

An Esoteric Education: Vespasiano Gonzaga's Private Library

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Abstract

Vespasiano Gonzaga, first and last Duke of Sabbioneta, built his small ideal city between 1554 to 1590. One of his ambitious projects being for his Duchy to become a “cathedral of learning”, he provided it with schools and a public library. He also owned a private library which reflected his own leanings and needs and represented the coeval trend of aristocratic education, increasingly interested in science, to the detriment of literature and, in particular, theological matters. The article investigates along these lines, presenting Vespasiano Gonzaga's scientific books.

Keywords: Vespasiano Gonzaga, Early Modern Education, History of Educational Thought, 16th Century Libraries, Sabbioneta.

Resumen

Una educación esotérica: la biblioteca privada de Vespasiano Gonzaga

Vespasiano Gonzaga, por encima de todo el Duque de Sabbioneta, construyó su pequeña ciudad ideal entre 1554 y 1590. Uno de sus ambiciosos proyectos era que su Ducado se convirtiera en una “catedral del saber”, proveyéndola de escuelas y de una biblioteca pública. Él también tuvo una biblioteca privada que reflejó sus propias inclinaciones y necesidades y representó la tendencia contemporánea de la educación aristocrática, cada vez más interesada en la ciencia, en detrimento de la literatura y, en particular, asuntos teológicos. El artículo investiga en este sentido, presentando los libros científicos de Vespasiano Gonzaga.

Palabras clave: Vespasiano Gonzaga, Educación Moderna Temprana, Historia del Pensamiento Educativo, Bibliotecas del siglo XVI, Sabbioneta.

Scholars and librarians, those who deal with books delight, or shudder, in learning the books people read; those whose focus is on Early Modern History of Education are keen to learn the books people read in the times past. This is because books are a powerful indicator of peoples' lives, particularly their interests and character, not to mention the education they received, either formal or informal.

The lightning-fast development of the printing-press in the 16th-century Italy, or in its many States, pandered to the sophisticated individualism of the Renaissance, since more and more people could afford the cost of a volume, and build personal libraries according to their religious and cultural leanings.

Some years ago, an incomplete catalogue of Vespasiano Gonzaga's private library was identified in Guastalla¹. It appears organized alphabetically with only the records between "B" and "S" intact. The rest were missing. The catalogue is a comprehensive inventory with sections available for household objects, pieces of furniture, paintings, clothing, and, in final position, books. Some of these books are described vaguely, but in many cases the scribe specified the publisher and year of printing. Most are printed books, but there are also manuscripts, about 450 in total².

¹ Fondo Gonzaga 91/3. First mention in A. Cerlini, *Inventari dei manoscritti delle Biblioteche d'Italia. Vol. XLIII: Guastalla*, Firenze, Olschki, 1937, p. 140, but incorrectly linked to the ruling family of Guastalla «91: Inventario di beni mobili dei Gonzaga (1551-1763) [...] 3: Inventario a rubrica di mobili oggetti di vestiario e libri posseduti da un duca di Guastalla (mancante delle prime carte)».

² The whole inventory has recently been transcribed and published by Giovanni Sartori, «La guardarobba di Sua Eccellenza: libri, quadri e oggetti vari», in *Vespasiano Gonzaga. Nonsolo Sabbioneta*

As mentioned earlier, scholars agree that this catalogue, drafted shortly after his death (March 1591)³, belonged to Vespasiano Gonzaga, the first and last Duke of Sabbioneta. However, they do not agree about whether the inventory corresponds to Duke Gonzaga's "great library"⁴, a public library located in the south wing of the Ducal Palace", or what was referred to as "little library", the duke's private collection adjoining his bedroom.⁵ Indeed, the personal collection does not fit with the 16th century 'librarian trend' of institutionalizing and making private libraries public⁶.

At present scholars lack the documents that definitively prove the contents of each library; however, I'm inclined to support that the inventory lists his private collection in consideration of the subjects of the books and the instructions in Vespasiano's Last will and Testament.

Terzo, Comune di Sabbioneta, 2016, pp. 48-116. I base the article on my own transcription from the manuscript.

³ E. Bertazzoni, *Il monastero di San Carlo in Guastalla e le giovani Gonzaga*, Guastalla, Soncini Editore, 2008, p. 250; C. M. Brown, «The Guastalla and Sabbioneta libraries in 1590», in P. Jackson/ G. Rebecchini (eds.), *Mantova e il Rinascimento italiano: studi in onore di David S. Chambers*, Mantova, Sometti, pp. 122-133.

⁴ I. Affò, *Vita di Vespasiano Gonzaga*, Parma, Filippo Carmignani, 1780, p. 117; G. B. Intra, «Sabbioneta», in *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, Serie Terza, vol. II, Anno XXI (1894), pp. 92-93. Franciscan friar Ireneo Affò wrote based his work on two coheval Vespasiano's biography, but above all he could consult the Ducal Archive of Sabbioneta, who was destroyed by the Austrian in 1831; most of the primary sources which he made use of no longer exist.

⁵ I. Affò, *Op. cit.*, p. 118.

⁶ Angela Nuovo, «Private libraries in Sixteenth-Century Italy», in Wagner B./ Reed M. (eds.), *Early Printed Books as Material Objects*, Berlin-New York, De Gruyter, 2010 pp. 229-240.

The mysterious “great library” completed Vespasiano’s educational project for his *almost-a-city*:⁷ seeking to transform the town in a “cathedral of learning”, he elected Athena as its patron and domestic goddess, and, before completing the building works, he established a *Gymnasium* where Sabbioneta’s young people could learn Latin, Greek and Philosophy in advance of the academic studies⁸.

Duke Vespasiano bequeathed the “great library” to the Servite Friars in Sabbioneta,

... so that they can keep themselves learned and intellectual, and they can easily study [...] ⁹.

Additionally, he left the “little library” to his stepson Luigi Carafa,¹⁰ who shared the duke’s interests, particularly in mathematics and astrology¹¹. In fact, some

⁷ A Renaissance *almost-a-city* («quasi-città») was a town with a strong urban and architectural identity, with an own legal status and the main structures of an autonomous State (schools, mint, court...), without any territorial dominion but itself, and therefore not important enough to be the seat of a cathedral, of a diocese. Cfr. G. Chittolini, «*Quasi-città. Borghi e terre in area lombarda nel tardo Medioevo*», in Id., *Città, comuni e feudi negli stati dell’Italia centro-settentrionale (sec. XIV-XVI)*, Milano, Unicopli, 1996, pp. 85-104.

⁸ I. Affò, *Op. cit.*, pp. 51-54. Vespasiano appointed humanist Mario Nizolio to organise and direct the school («studio publico di Humanità»), paying him 300 *scudi* per year: 100 provided directly by the Duke, and 200 by a levy on his subjects. Foreign students were accepted, whilst Sabbioneta’s subjects were forbidden to send their children anywhere else before University.

⁹ «... acciò possino mantenersi in detto convento religiosi dotti, e letterati, ed abbiano comodità di studiare [...] e voglio che ne sia fatto l’inventario nella consegna», in I. Affò, *Op. cit.*, p. 117.

¹⁰ I. Affò, *Op. cit.*, p. 118.

¹¹ A. E. Denunzio, «Sulla “Libreria Piccola” di Vespasiano Gonzaga e sulla sorte delle collezioni sabbionetane: notizie e ritrovamenti», in *Nonsolosabbioneta Secondo, Atti della giornata di studi (Sabbioneta*

precious volumes marked with Vespasiano Gonzaga's emblem was found in the Naples and Madrid libraries, conceivably coming from Carafa family's ancient inheritance¹².

As for the library's size, Vespasiano's biographers tell us that he began to search for and collect books in his youth as a soldier. Taking into account the Duke's intellectual ambition, 450 books for a private library seems small in number¹³. Barely enough for the great library, which occupied two rooms in the southern wing of the Ducal palace.

But the most substantial reason I claim that the catalogue lists the duke's personal collection, lie in the books subject matter: about 60 books of astronomy and astrology, about 60 of mathematics and architecture, fewer of law, not to mention holdings in philosophy, history and poetry. This library reflects Vespasiano's personality: a sharp interest in every application of the mathematical sciences in the areas of astronomy and civil construction; in law; and in Roman, Greek, and Medieval history. Vespasiano's personal collection

29 maggio 2010), a cura di G. Sartori e L. Ventura, Sabbioneta, Comune di Sabbioneta, 2013, p. 33, n. 9.

¹² Denunzio (*Op. cit.*) relates these books to Vespasiano's little library; he talks about *Elementorum geometricorum liber XV* by Euclid and a 1541 *Almagestum* by Ptolemy.

¹³ Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga, for instance, owned about 1500. We learn it from an inventory drafted immediately after Ercole's death (ASMn, AN, Ragazzola, Minute 7566); two-thirds of this wide library can be reconstructed from other notarized documents kept in Mantuan Archivio Gonzaga, which I partially investigate in L. Madella, «Libri luterani n. 140: Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga's library», in *Luther in Italy: Reform and Reaction in the Italian Book World*, Proceedings of the Conference organized by the Deutsche Historische Institut Rom and Biblioteca Casanatense, Rome, 22-24th February 2017, A. Badea/ F. Bruni/ M. Palumbo eds., Brill, 2018.

seems to be a selection that guided his main concerns and aims: building walls and ruling people.

To note, the number of the scientific volumes are not matched by a commensurate number of spiritual works: theological books are absent from the personal collection, and the religious ones that are listed seem to represent a conventional devotion, without either doubts or specific interests. Books like *Corona della Madonna composta in rime, Epistole ed evangelii che si dicono nelle messe tutto l'anno, Istruzioni et avvertimenti per meditare i misteri del Rosario, Homiliae sive conciones praestantissimorum ecclesiae catholicae doctorum*, an Italian version of Cornelio Musso's homilies, a *Missale romanum*, a *Little office of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, a sermon by Francesco Panigarola,¹⁴ a *Sacrum ceremoniarum Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae*, all seem to fall short of the standards that have come to be expected by the students and friars of the local Academy or Lycaeuum. There are also two New Testaments in Latin and Greek,¹⁵ the *Institutes* and *Conferences* by John Cassian, the first Book of Samuel, and a historical summary of the Bible,¹⁶ Isaiah, a 1574 Book of Psalms (maybe with a comment or a paraphrase).

Yet young Vespasiano was educated by a lady renowned for her religiosity and piety, his aunt Giulia Gonzaga, sister to his father Luigi Rodomonte. Giulia obtained the child's custody after Rodomonte's death,

¹⁴ Cornelio Musso and Panigarola were actual stars of Counterreformation preaching, they attracted people listening under the pulpit as well as reading their books.

¹⁵ Vespasiano could read and write Greek.

¹⁶ Likely *Sommario storico raccolto della Sacra Bibbia, dal Flavio, da Esegippo, et altri scrittori*, Bergamo, appresso Comino Ventura, 1590 (publisher and date are not specified but the work's second edition was published in 1593, i.e. after Vespasiano's death).

as Vespasiano's mother had remarried putting at risk the Gonzaga's inheritance¹⁷. The young boy went to live with her, and she made sure that he received a well-rounded first-class education as a humanist, courtier and soldier; around 1546 to 1549 he lived in Spain with Charles V's heir, an experience from which he was able to launch his career as a *condottiero* and diplomat. In Spain he improved his mathematical expertise, which triggered his later obsession with architecture. It should be mentioned that Vespasiano's technical skills did not primarily concern Sabbioneta, but extended to the construction of many strongholds and military buildings in other towns under the aegis and trust of Philip II (Cartagena, Pamplona, Fuenterabía and San Sebastián in the Basque Country, Orano in Algeria, etc.).

The pivotal role of Giulia Gonzaga in the Valdesian circle, as well as her dangerous and long-standing relationships with many Italians charged with heresy, is well known;¹⁸ but no sign of this history slips through Vespasiano's books.

There is instead a massive representation of another kind of knowledge that was an important element in Giulia Gonzaga's life, and also in her social circle: astrology. This was probably the atmosphere in which Vespasiano learnt to appreciate esoteric knowledge, although astrology was deeply rooted in the everyday life of Renaissance Italy and the lives of Italy's men of learning. Gandolfo Porrino published a three-part poem

¹⁷ Isabella Colonna, Vespasiano's mother, had remarried with a Philip of Lannoy prince of Sulmona. She was the daughter by Giulia's husband's first marriage, therefore Giulia's stepchild and sister-in-law at the same time.

¹⁸ Giulia was Juan de Valdés's dearest disciple; after his death, she helped the Spirituali's project (cardinal Pole, Marcantonio Flaminio...) preserving and disclosing Valdes's writings.

dedicated to Vespasiano;¹⁹ in the first part, Porrino invites the boy to Rome, where he lives to say that it's a city full of magicians and astrologers supported mainly by the Pope. In the second part, Gandolfo put into verse the position of planets at Vespasiano's birth along with his horoscope. Finally, at the end of the third part, Porrino makes his farewell recalling again the power of the Zodiac. We can suppose that the poet considered the astrological topic a good one to impress young Vespasiano.

The humanist Marius Nizolius later gives us a remarkable hint about Vespasiano's esoterical leanings. Vespasiano engaged him to direct the Lycaeo in Sabbioneta, and in 1562 Nizolius delivered an opening lecture in which the Duke's is praised for his intellectual skills:

videmus te ita docte, ita memeriter, ita subtiliter loquentem, ac disserentem modo de versibus poetarum, modo de monumentis historiarum, modo de dogmatibus Astrologorum [...].

We find in the Guastalla inventory the full spectrum of a classical humanistic education, with Latin poetry, Greek philosophy, but also Grammar books by the most renowned coeval scholars such as Giambattista Valentini alias Cantalicius, Antonio de Nebrija, Lucio Giovanni Scoppa, the portuguese Jesuit Manuel Álvarez. There are also those works by scholars closer to Vespasiano's personal experience and country, like the above-mentioned Mario Nizolio, the Mantuan monk Teofilo Folengo who wrote *Baldus*; and again Giovan Battista Attendolo and Camillo Pellegrino, belonging to the intellectual Neapolitan group which supported Tas-

¹⁹ Al Signor Vespasiano Gonzaga, cc. 88v.-100r in Rime di Gandolfo Porrino, Venezia, Tramezzino, 1551.

so's against Ariosto's poetry and which involved also Luigi Carafa, Vespasiano's stepson (Attendolo, indeed, had been Carafa's tutor). Of course, these scholars represent just a few of the list of scholars whose books were perhaps avidly read by Vespasiano. Further, dozens of volumes of legal history and law suggest that Vespasiano valued wisdom as a guiding principle in ruling a society a ruler, but they remind us also of his many litigations because of pre-emption right and borders with the main branch of the Gonzaga in Mantua.²⁰ Books of History and biographies of prominent men tell his longing for challenges and glory.

Nevertheless, books of mathematics, architecture, astronomy and astrology serve as windows into the most peculiar features of Vespasiano, as well as anchors from which he dreamt and realized his most ambitious project: the creation of a new State, although small. Whilst an impression of traditional erudition can be drawn from the religious and literary volumes of his personal collection, one can read in these "books of numbers" the upheaval that traversed the world of science in the second half of 16th century and an example of how, regarding 'formal education', the humanistic pattern began to fall out of favour in aristocratic circles.

As alchemical experiments slowly helped chemistry to find its way, measurements and calculation gradually led to a different comprehension of the universe, questioning ancient beliefs deeply seated in everybody's mindset and supported by religious and philosophical

²⁰ Vespasiano was tortured by a sort of inferiority complex towards the Gonzaga of Mantua, which resulted in a rivalry sometimes productive, if it caused patronage of arts and facilities for the subjects, but also detrimental when it collided with territorial and political interests of the Ducal family.

underpinnings. No surprise, then, that Ptolemy sat beside Copernicus, who together represent the most illustrious mathematicians of the late Renaissance, and calculated ephemerides²¹.

Duke Gonzaga took nothing more seriously than took mathematics, the principle of natural and physical knowledge, the base of every construction, and the proper foundation of the world. Mathematical and geometrical books make up the core of the Duke's library: Euclid in old and more recent editions, Pappus Alexandrinus, Proclus Lycaeus, comments on Archimedes' works, several books by Regiomontanus about geometry, the Jesuit Clavius about arithmetic, and works on perspective, optics, and medicine. Vespasiano even employed a personal mathematician, Giuseppe Scala, poaching him from the Padua University²². Scala filled his own Ephemerides, which have to be added to many other *Tabulae astronomicae* in Vespasiano's library, from the most ancient and famous (the *Tabulae alfonsinae*) to the newest (by the Flemish astronomer Jean Stade). It does not seem, instead, that he ever employed an astrologer²³.

With his reputation of military engineer, evidence point to the fact that the Duke was fond of mechanics, and able to execute complicated measurements that involved calculation by himself. The evidence is in the books the duke read: technical handbooks on measure-

²¹ Ephemerides were used to calculate the position and of astronomical objects, hence their usefulness for astronomical measurements, cartography, and astrology as well.

²² C. Dollo, *Modelli scientifici e filosofici nella Sicilia spagnola*, Napoli, Guida, 1984, pp. 267-268. Scala maybe followed Giuseppe Moleti's example, hired by Duke Guglielmo Gonzaga to give the heir Vincenzo a "modern" mathematical instruction.

²³ Atilio Carli, *Vespasiano Gonzaga duca di Sabbioneta*, Firenze, Carnesecchi, 1878, pp. 167 e sgg.

ment and arithmetic, works on mechanic and statics, works on automaton, books on astrolabe's construction and use; on this matter, the inventory lists not less than 14 astrolabes²⁴.

While this paper is not the place to examine the entire contents of the inventory, some other bizarre objects should be mentioned. A «candlestick for astrological purposes»²⁵ leaves no doubts regarding its function as a tool for horoscopes or predictions. An alembic made of lead may have been used for alchemical experiments, since its shape historically served to still chemicals. This makes sense since lead in particular was one of the most important base metals, but the alembic may have served also to prepare beverages²⁶. The inventory also listed what is called «una pietra sacrata involta in certi velli». It was called “pietra sacrata” a consecrate stone, because when placed in the reconditorium on the altar slab, the stone imbued the slab with a certain quality of sacredness, which without mass could not be celebrated. Further, the stone was needed to create a kind of portable altar and celebrate mass outside the church (e.g. on a journey).

Books of architecture, astronomy and astrology complete the framework of a complex though harmonious mental palace which provide a full theoretical base for a late 16th century Ideal City. The Renaissance concept of Ideal City sprang from an esoterical background

²⁴ I quote from the Guastalla inventory: «Dodeci casse rottonde coperte di coiro ero con dentro gli suoi astrolabii tondi» (c. 6 v.); «Una scatola grande bianca con dentro un astrolabio et un stucchiotto / Un'altra piccola con dentro un altro astrolabio» (c. 38 r.).

²⁵ C. 19 r.: «Un ingegno in forma di candelieri per astrologia».

²⁶ C. 21 r.: «Un lambico di piombo». At the 15th-century court of Savoy, rosewater was stillled in lead alembics (Terence Scully, *The Art of Cookery in the Middle Ages*, Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 1995, p. 159).

dating back to Plato and revised by Italian humanists, but it merged also with the ancient Arabian and Middle-Eastern knowledge replanted and reflourished in Spain through Andalusian sufism. From this ambience came *Picatrix*, a real grimoire, a book that chronicles the story of Hermes Trismegistus who established a mythical city, Adocentyn, where all people lived wisely, honestly and cheerfully while learning ancient knowledge (i.e. magic) and astronomy. *Picatrix*'s magical and symbolic worldview converged in the 15th century Neoplatonism; it permeated works like Filarete's *Sforzinda*, but also *De Re Aedificatoria* by Leon Battista Alberti, full of astrological advice. However, the Islamic and Middle-Eastern knowledge has very little representation through Arabian (or Spanish-Arabian) texts, and not without reason. The more representative astronomer in the library is Ptolemy, who distanced himself from Oriental magic and permitted divination only for medical treatments. The scientific passion of the Duke inclined more towards Flemish, German and French scholars, without prejudice to any forbidden authors: Sebastian Münster, Leonard Fuchs, Petrus (or Conrad) Dasypodius, perhaps Cyprianus Leovitius and Erasmus Oswald Schreckenfuchs; among poetry we find carmina by Marcantonio Flaminio.²⁷ Freedom of thought and care in safeguarding were maybe part of Giulia Gonzaga's inheritance,²⁸ but independence of judgment is often a natural endowment for ambitious people, and Vespasiano's ego is renowned to be overflowing.

²⁷ *Quinque Illustrium poetarum carmina*, Florentiae, apud Laurentium Torrentinum, printed in 1552 before Flaminio was put on the *Index*.

²⁸ Juan de Valdés taught his disciples a behaviour of dissimulation (or simulation) essentially the same that Calvin stigmatized calling it Nicodemism, although from different origin.

I provide below a diplomatic transcript of the scientific books listed in the inventory; whenever the volume is identifiable, a USTC code is given.

Biblioteca Maldotti, Fondo Gonzaga, Ms. 91/3:

C. 7r.

1. *Claudii Ptolomaei liber de Analemmate Romae apud Paulum Manutium 1562* [Ptolemy, *Liber de analemmate*, USTC 851491]: an Analemma shows through diagrams the position of the sun at the same time in the same place every day of the year.
2. *Cosmographia sive descriptio universi orbis Petri Appiani et Gemma Frisii Mathematicorum apud Jo. Bellerum 1584* [Petrus Apian, *Cosmographia*, USTC 407258]: Peter Apian, German, and Gemma Frisius, Dutch, were both renowned cartographer; Frisius improved mathematical instruments and constructed new ones (i.e. *Annuli astronomici* alias “Gemma’s rings”).
3. *Claudii Ptolomaei magnae constitutionis idest perfecte celestium motuum pertractationis libri 13, tutto greco* [Ptolemy, *Almagestum*, in Greek].
4. *C. Plinii Secundi Naturalis Historia opus Coloniae in aedibus Eucharrii Cervii Corni 1524* [Plinius Major, *Natural History*, USTC 617621].
5. *Commentaria in novas theoricis planetarum Georgij Purbachii* [?Erasmus Oswald Schreckenfuchs, *Commentaria in novas theoricis planetarum* (Basel, 1556), USTC 604629]: a work with the same title was written by Erasmus Osvaldus Schreckenfuchs, astronomer and Hebraist.
6. *Christophori Clauij In sfera Ioannis de Sacrobosco Roma 1585* [Christoph Clavius, *In Sphaera Ioannis de Sacro Bosco commentarius*, USTC 822866]: the *Tractatus de Sphaera* was published about 1230. As described

Ptolemy's universe in a clear and quite simple way, it became the most read introduction to astronomy in Medieval and Renaissance Europe. "*Sphaera*" did not refer to the Earth, but to the celestial globe, but it was also widely used for astrological and magical calculation. The German Jesuit Christopher Clavius perfected the Gregorian Calendar availing himself of Reinhold calculation and was a reference point for the 16th century astronomy, even though he refused the heliocentric model of Copernicus.

C. 7v.

7. *Coelestium rerum disciplinae Petri Jordani 1585*: it maybe corresponds with *Petrus Iordan lectori S.D. En tibi nunc iterum candide lector, coelestinum rerum disciplinae, atque totius sphaericae peritissimi Iohannis Stoefflerini Iustingensis uiri Germani uariorum astro-labiorum compositionem seu fabricam [...]*, where the author is Johann Stoeffler, a German scientist and instruments-maker and Petrus Iordan the publisher. Such a book was printed in Mainz in 1535, while we did not find evidence of a 1585 edition.

8. *Cosmographia Petri Apiani per Gemmam Frisium 1545*.

9. *Claudij Tholomei Geographicae enarationis Lugduni apud Ugonem 1551*.

10. *Centum Ptolomaei Sententiae ad Sirum fratrem a Pontano e greco in latinum translata atque expositae*: better known as *Centiloquium*, this collection of astrological aphorisms had been ascribed to Ptolemy and believed to be a summary of his major astrological work, the *Tetrabiblos*; scholars today agree on the pseudoepigraphical nature of the book.

11. *Compendio di aritmetica de numeri intieri*.

12. *C. Plinii Secundi Historiae mundi libri 3 1554*.

13. *Comentarii Archimedis Venetiis apud Manutium 1558* [*Archimedis Opera non nulla a Federico Commandino Vrbinate nuper in Latinum conuersa et commentariis illustrata*, printed in Venice by Paolo Manuzio. Commandino translated many ancient mathematicians from the Greek and Arabic.

C. 8r.

14. *Comentaria in Sfera Johannis de Sacrobosco* [Johannes de Sacrobosco, *De Sphaera*, commented edition].

15. *Commentaria in novas Theoricas planetarum Georgii Purbacchii*: cfr. n. 5.

16. *Claudii Ptolomaei almagestum* [Ptolemy, *Almagestum*].

17. *Claudii Ptolomaei almagestum 1528* [Ptolemy, *Almagestum*, USTC 851477]: with Luca Gaurico's comment.

18. *Claudii Ptolomaei Feludiensis Alexandrini* [Ptolemy].

19. *Claudii Ptolomaei liber de analemate* [Ptolemy, *Liber de analemmate*].

20. *Christ[opho]ri Clauii barbigensis ex Societate Jesu* [Christopher Clavius].

C. 8v.

21. *Cosmografia Universale nella quale secondo che vi hanno parlato i più veraci scrittori sono dessignati i siti de tutti li paesi* [Sebastian Münster, *Sei libri della cosmografia universale*, USTC 843737]: a former Franciscan friar, Münster had converted to the Reformation. He was put on the *Index librorum* as Sebastianus Munsterus, but after 1559 the Roman Censorship amended the *Cosmographia* and authorized the printing in Köln.

22. *Christofori Clauii Barbigensis Aritmeticae practicae* [Christopher Clavius, *Selected Arithmetic Methods*].

23. *Cosmografia Francesco Barotio* [Francesco Barozzi, *Cosmographia in quatuor libros distributa*, USTC 812370]: first printed in Venice 1585 (later editions after Vespasiano's death).

24. *Christofori Clauui Bambergensis*.

C. 9r.

25. *I Dieci libri dell'Architettura di Ms. Vitruvio in Venetia appresso Francesco de Franceschi 1567* [Vitruvius, *The Ten Books on Architecture*, USTC 863691].

26. *De re aedificatoria Leonis Baptistae Alberti Florentini 1541* [Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building*, Strasbourg, USTC 631286].

27. *Divi Alphonsi Romanorum et Hispaniarum Regis Astronomicae tabulae Parisijs ex officina Christiani 1545* [*Tabulae alphonsinae*, USTC 149299]: compiled in Toledo around mid-13th century, the *Alphonsinae tables* were still used in 16th century to calculate ephemerides and cast horoscopes.

28. *De temporum computatione et divisione Jo: Paduani Veronensis editio 2da Veronae apud Sebastianum a Donnis* [Giovanni Padovani, *De temporum computatione et divisione*, USTC 846041].

C. 9v.

29. *Di Herone Alessandrino delli Automati over machine se movendi in Venetia appresso il Porro 1589* [Hero of Alexandria, *About automata*, USTC 835654].

30. *De speculo ustorio Orontio Fineo autore ex officina Vascosani 1551* [Oronce Finé, *De speculo ustorio*, USTC 150840]: Finé was a French mathematician, cartographer and astronomer, imprisoned in Paris for judicial astrology.

C. 10r.

31. *Discorso Mathematico del Sr. Giovanni Luigi Longo* [Giovanni Luigi Longo, *Mathematical treatise*, Mantua, 1588].

32. *Discorso delle edifficattioni di Carlo Tetti* [Carlo Teti, *On the strongholds*]: a late 16th century classical treatise on defensive architecture.

C. 11r.

33. *Euclidis elementorum libri 15: grece et latine* [Euclid, *Elements*].

34. *Euclidis megarensis mathematici Clarissimi elementorum geometricorum libri XV*. Medieval translators often named him “megarensis” (see *ultra*), confusing Euclid of Alexandria, the mathematician, with Euclides of Megara, the philosopher, whose works Vespasiano also had.

35. *Elucidatio fabricae ususque Astrolabii Jo: Stopleri-
no Justingense Authore apud Guglielmum Cavelat*
1533: a work by Johann Stoeffler on construction and
use of Astrolabe.

36. *Euclidis Posteriores libri sex Romae apud Vincenti-
um Accoltum 1574* [Euclid, *Elements*, USTC 828480]: a
Clavius's edition in two parts.

37. *Euclidis Elementorum libri 15: Roma apud Vincen-
tium Accoltum 1574* [Euclid, *Elements*, USTC 828480].

38. *Euclidis Elementorum libri 15: una cum scolijs an-
tiquis Pisauri 1572* [Euclid, *Elements*, USTC 828478]:
this Pesaro's print was translated by Federico Commam-
dino.

39. *Elementa Geometriae ex Euclidorum Singulari pru-
dentia colecta a Joanne Vogelin professore Mathemati-
co* [Johann Vögelin, *Elementa geometriae ex Euclide
singulari prudentia collecta a Ioanne Vogelin professo-*

re mathematico in schola Viennensi. Arithmeticae practicae per Georgium Peurbuchium mathematicum. Cum prefacione Philippi Melanchtoni].

40. *Ephemerides novae auctae et repurgatae Joannis Stadii leonouthensis Mathematici Coloniae Agrippinae apud Haeredes Arnoldi 1570* [Jean Stade, *Ephemerides novae auctae et repurgatae*, Cologne, 1570]: among the most famous and consulted ephemeris in the 16th century. The Flemish Jean Stade (ca. 1527-1579) taught mathematics in Leuven and served the Duke of Savoy and the French court with his astrological predictions.

41. *Ephemerides Ioannis Stadii leonouthensis 1574* [Jean Stade, *Ephemerides*].

C. 11v.

42. *Ephemerides Josephi Scalae somario historico raccolto dalla sacra Bibia in Bergamo appresso il Ventura 1590* [Giuseppe Scala, *Ephemerides*].

43. *Euclidis posteriores libri sex auctore Christoforo Clauio Roma apud Vincentium Accoltum 1574* [Christopher Clavius, *Commentary on Euclid*, Rome, 1574].

44. *Euclidis elementorum libri 15: auctore Clavio predicto Roma apud ut supra* [Christopher Clavius, *Commentary on Euclid*].

45. *Euclidis Megarensis Elementorum geometricorum libri 15 1546* [?Euclid, *Elements*, USTC 654424]: it could be the Basel reprint of the edition edited 1537 including a Melanchthon's preface addressed to *studiosis adolescentibus* (*Euclidis Megarensis Mathematici Clarissimi Elementorum geometricorum libri 15 Cum expositione Theonis* [...], Basileae, per Iohannem Heruagium, 1537).

46. *Effemeride Josephi Scalae* [Giuseppe Scala, *Ephemerides*].

47. *Delli Elementi d'Euclide libri quindecì così intitolato* [Euclid, *Elements*].

48. *Euclidis elementorum libri 15: in un volume* [Euclid, *Elements*].

49. *L'Effemeride del Sr. Giuseppe Scali* [Giuseppe Scala, *Ephemerides*].

50. *Euclidis Elementorum libri 15: authore Christophoro Clavio Bambargense* [Christopher Clavius, *Commentary on Euclid's Elements*].

51. *Euclidis Posterioris libri 9 authore dicto* [Christopher Clavius, *Commentary on Euclid's Elements*].

C. 15r.

52. *Fr. Junctini Comentarìa in Sferam Jo. de Sacrobosco vol. 2* [Johannes de Sacrobosco, *Sphaera emendata* by F. Giuntini]: the theologian, astronomer and astrologer Francesco Giuntini was born in Florence 1523 but 1561 he fled to Lyon, maybe due to? *religionis causa*. Forceful accusations against Giuntini in Possevino's *Bibliotheca selecta*, Lib. XV, caput XV.

53. *Floridum opusculum ab Ascanio Mancinello Venetiis apud Joannem Baptistam Hugolinum 1587* [Ascanio Mancinelli, *Floridum opusculum...*, USTC 839934]: a medical treatise on rabies and how to cure it.

54. *Della Filosofia naturale del Piccolomini* [Alessandro Piccolomini, *The First Part of the Natural Philosophy*].

C. 17r.

55. *Geographia Claudij Ptolomei Alexandrini Ven. apud Valgrisium 1562* [Ptolemy, *Geographia*, USTC 851490]: translated by the German Willibald Pirckheimer, a friend of Albrecht Dürer and Erasmus, and com-

mented by Giuseppe Moleti, a renowned Sicilian mathematician and tutor of Vincenzo Gonzaga.

56. *Gemma Frisius de Principiis Astronomiae et Cosmographiae Antuerpiae in edibus Joannis Staelsii 1548* [Gemma Frisius, *De principiis astronomiae*, USTC 403099].

57. *Gemma Frisij de Astrolabio Catolico Antuerpiae 1556* [Gemma Frisius, *De astrolabo catholico liber*, USTC 403235].

58. *Gebri filij Affla Hispalensis de Astronomia libri 9* [Jabir Ibn Aflah, *Correction of the Almagest*]: a work on Ptolemy's *Almagest* and trigonometry by the Sevilan muslim who invented the *torquetum*, whose name was latinized in "Geber" (12th century).

59. *Geographia universalis Claudij Ptolomei* [Ptolemy, *Cosmographia or Geography*].

60. *Guidubaldi Mecanicorum liber Pisauri apud Hieronimum Concordiam 1577* [Guidobaldo Del Monte, *Mecanicorum liber*, USTC 826163]: was considered at that time the most important treatise on statics since Greek antiquity.

61. *Guidubaldi e Marchionibus Montis in duos libros Archimedis aquae ponderantium Pisauri apud Concordiam 1588* [Guidobaldo Del Monte, *In duos Archimedis aequponderantium libros*, USTC 826167]: on Archimedes's mechanics.

C. 17 v.

62. *Grandezza della terra e dell'acqua* [Alessandro Piccolomini, *On the extent of land and water*, Venice, 1558 (USTC 848314) or 1561 (USTC 848329)].

C. 18r.

63. *Hieronimi Mercurialis de arte gemnastica Venetiis apud Iuntas 1587* [Girolamo Mercuriale, *De arte gymnastica*, USTC 842192]: physician Girolamo Mercuriale's book on "sports medicine" was first published in 1569 and dealt with diet, hygiene and gymnastics to keep healthy both the body and the soul.

64. *Hieronimi Mercurialis variarum lectionum in Medicina scriptoribus et alijs libri sex Venetiis apud Iunctas 1588* [Girolamo Mercuriale, *Variarum lectionum*, 842197].

65. *Hieronimi Mercurialis de arte gemnastica libri sex Venetiis apud Iunctas 1587*: cfr. n. 63.

C. 19r.

66. *Ill. Viri d. Ioannis de Planispherium* [Juan de Rojas y Sarmiento, *Commentarium in Astrolabium quod Planisphaerium vocant*]: in this work, the Spanish mathematician proposed substantial adjustments in the astrolabe's construction, according to his own ortographic projection of the celestial sphere.

67. *Ioannis de Regio Monte De triangulis omni modis libri quinque* [Regiomontanus, *On triangles*].

68. *Ioannis Padoani Veronensis De aritmetica opus Veronas ex typographia Sebastiani a Donnisi 1587* [Giovanni Padovani, *De arithmetica opus*, USTC 846042].

69. *Ioannis Antonii Quinquerugii responsio Venetiis 1590* [Giovanni Antonio Quinquerugi, *Responsio*, USTC 851758]: under this alias the above-mentioned mathematician Scala answered to a colleague, Giovanni Antonio Mangini, who accused Scala to have stolen his astronomical calculations.

70. *Ioannis Francisci Ulmi medici et philosophi brixiani apud Vincentium Sabbium 1589* [Giovanni Francesco Olmo, *Velleris aurei hieroglyphica*, USTC 845363]: a very rare booklet, an encomium of the esoterical proper-

ties and meanings of the Golden Fleece, which main feature in myth was to cure wounds and illness.

C. 19v.

71. *Ioannis de Regio Monte De triangulis omni modis libri quinque 1533* [Regiomontanus, *On triangles*, USTC 639761]: Johann Müller von Königsberg (15th century) on trigonometry, extensively based on medieval Arabic scholars like the above-mentioned Geber.

72. *Ioannis Regiomontani De triangulis planis et sphericis* [Regiomontanus, *On triangles*].

73. *Ioannis de Monte Regio et Georgii Purbacchij Epithomae*: an abridgment of Ptolemy's *Almagestum*, started by Georg Peurbach and completed by his pupil Regiomontanus. It seems to have been printed only once 1496.

74. *Ioannis de Monte Regio tabulae directionum*: Regiomontanus's system of astrological houses. It should be noted that the book's original title was *Tabule directionum projectionumque famosissimi viri Magistri Ioannis Germani de Regiomonte in natiuitatibus multum utiles* (1490) and that it was modified through the years trying to overshadow the very astrological nature of the work, until this: *Ioannis de Monteregio Mathematici clarissimi Tabulae directionum projectionumque, non tam astrologiae iudicariae, quam tabulis instrumentisque innumeris fabricandis utiles ac necessariae* (Tubingen, 1559).

C. 20r.

75. *Ioannis Regiomontani Mathematici de triangulis planis et sphericis* [Regiomontanus, *On triangles*].

76. *Ioannis Regiomontani De triangulis omni modis* [Regiomontanus, *On triangles*].

C. 21r.

77. *Lunario Perpetuo*: a perpetual calendar.

C. 22r.

78. *Un Libro di matematica in carta bergamina*: a books on maths in parchment.

C. 22v.

79. *Il Primo libro d'Euclide scritto a mano* [Euclid, *Elements*, Book I, manuscript].

80. *Libro del misurare con la vista, di Silvio Belli Vicentino* [Silvio Belli, *Book on measuring by sight*]: a best-seller handbook in the late 16th century.

C. 24r.

81. *Musica libris quatuor demonstrata Parisi 1551* [Jacques L'évevre d'Étaples, *Musica libris quatuor demonstrata*, USTC 150930]: a mathematical treatise on music.

82. *Marci Vitruvii Pollioni De architectura apud Joannem Torrinensius 1586* [Vitruvius, *The Ten Books on Architecture*, Lyon, Jean de Tournes, 1586].

83. *Marci Vitruvii Pollionis Viri suae professionis peritissimi De architettura libri X* [Vitruvius, *The Ten Books on Architecture*].

84. *Marci Manili Astronomicus libri quinquem Lutetia apud Patissonium 1579* [Marcus Manilius, *Astronomicon*, USTC 203223/10472]: this ancient didactic poem (1st century A.D.) was written in Latin and put in hexameters the celestial phenomena; it is considered one of the firsts document to relate human aptitudes and

the zodiac (houses system). Vespasiano's book seems to be the one edited by Joseph Justus Scaliger.

85. *Medici primi de Stirpium Historia comentariorum Thomi [...] imagines 1549* [?Leonhart Fuchs, *De Stirpium Historia Commentariorum vivae Imagines*]: a wonderful herbal with hundreds woodcut pictures. Fuchs had been put on the 1559 *Index librorum* with all his works (Lheonartus Fuchsius).

C. 24v.

86. *Medium motum [...] planetarum*: no information found about this book.

87. *Magnae Compositiones Claudii Ptolomaei* [Ptolemy, *Almagestum*, also known as *Magnae compositionis mathematicae opus* in Trapezuntium comment].

88. *Le Mechaniche dell'Illustrissimo Signor Guido Ubaldo dei Marchesi del Monte* [Guidobaldo Del Monte, *Le mechaniche*, USTC 826166].

C. 25r.

89. *Nicolai Copernicii Turinensis De revolutionibus orbium coelestium Norimbergae apud Joannem Petrarium 1543* [Copernicus, *De revolutionibus*, Nuremberg, 1543]: the *editio princeps* of Copernicus's masterpiece. In 1616 it was forbidden *donec corrigatur*.

90. *La Nova scienza di Nicolò Tartaglia* [Niccolò Tartaglia, *The art of shooting*]: the Brixian mathematician wrote in this book the first ballistic theories.

91. *Nova geometria di Francesco Patriccio libri 15, in un volume* [Francesco Patrizi, neo-platonic humanist and scientist Patrizi wrote his *Della Nuova Geometria* (1587) to give a summary of the coheval science.

92. *Niccolai Copernici Torinens[is]*.

C. 26r.

93. *Opera Petri Dasypodii* [Petrus Dasypodius, *Works*]: Swiss protestant P. Dasypodius wrote various dictionaries, the most famous in Italy was the *Latinogermanicum*, containing a preface of Juan Luis Vives. He was put to the Index in 1559 (under the false name of Paulus) but the Dictionaries continued to be printed, author “Dasypodius catholicus”. His son Conrad wrote a lot on Euclid and Ptolemy and went to the Index too. In theory, Vespasiano may have been interested in both *Dasypodii*, father and son.

94. *Opticae thesaurus Alhazeni Arabis* [Ibn-Al-Haytham, *Book of Optic*, USTC 603289]: published in Basel 1572.

95. *Orontij Finei Delphinatis Lutetiae apud Vascosanum 1553*: during 1553, Vascosanum in Paris printed at least three works by Oronce Finé. *De duodecim coeli domiciliis & horis inaequalibus* on astrological theory of the zodiacal houses (USTC 151239); *In eos quos de Mundi sphaera conscripsit libros ac in Planetarum theoricis Canonum Astronomicorum*, a comprehensive astronomical treatise (USTC 151314); a *Description de l'horloge planétaire* (USTC 51309).

96. *Orontij Finei Delphinatis Parisiis ex officina Simonis Colinei 1542*: in 1542 Oronce Finé published with Simon de Colines both a mathematical and an astronomical book, *Arithmetica practica* (USTC 140334) and *De mundi sphaera sive Cosmographia* (USTC 140396).

97. *Orontij Finei Delphinatis*: cfr. supra.

98. *Tutte l'opere d'architettura di Sebastiano Serlio Bolognese*: to be exact *Tutte l'opere d'architettura di Sebastiano Serlio bolognese; doue si trattano in disegno, quelle cose, che sono piu necessarie all'architetto; et hora di nuouo aggiunto (oltre il libro delle porte) gran numero di case priuate nella città, & in villa [...]*, In Venetia, presso Francesco de' Franceschi senese, 1584.

99. *Opere di Horontio Fineo del Delfinato* [Oronce Finé, *Works*].

C. 26v.

100. *L'opere di Ms. Giulio Camillo* [Giulio Camillo Delminio, *Works*]: among Camillo's writings, it's well known the esoteric backdrop of the *Idea del Theatro*.

101. *Opticae Thesaurus Alazeni Arabis* [Ibn Al-Haytham, *Book of Optics*].

C. 29r.

102. *Pratica manuale d'Artegliaria del Collado in Venetia presso Pietro Dusenelli 1586* [Luis Collado, *Pratica manuale di artiglieria*, USTC 823382]: Luis Collado de Lebrija served Charles V and Philip II in Italy as military engineer, and studied Tartaglia's ballistic theories. His work was first published in Italian and later in Castellan.

103. *Pappi Alexandrini Mathematica colectionis Pisauri apud Hieronymum Concordia 1588* [Pappus of Alexandria, *Collection*, USTC 846710] a further translation by Federico Commandino. Pappus of Alexandria was active in the 4th century.

104. *Perspectiva corecta per Paschasium Hamelium Mathematicum Regium Lutetia apud Egidium Gonorbium 1556*: a 16th century comment of the *Perspectiva communis* by Archbishop of Canterbury John Peckham (13th century), a treatise on optics.

105. *Prattica cioè nuova Inventione di conteggiare*: another handbook for learning math and calculation without instruments, especially in weights, measurements and money exchange.

C. 29v.

106. *Proclij Diadochi Lysij philosophi platonici in primum Euclidis elementorum librum Patavii 1560* [Proclus Diadochus, *In primum Euclidis Elementorum librum commentariorum*, USTC 851416].

107. *Praefatio in Theoricas*: a too vague description to guess which book it refers to. It should be remembered at least the *Disputationum Joannis de Monte Regio contra cremonensia in planetarum theoricas deliramenta praefatio* (1490, but reprinted more than once, even in 1568) and the *Praefatio Philippi Melanthonis in theoricas novas Planetarum Georgii Purbachii* (1535).

108. *Prattica cioè nuova inventione del conteggiare*: cfr. n. 105.

109. *Prattica manuale di artiglieria del Collado* [Luís Collado, *Prattica manuale di artiglieria*, USTC 823382].

110. *Procli Diadochi Hipotiposis astronomicarum postillae del Valla*: Giorgio Valla included the Latin translation of Proclus's Hypotyposis (an astronomical work) in his 1501 Encyclopedia entitled *De expetendis et fugiendis rebus*. Thus, this could be an excerpt of that book.

C. 30r.

111. *Prima parte delle Theoriche di Pianeti di Ms. Alessandro Piccolomini* [Alessandro Piccolomini, *Theories of the planet, first part*]. Piccolomini's main astronomical treatise.

112. *Pappi Alexandrini Mathematicae collectiones* [Pappus of Alexandria, *Collection*].

113. *Prospettiva di Euclide* [Euclid, *Optics*].

114. *Ptolomaei Planispherium* [Ptolemy, *Planisphaerium*, USTC 1558].

115. *La prima parte delle Theoriche del Piccolomini* *Primiera edittione* [Alessandro Piccolomini, *Theories of the planet, first part*].

116. *La Prattica della prospettiva di Monsignor Daniel Barbaro* [Daniele Barbaro, *Treatise on the practical perspective*]: Venetian cardinal Barbaro studied Vitruvius and was himself an architect. This book deals with perspective in art and architecture, and with the related devices extant at that time (for example the *camera obscura*).

C. 32v.

117. *Quadranti Horarii astronomici et geometrici usus scritto a mano*.

118. *Quattro libri dell'Architettura di Andrea Palladio presso Bartolomeo Carampello 1581* [Andrea Palladio, *The four books of Architecture*, USTC 846303].

C. 33r.

119. *Li Quattro libri d'Architettura d'Andrea Palladio* [Andrea Palladio, *The four books of Architecture*].

C. 34r.

120. *Regola de li cinque ordini d'architettura di Ms. Jacopo Baroccio da Vignola* [Jacopo Barozzi da Vignola, *Canon of the five orders of architecture*]: the architect who created Palazzo Farnese and the Jesuit Church of Gesù, in Rome.

121. *Rote perpetue per ritrovar il far della luna, in Brescia*: a sort of perpetual calendar to calculate the phases of the moon.

122. *Rudimenta cosmographiae scritto a mano*: a famous *Rudimenta cosmographica* was written by the Lu-

theran Johannes Honterus; but many essential treatises or their summaries were informally called *rudimenta*.

C. 38v.

123. *Sphaera Ioannis de Sacrobosco Antuerpiae apud Ricardum 1547* [Johannes de Sacrobosco, *De sphaera*, Antwerpen, Jean Richard. (USTC 404132/408536/408537)].

124. *Sfera Tractatus 1531* [Johannes de Sacrobosco, *De sphaera*, at least three different editions in 1531 (USTC 138085/762736/854145)].

125. *Secunda pars tabularum directionum* [? Cyprián Karásek of Lvovice, *Secunda pars tabularum directionum, continens ascensiones obliquas ad plures elevationes Poli extensas*, Augsburg, 1551]: maybe Cyprianus Leovitius's comment on Regiomontanus's *Tabulae directionum*. Leovitius was a Bohemian and a Lutheran whose books were all condemned to the *Index librorum*.

126. *La Sfera di Ms. Gio. Sacrobosco* [Johannes de Sacrobosco, *De sphaera*].

127. *Un'altra Sfera del detto Sacrobosco* [Johannes de Sacrobosco, *De sphaera*].

128. *Sfera de Iason de Nores* [Giasone De Nores, *Sphera*, USTC 825722/825723]: the book compiles astronomical and geographical studies by the Aristotelian Giason Denores, a humanist from Cyprus who escaped to Venice 1570, as Ottoman army occupied Nicosia.

129. *La Sfera del Mondo del Piccolomini* [Alessandro Piccolomini, *De la sfera del mondo*]: one of the Piccolomini's astronomical work, about Ptolemaic universe.

130. *Sfera del Sacrobosco* [Johannes de Sacrobosco, *De sphaera*].

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