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FROM KING MATTHIAS TO LORENZO DE' MEDICI:
GALEOTTO MARZIO'S ASTROLOGICAL WORKS
AND HIS DEDICATEES

The aim of this paper is to present the astrological ideas of Galeotto Marzio's works and discuss how astrological knowledge can be traced in the court or circle of the dedicatees. This presentation allows us to compare the role of astrology in the royal court of Buda and in the city of the Medici family. The other aspect of my paper would be to present how medieval astrological theories influenced the works of Galeotto Marzio.

But first of all, I would like to outline the main phases of Galeotto's life: the Umbria-born humanist and philosopher studied in Ferrara, in Guarino Guarini's school from 1445¹ (Ill. 1). Here he became friend of the famous Neo-Latin poet Janus Pannonius, who later invited him into Hungary for the first time. After Guarino's humanist school Galeotto was educated in medicine at Padua where he simultaneously gave lectures on literature. This multiple education determined Galeotto's interest in his whole life: humanist knowledge of Antique authors, but praise of medieval sources characterise his works as well, where he often combines the natural philosophical content with literary quotations. From 1461 onwards he frequently stayed at the Buda court of King Matthias Corvinus, where, so he claims, he was very popular due to his erudition and witty manners. In the 1460s-1470s, he gave lectures on poetics in the Studio of

1. For more on his life and for a general overview of Galeotto's works, cf. G. Miggiano, «Galeotto Marzio da Narni. Profilo biobibliografico», *Il Bibliotecario*, 32 (1992), 45-96; 33-34 (1992), 67-156; 35 (1993), 61-108; 36-37 (1993), 83-191; 38 (1993), 27-122. Id., «Galeotto Marzio», in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, ed. M. Bray, Roma 2008, LXXI, 478-84.



Ill. 1. Anonym Master, Medal of Galeotto Marzio (obverse and reverse), second half of the 15th century, Budapest, Hungarian National Museum, inv. I. 1933-4.

Bologna, and took part in the preparatory works of the edition of Ptolemy's *Cosmography*², together with other physicians and astrologers from Bologna. In 1477, he was accused of heresy and arrested on his estate of Montagnana by the Venetian Inquisition because of the bold doctrines he put forth in his treatise entitled *De incognitis vulgo*, where, among other things, he claimed that the immortality of the soul cannot be proven through rational arguments, and that everybody, who lives faithfully according to his own faith can be saved, even the pagan Romans or the Turks³. After his release from prison, he resided again for a short time at the court of Buda, and subsequently returned to Italy. Here he completed his *De doctrina promiscua* in 1489 and dedicated it to Lorenzo de' Medici obviously hoping also from him some financial support⁴.

Galeotto's first Hungarian patron was not King Matthias, but Johannes de Zredna (in Hungarian also known as Vitéz János), archbishop of Strigonium (Esztergom, Hungary) and uncle of the aforementioned poet, Janus Pannonius. Galeotto dedicated his treatise entitled *De homine*⁵ around 1471 to the archbishop, who was famous for his library, and for his interest in natural philosophy and contemporary sciences. Also Galeotto referred to the bishop's positive attitude towards astrology, when he mentioned, that «Johannes always kept by himself his astrological calendar, and consulted it before every important occasion»⁶. Their common philological activity is testified by a manuscript of Manilius' *Astronomica*, preserved today in the Vatican Library, where an inscription tells that Galeotto and Johannes emended

2. Bologna, Domenico del Lapi, 1475-1477.

3. G. Marzio, *Quel che i più non sanno*, ed. M. Frezza, Napoli 1948.

4. The author of this article is working on a complete critical edition of the *De doctrina promiscua*. A selected edition was published, with Italian translation, by Mario Frezza: G. Marzio, *Varia dottrina*, a cura di M. Frezza, Napoli 1949. In the following notes I will refer to the page numbers of the editio princeps (*Liber de doctrina promiscua*, Florentiae, L. Torrentinus, 1548, henceforth *ed. princ.*).

5. *De homine*, Budapest, Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, Cod. Lat. 351; ed. Venezia, Federicus de Comitibus, 1471-1472.

6. For this type of interest of the archbishop, cf. Z. Nagy, «Ricerche cosmologiche nella corte umanistica di Giovanni Vitéz», in *Rapporti Veneto-Ungheresi all'epoca del Rinascimento*, ed. T. Klaniczay, Budapest 1975, 65-93.

together the text of this popular Antique astronomical poem⁷. The astrological determinism, reflected also by the work of Manilius, became an essential theoretical basis also of the writings of Galeotto: this is manifested also by the fact that the author had chosen a quotation from the *Astronomica* for his medal as a motto: *Nascentes morimur finisque ab origine pendet*⁸.

Galeotto's dedicatee, Johannes de Zredna is also called in Hungarian literature as the «father of Hungarian Humanism». This definition is related not to his literary activity, but rather to his humanistic type of patronage, and to the network that he kept up around himself⁹. Johannes was also active in the establishment of a university¹⁰ in Pozsony (today Bratislava, Slovakia), where he invited also astronomers and astrologers, like the Polish Marcin Bylica z Olkusza, or the famous Georgius Peurbach from Vienna. The latter did not accept the invitation, but still dedicated two astronomical works to Johannes, the *Tabula Variadensis*, and the *Gnomon geometricus*. Peurbach sent to the *Academia Istropolitana* his student, Johannes Regiomontanus, who, along with the Polish Bylica was patronized later by king Matthias Corvinus as well. With this brief list of names from the circle of Johannes de Zredna my intention was to emphasize the astrological and astronomical erudition of the archbishop whom also Galeotto addressed his *De homine*. This treatise is the first medical work of our author, where he focuses on human body, but the astrological aspects of healing appear already in this text. Galeotto gives here a complete description of the internal organs and external parts of the body, presenting the diseases and other beliefs connected to the organs, discusses also the etymology of

7. Roma, Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, Vat. Palat. Lat. 1711.

8. *Astronomica*, IV. 16.

9. K. Csapodiné Gárdonyi, *Die Bibliothek des Johannes Vitéz*, Budapest 1984; K. Pajorin, «La cultura di János Vitéz», *Camoenae Hungaricae*, 2 (2005), 13-22; *A Star in the Raven's Shadow. János Vitéz and the Beginnings of Humanism in Hungary* (Exhibition Catalogue), ed. F. Földesi, Budapest 2008.

10. For the foundation of the university a horoscope was cast: J.-P. Boudet, D. Hayton, «Matthias Corvin, János Vitéz et l'horoscope de la fondation de l'Université de Pozsony en 1467», in *Matthias Corvin, les bibliothèques princières et la genèse de l'État moderne*, éd. J.-F. Maillard, I. Monok, D. Nebbiai, Budapest 2009, 205-13.

their names, and deals with the physiognomical and astrological connections of the organs and members of the body. The *De homine* of Galeotto could be entitled as *De corpore* as well, since it is characterized by Galeotto's view, influenced by Northern-Italian Aristotelianism, namely by his conviction about the inseparable unity of body and soul¹¹.

In Hungary Galeotto met King Matthias Corvinus (ruled Hungary between 1458 and 1490) whose astrological interest, just like his art patronage, can be paralleled with that of the contemporary Italian princes and rulers¹² (Ill. 2). This was confirmed by Galeotto himself as well, first in his *De incognitis vulgo*, where he asks for the help of King Matthias to interpret the comet which appeared to the biblical Three Magi, and calls the King «*rex et astrologus*»¹³. In his *De egregie, sapienter, iocose dictis ac factis regis Mathiae (Excellent, Wise, Facetious Sayings and Deeds of King Matthias)*, which is an anecdotal biography of the Hungarian ruler, he explains the king's acute judgement of courtiers by the ruler's expertise in astrology and physiognomy¹⁴. Here I also have to mention that it is not an accident that Galeotto mentions these two fields as important and useful skills for good governance, since also himself considered physiognomy along with astrology as «sciences» that reflect the ruling laws of macrocosm and connect them together with the phenomena of microcosm¹⁵.

11. On the *De homine*, cf. also Z. Nagy, «Il fenomeno umano nel *De homine libri duo* e nella *Refutatio* a G. Merula di Galeotto Marzio», in *Galeotto Marzio e l'Umanesimo italiano ed Europeo. Atti del III. convegno di studio*, ed. U. Corradi, Narni 1983, 109-52; G. M. Anselmi, E. Boldrini, «Galeotto Marzio ed il *De homine* fra Umanesimo bolognese ed europeo», *Quaderno degli Annali dell'Istituto Gramsci*, 3 (1995-1996), 3-83.

12. From the vast literature on the court of King Matthias let me mention only a few, recent and comprehensive publication: *Mattia Corvino e Firenze. Arte e umanesimo alla corte del re di Ungheria*, a cura di P. Farbaky, D. Pócs, M. Scudieri, et al., Firenze 2013; *Italy & Hungary. Humanism and Art in the Early Renaissance*, ed. P. Farbaky, L. A. Waldman, Florence 2011; *Matthias Corvinus, the King. Tradition and Renewal in the Hungarian Royal Court 1458-1490* (Exhibition catalogue), ed. P. Farbaky, et al., Budapest 2008.

13. This passage is edited in: J. Ábel, *Olaszországi XV. századbeli írónak Máttyást dicsőítő művei*, Budapest 1890, 255.

14. Galeottus Martius Narniensis, *De egregie, sapienter, iocose dictis ac factis regis Mathiae*, ed. L. Juhász, Lipsiae 1934, cap. XIII.

15. This is reflected in almost every work of Galeotto, cf. G. Marzio,



Ill. 2. Giovanni Dalmata (attributed to), Portrait of King Matthias, 1480-1490, Budapest, Museum of Fine Arts, inv. 6711.

Neither of the two works dedicated to the Hungarian king are of exclusively astrological content, but in the context of this volume we cannot leave unmentioned King Matthias' strong sympathy with astrological ideas. The other aspect why we have to discuss here the Hungarian king is the fact that there are plenty of sources and evidences documenting the relationship of Galeotto and King Matthias, whereas nothing came down to us about Galeotto's success in the circle of Lorenzo de' Medici, whom Galeotto dedicated his *De doctrina*, a treatise dealing mainly with astrological medicine. It is also very likely that one of the main reasons why the Hungarian ruler supported such a person declaring in his works strange and also dangerous ideas, was that the astrological beliefs of our author well befitted the king's world view. It has been also argued both in Italian and in Hungarian literature that it was King Matthias, who intervened for Galeotto's release from the Venetian prison, that's why Galeotto dedicated a new, modified version of his *De incognitis vulgo* to the king¹⁶. Although our author discusses in this treatise mainly theological and philosophical questions, he touches upon astrological issues as well, for example when he refutes the arguments of Saint Augustine against judicial astrology¹⁷.

Plenty of studies could be (and have been already)¹⁸ dedicated to the presentation of the role of astrology in the court of King

Chiromanzia, ed. M. Frezza, Napoli 1951. For the role and interpretation of physiognomy in his works, cf. E. Békés, «Physiognomy in the Works of Galeotto Marzio», in *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Bonnensis. Proceedings of the Twelfth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies*, ed. R. Schnur, Arizona 2006, 153-62; Id., «La "physiognomia moralis" nel *De Dictis ac Factis* di Galeotto Marzio», in *Annuario* (Accademia d'Ungheria in Roma, Istituto Storico Fraknói), 2005-2006 [2010], 104-9.

16. Miggiano, *Galeotto Marzio*, 481.

17. Cap. XX, XXII, XXIII, XXV.

18. D. Hayton, «Expertise ex Stellis: Comets, Horoscopes and Politics in Renaissance Hungary», *Osiris*, 25 (2010/1), 27-46; B. Láng, «Astrology, Alchemy and Mysticism at King Matthias' Court – Old Statements Revisited», in *Matthias Rex 1458-1490. Hungary at the Dawn of the Renaissance. Proceedings of the International Conference, May 20-25*, Budapest 2008: <http://renaissance.elte.hu/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Benedek-Lang-Astrology-Alchemy-and-Mysticism-at-King-Matthias%E2%80%99Court-old-statements-revisited.pdf>; cf. also: A. Scafi, «Aurum Hungaricum: Il Re

Matthias, here I can mention only briefly a few data, which demonstrate that the Hungarian ruler similarly to his contemporaries considered astrology as an essential part of a Renaissance man's erudition and as necessary knowledge for exercising his power. The king's enthusiasm for astrology has been explained by several scholars also with his interest in Neo-Platonism¹⁹. He acquired for his famous library, the Bibliotheca Corviniana, astrological, astronomical and natural philosophical manuscripts, among which we can find Classical, Antique works, like that of Ptolemy's, but the library included a book originally prepared for Emperor Wenceslas IV, the Commentary to the *Tetrabiblos* of Ptolemy by Haly Aberudiam Heben Rodan (translated into Latin at the court of Alfonso the Wise)²⁰. Works of contemporary authors were also present, like writings of Regiomontanus: for example his *Canones LXIII*, a work about the (seeming) motion of fixed stars, which he dedicated to the king. Matthias inherited the astrologers of Johannes de Zredna, like for example the Polish Marcin Bylica, who wrote prognostications for the ruler and interpreted the appearance of comets in the context of the actual political circumstances²¹. But we can find in the service of the king also Johannes Tolhopff, a professor at Leipzig and Ingolstadt, who came into Hungary at the invitation of Matthias and dedicated his work entitled *Stellarium* to the king around 1480, which is a user's manual of an instrument called *stellarium*, a kind of *equatorium*, used for determining the position of the planets²². Last but not least, we have to mention the (unfortunately destroyed) astrological frescoes, which decorated the vaulted

Matthia della Ungheria e il segreto della alchimia», *Rivista di Studi Ungheresi*, 8 (1993), 5-16; Á. Orbán, «Astrology at the Court of Matthias Corvinus», *Terminus*, 17 (2015), 113-46.

19. K. Pajorin, «Asztrológia, mágia és Apuleius-kultusz Mátyás király műveltségében», *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények*, 118 (2014/2), 215-25.

20. Cs. Csapodi, *The Corvinian Library. History and Stock*, Budapest 1973, 239.

21. D. Hayton, «Martin Bylica at the Court of Matthias Corvinus: Astrology and Politics in Renaissance Hungary», *Centaurus*, 49 (2007), 185-98.

22. E. Zsoldos, «The *Stellarium* of Johannes Tolhopff», in *Corvina Augusta. Die Handschriften des Königs Matthias Corvinus in der Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel*, hrsg. von E. Zsupán unter mitarbeit von Ch. Heitzmann, Budapest 2014, 213-21.

rooms of the Royal Palace of Buda, one of them represented the image of the starry sky in the moment of the king's birth, and another one in the time when he was elected to be the king of Bohemia, as the surviving inscriptions indicated²³.

Since Galeotto's earlier friends and patrons in Hungary had died following the failed conspiracy against King Matthias in 1472, and since the conflict with the Ottomans and Emperor Frederick III took up most of the time and attention of the king, who, furthermore, resided more often in the newly occupied Vienna after 1485 than in Buda, Galeotto had to look for a new patron. Therefore it seems plausible that Galeotto intended to obtain some position (perhaps a professorship) with the help of Lorenzo de' Medici in Italy. If we look closer at the career of Galeotto we can point out that his *De incognitis vulgo* and the fact that he was accused of heresy, discredited him and he fell out of the contemporary intellectual circles. Afterwards he was no longer employed as professor at the Italian universities, neither in the service of princes or rulers. Returning to Italy he composed the *De doctrina promiscua*, in which he dealt with his favourite subject that is medical astrology.

This treatise consists of thirty-nine chapters, in most of which Galeotto discusses astrological, medical astrological and astronomical questions. In the first chapter, he deals with the celestial origin of names: he claims that we give names to our children under celestial influences, and that our entire fate is comprised in our names. For instance, he derives the name Medici from the word *medicus*, that is: «physician», as the Medici cure the diseases of the society just as doctors cure physical illnesses. The same metaphor recurs frequently in the text when Galeotto praises Lorenzo²⁴. Then he continues, quoting ancient examples to illustrate that rulers of antiquity – Hermes Trismegistus, Mithridates

23. A. Végh, «Egy reneszánsz felirat töredékei és a budai királyi palota csillagképei», *Művészettörténeti Értesítő*, 59 (2010/2), 211–31.

24. For more on this metaphor and its relation to the self-representation of Lorenzo de' Medici, cf. E. Békés, «La metaphora “medicus-Medici” nel *De doctrina promiscua* di Galeotto Marzio», *Camoenae Hungaricae*, 3 (2006), 29–38.

25. Cap. XIII, XIV.

or Numa Pompilius, for instance – were also proficient in astrology. In Galeotto's view, the letters of the alphabet are also subordinated to the planets: for example, the letters *a*, *b* and *c* are under the influence of Saturn. He brings the seven planets known at that time into connection also with the Medici coat of arms: according to Galeotto the seven *palles* symbolise the planets. Later on, he discusses how each humour, just like each metal, disease and part of the body, corresponds to one planet²⁵. He argues that the knowledge of astrology is indispensable for medicine, and without it, the physician is nothing more than a charlatan²⁶. In issues of medical astrology, Galeotto quotes Pietro d'Abano's *Conciliator*, Avicenna, Hippocrates and Galen as the main authorities. In the *De doctrina*, we encounter doctrines of medical astrology that date back to antiquity: for instance, Galeotto emphasises the significance of the date and time of taking a certain medicine, and that of the planetary conjunctions which also affect the healing process. He states that the date of birth of a patient should also be considered²⁷. Conforming to the teachings of the *lunaria*, he describes which activities are recommended in accordance with the path of the Moon, and expounds the theory of *zodiologia* that reveals the effects of the position of the Moon in each sign of the zodiac²⁸. Although Galeotto did not rank magic among the sciences which he considered «rational», unlike astrology²⁹, he still quotes several examples to illustrate the role of talismanic magic in medicine and dedicated a

26. *Ed. princ.*, 135: «Est igitur plurimis de causis astrologia medico necessaria, quam si quis ignoraverit, non inter medicos, sed potius inter pharmacopolas circumforaneos connumerabitur».

27. *Ed. princ.*, 131. For medical astrology, cf. M. Azzolini, *The Duke and the Stars. Astrology and Politics in Renaissance Milan*, Boston 2013; *Astro-Medicine. Astrology and Medicine, East and West*, ed. A. Akasoy, Ch. Burnett, R. Yoeli-Tlalim, Florence 2008; R. French, «Astrology in medical practice», in *Practical Medicine from Salerno to the Black Death*, ed. L. García-Ballester, R. French, et al., Cambridge 1994, 30–59.

28. Cap. XXV, XXX.

29. *Ed. princ.*, 256: «...secundum hanc doctrinam multa a nomine scientiae excluduntur, ut ars magica, alchimia, in his enim plurima sunt, in quibus argumentatio deficit...»; Id., 257: «Horum igitur causam nec intellectus apprehendit, nec vis argumentationis ostendit, unde culturae vel religionis nomen potius quam scientiae et magia et alchimia subibunt».

whole chapter to the description of the healing astrological images³⁰. He discusses for instance one of the most widespread talismans, the imprint of a lion-figure on a gold leaf that under certain celestial constellations, was thought to be effective to cure kidney pain³¹. Galeotto also deals with the relation of astrology to physiognomy: he writes that the sign of the zodiac, in which we are born, determines our appearance, as we resemble the animal the sign is named after³². A particularly interesting feature of the work is the astrological interpretation of ancient myths and literary works. Galeotto does not remark upon contemporary criticism of astrology, yet, he admits that some may find his reasoning superstitious and in conflict with religious doctrines. Thereupon he quotes Saint Thomas Aquinas who states, in his *Summa Contra Gentiles*, that God allows us to consult the stars in certain cases, such as the physician in medicine, the peasant on the field, or the soldier before the battle³³. Saint Albert the Great also argues that religion and belief in the stars are reconcilable, since God uses the stars as instruments in order to accomplish His will³⁴.

When examining the high esteem of astrology in the Medici milieu, we can ascertain that in this respect Galeotto's views, unlike his other statements related to the soul for example, were not that different from those of the Florentine philosophers. His belief in the stars contradicts the idea of free will, and the critics of astrology, like Pico della Mirandola, made objection precisely

30. Cap. XXIV: *De imaginibus astrologice impressis ad curandos morbos*.

31. *Ed. princ.*, 222-26. Cf. N. Weill-Parot, *Les «images astrologiques» au Moyen Âge et à la Renaissance. Spéculations intellectuelles et pratiques magiques (XII^e-XV^e siècle)*, Paris 2002, 723-30; G. Federici Vescovini, *Medioevo magico. La magia tra religione e scienza nei secoli XIII e XIV*, Torino 2008.

32. Cap. XXXV: *Quare signa zodiaci animalium nomina habent*. The theory of astrological physiognomy can be traced also in the *Physiognomica* of Pietro d'Abano. On this work, cf. G. Federici Vescovini, «La simmetria del corpo umano nella *Physiognomica* di Pietro d'Abano: un canone estetico», in *Annuario (Accademia d'Ungheria in Roma, Istituto Storico Fraknoi)*, 2005-2006, 2006-2007 [Roma, 2010], 94-103.

33. *Ed. princ.*, 242-43. Cf. *Summa contra gentiles*, III, 92.

34. *Ed. princ.*, 155: «...ut Albertus et Thomas aiunt caelum esse Dei instrumentum quo operatur...».

against this determinist doctrine³⁵. Yet, Galeotto's work is dominated not so much by judicial, but rather by medical astrology which can be traced in Ficino's philosophy as well³⁶. As is well known, Ficino's views on astrology were rather ambiguous: while he condemned the use of this science to make predictions, in his *De vita* he argued for the usefulness of medical astrology³⁷. A number of similarities can be noted between Galeotto's *De doctrina* and Ficino's *De vita*: the humours, melancholy, the concept of *spiritus*, the influence of the planets on human life and talismanic magic are the main topics of Ficino's work as well. He finished the third book of the *De vita*, the *De vita coelitus comparanda*, exactly when Galeotto was working on his *De doctrina*, and dedicated it to King Matthias, the former patron of Galeotto.

In Florence, the science of astrology did not have such traditions as in Bologna, Padua or Ferrara, where Galeotto himself had absorbed the doctrine of celestial influence. Yet a number of indications suggest that many Florentines believed in the stars³⁸. In the church of San Lorenzo, for instance, the ceiling of the sanctuary of the *Sagrestia Vecchia*, the burial chapel of the Medici family is decorated with an astrological image³⁹ (Ill. 3). Lorenzo

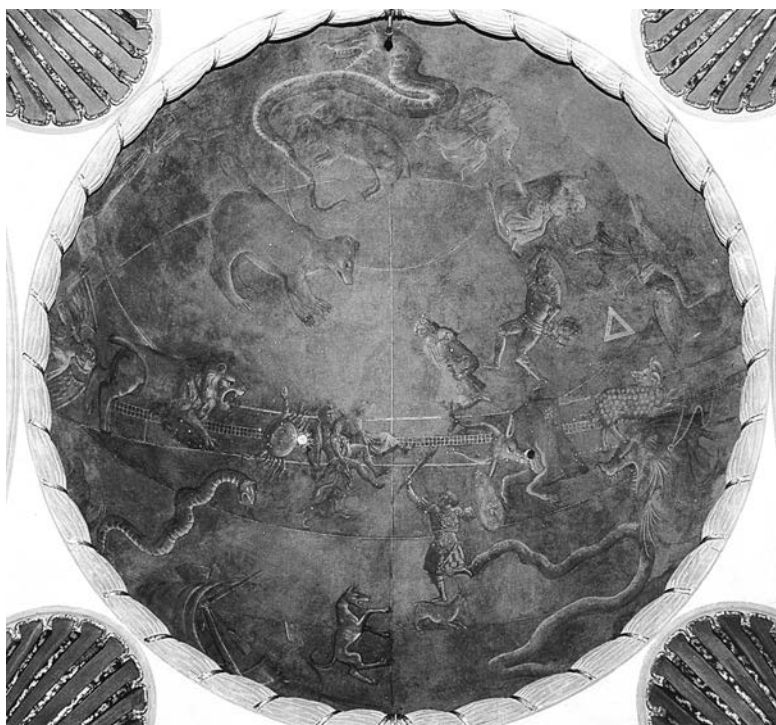
35. Pico della Mirandola, *Disputationes adversus astrologiam divinatricem*. For more on the debates on astrology, cf. E. Garin, *Lo zodiaco della vita. La polemica sull'astrologia dal trecento al cinquecento*, Roma 1976; S. J. Tester, *A History of Western Astrology*, Suffolk 1990; L. Ackerman Smoller, *History, Prophecy and the Stars. The Christian Astrology of Pierre d'Ailly, 1350-1420*, Princeton 1994, 25-32; K. von Stuckrad, *Geschichte der Astrologie. Von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, München 2003.

36. There is no evidence that Galeotto – like many contemporaries – was a practising astrologer and, as such, made prognostications or horoscopes.

37. The most recent edition of the *De vita*, provided also with a commentary, is: M. Ficino, *Three Books on Life. A Critical Edition and Translation*, with introd. and notes by C. V. Kaske and J. R. Clark, Arizona 1998. Cf. also G. Zanier, *La medicina astrologica e la sua teoria. Marsilio Ficino e i suoi contemporanei*, Roma 1977; M. M. Bullard, «The Inward Zodiac: A Development in Ficino's Thought on Astrology», *Renaissance Quarterly*, 43 (1990), 687-708; C. Vasoli, «Marsilio Ficino e l'astrologia», in *L'astrologia e la sua influenza nella filosofia, nella letteratura e nell'arte dall'età classica al Rinascimento*, a cura di L. Rotondi Secchi Tarugi, Milano 1992, 159-86.

38. Cf. G. Federici Vescovini, «Lorenzo Il Magnifico e l'astronomia a Firenze», *Il Ponte*, 48 (1992), 77-106.

39. On the interpretation of the fresco in the *Sagrestia Vecchia*, cf. A. Warburg, «Die astronomische Himmelsdarstellung im Gewölbe der Alten



Ill. 3. Florence, San Lorenzo, Dome of the scarsella in the Sagrestia Vecchia, ceiling painting, 15th century.

de' Medici's zodiacal sign, the Capricorn and the figure of Mars – which was the planet of Lorenzo's ascendant, the Scorpio (domicile of Mars) – were to be seen according to the sources on the helmet that he wore at the *giostra* of 1469⁴⁰ (Ill. 4). Astrol-

Sakristei von San Lorenzo in Florenz», *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz*, 2 (1912), 34-36; P. Fortini Brown, «Laetentur caeli: The Council of Florence and the Astronomical Fresco in the Old Sacristy», *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 44 (1981), 176-80; D. Blume, «Astrologie und Naturstudium – ein Horoskop für die Medici», in Id., *Regenten des Himmels. Astrologische Bilder in Mittelalter und Renaissance*, Berlin 2000, 126-38.

40. The same helmet is represented on a drawing of an Anonymous Master, now preserved in the British Museum, London: www.britishmuseum.org/research/search_the_collection_database.aspx, Registration number 1845,0825.383. (The portrait doesn't represent Lorenzo de' Medici).



Ill. 4. Anonym Master, Portrait of an unknown man, c. 1470, London, © Trustees of the British Museum, 1845,0825.383.

ogy was taught also at the University of Pisa, and the Medicis patronised the Florentine confraternity called *Compagnia dei magi*⁴¹. In this context their patronage is particularly interesting, since the biblical Three Magi were considered astrologers at that time, and the members of the Medici family were often represented in the company of the Magi, or as the three kings from the East⁴². Soon after the completion of the *De doctrina*, in 1490, Lorenzo composed a poem himself, entitled *Canzona de' sette pianeti*, in which he sings of the influence of the planets on human character. The poem was written on the occasion of the carnival of 1490, where it was recited accompanying a triumphal procession of the seven planets⁴³. Galeotto was not the only one who dedicated to Lorenzo a work on astrological, or medical topics. Antonio Benivieni, physician of wealthy Florentine families, had dedicated his *Regimen sanitatis* to him (before 1487), as did several other authors of treatises on the plague. In the dedication of his *Breve compendium futurorum eventuum rei rusticae*, Benedetto Maffei argues that the agricultural knowledge contained in the work is also connected to astrology, and might be useful to Lorenzo, too, when he retired to his estate and wanted to tend to his garden himself. Finally, Lorenzo Bonincontri dedicated to Lorenzo his treatise *Rerum divinarum et naturalium* (1468-1472), also largely of astrological content, in the hope that he would be called back from exile. Actually his expectations were not disappointed, and in 1475-1478 we find him giving lectures on astrology in the Studio⁴⁴.

41. On the *Compagnia dei magi*, cf. R. Hatfield, «The *Compagnia de' Magi*», *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 33 (1970), 107-61; P. Castelli, «Motivi astrologici ed ermetici nel governo laurenziano», in «*Per bellezza, per studio, per piacere*». *Lorenzo il Magnifico e gli spazi dell'arte*, a cura di F. Borsi, Firenze 1991, 55-78.

42. For instance: Sandro Botticelli, *Adoration of the Magi*, c. 1475, Firenze, Galleria degli Uffizi, inv. 1890 n. 882; Benozzo Gozzoli, *Capella dei Magi*, 1459-1462, Firenze, Palazzo Medici.

43. The *Canzona* is edited in: Lorenzo de' Medici, *Tutte le opere*, a cura di P. Orvieto, Roma 1992, 804-6.

44. For the description of these works with further bibliography, cf. *All'ombra del lauro. Documenti librari della cultura in età laurenziana. Catalogo della mostra*, a cura di A. Lenzuni, Cinisello Balsamo (Milano) 1992, 94-100.

The archbishop, the king and the banker: it is not the title of a movie, but various professions of Galeotto's dedicatees, which in itself also indicates the diffusion of astrology in the second part of the 15th century. Yet, as is well known, the genre of scientific treatises dedicated to rulers had a long tradition already before the fifteenth century. The idea of astrology as useful knowledge for rulers appeared in many medieval works dealing with *philosophia naturalis*, since kings were thought to be able to establish order and harmony in their realm only if they were aware of the rules of the macrocosm⁴⁵. Galeotto himself believed in this principle. In *De doctrina*, he often turns to Lorenzo for help emphasising that the Medici family always patronised science and culture. According to Galeotto's conviction, the knowledge we acquire, not through faith but through Aristotelian modes of cognition, that is by means of *scientia* and *philosophia*, may contribute to one's happiness even in one's earthly lifetime⁴⁶. For this very reason, he claims that ignorance is the major sin, and he dedicates an entire chapter to it (*De crimine ignorantiae*)⁴⁷ in his *De doctrina*. That is why, in his view, it is the rulers' responsibility to dissolve ignorance by supporting scholars. The Medici, as he puts it, did much to save people from sickness caused by the feeling of insecurity⁴⁸.

The in-depth analysis of *De doctrina* leads to the conclusion that Galeotto's work with its predominant focus on topics of medical astrology, astronomy and pharmacology is fundamentally based on Aristotelian natural philosophy, Galenic physiology, and their Arabic and Paduan reception hallmarked by Avicenna's and Pietro d'Abano's names, respectively. Furthermore, Galeotto was deeply influenced by the astrological thinking equally retraceable to classical Greek and Roman sources and Arabic scientific writing. Within this, Galeotto's tract reflects primarily not so much

45. Cf. P. Morpurgo, *L'armonia della natura e l'ordine dei governi (secoli XII-XIV)*, Firenze 2000.

46. For more on this, cf. A. d'Alessandro, «Astrologia, religione e scienza nella cultura medica e filosofica di Galeotto Marzio», in *Italia e Ungheria all'epoca dell'Umanesimo corviniano*, ed. S. Graciotti, C. Vasoli, Firenze 1994, 163ss.

47. Cap. XXVI.

48. Cap. XXXV.

the hermetic-magical-Neoplatonist trend represented by Ficino, but rather Paduan thought rooted in d'Abano's legacy⁴⁹. As for the issue of whether the immortality of the soul is confirmable or not, in this work Galeotto does not commit himself so explicitly as in *De incognitis vulgo*. However, his belief in the inseparable unity of body and soul is expressed in this tract, too. Galeotto's philosophical views on the soul allow for the conclusion that primarily the Aristotelian tradition of Padua, Galen's theory of humorism, and Epicureanism played a definitive role in his convictions. In sum, Galeotto's Aristotelian conceptions of the soul and science form part and parcel of the scholastic reception of Aristotle, which was still thriving in the 15th century. As more recent research on the Renaissance has revealed, earlier historiographies of education, literature and culture often attached too much significance to Neoplatonism within the intellectual history of the Renaissance, for philosophical and literary texts between 1400 and 1600 bear evidence that Aristotelianism also flourished in this period and this must be pointed out also in relation to the intellectual circle of Galeotto's dedicatees as well⁵⁰. Hence, simultaneously with the spread of Humanism and Neoplatonism at the end of the 15th century, there were also numerous followers of Aristotelian thought, which was primarily associated with universities in the north of Italy⁵¹. It was also this trend in intellectual history that exerted the most influence on Galeotto's worldview. Previous research related to Galeotto has approached his works from the traditional point of view of literary history and history of philosophy, whereas a broader intellectual historical analysis of

49. On d'Abano, cf. among others Pietro d'Abano, *Trattati di astronomia. Lucidator dubitabilium astronomiae, De motu octavae sphaerae e altre opere*, a cura di G. Federici Vescovini, Padova 1992; *Médecine, astrologie et magie entre Moyen Âge et Renaissance. Autour de Pietro d'Abano*. Textes réunis par J.-P. Boudet, F. Collard et N. Weill-Parot, Florence 2013.

50. J. Hankins, «Lorenzo de' Medici as a Patron of Philosophy», *Rinascimento*, 34 (1994), 15–53; J. Monfasani, «The Renaissance Plato-Aristotle Controversy and the Court of Matthias Rex», in *Matthias Rex 1458-1490*: <http://renaissance.elte.hu/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/John-Monfasani-The-Renaissance-Plato-Aristotle-Controversy-and-the-Court-of-Matthias-Rex.pdf>

51. Ch. B. Schmitt, *Aristotle and the Renaissance*, Cambridge (MA) 1983.

Galeotto's *De doctrina promiscua* helps us to collocate him better also on the horizon of the history of sciences⁵².

ABSTRACT

Enikő Békés, *From King Matthias to Lorenzo de' Medici: Galeotto Marzio's astrological Works and his Dedictees*

Galeotto Marzio, the Umbria-born humanist studied in Ferrara, in Guarino Guarini's school from 1445. Later on, he was educated in medicine at Padua where he simultaneously gave lectures on literature. From 1461 onwards, he frequently stayed at the Buda court of King Matthias Corvinus. Later Galeotto's earlier friends and patrons in Hungary had died following the failed conspiracy against King Matthias in 1472, and since the conflict with the Ottomans and Emperor Frederick III took up most of the time and attention of the king, Galeotto had to look for a new patron. Therefore it seems plausible that Galeotto intended to obtain some position (perhaps a professorship) with the help of Lorenzo de' Medici in Italy. In my paper I will present the astrological ideas of Galeotto's works and discuss how they are related to the politicians they are dedicated to. I also intend to compare the role of astrology in the royal court of Buda and in the city of the Medici family. The other aspect of my paper would be to demonstrate how medieval astrological theories can be traced in the works of Galeotto Marzio.

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52. On the intellectual historical analysis of Galeotto's *De doctrina promiscua*, cf. C. Vasoli, «L'immagine dell'uomo e del mondo nel *De doctrina promiscua* di Galeotto Marzio», in *L'eredità classica in Italia e Ungheria fra tardo Medioevo e primo Rinascimento*, ed. S. Graciotti, A. di Franceso, Roma 2001, 185-205; E. Békés, *Asztrológia, orvoslás és fiziognómia Galeotto Marzio műveiben*, Budapest 2014 (with an English summary).