

TWO ASTROLOGICAL CEILINGS RECONSIDERED:
THE SALA DI GALATEA IN THE VILLA FARNESINA
AND THE SALA DEL MAPPAMONDO
AT CAPRAROLA
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THE ICONOGRAPHIC problems presented by the astrological ceilings of the *Sala di Galatea* in the Villa Farnesina in Rome and the *Sala del Mappamondo* in the Villa Farnese at Caprarola have been discussed frequently in this *Journal* and elsewhere. Nevertheless, several aspects of both decorative programmes have escaped scholarly scrutiny. As a result, our understanding of each cycle has been limited, if not somewhat misdirected. This article does not propose solutions, but is intended more as a reflection on the state of research and as a suggestion about how certain problems might be readdressed.

I

The ceiling of the *Sala di Galatea* in the Villa Farnesina presents one of the most intriguing iconographic problems of Renaissance art (Pls 12, 13a, b).¹ Painted by Baldassare Peruzzi around 1511, it comprises twenty-six frescoed compartments, each of which contains one or more mythologized representations of planet-gods, zodiacal signs or extra-zodiacal constellations.

The least problematic aspect of the ceiling is the identification of the subjects of the ten spandrels or *peducci* depicting the zodiacal signs and planet-gods, arranged clockwise as follows:

1. Aries, Jupiter and Taurus with Europa²
2. Leda and the Swan and the Gemini
3. Hercules with the Lernean Hydra and Cancer
4. Hercules with the Nemean Lion (Leo)
5. Virgo and Diana (Luna)
6. Libra and Scorpio with Mars and Mercury
7. Apollo (Sol) with Sagittarius
8. Venus and Capricorn
9. Ganymede (Aquarius)
10. Venus and Cupid (Pisces) and Saturn

¹ For general information see R. Förster, *Farnesina-Studien. Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach dem Verhältnis der Renaissance zur Antike*, Rostock 1880; F. Hermann, *La Farnesina*, Bergamo 1927; E. Gerini, *La Villa Farnesina in Roma*, Rome 1949; P. d'Ancona, *La Villa Farnesina in Roma*, Rome 1955; C. Frommel, *Die Farnesina und Peruzzis architektonisches Frühwerk*, Berlin 1961; idem, *Der*

römische Palastbau der Hochrenaissance, Tübingen 1973, II, pp. 149-74; and D. Coffin, *The Villa in the Life of Renaissance Rome*, Princeton 1979, esp. pp. 87-110.

² Aries's placement slightly to the left of Taurus marginally undermines the clockwise progression of the signs. It is unlikely, however, that this is iconographically significant.

As early as 1912, Warburg realized that the relationship between planet-gods and zodiacal signs was neither uniform nor haphazard.³ In 1920 and 1927 he suggested that the organization of the *Sala di Galatea* ceiling reflected the natal chart of the building's patron, the wealthy Siense banker Agostino Chigi, who—Warburg suggested—may have been born in December 1465 while the Sun was transiting Sagittarius.⁴ In 1934 Saxl and Beer, surprisingly critical of Warburg's 'intuition', offered their own set of coordinates and proposed that Chigi had been born in 1466 between 8:00 a.m. on 30 November and 11:00 a.m. on 11 December. They proposed 7:00 p.m. local time on 1 December 1466 as an acceptable mean.⁵ Hartner later refined Beer's calculations, pointing out that since the Moon had moved into Libra by 1 December 1466, Chigi must have been born between 28 and 30 November 1466.⁶ Calculations using contemporary Alphonsine Tables have limited this spread even further. They place the Moon in Leo on 28 November 1466. Chigi's Moon in Virgo means that he must have been born on either 29 or 30 November.⁷ In 1984, Rowland published Agostino Chigi's baptismal record in the *Archivio di Stato* in Siena. It states that:

Agostino Andrea son of Mariano Chigi was baptized on the thirtieth day of November 1466 and was born on the twenty-ninth day of the said month at the hour 21¹/₂ and Giovanni Salvani was the godfather.⁸

³ The earliest systematic study of the ceiling is E. Maass, *Aus der Farnesina. Hellenismus und Renaissance*, Marburg i.H. 1902. Surprisingly, it is never cited in the critical literature on the Farnesina. Warburg bought Maass's book in 1908. His copy is still held by the Warburg Institute, shelfmark FAF 880. In a series of notes on the end fly-leaf, Warburg wrote:

8/IX. [1]912 im Coupé
Saturn conj. Venus
Luna in Virgo
Venus in Steinbock (with ? [Pisces] added)
Apollo im Schützen
Jupiter im Widder u[nd] Stier
Mars u[nd] Mercur in Conjunction
×
(Scorpion) (Waage)
[Gemini]?
[Cancer]? (Engonasin)
[Leo]?
[Pisces]?
[Aquarius]—Fortuna
Phoenike

On the bottom of p. 56 he drew a rudimentary natal chart of these coordinates (Pl. 14a). I thank Anne Marie Meyer for discussing these notes with me.

⁴ See A. Warburg, 'Heidnisch-antike Weissagung in Wort und Bild zu Luthers Zeiten', *Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philos.-Hist. Klasse*, xxvi [Abhandlung], 1920 (repr. in A. Warburg, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. G. Bing, Leipzig and Berlin 1932, ii, pp. 489–558, esp. p. 511) and A. Warburg, 'Orientalisierende Astrologie', *Wissenschaftlicher Bericht über den Deutschen Orientalistentag in Hamburg, 1926. Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, nF vi, 1927 (in Warburg 1932, as above, ii, pp. 561–65, esp. p. 563).

⁵ See F. Saxl, 'La fede astrologica di Agostino Chigi', *Collezione La Farnesina. Reale Accademia di Roma*, Rome 1934, pp. 1–57. Beer's calculations are on pp. 61–65; note esp. the conclusions on pp. 65 and 67. He republished his findings in A. Beer, 'Astronomical Dating of Works of Art', *Vistas in Astronomy*, ix, 1967, pp. 177–225, esp. pp. 189–99. Note also Saxl's subsequent emendations to his original article in F. Saxl, *Lectures*, London 1957, i, pp. 189–99, esp. p. 197. It seems to have gone unnoticed that the information conveyed by the horoscopic chart accompanying Saxl's essay—in both the 1934 (fig. 11) and the revised 1957 version (ii, pl. 132c)—does not match that depicted in the ceiling. In Saxl's diagram the Moon is shown in Libra and Mercury in Sagittarius; in the vault, the moon is in Virgo and Mercury in Scorpio! Beer 'solved' these inconsistencies by redefining the boundaries of the constellations. See 'La fede astrologica' (as above), p. 67.

⁶ See W. Hartner, 'Qusayr 'Amra, Farnesina, Luther, Hesiod. Some Supplementary Notes to A. Beer's Contribution', *Vistas in Astronomy*, ix, 1967, pp. 225–28, esp. pp. 226–27.

⁷ M. Quinlan-McGrath, 'The Astrological Vault of the Villa Farnesina. Agostino Chigi's Rising Sign', this *Journal*, xlvii, 1984, pp. 91–105, see esp. p. 94 n. 17.

⁸ See I. D. Rowland, 'The Birth Date of Agostino Chigi—Documentary Proof', this *Journal*, xlvii, 1984, pp. 192–93. The passage reads (p. 192 n. 5): 'Agostino Andrea di Mariano Chigi si batezo a di 30 di novembre 1466 e naque a di 29 di deto messe a ore 21¹/₂ e fu compare Giovanni Salvani' (Siena, *Archivio di Stato*, Pieve di San Giovanni 2, fol. 69^v).

The discovery of Agostino Chigi's baptismal record should have answered most of the questions concerning the astrological iconography of Peruzzi's vault. If the ceiling records Chigi's birthdate in a summary way—indicating his birth by means of the location of the planets alone—the baptismal record merely confirms what had already been deduced. But the presence of the extra-zodiacal constellations in the central section of the ceiling and in the fourteen triangular *vele* suggests that Peruzzi intended his decoration to convey more than just the zodiacal coordinates of the planets on 29 November 1466. A proper natal chart records the relationship between the celestial sphere and a given point on the earth's surface. Assuming that the *Sala di Galatea* vault is an artistic variation on the theme of Chigi's natal chart, two questions remain unanswered: how has Peruzzi constructed his 'map' of the heavens; and to what extent does this 'map' actually reproduce the astronomical coordinates for Siena 'a di 29 di [novembre] a ore 21^{1/2}?

In order to answer these questions, we must consider the significance of the fourteen *vele* in the over-all schema of Chigi's natal chart. Unfortunately, the subjects of some of these are less than certain. It may seem unfair to carp at Peruzzi, but the fault for this must rest with him. Peruzzi's choice to reinvent what he must have thought were suitably 'classical' pictorial forms for the constellations, rather than to follow established iconographic norms, has meant that the identity of some of the figures is unclear. Had he used figures adapted from contemporary manuscript illumination or astronomical maps, their identification would be less problematic. As it stands, however, one is left to second-guess at the iconographic motives behind Peruzzi's 'classicized' constellations.

The composition of each triangular compartment is relatively consistent and comprises two parts: a male or female reclining figure; and an object. In most instances, the object represents the constellation. This is certainly the case with *Auriga* [B], *Argo* [C], *canis maior* [D],⁹ *hydra and corvus* [E], *ara* [G], *crater* [F], *lyra* [I], *sagitta* [J], *Pegasus* [M]¹⁰ and the *deltoton* [N]. The *vele* containing Bacchus and Ariadne [G] is constructed slightly differently, but the premise remains unchanged. Ariadne's crown is the *corona borealis*. Bacchus, by embracing Ariadne, functions as the 'figure' holding the 'object' representing the constellation.

The ancillary figures in the *vele* play a key role in helping us to identify the textual sources behind Peruzzi's designs. In Book ii of the *Poetica astronomica*, Hyginus offers mythological explanations as to why each constellation was set into the sky. There is a remarkable degree of correspondence between the characters Hyginus describes as being somehow fundamental to the catasteristic myth of a given constellation and the secondary figures in Peruzzi's *vele*. For example, the youthful male holding the roundel depicting a chariot for *Auriga* [B] seems to represent the charioteer Erichthonius, who invented the *quadriga*.¹¹ Hyginus

⁹ Saxl (as in n. 5), p. 24, suggested that this compartment represented two constellations, *canis maior* and *Orion*. The male figure may well be Orion (see n. 12 below); he probably appears not as a constellation, but as the companion of his dog.

¹⁰ The constellation depicted here represents the winged Pegasus. In suggesting that the horse could be either one of two celestial horses, Saxl unwittingly amalgamated two separate iconographic traditions. The

Ptolemaic Ἐριχθωνίου, or *erichthonios* does not appear in either the Aratean literature or in the catasteristic myths deriving from Eratosthenes (i.e. Hyginus and the Germanicus *scholia*). Since these Greco-Latin literary myths seem to have been the basis of Peruzzi's decoration, the idea that this *vele* could represent *erichthonios* should be discounted.

¹¹ Hyginus, *Astronomica*, ii, 13. This rare depiction of Erichthonius as an able-bodied youth, rather than with

describes *canis maior* as Orion's dog; so the reclining figure in *canis maior's vela* [D] is probably Orion.¹² The female figure in the *hydra* and *corvus* compartment [E] is most likely Coronis, daughter of Phlegyas and mother of Aesculapius.¹³ The girl in the *crater vela* [F] is derived from Hyginus's story of how Mastusius killed the daughters of Demophon in retaliation for the sacrificial slaughter of his own daughter:

... he killed the king's daughters, and mixing their blood with wine in a bowl, bade it be given to the king on his arrival. The king asked for his daughters and when he learned what had happened, he ordered Mastusius and the bowl to be thrown into the sea ... Ancient astronomers have pictured it in the stars so that men might remember that no one can profit from an evil deed with impunity, nor can hostilities be often forgotten.¹⁴

The *vela* of *crater* shows a young girl—no doubt either Mastusius's daughter or one of the murdered princesses—kneeling beside a large urn which resembles a one-handed *ainochoe*, or libation vessel. Hyginus cites the myth of Ariadne to explain the catasterism of *corona borealis* [G],¹⁵ and calls *lyra* [I] the lyre of Orpheus.¹⁶ *Delphinus* is one of the pirates who were transformed into dolphins by the baby Father Liber; and the child riding on the dolphin's back in the *delphinus vela* [K] is probably the infant Dionysus himself.¹⁷ The bearded man with windblown hair in the *Pegasus vela* [M] may represent Bellerophon, who tried to ride the winged horse to heaven but took fright and fell off;¹⁸ and the old man worshipping at the altar in *ara's* compartment [H] may reflect Hyginus's statement that men modelled their sacrificial rites on those Jupiter offered prior to the war which the Olympians waged against the Titans.¹⁹

For at least eight of the *vela*, the ancillary figures appear to have been drawn directly from Hyginus's *Astronomica*. The figures in the remaining triangular compartments, drawn from similar astro-mythological sources, seem to have been included in the same capacity. *Argo* [C] is accompanied by a female figure lacking identifying attributes. She is probably a Danaid, one of the fifty daughters of Danaos, who were ferried from Egypt to Rhodes by this ship.²⁰ The female holding

serpentine legs, may be due to Hyginus's mixed opinions on the hero's form, describing him first as a youth, then as a snake and finally as having merely serpentiform legs. This figure, however, could possibly represent Orsilochus the Argive, or Myrtilus, son of Mercury and Clytie, both of whom Hyginus mentions as alternate identifications for the male charioteer.

¹² *ibid.*, ii, 35.

¹³ *ibid.*, ii, 40. Hyginus first mentions that some authors believe that the crow is Coronis herself; but then tells the story of Apollo turning the crow black for having betrayed on Coronis and her lover Ischys.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, ii, 40: '[Mastusius] filias regis interfecit et sanguinem earum cum vino in cratera mixtum adveniēti regi pro potione dari iussit. Qui cum filias desideraret, et quid his factum esset rescisset, Mastusium cum cratera in mare proci iussit ... Quem [cratera] antiqui astrologi stellis deformarunt, ut homines memissent maleficium neminem temere lucrari posse, neque oblivionem inimicitarum fieri solere' (edn Pisa 1976, p. 74).

¹⁵ *ibid.*, ii, 5.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, ii, 7. Saxl's diagram ceiling mistakenly shows this male figure as a woman.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, ii, 17. Hyginus specifically states that this event occurred when Father Liber was a child: 'Aglaosthenes autem, qui Naxica conscripsit, Tyrrhenos ait fuisse quosdam navicularios, qui puerum etiam Liberum patrem receptum, ut Naxum cum suis comitibus trajectum redderent nutricibus nymphis ...' (edn Pisa, p. 53). This figure probably does not represent Arion, as he is too young and lacks a cithara.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, ii, 18. Homer (*Iliad*, vi, 201) claimed that after his fall, Bellerophon was left to roam blind across the plain of wandering (= πῆλον ἄλκιον) 'devouring his own soul, and shunning the paths of all men' (ed. and transl. A. T. Murray, London and New York 1924, i, p. 277).

¹⁹ Hyginus, *Astronomica*, ii, 39.

²⁰ See Hyginus, *Fabulae*, 168 and Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca*, ii, i, 4. This figure could also conceivably be Athena who helped build the Argo and set it amongst the stars (see Hyginus, *Fabulae*, xiv: 'Haec est navis Argo, quam Minerva in sideralem circulum retulit, ob hoc,

the *deltoton* [N] could be Andromeda, since the anonymous Latin translation of the Aratus's *Phaenomena* describes the constellation thus: 'est quidem e adhuc aliud positum e propinquo significans Andromedam'.²¹ On the other hand, she may be Ceres, who begged Jupiter to include the constellation in the sky to remind her of Sicily, her favoured island.²² Although Hyginus describes *sagitta* [I] as the arrow with which Hercules killed Jupiter's eagle and Eratosthenes as that used by Apollo to kill the Cyclops,²³ it is also traditionally associated with the infant Cupid.²⁴ The fact that a cupid appears in Peruzzi's *vela* suggests that *sagitta* is meant to be love's arrow.

The compositional structure of all but two of the *vela* helps the viewer identify both the subject of the scene and the iconographic source from which the fable was drawn. The two *vela* which do not adhere to this pattern are those depicting a male river-god and swan [A], placed between the Aries/Taurus and Gemini compartments, and the female figure with windblown hair [L]—clearly representing the goddess Fortuna—next to Aquarius on the end wall of the *Sala di Galatea* (Pl. 18b).²⁵

The two characters in the first *vela* are easily identified. The swan represents the Ligurian king who, grieving over the death of his half-brother Phaeton, was transformed into a swan. The river-god is Eridanus, the river into which Phaeton fell. Both figures feature with equal prominence in the versions of the Phaeton fable told by Hyginus and Ovid.²⁶ The problem here is deciding which figure claims prominence. Does this composition represent the constellation *cygnus* or *Eridanus*?

The female figure, whose hair is blown forward over her head and who holds a ship's rudder, certainly represents Fortuna. But does she also indicate another extra-zodiacal constellation? Hyginus offers the story of Nemesis—a Greek counterpart to the Roman Fortuna—as his fable for *cygnus*, the swan, Jupiter, disguised as a swan, lay with the sleeping Nemesis who later bore an egg which Mercury carried off to Sparta and placed in the lap of the unsuspecting Leda. The egg yielded Helen, later 'of Troy'.²⁷ If Hyginus is the textual source behind this image of Nemesis, then the theory that the subject of Peruzzi's *vela* can be identified by the object depicted there cannot be maintained.²⁸ But is there further information in

quod ab se esset aedificata ac primum in pelagus deducta': from Hyginus *Fabulae*, ed. B. Bunte, Leipzig 1857, p. 45; Hyginus, *Astronomica*, ii, 37; Eratosthenes, *Catasterismos*, xxxv; the Greek *Arata* scholion and the Germanicus scholia. For the last three sources, see *Eratosthenis Catasterismorum reliquiae*, ed. C. Robert, Berlin 1878, pp. 174–75). Alternatively, she may be Juno, who set the part of the Argo crushed between the Symplegades into the sky (see Germanicus, *Aratea*, 350–52: 'Sed quia pars violata fuit, coeuntia saxa / numine Iunonis titus quom [or] rux] fugit Iason, / haec micat in caelo ...' (ed. Breysig, p. 22).

²¹ See E. Maass, *Commentariorum in aratea reliquiae*, Berlin 1898, p. 223.

²² See Hyginus, *Astronomica*, ii, 19 and A. Piccolomini, *Delle stelle fisse*, Venice 1553, fol. 18^r (sig. cii^r).

²³ Hyginus, *Astronomica*, ii, 15 and Eratosthenes, *Catasterismos*, xxix.

²⁴ Germanicus was hesitant regarding *sagitta*'s identity: 'Est etiam, incertum quo cornu missa sagitta, / quam servat Iovis ales'. Germanicus, *Aratea*, 315–16 (ed. Breysig, p. 20). Horace's reference to *sagitta* as Cupid's

arrow in *Carmina*, i, xxvii, 12 led Housman to assume, perhaps incorrectly, that Germanicus also implies that the arrow belonged to Cupid. See A. E. Housman, 'The *Aratea* of Germanicus' (rev. of Breysig edn), *The Classical Review*, xiv, 1900, pp. 26–39, esp. p. 32. Reproduced in *The Classical Papers of A. E. Housman*, eds J. Diggle and F. R. D. Goodyear, Cambridge 1972, ii, pp. 495–515, esp. p. 504.

²⁵ Warburg seems to have been the first to identify this figure. In his copy of Maass's *Aus der Farnesina* (see n. 3 above), Warburg questioned Maass's suggestion that this figure was related to Jupiter and underlined the phrase 'nach vorn' (referring to the figure's hair), writing 'kl[assische] Fortuna' in the margin. Maass himself called the figure 'Phoinike' (Maass, as in n. 3, p. 41).

²⁶ Hyginus, *Fabulae*, cliv and Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, ii, 367–80.

²⁷ Hyginus, *Astronomica*, ii, 8 and Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca*, iii, x, 7. See also Saxl (as in n. 5), p. 26.

²⁸ It also raises interesting questions regarding the decorum of the *Sala di Galatea* vault as an iconographic programme. It seems slightly peculiar that as the main

1. Aries is directly south of the *deltoton*
2. Taurus is north of *Eridanus*
3. Gemini are north of both *canis maior*, *canis minor* and *Argo*
4. Cancer is directly north of *Argo*
5. Leo is north of *hydra* and *crater*
6. Virgo is north of *hydra* and *crater*
7. Libra is south of *corona borealis*
8. Scorpio is north of *ara*
9. Sagittarius is south of *lyra* and *sagitta*
10. Capricorn is south of *delphinus* and *cygnus*
11. Aquarius and Pisces are south of *Pegasus*

The parallels with the *Sala di Galatea* ceiling are clear. Accepting Saxl's identifications of the river-god compartment as *Eridanus* and 'Fortuna' as *cygnus*, the schema fits extraordinarily well, except for the placement of *Auriga*, who should have been wedged in between Taurus and the Gemini, but is shown in the *Sala di Galatea* between Gemini and Cancer.

Saxl also believed that the longitudinal axis of the room—from Leo to Aquarius—helped account for the subject matter of the two central scenes of the ceiling: one depicting the legend of *Perseus*; and the other a female figure driving a chariot whom he called Callisto or *ursa maior*, following Hyginus's description of *ursa maior* as a wagon drawn by two oxen.³¹ Drawing a line between the two zodiacal signs of Leo and Aquarius on a celestial planisphere, Saxl discovered that it passed through *ursa maior*, the celestial north pole and the constellation of *Pegasus*.³² He argued, therefore, that the subject of the *Perseus* scene was actually the constellation of *Pegasus*, shown as a disembodied horse's head in the lower right corner of the scene. The two ceiling compartments together recreated the position of the constellations at the zenith of the heavens at 7:00 p.m. on 1 December 1466, the time at which Saxl believed Chigi was born.³³

Working on Saxl's model, Quinlan-McGrath proposed a different set of circumstances to explain the iconography of the *Sala di Galatea*. She suggested that the extra-zodiacal constellations in the ceiling recorded the *paramatellonta* found rising and setting along the edge of the horizon at the moment of Agostino Chigi's birth.³⁴ Drawing her information from the a rather wide selection of sources

³¹ Saxl (as in n. 5), p. 30 citing Hyginus, *Astronomica*, ii, 2: 'quod ex VII stellis duae quae pares et maxime in uno loco viderentur, pro bubus haberentur, reliquae autem V figuram plaustrum simulant' (edn Pisa 1976, p. 30). Depictions of *ursa maior* as a wagon are extremely rare in Italian art. Its presence in the *Sala di Galatea* ceiling underlines Peruzzi's debt to Hyginus over other iconographic sources (one later German example worth noting is the diagram in Peter Apian's *Cosmographicus liber*, first printed in Landshut in 1524. See D. Warner, *The Sky Explained: Celestial Cartography 1500-1800*, New York 1979, p. 9.) Despite its rarity, however, at least one informed contemporary viewer recognized the figure as 'currus'. See A. Gallus, *De viridario Augustini Chigii Partiti Senensis*, Rome 1511, Bk. v, 99-101:

In medio erecta est sublimibus inclita tectis
Parietibusque domus: cuius tegit undique currum

Sideribus medias caelum pendentibus aulās
(An abode is built in the middle, renowned for its sublime ceiling and walls; of which the vault of heaven covers all sides of the centre of the hall with the suspended stars of the chariots.) Maass suggested that the female figure was a feminized *Boötis* ('*Boötis*'). See Maass (as in n. 3), pp. 25-26.

³² Saxl (as in n. 5), pp. 66-67

³³ Again I am extrapolating from what is actually said, but I assume that Saxl and Beer were using modern terminology and that 'le ore 19' meant 7:00 p.m. local time. The relationship between the horoscopic chart printed in Saxl (as in n. 5), p. 67, and the accompanying text is slightly mysterious. The Leo-Aquarius axis of the room seems to have been shifted and the position of the Ascendant is unclear.

³⁴ Quinlan-McGrath (as in n. 7), pp. 96-97.

(Aratus, Manilius, Firmicus Maternus, mid-sixteenth-century Alphonsine Tables and 'the real sky'), she argued that Chigi was born with Virgo on his Ascendant. The only constellation not fitting into this schema was *ara*. Its inclusion in the programme resulted from the fact that *ara*'s celestial longitude in 1466 was 257° (or 17° Sagittarius) and that it indicated the exact position of the Sun in Chigi's birth-chart. The depictions of *Perseus* and 'Chariot/Bear' (which Quinlan-McGrath identified as *ursa minor*) in the central section of the ceiling reflected the constellations directly above Chigi's head shortly after he was born, or some time between 10:25 and 11:00 p.m. on 29 November 1466.

Although it is possible that Quinlan-McGrath is correct in her interpretations, a few aspects of her theory demand closer attention. First, it seems unlikely that any artist or 'humanist adviser' would be willing to consult such a vast array of primary sources in order to make up a list of *paranatellonta*. Were he an astronomer or a classical scholar of any merit, he would have remembered that the Greek version of Aratus's text is notorious for its inaccuracies.³⁵ Furthermore he would have realized that nothing but chaos could result from combining first-, fourth- and fifteenth-century astronomical material. If the constellations of the *Sala di Galatea* are meant to be *paranatellonta* of Virgo, they were chosen either simply because they were included in a selection of classical sources, having little real bearing on the ceiling's astronomical content; or they were compiled after a rather casual consultation of the night sky.³⁶

The second problem with Quinlan-McGrath's proposal—as she herself acknowledges—is the fact that Virgo was not the Ascendant at the time which she determined as the hour of Chigi's birth: 9:30 p.m. on 29 November 1466. Leo was.³⁷ This discrepancy between fact and theory gives rise to a great deal of rather fanciful speculation. Quinlan-McGrath supposes that perhaps Chigi had 'misremembered the exact time of his birth', but was, somehow, aware that the *caput algol* of *Perseus* had been directly above his newborn head and he therefore assumed that his Ascendant was in Virgo. This seems highly unlikely. Were a man to remember anything about his natal chart, it would not be the extra-zodiacal constellation located at his *medium coeli*. One cannot dismiss entirely the other possibilities Quinlan-McGrath proposed: that Chigi may have had his chart rectified in order to present himself as a child of Virgo; or that he may be celebrating the *paranatellonta* of the Ascendant at the time of his conception; or that the ceiling of the *Sala di Galatea* may actually depict two sets of horoscopic notations—the *medium coeli* of Chigi's real horoscope in the centre of the ceiling and his rectified horoscopic chart in the *vele*.³⁸ But if any of these conceptions is indeed the key to Peruzzi's decoration, it is hardly surprising that the significance of the ceiling has been misunderstood for nearly five hundred years.

³⁵ For Hipparchus's criticisms of Aratus's text, see D. R. Dicks, *Early Greek Astronomy to Aristotle*, London 1970, pp. 153–58. Germanicus, for example, mentions that *delphinus*, *lyra* and *sagitta* have already set when Virgo is rising. In Germanicus's 'translation', *cygnus*, *Eridanus* and *Pegasus* are setting when Virgo rises; and *hydra*, *scorpius*, *Argo* and *canis maior* are rising (Aratus, 612–22).

³⁶ Even so *Auriga*, although present in the night sky, is not a *paranatellonta* of Virgo; while *Bootes* is.

³⁷ Quinlan-McGrath (as in n. 7), p. 100.

³⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 100–03.

There is, however, another possible reading of the ceiling. When interpreting Agostino Chigi's baptismal record, Quinlan-McGrath worked on the assumption that a practising astronomer played some role in its notation.³⁹ It was probably Agostino's father, Mariano Chigi, who noted the time of birth. His calculations would have been made in accordance with local Siennese tradition and the 'ore 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' would have been calculated from sunset on the previous day.⁴⁰ In Siena, the 24-hour day began at twilight—one half-hour after sunset—with the ringing of the *ventiquattro* which marked the end of Complin.⁴¹ The hour at which the *ventiquattro* was rung was only superficially astronomical. Rather than calculate the moment of sunset for each evening, the church set up a schedule by which the clock was 'reset' every ten days. As the early eighteenth-century tables published by Barbieri show, for example, on 21 November the *ventiquattro* was rung at 5:31 p.m. It remained set at that time until 1 December, when it was changed to 5:22 p.m.⁴² It is more than likely that the birth-time recorded in Alessandro Chigi's baptismal record was calculated according to a similar sort of schedule; its 'astronomical accuracy', therefore, is somewhat dubious, as the 'ore 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' would not have been counted from the actual sunset of 28 November, but following the official '*ventiquattro*-schedule' then in use. Given this likelihood one could equally well use Barbieri's tables to calculate Chigi's birth-time, since despite their late date, they probably preserve the structure of analogous fifteenth-century tables, if not their precise content. On this premise, taking a *ventiquattro* point of 5:31, Alessandro Chigi would have been born at 3:01 p.m. on 29 November and his Ascendant would have been in the middle of Taurus.⁴³ In the final instance, however, until a late fifteenth-century set of *ventiquattro* tables is discovered, it seems best to leave the issue of the exact moment of Chigi's birth open—predicated on the recognition that regardless of method, a birth-time of approximately 3:00 p.m. and an Ascendant in Taurus seem certain.

Since the 'sky' depicted in the *Sala di Galatea* is arranged according to a terrestrial perspective rather than celestial perspective, the usual orientation of the natal chart is reversed. Essentially it is a mirror image of the normal natal chart. But

³⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 99–100.

⁴⁰ This has been suggested previously in an unpublished paper by K. Weil-Garris Brandt and J. Casanovas entitled 'An astronomical reconsideration of Agostino Chigi's horoscope on Peruzzi's Farnesina Ceiling'. I warmly thank Professor Brandt for allowing me to read and cite her article. There are similar conclusions in J. Cox-Rearick, *Dynasty and Destiny in Medici Art: Pontormo, Leo X, and the Tiso Cosimo*, Princeton 1984, pp. 192–94.

⁴¹ For further information on the ringing of the Angelus, see 'Angelus Bell', *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, New York 1913, i, pp. 487–88. I thank Elizabeth Tevisdale for this reference.

⁴² See N. Barbieri, 'Note di cronologia: le ore a Siena dal XIV al XVIII secolo', *Bollettino senese di storia patria*, xc, 1983, pp. 148–51. I thank Professor Nicolai Rubinstein for this reference. Barbieri's tables are based on material in Pirro Maria Gabbriellini, *Tavole perpetue calculate a giusta misura degli Orisli Senesi per uso principalmente degli ecclesiastici*, Siena 1702.

⁴³ My rough calculations for 3:01 p.m. at 43° N and 11.2° E and using a Tropical zodiac yield an Ascendant

of 17° 56' Taurus. Happily, this figure falls within the range of Ascendants proposed by scholars who chose to calculate from sunset or the beginning of twilight. Brandt first suggested a Taurian Ascendant in K. Weil-Garris Brandt, 'Cosmological Patterns in Raphael's Chigi Chapel in S. Maria del Popolo', *Raffaello a Roma. Il convegno del 1983*, Rome 1986, pp. 127–58, esp. p. 132. Brandt and Casanovas proposed an Ascendant of 12° Taurus in accordance with the Siennese tradition of beginning the day one-half hour after sunset. Their calculations have been made for a birth-time equivalent to the modern Italian local-time of 2:40 p.m. Cox-Rearick calculated Chigi's birth-time as 3:08 p.m., but believed his chart was rectified for the Farnesina ceiling to about 3:15 p.m. in order to allow Chigi's Mid-Heaven to fall more propitiously into Aquarius. She provides a rectified Ascendant of 23° 7' Taurus. See Cox-Rearick (as in n. 40), p. 193 n. 46. Note also Hartner's earlier comments on the coordinates of the Aries/Taurus and Libra/Scorpio compartments (Hartner, as in n. 6, p. 227).

longer seems quite so awkward. Instead, it appears to have been a rather inspired invention.

If Chigi's Ascendant is Taurus, then the extra-zodiacal constellations forming the outer boundary of the ceiling cannot represent *paranattellonta*. One must return to Saxl's proposal and accept that these constellations function as part of a schematized planispheric map of the heavens; the two scenes at the centre of the ceiling therefore represent the constellations at the summit of the northern celestial hemisphere. Both Saxl and Quinlan-McGrath have shown how *Perseus* and one or other of the celestial Bears formed a series of 'significant' north/south axes during late November and early December 1466. To my mind, nothing better expresses the iconographic ambiguity of the ceiling than the fact that acceptable explanations for the positions of *Perseus* (or *Pegasus*) and *ursa maior* (or *minor*) can be produced for two such varying opinions. The information conveyed by the two central compartments is extremely vague, and their role in the over-all decoration of the vault is not sufficiently clear. If they do play a vital role in the orientation of Chigi's natal chart, then it seems worth noting that *Perseus* is often listed as a *paranattellontion* of Taurus in both medieval and Renaissance sources.⁴⁹ If Chigi was born with an Ascendant in Taurus, he may have considered the constellation of *Perseus* an important part of his personal iconography. The figure of *Fama* may have been included in the *Perseus* scene specifically to draw attention to this, thereby celebrating the horoscopic *paranattellontion* of Chigi's birth and the fortune which attends it.⁵⁰

Interestingly, the classical sources are surprisingly mute regarding the 'fortune' attached to a man born with *Perseus* rising. Both Manilius and Firmicus Maternus omit *Perseus* from their lists. Bonincontri who, as I have argued elsewhere, constructed his commentary on Book v of Manilius's *Astronomica* largely by appending passages from Book viii of Firmicus Maternus's *Mathesis*, glosses over this fact.⁵¹ His comments about *Perseus* primarily concern the story of Andromeda's rescue and the location of the separate stars in the constellation (taken virtually verbatim from the *scholia Stroziana* to Germanicus).⁵²

⁴⁹ Brandt and Casanovas as well as Cox-Rearick (as in n. 40, p. 194) note this point. See also the Bonincontri passage which is cited below, n. 52. Giuntini lists *Perseus* between 18° Taurus and 7° Gemini. See F. Iunctinus, *Compendium de stellarum fixarum observationibus*, in his *Spectulum Astrologiae ... Accesserunt etiam commentaria absolutissima in duas posteriores Quadrupartiti Ptolemaei*, Lyons 1583, II, p. 972.

⁵⁰ Note Saxl's statement: 'It seems that Chigi's life and glory is in some way connected with the constellation of *Perseus* and determined by it' (Saxl 1957, as in n. 5, pp. 189-99, esp. p. 196). Quinlan-McGrath (as in n. 7, p. 98) reads the winged female figure in the *Perseus* scene in the centre of the ceiling as *Virgo*. The long trumpet held by the figure, however, is the conventional attribute of *Fama*. Also, there is no iconographic tradition in which the sign of *Virgo* holds such a trumpet.

⁵¹ See K. Lippincott, 'The Astrological Vault of the Sala dei Venti in the Palazzo del Te', this *Journal*, xvii, 1984, pp. 216-22.

⁵² These notes are wedged in between his discussion of *Andromeda* (who is described thus: 'hoc sydus oritur

cum maiori parte arietis et tauri nostris temporibus') and *deltaton* ('oritur nunc cum prima facie tauri'). See L. Bonincontri, *In C. Manilium Commentum*, Rome 1484, fol. 24'. Note also that Abū Ma'shar lists *Perseus* rising 'apud graecos' between the second decan of Aries and the third of Taurus. See Al-Būnāsār, *Introductorium in astronomiam Al-Būnāsārī albāchī octo continens libros partiales*, Augsburg [Raddolt] 1489, vi, 2. Versions of the text also appear in the French and Latin translations of Abraham ibn Ezra's *Principium sapientiae*. See *Abrahe Avenarīs Iudaei Astrologi peritissimi in re iudicali opera: ab excellentissimo philosopho Petro de Abano post accuratam castigationem in latinum traducta*, Venice 1507, pp. 4^r-5^r; R. Levy and F. Cantaro, *The Beginnings of Wisdom: An Astrological Treatise by Abraham ibn Ezra*, Baltimore 1939, pp. 37-42 and 157-60; and R. Levy, *The Astrological Works of Abraham ibn Ezra. A Literary and Linguistic Study with special reference to the Old French Translation of Hagin*, Baltimore and Paris 1927.

Saxl believed that the image of *Perseus* slaying Medusa indicated an extended allegory of *Fama* (Pl. 18a). The horse's head placed directly beneath the mouth of *Fama*'s trumpet represented *Pegasus* who, according to Fulgentius, the medieval mythographer, symbolized 'winged fame'.⁵³ *Perseus*, again according to Fulgentius, personified virtue acquired through learning and wisdom.⁵⁴ Saxl's reading is attractive in many ways, though if Peruzzi did indeed consult Fulgentius it seriously compromises any attempts to argue in favour of the 'classical purity' of his sources.⁵⁵ On the other hand, remembering that Hyginus's *Astronomica* seems to have been the primary textual source for the iconography of the *Sala di Galatea* ceiling, it is worth noting that Hyginus claims that *Perseus* was set into the heavens due to his nobility and the extraordinary circumstances of his conception.⁵⁶ One cannot know whether the circumstances of Chigi's own conception were extraordinary or not, but certainly this account of the demi-god's nobility would appeal to anyone who saw himself as a 'star-child' of the constellation *Perseus*.

All that one can argue with certainty is that the *Sala di Galatea* ceiling appears to be more the illustration of Chigi's horoscopic chart set against a somewhat rudimentary planispheric map of the heavens (Pl. 14c) than an accurate picture of the sky at the moment of his birth, or of some kind of extended allegorical interpretation of the fate accorded Chigi by the stars. Certainly Peruzzi's decoration begs interpretation, and no doubt the ceiling served as the starting point for many an impromptu 'reading' by the talented guests at Chigi's lavish banquets. To this end, Peruzzi's composition served and, in certain senses, continues to serve what must have been one of its prime motives: entertainment.

II

Giovanni Antonio Vanosino da Varese painted two colossal astrological ceilings during the second half of the sixteenth century,⁵⁷ the first of these for Cardinal

⁵³ Saxl 1957 (as in n. 5), i, p. 196 citing Fulgentius, *Mythologiae*, i, 21: 'De sanguine eius [of Medusa] nasci fertur Pegasus in figura famae constitutus; virtus enim, dum terrorem amputaverit, famam generat; unde et volare dicitur, quia fama est volucris' (*Fabii Planciadis Fulgentii V.C. Opera*, ed. R. Helm, Leipzig 1898, p. 33).

⁵⁴ Fulgentius, i, 21: 'Hos ergo terrores Perseus adiuuante Minerva, id est virtus adiuuante sapientia, interfecit' (ed. Helm, as in n. 53, p. 33).

⁵⁵ Saxl also argued that the composition of the woman seated in a chariot was an allegorization of the northern celestial pole—a slightly dubious point in itself—and that she symbolized 'constancy and immutability' (Saxl, as in n. 5, p. 31). As mentioned above, the representation of *Ursa minor* as a female figure seated in a chariot drawn by two bulls is extremely rare (see n. 31 above). This configuration is generally used to represent the planet-goddess *Luna*. The theory that this figure represents *Luna*, however, is equally problematic. If so, then she would have been depicted twice: in the *Perseus* scene and accompanying the zodiacal sign of *Virgo*. Furthermore, the reason why *Luna* might feature so

prominently in the ceiling is unclear. Nothing extraordinary in Chigi's horoscopic chart warrants such special attention. For the meantime, then, the significance of this image with regard to the rest of the decorations in the *Sala di Galatea* remains obscure.

⁵⁶ Hyginus, *Astronomica*, ii, 12: 'Hic nobilitatis causa et quod inusitato genere concubitionis esset natus, ad sidera dicitur pervenisse' (edn Pisa 1976, p. 42).

⁵⁷ Little is known of Vanosino's career prior to his arrival in Rome in the early 1560s, but documents suggest that whilst in Rome he specialized in painting maps. See A. Bertolotti, *Artisti lombardi a Roma nei secoli XV, XVI e XVII. Studi e ricerche negli archivi romani*, Milan 1881, i, pp. 115–18 and R. Almagli, *Monumenta cartographica vaticana. III. Le pitture murali della Galleria delle Carte Geografiche*, Vatican City 1952, pp. 8 and 12 and idem, *Monumenta cartographica vaticana. IV. Le pitture geografiche murali della terza loggia e di altre sale vaticane*, Vatican City 1955, pp. 3–6. Vanosino has also been cited as the author of the painted globe, formerly attributed to Giulio Romano, which can be dated c. 1565. See F. Denza, *Globi celesti della Specola Vaticana*, Turin 1894, iv.

Alessandro Farnese in the *Sala del Mappamondo* in the Villa Farnese at Caprarola (Pl. 16a, b).⁵⁸ Set within a heavily decorated oval moulding, it covers most of the ceiling, save the corners which are filled with four Farnese family *imprese*. The walls of the *Sala del Mappamondo* are covered with huge topographical maps punctuated by painted portrait busts of the great explorers: Vespucci, Magellan, Marco Polo, Columbus and Fernando Cortez. The two major parts of the room—celestial and terrestrial—are separated by a large sculpted frieze with a series of twelve astro-mythological paintings.

Vanosino's celestial map shows a single unbroken panorama of the heavens. It does not represent a given moment but, in the words of a contemporary poet, shows 'the sphere which glitters golden with eternal flames'.⁵⁹ The painting is centred on the northern celestial hemisphere which runs from Virgo to Pisces. The colure of the winter solstice forms its central vertical axis. The other, southern hemisphere is divided and added like crescent-shaped wings to the central, circular northern hemisphere. The map as a whole extends from Gemini to Gemini. The celestial circles have all been included, and the ecliptic is depicted as an unbroken undulating line.

In addition to the forty-nine constellations depicted in Vanosino's map⁶⁰ there is the unexpected appearance of the figure of Jupiter, seated on an eagle and hurling his thunderbolts, in the upper left quadrant of the picture, above the zodiacal constellation of Leo (Pl. 19a). Hess believed that this figure was added as an allusion to the Farnese *impresa* of a thunderbolt with the motto 'Hoc uno Jupiter ultor'.⁶¹ Another possibility, however, is that the Jupiter may reflect the influence of Aratean literature. The *Phaenomena* opens with an invocation to Zeus, who is

pp. xvii-xxiii; M. Fiorini, *Sfere terrestri e celesti di autore italiano oppure fatte o conservate in Italia*, Rome 1899, pp. 83-93; E. L. Stevenson, *Terrestrial and Celestial Globes*, New Haven 1921, i, pp. 63-64; J. Hess, 'On some Celestial Maps and Globes of the Sixteenth Century', this *Journal*, xxx, 1967, pp. 406-09; D. J. Warner, 'The Celestial Cartography of Giovanni Vanosino da Varese', this *Journal*, xxxiv, 1971, pp. 336-37; *Manoscritti cartografici e strumenti scientifici nella Biblioteca Vaticana secoli XIV-XVII*, Vatican City 1981, p. 61, no. 75; and Arnold Nesselrath's entry in *Raffaello in Vaticano*, Milan 1984, pp. 70-72, no. 46 (this entry must be used with caution, since it contains several errors including the repeated misspelling of Vanosino's name).

⁵⁸ See I. Faldi, *Gli affreschi del Palazzo Farnese di Caprarola*, Milan 1962; G. Labros, *Le Palais Farnèse de Caprarola. Essai de lecture*, Paris 1970, esp. pp. 137-39; O. Fantini Bonvicini, *Caprarola. Il Palazzo e la Villa Farnese*, Rome 1973; J. Recupero, *Il Palazzo Farnese di Caprarola*, Florence 1975; I. Faldi, *Il Palazzo Farnese di Caprarola*, Turin 1981, pp. 241-45; and E. C. Robertson, 'The artistic patronage of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese (1520-89)', PhD thesis, The Warburg Institute, University of London 1986, esp. pp. 126-27 and 316-17.

⁵⁹ Ameto Orti, *La Caprarola*, poem 101 ('*La Caprarola* di Ameto Orti', ed. F. Baumgart, *Studi romanzzi*, xxv, 1935, pp. 77-179; for poem 101, see p. 127):

*In Sphaeram coelestem sideribus distinctam
Conclusum angusta [sic] coelum qui suspicis aula,*

*Et duodena suis astra notata locis,
Par opus, aut maius vitreo miraberis orbe,
Quem siculus mira condidit arte faber.
Torquetur nulla vertigine stellifer axis:
Nec fugat exoriens lucida signa dies:
Ipsa sed aeternis aphaera emicat aurea flammis,
Et patitur nullas ingeniosa vices.*

For the importance of Orti's poem, see pp. 205-206 below.

⁶⁰ Vanosino includes the canonical forty-eight Ptolemaic constellations and adds the late-Roman constellation of *Antinous*. Concerning the identification of these figures, one should first read Warner's perceptive critique of Beer's fundamental mistakes in his appendix to Hess (as in n. 57); A. Beer, 'Appendix: Ceiling of the Sala dei Brevi (Sala Bolognese) 1575', this *Journal*, xxx, 1967, p. 409. See Warner (as in n. 57), p. 337 n. 3. One must also reject Hess's suggestion that the figure of *Eridanus/Phaeton* is derived from Guido Reni's *Phaeton* painted twenty years later in the Palazzo Trotti-Rossi, generally referred to as the Palazzo Rossi (già Zani) in Bologna (Hess, as above, p. 409). The resemblance between this figure and Taddeo Zuccaro's *Phaeton* in the *Sala dell'Estate*, however, is worth noting.

⁶¹ See Hess (as in n. 57), p. 408. His alternative suggestion that the figure illustrates an episode in the life of Ranuccio Farnese's illegitimate son, Ottavio, seems untenable.

described as the progenitor of gods and men, and who 'organized the stars for the year in order to give the most reliable signs of the seasons to men'.⁶² The Latin translations of the *Phaenomena* often expand this section of the poem.⁶³ In particular, in illuminated manuscripts of Germanicus's Latin translation of the *Phaenomena*, these opening passages are usually illustrated with an image of Jupiter riding on his eagle similar to that found in Vanosino's fresco (Pl. 19b).⁶⁴

The connection between the ceiling and the walls of the *Sala del Mappamondo* is relatively clear. Navigation depends on astronomical coordinates. To this extent, Vanosino's celestial map exists as simple cartographic premise for the terrestrial maps below it.⁶⁵ The presence of Jupiter, however, raises the additional possibility that Cardinal Alessandro is claiming a personal or familial role in this process of mapping the earth's surface. Given the reminiscences of Germanicus manuscripts in the figure of Jupiter, one is also reminded of the lines which conclude the poem's opening passage:

What power would there be in the points which mark for certain the seasons of the year ... if the gaining of peace under your leadership had not allowed ships to sail the level sea, the farmer to till the land and the sound of arms to recede into distant silence? At last there is an opportunity to lift one's gaze boldly to the sky and learn of the celestial bodies and their different movements in the heavens and discover what the sailor and the canny ploughman should avoid, when the sailor should entrust his ship to the winds and the ploughman his seed to the soil. May your presence and the peace you have won aid your son; [and] grant you divine power, to favour me as I attempt to tell of this in Latin verse!⁶⁶

⁶² Aratus, *Phaenomena*, 1–16.

⁶³ See, for example, the introduction to the revised *Aratus latinus (incipit 'A love incipimus')*: ed. Maass 1898, as in n. 21, pp. 175–79 and Germanicus, *Aratea*, 1–16.

⁶⁴ See, for example, the 15th-century 'Sicilian' Germanicus *Aratea* manuscripts: Florence, Bibl. Laurenziana, Plat. 89, sup. 43, fol. 6^v; London, BL, Add. 15819, fol. 4^r and Egerton 1050, fol. 4^v; Madrid, Bibl. Nac. 8282, fol. 4^r; Naples, Bibl. Naz., XIV. D. 37, fol. 3^r; New York, Pierpont Morgan Lib., MS 989, fol. 7^r and Vatican, Bibl. Apostolica, Barb. lat. 76, fol. 6^v; Barb. lat. 77, fol. 4^r and Urb. lat. 1358, fol. 4^r. See also the 15th-century Greek picture-book, Vat. grec. 1087, fol. 302^v. For the appearance of this figure in earlier manuscripts, see the Germanicus *Aratea* manuscripts (Bern, Stadtbibl. Germ. 88, fol. 1^v; Boulogne, Bibl. Mun., 188, fol. 20^r; Madrid, Bibl. Nac., A 16, fol. 55^r) and the Aberystwyth Germanicus (735 C, fol. 63^r). See further P. McGurk, 'Germanici Caesaris Aratea cum scholiis: A New Illustrated Witness from Wales', *The National Library of Wales Journal*, xviii, 2, 1973, pp. 197–216, esp. pp. 198 and 209. Saxl notes that the figure reappears in Michael Scot manuscripts as *vultur cadens*. F. Saxl and H. Meier, *Verzeichnis astrologischer und mythologischer illustrierter Handschriften des lateinischen Mittelalters in englischen Bibliotheken*, London 1953, iii, 1, p. xxxix and fig. 11.

⁶⁵ This idea is borne out to a great extent by one of Orti's poems concerning the *Sala del Mappamondo*. See Baumgart (as in n. 59), p. 127 (poem 100):

In aulae Cosmographiae ad Nautam

Palladis inventam dicam, sicilline Magistri?

An Ptholemaeae [sic] nobile mentis opus?

Enitet auratae muris regalibus aulae

Effigies terrae, parvaque signa poli.

Ipsa suos credas metiri hic annua cursus,

Et rerum instabiles sydera ferre vices:

Distinctumque notis immensum aequalibus orbem

Se totum in tabulis explicuisse suis.

Quid iuvat ergo novum, et fugientem quaerere

mundum,

Si quam, nauta, cupis visere, terra domi est?

Lorenzo Gambara's verses on the *Sala del Mappamondo* focus almost exclusively on the images of the navigators and their maps. See L. Gambara, *Capranola*, Rome 1881, pp. 36–38.

⁶⁶ Germanicus, *Aratea*, 5–16. English translation from D. B. Gaim, *The Aratus Ascribed to Germanicus Caesar*, London 1976, p. 53. The Latin reads:

quantum etenim possent anni certissima signa ...

si non tanta quies, te praeside, puppibus aequor

cultorique daret terras, procul arma silerent?

Nunc vacat audacis in caelum tollere vultus

sideraque et mundi varios cognoscere motus,

navita quid caveat, quid scitus vitet arator,

quando ratem ventis aut credat semina terris.

Haec ego dum Latiis conor praedicere Musis,

pax tua taque adsis nato numenque secundes!

(ed. Breysig, pp. 1–2). Note that Gaim reads 'parta' for 'tanta' in line 9 (p. 21).

In this passage, Germanicus slightly shifts the focus of his invocation. Jupiter is still praised as the 'ruler and begetter of the gods', but it is only the peace provided by Germanicus's patron—presumably Augustus Caesar—which has actually enabled men to appreciate the gifts of the gods.

If, as seems to be the case, the presence of Jupiter in Vanosino's ceiling is derived from the illustrations of Jupiter in Germanicus manuscripts, does the content of the invocation itself play some role in the iconography of the *Sala del Mappamondo*? Before addressing this question, it is necessary to understand a bit more of the history of the decoration of the *Sala del Mappamondo*. As is well known, the humanist and antiquarian Fulvio Orsini was responsible for coordinating its decoration. We have four documents outlining different phases of the project. The first, a letter from Orsini to the Cardinal dated 4 March 1573, describes two parts of the ceiling: that to be filled with cartoons, which had already been ordered from the artist who painted the *Cosmographia* in the Vatican Palace and the compartments whose shape has yet to be agreed upon. Orsini hopes that these compartments will follow the programme devised by his friend—a man who is very learned in this field and possesses an old illuminated manuscript copy of Hyginus.⁶⁷ In a letter dated 2 September 1573 Orsini expresses his intention to bring Vanosino, who painted the *Cosmographia* in the loggia of Pius IV, to Caprarola and his hope that the arrangement of the still empty spaces of the room can be agreed upon.⁶⁸ A letter of 6 September 1573 reiterates these wishes. Orsini adds that it had been negotiated that Vanosino might also paint 'that section' of the room following the design of Orazio de' Marii.⁶⁹ The final letter, dated 15 October 1573, seems to indicate a change of artist for 'that part planned to be done with figures'.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Orsini to Cardinal Farnese, 4 March 1573: 'Mando a V.S. Illma. il discorso dell'amico mio in materia della Cosmographia della Sala di Caprarola acciocchè lei, vedendolo, possa risolvere quello che s'ha da fare; ché già sollecita i cartoni dell'amico mio l'huomo che doverà metterli in opra, che è quello che fece la Cosmographia di Palazzo, sì come io ho detto a V.S. Illma. Et perchè nè anco i cartoni si possono fare se prima non si vedono i compartimenti della Sala, supplico V.S. Illma. risolversi con la commodità di questa andata, et comandarmi poi quello che ho da ordinare che s'eseguisca, accertandola che la dottrina et la pratica di questo mio amico è buono e fondata su buoni autori, oltre il condimento che ha per essere versato nell'antichità Romana, donde cavarà molte cose per i segni celesti; per i quali tiene anco un Hygino scritto a mano antichissimo con le sue figure colorite, come devono stare: et servirà V.S. Illma. solo per acquistare la gratia sua, et non per altra mercede ...' See A. Ronchini and V. Poggi, 'Fulvio Orsini e sue lettere ai Farnesi', *Atti e memorie della R. deputazione di storia patria dell'Emilia*, ns iv, 2, 1880, pp. 37–106, esp. p. 53 (doc. vi).

⁶⁸ Orsini to Cardinal Farnese, 2 September 1573: '... farmi sapere in tempo s'io devo menare meco quel Giovanni Antonio, che dipinse la cosmografia nella loggia di palazzo a tempo di Pio quarto et col quale s'è già convenuto di consenso di V.S. Illma. che si debbia fare quella della sala nuova di Caprarola. Gioverebbe hora la sua venuta per compartire le tavole secondo li

vani della sala, secondo le quali se li possono dare i cartoni da chi haverà questo carico. Et dandosi comodità porterebbe seco avvolta una tela alta 13 palmi, dove egli ha fatto un nuovo universale, che molto piacerebbe a V.S. Illma. ...' See A. Boselli, 'Il carteggio del Card. Alessandro Farnese conservato nella "Palatina" di Parma', *Archivio storico per le province parmensi*, ns xxi, 1921, pp. 99–171, esp. pp. 162–63.

⁶⁹ Orsini to Cardinal Farnese, 6 September 1573: '... havendole scritto l'altro giorno che non mi moverò prima che V.S. Illma. m'ordini s'io harò da condurre meco quel Giovanni Antonio che dipinse la cosmografia in Palazzo, col quale, se V.S. Illma. si ricorda, fu trattato che dovesse fare quella della Sala di Caprarola secondo il disegno che se li darà da messer Orazio Marii; et non sarebbe forse hora fuori di proposito che alla presenza di V.S. Illma. dessi un'occhiata al luogo et che lo compartisse per i cartoni che s'harranno da fare. Circa 'l pittore che V.S. mi scrisse che io dovessi trovare, ho fatto ogni diligenza et la cosa si riduce a pochi che vogliono venire a Caprarola et che possono sodisfare a V.S. Illma., delli quali io ne le darò conto alla mia venuta in Caprarola, se piacerà così a V.S. Illma. ...' See Ronchini and Poggi (as in n. 67), pp. 54–56 (doc. viii).

⁷⁰ Orsini to Cardinal Farnese, 15 October 1573: 'Con questa invio a V.S. Illma. il pittore ch'ella risolve ultimamente in Caprarola che dovesse fare la sala della Cosmografia, cioè quella parte che s'aspetta alle figure, non havendolo inviato prima, per aspettarne l'ordine,

Scholars have conflated this generous amount of information into the mistaken notion that Orsini's learned friend, Orazio de' Marii, supervised the subject matter of Vanosino's painting in the *Sala del Mappamondo*. I would suggest that it argues the opposite. The letters clearly describe two separate 'projects'.

As Orsini mentions, Vanosino had already painted cartographical maps for Pius IV in the third loggia or *Loggia bella* of the Vatican Palace, a project for which he seems to have been *capomaestro* from December 1562 until the summer of 1564.⁷¹ Following this, Vanosino was constantly employed in the Vatican Palace until he was called to Caprarola by Orsini.⁷² Although the name of the 'adviser' responsible for organizing the decoration of the *Loggia bella* has yet to be discovered,⁷³ the procedure by which the paintings were executed is relatively clear. Someone familiar with contemporary cartographic practices was responsible for procuring a series of up-to-date maps (probably directly from local sources) and for rationalising them in terms of scale and information.⁷⁴ These maps, in turn, served as the cartoons from which the Vatican frescoes were copied.

Given his previous experience in the *Loggia bella* one could argue that as long as model maps were provided, Vanosino probably did not need close supervision. His involvement in the decoration of the *Sala del Mappamondo* may have been extremely limited. He arrived, *modelli* in hand, painted the various maps in the room, and left. Orsini's letter of 6 September 1573 proposes Vanosino for the task of painting 'that section' of the room designed by Orazio de' Marii; but this proposal never reached fruition and by 15 October 1573 another artist had been found.

Since little is known about Orazio de' Marii's career, one could surmise that he had been the 'cartographic adviser' for Pius IV's *Loggia bella* and that the cartoons in Vanosino's possession were, in fact, by his hand. In this connection, it is important to note that the only mention of de' Marii's abilities, apart from those in Orsini's correspondence, appears in Egnazio Danti's commentary on Vignola's *Le due regole della prospettiva* where de' Marii is described as the author of 'sportelli' used for perspectival drawing.⁷⁵

Whereas the possibility that de' Marii was in charge of transforming maps to large-scale cartoons for both the *Loggia bella* and the *Sala del Mappamondo* cannot be altogether dismissed, it is also important to note the qualities for which Orsini recommends his friend: as a learned man who owns a very old illustrated manuscript of Hyginus; and not as the coordinator of the decoration of the *Loggia bella*

che mi portò poi hiersera il Gambaro, da V.S. Illma. ...' See Ronchini and Poggi (as in n. 67), p. 56 (doc. ix).

⁷¹ For further descriptions of the *Loggia bella*, see Bertolotti (as in n. 57), i, pp. 115–18; Almagià 1952 (as in n. 57), pp. 8 and 12; and idem 1955 (as in n. 57), pp. 3–6. Vanosino appears to have fallen ill in the summer of 1564, his responsibilities taken over by a certain Stefano Francese. See Bertolotti (as above), i, p. 116 ('23 luglio 1564. Scudi 3, 50 a M^o Francesco soprastante della loggia bella essendo infermo M^o Gio. Ant. de Varese per pagarne li pittori, ch'anno lavorato alla Cosmografia della Loggia').

⁷² In March 1565 Vanosino reappears in the records, having painted a picture of the Ecumenical Council in the *loggia superiore* in the Vatican. He was also asked to

repair a hole ('una buca') made by a fire in the *loggia* in 1573. See Bertolotti (as in n. 57), p. 116.

⁷³ The extent of the confusion is well illustrated by the fact that Almagià has named Stefano Francese both as an artist (1955, as in n. 57, pp. 1 and 4) and as the director or 'scientific coordinator' of the project (1952, as in n. 57, p. 12).

⁷⁴ This is the method employed by Egnazio Danti in his supervision of the later series of cartographic frescoes painted under the pontificate of Gregory XIII [Boncompagni]. See Almagià 1952 (as in n. 57), pp. 7–8.

⁷⁵ E. Danti, *Le due regole della prospettiva pratica di M. Jacomo Barotti da Vignola con i commentarij del R.P.M. Egnazio Danti ...*, Rome 1583, p. 58.

nor as a specialist in cartographic cartoons.⁷⁶ The specific reference to an illustrated manuscript of Hyginus, however, does provide two vital clues regarding the decoration of the *Sala del Mappamondo*. On the one hand there is nothing in Vanosino's celestial map dependent on either the text or figures of the Hyginian iconographic tradition. The fact that de' Marii owns a copy of Hyginus, therefore, is superfluous to the planning or execution of this section of the *Sala del Mappamondo*; as a recommendation it is irrelevant. On the other hand, there is one section of the room which depends directly on the text of Hyginus's *Astronomica*: the series of twelve astro-mythological paintings which surround Vanosino's celestial scene. Surely it is to this part of the vault's decoration that Orsini's comments refer. This band of 'compartments' must be 'that part' whose programme was devised by Orazio de' Marii. Moreover, this part of the room is patently not by Vanosino's hand, but is generally believed to be a collaborative effort by Giovanni de' Vecchi and Raffaellino da Reggio.⁷⁷ This attribution concurs with the information contained in Orsini's letter of 15 October 1573, that new artists had been called in to paint 'that part planned to be done with figures'. Neither de' Vecchi nor Raffaellino da Reggio seem to have worked for the Cardinal prior to this date.⁷⁸

The organization of the twelve astro-mythological scenes in the *Sala del Mappamondo* is unusual in several respects. The iconographic source for the scenes themselves is easily traced. Ten of the twelve scenes come directly from Book ii of the *Astronomica* of Hyginus. Each of the forty-three chapters in Book ii summarizes the various myths cited by the ancients to explain the history of particular constellations, the godly act by which a constellation was created or catasterized or set into the heavens. Hyginus generally offers three or four alternative myths for each stellar grouping, some of which are quite exotic if not self-consciously recherché. One might expect a late sixteenth-century 'iconographer' to favour the more bizarre or apparently erudite aspects of Hyginus's myths; de' Marii's approach to Hyginus, however, is extremely unadventurous. In every instance, he chooses the first myth Hyginus offers. Not only that, but he generally confines his interest to the information contained in the opening sentences of each first myth. For example, the compartment illustrating the myth of Aries, the Ram, shows Phrixus being borne through the sea by the ram with the golden fleece and Helle plucked from the water by Neptune (Pl. 19c).⁷⁹ The Taurus compartment illustrates Europa being

⁷⁶ Lodispoto Koch has suggested that Orsini did not mention de' Marii's abilities in perspectival and mathematical studies because they were already sufficiently recognized as his *métier*. See G. Sacchi Lodispoto Koch, 'La moda cinquecentesca dell'affresco geografico e il Palazzo Farnese di Caprarola', in *Lunario romano. IX. Rinascimento nel Lazio*, ed. R. Lefevre, Rome 1979, pp. 201-23, esp. pp. 210-12.

⁷⁷ See L. Collobi, 'Raffaellino Motta detto Raffaellino da Reggio', *Rivista del reale Istituto dell'archeologia e della storia dell'arte*, vi, 3, 1937-38, pp. 266-82; I. Faldi, 'Contributi a Raffaellino da Reggio', *Bollettino d'arte*, xxxvi, 1951, pp. 324-33; I. Faldi, *Gli affreschi del Palazzo Farnese di Caprarola*, Milan 1962; R. Roli, 'Giovanni de Vecchi', *Arte antica e moderna*, xxix, 1965, pp. 45-56 and 324-34, and I. Faldi, *Il Palazzo Farnese di Caprarola*, pp. 241-45.

⁷⁸ See L. Partridge, 'The Sala d'Ercole in the Villa Farnese at Caprarola, II', *The Art Bulletin*, liv, 1972, pp. 50-62, esp. p. 60 n. 160. Partridge believes that the ceiling of the *Sala di Mappamondo* was painted by Giovanni de' Vecchi. In the light of the ceiling's close stylistic connection to the ceiling of the *Sala Bolognese* (see pp. 206-207 below), this suggestion seems less plausible. I thank Clare Robertson for discussing this problem with me.

⁷⁹ Hyginus, *Astronomica* ii, 20: 'Hic existimatur esse, qui Phrixum et Hellen transtulisse dictus est per Hellespontum ... Sed Hellen decidisse in Hellespontum, et a Neptuno compressam Paona procreasse conplures, nonnulli Edonum dixerunt' (edn Pisa 1976, p. 56).

carried off by Jupiter disguised as a bull.⁸⁰ The Gemini are Castor and Pollux, given horses by Neptune.⁸¹ Cancer is the crab trodden on by Hercules.⁸² Leo is the Nemean lion.⁸³ The scene illustrating Virgo shows Astraea flying up to heaven, unable to endure the greed and violence of the men of the Bronze age.⁸⁴ Scorpio has Diana and Orion, with the scorpion sent by Jupiter to kill the hunter set between them ready to strike.⁸⁵ The Capricorn compartment contains the sea-goat who suckled the infant Jupiter.⁸⁶ The Aquarius scene is slightly odd in that it seems to conflate two of the Hyginian myths into a single story. Hyginus first claims that Aquarius is Ganymede, the beautiful cup-bearer, who, he says, is shown as if pouring water from an urn.⁸⁷ He then records how Hegesianax says that the water-bearer is Deucalion, the king under whose reign the great flood occurred.⁸⁸ The *Sala del Mappamondo* picture shows a beautiful nude boy pouring water from an urn, and surrounded by people drowning in the flood he has caused. The final Hyginian scene, Pisces, shows Venus and Cupid being transformed into fish as they jump into the Nile to escape a bifrons Typhon.⁸⁹

The two remaining scenes do not follow Hyginus. The compartment depicting the myth of Sagittarius shows a number of bow-wielding centaurs attacking a group of humans, one of whom holds a *crater* aloft in his hand. I have yet to identify this scene. It may represent an episode from the most famous centauromachy between the Lapiths and the Centaurs, although this identification is somewhat problematic as the scene does not include any reference to the disrupted wedding banquet, nor does it depict the centaurs wielding clubs—a trait repeated by the major sources for the tale.⁹⁰ More probably, it illustrates Hercules's visit to the Centaur Pholus, when the neighbouring centaurs were maddened by the smell of wine and driven to attack the hero and his human companions.⁹¹

⁸⁰ *ibid.*, ii, 21: 'Hic dicitur inter astra esse constitutus, quod Europam incolumen transverberit Cretam ...' (edn Pisa 1976, p. 59).

⁸¹ *ibid.*, ii, 22: 'Hos complures astrologici Castorem et Pollucem esse dixerunt ... Neptunum autem pari consilio munerasse; nam equos quibus utuntur donavit ...' (edn Pisa 1976, p. 61).

⁸² *ibid.*, ii, 23: 'Cancer dicitur lunonis beneficio inter astra collocatus, quod, cum Hercules contra hydram lernaean constitisset, ex palude pedem eius mordicus arripuisset; quare Herculem permotum, eum interfecisse. Lunonem autem inter sidera constituisse ...' (edn Pisa 1976, p. 62).

⁸³ *ibid.*, ii, 24: 'Hic dicitur ab Iove inter astra constitutus, quod omnium ferarum princeps esse existimatur. Nonnulli etiam hoc amplius dicunt, quod Hercules prima fuerit haec certatio, et quod eum inermis interfecerit' (edn Pisa 1976, p. 63).

⁸⁴ *ibid.*, ii, 25: 'Denique causam pervenisse usque eo, dum diceretur aeneum genus hominum natum. Itaque iam non potuisse pati amplius et ad sidera evolasse' (edn Pisa 1976, p. 64).

⁸⁵ *ibid.*, ii, 26: 'Sed omnino totum signum hac de causa statutum existimatur: quod Orion cum venaretur, et in eo exercitatissimum se esse confideret, dixisse etiam Dianae et Latonae se omnia, quae ex terra oriuntur, interficere valere. Quare Terram permotam,

Scorpionem misisse, qui eum interficere monstratur' (edn Pisa 1976, p. 65).

⁸⁶ *ibid.*, ii, 28: 'Huius effigies similis est Argipani, quem Iuppiter, quod cum eo erat nutritus, in sideribus esse voluit, ut capram nutricem ...' (edn Pisa 1976, p. 66).

⁸⁷ *ibid.*, ii, 29: 'Itaque ostenditur ut aquam aquali infundens' (edn Pisa 1976, p. 67).

⁸⁸ *ibid.*: 'Hegesianax autem Deucalionem dicit esse, quod eo regnante tanta vis aquae se e caelo profuderit, ut cataclysmus factus esse diceretur' (edn Pisa 1976, p. 67).

⁸⁹ *ibid.*, ii, 30: 'Eodem loco repente Typhona ... apparuisse; Venerem autem cum filio in flumen se proiecisse et ibi figuram piscium forma mutasse' (edn Pisa 1976, p. 67).

⁹⁰ *Iliad*, i, 262, ii, 272 and *Odyssey*, xxi, 295ff.

⁹¹ See esp. Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca*, ii, v, 4ff. See also Raphael's drawing of *Hercules and the Centaurs* in the Uffizi (1476E) reproduced in M. Lisner, 'Form und Sinngehalt von Michelangelos Kentaurschlacht mit Notizen zu Bertoldo di Giovanni', *Mitteilungen des kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, xxx, 1980, pp. 299–344, esp. fig. 28. Lisner also provides illustrations of *Inferno*, xii, 55ff, which faithfully represent Dante's description of the wrathful bow-carrying centaurs: figs 6 and 21 (Chantilly, Musée Condé 597, fol. 97^v and the 1481 edn with Landino's commentary). See also P. Brieger, M. Meiss

The iconographic source for the Libra scene, however, is unmistakable (Pl. 19d). The inclusion of the Scales as a separate constellation comes as a rather late addition to the zodiacal belt. Hyginus, for example, mentions Libra only as a part of the zodiacal constellation of Scorpio.⁹² Libra was a patently Roman invention, its myth being associated with the deification of the Emperor Augustus.⁹³ Virgil, for example, in his opening verses to the *Georgics*, offers a particularly vivid description of the event:

Yea, and thou, O Caesar, whom we know not what company of the gods shall claim ere long ... or whether thou [wilt] add thyself as a new star to the lingering months, where, between the Virgin and the grasping Claws, a space is opening (lo! for thee even now the blazing Scorpion draws in his arms, and has left more than a due share of the heaven!)⁹⁴

The Libra scene in the *Sala del Mappamondo* shows Virgo and Scorpio drawing apart to offer a position in the heavens for the Scales, being carried upwards from a sacrificial altar by an eagle. The main part of the Libra scene—the sacrificial scene—is similarly Augustan. It refers to the omens received by Augustus's father, Octavius, regarding the destiny of his son as the 'ruler of the whole world' (*Dominus terrarum orbi*). Suetonius tells the story in this manner:

Later, when Octavius was leading an army through the remote parts of Thrace, in a grove sacred to father Liber, he consulted the priests with Barbarian rites about his son, [and] they made the same prediction [that the ruler of the world had been born]; since such a pillar of flame sprang forth from the wine that was poured over the altar, that it rose above the temple roof and mounted to the very sky, and such an omen had befallen no one save Alexander the Great, when he had offered sacrifice at the same altar.⁹⁵

and C. S. Singleton, *Illuminated Manuscripts of the Divine Comedy*, Princeton 1969, i, pp. 130–32 and ii, 150–64.

⁹² Hyginus, *Astronomica*, ii, 26: 'Hic propter magnitudinem membrorum in duo signa dividitur, quorum unus effigiem nostri Libram dixerunt' (edn Pisa 1976, p. 65).

⁹³ See, for example, J. Bayet, 'L'immortalité d'Auguste', *Revue des études latines*, xvii, 1939, pp. 141–71; A. Le Boeuffe, 'Recherches sur Hygin', *Revue des études latines*, xliii, 1965, pp. 275ff., esp. p. 281 and A. Le Boeuffe, *Les noms latins des astres et des constellations*, Paris 1977, pp. 171–73.

⁹⁴ Virgil, *Georgics*, i, 24–35:

tuque adeo, quem mox quae sint habitura deorum
concilia, incertum est, urbisne invisere, Caesar ...
anne novum tardis sidus te mensibus addas,
qua locus Erigonen inter Chelaeque sequentis
panditur (ipse tibi iam brachia contrahit ardens
Scorpius et caeli iusta plus parte reliquit).

(ed. and transl. H. Rushton Fairclough, London and New York 1920, pp. 82–83). See also Servius's lengthy comments on these lines: '[33.] qua locus erigonen inter chelaeque s. Aegyptii duodecim esse adserunt signa, Chaldaei vero undecim: nam scorpium et libram unum signum accipiunt, chelae enim scorpii libram faciunt ... Modo ergo secundum Chaldaeos locutus est, dicens posse eum habere locum inter scorpium et virginem;

nam Erigone ipsa est virgo ... Vel certe ideo inter scorpionis brachia, quae sunt libra, et Erigonen, quae est virgo, quia libra aequitas, virgo iustitia ... [34] ... iam brachia contrahit ardens scorpius ideo Augusto merito iuxta scorpium locum adsignat, quia sidus hoc supra Romanum positum creditur ... Argute itaque eam viam et sedem tribuit Augusto, forti imperatori, quam habuit deus fortis'. See *Servii Grammatici qui feruntur in Vergilii Carmina commentarii*, eds T. Thilo and H. Hagen, Leipzig 1881–1902, iii, 1887, pp. 140–41. Note also that the 1746 Amsterdam edition of *P. Virgilii Maronis Opera cum integris et emendationibus commentariis Servii, Phalaris, Pindari* ... adds the following to Servius's commentary (i, p. 181): 'Bene autem Augusto inter Virginem et Scorpium, id est, inter iustitiam et virtutem, locum tribuit: (nam, chelae, Scorpii brachia sunt: quae sexaginta partes in caelo sunt) ut solum fore significet'.

⁹⁵ Suetonius, *Augustus*, xciv, 5: 'Octavio postea, cum per secreta Thraciae exercitum duceret, in Liberi patris luco barbara caerimonia de filio consulenti, idem affirmatum est a sacerdotibus, quod infuso super altaria mero tantum flammae emicuisset, ut supergressa fastigium templi ad caelum usque ferretur, unigue omnino Magno Alexandro apud easdem aras sacrificanti simile provenisset ostentum' (ed. J. C. Rolfe, London and New York 1914, i, pp. 266–67).

The Libra scene shows Octavius to the right of the scene, mounted and pointing with his baton towards the central composition in which a hooded priest pours wine on a flaming altar from which the triumphant scale-bearing eagle ascends.

A second rather curious aspect of the organization of the twelve astro-mythological scenes of the *Sala del Mappamondo* is the fact that the zodiacal scenes are not placed in their proper order (Pl. 15c). Instead, the sequence of scenes stops, starts, jumps and reverses in an apparently bizarre manner.⁹⁶ Assuming that this order is intentional, one can only suggest that the zodiacal scenes have been rearranged in order to highlight particular signs. Above all, it seems that the central picture of each sequence, which is significantly larger than its flanking pairs of scenes, has been set apart especially to attract the viewer's attention.

In considering the possible motives behind the peculiar ordering of the Caprarola zodiacal scenes, it is also worth noting that despite its astronomical exactitude, Vanosino's celestial map is not oriented in line with the Villa's geographical coordinates (Pl. 15a). Most astrological maps bearing any pretensions to 'astronomical accuracy' tend to follow local geographical coordinates. The extended northeast-southwest breadth of the *Sala del Mappamondo* made this impossible for Vanosino. In order to set his map properly, he would have had to position its wider breadth diagonally across the shorter span of the room. Instead, Vanosino was forced to let the format of his fresco determine its orientation. The greater horizontal of the map meant that its north appeared in the room's northwest.

In isolation, the orientation of Vanosino's celestial map seems inconsequential; but if one considers this peculiarity in relation to the placement of the flanking zodiacal scenes, one arrives at a somewhat unexpected conclusion. Any educated contemporary viewer entering the *Sala del Mappamondo* would have 'read' the room in relation to Vanosino's map. He would have understood the long inner wall of the room as its 'north'. Accordingly, he would have seen the Capricorn scene centred on the 'northern' wall; the Libra scene opposite in the middle portion of the 'southern' wall; and the Aries scene in the centre of the 'eastern' wall.

It may be coincidental, but each of these signs are very important in Alessandro Farnese's own horoscopic chart (Pl. 15b). In particular, the Cardinal's Tenth House (located at the 'north' of the chart) begins at 25° Capricorn and his Ascendant (the point on his chart's 'eastern' horizon) coincides with 23° Aries. Libra is also important, since it is the Cardinal's Sun sign.⁹⁷ In short the arrangement of the

⁹⁶ Commencing with Aries, the sequence begins in an anticlockwise direction on the short wall to the north; jumps to the short southern wall and reverses direction (note also that here the Gemini compartment is misplaced to follow the Leo compartment); then continues on the east wall in an anticlockwise direction; and finishes, still anticlockwise, on the northern wall. To progress from Aquarius to Pisces, one needs to jump diagonally across the length of the room.

⁹⁷ This information appears in Giuntini (as in n. 49), i, p. 174. Giuntini calculates for '1520. Die 7 octobris, hor. 5 m., 27 post meridiem'. His prognosis for the Cardinal's health (due to an opposition between Mars and Saturn) is particularly dire. Lucas Gauricus pub-

lished a horoscopic chart for the Cardinal which differs substantially from Giuntini's. Gauricus presents a chart calculated according to a birthdate four hours earlier than Giuntini's: 'Anno 1520, Octobris (d) 7 (h) 19 (m) 35 horol.; (d) 7 (h) 1 (m) 1 P.M.' and arrives with an Ascendant of 13° 45' Capricorn, a Mid-Heaven in Scorpio and Alessandro's Sun located at 23° 42' Libra conjunct with Mercury. See L. Gauricus, *Tractatus astrologicus*, Venice 1552, pp. 36^{rv}. As a caution, one should admit that more concrete information concerning Alessandro's birth—such as a baptismal record—has yet to be discovered. Experience teaches one, however, that given a choice between dates proposed by Giuntini and Gauricus, Giuntini is eminently preferable.

zodiacal signs in the *Sala del Mappamondo* seems to highlight the major components of Alessandro Farnese's natal chart: his Sun sign is placed above one of the doors on the long 'southern' wall of the room and the two most important angles of his chart, the Ascendant and *Medium Caeli*, appear respectively in the 'east' and 'north'.

The likelihood that many of the Cardinal's guests could have deciphered this aspect of the *Sala del Mappamondo* without prompting is decidedly slim. In this instance, however, rather than search for the lowest common denominator one should note the evidence that those closest to the Cardinal certainly appreciated the significance, for example, of the Aries scene in the *Sala del Mappamondo* as Cardinal Alessandro's Ascendant.

Some time during the late 1580s Ameto Orti composed a cycle of one hundred and ninety-one Latin epigrams collectively entitled *La Caprarola*.⁹⁸ The poems, which describe virtually every facet of the structure and decoration of the Farnese Villa, reflect an intimacy with the building and its history which could have been acquired only through extended contact and study. This suggests that Orti, whoever he was, must have been on intimate terms with a member of the Cardinal's entourage who could have given him detailed information about the planning and execution of each of the Villa's rooms.⁹⁹ He writes epigrams on Antonio da Sangallo, the Zuccari, Vignola, the gardens, the significance of the Farnese *impresa*—in short *La Caprarola* provides an extraordinary *vade mecum* to the Villa, and its importance seems to have been sorely undervalued.

Orti writes twenty-one poems on the *Sala del Mappamondo*, twelve of which concern the series of zodiacal signs. Each of these zodiacal poems is composed as a tribute to the mythological virtue of the sign, praising those qualities or events which led its inclusion in the zodiacal belt. Several are written in the second person singular, as if addressed directly to the sign itself. Only about half of the poems, however, actually refer to myths depicted in the *Sala del Mappamondo*. Given this somewhat *ad hoc* format, it is interesting to note that the poem to Aries is exceptional in being the only one in which Orti makes a recognizable allusion to the Farnese. In particular, the sign of Aries is singled out as having a special relation to the fate accorded Cardinal Alessandro Farnese:

Flave Aries, puroque humeros circumlitus auro,
 Hellespontiaeae [*sic* = Hellespontiacae] nobile
 pondus aquae:
 Sic tibi luxuriet pretioso vellere tergis,
 Semper et in lana divite crescat honos:
 Farnesi vitam felice stamine nenti
 Tondendum Parcae porrigere saepelatus.
 Non minus e tanto veniet tibi Principe nomen,
 Quam tibi de Phryxo sospite fama venit.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Baumgart (as in n. 59) noted two manuscripts of *La Caprarola*, one of which was then still housed in the Villa Farnese and bore a dedication to the Cardinal.

⁹⁹ Hess has suggested that the name is actually a pseudonym for Aurelio Orsi, the Cardinal's private secretary and brother of Prospero Orsi. See J. Hess, 'La Villa Lante di Bagnaia e Giacomo del Duca', *Palatino*, ser. iv, x, 1966, pp. 1–12, esp. pp. 7–8.

¹⁰⁰ Poem 110 (ed. Baumgart, as in n. 59, p. 130): 'Aureate Aries, your shoulders bathed in pure gold, the noble burden of the waters of the Hellespont: so may your body luxuriate in the precious fleece, and may your honour forever increase with the richness of the wool: again and again, present your flanks to be sheared by the Fate who happily spins life with the Farnese thread. May no less a name come to you, Prince, from

The Ascendant in a horoscopic chart marks the opening cusp of the First House, or House of Fortune, which for obvious reasons was commonly associated with the Parcae.¹⁰¹ The link between the Parcae, the Farnese Prince (the Cardinal) and the sign of Aries reaffirms the recognition of this sign as Alessandro Farnese's Ascendant.

The importance attached to Libra, the Cardinal's Sun-sign, is marked in two ways. First, as mentioned, Libra occupies the central position on the long inner wall of the *Sala del Mappamondo*. More importantly, however, the Libra scene is also 'crowned' by a gilt Farnese lily, placed directly above the scene, set within Vanosino's celestial map. Alessandro Farnese draws attention not only to the fact that Libra is his own Sun-sign, but that it was a Sun-sign he shared with the Emperor Augustus—a connection that any Renaissance prince would be eager to cite. Furthermore, it may be significant that the omen received from the Babylonian priests, the main subject of the compartment, was also received by Alexander the Great. One can easily imagine this confluence of coincidences greatly encouraging the Macedonian's namesake, Alessandro Farnese, toward greater dreams of glory.

As I mentioned previously, the figure of Jupiter seems to play a key role in the iconography of the *Sala del Mappamondo*. In this regard one might also mention a second episode cited by Suetonius, relating a dream which Octavius had the night after he received the oracle concerning his son:

Moreover, the very next night he dreamt that his son appeared to him in a guise more majestic than that of mortal man, with the thunderbolt, sceptre and insignia of *Jupiter Optimus Maximus*, wearing a crown begirt with rays and mounted upon a laurel-wreathed chariot drawn by twelve horses of surpassing whiteness.¹⁰²

Augustus claimed a special relationship with the god of thunder. So did Alessandro Farnese.

The extent to which these claims were recognized by casual visitors to Caprarola is unclear. We have indications that privileged viewers, such as Ameto Orti, identified certain aspects of the horoscopic analogy in the *Sala del Mappamondo*. But did anyone appreciate the extended Augustan analogy and the possible assertions Cardinal Farnese was making about his destiny and ambitions?

Whereas there is no definitive proof regarding Pope Gregory XIII's response to the *Sala del Mappamondo*, it is interesting to note that when he commissioned Vanosino to paint him a similar celestial ceiling in the *Sala Bolognese* or *dei Brevi*, three key elements of the decoration were changed (Pl. 17a, b).¹⁰³ The zodiacal

such greatness, than the fame that came to you [Aries] from saving Phryxus'.

¹⁰¹ See, for example, Manilius, *Astronomica*, iii, 96.

¹⁰² Suetonius, *Augustus*, xciv, 5: 'Atque etiam sequenti statim nocte videre visus est filium mortali specie ampliorem, cum fulmine et sceptro exuvisque Iovis Optimi Maximi ac radiata corona, super laureatum currum, his senis equis candore eximio trahentibus' (ed. and transl. Rolfe, as in n. 95, i, pp. 206–67).

¹⁰³ Hess was almost certainly mistaken in his belief that decoration of the *Sala Bolognese* preceded Vanosino's work at Caprarola (Hess, as in n. 57, pp. 406 and 408–09). The only documents for the room concern negotiations for a series of maps of Bologna and her

contade, which were to serve as the models for the cartographic frescoes on the southern and western walls of the room. The maps themselves did not arrive in Rome until June 1575 indicating that these frescoes, at least, were not begun until the middle months of that year. It seems more likely that the *Sala Bolognese* ceiling was painted during this period, rather than two years earlier. It also seems possible that plans for the decoration of the *Sala Bolognese* postdate Lorenzo Sabbatini's arrival in Rome in March 1575, since he appears to have coordinated the decoration of the room. For a discussion of the documents, see G. B. Comelli, 'Della pianta di Bologna dipinta nel Vaticano e di altre piante e vedute di questa città', *Atti e Memorie*

frieze was replaced by an illusionistic colonnade, under whose arches monumental *dal sotto in su* figures of astronomers are seated.¹⁰⁴ In the celestial map itself the Farnese lily is missing, and the *Jupiter Optimus Maximus* has been deleted. Numerous explanations could be offered as to why the Pope ordered these changes. Nevertheless, one is still struck by how successfully he managed (intentionally or not) to cut those parts—and only those parts—of the decoration which personalized the ceiling. Vanosino's two ceilings may look virtually identical, but the intellectual premise behind them could not have been more dissimilar. If the Pope's ceiling has any special significance, it is possibly as an allusion to or celebration of those astronomical skills which were utilized in calculating the new Gregorian calendar. Cardinal Alessandro Farnese's celestial ceiling, on the other hand, forms the keystone of a fundamentally astrological iconographic programme.

III

Both the *Sala di Galatea* and the *Sala del Mappamondo* ceilings record horoscopic information about their patrons, and both artists—Peruzzi and Vanosino—employed relatively conventional cartographic notation as the basis for their programmes: the former, the celestial planisphere common to fifteenth-century manuscripts; and the latter the newer, 'modern' medium of the celestial map. Furthermore, both rooms were used as dining rooms.¹⁰⁵ Astrological decoration in dining rooms has a long and distinguished heritage, the most famous classical example being Nero's octagonal dining room in the *Domus aurea*.¹⁰⁶ Perhaps both the *Sala di Galatea* and the *Sala del Mappamondo* represent individual and unrelated attempts by Renaissance patrons to extend and judiciously update this classical precedent. On the other hand it is tempting to speculate on the role that the *Sala di Galatea* ceiling may have played in Cardinal Alessandro Farnese's decision to decorate the ceiling of the *Sala del Mappamondo* with an astrological programme. It should be remembered that during the mid-1570s the Cardinal actually began negotiations to acquire what later became the Villa Farnesina.¹⁰⁷ If the *Sala di Galatea* was indeed an iconographic catalyst, it implies that the major structural premise of the ceiling—the juxtaposition of horoscopic chart and celestial map—was not only still intelligible to viewers fifty years after it had been painted, but that it was thought a sufficiently clever device to warrant repeating.

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della R. deputazione di Storia Patria per le provincie di Romagna, ser. iii, xiii, anno accademico 1894-95 [1895], pp. 153-219, esp. pp. 153-61 and 186-90; Almagià 1955 (as in n. 57), p. 34-36; and D. Redig de Campos, *I Palazzi Vaticani*, Bologna 1967, pp. 170-74.

¹⁰⁴ For reproductions, see B. Biagetti, 'Relazione (Pitture murali. Restauri)', *Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di archeologia. Rendiconti*, ser. iii, xi, anno accademico 1935 [1936], pp. 183-87, esp. fig. 18 and I. Sjöström, *Quadratura i Italiensk Takmåleri*, Stockholm 1972, pl. 15a. I thank Suzy Butters for this reference.

¹⁰⁵ For a discussion of the function of the *Sala del Mappamondo*, see L. Partridge, 'The Sala d'Ercole in the Villa Farnese at Caprarola, Part I', *The Art Bulletin*, liii, 1971, pp. 467-86, esp. p. 467 n. 1.

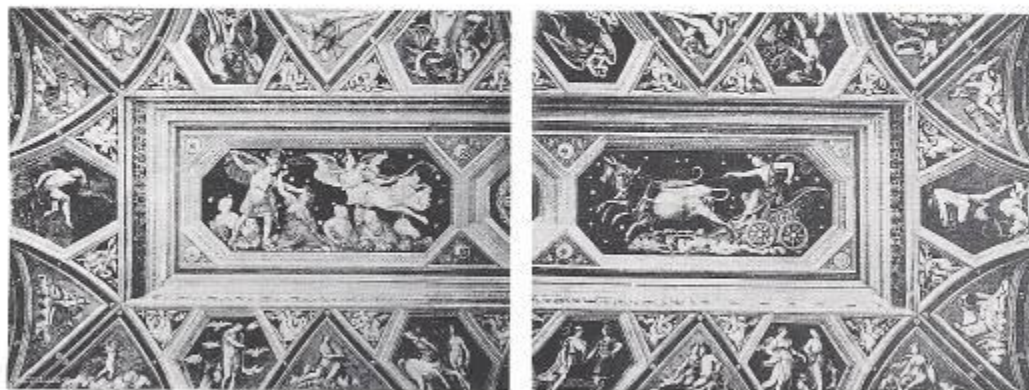
¹⁰⁶ See Suetonius's description in *Vitae Caesarum*, vi (Nero), xxxi, 2. For a reconstruction of the room, see D. Hemsoll, 'Reconstructing the octagonal dining room of Nero's Golden House', *Architectural History*, xxxii, 1989, pp. 1-17.

¹⁰⁷ See Frommel 1961 (as in n. 1), pp. 17-18 and Coffin (as in n. 1), p. 90.

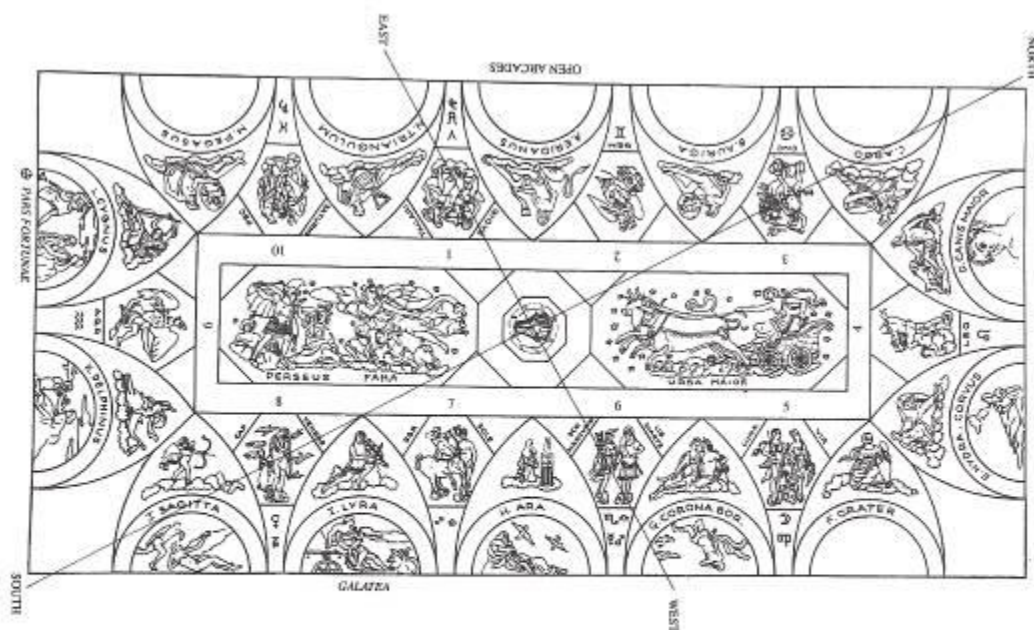


Rome, Villa Farnesina, *Sala di Galatea*, general view towards the south-east (pp. 185–96, 207)

a-c: Rome, Villa Farnesina, *Sala di Galatea*



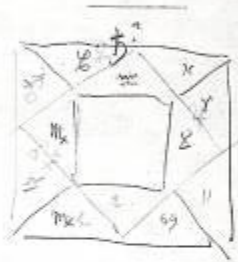
a, b—Astrological ceiling (p. 185)



c—Plan with geographical coordinates (pp. 190, 194)

58 III. GEMISCHTE BEZIEHUNG DER FARNESINA.

Wissenschaft ist sie zeitlos. Zeitlos sind die Werke in der Farnesina, nicht beschränkt auf Künstler oder Humanisten der Kreis, an welchen sie sich richten: es ist die Menschheit als solche, wie sie im Wandel der Jahrhunderte trotz allen Fortschritts im inneren Grunde dieselbe bleibt. Die großartige Schönheit selbst, wirkt diese Schöpfung auf Auge und Herz mit allen ihres Stärken, frei von jeder Zeitgewalt, herrlich wie am ersten Tag. Sie wiederzubeleben ist das Sehnen und die Hoffnung unseres Lebens.



Handwritten: 8/IX. 900 im Corijel

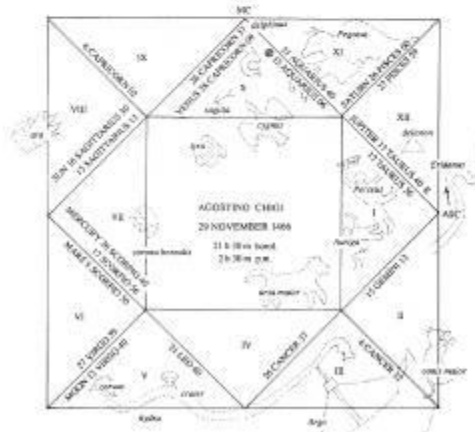
Handwritten notes:
 Saturn liegt Venus
 Luna in Virgo
 Venus im Sternbild
 Jupiter im Sternbild
 Mars in Merkur in Conjunction
 (Jupiter) (Venus)

Handwritten notes:
 H?
 5? (Chiron)
 2?
 X=
 XXX - Farnesina
 Phoinika

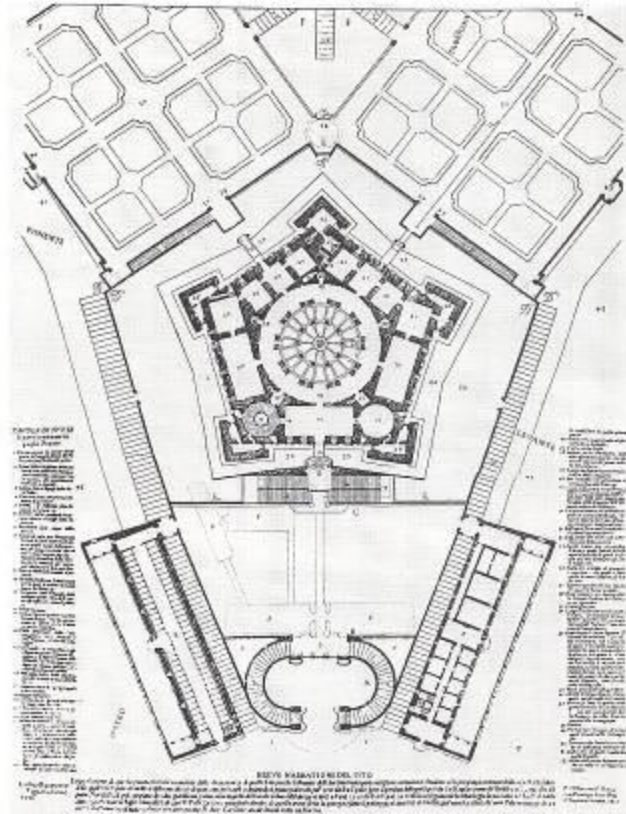
a—Aby Warburg's notations in Maass, *Aus der Farnesina*, 1902 (p. 194)



b—Rome, Villa Farnesina, plan showing geographical disposition (from Frommel, *Die Farnesina*, 1961) (p. 190)



c—Horoscope of Agostino Chigi (reversed) superimposed on a planispheric map (pp. 194, 196)

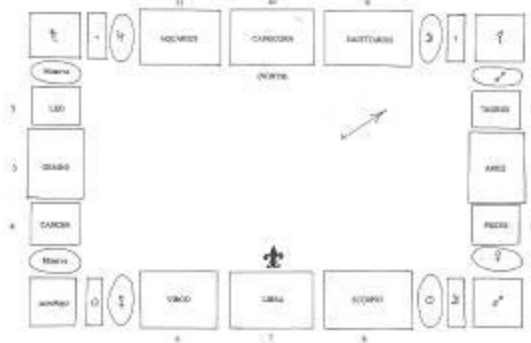


a—Plan by Francesco Villamena (from Faldi, *Palazzo Farnese*, 1962) (p. 204)



b—Cardinal Alessandro Farnese's horoscopic chart (reversed) (p. 204)

a, c Caprarola, Villa Farnese



c—Sala del Mappamondo, astrological ceiling, plan (p. 204)



a—Astrological ceiling (pp. 197–207)



b—General view (p. 197)

a, b: Caprarola, Villa Farnese, *Sala del Mappamondo*



a—Astrological ceiling (p. 206)



b—General view (p. 206)

a, b: Vatican Palace, *Sala Bolognese*



a—*Perseus slaying Medusa; and Fame* (p. 196)



b—*Fortuna/Cygnus and Aquarius* (pp. 189, 194)

a, b: Rome, Villa Farnesina, *Sala di Galatea*, astrological ceiling, details



a—*Jupiter* (p. 197)



b—*Jupiter*. Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Barb. lat 76, fol. 6^r (detail) (p. 198)



c—*Aries* (p. 201)



d—*Libra*
(p. 203)

a, c, d: Caprarola, Villa Farnese, *Sala del Mappamondo*, astrological ceiling, details