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Manuscript Tradition of Georg Joachim Rheticus’s Election Prophecy. Source Analysis and Edition*

The paper aims to organise the issues concerning the great variety of manuscripts jointly referred to as the “election prophecy”, supposedly made by Georg Joachim Rheticus. The author proposed to apply a model showing how the original text of the “prophecy”, the autograph of which has not been preserved to this day, underwent contamination and interpolation after being introduced into manuscript circulation through correspondence and numerous copies, while at the same time serving as the basis for the creation of vernacular traditions of the text. These processes are depicted in source materials annexed to the paper, containing editions of the Latin, Polish and German variants of the text.

Key words: Georg Joachim Rheticus (1514–1574), Andreas Dudithius (1533–1589), Renaissance astrology, manuscript circulation – sixteenth and seventeenth century, political propaganda – sixteenth and seventeenth century

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1. Introduction

Among the manuscripts circulated in the Old Polish era in the form of short works combining political subject matter with astrological tradition there are few texts that may boast of so high a number of records of diverse form and contents as the so-called election prophecy. It is accepted that the original text, which did not survive to date in the form of an autograph, was written by Georg Joachim Rheticus (1514–1574),¹ an astrologer, astronomer, mathematician and physician. He lived in Cracow in 1554–1574 and owing to his contacts with the retinue of a Cracow official, Jan (Hans) Boner (1516–1562) and with Andreas Dudith (1533–1589), emperor's diplomat, intelligence and humanist, he revolved close to the royal court and it was most probably on the initiative of those three circles, namely, the ones connected with King Sigismund Augustus, Boner, or Dudithius, that he made an astrological forecast featuring the following rulers of the Polish Commonwealth.²

Soon after the text had been written it began to function independently of the author, in various forms and in highly diverse contexts, and its copies may now be found in various library collections,

¹ On Rheticus, see: K.H. Burmeister, *Georg Joachim Rhetikus 1514–1574. Eine Bio-Bibliographie*, vols. 1–3 (Wiesbaden, 1968); L. Hajdukiewicz, “Retyk Jerzy Joachim,” in: *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 31 (Wrocław et al., 1988), pp. 255–259; D. Danielson, *The First Copernican. Georg Joachim Rheticus and the Rise of the Copernican Revolution* (New York, 2006); J. Włodarczyk, “Wstęp,” in: J.J. Retyk, *Relacja pierwsza z ksiąg O obrotach Mikołaja Kopernika*, trans. I. Lewandowski, introd. and comment. J. Włodarczyk (Warszawa, 2015), pp. 7–68.

² On the election prophecy, see L.A. Birkenmajer, *Mikołaj Kopernik*, Pt. 1: *Studia nad pracami Kopernika oraz materiały biograficzne* (Kraków, 1900), pp. 613–614; J. Dianni, “Pobyty J.J. Retyka w Krakowie,” *Studia i Materiały z Dziejów Nauki Polskiej* 1 (1953), pp. 64–80; Burmeister, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 23–28, vol. 3, pp. 171, 193–200; J. Nowak-Dłużewski, *Bibliografia staropolskiej okolicznościowej poezji politycznej (XVI–XVIII)* (Warszawa, 1964), p. 3; T. Przyppkowski, “Astronomia i astrologia w Krakowie w drugiej połowie XVI wieku,” in: *Historia astronomii w Polsce*, vol. 1, ed. E. Rybka (Wrocław, 1975), p. 198; H. Barycz, “Krakowski pobyt Jerzego Joachima Retyka,” in: idem, *Między Krakowem a Warmią i Mazurami* (Olsztyn, 1987), pp. 169–212; A.T. Klubiński, “‘Diversi color’ – kariera przepowiedni elekcyjnej (1697–1764),” *Barok* 5, no. 1 (1998), pp. 225–233; *Staropolskie przepowiednie i mirabilia*, ed. J. Krocak (Wrocław, 2007), p. 168, n. 187. As for the critical discussion of the above mentioned opinions, see M. Choptiany, Choptiany M., “‘Ultra prognosticare me sidera non permittunt’ i o okolicznościach powstania przepowiedni elekcyjnej Jerzego Joachima Retyka,” *Kwartalnik Historii Nauki i Techniki* 61, no. 4 (2016), pp. 85–110.

from Gdańsk to Rome and from Berlin to Lviv. That high diversity of the manuscripts and geographical dispersal of texts which – as evidenced by the provenance features of manuscripts in the form in which they survived – were distributed not only in the territory of the Commonwealth, but also across its borders, was the reason of many misunderstandings as to what the archetypal form of Rheticus's prophecy had been like, in what circumstances it had been written, if it was really the scholar's work and how to perceive the relations between the archetypal form and the texts which are copies coming from the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century.³ This study has three objectives: firstly, to discuss Rheticus's most complete text based on the most reliable horoscope versions, secondly, to feature the branches which are part of the handwriting tradition of the election prophecy, and finally – to document a few variants of the text ranging from attempts to reconstruct its archetypal form through vernacular variations which exist in source appendices.

2. Horoscope versus election prophecy

It seems that contrary to a widespread view which classifies Rheticus's text as belonging to a body of popular texts addressed to a wide group of less experienced or knowledgeable readers, this short work by the author of *Narratio prima* stems from the most sophisticated sources in technical and intellectual terms, and it is rooted in the current astrological practice basing on astronomical observations, calculating procedures and the application of interpretation rules to them.⁴ One may conclude with a high degree of probability from the analysis of 28 texts in Latin, Polish and German, carried out for the purposes of this study, that Rheticus's original text had the form of a horoscope consisting of a diagram featuring astrological and astronomical parameters – the position of planets, the Sun and Moon against

³ Cf. Choptiany, “Ultra prognosticare me sidera non permittunt”.

⁴ The working conditions and methods of a sixteenth-century astrologer are featured by A. Grafton, *Cardano's Cosmos. The Worlds and Works of a Renaissance Astrologer* (Cambridge, MA and London, 2001), Chapter 2: “The Astrologer's Practice” (pp. 22–37). On astrology after Copernicus, see R.S. Westman, *The Copernican Question. Prognostication, Skepticism, and Celestial Order* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 2011). On astrological aspects of Rheticus's output, see Burmeister, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 166–172; J. Kraai, *Rheticus' Heliocentric Providence. A Study Concerning the Astrology and Astronomy of the Sixteenth Century*, PhD diss., Universität Heidelberg, 2001, <http://www.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/archiv/3254> (accessed: 12.05.2016).

the twelve signs of the zodiac at the interrogation moment – and included a commentary with explanations. In a political context such horoscopes were prepared mainly on the birth of a royal or ducal offspring, on the occasion of the successive ruler's birthdays or in connection with events which were momentous to the state, however, heuristic procedures of astrology were applied on a much wider scale and their use in respect of a far-fetched forecast was part of the canon of the Renaissance astrology.⁵

In the election prophecy attributed to Rheticus the commentary included information about the task delegated to the astrologer and detailed information about the circumstances in which the horoscope was made. A question posed by the student of Copernicus was about the prospects of the kingdom's survival, which was then ruled by King Sigismund Augustus, and about the traits of the Commonwealth's future rulers, but also who of them would be better than the last of the Jagiellons. After the task was formulated that way, there must have been a verbalized interpretation of the information included in the diagram: apart from planet positions in individual signs of the zodiac (in degrees) information was offered about the relationships between the celestial bodies and individual houses – as the latter were significant for the overall meaning of the horoscope. Further part of the most complete version of the election prophecy consists of several characteristics of rulers in the form of brief descriptions of the course of their rule: from a righteous and pious prince ruling for a very short time, through subsequent monarchs. They included a criminal, stern and greedy old man whose rule was to be marked by sorrow, and a young man with an experience in combat, but his rule was not considered to be important and he was to die in a battlefield. The horoscope also forecast the coming of a ruler from an illustrious family; under his rule justice and peace were to reign. The list of future rulers also included a queen whose reign was to result in a brief turning of the noble republic (*respublica*) into an oligarchy. The whole discussion covering a total of eight characteristics ended

⁵ On horoscopes, see E. Śnieżyńska-Stolot, "Zamek piękny na wzgórzu..." *Horoskopy – zapomniane źródło historyczne* (Kraków, 2015), pp. 23–35; J.D. North, *Horoscopes and History* (London, 1986). The discussion of problems involved in the interpretation of horoscope diagrams (on the example of birth horoscopes), see M. Azzolini, "Refining the Astrologer's Art. Astrological Diagrams in Bodleian MS Canon. Misc. 24 and Cardanos 'Libelli Quinque' (1547)," *Journal for the History of Astronomy* 42, no. 1 (2011), pp. 1–25.

with the astrologer's note that he was not able to decipher anything else from the data compiled while working on the horoscope.⁶

That short astrological and political work by the author of *Narratio prima* very soon became widely circulated and was not only a popular tidbit allowing the literate residents of the Commonwealth to find out what the astrologer was "allowed to forecast by the signs of the zodiac"⁷ but also to "verify" his predictions by *post factum* attribution of the names of rulers to consecutive very general characteristics – which were therefore susceptible to various interpretations from different points of view – and also an instrument of public opinion shaping in the period directly following the death of the last Jagiellon, during the first and second *interregnum*, but also in the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century. That multifaceted reading of the horoscope's sense as well as its functionality and the ensuing popular prophecy largely contributed to a significant proliferation of the text's variants, and in effect the family of works, which are referred to in literature as the "election prophecy", comprises texts including both a highly complex (though not always correct) astrological apparatus corroborating the original "astrological" provenance of the initial text, and erroneous and impoverished texts which either offer a wrong astrological interpretation or are completely devoid of it. It is not the only difference which gives rise to major problems with the sorting out and classification of individual variants. Some of them include quite complex and almost narrative characteristics of the rulers, while others consist of succinct enumerations; there is also a lack of consistency between many texts as to the order of individual characteristics. The latter were also frequently subject to quite far reaching interference by copyists who modified their meaning radically.

3. Identified texts of *Vaticinium*

Serving as a starting point of my research was a list made by Karl-Heinz Burmeister⁸ in the 1960s. However, it soon became apparent that some of the manuscripts listed by Rheticus's biographer are

⁶ On editing of the texts comprising the most complete version of the election prophecy, see Appendix 1.

⁷ I paraphrase here the ending of the election prophecy from MS *Kc*; the sigla of all texts and their characteristics are included in Pt. 3 of this study, whereas the edition of the text of MS *Kc* can be found in Appendix 3.

⁸ Burmeister, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 23–28.

no longer available today, while others were not at all taken into consideration. According to our present knowledge the list of manuscripts including various variants of Rheticus's text which were made from the sixteenth through eighteenth century is as follows:⁹

Surviving texts

In Latin

- B Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. germ. Fol. 143, fol. 437rec.: *Judicium Rhetici Doctoris Medicinae, astronomi peritissimi, de Electione regum Poloniae, factum post obitum Regis Sigismundi, Anno [15]71.*

Manuscript miscellany *in folio*, including political writings, documents and occasional texts regarding the Reich and the Commonwealth, 16th–17th c.¹⁰

- C Città del Vaticano, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Ottob. lat. 2642, fol. 94: *Vaticinium Georgii Rhetici Medicinae Doctoris et Astronomi, de electione Regum Poloniae scriptum post obitum Sigismundi Augusti Regis Anno M.D.LXXI.*

Codex *in folio*, 17th c., including *Diarium electionis Polonicae anno 1587* and notes about the 1697 election.

- Da Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. 694, fol. 201rec.–202ver.: *Vaticinium Anno 1551 Betij Retycij Doctoris et Astrologi Doctissimi, Medici, de Regnatione Regni Poloniae post decessum Sigismundi Augusti.*

Volume *in folio* from 17th c., including political writings, documents and occasional texts regarding Gdańsk and relations between Royal Prussia and the Commonwealth.¹¹

⁹ The following list was published in the appendix in Choptiany, “Ultra prognosticare me sidera non permittunt”. But here it is extended and includes the titles of individual texts quoted *in extenso* with brief description of individual codices offering their format, date and overall characteristic of contents, provenance (whenever possible) and the address of the catalogue in which more specific information may be found.

¹⁰ See H. Degering, *Kurzes Verzeichnis der germanischen Handschriften der Preussischen Staatsbibliothek*, vol. 1: *Die Handschriften in Folioformat* (Leipzig, 1925), pp. 19–21.

¹¹ See O. Günther, *Katalog der Danziger Stadtbibliothek*, vol. 1, Pt. 1: *Die Danzig betreffenden Handschriften* (Danzig, 1892), pp. 435–444.

- Db* Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. 724, fol. 109ver.: *Vaticinium Anno 1551 Betij Retici Doctoris et Astrologi Doctissimi Medici De Regnatione Regni Poloniae post decessum Sigismundi Augusti*.
Codex *in folio* from the turn of 17th c., including political writings, documents and occasional texts about Gdańsk, Royal Prussia and the Commonwealth, a volume from Daniel Gralath's library.¹²
- Dc* Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. 821, fol. 2rec.: *Vaticinium D[omini] Rhetici Medici et Astronomi peritissimi de Electione et Gubernatione Regum Poloniae, factum ante Obitum D. Sigismundi Augusti Anno 1571*.
Cartulary *in folio* from end of 17th c., including descriptions of royal privileges granted to Gdańsk.¹³
- Dd* Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. Uph. fol. 26, p. 243: *Responsum Joachimi Mathematici doctissimi ad quaesitum Sigismundi Augusti Regis Poloniae utrum regimen suum sit diuturnum et an sub alio gubernatio melior feliciorq[ue] duratura*.
Cartulary *in folio* from 16th and 17th c., including copies of documents and writings regarding relations of Gdańsk and Royal Prussia with the Commonwealth.¹⁴
- Fb* Kórnik, PAS Library (Biblioteka Kórnicka PAN), MS 341, fol. 185rec.–ver.: *Quaestio utru[m] Regnu[m] istius Principis duraturum item an sub alio melior foret gubernatio Anno D[omini] M.D.L.XIII*.
- Fc* Kórnik, Kórnik Library PAN, MS 341, fol. 186rec.: *Vaticinium Bethaci Doctoris et Astronomi promptissimi Mediciq[ue] excellentissimi Anno D[omini] 1507. De Regnatione Regem Poloniae post decessum Sigismundi Augusti Regis Polonorum*.
Miscellany from 17–18th c., including copies of political writings, correspondence and diet journals from 17th c., as well as, i.a., Jan Brożek's anti-Jesuit satirical dialogue *Gratis*.

¹² See *ibidem*, pp. 495–525.

¹³ See O. Günther, *Katalog der Danziger Stadtbibliothek*, vol. 1, Pt. 2 (Danzig, 1903), pp. 26–27.

¹⁴ See *ibidem*, pp. 392–396.

Fd Kórnik, PAS Library (Biblioteka Kórnicka PAN), MS 352, fol. 135ver.: *Vaticinium Reticii doctoris et astrologi doctissimi medici A[nn]o D[omi]ni 1502 De regnatione Regni Poloniae post decessum Sigismundi Augusti Regis Poloniae.*

Miscellany including copies of documents, letters and occasional texts from the 1750s.

Ka Cracow, Jagiellonian Library (Biblioteka Jagiellońska), MS 118, pp. 235–237: *Prognosticon Regum Polonorum quoru[n]dam.*

Kb Cracow, Jagiellonian Library (Biblioteka Jagiellońska), MS 118, p. 445: *Vaticinium ex parte regum septem post decessum Sigismundi Augusti per Rheticum doctorem et astrologum medicum illustrem editum.*

Volume *in folio*, a work of several copyists from 16th and 17th c., including a number of documents from the reign of kings: Sigismund Augustus, Stephen Báthory and Sigismund III Vasa.¹⁵

La Cracow, Princes Czartoryski Library (Biblioteka XX. Czartoryskich), MS 1292, p. 8: *Vaticinium Rethici doctoris medici et astronomiae de electione regum Poloniae statim factum post obitum regis Sigismundi Augusti anno Domini 1571.*

Codex *in octavo* from first half of 16th c., including copies of statutes granted by Cracow Bishop Jan V Lutek of Brzezie (1405–1471) and Gniezno Archbishop Jan Łaski (1456–1531), the text of *Vaticinium* is placed on an free page between the copies.¹⁶

Lb Cracow, Princes Czartoryski Library (Biblioteka XX. Czartoryskich), MS 1657 IV, p. 596 (= fol. 446ver.): *Judicium D[omi]ni Gregorij Rethen Astronomiae peritissimi de electione Polon[orum] Regum A[nn]o 1571 editu[m].*

Miscellany *in folio* from second half of 17th c., including copies of documents, letters and occasional texts regarding the Commonwealth under the Vasa rule.¹⁷

¹⁵ See W. Wisłocki, *Katalog rękopisów Biblioteki Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego*, Pt. 1: *Wstęp. Rękopisy 1–1875* (Kraków, 1877), p. 49.

¹⁶ S. Kutrzeba, *Catalogus codicum manu scriptorum Musei Principum Czartoryski Cracoviensis*, vol. 2 (Cracoviae, 1913), p. 160.

¹⁷ Cf. *ibidem*, pp. 324–335.

- Lc* Cracow, Princes Czartoryski Library (Biblioteka XX. Czartoryskich), MS 1947 III, p. 50: *Prognostic Retici Doctoris et Astrologi Doctissimi AD 1601 De regnatione Regum Poloniae*.
Volume *in folio* from second half of 17th c., including copies of tax documents, political and funeral letters, speeches and political writings; provenance: Mazovia region, vicinity of Raciąż.¹⁸
- M* Lviv, National Vasyl Stefanyk Scientific Library of Ukraine (*olim* Ossoliński National Institute Library), MS 189/II), p. 8: *Judicium Rethici Doctoris Medicine et Astronomie peritissimi De Electione Reg[um] Polonorum facta post obitum 1552*.
A comprehensive codex *in folio* from second half of 17th c., compiled largely by Marcin Goliński and including copies of documents, letters and occasional texts produced from the 1740s through 1760s, moreover – several other prophecies regarding mainly and directly the period in which the codex was made.¹⁹
- N* Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, D 208 inf., fol. 170rec.–171rec.: *Reticus Medicus et Astrologus Cracoviensis, Quaestio utrum istius Principis est diu duraturum Imperium an sub alio melior futura gubernatio Anno MDLXIII 1 die aprilis hora 1, minut[orum] 15 post meridiem, poli elevatio 51*.
Codex *in folio* from end of 16th c., including copies of documents, letters and occasional texts regarding political and religious matters during the first and second interregnum; a volume from the library of Gian Vincenzo Pinelli (1535–1601).
- Rb* Warszawa, National Library (Biblioteka Narodowa), MS 6647 II, fol. 267ver.–268rec.: *Praedictio cuiusdam viri Graecii medicinae et astrologiae peritissimi de futuris Reipublicae Poloniae facta per obitum Sigismundi Augusti Anno 1572*.
Cartulary *in quarto* of historical as well as political and literary texts about the interregnum that followed after the reign of King

¹⁸ See *Katalog rękopisów Biblioteki Czartoryskich w Krakowie. Sygnatury 1682–2000*, ed. M. Kukiel, suppl. A. Homecki (Kraków, 1988), pp. 234–236.

¹⁹ Cf. W. Kętrzyński, *Katalog rękopisów Biblioteki Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich*, vol. 1 (Lwów, 1881), pp. 439–457.

Jan III Sobieski and the election of August II; provenance: Morstin Family Archive (Archiwum Morstinów).²⁰

V Wrocław, University Library (Biblioteka Uniwersytecka), MS Akc. 1949/594, fol. 56ver.–57ver.: *Iudicium D[omi]ni Georgii Ioachimi Rhaetici, medici et astronomi peritissimi, de successoribus in regno Poloniae post obitum regis Sigismundi II. Anno 1571.*

A copy of a 18th-c. manuscript no. 375 (which did not survive) coming from the library of the Maria Magdalen Church in Wrocław (Rehdigerianus Codex).²¹

Wa Wrocław, Ossoliński National Institute Library (Biblioteka Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich), MS 190/II, fol. 9ver.: *Vaticinium Retici Doctoris peritissimi phisici mediciq[ue] ill[ustrissi]mi ducis Slucensis Georgii Philosophiae magistri de electione regum Poloniae factum post obitum Serenissimi Sigismundi Augusti Regis Poloniae Anno 1572.*

Codex from 17th c., a work of many hands including writings and documents related to Zebrzydowski's *rokosz* (rebellion).²²

Wb Wrocław, Ossoliński National Institute Library (Biblioteka Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich), MS 200/II, fol. 208rec.–ver.: *Vaticinium Doctoris est Astronomi peritissimi Regij A[nn]o 1552 D[omini] de Regnatione Regum Poloniae post decessum Sigismundi Augusti.* Codex from the turn of 17th c., a work of several hands including letters, political writings and occasional texts dating from that period.²³

Wc Wrocław, Ossoliński National Institute Library (Biblioteka Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich), MS 223/II, p. 5: *Vaticinium Doctoris et Astronomi peritissimi Rhetici A[nn]o 1552 de reg[nati]one Regum Poloniae post decessu[m] Sigism[un]di Augusti.*

²⁰ See *Katalog rękopisów Biblioteki Narodowej*, vol. 7: *Rękopisy 6601–7000. Zbiory Morstinów, Radziwiłłów, Potockich i inne rękopisy XVI–XVIII w.*, ed. K. Muszyńska (Warszawa, 1969), pp. 114–124.

²¹ On the original manuscript, see M.A. Guttman, *Katalog der Handschriften der Rehdigerana*, Pt. 1, p. 80 (catalogue in manuscript form, Wrocław, University Library [Biblioteka Uniwersytecka], MS Akc. 1967/3).

²² Cf. Kętrzyński, op. cit., pp. 457–463.

²³ Cf. ibidem, pp. 497–508.

Miscellany from 17th c., a work of several hands, including copies of letters, writings and documents regarding the Commonwealth's internal and external affairs in first half of 17th c.²⁴

Wd Wrocław, Ossoliński National Institute Library (Biblioteka Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich), MS 3163/II, pp. 20–21: *Vaticinium Doctoris Astronomiae Perfectissimi Reiji de successione Regum Poloniae post obitum Sigismundi Augusti Anno D[omi]no 1552.*

Miscellany from 18th c., including copies of literary works and political writings regarding the 17th and 18th c.²⁵

In German

De Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. 907, p. 68: *Vaticinium, oder Weissagung Doctoris Retzij de sehr erfahrenen Medici et Astronomi von den Wahl un Regierung der Könige zu Pohlen Geschehen fürm Tode Königs Sigismundi Augusti, Anno 1571.*

Codex in folio in German, 17th c., including, i.a., comprehensive lists of former mayors and members of the city council of Gdańsk.²⁶

Df Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. 1293, fol. 157ver.–158ver.: *Weissagung Doctoris Joannis Rezy... von der wahl und Regierung der Könige zu Pohlen.*

Codex in folio in German, 17th c., including, i.a., copies of privileges granted to Gdańsk and historical texts regarding the city.²⁷

Fa Kórnik, PAS Library (Biblioteka Kórnicka PAN), MS 169, fol. 13ver.–14rec.: *Weissagung doctoris Ratzii von der Wahl unnd Regierung der Könninge von Pohlenn geschehen kurz fürm Tode selig Könning Sigismundi anno 1571.*

Codex from 17th c., including writings by Bartholomeus Wartzmann and a few prophecies of political nature.

²⁴ Cf. *ibidem*, pp. 595–600.

²⁵ *Inwentarz rękopisów Biblioteki Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich we Wrocławiu*, vol. 1: *Rękopisy 1505–7325*, ed. J. Turska (Wrocław, 1948), p. 152.

²⁶ See Günther, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, Pt. 2, p. 59.

²⁷ See *ibidem*, pp. 225–227.

In Polish

Fe Kórnik, PAS Library (Biblioteka Kórnicka PAN), MS 420, fol. 247ver.–248rec.: *Prognostyk astronoma krakowskiego Rescyusza o Successyi Krolow Polskich, po Smierci Augusta Pierwszego Krola Polskiego w Roku 1552.*
Codex from beginning of 18th c., including documents related to the Tarnogród Confederation (1715–1716).

Kc Cracow, Jagiellonian Library (Biblioteka Jagiellońska), MS 921, fol. 1rec.–ver.: *Wytłumaczenie z łacińskiego na polski język Prognostyku przez niegdy Geciusza nazwanego doktora o następujących królach polskich, z manuskryptu wypisane.*
A single page written on both sides, from 18th c. (*dissolutum* coming from a *silva rerum* from the same period?).²⁸

Ra Warszawa, National Library (Biblioteka Narodowa), MS 6634 III, fol. 207rec.: *Praktika doctoris Klitricii za panowania króla Zygmu[nta] Augusta uczyniona.*
Codex *in folio* from mid-17th c., including literary writings and historical documents from first half of 17th c., property of Jakub Michałowski (1612–1663), then of Morstin Family Archive (Archiwum Morstinów).²⁹

Lost texts*In Latin*

Dh Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. 781, fol. 44rec.–45ver.: *Vaticinium Doctoris Rhetici.*
A war loss identified after 1945, codex in Latin and German, 17th c., cartulary with documents and occasional writings regarding Gdańsk and relations between Royal Prussia and the Commonwealth.³⁰

S Weimar, Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek, sign. 30,6:18: *Judicium Joachimi Rhetici... de electione regum Poloniae factum post obitum Sigismundi a[nno] 1571.*
Manuscript lost in the fire of 2004. Item 19 in a collection of 22 works in one composite volume which included a few

²⁸ See Wisłocki, op. cit., p. 260.

²⁹ See *Katalog rękopisów Biblioteki Narodowej*, vol. 7, pp. 46–53.

³⁰ Cf. the description of the codex in: Günther, op. cit., vol. 1, Pt. 1, pp. 605–607.

manuscripts and more than a dozen prints on astrology and astronomy, etc. According to the catalogue description, the manuscript of *Judicium* consisted of one page.³¹

In German

Dg Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. 675, fol. 325: *Weissagung Dr. Rhaetici von der Wahl und Regierung der Könige zu Pohlen.*

A war loss identified after 1945. Codex from 16th–17th c., in 18th c. property of Walenty Schlieff (1680–1750), a cartulary including letters and documents mainly about the political situation in Gdańsk and its relations with the Commonwealth and Sweden.³²

Di Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. Uph. fol. 47, fol. 56: *Weissagung Doctoris Joannis Rezij.*

A war loss identified after 1945. Codex from 17th c., a cartulary of privileges granted to Gdańsk.³³

Dj Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. Uph. fol. 191, p. 142: *Rhetici Weisagung.*

A war loss identified after 1945. Autograph of Gdańsk historian Andreas Schott (1707–1764) from 1747, collection of extracts related to the history of Gdańsk and Royal Prussia.³⁴

The meticulous analysis of those texts confirmed Burmeister's main intuition that the work coming from Wrocław (MS *V*) includes one of the texts owing to which it is possible to understand best what exactly Rheticus's astrological and political text was like. The comparison of witness *V* with other manuscripts also disclosed that it was closely connected with a few other manuscripts, and allowed to sort out the texts in a way permitting to create a model featuring subsequent transformations of that work. The compiled source materials enable to reproduce a general outline of the text's development and its rooting in the popular register of political discourse regarding elected rulers, but they certainly are not complete and final. It is

³¹ See *Verlust- und Schadensdatenbank der Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek*, www.anna-amalia-bibliothek.de/de/verlustdatenbank.html (accessed: 12.05.2016).

³² Cf. the description of the codex in: Günther, op. cit., vol. 1, Pt. 1, pp. 384–387.

³³ Cf. codex description *ibidem*, Pt. 2, p. 408.

³⁴ See *ibidem*, pp. 463–464.

likely that Rheticus's autograph may be found and – which is even more probable – that in *silvae rerum*, miscellanies and cartularies, which I did not have access to or of the existence of which I was not aware, there are texts that may be classified in one of the groups identified below or in the light of which in the future it will be necessary to carry out a partial revision of what has already been established. Future amendments of that sort should not, however, substantially modify the fact that the Wrocław record is one of the key works in the whole family of texts.

4. Manuscript *V* – a crown witness

It may seem paradoxical that the text most probably offering the best insight into what the original Rheticus's election prophecy could have looked like is older than the original by nearly two centuries. Although from the chronological point of view the manuscript *V* has most in common with spoilt and most distant in formal terms and contents witnesses which are devoid of astrological apparatus present in the archetypal *Vaticinium*, where the author's name – if at all referred to – was completely distorted, many factors indicate that it is this particular manuscript that should be viewed as by far more reliable than some other copies made in the sixteenth century, i.e., during Rheticus's lifetime or soon after his death.

The text *V* was produced in the eighteenth century as a copy of codex no. 375 which was part of the collection of the library of the Mary Magdalene Church in Wrocław, and it had been made by Samuel Benjamin Klose (1730–1798), an outstanding Silesian historiographer of the Enlightenment.³⁵ The library was established based on a collection of patrician Thomas Rehdiger (1540–1576), a humanist and bibliophile active in Wrocław's intellectual community, and it was with the Rehdiger family, especially its branch represented by banker and merchant Nicolaus Rehdiger, Thomas' younger brother (1525–1587), that Dudithius got in touch after he had settled in Wrocław upon the election of Stephen Báthory as the king of Poland.³⁶ It was in Wrocław that in the final years of his life he brought together a group

³⁵ On Klose, see L. Harc, *Samuel Benjamin Klose (1730–1798). Studium historiograficzno-źródłoznawcze* (Wrocław, 2002; Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensi, 2389, Historia, 157).

³⁶ See G. Almási, *The Uses of Humanism: Johannes Sambucus (1531–1584), Andreas Dudith (1533–1589), and the Republic of Letters in East Central Europe* (Leiden and Boston, 2009), pp. 76–77.

of intellectuals and erudites, including, i.a., astronomer and astrologer Tadeáš Hájek, and physician and humanist, Johann Crato von Krafftheim. Unlike Dudithius's book collection, which was dispersed as early as the beginning of the seventeenth century and of which only fragments survived in the Wrocław collection,³⁷ a significant portion of the manuscripts documenting that circle's intellectual life survived in the Rehdirger collection in Silesia which were then incorporated by the Wrocław University Library. It was most probably owing to the importance of Dudithius himself and the fact that he played an outstanding role in the history of the sixteenth-century Wrocław that Klose, as part of a comprehensive project consisting in the compilation of copies and characteristics of the sources regarding the history of Silesia and its capital city, decided to make a copy of those documents, including Rheticus's text which was among them.³⁸ The codex comprising the text *V* is also one of several examples of sources which have not survived to date in their original version and the access to which we have today only owing to Klose's work.³⁹

A long-term familiarity between Dudithius and Rheticus, extensive correspondence of the former and – quite accidental as a matter of fact – location of MS *V* in Wrocław are not a sufficient reason to give priority to that particular text, even though those factors facilitate the reconstruction of the context in which the first version of *Vaticinium* was put in circulation. After all there are several features of *V* which speak in favour of a claim that this particular text provides us with a privileged – though marked by a degree of uncertainty – access to the lost archetype.

1. The text of *V* is the longest of all known texts of *Vaticinium* and although its individual parts correspond structurally with later succinct versions of *Vaticinium*, they are more elaborate and their vocabulary may be easily identified in relatively later and distorted texts.

2. The narrative about future rulers of Poland includes elements of astrological apparatus: featured are the positions of the Sun, Moon and planets, and conclusions of historical and political nature are derived

³⁷ Cf. *Dudith András könyvtára. Részleges rekonstrukció*, ed. and introd. J. Jankovics, I. Monok (Szeged, 1993), p. 9.

³⁸ See Harc, op. cit., pp. 118–132. Klose's archive of more than 200 units is now stored by two Wrocław institutions: the State Archive (Archiwum Państwowe) and the Manuscripts Department of the University Library (Oddział Rękopisów, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka); see *ibidem*, p. 259.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 131–132.

from them. Consecutive portions of the text *V* comprising information of astrological nature function as *lectio difficilior*: compared to other texts this one looks like the most complicated one in terms of contents and requires diverse interpretation abilities, which indicates that it is a work of an expert astrologer, this time identified beyond any doubt as Rheticus in the text's heading.

3. The text *V* was included in the codex by Klose himself without any additional highlighting, it begins in the middle of the page most probably to save the space. In the margins there are notes made by the Wrocław historian on the calendar of the life of Silesian humanists at the turn of the sixteenth century, which is an evidence that the author of the copy had historical awareness of the value of the documents he was copying and that he tried to reproduce and order the materials he was dealing with in an accurate way. The very way Rheticus's text is copied indicates that the original was in the form of a "professional" astrological manuscript – it includes astrological symbols which in other variants of the text are most frequently replaced by the names of the signs of the zodiac and celestial bodies. It is important that one of the texts similar to *V*, namely version *N*, which has been in the collection of Milan's Ambrosiana since the sixteenth century, offers other names of celestial bodies in some places than the text *V* (planet Mars instead of Leo or Mercury instead of Taurus), which shows how far reaching was the disintegration of the text and the mistakes made in its copies.

4. The text *V* includes an element absent from other manuscripts, namely a horoscope diagram made as at 1 April 1563, 1:15 p.m. Owing to the way it was copied by Klose, its form does not resemble the horoscope diagrams where signs of the zodiac are divided into 12 houses in the form of adjacent triangles inscribed within a quartile,⁴⁰ however, there is an important element which is absent from other texts, namely, precise timing of the circumstances in which a question was asked about the quality of the rule of King Sigismund Augustus's successors. One may assume, therefore, that the text *V* is an evidence that the election prophecy is not derived from a text stylized as a political prediction but rather a horoscope made in keeping with the rules of astrological art with comments which in the following decades of their copying and circulating became detached from the diagram and began to live an independent life. In this context

⁴⁰ Cf. North, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

it is worth noting that while in respect to some circumstances the text *N* seems to be erroneous, in respect of the date it is the only one that corroborates the data included in the text *V*. However, the text *N* offers information in a different way – not in the form of a horoscope diagram but in the form of a note placed by the copyist between the title and the prediction. What is more, it is in the text *N*, as well as in the manuscript *Fb* kept in Kórnik, that one may find a very important parameter which is not provided in the text *V*, namely “poli elevatio 51” (both in *N*, and in *Fb* in the form of “polus 51”), which means that planet observations were conducted at a latitude of 51 degrees north. Which fact is important because this is exactly the latitude then attributed to Wrocław in which Dudithius resided at the time (and it complies, with some tolerance, with the actual city’s latitude of 51°06’36’’N). It should be emphasized at the same time that although the exact latitude of Cracow was established as late as the seventeenth century by Stanisław Pudłowski, until then it was assumed that the capital of the Commonwealth had a latitude of 50 degrees north,⁴¹ which does not depart from the exact latitude (50°03’41’’N) we know today. Bearing in mind Rheticus’s geographical competence⁴² it seems unlikely that he viewed a difference of one degree in latitude as insignificant because it would be tantamount to a distance of nearly 110 km (for points located on one meridian, which in this case is even greater). The fact that some texts offer Wrocław’s latitude and do not mention Cracow may be an indirect proof that Rheticus’s horoscope was commissioned by Dudithius or that the text was prepared in his circle.

5. In the text there are elements of the first person narration which shed light on the communication between the astrologer and the commissioning person (no matter who the latter was). Most meaningful is the sentence closing the entire text: “The stars did not allow me to forecast any further”; variations of that phrase may be found in several other manuscripts, including texts *Fb*, *Ka* and *N* which corroborate the contents of *V*, granted some departures.

⁴¹ This location of Cracow was offered by, i.a., Szymon Starowolski, cf. idem, *Polonia* (Coloniae, 1632), p. 41.

⁴² Cf. his German geographical and chorographic treaty: G.J. Rheticus, “Chorographia Tewsch,” in: *Nicolaus Copernicus Gesamtausgabe*, vol. VIII/1: *Receptio Copernicana: Texte zur Aufnahme der Copernicanischen Theorie*, ed. H. Nobis, A.M. Pastori (Berlin, 2002), pp. 75–88.

6. It is possible to show the impact of *V* on other surviving texts but not otherwise. All elements present in other manuscripts of the election prophecy which are absent in the text *V* are either distortions by copyists or later interpolations which may be interpreted by the context in which a specific copy was made. They may be attributed to such diverse and distant factors as: ignorance of astrological apparatus, copy-making based on another, already spoilt and incomplete text or intention to modify ruler characteristics so that they correspond to a higher degree with the circumstances which arose since the moment the prophecy had been prepared, and owing to which it could still be probable. Anyway, it does not look that any copyist responsible for texts other than *V*, or any earlier manuscript *Dd*, *Fb*, *Ka* and *N*, had access to a better version.

7. The contents of *V* may be verified and connected with four incomplete, but closely related texts *Dd*, *Fb*, *Ka*, and *N*. It should be emphasized that the family of those five manuscripts is not homogenous and that there are differences between them which may be of consequence to the prospects of archetype reconstruction. They include such aspects of the election horoscope as a horoscope diagram (only in *V*), presence of astrological apparatus in the comments to the horoscope (nearly completely absent from *Dd*, making the text significantly shorter than the other witnesses), and such minor departures as omissions of individual words, changes in the word order in smaller units of the syntax, less important graphic variations, use of some prepositions and absence of the horoscope diagram. During the comparison of those five texts some local compliances were found in them, but they are not sufficient to indicate exactly the interdependencies between individual texts. Which does not change the fact that in principal those four texts of lower quality (*Dd*, *Fb*, *Ka*, *Na*) corroborate the contents of *V*.⁴³

5. Ideal types of the election prophecy

In the case of *Vaticinium* it is not possible to arrange the records according to a model which would reflect gradual degeneration of the text in the following decades and centuries. It is true (apart from *V*) that the older the text the more distortions it includes compared to *V* treated as a text closest to, if not identical, with the archetype, but it seems that the process of its decomposition, fragmentation

⁴³ See Appendix 1 for *editio variorum* of all five texts.

and degeneration began at a relatively early date and that at various stages both poorer and more complete variants functioned side by side. Parallel to gradual degeneration of Rheticus's text an opposite process took place which partly offset that trend: written were variants of the text which made use of the *Vaticinium's* framework structure in which additional contents were inserted. Thus relatively late manuscripts of the prophecy, dating from the second half or even the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century, did not necessarily have to have a form close to calculations and collations of the "diversi color" type described by Andrzej T. Klubiński,⁴⁴ but also had an elaborate form rooted in the current political context.

Whether the modifications of the text were triggered by ignorance or indifference to certain layers of the original prophecy, a wish to accomplish own, propaganda and political objective or were due to the most down to earth reason, namely the lack of access to a better (richer in contents, also in astrological terms) copy, it is owing to the authors of all copies that the "prophecy" was a living text for so long, open to added elements or their replacement, until the end of the Tarnogród confederation and the rule of King Augustus II the Strong.

A high diversity of available evidence makes it impossible to reconstruct precisely the interdependencies that exist between them. Those texts depart from one another in so many respects that it is hard to consider them as directly related to one another – such reconstruction would make it necessary to accept a high number of hypothetical texts which would be intermediary between individual records and *de facto* would not be of high heuristic value (like a potential expansion of the source base to include further examples of texts of the same type). However, certain regularities are noticeable, both at the level of the general text structure and certain phraseological groups. They allow to formulate more general conclusions about text varieties that will ignore connections between individual counterparts and to establish if ideal types exist. In respect to the latter it is already possible to formulate convincing – though involving some risk of error – conclusions about their origin and impact on other types of the *Vaticinium* text.

⁴⁴ Klubiński, op. cit.

In this highly diversified family of texts it is possible to identify the following types:

(α) archetype: non-surviving, no certainty by whose hand it was written;⁴⁵

(β) archetype copies: consist of the title, enumeration of the vicissitudes of individual rulers with elements of astrological commentary after each characteristic. That type includes manuscripts *Dd*, *Fb*, *Ka* and *N*, and also the text *V*, the most complete of all known manuscripts;

(γ) abridged variant: consists of the title and a “skeletal” version of the election prophecy, and is devoid of any explanation of astrological nature, with the characteristics of individual rulers significantly limited compared to the texts of the β family. This family of manuscripts comprises the texts *B*, *La*, *Lc*, *Da*, *Db*, *Dc*, *M* and *C*. It is from this family that the texts of the “diversi color” type presented by Klubiński originate;

(δ) expanded variant: based on the structure of the manuscripts from the γ family, it was used in a changing political context as a carrier of additional contents including, i.a., facts relating to real rulers and their accomplishments appraised positively or negatively by the author of the manuscript. This family of manuscripts includes the texts *Fd*, *Kb*, *Rb*, *Wa*, *Wb* and *Wc*;

(ϵ) mixed variant: in some manuscripts a variant of the text which could be classified as part of the family γ was combined with a text which is a partial copy of β , but – as it happened in the case of text *Lb* – only the “abridged version” was attributed to Rheticus, whereas the other one was copied as an anonymous prophecy. The same applies to the texts *Fb* and *Fc* which follow each other – the first one is an incomplete version belonging to β which is said to be an anonymous text, and the second one (related to the family δ) offers distorted Rheticus’s name (“Bethaci” instead of “Rhetici”). Another example is the manuscript *Wd* where the enumeration typical of γ or δ develops smoothly in a narrative characteristic of β which – being an exception

⁴⁵ Although I am inclined to accept that the original horoscope was authored by Rheticus, it is also likely that the election horoscope was an astrological forgery right from the beginning, a tool of political propaganda where the astrologer’s name was used only to make the text more credible in readers’ eyes. Though possible from the logical point of view, this hypothesis, like my guess regarding the date of 1 April, which I have signaled elsewhere, is not corroborated by any document.

– although it includes astrological commentary (even using astrological symbols) departs in terms of contents and vocabulary from the texts *Dd*, *N* and *V* – with the help of which it is possible to reproduce the text of *Vaticinium* closest to the archetype;

(ζ) German version – in the light of the surviving texts *De*, *Df* and *Fa* it may be viewed as an attempt to translate one of the manuscripts of the γ family; its origins are most probably connected with the Gdańsk centre as evidenced by a strong relation between the texts and other documents relating to the city, and the absence of other witnesses of that variant which are related to other centres;

(η) Polish version – survived in three different texts (*Ra* from mid-seventeenth century, and *Fe* and *Kc* from the turn of the seventeenth century), each of which, like the two manuscripts of the ζ family, is derived from the “abridged version” of *Vaticinium*. It is not clear when the prototypes of those texts were created for the first time and how many of them existed. Bearing in mind an attempt by Jan Januszowski to translate the election prophecy into Polish in his *Wróżki* (Fortune-Tellers),⁴⁶ one may suspect that the text could also have existed in other Polish translations.

The above classification into families of surviving texts allows to create at least two equally probable *stemma codicum*:

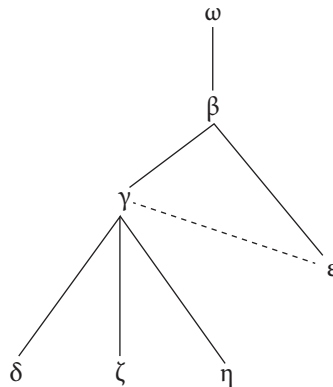


Fig. 1

⁴⁶ J. Januszowski, “Wróżki,” in: *Staropolskie przepowiednie i mirabilia*, p. 58.

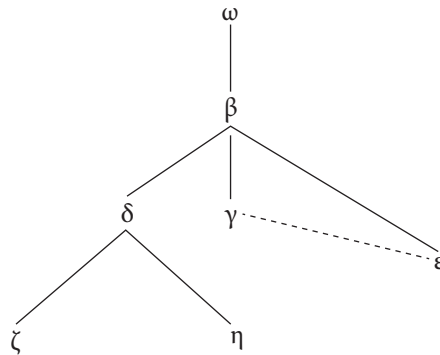


Fig. 2

According to the first variant (Fig. 1) the families δ , ζ and η developed in parallel assuming that all stem from one of the texts of the γ family and they had impact on the evolution of type ϵ . (Which is possible assuming that like the γ family, it derives directly from β .) The second variant (Fig. 2) is based on an assumption that the families δ , γ and ϵ stem from β , and the texts in the γ family had influenced the shaping of ϵ . No matter what is eventually decided about the texts of δ type, according to both interpretations two families of vernacular texts, i.e., ζ and η , stem directly from the γ family. Which means that they are based on the abridged Latin version of *Vaticinium*, as evidenced, i.a., by the fact that in terms of form and contents the German and Polish translations follow quite faithfully that particular type.

It should be emphasized again that the point of the identification of ideal types is not to attribute them to consecutive phases. That approach would obliterate specific distribution of individual manuscripts and could give rise to a wrong conviction that whenever a simplified form of the prediction appeared, the version richer and closer to archetype came out of use. Actually it was otherwise: the fact that a radically abridged version of the prophecy was circulated at some moment in time did not preclude that one of its longer versions continued to be copied. A crucial role was played by the copyist or commissioner of the copy and the milieu in which a specific counterpart functioned: significant were both individual writing and linguistic skills of the copyist and the nature of the text based on which the copy was made as well as the reason why it was copied

(ranging from a collection of curiosities to the dissemination of political propaganda).⁴⁷

6. Circulation of the manuscript of Rheticus's prophecy

Apart from the road from Wrocław to Cracow that the prototype of text *V* must have covered, it is impossible to draw an exact trajectory in space along which the text of *Vaticinium* was circulated. The reconstruction of specific reasons why the text of *Vaticinium* was included in the cartulary, which eventually landed in such collections as the Ossolineum or the Czartoryski Library by way of inheritance and acquisition, may be a subject matter of separate case studies. They may produce interesting results even if the identity of the authors of individual copies cannot be established. After it had been inserted in a *silva rerum*, the text of the prophecy existed in the company of other elements: letter and document copies, copies of printed texts, letter formats, loose notes and even drawings. It is not always easy to identify the provenance of such a codex, and sometimes it is even more difficult to reconstruct the reasons why a specific text had been included in a collection of manuscripts. Although the scope of this article covers mainly formal transformations of Rheticus's text by successive copyists, the problem may be highlighted by two examples with a proviso, however, that observations made on that occasion are no more than preliminary intuitions which require further source studies and verifications.

The Biecz castellan, Jakub Michałowski (1612–1663), is an example of a seventeenth-century reader about whom we are certain that he was familiar with the prophecy's text.⁴⁸ In his rich manuscript

⁴⁷ On the circulation of manuscript copies, see, i.a.: *Staropolska kultura rękopisu*, ed. H. Dziechcińska (Warszawa, 1990); J. Partyka, *Rękopisy dworu szlacheckiego doby staropolskiej* (Warszawa, 1995); A. Oszczyda, "Z kroniki do sylwy. Wokół problemów rękopisu i druku w początkach XVII wieku. Część 1: Pieśń o zdołaniu Smoleńska Marcina Paszkowskiego. Uwagi o autorstwie i migracji tekstu," *Pamiętnik Literacki* 102, no. 4 (2011), pp. 175–180; eadem, "Z kroniki do sylwy. Wokół problemów rękopisu i druku w początkach XVII wieku. Część 2: Wiersz Macieja Strykowskiego w lwowskim rękopisie Ossolineum," *Pamiętnik Literacki* 104, no. 3 (2013), pp. 231–248; M. Choptiany, "'Dyalog' Kasjana Sakowicza (1642) jako druk i rękopis. XVII-wieczne spory kalendarzowe i problem obiegu idei w kulturze staropolskiej," *Pamiętnik Literacki* 108, no. 3 (2017), pp. 51–78.

⁴⁸ A. Przyboś, "Michałowski Jakub," in: *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 20 (Wrocław et al., 1975), pp. 652–654.

collection which is now in the collections of the National Library in Warsaw and the Scientific Library of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Cracow, there is a significant percentage of cartularies which include a sizeable collection of the copies of various prints. Until today historians mainly focused on Michałowski's public activity and edited so far has only been one of many extensive codices which includes documents made in his lifetime and during his political career.⁴⁹ Although his bibliophile interests have also been a focus of attention, however, to date no wider study has been conducted to shed some light on his reading preferences and a strategy of text collection.⁵⁰

It seems that one of the keys to understand the strategy of the compilation and collection of texts coming from various cultural traditions and registers, both ancient and contemporary with Michałowski's times, is his interest in the texts of prophetic or astrological nature and the fact that the Biecz castellan could have perceived them as either a source clarifying the events that he was witnessing or a tool to shape the opinions of a wider group of readers. One may only guess that he consciously incorporated into his collection such texts which could help him perceive contemporary political events and to attribute an additional sense to them, sometimes in contravention of the authors' initial intentions. It is probably for that reason that his collection includes, i.a., a copy of the translation of the Padua prophecy by astrologer Andrea Argoli forecasting the imminent end of the world,⁵¹ a copy of the 1595 *Przestroga* (Admonition) by Jan Latosz which creates a vision of the coming of a powerful ruler from distant north and the reign of Antichrist, which must have fueled imagination in the days of Swedish invasion, especially of a member of King

⁴⁹ See *Jakuba Michałowskiego, wojskiego lubelskiego, a później kasztelana bieckiego księga pamiętnicza*, ed. A.Z. Helcel (Kraków, 1864).

⁵⁰ See M. Wichowa, "Elementy biblioterapii w literaturze polskiej epok dawnych. Rekonesans historycznoliteracki," *Acta Universitatis Lodzianis. Folia Librorum* 17 (2013), p. 56.

⁵¹ Cf. Warsaw, National Library (Biblioteka Narodowa), MS 6634 III, fol. 208rec.–215rec.: *Straszna dziwnych skutków po wszystkim świecie 'metamorphosis' przez Andrzeja Argola... spisana*; a mention in fol. 208rec. suggests that it is a faithful copy of the print ("Podana w druk ku dobru pospolitemu z wielkim tych wszystkich rzeczy uważeniem *millesimo sexcentesimo quinq[ua]gesimo tertio*), but even if it was so, no copy of that publications has survived, see J. Krocak, "Jeśli mię wieźdźba prawdziwa uwodzi..." *Prognozyki i znaki cudowne w polskiej literaturze barokowej* (Wrocław, 2006), pp. 142–144.

John II Casimir's camp,⁵² and finally – one of the *Vaticinium* texts (copy *Ra*). To an experienced politician and participant of the elections which raised to the Polish throne two sons of King Sigismund III, the horoscope could have been an inspiration to continue to be active in politics. Apart from the foregoing texts there was a number of minor forecasting and prophetic notes made on the pages of some codices. A more in depth study of Michałowski's own writings and the analysis of textual interdependencies between individual copies, closed within a material, individualized intertextual web, may bring about further information about the importance attributed by the Biecz castellan to texts of this kind and what use he made of them.

The second example illustrates with a high degree of probability the type of reception of Rheticus's prophecy which is situated at the interface of two planes: the individual one related to the preferences and objectives of specific copyists and the community one encompassing wider trends and a group of convictions shared by individual members of a social stratum or residents of one location. It seems that the burghers of Gdańsk, or even residents of Royal Prussia, were such specific community of readers of Rheticus's text. Out of 33 identified (of which 28 have survived) texts of various variants of the election prophecy as many as 11 manuscripts (of which 7 have survived) have indisputable Gdańsk provenance.⁵³ Out of 7 "Gdańsk" manuscripts of Rheticus's prophecy available today as many as 6 are to date in the collections situated on the Motława River due to a policy of donations and acquisitions conducted by the library of the City Council in the past centuries. Contrary to later collections established in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, whose provenance structure, i.a., in geographic terms, is highly diversified, there is no doubt that the

⁵² See M. Choptiany, "Przestroga' Jana Latosza z 1595 roku. Prolegomena do edycji krytycznej na podstawie siedemnastowiecznego rękopisu z Biblioteki Narodowej w Warszawie," *Terminus* 16, no. 2 (2014), pp. 175–192; a separate study will be devoted to the questions of the reinterpretation of Latosz's text during the Swedish deluge. On anti-Swedish texts, see, i.a.: Z. Libiszowska, "Anty-szwedzka literatura propagandowa z czasów 'potopu'," in: *Polska w okresie drugiej wojny północnej 1655–1660*, vol. 2: *Rozprawy* (Warszawa, 1957), pp. 481–527; A. Kersten, "Geneza 'Nowej Gigantomachii,'" *Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska, Sectio F* 10, no. 1 (1955), pp. 1–20; idem, *Pierwszy opis obrony Jasnej Góry w roku 1655. Studia nad "Nową Gigantomachią" ks. Augustyna Kordeckiego* (Warszawa, 1958).

⁵³ Which are respectively: in Latin – 4 survived (*Da*, *Db*, *Dc*, *Dd*) and 1 is lost (*Dh*), in German – 3 survived (*De*, *Df*, *Fa*) and 3 are lost (*Dg*, *Di*, *Dj*).

Gdańsk copies of the prophecy were made in that city. This is evidenced by the provenance characteristics of individual counterparts, both those that have survived and that have been lost, being a proof of the connection of those manuscripts with the history of the city, and this is why they landed naturally in the former City Library, which is now the Gdańsk Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Which applies both to the texts *Db*, *Dg*, *Dj* and *Fa*, that are directly connected with the figures of the eighteenth-century Gdańsk scholars and collectors (i.e., Daniel Gralath, Valentin Schlieff, Andreas Schott and Bartolomeus Wartzmann), and the other texts and codices of which they are part. When it comes to other codices including the text of the prophecy, the latter was never so clearly rooted in the context of internal and external affairs of Gdańsk – and more generally – Royal Prussia. It seems therefore that the harbour on the Motława River may be recognized as the place where the text of *Vaticinium* was most probably translated into German. Anyway, no other text in that language is known to be included in a codex which would not be connected with that city.

The above interpretation is also supported by the fact that Rheticus's *Vaticinium* not only had been made part of the context of specific local policy by inserting some texts (e.g., *Da*) among the copies of documents on the relations between the Commonwealth and Royal Prussia, but also that the horoscope was interpreted in a symbolic way. That second trend may be exemplified by two Latin texts of Rheticus's prophecy from Gdańsk, *Da* and *Dc*, inserted next to the texts by Dantiscus (Jan Dantyszczek) known as *Vaticinium* and *Jonas Propheta*.⁵⁴ In the case of the codex including text *De*, which was very neatly made and which is a kind of a historical compendium about the city, next to *Vaticinium oder Weissagung* there is a German version of Dantiscus's poetic forecast.⁵⁵ Those elements prove that the election prophecy was quite strongly connected by some users with the local prophetic and literary tradition initiated by Dantiscus and the vision of the history of Gdańsk and Poland he had created based to the same degree on popular apocalyptic topics and on the local political, religious and social context.⁵⁶ Out of the entire spectrum of prophecies

⁵⁴ See, Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. 694, fol. 202rec.f., and Ms. 821, fol. 2rec.-2ver.

⁵⁵ Cf. Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. 907, p. 70.

⁵⁶ On the subject, see Z. Nowak, "Antyreformacyjna elegia Dantyszka o zagładzie Gdańska," *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 16 (1971), pp. 3–35; A. Skolimowska,

by the author of *Encomium Prussiae* (The Praise of Prussia)⁵⁷ the manuscripts related to Gdańsk create the strongest and easiest to document constellation in spite of the fact that they differ from one another in terms of form and volume.

Both examples – of Michałowski and Gdańsk – prove a high content capacity of the prophecy allowing to combine it with other texts (both the literary ones and documents) and with the local and current political context. One of the main practices affecting the text was prophecy “checking” – a verification of its characteristics *ex post*, as evidenced in the margins of many texts. But apart from a widespread manner of its interpretation its users attributed more complex meanings to the text which after several centuries are a very valuable source allowing to study today various aspects of early modern mentality – attitude to the supernatural sphere, political views, convictions about the past, etc. Rheticus’s prophecy – or rather how it was transformed – may be one of the measures used in such studies which supplements the foregoing conclusions regarding the sources and editorial work.

7. Conclusion

The above conclusions do not clarify many issues. I.a., it is not clear how it came about that the prophecy’s variants stemming from the same source, i.e., the “archetypal” Rheticus’s horoscope, began to function independently to such degree that texts belonging to two separate tradition branches may be found on the pages of one codex as evidenced by a pair of texts (*Ka* and *Kb*) from Cracow which are several hundred pages apart, and texts *Fb* and *Fc* which followed each other directly in one *silva rerum*. It seems that to the authors of those home chronicles and cartularies the texts must have looked like two independent wholes (even though some of its contents were

“Vaticinium ruiturae Poloniae”. Was Dantiscus Foretelling the Downfall of Poland,” in: *Corpus Epistularum Ioannis Dantisci*, Pt. 5: *Respublica Litteraria in Action. New Sources*, vol. 3, ed. K. Tomaszuk (Warsaw and Cracow, 2016), pp. 99–114. I wish to express my gratitude to A. Skolimowska for access to the rough copy of her article which is an extended version of her paper delivered during the session “Respublica Litteraria in Action: New Sources – New Paths of Research” (Faculty of „Artes Liberales”, University of Warsaw, 14 Nov. 2014). On intellectual culture of Gdańsk and Royal Prussia in early modern times, see, i.a., B. Nadolski, *Ze studiów nad życiem literackim i kulturą umysłową na Pomorzu w XVI i XVII wieku* (Wrocław, Warszawa and Kraków, 1969).

⁵⁷ See J.J. Retyk, *Relacja pierwsza*, pp. 138–147; cf. also I. Lewandowski, “Jerzy Joachim Retyk i jego ‘Pochwała Prus’,” *Rocznik Gdański* 32, no. 2 (1972), pp. 73–94.

supplementary) and that the process of cleaving those two varieties – one closer to the original horoscope and the other closer to the popular prophecy devoid of the astrological apparatus – had occurred before those three pairs of manuscripts were made as evidenced, again, by the distortions of Rheticus’s name which stem from other erroneous copies which had been used as the starting point.

It was also impossible to establish at exactly what point in time the “*diversi color*” family of texts had emerged – although they are connected with Rheticus’s horoscope, in my opinion they are a separate body of texts written under the influence of both Rheticus’s forecast and other texts (paradigm texts) of prophetic and political nature – in this case a crucial role was also played by the Prophecy of the Popes so common in modern *silvae rerum* which comprised a list of the popes with their short characteristics. It is highly probable that this cross combination of two textual traditions had occurred relatively early and that for a long time both the texts of the original *Vaticinium* that had been subject to gradual degeneration, and the products of a new tradition functioned side by side and might have been copied for the same reasons, but without the awareness of their affinity with the sources of many decades earlier.

Inability to settle those questions conclusively as well as the issue of the intentions of some of the copyists responsible for so many copies of different variants of *Vaticinium* cannot overshadow the most important fact: Rheticus’s election horoscope, even in its abridged version devoid of astrological apparatus, is a popular text rather than a professional forecast, and it played an important role in the system of communication and political propaganda in the period between King Sigismund Augustus’s death and (at least) the reign of the first Wettin on the Polish throne. No other text of astrological provenance had such power to force one’s way through into the cartularies of nobility and burghers, and even if it thus reached various local interpretation communities highly diverse in social, political and religious terms, what all of those cases shared was an interest in further development of political affairs in the Commonwealth and that those texts were placed in larger collections comprising literary texts, political writings, speeches and letters. It is therefore likely that – at least in some cases – the text of Rheticus’s prophecy was not copied mechanically as a curiosity worth storing but that it had further impact when read and that it inspired the writing of other works which were to function in the context of tensions between consecutive elected rulers and the nobility.

Appendix 1

Vaticinium by Georg Joachim Rheticus –
reconstruction of the basic version

Offered below is the text of Rheticus's election prophecy in the form of *editio variorum* covering the identified texts of the most complete version of *Vaticinium*. The work was first published by K.H. Burmeister based on the manuscript *V*, but due to the fact that it is a reliable though late text it is expedient to compare it with other surviving witnesses of the archetype. The edited text in principle follows *V* with some corrections of, i.a., punctuation, and a decision was made to take into account certain minor elements that survived in texts *Dd* and *N*. The main text preserves the symbolic notation of the names of celestial bodies and astrological phenomena such as a quartile or conjunction, based on the assumption that the original version of the text (written by an astrologer experienced in his craft) resulting from the horoscope diagram could have looked like that. It should also be emphasized that of the three texts used in here *Gd* is the poorest variant which completely omits, e.g., the elements of the astrological commentary – it may be therefore interpreted as one of the transitional forms on the way covered by the complete text of *Vaticinium* to culminate in the form of short calculations of one or two sentences. Drawing 1 accompanying this edition comes from the text *V* and is a slight correction of the diagram that may be found in Burmeister's edition.

Sources:

- Dd* Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. Uph. fol. 26, p. 243
Fb Kórnik, PAS Library (Biblioteka Kórnicka PAN), MS 341, fol. 185rec.–ver.
Ka Cracow, Jagiellonian Library (Biblioteka Jagiellońska), MS 118, pp. 235–237
N Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, D 208 inf., fol. 170rec.–171rec.
V Wrocław, University Library (Biblioteka Uniwersytecka), MS Akc. 1949/594, fol. 56ver.–57ver.

Denotations and abbreviations:

- [] expansion of an abbreviation
 (?) incomplete reading
del. *delevit* (deleted text)
ins. *inseruit* (text added later)
om. *omisit* (omitted text)
sic as in the manuscript

Iudicium^a D[omi]ni Georgii Ioachimi Rhaetici, medici et astronomi peritissimi,^b de successoribus in regno Poloniae post obitum regis Sigismundi II^c anno 1571^d

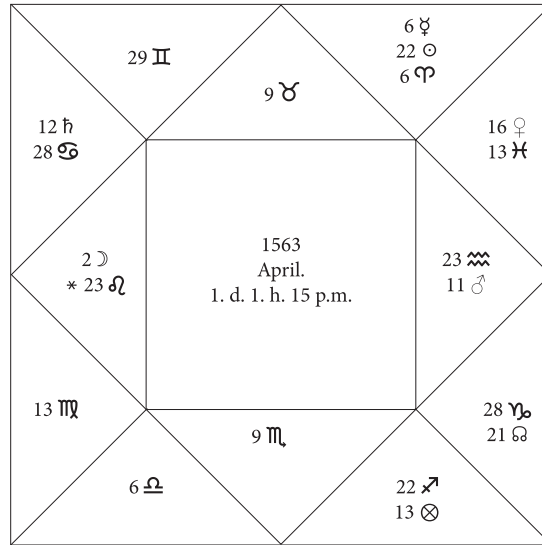


Fig. 3^e

Anno MDLXIII, 1. die Aprilis, hora 1., minut[orum] 15 post meridiem, poli elevatio 51.^f

Quaestio utrum regimen istius principis Sigismundi Augusti est duraturum?^g Item^h an sub alio melior gubernatio foret?ⁱ

^a Iudicium] Responsum *Dd* Prognosticon *Ka om. FbN*.

^b Domini ... peritissimi] Joachimi Mathematici doctissimi *Dd om. FbKa* Reticus Medicus et Astrologus Cracoviensis *N*.

^c de ... Sigismundi II] ad quaesitum Sigismundi Augusti Regis Poloniae *Dd* Regum Polonorum quorundam *Ka om. FbN*.

^d anno 1571] *om. DdFbKaN del. V*.

^e Fig. 3] *om. DdFbKaN*.

^f Anno ... 51] *om. DdKaV* Anno Domini MDLXIII Aprilis prima die, hora prima, minuta 15 post meridiem, polus 51 *Fb*.

^g Quaestio ... duraturum?] Quaestio utrum regnum istius principis duraturum *Fb om. Ka* Quaestio utrum istius Principis est diu duraturum Imperium *N*.

^h Item] et *Dd om. KaN*.

ⁱ an ... foret] an sub alio gubernatio melior felicio[r]q[ue] duratura *Dd* an sub alio melior foret gubernatio *Fb om. Ka* an sub alio melior futura gubernatio *N*.

I. Designatio^a

Quoniam signa ascendentia anguli^b orientis et^c medii coeli sunt firma seu^d fixa δ ^e et ζ ^f, quorum domini \odot et ♀ ^g fortes in exaltationibus^h suis sunt^{ij}. Nempe in^k ♈ et ♉ ^l manifeste^m denotantⁿ, quod huius regis dominatio^o non tantum diurna existet; sed^p etiam^q in dies celebrior^r futura est, quae nec bello nec seditione ulla, si acciderit^s, ei^t vivo auferri possit^u. Id cor δ ^v stella toto orbe fulgentissima in linea orientis denotat^w. Et ♁ ^x tribus^y gradibus ante centrum domus regiae in sua facie constitutus a^z ♀ ^{aa} domina sui^{bb} signi receptus^{cc} confirmat^{ddeeff}.

^a I. Designatio] *om. DdFbKaV.*

^b anguli] *om. N.*

^c et] *ex Ka.*

^d seu] *sive Ka.*

^e δ] *Leo Ka Mars sic N.*

^f ζ] *Taurus Ka Mercurius sic N.*

^g \odot et ♀] *Sol et Venus KaN.*

^h exaltationibus] *exhalationibus sic N.*

ⁱ sunt] *om. DdNV.*

^j Quoniam ... sunt] *om. Fb.*

^k Nempe in] *om. DdFbNV.*

^l ♈ et ♉] *om. Fb Ariete et Piscibus Ka Chrysi(?) et Pisces sic N.*

^m manifeste] *manifesti N.*

ⁿ indicant] *indicant stellae Fb denotant Ka.*

^o dominatio] *gubernatio Fb.*

^p sed] *verum Ka.*

^q etiam] *et in Fb.*

^r celebrior] *celebratior N.*

^s si acciderit] *etiamsi acciderit Ka ea accidet N.*

^t ei] *a N.*

^u possit] *poterit Ka.*

^v δ] *Leonis KaN.*

^w orientis denotat] *orientis indicat denotat N.*

^x ♁] *Mercurius Ka.*

^y tribus] *quatuor Ka.*

^z a] *om. N.*

^{aa} ♀] *Veneri Ka Venus N.*

^{bb} sui] *om. Ka.*

^{cc} receptus] *aspectans Ka.*

^{dd} confirmat] *hoc ipsum confirmat Ka.*

^{ee} Id ... confirmat] *om. Fb.*

^{ff} Quoniam ... confirmat] *om. Dd.*

II.^a

Ceterum^b cum e vivis discesserit^c: Clementissimus princeps iustitia et pietate insignis in locum eius succedet^d, sed^e brevissimo temporis spatio^f praeerit^g. Ita, ut cum regnare coepit^h suamque probitatem et prudentiamⁱ declarare voluerit^j, vel fato functus intercludetur vel alia ratione desistet^k. Hoc habetur ex ♃^l in succedente medio coeli fineque signi collocato^{m, n}.

III.^o

Porro sublato iniquissima fatorum lege futuro^p, tam^q praestantissimo^r principe, occupabit regnum^s sceleratissimus quidam senex^u, severus et avarus, vili^v familia oriundus^w, cuius dominatio tristis, exitialis et funesta huic regno futura est^x. Adiungetque^y sibi^z administratione^{aa}

^a II.] *om. FbKa I. V.*

^b Ceterum] *om. Dd Caeterum FbN.*

^c Cum ... discesserit] Sigismundus decesserit *Dd* cum e vivis decesserit *Fb.*

^d succedet] qui succedet *Dd.*

^e sed] *om. Dd.*

^f brevissimo ... spatio] brevi temporis spatio *Dd* levissimo temporis spatio *Fb* brevissimo spatio temporis *KaN.*

^g praeerit] in regno erit *DdKa.*

^h coepit] coeperit *Dd om. Fb caeperit KaN.*

ⁱ probitatem et prudentiam] prudentiam et propositum *Dd* probitatem ac prudentiam *Fb* prudentiam ac probitatem *N.*

^j voluerit] noluerit *Dd caeperit Fb om. N.*

^k desistet] regnare cessabit *Dd* regnare desistet *Ka.*

^l ♃] Jove *KaN.*

^m collocato] *om. Ka* collocati *N.*

ⁿ Hoc ... collocato] *om. DdFb.*

^o III.] *om. DdFbKa II. V.*

^p futuro] *om. FbKaV.*

^q tam] *om. N.*

^r praestantissimo] potentissime *N.*

^s regnum] *om. Fb.*

^t Porro ... regnum] Sublato deinde hoc succedet in Regnum *Dd.*

^u sceleratissimus ... senex] quidam senex sceleratissimus *Fb* quidam senex *Ka.*

^v vili] nihili *N.*

^w oriundus] oriendus *Dd.*

^x cuius ... est] *om. Dd.*

^y Adiungetque] III. Adiungetque *V.*

^z sibi] in *N.*

^{aa} administratione] in administrationem *DdFbKa.*

socium omnino^a sibi similem^b, sed magis ferum et immanem^c. Hoc minatur ♃ cum ♃ in ☿^d suo detrimento existens, et^e ♃^{mf} secundum^g signorum seriem sequens^{h,i}.

IV.^j

Post hos^k eligetur^l ex indigenis popularibus equestri ordine^m natus novus iuvenis, princeps callidusⁿ et ambitiosus, rei militari^o peritus. Sed^p qui tamen^q in bello vel^r gladio peribit^s. Eius^t gubernatio regni^u mediocris erit^v. Hoc significat ☽ in initio ♁^w, praemissos subsequentes^x planetos in ☐ ♃^y applicans^z ♃^{aa} ♃^{bb,cc}.

- ^a socium omnino] *om. N.*
^b sibi similem] similem sibi *DdN.*
^c immanem] inhumanum *N.*
^d ♃ cum ♃ in ☿] Saturnus cum Cauda Draconis coniunctus in Cancro *Ka*
 Saturnus cum Ariete in Cancro *N.*
^e et] *om. Ka.*
^f ♃] *om. Ka* Jupiter *N.*
^g secundum] *om. Ka.*
^h signorum seriem sequens] *om. Ka* signam successionem sequetur *N.*
ⁱ Hoc ... sequens] Vel etiam protunc administrans Reipublicam sine rege, tristis exitialis et funesta huic regno futura est *Dd om. Fb.*
^j IV.] *om. FbKa* IIII. *N.*
^k Post hos] Post hunc vel ea tempestate *Dd* Post hos autem *Fb* Post hunc *Ka* Post aut *N.*
^l eligetur] *om. Fb.*
^m ex ... ordine] ex indigenis equestri ordinis *DdKa.*
ⁿ callidus] calidus *Dd.*
^o militari] militaris *Dd.*
^p Sed] *om. Fb.*
^q tamen] tum *Dd.*
^r vel] a *Dd.*
^s gladio peribit] gladio peribit vel quacunq[ue] alia morte succumbet *Ka.*
^t Eius] Cuius *DdKa* Eiusq[ue] *Fb.*
^u regni] *om. Ka* regno *N.*
^v peribit] peribit vel quacunq[ue] alia morte succumbet *Dd.*
^w ☽ in initio ♁] Luna in initio Leonis *KaN.*
^x subsequentes] subsequens *KaV.*
^y in ☐ ♃] in quadrat Mercurii *Ka om. N.*
^z Applicans]]] *om. Ka.*
^{aa} ♃] et opposito *Ka om. N.*
^{bb} ♃] Martis *Ka* Marti *N.*
^{cc} Hoc ... ♃] *om. DdFb.*

V.^a

Cum autem huius regis gubernatio^b defierit^c, clarissimus quidam princeps ex illustrissima familia oriundus^d, potens et^e magnanimus^f, potentia^g potius sua^h quam per electionem hocⁱ regnum^j occupans feliciter et^k diutissime^l nobis praeerit^m, qui et in pace iustitia et in belloⁿ fortitudine^o, cum maximo huius regni commodo imperabit, mirum in modum puniet malos et praemio^p afficiet bonos. Victor ac^q triumphator regni, fines^r gloriamque nominis sui, longe lateque extendit^s, supplicibus hostibus parcat, adversantes^t opprimet ac^u proteret, adeo ut vix^v melior et^w fortunatior optari possit. Ex cuius etiam^x familia diu apud nos reges erunt^y. Huius fert^x effigiem cor ♂^{aa} in centro orientis, Pisces, Jupiter, Sol^{bb} faelicissime exoriens^{ccdd}.^{ee}

^a V.] *om. DdFbKa.*

^b huius ... gubernatio] gubernatio huius regis *Dd.*

^c defierit] desierit *N.*

^d oriundus] *om. FbNV.*

^e et] ac *Fb.*

^f magnanimus] magnonimus *Dd.*

^g potentia] potentiam *Dd.*

^h sua] *om. Dd.*

ⁱ Hoc] *om. Dd.*

^j hoc regnum] *om. N.*

^k feliciter et] feliciter ac *Fb* faelicissime ac *N.*

^l diutissime] diuturnissime *Fb.*

^m praeerit] *om. Ka.*

ⁿ et in pace ... bello] qui et pace et iustitia in bello *Fb.*

^o qui ... fortitudine] *om. DdKa.*

^p praemio] praemiis *FbN.*

^q ac] et *FbKaN.*

^r fines] finies *N.*

^s extendit] propagabit *DdKa* extendet *FbN.*

^t adversantes] adversarios *N.*

^u ac] et *DdFb.*

^v vix] nullus *Dd* Rex *Ka.*

^w et] ac *FbN.*

^x cuius etiam] eiusque *Dd* cuius et *Fb* cuius *KaN.*

^y reges erunt] regnabunt *Dd* regnabunt reges *Ka.*

^z fert] habet *Ka* fere *N.*

^{aa} ♂] Leonis *KaN.*

^{bb} Pisces, Jupiter, Sol] in sextili Iovis et trino Solis *Ka.*

^{cc} exoriens] exurgens *Ka.*

^{dd} Pisces ... exoriens] *om. V.*

^{ee} Huius ... exoriens] *om. Dd.*

Sed cum omnia mortalia interitui obnoxia sint^a, et^b hic princeps vel potius haeres^c, indignus qui moriatur^d, cum diutissime regnaverit, fato fungetur^{e, f}.

VI.^g

Cuius^h in locum succedet etiamⁱ bonus, benignus et iuvenis princeps^j, sed qui electus, licet^k, regia potestate et^l nomine imperabit^m tamen nescio quo casu, numquamⁿ dum vixerit, coronabitur^o. Hunc mihi^p indicat ♂ in ♃^q post regulum proximum^{r, s}.

VII.^t

Deinde^u ad quendam militarem virum^v regnum devolvetur, qui crudeliter praerit^w. Nam^x homo severus, ferox^y, agrestis^z et inexorabilis

^a sint] *om. Ka.*

^b et] *om. Dd.*

^c potius haeres] potius heros *Dd* potius heros *N.*

^d indignus qui moriatur] (indignum est quod moriatur) *N.*

^e fungetur] *fungit Ka.*

^f Huius ... fungetur] *om. Fb.*

^g VI.] *om. DdFbKa.*

^h Cuius] *Huius Dd.*

ⁱ etiam] *et iam Dd om. FbN.*

^j bonus ... princeps] bonus etiam benignus, iuvenis princeps *Fb* bonus et benignus iuvenis et Princeps *N.*

^k electus, licet] *licet electus N.*

^l et] *ac N.*

^m imperabit] *imperabile V.*

ⁿ numquam] *unquam Fb.*

^o nescio ... coronabitur] *nescio dio vixerit quam ob. causam nunquam coronabitur Dd.*

^p mihi] *om. N.*

^q ♂ in ♃] *Caput Draconis Ka Iupiter in Leone sic N.*

^r regulum proximum] *regulam proximam N.*

^s Hunc ... proximum] *om. DdFb.*

^t VII.] *om. DdFbKa.*

^u Deinde] *De hinc FbN.*

^v militarem virum] *virum militarem Dd.*

^w qui crudeliter praerit] *om. DdKaV.*

^x Nam] *His Dd.*

^y ferox] *et ferox Fb.*

^z agrestis] *om. Fb.*

futurus est^a. Et hunc^b portendit^c ♂ in ♃^d domo ♃ post ♄ receptus^{e, f}.

VIII.^g

Quo sublato illustrissima mulier^h regnumⁱ sortietur^j, quae licet iuste et pie praeerit^k. Tamen^l insolenter se geret ac^m regnum luxu et securitateⁿ inficiet. Cuius tamen gubernatio^o successu temporis felicior^p quam a principio futuro^q decernitur. Hanc praesagit ♀^r in domo^s octava, sed in sua exaltatione septima occupatura^t, ordine cedentes^u planetas subsequens^{v, wx}. Quodsi^y gubernatio regni^z ad mulierem non deferetur^{aa} Respublica e^{bb} regno fiet^{cc} vel^{dd} ὀλιγαρχία^{ee}, sed brevi tempore^{ff} duratura^{gg}.

^a futurus est] est futurus *Ka*.

^b Et hunc] Hunc *KaN*.

^c portendit] praetendit *sic N*.

^d ♂ in ♃] Mars in Aquario *KaN*.

^e domo ... receptus] in domo Saturni receptus *Ka* exoriens *N*.

^f Et ... receptus] *om. DdFb*.

^g VIII.] *om. DdFbKa*.

^h mulier] mulier quaedam *Fb*.

ⁱ regnum] *del. regnum ins. regno N*.

^j sortietur] potietur *N*.

^k iuste ... praeerit] pia ac iusta erit *Dd*.

^l Tamen] *om. N*.

^m ac] et *Dd*.

ⁿ securitate] scurilitate *N*.

^o tamen gubernatio] tum gubernans *Dd*.

^p felicior] foelicior *Ka* faelicior *N*.

^q futuro] futura *DdKa*.

^r ♀] Venus *KaN*.

^s domo] *om. V*.

^t septima occupatura] consituta *Ka om. V*.

^u ordine cedentes] *om. Ka* ordines antecedentes *N*.

^v planetas subsequens] *om. Ka* planetas subsequetur *N*.

^w decernitur ... subsequens] *om. Dd*.

^x Hanc ... subsequens] *om. Fb*.

^y Quodsi] Quod si *DdFbN*.

^z regni] *om. Fb*.

^{aa} deferetur] deferretur *Dd* devolvatur *Fb*.

^{bb} e] ex *DdFbKaN*.

^{cc} fiet] *om. Fb*.

^{dd} vel] *om. Dd*.

^{ee} ὀλιγαρχία] oligarchia fiet *Fb* oligarchia *KaN*.

^{ff} tempore] *om. Dd*.

^{gg} duratura] *om. Ka*.

IX.^a

Nam postquam indigenis pertaesum^b fuerit^c huius^d administratio-
nis^e. Eligent^f sibi ex regia familia regem, cui coronato parebunt.
Iste erit prudens, iustus et^g fortunatus planeque^h similis quintoⁱ
regi, suo antecessori, sed paulo minoris^j potentiae ac^k diuturnitatis^l.
Hic cognoscitur ex ☉^m etⁿ ♀^o in ♃^p sua exaltatione^q gestantem^{r, st}.

Ultra autem me^u prognosticare^v sidera^w non permittunt.^x

^a IX.] *om. DdFbKa.*

^b pertaesum] pertesa *Dd* protesa *Ka* taedium *N.*

^c fuerit] erit *DdFbKa* caeperit *N.*

^d huius] huiusmodi *DdFbKaN.*

^e administrationis] administratio *DdKa.*

^f eligent] eliget *Fb.*

^g et] ac *FbN.*

^h planeque] *om. Dd* plane *N.*

ⁱ quinto] *V^o N.*

^j minoris] minor *Fb.*

^k ac] et *Fb.*

^l diuturnitatis] diuturnitate *Ka.*

^m ☉] Sole *N.*

ⁿ et] *om. Ka* post *V.*

^o ♀] *om. Ka* Venere *N.*

^p ♃] Ariete *KaN.*

^q sua exaltatione] in sua exaltatione *Ka.*

^r gestantem] collocato *Ka om. V.*

^s similis gestantem] *om. Dd.*

^t Hic ... gestantem] *om. Fb.*

^u autem me] autem *Fb om. N.*

^v prognosticare] prognosticari me *Fb* prognosticari *KaN.*

^w sidera] sydera *FbKaN.*

^x Ultra ... permittunt] *om. Dd.*

Appendix 2

Abridged *Vaticinium* – a version with six rulers

Offered below is the text of the “abridged” election prophecy which has survived in various forms in eight different manuscripts. I adopted the text *La* as the starting point (with one correction introduced instead of *B* and *C* in a place where *La* was spoilt by the copyist). It is not the purpose of this edition to provide a final form of the text – which task seems to be impossible – but only to identify, based on probably the oldest text of that variant of the prophecy, directions in which the text was modified in consecutive copies. Although I am inclined to recognize the text *Lb* together with the text *Wd* as mixed, *Lb* differs from the latter in that it consists of two clear-cut parts, the first one showing affinity with the tradition of a short, six-element election prophecy. It was decided therefore to include this part of *Lb* into this edition in order to show a kind of a continuum marking individual trends in the tradition of Rheticus’s *Vaticinium*.

Although all texts quoted below enumerate six rulers, this group is marked by heterogeneous structure and in fact consists of two or even three subgroups. Recognized as their distinctive feature is the order in which they mention the ruler labeled as the “grand prince” (“magnus princeps” – in the *BDcLaLb* group he was mentioned in the second place, in *CLcM* in the third place) and a ruler coming from a “minor family” (“ex parvae familiae” – in the *BDcLaLb* group as the third, in *CLcM* – as the second). Due to this difference one may suspect that individual groups, even though stemming from one trunk, are separate branches of the same tradition, although no direct interdependencies have been found among the texts that are part of it. The combining of those two witnesses, with preference given to the *BLaLbDc* group as a point of reference in respect of the sequence of the rulers, was to provide material that will illustrate modifications of the text which is homogeneous in many other respects.

A separate group comprises the seventeenth century texts *Da* and *Db* coming from Gdańsk which follow the *CLcM* group in respect of the order of rulers, but differ from this group and the *BDcLaLb* group in that ruler characteristics are much more elaborate. This is why those two initial groups were analyzed together, while *DaDb*, whose formula brings it closer to the mixed type, was classified separately. It should also be emphasized that the text of *Da* and *Db* is identical, but owing to some inaccuracies in *Da*’s title, which are

another example of distorted Rheticus's name, the second of them was recognized as a more credible one.

Sources:

- B* Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. germ. Fol. 143, fol. 437rec.
C Città del Vaticano, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Ottob. lat. 2642, fol. 94
Da Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. 694, fol. 201rec.–202ver.
Db Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. 724, fol. 109ver.
Dc Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. 821, fol. 2rec.
La Cracow, Princes Czartoryski Library (Biblioteka XX. Czartoryskich), MS 1292, p. 8
Lb Cracow, Princes Czartoryski Library (Biblioteka XX. Czartoryskich), MS 1657 IV, p. 596
Lc Cracow, Princes Czartoryski Library (Biblioteka XX. Czartoryskich), MS 1947, p. 50
M Lviv, National Vasyl Stefanyk Scientific Library of Ukraine (*olim* Ossoliński National Institute Library), fond 5, MS 189, p. 8

Denotations and abbreviations:

- < > conjecture
del. *delevit* (deleted text)
ins. *inseruit* (text added later)
om. *omisit* (omitted text)
add. *addidit* (text added when copied)
sic as in the manuscript

Basic variant (*BDcLaLb-CLcM*)

Vaticinium^a Rethici^b doctoris medici^c et^d astronomiae^e de electione^f regum Poloniae^g statim factum^h postⁱ obitum^j regis Sigismundi Augusti^k anno Domini 1571^l

Primus^m erit Gallusⁿ qui^o magno cum^p periculo regnum imperabit^q, paulo^r post coronatione^s erit profugus^t.

Secundus^u erit magnus princeps^v qui^w sine corona regnabit^x.

^a Vaticinium] Iudicium *B* Iudicium *LbM* Prognostic *Lc*.

^b Rethici] Rhetici *B* Georgii Rhetici *C D*. Rhetici *Dc* Domini Georgii Rethen *sic Lb* Retici *Lc*.

^c doctoris medici] doctoris medicinae *BM* medicinae doctoris *C* doctoris medici *Dc om. Lb* doctoris *Lc*.

^d et] *om. Lb*.

^e astronomiae] astronomi peritissimi *BDc* astronomi *C* astronomiae peritissimi *LbM* astrologi *Lc*.

^f electione] regnatione *Lc* electione et gubernatione *Dc*.

^g regum Poloniae] Polonorum regum *Lb* regum Polonorum *M*.

^h statim factum] factum *BDc* scriptum *C om. Lb* AD 1501 *sic Lc* facta *M*.

ⁱ post] ante *Dc om. Lb*.

^j obitum] decessum *Lc*.

^k regis Sigismundi Augusti] Sigismundi Augusti regis *C* Domini Sigismundi Augusti *Dc om. LbM*.

^l anno Domini 1571] anno M.D.LXXI *C* anno 1571 *Dc* anno 1571 editum *Lb* 1551 *M om. Lc*.

^m Primus] I. *B* Primus rex *DcM1. Lb*.

ⁿ Gallus] peregrinus ex Regione longe absita *Dc*.

^o qui] *om. CLbM*.

^p cum] *om. BCLbLc*.

^q regnum imperabit] regnum intrabit *BCM* intrabit regnum *DcLb*.

^r paulo] sed paulo *C* et paulo *Dc* paululo *Lb* pauli *M*.

^s coronatione] coronationem *BDcM* coronationem suam *C om. LbLcRb*.

^t erit profugus] fugiet *C* praefecturus *Lb* | *add.* Henricus Rex Galliae *Dc* post aliquot annos occidetur ob varias in fide dissensiones *Lc* (Henricus) *M*.

^u Secundus] II. *B* Secundus rex *Dc 2. Lb* Tertius *LcMC*.

^v magnus princeps] magnus princeps et pater patriae *Lb* rex electus et adversus regno privabitur et erit captus spoliatusque dimissus ad suos *Lc*.

^w qui] sed *BLbLcC* et *DcM*.

^x sine ... regnabit] sine coronatione manebit *Dc* non diu durabit sine corona *Lb* sine corona rediit *Lc* | *add.* Maximilianus Romanorum Imperator *Dc* Maximilianus Archidux Austriae *M*.

Tertius^a erit homo pauper^b ex parvae familiae^c cuius regni^d gubernatio^e erit tristis^f. Is^g adiunget^h sibiⁱ in administratione homini sibi similem et in tyrannum parvaeque familiae equestris ordinis^j.

Quartus^k erit ex numero^l Poloniae^m homo pius et foelixⁿ, sed gubernatio eius^o non late se extendet.^p

Quintus^q erit peregrinus homo^r foelicissimus^s, hostes^t profligabit^u, <tranquillam gubernationem>^v id obtinebit^w, nec is diu durabit^x.

^a Tertius] III. *B* Tertius rex *Dc* 3. *Lb* Secundus *LcMC*.b

^b homo pauper] rex Poloniae *Lc*.

^c ex parvae familiae] parvaeque familiae *BCDcLb* parvae familiae *Lc*.

^d regni] *om. CM*.

^e gubernatio] gubernatione *Lc*.

^f erit tristis] iustissima *Lb* multi perturbabuntur *Lc*.

^g Is] et *C om. DcLc* in *M*.

^h adiunget] *om. Lc* adsiscet *Dc*.

ⁱ sibi] *om. Lc*.

^j in ... ordinis] hominem tyrannicum, cuius gubernatio non durabit *B* hominem tyrannum. Eius gubernatio non durabit *C* hominem tyrannum sed ejus gubernatio non diu manebit *Dc* hominem Tyrannum, eius gubernatio non diu durabit *Lb om. Lc* hominem Tiranum cuius gubernatio non diu durabit *M* | *add.* Stephanus Bathori *Dc* Stephanus Bathori *M*.

^k Quartus] IV. *B* Quartus rex *Dc* 4. *Lb*.

^l ex numero] indigena *Lc* ex num pro *M*.

^m Poloniae] Polonorum *BCDcLbM om. Lc*.

ⁿ pius et foelix] pius et felix *BM* foelix ac pius *Lb* duabus coronis coronabitur cum magno ipsius vitae periculo coniuge una orbabitur prole pulchra gaudens secunda vero relicta cum dissensio *Repub.* Vita ipsius alienabitur cuius gubernatio vitae extendit regnabit annos 49 menses aliquot *Lc*.

^o sed gubernatio eius] sed eius gubernatio *Dc* sed gubernatio ipsius *Lb om. Lc*.

^p late se extendet] *om. Lc* late se extenitet *M* | *add.* Sigismundus *Dc* Sigismundus 3. *M*.

^q Quintus] V. *B* Quintus rex *Dc* 5. *Lb*.

^r peregrinus homo] homo *Lc* homo peregrinus *M*.

^s foelicissimus] felicissimus *BCDcLb* fortissimus *M*.

^t hostes] is hostes *Lb* felicissimus bellicosissimus *Lc* hostis *M*.

^u profligabit] profligabit armata manu et *Lb* profugabit *M*.

^v tranquillam gubernationem] tranquillitatem, gubernatio *La* tranquillitatem sanctam gerens *Repub.* pacatam *Lc* tranquillitatem *Reipublicae M*.

^w id obtinebit] obtinebit *BCDcLb om. Lc* reddet *M*.

^x nec is diu durabit] sed non diu foelix *B* felix *C* sed non diu erit *Dc* sed non diu durabit *Lc* his diu durabit *M* | *add.* Vladislaus quartus, Sigismundi Filius *Dc* Vladislaus 4. *M*.

Sextus^a erit^b insignis^c familiae^d fortunatissimus^e et^f ultimus^g, cuius^h imperiumⁱ erit^j foelicissimum et tranquilum^k.

Omnes^l sine haerede^m manebuntⁿ.

^a Sextus] VI. *B* 6. *Lb* Sextus et ultimus *Lc*.

^b erit] *om. BLc*.

^c insignis] homo insignis *BCDcLb* insignis *M*.

^d familiae] *om. Lc*.

^e fortunatissimus] princeps fortunatissimus *C* fortassis *DcLb* peregrinus *Lc* fortis *M*.

^f et] *om. LbLc*.

^g ultimus] ultimus Rex Poloniae *Dc om. Lc*.

^h cuius] *om. B* eius *C*.

ⁱ Imperium] imperatio regni *Dc* imperium regni *Lb* gubernatio ultima Reipub. Inimicos Ecclesiae extirpabit ad unit<atem> fidei inducet Turcam cum vicem profligabit, iura et p<rivilegia> <...> *Lc*.

^j erit] *om. Lc* regni *M*.

^k foelicissimum et tranquilum] tranquillum *BC* felicissimum et tranquillum *Lb om. Lc* felicissimum et tranquillissimum *M*.

^l Omnes] Omnes hi *C* Omnes reges *Dc om. Lc*.

^m sine haerede] *om. Lc del. M*.

ⁿ manebunt] peribunt *B om. LbLc* regnabunt *M* | *add. Joannes Casimirus M*.

The "Gdańsk" variant (*DaDb*)

Vaticinium Anno 1551 Betij Retici^a Doctoris et Astrologi Doctissimi Medici De Regnatione Regni Poloniae post decessum Sigismundi Augusti

Erit Poloniae Rex Gallus, qui magno periculo intrabit. Paulo post aliquot annos occidetur, ubi variae dissensiones excitabuntur.

Postea erit Rex parvae familiae, cujus Regni Gubernatione multi perturbabuntur.

Postea erit electus et adversus Regno privabitur et erit captus spoliatusq[ue] dimissus ad suos sine corona redibit.

Postea erit indigena homo pius et foelix^b, duabus coronis coronabitur; cum magno ipsius periculo. Coniuge una orbabitur, prole pulchra gaudens. Secunda retro relicta cum dissensione in Republica vita ipsius alienabitur, cuius gubernatio late se extendet, regnabit annos quadraginta sex, menses aliquot.

Postea erit homo foelicissimus^c, hostes profligabit, tranquillitatem sanctam gerens, Rempublicam tranquillam paratamque^d per annos quindecim non diu durabit.

^a Retici] Retycii *Da*.

^b foelix] felix *Da*.

^c foelicissimus] felicissimus *Da*.

^d paratamque] pacatamque *Da*.

Appendix 3

Three variants of the election prophecy
in Polish

Below offered are three variants of the election prophecy translated into Polish. Text *Ra* is the oldest of them and it is included in the manuscript miscellany made in mid-seventeenth century in the circle of Jakub Michałowski, and the texts *Fe* and *Kc* come from the turn of the seventeenth century, as corroborated by the fact that in both manuscripts the latest elected ruler identified by the copyist in a note made in the margin is King Augustus II the Strong, but there are no mentions of Stanisław Leszczyński which supports a hypothesis that both copies were made under Wettin's rule. Contrary to the approach taken in respect to the Latin variants offered in Appendices 1 and 2 a decision was made not to collate three texts because the discrepancies between them suggest that we deal with three independent texts as evidenced by significant differences in the syntax and vocabulary. It should be emphasized that all three texts represent a far reaching misunderstanding as to the authorship of the prophecy (in each of them Rheticus's name is distorted in a different way) and the circumstances in which the prophecy was made (or each specific copy – as in the case of copy *Kc* which was “copied from a manuscript”). The text has been edited in line with rules for ‘type B’ of the editions of Old Polish texts (cf. *Zasady wydawania tekstów staropolskich. Projekt* [Warszawa, 1955], pp. 92–100), and accordingly the spelling was corrected, the punctuation was updated and the original layout of the text on each page was not preserved. Due to the specificity of the source it was decided, however, to allow for such aspects of the manuscript which are reserved for the critical editing of type A, namely notes in the margin or indication of the copyist's mistakes.

Sources:

Fe Kórnik, PAS Library (Biblioteka Kórnicka PAN), MS 420, fol. 247ver.–248rec.

Kc Cracow, Jagiellonian Library (Biblioteka Jagiellońska), MS 921, fol. 1rec.–ver.

Ra Warszawa, National Library (Biblioteka Narodowa), MS 6634 III, fol. 207rec.

Denotations and abbreviations:

< > conjecture

[] expansion of an abbreviation

in mg. *in margine* (in the margin)

a.c. *ante correcturam* (text before corrections)

The Warsaw text (*Ra*)

Practica^a doctoris Klitricii za panowania króla Zygm[nta] Augusta uczyniona

Wedle biegów niebieskich jaśnie się znaczy, iż króla tego panowanie nie tylko trwałe będzie, ale im dalej tym więcej sławniejsze będzie^b, które ani wojna, ani rozsterki, jeśliby co takiego przyszło, póki on żyw, być nie może.

A gdy z tego świata zejdzie łaskawe ksiązę w sprawiedliwości i pobożności, po nim nastanie, ale bardzo krociuchny czas będzie, tak iż gdy^c pocznie królować, za jakimśi przypadkiem odjedzie, a panowanie jego prędko ustanie.

Gdy już tego zacnego ks[ia]ż[ę]cia panowanie ustanie, opanuje królestwo niejaki starzec złośliwy, srogi, łakomy, z podłej familiej, którego panowanie smutne i żalosne ku upadku albo zginieniu królestwa tego będzie^d i przyłączy sobie podobnego w rządzeniu królestwa, ale sroźszego i okrutniejszego niż sam.

Potym będzie wybran z swoich obywatelów s<z>lacheckiego rodzaju młodzieniec, ksiązę chytre i chciwe, w rzeczach rycerskich biegły, który^e na wojnie zginie. Jego królestwo sprawowane mierne znaczy.

A gdy tego króla rządzenie ustanie, zacne ksiązę wielkiej familiej, wspaniałej myśli więcej <mocą>^f, niżli przez elekcyją te królestwo opanuje^g, który szczęśliwie i mężnie i długo panować będzie, granice do tego rozszerzy, czasu wojny i pokoju z wielkim pożytkiem tego królestwa będzie nad dziw, uciśnie złe a ubogaci dobre zwycięstwem, wielkim w tym królestwie będzie, nieprzyjaciołom swym unizającym się odpuści, a przeciwiających się porazi i rozgromi śmieie, z którego familiej w tym królestwie długo królować będą i sam przez jakieś *fata* po długim królowaniu zejdzie.

^a Practica] praktika *Ra*.

^b Wedle ... będzie] Augusta to znaczyło *add. mg. Ra*.

^c A gdy ... iż gdy] Francuza to znaczyło *add. mg. Ra*.

^d Ddy ... będzie] Batore[g]o to znaczyło a przyłąc<z>enie kanclerz<a> *add. mg. Ra*.

^e Potym ... który] Maximilia[na] to znaczyło *add. mg. Ra*.

^f mocą] motą *Ra*.

^g A gdy ... opanuje] Zygmunta III to znaczyło *add. mg. Ra*.

Po tym nastąpi spokojne ksiązę, jednak mocą, imieniem królować będzie, któremu rychl^h śmierć królestwo odejmie.

Po tym niektóry mąż rycerski królestwa dostąpi, który okrutnie będzie panował, człek srogi, okrutny i gruby nie otyły ma być, którego gdy nie stanie, zacnaⁱ niewiasta za szczęściem opanuje, która sprawiedliwie królestwo sprawować będzie, jednak za szaleństwem się uda, a w szaleństwie bezpieczeńność zbytek rozmowy wszakże ku końcowi niżli z przodku panowanie jej szczęśliwsze będzie. A jeśli rządzenie królestwa niewieście będzie przyczytane, z Rzeczypospolitej^j wiele <rządzy>^k w Królestwie będzie, a uprzykrzeniem się takiego rządu obywatelom w Królestwie krótko taki rząd trwać będzie.

Po tym obiorą sobie z domu królewskiego króla, które[g]o ukoronowania posłuszni będą. Ten będzie sprawiedliwy, mądry i szczęśliwy i prawie piątemu królowi, przodkowi swemu, podobny, wszakże coś mniejszą władzą i dostojnością.

^h rychle] w rychle *Ra*.

ⁱ zacna] *a linea in Ra*.

^j z Rzeczypospolitej] *a linea in Ra*.

^k rządy] rządzyw *Ra*.

The Kórnik text (*Fe*)

Prognostyk astronoma krakowskiego Rescyjusza o sukcesji królów polskich po śmierci Augusta Pierwszego króla polskiego w roku 1552.

1mo. Po śmierci Augusta króla na tron polski wstąpi Francuz, który z wielkim niebezpieczeństwem do polskiej wniejdzie, wkrótce jednak odbieży, a po lat kilku dla dyssensyi w wierze zabity będzie.^a

2do. Po nim wstąpi^b na królestwo człowiek małej familiej, którego gubernacją różni będą turbować.^c

3tio. Obiorą po tym adwersarze za króla ks[ię]cia jednego, który więźniem będzie, wypuszczony zaś, wszystko straciwszy, powróci do swego kraju bez korony.^d

4. Zostanie tedy panem indygena polski, człowiek pobożny i szczęśliwy, ten dwiema koronami będzie ukoronowany. Po śmierci pierwszej żony w wielkie niebezpieczeństwo życia wpadnie, drugą zaś pojąwszy, w potomstwo obfitować będzie, ale dla niezgód w królestwie życie jego będzie skrócone, daleko jednak rozszerzy się jego gubernium.^e

5. Nastąpi po nim na królestwo szczęśliwy nader, który zwyciężywszy nieprzyjaciół, uczyni koronę spokojną i bezpieczną, ale ten niedługo panować będzie.^f

6. Królować po tym będzie człowiek zacny peregrynant, wojenny, popędliwy, którego gubernacja będzie ostatnia. Nieprzyjaciół Kościoła św. wykorzeni i wielu do uznania wiary przywiedzie, prawa, przywileje różnemi artykułami przyozdobi, Turczyzna z sąsiadami ukróci, zdrady rozboje i najazdy domowe poskromi, szlachtę od opresyji poddanych uwolni i dobry rząd do pory swojej przyprowadzi. Po jego zejściu głód, mór, najazdy nieprzyjaciół i inne nieszczęścia do Polski poprzychoǳą.^g

7. Gdy ten ustąpi^h z państwa, obrany będzie za króla książę łaskawy, sprawiedliwością i słuszością znakomity, który bardzo krótko panować będzie. Gdy zaś tego pana zacnego niegodnym prawem śmierć zbierze.ⁱ

^a 1mo ... będzie] Henricus Valesius *add. Fe.*

^b wstąpi] wstąpi *Fe.*

^c 2do ... turbować] Stephanus Battori *add. Fe.*

^d 3tio ... korony] Maximilianus *add. Fe.*

^e 4. ... gubernium] Zygmunt Trzeci *add. Fe.*

^f 5. ... będzie] Władysław Czwarty *add. Fe.*

^g 6. ... poprzychoǳą] Jan Kazimierz *add. Fe.*

^h ustąpi] ustąpi *Fe.*

ⁱ 7. ... zbierze] Michał *add. Fe.*

8. Nastąpi na królestwo jeden człowiek stateczny, łakomy z podłej familiej urodzony, którego gubernacja nieprzyjaciółom u wielu szkodliwa i ku zgubie będzie. Przybierze sobie towarzysza dożywotniego, we wszystkim sobie podobnego, bardziej jednak łakomego i nieużytego.^k

9no. Po tych obrany będzie cudzoziemiec, kawaler urodzony, ksiązę młody, chytry i ambicyjant, trybu wojennego wiadomy, który jednak na wojnie albo w domu mieczem zgonie. Tego panowania lata pomierne będą. Tu wolności polskiej ciężka opresya.^l

10. Gdy zaś panowanie tego ustanie ksiązę jeden zacny z prześwieatnej familiej urodzony, wspaniały i potentat, bardziej przez potencją niżeli przez wolną elekcją to królestwo opanuje, szczęśliwie i bardzo długo panować będzie, który jako w pokoju sprawiedliwością, tak na wojnie mocą, z wielkim tego królestwa pożytkiem będzie rządził^m. Złych przedziwnymi sposobami karać będzie, dobrych zaś nagradzać, zwycięzca i tryjmfator, szaniec królestwa tego i chwałę swego imienia wzduż i wszere daleko rozciągnie, pokornie poddającym się nieprzyjaciółom odpuści, sprzeciwiających się zaś pod swoją władzę podbije tak dalece, że ledwie kto życzyć sobie może lepszego i szczęśliwszego pana, z którego też familiej długo u nas królowie będą. Ale wszyscy jesteśmy podlegli śmiertelności i ten ksiązę, czyli raczej dziedzic, niegodzien śmierci, po długo bardzo panowaniu umrze.

11. Na miejscu jego nastąpiⁿ dobry, łaskawy i spokojny ksiązę, ale ten obrany chociaż królewskim imieniem i władzą panować będzie, nie wiem jednak czemu za żywota swego nie będzie koronowany.

12. Dostanie się po tym władza królewska do żołnierza, który okrutnie rządzić będzie jako człowiek dziki, obłudny, tyran i nigdy niezmiękczoney.

13. Tego jak się pozbędzie Polska, prześwieatna pani królestwem tym władać będzie, która choć będzie rządził, jednak życie jej swawolne, zbytkiem i okrucieństwem zarazi, szczęśliwsza jednak będzie jej gubernacja czasem, niż była na początku. Jeśliby zaś dalej panowanie jej spadło na białą głowę pewnie Rzeczpospolitą i królestwem kilku oraz wojewodów będzie rządziło, ale to niedługo ma potrwać.

^j Nastąpi] Nastąmpi *Fe.*

^k 8. ... nieużytego] Jan III *add. Fe.*

^l 9no ... opresya] August Wtóry *add. Fe.*

^m rządził] *lectio incerta.*

ⁿ nastąpi] nastąmpi *Fe.*

14. Bo gdy uciemieży królestwa obywatelów, rządcy obiorą sobie króla z familijej królewskiej, któremu ukoronowanemu będą posłuszni. Ten będzie rozumny, sprawiedliwy, szczęśliwy, podobny antecessorowi piętemu przed sobą, mniejszej jednak potencji i godności.

The Cracow text (*Kc*)

[1rec.] Wytłumaczenie z łacińskiego na polski język prognostyku przez niegdy Gecyjusza nazwanego doktora o następujących królach polskich z manuskryptu wypisane

Po śmierci Zygmunta Augusta będzie król polski Francuz, który z wielkim niebezpieczeństwem wnidzie na państwo i krótkim czasie zjedzie z państwa i w kilka lat zabity będzie dla różnej w wierze dyssensyi.^a

Po tym król Polski będzie obrany człowiek niewielkiej familiji, który swoim panowaniem potrwoży wieki i zwycięży.^b

Nastąpi król obrany od przeciwnej strony, który pozbędzie wkrótce państwa, pojmany, ogłoszony, opuszczony od swoich.^c

Po nim będzie król postronny, człowiek pobożny i szczęśliwy, dwiema koronowany koronami, będzie z wielkim żywota jego niebezpieczeństwem, małżonki pozbędzie potomstwem jednak ubłogosławiony, za którego panowania długo i szeroko rozprzestrzenione będzie państwo.^d

Będzie król Polski najszcześniejszy, nad nieprzyjacielem zwycięstwo otrzymać będzie, jego królestwo w zgodzie i pokoju zostawać będzie, ale niedługie jego panowanie.^e

Nastąpi król Polski człowiek znaczny, którego panowanie będzie ostatnie, nieprzyjaciół Kościoła Bożego, Wiary Ś[więtej] wykorzeni i do prawej wiary nawróci, przywileje i statuta koronne w różnych artykułach przyozdobi, zdrady, mężobójstwa, najazdy domowe usmierzy, poddanych od opresyi uwolni i inne do stanu swego przywiedzie, jednak z tej rady zażwać będzie ku swojej zgubie, najazdy nieprzyjaciół do Korony nastąpią i wszystko złe na Polskę się obali. Po jego śmierci nastąpi głód, mor, rozterki i wszystko nieszczęście.^f

Nastąpi łaskawy książę sprawiedliwością i pobożnością znaczny, ale w krótkim barzo czasie, gdy pocznie panować i swoją dobroć i roztropność pokazywać, albo otruty będzie, albo z innej racyji z tego świata zjedzie.^g

^a Po ... dyssensyi] Henryk *add. Kc.*

^b Po ... zwycięży] Stephan Batory *add. Kc.*

^c Nastąpi ... swoich] Maximilian *add. Kc.*

^d Po ... państwo] Zygmunt *add. Kc.*

^e Będzie ... panowanie] Władysław *add. Kc.*

^f Nastąpi ... nieszczęście] Jan Kazimierz *add. Kc.*

^g Nastąpi ... zjedzie] Michał *add. Kc.*

Gdy tak znacznego i dobrotliwego pana Polska pozbędzie <się>^h, nastąpi niektóry stary, stateczny i poważny, ale łakomy, z podłej familiji zrodzony, którego panowanie smutne, opłakane i troskliwe będzie, przysposobi sobie w korespondencyją towarzysza takiegoż, ale się to Rz[eczy]p[ospo]l[i]tej na nic nie przyda.ⁱ

Po tym będzie z postronnych ludzi żołnierz nowy i ksiązę, gorączka i pyszny, trybu wojennego wiadomy, który albo na wojnie albo w domu zginie, którego panowanie mizerne będzie. Tu wolności polskiej opresyja będzie.^j

A gdy tego króla Polska pozbędzie <się>, nastąpi na jego miejsce znaczny ksiązę, najaśniejszej familii, potentat wielki, który barziej przez moc i potencyją swoją, niżeli przez wolną elekcyją to królestwo osiądzie, szczęśliwie i długo panować będzie, w pokoju i sprawiedliwości koronę postawi, zwycięstw wielkimi wślawiony, z wielki Królestwa tego pożytkiem panować będzie i rządzić, złych bez respektu karać, dobrym znacznie nagradzać będzie, zwycięzcą chwalebny zostanie, chwałę imienia swego szeroko i długo i granicę królestwa rozprostrzeni. Poddającym się nieprzyjaciołom przepuści, sprzeciwiającym się i odpór dającym do ostatniej zguby przywiedzie, z którego familiji długo królowie u nas będą. A gdy każdy śmiertelności podlega, lubo długo panować będzie, otruty jednak zostanie.

Na jego miejsce nastąpi dobry, łaskawy i spokojny ksiązę, który lubo obrany jako król, władzą królewską rozkazować będzie, ale nie wiem, z jakiej racyji koronowany nie będzie.

Po nim do żołnierza królestwo należeć będzie, długo i okrutnie sprawować je będzie, człowiek tetryk, złośliwy, groźny i przewrotny.

Po jego śmierci najaśniejsza pani osiądzie to królestwo, które według słuszności należeć jej będzie, ale niecnotliwie sprawować się będzie i królestwo niebezpieczeństwa i płaczu nabawi, za której panowania w następujących po tym czasach szczęśliwsze będzie niżeli początki. A gdy ta białogłowa panować będzie Rz[ecz]p[ospo]l[i]ta i Królestwo u postronnych narodów u wszystkich w pośmiewisku będzie. A wkrótce przybierze sobie męża i króla z królewskiej familijej, któremu koronowanemu posłuszni będą. Ten będzie mądry, sprawiedliwy, szczęśliwy, podobny piątemu królowi, antecessorowi swemu, ale mniejszy potencyją i godnością.

Więcej mi prognostykować znaki nie dopuszczają.

^h się] *om. Kc.*

ⁱ Gdy ... nie przyda] Jan Trzeci *add. Kc.*

^j Po .. będzie] August Wtóry *add. Kc.*

Appendix 4

The German version of the election prophecy

Offered below is Rheticus's election prophecy in German which survived in the form of two texts kept in the Gdańsk Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences (*De* and *Df*). Guided by the text *De*, I also highlighted minor differences with *Df* and pointed them out in the text. I also offered notes in the margin which accompanied both texts.

Sources:

De Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. 907, p. 68

Df Gdańsk, PAS Library (Biblioteka Gdańska PAN), Ms. 1293, fol. 157ver.–158ver.

Abbreviations:

om. *omisit* (omitted text)

in mg. *in margine* (in the margin)

Vaticinium, oder^a Weissagung Doctoris Retzij^b, des sehr erfahrenen *Medici et Astronomi*, von der Wahl unnd Regierung der Könige^c zu Pohlen, Geschehen fürm^d Tode^e Königes^f *Sigismundi Augusti Anno 1571*

^gDer Erste, wird ein frembling sein auss einer fernen abgelegenen Landschafft, welcher mit grosser gefahr wieder ins Reich kommen, unnd baldt nach der Krönung verflüchtig werden.

^hDer Ander, wirdt ein grosser Fürst sein, aber ohne Krönung bleiben.

ⁱDer Dritte, Wird ein armeer Herr sein, eines geringen Geschechtes unnd Herkommens, welches Regierung wird traurig sein, er wird sich an einen Tyrannen hengen, aber seine Regierung wird nicht lange wehren.

^jDer Vierde, Wird auss der Zahl der Pohlen sein, ein Hochfürchtiger Glückseliger Herr, aber seine Regierung word sich nicht weit ausstrecken.

^kDer Fünffte, Wird ein sehr glückhafftiger Herr sein, er wird die Feinde schlagen, unnd eine grausame Regierung erlangen, wird aber nicht lange regieren.

^lDer Sechste, Wird eines trefflichen Geschlechtes unnd Herkommens sein, unnd vielleicht der Lezte König in Pohlen, welches Regierung wirdt sehr glücklich unnd rühmlich sein.

^a Vaticinium, oder] *om. Df.*

^b Retzij] Joannis Rezij *Df.*

^c Könige] Koninge *Df.*

^d fürm] kurtz vorm *Df.*

^e Tode] Totte *Df.*

^f Königes] Koning *Df.*

^g *in mg.* Henricus von Valois, zog nach Franckreich *De Henricus 4 ex Gallia Df.*

^h *in mg.* Maximilianus Caesar Ward neben Bathori orwehlet *De Caesar Maximilian 2 Df.*

ⁱ *in mg.* Stephanus Bathori, Dux Transilvaniae *De Stephanus Botorius sic Df.*

^j *in mg.* Sigismundus Tertius, Erbe den Kron Schweden *De Sigismundus 3 Suecus Df.*

^k *in mg.* Wladisslaus Quartus *De.*

^l *in mg.* Johannes Casimirus Hodiernus Rex *De.*

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Abstract

The paper aims to organise the issues concerning the great variety of manuscripts jointly described as the “election prophecy”, supposedly made by Georg Joachim Rheticus (1514–1574), an astronomer, astrologer, and the student of Nicolaus Copernicus. The study contains a proposal of a model showing how the original Latin text of the “prophecy,” the autograph of which has not been preserved to this day and which had the form of a horoscope diagram with commentary by Rheticus, underwent contamination and interpolation, while at the same time serving as the basis for the creation of two vernacular traditions of the text – Polish and German. The analysis of the preserved copies consists of the description of the most reliable witness of the “prophecy” tradition – the copy made in the eighteenth century by

Wrocław-based Enlightenment historian Samuel Benjamin Klose on the basis of the available documents of Andreas Dudithius, which introduced the text into wider circulation – and of the discussion of other accounts which can be found in European libraries. The transformations undergone by the text of the prophecy between late sixteenth century and early eighteenth century are depicted in source materials to the paper, containing the editions of several Latin and Polish versions of the text, as well as its German version.

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