

LA CORTE DI  
*FERRARA*

È IL SUO MECENATISMO

1441-1598

The Court of Ferrara  
& its Patronage



Renaissance  
studier  
MUSEUM TUSCULANUM



EDIZIONI  
PANINI



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## The Iconography of the *Salone dei Mesi* and the Study of Latin Grammar in Fifteenth-century Ferrara\*

The frescoes of the *Salone dei Mesi* in the Palazzo Schifanoia are the unique example of a fifteenth-century Ferrarese decorative cycle. As such, they are central to any stylistic examination of the Ferrarese school. But beyond this, the richness of the mythological, astrological and historical material depicted in the paintings offers an unparalleled visual compendium of the cultural and intellectual interests of the Este court.

The four walls of the *Salone dei Mesi* are divided into 19 separate panels by monumental, painted *grisaille* pilasters. Twelve of the nineteen panels are devoted to the twelve months of the year. They run chronologically counter-clockwise around the room and are divided into three horizontally superimposed zones. The zodiacal months of Aries, Taurus and Gemini are depicted on the eastern wall of the *Salone*. Cancer, Leo, Virgo and Libra appear on the north wall. The months of Scorpio, Sagittarius and Capricorn comprise the west wall, though all but the upper zone of the Capricorn panel is virtually illegible due to paint loss. Only the *sgraffiti* remain of the months of Aquarius and Pisces on the southern wall of the *Salone* (Fig. 2).

The scenes in the upper section of each calendrical panel illustrate the triumphal procession of the patron god or goddess of the month. In the middle zone of each panel is the zodiacal sign of the month surrounded by three figures representing the astrological concept of decans – the name of which is derived from their astronomical function of dividing the thirty degrees of each zodiacal month into segments of ten degrees. The bottom zone of these panels depicts the occupations of the months and consists of numerous scenes of Duke Borso and his subjects fulfilling their seasonal duties.

The seven panels outside the calendrical cycle, most of which are too damaged for definitive analysis, contain groups of mounted courtiers, architectural scenes and depictions of tournaments.

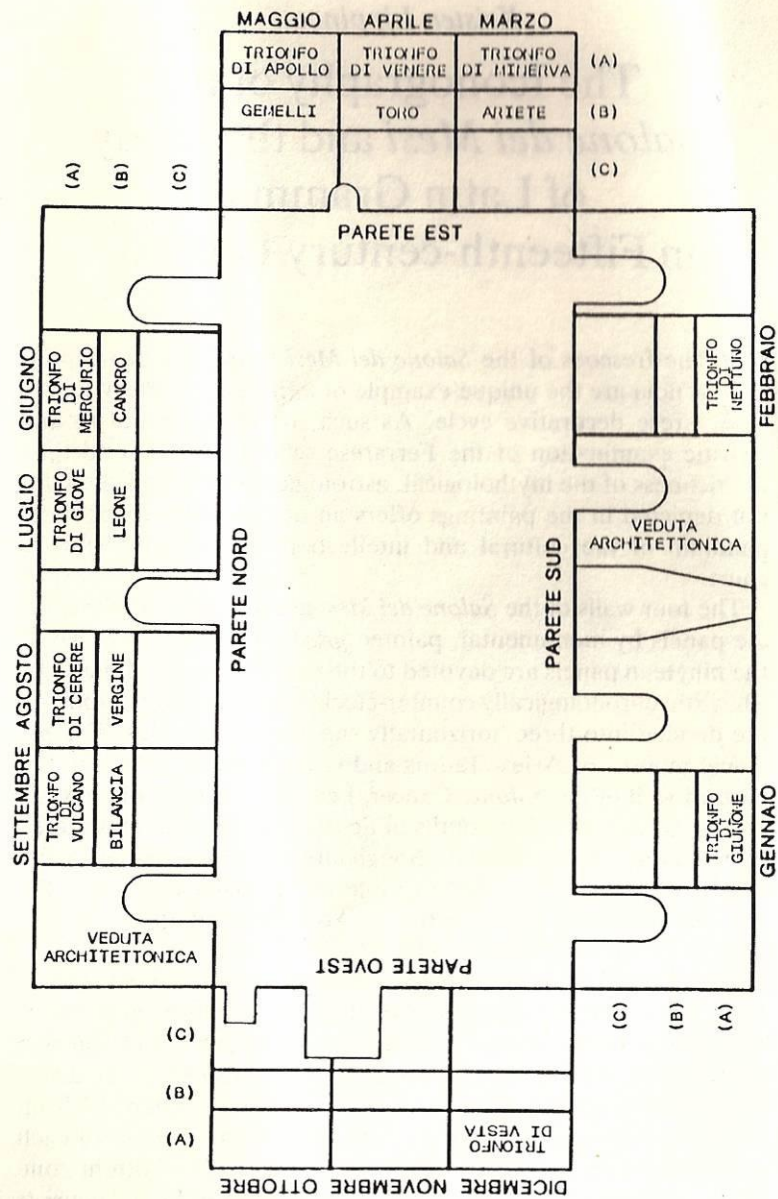


Fig. 2. Plan of Sala dei Mesi.  
Ferrara, Palazzo Schifanoia.

Although the basic structure of the frescoes is relatively straightforward, the arrangement and significance of the individual components of each separate horizontal band is rather more complex. In this paper, I plan to focus specifically on the upper zone of the frescoes, the region containing the triumphal procession of what we might call the zodiacal patrons – the gods and goddesses who rule over each month. This section provides information which illuminates one key feature of the formulation of the *Salone dei Mesi* program.

In his famous lecture on the Schifanoia frescoes, Aby Warburg made one particularly important contribution to our understanding of the iconographic components of the upper zone. He located the textual *locus classicus* for the series of the twelve triumphal Olympian gods in Book II of the astrological poem, the *Astronomica*, by the first century Roman poet, Marcus Manilius.<sup>1</sup> In this passage, Manilius identifies each of the twelve great gods of Olympus as the patron deity of one of the twelve signs of the zodiac.<sup>2</sup> The *Astronomica* is the unique textual authority for this system of zodiacal patronage.<sup>3</sup> The importance of Warburg's discovery is two-fold. The inclusion of the twelve Olympians separates the Schifanoia frescoes from all other extant calendrical cycles whose iconographic premise is fundamentally astrological. The Schifanoia Olympians are not planet-gods; and the figures which accompany them are not planet-children. The twelve Olympians are deities stemming from classical mythology. The subsidiary figures in each scene – drawn from the late-medieval mythographic handbooks of Albericus, the *Ovide moralisé* and the *Libellus de imaginibus deorum* – function largely as attributes serving to define the Olympians by means of the various myths associated with them. It is unclear whether the decision to illustrate the Manilian pantheon reflects a specific interest in the text or merely the sensible decision to take advantage of a system which offers a better distribution of god-per-month than the conventional astrological series of planet-gods. Regardless, the dependence on the *Astronomica* remains certain; and this specific association between the Schifanoia pantheon and the text of the *Astronomica* helps set the program of the *Salone dei Mesi* firmly within a specific phase and aspect of the development of Renaissance humanism.

Although the text of the *Astronomica* was first rediscovered by Poggio Bracciolini in 1417,<sup>4</sup> serious interest in the poem emerged only after 1450. There are twenty-six manuscripts of the text which either are, or can be, dated to the second half of the fifteenth century.<sup>5</sup> The poem was reprinted seven times between

1470 and 1500.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, there seems to have been a particular interest in the text in Ferrara and at least eight of the earliest fifteenth-century manuscripts can be linked directly to Ferrara through inscriptions or via common variants.<sup>7</sup> It is also interesting to note that, apart from the Schifanoia frescoes, there is only one large-scale Renaissance decorative program based specifically on the *Astronomica*, the *Sala dei Venti* in the Palazzo del Te in Mantua; and this cycle, in fact, can be linked via two channels to the Este court in Ferrara. First, the probable author of the iconographic program of the *Sala dei Venti*, Lucas Gauricus, had close connections with the Ferrarese *Studio*. Second, the mother of the patron of the cycle, Federico II Gonzaga, was Isabella d'Este, daughter of Ercole I d'Este and Eleonora d'Aragona, and niece of Borso d'Este.<sup>8</sup>

What might have been the impetus behind the decision to illustrate the Manilian pantheon of zodiacal patrons in the upper zone of the Schifanoia frescoes? As I have indicated, there is only an extremely limited iconographic tradition for the illustration of Manilius's *Astronomica* in the monumental arts. But beyond this, there is not even a single extant manuscript of the text which has any illustrations, save an occasional author portrait on the title page. This is remarkable given the large number of extant illustrated astrological manuscripts dating from the fifteenth century.<sup>9</sup> Considering that the iconographic traditions established by the Aratus, *Aratea*, Hyginus and *Almagest*-based constellation illustrations were sufficiently strong to have sparked similar patterns in the illustration of contemporary astrological treatises by Basinio da Parma, Fazio degli Uberti, Domenico d'Arezzo and Prosdocimo de'Beldomandi, it seems peculiar that the *Astronomica* was exempt from this influence.<sup>10</sup> Certainly, even beyond the constellation catalogues in Book I and Book V of the *Astronomica*,<sup>11</sup> there are several passages in the text sufficiently evocative to suggest illustration.<sup>12</sup>

What is it that set the *Astronomica* apart from the plethora of astrological texts being illustrated during the second half of the fifteenth century? The primary difference between the *Astronomica* and other astrological works seems to be the audience to which the text appealed. The *Astronomica* has always been the province of scholars whose interests were primarily philological. There seem to be two reasons for this. First, the inherited texts of the *Astronomica* were profoundly corrupt, to such an extent that collation, when attempted, proved to be of little value. The poem was not fundamentally incomprehensible, but much of it would have been beyond the talents of any but the most ardent or clever

linguist.<sup>13</sup> Second, Manilius never mentions planets throughout the five books of the *Astronomica*. At best, any practicing astrologer would find this fact mysterious. More likely, however, he would find a treatise on non-planetary astrology useless.<sup>14</sup> If nothing else, this fact suggests that it was not an astrologer who formulated the program of the Schifanoia frescoes. Instead, the scholars most interested in the *Astronomica* were those who found its difficult fusion of science and poetics intriguing, namely the humanists whose primary interest in the text was linguistic. Evidence contained within the manuscripts supports this thesis. Owners of fifteenth-century *Astronomica* manuscripts included Nicolas of Cusa, Novello Malatesta (the humanist brother of Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta and founder of the library in Cesena in 1452), Bartolomeus Fontius, Barzizza, Parrhasius and Galeazzo Maria da Narni.<sup>15</sup>

Given that interest in the *Astronomica* was apparently limited mainly to a small set of grammarians, it helps to explain why the poem was never illustrated, for surely it must have been as generally true in the fifteenth century as it is today, that scholars devoted to the study of words have little or no concern for pictures. Illustrations are considered to have no value in determining the correct reading of a text, and, consequently, are superfluous. Furthermore, if the poem was the province of the philologist, one must assume that the program of the Schifanoia frescoes originated in, and most likely reflects, this milieu.

In a recent article on Ferrarese humanism and the school of Guarino da Verona, Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine provided a valuable resumé of the methodology of humanist education, which focussed on the role, intentions, and effect of the Renaissance teacher.<sup>16</sup> Starting with the recognition that there seems to be a disparity between humanist educational theories and actual classroom practice, Grafton and Jardine examined the manner in which Guarino, "the greatest teacher in a century of great teachers",<sup>17</sup> responded to Quintilian's assertion that a mastery of the foundations of oratory (*scientia recte loquendi*) and literary interpretations of the poets (*poetarum enarratio*) would produce in Quintilian's words: "the man who can really perform his function as a citizen; who is fitted to the demands of both public and private business; who can guide a state by his counsel, ground it in law, and correct it by his judicial decisions".<sup>18</sup> The Greco-Roman system of education was based on the premise that one's ability to speak well in public was a measure of civic worth.

In essence, these assumptions were inherited by the Renaissance. Unfortunately, what had been lost – a native fluency in the

language of the texts (Latin), as well as a culturally-based understanding of the texts – created an almost unbridgeable gap between the means and goals of Renaissance humanism. Guarino's schoolroom method is interesting for the manner in which it seems to have been formulated specifically to compensate for these losses. His program of learning, based largely on memorization, repetition and set exercises, was designed to provide the student with a lexicon of words, ideas, facts and quotations which would enable him to understand, but perhaps more importantly, to recreate a convincingly "classical" Latin. One of the tools employed by Guarino to facilitate this process was his own mnemonic poems, the *Carmina differentialia*,<sup>19</sup> in which he listed a series of homonymically or synonymically related words, providing easily remembered definitions for each.

In the classroom, Guarino offered the *Carmina* with a fully detailed appendix in which he further elaborated the various subtle connotations of each word used in the poem. Large sections of this "appendix" have been preserved in Angelo Decembrio's *De politia literaria*<sup>20</sup> and in Lodovico Puppio's commentary on the *Carmina differentialia*. The latter was probably developed from Puppio's own notes taken in Guarino's classroom.<sup>21</sup> The nature of this "appendix" is interesting for us because it records a method of learning in which individual words were used to generate a complex series of related ideas.

For example, the two lines "*Hic Cancer cancri crescit aquis: caelesteque signum, / Cancer et hic cancri morbum potes ipse vocare*", point out the grammatical difference between the zodiacal sign (declined *cancer, cancri*) and the disease (declined *cancer, canceris*). In the commentary, however, the two lines generate a discussion of the zodiac, of the assignment of the zodiacal signs to the different months, and of the different planetary spheres and domiciles held by each planet-god, before the actual grammatical purpose is addressed.<sup>22</sup>

It is obvious from this example, and from an examination of the similarly structured lecture notes taken by the Englishman, John Free, who studied with Guarino in Ferrara from 1456 to 1458,<sup>23</sup> and from what remains of Guarino's prepared notes on the pseudo-Ciceronian *Rhetorica ad Herennium*,<sup>24</sup> that this method of supplying students with what one might call an "associative" or "discursive catalogue" of etymological, historical, geographical and mythological information was perhaps the most fundamental component of Ferrarese humanism. "The pupils were deluged with words, phrases and facts" to reinforce what were primarily grammatical exercises.<sup>25</sup> In addition to the passive

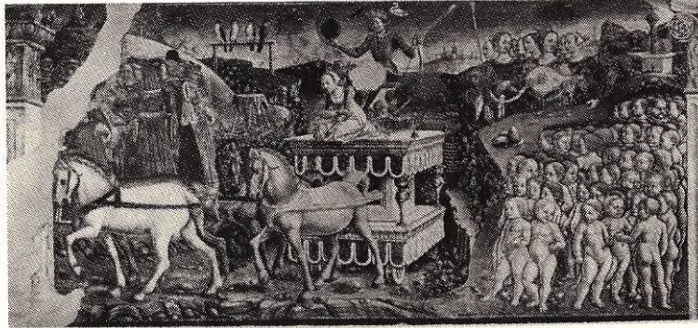


Fig. 3. May, upper and middle zones, detail.  
Ferrara, Palazzo Schifanoia, Sala dei Mesi.

reception of material, though, each student was also expected to assemble his own collection of material gleaned, presumably, from his own extensive reading. This material was collected and then systematically organized in a set of indexed notebooks.<sup>26</sup>

If a student were trained to collect, interpret and create according to this methodology, might he not also approach the formulation of an iconographic program in the same manner? In essence, if he were taught to think with reference to a "discursive catalogue", isn't it only logical to assume that his organization of images ~~in this scene fit relatively easily into the accepted iconography of this god. In the medieval mythographic tradition, the~~ that this was indeed the case.

Let us take as an example the triumph of Apollo which appears in the upper section of the Gemini panel (Fig. 3). Most of the images in this scene fit relatively easily into the accepted iconography of this god. In the medieval mythographic tradition, the arrow and bow are Apollo's most recurrent attributes, and the lute placed at his side in the Schifanoia image is a contemporary re-working of the harp he holds in most of the medieval illustra-

would follow his patterns of thinking?<sup>27</sup> A number<sup>99</sup> of iconographic details in the Schifanoia frescoes seem to indicate





Fig. 4. *Ovide moralisé*. Apollo, Pegasus, Minerva and the nine Muses. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Fr.871, fol.116<sup>v</sup>.

tions.<sup>28</sup> His youthful appearance, the golden disc of the sun he holds and the swan and raven shown floating above his head are also standard attributes of the god. Similarly, the inclusion of the nine Muses and the representation of Pegasus, standing behind a Renaissance version of the Castalian Spring, are commonly associated with Apollo, especially in his role as the patron of poetry (Fig. 4).

The three-legged stool to the left of the god is intended to represent the tripod of the Oracle at Delphi. The skin stretched over this tripod is probably that of the Python, the guardian dragon of the Delphic Oracle slain by Apollo. The textual source for this feature can be found among the writings of the so-called "*Mythographus tertius*", in which the etymological significance of the tripod and the Python are explained. The text reads:

Tripos tamen vocatur et mensa Apollinis, Pythii serpentis corio tecta; a quo *corio* etiam locus ipse circa tripodem, unde dabatur oraculum *cortina* dictus est; quem tamen alii vel quia *certa* illinc fusa sint responsa, cortinam quasi *certinam* nuncupatum volunt, vel a Greca etymologia vocabulum traxisse, vel certe, quod juxta Servium verius est, quia illic cor vatis tenebatur.<sup>29</sup>

It would seem unlikely that a program of which so many elements appear to have been somewhat lazily copied from late medieval manuscript illustrations might also use complex ety-

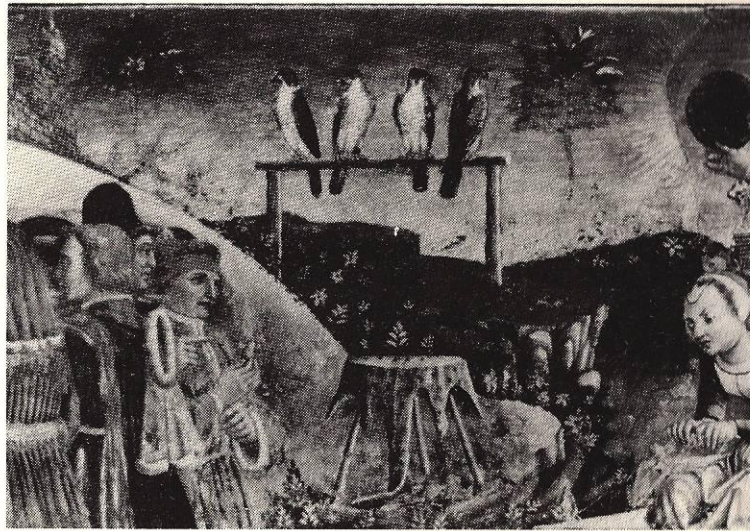


Fig. 5. May, upper zone, detail. The four falcons, the cortina and the poet.  
Ferrara, Palazzo Schifanoia, Sala dei Mesi.

mological verbal play as the basis for an iconographic detail, were it not for an additional detail that appears immediately to the left of the tripod (Fig. 5). At the right edge of the group of poets, there is a man holding a flaming object, apparently a heart, in his right hand. The man standing behind him points toward the Python-covered tripod. This image surely refers to Servius's interpretation of *cortina*, cited by the *Mythographus tertius*: "*quod verius est, quia cor illic vatis tenetur*" ("This is more true, because the heart of the poet is held there").

A second example of this kind of association explains the appearance of the large vase placed on the bottom frame of the upper section of the Capricorn panel, which illustrates the triumph of Vesta (Fig. 6). The textual precedent, again from the *Mythographus tertius*, and again with reference to Servius, explains how the name of the goddess Vesta is derived from the Latin word for vase, "*vas*".

Nam et sine igne nullum, ut legitur, erat sacrificium, nec sine eo ulla colebatur religio. Unde et ipsa, ut Janus, in omnibus sacrificiis invocabatur. Hinc et futim veteres ejus ministerio reor addixisse. Est autem *futis* vas quoddam, ut ait Servius, lato ore, fundo angusto, quo in sacris Vestae sacerdotes utebantur. Aqua enim ad ejus sacra hausta humi non deponebatur. Quod si fieret, piaculum

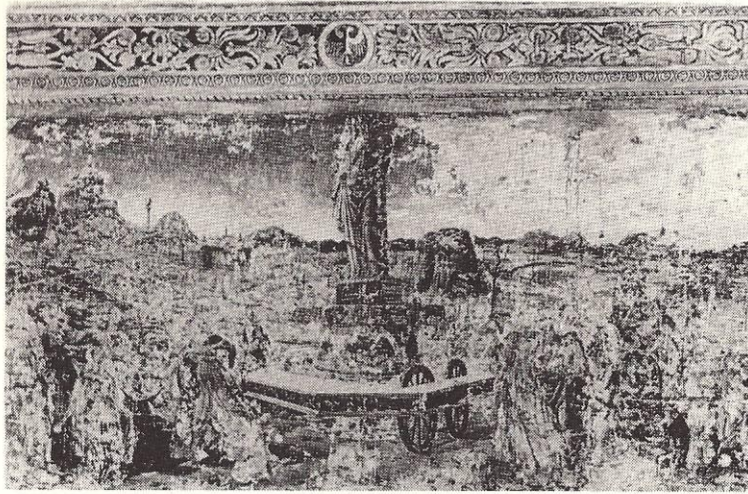


Fig. 6. *December, upper zone, Triumph of Vesta.*  
 Ferrara, Palazzo Schifanoia, Sala dei Mesi.

erat. Ideo excogitatum vas est, quod stare non posset, sed positum statim, quicquid continuisset, effunderet; et ipsum, ut existimo, significans: sicut a manu non remittebatur, ita a religione, nullo tempore esse cessandum.<sup>30</sup>

The presence of these images suggests that some, and perhaps many, details in the Schifanoia frescoes were chosen according to criteria which modern iconographers might find surprising. We do not expect the iconography of pictures to be based on etymological glosses. We read the mythographers looking for descriptive *formulae*, because we assume that these formulae were most important to the Renaissance iconographer. But, as I have suggested earlier, it seems that the Schifanoia program was almost certainly devised by a humanist who, being in Ferrara during the second half of the fifteenth century, would have been much more highly trained in problems related to grammar than to the job of picture-making. What appealed to him and, consequently, what is shown in the Schifanoia frescoes, is precisely the sort of verbal and literary associations that lie behind the image of the python-skin, the tripod, the flaming heart and the illustration of Vesta with her vase.

But even though we might have made progress towards understanding how some of the individual components of the Olympian processions were formulated, the question of why the Manilian *tutelae* appear in the upper zone of the frescoes still remains

unanswered. In this case, the Ferrarese sources are mute. I have yet to uncover any contemporary Ferrarese explanation or explication of this passage from the *Astronomica*. There is, however, a contemporary non-Ferrarese scholar whose allusions to the Manilian gods should be considered.

In Plato's *Symposium*, the interlocutor Agathon states that Apollo invented archery, medicine and divination under the guidance of Desire and Love. So too the Muses developed music, Athena weaving, Hephaestus metal-work and Jupiter the government of men and gods under the influence of Love. This Love, he says, was clearly the love of beauty; for "since the gods arose, the loving of beautiful things has brought all kinds of benefits to both gods and men."<sup>31</sup> Marsilio Ficino, in his *Commentary* on the *Symposium*, composed in large part prior to July 1469, interpreted Agathon's remark in the following manner:

Agathon thinks that the arts were given to humanity by the Gods because of Love: the art of ruling by Jupiter; of archery, prophecy, and medicine by Apollo; of bronze-work by Vulcan; the art of weaving by Minerva and music by the Muses. Twelve gods are in charge of the twelve signs of the zodiac: Pallas of Aries, Venus of Taurus, Apollo of Gemini, Mercury of Cancer, Jupiter of Leo, Ceres of Virgo, Vulcan of Libra, Mars of Scorpio, Diana of Sagittarius, Vesta of Capricorn, Juno of Aquarius, and Neptune of Pisces.

By these all the arts are handed down to mankind. The signs infuse the powers [to practice] each of the arts into the body, and the Gods who are in charge of them into the Soul. So Jupiter, through Leo, makes a man most fit for the governing of men and gods, that is, fit to manage well both divine affairs and human; Apollo, through Gemini, teaches prophecy, medicine and archery; Pallas, through Aries, teaches the skill of weaving; Vulcan, through Libra, teaches bronze-working; and the others teach the rest of the arts. But because the gifts of Providence are showered upon us by His beneficence, we say that they are given at the instigation of Love.<sup>32</sup>

The unique textual source for the recitation of zodiacal patrons is, of course, Manilius's *Astronomica*, but the catalyst for Ficino's association between Manilius's list and Agathon's speech comes neither from Manilius nor from Plato. Instead, it seems to be derived from a passage of the *De deo Socratis* written by the second-century neo-Platonist, Apuleius of Madaura. Apuleius states that in addition to those gods who are located in the stars and the planets, there is "another species of gods, which Nature has denied to our sight, which we can contemplate and admire

only through the intellect". "Ennius", he says, "has made a poem of their names:

Iuno, Vesta, Minerva, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mars,  
Mercurius, Iovis, Neptunus, Vulcanus, Apollo.

And though we have long known these gods, our attention is drawn to them due to the various benefits they impart to us in the affairs of life over which they preside".<sup>33</sup>

Ficino certainly knew Ennius's distych, since he quotes it in his *Epitome* to Plato's *Laws*.<sup>34</sup> And although the list also appears in Martianus Capella's *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*,<sup>35</sup> the *De deo Socratis* is the only source in which the Olympians are presented within a neo-Platonic context and characterized specifically as artistic patrons. Apuleius provided the vital link between Agathon's speech and Manilius's more vague statement that Nature had assigned each god to its zodiacal sign "in order that a living presence might lend majesty to abstract qualities",<sup>36</sup> and led Ficino to conclude that the Manilian *tutelae* were, indeed, the same as the Platonic supercelestial deities. It seems a wholly logical conclusion.<sup>37</sup>

Since the *De deo Socratis* was widely available in Italy during the mid-fifteenth century, it seems possible that the twelve Olympians were included in the Schifanoia program not merely as zodiacal patrons, but specifically as "celestial benefactors". Such a suggestion helps to explain the somewhat curious combination of scenes accompanying each god. Not only is each Olympian identifiable by the combination of attributes drawn from the mythographic descriptions, but each is accompanied by practitioners of the art which the god or goddess bestowed on mankind. To quote Apuleius, "our attention is drawn to them due to the various benefits they impart to us in the affairs of life over which they preside".

The Schifanoia frescoes preserve a variant to the norm – a variant which, somewhat like *Astronomica* itself, suggests the existence of alternate structures and attitudes. Art historians have become accustomed to believing that the presence of "humanist thought" in a work of art manifests itself in one of three ways: by imbuing it with densely allegorical content; by flavouring it with rustic, non-specific *poesia*; or by transforming its every detail into a complex commentary on some "topical" event or concern. I would suggest that the program of the Schifanoia frescoes illustrates a wholly different sort of interac-

tion between humanism and art and a very different relationship between text and image.

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#### Notes

- \* The paper has been adapted from my thesis for the University of Chicago, *The Frescoes of the Salone dei Mesi in the Palazzo Schifanoia in Ferrara: Style, Iconography and Cultural Context*. I am grateful to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation for their generous support of my research and would like to thank Charles Hope for his advice and suggestions.
1. See Aby Warburg, *Italianische Kunst und internationale Astrologie im Palazzo Schifanoia zu Ferrara*, in *L'Italia e l'arte straniera. Atti del X Congresso Internazionale di Storia dell'Arte in Roma, 1912* (Rome 1922), pp. 179-93. Reproduced in A. Warburg, *Gesammelte Schriften. Die Erneuerung der heidnischen Antike. Kulturwissenschaftliche Beiträge zur Geschichte der europäischen Renaissance*, ed. G. Bing (Berlin 1932), II, pp. 459-81 and 627-44. See also, A. Warburg, *La Rinascita del paganesimo antico. Contributi alla storia della cultura*, ed. G. Bing, Italian transl. Emma Cantimori (Florence 1966), pp. 249-72; and Marco Bertozzi, *La tirannia degli astri. Aby Warburg e l'astrologia di Palazzo Schifanoia* (Bologna 1985), pp. 81-112.
  2. The passage reads:  
*Lanigerum Pallas, Taurum Cytherea tuetur,  
formosos Phoebus Geminos; Cyllenie, Cancrum,  
Iuppiter, et cum matre deum regis ipse Leonem;  
spicifera est Virgo Cereris fabricataque Libra  
Vulcani; pugnax Mavortii Scorpios haeret;  
venantem Diana virum, sed partis equinae,  
atque angusta fovet Capricorni sidera Vesta;  
e Iovis adverso Iunonis Aquarius astrum est  
agnoscitque suos Neptunus in aethere Pisces.*  
Manilius, *Astronomica*, II, ll.439-47. Ed G. P. Goold (Leipzig 1985), p. 43.
  3. The representation of the dual patronage of the zodiacal sign of Leo by both Jupiter and Cybele in the frescoes further stresses the likelihood that the Olympian pantheon comes directly from the *Astronomica* rather than from an intermediary source. This particular aspect of the Manilian list occurs in no other known source. On this question, see Carol V. Kaske, *Marsilio Ficino and the Twelve Great Gods of the Zodiac*, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XLV (1982), pp. 195-202. Kaske notes that in Ficino's three passages on the Olympian zodiacal patrons, he consistently omits Cybele as the joint patron of Leo. Whereas Goold is certainly correct in his assertion that Manilius mentions Cybele "only for rhetorical ornament, and the poet does not mean that she shares Jupiter's guardianship of Leo" (Manilius, *Astronomica*, edn. and English transl. (Cambridge MA and London 1977), p. 116), this fact is not recognized by the Ferrarese, who scrupulously devote half of the subsidiary scenes in the upper zone of the Leo panel to Cybele's patronage.
  4. R. Sabbadini, *Le scoperte dei codici latini e greci ne' secoli XIV e XV* (Florence 1914), I, pp. 79-80 and II, pp. 192 and 234.
  5. A list of these manuscripts has been published previously in K. Lippincott,

- The Astrological Decoration of the Sala dei Venti in the Palazzo del Te, Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XLVII (1984), p. 217, n. 4. To this list add Paris, BN, n.a. lat. 483 (dated 1461); Sabiona, MS 68 (dated 1468); Vatican, Biblioteca apostolica, Barb. lat. 125, Chigi H. IV. 133, Vat. lat. 3099; Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, lat. XII. 69 and Vienna, ÖNB, Vindob. 3128. Also, the shelf-mark for the British Library manuscript should read Add. 22808. For the recension of these manuscripts, see H. W. Garrod, *Manilii Astronomicon Liber II* (Oxford 1911), pp. xv-lvii; M. D. Reeve, *Some Astronomical Manuscripts, The Classical Quarterly*, n.s. XXX (1980), pp. 508-22 and Goold edn. (1985), pp. xxxiii.
6. See Lippincott, *The Astrological Decoration of the Sala dei Venti ...*, p. 217, n. 4.
  7. Boston, Public Library, MS 20; Cesena, Plut. 1.s. XXV; Parma, parm. 283; Oxford, Bodley Auct. F.4.34; Paris, BN, lat. 8022; Vat. Chigi H.IV.133; Vat. lat. 3099 and Vienna 3128. See Goold edn. (1985), pp. xxii-xxiii and xxxiii. Through the Boston manuscript we can locate the text in Ferrara prior to 1461 as it is signed with the explicit by Pellegrino Agli, Florentine poet, humanist and friend of Ficino, "*scriptus praepropere ac festine a me Peregrino Allio ferrariae MCCCCLXI*". See Seymour de Ricci, *Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada* (New York 1935), I, p. 921. Cited by Kaske, *Ficino*, p. 197. See also P. O. Kristeller, *Supplementum Ficinianum* (Florence 1937-45), p. 323, n. 85. Agli was sent to Ferrara because of familial poverty in 1458 and seems to have returned to Florence before 1464. It would be interesting to know if this particular manuscript was the means of transmission of the *Astronomica* to Ficino.
  8. See E. H. Gombrich, *The Sala dei Venti in the Palazzo del Te, Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XII (1950), pp. 189-201. Reprinted in E. H. Gombrich, *Symbolic Images: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance, II* (London 1972), pp. 109-18. See also Lippincott, *The Astrological Decoration of the Sala dei Venti ...*, pp. 216-22.
  9. In a catalogue that is by no means definitive, I have counted over sixty fifteenth-century Italian manuscripts containing either a full or partial series of constellation illustrations. This number does not include the innumerable examples of manuscripts containing series of zodiacal, mythological, planet-god or planet-children illustrations.
  10. Similarly, it is interesting to note that neither of the two examples of Renaissance astrological poetry modelled after the *Astronomica* – the *De rebus coelestibus* of Lorenzo Bonincontri and the *Urania* of Giovanni Pontano – is ever illustrated, while the *Astronomicon* of Basinio da Parma, based on Hyginus, is almost always illustrated. For a discussion of the differing *geneses* of these poems, see B. Soldati, *La poesia astrologica nel Quattrocento. Ricerche e studi* (Florence 1906). See also Wolfgang Hübner, *Die Rezeption des astrologischen Lehrgedichts des Manilius in der italienischen Renaissance, Humanismus und Naturwissenschaften*, edd. R. Schmitz and F. Krafft (Boppard 1980), pp. 39-67 and Hübner, *Manilius als Astrolog und Dichter, Aufsteig und Niedergang der römischen Welt. Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung*, edd. H. Temporini and W. Haase (Berlin and New York 1984), XXXII, i, pp. 126-30. In the 1474 Bologna edn. of *Aratus Germanici ad Augustum ...*, which also contains the *Astronomicon* of Manilius, blank spaces have been left in the Germanic text for illustrations of the constellations, but the Manilius is uninterrupted.
  11. *Astronomica*, I, 255-455 and V, 32-709.
  12. The *Mathesis* of Julius Firmicus Maternus is another text which seems not to

have generated or inherited a pictorial tradition, though it should be noted that the *Mathesis* does not contain a catalogue of the constellations and, in general, the language used by Firmicus is hardly of the sort to prompt illustration. For example, it is unlikely that the *paranatellonta* section of Book VIII of the *Mathesis* could have been illustrated in the *Sala dei Venti* without the addition of the parallel passages from Manilius.

13. Our present-day understanding relies heavily on the inspired conjectures of Scaliger, Bentley and Housman. See J. J. Scaliger, *In Manilii quinque libros Astronomicon commentarius et Castigationes* (Paris 1579) and J. J. Scaliger, *Castigationes et notae in M. Manilii Astronomicon a Iosepho Scaligero ex vetusto codice Gemblacensi infinitis mendis repurgatum* (Leiden 1599-1600). (For an excellent analysis of Scaliger's approach to the *Astronomica*, see A. Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship, I*, (Oxford 1983), pp. 180-226.) *M. Manilii Astronomicon ex recensione et cum notis R. Bentleyi* (London 1739) and A. E. Housman, *M. Manilii Astronomicon*, 5 vols. (London 1903-33).
14. This idea is supported by the manner in which Lorenzo Bonincontri constructs his *Commentum* on the *Astronomica*. See Lippincott, *The Astrological Frescoes in the Sala dei Venti ...*, p. 218.
15. Brussels 10699 (from which Marciana lat. XII, 69 was copied) belonged to Nicolas of Cusa; Cesena, Plut. 1.s XXV was owned by and dedicated to Novello Malatesta; Florence, Laurenziana plut. 30, cod. 15 is a copy of Riccardiana Ed. R. 431', the 1474 Bolognese edn. of the *Astronomica* annotated by Bartolomeus Fontius; Naples, già Viennesi, lat. 32 (form. Vienna, Vindob. 5) was owned by Barzizza and Parrhasius; Vatican, Pal. lat. 1711 was corrected by Johannes Vitez, the Archbishop of Gran ("Archiepiscopus Strigoniensis"), with the aid of Galeazzo Marzio da Narni, and Madrid BN 3678 (form. M. 31) has associations with Poggio, probably being the manuscript copied for him at Konstanz.
16. A. T. Grafton and L. Jardine, *Humanism and the School of Guarino: A Problem of Evaluation, Past and Present*, XCVI (1982), pp. 51-80. The discussion of the school of Guarino which follows relies heavily on the material and insights presented in this article.
17. Grafton and Jardine, *Guarino*, p. 52.
18. Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, I, 4,5 and I. Pr. 10. Cited in Grafton and Jardine, *Guarino*, p. 57.
19. The *Carmina differentialia* are edited in *Ludovici de Puppio in differentias Guarini interpretatio* (Parma 1492).
20. Angelo Decembrio, *De politia literaria libri septem* (Basle 1562). Decembrio's presentation copy is in the Vatican, Biblioteca apostolica, Vat. lat. 1794. For a discussion of the *De politia literaria*, see Michael Baxandall, *A Dialogue on Art from the Court of Leonello d'Este: Angelo Decembrio's De politia literaria Pars LXVIII*, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XXVI (1963), pp. 304-26.
21. See Grafton and Jardine, *Guarino*, p. 65, n. 38.
22. L. Puppio, ... in *differentias Guarini interpretatio*, fol. 5<sup>v</sup>. Cited in part by Grafton and Jardine, *Guarino*, p. 65.
23. The class notes taken by Free are preserved in a manuscript in Oxford (Bodley 587). For a bibliography on Free and discussion of some of these notes, see Grafton and Jardine, *Guarino*, pp. 66-7.
24. See R. Sabbadini, *Il Metodo degli umanisti* (Florence 1922), pp. 43-4. See also Francesco Filelfo's reduced version of these notes in his *In Rhetoricam ad Herennium Commentaria*, now in Turin, Biblioteca Reale, Varia 75 (inv.



- 14,444). For a facsimile and discussion of this manuscript, see L. Firpo, *Francesco Filelfo educatore e il "Codice Sforza" della Biblioteca Reale di Torino* (Turin 1967). I thank Jill Kraye for this reference.
25. Grafton and Jardine, *Guarino*, p. 66.
  26. Grafton and Jardine, *Guarino*, p. 68.
  27. It should be stressed, however, that it is unlikely that this manner of "discursive" compiling as an iconographic method would have been practiced by someone of an intellectual stature equal or close to Guarino's own. What is being suggested is that this method might have been used by either a student who had grasped the means rather than the intent, or perhaps by a later humanist who, again, had access to the indexed notebooks of Guarino's pupils, but lacked the insight or desire to go beyond the level of the compilations. For Guarino's own attitudes to the visual arts, see Michael Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators: Humanist Observers of Painting in Italy and the Discovery of Pictorial Composition, 1350-1450* (Oxford: Oxford-Warburg Studies, 1971), esp. pp. 78-96.
  28. The only other handbook to replace the more common harp with a lute is the Vatican *Libellus*, Reg. lat. 1290, fol. 1<sup>r</sup>.
  29. *Mythographus tertius*, VIII, 5 in *Scriptores rerum mythicarum latini tres Romae nuper reperti*, ed. G. H. Bode (Celle 1834), pp. 202. The Servius reference comes from *In Vergilii Aeneidos commentarius*, III, 92: "*Cortina locus unde oraculum datur. Dicitur autem cortina, vel quod Apollinis tripus corio Pythonis tectus est, vel quod est verius, quia cor illic vatis tenetur*" and VI, 347: "*Cortina cortina dicta est aut quod cor teneat, aut quod tripus saeptus erat corio serpentis, ut diximus supra ...*". Edd. G. Thilo and H. Hagen (Leipzig 1881), I, p. 357 and II, p. 58.
  30. *Mythographus tertius*, 2, 5 (Ed. Bode, p. 159). For the Servius passage, see *Ad Aeneam*, XI, 339. Edd. Thilo and Hagen, II, p. 520.
  31. Plato, *Symposium*, 197.
  32. *Marsilii Ficini Florentini insignis Philosophi Platonici, Medici, atque Theologi clarissimi, Opera ...*, (Basle 1576) II, p. 1341: "*Artes a dijs propter amorem humano generi traditas Agathon arbitratur. Regnandi ab Iove, sagittandi, divinandi, medendi artem ab Apolline, fabricam aerariam a Vulcano, texendi artificum a Minerva, a Musis denique musicam. Duodecim Zodiaci signis numina presunt duodecim. Arieti Pallas, Tauro Venus, Apollo Geminis, Cancro Mercurius, Leoni Iupiter, Virgini Ceres, Librae Vulcanus, Scorpio Mars, Diana Sagittario, Vesta Capricorno, Aquario Iuno, Piscibus vero Neptunus. Ab his artes omnes generi nostro traduntur. Signa illa in corpus, numina que in illis praesunt, in animam vires suas ad singulas artes infundunt. Ita Iupiter per Leonem hominem ad gubernationem deorum et hominum; id est, ad res tam divinas quam humanas praeclare gerendas reddit aptissimum. Apollo per geminos vaticinium, medicinam et arcus industriam exhibet; Pallas per Arietem texendi peritiam; Vulcanus per Libram aerarium fabricam et artes reliquas alij. Quia vero providentiae benignitate sua nobis munera magnifice largiuntur, amore instigante dicimus elargiri.*" English transl. taken largely from Kaske, *Ficino*, p. 195.

Later in his career, Ficino cited the twelve Manilian *tutela*e as the patrons of the twelve parts of Plato's ideal city. See Ficino, *Opera*, II, p. 1502. Cited by Kaske, *Ficino*, pp. 195-6. Aspects of Ficino's interpretation of this passage from *Laws* (V. 745) could easily be cited as a "philosophical" context for the format of the Schifanoia frescoes and for the inclusion of the Manilian deities, were it not for the fact that this seems to reflect a development in Ficino's thought that substantially postdates the composition of the frescoes. If, as

Kaske suspects, Ficino was slightly in advance of his contemporaries in his interpretation of the significance of the Manilian pantheon, it would be unlikely that a passage postdating the frescoes, by possibly as many as fifteen years, reveals a similar mentality.

33. "*Est aliud deorum genus, quod natura visibus nostris denegavit, nec non tamen intellectu eos rimabundi contemplamur acie mentis acrius contemplan- tes. Quorum in numero sunt illi duodecim numero situ nominum in duo versus ab Ennio coartati:*  
*Iuno, Vesta, Minerva, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mars*  
*Mercurius, Iovis, Neptunus, Vulcanus, Apollo*  
*ceterique id genus, quorum nomina quidem sunt nostris auribus iam diu cognita, potentiae vero animis coniectatae per varias utilitates in vita agenda animadversas in iis rebus, quibus eorum singuli curant*". Apuleius, *De deo Socratis*, II, 3-4. Ed. Raffaello Del Re (Rome 1966), p. 24.
34. See n. 32 above.
35. Martianus Capella, *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, I, 42-4: "*Tunc etiam ut inter alios potissimi rogarentur ipsius collegae Iovis, qui bis seni cum eodem Tonante numerantur, quosque distichum complectitur Ennianum ... item et septem residui, qui inter duodecim non vocantur ... Quippe discretis plurimum locis deorum singuli mansitabant, et licet per zodiacum tractum nonnulli singulas vel binas domos animalibus titularint, in aliis tamen habitaculis commane- bant*". Ed. J. Willis (Leipzig 1985), pp. 17-18.
36. Manilius, *Astronomica*, II, 434-38: "... *noscere tutelae adiectaque numina signis/ et quae cuique deo rerum natura dicavit,/ cum divina dedit magnis virtutibus ora,/ condidit et varias sacro sub nomine vires,/ pondus uti rebus persona imponere posset*". Ed. Goold (1985), p. 43. English translation taken from ed. and English transl. Goold (1977), p. 117.
37. One might also consider the passage concerning the twelve gods in the *Phaedrus*, where Jove is described riding in a winged chariot followed by an army of gods and spirits in eleven squadrons, of which the twelve great gods are the commanders (*Phaedrus*, 246E-247B). See also the passage in Proclus's *Commentary on the Timaeus* (V, 197, 10-18) in which he seems to refer to *Phaedrus* 247A and cites Iamblichus as the authority for associating the thirty-six *decadarchae* (δεκαδάρχαι) with the Twelve Chiefs. Festugière believes that *decadarchae* is actually another name for the decan-gods. See A. J. Festugière, *Proclus. Commentaire sur le Timée* (Paris 1968), V, p. 55, n. 2.

