

Chapter 4

Venus rules Taurus and Venus rules Libra

Introduction

Having investigated the parts of the wall described by the two luminaries and Mercury, this chapter considers the Salone fresco images connected with the ‘chapters’ of Venus. Using the methodology described in the Introduction, it examines the top register of constellation images and evaluates the celestial cartography that is described by those fresco images. It then explores the middle and lower registers and evaluates the planetary qualities that are described by the fresco images as informed by the astrology of Ibn Ezra, and that of al-Qabīṣī. It then summarises the findings, both visually and textually.

In light of these qualities of Venus defined by Ibn Ezra and al-Qabīṣī, one would anticipate seeing in the narrative of the images in the two ‘chapters’ centred on Venus commonalities that apply to the planet and differences that are expressed in its rulerships of Taurus (the night sign) and Libra (the day sign).



Figure 1. Aerial view of the Palazzo della Ragione from Google Earth showing the fresco scheme of the first floor Salone and its division into ‘chapters’ by rulership.

Venus rules Taurus

A foldout of the images for this 'chapter' can be found on page 180.

Table 9: The 9 columns of the Venus rules Taurus 'chapter', South Wall, using Barzon numbering and collating image designations.			
Image	Barzon (1924)	Fantelli and Pellegrini (2000) C: constellation; Z: influence of zodiac sign; P: influence of planet; M: occupation of the month; NI: a figure they are unable to interpret; W: a winged figure; R: a religious scene.	Rigobello and Autizi (2008)
10A	The Constellation of Andromeda.	Andromeda. (C)	Andromeda.
10BC	The Apostle St James the Greater.		
11A	The Constellation of Cepheus.	Cepheus. (C)	Cepheus.
11B	An offer of flowers.	The subject of love. (P)	Loving courtship.
11C	Loving conversation.	Loving conversation.	A loving encounter.
12A	The Constellation of Cassiopeia.	Cassiopeia. (C)	Cassiopeia.
12B	The Month of April.		
12C	Spring awakening.	Awakening of nature. (M)	Spring landscape.
13A	The Constellation of Boötes.	Boötes. (C)	Boötes.
13B	A strong man.	Virile force. (Z)	Boy on a dromedary – Vitality.
13C	Flower picker.	Gathering flowers. (M)	Gathering flowers.
14A	Hunter.	(A man) fighting against a bear, quarrelsomeness. (Z)	(A man) fighting with a bear.
14B	Mournful woman.	Mournful woman. (Z)	Melancholic woman.
14C	Flower picker.	Gathering flowers. (M)	Noblewoman with baskets.
15A	A quarrelsome person.	Dogfight, quarrelsomeness. (Z)	Fight between dogs.
15B	Taurus the Bull.		
15C	The spirit of love.	The spirit of love.	The spirit of love.
16A	Wicked man.	Wicked man. (Z)	Bear with a stick/staff.
16B	St Paul the Hermit?	St Paul the Hermit?	Hermit.
16C	Pilgrim.	Pilgrim.	Pilgrim.
17A	A friar in prayer.	A friar in prayer. (NI)	A friar kneeling.
17B	The planet Venus.		Venus Genetrix (the goddess of motherhood and domesticity)
17C	A woman in prayer.	A woman in prayer. (NI)	A woman in prayer.
18A	A friar in prayer.	A friar in prayer. (NI)	A friar in prayer.
18B	Adoring cherubs.	Angels.	Angels.
18C	Wind.	Wind? (W)	Angel.
19A	Giovanni Gualberto?	Giovanni Gualberto? Forgiveness? (R)	Bird-hunter.
19BC	The apostle St John.		

The Top Register of Constellation Images for Venus rules Taurus

The scholars of Table 9 described the images of the top register of the Venus rules Taurus ‘chapter’ as follows: 11A (Fig.2) ‘The Constellation of Cepheus’; 12A (Fig.3) ‘The Constellation of Cassiopeia’; 13A (Fig.4) ‘The Constellation of Boötes’; 14A (Fig.6) ‘a hunter’ or ‘(A man) fighting with a bear, quarrelsomeness’; 15A (Fig.8) ‘A quarrelsome person’, ‘Dogfight, quarrelsomeness’ or ‘a fight between two dogs’; 16A (Foldout Fig.10) ‘a wicked man’ or ‘a bear with a stick/staff’; 17A (Fig.9) ‘a friar in prayer’ or ‘a friar kneeling’; 18A (Fig.10) ‘a friar in prayer’; and 19A (Fig.15) ‘Giovanni Gualberto/ Forgiveness’ or ‘a bird hunter’.

Aratus wrote of how the constellations surrounding the North Pole formed a Royal Family: Cepheus the King, Cassiopeia the Queen, Andromeda the Princess, and Perseus the Prince.¹ The suggestion made by these scholars of Table 9 is that at least some of these images (11A, 12A, and 13A) are depictions of these Royal Family constellations.

Considering these images in detail, beginning with image 11A (Fig.2), Allen wrote of how Cepheus the King ‘was highly regarded in early times as the father of the Royal Family, and his story well known in Greek literature of the fifth century before Christ.’² The iconography of the constellation of Cepheus the King was of a man in royal robes with feet astride, wearing a tiara, the high headdress of the Persian king, as many versions of the myth associated with Cepheus place him as an oriental ruler,³ holding a sceptre in his left hand and his robe near his shoulder in his right hand.⁴ Image 11A is depicted as a classicising Roman warrior-king, wearing a red chaperon, a red mantle over a white tunic, red hose, and pink pointed shoes, feet astride, holding a sword aloft in his right hand, his left hand resting on a sheathed sword at his hip. I contend that this depiction is in keeping with the constellational iconography.

¹ Aratus, *Phaenomena*, trans. Aaron Poochigian, Johns Hopkins New Translations from Antiquity (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), p.7.

² Richard Hinckley Allen, *Star Names: Their Lore and Meaning* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1963), p.156.

³ Claudius Ptolemy, *Ptolemy's Almagest*, trans. G. J. Toomer (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1998), p.346.

⁴ Gertrude Jobs and James, *Outer Space: Myths, Name Meanings, Calendars From the Emergence of History to the Present Day* (New York & London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1964), p.148.

The Greeks knew Cassiopeia, image 12A (Fig.3), as She of The Throne and Aratus wrote of how ‘her arms spread far and wide/ From either shoulder.’⁵ Gaius Julius Hyginus (64 BCE–17 CE) chronicled that Cassiopeia was punished for boasting of her beauty by being bound to a chair and forced to circle the pole, at times head down, as being placed closer to the equator would have kept her upright.⁶ The Romans transliterated the Greek proper name and also called Cassiopeia *Mulier Sedes*, the Woman of the Chair.⁷ Image 12A (Fig.3) of a seated woman, her ‘arms spread far and wide’, her eyes raised towards heaven, is also in keeping with the iconography of the constellation of Cassiopeia the Queen.



(Left) Figure 2. Image 11A of the constellation Cepheus the King, top register, south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D.Gunzburg.

(Right) Figure 3. Image 12A of the constellation Cassiopeia the Queen, top register, south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D.Gunzburg.

Image 13A (Fig.4) depicts a warrior with his back towards the viewer, dressed in a red knee-length tunic with a brown cloak over his left shoulder and carrying a large oval metal shield. He holds a long pole in each hand. I argue this image is the same as image 3A (Fig.5) (Mars rules Aries ‘chapter’) and is thus the image of Perseus the Warrior, more of which will be written in that chapter.

⁵ Aratus, *Phaenomena*, p.8.

⁶ Gertrude and James Jobes, *Outer Space: Myths, Name Meanings, Calendars From the Emergence of History to the Present Day* (New York & London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1964), p.143.

⁷ Allen, *Star Names: Their Lore and Meaning*, pp.142-143.



(Left) Figure 4. Image 13A of the constellation Perseus the Warrior in the Venus rules Taurus ‘chapter’, top register, south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D. Gunzburg.

(Right) Figure 5. Image 3A of the constellation Perseus the Warrior in the Mars rules Aries ‘chapter’ top register, south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D.Gunzburg.



Figure 6. Image 14A of the constellation Boötes hunting Ursa Major, top register, south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D.Gunzburg.

Image 14A (Fig.6) depicts a man dressed in a green thigh-length tunic, a red chaperon, and calf-length brown boots, who thrusts a long pole at the neck of a roaring brown bear. The bear grasps the pole with its front left paw. According to Linda Kalof, the medieval aristocratic pastime of bear baiting grew specifically out of the need to train domestic dogs in how to protect the members of a household (Fig.7), and only evolved into full-scale mass entertainment blood sport across Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.⁸ Permanent structures for commercial bear baiting in London, according to Oscar Brownstein, date from 1562 onwards.⁹ Placed within the ‘chapter’ connected with Venus, the overt cruelty implied by this image does not appear to be in rapport with the

⁸ Linda Kalof, *Looking at Animals in Human History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007), pp.56,88-89.

⁹ Oscar Brownstein, ‘The Popularity of Baiting in England before 1600: A Study in Social and Theatrical History’, *Educational Theatre Journal* 21, no. 3 (1969), 237-250, p.240.

conviviality of Venus described by Ibn Ezra as being ‘of favourable and even nature’.¹⁰ When placed into the sky, however, and seen as the constellation Boötes, the image gains a clearer understanding.



Figure 7. Dogs baiting a chained bear, illuminated manuscript, Add.42130, fol.161, Luttrell Psalter. Image: © The British Library Board.

The origin of the constellation of Boötes is lost in time, although Boötes is mentioned in *The Odyssey*, Book V,¹¹ indicating that the constellation has been known for at least three thousand years. Later in time the Athenians described how Boötes, the priestly leader of the people, was robbed of his wealth by his brother, the secular leader, and in extreme poverty, was forced to hunt and herd until he invented the plough. In so doing, he gave humanity a great gift¹² and, identified as the hunter-herdsman-farmer or The Hunter Who Now Farms, represented the critical shift from Palaeolithic hunter-gatherer to Neolithic cultivator and domesticator of animals. That is why Boötes is always depicted with either weapons of the hunt or with agricultural implements.¹³ The Greeks, however, understood this part of the sky through another story. According to Ovid (43 BCE–c.17/18 CE), Callisto, a wood nymph in service to Artemis and thus under a vow of celibacy, was raped by Zeus and fell pregnant. Ostracized by Artemis, she eventually gave birth to Boötes. In revenge, Hera, Zeus’s wife, turned Callisto into a bear. Sixteen years later

¹⁰ Avraham Ben Meir ibn Ezra, *The Beginning of Wisdom (Reshith Hochma)*, ed. Robert Hand, trans. Meira B. Epstein (Reston: ARHAT Publications, 1998), p.100.

¹¹ ‘He never closed his eyes, but kept them fixed on the Pleiades, on late-setting Boötes, and on the Bear which men also call the Wain, and which turns round and round where it is, facing Orion, and alone never dipping into the stream of Oceanus, for Calypso had told him to keep this to his left.’ Homer, ‘The Odyssey’, in *The Internet Classics Archive*, ed. Daniel C. Stevenson (Web Atomics1994-2009). Book V, online at <http://classics.mit.edu/Homer/odyssey.5.v.html> — accessed 24 April 2013.

¹² Jobes, *Outer Space: Myths, Name Meanings, Calendars*, pp.127-128.

¹³ Jobes, *Outer Space: Myths, Name Meanings, Calendars*, p.129.

when Boötes was hunting in the forest, he encountered his mother, still a bear, and went to kill her with a javelin. To avert the tragedy of matricide, Zeus placed both of them in the heavens as Ursa Major and Ursa Minor.¹⁴ Thus I contend that this image at 14A (Fig.6) reflects the constellation of Boötes in combat with Ursa Major.

Scholars in Table 9 described image 15A (Fig.8), a white dog and a brown dog both standing on their back legs, tails curved, fighting each other, as ‘a quarrelsome person’, ‘dogfight, quarrelsomeness’ or ‘a fight between two dogs’. There is a temptation to assign the image to the constellation of the two Hunting Dogs of Boötes. Although the stars are mentioned by Ptolemy as being ‘under [Ursa Major] outside the constellation’,¹⁵ or as noted by Jobes, ‘the unattached stars in the northern sky in the vicinity of Ursa Major’,¹⁶ they were not described as fighting dogs until Johannes Hevelius (1611–1687) named and created them Canes Venatici in the seventeenth century.¹⁷ What is visible in the sky just after sunset, south of the ecliptic on the western horizon, however, are the two dogs Canis Major and Canis Minor, positioned one above the other as if ‘fighting’ each other (Figs.13 and 14). These constellations rise around 11:00 am in Padua and set around 9:00 pm, thus identifying the constellation register as a skymap for sunset, rather than predawn, as at predawn Canis Major and Canis Minor had not yet risen.



Figure 8. Image 15A, of two dogs fighting, top register, south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D.Gunzburg.

¹⁴ Ovid, ‘Metamorphoses’, ed. A.S. Kline, Book II, lines 405-507. Online at <http://ovid.lib.virginia.edu/trans/Metamorph2.htm> — accessed 24 April 2013.

¹⁵ Ptolemy, *Ptolemy's Almagest*, p.343.

¹⁶ Jobes, *Outer Space: Myths, Name Meanings, Calendars*, p.134.

¹⁷ Nick Kanas, *Star maps: history, artistry and cartography* (Berlin: Springer: Praxis, 2007), pp.126-127. The information was published posthumously by his wife in 1690 in a catalogue, *Prodomus Astronomiae*, and an atlas, *Uranographia*.

Image 16A of a bear with a pole in its mouth is reflective of the constellation the Great Bear, Ursa Major, moving around the North Pole. This image as a seasonal marker has already been considered in the Sun ‘chapter’, so no further explanation will be added here.



(Left) Figure 9. Image 17A of a Franciscan friar praying, top register south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D. Gunzburg.

(Right) Figure 10. Image 18A of a Dominican friar praying, top register south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D. Gunzburg.

Images 17A (Fig.9), a Franciscan friar, and 18A (Fig.10), a Dominican friar, may seem out of place in this register of constellation images. The constellation directly beneath Boötes, however, is that of Hercules, described by Aratus as On His Knees (The Kneeler) and The Phantom or Silhouette, a constellation so old and ancient that ‘... no-one can divine / The sure form or vocation of this sign...’¹⁸ G.J.Toomer emphasized the fact that neither Ptolemy, who described the constellation as ‘the [figure] on its knees’,¹⁹ nor writers in the earlier Greek tradition identified this constellation with a mythological figure.²⁰ Rather, it had always been held as a human figure kneeling on one knee while holding an arm upward and bent, orbiting around the sacred pivot-point of the North Pole, paying obeisance to it. With that in mind, the images of these two men from two of the major mendicant orders, each one painted facing each other with eyes raised upward towards heaven, also paying obeisance to the sacred source of life, suggest the constellation On His Knees (The Kneeler).

¹⁸ Aratus, *Phaenomena*, p.3.

¹⁹ Ptolemy, *Ptolemy's Almagest*, p.348.

²⁰ Ptolemy, *Ptolemy's Almagest*, p.348.

I also contend that these two images at 17A and 18A serve a dual function: on the one hand they encapsulate the sky constellation On His Knees (The Kneeler) along the top horizontal register by representing devotion; on the other, they contribute, as portrayals of two of the major mendicant orders, to that part of the ‘chapter’ devoted to worship which I will elaborate later in this chapter.

Considering these images in terms of the sky at sunset for Padua at the Taurus Ingress (when the sun moves into the tropical zodiac sign of Taurus), nine of these images in the top register correlate with seven constellations that are visible in the sky at this latitude (Figs.11-13). These are the constellation Cepheus the King, correlating with the top register image 11A (Fig.2), the constellation Cassiopeia the Queen, correlating with the top register image 12A (Fig.3), the constellation Perseus — not Boötes, as noted by scholars in Table 9 — correlating with the top register image 13A (Fig.4), the constellation Boötes chasing the constellation of Ursa Major, correlating with the top register image 14A (Fig.6), the constellations Canis Major and Canis Minor correlating with the top register image at 15A (Fig.8), and the constellation Hercules correlating with the top register images of the Franciscan and Dominican friars at 17A (Fig.9) and 18A (Fig.10).

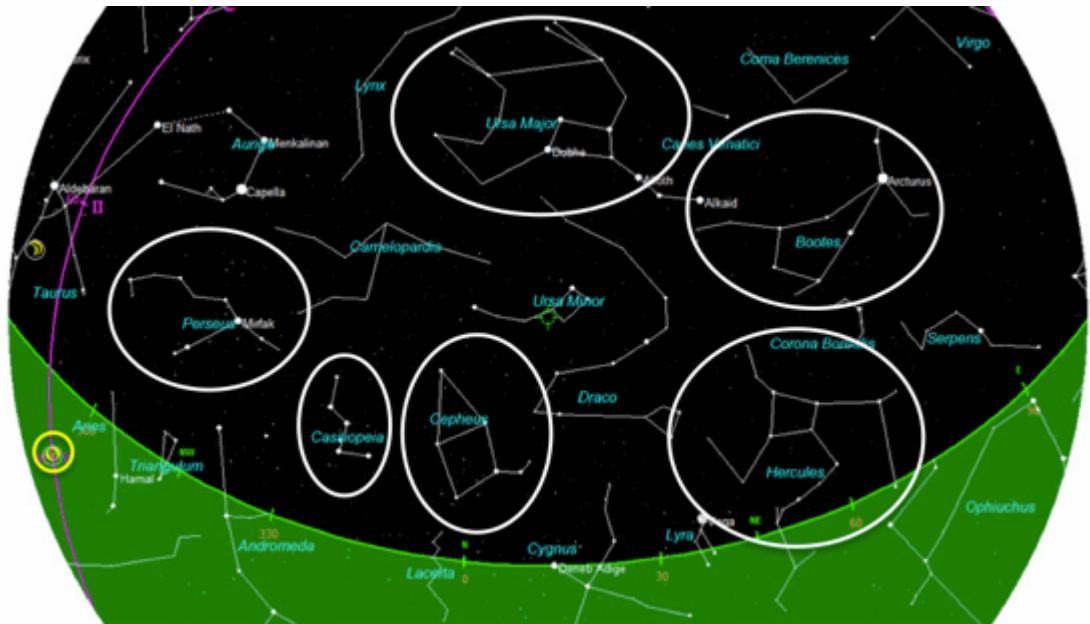


Figure 11. Sky map for sunset Taurus Ingress, April, c.1309 OS Padua, Italy, showing the sun (ringed and below the horizon in the green area) and constellations visible in the black area (the night sky) from left, Perseus, Cassiopeia, Cepheus, On His Knees (The Kneeler), also known by the Greeks as Hercules, in a line parallel with the horizon after sunset, with Boötes and Ursa Major above them.



Figure 12. Sky map for sunset Taurus Ingress, April, c.1309 OS Padua, Italy, showing the artist's impression of the sky and their correct orientation, from left, Cepheus (11A), Cassiopeia (12A), Perseus (13A), and On His Knees (The Kneeler), also known by the Greeks as Hercules (17A and 18A), in a line parallel with the horizon after sunset, with Boötes (14A) and Ursa Major (14A) above them.

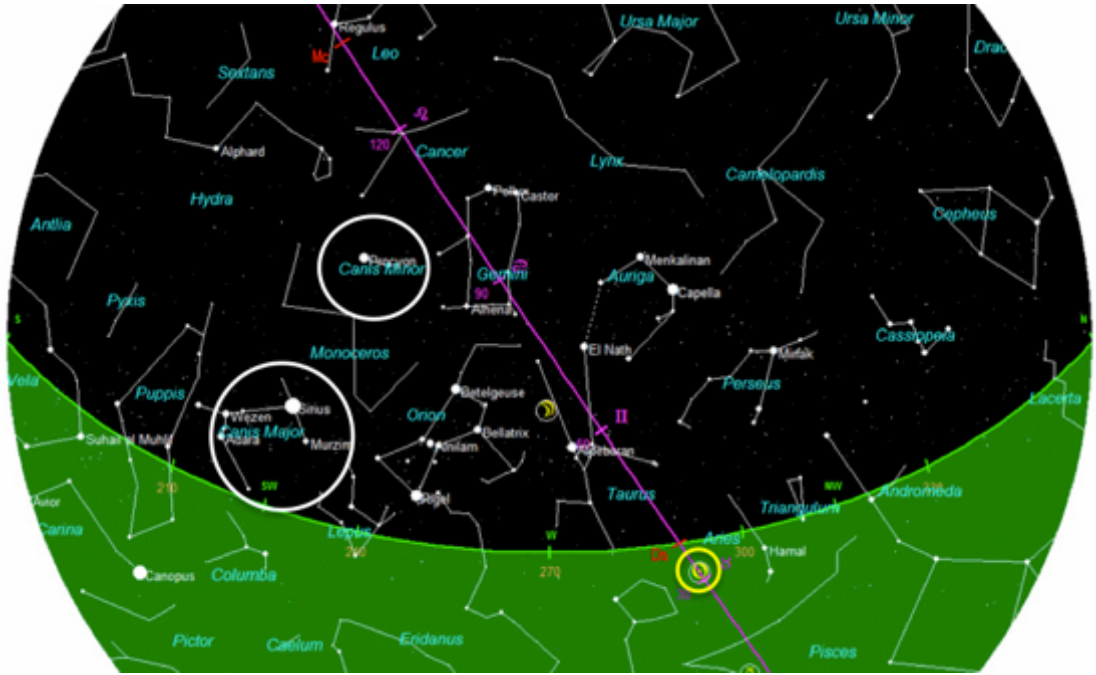


Figure 13. Sky map for sunset Taurus Ingress, April, c.1309 OS Padua, Italy, showing the constellations Canis Major and Canis Minor positioned one above the other as if ‘fighting’ each other.

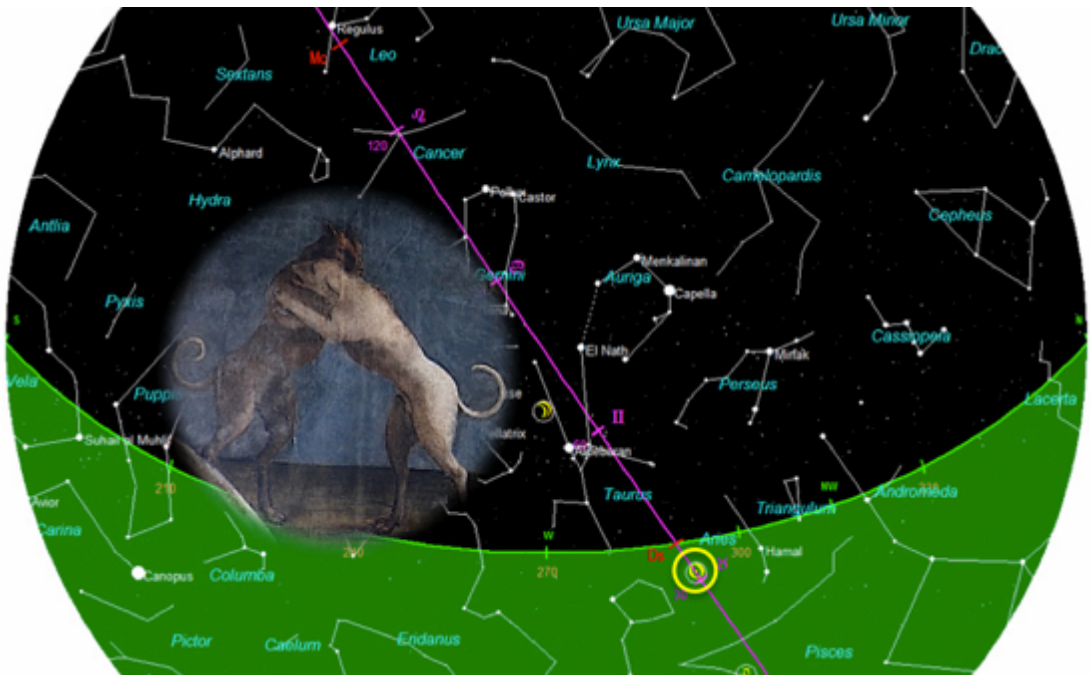


Figure 14. Sky map for sunset Taurus Ingress, April, c.1309 OS Padua, Italy, showing the artist's impression of the sky and the correct orientation of the constellations Canis Major and Canis Minor (15A).



Figure 15. Image 19A, top register south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D.Gunzburg.

Turning now to image 19A (Fig.15), of a young man wearing a green sugarloaf hat, a thigh length green tunic, brown hose and green shoes, carrying a dead white bird in his right hand and fruit and leaves in his left hand, Barzon, and Fantelli and Pellegrini tentatively described this as Giovanni Gualberto (985 or 995–1073), an Italian saint and the founder of the Vallombrosan Order. Fantelli and Pellegrini also added ‘forgiveness’, while Rigobello and Autizi designated this as a ‘bird hunter’. Since this image at 19A sits alongside a Franciscan friar and a Dominican friar, and above a devotional area of the ‘chapter’, more of which will be written in this chapter, the scholars in Table 9 may have felt it was appropriate to identify the image of another mendicant order. Yet portrayals of San Giovanni Gualberto created by painters in a slightly later time period, such as that of Luca di Tommè (fl.1356-1389) (Fig.16), Fra Angelico and his workshop (Fig.17) and Neri di Bicci (Fig.18), depict the saint in quite different ways to image 19A.

The rise of the mendicant orders in the thirteenth century, according to Anne Dunlop, was seen as ‘a social and religious revolution... [offering] a radically new idea of religious vocation... [which] embraced poverty as fundamental to the religious state.’²¹ The term ‘mendicant’ meant that the order had chosen to live by begging for alms and donations and it referred specifically to five orders: the Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites, Servites (the Order of Servants of Mary), and Augustinians.

²¹ Anne Dunlop, ‘Introduction: the Augustinians, the Mendicant Orders, and Early-Renaissance Art’, in *Art and the Augustinian order in early Renaissance Italy*, ed. Louise Bourdua and Anne Dunlop (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 1-5, pp.1-2.



(Left) Figure 16. Luca di Tommè (fl.1356-1389), *San Giovanni Gualberto*, table altarpiece, tempera on panel 114 × 47.2 cm. Sold at Sotheby's in 2009. Image: Wikimedia Commons.

(Middle) Figure 17. Fra Angelico and his workshop, detail of door panel showing Saint Giovanni Gualberto, c.1422-1434, tempera on panel, 185 x 176 cm, Museo di San Marco, Florence, Italy. Image: ARTstor.

(Right) Figure 18. Neri di Bicci (1419–1491), *Saint John Gualberto Enthroned among Vallombrosian Saints*, c.1455, fresco, Santa Trinità, Florence, Italy. Image: ARTstor.

The Vallombrosan Order, or Benedictine congregation, was founded in 1039, deriving its name from the place of its original location, Vallombrosa, approximately thirty kilometres south-east of Florence in the Appenines. Unless the Vallombrosan Order had specific links with Padua, and as far as it is possible to identify it doesn't, it is hard to understand why image 19A (Fig.15) might represent Giovanni Gualberto and why it would be included within this area of the scheme.

I suggested earlier that Boötes in image 14A (Fig.6) was represented holding a javelin and about to kill his mother. I suggest that this image 19A (Fig.15) also depicts Boötes, this time as The Hunter (carrying a dead bird) who now Farms (carrying a cornucopia of fruit and leaves). I am, in fact, suggesting that we see two interpretations of Boötes represented along the top register of the images. To place a constellation in two expressions in this way along the top register of fresco constellations may appear unusual. There is, however, a reasonable suggestion to account for it and this is due to what is known as star phasing. Having been visible in previous months for only part of the night, the constellation Boötes has now returned to its current phase of curtailed passage, which means the constellation is visible for the whole night (for full explanation

of star phasing see Appendix 2). Hence I contend both images are placed here to indicate that the constellation has now fully returned to the night sky and thus the whole story is visible throughout the night and into the predawn.

**The Middle and Lower Registers —
The Astrology Reflected in the Daily Lives of the Paduan Community
for when Venus was travelling through the zodiac sign of Taurus**

Image 12B (Fig.19), a woman holding red rosebuds and white flowers in her left hand and lavender and pink flowers in her right hand, is the image for the Labour of the Month for April. The flower-bearer was a consistent image for April amongst Italian sculptural cycles.²²



Figure 19. Image 12B of a woman holding flowers, symbolising the Month of April, middle register south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D. Gunzburg.

In describing Venus, Ibn Ezra noted that she ruled ‘fructification and multiplication’, the epitome of spring and new growth, as well as ‘gardens, orchards, places of myrtle and flowers’ and ‘partridge, doves and birds’, plants that have ‘good fragrance and pleasant

²² James Carson Webster, *The Labors of the Months*, Northwestern University Studies in the Humanities, Number Four (New York: AMS Press, 1938).p.58

taste' as well as 'good aroma and is succulent and oleaginous'.²³ Underneath image 12B, along the lower register, three images reflect this fruitful expression of the rulership of Venus: image 12C (Fig.20), a flock of five birds sitting and flying amongst verdant foliage,²⁴ image 13C (Fig.21), a woman kneeling to pick flowers amongst lush green growth, and image 14C (Fig.22), a woman holding baskets in her outstretched hands. All three images convey the return of spring birds signalling warmer temperatures, and longer days, and succulent and sweet-smelling vegetation.



Figure 20. Image 12C of a host of birds sitting and flying amongst foliage, lower register south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D. Gunzburg.



(Left) Figure 21. Image 13C of a woman kneeling and picking flowers, lower register south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D. Gunzburg.



(Right) Figure 22. Image 14C of a woman holding a woven basket in hand, lower register south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D. Gunzburg

²³ ibn Ezra, *The Beginning of Wisdom*, p.100.

²⁴ The bird on the far left may be a Great Egret. The bird with a split tail swooping downwards may be a swallow. The two birds flying upwards through the tree branches are difficult to identify with certainty. The bird on the right may be a gull.

The three women of 12B, 13C, and 14C all wear fashionable high-waisted dresses with sweeping hemlines slightly trained at the back, tall bulbous headdresses designed to give artificial height and elongate the neck, and hairlines plucked to make the women's foreheads higher. These fashions belong to the late Trecento-early Quattrocento International Gothic style of dress influenced by France²⁵ and therefore, I argue, situate the images in this part of the scheme within the period of repainting that followed the fire of 1420.

Ibn Ezra also described Venus as ruling 'the desiring [part of the] soul'.²⁶ Image 11B (Fig.23) depicts a noble man offering a large green flower to a curtsying woman who forms a circle between her right thumb and forefinger. Scholars in Table 9 describe this as 'an offer of flowers', 'the spirit of love' and 'loving courtship'. Flowers are a personification of spring and placed adjacent to image 12B, the month of April, the large green flower implies an intention of marriage/fructification, as does the circle made by the woman between her right thumb and forefinger.



Figure 23. Image 11B, of a man gifting a woman with a flower, and the woman circling her thumb with her forefinger, middle register, south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D.Gunzburg.

²⁵ Jacqueline Herald, *Renaissance dress in Italy 1400-1500*, ed. Aileen Ribeiro, The History of Dress Series (London: Bell & Hyman, 1981), p.45.

²⁶ ibn Ezra, *The Beginning of Wisdom*, p.100.

In 725, the Venerable Bede (c.673–735) wrote *The Reckoning of Time*, a book about time-keeping in general and of computing the date of Easter in particular, using a system of finger numeration. This was the oldest complete description of a classification that had been in place since Roman times and the only treatise on finger-counting from the Middle Ages.²⁷ It allowed intermediate computational results to be represented by finger positions: one to ninety-nine on the left hand and numbers up to nine thousand nine hundred on the right.²⁸ Forming a circle between the thumb and the forefinger represented the number thirty (Fig.24).²⁹

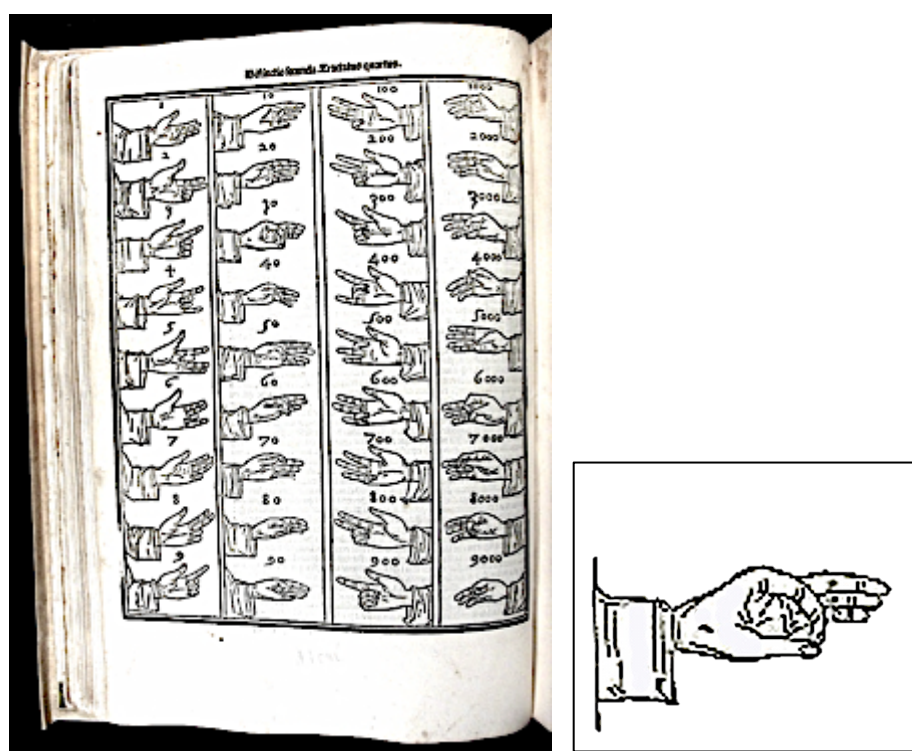


Figure 24. Finger numbering from Luca Pacioli's *Summa de arithmetica, geometrica, proportioni et proportionalita*, f.37, 1494, showing the circle of thumb and forefinger signifying the number 30 (left), and detail (right).

Cornelius O'Boyle's work on gesturing in the early universities³⁰ picked up on the work of French writer François Rabelais (1483–1553) who, in his book *Gargantua and Pantagruel* had one of his characters exclaim that the sign of the thumb and index finger

²⁷ Jeff Suzuki, *A History of Mathematics* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2002), p.274.

²⁸ Jeff Suzuki, *Mathematics in historical context* (Washington, DC: Mathematical Association of America, 2009), pp.126-127.

²⁹ Luca Pacioli, *Summa de arithmetica, geometria, proportioni et proportionalita* (1494). Online: http://archimedes.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/cgi-bin/toc/toc.cgi?step=thumb&dir=pacio_summa_504_it_1494

³⁰ Cornelius O'Boyle, 'Gesturing in the Early Universities', *Dynamis-Acta Hispanica ad Medicinae Scientiarumque Historiam Illustrated* 20(2000), 249-281, p.250.

joined ‘nail to nail’ symbolised marriage:

‘I understand what he means by that sign,’ said Pantagruel: ‘it signifies marriage and also the number thirty according to the doctrines of the Pythagoreans. You will be married.’³¹

Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920), writing in the area of experimental psychology, mentioned that in Naples ‘the kiss of thumb and index finger’ means ‘love’, ‘marriage’ or ‘spouse’.³²

In image 11C (Fig.25), an older woman wearing a white wimple with a brown chaperon, a brown gown, tied at the waist with brown belt from which hangs a purse with a cross on it, and a knife greets a younger woman. Scholars in Table 9 describe this as ‘a loving conversation’ and ‘a loving encounter’. The greeting is reminiscent of *The Visitation* image in the Arena Chapel (Fig.26). It is tempting to explore these images further in the light of the clothing, the purse, and the knife of the older woman which suggests her possible role as a midwife. This, however, requires further research to which I intend to return at a later time.



(Left) Figure 25. Image 11C, of an older widow greeting a woman, lower register, south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D.Gunzburg.

(Right) Figure 26. Giotto di Bondone (c.1267–1337), *The Visitation*, c.1305, fresco, Arena Chapel, Padua, Italy. Image: ARTstor.

³¹ François Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, trans. M.A. Screech (London: Penguin, 2006).

³² Wilhelm Wundt, *The language of gestures* (The Hague & Paris: Mouton, 1973), pp.96, 99.



Figure 27. Image 13B of a young male child riding a dromedary, middle register south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D. Gunzburg.

Scholars in Table 9 described image 13B (Fig. 27), a young male child with red curly hair, wearing a white chemise under a red pleated gown with wide cuffs, a brown belt, white gloves, and brown shoes, seated sideways on a grey dromedary, as ‘a strong man’, ‘virile force’, and ‘boy on a dromedary – vitality.’ The child holds red reins in his left hand and a whip with three fronds in his right hand. Ibn Ezra observed that Venus ‘rules camels, which are not harmful’.³³ Placing a young boy on the back of the dromedary is one way of depicting a camel as not being harmful. Furthermore, the image may also be a reference to the clima (latitude belt or region), since Ibn Ezra also wrote that,

In her share of the regions are the fifth [clima] where Spain is, and some of Idumea; of the nations [she rules over] the Arabs and all those of the Islamic faith.³⁴

Idumea, situated south of Judah and the Dead Sea, with its limits bordering on the wilderness, was the country inhabited by the descendants of Edom, the Iron Age kingdom in southern Jordan that flourished in the late eighth and seventh centuries BCE when it paid tribute to Assyria.³⁵ The name ‘Idumea’ was said to be the Graecized form of the

³³ Avraham Ben Meir ibn Ezra, *The Book of Reasons (Sefer Ha'Te'Amim)*, ed. Robert Hand, trans. Meira B. Epstein, vol. Project Hindsight Hebrew Text Volume 1 (Berkeley Springs: The Golden Hind Press, 1994), p.48.

³⁴ ibn Ezra, *The Beginning of Wisdom*, p.100.

³⁵ Piotr Bienkowski, ‘New Evidence on Edom in the Neo-Babylonian and Persian Periods’, in *The land that I will show you: essays on the history and archaeology of the Ancient Near East in honour of J.*

Hebrew ‘Edom’ meaning ‘red’ and may have arisen due to the red colour of the area’s sandstone cliffs.³⁶ A child dressed in red on a camel’s back may thus be symbolising the clima.

Based on Ibn Ezra’s statement about Venus that ‘Of the trades [she denotes working with] anything that is dyed...’³⁷ another line of thinking is possible. Recipes from a third-century papyrus indicated that the process of dyeing using alum is nearly two thousand years old.³⁸ Alum was made ‘by burning a particular stone continuously for between nine and twelve months ... [and then] soaked in lye made from the ash of burnt seaweed or stale urine... which worked like “yeast put to beer”. The liquor was drained from the stone and then boiled-off to leave the alum’.³⁹ Alum, according to Daniel V. Thompson, was the ingredient essential to the medieval process of colour-making and dyeing.⁴⁰ When used in painting, alum crystals became the mordant that was used to bind the dye colour so that it locked with or bit onto (French *mordre* ‘to bite’) the painting and did not wash off. Urine was also an important ingredient in the dyeing process. The third-century papyrus recipes specified urine from, variously, sheep, camels, a she-ass, pregnant animals, a small child, or an uncorrupted youth.⁴¹ A twelfth-century recipe specified urine from ‘a red-haired boy.’⁴² It may be speculative to suggest that image 13B (Fig.27) of a camel, and young red-haired boy wearing a red tunic suggests the art of dyeing in the ‘chapter’ of the Salone that is connected, by the quality of the planet Venus, with dyeing but it is a line of argument that could be followed. If so, then this image, via the meanings given by Ibn Ezra, may be serving three interpretations: harmless camels, the fifth clima, and trades involving dyeing.

Maxwell Miller, ed. John Andrew Dearman and Matt Patrick Graham (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press Ltd, 2001), 198-213, p.198.

³⁶ Charles Souvay, ‘Idumea’, in *Book Idumea*, Series Idumea (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910. Online at: <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07638a.htm>>), 7. – accessed 22 April 2013.

³⁷ Ibn Ezra, *The Beginning of Wisdom*, pp.100-101.

³⁸ Earle Radcliffe Caley, *The Leyden and Stockholm Papyri: Greco-Egyptian Chemical Documents From the Early 4th Century AD*, Oesper Collections in the History of Chemistry (Cincinnati: University of Cincinnati, 2008).

³⁹ Spike Bucklow, *The alchemy of paint: Art, Science and Secrets from the Middle Ages* (London: Marion Boyars, 2009), p.29.

⁴⁰ Daniel V. Thompson and Bernard Berenson, *The materials and techniques of medieval painting* (New York, NY: Dover Publications, 1956), p.79.

⁴¹ Caley, *The Leyden and Stockholm Papyri*, pp.33,34,36,38,50,51, and 58.

⁴² Bucklow, *The alchemy of paint: Art, Science and Secrets from the Middle Ages*, p.29.

A grouped narrative clustered around image 17B (Fig.28), the representation of Venus, the planet of this ‘chapter’, connote worship and may fit the description given by Ibn Ezra that Venus evidenced ‘places of worship’⁴³ and that of al-Qabīṣī that Venus ruled ‘houses of worship, and adherence to religions’.⁴⁴

Image 17B of Venus in its rulership of Taurus is depicted as The Virgin and Child. The Virgin, dressed in a white wimple under a long red gown with sleeves edged in gold, a blue mantle caught at the neck with a gold brooch and wearing a gold crown, carries a small child (the Christ child) dressed in a cream tunic wide red cuffs and long blue sleeves edged in gold, and a blue belt with gold studs. Neither the Virgin nor the Christ Child are haloed, possibly due to the fact that the Virgin is rayed to represent the planet. More will be written of this image further in this chapter apart from the fact that image 17B forms a central focus around which are situated the Franciscan friar (17A), the Dominican friar (18A), a nun praying (17C) (Fig.29), a penitent on his knees in the act of self-flagellation (16B) (Fig.30), a pilgrim with a purse, rod and water bottle (16C) (Fig.31), and three flying angels raising their arms in adoration towards the Virgin (18B) (Fig.32).



Figure 28. Image 17B of the planet Venus depicted as the Madonna and Child, with rays emanating from her to symbolise the planet, middle register south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D. Gunzburg.

⁴³ ibn Ezra, *The Beginning of Wisdom*, p.100.

⁴⁴ Charles Burnett, Keiji Yamamoto, and Michio Yano, eds. *al-Qabīṣī (Alcabitius). The Introduction to Astrology*, Warburg Institute Studies and Texts. London and Turin: The Warburg Institute and Nino Aragno Editore, 2004, p.75.



(Left) Figure 29. Image 17C of a nun praying, lower register south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D. Gunzburg.



(Right) Figure 30. Image 16B of a penitent on his knees in the act of self-flagellation, middle register south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D. Gunzburg.



Figure 31. Image 16C of a pilgrim, lower register south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D. Gunzburg.



(Left) Figure 32. Image 18B, of three flying angels raising their arms towards the Virgin in image 17B, middle register, south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D. Gunzburg.



(Right) Figure 33. Image 18C of a 'chapter-changing' angel, lower register, south wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D. Gunzburg.

Image 18C (Fig.33), a flying angel with streaming red hair and outstretched red wings, may be raising its arms in adoration of the saint at 19BC who completes the ‘chapter. It may also be a ‘chapter changing’ angel, directing the viewer to move onward.

One final image completes this sub-narrative sequence of images describing devotion. Image 15C (Fig.34) depicts an angel with gold curling shoulder-length hair, sumptuously dressed in a red knee-length tunic with a white leaf design around the neck, a pleated skirt edged with gold embroidery, white cuffs embroidered with gold, white gloves, black hose, and black knee-high boots edged with gold. He wears elaborate classicising armour with a white leaf design and holds a torch on top of a long staff. His gaze and his beckoning right hand encourage movement towards or into this grouped narrative. Scholars in Table 9 describe this image as ‘the spirit of love’. I contend, however, that although this angel does not carry the attributes of a shield and spear, the fact that he wears armour and carries a fiery torch suggests he may be the archangel Michael.



Figure 34. Image 15C, of a sumptuously dressed angel, wearing armour holding a torch on top of a long staff, lower register, south wall, Salone. Photo: D.Gunzburg.

If this is the archangel Michael, then there is a further line of reasoning that can be pursued. The archangel Michael was prevalent in Apocalyptic literature of the Old and New Testaments. Specifically in the New Testament, *Revelations 12*, he was connected with the Woman of the Apocalypse. Michael’s role in the narrative of *Revelations* was to kill the enormous red dragon with seven heads that threatened to devour the child born of

the Woman.⁴⁵ The Woman was described as ‘adorned with the sun, standing on the moon, and with the twelve stars on her head for a crown’⁴⁶ In considering the earliest Anglo-French illustrated Apocalypse manuscripts that emerged in the 1240s as texts separate to the New Testament, Beth Williamson has pointed to the deliberate visual connections between the Woman of the Apocalypse and the Virgin and Child in either or both the Massacre of the Innocents and the Adoration of the Magi.⁴⁷ The eleventh-century Rhenish monk Berengaudus, whose commentary was the one most widely used in Apocalypse manuscripts, distinguished the Woman as Ecclesia, the Mother-Church or the Virgin Mary when portrayed with her child.⁴⁸ The large following of Apocalypse manuscripts in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries suggests familiarity with and acceptance of this connection.⁴⁹ Given this link, one can argue that image 17B of The Virgin and Child, rayed, wearing a crown and holding the Christ Child, suggests by similitude the Woman of the Apocalypse, highlighted by the image proposed as being the archangel Michael two columns back, and further underscored by what appears to be images from the Book of Revelations three columns ahead (columns 21-15), more of which will be discussed in chapter 8.

Finally, since there is a conscious visual translation of the planet Venus as The Virgin and Child in this image at 17B, there is yet another suggestion for the meaning of the image. Visually in the sky Venus has three potential movements: rising in the east before the sun has risen as the Morning Star; setting in the west after the sun has set as the Evening Star; and invisible. Cicero observed this phenomenon when he wrote of ‘the star of Venus, called Phosphorus in Greek and Lucifer in Latin when it precedes, Hesperos when it follows the sun.’⁵⁰ Thus the Morning Star Venus was known as the ‘light-bringer’ or ‘dawn-bringer’ (Phosphorus) and the Evening Star Venus was known as ‘of the west’ or ‘western’ (Hesperos), for that is where Venus was seen to set.

⁴⁵ Rev.12:7-9. Alexander Jones, ed. *The Jerusalem Bible, Reader's Edition*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc, 1968, p.330.

⁴⁶ Rev.12:1-4. Jones, ed. *The Jerusalem Bible, Reader's Edition*, p.329.

⁴⁷ Beth Williamson, *The Madonna of Humility: Development, Dissemination and Reception c.1340-1400* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2009), pp.37-41.

⁴⁸ Williamson, *The Madonna of Humility*, p.39, footnote 24.

⁴⁹ Williamson, *The Madonna of Humility*, p.39.

⁵⁰ Marcus Tullius Cicero, *de Natura Deorum*, ed. O. Plasberg (Leipzig: Teubner. Perseus Digital Library Project. Online at: <http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:latinLit:phi0474.phi050.perseus-lat1:2.53>, 1917), 2.53.

There are two references in the Old Testament to the Queen of Heaven – *Jeremiah* 7:18 (‘The children collect the wood, the fathers light the fire, the women knead the dough to make cakes for the Queen of Heaven’) and *Jeremiah* 44:17-19 (‘We have no intention of listening to this word you have spoken to us in Yahweh’s name, but intend to go on doing all we vowed to do: offering incense to the Queen of Heaven and pouring libations in her honour’).⁵¹ Alexander Jones glossed ‘Queen of Heaven’ to mean Ishtar, the Assyrian goddess of fertility,⁵² and in the astro-theology of the Babylonians Ishtar was recognised as the planet Venus, the Morning and Evening Star.⁵³ In bas reliefs and statues from the tenth-, ninth-, and eighth-centuries BCE Ishtar was identified by her *polos*, or Oriental heavenly crown, along with the eight-rayed star enclosed in a ring or disc above the *polos*, identifying her with the planet Venus⁵⁴ (Fig.35).



Figure 35. Ishtar, goddess of love, standing on her iconographic animal, the lion. Her *polos* is visible on her head underneath the eight-rayed star enclosed in a ring. Relief sculpture, 8th century BCE. 122 cm (height). Musée du Louvre. Image: ARTstor.

According to Ronald Hutton, the functions of Ishtar as the Queen of Heaven, Morning and Evening Star were passed on to the Roman goddess Venus over time and in four

⁵¹ Jones, ed. *The Jerusalem Bible, Reader's Edition*, pp.1083, 1132.

⁵² Jones, ed. *The Jerusalem Bible, Reader's Edition*, p.1083.

⁵³ Grey Hubert Skipwith, ‘Ashtoreth, the Goddess of the Zidonians’, *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 18, no. 4 (1906), 715-738, p.720.

⁵⁴ Skipwith, ‘Ashtoreth, the Goddess of the Zidonians’, p.724.

stages.⁵⁵ The Roman Venus began as the gender-neutral spirit of vegetables. She then assumed a feminine gender when she was blended with the Etruscan goddess of flowers, Turan, and materialised as a goddess of green and growing things in general. When she became twinned with Aphrodite through the Roman Near Eastern collision with the Greeks of Magna Graecia in southern Italy during and shortly after the Second Punic War (218–201 BCE), she became a Roman version of Aphrodite, a goddess of love, beauty, pleasure, and procreation, although no longer transformed in terms of icons or myths, as she had been with Turan, and inheriting none of Aphrodite's connections to the sea or minerals. The fourth and final stage of Venus' evolution occurred when the Romans invaded Mesopotamia c.165 CE and encountered the worship of Ishtar. The Roman goddess Venus absorbed Ishtar's functions as a love and war goddess and embraced the nomenclature of Morning and Evening stars. Hutton described Venus as the western daughter of Ishtar and observed that, whilst Aphrodite faded in importance for some one thousand years, Venus remained a powerful and major figure in the western European imagination. It is therefore possible to see the *polos* of Ishtar (Fig.35) translated into the crown worn by the Virgin in image 17B (Fig.28).

The apostle at 19BC – St James the Greater

This apostle is examined in detail in chapter 8. Meanwhile, the letters 'Iacomus' written on the book held by this apostle (Fig.36), I contend, denote him as James the Greater. The facial characteristics of this image in the Salone fresco scheme are also consistent with that of St James the Greater in the Arena Chapel frescoes (Appendix 5).

⁵⁵ Personal communication with Ronald Hutton, 12 August 2013 and 10 October 2013.



Figure 36. Image 19BC depicting (*left*) the saint along the south wall completing the Venus rules Taurus ‘chapter’ and (*right*) a close up detail of the book he holds, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione, Padua. *Photo*: D.Gunzburg.

Visual Summary of the themes emerging in these three registers of Venus rules Taurus ‘chapter’

Whilst there is still uncertainty as to what some images may mean (the images at 11C and 14B), a visual summary of this Venus rules Taurus ‘chapter’ (Fig.37) shows the following themes emerging: the image of the Month and the Labours of the Month (circled in blue); the zodiac sign of Taurus the Bull (circled in aqua); the planet Venus (circled in purple); the religious orders as attributes of Venus (circled in pink); dyeing as an attribute of Venus (circled in green); the constellation images (circled in yellow); and ‘theme-changing’ and ‘chapter-changing’ angels (circled in black).



Figure 37. Visual summary of the emergent themes of the Venus rules Taurus ‘chapter’ of the Salone fresco images. *Image*: D.Gunzburg.

Venus rules Libra

A foldout of the images for this ‘chapter’ can be found on page 195.

Table 10: The 9 columns of the Venus rules Libra ‘chapter’, South Wall, using Barzon numbering and collating image designations.			
Image	Barzon (1924)	Fantelli and Pellegrini (2000) C: constellation; Z: influence of zodiac sign; P: influence of planet; M: occupation of the month; NI: a figure they are unable to interpret; W: a winged figure; R: a religious scene.	Rigobello and Autizi (2008)
60A	A winged spirit.	? (W)	A winged spirit.
60BC	The month of September.		
61A	A woman who rejects a lover	A woman who rejects a lover. (P)	A woman who rejects a lover.
61B	Musician.	Music. (P)	Music.
61C	Occupation of the month.	A liking for food and wine. (M)	A man who eats and a man who drinks — Moderation.
62A	The rejected lover.	The rejected lover.	The rejected lover.
62B	Woman’s work.	Feminine work. (M)	Woman who waits.
62C	Winged spirit.	? (W)	Angel in flight.
63A	The constellation of Draco.	Dragon — Serpent. (C)	Dragon — Serpent.
63B	The sign of Libra.		
63C	Women visiting each other.	Friendly greetings. (P)	Women greeting each other.
64A	Burning fire.	Fire — Love. (P)	Blazing fire — Love.
64B	A woman dressing herself.	Toilette. (P)	Woman who combs herself.
64C	Guardian.	Guardian of fields. (M)	A man with a stick on his shoulder.
65A	A woman dressing herself.	Toilette. (P)	Woman at her toilette.
65B	The planet Venus.		
65C	A winged spirit.	? (W)	A winged spirit.
66A	Industrious.	Industriousness. (Z)	An ox that moves forward.
66B	Coronation.	Coronation of a knight. (P)	Coronation of a knight.
66C	Prayer.	Prayer. (P)	Women in prayer.
67A	A winged spirit.	? (W)	A winged spirit.
67B	Dance.	Dance. (P)	Dance.
67C	Flourishing/verdant tree.	Flourishing tree. (M)	Tree still in leaves.
68A	A weakened man.	Human weakness. (Z)	A falling man.
68BC	The apostle St. Simon?	The apostle St. Simon Zealot.	The apostle St. Simon.

The Top Register of Constellation Images for Venus rules Libra

In considering the images along the top register of the Venus rules Libra ‘chapter’, two possible constellation images are apparent: 63A (Fig.38) of a dragon curled around a tree, which scholars in Table 10 described as the constellation Draco, and image 66A (Fig.39) of a white bull which scholars in Table 10 described as ‘industriousness’ and ‘an ox that moves forward’.

The constellation Draco revolves around the still centre of the North Pole and is circumpolar (never sets), hence it was known as the dragon that guarded the pole and never slept.⁵⁶ The Latin *draco*, however, meant both serpent and dragon, and the imagery of a serpent curled around a tree, suggesting the Tree of Life or the still centre of the North Pole, is reflective of the visual mythology of the constellations. In the predawn light at this time of the year (September-October) the constellation Draco is visible close to the horizon (Fig.40). At the same time the constellation of Taurus the Bull is seen to culminate overhead (Fig.40).



(Left) Figure 38. Image 63A of the constellation Draco the Dragon guarding the sacred North Pole, top register, north wall, Salone. Photo: D. Gunzburg.

(Right) Figure 39. Image 66A of the constellation Taurus the Bull culminating the predawn sky, top register, north wall, Salone. Photo: D.Gunzburg.

⁵⁶ Allen, *Star Names: Their Lore and Meaning*, p.204.



Figure 40. Sky map for predawn Libra Ingress, September, c.1309 OS, Padua, Italy, with the constellation of Draco 'face down' along the horizon and the constellation of Taurus the Bull culminating.

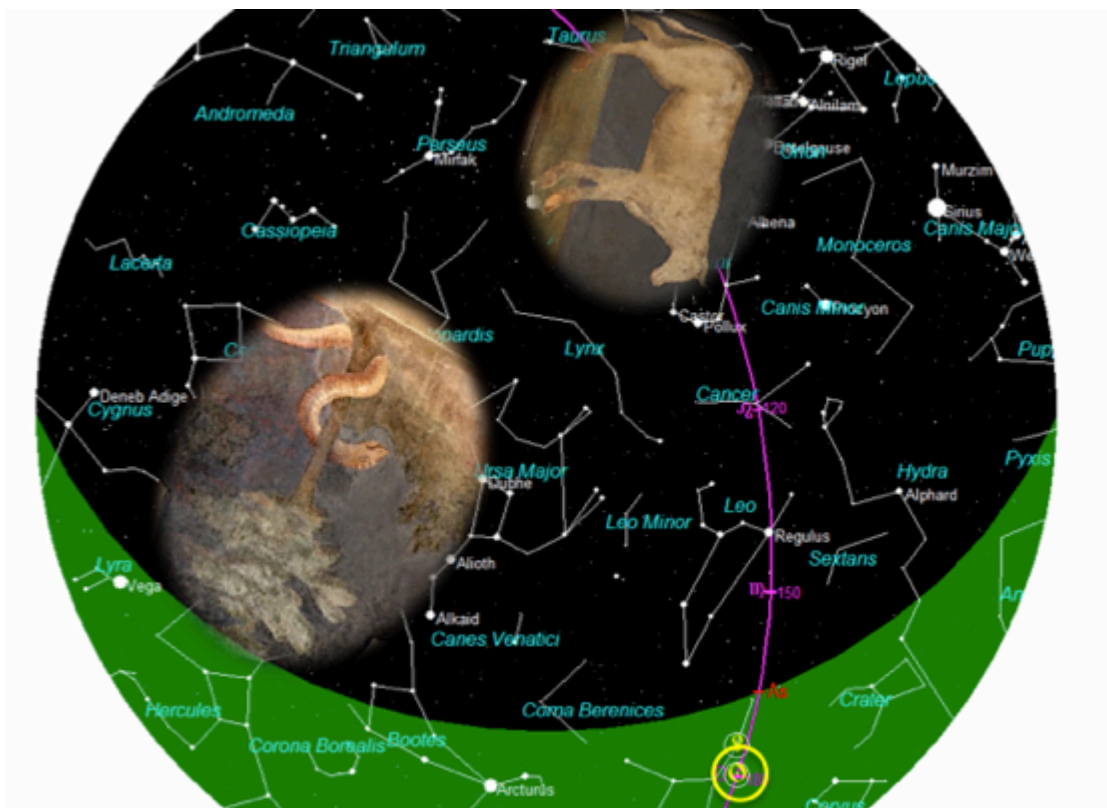


Figure 41. Sky map for predawn Libra Ingress, September, c.1309 OS, Padua, Italy, showing the artist's impression of the sky and their correct orientation of the constellation of Draco 'face down' along the horizon and the constellation of Taurus the Bull culminating.

The Middle and Lower Registers —

The Astrology Reflected in the Daily Lives of the Paduan Community for when Venus was travelling through the zodiac sign of Libra

Image 60BC (Fig.42), a cooper holding barrel hoops in both hands, is the image for the Labour of the Month for September, following on from grape picking in August (Mercury rules Virgo ‘chapter’). Image 61C (Fig.43) also describes the seasonal activity connected with wine. Two men sit side by side on a wooden chest. The man dressed in red holds his left hand to his mouth. The man dressed in saffron holds a glass of wine in his left hand. Scholars in Table 10 described this as ‘men who eat fruit and drink wine’, ‘a liking for food and wine’, and ‘a man who eats and a man who drinks. Moderation’.



Figure 42. Image 60BC of a cooper holding barrel hoops ready to build wine casks, lower register, north wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. *Photo: D.Gunzburg*

Whilst Ibn Ezra noted that Venus ruled ‘eating and drinking’,⁵⁷ these images of grape-picking and casking wine raise questions regarding the importance of wine as a beverage in medieval times and indicate other possible meanings for image 61C.

⁵⁷ ibn Ezra, *The Beginning of Wisdom*, p.101.



Figure 43. Image 61C of two men on a bench, one holding a glass of wine, the other touching his left cheek register, north wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D.Gunzburg.

Wine's central importance in the Mass, according to Melitta Weiss Adamson, meant that as Europe became Christianized, so vineyards proliferated from southern Europe to Scandinavia and the Baltic.⁵⁸ In her work on the windows of the trades at Chartres Cathedral, Jane Welch Williams noted how, in the eleventh century, wine was initially the privileged drink of the elite, yet by the thirteenth century as wine production expanded, it became the staple of the local diet.⁵⁹ Furthermore its role as a commodity changed. Despite Chartres being a predominantly money economy, like its counterpart bread, wine was used to pay debts such as 'taxes on wine production and sale,... tithes, small and large, and first fruit payments,... charges for transportation, weighing and measuring, taxes against the tenants to pay the lord's tavern keeper, and taxes against the tavern keeper for every barrel opened'.⁶⁰ Wine within Chartres' religious chapter was also socially important, welcoming visitors and concluding contracts. Initially taverns were temporary places set up by lords and small tenant farmers to sell wine they did not need to customers who brought their own containers and carried them away to consume the wine elsewhere. As wine production expanded, tavern keepers advertised with signs over their premises. From the early twelfth century onwards at Chartres, a wine crier announced the

⁵⁸ Melitta Weiss Adamson, *Food in Medieval Times* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004), p.49.

⁵⁹ Jane Welch Williams, *Bread, wine & money : the windows of the trades at Chartres Cathedral* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p.75.

⁶⁰ Williams, *Bread, wine & money*, p.76.

tapping of each new barrel.⁶¹ Initially one and the same occupation, by 1220 wine crying had separated itself from tavern keeping. At the crossroads, a wine crier would call out the price and quality of the wine and the tavern keeper would offer a sip to passers by.

Although Williams discovered four images of wine-crying in the St. Lubinus window, Bay 63, north aisle, Chartres Cathedral (Fig.44), all showing a man carrying a covered goblet and a second man carrying a stick and holding his left hand to his cheek, she found no precedence for this imagery in medieval art. What she did find was that these actions mirrored the descriptions of wine criers detailed in Parisian statues recorded in 1268.⁶² Thus rather than holding a piece of fruit, as Barzon suggested,⁶³ I contend that the man in image 61C (Fig.43) is, as Williams found in the Lubinus window, holding his left hand to his cheek, calling out to customers and working in tandem with the tavern owner who is offering wine to passing consumers.



Figure 44. Wine-crying, north aisle, Bay 63, second bay from west St. Lubinus window, Chartres Cathedral, c.1210. Image: ARTstor.

The colours of the garments in which these two figures are depicted — red and saffron — also bear discussion. Ibn Ezra noted how Venus ruled ‘the saffron [coloured] copper’.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Williams, *Bread, wine & money*, pp.77-78.

⁶² Williams, *Bread, wine & money*, p.83.

⁶³ Antonio Barzon, *Gli Affreschi del Salone in Padova* (Padova: Libreria Gregoriana, 1924), p.131.

⁶⁴ ibn Ezra, *The Beginning of Wisdom*, p.100.

When first exposed as a soft malleable metal, copper has a reddish-orange (‘saffron coloured’) colour. The classical Latin name was *Cyprium aes*, or copper with its alloys (*aes*) from Cyprus (*Cyprium*) since this is where copper of exceptional purity was found in the Roman era.⁶⁵ This was later shortened to *cuprum*. The planet Venus is also connected to copper through alchemy, and this was noted as such by Geoffrey Chaucer (1343–1400) in the fourteenth century.⁶⁶ As mentioned in chapter 3, from its earliest times in Hellenistic Egypt, alchemy was the body of knowledge that served to give an understanding of colour technology through how metals and dyes changed their surface colour when mixed with substances such as urine.⁶⁷ Thus we can argue that this image at 61C utilises the astrological and alchemical colours of the planet Venus in her copper-saffron expression. Further illustrating this discussion of colour, image 61B (Fig.45) depicts two musicians sitting side by side, one playing a triangular frame harp, dressed in red, the other playing a fiddle, dressed in yellow. This image combines Ibn Ezra’s descriptions of the qualities of Venus as ‘of people [she signifies]... musicians’⁶⁸ with this Venusian colour coding.



Figure 45. Image 61B of two musicians – a harp player and a fiddle player, middle register, north wall, Salone. Photo: D.Gunzburg.

⁶⁵ T. A. Rickard, ‘The Nomenclature of Copper and its Alloys’, *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 62(1932), 281-290, p.284.

⁶⁶ Geoffrey Chaucer, ‘Canon’s Yeoman’s Tale’, in *The Canterbury Tales*, ed. Gerard NeCastro (eChaucer: <http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/chaucer>, 2007), lines 819-829.

⁶⁷ John Gage, *Colour and culture: practice and meaning from antiquity to abstraction* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1993), p.139.

⁶⁸ ibn Ezra, *The Beginning of Wisdom*, p.100.

There also appears to be a self-contained narrative of the woman in a red gown beginning at the top of column 61 and forming an inverted-V pattern: image 61A (Fig.46), the woman leading or guiding a bull or an ox;⁶⁹ image 62B (Fig.47), the woman seated at a table; image 63C (Fig.48), the woman shaking hands with another woman; image 64B (Fig.49) the woman combing her hair, and image 65A (Fig.50) the woman seated on a low white stone wall holding a piece of green material in her left hand and a thick brown thread in her right hand.



(Left) Figure 46. Image 61A of a woman possibly leading or guiding a bull or an ox, top register, north wall, Salone Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D.Gunzburg.



(Right) Figure 47. Image 62B of a woman sitting at a table, middle register, north wall, Salone Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D.Gunzburg.



(Left) Figure 48. Image 63C, lower register, north wall, Salone Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D.Gunzburg.



(Right) Figure 49. Image 64B, middle register, north wall, Salone Palazzo della Ragione. Photo: D.Gunzburg.

⁶⁹ Although this part of the image is damaged, it is possible to make out the bull or the ox in high resolution close up.

In terms of colour coding, one can reason that image 65A (Fig.50) suggests a transition through a colour transformation. Aristotle argued that colours were proportioned in a scale between white and black.⁷⁰ Amongst the prevailing colour theories that abounded in the Trecento, such as that of Albertus Magnus (1193–1280),⁷¹ there was a general agreement that both red and green, contained within the same metal copper (ruled by Venus), were said to be the halfway point where white turned to black.⁷² This image at 65A (Fig.50) suggests the change from the saffron-red-copper colours of the first part of the ‘chapter’ into a red-green bias in the images depicted in 66B (Fig.51) and 66C (Fig.52).



Figure 50. Image 65A, top register, north wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. *Photo*: D. Gunzburg.



(Right) Figure 51. Image 66B, middle register, north wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. *Photo*: D. Gunzburg.

(Right) Figure 52. Image 66C, of two women in alternate red and green dresses, with crossed arms, lower register, north wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. *Photo*: D. Gunzburg.

⁷⁰ Aristotle, *Sense and Sensibilia*, ed. Jonathan Barnes, vol. 1, *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, The Revised Oxford Translation, Bollingen Series L X X I.2 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 439b, p.698.

⁷¹ Albertus Magnus, ‘Mineralia’, In *Opera omnia*, ed Borgnet (1890). (Paris: Alberti Magni e-corpus project, Department of Philosophy, St Jerome’s University, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 2008-2013), <http://albertusmagnus.uwaterloo.ca/newFiles/PDFs/Borgnet-volumen%2005.pdf> - accessed 12 May 2013. pp15-17.

⁷² Bucklow, *The alchemy of paint: Art, Science and Secrets from the Middle Ages*, p.133.

Image 66B (Fig.51), a woman placing a yellow chaperon on the head of the man kneeling in front of her (described by scholars in Table 10 as ‘coronation’ and ‘coronation of a knight’) and image 66C (Fig.52), two women with arms crossed on their breasts (described by scholars in Table 10 as ‘women in prayer’) unambiguously portray the red-green inversion.

Drawing all of these threads together I contend that this colour coding is based on the alchemical connection of Venus with copper which, in its raw state is saffron-red but when exposed to air or seawater over time, gains a vivid green patina called verdigris, a much-used pigment in the medieval era. Verdigris was also, according to Cennino Cennini (c.1370–c.1440) ‘manufactured by alchemy, from copper and vinegar’.⁷³ John Gage described the alchemical gendering of red and green in *The Arnolfini Portrait* by Jan van Eyck (1395–1441) as signifying the elemental union of fire (red) and water (green).⁷⁴ John Shearman argued that this colour coding exemplified his theory of ‘isochromatism’,⁷⁵ a term he invented and which referred to the equality (*iso*—) of areas of colour where identical tones or hues would be symmetrically repeated on either side of a central axis in an altarpiece. Spike Bucklow’s research into the figurative painting on the dado of five hundred rood screens in East Anglia in the UK revealed a non-axial symmetry of red and green images which he defined as an alchemically gendered ‘anagogic, polysemic, multivalent cultural phenomena’ — an allegorical or spiritual interpretation with many meanings designed to resolve temporal contradictions and provoke a transformation within the viewer.⁷⁶ Isochromatic colour combinations in sacred images were used in combination with gilding, tooling, and *cangiantismo* (the use of hue shifts in painting to create modelling, the invention of which is credited to Giotto) to produce ‘an unearthly presence’ and a ‘supernatural dimension to sacred images.’⁷⁷ I contend that this isochromatic colour combination is what is found in this ‘chapter’ of the

⁷³ Cennino D'Andrea Cennini, *The Craftsman's Handbook: The Italian "Il Libro Dell Arte"*, trans. Daniel V. Thompson, Jr. (New York: Dover Publications, 1960), p.33.

⁷⁴ Gage, *Colour and culture*, pp.142-143, 147.

⁷⁵ John Shearman, ‘Isochromatic Color Compositions in the Italian Renaissance’, in *Color and technique in Renaissance painting: Italy and the North*, ed. Marcia B. Hall (Locust Valley, NY: J.J. Augustin, 1987), 151-160, p.151. For example, the vestment and robe of an angel on the left side of the Madonna and Child would be repeated on the vestment and robe of an angel on the right side. See also Marcia B. Hall, *Color and meaning: practice and theory in Renaissance painting* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p.21.

⁷⁶ Spike Bucklow, ‘Red and Green: A Materials-based Hermeneutic of a Medieval colour scheme’, a seminar given at The University of Bristol for the Dept. History of Art, 2 May 2013.

⁷⁷ Hall, *Color and meaning: practice and theory in Renaissance painting*, pp.21-22.

Salone images and furthermore that it drives the visual intention of the ‘chapter’. This is underscored by the final image in this inverted-V pattern of the two women with their hands crossed on their breasts. Such a gesture, Moshe Barasch proposed, described a proclamation of the true faith.⁷⁸ Even the saint at 68BC (Fig.56) is depicted in a red-green colour coding. The fact that the artist used the red-green-saffron colours for this image of the saint serves, I suggest, to support my earlier argument that the saints complete each ‘chapter’ of the scheme, rather than begin them.

Image 63B (Fig.53), the zodiac sign of Libra, has four stars clearly marked on it that correspond with the positions noted by Ptolemy in his *Almagest*. Ptolemy, however, called this constellation the Claws of the Scorpion, the name by which it was known before the Greek and early Roman empires: The bright star at the end of the northern claw (the star on the left of the horizontal beam — star name Zuben Eschamali); the bright star at the end of the southern claw (the star at the top of the fulcrum — star name Zuben Elgenubi); the western star of the more southern three stars of the southern claw (the star at the top of the right side of the beam — star name Brachium) and the northern star of the two remaining eastern stars (the star in the pan on the right hand side — star name Upsilon Librae).⁷⁹ Even the faintest of these stars still has a visual magnitude of 3.58 meaning it would have been seen as bright in the skies of Padua c.1309. This marking of stars is not used for other zodiac images in the Salone fresco scheme. Whilst this emphasis of stars may simply have been to highlight the idea of the Scales of Justice in a place that dispensed justice, I argue that such accurate and deliberate placement suggests knowledge of the actual sky over Padua at this time by the scheme’s makers and users.

⁷⁸ Moshe Barasch, *Giotto and the Language of Gesture* Cambridge studies in the history of art (Cambridge University, 1987), p.87.

⁷⁹ Ptolemy, *Ptolemy's Almagest*, p.371.



Figure 53. Image 63B depicting the zodiac sign Libra the Scales with its four bright stars clearly shown, middle register, north wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. *Photo: D.Gunzburg.*



Figure 54. Image 65B of the planet Venus, with rays, middle register, north wall, Salone. *Photo: D.Gunzburg.*

Image 65B (Fig.54) depicts the planet Venus, a young woman with shoulder length brown hair pulled back off her face, standing in contrapposto pose, holding up a mirror

and gazing at the viewer. She is naked apart from a white gauze loincloth and a white gauze girdle. Nakedness symbolised purity in the medieval world.⁸⁰ Furthermore this image of Venus is placed next to image 64B (Fig.49), the woman in red combing her long red-gold hair, seated at a table on which there is a square mirror. These images of mirrors invite the viewer to reflect. Both are set either side of the circular glass of the window with a clear view of the sky symbolically representing heaven, and they contrast with the reflected view of self: in image 64B the mirror faces outward; in image 65B, the mirror faces the young woman. As Williamson noted, ‘Spectators looking at images that contain mirrors thus pick up cues to think consciously about seeing, and about what they see and how they see it, and about the significance of what they see.’⁸¹

The mythological Venus is also often depicted with a flaming torch, an attribute said to kindle love. The image of a burning fire is depicted at 64A (Fig.55) along the top register near to the image of Venus.

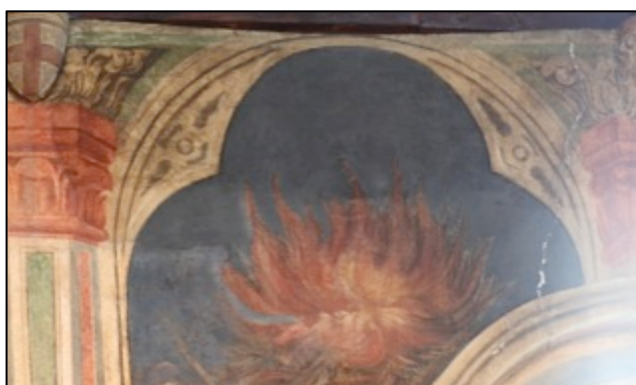


Figure 55. Image 64A of fire along the top register, north wall, Salone. *Photo: D.Gunzburg.*

The apostle at 68BC – St Simon

The apostle at image 68BC (Fig.56) depicts a balding man with a thick curly grey beard and moustache, wearing a red mantle with a golden lining over a loose-fitting long-sleeved green tunic, and sandals. The facial characteristics are consistent with those of St Simon in the Arena Chapel frescoes, the apostle with grey curling hair and beard (see Appendix 3).

⁸⁰ James Hall, *Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art* (London: John Murray Publishers, 1974), p.319.

⁸¹ Beth Williamson, ‘Mirrors in Art: Images as Mirrors’, in *The Book of the Mirror: An Interdisciplinary Collection Exploring the Cultural Story of the Mirror*, ed. Miranda Anderson (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), 132-150, p.132.



Figure 56. Image 68BC of the saint wearing a red cloak with a saffron lining, over a green tunic and holding a green covered book completing the Venus rules Libra ‘chapter’, middle and lower registers, north wall, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione. *Photo: D.Gunzburg.*

Visual Summary of the themes emerging in these three registers of Venus rules Libra ‘chapter’

Whilst there is still uncertainty as to what some images may mean (the images at 62A, 64C, and 68A), a visual summary of this Venus rules Libra ‘chapter’ (Fig.57) shows the following themes emerging: the image of the Month and the Labours of the Month (circled in red); the zodiac sign of Libra (circled in green); the planet Venus (circled in purple); the saint (circled in black); the red-green colour-coded images as attributes of the alchemical Venus (circled in pink and visually indicating the inverted-V pattern); the constellation images (circled in yellow); and ‘chapter-changing’ angels (circled in blue).



Figure 57. Visual summary of the emergent themes of the Venus rules Libra 'chapter' of the Salone fresco images. *Image: D.Gunzburg.*

Chapter Summary

This chapter focused on an examination of the Venus rules Taurus 'chapter' and the Venus rules Libra 'chapter' of the Salone fresco images. It examined the top register of constellation images and evaluated the celestial cartography that was described by those fresco images. In so doing, it found a fit for the images in the Venus rules Taurus 'chapter' in the sky map for sunset for the Taurus Ingress, and for the images in the Venus rules Libra 'chapter' in the sky map for pre-dawn for the Libra Ingress.

The themes represented in the middle and lower registers for the Venus rules Taurus 'chapter' were those of fructification and multiplication, of spring and new growth, and the desire to marry, along with colour and dyeing. Around the image of the planet Venus in her rulership of Taurus, portrayed as the Virgin and Child, clustered images of worship, together with an image of the Archangel Michael that, I suggest, prefaced images of the Feast of Corpus Christi that adjoins this 'chapter'.

The themes represented in the middle and lower registers for the Venus rules Libra 'chapter' were activities connected with wine: wine casking and wine-crying. Venus in its alchemical connection with copper, and the physical properties that turned it from saffron-red to green verdigris were reflected in the images of this 'chapter', an isochromatic red-green colour-coding which drives the visual intention of faith and completes with the red-green clothing of St Simon who closes the 'chapter'.

The next chapter examines the Mars rules Aries 'chapter' and the Mars rules Scorpio 'chapter' of the Salone fresco images.

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