Handout – Copernicus's Astrological Expertise

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Copernicus's annotations to and highlighted passages in Haly Abenragel, *De iudiciis astrorum*

A. Annotations

A1. Sig. 63r

Ptolemeus tertio Quadripartititi capitulo octavo de monstruosis signis dicit quod in talium nativitatibus luminaria pluries inveniuntur ab angulis remota et nullam cum ascendente[1] configurationem habentia, et quod ab infortuniis anguli continentur. Cum hoc igitur sic inventum fuerit, convenit, si hoc in miseris nativitatibus fuerit, si similiter sciatur locus coniunctionis vel preventionis ante nativitatem, si itaque hec loca in nativitate, scilicet[2] locus Lune [☽], locus item ascendentis[3] et locus Solis, nullam vel eorundem maior pars, non aspexerit gradum coniunctionis [☌] vel oppositionis [☍] luminarium, erit forme monstruose seu valde turpis, maxime si in signis brutorum animantium fuerit. Gibbosus.

Ptolemy says, in the third <book> of the *Quadripartitum*, in chapter 8 on monstrous signs, that in nativities of such people, the luminaries are often found far remote from the angles and having no aspect to the ascendant, and that the angles are restrained by the malevolent planets. Thus, when this is found to be so, that is, if this occurs in miserable nativities, if the place of the conjunction or of the prevention before the nativity is known, <and> if then these positions in the nativity, namely, the position of the Moon, the position of the ascendant and the position of the Sun, all or the majority of them, do not aspect the degree of the conjunction or of the opposition of the luminaries, he will be of monstrous shape or very ugly, especially if it occurs in the signs of insensible animals. Humpbacked.

A2. Sig. 68r (right margin)

Ptolemeus iudicat solum per partem fortune [⊕][4] et gubernatores ipsius parte quarta capitulo primo.

Ptolemy judges only by the part of fortune and its rulers in the fourth book, first chapter.

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[1] ascendente] ascensione *NCGA*
[2] scilicet] sicut *NCGA*
[3] ascendentis] ascensionis *NCGA*
[4] partem fortune [⊕]] ⊙ *NCGA*, i.e. Solem, as confirmed by the translation: 'nur mit Hilfe der Sonne'.

A3. Sig. 68r (bottom)

Ptolemeus parte quarta, capitulo secundo de statu et prosperitate nati, accipit argumentum a luminaribus et stellis eadem circumvenientes. Si enim luminaria in angulis fuerint in signis masculinis, planeteque circumdantes Solem [☉] matutinales, Lunam [☽] vero occidentales, maximum notat dominium, et similiter de dignitate dominorum orientis et medii celi.

Ptolemy, in the fourth part, second chapter on the condition and prosperity of the native, makes a rule from the luminaries and the planets surrounding them. If the luminaries are in the angles in masculine signs and the planets surrounding the Sun matutinal, <and the planets> surrounding the Moon occidental, it denotes the greatest ownership, and the same <applies> to the dignity of the rulers of the ascendant and of the midheaven.

A4. Sig. 71r

Secundum Ptolemeum.
1 Ptolemeus tertio Quadripartiti capitulo V iudicat statum fratrum ex decima, 11, quarta et quinta domibus et planetis in eisdem locis existentibus, et fratrum <et> parentum significationibus.
2 Signum etenim medii celi signum matris est, 11 vero filiorum eius.
3 Masculorum datores sunt planete masculini in suis qualitatibus mundi, largitores vero feminarum sunt femini in suis qualitatibus mundi.
4 Orientales iterum primos largiuntur fratres, occidentales postremos.[5] Rursum cum in figura largitoris associentur signo rem fratrum significanti, societati convenienti fratrum concordiam significabunt. Et si cum parte iterum fortune convenerint, fratrum societatem in suis rebus significabunt. Si vero fuerint in signis nullam societatem habentibus, oppositum significabit.

According to Ptolemy.
1 Ptolemy, in the third part of the *Quadripartitum*, chapter 5, judges the status of the brothers from the 10th, 11nd, 4th and 5th houses, from the planets located in those houses, and from the meaning of the brothers and parents.
2 The sign of the mid-heaven is the sign of the mother and <the sign of> the 11nd is that of the children.
3 The givers of males are the masculine planets in their qualities of the world and the givers of females are the feminine <planets> in their qualities of the world.
4 The oriental <planets> give the first brothers and the occidental <planets> give the later ones. By contrast, when in the chart of the giver they are associated with the sign denoting the topic of the brothers, they signify the harmony of the brothers in their partnership. And if they are associated with the part of fortune, they signify the partnership of the brothers in their business. But if they are in signs having no harmony, it signifies the opposite.

[5] postremos] postremus *ms.*

A5. Sig. 73v

1 Si Saturnus [♄] et Venus [♀] orientales fuerint,[6] in almugeia sibi propria, vel si fuerint in angulis, manifestum ex hoc fortunium parentum significare debemus secundum qualitatem utrique ipsorum convenientem.
2 Ptolemeus capitulo quarto libri tertii substantiam autem eorum accipit Sole [☉] et planetis significatores parentum circumdantibus. Item bona configuracio Solis [☉], et cum Saturnus [♄] vitam promovet patris, mala autem contradicit et tanta forcius si in angulis vel succedentibus[7] fuerint.
3 Non aliter de matre iudicamus. Quando enim in figura Luna [☽] vel Venus [♀] Iovi [♃], Veneri [♀], vel Venus [♀] Lune laudabiliter configurabitur, vitam matris elongabunt.
4 Nota: quemadmodum penes infortunium patris et a[8] Marte [♂], ita similiter matri abest Saturnus [♄].

1 If Saturn and Venus are oriental, in their almugeia, or if they are in the angles, we must infer from this the fortune of the parents according to the quality that suits each of them.
2 Ptolemy, in chapter 4 of the third book, examines their substance from the Sun and the planets surrounding the significators of the parents. A good configuration of the Sun, and because Saturn prolongs the life of the father, impedes bad things, and all the more so if they are in the angles or in the succedent <houses>.
3 We judge about the mother in no different way. When in the chart, the Moon or Venus is in harmonious aspect to Jupiter or Venus, or Venus to the Moon, they prolong the life of the mother.
4 Note: just as the question of the misfortune of the father <is> from Mars,[9] so, likewise, Saturn fails in assisting the mother.

A6. Sig. 75v

1 Idem dicit Pto<lemeus> 14 capitulo parte tertia de epilenticis.
2 Demoniaci naturaliter in quorum[10] capitibus superabundat venenosa quedam humiditas.

1 Ptolemy says the same thing in chapter 14 in the third part about the epileptics.
2 Possessed people inherently, in whose heads a certain venomous moisture abounds.

[6] fuerint] ~~fuerint~~ fuerint *ms.*
[7] succedentibus] successione *NCGA*
[8] et a] abest *NCGA*
[9] *This section is problematic and the reading of 'penes' uncertain*.
[10] quorum] *followed by the crossed-out word* na<tur…> *ms.*

B. Passages highlighted or underlined

B1. Sig. 2rb [underlined in red]
Saturnus in domibus Martis est multorum verborum propter linguam…

B2. Sig. 61va [underlined and marked in the margin]
Ego dico quod Dorothius et Albumasar et Elbemedeni et omnes alii qui eorum opiniones secuti fuerint. Dicunt quod elongatio oppositionis inter duos planetas quando latitudo unius eorum fuerit septentrionalis et latitudo alterius meridionalis non est applicatio propter diversitatem partium latitudinum. Et ego dico quod hoc dictum eorum fuit error.

B3. Sig. 62ra [marked in the margin]
Eclypsis hylech quando fuerit gradus ascendens et per athazir pervenit ad gradum eclypsis, morietur ille natus. Et si pars fortune fuerit hylech et applicuerit ad gradum ecly<psis, cecabitur natus>.

B4. Sig. 63va [marked in the margin, with added title: 'De statu spiritus']
Nunc autem volumus dicere statum spiritus nati….

> This applies to the whole of Haly's chapter, as shown by the six markings, with added titles, on sig. **63vb**, dealing with: **[1]** 'Signa vero communia faciunt convertibiles spiritus permutantes se…'; **[2]** 'In esse tamen planetarum et fortunarum suarum, eorum qui orientales ascendentes fuerint faciunt spiritum acutum…'; **[3]** 'Statio planetarum que nominata est matutinalis quando sunt in medio celi facit spiritum cogitabilem…'; **[4]** 'Et quando planete ascendunt in principio diei vel occidunt faciunt spiritum levem et agilem…'; **[5]** 'Et statio planetarum que dicitur vespertina existentium in Angulo terre et in occasu Veneris et Mercurii…'; **[6]** 'Et dico quod planete qui habent dominium in gubernando res spiritus quando fuerint in locis suis et in suis propriis haiz et in locis convenientibus eius tunc erunt proprietates et facta eorum in spiritu secundum quod superius diximus et distinximus apparentias, nec erit res que disturbet et quin appareant et compleantur.

B5. Sig. 66ra [title added in margin: 'Significa<tio> pla<nete> in ascendente']
Et si Luna fuerit in ascendente fortunata in domo vel exaltatione sua est bona significatio…
With added note at the bottom of the column: 'Cauda Draconis [☋] in ascendente prevat vilum'.

B6. Sig. 66rb [title added in margin: 'Dominus ascendentis per domos']
Et aspice in quo loco ex signis est dominus ascendentis…

> Copernicus numbered each paragraph 1 to 12 in the margin. After these twelve paragraphs, Haly returns to the meaning of the ascendant in the sixth house, where Copernicus wrote 'Dominus asc<endentis> in sexta'].

B7. Sig. 66vb [rubric mark in the margin]
Quando dominus domus Solis et dominus domus Lune et dominus ascendentis fuerint in opposito suarum domorum, significat quod natus erit in extraneis locis extra terram suam et habebit labores in itineribus…

B8. Sig. 67ra [rubric mark in the margin]
Pars celati accipitur de die a Luna in Solem et nocte e contrario et proiicitur ab ascendente…

B9. Sig. 67va [subject in the margin: 'Castitas']

Quando scire volueris utrum castus sit vel fornicator natus, aspice…

B10. Sig. 68ra [marked in the margin and partly underlined]
Et aspice ad ductoriam planetarum diurnam a Sole, et nocturnam a Luna. Et ductoria est quod planete sint orientales a Sole et occidentales a Luna…

B11. Sig. 68va [two passages marked in the margin]
[1] Non est bonus Sol neque Mars neque Saturnus in secunda domo in aliqua nativitate, nec inde natus bonum habebit…
[2] Quando dominus domus substantie iuerit ad applicationem domini domus ascendentis, significat quod natus lucrabitur…

B12. Sig. 69ra [marked in the margin and partly underlined]
In cuiuscumque radice nativitatis Iupiter habuerit aliquam dignitatem aut posse vel testimonium esse non poterit multum pauper…

B13. Sig. 69va [marked in the margin]
In quacumque domo ceciderint pars fortune ac eius dominus et fuerint fortunate ac liberi ab infortunarium aspectibus significant meliorationem et aptationem rerum quas significat illa domus…

B14. Sig. 70ra [marked in the margin]
Pars mercadentie accipitur de nocte et die a Saturno in Mercurium et proiicitur ab ascendente…

B15. Sig. 74ra [added note: ‘Parte quarta capitulo quinto’]
Opinio Ptolomei in hoc est quia dicit convenit ibi aspicere in esse filiorum planetis existentibus…

B16. Sig. 76ra [underlined in red, with note in the margin: ‘Sequitur’]
Et postquam locuti sumus in rebus <et accidentibus spiritus secundum quod ad nos pertinet…>.

B17. Sig. 84ra [added title in margin: ‘Dominus none per domum’, next to the corresponding chapter]

Johannes Apelt to Duke Albrecht of Brandenburg, 8 April 1535 (ed. *NCGA*)

Durchlauchtigster hochgeborner furst vnd herr eurn furstlichen gnaden sein mein gantzwillige vnd bereite dienst in aller vnterhenigkeit zuuorn. Gnedigster herr. Es ist alhir in der aufgerichten schull, ein chastgelerter man, Ioachimus Cammermeister genant, […] von Bamberg burtig, eins reichen burgers sun, welchem auch Philippus im lirchischen vnd anderm mehr weicht, ein grosser mathematicus, […] hat her viler fursten geburt tag, auch eurer furstlichen gnaden bey im gehabt. Ist auf mein ansinnen dahin bewegt, das her eurn furstlichen gnaden ein natiuitet aufgericht, vnd der dreyer kunftigen Jaer reuolutiones gemacht, welche ich eurn furstlichen gnaden hiemit zuschick, troslicher Zuuersich e(ure) furstliche gnade weren inen solchs gefallen vnd del Poliander nichts dervon wissen lassen. Vnd hat der man gar ein andere art, aus dem Ptolomeo, dan Carion vnd andere. Bit vnterthenigklichen e(ure) furstliche gnade wolten inen disen vleis gefallen lassen, vnd den guten willen mit gnade erkennen. E(ure) furstliche gnade haben wol iemanden an den Poliander der solchs lessen vnd auslegen kan. So ist auch **ein alter thumherr zur Frauenburg**, wo es sunst felen solt. Bin eurn f(urstlichen) g(naden) zudienen gantz willig. Datum Nurmberg, den viii Aprilis Anno 1535.

E(uer) f(urstlichen) g(nade) williger diener
Iohan Apel d.

Bernard Wapowski to Sigismund von Herberstein, 5 October 1535 (tr. Swerdlow)

To the Magnificent Lord, Gracious Lord, Greetings and Fortunate Success.

A few days ago I sent another letter to your magnificence in the possession of Master Ludovico Aliphio, Secretary to His Royal Majesty, in which I wrote of some news from Sarmatia (Poland). Now I send something new and long desired by learned men, an almanac with the truest and finest corrected motions of the planets, which differ greatly (or frequently) from the common almanac, calculated from new tables composed by the reverend father, Master Nicolaus Copernicus, Canon of Warmia. You will find that Mercury is in error by half a sign (15°) and that aspects of the planets to each other differ (in date) by some weeks from the old almanac. Master Nicolaus Copernicus is a great mathematician, who added that for the correction (*verificatione*) of the motions of the planets, it is necessary to grant some motion to the earth an opinion he has held for many years, and he maintains that the earth moves insensibly. He did not complete all the aspects on account of the hasty departure of the currier (*nuncii*), but they can be inserted by anyone even moderately instructed. Now, I wish that this thing be made widely known, especially among the experts in heavenly matters (i.e. astrologers) who compose almanacs in Germany, in order that they make (them) more correct and acknowledge their error and the error of their tables. And specifically, I wish that you send a copy of the almanac to them or hand it over to be printed in Vienna, so that the astronomers of Europe acknowledge their errors and diligently seek after more correct motions of the planets, and so on, because neither changes of air (meteorological prognostications) nor annual judgments (horoscopes for revolutions of years) can be made correctly without true motions and aspects of the planets. I wish you will notify me whether or not your magnificence will hand it over to be printed, for I, Master Nicolaus Copernicus, and many others desire this for the common advantage of all.

Farewell, your fortunate magnificence, to whom I wholly devote myself. From Cracow, the 15th day of October in the year 1535. I have noted error in the aspects in certain places, which is to be attributed to the hastening copyist, not to the author. Still, (anyone) even moderately instructed will easily be able to correct this, and add where the aspects are missing, especially since the motions are true and correct. In February the copyist was in error in the conjunction and opposition of the luminaries.

Bernard Wapowski of Radochoniec, Cantor (of the Cathedral) of Cracow, Secretary to the King.