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## Horoscopes Prepared by Master Astrologers from Krakow at the Turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Century (according to the BJ 3225 and 3227 manuscripts)

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**Abstract:** The article presents the output of Polish historiography concerning the research on Cracow horoscopes created before the year 1550, that is, in the period of the most active development of astrology as an academic science at the University of Krakow. At that time, astrology was a subject of enormous interest, which was reflected by the fact that horoscopes were ordered from professional astrologers (because of the price of the service, this was done mostly by wealthy people). These horoscopes were supposed to, according to popular views at that time, show the future. This, particularly with regard to the royal family, affected the policies of the ruler, and often the fate of the whole country.

**Key words:** astrology – astrologers – horoscopes – the University of Krakow – the Jagiellonian Library

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In the collection of the Jagiellonian Library, two handwritten codices (signatures BJ 3225 and 3227) are stored; as Grażyna Rosińska indicates, they are from the 15<sup>th</sup> century; dated back to the turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1</sup> The codices are sets of various horoscopes, charts (*figurae caeli*) together with their interpretations (*iudicia, practicae*), which constitute, in their large majority, completely unexamined resource material (with an exception of numerous works by Ewa Śnieżyńska-Stolot, especially the latest book, which discusses the horoscopes as historical sources<sup>2</sup>).

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- 1 Grażyna ROSIŃSKA, *Scientific Writings and Astronomical Tables in Cracow (XIVth-XVIth Centuries)*, Wrocław – Warszawa – Kraków 1984 (Studia Copernicana 22), p. 46, 250; Władysław WISŁOCKI, *Katalog Biblioteki Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego*, part 2: *Rękopisy 1876–4176. Indeks*, Kraków 1877–1881, pp. 708–710; Mieczysław MARKOWSKI, *Astronomica et astrologica Cracoviensia ante annum 1550*, Firenze 1990 (Studi e Testi 20), pp. 309–313. It needs to be emphasized that such collections were typical for the 16<sup>th</sup> century. See Emmanuel POULLE, *Sur la naissance de Charles Quint, de Luther, d'Erasmus et de quelques autres*, Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance 72, 2010, pp. 273–283, on p. 274.
  - 2 Ewa ŚNIEŻYŃSKA-STOLOT, *"Zamek piękny na wzgórzu..."*. *Horoskopy – zapomniane źródło historyczne*, Kraków 2015; eadem, *Ikonografia znaków zodiaku i gwiazdozbiorów w średniowieczu*, Kraków 1994;

A large number of these exceptionally interesting resources have been preserved, probably because (as Antonio Bonfinius, an Italian scholar and poet, the court chronicler of Maciej Korwin, wrote in 1491), “*Cracovia astrologis referta est*”.<sup>3</sup> This was commented on at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Michał Wiszniewski, who wrote: “*while some masters got involved in disputes and trained the young to do likewise, wrote calendars, horoscopes and lectured computus, others explained Vergil, Cicero, Ovid, Valerius Maximus and Boethius’s book Consolation of Philosophy*”.<sup>4</sup> Jerzy Samuel Bandtkie emphasized that “*even in Lombard and other works one can see horoscopes and other astrological rubbish*”.<sup>5</sup> Undoubtedly, we owe this rich scientific legacy left by the master astrologers of Krakow to the existence of two chairs at the University of Krakow – the first one, the Chair of Astronomy created at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, named Stobnerian from the name of its probable creator, and the second one, the Chair of Astrology, founded in the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century by Marcin Król of Żurawica<sup>6</sup> it was the only chair of this kind in whole of Christian Europe at that time.<sup>7</sup> At that time, astrology enjoyed enormous

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eadem, *Ikonografia astrologiczna w średniowieczu. Stopnie znaków zodiaku*, J. Komorowska (coop., trans.), Kraków 2002; eadem, *Astrological Iconography in the Middle Ages. The Decanal Planets*, J. Komorowska (coop. and trans.), Kraków 2003; eadem, *Horoskopy dziecka królowej Jadwigi*, Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej 53, 2003, pp. 5–32; eadem, *Horoskop Kazimierza Jagiellończyka – nowe źródło do treści ideowych wawelskiego nagrobka króla*, Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej 60, 2010, pp. 5–30; eadem, *Generale iudicium Władysława II zwanego Warneńczykiem*, Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej 61, 2011, pp. 13–41; eadem, *Almanach pro reverendissimo domino cardinali Fryderyka Jagiellończyka – historyczne źródło warsztatu astrologa*, Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej 63, 2013, pp. 5–70; eadem, “*Zamek piękny na wzgórzu*” i gwiazdziste niebo nad Salą Poselską Zamku Wawelskiego, *Kwartalnik Historii Nauki i Techniki* 58(1), 2013, pp. 7–71.

3 Stephano KATONA, *Historia critica regum Hungariae*, Budae 1793, p. 258.

4 Michał WISZNIEWSKI, *Historia literatury polskiej*, vol. 4, Kraków 1942, p. 325.

5 Jerzy S. BANDTKIE, *Historia Biblioteki Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego w Krakowie*, Kraków 1821, p. 24.

6 Zdzisław KUKSEWICZ, *Marcin Król z Żurawicy*, Materiały i Studia Zakładu Historii Filozofii Starożytnej i Średniowiecznej 1, 1961, pp. 118–140; Maria KOWALCZYK, *Przyczynki do biografii Henryka Czecha i Marcina Króla z Żurawicy*, Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej 21(1–2), 1971, pp. 87–91; Marian ZWIERCAN, *Marcin z Żurawicy zwany Królem*, in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 19, Wrocław – Gdańsk 1974, pp. 580–581 (see further PSB).

7 Aleksander BIRKENMAJER, *Uniwersytet Krakowski jako międzynarodowy ośrodek studiów astronomicznych na przełomie XV i XVI stulecia*, in: B. Suchodolski (ed.), *Odrodzenie w Polsce. Materiały z sesji naukowej PAN 25–30 października 1953 roku*, vol. 2, Historia nauki, part 2, Warszawa 1956, p. 364; Mieczysław MARKOWSKI, *Charakterystyka polskiego piśmiennictwa astrologicznego epoki przedkopernikańskiej*, *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 36, 1991, pp. 75–87, on p. 76. Only at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century similar chairs were brought to life in Ingolstadt and Vienna. See James H. HOLDEN, *A History of Horoscopic Astrology. From the Babylonian Period to the Modern Age*, Tempe, Arizona 2006, passim; cf. Darin HAYTON, *Instruments and demonstrations in the astrological curriculum: evidence from the University of Vienna, 1500–1530*, *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 41, 2010, pp. 125–134; Stefan SWIEŻAWSKI, *Dzieje filozofii europejskiej w XV wieku*, vol. 5: *Wszechświat*, Warszawa 1980, pp. 77–80; Jerzy

interest not only among studying youngsters, but also, most of all, among the society in the broad sense, regardless of the social status or financial situation. The faith in the power of the influence of heavenly bodies was great, which was in line with a common belief that nothing happens on the Earth that was not previously written in the stars.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, by observing and meticulously recording any changes in the arrangement of heavenly bodies, people attempted to predict the events to come, which resulted in various prognoses<sup>9</sup> and horoscopes, which are the object of our interest.

Horoscopes, according to the ancient, and then medieval and early modern investigators of the sky, could be divided into birth charts (this category was subdivided into natal charts, set for the moment of birth and horoscopes based on the moment of *conceptionis*;<sup>10</sup> rectified charts – corrected because of the lack of precision usually concerning the time of birth; and the so-called solar returns, referred to in resources as *Revolutio nativitatis* or *Revolutio coronationis*, calculated for the anniversary of birth or coronation for exactly the same horoscopic position of the Sun as the one in the moment of the birth of a baby or king's coronation,<sup>11</sup> electional charts, whose purpose was to select the most favourable time to do various activities or make important decisions, and event horoscopes, which also included horary charts (the chart was calculated in the moment of asking a particular question, at the beginning of an event, in order to find the prognosis of the success or failure of the event in the arrangement of heavenly bodies). All these horoscopes were prognostic and, as intended by not only their creators, but, most of all, their recipients, they were supposed to reveal the secrets of the future to astrologers and their clients.

The charts from Krakow are usually called *figura caeli* (in the case of natal horoscopes we can see names such as *nativitas*, *figura geniture*, *figura nativitatis*, *genesis*, *figura*

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DOBRZYCKI – Mieczysław MARKOWSKI – Tadeusz Przyppkowski, *Historia astronomii w Polsce*, vol. 1, E. Rybka (ed.), Wrocław – Warszawa – Kraków 1975, pp. 40–41.

- 8 Jan z GŁOGOWA, *Persuasio brevis quomodo astrologiae studium religioni christianae non est adversum*, in: M. H. Malewicz (ed.), *Studia Mediewistyczne* 24(1), 1985, pp. 153–175, on p. 168.
- 9 Jerzy ZATHEY, *Z historii środowiska magiczno-astrologicznego w Krakowie w XV wieku*, Krzysztofory. Zeszyty Naukowe Muzeum Historycznego Miasta Krakowa 8, 1981, pp. 7–21, on p. 17; Anna STRZEBOŃSKA, *Szesnastowieczne kalendarze krakowskie*, in: M. Konopka – M. Zięba, (eds.), *Bibliologia, literatura, kultura. Księga pamiątkowa ofiarowana Profesorowi Waławie Szeleńskiej*, Kraków 1999, pp. 177–198, on pp. 177–179; Józef SERUGA, *Krakowskie kalendarze XVI wieku*, Kraków 1913, p. 6; Krystyna KOSSAKOWSKA-JAROSZ, *Kalendarz. Spory terminologiczne*, Zeszyty Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej im. Powstańców Śląskich w Opolu. Zeszyty Naukowe. Filologia Polska 33, 1993, pp. 129–135; *Encyklopedia wiedzy o książce*, Wrocław – Warszawa – Kraków 1971, pp. 36–37, 1087–1092, 1968–1970.
- 10 Germaine AUJAC, *Sextus Empiricus et l'astrologie*, in: A. P. Jiménaz – R. Caballero (eds.), *Homo Mathematicus. Actas del Congreso Internacional sobre Astrólogos Griegos y Romanos*, Málaga: 2002, pp. 215–219; cf. Auguste BOUCHÉ-LECLERQ, *L'astrologie grecque*, Paris 1899, p. 36, 377.
- 11 E. ŚNIEŻYŃSKA-STOLOT, *Almanach pro reverendissimo domino cardinali Fryderyka Jagiellończyka*, pp. 9–12; eadem, *Horoskopy – zapomniane źródło historyczne*, p. 24.

*rectificatae nativitatis*) and not *horoscopus*, as ancient scholars would write, which, however, was quite a common practice in the Middle Ages.<sup>12</sup> These charts are often complemented by extensive texts, which are their interpretations and which are most often called *iudicium* (in the case of natal chart interpretations – *iudicium nativitatis*). Here the astrologer had the possibility to demonstrate his familiarity with not only the secrets of astrological and astronomical knowledge (such as the knowledge of astronomical tables necessary to determine the correct positions of planets in the moment which was the basis for the horoscope), but also with then available works of ancient and medieval scholars, namely Manilius, Firmicus Maternus, Claudius Ptolemeus, Alcabitius, Abraham Ibn Ezra and others, who were often quoted to affirm the content of the *iudicium*.<sup>13</sup>

The recipients of the horoscopes were most often wealthy people (we can see it by the names of the addressees of the horoscopes from the BJ 3225 and 3227 manuscripts), because the services of professional, academically trained astrologers were not cheap. Therefore, no wonder that in the Middle Ages, an astrologer resided and served with his prognostic skills and his knowledge, usually in the field of medicine, at almost every king's court, at princes' courts and often even bishops' courts. At that time, astrologers also played the role of court doctors, as it was the case with the royal medic Herman of Przeworsk<sup>14</sup>, the Italian medic from Pavia – John de Saccis,<sup>15</sup> Marcin Król of Żurawica,<sup>16</sup> or Piotr Gaszowiec,<sup>17</sup>

12 A. BOUCHÉ-LECLERQ, *L'astrologie grecque*, p. 257; cf. Laura ACKERMAN-SMOLLER, *History, Prophecy and the Stars. The Christian Astrology of Pierre d'Ailly, 1350–1420*, Princeton – New Jersey 1994, p. 17; John D. NORTH, *Horoscopes and History*, London 1986 (Warburg Institute Surveys and Texts 13), pp. 1–2; E. ŚNIEŻYŃSKA-STOLOT, *Horoskopy dziecka królowej Jadwigi*, p. 6.

13 Józef MUCZKOWSKI (ed.), *Statuta nec non liber promotionum philosophorum ordinis in Universitate studiorum Jagellonica ab anno 1402 ad annum 1849*, Cracoviae 1849, pp. XII–XIII; Krzysztof BORODA, *Studenci Uniwersytetu Krakowskiego w późnym średniowieczu*, Kraków 2010, pp. 223–242; see Mieczysław MARKOWSKI, *Nauki ścisłe na Uniwersytecie Krakowskim w XV wieku*, in: R. Palacz (ed.), *Filozofia polska XV wieku*, Warszawa 1972, pp. 202–217; cf. John D. NORTH, *Historia astronomii i kosmologii*, Katowice 1997, pp. 149–150; Krzysztof OŻÓG, *Zakres i metody nauczania septem artes na Wydziale Sztuk Uniwersytetu Krakowskiego w XV wieku*, in: T. Michałowska (ed.), *Septem artes w kształtowaniu kultury umysłowej w Polsce średniowiecznej (wybrane zagadnienia)*, Wrocław 2007, pp. 105–124, on pp. 113–115; E. ŚNIEŻYŃSKA-STOLOT, *“Zamek piękny na wzgórzu...”*. *Horoskopy – zapomniane źródło historyczne*, pp. 20–22.

14 Aleksander BIRKENMAJER, *Herman z Przeworska*, in: PSB, vol. 9, Wrocław – Warszawa – Kraków 1960–1961, pp. 461–462; Maria KOWALCZYK, *Przywilej nobilitacyjny dla doktora medycyny Hermana z Przeworska*, *Studia Mediewistyczne* 29, 1992, pp. 155–158, on p. 157.

15 Aleksander BIRKENMAJER, *Jan de Saccis*, in: PSB, vol. 10, Wrocław – Warszawa – Kraków 1962–1964, pp. 473–475.

16 This scholar collected funds for the foundation of the chair of astrology at the court of the Hungarian king, Matthias Corvinus, where he played the roles of a medic and an astrologer. M. KOWALCZYK, *Przyczynki do biografii Henryka Czecha*, pp. 87–91; M. ZWIERCAN, *Marcin z Żurawicy zwany Królem*, pp. 580–58.

17 Aleksander BIRKENMAJER, *Gaszowiec Piotr*, in: PSB, vol. 7, Kraków 1948–1958, pp. 294–295.

Maciej of Miechowo,<sup>18</sup> Jakub of Zalesie<sup>19</sup> and many others. Casting horoscopes, as we can imagine, was one of his duties.<sup>20</sup>

In the BJ 3225 and 3227 codices, birth charts are the majority, in all types listed above. We can find horoscopes of royal children, including the natal horoscope of Casimir Jagiellon, prepared in 1427 by Henricus Bohemus,<sup>21</sup> a controversial astrologer, whose services were used by the royal couple – Władysław Jagiełło and his wife Sophia (this horoscope was said to be copied and in the same time rectified around 1485 by Jakub of Zalesie).<sup>22</sup> Interesting information on this topic is presented to us by Jan Długosz, who quoted Henricus Bohemus's prognoses concerning the future that awaited the royal sons. The astrologer, on the basis of the observation of celestial bodies, was claimed to state that the oldest one, Vladislaus, "*will gain power over numerous kingdoms and principalities, if fates do not envy his long life.*"<sup>23</sup> The second son, Casimir, was supposed to love his mother very much, but, unfortunately, Henricus Bohemius predicted his early death (Casimir lived less than a year). As for the next son, Casimir Jagiellon, Długosz wrote that he had been not only conceived, but also born "*sub infelicis auspicii sidere*" (i.e. under an unlucky star), and his reign was to bring various misfortunes or even destruction onto Poland, unless the king and the country were saved by God's mercy.<sup>24</sup> As we can see, the prognosis was very diplomatic, as it combined people's trust in the agency of heavenly bodies with faith in the power of God, the Creator of all things. Casimir Jagiellon as a king was also willing

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- 18 Leszek HAJDUKIEWICZ, *Maciej z Miechowa*, in: PSB, vol. 19, Wrocław – Warszawa – Kraków 1974, pp. 28–33.
  - 19 Aleksander BIRKENMAJER, *Jakub z Zalesia*, in: PSB, vol. 10, pp. 369–371; idem, *Jakub z Zalesia, doktor medycyny, nie był nadwornym lekarzem króla Aleksandra Jagiellończyka*, Kwartalnik Historii Nauki i Techniki 7(1–2), 1962, pp. 33–37; idem, *Lekarz Jakub z Zalesia nie przeżył roku 1496*, Kwartalnik Historii Nauki i Techniki 7(1–2), 1962, pp. 39–48.
  - 20 E. ŚNIEŻYŃSKA-STOLOT, *Almanach pro reverendissimo domino cardinali Fryderyka Jagiellończyka*, p. 7; Roman BUGAJ, *Nauki tajemne w Polsce w dobie odrodzenia*, Wrocław-Gdańsk 1976, p. 92; cf. Krzysztof OŻÓG, *Uczeni w monarchii Jadwigi Andegaweńskiej i Władysława Jagiełły (1384–1434)*, Kraków 2004, pp. 322–324.
  - 21 Aleksander BIRKENMAJER, *Henryk Czech*, in: PSB, vol. 9, pp. 419–420; idem, *Astronomowie i astrologowie śląscy w wiekach średnich*, Katowice 1937, p. 20, 30; idem, *Sprawa magistra Henryka Czecha*, *Collectanea Theologica* 17, 1936, pp. 207–224; K. OŻÓG, *Uczeni w monarchii Jadwigi Andegaweńskiej*, pp. 303, 323–324; Bożena CZWOJDRAK, *Zofia Holszańska. Studium o dworze i roli królowej w późnośredniowiecznej Polsce*, Warszawa 2012, pp. 127–128.
  - 22 The BJ (The Jagiellonian Library – see further BJ) 3225 manuscript contains another birth chart of Casimir Jagiellon, copied around the year 1535 by Bernard Wapowski. See E. ŚNIEŻYŃSKA-STOLOT, *Horoskop Kazimierza Jagiellończyka*, pp. 7–9.
  - 23 Jan DŁUGOSZ, *Roczniki czyli Kroniki sławnego Królestwa Polskiego, Księga 11: 1413–1430*, Warszawa 1985, pp. 241–242; *Joannis Dlugossii Annales seu cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae, liber undecimus: 1413–1430*, Varsoviae 2000, p. 229.
  - 24 *Joannis Dlugossii Senioris Canonici Cracoviensis Opera omnia*, vol. 4: *Historiae Poloniae libri XII*, A. PRZEZDZIECKI (ed.), Cracoviae 1877, pp. 349–350.

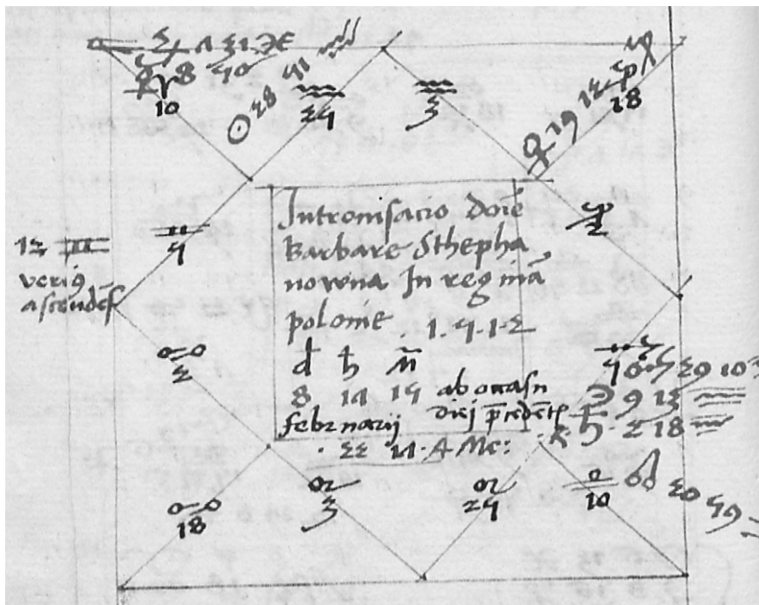


Fig.1: Figura intronisationis Barbarae Sthephanowa 1512a Februarii 8d 17h 15m, BJ msc 3227, p. 150.

to use the services of an astrologer and medic; he employed a distinguished specialist – Piotr Gaszowiec. Like his father, he also ordered horoscopes for his sons – Vladislaus, Alexander, Sigismund and Frederick.<sup>25</sup> These horoscopes have been partly preserved in the discussed codices.<sup>26</sup> His sons acted similarly; most of all, Sigismund the Old, who was famous for his penchant for astrological predictions and had *Iudicium Cracoviense de rege Sigismundo Augusto neonato* prepared for his long-awaited son.<sup>27</sup> Undoubtedly, this prognosis was to assure the monarch of the future fate of the desired heir to the throne.

It is worth noting that apart from the royal children's horoscopes, also horoscopes of nobility and bourgeoisie, including: *Figura nativitatis Annae Groszowa* *Figura nativitatis Matthiae Drzewicki* (the later Archbishop of Gniezno, Primate of Poland, Great Chancellor of the Crown),<sup>28</sup> *Figura nativitatis Karnkowski, canonici Cracoviensis* (John Karnkowski), *Figura nativitatis Andreae Vitreatoris*, *Figura nativitatis Ioannis Veneti, apothecarii Plocensis*, *Judicium nativitatis Stanislai Belze, mercatoris et scabini Cracoviensis*, etc., have been

25 Stephen C. ROWELL, *The Jagiellonians and the Stars: Dynasty-Sponsored Astrology in the Fifteenth Century*, Lithuanian Historical Studies 7, 2002, pp. 23–42.

26 M. MARKOWSKI, *Astronomica et astrologica Cracoviensia*, pp. 227–229.

27 *Iudicium Cracoviense de rege Sigismundo Augusto neonato*, National Library of Poland msc 907, p. 1.

28 *Figura nativitatis Annae Groszowa*, BJ (see further BJ) msc 3227, p. 472; *Figura nativitatis Matthiae Drzewicki*, BJ msc 3227, p. 492.

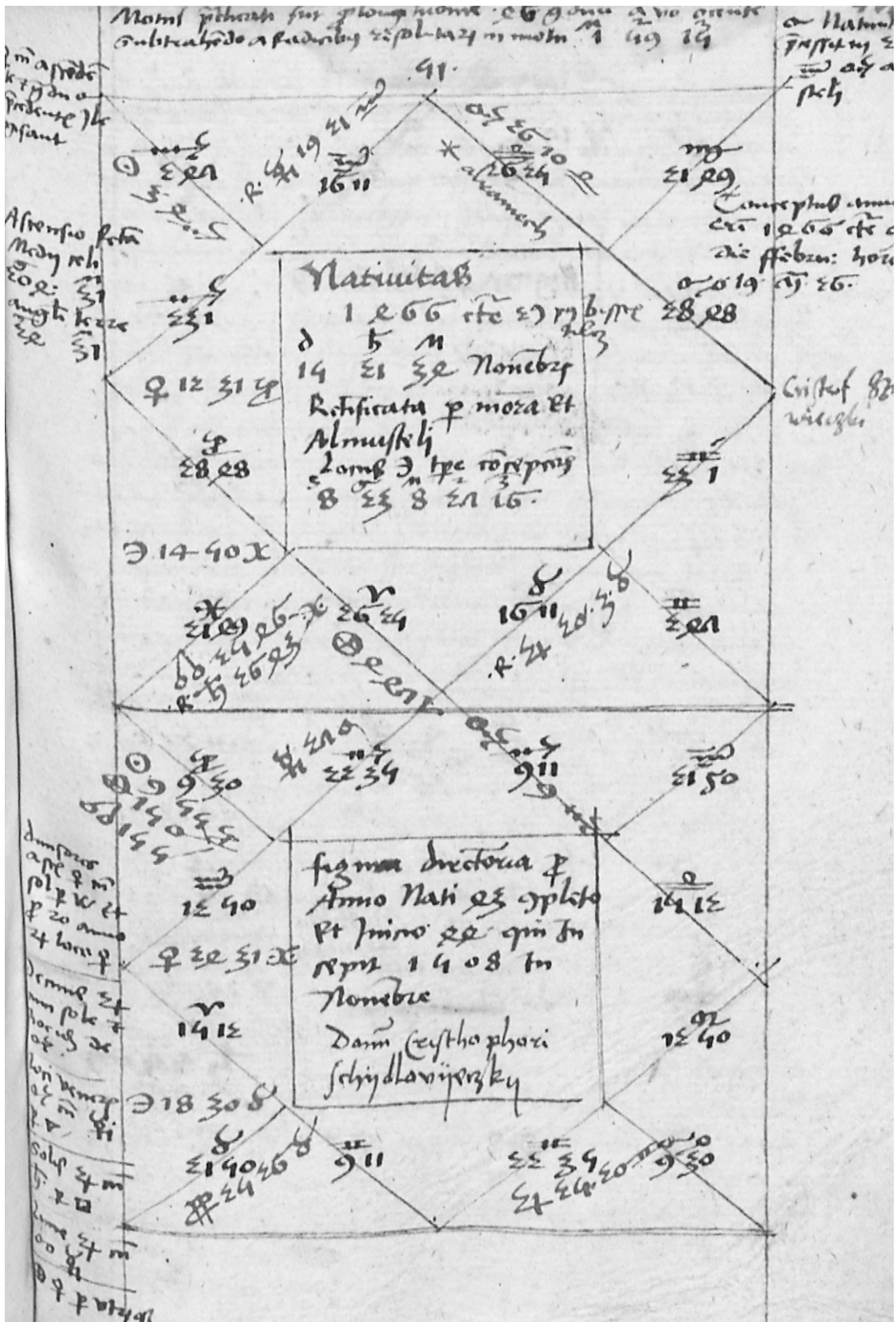


Fig.2: Maciej of Miechów, Iudicium Cracoviense revolutionis nativitatis Christophori Szydłowiecki 1508a Novembris 15d 21h 34m cum figuris caeli, BJ msc 3227, p. 461.jpg

preserved.<sup>29</sup> Interestingly, there are also horoscopes which can be called international, because in the 3227 codex we can find the birth chart of Giovanni di Lorenzo de' Medici, that is, Pope Leon X.<sup>30</sup> The BJ 3225 and 3227 codices are also abundant in rectified horoscopes, improved in comparison to natal horoscopes e.g. by making the birth time, i.e. the hour and minute, more precise (this was connected with the fact that before 1428, Alfonsine Tables were used, which did not include the latitude of Krakow).<sup>31</sup> The correction was often made many years after birth, as it happened to Casimir Jagiellon's horoscope, rectified in 1485 (the birth date according to the horoscope – 29 November 1427, 20:47:39, corrected to 21:09:25, that is, counting from the noon, as it was done at that time, 9:09:25 in the morning of the next day, i.e. 30 November 1427).<sup>32</sup> Wealthy and influential people succumbed to the temptation of knowing the events that awaited them – therefore, many horoscopes were cast on the anniversary of birth, in the expectation that promises of the natal horoscope would be fulfilled in the forthcoming year (e.g. if in the natal horoscope Jupiter was placed in the 10<sup>th</sup> house, which meant, according to the interpretation of ancient scholars' works, honours and career, then indicators of this forecast were sought in the solar return chart. For Chancellor Krzysztof Szydłowiecki both a rectified horoscope and solar return charts were prepared).<sup>33</sup>

Therefore, we should agree with Henryk Barycz, who wrote:

*“The influence of astrology affected very strongly not only the lives and deeds of particular people, who did not make any important decisions without consulting the stars, but it had a considerable weight in the relations within the state, and even international ones. An astrologer often voiced his opinion in political issues of great importance.”*<sup>34</sup>

29 *Figura nativitatis Karnkowski, canonici Cracoviensis*, BJ msc 3225, p. 107–109; *Figura nativitatis Andreae Vitreatoris*, BJ msc 3225, p. 110; *Figura nativitatis Ioannis Veneti, apothecarii Plocensis*, BJ msc 3225, p. 120; *Judicium nativitatis Stanislai Belze, mercatoris et scabini Cracoviensis 1480<sup>a</sup> 26<sup>d</sup> 4<sup>h</sup> 18<sup>m</sup> cum figura caeli*, BJ msc 3225, p. 305–319.

30 *Genesis domini Leonis, pape moderni, facta 1475 [...]*, msc 3227, p. 163.

31 Mieczysław MARKOWSKI, *Ist Gerhard Hoefmans von Hamont der Verfasser der astronomischen tafel für Prag*, Acta Mediaevalia 13, 2000, pp. 267–269.

32 Ludwik BIRKENMAJER, *Krakowskie tablice syzygijów dla r. 1379 i 1380. Przyczynek do dziejów astronomii w Polsce w XIVtym wieku*, Rozprawy AU. Wydział Matematyczno-Przyrodniczy II 1891, 1, pp. 261–285, on pp. 281–282.

33 Maciej of MIECHÓW (?), *Iudicium Cracoviense revolutionis nativitatis Christophori Szydłowiecki 1508<sup>a</sup> Novembris 15<sup>d</sup> 21<sup>h</sup> 34<sup>m</sup> cum figuris caeli*, BJ msc 3227, pp. 461–467; idem (?), *Iudicium Cracoviense revolutionis nativitatis Christophori Szydłowiecki 1510<sup>a</sup> Novembris 15<sup>d</sup> 14<sup>h</sup> 9<sup>m</sup> cum figuris caeli*, BJ msc 3227, pp. 468–470.

34 Henryk BARYCZ, *Historja Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego w epoce humanizmu*, Kraków 1935, p. 266. In the collection of the Jagiellonian Library we can find a manuscript by Stanisław of Dąbrowka, entitled *Opusculum de influxu planetarum et stellarum in effectus politicos*: BJ, msc 187, f. 5v-16v, where the scholar from Krakow, on the basis of Aristotle's Politics, attempted to present the influence



This opinion is confirmed by horoscopes cast for the occasion of royal coronations (the astrologer most often selected the most appropriate date for the coronation according to the expected arrangement of heavenly bodies), enthronement and even sublimation. In the BJ 3225 codex we can find the horoscopes of coronations of Casimir Jagiellon and Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary, and in the BJ 3227 codex – the horoscopes of coronations of Vladislaus II of Hungary, King of Bohemia and Hungary, of Alexander Jagiellon, and the *Sublimationis regis Sigismundi in ducem Lithuaniae* horoscope, the horoscope of the coronation of Sigismund the Old for King of Poland, as well as the enthronement of Barbara Stefanovna, that is, Barbara Zapolya, the first wife of Sigismund the Old.<sup>35</sup> The monarch was said to believe in astrological predictions so strongly that he did not make any important decisions concerning the state (and not only) without a prior consultation with an astrologer (he was said to order Maciej of Miechowo to prepare a horoscope on whose interpretation he based his decision to travel to the Congress of Vienna).<sup>36</sup> What is worth noting, also here (i.e. in BJ msc 3227: ff. 473–475) we can find anonymous *Iudicium Cracoviense coronationis Ioannis de Conary in episcopum Cracoviensem*. The services of astrologers were also very willingly used by the clergy. Bishop Piotr Tomicki was said to be an enthusiast of astrological forecasts. He saw the prognosis of future events in a comet visible in the sky in 1533.<sup>37</sup> The bishop also demonstrated his belief in astrological prognoses when he found about an illness of Sigismund the Old in 1529; he sought consolation in the signs, or rather the lack thereof, in the heavens.<sup>38</sup> Horoscopes of illness, so-called decumbitures, were often used at that time.<sup>39</sup> Even though the clergyman was aware of the unreliability of many astrological

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of heavenly bodies on political events. See Paweł CZARTORYSKI, *Wczesna recepcja "Polityki" Arystotelesza*, Wrocław – Warszawa – Kraków 1963, pp. 201–207.

- 35 *Figurae nativitatis et coronationis Wladislai, regis Ungariae et Bohemiae cum nota*, BJ msc 3227, pp. 7–8; *Iudicium Cracoviense revolutionis coronationis Alexandri, regis Poloniae, 1503<sup>a</sup> Decembris 12<sup>d</sup> 9<sup>h</sup> 10<sup>m</sup> 40<sup>s</sup> cum figuris caeli*, BJ msc 3227, pp. 9–13; *Figura sublimationis regis Sigismundi in ducem Lithuaniae 1506<sup>a</sup> 17<sup>d</sup> 22<sup>h</sup> 10<sup>m</sup> Vilnae*, BJ msc 3227, p. 13; *Iudicium Cracoviense coronationis Sigismundi in regem poloniae 1507<sup>a</sup> Ianuarii 24<sup>d</sup> 0<sup>h</sup> 20<sup>m</sup> ante meridiem*, BJ msc 3227, p. 18–20; *Figura intronisationis Barbarae Sthephanowa 1512<sup>a</sup> Februarii 8<sup>d</sup> 17<sup>h</sup> 15<sup>m</sup>*, BJ msc 3227, p. 150.
- 36 Włodzimierz S. BROEL-PLATER (ed.), *Zbiór pamiętników do dziejów polskich*, vol. 1, Warszawa 1858, pp. 66–67.
- 37 H. BARYCZ, *Historja Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego*, p. 266.
- 38 Stanisław GÓRSKI, *Acta Tomiciana. Tomus undecimus. Epistolarum. Legationum. Responsorum. Actionum et Rerum Gestarum Serenissimi Principis Sigismundi Primi Regis Poloniae Magnis Ducis Lithuaniae, Posnaniae* 1901, p. 194.
- 39 Nicholas CULPEPER, *Traktat o astrologii medycznej*, (trans.) M. Krukowska, (foreward) J. Frowley, Warszawa 2014, (Biblioteka PTA 5), passim.

forecasts, as he wrote in a letter to Dantyszek, “[...] we found that forecasts and divinations are not completely void and useless.”<sup>40</sup>

I would also like to direct your attention to the horoscope named *Figura aedificationis civitatis Venetiarum 421<sup>a</sup> cum nota de civitate Bononiensi*, included in the BJ 3225 codex. It was based on the legendary date of the foundation of Venice in 421 (on 25 March), and which was appended with a note referring to Bologna.<sup>41</sup> Unfortunately, the chart was not accompanied by explanations, which would certainly give us a lot of interesting information, such as the motivation of the anonymous author to cast this horoscope. It is worth adding that a similar horoscope for Venice was prepared in 1501 by Leonard of Dobczyce<sup>42</sup> and the chart can be found in the BJ 576 manuscript.<sup>43</sup> Luckily, the intentions of another, also anonymous author of an electional horoscope, this time named *Figura caeli pro initio fundamenti scholae sanctae Annae*, are known.<sup>44</sup> The horoscope was made in 1510, i.e. a year before the reconstruction of the school, or rather building it again from scratch – the original wooden building had been completely burned. In 1511, Maciej of Miechowo donated funds for the construction of a new, impressive concrete school building which lasted till 1689; it was demolished because a new Baroque St. Anne’s Church was built in the place of the old Gothic temple.<sup>45</sup> It is probable that Maciej of Miechowo himself was the author of this horary horoscope, by which he made sure that the planned initiative stood a chance to succeed. It is also probable that the fact (as it was written in a short note that can be seen under the chart) that “*nothing is visible* [in the arrangement of heavenly bodies] *that would constitute an obstacle*” convinced him to invest in that undertaking.<sup>46</sup>

In the 3227 codex we can also find other extremely interesting horary horoscopes that were meant to give answers to questions asked. So astrologers’ clients sought advice before setting out for a journey, sought answers to a question concerning the reason for

40 Stanisław GÓRSKI, *Acta Tomiciana. Tomus septimus. Epistolarum. Legationum. Responsorum. Actionum et Rerum Gestarum Serenissimi Principis Sigismundi Primi Regis Poloniae Magnis Ducis Lithuaniae*, Posnaniae 1857, p. 113.

41 *Figura aedificationis civitatis Venetiarum 421<sup>a</sup> cum nota de civitate Bononiensi*, BJ msc 3225, p. 18.

42 Helena FRIEDBERG, *Rodzina Vitreatorów (Zasańskich) i jej związki z Uniwersytetem Krakowskim na przełomie XV i XVI wieku*, Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej 18, 1986, pp. 19–37; eadem, *Leonard Vitreatoris z Dobczyc*, in: PSB, vol. 17, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk 1972, pp. 71–72.

43 Leonard z DOBCZYC, *Figura caeli pro iudiciis*, BJ msc 576, f. 58v.

44 Maciej of MIECHÓW (?), *Figura caeli pro initio fundamenti scholae sanctae Annae*, BJ msc 3225, p. 230.

45 John H. BROOKE, *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives*, Cambridge 1991, pp. 19–22; Jan KRUKOWSKI, *Z dziejów budownictwa szkolnego w Krakowie. Budynek szkoły przy kolegiacie św. Anny*, Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej 37, 1987, pp. 85–110, on pp. 86–88, 108–109; Julian BUKOWSKI, *Krótką wiadomość historyczno-artystyczna o kościele św. Anny w Krakowie*, Kraków 1903, passim.

46 Maciej of MIECHÓW (?), *Figura caeli pro initio fundamenti scholae sanctae Annae*, BJ msc 3225, p. 230.

someone's absence and even the place where treasures were hidden. With the help of "stars", someone even attempted to find a thief; moreover, they asked if it could be done promptly and where the thief would be found;<sup>47</sup> the anonymous author of *Judicium pro fure et fugitivo* from 1512 had a similar motivation and the conclusion was as follows: the lost object which the horoscope was concerned with had certainly been left in a tavern.<sup>48</sup> Another horoscope was meant to answer the question concerning the theft of two horses from doctor Mikołaj de Comprivnicza; another one was to help a certain publican to decide whether to travel to Koszyce or to "do his duties in Krakow."<sup>49</sup>

Undoubtedly these last examples of horoscopes caused the greatest opposition of the Church, as the official stance of the clergy was that astrologers were not allowed to take over the prerogatives that were reserved for God.<sup>50</sup> Stanisław of Skarbimierz,<sup>51</sup> doctor of decrees and the first rector of the restored University of Krakow, decided that it was not possible to give a verdict about accidental things, which by their own nature do not have and even cannot have a particular reason. On this ground, he stated that using astrological knowledge for utilitarian purposes or even in order to satisfy human knowledge is a mistake which is contrary to the Christian faith. People seeking help of astrologers seem to doubt in the Lord's power.<sup>52</sup>

However, as we can guess from the amount of preserved resources and clients who ordered them, there was resounding criticism of astrology, but it gave poor results. Astrology was practiced even in its denied and rejected form (natural astrology, including astrological medicine and astrometeorology, was approved; superstitious astrology, covering, most of all, electional astrology, and also horary and natal astrology, concerned with predicting the future, was denied),<sup>53</sup> which was often cleverly referred to as practical

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47 *Questio de fugitivo, si reverteretur, et si cito, et ubi cit, 1499*, BJ msc 3227, p. 26.

48 *Judicium Cracoviense pro fure et fugitivo 1512<sup>a</sup> cum figura caeli*, BJ msc 3227, p. 286.

49 1496. *Questio de duobus equis, furatis d[octo]ri Nicolao de Comprivnicza*, BJ msc 3227, p. 33; *Questio a theolonatore, si melius est ei ire in Caschoviam, vel officium tenere Cracovie, 1502 in die Palmarum*, BJ msc 3227, p. 48.

50 Aemilius FRIEDBERG (ed.), *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, vol. 2: *Decretalium Collectiones*, Graz 1959, p. 1027.

51 Roman M. ZAWADZKI, *Stanisław ze Skarbimierza*, in: PSB, vol. 42, Warszawa – Kraków 2003, pp. 76–80.

52 Stanisław ze SKARBIMIERZA, *Consilia de Stanislai de Scarbimiria contre l'astrologue Henri Bohemus /Consilia Stanislai de Scarbimiria contra astrologum Henricum Bohemum. Edition critique/*, S. Wielgus (ed.), *Studia Mediewistyczne* 25(1), 1988, pp. 145–172, on p. 160; *ibidem*, on p. 155, 158.

53 Mieczysław MARKOWSKI, *Astrologia a wolna wola*, *Alma Mater* 20, 2000, pp. 20–22; Sylvia KONARSKA-ZIMNICKA, *Mistrzów krakowskich z XV wieku kilka uwag na temat astrologii*, *Krzysztoforzy. Zeszyty Naukowe Muzeum Historycznego Miasta Krakowa* 25, 2007, pp. 39–50; *eadem*, *Astrologia Licita? Astrologia Illicita? The Perception of Astrology at Kraków University in the Fifteenth Century*, *Culture and Cosmos. A Journal of the History of Astrology and Cultural Astronomy* 15(2), 2011, pp. 65–86.

astronomy, whose knowledge can lead people to the better knowledge of God.<sup>54</sup> And it all probably happened because most of the contemporary scholars allowed for, or even accepted the view of the influence of heavenly bodies on the life in the sublunary world – controversies were related only to the scope and amount of this influence.

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54 Mieczysław MARKOWSKI, *Nie znany prognostyk Wojciecha z Brudzewa*, Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej 27(1–2), 1977, pp. 53–58, on p. 56.

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## Resumé

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### **Horoskopy vytvořené mistry astrologie v Krakově na přelomu 15. a 16. století (podle rukopisů BJ 3225 a 3227)**

Ve sbírce Jagellonské knihovny jsou uloženy dva ručně psané kodexy (pod signaturami BJ 3225 a 3227), pravděpodobně z 15. nebo 16. století. V těchto kodexech jsou zahrnuty soubory různých horoskopů včetně jejich výkladů (iudicia, practicae) a grafů (figurae caeli). Tyto horoskopy vznikly nejčastěji na objednávku zámožných lidí. Najdeme v nich horoskopy týkající se narození královských dětí, včetně horoskopu zrození Kazimíra IV. Jagellonského a jeho synů: Vladislava, Alexandra, Zikmunda a Frederyka. Kromě horoskopů královských potomků můžeme v rukopisech najít i horoskopy narození šlechty a měšťanů. Součástí zmíněných kodexů jsou také horoskopy korunovací Kazimíra IV. Jagellonského a Matyáše Korvína, krále uherského, dále horoskopy korunovací Vladislava II., krále českého a uherského, Alexandra I. Jagellonského, Zikmunda I. Starého, krále polského, jakož i korunovace Barbory Stefanovny, tj. Barbory Zápolské, první manželky Zikmunda I. Starého atd. Je zajímavé, že manuskripty obsahují i horoskopy, které bychom mohli nazvat mezinárodními, protože například v kodexu BJ 3227

můžeme najít i graf narození Giovanniho Medici, tedy papeže Lva X.!

V kodexu BJ 3227 najdeme i další mimořádně zajímavé hodinové horoskopy, které měly dát odpověď na zadané otázky. Tak například klienti hledali u astrologů rady před tím, než vyrazili na cestu, ptali se jich na důvod něčí nepřítomnosti a dokonce chtěli znát i místa, kde jsou ukryté poklady!

Všechny tyto horoskopy byly vytvořeny před rokem 1550, tedy v době největšího rozvoje astrologie jako akademické vědy na univerzitě v Krakově. V té době se stala astrologie předmětem obrovského zájmu, což se projevilo zvýšeným počtem objednávek horoskopů u profesionálních astrologů. Horoskopy měly podle tehdy všeobecně rozšířeného názoru předpovídat budoucnost. Astrologie byla praktikována dokonce i v podobě, kterou církev zavrhovala a odmítala. K tomu všemu došlo zřejmě proto, že většina tehdejších lidí věřila, že nebeská tělesa ovlivňují pozemský život – polemiky se vedly pouze o rozsah a šíři tohoto vlivu...