

x, 10, Venice 1501, fol. 100^{rb}; in this chapter the causes why individuals are disposed differently are explained at length). Visible dispositions are in this view bodily dispositions. I conclude from these observations that *dispositio* means here the totality of permanent and actual qualities of a man, especially his inborn and acquired bodily features.

RICCOBALDO OF
FERRARA AND GIOTTO:
AN UPDATE

PETER MURRAY'S 'Notes on some early Giotto Sources'¹ suggested a date of 1318 for Riccobaldo's reference to Giotto. The study of Riccobaldo's extant works, however, strongly suggests that he made no additions to the *Compilatio Chronologica* after 1313. He probably added all the material on 1302–13 together when he was updating his earlier short chronicles, none of which had carried the narrative beyond 1302, and placed the Giotto passage in 1306 because this tallied with his recollections of his pre-1308 stay in Padua. Preparing an edition of the *Compilatio chronologica* enables me to state that Florence, Laur. Pl.83.2 fol. 71^r and Berlin, Staatsbibl. F.118 fol. 139^v contain the uncorrupt text.² They read: 'opera facta per eum in ecclesiis Minorum Assisii, Arimini, Padue ac per ea que pinxit palatio Comunis Padue et in ecclesia Arene Padue'. The branch containing Malta XXI, Escorial α.IV.28 and the three incunabula (which are mutually independent) had a lacuna, or, more probably, an illegible passage. They lack 'ac per ea ... Comunis Padue', for which Malta supplies 'et in cappella extra Sanctum Antonium'. Thus, like A. F. Massera and, more recently, Giuseppe Billanovich, I continue to believe that Dante was influenced by Riccobaldo on this as on other points.³

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¹ This *Journal*, xvi, 1953, pp. 59–62.

² cf. L. Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, ix, Milan 1726, col. 255, based on the Berlin MS.

³ A. F. Massera, 'Dante e Riccobaldo da Ferrara', *Bollettino della Società Dantesca italiana*, N.S. xxii, 1915,

pp. 168–200; Giuseppe Billanovich, *La tradizione del testo di Livio e le origini dell'umanesimo*, Padua 1981, pp. 17–32; C. T. Davis, 'Il buon tempo antico', *Florentine Studies*, ed. Nicolai Rubinstein, London 1968, pp. 65–66n; and my forthcoming study of Riccobaldo and edition of the *Compilatio chronologica* in *Studi storici*.

THE CAMERA DELLO
ZODIACO OF FEDERICO II
GONZAGA

LITTLE has been written about the decorative projects commissioned by Federico II Gonzaga prior to the arrival of Giulio Romano in Mantua in 1524.¹ The reason for this is relatively clear: there are considerable gaps in the archival records for the period between 1519 and 1522 and most of the major decorative projects completed by Federico during these years have been largely destroyed by subsequent alterations or neglect.

One room that does survive from Federico's first building campaign—the refurbishment of his father's former apartments in the Castello di San Giorgio—is the so-called *Camera dello Zodiaco*.² The room itself is situated on the second floor of the Castello (Pl. 65c). Its decoration is divided into two parts. The walls are covered with landscape scenes, each of which appears to have either a series of episodes from a single fable or, perhaps, a group of unrelated bucolic tableaux (Pls 62–63). The exact subjects are difficult to determine. The northern wall shows a satyr confronting or chasing a young maiden, surely Pan with Syrinx, with a

¹ The only study to focus exclusively on the period is Clifford Brown, 'The Decoration of the Private Apartment of Federico II Gonzaga on the Pianterreno of the Castello di San Giorgio', *Guerre, Stati e Città. Mantova e l'Italia Padana dal secolo XIII al XIX*, Mantua 1988, pp. 315–43.

² See Brown (as in n. 1), pp. 315–17 and C(hiara) T(ellini) P(erina), 'Lorenzo Leonbruno. Sala dello Zodiaco', in *Pittura a Mantova dal Romanico al Settecento*, Milan 1989, pp. 230–31 and pl. 61. These rooms were very badly damaged during the period of Austrian and Napoleonic rule when they served as prison cells. See U. Bazzotti, 'Il Castello di San Giorgio come carcere', in *Le Carceri dei Martiri di Belfiore nel Castello di San Giorgio*, Mantua 1985, pp. 23–28.

number of soldiers conversing or walking through the adjacent countryside. The western wall has a seated young lady holding a viol in one corner, with the rest of the scene similarly populated with soldiers. The southern wall has several soldiers in the foreground and a small depiction of an antique city (with colosseum) in the background. The eastern wall has Pan playing his pipes (*syrix*) surrounded by a group of four dancing satyrs, several men collecting firewood and a man killing a dragon. The four pendentives of the vault are filled with scenes of monks proceeding uphill to mountain-top monasteries or soldiers travelling up to walled hill towns; the curious shape of one of the mountains depicted strongly recalls the Pietra di Bismantova, near Reggio Emilia.

The decoration of the vault of the *Camera dello Zodiaco* is the source of the room's name. It is divided radially by illusionistic groining, resembling the spokes of a wheel and separating the ceiling into twelve segments (Pl. 64a). The visual conceit is such that each rib runs through one of the twelve signs of the zodiac, which are arranged in a circle around the outer margins of the ceiling. Beneath the zodiac signs, there is a series of stellar gods, who are easily identified as the seven planetary gods: Saturn appears with his scythe near the flanks of Taurus; Apollo with his lyre and Mercury with feathered feet and holding the caduceus sit beneath the Gemini; Mars and Venus embrace under the sign of Cancer; Luna with a crescent Moon in her hair and holding a bow and arrow is placed beside the tail of Capricorn; and Jupiter with sceptre, thunderbolt and eagle stands between the signs of Pisces and Aries (Pl. 65b).

A figure of Hercules, wearing an oak-leaf wreath, stands at the centre of the ceiling upon a bank of clouds littered with the armour of his fallen enemies. He holds a large club encircled by a golden ribbon and embellished with pointed metal studs, which bears the motto *UBIQUE FORTIS*. Brown suggested that the facial features of the Hercules resemble those of the young Federico II. In particular, he noted a similarity to the portrait of the young Marchese in Lorenzo Costa's *Triumph of Federico II Gonzaga*, now in the Narodne Galerie in

Prague.³ Whereas this particular comparison seems less than convincing, one might cite instead the portrait of Federico in a drawing attributed to Lorenzo Leonbruno (the artist who painted the *Camera dello Zodiaco*) or the early bust portrait of the Marchese on the obverse of one of his commemorative medals, both of which are very close to the facial features of the *Camera dello Zodiaco* Hercules.⁴ This possibility makes sense for two reasons. First, it is common to have the image of the ruler as the centre-point of a zodiacal configuration. Second, in terms of the positions of the planet-gods, the vault of the *Camera dello Zodiaco* quite clearly represents the horoscopic chart of Federico II Gonzaga.⁵ There would be no more fitting way to illustrate this point than to place the personified image of the native in that space usually reserved for the native's name in a horoscopic chart.

The best-known version of Federico's chart appears in Lucas Gauricus's *Tractatus astrologicus* (Pl. 65a).⁶ The planetary positions indicated in the chart and those depicted in the ceiling are identical.⁷ Furthermore, it seems that the ribbing of the *Camera dello Zodiaco* may represent the cusps of the astrological houses in Federico's horoscopic chart. In this respect, the vault and Gauricus's chart differ. The chart

³ See Brown (as in n. 1), p. 316 and pls 1 and 2.

⁴ *ibid.* and pl. 3. The present location of the drawing is unknown. Brown mentions that it was formerly held by K. E. Maison and Company, London. It should be noted that Brown's description of the drawing is slightly misleading. The putti which fly above Federico and his father carry bows, not golden crowns. For a reproduction of the medal, see *Splendours of the Gonzaga* [exh. cat.], eds D. Chambers and J. Martineau, London 1981, p. 180, no. 141.

⁵ Federico's interest in astrology and the use of personalized astrological iconography in the decoration of the Palazzo del Te have been discussed in E. H. Gombrich, 'The Sala dei Venti in the Palazzo del Te', this *Journal*, xiii, 1950, pp. 189–201; R. Signorini, 'Distat enim quae / Sydera te excipiant', this *Journal*, xlii, 1979, p. 273 and K. Lippincott, 'The astrological decoration of the Sala dei Venti in the Palazzo del Te', this *Journal*, xlvii, 1984, pp. 216–22.

⁶ L. Gauricus, *Tractatus astrologicus*, Venice 1552, fol. 44^r. See Lippincott (as in n. 5), p. 220 and fig. 1.

⁷ The chart shows: Saturn 27° 32' Taurus; Apollo (Sun) 5° 23' Gemini; Mercury 21° 48' Gemini; Venus 7° 25' Cancer; Mars 14° 25' Cancer; Moon 23° 55' Capricorn; Jupiter 24° 47' Pisces.

is constructed according to a simplified version of the Porphyry house-system in which the individually reckoned coordinates of the Ascendant and of the Mid-Heaven determine the boundaries of the ten other houses.⁸ Gauricus places Federico's Ascendant at 22° 16' Taurus and his Mid-Heaven at 28° 27' Capricorn. The *Camera dello Zodiaco* ribs seem to mark the cusps of a chart divided by the equal-house system. In this system, each house is given an equal 30°, using the Ascendant as a starting point. Most of the ribs of the vault fall well into the second half of each zodiacal sign, perhaps indicating Federico's Ascendant of 22° 16' Taurus has been taken as the starting point for the demarcation of the chart into twelve equal parts. The suggestion of an equal-house system is supported by the inclusion of four otherwise inexplicable golden circles included in the decoration. One circle is placed above Saturn's head on the flanks of Taurus; one on the back of Leo; one above the tail of Scorpio and one between Aquarius and the snout of the uppermost fish in Pisces. In an equal-house system, if Federico's Ascendant were 22° Taurus, the remaining three Cardinal points of his chart would fall thus: the cusp of the 4th House or *Imum Coeli* at 22° Leo; the cusp of his 7th House or Descendant at 22° Scorpio; and the cusp of his 10th House or *Medium Coeli* at 22° Aquarius—or exactly where the golden circles appear in the vault of the *Camera dello Zodiaco*.

There are four additional figures in the fresco, however, whose significance is less easy to determine. The first is that of a small boy riding on a camel (Pl. 64b), placed directly beneath the sign of Scorpio. The origin of this image is certainly as one of the *paranattellonta* depicted in the *Astrolabium planum* of Johannes Angeles.⁹ The boy on

the camel appears twice in the text: as the *paranattellon* of 20° Scorpio and of 28° Sagittarius (Pl. 64c). The two parts of the *paranattellon* are described in the accompanying text: the figure is VIR SEDENS IN CAMELO (though the illustration clearly shows a young boy) and the fortune is HOMO FORTIS ERIT. It is tempting to see the fortune accorded these *paranattellon* as some sort of astrological gloss on the central image of Federico as Hercules—UBIQUE FORTIS; and the fact that this image appears directly above Federico's Descendant of 22° Scorpio seems to strengthen the plausibility of such an interpretation. Added to this, another *paranattellon* appears in a similarly auspicious location: the dismembered hand holding a banderole placed beneath the sign of Leo (Pl. 64d) closely resembles a banderole depicted as the figure for the *paranattellon* of 20° Leo in the *Astrolabium planum* (Pl. 64e). In this case, the fortune seems less pertinent, but the association between *paranattellon* and the cardinal points of Federico's chart is surely strengthened.¹⁰

The two remaining figures are not derived from the illustrations to the *Astrolabium planum*, but they function in a similar fashion, highlighting the major astrological points of Federico's chart. The first is situated below the sign of Capricorn: a woman holding several spheres in the folds of her skirt and resting her hand on the top of what appears to be a large rudder. Iconographically, she resembles the figure of *Fortuna*.¹¹ If, as has been suggested, the vault of the *Camera dello Zodiaco* represents Federico's horoscopic chart calculated according to an equal-house system, then mid-way through Capricorn would be the appropri-

⁸ For a convenient résumé of the different house-systems, see J.-L. Brau, H. Weaver and A. Edmands, *Larousse Encyclopédia of Astrology*, New York 1980, pp. 137–48.

⁹ The *Astrolabium planum* is an abbreviated, illustrated version of a treatise originally written by Pietro d'Abano. For further information, see B. D. Haage, 'Ein Handschriftfund zum *Astrolabium planum* des Petrus von Abano', *Litterae ignotae*, 1, 1977, pp. 95–108; B. D. Haage, 'Dekane und Paranattellonta des *Astrolabium planum* in einem Nürnberger Fragment', *Archiv für Kunstgeschichte*, lx, 1978, pp. 121–39; G. Federici-Vescovini, 'Pietro d'Abano e gli affreschi astrologici di

Pietro d'Abano del Palazzo della Ragione di Padova', *Labyrinthos*, ix, 1986, pp. 50–75; G. Federici-Vescovini, 'La teoria delle immagini di Pietro d'Abano e gli affreschi astrologici del Palazzo della Ragione', *Die Kunst und das Studium der Natur vom 14. zum 16. Jahrhundert*, eds W. Prinz and A. Beyer, Weinheim 1987, pp. 213–35.

¹⁰ The figure is described as MANUS UNA TENENS CARTAM (*sic*) and the fortune, NUNCIUS ERIT.

¹¹ Compare, for example, the figure of *Fortuna* in the ceiling of the *Sala di Galatea* in the Villa Farnesina. See K. Lippincott, 'Two Astrological Ceiling Reconsidered: The *Sala di Galatea* in the Villa Farnesina and the *Sala del Mappamondo* at Caprarola', this *Journal*, liii, 1990, pp. 185–207, esp. pp. 189–90, 194–95 and fig. 18b.

ate location for his *Pars fortunae*.¹² The second unusual image in the ceiling is the small nude god standing on top of what appears to be a cylindrical altar, set between the pans of Libra.¹³ In Gauricus's version of Federico's natal chart, 3° 44' Libra is marked with the glyph for the *Pars fortunae*. This seems slightly odd, since the standard formula for calculating the *Pars fortunae*, as mentioned, results in Federico's being located in Capricorn. There is, however, an alternative method for figuring fortunate degrees preserved, apparently uniquely, in the *Astronomica* of Marcus Manilius—a source with which Gauricus was certainly familiar.¹⁴ Manilius states that if the native is born during the night, the *Locus fortunae* or *Sedes fortunae* is calculated in the following manner: the position of the Sun is subtracted from that of the Moon, and the remainder is added to the Ascendant.¹⁵ According to the notations in Gauricus's chart, Federico was born 15 hours and 52 minutes after noon of 16 May—or at 3:52 a.m. on the morning of 17 May 1500. With his Sun at 5° Taurus and his Moon at 23° Capricorn, Federico's night time *Locus fortunae* falls precisely at 3° Libra. The figure standing on the altar records this important spot in his chart by referring to the extra-zodiacal constellation which rises with the first degrees of Libra, namely *ara*.¹⁶

¹² The *Pars fortunae* is found by locating the position of the Moon if the native's Sun were placed on the Ascendant. In Federico's case, if the chart is rotated 13° so the Sun falls on the Ascendant, the Moon appears at 10° Capricorn. See Lippincott, *ibid.*, p. 194.

¹³ It may be noted that the figure of Virgo, immediately next to Libra, is modelled on Raphael's *Sappho* from the *Stanza della Segnatura*.

¹⁴ For Gauricus's use of Manilius in planning the programme for the decoration of the *Sala dei Venù* and his reliance on the intermediary *Commentum* of Lorenzo Bonincontri, see Lippincott (as in n. 5), pp. 216–22.

¹⁵ Manilius, *Astronomica*, iii, 169–202. See also the explanation in *Astronomica*, ed. and transl. G. P. Goold, Cambridge Mass. and London 1977, pp. lxxv–lxxviii.

¹⁶ Two contemporary sources list the southern constellation of *ara* as a *paranatellon* of Libra. Bonincontri says 'Ponit Arem imaginem esse in XXVIII parte libre distantem longe a cornibus lire, sed firminus (*sic* = Firmicus [Maternus]) ponit aram oriri cum prima scorpionis parte' (L. Bonincontri, ... *In C. Manilium Commentum*, Rome 1484, fol. 96^v). Giuntini describes 'Iars, sive thuribulum, seu ara, constellatio 46' between 11° 54' and 21° 24' Libra (F. Giuntini, *Speculum astrologiae ... Accesserunt etiam commentaria absolutissima in duos posteriores Quadripartiti Ptolemaei*, Lyons 1583, ii,

In conclusion, all of the components in the decoration of the *Camera dello Zodiaco* contribute to the detailed, accurate rendering of Federico's horoscope. Why Federico chose this programme, depicting himself as Hercules *UBIQUE FORTIS* and as the central pivot of the schema, may never be fully understood. There is the temptation to cite the peculiar circumstances of his accession to the marquisate and suggest that the iconography of the *Camera dello Zodiaco* may indeed reflect Federico's desire to assert himself as the legitimate heir. Whether or not the iconography of the room refers to contemporary events, however, the message of the ceiling is clear: at the moment of Federico II Gonzaga's birth, the heavens have proclaimed that he had been born to rule.

KRISTEN LIPPINCOTT
RODOLFO SIGNORINI

NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM, LONDON
FONDAZIONE D' ARCO, MANTUA

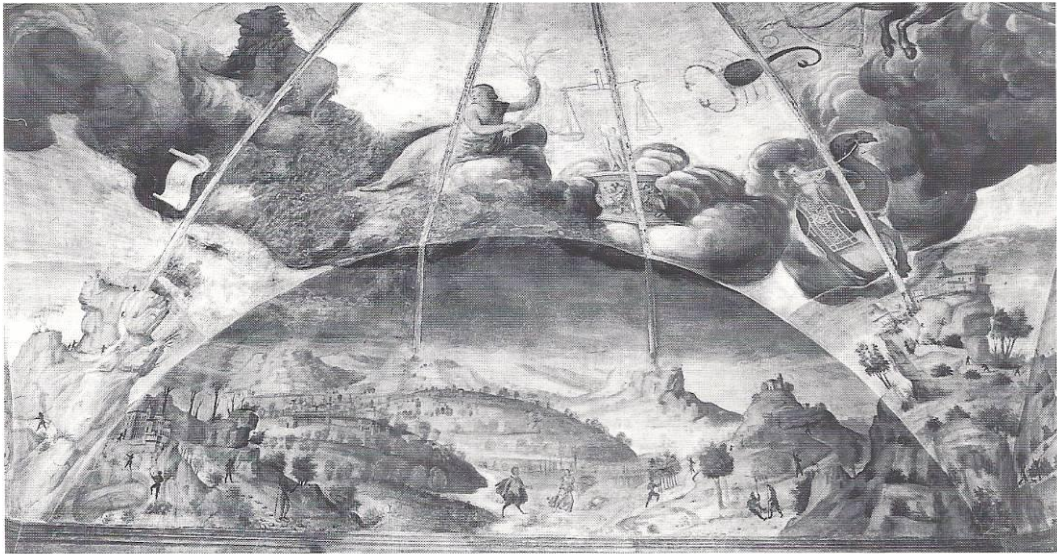
p. 988. Giuntini inserts a discussion of Federico's chart into his commentary on determining the longevity of the native's father. The chart itself is merely copied from Gauricus (*ibid.*, i, p. 167.)

DANIELE DA VOLTERRA'S SATIRICAL DEFENCE OF HIS ART*

In memory of Philip Pouncey

FEW RENAISSANCE ARTISTS' works have had such a poor record of survival as those of the painter Daniele Ricciarelli da Volterra. Even his most famous picture—his *Deposition* formerly in the Orsini Chapel in S. Trinità dei Monti, painted between 1543 and c. 1550—is now a shadow of its former self. A few drawings provide the only artistic evidence for the rest of the Chapel's interior

* I thank Elizabeth McGrath for help with Latin texts and Greek inscriptions, and Ingo Herklotz, Monique Kornell and Rick Scorza for their suggestions.

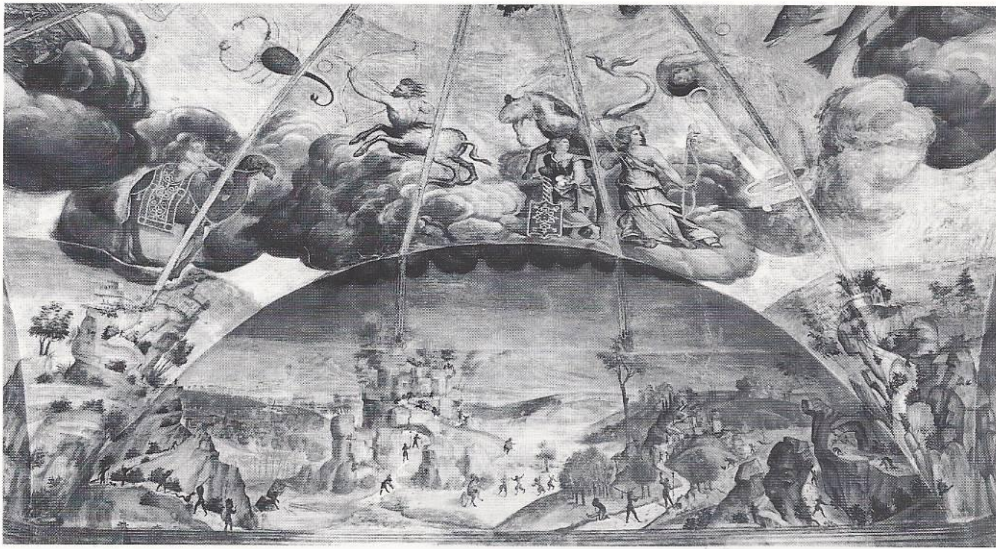


a—Northern wall (*pp.* 244f)

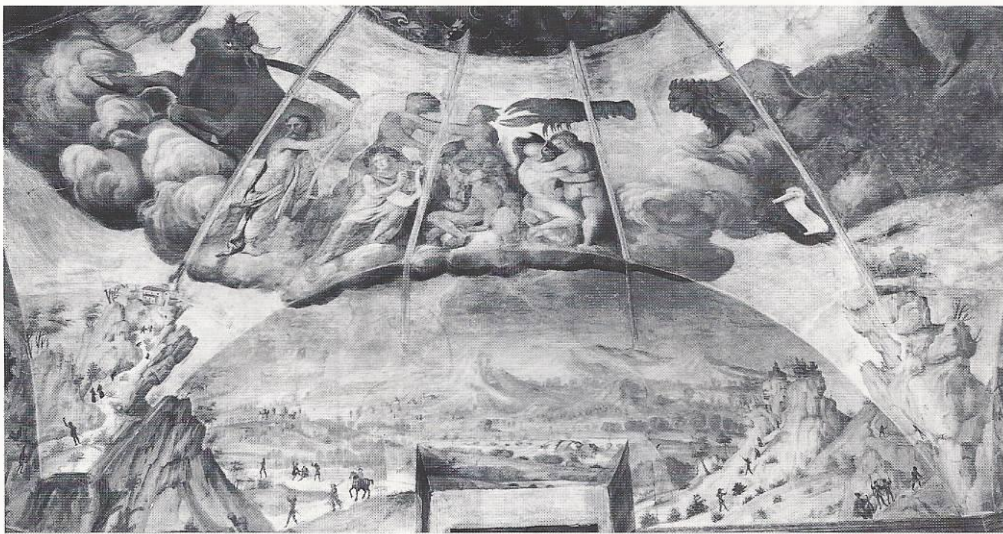


b—Southern wall (*pp.* 244f)

a, b: Mantua, Castello di San Giorgio, *Camera dello Zodiaco*



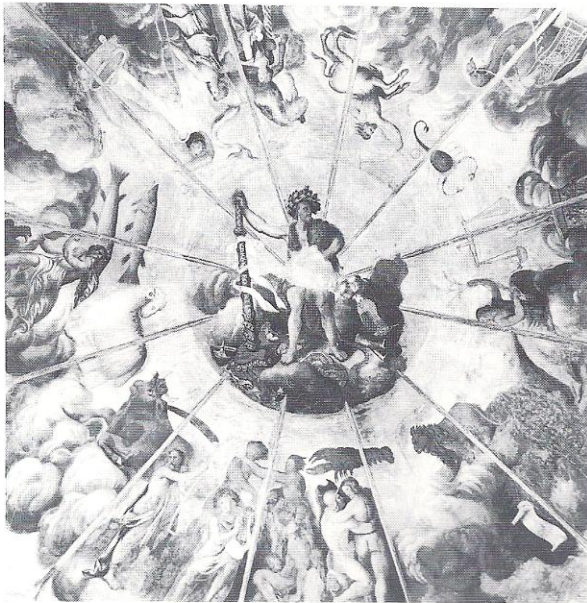
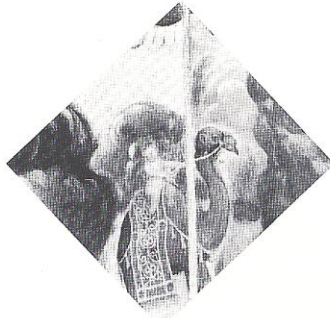
a—Eastern wall (*pp.* 244f)



b—Western wall (*pp.* 244f)

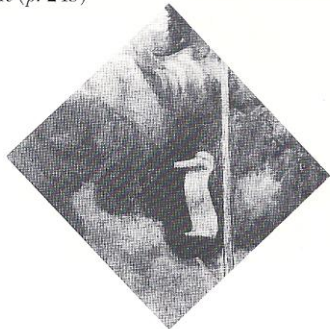
a, b: Mantua, Castello di San Giorgio, *Camera dello Zodiaco*

b—Boy on a camel (detail from Pl. 64a) (p. 246)

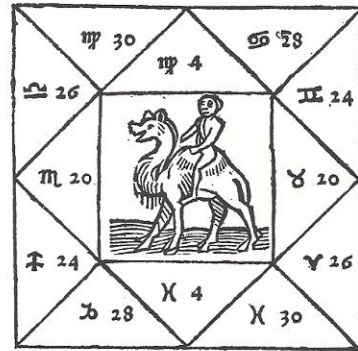


a—Mantua, Castello di San Giorgio, Camera dello Zodiaco, decoration of the vault (p. 245)

d—Banderole (detail from Pl. 64a) (p. 246)



¶ Homo fortis erit.

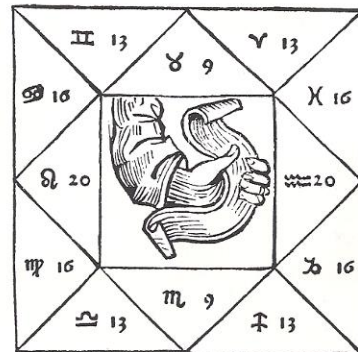


¶ Aqua magna fluens.

c—Paranatellon for 20° Scorpio (p. 246)

c, e: from Johannes Angelus, *Astrolabium planum*, Augsburg 1488

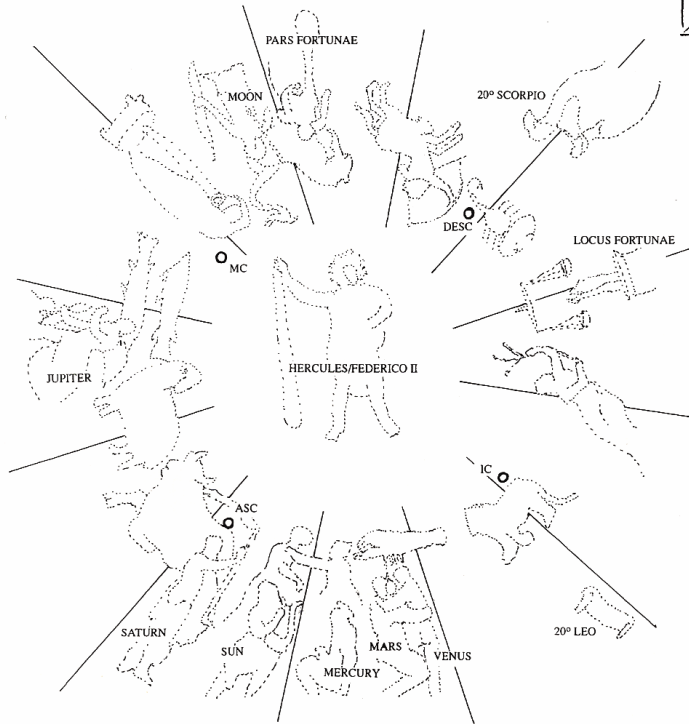
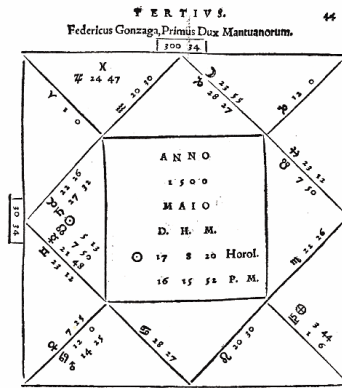
¶ Nuncius erit.



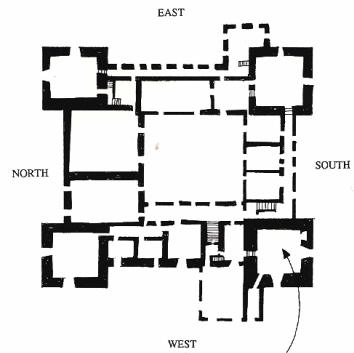
¶ Vir iacens vt mortuus.

e—Paranatellon for 20° Leo (p. 246)

a—Federico II Gonzaga's natal chart, from Lucas Gauricus, *Tractatus astrologicus*, Venice 1552, fol. 44^r (p. 245)



b—Diagram of Pl. 64c (p. 245)



c—Mantua, Castello di San Giorgio, *Camera dello Zodiaco*, floor-plan (p. 244)

Camera dello Zodiaco