

Doctoral Dissertation

**Born for Phoebus. Solar-astral Symbolism and Poetical Self-representation
in Conrad Celtis and his Humanist Circles.**

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Abbreviations

Am. = *Quattor libri amorum secundum quattuor latera germaniae; Germania generalis; Accedunt carmina aliorum ad libros amorum pertinentia*, ed. Felicitas Pindter. Leipzig: Teubner, 1934.

BW = *Der Briefwechsel des Konrad Celtis*, ed. Hans Rupprich. Munich: Beck, 1934.

DGWE = Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism, ed. W. J. Hanegraaff (Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2006)

Ep. = *Fünf Bücher Epigramme von Konrad Celtis*, ed. K. Hartfelder. Berlin: S. Calvary, 1881.

Od. = *Oden, Epoden, Jahrhundertlied. Libri odarum quattuor, cum epodo et saeculari carmine*, ed., tr. Eckart Schäfer. Tübingen: Narr, 2012.

OO = Ficino, M. *Opera Omnia* (2 vols.). Basel: Adam Heinrich Petri, 1576. (Repr. ed. P. O. Kristeller, Torino: Bottega d'Erasmus, 1959.)

OSZK = Országos Széchényi Könyvtár (National Széchényi Library)

VL-DH = *Verfasserlexikon: Deutscher Humanismus 1480-1520* (2 vols.), ed. F. J. Worstbrock. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008.

Introduction

I strongly believe that every scholar in the humanities, however specialized his work may be, must also keep in view the basic questions of human existence, and must somehow – however indirectly – contribute to our knowledge about who we are, what humans were / are like in different periods and in general, what our main values are, what a person’s place and role in the world may be. This latter issue was viewed from several perspectives in the Renaissance; several ancient endeavours, wishes and habits of mind about the universe were expressed in new ways in Renaissance works of art, literature or science. Many of these ideas may be commonplaces or appear in commonplace form, but these, too, may conceal important truths, and refer to essential potentialities of human existence. Many of these ideas may be alien at first sight to our modern mind – they may be all the more intriguing at the same time.

The endeavour to reveal the secrets of nature, to know and conquer the cosmos – at least mentally – is as old as human culture; Goethe’s Faust figure is one of the archetypal representatives of this yearning. Perhaps in no other historical period was this idea more frequently expressed than in the Renaissance (not to speak about the real scientific achievements); it was the hobby-horse of Conrad Celtis, too – the protagonist of this study –, he is not accidentally associated to Faust repeatedly in scholarly literature. The notion of interrelation between micro- and macrocosm, the idea of a network of symbols and correspondences, a holistic view of the world, appeared – to various extent – in basically all premodern cultures. A number of Renaissance authors were obsessed with such ideas; this habit of mind underlied Celtis’s oeuvre, too, as can be seen from serious or playful associations between stars and inborn characteristics, fire and choleric temperament, or summer solstice and a feast of Phoebus-follower poets. Humans’ power to create is another typical Renaissance issue, and was related to reemerging poetological issues: what is the poet’s task, what is true and false poetry, and so on. These issues are not strictly those of poetology and art theory; the Platonic idea of poetic frenzy, for instance, has not only a long and ramifying history in European literature, but possibly relates to real phenomena like the rapture of the shaman or the dervish – the latter is mentioned for example by Lupinus, Celtis’s contemporary. An enthusiasm about the recovered classical lore and an optimistic belief in cultural rebirth, “Re-naissance,” was essential to the humanist movement; again, the oeuvres of Celtis and contemporary German humanists are exemplary in this respect. While

studying German humanism around 1500, one gets entangled in typical Renaissance – and in fact, evergreen – issues about “the individual and the cosmos,” to use the title of the book of Ernst Cassirer, a distinguished scholar of the period.

Conrad Celtis (1459-1508), the “arch-humanist”¹ and first poet laureate of Germany, was born son of a peasant in Wipfeld (near Würzburg in Franconia). He left behind his rural background early and studied in Köln and Heidelberg; after his graduation as master of art, he started his career as a humanist teacher and poet. He was crowned poet laureate by Emperor Frederic III in Nürnberg in 1487, then he made journeys to Italy (1487-89) and the university of Cracow (1489-91). In 1492 he was appointed as lecturer of poetry and rhetorics in Ingolstadt, but in the following years he was active in other Southern German cities, too, like Nuremberg or Regensburg; he became the leading spirit of German humanism in the region. Supported by Emperor Maximilian I, he was invited to the chair of poetry and rhetorics at the university of Vienna, where he stayed from 1497 until his death; in 1501 Celtis founded the *Collegium Poetarum et Mathematicorum*, the very name of which already mirrors his ambition to widen the range of humanist studies with the involvement of natural sciences. All through his life, he furthered the cause of humanism in many ways. He composed primarily poetical works, always in Latin; many of his works exemplify a creative *imitatio* and *aemulatio* with the classics and a creative combination of various classical and medieval genres, textual and visual media, literary and natural philosophical issues. As an enthusiastic teacher, he inspired a number of humanists who made later a significant career: Locher, Vadianus, Aventinus, and so on; he created or supported “sodalities” and furthered the cooperation within and between humanist groups of various cities; he edited and even discovered classical or medieval German works. I am going to highlight the relevant aspects of Celtis’s life and activity in more detail (in the note on Celtis’s sodalities, in the subchapter discussing his humanistic program, and later), but from this short biographical overview one can already see his significance and the grounds of the issue of his ambitious self-representation, which is related to self-representative strategies of some other German humanists.

The validity of Jakob Burckhardt’s notion of Renaissance individualism has long been debated. The term itself is problematic,² and the individual, the “self” and its representation

¹ The term was first used by David Friedrich Strauß (1808-74) and has been attached to Celtis since then in scholarship.

² N. Nelson, for instance, differentiates five main interpretations of the term “individualism”: personalism, moral autonomy, singularity, self-assertiveness and subjectivity. N. Nelson, “Individualism as a Criterion of the Renaissance,” *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* (1933), 316-334.

can be investigated from various perspectives; for Greenblatt and his followers, for instance, “self-fashioning” relates primarily to adaptation to social standards.³ It cannot be denied, however, that a strong assertion and representation of the authorial self, the humanist’s person is characteristic of most works of *humanist* literature and related arts (humanism in the narrow sense, as established by Kristeller⁴), and the term individualism fits this phenomenon; this was undoubtedly the case in German humanism around 1500.⁵ Compared to the relatively low number of humanists (around 250⁶) in early sixteenth-century Germany, a remarkable amount of literary “Ego-documents” survived from this period;⁷ Enenkel’s characterization about Neo-Latin humanism in general perfectly fits the German humanism of Celtis’s time in particular:

in Neo-Latin Humanism the self-representation of the intellectual gains an overwhelming importance: humanists, as it seems, were willing to invest a considerable part of their time in modelling their reputation in society and among their fellow intellectuals. In harsh invectives, they defended their position against their intellectual enemies; with every word published they strove for a well-respected position within the networks of the international *Respublica litteraria*. In doing so they developed a more profound interest in their individual personality than was usually the case in the centuries before and also among most of their contemporaries.⁸

The individual as represented in the artwork is never exactly identical with the real individual. On the one hand, humanists provide a stylized and idealistic picture about themselves – at least to a certain extent –, on the other hand, the self-representation is adjusted to generic requirements and contemporary ideas, ideologies in general (that often have classical origin). There is an ambivalence between the two: the freedom of self-contruction in the (in part fictional) sphere of literature and arts is limited by genre and tradition; in terms of poetology, it is most often *imitatio* and *simulatio* that happens in the

³ Cf. primarily S. Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: from More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

⁴ Cf. e.g. P. O. Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought. The Classic, Scholastic and Humanist Strains* (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), 9-10: “By the first half of the fifteenth century, the *studia humanitatis* came to stand for a clearly defined cycle of scholarly disciplines, namely grammar, rhetoric, history, poetry, and moral philosophy, and the study of each of these subjects was understood to include the reading and interpretation of its standard ancient writers in Latin and, to a lesser extent, in Greek.”

⁵ Cf. e.g. P.-K. Schuster, “Individuelle Ewigkeit. Hoffnungen und Ansprüche im Bildnis der Luther-zeit,” in *Biographie und Autobiographie in der Renaissance*, ed. A. Buck (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1983), esp. 121ff.

⁶ As estimated by E. Bernstein, “Group Identity Formation in the German Renaissance Humanists: The Function of Latin,” in *Germania latina - Latinitas teutonica*, ed. E. Keßler et al. (Munich: Fink, 2003), 376.

⁷ Jörg Robert, *Konrad Celtis und das Projekt der deutschen Dichtung: Studien zur humanistischen Konstruktion von Poetik, Philosophie, Nation und Ich* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 2003), esp. 498-500.

⁸ K. A. E. Enenkel, “In Search of Fame: Self-Representation in Neo-Latin Humanism,” in *Medieval and Renaissance Humanism. Rhetoric, Representation and Reform*, ed. S. Gersh et al. (Leiden / Boston: Brill, 2003), 93.

work.⁹ Anyway, Renaissance humanists creatively constructed their image and mythologized their life, as shown by a legion of examples from England to, say, Hungary.¹⁰ Humanists created even new genres to suit their extra needs of self-representation, like the private prose letter, the humanist autobiography, the autobiographical elegy or the dedicatory letter;¹¹ in general, the wide use of paratexts provided frameworks for the birth of early modern humanist authorial ego.¹² Naturally, the extent to which the author represented his real individualistic properties, and to which the author idealized himself, could widely range. Petrarch's *Epistola posteritati*, one of the paradigmatic humanist "autobiographical" works, has a tendency of anti-idealizing – at least on the surface – and intended to present the author's individual personality; in contrast, Eobanus Hessus, for instance, advertised himself as Germany's new Orpheus, and his elegy *Eobanus Posteritati*, that reflects on Petrarch's work, explicitly reveals his striving for fame.¹³ Each humanist, however, intended to construct an image of himself that was to last for eternity, that provided an eternal fame; humanist self-representation was part of rhetorical memorial culture (as was the self-representation of Renaissance rulers). Renaissance "autobiographies" should be seen from this perspective; the real life of the individual was considered only inasmuch as it fitted the author's self-constructed image and the given generic requirements.

If a given humanist composed works in different genres, he could assume various identities; and indeed, as it has been demonstrated, authors who wrote various "autobiographical" works had no stable identity, the Petrarch of a given Petrarch-work is to some extent different from the Petrarch of another work of his.¹⁴ This does not mean, however, that there is no continuity and a common essence in the self-representations of the author. To stay with the example of German humanism, and the humanist who concerns us the most here: Celtis, too, portrayed himself differently, say, in the *Amores* and in his self-designed 1507 memorial woodcut; in the former work, he assumed the role of a lover beyond that of the poet-philosopher, he was

⁹ Cf. e.g. Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 6-7 and 482ff.

¹⁰ Good insights in ways of humanist self-construction are provided, for instance, by György E. Szónyi, "Self Fashioning and Canon Formation in the Renaissance: Sidney and Balassi," in *Celebrating Comparativism. Essays in Honor of György Vajda Mihály and István Fried*, ed. P. József and K. Kürtösi (Szeged: JATE, 1994), 447-461, about Philip Sydney's and Bálint Balassi's "Soldier of Christ" image; or L. Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters. The Construction of Charisma in Print* (Princeton / Oxford, Princeton University Press, 1993), about Erasmus's strategies of self-representation.

¹¹ Enenkel, "In Search," 93.

¹² K. A. E. Enenkel, "Shaping the Early Modern Writer's Self: Remarks on the Construction and Function of Authorial Self-Presentation in Neo-Latin Works," *Fragmenta. Journal of the Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome* 3 (2012), 93.

¹³ Enenkel, "In Search," 96-113.

¹⁴ Cf. primarily Enenkel, "Shaping"; Enenkel, *Die Erfindung des Menschen: die Autobiographik des frühneuzeitlichen Humanismus von Petrarca bis Lipsius* (New York: de Gruyter, 2008).

often self-ironical, and he combined a serious with a playful attitude, while the woodcut displays a kind of apotheosis of the poet-philosopher. Still, the basic role of Celtis as the exemplary German *vates*, poet-philosopher, the leader of the movement in Germany, can be perceived in the background of his whole oeuvre. His self-assumed position already encouraged – indeed, required – the use of spectacular symbolism: symbolic name, acts, poetical motifs and scenes. Solar-astral symbolism – in general, cosmic symbolism – provided fruitful possibilities for Celtis and some other humanists to express their significance and the atmosphere of a total cultural renewal, and its use was further encouraged by two intellectual historical trends of the period that determined in large part the habits of mind of these humanists: the tradition of the defense of poetry that increasingly involved the poet, the *vates* in a cosmic context, and the growing Renaissance interest in natural philosophical, cosmological issues, the secrets of the cosmos, micro-macrocosmical relations. The primary field of the study of the macrocosm and its relation to the humans was astronomy-astrology, the discipline of the heavenly bodies. Our humanists' involvement in the two intellectual historical trends will be discussed in the first two chapters of this study.

This study will explore the wide use of solar and astral (mostly astrological) symbolism in the self-representation of Conrad Celtis and other German humanist poets closely related to him. Constructing their various *vates*-roles, how and why did these humanists employ such a cosmic symbolism? What forms and strategies of this “cosmic” self-representation can we discern? How important was the reception of various literary, poetological or cosmological traditions? Any kind of association between the heavenly bodies and the poet in humanist imagination may fall into our scope: the knowledge of the *poeta doctus* about the stars and the cosmos, the support of the poet by the stars, the involvement of the heavenly bodies in ideas of poetical inspiration, the place of the poet in systems of micro-macrocosmical correspondences; all this in poetical works, visual artworks designed by humanists, poetological and other theoretical works, or letters. Our main focus, however, is *personal* solar and astrological symbolism *in the artworks* themselves, in poetical fiction: how the author, the lyrical subject gets in contact with celestial forces that are (related to) heavenly bodies. Renaissance Europe, particularly the German lands in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, yielded a huge astronomical-astrological literature: astronomical treatises, didactic poems, calendars, annual *prognostica*, comet-predictions, and so on; these will be considered only insofar as they concern the poet's self-construction in poetical works. Our topic might seem narrow at first sight, but I hope to persuade the reader that our target is an insufficiently explored *core* area of the poetical oeuvre of Celtis and some other German

humanists, and that these investigations help to grasp the essence of humanism in the period. Both the cosmological interests and the enhanced *vates*-ideology were essential characteristics of this humanism, and this study aims just at the junction of the two; all this connected to self-reflection, self-representation, which is necessarily one of the basic aspects of any poetical oeuvre. The analyses of the relevant works will delve deep into the habits of mind of the humanists and their age.

The spatial and temporal frameworks of my study are defined by Celtis's life and work. The tightly woven fabric of the humanist *Respublica litteraria* surpassed the borders within Europe,¹⁵ the humanists were of various origin, wandered relatively much, followed various ideas and ideologies, joined different patrons; it would be hardly possible to cut out and investigate just one specific and well definable humanist group, say, "Viennese humanists" or "humanists at the court of Maximilian I" (as will be seen below, Celtis's "sodalities" were not clearly definable groups either); therefore I follow the principle of concentricity. Celtis will be in the focus; any of his humanist friends who similarly composed works with individual solar-astral symbolism in the above discussed sense may fall into the scope of the study, but only in Celtis's case will the research be comprehensive. His correspondence collected in the *Codex epistolaris*¹⁶ provides a picture of his friendly circle in a wide sense, but mostly Celtis's close friends interest us in this study. I highlight here four of his *sodales*, each with one or two works to be analyzed later: Jakob Locher, Augustinus Moravus, Johannes Tolhopf, and Laurentius Corvinus. Each was of German origin, and each belonged to Celtis's closest acquaintances; the fact that they combined – similarly to Celtis – cosmic symbolism and poetical self-representation may be due to similar intellectual historical influences, similar personal traits, or direct impact on each other. Celtis's activity, his wanderings and his correspondence with his close friends determine the spatial range of our investigations: present-day Southern Germany, Austria, Moravia, Silezia, Cracow in Poland, Buda (today part of Budapest) in Hungary; these compose a quite large section of Central Europe. The time frame of the research is the period of Celtis's productive lifetime, c. 1485-1510.

Why does our research focus on Celtis? Because the above outlined cosmic poetry is characteristic of him the most among his contemporaries; furthermore, because he was really one of the most significant humanists in Central Europe around 1500. I am aware of the

¹⁵ For the interrelation between the concept of *respublica litteraria* and that of Europe cf. e.g. E. Klecker, "Das Reich der gelehrten Europa im Blick der wiener Humanisten um 1500," in *Wien 1365: eine Universität entsteht*, ed. H. Rosenberg et al. (Vienna: Brandstätter, 2015), esp. 252.

¹⁶ Ms.: Vienna, ÖNB, cod. 3448; modern ed. by H. Rupprich, *Der Briefwechsel des Konrad Celtis* (Munich: Beck, 1934) (henceforth: BW).

dangers of overemphasizing a specific, closely investigated person against his contemporaries. First, it is a most general phenomenon that the focus on a specific individual, ideology, etc. makes it appear to the scholar more significant than it was in reality. Second, the following investigations will repeatedly show how ambitious his self-representation was, how he kept referring by various means to his central role in German humanism; seen from the perspective of other significant humanists of the region, this privileged status of his may not be so unambiguous. A third problem is related to the second: while Celtis's works have more or less survived, we have much less sources from most of the contemporary German humanists. Much of the correspondence of the region survived in Celtis's *Codex epistolaris*, and in case of some humanists it provides the most important sources for their activity. From the poems by two of the four above mentioned humanists, Augustinus Moravus and Johannes Tolhopf, only a few epigrams have survived; the one or two spectacular visual-textual sources related to them do belong to our issue, and considering their surviving astrological works, the poetical yield of these humanists would certainly have provided material for our investigations. For all these considerations, Celtis's highly important role in the development of German and Central European humanism cannot be denied. I have already indicated above the wide range of his activities, and my analyses will increase the number of examples for contemporary humanist works where Celtis's direct influence can be detected. Here I just emphasize that his poetical achievement is really outstanding compared to the average of the age (not compared, naturally, to the Golden Age classics; it would be unjust to compare his style and his Latin to that of, say, Horace, based on Celtis's implicit claim to be a German Horace). There is much commonplace poetry or panegyric lip-service in his oeuvre, and even plagiarism occurred; he did compose, however, such poems which touch the modern reader, and which help open the eye to the beauty in the world. To be sure, these are subjective value judgments; nevertheless, several scholars have supported a positive evaluation of his poetry.¹⁷

¹⁷ D. Wuttke: "Celtis gilt als der bedeutendste deutsche Renaissance-Humanist und der bedeutendste deutsche neulateinische Dichter der vorreformatorischen Zeit" ("Conradus Celtis Protucius," in *Deutsche Dichter der frühen Neuzeit (1450 - 1600): ihr Leben und Werk*, ed. S. Füssel, Berlin: Schmidt, 1993, 189); F. J. Worstbrock: "Die 'Amores' konkurrieren als Zyklus mit den Römischen Elegienbüchern, übertreffen sie an zyklischer Konsistenz aufgrund ihrer vollends unvergleichlichen gesamthaften Konzeption" ("Konrad Celtis. Zur Konstitution des humanistischen Dichters in Deutschland," in *Literatur, Musik und Kunst im Übergang vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit*, ed. Hartmut Boockmann, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995, 32); H. Grössing: Celtis's scientific interest "nicht zur gelehrten Dichtung entartete, sondern stets vom Hauch des Musisch-Genialen berührt bleiben ist" (*Humanistische Naturwissenschaft: zur Geschichte der Wiener mathematischen Schulen des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts*, Baden-Baden: Koerner, 1983, 278); H. Entner: "...er war ja einer der wenigen wirklichen Dichter, die der deutsche Humanismus gehabt hat" ("Zum Dichtungsbegriff des deutschen Humanismus. Theoretische Aussagen der neulateinischen Poetik zwischen Konrad Celtis und Martin Opitz," in

Although in general I can rely on the work of a number of excellent scholars, the secondary literature *directly* related to our issue is relatively meagre and insufficient in many respects. As for the works interpreted in this study, only few of them have been analyzed henceforth in detail, and mostly from a different perspective than that of this study. My research requires the consideration of at least two vast fields of European (mainly German and Italian) intellectual history: (natural) philosophy related to cosmological issues, involving various Platonic traditions or astronomy-astrology, and literary history (or art history); it goes without saying that the investigation of Renaissance works and ideas includes the consideration of possible classical and medieval sources and models (the influence of Italian Neo-Latin poetry on German humanists seems to be underestimated in scholarship in general). This interdisciplinary approach has not been characteristic of the scholarship on the period, apart from a few exceptions (e.g. Dieter Wuttke, Jörg Robert). Within literary history, methodological problems have often led to misinterpretations of the texts, especially in older scholarship; in the Celtis-literature, scholars in the 1980s–1990s, and especially Jörg Robert in his seminal monograph about Celtis’s work (2003)¹⁸ contributed much to a changing scholarly attitude to the texts. Rhetoricity and tradition-boundedness, these two basic characteristics of humanist literature, should be even more considered than before. The texts refer to various (mainly classical) genres and topoi, discourse with them, and the meaning is born against this manifold intertextual background.¹⁹ It is not enough to point at the sources; it is the play of references, the oscillation between the connotative levels of the text from which the overall message or the most relevant interpretations of the text must be gathered. The literary self, the lyrical subject is part of this play; the most spectacular manifestation of the methodological deficiencies of earlier scholarship was the frequent confusion of Celtis’s literary self with his biographical one. I have already touched on these problems above and will discuss them later as well. From the perspective of cosmological issues, there is a specific deficiency in the scholarship of the German humanism of the period: despite the relatively large number of astrology-related literary works, these have been rarely analyzed, although in many cases only the scholar’s interpretation could render them understandable for the reader; in the few cases when these passages have been interpreted, scholars have often made mistakes and used the astrological terms in a wrong way. Horoscopes that were important for

Grundpositionen der deutschen Literatur im 16. Jahrhundert, ed. I. Spriewald et al., Berlin / Weimar: Aufbau 1972, 354); Lewis W. Spitz: “He was a good lyric poet, the best, in fact, that German humanism produced” (*Conrad Celtis. The German Arch-Humanist*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957, 83).

¹⁸ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*.

¹⁹ For intertextuality as a central notion for the scholarship of early modern literature, cf. *Intertextualität in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. W. Kühnmann et al. (Frankfurt am Main et al.: Lang, 1994).

our humanists and that either survive in documents or can be partly reconstructed from the sources have not been analyzed, except for the horoscope-elegy (I,1) of Celtis's *Amores*. Modern computer programs can calculate in a moment the planetary positions that belong to a given date and time, which largely facilitates the investigation of horoscopes.²⁰

Among the comprehensive studies that review (early) German humanism from various intellectual historical points of view, relatively few concerns directly our topic. A comprehensive review of early German literary theory / poetology and its Platonic tendencies is a desideratum in scholarship,²¹ just as an overview of humanist self-representation in literature and arts in the period;²² the astronomical-astrological reviews generally ignore the lyrical sources. The most useful general study for us is Steppich's monograph about the idea of poetical inspiration in Italy and German humanism;²³ in this book, however, the period of Celtis's time receives too little attention compared to the abundance of works reflecting on poetical inspiration. As for the research on the specific humanists mentioned above, only Celtis has received considerable scholarly attention; scholarship on the poems or visual material concerning our "lesser" humanists is especially meagre,²⁴ although such works as Tolhopf's coats-of-arms with inscriptions, the golden *patera* owned by Augustinus Moravus or Locher's *Sapphicon* and other poems display intriguing symbols, symbolic expressions that wait for (further) deciphering. In the extensive Celtis-literature,²⁵ his humanistic program and his interest in natural philosophical disciplines has often been discussed, the significant cosmological / astronomical / astrological aspects of his oeuvre, however, has not yet attracted *focused* scholarly attention. Scholars have discussed his astrology-related works in two ways: on the one hand, some general monographs in the older Celtis-literature have a subchapter-length part (or a few pages) that argue for the significance of astrology in his poetry, supporting the argument with the most evidently astrological passages (Pindter, Novotny,

²⁰ I have used in this study the program "ZET 8 Lite" to calculate the planetary data with regard to horoscopes, and the program "CyberSky 3.3.1" to check the sight of the sky at a given moment.

²¹ See ch. II,1,intr.; H. Stejskal's PhD dissertation, *Die Gestalt des Dichters im deutschen Humanismus* (Vienna, 1937) is outdated in many respects.

²² Cf. Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 485.

²³ C. J. Steppich, *'Numine afflatur: ' die Inspiration des Dichters im Denken der Renaissance* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002).

²⁴ Bibliography for these humanists will be provided in the relevant subchapters. In case of Locher, G. Heidloff has produced a PhD dissertation / monograph that also includes reviews of Locher's lyrical poetry and poetological works: *Untersuchungen zu Leben und Werk des Humanisten Jakob Locher Philomusus (1471-1528)* (Freiburg: Universität Freiburg, 1975).

²⁵ A useful bibliography for Celtis is provided by Jörg Robert in *Verfasserlexikon: Deutscher Humanismus 1480-1520* (2 vols.), ed. F. J. Worstbrock (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008) (henceforth: VL-DH). Basic reviews of his life and work: Spitz, *Conrad Celtis*; Wuttke, "Conradus Celtis Protucius."

Spitz, Grössing),²⁶ on the other hand, Jörg Robert and Kober have analyzed in depth the most important text, the very first *Amores*-elegy, which presents the poet's nativity (birth horoscope), and Robert and Grössing have touched on other relevant passages of the *Amores*, too.²⁷ Comprehensive research has not been conducted yet. Solar symbolism is intertwined with that of Phoebus Apollo in Celtis's poetry; Phoebus and the Sun figure conspicuously large in his oeuvre. Scholarship has not recognized this, probably because Celtis seemed just to elaborate a little on the usual, commonplace relationship between the humanist poet and Apollo. This complex symbolism, however, surpasses greatly the level of commonplaces: elaborate epiphanic scenes are staged, or events happening at a date or time determined by the Sun's position; among the related Celtis-works only the Apollo-epiphany in the *Poema ad Fridericum* has been thoroughly investigated.

I treat my issue in six chapters; the actual analyses of poetical works take place in the last four. The first chapter reviews what we can call the German *vates-ideology* in Celtis's time and its preliminaries, the second deals with Celtis's general attitude to cosmological and particularly astronomical-astrological issues; much of his ideas and habits of mind were shared by his contemporaries, especially the above mentioned humanists. On the one hand, these two chapters serve as an introduction to the treatment of poetical works: they review the humanists' habits of mind and the intellectual historical background from the two most important perspectives, and they incorporate biographical / prosopographical information as well as reviews of key works, some of which will be further reflected on during the analyses. On the other hand, the treatment of our main issue already begins in these chapters. The idea of the poet's close affinity to the heavenly bodies, to cosmic forces appear in original ways already in the theoretical, poetological works of the German humanists, or in the natural philosophical "question catalogues" of Celtis's poetry; furthermore, although the subchapters in these chapters are summaries largely based on previous literature, these specific sub-issues were either not reviewed in scholarship or not from our perspective; this is particularly the case in the second chapter. The last four chapters may be seen as composing two main parts, the

²⁶ F. Pindter, *Die Lyrik des Conrad Celtis* (PhD Dissertation, Vienna, 1930), 144-158; E. Novotny: *Die Weltanschauung des Konrad Celtis* (PhD Dissertation, Vienna, 1938), 44-53; L. W. Spitz, "The Philosophy of Conrad Celtis, German Arch-Humanist," *Studies in the Renaissance* 1 (1954), 25-27; Grössing, *Humanistische*, 157-170.

²⁷ Robert: *Konrad Celtis*, 451-481; Robert: "Zum Dichter geboren: Die Astrologie in den Amores," in *Amor als Topograph*, ed. C. Wiener (Schweinfurt: Bibliothek Otto Schäfer, 2002), 51-60; M. Kober, "Das Humanistenleben als Sühne. Zu Konrad Celtis' Einleitungselegie 'Amores' I. 1," in *Würzburger Jahrbücher für die Altertumswissenschaft* 23 (1999), 245-263; H. Grössing, "'Astra inclinant'? Astrologie in den 'Amores' des Konrad Celtis," in *Pharmazie in Geschichte und Gegenwart. Festgabe für Wolf-Dieter Müller-Jahncke zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. C. Friedrich (Stuttgart: Wiss. Verl.-Ges., 2009), 167-182.

treatment of astrology-related works (ch. 3, 4) and that of solar / Phoebean symbolism (5., 6.); however, these are in fact just two aspects of a general “cosmic” symbolism, and in many works the astrological and the Phoebean aspects are equally important. The four chapters review strategies of self-representation by various, more or less original means, and it seemed to me more convenient to structure my study according to this perspective than discuss the works of one author after the other.

I have collected in an Appendix those longer texts that I involve in my investigations but were too long to show them in full extension in the actual chapters. In this Appendix and in the study in general I quote the Latin texts according to their standard modern edition. If they do not have any, I closely follow the text of the original print, including the punctuation; I modernize only the orthography of j/i, u/v, e-caudata/ae, and write out ligatures and abbreviations. In those few cases when the Latin text has an English translation, I use them (if I interpret a passage differently, I indicate it), otherwise I provide raw translations (not literary translations!) that intend to render the primary meaning of the text as exactly as possible.

A note on the issue of Celtis’s sodalities

One of the hottest issues in the scholarship of German humanism in Celtis’s time is to what extent such sodalities that Celtis-related sources call *Vistulana*, *Rhenana* or *Danubiana* were real, organized societies. I must touch on the problem, since humanist self-representation (individual or collective) is based, beside various intellectual traditions and ideologies, first of all on actual individual or social reality, actual communities which may even have had own symbols, and the very term sodality / Sodality has to be discussed in order to clarify its use in the following chapters. Nevertheless, a short general review of the issue will suffice here, and specific sources will be addressed, if needed, in the appropriate subchapters.

Since at least his Italian journey (1487-89) Celtis was highly enthusiastic about what can be called the *sodalitas*-idea: cooperative societies of learned men with humanist aims should be founded or furthered across the Central European area that he liked to call *Germania*. Celtis or his friends applied the terms *sodalitas*, *academia* (even *academia Platonica*), *coetus* or *contubernium* to various local humanist groups (humanist in a wide sense), or – in the case of *sodalitas* – even to the whole *respublica litteraria* around Celtis. Undoubtedly, Celtis drew inspiration from the Italian “academies,” first of all the academy of Pomponius Leto,²⁸ who

²⁸ Cf. e.g. Heinrich Lutz, “Die Sodalitäten des späten 15. und frühen 16. Jahrhunderts,” in *Humanismus und Bildungswesen des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts*, ed. W. Reinhard (Weinheim: Acta humaniora, 1984), 58; G.

referred to themselves with similar phrases as those above; Ficino's Platonic "academy," too, has often been mentioned by scholars as a source of inspiration, although it is rather just the idea – as it appeared in the Ficino-texts – that could have been influential, since the existence of a real academic institution has been seriously questioned.²⁹ The earlier *sodalitas*-scholarship from the eighteenth century to well into the twentieth century tended (not without exceptions) to take all phrases that seemed to refer to institutionalization at their face value, and to consider at least three *sodalitates* (*litterariae*; the term could always be added to *sodalitas*), the "Vistulana" and more importantly the "Rhenana" and the "Danubiana," as real organizations;³⁰ the description of the given sodality was sometimes in fact replaced by the description of its members.³¹ It has also been suggested that they may have been secret societies with esoteric symbols.³² Csáky has written the first serious critical article on the *sodalitas*-issue:³³ he pointed, on the one hand, at the insufficient evidence for Rhinish or Danubian sodalities as organizations (with definite membership, fixed principles or rules, and own symbols), on the other hand, at other uses of the term *sodalitas* that relativize the notions of these two sodalities: the Celtis-related sources also speak of other local and often just temporary sodalities (*Augustana*-Augsburg, *Marcomannica*-Olomouc, *Linciana*-Linz), or use the term in a comprehensive and obviously idealistic sense (an epigram to the four sodalities

Kozielek, "Konrad Celtis in Krakau," in *Res Slavica. Festschrift für Hans Rothe zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Peter Thiergen et al. (Paderborn et al., 1994), 564; H. Entner, "Was steckt hinter dem Wort 'sodalitas litteraria'? Ein Diskussionsbeitrag zu Konrad Celtis und seinen Freundeskreisen," in *Europäische Sozietätsbewegung und demokratische Tradition: die europäischen Akademien der Frühen Neuzeit zwischen Frührenaissance und Spätaufklärung*, ed. Klaus Garber et al. (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1996), 1081; H. Wiegand, "Phoebea sodalitas nostra. Die Sodalitas Litteraria Rhenana," in id., *Der zweigipflige Musenberg. Studien zum Humanismus in Kurpfalz* (Ubstadt-Weiher: Regionalkultur, 2000), 30. A recent review on the academy: S. de Beer, "The Roman 'Academy' of Pomponio Leto: from an Informal Humanist Network to the Institution of a Literary Society," in *The Reach of the Republic of Letters. Literary and Learned Societies*, ed. A. van Dixhoorn et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

²⁹ J. Hankins, "The Myth of the Platonic Academy," *Renaissance Quarterly* 44 (1991), 429-475; in Hankins's final conclusion, Ficino's "'academy' was simply a private gymnasium loosely associated with the studio" (p. 457).

³⁰ For the earlier *Sodalitas*-literature cf. R. Kemper, *Die Redaktion der 'Epigramme' des Celtis* (Kronberg im Taunus: Scriptor, 1975), 216-221. Some of the important works that have investigated the sodalities from a broader socio-cultural perspective: G. Hummel, *Die Humanistischen Sodalitäten und ihr Einfluss auf die Entwicklung des Bildungswesens der Reformationszeit*. (Leipzig: Edelman, 1940); Lutz, "Die Sodalitäten," C. Treml, *Humanistische Gemeinschaftsbildung. Sozio-kulturelle Untersuchung zur Entstehung eines neuen Gelehrtenstandes in der frühen Neuzeit* (Hildesheim et al.: G. Olms, 1989).

³¹ Cf. e.g. J. Ábel, *Magyarországi humanisták és a Dunai Tudós Társaság* [Humanists in Hungary and the Danubian Learned Sodality] (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1880).

³² Kemper, *Redaktion*, 174-7; Lutz, "Die Sodalitäten," 58; Treml, "Humanistische," 151-3. These hypotheses generally go back to L. Keller's *Die römische Akademie und die altchristlichen Katakomben im Zeitalter der Renaissance* (Berlin: H. Heyfelder, 1899), who saw a secret society, a precursor of Freemasonry, in Leto's academy. About the problem cf. Entner, "Was steckt," 1097-1101.

³³ Moritz Csáky, "Die 'Sodalitas litteraria Danubiana': historische Realität oder poetische Fiktion des Conrad Celtis?" In *Die österreichische Literatur*, vol. 2, ed. H. Zeman (Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1986), 739-758.

according to the four parts of *Germania*;³⁴ an epode to the “sevenfold sodality,” based on another symbolic number;³⁵ the Hroswitha-edition by the *Sodalitas Celtica*;³⁶ simply *Sodalitatis litteraria* for all the correspondence of Celtis;³⁷ and so on). Csáky has concluded that Celtis’s *sodalitates* were poetical fictions, and the Danubian Sodality nothing else than a sum of his humanist friends and comrades in a wide sense.³⁸ After Csáky, scholars have been inclined either to a critical or a permissive attitude towards Sodalities as organizations: Entner and Backes, for instance, followed Csáky’s argumentation,³⁹ while T. Klaniczay, Treml, Machilek or Wörster, among others, kept pointing at sources that showed at least the intention or first traces of institutionalization in case of the Rhinish or Danubian sodalities, and criticized Csáky’s too static understanding of Celtis’s *sodalitas*-concept.⁴⁰ These scholars are certainly right at least in that Csáky should not have lumped together Celtis’s obviously idealistic “Pan-German” and the local use of the term *sodalitas*. Klaniczay has convincingly argued that Celtis’s original idea may have been one *sodalitas* comprising all humanists of *Germania*, and he occasionally called it after that town or region where he was and where the center of the movement was supposed to be, so the “Danubian” sodality after the “Rhinish” one would not have been a new sodality but a continuation or extension of the already existing society. It turned out soon that it is the local level where the humanists can efficiently cooperate, and the one sodality disintegrated by itself to many; these local humanist communities, however, really had common projects and activities, and the whole movement resulted in such sodalities as the *Peutingeriana* in Augsburg that was demonstrably a

³⁴ Ep. I,1 *Ad quattuor sodalitates litterarias Germaniae...* (Fünf Bücher Epigramme von Konrad Celtis, ed. K. Hartfelder, Berlin: S. Calvary, 1881. In this study I take into consideration D. Wuttke’s “Supplement zu Hartfelders Edition der Celtis-Epigramme,” in *Renatae Litterae: Studien zum Nachleben der Antike und zur europäischen Renaissance: August Buck zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. K. Heitmann und E. Schroeder, Frankfurt: Athäneum, 1973, 101-126.)

³⁵ Epod. 14 *Septenaria sodalitas litteraria Germaniae* (Oden, Epoden, Jahrhundertlied. Libri odarum quattuor, cum epodo et saeculari carmine, ed., tr. Eckart Schäfer, Tübingen: Narr, 2012)

³⁶ *Opera Hrosvite...* (Nuremberg, “Sodalitas Celtica,” 1501).

³⁷ In the title page of the *Codex epistolaris: Libri epistolarum et carminum Sodalitatis litterariae ad Conradum Celtem*.

³⁸ Csáky, “Die Sodalitas,” 755: “Die Sodalitas Litteraria Danubiana ist – im verständnis von Konrad Celtis – nichts anderes als die Summe seiner Freunde und Bekannten, seiner Gesinnungsgenossen im weitesten Sinne des Wortes; dies ist die reale Basis der Sodalitas.”

³⁹ M. Backes, *Das literarische Leben am kurpfälzischen Hof zu Heidelberg im 15. Jahrhundert. Ein Beitrag zur Gönnerforschung des Spätmittelalters* (Tübingen, 1992), 151ff.; Entner, “Was steckt.”

⁴⁰ T. Klaniczay, “Celtis und die Sodalitas litteraria per Germaniam,” in *Respublica Guelpherbytana. Wolfenbütteler Beiträge zur Renaissance- und Barockforschung. Festschrift für Paul Raabe*, ed. A. Buck et al. (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1987), 79-109; Treml, *Humanistische*, 151-4; P. Wörster, *Humanismus in Olmütz. Landesbeschreibung, Stadtlob und Geschichtsschreibung in der ersten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhundert* (Marburg: Elvert, 1994), esp. 55 n. 165; F. Machilek, “Konrad Celtis und die Gelehrtensodalitäten, insbesondere in Ostmitteleuropa,” in *Humanismus und Renaissance in Ostmitteleuropa vor der Reformation*, ed. W. Eberhard (Köln et al.: Böhlau, 1996), 137-155.

successful organization.⁴¹ After all, it remains a question in what sense we can speak of Vistula-, Rhinish or Danubian Sodalities, as capitalized phrases.

In case of Cracow, the arrival of various humanists – most importantly Callimachus Experiens – in the Polish city that had both the royal court and the famous university, accelerated local humanist activity, which was further boosted by Celtis, who arrived there in 1489 and was surrounded by humanists of German origin in large part.⁴² Based on few sources, a number of scholars who outlined humanism in Cracow at that time spoke of a *Sodalitas Vistulana* as an organization led or “founded” by Celtis;⁴³ however, scholars more engrossed in the *sodalitas*-issue have rightly pointed out that there is no evidence for a sodality as institution.⁴⁴ In Heidelberg, a cooperative humanist community, patronized primarily by Bishop Dalberg, was forming already at Celtis’s first stay in the city (1484-85), and it included soon such illustrious members as Johannes Reuchlin. When Celtis arrived there again in November 1495 at the latest, he assumed a leading role in holding together the humanist community and boosting its literary activities; the various phrases used for the sodality in Celtis-related sources at that time, most frequently *sodalitas / academia Rhenana* or *Heidelbergensis*, do not necessarily refer to a (re-)founded institution. Celtis left already in the first half of the next year, but the humanist sodality there and the term *Sodalitas Rhenana* lived on. Plato’s *academia* served as a model in at least one sense, the organization of *symposia / convivia* – both for scholarly reasons and for fun –, that were mostly held in Johannes Wacker’s (Vigilius) house in Celtis’s time. They seem to have celebrated at least once (7 Nov. 1496) Plato’s birthday. Their common scholarly activities included translations and editions of classical or German *monumenta*, the acquisition and circulation of books, and even a kind of “field trip,” an excursion to Trithemius, abbot of Sponheim. Certain sentences in Celtis’s correspondence may be interpreted as references to fixed principles, precepts of the *sodalitas*, and certain letters as responses to invitation for a membership in the sodality; in neither cases are the interpretations unambiguous.⁴⁵

When Celtis, invited by Emperor Maximilian to lecture on poetry and rhetorics, arrived in Vienna in 1497, a number of humanists greeted him, and he published the greeting epigrams

⁴¹ Klaniczay, “Celtis.”

⁴² See ch. II,3,a.

⁴³ E.g. H. B. Segel, *Renaissance Culture in Poland: the Rise of Humanism, 1470-1543* (Ithaca, N.Y. et al.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1989), 91; Kozierek, “Konrad Celtis,” 564-5; Machilek, “Konrad Celtis,” 146; S. Rau, Art. “Laurentius Corvinus (1465-1527),” in *Schlesische Lebensbilder*. Vol. 8: *Schlesier des 14. bis 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. A. Herzig (Neustadt /Aisch: Degener, 2004), 41.

⁴⁴ Beyond scholars critical about the sodalities (like Csáky or Entner) cf. also Klaniczay, “Celtis,” 86.

⁴⁵ For the Heidelberg sodality cf. primarily Klaniczay, “Celtis,” 87ff; Entner, “Was steckt,” 1074-80; Wiegand, “Phoebea,” 33ff. Its possible members are enumerated in Wiegand, “Phoebea,” 42-43. See also ch. II,3,b.

at least two times, as *Episodia* of a *sodalitas litteraria Danubiana*; eight of the eighteen humanists seem to have been in Vienna, the others were humanists from Southern Germany, Moravia (Olomouc) or Hungary (Buda).⁴⁶ It is certain that Celtis's activity and growing reputation gave a new impetus to the *sodalitas*-movement, especially in case of three cities in the eastern range of German / Central European humanism: Vienna, Olomouc and Buda. The Vienna circle of humanists were related to both the university, where Celtis had his privileged position, and the court of Maximilian I, whose counsellor, Johannes Krachenberger (Graccus Pierius) – the author of the first epigram – was one of the key mediators between Celtis' circle and the emperor; the Olomouc humanist circle prospered under the patronage of Stanislaus Thurzó, and included such versatile humanists and friends of Celtis as Augustinus Moravus;⁴⁷ a humanist circle in Buda, also visited by Celtis, was already active under King Mathias, and in the 1490s most of them (Jacobus Piso, Georg Neideck, Jan Schlechta, Augustinus Moravus for a time, and so on) were closely related to the royal chancery of King Vladislaus II of Hungary and Bohemia.⁴⁸ The connections between these circles grew strong, partly due to Celtis;⁴⁹ naturally, the correspondence between humanists of German-speaking territories prospered, too. The evidence for a Danubian Sodality as an organized society is in general poor; the most important source in this respect is perhaps a letter of Jacobus Canter to Celtis, where Canter seems to have asked for admission in Celtis's sodality in 1498.⁵⁰ According to the *Episodia*, János Vitéz Jr. was elected *princeps* of the *Sodalitium Danubianum*, but such styles indicate rather honorary titles than real offices: Celtis called

⁴⁶ The *Episodia sodalitatit litterariae Danubianae* appeared in Celtis's *De mundo* edition (*L. Apulei Platonici et Aristotelici philosophi Epitoma divinum de mundo Seu Cosmographia ductu Conradi Celtis*, Vienna, 1497/98 [GW 2424/10]; modern ed. in BW p. 299-307; henceforth: *Episodia*), and also as a single-sheet pamphlet (for the probably lost exemplars cf. G. Borsa, "Drei weitere unbekannte Einblattdrucke aus dem XV. Jahrhundert in der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek," *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* 25 [1960], 55-61). The titles of the epigrams indicate eighteen names (the two Bonomi taken as one) belonging to the sodality; among these, probably eight were in Vienna (Csáky, "Die 'Sodalitas litteraria Danubiana,'" 743): J. Krachenberger, J. Cuspinianus (Spießheim), A. Stiborius (Stöberl), J. Stabius (Stöberer), G. Balbi, B. Stäber, Erasmus Pinifer (Beck) and János Vitéz Jr. (bishop of Veszprém). The other ten *sodales*: Augustinus Moravus (Käsenbrot), G. de Milio, C. von Weitmühl, Sturlinius Smalcaldia, J. Schlechta, G. Neideck, J. Tolhopf, Th. Ulsen, H. Cuspidus (Spieß), P. and F. Bonomo.

⁴⁷ For the humanism in Olomouc, cf. F. Machilek, "Der Olmützer Humanistenkreis," in *Der polnische Humanismus und die europäischen Sodalitäten: Akten des polnisch-deutschen Symposiums vom 15.-19. Mai im Collegium Maius der Universität Krakau*, ed. S. Fussel and J. Pirozynski, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997, 111-135; I. Hlobil and E. Petrů, *Humanism and the Early Renaissance in Moravia* (Olomouc: Votobia, 1999), esp. 36-54; Wörster, "Humanismus,"

⁴⁸ Cf. most importantly T. Klaniczay, *A magyarországi akadémiai mozgalom előtörténete* [The prehistory of the Hungarian academic movement] (Budapest: Balassi, 1993).

⁴⁹ For Celtis in Buda, cf. e.g. Machilek, "Der Olmützer," 143-6; for Celtis in Olomouc, cf. Wörster, "Humanismus," esp. 57-59.

⁵⁰ BW p.328-9. Cf. also the words *litteraria tua sodalitas instituta* in Peutingers' 1505 letter to Celtis: *Konrad Peutingers Briefwechsel*, ed. E. König (Munich, 1923), p. 61. Nevertheless, even if some foundation ceremony took place, the continued existence of an organization is a different matter. The notion of "foundation" of sodalities is further problematic since Celtis joined an already existing circle in each case.

Krachenberger and Fuchsmagen too, *principes* of the same sodality in the same edition, and he called Dalberg a *princeps*, while Ulsenius called him, Celtis, a *princeps*, parent etc. of the “Bavarian” sodality in 1496.⁵¹ The inscriptions of Augustinus Moravus’ *patera*, the precious golden bowl kept in Dresden, dated to 1508, does not refer to any *sodalitas*, so it cannot be considered as evidence for its “reality,” as Treml has asserted.⁵² In an inscription from around 1506-08, Cuspinianus commemorated the twelve members of the *Sodalitas Litteraria Danubiana*,⁵³ the name and the idea is the same, but half of the members seem to be new, and it is still not known how firm the sodality was as organization and what range it had beyond Vienna.⁵⁴ It is also questionable what could be considered as the center of such a sodality: Celtis was in Vienna, but it was Nuremberg and then Augsburg where he managed to publish his works in the name of different “institutions,” as the above mentioned *Sodalitas Celtica*; if the printing privilege meant the official recognition of an organization, as it has been argued,⁵⁵ it is still a question what exactly this organization was. The *idea* of a comprehensive Sodality certainly existed: the Augsburg patrician Conrad Peutinger and his circle, who edited works in the name of *Sodalitas Augustana* or *Peutingeriana* and helped Celtis in his editions,⁵⁶ subordinated in a 1505 letter to Celtis the Augsburg circle to that greater Sodality.⁵⁷

After all, the truth must be somewhere between the two extreme points of view that some scholars adopted in the *sodalitas*-literature, that is, sodalities as poetical fictions or real organizations. It is by now clear that there were two levels of the *sodalitas*-idea, a comprehensive and a local, and the local learned groups with humanists or humanist aims can be further divided into various types.⁵⁸ There were loose humanist circles in many Central

⁵¹ Krachenberger and Fuchsmagen: BW p. 295; Dalberg: e.g. BW p. 468; Ulsenius: BW p. 211. Cf. Csáky, “Die ‘Sodalitas litteraria Danubiana,’” 743; Klaniczay, “Celtis,” 95.

⁵² Treml, *Humanistische*, 154; see ch. VI,1.

⁵³ *Cuspinianus Sodalitatis Litterariae Danubianae Viris Eruditissimis in Memoriam Sempiternam fieri fecit...* From the twelve names that follows, six had occurred earlier: Krachenberger, Cuspinianus, Stöberer, Celtis, Ulsenius, Stöberl; and six occur the first time: Gabriel Gutrater (Eubolius), W. Pülinger (Polymenius), J. Burger (Burcius), L. Suntheim (Sunthemius), Stephan Rösslin (Rosius), Heirich Geratwol (Euticus). Cf. H. Ankwicz-Kleehoven, *Der Wiener Humanist Johannes Cuspinian. Gelehrter und Diplomat zur Zeit Kaiser Maximilians I.* (Graz / Cologne: H. Böhlau Nachf., 1959), 90-92.

⁵⁴ Csáky, “Die ‘Sodalitas litteraria Danubiana,’” 747.

⁵⁵ Cf. Klaniczay, “Celtis,” 100, with further literature.

⁵⁶ J-D. Müller, “Konrad Peutinger und die Sodalitas Peutingeriana,” in *Der politische Humanismus und die europäischen Sodalitäten*, ed. S. Füssel and J. Pirozynski (Wiesbaden, 1997), 167-186; about Celtis’s activity in Nuremberg and Augsburg in the 1500s, cf. Klaniczay, “Celtis,” 98-102.

⁵⁷ *Konrad Peutingers Briefwechsel*, p. 61; Müller, “Konrad Peutinger,” 173.

⁵⁸ In Entner’s conclusion (“Was steckt,” 1091), the term *sodalitas litteraria* was used in at least five meanings (the four last are types of the local sodality): “(1.) ideelle Gemeinschaft aller humanistischen Gelehrten, im Grunde das, was man heute ‘community of scholars’ nennen würde; (2.) Kreis mehr oder weniger literarisch aktiver Humanisten, die sich ohne sichtbare feste Struktur zum philosophischen *convivium* treffen oder auch nur durch Briefe miteinander kommunizieren; (3.) Förderkreis aus selbst nicht unbedingt literarisch Aktiven, die

European cities and towns, and Celtis's movement gave an impetus for them to become more definite organizations; in certain sodalities there may have been fixed principles, leaders and membership – the Heidelberg sodality comes the closest to this assumption –, but so far in neither case have been brought up enough evidence for an organization, institution that would essentially differ from the humanist circles in general. It does not seem to be justified to differentiate through the terminology, say, the “Rhinish Sodality” in Heidelberg from the humanist circles in Nuremberg and Bavaria in general. Nuremberg had a prospering, cooperative humanist circle around patricians like Hieronymus Münzer, Hartmann Schedel or Willibald Pirckheimer, and Celtis boosted further their activity; they had common interests (e.g. in Platonism), common projects (e.g. the Nuremberg Chronicle), edited a number of works.⁵⁹ Celtis lived mostly in Sebald Schreyer's house and had many other close friends in the city (Münzer, Peter Danhauser, Dietrich Ulsen and so on), and he strengthened the humanist connections with other Bavarian cities: Ingolstadt, where he had the chair of poetry and rhetorics; Regensburg, where one of his closest friends, Johannes Tolhopf lived; or Augsburg, with Peutinger and his circle. In a 1496 letter Ulsenius calls him the *parens, princeps* (etc.) of the “Bavarian learned sodality.”⁶⁰

There is even less evidence for a real institutionalization of a comprehensive *sodalitas* that would have mostly been called *Danubiana* in Celtis's Vienna-period. Naturally, one could argue that humanist publicity was realized through verbal and written communication, and the publications in the name of a *sodalitas* already meant its existence;⁶¹ but from our perspective it is advisable to separate the ideas from actual social-historical reality. I do not exclude the possibility that scholarship will collect enough proofs for us to consider Celtis's above mentioned sodalities as organizations, but in this work I will use the terms *Sodalitas Rhenana* or *Danubiana* at most as Celtis's ideas; for sake of precaution, I will use the words *sodalitas*, *sodalis* in their standard meaning, and speak of “Heidelberg sodality” or “Vienna sodality,” meaning simply the humanist circles there. What is important for us in the following is that Celtis's activity and *sodalitas*-idea really furthered humanist activity and cooperation in the

aber zur Publikation ihnen interessant erscheinender Texte materiell beitragen; (4.) Gemeinschaft der Lernenden und Lehrenden an einem Bildungsinstitut; (5.) gelegentlich auch die zufällige, vielleicht sogar nur vorgestellte, gesellige Runde, in der Bildung und Dichtung das Thema abgeben, bzw. die Spieltruppe.”

⁵⁹ Cf. e.g. E. Ph. Goldschmidt, *Hieronymus Münzer und seine Bibliothek* (London: The Warburg Institute, 1938), 30-42.

⁶⁰ BW p. 211: *Ulsenius Celti philosopho et poetae, sodalitatibus litterariae Babaricae parenti, principi, fratri nostro et proconsuli metuendo, disparem numerum, licet unitatem.*

⁶¹ Cf. J-D. Müller, “Konrad Peutinger und die Sodalitas Peutingeriana,” in *Der politische Humanismus und die europäischen Sodalitäten*, ed. S. Füssel and J. Pirozynski (Wiesbaden, 1997), esp. 173-5; Lutz has argued for the sodalities as “new forms of communication” (Lutz, “Die Sodalitäten,” 58).

region, and this reinforced both his self-consciousness and the group-identity of the given sodalities, which in turn furthered spectacular form of humanist self-representation through various symbols.

A note on natural philosophical terminology

Medieval / Renaissance natural philosophy thought in terms largely different from those of modern science, and used a different language; this has often entailed a confused, problematic use of certain terms in modern scholarly literature, including the Celtis-literature. For the following investigations it is necessary to clarify the basic natural philosophical notions as I am going to use them. However, in this preliminary note I am not going to clarify them in detail, just provide basic meanings so that one can separate the notions and gain a sketchy overview of the system (represented in a schematic figure: Fig. 1). I am aware that certain terms had several meanings, not to speak about the various options in the English translation; as far as possible, I adjusted the terminology used in my work to reliable scholarly literature,⁶² and took into consideration the meanings of the terms in Central Europe around 1500.

- The subject of *philosophia naturalis* was the whole universe, the natural world, therefore it could also be called *physica* in the original Aristotelian sense (the standard medieval world view was mostly based on Aristotle's writings as received in the Middle Ages). Natural philosophers dealt mostly with general issues concerning the status or structure of the world, its material composition or motion / change: for this latter, one could use *physica* in a narrow sense. (In Celtis-related sources *physica* is generally used in the wide sense.)

- The number of spheres and what was above the spheres was debated, but a basic twofold division of the visible world was commonly accepted: the unchanging celestial world, with at least the eight (7+1) spheres of the "planets" (from the moon to Saturn) and the fixed stars, was opposed to the sublunar world, the world of change. *Astronomia* and *astrologia* was used interchangeably for the discipline investigating the celestial spheres and heavenly bodies; however, a theoretical and a practical aspect of this science could be differentiated already in the Middle Ages. In the following, I will use "astronomy" and "astrology" based on their

⁶² Most importantly: Edward Grant, *Planets, Stars, and Orbs the Medieval Cosmos, 1200-1687* (Cambridge: University Press, 1994); id., *The Foundations of Modern Science in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: University Press, 1996); various articles of *Medieval Latin. An Introduction and Bibliographical Guide*, ed. F. A. C. Mantello and A. G. Rigg (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1997).

modern meanings: astronomy dealt with the dimensions of spheres and the movements of the heavenly bodies, while astrology investigated their effects on the terrestrial world.⁶³

- *Cosmographia* meant originally the description of the whole cosmos, but in Celtis's time it was more frequently used in a narrower meaning: it meant basically the description of the Earth, the terrestrial world. It took into consideration the heavenly bodies and their effects, but the focus was on the climates, lands and their peoples, and so on. Since this was in fact geography in a wide sense, I will use "comprehensive geography" for it and avoid the confusing term "cosmography." When such investigations focus on a specific land, this can be called "regional studies" (the German phrase, *Landeskunde*, is more expressive).

- A correspondence or system of correspondences between the "microcosm" and the "macrocosm" was a commonplace in the Renaissance; the microcosm was either the human being itself or the terrestrial world surrounding him, and practically each graspable component of this sublunar world could be analogized with or related to something beyond, for instance the planets. Therefore a "microcosmic" and a "macrocosmic" level can be differentiated, and "cosmology" refers to investigations on this macrocosmic level (cosmology is therefore a wider notion than astronomy / astrology: beyond the celestial spheres, it includes general issues about the cosmos).

⁶³ See also ch. II,2,b.

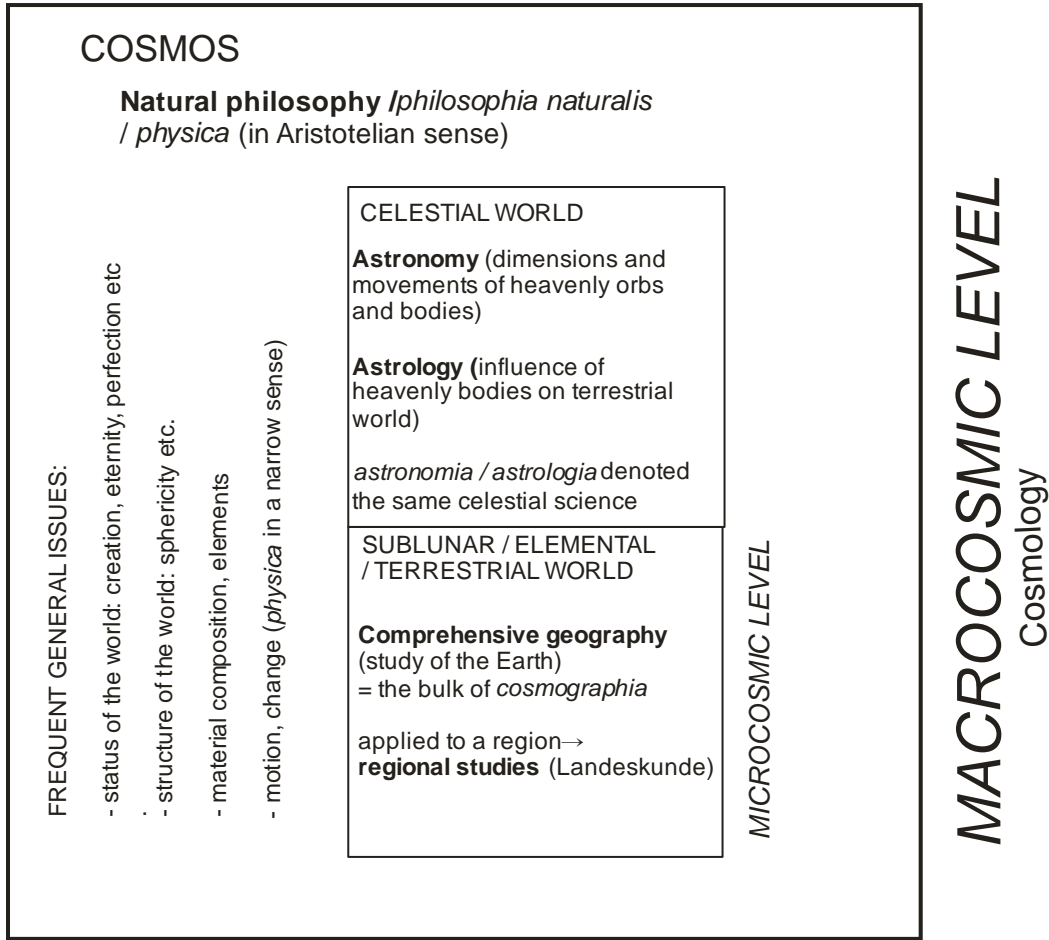


Fig. 1. Terms for natural disciplines used in Celtis's time and in this study

Chapter I

Vates-ideology in German humanist poetology around 1500

Individual and collective self-representation of humanist poets in their poems is inseparable from the ideology of poetry, the development of which ran parallel with the evolution of humanism in general. In this chapter I will review, as briefly as possible, the main poetological ideas concerning the figure of the poet that appeared in Renaissance Italy and Germany until the turn of the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries; I will go into more detail only where the theorists approached poet and poetry from a somehow cosmological perspective. Since humanist poets increasingly referred to themselves as *vates*, a classical notion which mythified the poet and associated him with the seer, with the mediator of divine wisdom, one may speak of a development of a *vates*-ideology. Poetry and literature was central among the typical *studia humanitatis*, the “humanities” that humanism in the narrow sense was to represent, so we are entering now a core region of the world of humanism in general. What is more, literature – oral and written – has always been mirroring the essence, the spirit of the different cultures from prehistory and antiquity to our postmodern (or post-postmodern?) times, so the main theoretical issues about literature and poetry can always rely on the interests of the intellectual elite.

In Renaissance poetology up to 1500,¹ two aspects or levels can be distinguished, an ideological and a pragmatism. The first focuses on the general nature of poetry, the poet’s function and status in the world, the issue of the poet’s relationship to and knowledge about reality, even ultimate reality and divinity; a typical genre representing this approach is the *defensio poetices*, defenses of poetry. The second, the pragmatism approach focuses on the issue of how the poet should compose; such works are, for instance, the various *artes*

¹ Regarding the general characteristics of poetological writings in Italy (which largely determined the European development of poetology), a new phase seems to have begun with the beginning of the sixteenth century, which already falls out of the scope of our investigations. The first Renaissance theoretical writings on poetry took mostly the form of “defense of poetry,” they were not poetics in the strict sense; the latter was characteristic of the sixteenth century, the hayday of Renaissance literary theory in Italy. In connection with this, while in the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries Horace’s *Ars poetica* was the most popular reference work concerning poetical theories, the recovery of Aristotle’s *Poetics* gave a new impetus to theoretical investigations in the sixteenth century. For a general overview of the scholarly literature on Italian Renaissance poetology, cf. A. Buck, “Poetiken in der italienischen Renaissance: zur Lage der Forschung,” in *Renaissance-Poetik / Renaissance Poetics*, ed. H. F. Plett (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1994); I just highlight here some of the most important summaries. B. Weinberg, *A History of Literary Criticism of the Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols. (Chicago 1971) assumes a historical perspective, while B. Hathaway, *The Age of Criticism: The late Renaissance in Italy* (Ithaca, N. Y., 1962) discusses systematically the most important poetological notions, which were also used before the sixteenth century. Cf. also C. C. Greenfield, *Humanist and Scholastic Poetics, 1250-1500* (Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 1981) or F. Tateo, *Retorica e poetica fra medioevo e rinascimento* (Bari, 1960).

versificandi, manuals of versification. Although the ideological and pragmatical levels cannot be clearly distinguished in the actual treatises,² still, the distinction applies, and actually, there could be quite large discrepancies between the ideological and practical notion of the same author: while the basic actual principles and rules of rhetorics-poetics changed little throughout the period, the ideology, centered around the notion of *vates*, grew more and more important, and the more “inflated”, the more it was likely to detach itself from practical issues.³

It is the various ideologies of poetry that will stand in our focus, and regarding their development in the fourteenth-fifteenth century, the distinction of two basic approaches, applied by several scholars,⁴ seems to be most useful: for convenience, these two can be called “standard humanist” and “Platonic” poetics. The first crystallized around the notion of *poeta rhetor*. The humanism revalued and glorified rhetorics, which aimed at the unification of eloquence and wisdom (as was exemplified by Cicero), and poetry could easily fit this rhetorical framework: the poets just used other means (notably metrics) than the orator did, for the same aims.⁵ (The basic principle of *imitatio* of classical authors meant rhetorical imitation in the first place.⁶) On the other hand, in the writings of such fifteenth-century authors as Bruni, Ficino or Landino, a new image of the poet emerged; drawing on philosophical ideas going back to Plato, they mystified and elevated the poet’s status further, thus “outbidding” the earlier poet-image: this is the divinely inspired *vates*, the seer-poet aided by heavenly powers. To be sure, the two approaches are not at all opposing each other, it is rather the emphases that are different (for instance, any humanist poetological treatise could apply, at least on a commonplace level, such ideas as the *vates* – poet and seer at the same time – or heavenly inspiration, since these ideas were never forgotten since antiquity). In the following review I will pay attention mostly on such poetological works and concepts

² For instance, the Renaissance treatises generally provided a pragmatical definition about the task of poetry, which most often involved that the poem must express the truth through various delightful, “ornamental” means (the Horatian principle of *prodesse et delectare* was either in the background or explicitly restated): but what kind of truth is this, to what extent can the poet reveal the divine truth? This is already a hot ideological issue. Another often addressed question is what the practice of good poetry needs, what kind of literary expertise, technical skills, excercises or inspiration – but at least this latter lifts us again from the pragmatical level, the issue of inspiration concerns the author’s philosophical or religious views in general.

³ Stejskal, *Die Gestalt des Dichters*, 40; A. Buck, *Italienische Dichtungslehren vom Mittelalter bis zum Ausgang der Renaissance* (Tübingen, 1952), esp. 87.

⁴ E. g. Buck, *Italienische*; G. E. Grimm, *Literatur und Gelehrtentum in Deutschland. Untersuchungen zum Wandel ihres Verhältnisses vom Humanismus bis zur Frühaufklärung* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1983).

⁵ To be sure, there is a strong continuity between medieval and Renaissance rhetorical traditions (cf. Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought*, 3-23), and the classic inheritance concerning the metric and prosodic rules of poetry more or less overlaps with the medieval inheritance.

⁶ Cf. Buck, “Poetiken,” 27-30, with further literature on *imitatio*.

that deviated from the standard humanist rhetorical approach, and contributed to the crystallization of a new Platonic poetics.

1. Italian preliminaries

a. The revaluation of poetry in the early Renaissance

Poets lie. Poems are morally dangerous. However curious such statements may sound to the modern ears, these were the most widespread accusations against poetry in the Middle Ages, at least it seemed so for the humanists, since they built their defenses of poetry primarily upon these blames.⁷ The authorities the Italian scholastic attackers (mostly clericals and / or university professors) could refer to included some of the humanists' favorite classics, too. The low status of poetry within the system of the *artes* could be supported by quotations from Quintilian⁸ or Thomas Aquinas.⁹ According to later misinterpreted Aristotle-passage,¹⁰ the poets lie quite often;¹¹ according to a Boethius-passage, the muses are “courtisans of the stage”;¹² Jerome called poetry, rhetorics and secular wisdom the “nutriment of demons;”¹³ and most importantly, Plato wanted to expel the poets from the republic, because their fancies, the effigies of effigies, can only be disturbing and harmful.¹⁴ Given the general Christian frameworks of thought in the period, the humanists or pre-humanists tried to show that poetry is reconcilable with theology (while naturally they also relied on classical authorities). They pointed to various church fathers (most often Augustine) who defended classical poetry or some values of “pagan” wisdom. The Bible itself contains poems, and Christ's parables are in fact allegories. This leads us to the most important aspect of humanistic argumentation for poetry: the tradition of “Ancient Theology,”¹⁵ and more generally, that of the allegorical

⁷ For the non-Platonic defenses of poetry, including, first of all, the issue of allegorical argumentation: Buck, *Italianische*, 67-87 and Steppich, *Numine*, esp. 29-81. In the following subchapter about Italian poetological issues I will mostly rely on Buck's and Steppich's accounts.

⁸ Quint. Inst. VIII,20.

⁹ Summa theol. I-I,9 ad 1.

¹⁰ Metaph. I,983 a 3.

¹¹ Entner emphasizes the significance of this and other misinterpretations of Aristotle-passages for the later poetics (“Zum Dichtungsbegriff,” 338ff).

¹² Cons. I,1,8: *scaenicae meretriculae*.

¹³ Epist. XXI,13: *cibus daemonum*.

¹⁴ *Republic* 10, 598 D.

¹⁵ Some of the basic studies about the issue: D. P. Walker, *The Ancient Theology. Studies in Christian Platonism from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (London: G. Duckworth, 1972); C. Vasoli, “La ‘prisca theologia’ e il neoplatonismo religioso,” in *Il neoplatonismo nel Rinascimento*, ed. P. Prini (Rome: Instituto d. Enciclopedia Italiana, 1993).

interpretation of Pre-Christian literature.¹⁶ Poets did not lie, they just covered the truth behind the veil of allegorical stories and myths. These can possess moral, physical or historical meanings;¹⁷ most importantly, the poets, even the first poets, may have known and allegorized pieces of the theological truth and divine mysteries. This is the idea of “Ancient Theology” (it was primarily referred to as *theologica poetica* or *prisca theologia*).

The idea goes back to antiquity: according to Aristotle, the early poets were the first to pursue theology, as one can see in the interpretation of nature and world in Hesiod’s *Theogony*.¹⁸ Later classics and church fathers developed the tradition further,¹⁹ treating Orpheus, Musaeus, Linus and many others as theologian-poets. Augustine’s contribution, including the expansion of the idea of *praeparatio evangelica*, was especially important: not only the prophets could foresee the coming of Christ and other elements of divine truth, but also pagan poets like Virgil in his famous fourth eclogue.²⁰ Virgil figured as one of the protagonists in Dante’s *Divina Commedia*; it was Dante’s conscious theoretical aim to unify theology and poetry and to elevate them to the highest rank. Mussato, the crowned poet, generally considered one of the most important pre-humanists, was more explicit about the issue, and he intended to reconcile the whole Greek-Roman mythology with the biblical stories: the myth of the Gigantes who challenged Zeus would be parallel to the story of Tower of Babel.²¹ Petrarch’s work was groundbreaking in many respects, and one of his central issues was the value of poetry and classical literature. His related ideas – like the revival of antiquity and the return of a Golden Age, or the divine fame which the poet can both achieve and give to others – are scattered within his oeuvre;²² the ideas of allegorical interpretation and Ancient Theology take a prominent place.²³ Boccaccio, Petrarch’s friend and admirer, did not find out important new arguments in general, but he elaborated and partly systematized them,²⁴ moreover, he revalued poetry as an own discipline, related to but independent from

¹⁶ Edgar Wind, *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (London: Faber and Faber, 1968); Don C. Allen, *Mysteriously Meant. The Rediscovery of Pagan Symbolism and Allegorical Interpretation in the Renaissance* (Baltimore and Md., 1970); Ph. Rollinson, *Classical Theories of Allegory and Christian Culture* (Pittsburg: Duquesne U. P., 1981).

¹⁷ In Seznec’s classic study about the traditions concerning the classical gods, these three kinds of allegorical traditions are distinguished in the general arrangement of the work: Jean Seznec, *The Survival of Pagan Gods. The Mythological Tradition and its Place in Renaissance Humanism and Art*, tr. Barbara F. Sessions (New York: Princeton University Press, 1953).

¹⁸ Met. I,3,983b.

¹⁹ Cf. e.g. Strabo, Geogr. I,2,3; Lactantius, Div. Inst. I,11; Augustine, Civ. D. XVIII,14.

²⁰ Ecl. IV, esp. 6-7: *iam redit et virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna, / iam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto.*

²¹ On Dante and Mussato summarily: Buck, *Italienische*, 68-72.

²² In his most comprehensive work on the issue, the *Invectivarum contra medicum quendam IV*, he marshals several arguments defending poetry.

²³ Cf. esp. Fam. X,4.

²⁴ Mostly in his *Genealogie deorum gentilium libri* and his *Vita di Dante*; Buck, *Italienische*, 77-82.

philosophy, theology, history, and rhetorics.²⁵ In his *Genealogy of the Pagan Gods*, he intended to rehabilitate Greek-Roman mythology. The work, whose fourteenth-fifteenth chapters is an explicit defense of poetry, abounds in allegorical interpretations: the very term *fabula*, through which the poets veil the truth, means for Boccaccio basically “myth,” “mythical story;”²⁶ he had, as most of the other humanists, primarily epic poetry in mind. Within the later generations of fourteenth-fifteenth-century humanists, many defended poetry – Salutati, Lorenzo Valla, Poggio, Panormita and so on –, but for the humanists outside Europe, including the Germans, the work of Petrarch and Boccaccio remained the two main Italian Renaissance bases of reference.

How does poetic creation exactly relate to the divine spheres? In the Middle Ages, between classical or late antique Platonic theories of poetical inspiration and their reappearance in Italian Platonism,²⁷ one can see a heterogeneous spectrum of thoughts about inspiration,²⁸ which are either theories in nuclear form, or more often just simple ideas, and commonplace at that. The muses have never been forgotten in medieval literature,²⁹ but they were most often³⁰ replaced by such sources of inspiration that fitted Christianity: the Holy Spirit, Christ or God himself. In fact, the rejection of the muses became an own invocational topos, and Christ could be referred to as the “true Orpheus” or *summus Jupiter*;³¹ such references could simply indicate the religious identity of the author. Renaissance authors revived some of the classical ideas of inspiration, and addressed – in line with the Renaissance emphasis on the individuum – the issue of talent, *ingenium*, too. Petrarch recovered Cicero’s *Pro Archia Poeta* and echoed³² its statement that the true poet has a natural talent which allows him to be “inspired by some divine spirit.”³³ Petrarch exchanges the word *inflari* (lit. “to be blown

²⁵ Ibid., 82-84.

²⁶ Brigitte Hege, *Boccaccios Apologie der heidnischen Dichtung in den ‘Genealogiae deorum gentilium,’* with tr., comm. and studies (Heidelberg: Stauffenberg, 1997), 4.

²⁷ See ch. I,1,b, “Ficino’s concept of ‘furor poeticus.’”

²⁸ Steppich, ‘*Numine*,’ esp. 13-28; 111-126.

²⁹ Summarily on the muses in antiquity and the Middle Ages: E. R. Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* (Bern: A. Francke, 1948), 233-250.

³⁰ Some medieval authors, like Dante (Purg. 22,5; 29,37; etc.), rose above the opposition of Christianity and paganism, and addressed the classical muses (Curtius, *Europäische*, 243-7). On the other hand, the muses may have indicated talent rather than inspiration (Steppich, ‘*Numine*’, 18).

³¹ Walther Haug, *Literaturtheorie im deutschen Mittelalter. Von den Anfängen bis zum Ende des 13. Jahrhunderts* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1992), 226f. For the relation between poetical inspiration and biblical inspiration / revelation in the Middle Ages: Steppich, ‘*Numine*’, esp. 82-111, the problematics of divine inspiration in Dante’s *Divina Commedia*.

³² *Invectivae contra medicum* (ed. P. G. Ricci, Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1950), p. 33; cf. also his laureation speech, in C. Godi, “La Collatio Laureationis del Petrarca,” *Italia Medievale e Umanistica* 13 (1970), 2f.

³³ *Pro Archia Poeta* VIII,18: *Atque sic a summis hominibus eruditissimisque accepimus, ceterarum rerum studia et doctrina et praeceptis et arte constare, poetam natura ipsa valere et mentis viribus excitari et quasi divino*

into”) to *afflari* (“to be blown at”), which Cicero used in some of his other works, and which Virgil used referring to the Sybill’s inspiration;³⁴ Petrarch obviously intended to reestablish the idea of the *vates*, the seer-poet. According to the fourteenth book (cap. 7) of Boccaccio’s *Genealogy*, the poet is roused by an *impulsus* which comes *ex gremio Dei* (“from the lap” or “interior of God”); poetry itself “is an ardor” (*fervor*) resulting in excellent invention and composition.³⁵ Boccaccio seems to refer to the poet’s recurring inspired condition, which presupposes the due *ingenium*. *Fervor* is not *furor*, however; the notion is not elaborated, the Platonic context is missing, and the requirement of the knowledge of the *ars*, the technical skills is not distinguished from *fervor* as a divine gift.³⁶ In general, Petrarch’s and Boccaccio’s notions of *spiritus*, *impulsus*, *gremium Dei* or *fervor* remain vague. It is Leonardo Bruni who actually reintroduces the Platonic notion of frenzy:³⁷ in his partial *Phaedrus*-translation (1423)³⁸ he translates *μανία* as *furor* (as Cicero before³⁹), and he adds to Plato’s words that a poem inspired by *furor* stands higher than the artificial product of the sane human intellect, just as divination was said to stand higher than conjectures about the future.⁴⁰ Maffeo Vegio and Cardinal Bessarion⁴¹ echo some further aspects of the divine frenzy, for instance, Vegio comments on the *Ion* explaining how the *furor* gives a chance for the mind to free itself from its prison, the body.⁴² A comprehensive re-elaboration of the *furor*-idea waited for Ficino; Bruni, Bessarion or Vegio made only the first steps in this area of the Plato-reception.

b. Poetry-related ideas in Florentine Platonism

“Florentine Platonism” or “Florentine Neoplatonism” have come to denote a theological-philosophical movement in fifteenth-century Florence patronized by the Medici which aimed at a reconciliation of pre-Christian (and not only classical) wisdom with Christianity; as the most important classical authority for them, Plato’s name came to hallmark this whole period of syncretist philosophy, nevertheless, he was only one of the many authorities frequently

quodam spiritu inflari. Qua re iure noster ille Ennius sanctos appellat poëtas, quod quasi deorum aliquo dono atque munere commendati nobis esse videantur.

³⁴ Verg. Aen. VI,50-51: *adflata est numine quando / iam propiore dei...*

³⁵ Gen. XIV,7,1: *Poesis... est fervor quidam exquisite inveniendi atque dicendi, seu scribendi, quod inueneris.*

³⁶ Steppich, ‘*Numine*’, 112-6.

³⁷ See ch. I,1,b, *Ficino’s concept of ‘furor poeticus.’*

³⁸ In *Leonardo Bruni Aretino: Humanistisch-philosophische Schriften, mit einer Chronologie seiner Werke und Briefe*, ed. H. Baron (Leipzig: Teubner, 1928), 125-8, 161-3, 172-4.

³⁹ *De oratore* II,46,194; *De divinatione* I,37,80.

⁴⁰ *Phaedrus* 244D.

⁴¹ Cf. *In calumniatorem Platonis*, IV. 2. 11f; Steppich, ‘*Numine*,’ 149.

⁴² *Maffei Vegii Laudensis Philalethes, seu veritas invisae exulans, Dialogus*. In *Maxima Bibliotheca veterum patrum et Antiquorum Ecclesiasticorum*, ed. M. de la Bigne (Lyon, 1677), vol. 25, p. 756; Steppich, ‘*Numine*,’ 148.

referred to.⁴³ As for the age-old issue of “Aristotle versus Plato,” the Florentines did not, could not neglect Aristotle; indeed, one can see, from Pletho to Pico, an intention to reconcile the two classical luminaries. To be sure, already the antique “Neoplatonists” were heavily influenced by Aristotle. The Renaissance Platonists drew both directly on Plato and indirectly, via Middle or Neoplatonism.⁴⁴ To avoid confusion, henceforth I will use the term “Florentine Platonism” (and not “Neoplatonism”) for the whole Renaissance movement, but the foregoing considerations should always be kept in mind.

The most significant Florentine Platonist was Marsilio Ficino, one of the most learned men of his age, whom the contemporaries hailed as a new Plato or a new Orpheus. As M. J. B. Allen, one of the most productive Ficino-scholars put it: “Unlike most scholars, Ficino was able to exert a formative influence on his own age and on two subsequent centuries.”⁴⁵ He has fascinated many modern scholars, too, although criticisms about confused concepts of his have also been raised. Before Ficino, it was the Greek George Gemistus Plethon who brought Platonic and Neoplatonic lore into discourse in the intellectual circle around the Medicis; the heterodoxical way he wanted to restore Pre-Christian religious wisdom created much attention. While Ficino lived an intellectually highly productive but otherwise quite uneventful life at Careggi, translating and commenting on Plato and other authors in the villa Cosimo de’ Medici gave him, his disciple, the rich count Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, the other famous Florentine Platonist, led an adventurous life; while developing further his master’s syncretist philosophy, he also had controversies with him, not to speak about his serious controversies with the Church. Given Ficino’s extensive correspondence and his wide circle of friends and disciples, it is difficult to say where Florentine Platonism ends in space and time; for instance, Christoforo Landino – professor of rhetoric and poetry in Florence, poet, and a follower of Ficino in many respects – was one of the most important humanist mediators of Florentine Platonic ideas to the Germans, due to such poetology-related writings as the prefaces to the *Divina Commedia* or the *Aeneis*. I am going to discuss only those aspects of Florentine Platonism that concern our topic – poetry-related ideas in this chapter, and cosmological issues in the next chapter –, and only with an introductory purpose. Since in these issues the younger Italian Platonists added little to what Ficino had already outlined, I will mostly focus on Ficino’s views. Although such literary issues as *furor poeticus* or

⁴³ Kristeller’s “Florentine Platonism and its relations with Humanism and Scholasticism,” *Church history* 8 (1939), 201-211, is still a basic summarizing article about the movement; the works of more recent scholars (J. Hankins, M. J. B. Allen, etc.) about Florentine Platonists will be noted later in this subchapter.

⁴⁴ Ficino held Plotinus the most authoritative interpreter of Plato.

⁴⁵ Art. “Ficino” in *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, ed. W. J. Hanegraaff (Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2006) (henceforth: DGWE), p. 361.

allegorical interpretation did not stand in the focus of his attention, and his relevant ideas are scattered throughout his oeuvre, still, the wide German reception of these ideas justify a separate introductory discussion.

Florentine Platonism has influenced German intellectual life already at a general level, independent from the specific philosophical ideas, concerning the general habits of mind and the overall syncretist attitude of the learned men of the age. The decisive role of analogical thinking in Renaissance Platonism can hardly be overemphasized. The world is a network of correspondences; things similar to each other are tied together with secret bonds, there is sympathy between them (Ficino usually calls it *congruitas* or *compassio*). This network of sympathies is, from another perspective, Love; Love holds the world together. Astrology, magic are based on this. A chain (*series*) of interrelated entities can be seen also from a “vertical” perspective: channels of influence function throughout the ontological levels from the One to the sublunar, material world (the theory of hypostases is basically a Neoplatonic heritage). We, humans, are a world in ourselves; microcosm mirrors in macrocosm. To be sure, these are age-old thoughts; however, Renaissance syncretists developed them further to a new complexity; for instance, Ficino conceived of a World-soul, World-spirit and the “body” of the World, which would correspond to the human soul, spirit and body.

Ancient Theology in Florentine Platonism

Ficino, who had received a number of impulses from Plethon,⁴⁶ brought various bodies of pre-Christian lore into circulation in contemporary intellectual life with his Latin translations (and commentaries) of Platonic dialogues, the *Corpus Hermeticum* or Orphic fragments and hymns; he, and even more Pico, also drew on Kabbalistic literature. These syncretists aimed at an overall synthesis of Christianity and pre-Christian wisdom in the widest sense; since Plato became the most focal figure among the “Ancient Theologians”, their ideology has often been called Christian Platonism. The theory of Ancient Theology was even more important for them than for the defenders of literature: it served as the foundation of their philosophy from a historical perspective.⁴⁷ No wonder that they developed the theory further

⁴⁶ I just mention here Plethon’s commentaries on Plato, his interest in the Orphic hymns, his inclination to syncretism and his general idea of a revival of classical religion. However, his reinterpretation of the pagan gods meant the rejection of mythological theology (found in classical poets) and its substitution for a more rational philosophical theology. Poets have no place in his version of Ancient Theology, the first theologians are legislators (beginning with Zoroaster), then religious teachers and sages. P. R. Blum, “‘Et nuper Plethon’ – Ficino’s Praise of Georgios Gemistos Plethon and his Rational Religion,” in *‘Laus Platonici Philosophi.’ Marsilio Ficino and His Influence*, ed. S. Clucas, J. P. Forshaw, V. Rees (Leiden / Boston: Brill, 2011), 89-104.

⁴⁷ From the ample literature on Ancient Theology in Ficino and other syncretists of the period, the most important studies include D. P. Walker, “Orpheus the Theologian and Renaissance Platonists.” *Journal of the*

in many respects, in several ways; for instance, some syncretists argued for a single revelation, the Jewish one, others opted for multiple revelation.⁴⁸ The Renaissance syncretists' list of *prisci theologi* looked somewhat different from that of the defenders of poetry:⁴⁹ new "theologians" appeared, like Zoroaster, whom Ficino put even before Moses in the chronology; others, like Orpheus or Hermes Trismegistus (who had an ambiguous role throughout the Middle Ages⁵⁰) earned new importance.⁵¹

Among the mythical "theologians," Orpheus had a special significance in Ficino's oeuvre.⁵² Already in antiquity, the figure of Orpheus came to symbolize the power of music and poetry (the two were considered to belong together), the unity of poetry and divine wisdom. It has become a literary commonplace that he could tame the animals, the trees, the rocks, even rivers and oceans, with his magical song; based on this, he was also accorded a civilizational role (the "taming" of barbarism).⁵³ In the Middle Ages, too, he continued to appear mostly in positive roles, even as a *poeta theologus*;⁵⁴ naturally, the literature-oriented

Warburg Institute, 16 (1953), 100-120; id., *The Ancient Theology*; Charles Schmitt, "Perennial Philosophy from Agostino Steuco to Leibniz," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 27 (1966), 505-32; Paul O. Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought and its Sources*, ed. by Michael Mooney (New York, 1979), 196-210; Ilana Klutstein, *Marsilio Ficino et la Théologie Ancienne. Oracles Chaldaïques – Hymnes Orphiques – Hymnes de Proclus* (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1987); M. J. B. Allen, *Synoptic Art: Marsilio Ficino on the History of Platonic Interpretation* (Florence: Olschki, 1998), 1-49; Moshe Idel, "Prisca Theologia in Marsilio Ficino and in Some Jewish Treatments," in *Ficino. His Theology, his Philosophy, his Legacy*, ed. M. J. B. Allen, V. Rees (Leiden / Boston / Cologne: Brill, 2002), 137-158.

⁴⁸ The question concerned is how the pre-Christian theologians have gained their divine wisdom. According to the first view, there was only one revelation before Christianity, the Jewish one, and the Mosaic tradition filtered through the pagans; this view was held by several church fathers and Renaissance authors. However, such authors as Pletho and Pico held a different view: there were several (at least partial) revelations beyond the Jewish one, thus theology has several independent sources. Ficino, too, seems to have inclined to the view of multiple revelations. (Idel, "Prisca," 139-150.) In any case, they still conceived of this whole tradition basically as a transmission of knowledge from one authority to the other; this transmission may have various different ways, but it can be indicated with a series of names. "These *prisci theologi* may either derive successively one from another, or each may be said to have visited Egypt and there learnt the Mosaic doctrine, or, more usually, both" (Walker, "Orpheus," 105).

⁴⁹ Some of the reasons are the change of emphasis from a literary to a philosophical context, the extension of the perspective to several ancient cultures, and the alleged esoteric, mystical nature of the works concerned.

⁵⁰ Cf. the article about Hermes Trismegistus in the Middle Ages by Paolo Lucentini, in DGWE, p. 479-482.

⁵¹ A typical example for the chain of theologians in Florentine Platonist writings is the series which became stereotypical in Ficino's late works: Zoroaster, Hermes Trismegistus, Orpheus, Pythagoras, Aglaophemus, Plato (J. Hankins, *Plato in the Italian Renaissance*, Leiden / New York: Brill, 1990, vol. II, 462-4; Idel, "Prisca," 150-1). Naturally, all the series must culminate in the New Testament.

⁵² Walker, "Orpheus;" A. Buck, *Der Orpheus-mythos in der italienischen Renaissance* (Krefeld: Scherpe, 1961), 19-22; J. Warden, "Orpheus and Ficino," in *Orpheus: the Metamorphoses of a Myth*, ed. J. Warden (Toronto / Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1982) 85-110; Angela Voss, "'Orpheus redivivus': The Musical Magic of Marsilio Ficino," in *Ficino. His Theology, his Philosophy, his Legacy*, ed. M. J. B. Allen, V. Rees (Leiden / Boston / Cologne: Brill, 2002), 227-242; Grantley Robert McDonald, *Orpheus Germanicus: metrical music and the reception of Marsilio Ficino's poetics and music theory in Renaissance Germany* (PhD dissertation, Melbourne, 2002), 54-57.

⁵³ Hor. Ars p. 391-6; Quint. Inst. I,10,9; etc.

⁵⁴ I just quote here Thomas Aquinas, who explicitly involves him among the poet-theologians: *Sciendum est quod Orpheus iste fuit unus de primis philosophis qui erant quasi poetae theologi, loquentes metricè de philosophia et de Deo [...] Et iste Orpheus primo induxit homines ad habitandum simul et fuit pulcherrimus*

Italian humanism revived him as the culture-hero, the exemplary poet, the ancient theologian: Boccaccio, Bruni, Poliziano, Landino,⁵⁵ practically every humanist hailed him, at least on a commonplace level. Ficino, the syncretist philosopher, felt himself even closer to this mythical hero. He translated some Orphic hymns and other Orphic fragments as key pieces of evidence that Ancient Theology was basically a monotheistic tradition foreshadowing Christianity: the many gods addressed in the hymns are only aspects of the one God.⁵⁶ Furthermore, cosmological, astrological issues were involved in the Orphic tradition, which Ficino was happy to receive;⁵⁷ and there are a number of other reasons why he drew on the Orphic tradition.⁵⁸ Ficino's philosophical-theological achievement in general, the *Orphica*-translations and his frequent references to Orpheus in particular, and the fact that he himself played the lyre (probably *lyra da braccio*⁵⁹), are in the background of the frequent contemporary praise of Ficino as Orpheus reborn.⁶⁰ "The ancient singing of songs to the

concionator, ita quod homines bestiales et solitarios reduceret ad civilitatem. Et propter hoc dicitur de eo, quod fuit optimus cytharaedus, in tantum quod fecit vel faceret lapides saltare, id est, ita fuit pulchre concionator, quod homines lapideos emollivit (Comm. in Arist. De anima I,12). For the medieval Orpheus cf. e.g. J. B. Friedman, Orpheus in the Middle Ages (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970).

⁵⁵ Summarily: Buck, *Der Orpheus-mythos*, esp. 14-24.

⁵⁶ Walker, "Orpheus," 109ff.

⁵⁷ *Astrologica, Physica* are among the twenty-two work-titles attributed to Orpheus in the Souda, and indeed, the syncretism perceivable in the hymns and fragments often has a cosmological, astral context (cf. fragments 249-288 under *ΑΣΤΡΟΛΟΓΙΚΑ* in *Orphicorum fragmenta*, ed. Otto Kern [Berlin, 1922], or OF 417-420 about the hypothetical Orphic work *Λύρη* and the correspondence of between the strings of the lute and the heavenly spheres, in *Poetae Epici Graeci. Testimonia et Fragmenta. Pars II. Orphicorum et Orphicis similibus testimonia et fragmenta*, fasc. 1 et 2, ed. A. Bernabé, Munich / Leipzig, 2004-5); and Orpheus was sometimes regarded as the founder of astronomy-astrology among the Greeks (Ps.-Lucian. astr. 10; Firmicus Maternus, *Mathesis* IV. praef.).

⁵⁸ The peculiar character of the texts and the esoteric context which the antiquity developed around them met the mystical and esoterical inclinations of Florentine Platonism and the fashion of allegorical interpretation in general. One aspect of this esotericism is a certain Dionysian character of Orpheus and Orphic mysteries.⁵⁸ Dionysos is the most frequently addressed god in the Orphic hymns, and their alleged author himself went through the underworld in the myth, founded his secret mysteries like Dionysos, and went through a violent death, again like Dionysos. His head became the source of wise oracles; his lyre went up to the sky to become a constellation. Music is another important element of the tradition: Ficino speculated much about music, and even practiced it – and Orpheus was the par excellence musician. Last but not least, the most renowned Orpheus-myth was his love story with Eurydike, and his lover role could again be related to a view of a world based on the principle of love. Ficino quoted in the *De amore* several Orphic hymns about the cosmic love: it "holds the keys of everything," and Eros is rightly called "the most ancient deity" (Warden, "Orpheus," 101-2). After all, Ficino could claim that Orpheus was possessed by *all* the four Platonic frenzies, the poetical, the prophetic, the mystical and the eretical: *De amore* VII,14; Buck, *Der Orpheus-mythos*, 19. (I use Marcel's edition of Ficino's *Commentarium in Convivium Platonis de amore: Commentaire sur le Banquet de Platon*, ed., tr. R. Marcel, Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1956).

⁵⁹ In line with contemporary musical practice, Orpheus, too, was generally illustrated with a *lyra da braccio*, which is similar to our modern violin; he was only rarely represented with harp or a traditional lyre (G. Scavizzi, "The Myth of Orpheus in Italian Renaissance Art, 1400-1600," in *Orpheus: the Metamorphoses of a Myth*, ed. J. Warden [Toronto / Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1982], 111-162). The *lyra da braccio* was generally referred to simply as *lyra*; for convenience, I will also refer to all types of *lyra* with the term "lyre."

⁶⁰ A number of examples could be given, mostly from his Florentine acquaintances:

- Naldo Naldi claims that Orpheus's soul went via Homer, Pythagoras and others into Ficino by metempsychosis, "Hence he soothes the unyielding oaks with his lyre and his song and softens once more the hearts of wild beasts" (*Hinc rigidas cythara quercus et carmine mulcet / Atque feris iterum mollia corda facit*.

Orphic lyre,”⁶¹ that Ficino mentions among the *artes* of the Renaissance as a new Golden Age, has a highly peculiar aspect: Walker has successfully demonstrated that Ficino must have used *Orphica* for astro-magical purposes.⁶²

While “from” the mythical Orpheus only fragments survived, Plato, a later⁶³ “theologian,” provided the greatest and most coherent body of texts regarded as Ancient Theological wisdom; many Renaissance thinkers, especially the Florentines, looked for (Neo)Platonic lore in classical and medieval “allegorical” literary works. Christoforo Landino provides a good example: as Ficino’s friend and admirer, he echoed Ficino’s ideas about Ancient Theology and *furor poeticus*, but as a professor of rhetoric and poetry, he was more interested than Ficino in the actual practice of allegorical interpretation. Based on earlier interpretational traditions, he gave a (Neo)Platonic meaning to Virgil’s *Aeneid* (the story of the human soul

Tr. Warden, “Orpheus,” 86. *Naldo Naldi ad Ficinum*, in *Supplementum Ficinianum. Marsilii Ficini Florentini Philosophi Platonici opuscula inedita et dispersa*, ed. P. O. Kristeller (Florence: Olschi, 1937), II, 262.

- From another poem by Naldi we learn that Ficino had Orpheus depicted on his lyre (*De Orpheo in eius cythara picto*, in *Suppl. Fic. II,37*).

- Lorenzo Medici also mentioned his lyre-play (*Altercazione II, 4*; in Lorenzo de Medici, *Opere*, ed. A. Simioni [Bari: Laterza, 1914], II, p. 41; Buck, *Der Orpheus-mythos*, 22);

- Poliziano felt himself enraptured with *furor* by Ficino’s music (*Bartholomaeo Fontio*, v. 181ff: *Saepe graves pellit docta testudine curas, / Et vocem argutis suggerit articulis, / Qualis Apollinei modulator carminis Orpheus / Dicitur Odrysias allcuisse feras [...] Hinc, ubi conticuit, Musarum concitus oestro / Deferor ad solitos protinus ipse Lares / Atque iterum meditor numeros Phoebumque lacesso / Attonitusque sacram pectine plango chelym*. In *Carmina*, ed. L. Juhász, Leipzig: Teubner, 1932, p. 27);

- Callimachus Experiens sent him an Orpheus-costume from Poland (*Suppl. Fic. II,225*; Warden, “Orpheus,” 87; McDonald, ‘*Orpheus Germanicus*,’ 55).

⁶¹ Letter to Paul of Middelburgh, in *Opera omnia* (Basel: H. Petri, 1576; repr. Turin: Bottega d’Erasmus, 1959; henceforth: OO), p. 944: *antiquum ad Orphicam lyram carminum cantum*. For other references by Ficino to Orpheus and his lyre cf. Voss, “Orpheus redivivus,” 226 n. 3.

⁶² Here I can summarize Walker’s intriguing argumentation (*Spiritual and Demonic Magic from Ficino to Campanella*, London: The Warburg Institute, 1958, 1-24) just in a nutshell. The world-spirit (*spiritus mundi*), which mediates between the heavenly spheres and the sublunar world, corresponds to the human spirit between body and soul. By certain means – images, scents, music, various things pertaining to planets – the human spirit can be made similar to a celestial one, so that it can attract planetary influences. “The use of anything having the same numerical proportions as a certain heavenly body or sphere will make your spirit similarly proportioned and provoke the required influx of celestial spirit” (ibid., 14). So the spirit can be made more Venereal, or more Jovial, and so on. Among the means, song – that is, music with text – plays a key role; chapter III,21 of *De vita* (*Three Books on Life*, ed., tr. Carol V. Kaske and John R. Clarke, Tempe, Arizona: RSA, 1998), which describes all this method of astrological music, also indicates what Jovial, Venereal etc. music is like. The whole procedure is in fact a kind of natural magic, and “came near to being a religious rite” (ibid., 20). There is evidence that Ficino used Orphic hymns and probably other similar texts for this purpose. In his Plotinus-commentary, too, Ficino outlines this astro-magical method and considers it to be most successful if “we apply the song and light suitable to the astral deity and also the odour, as in the hymns of Orpheus addressed to cosmic deities” (tr. Walker, ibid., 23; OO p. 1747: *...praesertim si cantum et lumen adhibemus, odoremque numini consentaneum, quales Orpheus hymnos mundanis numinibus consecravit*). Pico, Ficino’s disciple, claims that “in natural magic nothing is more efficacious than the Hymns of Orpheus, if there be applied to them the suitable music, and disposition of soul, and the other circumstances known to the wise” (tr. Walker, ibid., 23; Concl. Orph. 2: *Nihil efficacius hymnis Orphei in naturali magia, si debita musica, animi intentio et caeterae circumstantiae, quas norunt sapientes, fuerint adhibitae*. Among the many ways poetry and music could be situated in a cosmological context, Ficino’s magical singing is most spectacular one.

⁶³ Already in the view of the Neoplatonists, Plato drew on Orpheus in creating his philosophy; in the Renaissance series of Ancient Theologians, it became standardized that Pythagoras mediated between the two.

that gradually frees himself from its earthly limitations), and he interpreted Dante's *Divina Commedia* in a similar Platonic manner.⁶⁴ In general, Dante presented the whole universe in his work; Landino and some other theorists of poetry⁶⁵ caught up the ancient idea which paralleled the poet (ποιητής) to the “maker” (ποιητής) of the universe. Imitating God, the poet also creates a world.⁶⁶ Landino even formulates that God himself is a poet, and the world is his poem; as the prophet said, “God made all things in measure, weight and number.”⁶⁷ To be sure, the parallel between poet and God relates to a more general idea caught up in the Renaissance, that of the humans' central position in the universe: the fact that we were made in the image of God would mean that we can imitate God and we can, on the one hand, rule nature, and on the other hand, approach and eventually unite with God.⁶⁸ But to return to the issue of Renaissance Plato-reception, let us now briefly investigate how Ficino elaborated on the most important poetry-related idea of Plato, the *furor poeticus*.

Ficino's concept of 'furor poeticus'

In the *Phaedrus* Plato differentiated the divinely influenced frenzy from frenzy as a consequence of mental illness, and he established the four kinds of divine frenzy, each pertaining to a god:⁶⁹ “the inspiration of the prophet to Apollo, that of the mystic to Dionysus, that of the poet to the muses, and [...] the madness of the lover, to Aphrodite and Eros.”⁷⁰ In the *Ion*, he expounded in more detail on the poetic frenzy, explaining why only the divinely inspired poets are true poets; their state of mind can be compared to that of the Bacchantes, and indeed, the gods themselves speak through the poet.⁷¹

Ficino combines in an original way the idea of divine frenzy with another Platonic idea, the ἀνάμνησις, about the soul remembering the ideas of the divine sphere from where it came;

⁶⁴ Summarily: Buck, *Italianische*, 93-94. Landino's inaugural lecture in the “Studio Fiorentino” provides a good summary of his views on poetry: Rainer Weiss, *Christoforo Landino: das Metaphorische in den 'Disputationes Camaldulenses'* (Munich: Fink, 1981), 23-36.

⁶⁵ Steppich, *Numine*, 137-142.

⁶⁶ Cf. Landino's introduction to the *Aeneid* in Virgil's *Opera*, comm. Servius, Donatus, Landino and Calderini (Nuremberg, 1492), f. 77r. As Tigerstedt summarily states, “What Ficino says of man, Landino says of the poet” (E. N. Tigerstedt, “The Poet as a Creator: Origins of a Metaphor,” *Comparative Literature Studies* 5 [1968], 455).

⁶⁷ “Et è Iddio sommo poeta, ed è il mondo suo poema [...] onde el propheta Deus omnia fecit numero mensura et pondere.” In C. Landino, *Scritti critici e teoretici*, ed. R. Cardini (Rome: Bulzoni, 1974), p. 142. Buck, *Italianische*, 92-93; Steppich, *Numine*, 141-2.

⁶⁸ Cf. Ficino's idea of deification (e.g. Jörg Lauster, “Marsilio Ficino as a Christian Thinker: Theological Aspects of his Platonism,” in *Laus Platonici Philosophi. 'Marsilio Ficino and His Influence*, ed. S. Clucas, J. P. Forshaw, V. Rees, Leiden / Boston: Brill, 2011), or Pico's famous *Oratio de hominis dignitate*.

⁶⁹ *Phaedrus* 244A-C, 265B

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 265B; *Plato's Phaedrus*, tr. and comm. R. Hackforth (Cambridge: Cambridge U. P., 1952).

⁷¹ *Ion* 533E-534D.

and he does so in the context that is perhaps the most basic one in his oeuvre: the recovery of man's dignity and his return to God.⁷² In the *Symposium*- and the *Ion*-commentary, he equates the four frenzies⁷³ with the four levels of the universe between God and the material level; and just as the soul "descends through four degrees, it must ascend through four."⁷⁴ For the ascension, the soul needs first the *furor poeticus*: the musical tones, rhythms and consonance render the soul in a harmonic state.⁷⁵ Further on, through Dionysus, Apollo and the heavenly Venus, the soul becomes more and more purified, it keeps approaching the One, until they unite. In the epistle *De divino furore*, Ficino differentiates *furor poeticus* and *amatorius* from the other two in that the former frenzies are based on sensory perception, hearing or seeing; the visual reflection of divine beauty is parallel with the heard consonance that is the reflection of the music of spheres and heavenly harmony, thus the two frenzies are twin, *gemiini furoris species*.⁷⁶ After all, Ficino's construction, which sets the Platonic *furor poeticus* in both a cosmological and an erotical context, is a positive revaluation of this *furor*. Although Plato conceived of it as divine, still, it seems to have been an uncontrollable, alien force for him; with Ficino, the poetic frenzy gains a definitely positive role.⁷⁷

Also when he speaks about the heavenly origin of *furor poeticus*, Ficino could conceive of successive stages, although from a different perspective, with different gods. Based on the Platonic idea of heavenly sirens that produce the music of spheres, the muses were correlated to the planetary spheres already in antiquity.⁷⁸ They were allegorically interpreted in various ways; in a (Neo)Platonic branch of tradition in which Ficino was involved, they were regarded as cosmic entities in a mediatory role. For Ficino, the upper level, the ruler over the muses could be Jupiter, Apollo or the world soul, depending on which authorities he drew on

⁷² Steppich, 'Numine,' 156.

⁷³ The four frenzies in the formulation of the *Ion*-comm. (*Commentaries on Plato. Vol. I: Phaedrus and Ion*, ed., tr. M. J. B. Allen, Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard U. P., 2008), p. 196: *primus quidem poeticus furor, alter mysterialis, tertius vaticinium, quartus amatorius affectus*. The order of the frenzies is different in the *Phaedrus* and thus in Ficino's *Phaedrus*-comm. (ed., tr. Allen, II,1, p. 43: *in vaticinium, mysterium, poesim atque amorem*), but here, too, the amatory frenzy is the highest one. Ficino conceived of the whole *Phaedrus* as a divinely inspired work, that is why he treats *furor poeticus* in the first place in the commentary. M. J. B. Allen, *The Platonism of Marsilio Ficino: A Study of His 'Phaedrus' Commentary, Its Sources and Genesis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 41-68.

⁷⁴ Ficino, *Ion*-comm. (ed., tr. Allen), p. 194-8; *De amore* (ed. Marcel) VII, 13-14. Quotation: *Ion*-comm. p. 196.

⁷⁵ In the formulation of *De amore* (ed. Marcel) VII, 14: *Poetico ergo furore primum opus est, qui per musicos tonos que torpent suscitet, per harmonicam suavitatem que turbantur mulceat, per diversorum denique consonantiam dissonantem pellat discordiam et varias partes animi temperet*.

⁷⁶ Epist. to Peregrino d'Agli, 1457 (*De divino furore*), OO p. 613; Steppich, 'Numine,' 158-164. The two frenzies, as interpreted by Ficino, also seem to be relatives in that one not only yearns for acquiring divine beauty (contemplative aspect of *furor poeticus* / *amatorius*) but also wants to create the beautiful, through composition or begetting (generative aspect of *furor poeticus* / *amatorius*). Steppich, 'Numine,' 164-5.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 154; 162.

⁷⁸ See p. 207.

in the actual description; this divine power is the world-musician or conductor who produces the heavenly harmony.⁷⁹ In the *Ion*-commentary one can find a composite version of the idea of mediation between heavenly and earthly harmonies:

“the steps by which that frenzy descends are these: Jupiter enraptures Apollo, Apollo illuminates the Muses; the Muses arouse and excite the soft and unconquerable souls of bards (*vates*); the inspired bards inspire their interpreters; and the interpreters sway their listeners.”⁸⁰

The different muses take effect on different sorts of poets; taking the most renowned poets as examples, Ficino assigns Orpheus to Calliope, Musaeus to Urania and so on. The terms *illustratio*, *illumiatio* refer to a light spreading downward, which again may have astral implications; otherwise the chain-idea relates to another cosmological allegory used by Renaissance syncretists, the Homeric *catena aurea* or *catena luminosa*.⁸¹ The chain of *furor* does not end with the poet, but it continues “horizontally,” in the earthly dimension, in the world of space and time: an inspired poem’s later performer takes over the “enthusiasm,” which can in turn go over to the audience.⁸² The whole (basically Platonic⁸³) idea, henceforth referred to as the “chain of *furor*,” is again one that will have a significant reception in Germany.⁸⁴

It is, in the end, God who speaks by means of the inspired poet: Ficino emphasizes several times⁸⁵ the divine nature of the process. True poetry depends *only* on inspiration, not on poetic technique and skills. The poem veils a divine message; and even the poet himself does not fully understand what he has sung just before, at the moments of inspiration he had an altered state of mind.

Needless to say, Italian Neo-Latin poetry – with its rich topology about the value of poetry and poetical inspiration – could also mediate such ideas to Germany. I just mention here the *Nutricia* (1491) of the Florentine Poliziano (a disciple of Ficino, among others) as an outstanding example: it surveys the history of poetry in almost 800 hexameters, with an emphasis on Platonic ideas of inspiration. Especially those Italian humanist poets had a

⁷⁹ Ibid., 172-3.

⁸⁰ Ficino, *Ion*-comm. (ed., tr. Allen), p. 204: *Gradus autem quibus furor ille descendit hi sunt: Iuppiter rapit Apollinem; Apollo illuminat Musas; Musae suscitant et exagitant lenes et insuperabiles vatum animas; vates inspirati interpretes suos inspirant; interpretes autem auditores movent.*

⁸¹ Steppich, ‘*Numine*,’ 174-6.

⁸² Cf. also *ibid.*, 299-300.

⁸³ Cf. *Ion*, 533E.

⁸⁴ See ch. I,2,c, *The reception of Florentine Platonism in Germany*.

⁸⁵ *Theol. Plat.* (*Platonic Theology*, 6 vols., tr. M. J. B. Allen, ed. J. Hankins, Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard U. P., 2001-06) XIII,3,5; *Ion*-comm. (ed., tr. Allen), p. 200-4. The passage in *Theol. Plat.* cites the famous Ovidian passage *est deus in nobis...* (*Fast.* VI,5f.).

mediatory role who personally appeared in Germany or elsewhere in Celtis's circles, like Callimachus Experiens or Girolamo Balbi.

2. *New theories on the poet in late fifteenth-century Germany*

a. The educational context: humanist-scholastic conflicts at the German universities

Most of the fifteenth-century German poetology-related writings originated in a university milieu: poetry and rhetorics were the core disciplines of humanism, and a basic activity of most German humanists of the period was teaching at a university. From the beginning, it was the universities where the wandering humanists, with their knowledge earned in Italy, wanted to gain a footing. One of the events that mark the beginning of German humanism was Peter Luder's⁸⁶ oration praising the *studia humanitatis* at the university of Heidelberg on 15 July 1456; Peuerbach's oration in Vienna (1458) similarly stressed the moral benefits of such studies.⁸⁷ Humanism began to rise in Germany, but slowly: the scholastic educational system which they intended to reform (at least partially) was firmly rooted at the universities by the fifteenth century. Earlier scholarship had a tendency to overplay the issue of the intellectual war between humanism and scholasticism; since then it has been demonstrated that the humanists' basic intentions were most often limited to a reform of the *trivium* in the interests of *studia humanitatis* (their critique pertained primarily to the preponderance of logic, the outdated grammar books and the scholastics' bad Latin), and the often spectacular debates originated rather in personal conflicts than differences in religious-philosophical ideas or conceptual frameworks.⁸⁸ Furthermore, humanists tended to overplay, overstate the conflicts, and sometimes they took offence at what seem to have been normal measures of the university, for instance when the authorities wanted to preview Luder's oration, or when Celtis's frequent absence from the university of Ingolstadt was justly criticized.⁸⁹ For all the

⁸⁶ For an overview of the life of this pioneering wanderer humanist cf. R. Kettmann, "Peter Luder (um 1415-1472). Die Anfänge der humanistischen Studien in Deutschland," in *Humanismus im deutschen Südwesten. Biographische Profile*, ed. P. G. Schmidt (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1993), 13-34.

⁸⁷ James H. Overfield, *Humanism and Scholasticism in Late Medieval Germany* (Princeton: Princeton U. P., 1984), 65-70.

⁸⁸ This is one of the main conclusions of Overfield, *Humanism*. More generally, cf. e.g. the chapter "Humanism and scholasticism in the Italian Renaissance" in Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought. The Classic, Scholastic and Humanist Strains*, 92-119. Basically, it was the order of importance in case of the *artes* of the *trivium* that was debated; the rhetorical absolutisation of poetry and the occasional critical remarks on two of the higher faculties, medicine and law, did not mean an intention on radical institutional reform. Humanists may have had religious or philosophical views different from that of their scholastic colleagues, but the highest status of theology among the disciplines was never challenged.

⁸⁹ Overfield, *Humanism*, 125-142.

above considerations, the second half of the fifteenth century, especially the period around 1500, saw a number of real conflicts, the issue of *studia humanitas* was a hot and important issue, there was much at stake; this milieu helps a great deal to explain the exaggerations, hysterical reactions and attacks, and the enhanced self-representation or idealization of poetry that can be found in the humanists' treatises and poetical works.⁹⁰ Here I just refer to some types of the prosaic sources of conflicts; concrete examples will be treated later. The humanists intended to acquire ordinary, salaried lectureship, otherwise they had to give extraordinary lectures (with less income and audience) or teach privately. Slowly, more and more chairs of poetry and/or rhetorics came to existence or grew in importance. It could be also debated how much salary the lecturer should earn, when the lectures should be held, what rhetorical or grammar books should be used, and whether the lectures on logic and those on humanist subjects should be mandatory or not. In such issues the faculty council, where the senior masters prevailed, had a great influence. Though practically every university had some ordinary humanist-type lectures by 1500,⁹¹ conflicts continued to appear in the next century, and the humanist aims were achieved at a different pace and to a different extent at the different universities.⁹² The case of Vienna is telling. Already in the 1450s-1460s, professors who were primarily astronomers (Peuerbach, Regiomontanus) gave humanist-type lectures; in the 1490s, Maximilian I appointed a superintendent over the university, Bernard Perger, in order to accelerate the reforms; and humanists of great calibre, such as Conrad Celtis, were invited to the chair of poetry-rhetorics. With great efforts, most humanist objectives were achieved, but only by the early sixteenth century, due to the resistance of scholastic professors and unfavorable historical circumstances (for instance the campaigns of Mathias of Hungary).⁹³

b. The strength of the 'poeta rhetor' tradition. Celtis's 'Ars versificandi'

Although scholarship has not provided yet a comprehensive, nuanced picture about German poetology in the Renaissance,⁹⁴ it can be summarily stated that the strength of

⁹⁰ It is not by chance that the most frequent criticism of the humanists refer to their *arrogantia* (Stejskal, *Die Gestalt des Dichters*, 79).

⁹¹ Overfield, *Humanism*, 120.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 102-20; Grimm, *Literatur*, 78-79. By the early sixteenth century, humanism seems to have had the most success at the universities of Erfurt, Leipzig, Freiburg, Basel or Vienna.

⁹³ Overfield, *Humanism*, 102-6; Grimm, *Literatur*, 97-100.

⁹⁴ The stand of scholarship summarized by Asmuth or Robert has not basically changed since then. B. Asmuth, "Anfänge der Poetik im deutschen Sprachraum. Mit einem Hinweis auf die von Celtis eröffnete Lebendigkeit des Schreibens," in *Renaissance-Poetik / Renaissance Poetics*, ed. H. F. Plett. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1994), 100; Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 19f.

tradition that can be observed in fifteenth-century German university life and culture in general was in a sense also characteristic of the poetology of this period. Humanism was “imported” from Italy relatively late, from the second half of the fifteenth century, and the first poetological treatises followed the standard Italian models (including Enea Silvio Piccolomini,⁹⁵ who planted humanism in Vienna at the court of Frederick III; as a frequently read author, he was one of the mediators of humanism to Germany). Early examples are Gossembrot’s justification of poetry, a letter treatise to Dringenberg⁹⁶ or the tractate of Georg Peuerbach,⁹⁷ which can be regarded as standard humanist treatises: they argue for the benefits of poetry regarding eloquence, knowledge, and morality, and in their defensive argumentation they rely on the writings of the relevant church fathers in the first place. The rhetorical approach remained predominant after the rise of Platonic poetical ideology (discussed below) in the 1490s, too; perhaps the most typical example for this attitude has been provided by Heinrich Bebel (1473-1518),⁹⁸ a humanist professor of poetry and rhetorics in Tübingen. The primary context of his *Apologia et defensio poetices*⁹⁹ is the issue of the value and legitimacy of classical models of poetry; this involves parrying accusations of paganism. One can read the well-worn arguments that the church fathers also approved poetry and classical literature, and that the Bible itself contains inspired poems; the great classical authors and the church fathers are the representants of true wisdom and eloquence, not the scholastic theologians. Cosmological aspects, Platonic / Ficinian ideas about *furor* are not at all involved. Scattered, one can find arguments defending classical poetry and rhetorics in many other of his works, but again, these are traditional staple arguments.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ Letters by Enea Silvio in which he argues for the value of poetry are for instance the one to Cardinal Olesnicki, Vol. III/1. in *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*, ed. R. Wolkan, Vol. III/1 (Vienna: Hölder, 1918), p. 336f., or the one to Wilhelm von Stein in Vol. I/1, no. 144.

⁹⁶ Dated to 1466; ed. in *Humanismus und Renaissance in den deutschen Städten und an den Universitäten*, ed. Hans Rupprich (Leipzig: Reclam, 1935), 93-100.

⁹⁷ He was primarily an astronomer in Vienna, nevertheless he wrote a *Positio sive determinatio de arte oratoria sive poetica* that, while defending poetry, discusses its genres and its relation to rhetorics and some other arts. Ed. in *Die Frühzeit des Humanismus und der Renaissance in Deutschland*, ed. H. Rupprich (Leipzig: Reclam, 1938), 197-210.

⁹⁸ For a biographical summary cf. D. Mertens, “‘Bebelius... patriam Sueviam... restituit.’ Der poeta laureatus zwischen Reich und Territorium,” *Zeitschrift für Württembergische Landesgeschichte* 42 (1983).

⁹⁹ Issued in *Liber hymnorum in metra noviter Redactorum...* (Tübingen: J. Othmar, 1501), f. a5r-b1r.

¹⁰⁰ For instance in those works where he provides his students with classical and Christian models for eloquence, like the *Oratio de utilitate latininitatis* (1503, appeared in *Oratio ad regem Maximilianum...*, Pforzheim: T. Anshelm, 1504), or the *Opusculum... de institutione puerorum* (Strasbourg: M. Schürer, 1513). Cf. also Entner, “Zum Dichterbegriff,” 365-7. His dialogue titled *Egloga contra vituperatores poetarum* (1495, appeared in *...Opuscula nova...*, Strasbourg: J. Grüninger, 1508, VD 16 B 1185) includes Platonic ideas of inspiration, but only at a commonplace level. About the conventional nature of the *Apologia* cf. also Overfield, *Humanism*, 147-8.

The most frequently published poetology-related genre, the various manuals of versification¹⁰¹ are the best examples for the predilection for a pragmatical approach in Germany. These focused on metrics, prosody and other technical issues, as already their titles – *De arte metrificandi*, *Ars versificandi* and so on – indicated; they implicitly suggested that it is the knowledge of *metrum* that a poet primarily needs, and that this skill makes the difference between a *poeta* and an *orator*. In the pragmatical approach characteristic of this genre, the whole scholastic system of education and the actual needs of the teachers were highly determinant. Within the German ramifications of the humanistic *ars versificandi* tradition, the manuals of Celtis, Laurentius Corvinus and Heinrich Bebel, each of whom based his work on that of his master's, provide good examples for the strength of tradition. The *Ars versificandi et carminum* (1486) is the first printed work of Conrad Celtis: this manual deserves a closer look and will be treated below. The Silesian German Laurentius Corvinus (Rabe; c. 1465-1527),¹⁰² who praised Celtis as his master,¹⁰³ also wrote poetological works. This peaceful, industrious humanist worked primarily as a teacher in Cracow and various Silesian town schools, and most of his oeuvre relates to his teaching activity. His *Carminum structura*¹⁰⁴ (1496) was meant to teach the Latin metres for his students; it shows traces of the influence of Celtis' *Ars*.¹⁰⁵ The prologue begins with the Platonic distinction of soul and body, and Corvinus cites some classics about the divine nature of poetry; these elements suggest that the author was well aware of the debate over the value of poetry and that he wanted to indicate his belonging to the “defender” side. Still, the prologue is rather short and

¹⁰¹ Only in Leipzig, a dozen different “arts of versification” appeared in the late fifteenth – early sixteenth centuries. The most renowned examples of the genre include Wimpfeling's *De arte metrificandi* (1505), Bebel's *Ars condendorum carminum* (1506) or Hutten's *Ars versificatoria* (1511). For the history of the genre cf. Jürgen Leonhardt, *Dimensio syllabarum. Studien zur lateinischen Prosodie- und Verslehre von der Spätantike bis zur frühen Renaissance* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1989).

¹⁰² The most detailed biographical account is still G. Bauch, “Laurentius Corvinus, der Breslauer Stadtschreiber und Humanist. Sein Leben und seine Schriften,” *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens* 17 (1883). Piotr Bering's “Laurentius Corvinus: ‘Scriptor, orator, poeta et dispositor scaenarum,’” in *Mentis amore ligati: Lateinische Freundschaftsdichtung und Dichterfreundschaft in Mittelalter und Neuzeit; Festgabe für Reinhard Düchting zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Boris Körkel et al. (Heidelberg: Mattes, 2001) adds little new information. A recent summary is provided by Grantley McDonald, “Laurentius Corvinus and the Flowering of Central European Humanism,” *Terminus* 9 (2007), 49-71.

¹⁰³ See ch. II,3,a.

¹⁰⁴ *Carminum structura Magistri Laurentii Corvini Novoforensis...* (Leipzig: M. Landsberg, after 20 July 1496).

¹⁰⁵ At some points of the prologue, for instance in explaining the four principles of poetry, he echoes Celtis's *Ars versificandi*; in the main part, however, he lays more emphasis on the metres and less on the prosody than Celtis did. The novelty of the work is that it provides Corvinus's own poems as examples for the various classical strophe forms, thus it really exemplifies the art of imitation (J. Glomsky, “Poetry to Teach the Writing of Poetry: Laurentius Corvinus' ‘Carminum structura’ [1496],” in *Poets and teachers: Latin Didactic Poetry and the Didactic Authority of the Latin Poet from the Renaissance to the Present*, ed. Y. Haskell and Ph. Hardie, Bari, 1999, 166);¹⁰⁵ no wonder that it became popular, together with two other manuals of his (the *Hortulus elegantiarum* and the *Latinum ydeoma*; *ibid.*, 156).

commonplace, especially compared to the paratexts of Celtis's *Ars*,¹⁰⁶ and to some of Corvinus's own works – his *Carmen* about an epiphany of Apollo and the muses to the poet, and his *Dialogus* – which clearly reveal his strong Platonic and Ficinian inclinations, and which have to be discussed later. Corvinus's adherence to practical purposes left him little space to reveal his theoretical ideas. Bebel had been a disciple of Corvinus in Cracow, and lectured himself on the *Carminum structura*; in his own *Ars condendorum carminum* (1506) one finds little theoretical discussion, and that is mostly based on Corvinus's work.¹⁰⁷ Bebel shows here, as in his oeuvre in general, little interest in Platonic and Ficinian inspirational philosophy (although there was a significant Ficino-reception in Tübingen¹⁰⁸).

Celtis's *Ars versificandi et carminum*¹⁰⁹ (1486) was well received as a manual of versification; is it significant as a poetological treatise that already adumbrates Celtis' ideal of an integrative humanism, a poetry that mirrors all the disciplines of *philosophia*? It can be seen at first sight that this work, obviously written during Celtis's lectureship in Leipzig and dedicated to Frederick the Wise, elector of Saxony, is more than just an ordinary manual of poetry. Not because of its actual metrical-prosodical material: as has been demonstrated, it is a compilation from Italian and German manuals, primarily from Jakob Wimpfeling's *De arte metrificandi libellus*.¹¹⁰ Those parts of Celtis's work interest us here which directly mirror his ideology of poetry. First, the paratexts that frame the work include two poems which will be investigated later because of their role in the author's self-fashioning as a pioneering German *vates*: the *Poema ad Fridericum* tells the story of Celtis's initiation by Apollo and the heavenly origin of the *ars metrica*, while the closing poem, the frequently analyzed *Ode ad Apollinem* envisions Apollo's coming to Germany, the *translatio studii* that would mark the beginning of a new cultural era. Second, the metrical tables, genre-definitions and examples for the rules of metrics and prosody alternate with such poetological reflections that were not characteristic of earlier manuals of versification, and in which earlier scholarship saw the

¹⁰⁶ Entner points out (maybe a little too sharply) the difference between the two authors' approaches: Celtis, the poet, at least suggests the creative powers of poetry which can revive the things by presenting them, while the work of Corvinus, the schoolmaster, represents more clearly the traditional approach that poetry is ornament, it provides a delightful way of learning. "Zum Dichterbegriff," 361-5.

¹⁰⁷ Entner, "Zum Dichterbegriff," 366.

¹⁰⁸ See ch. I,2,c, *The reception of Florentine Platonism in Germany*.

¹⁰⁹ The edition I have used: *Ars versificandi et carminum* (Leipzig: Martin Landsberg, ca. 1492-95; GW 6461. Henceforth: *Ars v.*).

¹¹⁰ Beyond Wimpfeling, the material came from Niccolò Perotti, Ognibene da Lonigo, the *Doctrinale* and other medieval sources. The exchange of the examples for Horatian ones and the tables might have been Celtis's work. Franz Josef Worstbrock, "Die 'Ars versificandi et carminum' des Konrad Celtis. Ein Lehrbuch eines deutschen Humanisten," in *Studien zum städtischen Bildungswesen des späten Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit*, ed. B. Moeller et al. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983), 468-474.

beginning of a new humanist poetics.¹¹¹ However, Jörg Robert has convincingly argued in his detailed analysis¹¹² that Celtis's work basically belongs to the tradition of rhetorical poetics; his later characteristic poetical ideas, including that of an integrative humanism, appear here at most in a nuclear and commonplace form.

The fact that Celtis's manual intends at all to situate the poet in public, in a wider social context, stepping out from the classroom, is in itself significant: it was not customary with the manuals of versification that they had an ideological horizon. The first item, the dedication to Frederick the Wise,¹¹³ suggests the poet's closeness to his patron, and the idea of a close, symbiotic relationship to the ruler ("*Herrschernähe*") will be a stable component of Celtis's *vates-ideology* in his whole oeuvre. In connection to this, Celtis emphasizes the poet's usefulness for the state in one of the core parts of the work, the *Quare et qui poete legi debeant* ("Why and which poets should be read"):¹¹⁴ the poet, the inspired *vates*, is *dispensator gloriae*, the poem or oration has a protreptical, psychagogical effect, it has the power to civilize. These reflections, however, remain unexplained, and Celtis does little more here than echo Horace's *Ars poetica* and even more Cicero's *De Archia poeta*.¹¹⁵ The idea of a thematical universality of poetry, so important in the later Celtis, seems to have been adumbrated in the definition of poetry that Celtis provides in the part *De compositione materiali carminum* ("about the metrical¹¹⁶ composition of the poems").¹¹⁷ As the first part of the four-part paragraph explains,

"The duty of the poet is to fashion – by way of the oration's or poem's figurative and elegant form – characters, acts, deeds, places, peoples, [geographical] situation of lands, rivers, the course of the stars, and – in an allegorical way – the nature of things and mental-psychic dispositions; furthermore, to express with well chosen words the things' likenesses in a harmonizing and proper metrical form..."¹¹⁸

¹¹¹ Entner, "Zum Dichterbegriff," 352 about these paragraphs: "die Grundzüge der humanistischen Position deutlich genug erkennen lassen." Worstbrock, "Die 'Ars versificandi,'" 477: "Er tat den Versuch, den Eigenbereich des Dichterischen als Zusammenhang von eigenem Gegenstand, eigener Methode, eigenen Mitteln neu zu erfassen, begründete damit in Deutschland einen gänzlich neuen Begriff der Dichtung." Asmuth, "Anfänge," 110-2 makes similar conclusions.

¹¹² Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 19-104.

¹¹³ *Ars v. f.* a2r.

¹¹⁴ *Ars v. f.* c1v-c2r.

¹¹⁵ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 22-24, 41-46.

¹¹⁶ In this context *materia* means the metrical components of the poem: feet, syllables etc. Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 52-54.

¹¹⁷ F. a6v-b1r.

¹¹⁸ (*Officium poete est figurato atque decoro orationis et carminis contextu: mores: actus: res gestas: loca: gentes: terrarum situs: flumina: siderum cursus: rerum naturas translatis signis: menciū animorumque affectus effingere: electisque verbis rerum simulacra concinna et legitima quadam verborum mensura exprimere.*)

Compared to other poetry-definitions, that of Celtis is rather original,¹¹⁹ and it seems to include Celtis's own scientific, natural philosophical interests; furthermore, the whole paragraph's emphasis on the (otherwise general rhetorical) requirement of *evidentia*, the sensual representation, revitalization of the "real" things, is also quite unusual. Still, the definition remains within the reference systems of rhetorics. It is not the poet himself or the problem of reality and allegory, but the ways of expression that interest the author here and in the treatise in general. The paragraph summarizes a production-aesthetical procedure, parallel to the classical rhetoricians' instructions about oration (indeed, parallel to what Celtis himself wrote about the *compositio* in his *Epitoma in utramque Ciceronis rhetoricam*). Consequently, the apologetical topoi of poetry are missing, just as the ideas of Ancient Theology or poetic frenzy. In sum, the treatise belongs to the *poeta rhetor* tradition, and the rather traditional character of the main text contrasts sharply with the epoch-making role, the *tabula rasa* claims suggested by the *Poema ad Fridericum* and the *Ode ad Apollinem*.¹²⁰

c. The appearance of the Platonic vates-ideology in German poetological treatises

Although Platonic ideas about the soul, contemplation and inspiration were involved already in some early programmatic works of such important humanists as Rudolf Agricola or Johann Reuchlin,¹²¹ it is the 1490s that brought a breakthrough concerning Platonic *vates*-ideology in German poetical theory. This section will briefly overview such poetological treatises which have Platonic frameworks in some ways; two of the discussed authors, Locher and Augustinus Moravus, will also concern us in the later chapters, because they have relevant surviving poetical works beyond the theoretical ones. Before seeing how the poet was elevated higher than ever by humanists around 1500, let us first take a cursory glimpse at the German reception of Florentine Platonism in general.

The reception of Florentine Platonism in Germany

¹¹⁹ Naturally, classical and medieval poetry-definitions lurk in the background: cf. Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 55.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 48-61.

¹²¹ E.g. in the praises of philosophy by Agricola (1476) and Reuchlin (1477): Agricola, *In laudem philosophiae et reliquarum artium oratio*, ed. in *Humanismus* [ed. Rupprich], p. 171-180; Reuchlin's *Oratio* has been edited in *Johann Reuchlins Briefwechsel*, ed. L. Geiger (1875 / Hildesheim, 1962), 340-3. For Agricola, cf. also H. Wiegand, "'Mentibus at vatum deus insidet...'" Zu Rudolf Agricolas lateinischer Dichtung," in *Rudolf Agricola 1444-1485. Protagonist des nordeuropäischen Humanismus. Zum 500. Geburtstag*, ed. W. Kühlmann (Bern: A. Francke, 1994).

Humanists wanted to elevate substantially the status of the poet, and for this – as for other characteristics of humanist literature – Florentine Platonism provided not just distinct arguments, but a whole ideological background (which absorbed earlier literary, poetological traditions). Italian syncretists, with both their own and their mediated ideas, came in very handy for the *tramontani* humanists, and with the spread of printing the technical conditions were also given for a wide reception of Ficino, by far the most important representant of Florentine Platonism. The 1490s saw a rapid spread of Ficino’s works in German territories, which continued in the next century: within a hundred years, most of his works appeared in print once or several times, in at least a dozen German towns (two-third of the editions came from Basel and Strasbourg); around 1500, the most popular works or translations by Ficino were – as seen from the editions – his printed correspondence (including such treatises as the *De divino furore*), his *Platonis opera omnia* and his *De vita libri tres*.¹²² Naturally, it is problematic to measure the proliferation of an intellectual movement by the number of editions. As mentioned above, general concepts about the micro- and macrocosm, new or renewed habits of minds seem to have played altogether a more significant role than specific Ficinian ideas, and these general ideas could be mediated by many other ways than reading Ficino. Furthermore, Italian and French editions of Ficino-works also circulated in Germany, and the number of surviving manuscript copies is significant, too.¹²³ The *laus Florentiae*, the praise of Ficino, Pico, Ermolao and others – a frequent rhetorical topos in Germany around 1500 – is another sign of the Florentines’ popularity.¹²⁴

Whence this popularity? A general reason from an intellectual historical perspective has been well formulated by Allen: “the intellectual fascination and novelty, bordering on unorthodoxy (even heresy, as we shall see), of his revival of Neoplatonism and the unfamiliar nature of what he had to say about the complementary roles of religion and philosophy in nurturing the spiritual and noetic life.”¹²⁵ To be sure, certain Platonic or Neoplatonic notions have been popular because of their own value and find reception over and over again, as the history of philosophy and literature abundantly shows. But there are specific fifteenth-century German circumstances which enhanced the Ficino-reception. To put it mildly, the pre-Reformation church could not satisfy the humanists’ need for spirituality; they needed a renewal of intellectual and religious life based on a synthesis of Christian and classical

¹²² McDonald, *Orpheus*, 120-4; Steppich, ‘*Numine*,’ 128.

¹²³ McDonald, 123-4.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 125-9.

¹²⁵ DGWE p. 361.

thought.¹²⁶ Ficino's concepts fitted all the more the interests of the German intellectuals since they had a cosmic framework, and astrology (and even "natural magic") was involved in a philosophical (mostly Neoplatonic) system of thoughts. As they hoped, this kind of knowledge would also enhance their creativity, intellectual achievement and their life's general quality.¹²⁷ In general, astrology and occult disciplines based on the idea of micro- and macrocosm were more and more popular in late medieval Germany, and medieval Arabo-Latin astrological or astromagical texts paved the way for Ficino's German reception. What is more, Ficino's Latin and his general style, with the frequent classical quotations and the involvement of classical gods (or god-names), stood close to their taste, too.¹²⁸ From a social point of view, the flourishing network of the *respublica litteraria* – that is, the close ties between some Germans and Ficino, the active correspondence among the Germans themselves, and their personal meetings in the frameworks of sodalities – certainly contributed to Ficino's wide proliferation. The *doctores* of Tübingen, among whom such humanists as Johannes Reuchlin and Martin "Uranius" Prenninger had had personal contacts to Ficino, celebrated the Italian philosopher's birthday every year;¹²⁹ other examples from this generation of humanists with a strong interest or enthusiasm about Ficino and the Florentines include Willibald Pirckheimer, Dietrich Ulsenius, Peter Danhauser or Hieronymus Münzer (Nuremberg),¹³⁰ Conrad Peutinger and his circle (Augsburg),¹³¹ Matthaëus Lupinus or Conrad Tockler¹³² (Leipzig), Mutianus Rufus (Erfurt / Gotha),¹³³ Jakob Locher (Ingolstadt / Freiburg).

As for Celtis, the extent and nature of Ficino's influence on him is a controversial issue in scholarship. From Bezold¹³⁴ onward, many have emphasized (sometimes overestimatingly)

¹²⁶ Cf. e.g. L. Spitz, *The Religious Renaissance of the German Humanists* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), passim; or Steppich, 'Numine,' esp. 227.

¹²⁷ Steppich, 'Numine,' 233 about the prospect that the *De vita* promised for them: "ihr Leben gerade als *litterati* zu verändern, zu verlängern und neue Möglichkeiten zur Steigerung ihrer geistigen Vitalität und intellektuellen Schaffenskraft zu erschließen."

¹²⁸ Ibid. Naturally, the above mentioned characteristics were not present to the same extent in the particular Ficino-works; it is the Ficino-correspondence that seems to have been the most convenient work for the humanists to read.

¹²⁹ S. Lorenz, "Von Johannes Reuchlin und Jakob Locher zu Philipp Melanchthon: eine Skizze zum Tübinger Frühhumanismus," *Blätter für deutsche Landesgeschichte* 135 (1999), 44.

¹³⁰ Cf. e.g. E. Ph. Goldschmidt, *Hieronymus Münzer und seine Bibliothek* (London: The Warburg Institute, 1938), 34-37.

¹³¹ Cf. H. J.-D. Müller, "Konrad Peutinger und die Sodalitas Peutingeriana," in *Der polnische Humanismus und die europäischen Sodalitäten. Akten des polnisch-deutschen symposiums, Krakau*, ed. S. Füßel, J. Pirozynski (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997), 167-186.

¹³² For Tockler cf. McDonald, *Orpheus*, 220.

¹³³ McDonald, *Orpheus*, 237-40.

¹³⁴ Fr. von Bezold, *Konrad Celtis. Der deutsche Erzhumanist* (Darmstadt, 1959 [1883]), 46-58.

the Ficinian traits in Celtis's cosmic concepts, while some scholars, like Füllner¹³⁵ or Luh,¹³⁶ have stressed the differences between their concepts. The meaning of "Ficinian influence" have often been blurred; such investigations like Jörg Robert's, who paid much attention to the Italian mediators of Florentine Platonism (among others), are highly useful. At any rate, I anticipate here that with regard to our topic, that is, the use of cosmic ideas and symbols in poetical ideology, the Italian Platonic impact on Celtis was decisive.

Augustinus Moravus's 'Dialogus in defensionem poetices'

Augustinus Moravus Olomucensis (Augustine of Olomouc, originally Käsenbrot, 1467-1513), the central figure of Moravian humanism around 1500, also connected to and involved in Southern-German and Hungarian humanism, has received due scholarly attention only recently.¹³⁷ It is known that he studied *artes* – involving astronomy-astrology – in Cracow, then canon law in Padua and Ferrara; these studies served as a basis for his versatile oeuvre which involved astrological predictions, poetological-rhetorical writings, clerical historiography, editions of classics, correspondence and (mostly lost) poetry. From 1496 to 1511 he was chancery secretary in Buda under Vladislaus II of Hungary and Bohemia. Meanwhile, he held various clerical offices; among others he became the dean (cathedral provost) of Olomouc, where he returned in 1511. About his friendship and correspondence with Celtis, see more in ch. VI,1 which discusses Augustinus's golden bowl, now kept in Dresden.

His *Dialogus in defensionem poetices*¹³⁸ is one of his early works, written in Padua in 1492; although it heavily relies on the Italian traditions of defence of poetry, Farkas Gábor Kiss's recent article revealed several original aspects and ideas in the work that make it more intriguing than it was previously thought.¹³⁹ Already in Padua, Augustinus had a Central-

¹³⁵ R. Füllner, *Natur und Antike. Untersuchungen zu Dichtung, Religion und Bildungsprogramm des Conrad Celtis* (PhD Dissertation, University of Göttingen, 1956), passim.

¹³⁶ Peter Luh, *Kaiser Maximilian gewidmet. Die unvollendete Werkausgabe des Konrad Celtis und ihre Holzschnitte* (Frankfurt/Main et al.: Peter Lang, 2001), esp. 80 n. 91.

¹³⁷ See, first of all, the recent conference volume *Augustinus Moravus Olomucensis. Proceedings of the International Symposium to Mark the 500th Anniversary of the Death of Augustinus Moravus Olomucensis (1467-1513)*, ed. P. Ekler, F. G. Kiss (Budapest: OSZK et al., 2015) (with selected bibliography). For a general outline of his work and still defectively known life, Czaplá's summary in *Verfasserlexikon: Deutscher Humanismus 1480 – 1520* (2 vols.), ed. F. J. Worstbrock (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008; henceforth: VL-DH) is most convenient.

¹³⁸ Issued in Venice, March 1493. Karel Svoboda's modern edition (*Augustini Olomucensis Dialogus in defensionem poetices*, Prague: Česká akademie věd a umění, 1948) is useful, especially for the sources, but contains several mistakes in transcription.

¹³⁹ F. G. Kiss, "Augustinus Moravus and the Transmission of Ancient Wisdom in the Context of Poetry," in *Augustinus Moravus Olomucensis* (see n. 137), 77-92.

European audience in mind: he dedicated the work to his two most important patrons, Johannes Roth, bishop of Wrocław, and his uncle Andreas Ctiborius; besides, he mentions other German humanists in Bohemia-Moravia in his dedicatory letter.¹⁴⁰ He did intend to propagate his ideas on literature in these areas, in the framework of the basic humanistic idea of *translatio studii*, which he often emphasized; at any rate, the work found considerable reception.¹⁴¹ Beyond drawing on several classical and Renaissance ideas, he directly builds on more than one Italian model,¹⁴² he combines them in an original way, and the result is a Platonic dialogue which is a comparison of poetry and medicine and a defense of poetry at the same time. While “Augustinus” and “Laelius” are debating, a third person, “Bassareus,” a funny, clownlike, drunkard doctor joins the discussion, but only for a short time, obviously for a humorous digression illustrating the highly imperfect character of doctors. The first, lesser part of the debate is over the value of medicine: after Laelius contrasts the practical usefulness of medicine and poetry, the alter ego of Augustinus enumerates several well-worn Renaissance arguments against the physicians (they work only for profit, they kill without consequences and so on), and he expounds on the lack of the doctors’ expertise in astrology, the most important skill in diagnosing and healing. The second part, the praise of poetry, can be subdivided into five main ideas.¹⁴³ (1) First of all, true poetry originates in divine inspiration: Augustinus follows Plato’s *Ion* in the presentation of *furor*. (2) After reminding Laelius of the high status of poetry in antiquity, (3) Augustinus goes on to differentiate among its various functions and genres. Most importantly, he takes over Macrobius’s distinction between voluptuous and virtuous tales, between *fabula* and such *narratio fabulosa* in which the tale covers, veils the truth. Thus Augustinus joins the late antique / Renaissance tradition of the allegorical interpretation of poetry,¹⁴⁴ and in the longest part within the praise of poetry, (4) he conveys a number of examples for such allegories, based mostly on Macrobius and Fulgentius: for instance, Saturnus’s / Chronos’s origin from Coelum / Uranos would indicate that celestial phenomena arrange time, or Thiresias’s tale would hide symbols for the four

¹⁴⁰ Kiss, “Augustinus,” 78-80.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 80-84.

¹⁴² On the one hand, it is modelled after such works of Petrarch or Boccaccio which compare and defend poetry-rhetorics against other, allegedly more elevated university disciplines, law or medicine (K. Svoboda, “Il dialogo ‘In difesa della poesia,’” *Lettere italiane* 8 [1956], 38; Kiss, “Augustinus,” 77); on the other hand, the Platonic dialogue form and the idea of a resurrection of classical literature seems to have been directly inspired by the dialogue *De reputatione linguae Latinae* (1490, published 1494) of Marcantonio Sabellico, a Venetian professor (Kiss, “Augustinus,” 83).

¹⁴³ Svoboda, “Il dialogo,” 43-47.

¹⁴⁴ Svoboda, “Il dialogo,” 46-47; Kiss, “Augustinus,” 87-90.

seasons. Finally, (5) Augustinus defends poetry against accusations of immorality (well known arguments since Petrarch and Boccaccio).

What makes the dialogue interesting for our purpose is its strong Italian Platonic and cosmological hue which surfaces more frequently than it has been perceived before. They speak in a dialogue, and as for the scenery, they find a beautiful place outside the town, with a plane-tree¹⁴⁵ and a little stream: these features allude to Plato's *Phaedrus*, but not just these. Socrates is explicitly filled with divine inspiration in the *Phaedrus*:

Socrates: (...) Well, my dear Phaedrus, does it seem to you, as it does to me, that I am inspired?

Phaedrus: Certainly, Socrates, you have an unusual fluency.

Socrates: Then listen to me in silence; for truly the place seems filled with a divine presence; so do not be surprised if I often seem to be in a frenzy as my discourse progresses, for I am already almost uttering dithyrambs.¹⁴⁶

A similar *furor* seizes Augustinus and Laelius, too, at the end of the dialogue when they sing alternately to the muses. Similarly to Socrates, Laelius clearly refers to the frenzy that he feels: "While you speak, I guess a strange heat seizes me."¹⁴⁷ It has not been emphasized in scholarship that such spectacular "illustrations" of the *furor poeticus* occur in German poetical and also poetological works of the period, we will see later other examples. The author lays stress on the *furor* explicitly, too, he treats it in the first place within the praise of poetry, and follows Plato's *Ion* in Ficino's translation. The divine inspiration comes from Apollo, god of poetry, medicine, and divination at the same time. True medicine needs expertise in astrology, and true poetry is the gift of heaven, too: this is how Augustinus connects, in a rather original way, the two main themes of the dialogue.¹⁴⁸ This strategy, observed by Kiss, can be further contextualized. As we will see, both the interest in astrology and the positioning of poetry in a cosmological framework was characteristic, on the one hand, of Ficino, and on the other hand, of Celtis's circles. Augustinus's two *prognostica*,¹⁴⁹ written around the same time, also mirror his predilection for the stars; they contain poems,

¹⁴⁵ The plane-tree appears in *Phaedrus* 229A, 230B, 236D; As Svoboda remarked ("Il dialogo," 39), some Renaissance authors, like Landino, have taken over the *Phaedrus*'s scenery.

¹⁴⁶ *Phaedrus* 238 C-D, tr. H. N. Fowler; Ficino's translation: *Omnia divini Platonis opera*, ed. S. Grynaeus (Basel, 1551), 447.

¹⁴⁷ *Dialogus* (ed. Svoboda), p. 37 line 11: *Videor mihi nescio quos calores dum ista commemoras concipere*.

¹⁴⁸ Kiss, "Augustinus," 85-86. Augustinus's sentence that explicitly connects poetry and medicine as kinds of divination reads: *Volo siquidem ante omnia cum Musis meis in gratiam redeas, atque id genus hominum qui praeclaro munere afflantur non secus ac oracula quaedam suspicias* (*Dialogus* [ed. Svoboda], p. 23 lines 26-28; Kiss's emphasis).

¹⁴⁹ For 1492: *In annum Christi 1492 prognosticon* [Venice: J. Hamann, after 13 Nov. 1491], GW 3059; for 1494: *Iudicium anno Domini 1494* [Rome: A. Fritag, 1494], GW 3060.

too, which combine astrology and mythology in a humanist fashion.¹⁵⁰ Taken all these into consideration, it is not surprising that during the enumeration of examples for allegories Augustinus draws heavily on Macrobius who had strong cosmic interests, and that the most detailed example is dedicated to Apollo; he takes over even the idea of a “solar monoteism” from Macrobius, that is, the many deities are just various aspects of the same Sun-god.¹⁵¹

Barinus, Lupinus and other defenders of poetry from Leipzig

Leipzig saw an upswing of humanistic defenses of poetry from members of the university in the 1490s and 1500s. Johannes Landsberger’s *Dyalogus*,¹⁵² published in the summer of 1494, still focuses on a well-known issue, a traditional problem in the teaching of grammatics-rhetorics: this is the dangerousness or usefulness of pagan (classical) literature. In the work of this student of Barinus, *Fautor*, the “supporter” of classical poetry – obviously Landsberger himself – has an argument with *Emulus*, the “rival”; there is in fact nothing new in *Fautor*’s arguments in favor of classical literature (the church fathers’ supporting statements about classical poetry, the theme of the Ancient Theology, and so on). Landsberger’s teacher, however, Jacobus Barinus, drew heavily on Ficino in his *Recognicio in genera vatum et carmina eorundem*¹⁵³ (“An investigation of the kinds of poets[-seers] and their songs”), likewise from 1494. Barinus belonged to that group of young *magistri artium* (Lupinus, Dottanius, Honorius, Maius) who supported the case of humanism with a new impetus in the 1490s and who profited both from the previous activity of Celtis and the expanding Ficino-reception. In the apologetical introduction to the *Recognitio*, Barinus expands on the moral benefits of poetry. While declaring for the *prisca philosophia*, he cites from the *proemium* of Ficino’s *Pimander* about Hermes Trismegistus and his successors (interestingly, he omits Moses from the list). He focuses on love poetry: while defending it from recent attacks, he draws on Ficino’s *De amore* and the distinction between celestial and earthly love. Still in 1494, Barinus composed an *Ars scribendi*,¹⁵⁴ discussing letter-writing in the first and poetry in the second part; in the latter he included that part of Ficino’s *Ion-*

¹⁵⁰ A characteristic example from the 1494 *Iudicium*, f. 3r (modern ed. in *Augustinus*, ed. Ekler and Kiss, p. 160): *De Veneris et Martis congressi hexastichon ad Vulcanum: Mulciber occulta cur non retinacula nectis? / Prodis et incestos iam quoque concubitus? / Gradivus thalamos repetit, pulchramque Dionem, / Atque cupita ferus gaudia solus habet; / Sic nobis blandum Veneris comprimitur astrum. / Disturba incestas, Mulciber, insidias!*

¹⁵¹ *Dialogus* [ed. Svoboda], p. 30 line 27 – p. 31 line 2; pointed out by Lubomir Konečný, “Augustine Käsenbrot of Olomouc, His Golden Bowl in Dresden, and the Renaissance Revival of ‘Poetic’ Bacchus,” *Artibus et Historiae* vol. 24 no. 48 (2003), 190.

¹⁵² *Dyalogus recommendationis exprobatonisque poetices* (Leipzig, 1494)

¹⁵³ Ed. Leipzig: Landsberg, 1494.

¹⁵⁴ Ed. Leipzig: Landsberg, 1494.

commentary which is about the divinity of poetry and the poetical *furor*. From the two works of Barinus together there emerges the new, Platonic-Ficinian image of the *vates*, at least in its main features, perhaps more coherently than ever before in German poetology; this ideology develops further in Lupinus's *Quaestio*, the most important poetological treatise from Leipzig in this period.

Matthaeus Lupinus Calidomius composed his *Quaestio*¹⁵⁵ in Leipzig¹⁵⁶ in 1497, answering a question raised by the university in the frameworks of a *Disputatio de quolibet* (organized every five years): “whether poets... should be driven out of the well-ordered republic... as many claim the divine Plato instructs.”¹⁵⁷ Following the scholastic methodology of the age, he divided the issue to several sub-questions, in this case three *articuli*, then marshalled his arguments drawing on the accepted authorities before arriving to the conclusions and corollaries. The first part of the first *articulus* elucidates the notion of the divine *vates*, the *poeta* whose activity (ποίησις) means divine creation. It is the *furor poeticus* that makes the poet: while expanding on the nature and importance of this *furor*, Lupinus cites abundantly from Ficino's *Ion*-commentary, and to a lesser extent from Ficino's epistle *De divino furore*.¹⁵⁸ That he does not just slavishly adopt Ficino's views can be seen, for instance, from an Augustine-passage¹⁵⁹ quoted as an example for divinely inspired texts: Lupinus seems to have been really interested in the nature of *furor poeticus*. In the second part of the first *articulus* he dwells on the nature and origin of muses and music, drawing mostly on Perotti; finally he arrives to the muses / planetary spheres correspondence and the Ficinian idea of the *furor*-chain. The second *articulus* provides a brief history of poetry, beginning, unsurprisingly, with the ancient poet-theologians as discussed in Ficino,¹⁶⁰ and arriving to fifteenth-century Italian poet, what is more, German poets and philosophers (he refers to Celtis, too¹⁶¹): these contemporaries, too, mean the Christian God under the various pagan god-names... The third *articulus* reinvestigates Plato's (and some church fathers') relevant lines about poets and the Ficino-commentaries on them, and the author recapitulates why the poets should not be expelled from the state. While all scholars point out Lupinus's heavy

¹⁵⁵ *Matthaei Lupini Calidomii Carmina de quolibet Lipsensi anno 1497 disputato. Et quaestio de poetis a re publica minime pellendis* (Leipzig: J. Thanner, 1500), edited in the Appendix of McDonald, *Orpheus*.

¹⁵⁶ Lupinus was a student and later a teacher at the Faculty of Arts in Leipzig, but at the time of composing the *Quaestio* he was employed in Großenhain as a schoolmaster, and went to Leipzig for the occasion of the *Disputatio*. Worstbrock, art. “Lupinus” in VL-DH.

¹⁵⁷ *Quaestio*, f. b1r, tr. McDonald, *Orpheus*, 212.

¹⁵⁸ For the sources of the *Quaestio*, cf. McDonald, *Orpheus*, 211-9 and the notes in the edited text.

¹⁵⁹ *Quaestio*, f. b5r.

¹⁶⁰ Lupinus draws mainly on Ficino's epistles *Orphica comparatio solis ad deum* and *De divino furore*.

¹⁶¹ *Quaestio*, f. d5v: ...*Norici quoque nostri hymnum saphicum de sancto Sebaldo recinunt...*

reliance on Ficino,¹⁶² it has to be noted that Lupinus's thinking was too much imbedded in scholastic traditions to fully identify with the views of "Plato reborn"¹⁶³: he retains that the poet needs both *ars* and *furor*,¹⁶⁴ and in the end, he disapproves many kinds of literature (tragedies with infernal monsters, adulterious myths about gods and so on) as improper for the education of the young.¹⁶⁵ Still, this is undoubtedly a Ficinian work, and it was relatively popular¹⁶⁶ as such. Beyond Leipzig, the *Quaestio* was well received in Nuremberg, among others; Celtis, too, was given an exemplar from Schreyer to whom Lupinus had sent the work.¹⁶⁷ Less influential and for our topic less important was the pamphlet war (1500-04) about poetry and theology between two academics of Leipzig, Conrad Wimpina and Martin Polich von Mellerstadt.¹⁶⁸

Jakob Locher

Philomusus, "the one who loves the muses" (or "loved by the muses"?): so called himself Jakob Locher (1471-1528), one of the most intriguing characters of Southern German humanism.¹⁶⁹ The name already implies his ardent love and fierce insistence on humanistic literature, and generally, his ardent and extravagant nature, similar to that of Celtis. Locher was a disciple and, as a lecturer on poetry, the "heir" of Celtis in Ingolstadt (from 1497); in his case, too, an Italian journey (1493) contributed a great deal to the shaping of his habits of mind. As a professor of arts, he taught alternately in Freiburg and Ingolstadt:¹⁷⁰ the frequent change of place has to do with his bellicose nature, which earned him many friends and foes.

¹⁶² Cf. e.g. McDonald, *Orpheus*, 212: "A remarkably faithful reflection of Ficino's poetics."

¹⁶³ *Quaestio*, f. b1v.

¹⁶⁴ *Quaestio*, f. b3v. Heidloff, *Untersuchungen*, 214 also points this out, comparing the *furor*-ideas of Locher and Lupinus.

¹⁶⁵ *Quaestio*, f. e5v-e6r.

¹⁶⁶ McDonald, *Orpheus*, 218-9.

¹⁶⁷ BW p. 413-4, Schreyer to Celtis on 11. 08. 1500.

¹⁶⁸ In his *Apologeticus Sacretheologie defensionem...* (1500), Wimpina answered to an unknown poet's statement that poetry was the source of sacred wisdom; Wimpina did not attack poetry itself, only its alleged primacy to theology. Polich's *Laconismus tumultuarius... in defensionem poetices contra quendam theologum editus* (1500/01) dwelled on the importance of poetry, insisting that it is one of the sources of sacred wisdom. Between 1502-04 they issued altogether five more pamphlets, adding little new to their previous arguments. As Overfield has demonstrated, Polich's humanistic arguments for poetry were few and most traditional, and it was much less a poetological dispute than a personal enmity in which they listed each other's logical mistakes in a scholastic fashion (Overfield, *Humanism*, 173-187). It is surprising that it was not Wimpina – a published poet, interested both in theology and in arts – who defended poetry, but Polich, a physician and astrologer with a traditional scholastic training (for possible reasons cf. *ibid.*, 218)

¹⁶⁹ For his life, cf. Heidloff, *Untersuchungen*, 140-172; B. Coppel, "Jakob Locher Philomusus (1471-1528): Musenliebe als Maxime," in *Humanismus im deutschen Südwesten* In *Humanismus im deutschen Südwesten. Biographische Profile*, ed. P. G. Schmidt (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1993), 151-178.

¹⁷⁰ After teaching three months in Tübingen and travelling to Italy, he went to Freiburg (1493), Ingolstadt (1497), again to Freiburg (1503) and again to Ingolstadt (1506) where he stayed until his death (1528).

On the one hand, he was an energetic standard-bearer of humanism at the university as teacher, poet, and even initiator of new dramatic genres;¹⁷¹ his Latin translation of Brant's *Narrenschiff*, the *Stultifera navis* earned him fame beyond the borders of Germany. On the other hand, his exhibitionist nature, his arrogance and hate of scholasticism led him to such excesses that were outstanding even in the hot intellectual climate of that time. When he called the pamphlet of his adversary "deceitful, bombastic, putred, meager, filthy, rotten, shitty,"¹⁷² he remained at least on the verbal level, but it also occurred that our crowned poet used his fists and beat his colleague up.¹⁷³

The divinity of poetry always stood in the center of his thought; here I survey only those treatises where the defense of poetry is one of the central aspects of the given work. The *Oratio* in praise of poetry,¹⁷⁴ which he held in the beginning of the winter term 1495/96 in Freiburg, is a pure example of humanistic enthusiasm for classical culture¹⁷⁵ and an inspired presentation of what he considered the essence of poetry. Some aspects of the main text, notably Apollo's epiphany in the beginning, will require a deeper analysis;¹⁷⁶ here I just trace the main points and characteristics of the work, drawing mainly on Heidloff's analysis.¹⁷⁷ Phoebus appears to the poet in a dream, and escorts him through *Elysium*, meaning here a kind of "humanistic heaven"¹⁷⁸ with the heroes of classical *virtus*. He can see the great military leaders, natural and moral philosophers (including some church fathers), legislators, and finally the poets, "in whose heart god dwells and divine frenzy."¹⁷⁹ He expounds enthusiastically on the main literary genres, on the ability of poetry to acquire eternal fame for the author and the addressee, and on the usefulness of poetry for the state. The most original and most intriguing aspect of the oration is the highly spectacular presentation of his idea of *furor*. Locher explicitly refers to Plato and his *Ion* in the text,¹⁸⁰ and gives – here as elsewhere – a Platonic-Ficinian picture about the poetical frenzy; the poet needs only this, not the

¹⁷¹ About Locher's "dramas," cf. Cora Dietl, *Die Dramen Jakob Lochers und die frühe Humanistenbühne im Süddeutschen Raum* (Berlin / New York: de Gruyter, 2005).

¹⁷² *Iacobus Locher. In Anticategoriam Rectoris cuiusdam et conciliabuli: Gymnasii Ingolstadtensis: Responsio compendiosa...* (Basel: M. Lamparter, 1505; VD 16 L 2222): *dolosa, bullata, subrancida, strigosa, lutulenta, putida, merdosa*; tr. Overfield, *Humanism*, 192.

¹⁷³ Coppel, "Musenliebe," 163.

¹⁷⁴ *Oratio de studio humanarum disciplinarum et laude poetarum Extemporalis* (Freiburg: F. Riederer, 1496)

¹⁷⁵ Heidloff, *Untersuchungen*, 222: "Locher wesit sich in dieser Rede durch seine Nähe zu antiken Vorstellungen als ein Humanist reiner Prägung aus."

¹⁷⁶ See p. 215.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 205-222.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 221.

¹⁷⁹ *Oratio*, f. b1v: *quorum in pectore deus sedet et furor divinus*.

¹⁸⁰ F. a3v: *dictavimus illud in Academia Socrati et Ioni...*

knowledgeable skill, exercises or theories.¹⁸¹ Locher's text, however, is not a systematic treatise in defense of poetry, as that of Lupinus, but an oration of praise, and a work of a genuine humanistic poet at that. The god – Apollo – and the divine sphere – the “humanistic heaven” – really appears before the author, whose words and style obviously refer to an inspired state; he even changes into metrical poetry at some point of his oration.¹⁸² This is an illustration of *furor poeticus*, functionally similar to that in Augustinus's *Dialogus*. In a prose panegyric to Maximilian I, too, his eulogy turns lofty and begins to take wings, before he disrupts his speech: “but where does the frenzy take me?”¹⁸³

The ideology of divine inspiration, including such Ficinian aspects of it as the chain of *furor*, permeates Locher's whole poetry.¹⁸⁴ Here I just mention a passage that fits well the atmosphere of the *Oratio*: in the introduction of his 1506 comet-interpretation in verse-form,¹⁸⁵ he apologizes to the reader for the possible roughness of his interpretation with the words “the frenzy wrote this [text], not Philomusus's hand;”¹⁸⁶ that is, he assumes the role of a medium comparable to the Pythia. (The type of the imperial *vates / augur* who warns the people and draws moral conclusions from celestial phenomena is known in German humanism: Sebastian Brant definitely assumed this role, while Locher only dabbled in it.¹⁸⁷) Locher has perhaps only one work, the poem *De origine et officio poetarum elegia* (1518),¹⁸⁸ where he explicitly involves among the sources of good poetry other things than just *furor* and divine inspiration.

Locher discussed the relation of poetry to theology in a series of polemical writings, like the *Theologica emphasis* (1496),¹⁸⁹ the *Apologia*¹⁹⁰ against Georg Zingel and the *Comparatio*

¹⁸¹ Ibid.; cf. also Apollo's speech on f. a3v.

¹⁸² *Oratio*, f. b1v: *O altes altisonos! O superum candidissimos buccinatores! O sanctae philosophiae patronos! Et laudes vestrae et praeconia nostra manebunt.*

¹⁸³ *O seculum Aureum. O faustum Augurium. Quo in terras ad nos miseros mortales te divina ineffabilisque summi tonantis benignitas produxit. Sed quorsum me furor rapit...* in *Libri Philomusi. Panegyrici ad regem. Tragedia de Thurcis et Suldano. Dyalogus de heresiarchis* (Strasbourg: J. Grüninger, 1497), f. b3r.

¹⁸⁴ Heidloff, *Untersuchungen*, 173-204; cf. also Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 263 for the appearance of the Ficinian chain of *furor* in Locher. Later I will investigate such poems of Locher which have intriguing (not commonplace) cosmological ideas, like the *Sapphicon* (see p. 202).

¹⁸⁵ *Tetrastichon Philomusi...* [f. 2r] *de cometa sub septentrionibus viso carmen...* (Augsburg: H. Froschauer, 1506).

¹⁸⁶ *Tetrastichon* f. 1v: *furor scripsit non philomusea manus.*

¹⁸⁷ D. Wuttke, “Sebastian Brants Verhältnis zur Wunderdeutung und Astrologie,” in *Studien zur deutschen Literatur und Sprache des Mittelalters. Festschrift für Hugo Moser für 65. Geburtstag*, ed. W. Besch et al. (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1974) 272-286. Cf. also Locher's *Carmen heroicum de monstifero partu*, in *Monstrosa hominis forma...* (Ingolstadt: J. Kachelofen, after 26 Nov. 1499).

¹⁸⁸ In *...Catalogus illustrium auditorum eiusdem Philomusi...* (Nuremberg: F. Peypus, 1518; VD 16 C 4043), f. k4v–L1v; Heidloff, *Untersuchungen*, 176-8.

¹⁸⁹ *Theologica emphasis sive. Dialogus super eminentia quatuor doctorum ecclesiae. Gregorii: Hieronimi: Augustini: Ambrosii: cum sex centum versibus...* (Basel: J. Bergmann, 1496). Discussed by Heidloff, *Untersuchungen*, 223-252. In this work he outlined, debating with Ulrich Zasius (his jurist colleague in Freiburg),

mulae ad Musam (abbreviated title; “Comparison of the mule to the Muse”);¹⁹¹ the last two belong to a pamphlet war that lasted from 1503 up until 1510. In the *Apologia* (1503) he demonized his scholastic adversary so much¹⁹² that even two humanists, Zasius and Jakob Wimpfeling,¹⁹³ started attacking Locher in the continuing debate in Freiburg. In 1506, after the university council suspended Locher from teaching poetry but he managed to resume the same position in Ingolstadt, he issued his main writing against Zingel (and other theologians), the *Comparatio mulae ad Musam* (abbreviated title; “Comparison of the mule to the Muse,” 1506), which contrasted, among others, the productivity of the muse-inspired poets and the sterility of “mule theology.”¹⁹⁴

After all, Locher had the most radical views among German humanists in the issue of poetical inspiration, and this is in line with the fact that the evidence of Italian influence in his work (from Boccaccio through Ficino and Beroaldo) is more abundant than in the work of his German contemporaries.¹⁹⁵ Since the use of astrological or solar imagery in his enhanced poetical self-representation is only peripheral (he does not seem to have been much interested in cosmological, natural philosophical matters), Locher will not figure large in the following investigations; however, his attitude, his polemics and the whole milieu that surrounded him

a new, humanistic idea of theology which is here exemplified by four church fathers, Gregory the Great, Jerome, Augustine and Ambrose (a traditional quartet); in Locher’s eulogies the church fathers are each paralleled to classical philosophers and are endowed with eloquence and other positive humanistic characteristics. The very scenery of the dialogue already shows Locher’s intention of a fusion between classical and Christian spirituality: a heavenly or Elysean garden is presented where both Apollo with the muses and the four rivers of the Paradise appear.

¹⁹⁰ *Apologia... contra poetarum acerrimum Hostem Goergium Zingel Theologum Ingolstadiensem Xynochylensem* (Strasbourg: J. Grüningen, 1503).

¹⁹¹ *Continentur. In hoc opusculo a Jacobo Locher Philomuso facili Syntaxi concinnato. Vitiosa sterilis Mule, ad musam: roscida lepiditate predictam, Comparatio...* (Nuremberg, J. Weißenburger, 1506).

¹⁹² Locher’s *Apologia* against Georg Zingel, an old professor of theology in Ingolstadt who otherwise sympathized with humanism, was allegedly triggered by a statement which compared the muses to prostitutes, but something more might have happened, since Locher’s rage was extraordinary and unpacifiable: in this “most scurrilous in all of German humanist writing” (Overfield, *Humanism*, 189), the author tells Zingel names and blames the theologians for all kinds of offensive acts; a woodcut in the frontispiece helped in demonizing the enemy. Overfield, *Humanism*, 188-9; Coppel, “Musenliebe,” 161.

¹⁹³ They both belonged to the moderate, “Christianity-oriented” (Grimm, *Literatur*, 95) type of humanism that was characteristic of the Strasbourg-Schlettstadt circle.

¹⁹⁴ Although the *Comparatio mulae ad Musam* may be seen as a defense of poetry (cf. Heidloff, who has written the most detailed account of this work: *Untersuchungen*, 253-302), and it includes many well-worn arguments for poetry, it became famous rather as a comprehensive attack on scholastic theology. It is a variegated mixture of woodcuts, dialogues, *argumenta*, epigrams, eulogies, letters, all this mostly in elegiac couplets. In one of the key dialogues (*Hortamen Calliopes et phoebi Mutuum contra Mulotheologum*, f. a5v-b3v) the views of Apollo and Calliope exemplify well the main axis of the work: the real “theologians” – including classical poets from Homer to Terence – tell us what sin and virtue is, they are inspired by the muses and thus productive, while the sterile “mule theology” can only produce “stinking filth, from which a crude and garrulous theologian is born...” (f. b3r: *Mula aliquid gignit, quid? stercora foeda; quid inde? / Theologus crudus nascitur atque loquax*; tr. Overfield, *Humanism*, 201). The most comprehensive answer to Locher’s work was issued by Wimpfeling in 1510 with the title *Contra turpem libellum Philomusi, theologie scholastice et neotericorum defensio* (Nuremberg, 1510); among others, it maintained that poetry had no practical value.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. e.g. Heidloff, *Untersuchungen*, 242; Coppel, “Musenliebe,” 167-177: “Locher und Italien.”

in Freiburg and Ingolstadt are telling in understanding to what a great extent actual university matters, friendships and enmities formed the views of the German humanists, and why they were inclined to excesses in their poetical self-representation or *vates*-image in general.

3. ‘*Quicquid habet coelum quid terra quid aer et aequor.*’ *Celtis’s program*

a. *The significance of the national and the individual components of Celtis’s humanistic program*

*Tu celer vastas equoris per undas
Letus a grecis laciam videre
Invehens Musas voluisti gratas
Pandere et artes
Sic velis nostras rogitamus horas
Italas ceu quondam aditare terras,
Barbarus sermo fugiatque ut atrum
subruat omne.*¹⁹⁶

You [Apollo] it was who wished to leave Greece, passing swiftly and gladly over the great waves of the sea to visit Latium with the muses in your train, and reveal the arts you love.

So now we pray you: Come to us as you came to Italy; let barbarian speech be driven out and the whole fabric of darkness collapse.¹⁹⁷

So concludes Celtis his *Ode ad Apollinem* at the end of the *Ars versificandi*. As an early, concise and elegant declaration of his humanistic program, which is on the other hand controversial in some respects, this is the most frequently analyzed Celtis-poem;¹⁹⁸ for our purposes it suffices to highlight two of the basic messages. Apollo’s coming from Greece to Italy and then to Germany is an allegory for the German version of the idea of *translatio studii*, the spread of high culture from one nation to the other; and it is Celtis himself who initiates the cultural renewal of his nation: he not only invites Apollo but does so in a Sapphic ode, as if providing a model – and a Horatian one at that – for later Neo-Latin lyrical works. Thus the ode mirrors two basic clusters of ideas that are tightly intertwined with the general ideology of a new humanistic culture all throughout Celtis’s work: cultural renewal will mean a renewal of the German nation, a new national identity is to be constructed; and although the

¹⁹⁶ V. 17-24 of the original version of *Ode ad Apollinem* at the end of *Ars v.*

¹⁹⁷ Based on Forster’s translation of the later version of the ode (Od. IV,5); within v. 17-24 of the two versions only v. 17 differs. *Selections from Conrad Celtis, 1459–1508*, ed., tr., comm. L. Forster (Cambridge: University Press, 1948), 21.

¹⁹⁸ The most detailed interpretation is still E. Schäfer: “Ode an Apoll. Ein Manifest neulateinischen Dichtens in Deutschland,” in *Gedichte und Interpretationen, Vol. I: Renaissance und Barock*, ed. V. Meid (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1982), 83-93. For further literature cf. Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 83 n. 274. As Robert pointed out, scholarship has been inclined to take the ode as a manifestation of his whole humanistic program (although he developed it gradually), and thus to project back some of his later ideas into the poem. Robert has analyzed the ode strictly in the context of *Ars versificandi*, and he has argued – among others – against the view that Celtis would have excluded contemporary Italy from the procedure of *translatio studii* (*Konrad Celtis*, 83-103).

fulfilment of humanistic aims requires royal patronage and the cooperation of humanist fellows, Celtis claims basically for himself the leading role in the making of a new epoch.

Since Petrarch, the cyclic idea of cultural rebirth – *renascentia*, *renovatio* and so on – was a natural component of Italian humanistic national identity: the Italians lived just in the central area of the classical Roman Empire. North of the Alps, the historical conditions for the formation of a new national identity were different. On the one hand, the Germans could not boast of such a historical heritage as the Italians could, and they were late in developing a Neo-Latin literature comparable to the Italian one. Complaining about the *barbaries* of their own nation, the early German humanists depended on and imitated the Italians; Rudolph Agricola was the first to argue for a need of cultural equality and independence.¹⁹⁹ On the other hand, the idea of *translatio imperii*, against which the Italian sought their own alternatives, came in handy for the Germans, since the last phase in the divinely ordered succession of the hegemonic monarchies happened to consist of German empires and emperors, from Charles the Great through the Ottos up until the present Habsburg rulers of the Holy Roman Empire. It was easy and natural for the German humanists to take up the *translatio studii* tradition and adjust, parallelize it to the idea of *translatio imperii*; Celtis played a prominent role in the early modern development of this twofold ideology.²⁰⁰ In rivalry with Italian humanists²⁰¹ (after his Italian travel, not before²⁰²) and in the wake of his German precursors, he placed his cultural ideals in the context of a national history – or rather an interrelated cluster of national historical constructions – for which the *translatio imperii* as followed by the *translatio studii* provided the basic paradigm.

It is not easy to reconstruct even a general scheme of national history as imagined by Celtis: he entertained several interrelated historical concepts, new or traditional, sometimes contradicting each other, and he applied them according to the actual rhetorical purpose of the given work. Here I can only briefly touch on some of his main historical constructions. The

¹⁹⁹ Summarily: Worstbrock, “Konstitution,” 9-12.

²⁰⁰ For the problematics of *renascentia*, *translatio* and national identity in Italy and Germany, cf. the essential summaries of Fr. J. Worstbrock: “*Translatio artium*. Über die Herkunft und Entwicklung einer kulturhistorischen Theorie,” *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 47 (1965), 1-22; id., “Über das geschichtliche Selbstverständnis des deutschen Humanismus,” in *Historizität in Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaft*, ed. W. Müller-Seidel (Munich: Fink, 1974), 499-519. Focusing more on Celtis: H. Jaumann, “Das dreistellige ‘*translatio*’-Schema und einige Schwierigkeiten mit der Renaissance in Deutschland: Konrad Celtis’ ‘*Ode ad Apollinem*’ (1486), in *Rezeption und Identität. Die kulturelle Auseinandersetzung Roms mit Griechenland als europäisches Paradigma*, ed. Gregor Vogt-Spira and Bettina Rommel, 335-349 (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1999); G. Müller, *Die ‘Germania generalis’ des Konrad Celtis: Studien mit Edition, Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2001), 424-436; Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 345-350.

²⁰¹ For instance, against Lorenzo Valla’s claim for the hegemony of Italian-Latin humanism all over Europe: W. Kühlmann, in *Humanistische Lyrik des 16. Jahrhunderts. Lateinisch und deutsch*, ed. W. Kühlmann, R. Siedel, H. Wiegand (Frankfurt am Main, 1997), 978.

²⁰² Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 85-96.

basic and most commonplace opposition is that of culture vs. barbarism, a humanistically enlightened era contrasted to the preceding dark age; in the *Ode ad Apollinem*, *Poema ad Fridericum* and many later poems, a *tabula rasa* situation is implicitly assumed, as if the innovation could not be based on earlier German traditions, but should emerge from a zero level, as a revelation.²⁰³ This contrasts with such concepts of Celtis that emphasize certain cultural or moral values in earlier historical periods. Based on an arbitrary selection from classical authors, Celtis constructed the myth of the druids civilizing Germany.²⁰⁴ Even more problematic is Celtis's occasional positive attitude to the ancient Germans (and other native folks²⁰⁵) conducting a simple, pre-civilized way of life.²⁰⁶ Celtis's attitude to history may remind one of Kristeller's general warning about the high grade of humanist rhetoric: "Any particular statement gleaned from the work of a humanist may be countered by contrary assertions in the writings of contemporary authors or even of the same author."²⁰⁷ Still, while one can easily point out contradictions, superficial ideas and the underlying rhetorical purposes or generic traditions, there *is* coherence in Celtis's views on national cultural history, and a general scheme of two successive phases of Germany's cultural development can be gathered from the relevant passages: what the druids began, Celtis and his followers will accomplish.²⁰⁸

²⁰³ Cf. primarily J. Robert, "'Carmina Pieridum nulli celebrata priorum.'" Zur Inszenierung von Epochenwende im Werk des Konrad Celtis," *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur* 124 (2002), 92-121; more generally W. Barner, "Über das Negieren von Tradition. Zur Typologie literaturprogrammatischer Epochenwenden in Deutschland," in *Epochenschwelle und Epochenbewußtsein*, ed. R. Herzog et al. (Munich: Fink, 1987).

²⁰⁴ This priestly class, so Celtis, was Greek in origin, and combined religion with philosophy in the Pythagorean-Platonic tradition (including such beliefs as the metempsychosis); they are thus comparable to the Ancient Theologians. Driven out from Gallia by Emperor Tiberius, they came to the heart of Germany, to the "Hercynian Forest;" later, they adopted Christianity and built cloisters. They were the first to spread civilization in Germany. However, it is not clarified how their activity relates to the "epoch-making" of Celtis's generation, how their religion relates to the alleged *patria religio* of the native Germans, what their attitude to Latin language was – to mention just some of the problems raised by Celtis's theory. Celtis's most detailed account of the druids can be found in the third chapter of the *Norimberga*; for other occurrences see Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 378 n. 153. For Celtis's myth of the druids: Müller, *Die 'Germania generalis'*, 418-424; Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 378-394.

²⁰⁵ Cf. Od. IV,4.

²⁰⁶ Tacitus provided an ambivalent picture about the German tribes in his *Germania*: one could gather from it evidence of either barbarism or *simplicitas* and *castitas*, purity from the harms of civilization. According to Krapf, Ridé and many other scholars, Celtis did the latter in such poems as *Amores* II,9 (L. Krapf, *Germanenmythus und Reichsideologie. Frühhumanistische Rezeptionsweisen der taciteischen 'Germania'*, Tübingen, 1979, 68-102; J. Ridé, *L'image du Germain dans la pensée et la littérature Allemandes de la redécouverte de Tacite à la fin du XV^{ième} siècle. Contribution à l'étude de la genèse d'un mythe*, 3 Vols., Lille and Paris, 1977, 198-259), while Müller or Robert emphasized the generic conventions behind the praise of Germans (Müller, *Die 'Germania generalis'*, 425-431; Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 422-434).

²⁰⁷ Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought. The Classic, Scholastic and Humanist Strains*, 22.

²⁰⁸ Cf. e.g. Müller, *Die 'Germania generalis'*, 424: after the civilizing activity of the druids, "was bleibt, ist der Makel der im Vergleich zu Griechen und Römern späten Entwicklung zur Zivilisation. Dieser aber wird aufgehoben durch das historische Paradigma der *Translatio*."

His plan of a comprehensive topographical work in verse, entitled *Germania illustrata*, mirrors in fact all of his basic preoccupations: the combination of eloquence with *sapientia* and factual knowledge, his predilection for natural philosophical disciplines, and his intention to lead his nation to new glory. Surpassing the Italians: the work would have been a masterpiece modelled on – and possibly outshining – Flavio Biondo’s *Italia illustrata*. Would have been: Celtis never wrote it. Still, the idea itself is one of the determining factors in his whole program. From the *Norimberga* onwards,²⁰⁹ he kept mentioning this plan, and he even presented several components of the comprehensive *Amores*-edition in 1502 as a partial fulfilment of his project, in order to meet the (by then) high expectations of his audience.²¹⁰ It is obvious that Celtis imagined *himself* in the position of the main initiator and leader of the German humanist movement. Obligatory modesty restrained him from a most explicit advertisement of this role of his – and in relation to the ruler, he had to give up his first place to his patron –, but his recurrent implicit and less implicit references were well understandable for his audience. Celtis’s *sodales* could be even less miserly with the eulogy of the Arch-humanist; various constituents of his self-constructed image – say, “the bringer of the muses to Germany”²¹¹ – are mirrored in a number of Celtis-praising poems from his first editions to after his death.

Already his humanist name, *Conradus Celtis Protucius*, alluded to his pioneering role. The rare word *celtis* meant, among others,²¹² “chisel,” and Ulsenius, playing with this meaning of the word, refers to the chiseling of hard rock in a praising epigram to his friend;²¹³ *Protucius* comes from the Greek verb προτύπτω meaning “press forward; forge beforehand, strike first.” Both is based on Celtis’s original name, *Pickel* (“pickaxe”). Celtis never reminded his audience of his original name, and did his best to mythify his birth, all the more since this

²⁰⁹ *Norimberga (Conrad Celtis und sein Buch über Nürnberg*, ed. A. Werminghoff, Freiburg i. Br., 1921), p. 105.

²¹⁰ As it can be gathered from the relevant passages, the work would have consisted of four books, and would have presented Germany in the frameworks of what was called *cosmographia*: geography-ethnography, involving relevant aspects of astronomy and cosmology (maps would have been added to the text). The topographical description would have provided him occasion for the involvement of some historiography, praising noble German deeds and rulers. Autopsy, personal observation would have completed information from the written sources, and in this respect Celtis would have relied on the cooperation with his *sodales*. For Celtis’s project of a *Germania illustrata*: Müller, *Die ‘Germania generalis’*, 441-484; Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 345-354 and 373-8.

²¹¹ Cf. Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 102-3.

²¹² *Celtis* could also denote two plants that might have to do with Celtis’s choice of name: *Celtis australis* or *Celtis tournefortii*, commonly called hackberries, and a kind of lotus mentioned by Pliny: cf. Kemper, *Die Redaktion*, 197-9.

²¹³ One of the greeting epigrams of the *Episodia* begins so: *Celte tua caelas, Conrade, rebellem. / Est mea dura silex, nil tua celtis agit.* (BW p. 306.)

birth was quite humble: he was son of a peasant.²¹⁴ It has already been pointed out that one of the reasons for his ambitious self-representation must have been a kind of minority complex.²¹⁵ In the following I mention only some of the works where Celtis refers to his individual significance.

As early as in the *Ode ad Apollinem*, Celtis seems to have stylized himself as a kind of Apollo-priest.²¹⁶ Later, too, he appeared in this role²¹⁷ – as in the *Carmen Saeculare*, celebrating the secular year²¹⁸ –, and he stated explicitly, too, that he wanted to bring the muses to Germany.²¹⁹ He repeatedly referred to himself as the first poet laureate of Germany. With such representative phrases as the *Sodalitas Celtica* or “the letters... of the *Sodalitas Litteraria* to Conrad Celtis,” he positioned himself in the center of the *respublica litteraria* of the region. As will be seen, many of the woodcuts in the Celtis-related editions of the 1500s highlight the double glory of him and Maximilian I. Here I only touch on the much analyzed “memorial image”²²⁰ (“*Sterbebild*”, fig. 2.), designed by Celtis and delivered by Burgkmair in 1507, shortly before the Arch-humanist’s death: the glorification of Celtis and the humanist *vir doctus* reaches a summit here, and the woodcut contributed to a paradigmatic change in the visual self-representation of humanists in the sixteenth century.²²¹ The medieval devotional epitaph is secularized here; poetry / philosophy is elevated to an almost religious sphere, and instead of celestial glory, the earthly fame, eternity in *this* world receives emphasis.²²² The Roman gravestone served as the basic model for the woodcut, but the

²¹⁴ For the mythologizing of his birth and name, cf. e.g. Wuttke, *Conradus Celtis Protucius*, 173ff.

²¹⁵ E.g. U. Hess, “Typen des Humanistenbriefes. Zu den Celtis-Autographen der Münchener Universitätsbibliothek,” in *Befund und Deutung. Zum Verhältnis von Empirie und Interpretation in Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaft. Festschrift für Hans Fromm*, ed. K. Grubmüller et al. (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1979), 493.

²¹⁶ Robert, “Carmina Pieridum,” 98.

²¹⁷ See ch. V,1.

²¹⁸ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 140.

²¹⁹ E.g. Od. II,6,11-12: *Unica cura mihi Latias inferre camenas / Et Grais fidibus resonantes...; Conradi Celtis Protucii Panegyris ad duces Bavariae*, ed., tr., comm. J. Gruber (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2004), p. XLIX.

²²⁰ In this study I refer to the Celtis-related woodcuts with an English title that mirrors as much as possible the German titles used in German scholarship.

²²¹ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 500.

²²² E.g. Worstbrock, “Die Konstitution,” 23; J. Gruber, “‘Singulis rebus reperire causas.’ Konrad Celtis und der Bildungskanon der frühen Neuzeit,” in *Gymnasium. Zeitschrift für Kultur der Antike und humanistische Bildung* 110 (2003), 261.



Fig. 2. Celtis's memorial image, made by Burkmaier

influence of late fifteenth-century Italian representations of *docti viri* can also be observed.²²³ Beyond his works, Celtis's *virtus* is also represented by the indication of his social status, primarily as the leader of the *Collegium Poetarum et Mathematicorum*. The audience at which the woodcut aims are *vates*, *docti viri* as well, so the image fulfils a group-building function, too.²²⁴

b. The complementarity of 'poetica' and 'philosophia' and the emphasis on natural philosophical disciplines in Celtis's humanistic program

After Celtis was crowned poet laureate in 1487, he left for Italy, then Poland.²²⁵ The main texts of the first print he issued after his return to Germany, the *Panegyris ad duces Bavariae* (1492) already include that concept of poetry and that integrative humanistic program which had been taking shape due to his rich experience in Germany, Italy and Poland, and which basically did not change until his death in 1508. The two central ideas of this program are (1) the ideal of an intergrative *philosophia* or *sapientia* (reconcilable with *theologia*) that includes all the disciplines, all branches of knowledge, and (2) the complementarity of this *philosophia* with *eloquentia* and *poesis / poetica* (in which *eloquentia* manifests itself in an exemplary way).²²⁶ It is not these central ideas themselves that are original, but his special emphases and specific ideas developed around this seed, that unique combination of old and new concepts that altogether make out a rather coherent humanistic program. The complementary relationship of eloquence and wisdom had often been emphasized in antiquity, notably by Cicero,²²⁷ and became one of the central ideas of Italian humanism; the concept of an all-inclusive *philosophia* and the encyclopedic thought (the "circular" way of sciences that one has to go through to achieve wisdom) have a similarly great tradition.²²⁸ According to Petrarch, just as philosophy and theology are not included among the *artes liberales*, so

²²³ Iconographical analysis by Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 290ff.

²²⁴ An analysis of this woodcut – which is closely related the elegy Am. IV,15 (*Quattuor libri amorum secundum quattuor latera germaniae; Germania generalis; Accedunt carmina aliorum ad libros amorum pertinentia*, ed. Felicitas Pindter, Leipzig: Teubner, 1934) from the perspective of self-representation, incorporating most results of the previous scholarship, has been provided by Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 482-509.

²²⁵ See ch. II,3,a.

²²⁶ The research of those scholars who have investigated in depth Celtis's humanistic program have resulted in similar summarizing statements, cf. e.g. D. Wuttke, "Humanismus als integrative Kraft. Die Philosophia des deutschen 'Erzhumanisten' Conrad Celtis," *Artibus et Historiae* 6/11 (1985), 88f; Wuttke, "Conradus Celtis Protucius," 189; Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 144. Cf. also Grössing, *Humanistische*, 147f.

²²⁷ Cf. e.g. De inv. I,1.

²²⁸ Cf. e.g. Quint. Inst. I,10,1 about the circle of sciences; summarily: P. Luh, *Der Allegorische Reichsadler von Conrad Celtis und Hans Burgkmair: ein Werbeblatt für das Collegium poetarum et mathematicorum in Wien* (Frankfurt a. M. et al.: Lang, 2002), 79. The idea of the close relationship of poetry and science came up frequently in the Middle Ages: Curtius, *Europäische*, 480.

poetry is not among them either, since they incorporate all the *artes*: a prince is not included among his nobles.²²⁹ Among the German humanists who paved the way for Celtis, Rudolph Agricola has to be highlighted, whom Celtis met in his first stay in Heidelberg (1484-5) and praised later many times:²³⁰ his integrative notion of *studia humanitatis*, his emphasis on the close interrelationship of rhetorics and philosophy, and his version of the division of the *artes* are all mirrored²³¹ in Celtis's later program. Celtis, however, will develop the tradition of *poeta doctus*²³² further: how he does this will be the issue in the following.

Interestingly, Celtis himself – unlike many of his contemporaries – has not written a *defensio poetices* in a strict sense, and as for the other standard poetological genre, his *Ars versificandi* was written *before* the crystallization of his integrative humanism. However, a number of Celtis-works include poetological reflections, or indeed, summarize his whole program: a printed inaugural oration, some programmatic odes and woodcuts, introductions that are in fact small treatises. In the following I will overview these works in a chronological order and summarize how Celtis's most basic concepts about poetry appear in them. We are at the core of his whole oeuvre, where both his intriguing personality and his significance in literary history manifests itself to a great extent. However, this subchapter will remain just an introductory one, basically drawing on excellent in-depth analyses of previous scholarship: my only objectives are to give a convenient, well graspable picture about his ideals in general and his emphasis on natural philosophy in particular, and to provide a basis for some of my later analyses. I am going to limit myself on Celtis's theoretical reflections concerning his program, and only the most telling works at that; many of his poems echo these ideas in commonplace form, and in general, his poetical and prose works themselves mirror to a great extent his programmatic ideas, but I am concerned here only with his ideals, his vision of renewed Latin literature and *philosophia* in Germany.

²²⁹ Sen. XV,11.

²³⁰ As early as in the *Ars versificandi* he praised Agricola as his master (f. 2r). For their relationship: Kurt Adel, "Rodolphus Agricola und Conrad Celtis," in *Rodolphus Agricola Phrisius: 1444 – 1485. Proceedings of the International Conference at the University of Groningen, 28-30 October 1985*, ed. W. Akkerman et al. (Leiden et al.: Brill, 1988).

²³¹ Primarily in his *In laudem philosophiae et reliquarum artium oratio* (1476, ed. in *Humanismus* [ed. Rupprich], p. 171-180) and his *De formando studio* (1484). Wuttke, "Conradus Celtis Protucius," 176; Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 72-3.

²³² Summarily about this tradition since Petrarch: Worstbrock, "Die 'Ars versificandi,'" 476 with literature.

On 30 August 1492 Konrad Celtis, the newly appointed professor of poetry and rhetorics held his inaugural speech at the university of Ingolstadt.²³³ On the one hand, the speech and its topoi met the requirements of the genre *laus poetices* or *laus artium* expected on such occasions;²³⁴ on the other hand, he extended the scope and outlined a program of a reform of German education – what is more, German culture – that was unusual in many respects. He laid stress on its programmatic significance by having the *oratio* published, together with a panegyric on “the Bavarian princes,” and another programmatic ode, dedicated to Sigismundus Fusilius.²³⁵ His commitment to his nation – increased also by the concurrence with Italy – is strongly felt throughout the *oratio*: he scourges the barbaric conditions of his fatherland with all its discords, ignorance and all the drawbacks of scholastic education. “Turn then, Germans, turn to more cultured studies, which only philosophy and eloquence can teach you.”²³⁶ The *translatio imperii* should be followed by a *translatio studii*. A humanistic education should involve the so far neglected knowledge of their own land and national history; and in general, the whole world, the whole cosmos is to be known by one trained on the Latin and Greek²³⁷ *auctores* (the investigations should also be based on personal observation, as exemplified by the ancient wandering philosophers). Secrets of nature and of the Divine, *res naturae* and *res divinae* are both to be studied: the two often appears together as the columns of an integrative philosophy.²³⁸ With such an education can one earn eternal fame. The ancient poet-theologians provide the ideal: Celtis makes use of tradition of Ancient Theology in order to support his own integrative humanistic views.

Celtis’s intention of a thorough reevaluation of poetry-rhetorics (that had a relatively low esteem also at the actual university) is explicit in the speech.²³⁹ His educational program takes

²³³ Celtis acquired this position primarily through the offices of Sixtus Tucher, professor of canon law; on this and Celtis’s activity in Ingolstadt: *Panegyris* (ed. Gruber), p. XXXIV-IX; programmatic speeches of humanists that may have served as a pattern for Celtis: *ibid.*, p. XLIIff.

²³⁴ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 129.

²³⁵ *Panegyris ad duces Bavariae; Oratio in gymnasio Ingolstadiæ habita* (Augsburg: E. Ratdolt, after 31 Aug. 1492) (henceforth: *Paneg.*-ed.). Modern ed. with comm. and tr.: *Panegyris* (ed. Gruber). The main parts of the print: *Conradi Celtis Protucii... panegyris ad duces Bavariae et Philippum Palatinum Rheni...* (henceforth: *Paneg.*); *Eiusdem oratio in gymnasio in Ingelstadio publice recitata* (henceforth: *Or.*); *Eius ode ad Sigismundum Fusilium Vratislamensem...* (henceforth: Fusilius-ode).

²³⁶ Or. 10,1: *Quamobrem convertite vos, Germani, convertite vos ad mitiora studia, quae sola vos philosophia et eloquentia docere potest*. Tr. by Forster in *Selections*. These two appear together several times in the text, cf. e.g. Or. 10,4: *Magna profecto res illa et prope divina in administranda illorum republica, quod sapientiam eloquentiae coniungere studuerint*.

²³⁷ There are many traces of Celtis’s preoccupation with the Greek: cf. *Panegyris* (ed. Gruber), p. L.

²³⁸ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 131. An example is provided by the following paraphrase of the term *philo-sophy*: *in coelestium rerum et naturae inquisitionem amor* (Or. 2,7). Agricola, too, insisted in his speech on philosophy that the study of visible and invisible things (those pertaining to natural philosophy and theology) make one similar to God (Gruber, “Singulis rebus,” 261).

²³⁹ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 130.

a more concrete shape in the second part of the *Panegyris*, where he in fact enumerates the disciplines to be learned²⁴⁰ in an ascending order, in units clearly divided by paragraphs:

- v. 66-75 the *trivium* based on classical authors;²⁴¹
- v. 76-91 general natural philosophy (the longest paragraph!);²⁴²
- v. 92-102 astronomy, in close connection to geometry, arithmetics and music;²⁴³
- v. 103-111 comprehensive geography;
- v. 112-9 medicine;
- v. 120-6 law;
- v. 127-137 historiography and panegyrics²⁴⁴ as *officium poetae*;²⁴⁵
- v. 138-145 theology.

Even from this brief enumeration at least two peculiarities can immediately be seen. First, while the text of the penultimate unit itself speaks about “young men” (*iuvenes*) or “the educated” (*doctos*) he will record and “sing” the venerable German and ancient deeds, the marginal notes (*officium poetae* at v. 131, *Antiqui theologi poetae*) and parallel passages²⁴⁶ make clear that this historiographical eulogy is the task of the poets (the hexametric *Panegyris* itself provides an example). Although the paragraph highlights only the political-historiographical function of poetry,²⁴⁷ it is remarkable how Celtis reevaluates poetry by removing it from its usual place in the *trivium* to its new place among the highest faculties.²⁴⁸ Second, the extension of the *quadrivium* (itself dominated by astronomy) by general natural philosophy and comprehensive geography is not only a gesture towards fellow *mathematici* at the university,²⁴⁹ but spectacularly mirrors his natural philosophical interests – which in turn mirror, among others, the impact of Florentine Platonism, the studies at the university of Cracow, and such German acquaintances as the Nuremberg patrician Hartman Schedel and

²⁴⁰ In the *Panegyris* Celtis speaks as if the new system of education were already accomplished *per te*, by the prince.

²⁴¹ In the ten-line paragraph logic is “granted” only a half line (v. 75: ...*arguta doctus in arte* is specified as *logica* by the marginal note in the 1492 edition).

²⁴² Including the issue of the role of God, the fate and the stars in the government of the universe. The marginal note to v. 77 reads *naturalis phi[losophi]a*.

²⁴³ The last three are “granted” one line respectively in the end the eleven-line paragraph

²⁴⁴ Similarly summarized in the comm. of Gruber, p. 78.

²⁴⁵ Marginal note to v. 131.

²⁴⁶ Cf. v. 51-57 of the same poem; Müller, *Die ‘Germania generalis,’* 216.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.; Gruber p. LIII. On the significance of historiography-panegyrics for Celtis in general: Gruber p. LIII f., p. 78.

²⁴⁸ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 145-6.

²⁴⁹ C. Schöner, *Mathematik und Astronomie an der Universität Ingolstadt im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1994), 236-7: “Diese starke Betonung der Astronomie und der Kosmographie ist wohl als Hommage für diejenigen Freunde von Celtis – vor allem Andreas Stiborius und Johannes Stabius – zu verstehen, die sich schon in den achtziger Jahren intensiver mit den quadrivalen Disziplinen, insbesondere der Astrologie, beschäftigt hatten.”

his library.²⁵⁰ In the *Fusilius*-ode, whose pedagogical agenda is made explicit already by the title²⁵¹ (“...what [disciplines] should be taught to the young”²⁵²), natural philosophy is even more dominant: around a half of the main part that outlines an idealistic program of education (v. 29-76) is dedicated to such disciplines.²⁵³

The next and last academic station in Celtis’s career was his lectureship of poetry-rhetorics at the university of Vienna from 1497; he seems to have led here a more sedentary way of life than in the preceding years – and to have lectured more diligently than in Ingolstadt. As appears from the preface of the first print he issued in Vienna (for his own lectures), an edition of the cosmological treatise *De mundo* attributed to Apuleius,²⁵⁴ his basic educational objectives did not change. As Celtis explains, the work can excellently fulfil a propedeutic function because it combines eloquence and wisdom, and because it leads one towards the understanding of cosmic secrets: in the contemplation of the God-created universe, natural philosophy and theology merge.²⁵⁵ As appears from Celtis’s notes in his own *De mundo*-exemplar, the work might have had a decisive influence in the formation of his concept of *philosophia*.²⁵⁶

In order to realize – at least in part – his humanistic program, Celtis intended a representative edition of his complete elegies, odes and epigrams, timed for 1500, the secular year. Celtis eventually needed the patronage of Emperor Maximilian more than he had expected: the edition that came out in Nuremberg in 1502²⁵⁷ (henceforth: the *Amores*-edition) shows a shift of emphasis from poetical self-representation to an illustration of “the emperor and his empire.”²⁵⁸ The edition applies both textual and visual types of media and is composed of woodcuts, poetical paratexts and poetical and prose works of Celtis. His main

²⁵⁰ Müller, *Die ‘Germania Generalis,’* 209-210.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 150.

²⁵² ...*Quibus instituendi sint adolescentes.*

²⁵³ H. C. Schnur (*Lateinische Gedichte deutscher Humanisten*, Stuttgart: Reclam, 1967, 424), Wuttke (“Conradus Celtis Protucius,” 181), and many others have called attention to its unique program compared to the traditional system of education.

²⁵⁴ *L. Apulei Platonici et Aristotelici philosophi Epitoma divinum de mundo Seu Cosmographia ductu Conradi Celtis* (Vienna: J. Winterburg, 1497/98; GW 2424/10). Ed. of the preface in BW p. 295-9.

²⁵⁵ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 151-2.

²⁵⁶ Müller, *Die ‘Germania generalis,’* 316 n. 65.

²⁵⁷ *Quatuor libri amorum secundum quatuor latera Germanie* (Nuremberg: “Sodalitas Celtica,” 5 Apr. 1502). Partial modern ed.: *Quattuor libri amorum secundum quattuor latera germaniae; Germania generalis; Accedunt carmina aliorum ad libros amorum pertinentia*, ed. Felicitas Pindter (Leipzig: Teubner, 1934). For the *Amores* I use this edition; for the *Germania generalis*, that of Müller, *Die ‘Germania generalis’*; for the *Norimberga*, that of Albert Werminghoff, *Konrad Celtis und sein Buch über Nürnberg* (Freiburg i. Br., 1921).

²⁵⁸ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 169. For the history of the publication: E. Schäfer, “Nachlese zur Odenedition des Conradus Celtis,” in *Horaz und Celtis*, ed. U. Auhagen et al. (Tübingen: G. Narr, 2000), 227-235; Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 313-325. In the formation of the *Amores* three phases have been distinguished: 1. A preliminary version that Trithemius called *peregrinatio Sarmatica* (completed before 1494); 2. “Secular phase” (by 1500); 3. “Maximilian-phase” (by 1502) (*Säkularphase* and *Maximilianphase* are Schäfer’s terms).

works included are the elegy cycle *Amores*, the cosmographical poem *Germania Generalis*, the topographical *Norimberga*, and the panegyric stage play *Ludus Dianae*: the last three had already appeared before, in full or in part.²⁵⁹ Already the bird eye's view of the edition suggests that it was meant to represent a successful combination of *poesis* and *sapientia*, mainly the comprehensive geographical aspects of the latter. This is true for the core work, the *Amores*,²⁶⁰ most of all: although the poet follows in many ways the generic traditions of the classical love elegies, he replaces the classical mythology with a cosmic-astrological and a topographical-ethnological background.²⁶¹ The hero's quest is to wander through and describe the four parts of what he calls *Germania*; the cosmological dimensions of the work can be seen from a system of correspondences based on the number four: four books are devoted to four women, directions, rivers, seasons, parts of the day, elements, temperaments, qualities, zodiacal signs, ages of life, and colors.²⁶² The panegyric *praefatio* insists on the didactic function of the work, the two main issues being love and *cosmographia*. Love is also a cosmic force: in the apology of love that constitutes the central part of the *praefatio*, Celtis draws on Ficino, Beroaldo and other (Neo)Platonic writings. On the one hand, the love stories themselves are meant to be fictitious, and Celtis the lyrical subject is not identical with the real Celtis; on the other hand, the stories are true as *exempla vitae*, with all their moral implications. In sum, the *Amores* is meant to convey truth in many respects, the truth that only the poet can convey; fiction is legitimized through that all *inventio* is based on already known (moral, geographical etc.) facts²⁶³ (the insertion of a *praefatio* before a lyrical cycle already suggests the role of *poeta doctus*: this was only customary with didactic treatises).²⁶⁴

Beyond the *Amores-praefatio*, one can find reflections by Celtis about his own (now partly fulfilled) literary program and humanistic vision in some of the poems and woodcuts²⁶⁵ as well; the most significant and explicit one is the *Philosophia*-woodcut, born of the cooperation between Celtis and Albrecht Dürer (f. a6v; fig. 3).²⁶⁶ The Horatian principle of *ut pictura poesis* formed an intergral part of Celtis's concept of poetry, already from the *Ars versificandi* with its concept of *evidentia*; with its basically evident programmatic messages,

²⁵⁹ For an overview of the edition, with the earlier appearances of its components: Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 33-38.

²⁶⁰ The most thorough analysis of the *Amores*: Robert, *Konrad Celtis*.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 272-280.

²⁶² See p. 94.

²⁶³ Wuttke, *Conradus Celtis Protucius*, 186.

²⁶⁴ A thorough analysis of the *Amores-praefatio*, including the problem of fiction and reality, has been provided by Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 154-248.

²⁶⁵ A comprehensive survey of the woodcuts of the *Amores*-edition constitutes the major part of Luh, *Werkausgabe*: 39-246. The fame and glory of the humanist poet seems to be a common currency of all these woodcuts.

²⁶⁶ As for the contents and main messages of the woodcut, Dürer's role is minimal: Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 106.

the *Philosophia*-woodcut (as some other woodcuts) may be said to exemplify the parallel notion, *ut poesis pictura*. It summarizes Celtis's basic objectives in such a spectacular way²⁶⁷ that it has served for many scholars as a basis for the discussion of Celtis's humanistic program and all the related passages in the *Amores*-edition.²⁶⁸ The picture is framed by four wind-blowing figures representing the tetradic system of the *Amores*. The wise men in the four medallions on a wreath of different plants (see p. 191-3) represent the idea of *translatio studii* in an intriguing version.²⁶⁹ Ptolemy stands at the beginning, with an armillary sphere and the inscription "the priests of the Egyptians and the Chaldeans," who were generally regarded as the inventors of astronomy: beside the prominent place of astronomy and geography in Celtis's thought, the figure mirrors the adoption of the Platonic-Hermetic view about the eastern – and ultimately heavenly – origin of wisdom. The choice of Plato as representant of the "philosophers of the Greeks" is hardly surprising. One of the reasons why Celtis was indebted to the Pythagorean-Platonic philosophical tradition was that these wandering philosophers based their knowledge largely on personal experience, Plato, for instance, learned in Egypt and saw the columns of Mercurius; the choice of Plato and Ptolemy and the intertextual allusions of the *superscriptio*²⁷⁰ together emphasize again the ideology of wandering and personal observation. With Virgil and Cicero as the representants of "the poets and orators of the Latins," Celtis seems to stress eloquence as the main contribution of the Romans to the *studia*. And where else would the *translatio* finally lead than the "wise men of the Germans"? Beyond Albert the Great, "Albertus" might also refer to Albrecht Dürer himself, who again laid stress on autopsy and scientific observation: it is just the experience by which the Germans can surpass the Romans in the emulation.

²⁶⁷ Cf. e.g. *ibid.*, 106 and 144.

²⁶⁸ Wuttke, "Humanismus;" Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 105-127. Other important studies from the abundant literature on the woodcut: C. Dodgson, *Catalogue of Early German and Flemish Woodcuts Preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum*, Vol. I (London, 1903); Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 64-122; Th. Shauerte, "Von der 'Philosophia' zur 'Melencolia I': Anmerkungen zu Dürers Philosophie-Holzschnitt für Konrad Celtis," in: *Konrad Celtis und Nürnberg*, ed. F. Fuchs (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2004), 117-139.

²⁶⁹ Cf. primarily Wuttke, "Humanismus," 80-83; Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 78-84; Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 107-115. Celtis's Mommerloch-ode (Od. III,21) renders the idea of *translatio studii* in a similar way (Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 150).

²⁷⁰ *Sophiam me Greci vocant Latini Sapientiam / Egyptii et Chaldei me invenere Greci scripsere / Latini transtulere Germani ampliavere*. The first line alludes to the verses of Afranius (*Usus me genuit, mater peperit Memoria, / Sophiam vocant me Graei, vos Sapientiam*), preserved in a passage by Aulus Gellius, arguing that the acquiring of wisdom requires personal experience at least as much as books. Wuttke, "Humanismus," 80.



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Fig. 3. The *Philosophia*-woodcut in the *Amores*-edition.



Fig. 4. Opposing the *Philosophia*-woodcut: Celtis kneeling before Maximilian.

It is the central *Philosophia*-figure, the *subscriptio* below,²⁷¹ and their relation to an educational program and the division of disciplines that concern us here the most. *Philosophia* sits enthroned as a young queen,²⁷² with branches of the *studium* indicated in front of her breast. This parallels with the “Celtis kneeling before Maximilian” woodcut (f. a1v; fig. 4), where Maximilian I is the central figure and the *Amores*-exemplar handed over by Celtis is in front of the emperor’s breast:²⁷³ thus the *Amores*-edition is implicated to be a work of integrative philosophy, and the message of the parallel woodcuts concerning the significant role of Celtis, Maximilian and their symbiotic relationship is likewise obvious. The three books in *Philosophia*’s right hand may stand for the Platonic-Stoic threefold division of philosophy (*philosophia rationalis, moralis, naturalis*)²⁷⁴ that Celtis seems to have known in Agricola’s version. Based on this,²⁷⁵ but with different emphases, the first three lines of the *subscriptio* provide another threefold division of philosophy (made explicit by the conjunctive *quicquid*) where the middle line circumscribing the *res humanae* is flanked by lines referring to the *res naturae* and *res divinae*.²⁷⁶ These two had already been frequently paired in the Ingolstadt *oratio*²⁷⁷ – and they flank the *septem artes liberales* indicated in an ascending order²⁷⁸ in front of Queen *Philosophia*.²⁷⁹ The interpretation of the Θ and even more the Φ had long been debated and misunderstood until Luh has convincingly demonstrated – based

²⁷¹ *Quicquid habet Coelum quid Terra quid Aer et aequor / Quicquid in humanis rebus et esse potest / Et deus in toto quicquid facit igneus orbe / Philosophia meo pectore cuncta gero.*

²⁷² For a comparison of *Philosophia* with that of Boethius (Cons. I. pr. 1), the main model for Celtis / Dürer: Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 68-77.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 80; 88.

²⁷⁴ Wuttke, “Humanismus,” 69; Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 72-3. The threefold division is reconcilable with the twofold division, *res humanae / divinae*, which has a similarly long tradition: cf. e.g. Cic. Tusc. IV,26,57: *Sapientiam esse rerum divinarum et humanarum scientiam cognitionemque, quae cuiusque rei causa sit*; or Celtis, Am. IV,4,21-2: *Divinas atque humanas qui pectore causas / versarent...* Further examples in Wuttke, “Humanismus,” 75.

²⁷⁵ Within Agricola’s threefold division (Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 73 n. 46), *philosophia naturalis* includes physics with medicine; mathematics with geometry, arithmetics, astronomy and music; and theology. This is line with Celtis’s frequent pairing *res naturae / divinae*.

²⁷⁶ So summarized e.g. by Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 122. As for v. 3, the way *Philosophia* circumscribes the *res divinae* (e.g. with the Stoic hue of the term *deus igneus*) moves it away from a strictly Christian theology towards a universal theology or *theologia cordis*: Wuttke, “Humanismus,” 75; 85.

²⁷⁷ The continuity between the Ingolstadt *oratio* and the *Philosophia*-woodcut has been emphasized primarily by Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, esp. 106; 144.

²⁷⁸ Drawing on similar medieval representations, Schauerte has argued that it is not an ascension that one can see below Philosophy’s heart, but the letters come *from* the heart, and he identified it as a banner (“*Spruchband*.” Schauerte, “Von der ‘Philosophia,’” 117-124). Still, the arts are represented in an ascending order, and Boethius’s *Consolatio*, too, clearly speaks about an ascension (1,p1: *Harum in extremo margine II graecum, in supremo uero Θ legebatur intextum atque inter utrasque litteras in scalarum modum gradus quidam insigniti uidebantur, quibus ab inferiore ad superius elementum esset ascensus*), so I would not like to deviate from the earlier, general scholarly opinion.

²⁷⁹ In this respect, the *subscriptio* is in line with the disciplines indicated by the Greek letters; however, this does not mean that *all* the three verses correspond to the three units of the letter-series, as Gruber, *Panegyris*, p. LVIf. thought (*physis – septem artes liberales – theós*); it is a forced concept to equate the line *Quicquid in humanis rebus et esse potest* with the *septem artes liberales*, which includes natural philosophical disciplines.

on the observation of Dodgson²⁸⁰ – that they must mean *theologia* and *physica* / *physiologia*²⁸¹ (natural philosophy). The two disciplines can not only be seen as parts of a ninefold²⁸² division of philosophy but also as the two branches that integrate and make sense of the traditional curriculum of *septem artes liberales*.

The *Amores*-edition in its final form was meant to express, among others, Celtis's gratitude to Emperor Maximilian for making possible the foundation of the *Collegium Poetarum et Mathematicorum*²⁸³ (henceforth: CPM), a special faculty with the aim of training a humanist elite; its very name mirrors Celtis's concept of *sapientia* as resting on the pillars of poetry, on the one hand, and numerical / natural philosophical disciplines, on the other. Celtis acquired the right to crown poets himself, and in general, he gained more ground to put his ideas into practice.²⁸⁴ Let us take a glimpse at a single sheet with an allegorical imperial eagle that was meant to express and advertize the educational ideology of the CPM in a well graspable visual form (Fig. 5).²⁸⁵ A visual medium again: in the 1500s²⁸⁶ Celtis seems to have preferred the medium of woodcuts for the presentation of his programmatic ideas, and a transparent, well-decodable style at that.²⁸⁷ It is uncertain when Hans Burgkmair delivered the "imperial eagle", Luh suggests 1503 or early 1504.²⁸⁸ That it represents the humanistic program of the CPM can already be seen from the inscription above, with the expression *Maxmilianeis scolis* ("in the schools of Maximilian").²⁸⁹ As Luh summarizes, the woodcut conveys three basic messages: it represents the basics of poetical creation; establishes the high status of poetry as the noblest among all human activities; and contextualizes poetical creation and its education as happening under the defending wings of the Habsburg-eagle (who is at the same time *Iovis ales*, God's bird²⁹⁰). The medallions on the right wing show the seven days of creation, those of the left wing the seven mechanic arts; poetry / philosophy is placed in the center, between

²⁸⁰ Dodgson, *Catalogue*, p. 282 interpreted them as *physis* and *theos*.

²⁸¹ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 73.

²⁸² Corresponding to the nine muses. Celtis originally intended to dedicate the *Amores*-edition to Apollo and the nine muses. *Ibid.*, 74.

²⁸³ See ch. II,3,c.

²⁸⁴ One of the prints that informs us about these ideas is the *Rhapsodia*-edition, based on a panegyric stage play performed by the students of the CPM; the edition abounds in paratexts echoing many ideas discussed above. *Rhapsodia, laudes et victoria de Boemannis*... Augsburg: Otmar, 1505; modern ed. in *Ludi scaenici*, ed. F. Pindter (Budapest: Egyetemi Nyomda, 1945); for the print and its woodcuts: Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 269-281.

²⁸⁵ The woodcut has several exemplars, e.g. Vienna, ÖNB, cod. 3448; Wolfenbüttel, HAB, 12. 9. Poet. 2°. For further exemplars cf. Luh, *Reichsadler*, 12 n. 22. By far the most detailed analysis of the woodcut has been provided by this study. For a bibliography of earlier scholarly works that touched on the woodcut, cf. Wuttke, 'Humanismus,' n. 109.

²⁸⁶ For the chronology of the Celtis-related woodcuts: Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 326-333.

²⁸⁷ Wuttke, "Conradus Celtis Protucius," 188; Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 176; Luh, *Reichsadler*, 8-9.

²⁸⁸ Luh, *Reichsadler*, 88.

²⁸⁹ *LAUREA SERTA GERIT SACRO IOVIS ALES IN ORE / MAXMILIANEIS IAM CELEBRATA SCOLIS*.

²⁹⁰ Wuttke, "Humanismus," 88.

divine and human activity, in line with the concept of Landino who compared poetical creation to God's creation of the macrocosm. The central axis shows the stages the student should go through from the lowest human condition, represented by the slumbering Paris, to the highest glory of being crowned by the laurel wreath. In the scene of Paris and the goddesses, the essence of Paris's good and bad choice, the alternatives between *humanitas* and *immanitas* is allegorized by the figures of Mercury and *Discordia* (whose representation is reminiscent of the way Locher demonized Zingel and his other scholastic adversaries; such figures throw light on the actual educational background of the woodcut). Among the allegorical women supposed to stand for the *trivium*, Logic is replaced by Arithmetics (!); the representatives of the *quadrivium* surround a globe – the cosmos can be known by way of the *quadrivium* –, and Philosophy sits enthroned over the group. They lead one to poetry, to the muses and their inspiring fountain; finally, one is supposed to be laureated, directly or indirectly, by Emperor Maximilian, enthroned above them all, represented at the highest stage of the hierarchy. The *septem artes liberales* are not *ancillae theologiae* any more, but make possible the creation of poems, which are in fact microcosms.²⁹¹

At the end of his life, Celtis initiated further woodcuts that highlight specific aspects of his humanistic ideology. Two woodcuts, the “Concert of gods” and “Apollo on Mount Parnassus,” both focusing in poetical inspiration, have been added to the *Melopoiae*-print (1507)²⁹² – a collection of odes set to music by Tritonius under the supervision of Celtis – and are to be discussed later;²⁹³ the last woodcut, Celtis's memorial image has been treated above.

²⁹¹ The above summary is based on the detailed interpretation by Luh, *Reichsadler*.

²⁹² P. Tritonius, *Melopoiae Sive Harmoniae Tetracenticae... ductu Chunradi Celtis foeliciter impressae*, (Augsburg: J. Rynman, 1507). About the print, which was probably meant to prepare the edition of Celtis's odes: Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 247f. The print introduces the *Humanistenode*, a unique genre in the history of music. For the close relationship of poetry and music in Celtis: Robert, *Konrad Celtis* 28 n. 53.

²⁹³ See ch. V,2.



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Fig. 5. The "imperial eagle" woodcut.

The foregoing brief survey may have already shown what the main differences between Celtis's humanistic ideal and the standard Italian concept of *studia humanitatis* proper were.²⁹⁴ In Celtis's vision, *Poesis / eloquentia* and *sapientia* complement each other, what is more, they compose a unity, as Wuttke put it.²⁹⁵ In the term *vates*, the notions of the poet and the philosopher merge;²⁹⁶ when he says poet, he is supposed to mean philosopher as well,²⁹⁷ and vice versa.²⁹⁸ How and why *natural* philosophy – and within that, cosmology, astronomy / astrology – received a special emphasis in Celtis's whole oeuvre, will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter; furthermore, his insistence on *furor poeticus* and other Platonic ideas will be investigated through concrete poems and woodcuts in the later chapters. The Platonic-Ficinian *vates*-ideology that appeared both in German humanists' apologetical treatises around 1500 and in Celtis's various works elevated poetry and poet to cosmic dimensions, and thus provided frameworks or facilitated the self-representative use of various kinds of cosmic symbolism by Celtis and other poets.

²⁹⁴ About this standard sense of *studia humanitatis* cf. e.g. Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought. The Classic, Scholastic and Humanist Strains*, 9-10, or A. Buck, "Die 'studia humanitatis' im italienischen Humanismus," in *Humanismus im Bildungswesen des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Wolfgang Reinhard (Weinheim, 1984), 14.

²⁹⁵ D. Wuttke, *Dazwischen: Kulturwissenschaft auf Warburgs Spuren* (Baden-Baden: Koerner, 1990), 394.

²⁹⁶ Gruber, *Panegyris*, p. LI. Cf. also Stejskal, *Die Gestalt*, 80f.: "Der Zentralbegriff des deutschen Humanismus ist nicht der 'poeta' sondern der 'philosophus'."

²⁹⁷ E.g. Or. IV,5; Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 133.

²⁹⁸ As in Am. II,12,69.

Chapter II

Astronomy-astrology, micro- and macrocosm in Celtis's thought in general

1. Natural philosophical question-catalogues and the Pythagorean-Platonic cosmological tradition

Rerum causas repetere...¹ singulis rebus reperire causas...² naturae seriem rimari...³ the reader of Celtis comes across the issue of searching for the secret causes of things over and over again; this idea, expressed most often with the phrase *rerum causae*, is perhaps most frequent than any other “hobby-horses” of Celtis. The idea is basically the same as that which Goethe’s Faust expresses with the famous words “*Was die Welt / im Innersten zusammenhält*” (“What holds the world together deep inside”).⁴ It is not accidental that the Celtis-scholarship repeatedly found the parallel between Faust and Celtis.⁵ Robert opposes this scholarly attitude, insisting that it overemphasizes Celtis’s earnest inquisitive spirit against his *musa iocosa* attitude.⁶ It is true that Celtis’s real natural philosophical knowledge was far from that of Goethe or his Faust, and that the inquisitive spirit was a component of a role that Celtis assumed, the role of the *philosophus*. Still, one cannot deny his strong cosmological *interests*, his desire to know and mentally conquer the cosmos: otherwise his oeuvre would not abound in texts that attest to such inclinations, regarding both the cosmos’s innermost secrets and the phenomena of the visible nature. His experimenting with the torch in the salt mines of Wieliczka,⁷ his description of a bison hunt in the *Amores*,⁸ his wonder about a fire-lit nut-bush⁹ or about animals trapped in an amber,¹⁰ to say nothing about the frequency of passages about celestial phenomena: one could endlessly cite examples for his

¹ Od. I,20,70

² Od. I,11,38.

³ Od. I,1,16.

⁴ *Faust* I., v. 382f; cited in a similar context also by Worstbrock, “Die ‘Ars versificandi,’” 475.

⁵ E. g. K. L. Preiß (*Konrad Celtis und der italienische Humanismus*, PhD Dissertation, Vienna, 1951, 244) paraphrases the Faust in the context of Celtis’s search for the *rerum causas*: “*.deshalb hat sich Faust der Magie ergeben;*” Forster, *Selections*, 78 draws a parallel between Celtis’s, Faust’s and other romantics’ attitude to nature; H. Wiegand names Faust already in the title of his article: “Konrad Celtis: Nekromant und Bruder Faustus im Geiste; zu Elegie I,14 der ‘Amores,’” in *Iliaster. Literatur und Naturkunde in der Frühen Neuzeit. Festgabe für Joachim Telle zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. W. Kühlmann et al. (Heidelberg: Manutius, 1999), 303-319. For some other examples cf. Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 9 n. 40.

⁶ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 9.

⁷ Am. I,6.

⁸ Am. I,5.

⁹ Ep. II,28

¹⁰ Ep. I,49.

natural interests, based in a large part on obviously real experience. Naturally, he was a humanist, with the basic attitude of *aemulatio* and play with classical models, and one can often point to classical – or medieval, Renaissance – texts (such is the *rerum causae* motif itself) Celtis drew on; all the more important is to stress right at the beginning that Celtis did have an earnest inquisitive attitude to the cosmos, as shown already by the sheer quantity of relevant passages. With the above mentioned restrictions, there *was* something Faust-like in Celtis, and this is one of the most original and perhaps the most lovable aspects of his personality and his oeuvre. In this chapter I am going to highlight Celtis’s interest in nature and cosmos – particularly astronomy-astrology – from various perspectives: the models provided by the Pythagorean-Platonic cosmological tradition, Celtis’s emphasis on micro-macrocosmical relations in general, and the historical-biographical context of these interests.

The *rerum causae*-phrases often appear in longer passages that address natural philosophical issues in the form of an enumeration of natural phenomena, most often in a series of questions: such philosophical digressions are rightly called “question-catalogues” or “catalogue-like enumerations” in scholarship. In order to grasp the main features of Celtis’s attitude to cosmological issues, one had best look at these catalogues first. They are inspired by classical models: beyond such long didactic natural philosophical poems as Lucretius’s *De rerum natura* or Manilius’s *Astronomicum*,¹¹ more important patterns for Celtis seem to be those catalogues of the most famous classics – Virgil, Horace, Ovid – that are imbedded in longer, not primarily natural philosophical poems:¹² Celtis inserts to his poems his philosophical digressions in a similar way. Dieter Wuttke – who has repeatedly emphasized Celtis’s cosmological inclinations – has already called attention¹³ to a *Georgicon*-passage which must have inspired him (as shown by textual *similia*, too):

*Me vero primum dulces ante omnia Musae,
quarum sacra fero ingenti percussus amore,
accipiant caelique vias et sidera monstrent,
defectus solis varios lunaeque labores,
unde tremor terris, qua vi maria alta tumescant
obcibus ruptis rursusque in se ipsa residant,
quid tantum Oceano properent se tinguere soles
hiberni, vel quae tardis mora noctibus obstet.
(...)
Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas*

As for me, may the sweet Muses, supreme above all, / whose rites, I celebrate, stirred by a great love, / receive me, and show me heaven’s roads, and the stars, / the sun’s many eclipses, the moon’s labours, / where earth-quakes come from, forces that swell the deep seas, / bursting their barriers, then sinking back again into themselves: / why winter suns rush so to dip themselves in the ocean, / and what it is that holds back the slow nights. (...) He who’s been able to learn the

¹¹ Cf. Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 312f.

¹² Ov. Met. XV,67ff; Hor. Epist. I,12,16ff; Verg. Georg. V,475-492. Boethius’s *Consolatio Philosophiae*, the main source for the *Philosophia*-woodcut, has a catalogue, too (Cons. 1,m2). For more specifically astronomical catalogues, a passage in Urania’s speech in Martianus Capella’s *De nuptiis*, II,122-7 provides a good example.

¹³ Wuttke, “Humanismus,” 86.

*atque metus omnis et inexorable fatum
subiecit pedibus strepitumque Acherontis avari.*

causes of things is happy, / and has set all fear,
and unrelenting fate, and the noise / of greedy
Acheron, under his feet.¹⁴

Virgil reveals here his ardent love for the muses, who can teach him about stars, solar eclipses and so on: such knowledge frees us from the fear of death and the forces of destiny. While in classical poetry such catalogues (with natural philosophical or other questions) appear only occasionally, Celtis applies them conspicuously frequently: they are highly suitable to represent important aspects of his integrative humanistic program. His longest catalogues are in the *Amores* – that was meant to be, among others, a didactic philosophical poem –, but also the odes and even the epigrams abound in catalogue-like enumerations. They can appear in various contexts:

- in an educational context (as in the programmatic *Panegyris*, discussed above);¹⁵
- as the topic of conversation at humanist feasts, *convivia*;¹⁶
- assuming the philosopher-role in the *Amores* and musing on the causes of things;¹⁷
- most often: praising a friend's knowledge, and / or inviting him to study (further) and “sing” about such issues.¹⁸

Such philosophical digressions are common in contemporary German humanist poetry, though one encounters them more frequently in the work of Celtis.” He seems to have had a role in mediating this pattern.¹⁹ In general, what I say in this chapter about Celtis's cosmic concepts and their rhetorical expression is in many respects true for other humanists around him: Augustinus Moravus's, Laurentius Corvinus's or Johannes Tolhopf's views on micro- and macrocosm had much in common with that of Celtis, as appears from their surviving works.

¹⁴ Verg. Georg. II,475-492, tr. A. S. Kline.

¹⁵ Paneg.; Od. III,21 (to Mommerloch, in the context of the university of Cologne); Ep. I,90 *Ad gymnasium Crocaviense*.

¹⁶ Ep. II. 89, 2-4; Od. II,2,29-40; Am. II,10,37-48.

¹⁷ Am. II,2,9-52; IV,4,65-104.

¹⁸ Ep. II,53 to Antonius Allecius, 5-15; Od. I.4 to Ianus Canusius, 7-32; I,8 to Ursus, 13-4, 17-28; I,9 to S. Delius, 17-24; I,11 to S. Fusilius, 9-76; I. 27 to Bohuslav Hassenstein, 77-88; II,11 to Tucher, 45-52; II,12 to B. Waldkirch, 37-48; III,20 to G. Herward, 13-24; III,22 to Hartmann von Eptingen, 25-36.

¹⁹ Cf. e.g. the dedicatory poem of Vadianus, Celtis's disciple, in the *Parvulus philosophias naturalis Iuvenilibus Ingeniis Phisicen desiderantibus oppido quam necessarius* (Vienna: J. Singrenius, 1516; the first edition from 1510 is lost), f. 1r. Adrianus Wolphardus provides an example for the use of catalogue in a panegyric context: *Panegyris ad Caesarem Maximilianum* (Vienna, 1512), f. c1r. The motif of *rerum causae*, with or without catalogue-like enumeration, was a frequent commonplace in German Neo-Latin poetry in the second half of the fifteenth century.

It is clear from the above classified contexts that Celtis's question-catalogues are meant to represent integrative *philosophia, sapientia* in general: what issues a real man-of-letters should be interested in, what topics the poet should address. In this respect, the extent to which natural philosophy predominates is remarkable: around three quarter of the questions altogether pertain to natural philosophy, while issues pertaining to *philosophia rationalis, moralis*, history or medicine are much less frequent. This corroborates what could already be seen from the overview of Celtis's program, from texts like the programmatic *Panegyris* and the *Fusilius*-ode: natural philosophical, cosmological disciplines are for him the core disciplines, this knowledge makes the poet / the philosopher in the first place. It can even be said that it is primarily this cosmological concern that constitutes humanist group-identity, as Celtis wanted to see it: in the *convivia*, humanists discuss questions about the cosmos, and Celtis repeatedly encourages his friends to sing together about such issues.

Another significant fact is the preponderance of astronomy among the natural philosophical issues in the catalogues. The celestial spheres, the behaviour of the heavenly bodies are most frequently addressed. I will just quote one example in order to show the typical proportions, the catalogue in the ode to Bohuslav Lobkovic:

*His ubi fessus studiis, soluta
mente de rerum generose causis
disseris, terras, maria, insulasque
pectore cernens.
Doctus astrorum numeros reservas,
quae meent cursu memoras licenti,
quaeque sublimem rutilent per orbem
sidera noscis.
Quae volant nullis remoranda frenis,
atque nostrorum statuunt laborum
ordinem certum, stabili rotando
singula fuso.²⁰*

Exhausted from these pursuits, you, o noble one,
discuss with mind unbound the causes of things,
as you survey the lands, the seas, the islands in
your mind's eyes.
As a learned man, you hold in your mind the
number of stars, you can remember those that
travel past on an unregulated path, and you know
the stars that sparkle across the uppermost
celestial sphere.
These fly without any restraint, and determine a
fixed order for our labours, winding each one
around a firm reel.

From the phenomena of the earth the focus swiftly changes to the knowledge of the stars and their movements, and the end of the catalogue reckons with the stars' determinative effect on Earth, that is, astrology. The Sun is especially frequently addressed in the catalogues; in the ode to the Hungarian *sodales*, for instance, the catalogue is similar to the previous example, but when the focus shifts from the earth to the sky, not the stars in general are addressed in the two strophes, but the Sun's movements and its effect on the seasons.²¹

²⁰ Od. I,27,77-88.

²¹ Od. II,2,25-40: *Saepius mecum repetistis alta / mente, quae rerum fuerint latentes / inferum causae, / uperumque quis sit / lucidus ordo; / unde sublatum mare fluctuosis / turgeat ventis, nebulosus aer / unde vel*

Neither in classical poetry, nor in scholastic natural philosophy was astronomy-astrology so predominant. Celtis's predilection can be explained with many different reasons. The heavenly bodies were thought to have a significant influence on lands, folks, earthly phenomena – more significant than modern science estimates –, so it is not surprising that in the catalogues, which center around the *rerum causae*, geographical issues are less frequent, or they are related to the Sun's movement. It is also true that many of the addressees of the relevant odes are astronomers or humanists skilled in astronomy, which fact must have had an influence in choosing the questions. Still, these remain partial explanations. The preponderance of astronomical-astrological and solar issues in the catalogues mirrors a general predilection of Celtis, for which quite a number examples will be given in the following investigations. Astronomy-astrology permeates his poetry; he grasps every opportunity to involve the stars and the Sun.

Why were the heavenly bodies so important for Celtis? First of all, they fitted excellently the general philosophical frameworks of his thought concerning the universe as a whole and man's place in it. These frameworks were primarily defined by what we can call the Pythagorean-Platonic cosmological tradition.

As was transmitted by later classical sources, Pythagoras and his followers deeply believed in a harmoniously arranged universe, based on numerical proportions. The creator created a hierarchically structured, beautiful cosmos; the spherical forms and circular movements of the Sun, planets and stars are visible signs of this divine order, and this harmony is expressed by the music of the spheres (which was first understood metaphorically). The human mind originates in this divine perfection, and it must ultimately return to it; while living on Earth, imprisoned in the body, humans must work on the purification of the mind, and the primary means to this aim is the contemplation, observation of the harmonious universe, including the learning of the underlying numerical proportions.²² These tenets of Pythagorean cosmology and philosophy was mediated to later European philosophy primarily by Plato: as shown by his basically Pythagorean cosmology in the *Timaeus*, or the further elaboration on the idea of

vultus triplices coloret / nubibus Iris; / igneus Phoebi globus unde tanto / impetu currat, rapido rotatus / turbine, et lentam roseis reducat / solibus umbram, / et modo celsas properans ad Ursas / evocet flores, iterum rotatus / orbe declivi pluvium recurrens / pronus in Austrum.

²² For a summary of what was considered Pythagorean philosophy up to the Renaissance: S. K. Heninger Jr., *Touches of Sweet Harmony. Pythagorean Cosmology and Renaissance Poetics* (San Marino [California]: Huntington Library, 1974). A brief summary of Pythagorean cosmology is provided by S. K. Heninger Jr., "Pythagorean Cosmology and the Triumph of Heliocentrism," in *Le Soleil à la Renaissance: sciences et mythes. Colloque international tenu en avril 1963* (Brussels / Paris, 1965), 35-9.

the harmony of spheres or the heavenly origin of the human soul, Pythagorean thought permeated Platonic philosophy. For convenience, I will refer to the above outlined view of the cosmos as the Pythagorean-Platonic cosmological tradition. One can hardly overemphasize the impact of these views on later European intellectual historical traditions; I just remind one here of two directions in the development. Basic cosmological concepts like sphericity, circular movement, the opposition of heavenly perfection and earthly imperfection were incorporated in the world view of Aristotle and later Ptolemy, which in turn determined the standard medieval picture of the cosmos; and naturally, the Pythagorean-Platonic cosmological concepts served as a basis for later “Platonic” or “Neoplatonic” concepts, those of middle Platonism, the Neoplatonism of Plotinus and his followers, late antique and medieval Platonizing thinkers like Macrobius and Boethius, up until Italian Renaissance Platonism (these all I include in the term Pythagorean-Platonic *tradition*). Greek and Roman Stoics had also absorbed and mediated such concepts; for Celtis, the most important classical Stoic mediator may have been Seneca, some of whose dramas he published. An excerpt from the preface of Seneca’s *Naturales Questiones* mirrors well the essence of this tradition:

When the mind contacts those regions [the heavens] it is nurtured, grows, and returns to its origin just as though freed from its chains. As proof of its divinity it has this: divine things cause it pleasure, and it dwells among them not as being alien things but things of its own nature. Serenely it looks upon the rising and setting of the stars and the diverse orbits of bodies precisely balanced with one another. (...) Here, finally, the mind learns what it long sought: here it begins to know god.²³

A lateral tradition that has run parallel with the development of the cosmological ideas was the poetological or aesthetical tradition based on Pythagorean-Platonic cosmology. If humans in general were capable of perceiving and admiring the divine harmony in the universe, it is all the more so with poets: indeed, they can and should imitate this harmony. The metrics, the rhythm of the poem or the music – the two is together in the song – mirrors the universal rhythm; the poet draws inspiration from and at the same time expresses the harmonious cosmos, any of its phenomena. The Sun could be identified with Apollo, the muses with the planets, the seven spheres with the seven strings of the lyre, and so on: these correspondences made more explicit the bonds between cosmology and poetry. From the relevant *Timaeus*-passage (47C-D) to Italian Renaissance or German poetical theories, many examples could be provided for this huge and ramifying tradition: some specific views were

²³ Tr. T. H. Corcoran; Nat. Quest. I, praef. 12-13: *Cum illa tetigit, alitur, crescit ac velut vinculis liberatus in originem redit et hoc habet argumentum divinitatis suae, quod illum divina delectant, nec ut alienis, sed ut suis interest. Secure spectat occasus siderum atque ortus et tam diversas concordantium vias (...) Illic demum discit, quod diu quaesit; illic incipit deum nosse.*

already touched on in the previous chapter. Naturally, these ideas repeatedly appeared in poetry itself, too, as shown by the *topoi* concerning the music of spheres, cosmic inspiration and so on.

Let us now turn to Celtis: the crucial importance of the Pythagorean-Platonic tradition in his habits of mind concerning the cosmos was already pointed out in previous scholarship,²⁴ and I can only reinforce this view. The most explicit example for this is probably the preface to his edition of the *De mundo* as translated by Apuleius (himself a middle Platonist), in which Celtis consciously commits himself to the Pythagorean-Platonic tradition.²⁵ The “master-builder and father of all things” (*opifex et rerum omnium parens*) created a perfect and beautiful universe in which everything is mathematically arranged, and nothing gives more happiness on Earth than the contemplation of these things, through which our mind frees himself from its prison and participates in divinity.²⁶

The preface shows in an exemplary way how in Celtis natural philosophy can extend and turn into a kind of natural theology.²⁷ This does not mean that Celtis did not believe in the Christian God, but regarding such issues as the immanent forces in the universe, a person’s place in the cosmos, the relationship of body and soul, Celtis – as many others in the Renaissance – looked for alternative answers in ancient, classical lore, that could be different from the answers of Christian scholastic theology. As a poet, he did not do this in the frameworks of systematic philosophy;²⁸ still, the basic philosophical habits of mind underlying his work can be relatively well established. In the *Amores*, the idea of divine harmony and natural theology is primarily treated in the context of the Platonic concept of cosmic love; its most explicit discussion is in the preface of the *Amores*.²⁹ As for explicit

²⁴ Most importantly by Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 64ff., regarding the *Amores*; the title of the subchapter with which he refers to the *Philosophia*-woodcut and more generally to the *Amores* is already telling: “Ein programm des Celtis zur Erneuerung der Wissenschaften auf der Basis der pythagoreisch-platonischen Naturlehre.” From earlier scholarship I only mention Wuttke, who summarizes Celtis’s relevant views like this: “Während des irdischen Lebenswandels so viel als möglich von der Herrlichkeit der Schöpfung zu verstehen, ist die vornehmste Aufgabe des Menschen” (Wuttke, “Humanismus,” 88).

²⁵ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 105.

²⁶ BW p. 296.

²⁷ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 105; Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 105.

²⁸ Already Spitz has suggested in his overview of Celtis’s “philosophy” that he was far from being a real philosopher, especially with regard to issues pertaining to God and ultimate reality: Spitz, “The Philosophy,” 22-37.

²⁹ After Jörg Robert’s in-depth analysis, a brief summary of this part of the *Amores*-preface (16-41; Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 188-228) will suffice here. Beyond Plato, Celtis refers to Pythagoras, Apuleius and other classical authors; in fact, he largely drew on Ficino and other Italian Platonizing authors (e.g. Beroaldo). Celtis transferred their arguments from philosophical discourse to that of apology of poetry: the poet has to justify why he ventured to the morally dangerous genre of love poetry. *Amor* is a force governing the world, it has a civilizing power; it made harmony between the elements that had been at war in chaos; *amor* is *principium naturae*, what is more, *magnus deus* (this may be both the classical Jupiter and the Christian God; he identified *amor* with *caritas*, too, as earlier syncretists did). Love has two faces: *amor spurcus* (filthy) or *infamis* (infamous) and *amor*

mentions of Pythagoras and Plato, they are among the ancient wise men Celtis frequently refers to, appearing either distinctly³⁰ or in pair.³¹ Plato's academy served as an idealistic model for the scientific activities of Celtis's circles.³²

As Luh has pointed out,³³ the Pythagorean-Platonic tradition played a great role in the scientific activity of the humanist circle around Bishop Johann von Dalberg in Heidelberg, where Celtis stayed in 1484-5 and around 1495. Already in Agricola's speech praising philosophy (1476), one of the main arguments is that philosophy studies the eternal things, through which man can reach divinity.³⁴ By the end of the fifteenth century, several Latin texts which were thought to contain Pythagorean lore were available for the *sodales*; such texts as the twentieth chapter of Hierokles's commentary on the *Aurea verba* attributed to Pythagoras, or the *Philosophus* attributed to Plato, urged the reader to study the numerical sciences and learn the causes of things in order to reach the Divine.³⁵ Although Luh is probably not right that the tetradic system of the *Amores*, too, originated in Pythagorean number mysticism,³⁶ Celtis's experience in Heidelberg must have contributed to his commitment to the Pythagorean-Platonic lore.

Number symbolism – or the “mystique of number,” as Ryan called it in his overview of the issue³⁷ – permeates Celtis's oeuvre; numbers of cosmological importance, like four, seven or twelve, often appear either in the form³⁸ or in the contents of the poems. We have already

honestus (honourable), the former aims at bodily union, the latter wants to contemplate and participate in divine harmony. It is the *amor spurcus* that is despicable, representing excess and deviation from the original principle. This moral didaxis is at the core of the apologetic argumentation of the preface, and the opposition between contemplation and earthly love will indeed be an organizing factor in the plot of the *Amores*-books.

³⁰ For instance, in the *Philosophia*-woodcut Plato represents Greek wisdom; in the preface of the *Amores*, *Pythagorici* are referred to several times (9; 48).

³¹ As in the beginning of the *De mundo*-preface. It came in handy for Celtis that tradition involved both Plato and Pythagoras among the wandering philosophers.

³² Cf. e.g. K. Garber, “Sozietäten, Akademien, Sprachgesellschaften,” in *Europäische Enzyklopädie zu Philosophie und Wissenschaften*, ed. H. J. Sandkühler et al. (Hamburg: F. Meiner, 1990), 367.

³³ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 396-9.

³⁴ This and Reuchlin's speech was mentioned above, p. 41 n. 121.

³⁵ Basic works on Pythagoras and / or his teaching were the *Timaeus*, the Pythagoras-Vita of Diogenes Laertius, Pythagoras's speech in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (XV,60-478). Around 1495, the humanists in Heidelberg worked on a translation of Philostratus's works, who wrote, among others, on the Pythagorean Apollonius of Tyana. Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 103-4; 397.

³⁶ Luh has argued that the *Amores*, with all its cosmological frameworks and tetradic structure, must have originated in this intellectual milieu, and that Reuchlin's *De verbo mirifico*, with its emphasis on the tetrad, the most important Pythagorean number, can also be related to the origin of the *Amores* (*ibid.*, 396-9); however, Robert has convincingly argued that the tetradic system of the *Amores* must have primarily come from Ptolemy's *Geography* instead of Pythagorean numer mysticism (*Konrad Celtis*, 183-7).

³⁷ L. V. Ryan, “Conrad Celtis and the Mystique of Number,” in *From Wolfram and Petrarch to Goethe and Grass. Studies in Literature in Honour of Leonard Forster*, ed. D. H. Green et al. (Baden-Baden: Koerner, 1982), 181-192.

³⁸ Examples for implicit reference, with the number twelve: in the Fusilius-ode the last twelve strophes constitute a unity, while in the *Paneg.* there are twelve arts (*Panegyris*, ed. Gruber, p. 130, comm. to v. 29-76); the *Carmen saeculare* consists of twice twelve strophes.

seen how the *quadrivium*, the numerical sciences were praised in Celtis's programmatic works, from the *Panegyris ad duces Bavariae* to the allegorical imperial eagle within which the world's globe is surrounded by the representants of the *quadrivium*, symbolizing that they hold the key to the deep knowledge about the universe. In the poems themselves, astronomy-astrology is the most in the front among the numerical sciences. In this discipline, the numerical principle and the principle of correspondences between the macro- and microcosm are *united*. The following investigations will present many examples, including such where the stars explicitly appear in the context of the Pythagorean-Platonic tradition, and where Celtis directly drew from such authors as Macrobius or Ficino; but even when this is not the case, the Pythagorean-Platonic cosmological frameworks may be implicitly present in the background of astronomical passages.

So, when Celtis turns his eyes to the starry sky – either in a question catalogue or in other circumstances –, or urges others to do so, this may not simply come from scientific or aesthetic interests: the contemplation of the heavenly bodies is at the same time contemplation of the divine order and harmony, through which the soul frees itself from earthly restrictions, or in the context of the *Amores*, from the sufferings of love. A good example is provided by the longest question-catalogue, in *Am. II,2*, when the poet intends to take a radical turn from love suffering to philosophy: “Now I would like to elevate my mind freely to the celestial orbits, and grasp mentally the course of the stars,”³⁹ and he raises questions first about the stars and then about the fate of the human soul. Already in Ovid's catalogue in the *Metamorphoses*, it is Pythagoras who explains the various natural phenomena, the man who “held converse with the Gods, although far distant in the region of the heavens.”⁴⁰ To stay with the example of Ovid, one of Celtis's favourite *auctores*, the motif of contemplation of the starry sky was a general theme in his poetry, as his exclamation in the *Fasti* shows: “What prevents me speaking of the stars, and their rising and setting? (...) Happy minds that first took the trouble to consider these things, and to climb to the celestial regions!”⁴¹ According to Plato's *Timaeus*, the soul's return to the heavens begins with its observation.⁴² In the work of Celtis and his circles, too, this is a discernable motif, that also appears without the catalogue-context. A real man-of-letters finds time for the stars. As can be read in a letter by Willibald Pirckheimer, he ended his industrious day with the observation of

³⁹ *Am. II,2,9-10: Liberum in aetherios animum modo ferre meatus / Astrorumque vias prendere mente iuvat.*

⁴⁰ Tr. H. t. Riley; *Ov. met. XV, 62-3: ...isque licet caeli regione remotos / mente deos adiit...*

⁴¹ Tr. A. S. Kline; *Ov. Fast. I,295-8: Quid vetat et stellas, ut quaeque oriturque caditque, / dicere? promissi pars sit et ista mei. / Felices animae, quibus haec cognoscere primis / inque domos superas scandere cura fuit!*

⁴² *Timaeus* 90 C-D

the stars;⁴³ during an excursion at night, Vadianus held a little lecture for his friends about the operation of the cosmos, the stars as the signs of divine order and harmony.⁴⁴ In Celtis the motif figures several times: he claims to have observed the starry sky with Hartmann von Eptingen,⁴⁵ Johannes Wacker (Vigilius)⁴⁶ and many other *sodales*. In general, the stars attract the glance of Celtis, the lyrical subject: whatever he does, he may look upwards at any moment. Even when he runs naked in the street after an unsuccessful visit of someone's wife, he gives a description of the position of the stars at that night (the self-ironical character of the poem is enhanced in this part);⁴⁷ and when he can't see the stars because he is in a salt mine⁴⁸ or on a ship tossed about by a storm,⁴⁹ he is anxious and feels himself in the underworld. At the end of his life, then, it is natural that the poet – and whoever the poet deems worthy – ascends *ad astra*, to the celestial spheres. To be sure, this is a general commonplace in poetry, especially in Renaissance poetry, but Celtis adds a special significance to it by elaborating on the motif; for instance, he stresses that the ascension is a return to the soul's original abode,⁵⁰ he playfully names specific planets characteristic of the persons concerned,⁵¹ or he imagines a whole celestial journey after his own death.⁵²

The role of Florentine Platonism

It cannot be denied that *Florentine Platonism* played a huge role in mediating the Pythagorean-Platonic cosmological tradition to Celtis and his generation. On the one hand, Ficino's view on the cosmos rooted primarily in ancient Neoplatonism: he held Plotinus the most authoritative interpreter of Plato, and he based his picture about the ontological structure of the universe on the model of the Proclean four-tired universe.⁵³ On the other hand, in several respects he reflected directly on the Pythagorean-Platonic cosmological and poetological lore: I will just mention here his emphasis on the numbers on which the cosmic laws are based; his concept of love as a force that ties everything together; or his ideas on the harmony of the spheres and the poetic frenzy. German humanists, in turn, drew both directly

⁴³ Willibald Pirckheimers *Briefwechsel*, ed. E. Reicke et al. (Munich: Beck, 1940-2009), vol. IV, p. 492.

⁴⁴ Johannes Kesslers *Sabbata: mit kleineren Schriften und Briefen*, ed. E. Egli et al. (St. Gallen: Fehr, 1902), 359.

⁴⁵ Od. II,22,25-6.

⁴⁶ Od. III,5,37-44.

⁴⁷ Am III,5,45-58.

⁴⁸ Am. I,6,25-36.

⁴⁹ Am. IV,14,101-6.

⁵⁰ Ep. II. 38,6.

⁵¹ Am. III,3,65-6.

⁵² Od. III,6.

⁵³ Cf. e.g. Allen, *The Platonism*, 144ff.

on classical philosophical traditions and indirectly, through the filter of Italian syncretists. What is to be briefly summarized here is not how Ficino elaborated on classical / late antique cosmological traditions in general, but only a certain aspect of this development, a direction that seems to point further to German humanism: this is Ficino's (and other Florentines') attitude to the heavenly bodies, astrology in general and the Sun in particular.

Given the long perceived significance of the Sun for any life on Earth, this heavenly body was seen as representant or symbol of gods or divine powers in practically every ancient culture; here I can only briefly mention the main branches of the huge and ramifying western tradition from the Greeks to the Renaissance. In Greek-Roman mythology, Phoebus Apollo came to be identified with the Sun – his association with light, healing, and also fight (with arrows) all fitted this identification, – and in later western tradition the Sun was more frequently referred to with this deity than with Helios, the earlier Sun-god. In the *Republic*, Plato saw the Sun as the visible symbol of the Good and supreme divinity (503A-509B); this became a central idea and was elaborated further in Neoplatonic tradition with its basic concept of the One and its emanation. Proclus's Sun-hymn is a major poetical example of the Sun's significance in Neoplatonic thought; but from all Neoplatonizing authors probably Macrobius was the most important mediator of this tradition to the Renaissance. In the *Saturnalia*, the identity of Phoebus and other gods is argued in such a way that makes it a kind of solar monotheism; and the commentary to Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*, too, expands on the Sun's eminent role in the operation of the universe.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, another branch of solar traditions grew significant: the Sun's identification with Christ. Based on loci in both the Old and New Testaments (especially the Gospel of John), a number of Christian authors emphasized this cosmological aspect of Christ and the trinity, from Pseudo-Dionysius and Augustine through Dante, while early Christian iconography developed Christ's representation as a beardless Apollonian Sun-god.⁵⁵ The Renaissance revived all these textual and visual traditions,⁵⁶ and the interplay between the mythological, astronomical, Platonic and

⁵⁴ Summarily about the Platonic-Neoplatonic aspect of the issue: C. R. Ligota, "L'influence de Macrobe pendant la Renaissance," in *Le Soleil à la Renaissance: sciences et mythes. Colloque international tenu en avril 1963* (Brussels / Paris, 1965).

⁵⁵ Summarily on the tradition of the Christ-Sun identification: V. Shrimplin-Evangelidis, "Sun-Symbolism and Cosmology in Michelangelo's Last Judgment," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 21 No. 4 (Winter 1990), 624-8; further literature: *ibid.*, 625 n. 34.

⁵⁶ Cf. the relevant studies of the volume *Le Soleil à la Renaissance: sciences et mythes. Colloque international tenu en avril 1963* (Brussels / Paris, 1965), e.g. N. Arnoldi: "L'iconographie du soleil dans la Renaissance Italienne."

Christian solar traditions grew more intensive then ever, for which perhaps the most beautiful example is the Christ-figure of Michelangelo's *Last Judgement* in the Sistine Chapel.⁵⁷

An intriguing issue that was repeatedly addressed in connection with the Sun's divine character was the question of the Sun's dominance over the other planets. On the one hand, the Sun was just one among the seven planets in Aristotelian-Ptolemaic cosmology, the fourth one from the Earth. On the other hand, there were alternative astronomical theories in antiquity (not becoming widespread) in which the Sun determined the motion of other planets,⁵⁸ but also without these, the Sun's obvious influence on the division of time, on the Moon, on the sublunar world in general, was enough to encourage the redefinition of the Sun's operation the cosmos. In Neoplatonic tradition, Macrobius provides probably the most explicit example in his commentary to the *Somnium Scipionis*. Cicero had called the Sun *dux et princeps... et moderator luminum reliquorum, mens mundi et temperatio* ("leader, chief, and regulator of the other lights, mind and moderator of the universe"⁵⁹); Macrobius expanded on Cicero's words from an astronomical perspective,⁶⁰ and stressed the Sun's predominance among the planets, which meant, for instance, the determination of "the direct and retrograde motions of the planets and the transitional stationary points between these directional changes."⁶¹ Scholastic natural philosophy – which seldom discussed solar issues distinctly⁶² – addressed the problem of the Sun's position from a different perspective: if the higher spheres are more perfect than the lower ones, how can the Sun, apparently the most perfect heavenly body, be in the fourth sphere? Several solutions were proposed to the issue;⁶³ generally, the Sun's middle – thus central – position was stressed, and it was frequently analogized with the heart in the middle of the human body, or it was seen as a wise king in the middle of his kingdom. The idea of the Sun's predominance formed part of the general revival of "solar syncretism" in Florentine Platonism, and it is a hot topic in scholarship to what extent this whole tradition stood in the background of the Copernican turn, that is, the

⁵⁷ Shrimplin-Evangelidis, "Sun-Symbolism."

⁵⁸ E.g. according to Heraclides Ponticus (who drew on Aristarchus) Mercury and Venus revolve around the Sun; for the impact of this theory on Macrobius cf. W. H. Stahl in the introduction to the *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, tr., comm. William Harris Stahl (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 17-18. For the Pythagorean idea of a central fire and Aristarchus's heliocentric views, and their possible relation to the Copernican turn, cf. e.g. Henninger, "Pythagorean Cosmology," 39-41.

⁵⁹ Tr. W. H. Stahl; Cic. S. Sc. 17.

⁶⁰ Macr. S. Sc. I,20.

⁶¹ Grant, *Planets*, 453.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 451.

⁶³ For instance, according to Burridan – who echoed Averroes –, although the Sun is not the highest planet, still, in some characteristics it can outdo all other planets, just as the horse is better than man with respect to certain characteristics (Grant, *Planets*, 226). According to Albertus Magnus, the Sun collects the powers of the planets and mediates them to the Moon (*ibid.*, 452).

breakthrough of a heliocentric (or, with a more exact term, heliostatic) view of the universe.⁶⁴ The Sun's governing role could also be analogized with the role of rulers and leaders in human society. Cicero's terms *dux et princeps* and Macrobius's commentary had a political dimension, too, for which an example is Publius Africanus as *sol alter* (another Sun) in Macrobius.⁶⁵ According to Emperor Julian's *Oration to the Sovereign Sun* (likewise popular in Renaissance Italy), the planets are dancing around the Sun like around a king;⁶⁶ I have mentioned above the Sun's frequent medieval stylization as the wise king. It is hardly surprising that Renaissance literature, with its inclination to panegyrics, frequently applied the ruler-Sun analogy (with the planets or in general).

Ficino's *Book of the Sun (De Sole)*,⁶⁷ published in 1493, can be regarded as a great junction of the above mentioned branches of solar traditions; as it has been pointed out, this and other Sun-related writings of Ficino were "a major source for the symbolic identification of the Sun and Deity as it is found repeatedly in Renaissance literature and philosophy."⁶⁸ In his *De Sole* (too), Ficino explicitly stands on the ground of the Pythagorean-Platonic cosmological tradition. "Just look up at heaven, I pray, Oh citizen of the heavenly realm, at that heaven whose manifestly perfect order so clearly declares God to be its creator,"⁶⁹ he exclaims in chapter two entitled "How the Light of the Sun is Similar to Goodness Itself, Namely, God;"⁷⁰ he sets out directly from Plato's above mentioned identification of Sun, goodness and deity,⁷¹ and incorporates in his work the ideas of later "*Platonici*", too.⁷² He expands on "The Power of the Sun in Generating, and in the Seasons, at the Time of Birth and in All Things;"⁷³ and more than simply echoing the well-known Greek-Roman and Christian solar analogies, he draws an explicit parallel between these analogies (ch. 12: "Similitude of the Sun to the Divine Trinity and the Nine Orders of Angels, Likewise of the Nine Spirits in the Sun and of

⁶⁴ Many scholars have deemed the Neoplatonic background important for the Copernican turn, cf. e.g. T. Kuhn, *Copernican Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass. / London: Harvard University Press, 1957), 130-1; Paula Findlen, "The Sun at the center of the world," in *Le Soleil à la Renaissance: sciences et mythes. Colloque international tenu en avril 1963* (Brussels / Paris, 1965), 658ff; A. Koyré, *The Astronomical Revolution* (London: Methuen, 1973), 65. Example for a skeptical opinion: M. Markowski, "On Philosophical Foundations of Copernicus' Heliocentric System," *Dialectics and Humanism* 1 (1973), 222.

⁶⁵ Macr. S. Sc. II,14. Ligota, "L'influence," 469.

⁶⁶ 138B.

⁶⁷ [*Liber de Sole*] (Florence, 31 Jan. 1493), GW 9880. In OO: p. 965-975.

⁶⁸ Shrimplin-Evangelidis, "Sun-Symbolism," 629.

⁶⁹ OO p. 966: *Caelum suspice precor caelestis patriae civis, coelum ad hoc ipsum perspicue declarandum ordinatissimum a Deo factum, atque patentissimum*. Henceforth I use the following translation: *The Book of the Sun*, tr. G. Cornélius et al., *Sphinx* 6 (1994).

⁷⁰ *Quomodo Solis lumen sit ipsi bono scilicet Deo, simile*.

⁷¹ Cf. the references to Plato in chapter 9 (OO p. 971)

⁷² E.g. Dionysius the Areopagite is mentioned in the preface; for Macrobius, cf. Ligota, "L'influence," 475-6.

⁷³ Ch. 5: *Virtus Solis in generationibus atque temporibus, in genesi et in omnibus*.

the Nine Muses around the Sun.”⁷⁴ The Sun’s dominance over the other spheres had been analogized with Apollo as leader of the nine muses already in antiquity). The less traditional aspect of the work is Ficino’s extensive summary of the Sun’s astrological role, for instance its relation to the signs, or its importance in the birth horoscope.⁷⁵ In Ficino’s oeuvre in general, the Sun as a divine power or symbol repeatedly appears. The *Book of the Light* (*De Lumine*)⁷⁶ is similar to the *De Sole* in form and contents, but here the Light–God analogy is in the focus. The title of the short letter-treatise *Orphica comparatio Solis ad deum*⁷⁷ refers to the “comparative method” that one has to apply in order to communicate with the world of *mens*; speaking about the nature of the Sun, Ficino contends to understand the nature of God. In the highly influential *De amore*, the parallel between Sun and God figures large.⁷⁸ The Sun is compared to Apollo, the singer and lyre-player who controls the harmonious operation of the cosmos, in several works, for instance in the *Theologia Platonica* or in the *Ion*-commentary.⁷⁹ As mentioned above, Ficino invoked divinities with his lyre himself, and the Sun was certainly involved; in his Plotinus-commentary, he summarizes the Pythagorean-Platonic cult of the Sun: “Julian and Iamblichus composed orations to the Sun. Plato called the Sun the offspring and visible image of God; Socrates as he greeted the rising Sun often experienced a state of ecstasy; the Pythagoreans sang hymns to the Sun on their lyres.”⁸⁰ Ficino was not the only Florentine Platonist who liked solar concepts; Landino, for instance, recapitulated the Macrobian idea of a solar monotheism in his Dante-commentary.⁸¹

As for the heavenly bodies in general, Ficino was deeply interested in astrology, which attracted much scholarly attention.⁸² In fact, this is a ticklish issue, since Ficino seems to have

⁷⁴ *Similitudo Solis ad trinitatem divinam, et novem ordines angelorum. Item de novem numinibus in Sole, et novem Musis circa Solem.*

⁷⁵ Cf. esp. chapters 3, 4 and 8.

⁷⁶ OO p. 975-986.

⁷⁷ OO p. 825-6.

⁷⁸ Cf. Shrimplin-Evangelidis, “Sun-Symbolism,” 625.

⁷⁹ *Theol. Plat.* (ed. Hankins) IV,1,16; *Ion*-comm. (ed. Allen), p. 206.

⁸⁰ Tr.: Warden, “Orpheus,” 96-97; *Commentarium in Plotinum*, OO p. 1745: *Orationem ad Solem composuit Iunianus et Iamblichus. Solem Plato filium et imaginem summi Dei visibilem appellavit. Solem Socrates orientem salutans ectasim saepe patiebatur: Orienti soli Pythagorici hymnos lyra canebant. De cultu quidem Solis illi viderint: Deus certe in Sole posuit tabernaculum suum.*

⁸¹ See p. 179.

⁸² Almost all Ficinists had a word in the topic; here I list only such studies that specifically address the issue. Carol V. Kaske, “Marsilio Ficino and the Twelve Gods of the Zodiac,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 45 (1982), 195-202; id., “Ficino’s Shifting Attitude towards Astrology in the *De vita coelitus comparanda*, the letter to Poliziano, and the *Apologia* to the Cardinals,” in *Marsilio Ficino e il Ritorno di Platone: Studi e Documenti*, ed. Gian Carlo Garfagnini (Florence: Olschki, 1986), 371–81; in the same volume, D. P. Walker, “Ficino and Astrology,” pp. 341–49; M. M. Bullard, “The Inward Zodiac: A Development in Ficino’s Thought on Astrology,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 43/4 (Winter, 1990), 687-708; J. North, “Types of Inconsistency in the Astrology of Ficino and Others,” in *Christian Humanism: Essays in Honour of Arjo Vanderjagt*, ed. A. A. McDonald et al. (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009), 281-302; M. J. B. Allen, “Marsilio

changed his mind many times, sometimes approving, sometimes disapproving astrology, at least certain traditional practices of it. The scholarly explanations of this inconsistency vary greatly: since Della Torre, some argued for psychological reasons, a weak mental equilibrium; according to Thorndike and others, Ficino simply lied when the circumstances rendered it necessary; and a group of scholars like Trinkaus intended to harmonise Ficino's contradictory writings and highlight constant habits of mind that stand behind the various utterances concerning astrology.⁸³ For our topic, it will be enough to provide a bird's eye view on Ficino's attitude and mention some of the most important and constant astrological habits of mind. In general, a twofold attitude seems to emerge beyond all vacillations of his mind: on the one hand, he condemned the misuse of astrology by many of its practitioners and denied the star's determinative influence on human free will; on the other hand, he was convinced of the decisive influence of the stars in general, and for all his innovations, he did use the rules and components of traditional astrology (concerning the signs, planets, aspects, horoscope-houses and so on). His *Disputatio contra iudicium astrologorum* (written 1477) was directed against astral determinism and arbitrary astrological practices, not against astrology in general, and his arguments had long been commonplace. The same is true for the most renowned Renaissance criticism of astrology, Pico's *Disputationes adversus astrologiam divinatricem* (written 1494): for all his attacks on astrological divination, he insisted that the stars can affect human beings in many ways: Venus in a venereal way, Mars in a martial way, and so on; the treatise said in fact little more than its predecessors, its fame is in large part due to rhetorical merits. Both criticisms aimed rather at the reform than the rejection of the discipline.⁸⁴ Another general factor in Ficino's attitude is his creativity: Clydesdale is probably right in that "Ficino's use of astrology is broader in range and more inventive than that of any of his contemporaries."⁸⁵ He did his best to incorporate astrology in his Platonic-Neoplatonic cosmological system, and it is the *De vita* where he did this the most comprehensive way. The cosmic spirit that he postulates there provides the link between the heavenly bodies and the sublunar world, and this serves as a basis for various old and new practices of astral medicine and magic, for which an example, Ficino's Orphic lyre-play and

Ficino on Saturn, the Plotinian mind, and the Monster of Averroes," *Bruniana & Campanelliana* 16/ 1 (2010), 11-29; R. Clydesdale, "Jupiter tames Saturn": Astrology in Ficino's *Epistolae*," in *Laus Platonici philosophi. Marsilio Ficino and His Influence*, ed. S. Clucas, J. P. Forshaw, V. Rees (Leiden / Boston: Brill, 2011).

⁸³ Two studies provide an overview of the extensive literature on Ficino's changing attitude to astrology: Bullard, "The Inward Zodiac"; North, "Types of Inconsistency," esp. 296-300.

⁸⁴ On Ficino's and Pico's criticisms on astrology, cf. e.g. Steven Vanden Broecke, *The Limits of Influence: Pico, Louvain, and the Crisis of Renaissance Astrology* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), esp. 65; North, "Types of Inconsistency," esp. 292-6, 300-1.

⁸⁵ Clydesdale, "Jupiter," 118.

incantation, was already noted above.⁸⁶ As Siraisi has formulated, the *De vita* became “one of the most famous and influential Renaissance accounts of astral magic.”⁸⁷ The human *ingenium* is also determined by the stars: this *ingenium* is closely related and almost identical with a personal spirit that is variously called *genius* or *custos* or *daemon geniturae*.⁸⁸ Ficino himself felt the influence of Saturn the most, whose position in his nativity was particularly strong; but for him, this was not the traditional, definitely maleficent planet any more. Picking up one of the many characteristics that Ptolemy attributed to the influence of Saturn – “deep thinker,” – and drawing on some other, not widespread classical ideas, Ficino revalued the role of Saturn in a unique way, making it, among others, the planet of genius and contemplation;⁸⁹ melancholy is an ambivalent temperament, and suffering is unavoidable, but “for the earthly life from which he [Saturn] himself is separate and finally separates you, repays you with a life celestial and everlasting.”⁹⁰ Ficino’s collection of *Letters*, where he expands on his horoscope, abounds in general in astrological symbolism, and exemplifies more than any other Ficino-work the wide range of his relevant ideas and strategies how he uses this symbolic language. He warned the pope and rulers of future perils discussing their horoscopes; he pointed out to his friends common planetary positions as the basis of their friendship; he fashioned his own philosopher-image by discussing his horoscope, among others; he related the planets / gods to music, literature and other issues in the framework of the Pythagorean-Platonic tradition; he expanded on the *stella magorum* that signaled the birth of Christ; or he used the astrological symbols in a clearly playful way, as literary conceits or jests.⁹¹

Let us turn now to German humanism: many examples could be provided for the reception of the above discussed Florentine Platonic solar and astrological concepts. Martin “Uranius” Prenninger, the Swabian jurist was one of Ficino’s close friends, and his admiration for the Florentine is mirrored, for instance, by the name of Prenninger’s son, *Marsilius*. They exchanged fourteen letters, which reveal Prenninger’s interest in astrological, Platonic, Orphic writings, and in the 1493 edition of the *De Sole* there is a small letter-treatise about the Sun

⁸⁶ See p. 31 n. 62.

⁸⁷ Nancy Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine: An Introduction to Knowledge and Practice* (Chicago / London: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), 152.

⁸⁸ Summarily: Steppich, ‘*Numine*,’ 297-306.

⁸⁹ Cf. R. Klibansky – E. Panofsky – Fritz Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy* (London: Nelson, 1964), 254-74; and most of the studies cited at n. 82.

⁹⁰ *De vita* (ed. Clark and Kaske), p. 212: *Saturnus autem pro vita terrena, a qua separatus ipse te denique separat, coelestem vitam reddit atque sempiternam.*

⁹¹ Cf. primarily Clydesdale, “‘Jupiter.’”

and other planets dedicated to Prenninger.⁹² A more famous Tübingen jurist and humanist, Johann Reuchlin, applied, for instance, the analogy between the Sun and the Trinity in a Ficinian way in his *De verbo mirifico*;⁹³ in Leipzig, the first publication of the mathematician, astronomer and music-theorist Conrad Tockler was an edition of Ficino's *De Sole* in 1502.⁹⁴ The reception of specific Florentine astrological ideas could also be exemplified, like that of the revalued Saturn in the works of Dürer⁹⁵ and others, but more important is the general Florentine Platonic pattern of incorporating astrology and magic to the (Neo-)Platonic cosmological frameworks. Astrological ideas, including astral magic, play a significant role in Ficino's system, more than was characteristic of classical Neoplatonism. Nevertheless, he made this whole new syncretic system appear in the main line of Platonic traditions, astrological ideas could also be called "Platonic;"⁹⁶ his frequent references dimmed the differences between old and new cosmologies. As it has been rightly argued, one of the reasons of the wide reception of Ficino, especially the *De vita*, in Germany, was that fashionable disciplines like astrology was treated in a philosophical, highly intellectual way⁹⁷ and elevated from the niveau of, say, courtly astrology.

As regards Celtis, his thought was determined by the general idea of micro-macrocosmical correspondences, and he stressed the significance of the stars, particularly the Sun, in his half serious, half playful and poetical cosmos not less eagerly than Ficino in his syncretic cosmology. It is particularly on this general level that one has to reckon with the impact of Florentine Platonism. This is an important factor, even if some scholars have been inclined to play down the Florentine Platonic background of Celtis's poetry.⁹⁸ It is true that many specific celestial ideas of Ficino are not at all characteristic of Celtis, for instance the Ficinian revaluation of Saturn⁹⁹ (many specific ideas, on the other hand, do appear in Celtis, as will be seen later). Furthermore, Luh is right in that Ficino's main intention was to reconcile classical and Christian thought, and this intention is hardly perceptible in Celtis;¹⁰⁰ indeed, more spectacular is his anticlericalism and the use of classical instead of Christian terminology in

⁹² *De Sole*, f. c1v-c2v; also in OO p. 949f. The earlier version of *De Sole*, the *Comparatio Solis ad Deum* was dedicated to Duke Eberhard at whose Tübingen court Prenninger worked (ms.: Stuttgart, Landesbibliothek, H. B. XV 65). For the relationship of Prenninger and Ficino: W. Zeller, *Der Jurist und Humanist Martin Prenninger gen. Uranius (1450-1501)* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1973), 65-83; McDonald, 'Orpheus,' 162-5.

⁹³ *De verbo mirifico* (Basel: J. Amerbach, 1494), f. h6v (Spitz, *The Religious Renaissance*, 75).

⁹⁴ *Preclari Oratoris et philosophi Marsilii ficini Libellus de Sole* (Leipzig: W. Monacensis, 1502); McDonald, 'Orpheus,' 220.

⁹⁵ Cf. e.g. Klibansky et al., *Saturn*, 345ff.

⁹⁶ Cf. e.g. Hankins, *Plato*, esp. 304; Clydesdale, "Jupiter," 117; for Pico: North, "Types of inconsistency," 293.

⁹⁷ Steppich, 'Numine,' 232-3.

⁹⁸ See ch. I,2,c, *The reception of Florentine Platonism in Germany*.

⁹⁹ See the end of ch. III,1,a.

¹⁰⁰ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 389.

such a way that some contemporaries felt a strong pagan hue in Celtis's poetry. However, from the perspective of the immanent forces of the universe, the main concepts about "what holds the world together deep inside," Ficino's and Celtis's worlds are similar to a great extent. In Ficino's extension of the Pythagorean-Platonic cosmological tradition, micro-macrocosmical correspondences permeate the world more than in any earlier syncretic systems; the numbers and the concept of love, and – for us more importantly – astrology have a key role in this system (with a particular emphasis on the Sun). Celtis, too, emphasizes all these. Naturally, Celtis did not adopt Ficinian cosmology as a whole. However, the general cosmological frameworks within which Celtis thinks and plays with specific ideas were in large part shaped by Florentine Platonism, which both mediated classical concepts and added to them.¹⁰¹ From this macro-perspective, the direct reading of Ficino's works was not necessarily the only or primary way of receiving Florentine Platonism. Italian Neo-latin poetry, that provided models for the Germans to a considerable extent, received it too, and not only at a commonplace level, as the examples of Naldi, Marullo or Beroaldo show; and the German humanists both read each other's works and discussed fashionably issues orally. All in all, Ficino has extended the Pythagorean-Platonic cosmological tradition in an a solar-astral direction (too), and it was with these emphases that Celtis and some other German humanists received the Platonic tradition.

2. *Cosmologizing the sublunar world: conventions and inventions*

a. Poetical play and generic conventions

This subchapter will overview how Celtis represents in his poetry cosmic influences based on the microcosm-macrocosm analogy; however, this cannot happen without first emphasizing the role of poetical play, rhetoricity, generic and topical conventions in humanist poetry in general and in Celtis's work in particular. Some of the early Celtis-scholars tried to summarize or reconstruct his "world view" (*Weltbild* or *Weltanschauung*), happy to have found abundant related source material;¹⁰² in doing so, they took into consideration only part of the relevant passages, and they took them too often at face value. However, since Celtis's works are humanist literary texts, feeding not only on real experience and beliefs but also the

¹⁰¹ I can refer here again to the great number of studies from Bezold to Wuttke or Robert that have emphasized the general impact of Florentine Platonism on Celtis; see ch. I,2,c; the end of II,1.

¹⁰² F. Pindter, *Die Lyrik des Conrad Celtis*, PhD Dissertation (Vienna, 1930), ch. 3: "Das Weltbild" (p. 81-192); E. Novotny, *Die Weltanschauung des Konrad Celtis*, PhD dissertation, Vienna, 1938.

huge storehouse of literary traditions, one can draw at most some cautious and general conclusions after a comprehensive survey concerning the poet's view – or rather views – about the cosmos, having taken into account in each relevant text their genre, rhetorical function and other literary characteristics. The difficulty is not only that Celtis was not a philosopher, and that he often just caught up cosmological ideas instead of building a comprehensive system;¹⁰³ in addition, he often just used and played with ideas in accordance with rhetorical purposes, generic or other literary requirements. In typical humanist literature the meaning of the text is born from an interplay of primary meaning and various connotated generic, topical and other literary traditions.¹⁰⁴ For instance, when in a certain type of Celtis-odes a superficial reference to the power of the stars appears in the context of the power of destiny and the transitoriness of human life that has to be answered by a *carpe diem* attitude, the reference to the stars may have simply fulfilled a generic-topical function; only when astrological references appear repeatedly, in more detail and in various contexts, can one consider the possibility of an earnest and strong belief in astrology. In a creative emulation with the classical models, the poet plays with topoi and conventions; the very fact of involving the classical world (classical history, mythology and so on) in the poet's actual historical reality may already give a playful character to the poem.

The above mentioned caveats have to be considered all the more since the issue in question is micro-macrocosmical correspondences in Celtis's thought, while humanist poets are *a priori* inclined to apply analogical correspondences and syncretism: first, because allegories and metaphors, these basic poetical devices, are based on analogical thinking, second, because the humanist poet often fuses the classical world with all its gods and the contemporary world, which is already a kind of syncretism. The most basic example for cosmic forces that give opportunity for poetical play is the group of seven planets identified with classical gods; this ancient identification was reinforced in Late Antiquity when the systematization of cosmic correspondences were in fashion. In poetry and fine arts, the planets could be easily personified, or the gods "planetaryized": examples are legion from classical through Renaissance art and literature.¹⁰⁵ Florentine Platonic syncretism could only encourage this; Ficino's correspondence, one of the most popular Ficino-works in Germany, is especially worth mentioning, since it abounds in letters with playful mythological personifications of the planets. Naturally, cosmic syncretism could fuse more conceptual frameworks than just

¹⁰³ This general attitude of Celtis is well summarized by Spitz, "The Philosophy."

¹⁰⁴ Cf. e.g. H-G. Roloff, "Bemerkungen zum Problem der deutschen neulateinischen Literatur," *Jahrbuch für internationale Germanistik*. A/1 (1971); related to Celtis: Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, esp. 1-7.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. e.g. Sez nec, *The Survival*, esp. 37-83; 184-218.

astronomy and Greek-Roman mythology: the poet could mix cosmology, mythology, Christianity and Neoplatonic, Stoic or other philosophical ideas in various combinations (see the solar syncretism discussed above). It is often difficult to say to what extent we are dealing with personal philosophical convictions, fashionable topoi or just poetical plays.

For Celtis, the caveats concerning poetical play particularly apply; his general attitude of *serio ludere*, mixing seriousness and play is a long perceived characteristic of his poetry, and he explicitly expounds on this in the *Amores*-preface with regard to the relation between the poet and the lyrical subject.¹⁰⁶ That the two are not identical is an important element in the apology of love poetry in the *Amores*, and the whole argumentation follows the tradition of fiction-topos as applied by many authors.¹⁰⁷ One of the a macro-level applications of poetical play is roleplay. Although the lyrical subject and the poet of the *Amores* are both called Celtis, the lyrical subject, just as the other characters of the *Amores*, is a literary construction: biographical elements could be incorporated only in so far as they are in line with the generic conventions of love elegy, and his poetical self-representation and self-mythologizing in general (in a certain sense, roleplay is characteristic for the whole Celtis-oeuvre: he formulated his Arch-humanist or *archagetes*-role in various ways, and we will see later its cosmological dimensions). A number of earlier Celtis-scholars fell in the trap of attributing too much biographical validity to the poems. The most spectacular case is undoubtedly that of “Hasilina Rzytonicz na Kepsstaynie,” the first of Celtis’s four loves in the *Amores*. From her appearance in the elegies, what is more, in four letters and other literary works as well, scholarship had considered her a Czech noble woman who got in touch with Celtis in Cracow, until Ursula Hess exposed her as a literary construction feeding in large part on topoi and playful fantasy; as for her very name, Hasilina means “beloved” or “little treasure,” Rzytonicz incorporates the words for “to bellow” and “anus,” and Kepsstaynie the word for “vulva.”¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, esp. 228-240.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ U. Hess, “Erfundene Wahrheit. Autobiographie und literarische Rolle bei Conrad Celtis,” in *Akten des VII. Internationalen Germanistenkongress. Vol. 7: Bildungsexklusivität und volkssprachliche Literatur*, ed. G. Hess et al. (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1986), 470-497.



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Fig. 6. Region-woodcut for Amores I in the Amores-edition.

b. Types of micro-macrocosmic correspondences and influences in Celtis's poetry

The world is a network of correspondences; most importantly, various channels of influence exist between the macrocosm and the microcosm, the latter meaning here both the sublunar world and the human being. Not a new idea in itself,¹⁰⁹ but the extent to which this idea permeates Celtis's poetry, and the playful creativity by which he adds fresh colors to the traditional palette. He liked to involve in a cosmic context such things or in such a way that was not customary before: for instance, the four rivers and four parts of *Germania* are involved in the tetradic cosmological system of the *Amores*, or the amorous nature of the elegiac lovers is expressed in terms of natal or iatromathematical / catarchic astrology. This is why I have added "inventions" to "conventions" in the title of the subchapter, and used the word "cosmologizing." In the following I am going to provide a brief general overview of the main kinds of micro-macrocosmic correspondences and influences in Celtis's poetry, including conventional as well as creative applications.

The most spectacular appearance of a system of correspondences is in the *Amores*, and in the "region-woodcuts" at that: each of the four *Amores*-books of the 1502 edition are preceded by a woodcut that represents the region and the season in which the book is set, and in the upper part, nine characteristics of the book that correspond to each other (see, for instance, fig. 6 for book I, *Hasilina Sarmata*).¹¹⁰ Summarized in a table, the system looks like this:

Book	I	II	III	IV
lover	Hasilina	Elsula	Ursula	Barbara
town / river	Cracow, Vistula	Regensburg, Danube	Mainz, Rhine	Lübeck, <i>Mare Codoneum</i> (Baltic sea)
season	<i>ver</i>	<i>aestas</i>	<i>autumnus</i>	<i>hiems</i>
age of life	<i>pubertas</i>	<i>adolescentia</i>	<i>iuventus</i>	<i>senectus</i>
time of the day [and point of the compass]	<i>oriens</i>	<i>meridies</i>	<i>occasus</i>	<i>nox</i>
wind	<i>Eurus</i>	<i>Auster</i>	<i>Zephyrus</i>	<i>Boreas</i>
temperament	<i>sanguis</i>	<i>colera</i>	<i>flegma</i>	<i>melancholia</i>
[cardinal] sign	<i>Aries</i>	<i>Cancer</i>	<i>Libra</i>	<i>Capricornus</i>
character	<i>fervor</i>	<i>calor</i>	<i>tepor</i>	<i>torpor</i>
element	<i>aer</i>	<i>ignis</i>	<i>aqua</i>	<i>terra</i>
color	<i>violaceus</i>	<i>purpureus</i>	<i>puniceus</i>	<i>lividus</i>

¹⁰⁹ In all premodern cultures that I know of this was a basic idea in some ways. A short summary from a philosophical perspective is e.g. G. P. Conger, *Theories of Macrocosms and Microcosms in the History of Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1922).

¹¹⁰ For the region-woodcuts cf. Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 156-189.

The division of characteristics is generally based on tetradic divisions that had been crystallized by hellenistic / late antique times;¹¹¹ Celtis, however, links each series of nine characteristics to the four lovers and the four parts / border rivers of Germany, thus endowing *Germania* and the whole cycle with a cosmic universality. The tetradic-nonadic system is also highlighted by the nine strophes of Longinus's dedicatory poem *In Conradi Celtis novenarium*,¹¹² otherwise it is in fact the number four and not the number nine¹¹³ that organizes the *Amores*. The tetradic system is represented by the four segments of the wreath in the title page and the *Philosophia*-woodcut, as well as in the titles of the books; in all these, only some of the nine characteristics appear. The background of the tetradic division is debated: on the one hand, the four points of the compass and Ptolemy's *Germania*-description provided an obvious pattern to follow, as Robert has argued; on the other hand, the whole cosmic context might suggest a link between the tetradic division of the *Amores* and the tetrad of the Pythagoreans, as has long been perceived in scholarship, and argued in detail by Luh.¹¹⁴ At any rate, the four as a cosmic number, the nine with its reference to the muses and the totality of arts and sciences, and each of the tetrad-series that represent the basic constituents of the world – all these refer to universality. It is a whole world that the poet creates, a “microcosm” in a certain sense, that mirrors the macrocosm: and we arrived again to the *vates*-ideology, the divinity of the poet.¹¹⁵ As for the realization of the system of correspondences in the actual poems of the *Amores*, Celtis remains in the reader's debt: only some of the nine characteristics really characterize the *Amores*-books (the geographical division, the ages of life, to some extent the zodiacal signs and the temperaments),¹¹⁶ and even the tetradic divisions of the woodcuts themselves differ to some extent.¹¹⁷ Two things are

¹¹¹ For the similarity of Celtis's system and that of Antiochus of Athens, cf. Luh's table: *Werkausgabe*, 189.

¹¹² F. a7v-a8r.

¹¹³ The reason for using number nine is made explicit by the superscription of each region-woodcuts: *Nota novenarium Numerum / novem musis dedicatum*; the *Amores* was originally dedicated to Apollo and the nine muses (Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 74). Anyway, nine is the square of three, and both three and four, as constituents of the cosmic numbers seven or twelve, play a great role in symbolical numerology.

¹¹⁴ See p. 80.

¹¹⁵ This aspect of the tetradic system has been particularly emphasized by Luh, e.g. in *Werkausgabe*, 400.

¹¹⁶ Cf. J. Gruber, “Von der neunfachen Sicht der Dinge. Conrad Celtis' ‘Amores’ als humanistisches Bildungsprogramm,” in *Humanismus und Bildung. Beiträge zur Bildungstheorie und zur Didaktik der Alten Sprachen. Vol. 2: Interpretationen, Auxilia*, ed. J. Gruber (Bamberg: Buchner, 1991), 113: “Es entsteht [...] der Eindruck, als sei dieses Prinzip den im Laufe eines Jahrzehnts entstandenen Liebesgedichten erst nachträglich aufgepropft [...] oder habe sich [...] mehr oder weniger verselbständigt;” Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 184: “In den ‘Amores’ [...] werden zwar alle Elemente des ‘Novenarium’ von Buch zu Buch aufgegriffen, eine intensivere Berücksichtigung finden aber nur jene Vierheiten, die Celtis am Beginn der Vorrede ausdrücklich bezeichnet, darunter vor allem das jeweilige Lebensalter und in Zusammenhang damit das vierfach differenzierte Temperament.”

¹¹⁷ For instance, the ages of life in the title page are *adolescensia*, *iuventus*, *senectus*, *mors*; in the region-woodcuts *pubertas*, *adolescensia*, *iuventus*, *senectus*; the *Philosophia*-woodcut represents two young wind-heads, a middle-aged / old and a very old one.

important for us here: first, Celtis made explicit his predilection for micro-macrocosmical correspondences through the *Amores*-woodcuts and -titles; second, this general habit of mind is heavily represented – although not as systematically as in the region-woodcuts – both in the *Amores* and in many other of his other works.

Beyond establishing the fact of analogical relationship between various things, micro-macrocosmical *influences* are often treated in the poems, and in this respect, astrology and – to a lesser extent – magic come to the front. In the case of magic, humans are not simply passive recipients of cosmic influences, but they themselves exert influence, based on the principle of analogy. Magic is on the periphery of Celtis’s poetical world in general, and when a character in a poem uses it, play and irony is never far; however, it adds an intriguing color to his poetry, and expresses in a spectacular way the idea of immanency and a network of correspondences. Nevertheless, the central and most frequently emphasized aspect is astrology. In the region-woodcuts, too, the key role of the heavenly bodies is spectacularly represented. First of all, the position of the Sun (represented in the relevant cardinal sign) determines the conditions in the sublunar world, and in general, the terrestrial sphere is dependent upon the celestial: the representation of heavenly bodies and earthly activities borrows elements from the iconography of calendar-pictures and the “children of the planets” tradition.¹¹⁸ In the *Amores*, astronomy-astrology has a structural role related to the main generic model: in the classical love elegies it was the mythological sphere, the world of the gods, that served as a background for the human world, while in the *Amores* the mythological layer is replaced by a geographical (the presentation of “Germania”) and an astronomical-astrological layer;¹¹⁹ whenever possible, the Greek-Roman gods and the planets meld.

Astrology is a heterogeneous term;¹²⁰ one could differentiate, for instance, between *astrologia naturalis* and *superstitiosa*.¹²¹ In the investigation of Celtis’s astrological ideas, the

¹¹⁸ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 184-8. Cf. also Ep. III,70-76 *VII de horis et diebus planetariis*, with seven distichs dedicated to each planet and one’s character born under that planet: this and other epigrams may have also belonged to visual representations (ibid., 186).

¹¹⁹ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 274-5.

¹²⁰ For the basics of Renaissance astrology, cf. Reiner Reisinger, *Historische Horoskopie. Das iudicium magnum des Johannes Carion für Albrecht Dürers Patenkind* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997), 17-98.

¹²¹ The main types of astrology can be classified from different points of view. With regard to complexity, the scale ranges from a simple astrological idea (e.g., the appearance of a comet signifies the death of the king) to methods requiring complex calculations (horoscopes). The stars’ effect can be restricted to the material world, or it can involve the dimension of the soul and free will; one can also differentiate between a fatalist and a non-fatalist (*astra inclinant, sed non necessitant*) concept of astrology. All these aspects relate to the differentiation between *astrologia naturalis* and *superstitiosa*: these opposed terms of Isidore of Seville (*Etymologiae*, III, 27) were often used in medieval academic circles (cf. Benedek Láng, “Asztrológia a késő középkori tudományos diskurzusban” [Astrology in late medieval academic discourse], *Magyar filozófiai szemle*, 43 [1999], 747-774). Hugh of St. Victor, an authoritative scholar for the later Middle Ages, based on Isidore in defining the two terms: in *astrologia naturalis* the stars influence the bodies which are subject to natural order, while in *astrologia*

most fruitful perspective seems to be the consideration of the traditional medieval classification of methods, as laid down, for instance, by the *Speculum astronomiae* of¹²² Albert the Great, whom Celtis held in high esteem. One can apply general or mundane astrology (*de revolutionibus*), natal (*nativitates*); catarchic (*electiones*)¹²³ and horary (*interrogationes, horaria*)¹²⁴ astrology.¹²⁵ Natal astrology, and in most cases, catarchic and horary astrology deal with the fate of the individual: among these, Celtis applies mostly natal astrology – and also catarchic astrology, but it occurs rarely¹²⁶ –, and since our main topic is the use of cosmic symbolism in the *vates*-ideology, individual astrology will be investigated in detail later. Mundane astrology deals with the stars' effects on nations, regions or world history: this, too, has its subgenres, but it occurs in Celtis relatively rarely and without the mention of horoscopic details. Considering all these, one may classify the astrological references in Celtis under four categories:

- individual astrology;
- mundane astrology,¹²⁷
- the effect of the stars¹²⁸ or a certain planet¹²⁹ in general, without the mention of concrete cases;

superstitiosa the stars can also affect things subordinated to free will (*Didascalion*, PL 176. II./IV. 753. col. *De mathematica*). Indeed, there seems to have been two *basic* attitudes to astrology in the Middle Ages (however the different authors expressed this dichotomy). On the one hand, the very fact that the stars affect the sublunar material world was generally accepted and formed part of scholastic teaching at the universities. Based on *experientia*, certain (rather general) predictions can be made, but the predictability of the future is in many ways limited. On the other hand, in the view of most astrologers quite concrete and exact predictions could be made by certain complex methods, and not only about material changes, but also things pertaining to the soul. The opposers of this *astrologia superstitiosa* argued that the predictability of human properties, deeds and events is irreconcilable with human free will. This was one of the most important issues also in the Renaissance debates over astrology. Garin and others have observed that astrology was criticized on moral and religious, not rational, grounds; the problem was free will and human dignity: E. Garin, *Astrology in the Renaissance: The Zodiac of Life*, tr. C. Jackson and J. Allen (London: Routledge, 1983), 30; Sez nec, *The Survival*, 58; Roger French, “Astrology in Medical Practice,” in *Practical Medicine from Salerno to the Black Death*, ed. Luis García-Ballester, Roger French et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge U. P., 1994), 34; Broecke, *The Limits*. About Celtis's criticism against certain astrological practices, see the end of this section; Celtis does not seem to have rejected superstitious astrology *in general* – or rather, there is no trace that the above outlined differentiation between *astrologia naturalis* and *superstitiosa* would have been decisive in his astrological habits of mind.

¹²² Albert the Great's authorship is debated by some scholars.

¹²³ The election of a favorable date for a future event based on the planetary positions.

¹²⁴ One raises a question and looks for the answer in the horoscope cast for the exact time of the question.

¹²⁵ This is a classification transmitted by Albert the Great and others: for this and medieval astrological terminology in general, cf. Charles Burnett, “Astrology,” in *Medieval Latin: an Introduction and Bibliographical guide.*, ed. F. A. C. Mantello, A. G. Rigg (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1996).

¹²⁶ Am. II,12,81-88; III,11,21-24.

¹²⁷ Am. III,9,37-8; III,14,33; Ep. I,35; I,68,4; Od. II,2, 57-72.

¹²⁸ From among the vast number of examples, a few typical ones: Od. II,17,37-40; Ep. I,6; II,34.

¹²⁹ In the case of Venus e.g. Am. I,7,53-4; in the case of Saturn e.g. Od. I,18,17-19.

– texts criticizing astrologers¹³⁰ (they also mirror Celtis’ attitude to astrology, although indirectly).

However, Celtis often used astrology in a creative way, combining it, for instance, with magic, number symbolism or the idea of cosmic love. It seems more fruitful to include all kinds of micro-macrocosmical correspondences and influences in our overview, and classify them according to components of the sublunar world that are often treated from a micro-macrocosmical perspective. Taken into account the vast number of relevant texts, I will treat the material summarily and provide only a few representative examples for each categories. (Within astronomy-astrology, I do not include such effects of the heavenly bodies on the material world – related to climate and meteorology, for instance – that were generally accepted.)

– *Cosmologizing Germania*. When the protagonist of the *Amores* wanders through the four parts of what he calls *Germania* according to the points of the compass, he wanders – symbolically – through the whole of *Germania*, what is more, the whole world. Ruling the “four points of the compass” has been an ancient metonymy for the symbolic rule over the cosmos (since Sargon of Akkad at the latest, more than four thousand years ago), and Celtis himself applies this symbolism to Maximilian in the *Rhapsodia*, for instance.¹³¹ It was a tradition in Germany to think in terms of tetradic groups representing the Holy Roman Empire (four margraves, four cities and so on; this *Quaterniontheorie* was often discussed in fifteenth-century legal works),¹³² but Celtis, the poet, made his claim for the cosmic dimensions of *Germania* explicit by the tetradic system discussed above. This dimension is further reinforced by the obvious parallel between the journey of the protagonist and that of the Sun:¹³³ the cycle begins in the east and goes south, west and north (there will be more word later on the Phoebean-solar aspects of Celtis’s self-representation). Furthermore, a “cosmic” tetrad also appears in Celtis’s homeland proper, Franconia, likewise with rivers: four rivers spring from the *pinifer mons* (*Fichtelgebirge*, the topographical unit most frequently mentioned by Celtis), from the symbolic center of *Germania*, towards the four points of the compass. This seems to be Celtis’s own construction, unprecedented in classical

¹³⁰ E.g. Am. III,10,59f and 71-8; Ep. I,35; I,59,1-10; I,60; II,73.

¹³¹ *Rhapsodia* 203-6.

¹³² Müller, *Die ‘Germania generalis,’* 326 n. 109.

¹³³ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 355; the region-woodcuts explicitly display the four stations of the Sun’s annual movement.

literature; it may be related to the four rivers of the Paradise.¹³⁴ The rivers may also refer to poetical inspiration, thus to the symbolical career-defining function of Celtis's homeland: in the "imperial eagle" woodcut, too, water flows through four outlets from the central muse-fountain, and Wuttke rightly assumes that the four outlets stand for the four points of the compass, thus the universe in general.¹³⁵

– *The natural world.* Beyond those traditional correspondences that Celtis involved in his tetradic system, specific micro-macrocosmical analogies occurring in classical and medieval thought – either simple conventions or elements of elaborate cosmological systems – were legion; they could be reactivated both by the Renaissance philosopher and the poet. From the stones through the human being and the celestial entities, correspondences could be postulated for many things between any levels of the great chain of being. Celtis liked to remind one of micro-macrocosmical analogies – especially with the heavenly bodies – perhaps more than any other contemporary German poet. A representative example for this habit of mind is provided by *Amores* I,11. The issue of attraction between lovers gives opportunity for the poet to muse on the question what kind of spirit moves body and matter (v. 1-14); the human eye, the "messenger and window of the mind" (*mentis qui nuntius atque fenestra est*), issues rays that link the seer and the thing seen, and may have great power, as Hasilina's glance had on Celtis (v. 15-24).¹³⁶ Next, the author shifts to a cosmic point of view – and this is typical for him: the stars's rays, too, have power over the sublunar world; he enumerates each planet, and naturally, it is Venus to whom he attributes absolute power in the given context (v. 25-34). Then he widens the perspective further:

*Et veluti gemmas herbasque sub orbe creavit
Natura et vires iussit habere suas,
Quas ex cognati capiunt virtutibus astri
Et sua de radiis mira sigilla ferunt:
Hinc adamas ferrum trahit inviolabilis ictu,
Ille tamen capri sanguine mollis erit;
Sicque cutem teneram fervens urtica perurit
Socraticamque tulit dira cicuta necem;
Sic radium sibi quisque suo concepit ab astro,
Quo movet et tacito membra vigore regit....¹³⁷*

And since nature created gems and herbs under the sky, and decreed that each must have a specific force, which they receive from the power of their related star, and each bears a wondrous imprint from these rays, so the diamond that no blow can harm, attracts the iron, but softens from the he-goat's blood; and the stinging nettle burns the tender skin, and the dreadful hemlock caused Socrates's death. So everything receives a ray from its star that can in this way move and govern it with secret power.

¹³⁴ For the role of the *pinifer mons* in Celtis: Müller, *Die 'Germania generalis,'* 370-3.

¹³⁵ Wuttke, "Humanismus," 89. The four outlets do not literally face the four points of the compass, but this has certainly technical reasons: the recipient of the woodcut must be able to see all the four outlets.

¹³⁶ Discussing the eye's rays, Celtis combines (1) a topos of love poetry, (2) the most widespread contemporary theory of seeing, and (3) Ficino's theory about *visus* in the *De amore*: Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 296-7.

¹³⁷ Am. I,11, 35-44.

Every living or lifeless thing – here the examples of diamond and nettle are mentioned – has its power or force (*vis*) from specific stars, this correspondence determines in large part the thing's characteristics. This is an old but not widespread idea that Celtis took over – probably through Ficino¹³⁸ – because it fitted both his general picture about the cosmos *and* the specific context of the elegy.

From the many examples for Celtis's analogies involving natural phenomena, I am going to provide here one or two for each main categories of the great chain of being, such examples that are not simply topoi; sometimes the very existence of the given analogy seems to be the main message of the poem. Precious stones are presented as astral magical objects in two epigrams: a golden ring with a “bloody stone” (a carbuncle?) were made “under a certain star” to coerce a “girl” (probably Hasilina) to love;¹³⁹ and an emerald ring on Hasilina's finger snapped when she was cheating on his husband¹⁴⁰ (the emerald's power to test a woman's chastity is a traditional idea¹⁴¹). The sunflower's (*heliotropium*) spectacular dependence on the Sun's movement is presented in order to show that the earth contains celestial “seeds.”¹⁴² The origin of specific animal species is attributed to specific constellations in the *Norimberga*,¹⁴³ and naturally, such monstrous omens as the birth of a human-faced calf are also due to the stars.¹⁴⁴ As for the human being in general, I mention here those epigrams that echo traditional systems of correspondences between the stars on the one hand, and the ages, the parts of the body or mental characteristics on the other. Each decade of the human life is allotted to the seven planets;¹⁴⁵ each of the twelve zodiacal signs and their related element (fire / earth / air / water) can fall to the Ascendant and determine corporal characteristics;¹⁴⁶

¹³⁸ Cf. e.g. *De vita* (ed. Clark and Kaske) III,8, p. 280; III,12, p. 300.

¹³⁹ Ep. I,11 *De annulo: Annule sanguineum qui stringis in orbe lapillum, / Quique auri puri non leve pondus habes, / I, precor, et duram coge in mea vota puellam, / Nam mihi sub certo sidere sculptus eras. / Perseus gorgoneo mutavit corpora vultu, / Et Iove comminuit Deianira satum.*

¹⁴⁰ Ep. I,23 *De smaragdi natura: Gemmarum vires occultaque semina coeli / Scire volens, nostro carmine doctus eris. / Gestabat Scythicum digitis Hasilina smaragdum, / Cui color et species integer omnis erat. / Sed postquam invisio se miscuit illa marito, / Ruptus et in partes dissilit ille duas.*

¹⁴¹ Cf. e.g. Cuspinianus's edition of Marbod's *Libellus de lapidibus preciosis* (Vienna: Vietor, 1511), f. b2r. Astral influence in gems is a prominent issue in other medieval works as well, like Thebit's *De imaginibus* or the *Picatrix*.

¹⁴² Ep. II,87 *De eliotropia, herba horaria: Virtutes coeli Phoebeaque semina terra / Continet, ex herbis quisque videre potest. / Nam qui forte velit cognoscere temporis horam, / Poebus [sic] ut obscuris nubibus ipse latet, / Hic videat florem, cui heliotropia nomen, / Ille sui floris vertice signa dabit.* The sunflower appears in Am. III,4,11, too, here in a simile.

¹⁴³ Nor. p. 122.

¹⁴⁴ Ep. IV,14 *De vacca et pastore.*

¹⁴⁵ Ep. II. 35 *De fati ordine ex 7 stellis, ex sententia Macrobi; Od. II,10 De denariis planetarum et orbium ad aetates et numerum annorum hominum.*

¹⁴⁶ Ep. IV,9 *Cuius virtutis et de qua triplicitate quodlibet signum sit; natus loquitur.* For its possible sources and parallels cf. Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 184 n. 133.

the planets determine the character through the day and hour of birth.¹⁴⁷ Not the conventional material is interesting in these, but the fact that Celtis dedicated poems to these correspondences.

In the human world, there are certain professions or roles that Celtis especially likes to relate to cosmic influences: the special characteristics or abilities of these persons are due to celestial forces.

– *The lover.* The central role of the notion of cosmic love in the *Amores* was already discussed above;¹⁴⁸ beyond referring to love as an abstract force, Celtis also specifies – playfully – what the celestial causes of the actual love or amorous character of the figures could be. To be sure, the goddess / the planet Venus has to be mentioned in the first place: Celtis emphasizes her power several times.¹⁴⁹ When the poet investigates birth horoscopes of the *Amores*-figures, several components are considered, but with regard to love or beauty, Venus is involved in the analysis. The quadrature between Venus and Saturn in the protagonist’s nativity will entail that love repeatedly turns into suffering; when he praises the beauty of Elsula, Venus and the constellation Bull (one of her domiciles) have a key role in the nativity the poet imagines for her; these will be treated later in detail. One of the elegies combines iatromathematical traditions and elegiac themes in a creative way. Our hero feels himself ill and consults the stars what the favorable date for a venesection could be; he finds a date when Venus, Jupiter and the Sun are in a promising position, but this does not help, since the illness turns out to be love itself, which is incurable.¹⁵⁰ The most interesting poetical strategy for displaying the cosmic power of love is the endowment of its negative aspect, *amor infamis*, with witchcraft-motifs. Beroaldo, whose *Asinus aureus*-commentary Celtis knew, related *amor infamis* to “demonic” magic, goetia (approximately “witchcraft”) or theurgia;¹⁵¹ the close affinity of love and magic in general, and *amor spurcus* and witchcraft in particular, lurks in the background of the *Amores*-narrative. In most cases, the references to the corrupt lover’s witch-like nature remain implicit;¹⁵² in *Amores* IV,10, however, Barbara

¹⁴⁷ Ep. III,70-76 *De horis et diebus planetariis*. This is related to the children of the planets tradition: Luh, *Werkausgabe* 186 n. 143.

¹⁴⁸ See p. 79 n. 29.

¹⁴⁹ The example of Am. I,11,33-34 was already discussed above; cf. also Am. I,7,53-4, or Ep. IV,1,9.

¹⁵⁰ Am. III, 11; briefly discussed by Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 299-300.

¹⁵¹ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 211-9.

¹⁵² A typical example occurs in elegy 7 of book I, the one dedicated to Hasilina, in a context of love as a force that corrupts, coerces, makes man captive. After the well-known topoi of complaining about the lover’s fraudulent nature and the poet’s own suffering from love, Apollo warns him of the *docta meretrix* (“educated / cunning courtesan”), “because – believe me – she transforms you into a thousand shapes, as the offspring of the Circean waters [Circe] was used to do” (v. 77-78: *Nam te transformet (mihi crede) in mille figuras, / Ut mea Circaeis nata solebat aquis.*) To be sure, Circe’s transformative power can be taken allegorically: love

explicitly behaves like a witch. She apprehended Celtis making love with her servant, *Lamia* (!), and vents her rage on both of them. In detailing the various modes of her revenge, she actually gives a catalogue of *maleficia* in thirty lines. She knows herbs and poisons, she can raise storms at sea, charm the moon down from the sky, make the running water freeze and halt its course, fashion a ring with astral powers, have insight into hidden things by means of a crystal, write down magical characters, arouse love by means of a wax figure, steal milk from sheep, and so on;¹⁵³ the author draws on both classical and medieval witchcraft. Since most of the elegiac couplets begin with *arte mea* (“by my art” or “skill”), which is a frequent idiom in Ovid¹⁵⁴ and other love poets referring to the power of *carmina*, the passage also exemplifies the power of poetry in general, a recurrent theme in Celtis’s oeuvre.¹⁵⁵ The protagonist himself, too, assumes the role a wizard – indeed, a necromant – in *Amores* I,14. In order to defeat his rival, he turns to the magical arts, and summons infernal creatures: through *carmina* and other methods he rips open the ground from where the inhabitants of the underworld rise.¹⁵⁶ As will be seen, in *Amores* II,10 *carmina* (two verses) are written on the candles that should be lit for the Sun to rise on the birthday of Celtis, the poet. Magic and poetry are only peripherally and playfully related to each other, still, these poems are in line with Celtis’s main strategies of “cosmic” self-representation.

– *The poet.* The application of solar and astrological symbolism in the construction of a special *vates*-image is the main issue of the following chapters. Beyond the usual *vates*-ideology, Celtis and some other humanists will specify further their elect status as poets: it will be seen how they lay emphasis on favorable horoscopes and a close relationship to Phoebus.

– *The ruler.* It is also to be discussed later that Celtis endowed various rulers (patrons), too, with cosmic symbols, using both astrological¹⁵⁷ and solar¹⁵⁸ imagery. Both has a long tradition, but again, Celtis proved creative in some respects, particularly in joining his “cosmic glory” to that of his patron.

potentially lowers man to an animalistic level of existence. Other examples for references to witchcraft are Am. II,7,1-10; II,11,47-48.

¹⁵³ Am. IV. 10. 19-48.

¹⁵⁴ E. g. in the Medea-scene of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (VII, 176).

¹⁵⁵ One of the related topoi (frequent in Celtis and Renaissance poetry in general) is the motif of Orpheus who can move the trees, the rocks and so on with his “magical” song and lute-play.

¹⁵⁶ Analyzed by Wiegand, “Nekromant.” The part of the elegy preceding the magical procedure reflects favorably on magic: Celtis remembers the words of his master, likewise a magician, according to which the creatures summoned from the underworld will reveal to Celtis the secrets of cosmic *amor* that permeates everything and holds the world together (v. 62-89).

¹⁵⁷ See p. 117; 143-5.

¹⁵⁸ See p. 183-4.

The foregoing overview was meant to show the wide spectrum of contexts in which micro-macrocosmical correspondences and influences appeared in Celtis. On the one hand, he undoubtedly had a strong inclination to a holistic view of the world; on the other hand, an *elaborate and consistent* cosmology surpassing the basic cosmological conventions of the age cannot be outlined from the poems. He was highly receptive, took over a wide range of philosophical ideas and topoi and combined them in intriguing ways; he was creative as a poet and not as a philosopher. The foregoing examples may have rendered palpable for the reader Celtis's attitude of *seria mixta ioci*: poetical play and earnest thought are intertwined and cannot be separated in the interpretation. Sometimes the playful element obviously dominates, as is best exemplified by the use of magic-motifs. And indeed, when magic appears not in a fictional narrative but as subject of real discourse, he definitely rejects magical practices. In his ode to Johannes Melber he remembers a conversation in which Melber asked him about the validity of magic; Celtis enumerates various kinds of magical practices, alchemy and superstitions about witches, and at the end he voices an "I believe if I see" attitude.¹⁵⁹ The *Amores*-elegy III,10, which argues that people are born for different predilections and professions,¹⁶⁰ treats necromants, cabbalists, seers of all kind scornfully and associates to them the notion of *superstitio*.¹⁶¹

And what about astrology? He wrote a number of poems criticizing astrologers in general; does that mean a general skeptical attitude to actual astrological practices? Italian Neo-Latin poetry (drawing inspiration from classical philosophy and satirical poetry) provided models for criticism on astrologers: a number of Italians, including acquaintances of Celtis like Callimachus or Balbi, made critical remarks on astrologers, on their vain endeavour to foretell the future.¹⁶² German *sodales* of Celtis like Reuchlin¹⁶³ or Locher¹⁶⁴ also criticized astrological prediction; Bebel composed downright parodies of *prognostica*.¹⁶⁵ Celtis, too, condemns astrologers, for various reasons. In at least five epigrams he ridicules their

¹⁵⁹ Od. III,19.

¹⁶⁰ The title reads *Quod diversi ad diversa studia nati sunt, se tantum ad amorem natum esse scribit*.

¹⁶¹ V. 63-70.

¹⁶² Callimachus, Ep. II,17; II,29; Faustino Perisauli, *De triumpho stultitiae* II,462ff; Panfilo Sasso, *Distichum libri* II,4; Balbi, *Carm.* 7; Marullo, Ep. IV, 16. The issue already occurred in earlier humanism, cf. e.g. Salutati, *De fato et fortuna* 3,1,505ff. Texts and edition data are available at www.poetitalia.it (14.05.2015).

¹⁶³ In the *De verbo mirifico* (ed. Ehlers) II, p. 132ff, he reprimands the tricks of astrologers at great length, then he targets magic.

¹⁶⁴ According to the *Contra oblocutores...* (in *Haec in libello...*), v. 3-9, the message of the stars counts nothing compared to the will of God.

¹⁶⁵ *Prognosticon ex Ethrusco in latinum traductum ab Anno domini M.D.IX. usque ad finem mundi*, in *...Opuscula nova...* (Strasbourg, 1512; VD 16 B 1209), f. aa5v-7r.

mistakes, especially their inability to foretell the future: a Polish astrologer was mistaken about the outcome of a campaign;¹⁶⁶ another astrologer erred about the movement of the Sun;¹⁶⁷ astrologers could not foretell the weather from the stars;¹⁶⁸ astrologers and physicians together are said to have advised that one should eat animals corresponding the actual zodiacal signs.¹⁶⁹ A more serious charge, also known from the anti-astrological treatises of the age, concerns the essence of astrological prediction. In the above mentioned elegy about the professions, astrologers are condemned at the greatest length among all pursuers of *superstitio*: they hurt God by their intention to sell out divine secrets, and they expose themselves, too, to danger.¹⁷⁰ According to a two-line epigram, astrologers work in vain, the heaven is only in God's possession.¹⁷¹ Regarding all this criticism, Celtis was certainly inspired by classical, contemporary Italian and German anti-astrological literature, and the criticism fitted well his image of a wise poet-philosopher, too. Nevertheless, he seems to have voiced his earnest personal opinion. He made versatile criticism, several times, involving such cases that are obviously based on personal experience; this corresponds to the fact that despite the significant presence of astrology in his oeuvre, he has not made any prediction of the future, although even some of his humanist friends wrote *prognostica* (as will be seen in the next subchapter).

However, in all these poems Celtis finds only one aspect of astrological practice problematic, the prediction of the future (and even in this case, none of the foregoing poems suggest the *impossibility* of foretelling the future from the stars¹⁷²). The next two chapters will

¹⁶⁶ Ep. I,35 *De genethliaco Polono Ungariam pollicente: Sarmata Pannonio fuerat ter captus amore / Terque redit vacuis in sua regna viris. / Dic mihi, venturo quae scribant tempora fato / Sidera, si poteris, caece genethliace.* The epigram was certainly written during Celtis's stay in Cracow and must refer to the unsuccessful campaign of Duke John Albert, Casimir IV's son, against Vladislaus, the would-be king of Hungary and Bohemia, in 1490. Casimir is the subject of the next epigram (I,36).

¹⁶⁷ Ep. I,60 *De imperito astrologo.*

¹⁶⁸ Ep. IV,6 *De cane, gallo et culina; astrologis*, and Ep. I,59,1-10 *De mendaciis astrologorum.* According to the latter, when the astrologer predicts genial weather, it will be raining, and vice versa; therefore, the end of the epigram (v. 9-10, *Non opus, ut superi nobis dent scire futura, / Illi consilium dum meruere Iovis*) has to be taken ironically: as can be seen, God has presented them with the knowledge of the future; you don't have to know it because they tell us.

¹⁶⁹ Ep. IV,19 *De cibis annuis ex loco solis.*

¹⁷⁰ Am. III,10,73-82: *Cum deus hunc sacro perfecit pectore mundum, / Ut nihil huic addi diminuere queat, / Cur temere illi audent naturae vertere leges / Arcanumque dei vendere consilium? / Hinc tales natura fugit, deus optimus odit, / Ceu qui prostituunt condita fata dei. / Nemo mathematicus genium indemnatus habebit, / Quandoquidem violat iusque piumque dei. / Inde parum illorum constant mentes animique / Et vita illorum multa pericla subit.*

¹⁷¹ Ep. IV,64 *Ad astrologos: Quid te cum curis magnisque laboribus urges? / Solus habet coelum Jupiter ipse suum.*

¹⁷² It occurs even that Celtis bases his poem on a concrete astrological prediction: in one epigram, he describes a triple conjunction as dangerous for the pope (Ep. IV, 5 *De coniunctione magna siderum in Cancro*). However, one does not have to draw far-reaching conclusions from the epigram: he may have drawn on an actual prediction by an astrologer, and used it to voice his anticlerical feelings.

show that Celtis did not contempt horoscopes at all: he accepted the basic rules of horoscopic astrology, and he seems to have had a specific predilection for natal astrology. *Amores* III,10, too (in which he criticizes astrologers at length), is put in an astrological context right at the beginning: the stars give various inclinations which result in various courses of life;¹⁷³ and when he criticizes a palmist (*chiromanticus*), his problem is that the palmist could not establish the inquirer's stars of birth; which implies that the consideration of the natal stars was natural for Celtis.¹⁷⁴ In general, astrology, as any other issue in humanist poetry, is exposed to play and topical applications in Celtis's poetry; nevertheless, one can feel Celtis's earnest personal concern for the stars in many poems, like in an epigram where he wants to know how the stars predestined his French disease already at birth.¹⁷⁵ The issue of the stars' effect was an essential component of his thought; the stars often appear as the primary instruments of God in the government of the world, even in the creation of the world.¹⁷⁶

The fact of an ambivalence between Celtis's criticism on astrologers, on the one hand, and his basic belief in astrology, on the other, was already stated by previous scholars;¹⁷⁷ Spitz remarks that this ambivalence was common in humanism.¹⁷⁸ However, Celtis's concern for the stars surpassed the humanist average. Grössing is not right in saying that "astrology influenced Celtis not more and not less than all his other contemporaries, humanists or non-humanists, clerical or secular notabilities, the simple folk."¹⁷⁹ As could be seen from the above overview, astrology permeated his whole oeuvre, more than that of any other humanist poets of the period; and the same seems to be true for his concern for micro-macrocosmical correspondences and influences in general.¹⁸⁰

The foregoing investigations have revealed several reasons for Celtis's predilection for astronomy-astrology: his inquisitive spirit in general; the spectacular role of stars and heavenly spheres in the Pythagorean-Platonic cosmological tradition that he used to a great extent; astrology provided the most convenient example for micro-macrocosmical influences

¹⁷³ V. 1-2: *Quam variis fatis caelestia sidera mentes / Exagitent, nostro carmine nota dabo*

¹⁷⁴ Ep. II,73 *De chiromantico*, v. 9-12: *Ex illis tandem dic, quo sum sidere natus, / Et de me superi quid statuere dei. / Linque, miser, nugas: non haec sunt sidera coeli / Aut quae natales constituere dies.*

¹⁷⁵ Ep. IV,35 *De morbo suo natali*.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. the cosmogonical part of Germ. gen. (v. 1-55), analyzed in detail by Müller, *Die 'Germania generalis,'* 306-27; a parallel idea appears in the "imperial eagle" woodcut: cf. Luh, *Reichsadler*, 30-42.

¹⁷⁷ Pindter, *Die Lyrik*, 144; Grössing, *Humanistische*, 165-170.

¹⁷⁸ Spitz, "The philosophy," 26: "The combination of mild protest against grotesque aspects of astrology and a basic belief in it was common among the humanists."

¹⁷⁹ Grössing, *Humanistische*, 165: "Die Astrologie hat Celtis nicht mehr oder weniger beeinflusst als alle seine Zeitgenossen, Humanisten oder Nichthumanisten, geistliche oder weltliche Grosse, das einfache Volk."

¹⁸⁰ Naturally, if humanism is taken in a wide sense, many German and Italian intellectuals had a strong predilection for the above mentioned ideas; at any rate, Celtis belongs to those whose predilection for a holistic view of the world most spectacularly appears in his works.

in general; and, as will be seen later, individual merits could be emphasized by astrological means. Let us now investigate more closely the Central European world around him, primarily for a better understanding of the biographical, prosopographical, historical reasons for his cosmological interests.

3. Astronomy-astrology in Celtis's Central European environment: universities, courts, humanist circles

Apart from all philosophical background, the extensive use of astronomical-astrological ideas by Celtis can be in large part explained simply by the heavy presence of this discipline in the intellectual climate of Central Europe around 1500. The significance of astrology in late medieval / Renaissance Europe in general has long been known and increasingly investigated by scholarship.¹⁸¹ As for the German territories, astrology was gaining more and more ground in intellectual, courtly, and daily life due to printing,¹⁸² the personal achievements of astronomers (primarily those of the Viennese school), and also economic and geographical factors (the economic flourishing of Southern German cities). Critiques of divination (partly from clerics) and debates over the effects of the stars may have just enhanced the presence of these ideas in public thought.¹⁸³ According to Celtis's ironical remark about astrologers, "no other region is so full of them than the land that has been called Germany."¹⁸⁴ The following overview will not be concerned with astrology-astrology in the region in general, but only

¹⁸¹ The literature on European Renaissance astrology (especially in the context of intellectual history) has grown extensive by now, largely as a result of the Warburg school. About the main general monographs, collected volumes, lexicons, and the scholarship of astrology in Germany, a useful survey has been provided by Reisinger, *Historische Horoskopie*, 10-13. These I complete here only with some important items of the recent literature: *Secrets of Nature: Astrology and Alchemy in Early Modern Europe*, ed. William R. Newman and Anthony Grafton (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press, 2001); *Horoscopes and Public Spheres: Essays on the History of Astrology*, ed. Gunther Oestmann, H. Darrel Rutkin and Kocku von Stuckrad (Berlin / New York: De Gruyter, 2005); Kocku von Stuckrad, *Geschichte der Astrologie: Von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2007); *A Companion to Astrology in the Renaissance*, ed. Brendan Dooley (Leiden / Boston: Brill, 2014). Nevertheless, scholars have not paid much attention to the investigation of actual horoscopes and the theoretical aspects of interpretation; in this regard, Reisinger's work is pioneering.

¹⁸² In the catalogue of Zinner (Ernst Zinner, *Geschichte und Bibliographie der astronomischen Literatur in Deutschland zur Zeit der Renaissance*, Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1941), 620 (!) titles of astronomical-astrological prints fall in a period of twenty years between Celtis's laureation and his death.

¹⁸³ For instance, the debate over the French disease (from 1496) between Polich von Mellerstadt (Celtis's acquaintance) and Simon Pistoris had astrological aspects, too. R. French – J. Arrizabalaga, "Coping with the French Disease: University Practitioners' Strategies and Tactics in the Transition from the Fifteenth to the Sixteenth Century," in *Medicine from the Black Death to the French Disease*, ed. Roger French (Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate, 1998), 90-96.

¹⁸⁴ Am. III,10,61f: *Illis non alia est regio nunc plenior ulla, / Quam quae Germano nomine dicta manet.*

those places and milieus that were primarily related to Celtis. To what extent and how was astronomy-astrology present in those specific towns and intellectual circles where Celtis stayed? How these experiences could have stimulated and shaped Celtis's views? To what extent and how did humanists address such issues?

a. Cracow

It was not Celtis's Italian or Polish journey that aroused his interest for astronomy-astrology: this concern appears already in his first works in 1486-87. After acquiring the rudiments of the quadrivial disciplines by October 1485, his graduation as a *magister artium* in Heidelberg, he became acquainted with two astronomers, and through them, the world of courtly astrology. In the *Ars versificandi*, he refers to the physician of Frederick the Wise (Elector of Saxony), Polich von Mellerstadt, who taught at the university of Leipzig (just as Celtis did), and wrote several *Pronosticons* and a calendar; he probably had an intermediary role in that Celtis elaborated on the horoscope of Frederick, the dedicatee, in the *Poema ad Fridericum*.¹⁸⁵ Johannes Canter, the astronomer of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III, cast a horoscope for Celtis' laureation that appeared in the panegyric *Proseuticum*: as will be seen, both the casting of a chart for such an occasion and its actual contents were unique and Celtis himself must have been its chief initiator.

Nevertheless, it is Celtis's stay in Cracow that must have decisively deepened his astronomical-astrological interests and knowledge.¹⁸⁶ The primary reasons why he came to Cracow are debated in scholarship, but the fame of the university as a center of European astronomical education¹⁸⁷ was certainly among the reasons.¹⁸⁸ Natural philosophy and numerical sciences¹⁸⁹ stood in high esteem here; since 1459 astronomy-astrology had an own

¹⁸⁵ See p. 143-5.

¹⁸⁶ As can be read in the *Celtis-Vita: A Roma per Venetias, Ylliricum et Pannonias, Sarmatas adiit ibique astrorum studio vacavit praeceptore Alberto Bruto usus* (BW, p. 610). He addressed a praising epigram *Ad gymnasium Crocaviense* (Ep. I,90), where *scrutata est penitus naturae arcana potentis, / Astrorum cursus consiliumque poli* (v. 9-10). Müller (*Die 'Germania generalis'*, 311ff.), Luh (*Reichsadler*, 20) and many other scholars stressed the importance of Celtis's studies here.

¹⁸⁷ A good summary on the development of astronomy in Cracow in the fifteenth century has been provided by Mieczyslaw Markowski, "Astronomie an der Krakauer Universität im XV. Jahrhundert," in *Lés universités à la fin du moyen âge. Actes du Congrès international de Louvain 26-30 mai 1975*, ed. J. Paquet and J. Ijsewijn (Louvain, 1978), 256-275. Cf. also J. Babicz, "Die exakten Wissenschaften an der Universität zu Krakau und der Einfluss Regiomontans auf ihre Entwicklung," in *Regiomontanus-Studien*, ed. G. Hamann (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1980), 301-314; on the royal patronage of the discipline: S. C. Rowell, "The Jagiellonians and the Stars: Dynasty-Sponsored Astrology in the Fifteenth Century," *Lithuanian Historical Studies* 7 (2002), 23-42.

¹⁸⁸ On the debate cf. Kozierek, "Konrad Celtis in Krakau," 559-561.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. M. Markowski, "'Numerus' und 'mensura' in der Krakauer Naturphilosophie des XV. Jahrhunderts," in *Mensura, Mass, Zahl, Zahlensymbolik im Mittelalter*, ed. A. Zimmermann (Berlin and New York, 1983), 177-191.

chair, and the education of the latter aspect of the discipline received a special emphasis.¹⁹⁰ In the last quarter of the fifteenth century, when this discipline flowered the most in Cracow, it had such a high niveau that professors and court astrologers were frequently invited to Italy and many other lands. The achievements of Peurbach's and Regiomontanus's first Viennese astronomical school were not only received but elaborated further; especially two astronomers excelled in the assimilation of the Viennese and Cracowian schools, John of Głogów¹⁹¹ and Albert Blar of Brudzewo.¹⁹² The latter demonstrably taught Celtis; more than that, a letter, an ode and a university document attest to their close relationship comparable to that between father and son.¹⁹³ As Müller has pointed out, Celtis received from him more than technical astronomical-astrological knowledge: Blar must have had a role in mediating a view of a cosmos in which the stars are the visible signs of divine harmony and have a decisive role in the world's operation. According to Blar's commentary to Peurbach's *Theoricae novae planetarum*, the task of astronomy-astrology is to learn as exactly as possible the means by which God governs the universe and determines the earthly events: in this way, astronomy-astrology is a means to know God.¹⁹⁴

Celtis dedicated odes to two other professors of astronomy and medicine, too: Johannes Bär (Ursinus)¹⁹⁵ and to Stanislaus Selig (Statilius Simonides).¹⁹⁶ The group of academics with whom Celtis had contact and the humanist circle around him in Cracow overlapped;¹⁹⁷ this whole circle of friends were mostly German and belonged to the upper, predominantly German social strata (which fact encouraged Celtis to treat Cracow as a city of *Germania* and involve it in his mission of a cultural renewal of his nation). A number of these friends were interested and skilled in astronomy-astrology. We have to begin with Callimachus Experiens (Filippo Buonaccorsi, 1437-96), who had a high position at the court and a high esteem as a humanist poet. Having been a disciple of Pomponio Leto (just as Ursinus was), he fled to

¹⁹⁰ Already in the first half of the fifteenth century, the usage of planetary tables and astronomical instruments formed part of the education. After Martinus Rex (Marcin Król) of Zurawica founded the chair of astronomy-astrology, basic astrological works like Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos* and *Centiloquium*, Albumasar's and others' works were regularly lectured on, and *iudicia* were regularly made. Markowski, "Astronomie," 258-260.

¹⁹¹ Jan z Głogowa (c. 1445 – 1507).

¹⁹² Wojciech Blar z Brudzewa (c. 1445 – c.1497).

¹⁹³ BW p. 92f, from Blar to Celtis; Od. I,17 *Ad Albertum Brutum Astronomum* (Kozielek, "Konrad Celtis in Krakau," 559-560); and Blar is simply called *Conradi Celtis magister* in a document of the Faculty of Arts (G. Bauch, *Die Anfänge des Humanismus in Ingolstadt*, Munich / Leipzig: R. Oldenbourg, 1901, 94).

¹⁹⁴ *Commentariolum super Theoricis novas planetarum Georgii Purbachii*, ed. L. A. Birkenmajer (Cracow, 1900), p. 3-4. In Celtis's ode, too (Od. I,17) the wider cosmological frameworks are present in the praise of Blar's astronomical knowledge. Müller, *Die 'Germania generalis'*, 314-5.

¹⁹⁵ Od. I,8.

¹⁹⁶ Od. I,23.

¹⁹⁷ Summarily about Celtis's humanist circle here: Kozielek, "Konrad Celtis in Krakau," 564-7; Stefan Zablocki, "Celtis' Nachahmer und sein Freundeskreis in Polen," in id., *Studien zur neulateinischen Literatur und zur Rezeption der antiken Dichtung im europäischen Schrifttum* (Frankfurt a. M.: P. Lang, 2009), 49-58.

Poland because of the the pope's procedure against the Roman Academy; certain phrases in Celtis's ode to him suggest that the German had befriended Callimachus already in Italy, moreover, the idea of going to Cracow might have come from the Italian.¹⁹⁸ Beyond the ode, the *Epitaphium Philippi Callimachi*, a Celtis-epigram with an anticlerical hue,¹⁹⁹ and traces of Callimachus's impact on Celtis's work²⁰⁰ attest to their close intellectual relationship. As for the stars, Callimachus voiced his belief in the decisive influence of the heavenly bodies in several poems,²⁰¹ and he may have actively practiced astrology.²⁰²

Another close friend of Celtis was the already mentioned Laurentius Corvinus,²⁰³ with whom they exchanged books and letters well after the Cracowian period;²⁰⁴ they seem to have had a mutual influence on each other's cosmological views. In his teaching activity in Cracow, Corvinus stood firmly on the ground of scholastic traditions (he taught mainly logic),²⁰⁵ nevertheless, such works as the *Cosmographia*,²⁰⁶ based on his lectures on Ptolemy's same-titled book, show the traces of fashionable philosophical currents. Expanding the notion of traditional *geographia* / *cosmographia* in the preface, he envisions a comprehensive program which would mean a real "description of the cosmos," with all its cosmological, astronomical, geographical facets:²⁰⁷ the "sacred laws", the "forces of nature" hiding in various things, the "various effects of the stars" (among which the Sun is called, after Macrobius, *dux et moderator reliquorum luminum*) have to be all explored.²⁰⁸ Celtis had

¹⁹⁸ Od. I,7; Zablocki, "Celtis' Nachahmer," 53.

¹⁹⁹ Ep. I,67.

²⁰⁰ See ch. VI,2.

²⁰¹ A representative example is a passage from the poem *ad Glaucum Enetum: Caucasei quamvis fugias post culmina montis / Illic a fatis invenire tuis: / Sideribus celoque patent quicumque recessus, / Et nihil in terris astra latere potest* (Carm 3. 15-18 in *Callimachi Experientis Carmina*, ed. Francesco Sica [Naples: F. Conte, 1981]). One of his epigrams remembers how he once turned to an astrologer (Ep. 29 in *Philippi Callimachi epigrammatum libri duo*, ed. C. F. Kumaniecki [Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolinskich, 1963]). Other examples: carm 2,13-14; carm. app. 1,138-9.

²⁰² G. Paparelli, *Callimaco Esperiente* (Salerno: Beta, 1971), 48.

²⁰³ See p. 38.

²⁰⁴ Cf. the correspondence between 1499 and 1503 in BW.

²⁰⁵ Bauch, "Laurentius Corvinus," 235. From 1489/90 to at least 1494 he taught at the university, probably as a private lecturer.

²⁰⁶ *Cosmographia dans manuductionem in tabulas Ptholomei* (Basel: Nikolaus Kessler, not before 1496), published by Heinrich Bebel, Corvinus's disciple.

²⁰⁷ Müller, *Die 'Germania generalis,'* 319-322.

²⁰⁸ F. [a5r]: *Cum geographia istiusmodi telluris notio est: quae nobis mortalibus deorum munere incolitur: nedum divinos musarum alumnos rerumque gestarum scriptores vetustatis memores: cognitu faciliores efficit: verum etiam sacrae legis obscuritates ambiguas creberrime reserat: sagacisque naturae vim in diverso rerum genere latitantem: necnon varios siderum influxus effectum mira varietate in dubio comprobant.* About the Sun on f. [a7r]: *Ut autem praefata ad primum ducantur originem: ad siderum lationem: et ad parallellos: sermo flectendos est: praecipue tamen ad solis meatum: qui in obliquo volutus circulo hanc regionum diversitatem explicat. Si enim sol (ut veteribus placuit) inquit Macrobius primo saturnalium dux & moderator est reliquorum luminum: et solus stellis praebet errantibus: ipsarum vero Stellarum cursus ordinem rerum humanarum disponunt: necesse est ut solem qui moderatur: planetas nostra moderantes omnium quae circa nos geruntur: fateamur auctorem.*

own exemplars of both Ptolemy's and Corvinus's *Cosmographia*.²⁰⁹ As will be seen from the investigation of Corvinus's *Carmen elegiacum*, the author drew heavily from Pythagorean-Platonic-Ficinian cosmological and poetological traditions, including the decisive role of the stars.²¹⁰ Some works, like the *Carmen Elegiacum* or the above mentioned *Carminum structura* show traces of Celtis's direct influence. Corvinus remembers in several letters how much he learned from Celtis, his master, in Cracow;²¹¹ it is certainly not (only) Celtis's official teaching activity that Corvinus meant – Celtis could only teach at the *bursa Hungarorum* in Cracow, he lectured on letter writing there²¹² –, but his educational, literary activity and personal discussions in general. In a 1503 letter, Corvinus praises Celtis with these words: your songs '*De Amoribus*' "delight me above all, since they contain an especially great amount of astrology and natural charm."²¹³

It is not accidental that the Cracow-related first book of the Celtis-odes contains the most astronomical-astrological references among the books of odes. Praising the friend's knowledge in the form of question-catalogues or otherwise, the stars figure large, not only in the above mentioned odes to the professors, but also in the odes to Jan Kunasz (Ianus Canusium; Od. I,4), Georg Morstyn (Morinus; I,20), Johannes Salomon (Salemnius/Salamius Delius; I,9) Sigismund Gossinger (Fusilius; I,11); in the case of the last two friends, the stars of their birth-horoscopes are referred to as well.²¹⁴

Two facts must be emphasized: beyond astronomy-astrology proper, Celtis's more general cosmological views must have also been shaped by his Cracowian experience; and the discourse about such issues was not restricted within the walls of the university of Cracow, but must have formed part of learned discussions in the Cracowian humanist circle around him.

b. Southern Germany

²⁰⁹ Ptolemy, *Cosmographia*, Lat. tr. by J. Angeli da Scarperia (Ulm: Lienhard Holl, 1482), exemplar: Debrecen, Református Teológiai Akadémia Szeminárium Könyvtára: U 45; the exemplar of Laurentius Corvinus's *Cosmographia*: Vienna, Universitätsbibliothek, I 138054. Description of the two exemplars in N. Henkel, "Die Bücher des Konrad Celtis," in *Bibliotheken und Bücher im Zeitalter der Renaissance*, ed. W. Arnold (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997).

²¹⁰ Corvinus's strong astronomical interests has been mentioned by Bauch, "Laurentius Corvinus," 234.

²¹¹ BW no. 217 p. 361-2 (1499); no. 236 p. 393-6 (1500); no. 285 p. 517-8 (1502).

²¹² Zablocki, "Celtis' Nachahmer," 53.

²¹³ BW, no. 294, p. 530: *Delectant enim [carmina tua] me plurimum, cum presertim astrologie et naturalis dulcedinis sint plena*. The word *astrologia* can also mean astronomy, and *naturalis* may also refer to the study of nature.

²¹⁴ See ch. III,1,c.

Celtis spent the years between 1491 and 1497 in various towns and cities of present-day Southern Germany. He arrived to Ingolstadt with great plans. According to an 1491 letter to Tucher, he wanted to organize a “Platonic (!) academy”²¹⁵; he probably meant a *bursa* or similar institution where he could start realizing his program.²¹⁶ In 1492 he was appointed professor of rhetorics and poetry in Ingolstadt: his inaugural speech and the *Panegyris*-edition that reveal his ambitious project and his emphasis on natural philosophical disciplines was already discussed above. In reality, he found here *mathematici*, that is, professors of quadrivial-numerical disciplines, allied with them and started to put in practice his extended notion of humanism: he provided new frameworks for the teaching of numerical disciplines in the university, therefore he may be regarded as the leader of a “mathematical school” here,²¹⁷ even if he was not a *mathematicus* in a strict sense. Although Trithemius calls Celtis in his *Catalogus illustrium virorum* not only a *philosophus*, *orator* and *poeta laureatus*, but also *astronomus et cosmographus insignis*,²¹⁸ there is no evidence that Celtis ever had in his life the *practical* astronomical-astrological skills, meaning the calculation of planetary positions, casting a horoscope and so on; nevertheless, the term *astronomus* – that Trithemius had probably squared with Celtis²¹⁹ – fitted well his self-assumed humanist-philosopher role, and this kind of self-representation is a basic reason why he referred to the stars so often in his poetry. Beyond the literary and rhetorical disciplines, he lectured on Ptolemy’s *Cosmographia* in Ingolstadt,²²⁰ and must have touched on astronomical issues within these frameworks. Among the professional *mathematici* belonging to the Celtis-circle, Andreas Stiborius seems to have been the most devoted to Celtis’s ideals; Johannes Stabius was also a trustworthy ally; there are less data about other members, but Joseph Grünpeck, for instance, belonged to the circle from at least 1496, and produced both poetical-historiographical and astrological works (*prognostica*).²²¹ The teaching of numerical sciences seems to have been practically oriented (making maps, casting horoscopes and so on), and was characterized by a division of labour

²¹⁵ BW, p. 32.

²¹⁶ Entner, “Was steckt,” 1072.

²¹⁷ Schöner has called it so after Grössing’s notion of the “second Viennese school of mathematicians” led by Celtis; Schöner summarizes the activity of the school in Ingolstadt in *Mathematik*, 233-284.

²¹⁸ Trithemius: *Catalogus illustrium virorum Germaniae* [Mainz: P. Friedberg, after 14 August 1495], f. 70r (in the exemplar of Munich, BSB, 4o inc. s. a. 1868).

²¹⁹ Schöner, *Mathematik*, 234.

²²⁰ Ibid., 252. Celtis acquired his Greek exemplar of Ptolemy’s *Geography* (ms.: Vienna, ÖNB, cod. vin. hist. gr. 1) only around 1498, and not in 1482, as would appear from the marginal note of Celtis’s scribe: Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 177; C. Gastgeber, *Miscellanea Codicum Graecorum Vindobonensium II. Die griechischen Handschriften der Bibliotheca Corviniana in der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek. Provenienz und Rezeption im Wiener Griechischhumanismus des frühen 16. Jahrhundert* (Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 34) (Vienna: ÖAW, 2014), 280-1.

²²¹ For the members of the circle: Schöner, *Mathematik*, 246-251; cf. also Celtis’s works dedicated to Stiborius (Od. II,14 and Ep. II,42 *De armis Stiborii*) or Stabius (Od. III,23).

(apart from the frequent periods of Celtis's absence): "Celtis was mainly engaged in cosmography, Stiborius in the building of instruments and Stabius in the building of instruments and mathematical geography."²²² The Celtis-circle in Ingolstadt had many enthusiastic disciples, like Aventinus with his deep interest in comprehensive geography,²²³ or the already mentioned Jakob Locher, Celtis's heir in the chair of poetry and rhetorics.

Beyond Ingolstadt, the humanist circles around him in other Southern German cities could also further stimulate his interests for numerical sciences and cosmological issues, and the application of such motifs in his poetry. The Heidelberg circle was already mentioned above; Nuremberg was significant from the perspective of both the reception of Florentine Platonism and the development of astronomy in Germany. Celtis was acquainted with Nuremberg astronomers, for instance Bernhard Walther, whom he encouraged in an ode to publish the rich scholarly results of both his and Regiomontanus's works (Regiomontanus had worked in Nuremberg in the last phase of his life and used the printing shop in Bernhard Walther's house).²²⁴ In an ode to Stabius, Celtis praised the Sun dial on the church of Nuremberg made by members of the Ingolstadt circle.²²⁵ In the house of the Nuremberg patrician Hartmann Schedel, where Celtis was welcome, the library contained, among others, a considerable astronomical-astrological collection.²²⁶ As for the the surviving items of Celtis's own library, one finds several works directly related to the issue of astronomy-astrology: Regiomontanus's calendar and almanach, and three works containing *prognostica*.²²⁷

With regard to the versatile use of astrological symbolism, Celtis received the most impulses certainly from Regensburg, from one of his closest friends, Johannes Tolhopf, a man quite neglected in scholarship. Born in Kemnath in Bavaria around ten–fifteen years earlier than Celtis,²²⁸ this astronomer and humanist was, among other activities, a lecturer at the university of Ingolstadt in the 1470s, and in the beginning of the 1480s a court astrologer to King Mathias of Hungary. After years of much wandering, he settled in Regensburg as canon of the town, and in this last phase of his life (1492-1503), his correspondence with Celtis

²²² Schöner, *Mathematik*, 267.

²²³ *Ibid.*, 253.

²²⁴ Od. III,23; Regiomontanus is also praised in Ep. II,83. Celtis knew the Nuremberg astronomer Johannes Werner, too: cf. Werner's letter in BW, p. 545.

²²⁵ Od. II,21; Schöner, *Mathematik*, 262.

²²⁶ According to the surviving catalogue: R. Stauber, *Die Schedelsche Bibliothek. Ein Beitrag zur Ausbreitung der italienischen Renaissance, des deutschen Humanismus und der medizinischen Literatur* (Freiburg I. Br.: Herdersche Verlagshandlung, 1908), 105-7.

²²⁷ Henkel, "Die Bücher."

²²⁸ According to Schöner, *Mathematik*, 177 he was born around 1445.

attest to their close friendship;²²⁹ Celtis even stayed in Tolhopf's house for around three months.²³⁰ Tolhopf is primarily known as an astronomer, since his two main surviving works are astronomical: he composed a *De motibus celestium mobilium* in 1475-76 and dedicated it Pope Sixtus IV, and he dedicated a *Stellarium* to King Mathias in 1480.²³¹ On the other hand, he was also a humanist poet. From among his poems, only two short epigrams have survived,²³² but he speaks in his letters about poetical, poetological works or editions of some classics.²³³ He had many projects in mind, and certainly not all of these works remained just plans: for instance, he mentions a certain "book about the poets' dignity" as a work that had already been issued.²³⁴ He seems to have had an integrative humanist attitude similar to that of Celtis; he composed astronomical and other treatises, poems, letters, visual artworks, and one can see in each of these genres how astral ideas are combined in various ways with typical humanist ideas. In his *Stellarium* he refers to the tradition of allegorical interpretation, emphasizing that astrological knowledge can help to decipher certain myths (f. 1v; 22v). In his letters, he often uses a mythological-astrological symbolic language that renders the understanding of the texts difficult; sometimes he made concrete astrological predictions.²³⁵ We will see later how some mythological images in Tolhopf-related visual and written sources are connected both to astrology and humanist self-representation. Luh has already pointed out some common motifs and stylistic elements in the oeuvres of Celtis and Tolhopf that suggest the influence of the senior friend (including Celtis's turn toward visual representation in the 1500s);²³⁶ our further investigations will reveal more of these common characteristics.

²²⁹ The BW contains ten letters from Tolhopf to Celtis, of which eight date from the period 1492-95, and the last two from 1499 and 1500.

²³⁰ For Tolhopf's life, cf. Schöner, *Mathematik*, 162-182; K. Arnold, "Vates Herculeus. Beiträge zur Bibliographie des Humanisten Janus Tolophus," in *Poesis et pictura. Studien zum Verhältnis von Text und Bild in Handschriften und Alten Drucken. Festschrift für Dieter Wuttke* ed. St. Füssel, J. Knape (Baden-Baden: Koerner, 1989).

²³¹ The *De motibus celestium mobilium* is a treatise about the movements of the celestial spheres; ms.: Vatican, BAV, Cod. vat. lat. 3103. The *Stellarium* is a version of the *De motibus*, rich in illustrations and focusing more on the calculation of planetary positions with the help of a *stellarium*; this corvina survived in Wolfenbüttel, HAB, Cod. Guelf. 84.1 Aug. 2^o. About the two works in general, cf. e.g. Schöner, *Mathematik*, 178-182; 494-5.

²³² A one-distich epigram hailing Celtis's arrival at Vienna in 1497 (in *Episodia...*, modern ed. in BW p. 306); and a two-distich epigram praising Hrosvitha of Gandersheim in the edition of Hrosvitha's works by Celtis (*Opera Hrosvite...*, Nuremberg, *Sodalitas Celtica*, 1501, f. a3v, modern ed. in Arnold, "Vates Herculeus," 131).

²³³ E.g. BW no. 101 p. 166: *Iam manum apposui Almagesto; item kalendario perpetuo, Parcalibus libellis, octavo sphaerae et Herculi etc.* Cf. also BW no. 41; 63; 76; 221; 244.

²³⁴ BW no. 221 p. 367: *libro nostro de poetarum dignitate nuper edito...*

²³⁵ E.g. BW no. 63 p. 105; no. 64 p. 107; no. 65 p. 109-110; no. 101 p. 167. Schöner called Tolhopf, perhaps a little too sharply, the astrological adviser of Celtis (*Mathematik*, 265).

²³⁶ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 344-8.

c. Vienna; the Habsburg court

The invitation of Celtis to the university of Vienna to teach poetry and rhetorics in 1497 was one of the major measures taken by Emperor Maximilian I in his endeavours for an educational and cultural reform; it was a free lectureship financed by the ruler, not imbedded in the traditional university organization.²³⁷ Many *sodales* waited for Celtis,²³⁸ and such Celtis-friendly professors in Ingolstadt as Stiborius and Stabius followed the Arch-humanist to Vienna; what this circle began there, continued here. However, the interference with institutional traditions caused much conflict between Celtis and scholastic professors in Vienna (and even between him and the superintendent Perger),²³⁹ this must have been one of the reasons why Celtis induced the emperor to grant the foundation of a special *collegium* for the education of a humanist elite, the *Collegium Poetarum et Mathematicorum*.²⁴⁰ On the one hand, the *collegium* was a basic form of university organization, on the other hand, the relation of the CPM to the university remained uncertain, and the conflicts continued. Its superintendent (Celtis) and lecturers were to be appointed by the ruler, and Celtis had the right to laureate poets. Among others, he may have been inspired by Pomponio Leto, who had had a *collegium poetarum*, and who had acquired the right to laureate the winner of poetical competitions (at the anniversary of Rome) from 1483.²⁴¹ The CPM was inaugurated on 1 February 1502, Celtis's forty-third birthday: another sign of how much the institution belonged to him. Basically that kind of education and that alliance of literary and numerical disciplines continued here that Celtis and his circle pursued before, only in more crystallized frameworks. As for the lecturers, Celtis and Vincent Lang (Longinus) taught mainly grammatics and rhetorics, while Stiborius and Stabius (later, Stephan Röslin / Rosinus and Georg Tannstetter / Collimitius) the mathematical disciplines. Celtis lectured on Ptolemy's

²³⁷ Kurt Mühlberger, "Bemerkungen zum Wiener Poetenkolleg," in *Stadtarchiv und Stadtgeschichte. Forschungen und Innovationen. Festschrift für Fritz Mayrhofer* (Historisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Linz; 2003/04), ed. W. Schuster et al. (Linz: Archiv der Stadt Linz, 2004), 763-4.

²³⁸ See the *Episodia* (BW 299-307).

²³⁹ In general, there was a controversy between the *poetae* and the *magistri regentes*: Mühlberger, "Bemerkungen," 764f; about Celtis's teaching activity and conflicts in Vienna, cf. also H. Telatko, *Der Humanismus an der Wiener Universität unter Konrad Celtis*, PhD Dissertation (Vienna, 1937), 96-104. For Celtis in Vienna cf. also Kurt Adel, "Konrad Celtis und Wien," *Österreich in Geschichte und Literatur* 10 (1966), 237-244.

²⁴⁰ About the CPM: Mühlberger, "Bemerkungen," which later appeared as "Poetenkolleg und Dichterkrönung in Wien," in *Bilder – Daten – Promotionen. Studien zum Promotionswesen an deutschen Universitäten der frühen Neuzeit*, ed. R. A. Müller (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2007); Franz Graf-Stuhlhofer: "Lateinische Dichterschule. Das Collegium poetarum des Konrad Celtis von 1501 bis 1537," *Grazer Beiträge. Zeitschrift für die Klassische Altertumswissenschaft* 22 (1998), 211–214. Stuhlhofer has called attention (211-2) to the problem of its name (the foundation charter called just it *collegium poetarum*).

²⁴¹ G. Tournoy-Thoen, "La laurea del 1484 all'Accademia romana," *Bulletin de l'Institute Historique Belge de Rome* 42 (1972).

Geography here, too, at least once (in 1504),²⁴² and then a wider range of teaching aids was at his disposal: he seems to have been responsible for the *bibliotheca regia*,²⁴³ where maps and globes (both celestial and terrestrial²⁴⁴) were also available. He must have involved astronomy in his teaching here, too;²⁴⁵ otherwise we know little about the contents of his lectures.²⁴⁶

The spheres of humanism and astronomy had overlapped to some extent already in the first Viennese mathematical school:²⁴⁷ Regiomontanus and Peurbach held humanistic lectures,²⁴⁸ composed poems,²⁴⁹ and applied a wide range of typical humanist methods and habits in their scholarly activity.²⁵⁰ By Celtis's time, this connection became more evident. As in the case of the earlier humanist circles, the Celtis-friendly circle of professors overlapped with the local humanists, many of whom appeared in the *Episodia* as members of the Danubian Sodality.²⁵¹ Among these, not only the mathematics-professors were interested and skilled in astronomy-astrology, as the *Prognostica* of Augustinus Moravus²⁵² or Ulsenius²⁵³ show. Besides, professional astronomers liked to show their poetical talent, as Stabius, who composed various poems in various metres,²⁵⁴ and was laureated by Celtis in 1502.

²⁴² Grössing, *Humanistische*, 152. He advertized his lectures with an epigram: Ep. V,11.

²⁴³ According to the preface of the *Rhapsodia*, f. b1r; Telatko, *Der Humanismus*, 105.

²⁴⁴ *Rhapsodia*, *ibid.*: ...cum globis non parvis et chartis utramque coeli et terrae superficiei designantibus. Ep. V,11,7-8: *Perque globos solidos coelum terrasque docebo, / Et veteres tabulas edoceamque novas.* Also in Celtis's will (BW p. 605): ...tam sphaeram solidam superficiei coelestis quam terrae.

²⁴⁵ Cf. the memories of Vadianus about his master's lectures in his *Encomion* to Celtis (BW p. 627, v. 60-65): *Ore ubi facundo docuit, quae sidera possent, / Quae deus et quicquid cardine mundus agit./ Quem memini gravibus quassantem pulpita pugnīs, / Me iuvenem in vultus saepe citasse suos. / Unde velut Phoebi fulgor rutilabat honestas, / visque iocis, veri visque latentis erat.*

²⁴⁶ Grössing, "Die Lehrtätigkeit des Konrad Celtis in Wien. Ein Rekonstruktionsversuch," in *Die Universität Wien im Konzert europäischer Bildungszentren 14.-16. Jahrhundert*, ed. K. Mühlberger et al. (Vienna / Munich: Böhlau, 2010), 233. Grössing argued (226-233) that Celtis's question-catalogues give us hints as to what he could have taught, but I do not find this too convincing, given the strong roots of the catalogues in literary tradition (see above).

²⁴⁷ Summarily about this first Viennese school: Grössing, *Humanistische*, 67-141; about the second, led by Celtis: 145-191.

²⁴⁸ Summarily: Grimm, *Literatur*, 97-98.

²⁴⁹ Cf. e.g. H. Grössing, "Astronomus poeta – Georg von Peurbach als dichter," *Jahrbuch des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Wien* 34 (1978).

²⁵⁰ For Regiomontanus, cf. James Steven Byrne, *The Stars, the Moon, and the Shadowed Earth: Viennese Astronomy in the Fifteenth Century*, PhD Dissertation (Princeton University, 2007), 17: "in order to promote and carry out his program of reform, he borrowed humanist rhetoric and textual criticism, navigated a variety of patronage environments, established connections with other scholars, and capitalized on the new technology of print."

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²⁵² In the beginning of the 1490s, Augustinus composed two prognostica: about these and the involvement of astrology in his defense of poetry, see ch. I,2,c.

²⁵³ He was a humanist and town physician in Nuremberg, later Maximilian's physician. His *Prognosticon novum* from 1488 was not a traditional prognosticon but a miscellaneous astrological-medical writing including a defense of astrology. Ms.: Munich, BSB, clm 957.

²⁵⁴ A catalogue of his poems can be found in H. Grössing, *Johannes Stabius: ein Beitrag zur Kulturgeschichte der Zeit Kaiser Maximilians I.*, PhD dissertation (Vienna, 1964).

Stiborius, Stabius and Grünpeck also served as court astrologers to the emperor; in general, the university of Vienna exemplifies well how strong the links between courtly astrology and the academic world could be.²⁵⁵ Practically all rulers in Europe had their astrologers, but the Habsburgs were particularly interested in the effect of the stars; they consulted their astrologers before every important measures, and increasingly used astrology to legitimize their rule.²⁵⁶ When Celtis published his horoscope of lauration in 1487, this had certainly to do with Frederick III's predilection for the stars, for which many examples could be provided.²⁵⁷ Frederick III had a number of astrologers during his long reign: Johannes Nihili of Bohemia, Peuerbach, and at the end of his reign, Johannes Lichtenberger, Johannes Canter (the maker of Celtis's horoscope of lauration) and others.²⁵⁸ With Maximilian succeeding the throne in 1493, astrology was increasingly involved in imperial propaganda, and one of the reasons for his support of the mathematical disciplines and the CPM must have been his reliance on astrological expertise. Lichtenberger, Grünpeck, Stiborius, Stabius, Georg Tannstetter: they all served as astrologers of Maximilian, and produced *prognostica*, almanacs, instruments. He was concerned about horoscopes, especially his geniture, all through his life. Maximilian's autobiographical writings (from the first sketches of a Latin autobiography by Grünpeck to the *Weißkunig* and the *Theuerdank*) exemplify most spectacularly what a role the stars played in the emperor's endeavours to understand history, the natural world and himself, and how astrology was increasingly involved in his self-representation.²⁵⁹ Celtis intended to have a good relationship with the emperor, and he apparently succeeded in this;²⁶⁰ as already mentioned, he relied on their alliance in the

²⁵⁵ This is the main point of Michael Shank, "Academic Consulting in 15th-Century Vienna: The Case of Astrology," in *Texts and Contexts in Ancient and Medieval Science. Studies on the Occasion of John E. Murdoch's Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Edith Sylla and Michael McVaugh (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 245–70.

²⁵⁶ Summarily: D. C. Pangerl, "Sterndeutung als naturwissenschaftliche Methode und Politikberatung. Astronomie und Astrologie am Hof Kaiser Friedrichs III. (1440-1493)," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 92 (2010), 309-327; H. Grössing – F. Stuhlhofer, "Versuch einer Deutung der Rolle der Astrologie in den persönlichen Entscheidungen einiger Habsburger des Spätmittelalters," *Anzeiger der phil.-hist. Klasse der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 117 (1980), 267–83; the most detailed study on astrology in Maximilian's court will be Hayton's soon-to-appear monograph: *Astrology and Politics in the Holy Roman Empire*. I am grateful to Darin Hayton who put his draft at my disposal.

²⁵⁷ For instance, the date of his marriage with Eleonor of Portugal depended on Nihili's advice (Grössing – Stuhlhofer, "Versuch," 280); he had horoscopes made and analyzed for Eleonor's and Maximilian's birth (H. Grössing, "Die Horoskope Eleonores von Portugal und Kaiser Maximilian I., in *Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Geschichte der Mathematik, Naturwissenschaften und Medizin* 31, Vienna: ÖAW, 1981).

²⁵⁸ Cf. Pangerl, "Sterndeutung," 312-8.

²⁵⁹ Cf. esp. Hayton, *Astrology*," ch. 1

²⁶⁰ For their relationship: Claudia Wiener, "'Et spes et ratio studiorum in Caesare tantum.' Celtis' Beziehungen zu Maximilian I.," in *Amor als Topograph*, ed. C. Wiener (Schweinfurt: Bibliothek Otto Schäfer, 2002); Jan-Dirk Müller, "Maximilian und die Hybridisierung frühneuzeitlicher Hofkultur. Zum Ludus Dianae und der Rhapsodia des Konrad Celtis," in *Kaiser Maximilian I. (1459 - 1519) und die Hofkultur seiner Zeit*, ed. S.

realization of his integrative humanistic program. Not surprisingly, the role of astrology in Maximilian's self-representation left its traces in Celtis's poetry, too: it does not seem to have served as models for Celtis's own astrology-related self-representation,²⁶¹ but he mentions Maximilian's favorable stars, at least superficially, in the *Ludus Dianae* and the *Rhapsodia*²⁶² (and he voiced the topical ruler-Sun analogy²⁶³). Interpreting his own horoscope in *Amores* I,12, Celtis points out that Maximilian was born just forty days after and likewise with favorable stars:²⁶⁴ knowing the significance that Maximilian attributed to his nativity, Celtis capitalized on the fact that their date of birth fell close to each other, he could emphasize his *Herrschernähe* this way, too. On the other hand, Celtis did not speak about the Habsburgs' stars and other celestial signs in a propagandistical way, as Brant, Grünpeck and others often did;²⁶⁵ we have seen Celtis's skepticism about divinatory astrology, and the frequent grandiloquent prophetic predictions must have only reinforced his skepticism. A good example for such predictions is Lichtenberger's famous and popular *Pronosticatio* (1488), which "consisted of little more than plagiarized astrology and a compilation of various prophecies,"²⁶⁶ related to Habsburg military interests, church reform, the Turkish threat and many other issues; he used astrology, a seemingly scientific discipline, to legitimize his prophecies.²⁶⁷

It can be concluded that Celtis happened to stay during his life in such cities and intellectual milieus where discourses related to astronomy and astrology were particularly frequent. He frequently met intellectuals with these interests, and not only astronomers-astrologers at universities or courts, but also humanists who wrote, among others, astrology- or astronomy-related works: Callimachus, Laurentius Corvinus, Ulsenius or Augustinus

Hartmann et al. (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2009), 3-21; Larry Silver, *Marketing Maximilian: the Visual Ideology of a Holy Roman Emperor* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), esp. 17-20.

²⁶¹ The rulers' attitude to astrology in general (including Maximilian with his reliance on predictions and elections) differed greatly from that of Celtis, the poet. Both Celtis and Maximilian attributed great importance to their nativities, with favorable positions on the one hand, and Saturn's oppressive role on the other, but these are to general similarities.

²⁶² *Ludus*, v. 1: *Rex cui Maximium praestant pia sidera nomen...*; *Rhapsodia*, v. 169: *Sed maiora tuis fieri his speramus ab astris...*

²⁶³ See p. 178.

²⁶⁴ Am. I,12,25-28: *Maximus Αἰμίλιος, Romani nominis heres, / Hoc anno et fausto sidere natus erat, / Nostra quaterdenis sed praevenit hora diebus / Astra, quibus vitam coeperat ipse suam.* In fact, the difference is around fifty days, Celtis was born on 1 February, while Maximilian on 22 March 1459.

²⁶⁵ Cf. Hayton, *Astrology*, ch. 2 and 7.

²⁶⁶ D. Kurze, "Popular Astrology and Prophecy in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries: Johannes Lichtenberger," in *Astrologi hallucinati: Stars and the End of the World in Luther's time*, ed. P. Zambelli (New York: De Gruyter, 1986), 190.

²⁶⁷ Cf. Kurze, "Popular Astrology;" C. Heitzmann, "Hüte dich vor Pfeil und Gift! Johannes Lichtenbergers Vorhersagen und seine bisher unbekanntem Horoskope," *Zeitschrift für Ideengeschichte* III/2 (summer 2009), 104-8.

Moravus, for instance.²⁶⁸ This aspect of humanism was in line – and interacted – with Celtis’s previously discussed integrative humanistic attitude. It is not the humanistic interests in astronomy-astrology in that Celtis has brought something new, but in certain creative ways of using it in poetry; while the above enumerated German humanists wrote primarily *prognostica* or other treatises, Celtis incorporated astronomy-astrology in his poetry more than anyone else, with a particular emphasis on self-representation that will be in the focus of the following investigations.

It is important that practically all the humanists and / or professors mentioned in this subchapter were friends and comrades of Celtis. It was also *in his interest*, to his advantage, to use astronomical-astrological symbolism. Many of his readers (and also the Habsburg rulers) liked this discipline and could only greet such aspects in poetry; the application of such motifs could strengthen Celtis’s philosopher-role and even humanist group identity, as we will see. This, on the other hand, does not mean that he did not have an earnest interest and belief in the great influence of the stars: as we have seen above, his skepticism was about certain divinatory practices, not against astrology in general. Celtis’s personal inclinations, his philosopher-role and the philosophical frameworks of his thought, his social environment – all this contributed to a uniquely wide and spectacular application of (mainly individual) astrological and solar symbolism in poetry.

²⁶⁸ In certain cases, as in the case of Tolhopf, one cannot definitely categorize one as an astronomer or a humanist (in the traditional sense), because he was both at the same time.

Chapter III

Natal astrology in the service of poetical character-building

1. *Natal astrology in Celtis*

a. The stars at Celtis's birth

Natal astrology has always been the most basic branch of astrology, and one could especially make use of it in an age that witnessed a growing need for representing exceptional characters – or portraying the individual in general –, and that liked to think in terms of micro-macrocosmical relations. In the Renaissance the most natural subject for an astrology-based characterization was the patron, most often the ruler: he needed the most and he had the most power to have himself represented – mostly in a favorable light –, and he could afford to have astrologers. Given an audience that basically believed in the effect of the stars on earthly phenomena, the validity of certain mental and physical properties could be “proved” or at least supported by pointing at planetary relations. Another social group with a growing need for favorable self-representation were the humanists who liked to call themselves *vates*: amid the controversies around the value of poetry, humanists grasped every opportunity to prove the merits and the exceptionality both of the *vates* in general and their specific character, specific *ingenia* in particular. The literary genres they used provided much freedom and many ways of (self-)representation; they could play with fiction and reality, they could, for instance, create lyrical subjects through which they could avoid direct self-eulogy. Natal astrology came in handy for humanists like Celtis in particular: on the one hand, the presence of astrology in everyday life was particularly strong in his environment, on the other hand, he aimed at an elect status among his humanist fellows. All this taken into consideration, it is not so surprising that the very first elegy of his most important work, the *Amores* – that is, an elegy in a key structural position – is basically a poetical and genre-adjusted interpretation of his own birth horoscope.

*Ad Fridianum Pignucium Lucensem infeliciter
se ad amorem natum ex configuratione
horoscopi sui*

*Sidera quae nostrae fuerint natalia vitae,
candide Pignuci, carmine nosse cupis.
Accipe, per Latias vates doctissimus oras*

To Fridianus Pighinutius of Lucca who was born for unhappy love according to the planetary positions of his horoscope

Bright Pighinutius, you want to know from our song what the stars of my birth were. Hear then, yourself, the most learned poet in the region of Latium, the great glory of your Luccan nation:

Lucanae gentis gloria magna tuae:
 5 *nox erat et Februae submerso sole Calendae*
transierant mensis februa maesta colens.
Candidus inflexa Phoebus tunc stabat in Urna,
proxima cui nitidae stella serena Lyrae,
cumque Sagittiferi surgebant sidera signi
 10 *horaque post medium tertia noctis erat.*
Tunc mea me genitrix reserata effudit ab alvo
et dederat vitae stamina prima meae.
Illa nocte Lyræ nemo conspexit Olympo,
Phoebus enim roseis hanc sibi iunxit equis
 15 *plectraque pulsabat toto resonantia caelo*
et dixit: "Phoebo nascere, quisquis eris!
Ipse meam citharam plectro gestabis eburno
Lesboaque canes carmina blanda chely,
seu te Germano contingat cardine nasci,
 20 *sive Italo, Gallo, Sarmaticove polo,*
nam mea sunt toti communia numina mundo,
sim licet Arctois languidior radiis."
Dixit et assensit Capricorni frigidus astro
Saturnus, totiens qui mihi damna tulit,
 25 *Marsque sub aestivo micuit tunc forte Leone*
et medium caeli cum Iove Virgo tulit.
Lunaque fraterno capiens iam lumen ab ore
cornua cum Capri cornibus implicuit.
Quaque mihi nato volucris sub parte refulsit,
 30 *haec eadem coepto pars orientis erat.*
Principium Maiis fuerat tunc forte Calendis,
concepit nostrum dum pia Mater onus,
mater centenos quae quasi impleverat annos
et vidit quartam stirpe sua subolem.
 35 *Mercuriusque suo junxit vaga lumina Phoebos,*
lusit et ad citharam verba canora suam.
Iamque Venus stabat Vervecis sidera lustrans
deridens tremuli frigida membra senis,
quam pater in quarta dum vidit adesse figura,
 40 *inrepat et contra talia voce refert:*
"Saeva Venus, nostro quam de genitore creavi,
eius ut iniecti secta verenda mari,
cur mea derides venerandae membra senectae
et falcem, quacum cuncta sub orbe meto?
 45 *Ipse ego iam, tecum qui inimico lumine volvor*
et male concordi foedere semper ago,
efficiam: quicumque sub hac vitam accipit hora
sentiat immites semper amore deos."
Dixit. Et auratae Veneris fera spicula fregit(,)
 50 *plumbea sed tarda iussit abire mora.*
Inde mihi facilem nulla est quae femina mentem
praebeat et stabilem servet amore fidem.
Testis Sarmaticis Hasilina est nata sub oris,
Elsula Danubio quaeque creata vago,
 55 *Ursula Rhenanis et quae vaga gloria ripis*
adque Codoneum Barbara nota sinum
atque aliae multae quas fido pectore amavi,
quis mea deceptus munera saepe dedi,
munera, quae cunctas retinent in amore puellas
 60 *et validas vires semper amoris habent.*

It was night, and after sunset the first of February elapsed (?), the month of the sorrowful expiatory sacrifice. Radiant Phoebus stood in the curved Urn [Aquarius], next to him the bright star of the brilliant Lyre, and when the constellation of the Archer was rising, it was three o'clock after midnight. It was then that my mother sent me forth from her opening womb, giving me my life's thread. That night no-one could see the Lyre in the heavens, since Phoebus bound it to his rose-colored horses. Then he plucked the strings, making the whole sky resound, and said:

"Be born for Phoebus, whoever you will be! You will take with yourself my lyre with the ivory plectrum, and you will sing charming songs in the style of the lyre of Lesbos, no matter where you are born, under a German sky, or under an Italian, Gallic or Sarmatian; because I have the same power all over the world, even if my rays are weaker in the North."

So he spoke, and cold Saturn in the constellation of Capricorn agreed, Saturn, who did me harm so many times. Mars happened to shine under the summer Lion, and the middle of the sky was possessed by the Maiden with Jupiter. The Moon, who borrowed her light from her brother's face, locked her horns together with Capricorn's horns. And the degree at which the winged [planet] shone at my birth was the degree of the eastern horizon at my conception. My origin, when my good mother conceived her burden, happened to fall on the first of May; my mother completed her hundredth year, as it were, and saw me as her fourth child in the lineage. Mercury joined his wandering light with his Phoebus, and sang harmonious songs playing the lyre.

Now Venus stood there, staying in the constellation of Wether [Ram], and ridiculed the cold members of the trembling old man; when the father saw that they were in a quadrangle, he rebuked her with these words:

"Cruel Venus, whom I helped to be born from our father, having thrown his severed loins into the sea, why do you ridicule the members of my honorable old age and the sickle with which I cut off everything under the sky?

I, revolving in an inimical aspect with you, always in a disharmonious bond with you, I am going to do this: whoever comes into the world at this hour, may he always feel the gods cruel with regard to love!"

So he spoke, and he broke the wild arrows of golden Venus, ordering that the leaden arrows can only go on their way with delay. That is why no woman is freely inclined to me, no woman is faithful in love. This is attested by Hasilina, born in the Sarmatian region, or Elsula, who came to the world by the far-flowing Danube, or Ursula, who has a far-reaching glory on the banks of the Rhine, or Barbara, known at the Codonean bay, or many other women who I loved with a faithful heart, and to who I often gave my gifts, though they deceived me; such gifts that keep every girl in love, and always have the great strength of love.

In the following I summarize just briefly the results of those scholars (primarily Jörg Robert) who have discussed the elegy, and analyze the poem further from the perspective of self-representation, paying an even greater attention to the horoscope itself, other works by Celtis, and possible Italian influences. The elegy is part of a question–answer game characteristic of humanists. Its precedent is an ode by Pighinutius (1487),¹ an Italian humanist at the court of Frederick the Wise of Saxony, in which he expresses his admiration for Celtis by guessing the stars of his birth: “Which star shone for you at your birth, reveal with your song!”² The replying poem, at least its core, might have been composed at about the same time, but the whole poem can only be seen now in the Nuremberg manuscript of the *Amores*³ (1500) and in the 1502 printed edition, which contains the ode to Pighinutius in a somewhat altered version.⁴

What literary models could Celtis have considered while composing this horoscope elegy? Classical literature could provide patterns only for a few components of the poem. The biographical *sphragis* of Propertius’s *Monobiblos* (I,22) presents the poet’s origin, and the introductory lines of the two poems⁵ undoubtedly harmonize (Propertius’s *Elegiae* was the primary model for Celtis’s *Amores*). Here and there the elegists complain about the erotic bondage that is due to the bad influence of the stars.⁶ The motif of favorable birth due to the gods appears in classical works on a general level.⁷ In the astrological literature, Firmicus Maternus mentions examples of poets’ nativities, for instance that of Homer.⁸ The models provided by contemporary poetry are more important than the classical preliminaries: they deal with actual horoscope-elements, too. Pontano mentions the constellation that determined his or his relatives’ fates in several of his poems.⁹ More significant is Giovanni Pico della Mirandola’s poem entitled *Excusatio quod amet*,¹⁰ which provides a parallel for Celtis’s elegy

¹ Appeared in Celtis’s *Proseuticum ad divum Fridericum tertium pro laurea Appollinari* (Nuremberg: F. Creussner, 1487), f. 1v-2v. For the poetical correspondence between Pighinutius and Celtis cf. Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 92-95.

² *Quod tibi sidus micuit sub ortu* (v. 3).

³ Nuremberg, Stadtbibliothek, Cent. 5 app. 3.

⁴ As regards astronomy-astrology, the changes – that may be due to Celtis himself – are not significant, although the later version lays emphasis on the hour of his birth: *Aut tibi Maiaie fidibus lyraeque / Filius natalicia sub hora / Fulsit...* (v. 21-23).

⁵ Prop. I,22,1-2: *Qualis et unde genus, qui sint mihi, Tulle, Penates, / quaeris pro nostra semper amicitia*. Am. I,1,1-2: *Sidera quae nostrae fuerint natalia vitae, / candide Pignuci, carmine nosse cupis*.

⁶ E.g. Ov. Epist. XV,15,81f; Trist. V,3,27.

⁷ E.g. Horace’s ode to Melpomene (IV,3,1f).

⁸ *Mathesis* VI,30,23ff.

⁹ W. Hübner, “Die Rezeption des astrologischen Lehrgedichts des Manilius in der italienischen Renaissance,” in *Humanismus und Naturwissenschaften*, ed. Fr. Krafft and R. Schmilz (Boppard: H. Boldt, 1980), 55f.

¹⁰ Carm. 2 (Pico della Mirandola, *Carmina Latina*, ed. W. Speyer, Leiden: Brill, 1964)

in its topic and function. Pico describes his nativity by making a circle around the signs and he explains and justifies his erotic addiction with the power of the stars.¹¹

Some other possible patterns can be added to those enumerated by Robert. It is theoretically possible that Celtis knew the *sphragis* of Pseudo-Manetho's *Apotelesmatica*, mentioned by Hübner,¹² in which the poet demonstrates his exceptionally lucky birth by summarizing his nativity.¹³ More importantly, in Propertius's elegy IV,1 the love-dependence (opposed to the freedom of poetry according to the general elegiac pattern) is given an astrological background, which has most probably contributed to Celtis's similar theme in the horoscope-elegy.¹⁴ Propertius as the lyrical subject of the poem would sing the great deeds of the Roman past, but an astrologer warns him to compose love elegies instead: this is written in the stars, the poet's horoscope, and astrologers are not mistaken in their predictions (so speaks the astrologer). As Wimmel has pointed out, the elegy belongs to the apologetical tradition of Apollo warning against "great" poetry; Propertius used this motif most explicitly in elegy III,3 (that Celtis drew on in the *Poema ad Fridericum*, as will be seen), and boldly extended the motif in elegy IV,1: the astrologer as *vates* stands in the service of Apollo.¹⁵ It is not the details that are mirrored in Celtis's elegy – contrary to Pico's *Excusatio quod amet*, Propertius's astrologer does not go into horoscopic details –, but the general opposition of freedom of poetry and love-dependence, and the idea of astrological unalterability.¹⁶

Contemporary Neo-Latin poetry in Italy applied several astrological topoi that could have provided patterns for the relevant aspects of Celtis's poem. Complaints were often made about the unfavorable position and strongly negative effects of Saturn.¹⁷ Celtis's friend, Callimachus, suspects the harmful stars with his lasting "love servitude".¹⁸ The lucky

¹¹ About Pighinutius's ode and the sources see Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 451-461.

¹² *Der Neue Pauly* (Stuttgart et al.: Metzler, 2004-) XIV, 534.

¹³ *Manethonis Apotelesmaticorum qui feruntur libri VI*, ed. A. Köchly (Leipzig: Teubner, 1858), v. 738-750. Four planets, the traditionally most favorable planets at that (Jupiter, Sun, Venus, Mercury), stay in the same sign (the Twins), and one can find the Κενταύρος in the MC (according to Otto Neugebauer, *Greek horoscopes*, Philadelphia: American Philosophical Soc., 1959, 92, the last position refers to Centaurus and not the Archer; the horoscope was cast for 28 May 80 AD, 2 hours after sunset). The text emphasizes the MC, just as Celtis did; however, since one cannot find exact textual agreements and the manuscript tradition is too unexplored (the work did not appear in print in the fifteenth century), one can only speculate about a possible influence on Celtis.

¹⁴ Interestingly, Robert – who has demonstrated that Propertius's *Elegies* was the most important classical source for Celtis's *Amores* – mentioned only superficially this Propertius-poem in his analysis of *Amores* I,1: *Konrad Celtis*, 457 n. 93.

¹⁵ That the speech of the astrologer (who is presented in a partly ironical way) originates in the "warning Apollo" tradition is shown by direct references to Apollo at v. 73-74 and 133-4. W. Wimmel, *Kallimachos in Rom. Die Nachfolge seines apologetischen Dichtens in der Augusteerzeit* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1960), 279-282.

¹⁶ On the other hand, Celtis does not speak about *astrologers* and prediction of the future in the elegy: for the reasons, see the end of ch. II,2,b.

¹⁷ See examples below, p. 134 n. 82.

¹⁸ Carm. 2 *Ad Bassum*, v. 1-20: *Liber eram nullosque mihi meditar amoris, / Contentus casto vivere posse thoro: / Ast amor abruptit pacte mihi federa pacis / Et iubet assueto reddere colla iugo. / Prima peregrinis faculis*

planetary positions in Celtis' nativity are at least as important for him as the Saturn-Venus problem, and one often reads about favorable stars of birth in Italian poems;¹⁹ for instance, when they describe how the gods assist in the birth of the patron, god and planet merge, and actual horoscope-elements (like the sign of the Ascendant) are also referred to.²⁰ Pighinutius' ode, too, is based on a topos; it provides an example for that sort of *rogatio* where the poet guesses which planetary position could have brought about the birth of such an excellent patron or friend.²¹ Pighinutius may have not been interested in Celtis's actual horoscope; he seems to have simply expressed his admiration for his fellow poet, adjusting to contemporary literary norms and maybe Celtis's astrological interests. However, the poet laureate grasped the opportunity and answered, and the symbolism of his poem indicates, among other things, an "Orpheic" identity and calling that reminds one of Ficino's assessment of his own nativity: in a letter Ficino assumed the role of the restorer of ancient wisdom in the frameworks of *poetica theologia*.²² With regard to all these Italian patterns, one cannot and need not know what exactly Celtis heard or read;²³ here it is enough to know that almost all the important components of his elegy had Italian Renaissance or classical) precedents. He composed, however, by a "*mirifica permixtio*"²⁴ of these components a relatively original poem with few commonplaces, and it found followers in the later Neo-Latin poetry of Germany.²⁵

mea pectora doris / Attigit et mentis sedit in arce mee, / Dura sed inceptas fregerunt sidera curas / Et periit subito vix bene natus amor. (...) Sive hanc nascenti legem dedit hora maligna / Fitque meum molli sidere pectus iners; / Sive aliquid natura iubet me semper amare / Inque tuis castris signa tenere, Venus; / Sive adamanteo fuso fatalia nentes / Hanc curam filis implicuere meis: / Ardor inest menti tecum gerere arma, Cupido, / Nec licet a signis me procul esse tuis.

¹⁹ Already Dante attributed his talent to his birth-sign, the Twins, and the Sun, in his *Divina Commedia* (Par. XXII, 112-7; Steppich, 'Numine,' 104); Landino specifies in his commentary that the Twins was the Ascendant, and that it furthers *scientia* because it is the domicile of Mercury (*Comento di Christophoro Landino Fiorentino sopra la Comedia di Danthe Alighieri Poeta Fiorentino*, Florence, 1481, f. 340v).

²⁰ Amerigo Corsini, *Compendium in vitam Cosmi Medicis I*, 39-69 (*Compendium in vitam Cosmi Medicis ad Laurentium Medicem*, ed. László Juhász, Leipzig: Teubner, 1934); Naldi, Ep. 181 *Ad Laurentium Medicem* (*Epigrammaton liber*, ed. A. Perosa, Budapest: K. M. Egyetemi Nyomda, 1943). Alessandro Cortesi refers to concrete planetary positions in the nativity of Matthias of Hungary: *Laudes Bellicae Matthiae Corvini Hungariae regis*, 198-200, in *Olaszországi XV. századbeli írónak Mátyás királyt dicsőítő művei* [Fifteenth-century Italian authors' works praising Matthias of Hungary], ed. J. Ábel (Budapest: MTA, 1890), 307; cf. Á. Orbán, "Astrology at the Court of Matthias Corvinus," *Terminus* 17 (2015), 127-8.

²¹ Another example is Janus Pannonius's panegyric to Lodovico Gonzaga: *Iani Pannonii Poemata quae uspiam reperiri potuerunt omnia*, ed. Sámuel Teleki and Sándor Kovásznai (Utrecht: Wild, 1784), vol. I, p. 238.

²² Ficino to Johannes Pannonius, OO p. 871.

²³ He most probably read at least Pico's and Callimachus's above mentioned poems.

²⁴ Cf. W. Wenk, "'Mirifica quadam permixtione.' Beobachtungen zur poetischen Technik des Konrad Celtis," *Sphairos. Wiener Studien* 107/108 (1994/5). With the Petrarch-phrase (Fam. I,8,2) that Michael Styrius applied to Celtis (BW p. 353) Wenk refers to Celtis's general eclectic method of artistic production which often resulted in a synthesis of highly different motifs and concepts. Cf. also Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, esp. 71-83.

²⁵ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 460-1.

Focusing on the elegy itself, first the problem of the birth date should be addressed. In several of his poems (Am. II,10,3f; Am. I,9,5; ode to Hölztl,²⁶ 1-7) Celtis unambiguously refers to his birth on the *Calendae* of February, that is, 1 February (1459). The older scholarly literature has accepted this, Dieter Wuttke, for instance, who highlighted the symbolic significance of 1 February and 1 May, the date of his conception (cf. Am. I,1,31-32): “these moments, just as that of his death, tie him to the great circulation of nature, whose investigation he propagated emphatically and in an exemplary way.”²⁷ Nevertheless, in the horoscope elegy itself he uses a problematic expression. In lines 5-6, where he speaks about his birth, the expression *februae... Calendae transierant* itself primarily means “1 February elapsed;” therefore, the more recent scholarship (Kober, Robert, Mertens) argues that he was most probably born on 2 February, since 3 o’clock at that night fell on 2 February.²⁸

In the Nuremberg manuscript, one finds the nativity itself attached to the elegy (Fig. 7a) in two forms, sketchy and elaborate. The elaborate form was the customary way representing horoscopes in that age.²⁹ The drawings may go back to Rosenperger, Celtis’s scribe, or even to Celtis himself;³⁰ who cast the charts is not known.³¹ What does the nativity reveal on the question of the date? The date stands in the middle of the elaborate chart: *1459. 1 Feb: 3 horae mane*, this must mean (in modern terms, too³²): 1 February, 3 o’clock in the morning. Computer-aided³³ investigation reveals that the horoscope was really cast for 1 February in the morning, although not exactly 3 o’clock: it is the data of 2:30 to which the horoscope data of the Nuremberg manuscript correspond (compare Figs. 7 b-c.³⁴ The vague inscription *3 horae mane* may be a result of negligence). However, the planetary positions on 2 February

²⁶ Od. app. 1.

²⁷ Wuttke, “Conradus Celtis Protucius,” 173.

²⁸ Kober, “Humanistenleben,” 254; Robert, “Zum Dichter,” 56; Dieter Mertens, “Die Dichterkrönung des Konrad Celtis: Ritual und Programm,” in *Konrad Celtis und Nürnberg*, ed. F. Fuchs (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2004), 35.

²⁹ Ms.: Nuremberg, Stadtbibliothek, Cent. 5 app. 3.

³⁰ Wiener, in *Amor als Topograph*, ed. C. Wiener (Schweinfurt: Bibliothek Otto Schäfer, 2002), 61.

³¹ It is improbable that Celtis himself cast the horoscope: he might have looked up the planetary positions of the given date in any almanach / ephemerids, but establishing the house cusps required more complex calculations and Celtis was not an astrologer.

³² In the Late Middle Ages there was an alternative method of counting the hours of day, and this method was sometimes used in horoscopes: according to this, the day began at noon. However, Celtis’s words *nox erat et Februae submerso sole Calendae / transierant* exclude that he reckoned with this method, and the maker of the horoscope in the manuscript did not do this either: the elements of the horoscope also refer to the morning of 1 February in modern terms.

³³ ZET 8 Lite.

³⁴ In modern charts (horoscopes represented in modern fashion) the aspects between the planets are indicated, too (I followed the contemporary astrological rules for determining the aspects): straight lines indicate positive aspects and broken lines negative aspects. The aspect mentioned in Celtis’ poem is indicated by a thicker line. Nativity 1c. is calculated for Würzburg because Celtis was born in Wipfeld, near Würzburg. I thank Márton Veszprémy for the suggestion of the time 2:30.

around 2-3 o'clock show more significant differences from the Nuremberg nativity,³⁵ the Moon, for instance, was then in Aquarius (5°). Since contemporary astrologers were able to cast quite exact horoscopes for a given date (see *Appendix II*), it is improbable that this nativity was intended for 2 February. Based on the inscription in the chart and the comparison of recorded and real horoscope data, this is clearly a horoscope cast for 1 February, and Celtis must have regarded this as his nativity.

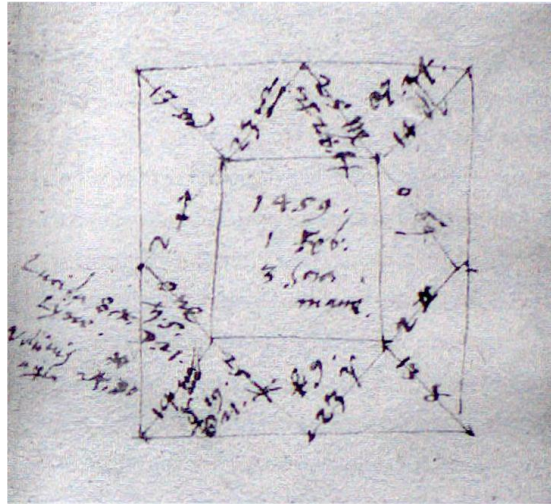
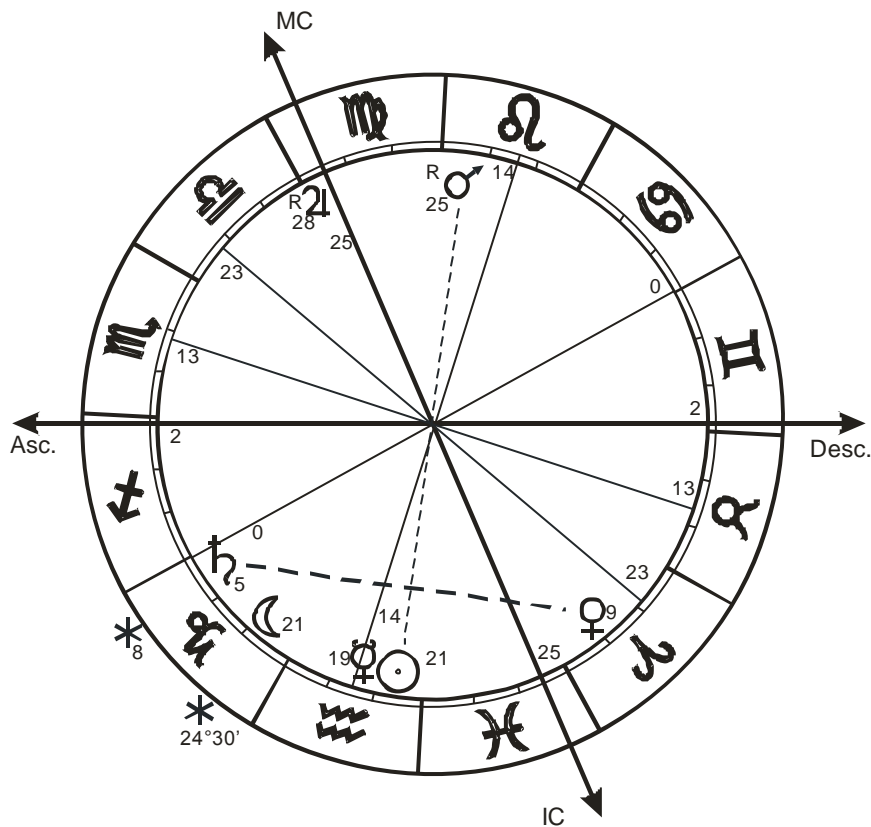


Fig. 7a. Celtis's nativity in the Nuremberg manuscript



³⁵ Kober also points this out: "Humanistenleben," 248.

Fig. 7b. Celtis's nativity in modern form, after the Nuremberg manuscript

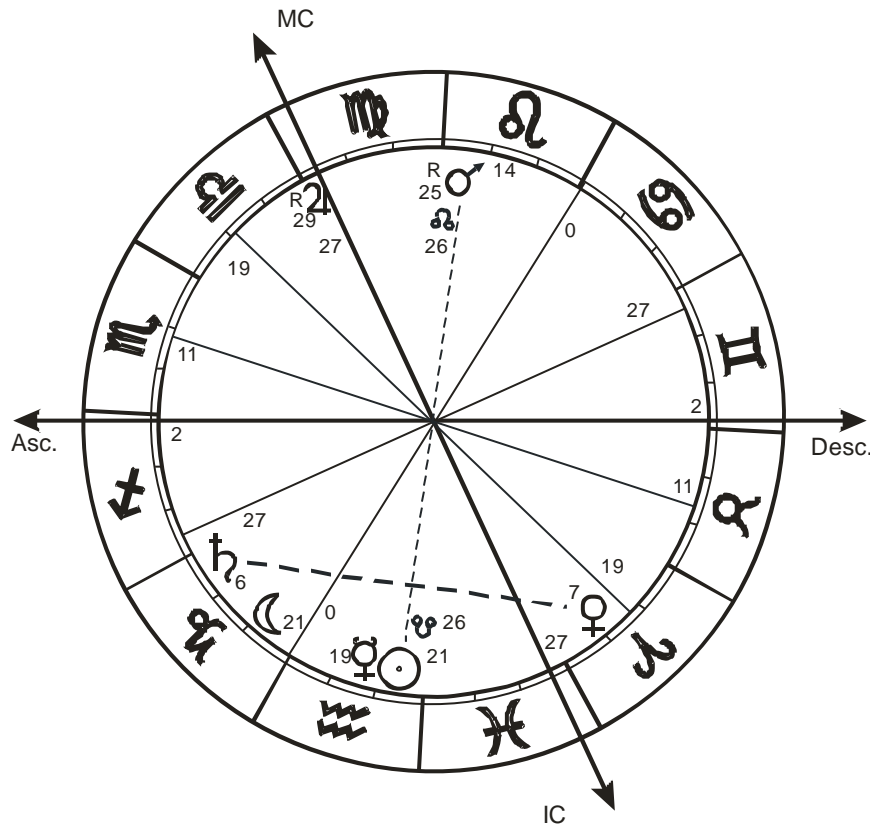


Fig. 7c. Celtis's nativity in modern calculations, for the date 01.02.1459, 02:30 (Würzburg)

What then does *Calendae transierant* (v. 5-6) mean? The primary meaning of *transeo* is “to elapse,” but also “to go over, cross, turn over” (used in these meanings by Celtis in other texts³⁶). Theoretically, it is possible that the author intended to say: “the time turned over, 1 February and thus February itself arrived;” such an interpretation – that Kober, too, raises as an option³⁷ – would solve the problem of the date. Grammatically, however, *Calendae transierant* must mean that 1 February elapsed; there seems to be no better solution than the supposition that Celtis wanted to adjust his poem to the *Fasti*-passage (II,75-76)³⁸ according to which the *Lyra* disappeared from the sky at the night of 1-2 February, and he did not care that this goes beyond 1 February which he advertized elsewhere as his birth date and for which the nativity was cast. In general, Celtis considered 1 February as his birthday, and the exception that this poem involves may be simply due to literary reasons (*imitatio* of Ovid).

³⁶ Am. III,1,27; Am. IV,5,35.

³⁷ Kober, “Humanistenleben,” 248.

³⁸ *Illa nocte aliquis, tollens ad sidera voltum, / dicet ‘ubi est hodie quae Lyra fulsit heri?’* Cf. Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 468-9.

Thematically and structurally, the elegy rests on two pillars. One is the speech of Sun/Phoebus, according to which the poet to be born would belong to this god; in contrast, Saturn assures the poet in a speech that he will never find lasting happiness in love. This two-faced fate destined by the stars, this “lifelong erotic–Apollonic attachment (*Doppelbindung*, in Robert’s words),” this opposition between heavenly and earthly inclinations leaves its mark on the whole of the *Amores*,³⁹ as already indicated in the closing part of the poem. Between the two speeches the poet enumerates the planetary positions of his nativity: first, the three planets in the spheres above the Sun (the middle planet), then the three under the Sun. With regard to the actual order of the enumeration from the Sun to Venus, Jupiter stands in the fourth, that is, middle, place – just as in the horoscope he also stands in the MC, in the “middle of the sky.” This is a well thought-out, symmetrical structure that highlights both the Sun and Jupiter.⁴⁰

The positions of the stars that support a birth proper for a poet have a rich symbolism and intertextual background that has partly been explored by earlier scholars. The constellation *Lyra* disappears from the sky, since the Sun took it (v. 13-14). The poet alludes here to the events falling at the beginning of February in Ovid’s *Fasti*, thus he sheds a mythical light on his role as a singer, flashing up the figures of the Lyre, the Dolphin and Arion.⁴¹ The lyre is the instrument of Orpheus; its rise at birth gives talent for music and poetry according to Manilius’s *Astronomicon* (I,324-330; V,324ff),⁴² the most famous classical work of astronomical-astrological poetry, widely read in Celtis’s circles.⁴³ In the elegy, too, the Lyre must be rising, since the Sun that took it is also rising; it was not a problem for Celtis that the *Lyra*, rising at 1:30, could be seen at 3 o’clock at that geographical place⁴⁴ and the Sun would

³⁹ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 464; 474.

⁴⁰ Kober, “Humanistenleben,” 248-9. However, his concept that three masculine planets are followed by three feminine planets is strained; from an astrological point of view, Mercury is neutral, and he is a masculine god in mythology; in general, it is not the gender of the planets /gods that determines the system of planetary relations in the poem.

⁴¹ Kühlmann, in *Humanistische Lyrik*, 984; Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 468-9. According to a passage from *Fasti*, the disappearance of the Lyre happens at the night of 1-2 February, but this cannot be used as an argument for Celtis’ birth on 2 February. The disappearance of the *Lyra* goes together with that of the *Delphinus*, which happens the next night in the *Fasti* (II,79-84). When alluding to his role as Arion the poet refers back to this whole series of motifs and exploits the date of these mythical events insofar as they fall at the beginning of February, just as the poet’s birth. Furthermore, another passage of the *Fasti* dates the disappearance of the Lyre to the end of January (I,653-4).

⁴² Kühlmann, *Humanistische*, 984.

⁴³ Cf. Celtis’s correspondence, where Manilius is mentioned and quoted several times. Two references in two letters sent to Celtis around 1500 reinforce that Celtis must have had an own exemplar of the *Astronomicon* (BW p. 351, from Stabius in 1498; BW p. 406, from Tritonius in July 1500). Among the several fifteenth-century editions of the work, there was a commented edition by Bonincontri (*Astronomicon, cum commento Lucii Buonincontrii*, Rome, 1484, GW M20631) owned at least by one humanist in Celtis’s environment, Sommerfeld (cf. his 1497 letter to Celtis in BW p. 313), but I have found no traces that Celtis used this edition.

⁴⁴ Kober, “Humanistenleben,” 250.

rise only 6:30.⁴⁵ According to Kober, he “rendered” the *Lyra* unseen only for the sake of the erudite reminiscence on *Fasti*; however, the poet could support the proximity of the Sun and the Lyre (v. 8: *proxima cui*⁴⁶) using astrological literature. Several classical authors, including Firmicus Maternus,⁴⁷ placed the *Lyra* in Capricorn, which is next to the Sun’s sign, Aquarius. This was important for Celtis: according to the star-indications of the nativity – disregarded so far in scholarship –, at Capricorn 8° one reads *Lucida Lyrae*, an expression for the brightest star of *Lyra* (*alpha Lyrae / Vega*), and at Capricorn 24°30’ it is the second brightest star of this constellation (*Jugum / Sulafat / gamma Lyrae*).⁴⁸ Furthermore, the “disappearance” of the *Lyra* can be given an interpretation that makes this motif harmonize with both the self-mythologizing in the poem and the symbolism of rebirth, of light prevailing over darkness (this general Renaissance symbolism is especially significant in Celtis). According to classical astrological literature⁴⁹ the *Lyra*, that Orpheus received from Apollo, goes up to the sky after Orpheus’ death; in the poem, the *Lyra* returns to the earth at the birth of a new Orpheus, since Phoebus’ son, Orpheus / Celtis will eventually take it. This is not the only occasion that Celtis is related to Orpheus. Orpheus was the par excellence poet, musician, magician for humanists in general; if Celtis himself alluded to his Orpheus-like characteristics, it was even more natural for his *sodales* to mention him in this role.⁵⁰

It is also proper for a poet that the Sun stands in conjunction with Mercury (v. 35), the planet of intellect and science among other things; the two planets / gods, also found together in other works by Celtis,⁵¹ complete each other well under the banner of *philosophia*. Italian

⁴⁵ Checked by the computer program *CyberSky 3.3.1*.

⁴⁶ *Cui* may refer both to *Phoebus* and *Urna*, but this polysemy has no significance since they are together in the horoscope.

⁴⁷ *Mathesis* VIII,15,3: the *Lyra* rises at Capricorn 10°. It is an exceptional case that Manilius places the *Lyra* at Scales 26° (see below).

⁴⁸ As a rule, it is individual fixed stars in significant positions that are indicated in horoscopes, and not constellations.

⁴⁹ E.g. Hyg. Astr. II,7; Avienus, *Orae maritimae* 621. Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 469.

⁵⁰ Luh (*Werkausgabe*, 381) has pointed out that the ambivalence of his Phoebean character and his problems with Venus and love, both indicated in the horoscope, corresponds to Orpheus’s myth in which he is the favourite child of Apollo but he is hated by Venus. This observation can be completed with another source where the same pattern of relationships appear. In a 1500 letter (BW p. 235) Schreyer reproaches Celtis that he did not reveal his illness, the French disease; besides, Schreyer had warned Celtis of the Venereal dangers in 1496 (BW p. 207-8). Schreyer continues the 1500 letter in a mythological context and alludes to Celtis as being in a similar position as Orpheus: *Non enim ignoras, quantum Phoebeam prolem Cypris ipsa olim insectata sit* (etc.). An example for that version of the Orpheus-myth where the Venus–Orpheus conflict is highlighted can be found in Hyginus’s astronomy-related work (Hyg. Astr. II,7). Celtis could be compared to Orpheus in poems of praise, too, as in the final poem of the *Melopoiaie*-print, written by Ulsenius. Celtis himself refers in the *Oratio* to Orpheus and Amphion in the context of the significance of rhetorics and the tradition of Ancient Theology (Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 135-8).

⁵¹ Kober, “Humanistenleben,” 252. In Am. I,12,19 (see below) the poet expressly states that this conjunction gives the power of his *ingenium*.

examples exist for the favorable position of Mercury at a humanist's birth⁵² and the Sun-Mercury conjunction⁵³. Line 36 connects Mercury to the symbolism of *Lyra*, with good reason, since he is the inventor of the lyre. The conjunction takes place in Aquarius (v. 7); theoretically, this is not the most favorable place for the Sun, since it is the domicile of Saturn in astrology, and the Sun is in detriment there. However, Celtis renders this situation rather favorable in several of his related works. In another *Amores*-elegy he can remember exactly that the Sun stood at 22°, and he calls the Aquarius here the star of Ganymede,⁵⁴ who could be related to Aquarius (as early as in the classical literature) as the cup-bearer of the gods, the pourer of water from *Urna*. The author puts into play an Aquarius-symbolism which is similar to that used by Janus Tolophus and which will be discussed below. For both Tolhopf and Celtis the main source of the Aquarius-Ganymede identification was obviously Manilius, who sporadically speaks about him as a beautiful naked youth.⁵⁵ Thus, Celtis connects Aquarius to the realm of beauty. In his ode for Hölztl's birthday, also 1 February, Celtis plays with pleasure with the Sun-*Urna* combination.⁵⁶ As for the emphasis on the Sun in general, a birth rendered favorable by Apollo, the poet's divine *ingenium* given by Apollo is an ancient topos appearing from *Plato-vitae* through Petrarch and many Italian and German humanists;⁵⁷ however, it will be seen from the last two chapters of this study that it is a complex Phoebean symbolism in Celtis's whole oeuvre to which the sentence *Phoebo nascere, quisquis eris!* (v. 16) can be connected.

Ganymede was abducted by Jupiter in mythology – which leads us to the most important element of the symbolism of divine poetry in the horoscope elegy: Jupiter shining in MC and in the Virgin. In Manilius, the Virgin gives an inclination, beyond eloquence, for learning, for exploring the mysteries of nature and the secret causes of things⁵⁸ – this is just Celtis's hobby-horse. Manilius highlights the general significance of the MC, too (II, 810f). The Virgin

⁵² E.g., in one of his letters (to B. Foresi, OO p. 823), Ficino considers the position of Mercury, “master of lyre and letters,” to be crucial in the nativity.

⁵³ In Gauricus's collection of horoscopes (*Lucae Gaurici Geophonensis Episcopi Civitatis Tractatus Astrologicus...*, Venice: C. T. Nauò, 1552, Fol. 61r), Petrarch's nativity shows Mercury exactly on the Ascendant in the Lion, and the Sun can be found in the first house in conjunction with him.

⁵⁴ Am. III,12,31-2: *Phoebe, bis undenas Ganymedis sidere partes / servabas, vitam ut das mihi in orbe meam.*

⁵⁵ See p. 151. The expression *inflexa... Urna* (v. 7 in Celtis' elegy) can be found in Manilius in the same way, in the same metrical feet (I,272; Kühlmann, *Humanistische*, 984).

⁵⁶ Od. app. 1, v. 7-8, 33-36.

⁵⁷ Cf. e.g. Diog. Laer. *Vita Platonis* 2, on which Ficino's mention of Plato's *apollinea genitura* is based (*Phaedrus*-comm., ed. Allen, I,1, p. 38); Petr. Afr. IX,18-19: *Si tibi nascenti, quo polles, summus Apollo / Ingenium celeste dedit...*; and the examples in ch. V,1.

⁵⁸ Manil. IV,189-196: *At quibus Erigone dixit nascentibus aevum / ad studium ducet mores et pectora doctis / artibus instituet, nec tam compendia census / quam causas viresque dabit perquirere rerum. / illa decus linguae faciet regnumque loquendi / atque oculos mentis, qui possint cernere cuncta / quamvis occultis naturae condita causis.*

receiving the MC and thus the tenth house, that of *mores*, glory, career, is indeed a telling symbol of Celtis's ideology; it is not by chance that Pighinutius, too, alluded to this possibility in his ode (v. 25-6) and Celtis naturally makes the best of the opportunity (v. 26). In the words of Robert: "this [astrological] situation seems to reflect Celtis' expectation of achieving lasting fame through poetry that combines *eloquentia* and *sapientia*."⁵⁹ What is more, it is just Jupiter, the *fortuna maior*, the royal planet, that can be found on the MC; moreover, Jupiter is the birth ruler because of the Archer Ascendant. In my opinion, previous interpreters have not emphasized the significance of these facts enough, although Robert enumerates several passages from Celtis where he refers to the favorable position of Jupiter.⁶⁰ The chart in the manuscript highlights Jupiter, by indicating his birth-ruler quality with the sign of the Archer next to the sign of the planet. Other references, too, suggest that the Jupiter of his nativity was especially dear to the poet. In an elegy in the *Amores* he describes how robbers attacked him and he grieves over not having checked in advance the position of the stars that forecast the catastrophe (this would be a subsequent catarchic astrological investigation, as it were):⁶¹ the Moon opposed Saturn (opposition is the most unlucky aspect), and the too strong Mars oppressed the good rays of the Jupiter that stood in conjunction with him. Here it is the Jupiter whom the poet calls "his" planet, which brings him good fortune in general (*mei fata benigna Jovis*). In a letter, Ulsenius warns Celtis playfully about neglecting his Mercury and Jupiter (that is, the activities related to these planets) and yielding to saturnine influence.⁶² Benedictus Chelidonium characterizes Celtis in an elegy commemorating his death as "born under Jupiter's star."⁶³ Naturally, the role of this planet as bringing luck is almost a commonplace, as Italian examples show,⁶⁴ but Celtis's Jupiter in its given position seems to have been important for him indeed, at least with regard to the image of a poet favored by the heavens.

⁵⁹ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 465. About the planetary position *ibid.*, 456, 465. Kühlmann had previously referred to the Manilius-passage (*Humanistische Lyrik*, 985).

⁶⁰ E.g., Am. II,10,71: *Iuppiter aeternos tribuat tibi, Celtis, honores*; Od. I,9,3: *et cui mite dedit sidere Iuppiter / felici, ingenium clarum et amabile*. It is ambiguous whether lines 19-22 of the ode to Höltzl (see above) also refer to Jupiter in MC (as Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 465 n. 127 alleged): *Candidam famam placidamque vitam, / integram mentem dabis et quietam, / Iuppiter, celso residens Olympo, / rite precamur*.

⁶¹ Am. II,12,81-88: *quod si de caelo ceu dicunt fata hominum sunt / utramque et sortem sidera celsa regunt / incautus prorsus fueram: quia sidera caeli / non cavi: infausto hoc quae micuere die / nam Luna opposito Saturnum lumine vidit / Mars luna et radio viderat opposito / conjunctusque Jovi fuerat mavortius heros / oppressitque mei fata benigna Jovis*.

⁶² Ulsenius to Celtis, 31 Oct. 1496 (BW p. 226): *Mercurium... negligis et nescio cui Saturno indulgens Iovem posthabes...*

⁶³ Ed. in F. v. Bezold, "Aus dem Freundeskreis des Konrad Celtis," *Anzeiger für Kunde der deutschen Vorzeit* 29 (1882), 95-96, v. 15: *Sic et Protrucius [sic!], qui sub Iovis editus astro...*

⁶⁴ Naldi, El. 7, 143-4 (*Bucolica, Volaterrais, Hastiludium, Carmina varia*, ed. W. L. Grant, Florence: Olschki, 1974) about the Jupiter standing in the Fish (its domicile); Ficino expresses his wish to be together with someone born under the Jupiter so that this person could mitigate his too strong Saturn (letter to G. Niccolini, OO p. 805).

Compared to this, the Archer Ascendant, although important, seems to have less significance. It renders possible the role of Jupiter as birth ruler; furthermore, Manilius's description of the Archer has some qualities proper for a singer: an Archer native has – among other things – sharp wits and good comprehension (IV,241f.);⁶⁵ he softens tigers and tames lions (IV,235).⁶⁶ However, taken in its entirety, the characterization calls forth rather the image of a herdsman or a clever animal-tamer, far from the image of a *poeta doctus*; the above discussed horoscope-elements fit Celtis more clearly. Among the components of a horoscope it is the Ascendant and the MC that wander all over the signs during a day. If Celtis (or his astrologer) defined or modified, “rectified”,⁶⁷ the exact date of his birth himself, he probably considered the possibility of joining the MC to the Virgin and Jupiter in the first place, and it would have come in handy that the Ascendant thus fell in the Archer, which belongs to Jupiter and can be partly included in the divine singer symbolism. It is almost certain that Celtis “chose” 3 o'clock, 1 February, as his birth date; it would have been a curious stroke of luck if the nativity, providing so much opportunity for self-mythification, had been based on the real birth date.

In order to complete his astrological portrait, Celtis mentions the horoscope of his conception, too (v. 29-32). As Grössing has observed, these lines prove that Celtis knew the method called *trutina Hermetis* (the scales of Hermes) by which astrologers tried to establish the exact time of conception.⁶⁸ The question remains whether the poet refers to a horoscope that was actually cast. The essence of the method, generally attributed to Ptolemy, is: where the Ascendant took place in the nativity, there is the Moon in the horoscope of conception, and where the Moon was in the nativity, that will be the place of the Ascendant in the other one.⁶⁹ Therefore, *volucris* in line 29 can only mean the Moon (mentioned just before, in line 27), and not “winged god” (Mercury);⁷⁰ the Moon is “winged” because it is the fastest among the planets. Its exact position is at issue: *qua sub parte* means “at which degree...”⁷¹ To be sure, it is rare to have a horoscope that equals the “reverse” of the nativity with regard to the degrees, therefore, astrologers generally aimed at an exact equivalence of at least one pair of

⁶⁵ Kühlmann, *Humanistische*, 984.

⁶⁶ Kober, “Humanistenleben,” 250.

⁶⁷ The phenomenon is rather euphemistically called “rectification,” the adjustment of the date, according to which one has to find the exact birth date by taking into account the planetary positions of the period around the birth; not surprisingly, the dates thus “rectified” often provide rather favorable planetary positions.

⁶⁸ Grössing, *Humanistische*, 167.

⁶⁹ Cf., e.g., *Centiloquium*, 51.

⁷⁰ So translated by Kühlmann, *Humanistische*, 75.

⁷¹ The earlier translations are imprecise and too general (Kühlmann, *Humanistische*, 74: “Konstellation”; Kober, “Humanistenleben,” 247: “Teil.”)

horoscope elements (e.g., the Moon of the nativity and the Ascendant of the conception), while the other pair had to fall at least into the same sign.⁷² Calculated in this way, can Celtis's horoscope of conception fall on 1 May? Yes, in the late spring of 1458 it occurred on just three days between 30 April and 2 May that the Moon stayed in the Archer while the Ascendant stood at Capricorn 21°.⁷³ Naturally, one can only speculate about what the poet took into account, nevertheless, since the contemporary horoscope data can be well deduced from the exact modern – computer-generated – data, and a horoscope of conception was often cast beside a nativity,⁷⁴ it is probable that Celtis refers to an actual horoscope. If this was the case, the mention of the horoscope may have been motivated by the fact that the chart of 1 May is exceptionally lucky with regard to the aspects (Fig. 8): it has six trines (the most lucky aspect) and only one quadrature.⁷⁵ Kober's argument that Saturn, rising just above the horizon, features as the most significant element of the horoscope,⁷⁶ is by no means valid. According to astrological thinking, Saturn would only be in a key position on the Ascendant or in the first house, but it was in the eleventh house around 1 May, in retrograde motion, without *dignitas* at Archer 27°. It is also true that, independently of the horoscope, the symbolic value of the date itself, 1 May (a *Calendae*, that goes well with the other one, 1 February) might have been enough for Celtis to mention it. In any case, the importance of the time of conception for our poet is demonstrated, beyond the reference to the (presumed or real) horoscope, by an elegy in the *Amores* where the poet invites Barbara to celebrate the anniversary of his conception⁷⁷ (thus, the elegy may be regarded as a parallel to his odes inviting to birthday celebration). Naturally, they celebrate the significant anniversary with abundant love-making.

⁷² Cf. e.g. Reisinger, *Historische*, 159.

⁷³ In the horoscope calculated for 1 May 1458, 0:15, Würzburg, the Moon stands at Archer 13°; in the equivalent horoscope of the previous day, at Archer 0°48' (here it is possible that on account of the slight inaccuracy of contemporary calculations the Moon was placed in Scorpion); on 2 May the Moon stood at Archer 27°.

⁷⁴ Cf. the German examples in Reisinger, *Historische*, 156-8.

⁷⁵ Both Saturn and Jupiter cast a trine at the Mars-Mercury conjunction; there are wide trines between Jupiter and Saturn, and between Jupiter and the Moon (a 7° deviance from the ideal case was still accepted in contemporary astrology); a negative aspect, a quadrature, can only be found between Jupiter and the Sun. The aspect relations of the horoscopes for 30 April and 2 May differ little from those of 1 May.

⁷⁶ Kober, "Humanistenleben," 258.

⁷⁷ Am. IV,13: *Invitat Barbaram ad hortum, ut secum diem conceptionis suae celebret.*

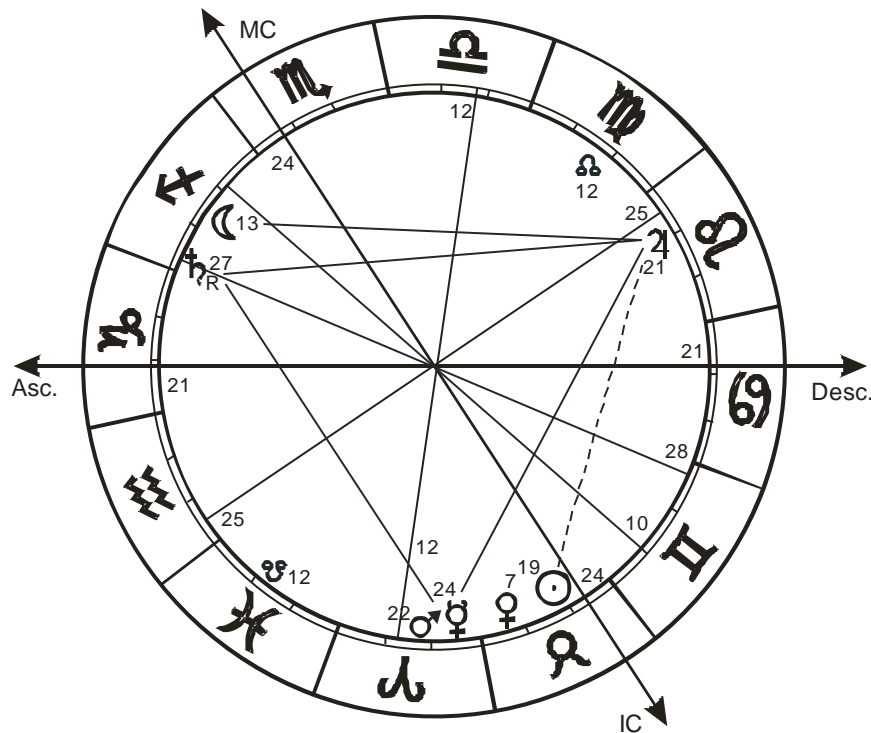


Fig. 8. Celtis's hypothetical horoscope of conception in modern calculations, based on the date 01.05.1458, 00:15, Würzburg.

However, the *ingenium* that supports an exceptional philosopher-poet is only one component of the protagonist's fate. Venus gets into conflict with Saturn, the cold planet of misfortune, who pronounces a sentence damning the poet's future loves; there cannot be true happiness in *earthly* love, the dialectic of *laetitia* (Venus) and *tristitia* (Saturn) means recurrent suffering from love. The astrological base of the rather tragicomic scene is the quadrature of Saturn cast on Venus, clearly indicated by the expression *quarta figura* (v. 39).⁷⁸ Robert has analyzed the scene and its love problem in detail in the context of classical elegies (the opposition of *laetitia* and *tristitia*, happiness and sadness), Florentine Platonic love concepts (*amor honestus* and *amor infamis*, honorable / heavenly and infamous / earthly love), and astrological traditions of Saturn, all this with regard to the whole of the *Amores*.⁷⁹ Several passages that he collected,⁸⁰ just as other texts by Celtis,⁸¹ make clear what earlier

⁷⁸ *Quarta figura* cannot be translated as “fourth house” (Kühlmann, *Humanistische*, 75). It is true that Venus stands in the fourth house, the house of the father, and the text refers to Saturn, the “father” of Venus, with the word *pater*; however, neither of the meanings of *figura* fits the concept of horoscope house: it usually means the chart itself in the astrological literature; more importantly, such a translation would make the astrological basis for the Saturn–Venus conflict disappear.

⁷⁹ Cf. Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, esp. 471-5.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 473.

⁸¹ An interesting example referring back to the horoscope elegy: Am. II,6 describes the lechery of priests, among others, and lines 87-8 read: *Hei mihi qua steterat caeli Venus aurea parte, / Praeda fuit rasis semper amata mihi...* I can only interpret these lines in the following way: “and because of the degree of the sky (the horoscope) where the golden Venus stood, my beloved always fell victim to the shaven (the priests).” Since he

scholars, too, have indicated: Ficino's positive revaluation of Saturn, interpreted as the planet of intellect and contemplation, was not characteristic of Celtis's thought. Kober's arguments for this interpretation cannot stand their ground (see below). In the horoscope elegy – as in Celtis in general – Saturn is definitely the negative force, the counterpole of Phoebus or Jupiter. Italian poetry – which, as suggested above, provided models to Celtis to a greater extent than was previously thought – also continues the medieval tradition by commonplace allusions to Saturn as the planet of misfortune.⁸² Naldi presents a horoscope interpretation explaining how Saturn hinders the favorable conjunction of Mars and Venus, that is, the happy love of the poet and his beloved.⁸³

Saturn's power manifesting itself in the elegy is justified by its astrological position; on the one hand, it is in his own domicile, the Capricorn,⁸⁴ thus it is the stronger party in its quadrate relation to Venus; on the other hand, it dominates the Sun and Mercury (through his other domicile, Aquarius); moreover, it is on a house cusp. Consequently, Saturn's *assensio* (v. 23) might have an ironic note, especially when applied to the whole of the Sun's speech that elevates the poet high;⁸⁵ conscious of his power and his role as the Sun's enemy, Saturn "agrees" with the Sun.

Irony permeates the Saturn–Venus scene, too, even deeper than previous scholars have suggested. Lines 39-44 speak openly about Uranus's mutilation and the birth of Venus,⁸⁶ and a similar sexual symbolism is involved when Venus ridicules the "trembling old man's cold members:" the classical elegists also used *membra* (in the plural) in the sense of "virile member,"⁸⁷ and Celtis exploits the polysemy of this word several times in the *Amores*.⁸⁸ Saturn's sexual potency is not his strength – in contrast to Venus (who is in the Ram, the sign of the sexually similarly potent Mars). When the offended Saturn breaks the *fera spicula* of Venus, replacing them with lead arrows (v. 49-50), behind this deed one may feel a kind of

complains of the unfavorable position of Venus, this can only refer to the Ram 9° of his nativity, which position happens to be a quadrate-distance from Saturn, the planet that always hinders happy love.

⁸² Naldo Naldi, *El. I,29,45 (Elegiarum libri III ad Laurentium Medicen*, ed. László Juhász, Leipzig: Teubner, 1934); III,7,79; Naldi, *ep. 82, 26; 181,1; Campanino, ep. 4,1; Carm. 4* (<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu>; 2014.05.06).

⁸³ Naldi, *El. I,10,55-66: Et quid agis? Caram reprehendere, Nalde, puellam / Desine, namque tibi mitior illa foret. / Sed tua Saturnus subvertit vota malignus / Disiungens radiis astra propinqua malis. / Nam iungi poteras Marti, Cytherea, furenti, / Obstet ni veteris stella maligna dei. / Quin etiam Titan, Phrixei vellera signi / Dum subit et Martem comprimit orbe ferum, / Efficit, ut nostri ne tu, Venus aurea, possis / Monstratrix Marti concubuisse tuo. / Nam bona Gradivus monstrat dum vota puellae, / Combustas vires perdidit ille suas.*

⁸⁴ Also mentioned by Kober, "Humanistenleben," 251.

⁸⁵ *Assentit* may also refer to just the last line of the Sun's speech: the *frigidus* Saturn is happy to agree that the Sun's rays are weaker in the north.

⁸⁶ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 471. Saturn is "father" in the sense that Venus owes him her birth (v. 41).

⁸⁷ *Tib. I,4,70; Ov. Am. III,7,65.*

⁸⁸ E.g., *Am III,3,52: si dabitur blando et membra fovere sinu...* *Am. I,9,24: membraque adhuc Veneris non bene firma iocis...*

envy and lust for revenge because of the potency problem. *Spicula* (spear, arrow) can rather clearly mean “virile member” in Celtis.⁸⁹

All the results of this discussion of the elegy complete well and generally reinforce Robert’s analysis, at the same time they render even more doubtful the results of Kober. Kober interpreted the elegy basically in a Christian context; the poet has to do penance for his sinful loves, but he can rely on the comforting power of poetry, *philosophia*, Saturn.⁹⁰ Although he has made many good observations, his overall interpretation went astray, as Robert has demonstrated for the most part.⁹¹ It is lines 33-34 (about Celtis hundred-year-old mother) that have Christian associations, but these, too, point in another direction than Kober’s interpretation does.⁹²

After all, if Celtis seems to have proclaimed throughout his whole oeuvre that he was born on 1 (or 2) February “at dawn,” this does not mean that he really came into the world at this

⁸⁹ Cf. line 39 in the sex scene of Am. IV,10: *pande sinum: distende pedes: mea spicula tendo.*

⁹⁰ One group of his basic arguments is related to the date 2 February: *mensis februa maesta colens* (v. 6), the offering of the purifying sacrifice in February would be connected to *Phoebus* (v. 7); the lyre music has a comforting, purifying effect according to Ficino, too; an ecclesiastical text, the pericope for the *Purificatio Mariae* on 2 February (Lk. 2,23: *quia omne masculinum adaperiens vulvam sanctum Domino vocatur*), declares that the child born belongs to the Lord, and lines 11 and 16 of the elegy, taken together, would have a similar meaning (“Humanistenleben,” 250-5). Robert (*Konrad Celtis*, 476-7) has already shown that the sentence selected from the pericope has a rather different context than the lines of the elegy, furthermore, while the pericope mentions first-born children, Celtis definitely speaks about himself as the fourth child (v. 34); after all, the similarity of the two texts is atmospheric. Kober’s punctuation connecting lines 6 and 7 (*mensis... Urna*) is arbitrary, and the whole behaviour, the solemn speech of Phoebus is almost contrary to the motif of the mournful expiatory offering; *februa maesta colens* can be simply considered as a playful etymological apposition of *mensis* February, related to the *Fasti*. The symbolism behind *Phoebus* and *Lyra*, the ideology of the divine singer is well demonstrable (see above), and taking this into account it seems arbitrary to pick up the Ficinian example just to connect the lyre to the idea of comfort and expiation (nevertheless, it is true that celestial music and harmony – v. 15: *toto resonantia caelo* – remind one of the music of the spheres, a basic idea of the Pythagorean-Platonic cosmological tradition). After all these considerations one can easily see the untenability of the argument that the elegy would make Phoebus / Celtis and Christ parallel, on account of the Christian associations of the birth and the Phoebean “sacrifice” that “makes us think of Christ” (“Humanistenleben,” 255). The other pillar of Kober’s argumentation is the allegedly dominant role of Saturn as the planet of intellect (see Ficino) and purification with regard to Celtis’s fate (“Humanistenleben,” 257-261). However, as seen above, Saturn does not prove strong in the horoscope of conception and is only one of the dominant horoscope elements in the nativity. The view of Saturn as an intellectual or purifying planet is not justified in Celtis’ case. Furthermore, an interpretation that makes the Saturn-Venus opposition the main conflict axis of the poem, putting down Saturn as a good planet and Venus as a bad one, contradicts the well supported (Apollonic-erotic) *Doppelbindung*-concept of the elegy. Kober’s many other arguments are based on arbitrary associations (e.g. about Apollo and Daphne, v. 49-50, or the *munera* in v. 57-60), and more importantly, there is poor coherence among the arguments themselves. The ideas of penance, comfort, and intellectual purification blur, and the Christian reading cannot be supported by other texts from the *Amores* with similar messages, contrary to the concept outlined above, according to which the horoscope elegy forecasts the dialectic and mythological-astral symbolism of the whole *Amores*.

⁹¹ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, esp. 476-7.

⁹² Cf. Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 477-480: Celtis adds a Christian color to his own myth (in a syncretist way typical of Florentine Platonism) by referring to Abraham, who sired his son in his hundredth year, Sarah’s old age when she bore the child, and the number four, which is discussed in Reuchlin’s *De verbo mirifico* and has a central role in the *Amores*. According to the text and biographical data, Celtis was born as the fourth child, and not the fifth, as Kober interprets it.

time. As seen above, the position of Jupiter is too favorable not to think about a manipulated date, at least with regard to the hour. The data of the nativity that was cast for 2:30 roughly equal the real house cusp and planet data (see fig. 7 b-c). More important is the question what differences are on the next level: What does the comparison of the nativity and the elegy reveal? That is, how does the horoscope “interpretation” implied by the poet differ from a standard interpretation to be expected at that time?⁹³ As already seen, several important motifs of the elegy – e.g., the power of Saturn, his conflict with Venus – are based on astrological facts. It is conspicuous, however, how many facts “escaped” the poet’s attention.⁹⁴ No less than four planets are in detriment: the Moon, Venus, the Sun, and Jupiter; in the elegy, the last two are supposed to support a birth proper for a poet. Jupiter is retrograde, which would carry a negative meaning. Mars stands in opposition to the Sun and Mercury,⁹⁵ and opposition is theoretically a more powerful negative aspect than the quadrature, which alone was regarded in the elegy. The houses are not taken into account in the poem,⁹⁶ in contrast to standard contemporary horoscope interpretations (apotelesmatics) which examine the houses one by one in order to reveal the native’s character and future. Among the fixed stars, *Lyra* appeared in the nativity and the elegy, although it would have been more justified to include, for instance, *Cassiopeia*, which can be found at Aquarius 20° according to both Manilius and Firmicus Maternus, so it would belong to the Sun-Mercury conjunction in the nativity. In sum, Celtis (or his astrologer) seems to have deviated from reality on three levels: most probably in the rectification” of his birth time; in the reference to this birth time (“3 o’clock” instead of 2:30); and most significantly, in the (too) poetic interpretation of his nativity. Celtis took great advantage of poetic freedom and did not take the most standard astrological authorities, Ptolemy and Firmicus Maternus, as a basis, but instead Manilius, who suited his taste the best, and who had displayed his astrological knowledge in verse form.

The character-building the horoscope-elegy has a greater significance than it was previously thought. With regard to his “elect philosopher-poet” identity – the planetary positions that support the symbolism with Phoebus, Jupiter and Orpheus –, the poem relates to his whole oeuvre and his poetical self-representation in general; it is not simply the fictitious protagonist of the *Amores* that the elegy presents. The poet noticeably intends to present his

⁹³ An absolutely consistent system of rules for interpreting horoscopes did not exist in that age, but the astrologers did adjust to the main rules based on classical astrological literature (e.g., when fixing the favorable and unfavorable aspects, the birth ruler, etc.), they were not allowed to interpret in too arbitrary a way. Cf. Reisinger, *Historische*.

⁹⁴ Observed by Robert, too: *Konrad Celtis*, 462.

⁹⁵ Grössing, *Humanistische*, 197.

⁹⁶ Except that the Ascendant equals the cusp of the first house, and the MC the cusp of the tenth.

nativity as a real one; he fashions in large part his general image as a poet, a divinely supported *vates*, and not just a portrait of the protagonist in the *Amores*. It is not accidental that, as will be seen below, certain elements of his nativity recur in other of his works, as well as in the works of some *sodales*.

b. The well-matched lovers

On occasion, Celtis versified the horoscopes of acquaintances or fictitious *Amores*-characters, and these texts connect to the symbolism of his own horoscopes at many points. According to a contemporary astrological method, one could compare two charts and look for the common characteristics in them. This seems to have been less frequent in the classical-medieval tradition than in modern astrology, which calls the method “synastry.” One use of this is to decide whether lovers are well matched. The method was rare, but known in premodern astrological literature;⁹⁷ other texts, primarily poetic, refer in a more superficial way to the harmony of two lovers’ stars.⁹⁸ Considering the importance of the astrological layer in the *Amores* and the *amor* itself as the main topic, it is not surprising that one finds this phenomenon in Celtis, too.

In the twelfth elegy of the first book, where the poet courts Hasilina, he intends to demonstrate by his nativity how many good properties the heavens granted him, emphasizing especially such characteristics that are needed in a love relationship:

Septimus a primo qui dicitur angulus orbis, 15
prospera (ni fallor) sidera nostra refert:
fervidus Haemonio iuvenis mihi surgit in arcu
et medium caeli cum Iove Virgo regit,
quin et suscipiens Phoebum Cyllenius ignis
ingenium vires iussit habere suas, 20
nec dea cunctipotens aversa fronte resedit,
cum numero partem per mea signa suam.⁹⁹

The cardinal house that is called the seventh one reckoned from the first indicates favorable stars for us, if I am not mistaken: the hot-tempered youth rises for me in the Thessalian Arch[er],¹⁰⁰ and the middle of the sky [MC] is ruled by the Virgin with Jupiter; what is more, the Cyllenian fire [Mercury] received Phoebus, thus ordering that the [poet’s] talent would be outstanding; and the almighty goddess [Venus] did not sit there with her face turned away from me, since I reckon her degree [Ram 9°] in my sign.

⁹⁷ E.g. Ptol. Tetr. IV,5,184.

⁹⁸ An example from medieval poetry: *Carmina Burana*, ed. A. J. Schmeller (Stuttgart, 1883), no. 62 (p. 152); cited by Fr. Boll, “Synastry,” *Sokrates* 5 (1917), 458 (*Iove cum Mercurio geminos tenente...*).

⁹⁹ Am. I,12,15-22.

¹⁰⁰ Celtis’s Ascendant in the birth horoscope is the Archer, who was usually represented as a Centaur, a classical mythological human-animal famous for his strength and hot-tempered behaviour; they lived in Thessaly, for instance. *Surgit* refers to the Ascendant, and *Haemonious arcus*, “the Thessalian bow” stands *pars pro toto* for the constellation Archer.

Septimus angulus means the seventh house, traditionally the house of marriage;¹⁰¹ on the issue of a love relationship, it is natural that the poet takes this component of the horoscope into account. Two facts about Celtis's nativity (cf. fig. 7) support the protagonist's opinion that the seventh house contributes to a favorable horoscope. The ruler of the house, Mercury,¹⁰² stands in conjunction with the Sun and they give strength to the *ingenium*. More importantly, Jupiter casts a trine to the house cusp; the *Fortuna maior*, the birth ruler (because of the Archer Ascendant) stands in the Virgin, the sign belonging to Mercury, and casts the most favorable aspect on the house of marriage. All these planetary positions are recorded in lines 17-20, although the author does not relate them directly to the favorable seventh house mentioned just before (v. 15-16). Together with his own excellence, he also asserts the great ardor of his love and exploits astrological facts that can be related to fire or hotness: the sign of the Archer belongs to the element of fire, and the Centaur, by which this sign is traditionally represented, features as a warlike, hot-tempered youth in v. 17 (*fervidus iuvenis*); Mercury is the "Cyllenian fire," because stars are heavenly fires in poetry in general and in classical cosmological traditions in particular; the Sun may also evoke an association to fire. The interpretation of lines 21-22 mainly depends on how we translate *pars*. In classical and Renaissance astrological literature *pars* means degree (and not house, for instance), and in Celtis, too, at least three passages could be cited where it means degree.¹⁰³ *Partem suam*, therefore, have to mean "her [Venus's] degree", that is, Ram 9°. I see only one possibility to make sense of the mention of this position:¹⁰⁴ the poet connects the 9° to the ninth house of the zodiac, that is, the Archer, "his" (Ascendant) sign" (*per mea signa*, in poetic plural); furthermore, the Ram and the Archer are both fiery signs,¹⁰⁵ and the poet "plays with the fire" in the whole passage. These are the reasons why he could "reckon the Venus's degree in" (= analogize with) his Ascendant sign. A playful, poetical – from another perspective: strained and arbitrary – interpretation of a horoscope-element; these two lines and the whole passage is meant to show that the protagonist has a harmonious horoscope, a "full of fire, full of love" character which was destined by the stars. The Celtis of the *Amores* makes use of his

¹⁰¹ *Angulus* originally meant the main axes, the cardinal houses of a horoscope (houses 1, 4, 7, 10), so *septimus angulus* would literally mean the "seventh cardinal house," however, it was customary in astrological literature to use such a contracted expression that refers both to the number of the house and its cardinal quality; cf., e.g., the horoscope interpretation written for Eleonore of Portugal: *Joannis Regiomontani opera collectanea*, ed. Felix Schmeidler (Osnabrück: Zeller, 1972), fol. 80r.

¹⁰² The cusp of the seventh house is in the Twins, so the ruler of the house is Mercury.

¹⁰³ Am. I,1,30; Am. II,6,87; Am. III,12,31.

¹⁰⁴ There is no such *division* [decans, *termini* etc.] of the Ram that would allow us to connect the 9° with the Archer or the Virgin, the signs that Celtis could consider as "his" signs (*per mea signa*).

¹⁰⁵ Every sign belongs to one of the four elements, and the Archer, the Lion and the Ram are the fiery signs.

favorable stars here with the purpose of a love conquest (using the real data of his nativity, again), and he also refers to this strategy of “astral seduction,” as it were, in another elegy in the *Amores*.¹⁰⁶

In the next book of the *Amores* the poet is courting Elsula; this time he idealizes *her*, the woman’s, nativity, after enumerating how many stars’ brilliance she surpasses:

*Crediderim ex illis unam micuisse sub ortu,
Elsula, dum vitae sunt data fila tuae:
Taurus erat, blanda rutilat cui fronte Cupido,
ille tibi primo cardine fila dedit.
Phoebus et in nona caeli tibi parte refulgens
cultorem Phoebi strinxit amore tibi.
Iuppiter in medio stabat tunc laetus Olympo
et Venus in gremio luserat alma suo.
Hi tibi finxerunt speciosi corporis artus
Atque animum radiis composuere suis...*¹⁰⁷

Therefore I have to think that one [star] was shining at your birth, Elsula, when you were given the thread of your life: it was the Bull, whose loving face flushed with Cupido, he gave you the thread of life, being in the first house. And Phoebus, shining in the ninth degree of the heavens, bound the follower of Phoebus with love to you. Jupiter stood then propitiously in the middle of heaven, and nourishing Venus played in his lap. They created the members of your beautiful body, and they fashioned your character with their rays.

Here it is not a real horoscope that stands behind the text,¹⁰⁸ the poet mixes commonplaces with specific planetary positions, outlining the main elements of an “ideal” horoscope. In the next book of *Amores* he describes Ursula’s lucky birth in a similar manner, although astrologically less detailed: Ursula’s Ascendant is the Lion, the sign of Phoebus, and she, too, has a Venus-like figure.¹⁰⁹ When applying such motifs, Celtis could use the topoi circulating in Italian poetry; Venus, Jupiter or Phoebus, separately or together, often feature as planets shining on the birth, giving beauty, luck, and perfect characteristics;¹¹⁰ the eyes of the beloved woman may even outshine the brilliance of Venus and Jupiter.¹¹¹ Nevertheless, the passage about Elsula is astrologically more elaborate, and eventually a whole horoscope unfolds. Most of its elements can be easily explained; the Ascendant (*primo cardine*) is in the Bull,¹¹² so the birth ruler is Venus; Jupiter is in MC (*in medio Olympo*), in conjunction with Venus.¹¹³ What is the position of the Sun, the most important heavenly body? According to Grössing, *Nona*

¹⁰⁶ In Od. I,17,53-60 he jokingly warns Albert Blar (Celtis’s most important teacher of astrology, see above) not to misconstrue the will of the heavens (his nativity), according to which Celtis will win Hasilina.

¹⁰⁷ Am. II,5,71-80.

¹⁰⁸ Such a planetary combination would not have been possible in that period of the fifteenth century (checked with ZED 8 Lite)

¹⁰⁹ Am. III,3,13-18: *His te crediderim stellis natalibus ortam, / dum tibi ab Eoo surgeret axe Leo, / quo vagus exultat sua fervida lumina Phoebus, / dum metit optatum falce colonus agrum. / Arte Dionaeva splendet tibi corpore vultus / et rutilant niveis ora venusta genis.*

¹¹⁰ E.g. Naldi, *Hastiludium* 96: *cui se Venus aurea protinus uni / obtulit, atque suos nascenti afflavit honores.*

¹¹¹ Janus Pannonius, ep. 283 és 284 to Alte (*Iani Pannonii Opera Quae Manserunt Omnia. Vol. I. Epigrammata*, ed. Gyula Mayer et al. Budapest: Balassi, 2006).

¹¹² I have to mention that in Celtis the Bull may also have negative associations, as in Od. I,22,7, regarding Hasilina’s husband: *vel Taurus tibi Scorpiusve surgit.*

¹¹³ Grössing, ““Astra inclinant,”” 180.

caeli parte means the ninth house;¹¹⁴ we have already seen, however, that *pars* means degree in astrological literature in general and in Celtis in particular. In the previous passage, just as in another *Amores*-passage quoted above,¹¹⁵ Celtis actually refers back to the exact position, the *pars* of Venus in his nativity (Ram 9°). Therefore *nona caeli parte* has to signify the ninth degree reckoned from the beginning of the celestial circle, that is, Ram 9°. This explains expressively why the words *strinxit amore* are used and why the two lovers match: in Celtis's nativity Venus, Elsula's equivalent, stands at Ram 9°, while in Elsula's nativity Phoebus, the equivalent of Celtis (v. 76: *Phoebi cultor*), stands at the same degree. This is an original example for a literary application of synastry.

The passage about Elsula also exemplifies that Celtis is always inclined to fashion his mythical poet-image, even when idealizing someone else. Elsula's Jupiter in MC may remind the reader of the similar position of the poet's Jupiter, and it is "the follower of Phoebus", the priest of Apollo, whom Elsula is bound to. All the so far discussed passages adumbrate a horoscope-astrological poetry that went beyond the superficial astral commonplaces known from Italian Neo-Latin poetry. Celtis relied on an astrologically skilled humanist audience who also understand technical details and a symbolism playing with notions like planetary aspects or degrees. This is in line with what I outlined in the previous subchapter about Celtis's environment.

c. The stars of the sodales

When Ficino explains in his letter to Marco of Venice how much they resemble and how similarly they feel towards each other, he attributes this to "our Mercury."¹¹⁶ In other works, too, he praises the favorable stars of his friends and fellow writers favored by the muses and he associates the notion of friendship with the harmonizing stars; this phenomenon occurs in other Italian Neo-Latin works as well, although not frequently.¹¹⁷ In classical literature, the idea of congeniality or innate sympathy indicated by the stars occurs not only in

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ See above, p. 133 n. 81.

¹¹⁶ OO p. 875.

¹¹⁷ Wind, *Pagan Mysteries*, 65 points to the "cult of synastry" in Ficino's letters, but he does not mention examples. Clydesdale ("Jupiter") have briefly discussed synastry in Ficino, and brought up two examples, Ficino's letters to Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco de' Medici and Alberto Lisci. Another characteristic example can be found in Ficino's letter to Bembo (OO p. 771): the twin lyres of Ficino and Marco Aurelio may have been tuned by the Mercury in the Bull or the Sun in the Twins... Among the Italian poets, cf., e.g., Landino, Carm. 8. 61-68 (*Christophori Landini carmina omnia*, ed. A. Perosa, Florence: Olschki, 1939), esp. v. 67-68: *Dulce loqui dulci risu ingenuoque pudore / Mercurius facili sidere, Bembe, dedit.*

the astrological literature,¹¹⁸ but also in Celtis's most important model, Horace, who mentions actual signs of the zodiac in his ode to Maecenas before he concludes that: "both of our stars incredibly harmonized."¹¹⁹

Celtis was a central figure of the network of *respublica litteraria* in Germany; a "dialogical way of life"¹²⁰ was especially characteristic of him, and he addressed most of his works, especially the odes, directly to his friends. His ode to Höltzl, mentioned in the discussion of the nativity, provides an explicit example for attributing congeniality to similar planetary positions (among other things). Höltzl was born on 1 February, so he had the Sun of his nativity at the same degree of Aquarius as Celtis; after describing this position poetically, he concludes: "therefore, a mutual love awakes in our soul."¹²¹ In other poems our poet refers indirectly to congeniality or some kind of intellectual relationship, insofar as he praises his friends' favorable birth stars (often similar to those of his own). He begins his ode to Salemnus (or Salamius) Delius, one of his disciples in Cracow, with these lines:

*Deli, purpurea quem face Cynthius
irroravit amans matris ab ubere,
et cui mite dedit sidere Iuppiter
felici ingenium clarum et amabile...*¹²²

Delius, you whom the Cynthian [Apollo] sprinkled with his purple rays at the teet of your mother, and upon whom Jupiter has gently bestowed a splendid and congenial talent under his fortune-bearing star...

Apollo, whom the name of Delius ("one from Delos") alludes to, features again as both the god of poetry and the Sun itself, while Jupiter is either God, who provides favorable stars (Celtis generally calls God Jupiter), or more likely the planet Jupiter. A technique typical of Celtis is to start from classical topoi and mix a religious-mythological milieu with an astrological one, which often grows dominant.

Speaking about the favorable stars of his *sodales* he highlights the effect of Jupiter in other works as well. At the birth of the muse-beloved Gracchus Pierius (Krachenberger) "Jupiter shone, providing many virtues."¹²³ In the case of Sigismundus Fusilius, a member of Celtis's circle in Poland (like Delius), the *sidus patrium*, the "paternal star" gave the outstanding virtues;¹²⁴ taking into account Jupiter's / Zeus's paternal role among the gods and the above

¹¹⁸ Pseudo-Ptolemy, *Centiloquium*, 32.

¹¹⁹ Hor. Carm. II,17,17-25: *seu Libra seu me Scorpios aspicit / formidulosus, pars violentior / natalis horae, seu tyrannus / Hesperiae Capricornus undae, / utrumque nostrum incredibili modo / consentit astrum: te Iovis impio / tutela Saturno refulgens / eripuit volucrisque Fati / tardavit alas...*

¹²⁰ W. Rüegg, *Anstösse, Aufsätze und Vorträge zur dialogischen Lebensform* (Frankfurt a. M., 1973).

¹²¹ Od. app. 1, v. 5-10: *Celtis et tali est generatus olim / luce, dum claro radians in orbe / fulserat Phoebus tepidaque stabat / fulgidus urna. / Mutuus nostris animis calescens / hinc amor surgit...*

¹²² Od. I,9,1-4.

¹²³ Od. II,9,11-2 *Virtutibus multis decoro / Iuppiter ut tibi fulsit ortu.*

¹²⁴ Od. I,11,10-12: *cui dedit sidus patrium decoros / pectoris mores, et honesta sanctae / pignora mentis.*

examples, the expression should be interpreted most probably as the planet Jupiter.¹²⁵ And perhaps it is Jupiter again that hides behind the lines of the epitaph for Regiomontanus:

*Regia cui fulsit coeli clarissima stella,
hic iacet astrorum dux, decus et patriae.
Regius hunc genuit mons, quem mea Francia tollit,
haud procul a ripis, inclyte Moene, tuis.*¹²⁶

For whom the brightest, royal star of the heaven shone, he lies here, the commander of the stars, the glory of the fatherland. A royal mountain bore him, that rises in my Franconia, not far from your banks, O famous Main.

Clearly he uses the expression *regia stella* because of the pun with *Regio-montanus* (whose scholarly activity in Vienna was also important with regard to the CPM); the “royal star” may be associated with several actual stars, for instance with the *Regulus (alpha Leonis / Rex)*, which is indeed one of the brightest stars in the sky. However, in the collection of Gauricus a surviving nativity for Regiomontanus has the Jupiter just rising.¹²⁷ It is not known whether Celtis knew such a nativity of Regiomontanus, but considering the astrological tradition that Jupiter provides characteristics worthy of a king, and that Celtis speaks several times about the favorable Jupiter at birth, it is a valid option to interpret *regia stella* as Jupiter.

Beyond the appreciation or eulogy of his friends’ abilities and talents, these poems always refer – directly or indirectly – to the congeniality between the poet and the addressee and the same heavenly support. These references are primarily topoi, related to Phoebus and the muses, found in the works of other humanists as well. Nevertheless, it is rather conspicuous that the actual heavenly bodies that Celtis mentions often remind one of his own nativity; he features Jupiter several times as the star “shining at birth,”¹²⁸ and he explicitly refers to the position of his own Sun. These texts are rather mirror-like; speaking about a friend, the poet praises himself at the same time. They enjoy the gifts of the gods, the muses, the stars together. It was typical of humanist communities that they separated themselves as the intellectual elite from non-humanist outsiders by means of various strategies and symbols; in Celtis, this endeavour took on an astrological coloring. One can observe in germ form how astrological symbols begin to assume the role of creating group identity, although this aspect does not blossom out in Celtis’ oeuvre and in most cases it does not go beyond the level of commonplaces. One of the reasons why he did not draw a detailed parallel between his and

¹²⁵ I do not see any reason why *sidus patrium* should be interpreted as Mercury, as Gruber suggested (“Singulis rebus,” 263).

¹²⁶ Ep. II,83.

¹²⁷ Gauricus, *Tractatus*, fol. 62v. Jupiter (at Scorpio 10°) stands by just 6° from the Ascendant (Scorpion 16°), and 2° from the Dragon’s Head (Scorpion 14°).

¹²⁸ The expression may refer both to the Ascendant and the MC, the two most significant components of a horoscope. The gifts of Jupiter mentioned in these passages – virtues, glory, etc. – fit well the MC / tenth house, but are at the same time commonplace expressions; they cannot be taken as unambiguous references to actual horoscopes.

others' horoscopes must be that he assumed a leading role in the community, and he justified his exceptional position – among others – with his exceptional horoscopes. Indeed, in the works of the *sodales* Celtis's nativity does appear as a topic. Salemnus Delius provides a characteristic example with his fragmentarily surviving ode to Celtis which contains, beyond the topoi of divine birth and education by the muses, a concrete reference to the poet's Ascendant: "the Archer shone for him in the first hour..."¹²⁹ (Unluckily, the fragment breaks at this point.)

Naturally, in Renaissance astrological eulogy the patron, too, could be involved in the elite circle of persons with musaic skills. Celtis's *Poema ad Fridericum*, a programmatic work at the beginning of *Ars versificandi*¹³⁰ that elevates the poet into mythical, sacred spheres in the framework of a spectacular epiphany scene with Phoebus (discussed later in more detail), ends with a short discussion of the nativity of the dedicatee, Frederick the Wise of Saxony, that could have as well been written to a beloved humanist friend, on grounds of the artistic skills he mentions. Celtis makes it clear that his patron is also favored by the muses:

*Te Gemini aspiciunt, vitale, Caducifer, astrum
et Venus assurgunt; haec genitura tua est.
per varios cantus Gemini modulataque verba,
et gracilis calamos te, Friderice, trahunt.
Atlantis, Tege[ae]e,¹³¹ nepos facundus in astro
ingenii vires blandaque verba movet,
et Cytherea tuos aptavit corporis artus,
membra decora fovens, mollibus apta iocis.¹³²*

The Twins are looking at you, the life-giving star of the Caduceus-bearer [Mercury] and Venus are rising: this is your nativity. The Twins take effect on you, Frederick, by varied songs, harmonious verses and slender pipes. Atlas's eloquent grandson [Mercury], the Tegean arouses, as a star (?), the powers of your talent and gives charming words, and it was the Cytherean [Venus] who fitted the members on your body, took care of these beautiful members, [and made them] suitable for soft play.¹³³

As Robert observed, the poet sets out from Manilius here, too. Characterizing the Twins, Manilius explains that this sign of Mercury provides talents for singing, music, and eloquence. Some expressions in the passage correspond word for word to the text of the *Astronomicon*.¹³⁴ Celtis also has Venus appear; he describes her activity in line with the relevant Venerean topoi. The phenomenon that a poet eulogized the ruler through his

¹²⁹ Fr. von Bezold, "Aus dem Freundeskreis des Konrad Celtis," *Anzeiger für Kunde der deutschen Vorzeit*, N. F. 29 (1882), 61f. V. 21: *Arcifer prima sibi fulsit hora...*

¹³⁰ Fol. a2r–3v; edited by Robert, "Carmina," 116–8.

¹³¹ Robert has emended the original *tegee* as *Tege[ae]e*, and indeed, there seems to be no better solution that would fit the hexameter. Mercury was sometimes called Tegeaeus in Italian poetry, too, cf. e.g. P. Sasso, *Epigrammaton libri II*, 7,9 (The text and its edition data are available at www.poetitalia.it; 14.05.2016).

¹³² V. 91–8.

¹³³ There is no ignoring the sexual connotations of this line; the reader of Celtis gets used to sexual allusions after a time.

¹³⁴ Manil. IV,152–8; Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 40.

horoscope also occurred in contemporary Italian poetry.¹³⁵ Some characteristics of the passage, however, are quite typical of Celtis; he quotes from Manilius, and highlights such elements of the horoscope that are related to wisdom, art, and beauty, that elevate the ruler into the empire of the muses, as if the poet wrote to a *sodalis*.

The question arises whether the astrological references are based on a real horoscope. In such a case the poet's words would have more weight – and there was a great deal at stake, the poet's later career demonstrates how important it was to gain the support of Frederick the Wise. Rulers had far more means to have their horoscopes cast and propagated than humanists did, and in most cases they used the opportunity. The birth date of Frederick is known (17 January 1463, a little before 13 o'clock¹³⁶), on the grounds of which his hypothetical nativity can be cast (fig. 9); one can immediately see that Celtis drew on this. The Ascendant is in the Twins, whose ruler, Mercury, stands in conjunction with Venus.¹³⁷ This corresponds roughly to the text, moreover, it helps to interpret it: *aspiciunt* refers to the Ascendant; because of this rising sign the poet uses the verb *assurgunt* for the related planets. In his Hrosvitha-edition, also dedicated to Frederick the Wise, Celtis mentions again that the ruler's outstanding mental and corporal properties are the gift of the stars, “as the astrologers say.”¹³⁸

¹³⁵ See above, p. 123 n. 20.

¹³⁶ I. Ludolphy, *Friedrich der Weise: Kurfürst von Sachsen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1984), 43. The place of birth is Torgau (near Leipzig).

¹³⁷ The horoscope contains other important planetary positions, too, but Celtis does not seem to have known or been interested in them. Jupiter, too, stands in conjunction with Mercury and Venus. Saturn in MC, in his own domicile, ruling over five planets, is outstandingly strong.

¹³⁸ BW p. 467: *Animi tui nobilissimi et corporis tui egregii, illa divina quaedam ex natalibus et sigillatis, ut genethliaci dicunt, stellis dona sunt.* Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 40.

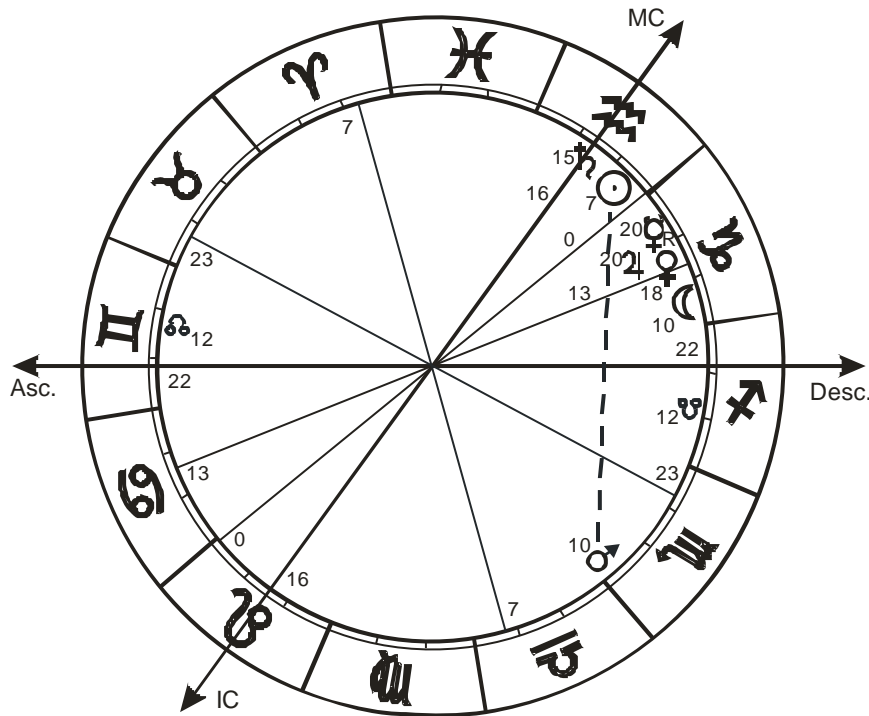


Fig. 9. The nativity of Frederick the Wise in modern calculations, based on the given date (17.01.1463, 12:55, Leipzig)

Celtis's direct informer may have been Martin Polich von Mellerstadt, Frederick's physician and astrologer, who helped the poet later. The dedication, to be found above the *Poema ad Fridericum*, reads: "I was informed by your physician... Martin von Mellerstadt, that you are absolutely fascinated by the poets' honey-flowing songs, and that you are engrossed in this discipline, stimulated by your good nature."¹³⁹ The expression *natura ipsa bona* may also be associated with his birth.

The important issue for us, however, is not so much whether the characterizations through the stars are based on actual horoscopes, but the fact that Celtis involved several of his acquaintances, too, in the astrological representation of divinely supported persons, *vates*, a strategy through which both the author's and the addressees' (most often the poets') astronomical-astrological competence and the heavenly "proofs" of their various outstanding skills could be referred to.

¹³⁹ F. a2r: *Accepi... ex physico tuo... Martino Mellerstat te summe mellifluis poetarum carminibus oblectari: atque ita natura ipsa bona id studii genus amplecti...*

2. Mythological-astrological self-representation in Tolhopf's coats-of-arms

There can be many ways of astrological self-representation; one of the relatively simple ways is a one's association with a zodiacal sign or signs used as a kind of personal emblem or quasi heraldic sign. This occurred mostly in royal representation, from Augustus (Capricorn and Scorpion in coins) through the Renaissance rulers Cosimo and Lorenzo Medici (Capricorn) or Lodovico Gonzaga (Lion).¹⁴⁰ Johannes Tolhopf's¹⁴¹ coats-of-arms belong to the rare cases when someone "below" the level of patrons applied a similar, although not at all simple, "zodiacal" self-representation. Nevertheless, this kind of self-fashioning is not so surprising in Tolhopf's case: he was an astrologer, on the one hand, and as a humanist he had the required amount of self-consciousness, on the other. Needless to say, such an astrological symbolism could only inspire (or be inspired by?) Celtis, Tolhopf's close friend, to a similar representative use of astrology. Let us have a look first at the most clearly self-interpreted version of Tolhopf's coats-of-arms. One of the surviving examples for the countless woodcuts "marketing"¹⁴² Maximilian is what can be called the *Hercules Germanicus* woodcut, which Luh has convincingly dated to 1496 (fig. 10 a-b).¹⁴³ On the one side *Hercules Germanicus*, that is, Emperor Maximilian can be seen, with his army marching against Charles VIII of France; the other side represents Tolhopf's coat-of-arms with a special superscription. This side interests us here: Tolhopf, who most probably designed the woodcut (at least the coat-of-arms), advertised a bit himself, too, apropos of the imperial propaganda. Luh has already analyzed how the image within the coat-of-arms combines the iconographies of Janus and Aquarius; his analysis can be here and there completed in the following. The superscription, which abounds in epithets in the ablative¹⁴⁴ and lacks predicate, helps in the interpretation of the coat-of-arms, when divided into sensible units; let us see what kind of image Tolhopf constructs about himself.

¹⁴⁰ Example for Augustus's coins with Capricorn and Scorpion: www.wildwinds.com/coins/greece/cyprus/RPC_3916.jpg. A representation of a helm with Capricorn used in the Medici-period: www.britishmuseum.org/research/search_the_collection_database.aspx, Registration number 1845,0825.383 (both accessed: 15.04.2016). For all these, cf. Enikő Békés, *Asztrológia, orvoslás és fiziognómia Galeotto Marzio műveiben* [Astrology, medicine and physiognomy in Galeotto Marzio's works] (Budapest: Balassi, 2014), 98. For Lodovico and the Lion: Á. Orbán, "Astrology in Janus Pannonius's Poems of Praise," in *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 19 (2013), 116-8.

¹⁴¹ For his life and work see p. 112-3.

¹⁴² Silver, *Marketing Maximilian*. Silver discusses the recto of the *Hercules Germanicus* woodcut briefly at p. 23.

¹⁴³ Luh has analyzed the woodcut in *Werkausgabe*, 334-342. Exemplar e.g. in Vienna, Graph. Sammlung Albertina, inv. no. 1948/224.

¹⁴⁴ The phrases in ablative belong to *Adornata* at the end, so they should be preceded by "ornamented by" in an English translation.



Fig. 10a. The recto of the “Hercules Germanicus” woodcut.

IANI TOLHOPHI GERMANI VATIS HERCVLEI

Alatorum Insignia Clipeo Bicolori Caelesti Campo & Aureo Pannulo Lapo
 Bicipite Mundi Renovatore Ventre Chaonto Pontificali Lino Vrina Stell
 Celata Degualionis Aqvis Sahara Rate Clave Coelica Nube Candida Inabe
 Senis & Ganymedis Iuvenis Faciebus Innotuitis Aquarii Corona Regia &
 Aquila ad super. Ca. Tide Belhgera Pannonis Cauda Cum Anqr Oculis
 Induitis Veniuolis Socera & Iafonis Adonara



Fig. 10b. The verso of the “Hercules Germanicus” woodcut.

– *IANI TOLHOPHI GERMANI VATIS HERCVLEI Armorum Insignia* (“The coat-of-arms of Janus Tolophus, the German Herculean *vates*” or “the *vates* of the German Hercules”¹⁴⁵): in the context of the *Hercules Germanicus* woodcut, the apposition with its (probably deliberately) multiple meanings expresses primarily his affiliation to Emperor Maximilian, while the multiple meanings of *vates* will be clear from the subsequent self-interpretation. The first word, *Iani*, already reveals one of the reasons why Tolhopf applied first of all the god Janus in his self-representation: he could latinize his name *Johannes* as *Ianus*.¹⁴⁶

– *Clipeo Bicolori[:] Coelesti Campo et Aureo Parnaso* (“[ornamented by] a two-coloured shield, [with the colours of] the heavenly field and the golden Parnassus”). The heaven is represented by the cloud to the left of the Janus-figure, so the blue of the sky was probably meant to fill out the left side of the shield, while the gold of the Parnassus would fit Deucalion’s ship to the right that landed on Mount Parnassus according to the myth (see below). *Campus coelestis* may refer both to the Elysean fields and the Christian heaven: the fusion of classical and Christian concepts was customary in the humanism of the period. The “golden” Parnassus refers to Apollo as Sun-god and the god of poetry and divination, which in turn alludes to Tolhopf’s multiple professions.¹⁴⁷

– *Iano Bicipite Mundi Renovatore* (“the two-headed Janus, the renewer of the world”). Janus is not only the god of beginning or god of piece, but also a cosmic deity, as Ovid and even more Macrobius has explained: Janus is closely related to Chaos or the power that helps create a world from Chaos; he guards the universe, the heaven and the underworld, he is lord over the waters of the deep.¹⁴⁸ Macrobius identifies him with the Sun, as he does with many other gods (Janus opens the dawn and the dusk,¹⁴⁹ and so on); this aspect of Janus fits Apollo’s “Golden Parnassus.” Poetry, too, is supposed to have the power of universal creation, in the Florentine Platonic and the subsequent German humanist *vates*-ideologies.

¹⁴⁵ Since the genitive of *Hercules* can be *-ei*, *-i*, or *-is*, *Herculei* can be translated both as a noun and an adjective; the first translation occurs in Luh (“Das Wappen von Janus Tolophus, dem *vates* des Hercules Germanicus,” *Werkausgabe*, 338), the second in Arnold’s article entitled “‘Vates Herculeus’...” Tolhopf referred to himself as *vates Herculeus* in one of his letters as well (BW no. 63, p. 103-4; indicated by Arnold, “‘Vates Herculeus,’” 146).

¹⁴⁶ Having been at King Mathias’s court, Tolhopf certainly knew the example of Ianus Pannonius, whose original name had been the equivalent of Johannes (*János* in Hungarian, *Jan* in Croatian).

¹⁴⁷ Apollo also appears in some of Tolhopf’s letters to Celtis, as a god supporting him: BW no. 41 p. 71; no. 63 p. 104.

¹⁴⁸ Ov. *Fast.* I,89-288; Macr. *Sat.* I,9,4 and I,7,20. Summarized by Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 339-340, but Luh’s note 39, “Macrobius, *Somn.* I,9” is false.

¹⁴⁹ Macr. *Sat.* I,9,9-10.

Janus has two heads, because he knows the past and the future:¹⁵⁰ a poet, a man-of-letters knows the past (history, classical culture and so on), an astrologer knows the future, and Tolhopf presented himself as both.

– *Ventre Chaonio* (“Dodonan womb”). In classical literature the adjective *Chaonius* refers to Dodona and Zeus’s / Jupiter’s oracle, where the priestesses made divinations from the rustle of oak leaves in the sacred grove. On the other hand, the Janus-figure may be seen as rising between two mountains, and the idea of twin mountains was associated to the Delphic oracle. Tolhopf seems to have combined the two oracles, and Janus rises from the earth (“womb”) of this sacred place. The chthonic connotation of Delphoi and its cave is well known (δελφός = “womb”). Tolhopf may have been inspired by Plato’s *Phaedrus*, which mentions the Delphic Pythia and the priestesses of Dodona together, in the context of divine frenzy;¹⁵¹ Roman poets echoed this parallelism.¹⁵² Again, Tolhopf refers to the divine abilities of the *vates*, the *furor poeticus* which is at the same time *furor propheticus*.¹⁵³

– *Pontificali Lituo (...)* *Clave Coelica Nube Candida* (“priester’s staff... celestial key and white cloud”). Completing Ovid, Macrobius remarks that Janus holds a rod in his right hand as *rector viarum* (a guide), and a key in his left as *omnium portarum*¹⁵⁴ *custos* (guard of all gates).¹⁵⁵ Tolhopf modifies the two motifs so that they fit his astrologer- and *vates*-role. *Lituus* was the curved staff of the augurs who predicted the future from the celestial signs; and with the “celestial key” he opens the secrets of the heaven, including the messages of the stars. (The *lituus* might also allude to his priester-role: he was then canon of Regensburg, among other clerical offices).

– *Urna Stell[is] Celata*. In his right, Janus also holds “an urn with carved stars”: Tolhopf combines the Janus-iconography with that of Aquarius.¹⁵⁶

– *Deucalionis Aquis Saturnia Rate* (“Deucalion’s waters, Saturnus’s boat”): the water flowing from the urn created an opportunity for the author to involve two Greek-Roman myths related to the Golden Age. In the myth retold by Ovid, Deucalion and Pyrrha were the only survivors of the Deluge; their ship landed on Parnassus, the highest mount (in a symbolical sense, too).¹⁵⁷ Hyginus identified Deucalion with the Aquarius.¹⁵⁸ The boat is also

¹⁵⁰ Macr. Sat. I,9,4.

¹⁵¹ *Phaedrus* 244A.

¹⁵² E.g. Ov. Trist. IV,8,43: *hoc mihi si Delphi Dodonaque diceret ipsa, / esse videretur vanus uterque locus*.

¹⁵³ I thank Prof. Elisabeth Klecker for the suggestion of this interpretation.

¹⁵⁴ Not *poetarum*, as *ibid.*, 340.

¹⁵⁵ Fast. I. 99; Macr. Sat. I,9,7. Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 340.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 340-1.

¹⁵⁷ Ov. Met. I,316ff. Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 341.

¹⁵⁸ Hyg. Astr. II,29. Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 341.

Saturnia: as Ovid relates in the *Fasti*, Saturnus, expelled by Jupiter, arrives to *Latium*, to the castle of Janus, and they rule together in harmony, founding a new Golden Age.¹⁵⁹ The story in the context of the coat-of-arms certainly refers to the general Renaissance idea of *translatio studii*: the resurrection of classical studies will bring a new era of cultural flowering in Europe in general and in Germany in particular.¹⁶⁰

– *Inachi Senis & Ganymedis Iuvenis Faciebus* (“the faces of the old Inachus and the young Ganymede”): Tolhopf adjusts the outer appearance of Janus himself to Aquarius-traditions. Inachus is a primeval king and river god in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*;¹⁶¹ the other face, the young one belongs, however, to Ganymede, whom the eagle of Jupiter abducts. It was Manilius, the classic of astronomical poetry, one of Celtis’s and Tolhopf’s favorite authors, who identified Ganymede, the cup-bearer of the Gods, with Aquarius; Manilius characterized Aquarius as naked and young.¹⁶²

– *Irrorantis Aquarii Corona Regia* (“the royal crown of Aquarius who sheds dew”): grammatically the two phrases seem to belong together, but *irrorantis Aquarii* is rather a continuation of the foregoing, making the Manilius-reference explicit (cf. also *rorantis iuvenis* in Manil. V,487). The *corona regia* can be seen on the Janus-figure, indicating his Golden Age rule.

– *et Aquila Desuper* (“and an eagle from above”). Manilius identified the constellation *Aquila* (near Aquarius) as the eagle that abducts Ganymede. In a prosaic approach, the eagle on the woodcut is the Habsburg eagle who supports, elevates Ianus Tolophus. From another perspective, it is Jupiter’s bird, it is God who elevates the poet-seer to divine spheres (Celtis’s “Imperial eagle” woodcut, too, presented these two aspects of the eagle); the idea of poetical inspiration lurks in the background.¹⁶³

The remaining twelve words of the superscription describe the embellishment around the shield;¹⁶⁴ these accessories are less original¹⁶⁵ and do not interest us here. To conclude the

¹⁵⁹ The myth of Janus and the Golden Age was also represented in a coin of the Roman Republic, with *Ianus bifrons* on the recto and *prora*, the ship’s bow, on the verso. Ibid., 339.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. also BW no. 221 p. 368.

¹⁶¹ Ov. Met. I,583f.; 645; 662. Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 341.

¹⁶² E.g. V. 486; Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 340-1.

¹⁶³ As Landino said in his inaugural speech in the “Studio Fiorentino” about the origin of *vates*, the *furor poeticus* and other poetry-related issues, poets were also called eagles in antiquity because of the ability to surpass themselves as humans (Weiss, *Christoforo Landino*, 28). The term *irrorantes* in Tolhopf’s woodcut may also be associated with divine inspiration, which could be represented as celestial dew, as will be seen later (p. 229); Janus’s key, too, opens a cloud. In Tolhopf’s surviving texts themselves I have not found compelling evidence for such an interpretation, but the idea would fit the general *vates*-ideology of the woodcut.

¹⁶⁴ *Casside Belligera Pavonis Cauda Cum Argi Oculis Induviis Ventivolis Societa[tis] Iasonis Adornata* (“ornamented by a war helm, a peacock’s tail [Juno’s bird] with the eyes of Argus, and the booty of Jason’s sailing company”). Emperor Maximilian was often represented with the chain of the Order of the Golden Fleece.

review of Tolhopf's coat-of-arms from 1496, his combination of a number of mythological, astrological symbols resulted in an image of a versatile *vates*, supported by the gods, the stars and the ruler; he is the astrologer who uncovers the secrets of the heaven, furthermore, the seer-priest and the poet, the humanist contributing to a new Golden Age.

Let us jump back in time to 1480, to the court of King Mathias of Hungary: Janus-figures appear in Tolhopf-related sources of that period as well.¹⁶⁶ One of them combines visual and textual representation and reveals that the original version of the above discussed coat-of-arms was granted by Mathias to Tolhopf for his astrological service: this is a grant-of-arms dated to Oktober 1480, Zagreb (fig. 11). A copy of this survived from 1618:¹⁶⁷ the image of the coat-of-arms in the middle is of a type characteristic of the seventeenth century, but the text follows the original one,¹⁶⁸ so our investigations should be based on this German text. The grant-of-arms naturally praises both Mathias and Tolhopf, and explains, with formulas and topoi characteristic of that period, why, how and with what consequences this servant of the king is granted nobility; the most interesting part for us is the blazon, the formal description of the coat-of-arms.¹⁶⁹ As it reads, the lower part of the shield is a dark green rock, the upper background is the blue sky, and Janus emerges from a cage. The text makes it

¹⁶⁵ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 338.

¹⁶⁶ The similarity of the Janus-figures from 1496 and 1480 has been first recognized by Arnold, “Vates Herculeus,” 146.

¹⁶⁷ Ms.: MNL, OL (National Archives of Hungary), DL 108112; available at hungaricana.hu/hu/search/results/?simple=1&query=SZO%3D%28108112%29&DATABASE=DLDF&page=. Klára Csapodi-Gárdonyi has called attention to the grant-of-arms: “Tolhopff János, Mátyás király csillagásza” [John Tolhopff, the astronomer of King Mathias], *Magyar Könyvszemle* 100 (1984), 335; “Die Wolfenbütteler Tolhopff-Corvine,” in *De captu lectoris: Wirkungen des Buches im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert; dargestellt an ausgewählten Handschriften und Drucken*, ed. W. Milde (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1988), 89. Árpád Mikó made additional remarks and transcribed part of the text: “Über den Miniator der Wolfenbütteler Tolhopff-Corvine,” in *Corvina Augusta: die Handschriften des Königs Matthias Corvinus in der Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel*, ed. E. Zsupán (Budapest, OSZK, 2014), 224-5. The text still waits for a deeper investigation.

¹⁶⁸ Mikó, “Über den Miniator,” 224; according to Mikó, the text shows no traces of “having been originally formulated in Latin.”

¹⁶⁹ Mikó has provided a transcription of this part (ibid.), which I follow here, except for the capitalization of god-names: “...darnach einen doppelten / Schilt, dessen vndertheil soll sein ein geferbter Stein oder Fels dünckel grün, der Obertheil aber Himmelblau vnd in demselben Obertheil soll stehen der Janus mit seinen Zwuyen Köpffen oder gesichtern, mit seinem anderen halben Körper oder leib sollen / gleichsam versteckt vnd verborgen sein in einer Stein Klufft, oder Felssigen Höle, der da für sich vnd hindersich sehen kan, als der fürnemblich beides von vergangenen vnd Zukünfftigen dingen die erfahrung habe vnd dauon sagen Könne. In der linken / Handt soll er einen schlüssel haben gen Himmel vfericht, das Er damit dess Himmels gestirn öffne vnd aufschliesse, welchs sich mit denen, die dess Himmels Lauff vnd gestirn erfahrung haben, wol schicket vnd überein Kombt, welcher Kunsten wir dich war / einem geschickten, Kunstlichen und Hochgelehrten Doctorem vnd Maister erkennen und halten, wie wir dann solches [*bey Alten kirch.] in vnserm Leib selbst erfahren, mit der rechten Handt soll Er sich vnderstützen vnd daran halten den Wassereimer mit sternem ausge- / graben vnd aussgestochen, dess alten Inachi daraus dess Deucalionis wasser geflossen, vnd das Schiff mit welchem der Saturnus vndem Joue vertrieben, in dem Sehe über das Mehr geschiff hat, das solches nit zu gross sey, damit keine / confusion vnd vermischung vnder den andern Kleinoten geschehe. Vber den Schilt aber soll sein ein Helm auf Krantzlein oder Hauptbendelein, mit einer Himmel: vnd graublauer farb, vnd eine guldene Cron, mit dem bildnus dess Zwiköpffichten / Jani, allerdings wie in dem Schildt gezieret, wie dann solches auf dem Randt durch dess Mahlers Kunst fürgebildet, Klarlicher vnd deutlicher Zue sehen ist....”

explicit that the key in his left serves to open the heaven and the stars; in his right he holds the starry Aquarius-urn, and Saturnus, Deucalion, Inachus, Ganymede are mentioned as well. Compared to the 1496 version, only some of those elements are missing that seem to refer, among others, to the divinity of poetry: the gold of the Parnassus, the creation from Chaos, the eagle. Tolhopf was then rather an astrologer than a humanist poet, at least at the court of King Mathias. Otherwise the coats-of-arms of 1480 and 1496 are essentially the same, they both combine the iconographies of Janus and Aquarius.



Fig. 11. King Mathias's grant-of-arms to Tolhopf.

Fig. 12. The title page of Tolhopf's *Stellarium*.

Basically the same Janus can be seen in a medallion of the title page of the *Stellarium-Corvina*,¹⁷⁰ (fig. 12) likewise made in 1480. The title page is rich in unique images, the interpretation of which are mostly problematic; several images are related either to royal representation or Tolhopf's self-representation.¹⁷¹ One can hardly make out the details in the upper left medallion, but they can be deduced with the help of the two coat-of-arms: here, too, Janus can be seen with the priestly staff, key, urn and sailboat. No doubt, this upper left, so-to-speak the first miniature refers to Tolhopf himself.

The medallion form provided little space to represent the cosmic aspects of Janus. However, the largest miniature, the Initial R represent Janus in his cosmogonical role. Below: the chaos, where the elements, earth, fire, air, water are still unseparated; above: the created world with the distinct elements, with the stars on the top, that are the fires of heaven. As Peter Luh has demonstrated, the main source of the scene must be Janus's oration in Ovid's *Fasti*:¹⁷²

*me Chaos antiqui (nam sum res prisca) vocabant:
aspice quam longi temporis acta canam.
lucidus hic aer et quae tria corpora restant, 105
ignis, aquae, tellus, unus acervus erat.
ut semel haec rerum secessit lite suarum
inque novas abiit massa soluta domos,
flamma petit altum, propior locus aera cepit,
sederunt medio terra fretumque solo. 110
tunc ego, qui fueram globus et sine imagine moles,
in faciem redii dignaque membra deo.*¹⁷³

The ancients called me Chaos (since I am of the first world): / Note the long ages past of which I shall tell. / The clear air, and the three other elements, / Fire, water, earth, were heaped together as one. / When, through the discord of its components, / The mass dissolved, and scattered to new regions, / Flame found the heights: air took a lower place, / While earth and sea sank to the furthest depth. / Then I, who was a shapeless mass, a ball, / Took on the appearance, and noble limbs of a god.¹⁷⁴

Indeed, the pallid, bearded figure with outstretched arms must be Janus just gaining shape, and this is not contradicted by the observation of Wehli, according to which the representation of the figure is similar to contemporary Microcosmos-representations.¹⁷⁵ However, the *Fasti*-passage does not explain the snake body surrounding the globe of chaos. As has been

¹⁷⁰ Ms.: Wolfenbüttel, HAB, Cod. Guelf. 84.1 Aug. 2°.

¹⁷¹ The title page has been investigated most importantly by K. Csapodi-Gárdonyi, "Tolhopff János"; id., "Die Wolfenbüttleler Tolhopff-Corvina"; T. Wehli, "Cuius hec est exemplaris figuratio. Questions about an Illustrated Page in the Tolhopff Corvina," in *Bonum ut pulchrum. Essays in Art History in Honor of Ernő Marosi on his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. L. Varga et al. (Budapest: MTA Művészettörténeti Kutatóintézet, 2010), note 5; Mikó, "Über den Miniator."

¹⁷² Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 345.

¹⁷³ *Fasti*, I, 103-112.

¹⁷⁴ S. Kline's tr.

¹⁷⁵ Wehli, "Cuius hec est," note 5.

suggested, it might be the snake Ophion, a character of several cosmogonical myth;¹⁷⁶ but a more definite explanation can be given. In an already mentioned passage of the *Saturnalia*, that expounds on Janus's cosmogonical aspects – he is the god of the chaos, the heaven, the world, the creative power –, Macrobius remarks that “when the Phoenicians fashioned his likeness for their rites they represented him as a serpent shaped like a circle, swallowing its own tail, to make plain that the universe is fed by itself alone and moves in a self-contained circle.”¹⁷⁷ In the image, it is not clear what the two ends of the snake are, they seem to be neither heads nor tails but something in between, so the whole does remind one of Macrobius's circular snake.

The right part of the letter R is composed by two fish, and it has been rightly suggested that they may refer to the solar sign of King Mathias's birth horoscope, the Fish.¹⁷⁸ This is corroborated by the beginning of the text about King Mathias, and the bright globe, reminiscent of the Sun, against a dark blue background. All this connected to the god Janus might refer to the power of the king to renew the world; and the scene within the R-initial might also refer to the creative powers of Tolhopf, taking into consideration the God Janus / Janus Tolophus identification in the three above mentioned sources. Considering Tolhopf's interest in the *Fasti* that his correspondence with Celtis reveals,¹⁷⁹ and the Ovidian-Macrobian elements of the 1496 coat-of-arms, Tolhopf must have had a word in the design of the R-initial.

The combination of Janus and Aquarius is, on the one hand, based on tradition: Janus gave his name to January, the month in which the Sun enters Aquarius; in medieval art the two figures could appear together.¹⁸⁰ On the other hand, I have not found any example for a fusion of Janus- and Aquarius-motifs in an elaborate image. Both Janus and Aquarius seems to have been important for Tolhopf, their combination in this case cannot be simply explained by tradition. The rich cosmological implications of the Janus-mythology and Tolhopf's surname “Johannes” make understandable why he liked Janus – but why did he insist on Aquarius and not something else? Since these are self-representative images, and those of an astrologer at that, the question arises whether the application of such symbols as Ganymede or the urn of Aquarius had an individual astrological reason. A specific sign in someone's nativity can be

¹⁷⁶ Csapodi-Gárdonyi, “Tolhopff János,” 338.

¹⁷⁷ Tr. R. A. Kaster; Sat. I,9,12: *hinc et Phoenices in sacris imaginem eius exprimentes draconem finxerunt in orbem redactum caudamque suam devorantem, ut appareat mundum et ex se ipso ali et in se revolvi.*

¹⁷⁸ Csapodi-Gárdonyi, “Tolhopff János,” 338. Contrary to what some scholars allege, Aquarius is not referred to in the R initial, neither by the Janus-figure (ibid.), nor by the fish (Wehli, “Cuius hec est,” note 5).

¹⁷⁹ Cf. esp. BW no. 63 p. 105. Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 346.

¹⁸⁰ E.g. in a window of the Cathedral of Chartres Aquarius pours water next to a three-headed Janus.

prominent in at least three ways: the Ascendant, the *medium caeli*, or the Sun may be in that sign; all of these could be important in Renaissance astrology. Csapodi-Gárdonyi's suggestion that Tolhopf might have been born in January is only one of the possibilities.¹⁸¹ Concerning this issue, there is a piece of data in the grant-of-arms, in the part which praises Tolhopf's astrological competence:

Wie nemblichen in deiner geburt Ianus der alte heidnische Gott das mittel dess himmels anschaue, mit dem Wassermann den die Poeten den Ganimedem nennen...

Namely, since it was Janus, the ancient pagan god, who looked at the middle of the sky at your birth, with Aquarius, whom the poets call Ganymede...

Because of all this, the king deemed him worthy of the following coat-of-arms:¹⁸² and here comes the blazon. So, Tolhopf's use of Janus and Aquarius-Ganymede seems to be based on the actual circumstances of his birth (too). The *Mitte(l) des Himmels*, the middle of the sky, *medium caeli* or *MC* in Latin, is an astrological term; it is the cusp of the tenth house, one of the most important houses, indicating character, career, social position. A number of examples could be mentioned for the significance of the MC in contemporary horoscope interpretations; see the above discussed horoscope-elegy of Celtis. The quoted passage can be best interpreted like this: Tolhopf's MC was in the Aquarius, and he considered this to be important; the traditional Aquarius–Janus association gave him opportunity to a reference (the text was certainly made at Tolhopf's suggestion¹⁸³) according to which “with the Aquarius” Janus, too, was¹⁸⁴ in the middle of the sky, supporting him from above. This celestial situation seems to have been the “real” basis, the individual astrological basis for the fruitful combination of the Ianus- and Aquarius-iconographies. In addition, Saturnus could also be said to connect the two: Saturnus is both Janus's co-ruler in the myth of the Golden Age and the ruler of Aquarius in astrology. Tolhopf's birth horoscope cannot be reconstructed from the surviving sources, so one cannot check for sure the sign of the MC; nevertheless, the natal astrological basis of Tolhopf's Aquarius-iconography is probable anyway, and since the MC has been mentioned in this context, it is highly probable that the MC was in the Aquarius of his nativity.

¹⁸¹ Csapodi-Gárdonyi, “Tolhopff János,” 335.

¹⁸² The cited passage is followed by a digression discussing a future Saturn–Jupiter conjunction in Aquarius, then the main text continues: *wir dafür halten, nicht unbilllich übereinstimmen, und gleich mit zutreffe: darnach einen doppelten Schilt...*

¹⁸³ Mikó, “Über den Miniator,” 225.

¹⁸⁴ Theoretically, *anschauen*, “to look at”, could also refer to an aspect, but the aspects were not so important in Renaissance astrology that one aspect could have been mentioned as the only important thing in a nativity.

Luh has already collected a number of characteristics that Tolhopf's and Celtis's oeuvres had in common.¹⁸⁵ They both spectacularly expressed their *Herrschernähe*;¹⁸⁶ they planned together an edition of the *Fasti*,¹⁸⁷ and were both interested in the issue of Chaos and creation as it appeared in Ovid; there are a number of similar motifs in the contents of their works (from a journey on the northern sea through the Hercules-figure or the topical “ten years of wandering”); and they developed a similar, mannered and spectacular iconographic style. Luh has rightly assumed that Tolhopf may have contributed to Celtis's turn toward the visual medium and mythological-allegorical representation. After the foregoing analyses in this chapter, it has to be stressed more to what a great extent both Celtis and Tolhopf combined the spheres of poetry / literature and astrology. Beyond the *Fasti*, Tolhopf wrote in his letters to Celtis about other literary plans that related both to poetry and astrology.¹⁸⁸ As already mentioned, Tolhopf often used an obscure mythological-astrological language in his letters to Celtis, which, on the other hand, was meant to be understood by his friend.¹⁸⁹ Most importantly, this chapter has demonstrated that both of them were inclined to use a *serio-iocosus* astrological-mythological symbolic language in their self-representation. This strategy provided wide possibilities for symbolic expression; furthermore, they could demonstrate this way (too) both their literary and cosmological / astrological competence. Both employed natal astrology in order to support their in large part idealistic self-representation: the decisive influence of the stars on birth was supposed to be a real phenomenon; in addition, the idea helped their constructed identity to be further involved in a micro-macrocosmical context. In all this, the two friends must have mutually influenced each other, but on the basis of Tolhopf's higher age and his role as a kind of astrological advisor, Tolhopf might have had a greater impact on Celtis than the other way round.

¹⁸⁵ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 344-8.

¹⁸⁶ See ch. V,1.

¹⁸⁷ BW no. 63 p. 105.

¹⁸⁸ BW no. 101 p. 166: *Iam manum apposui Almagesto; item kalendario perpetuo, Parcalibus libellis, octavo sphaerae et Herculi etc.*; BW no. 244, p. 408-410 about a work with mythological and astro-meteorological images (mentioned by Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 346).

¹⁸⁹ E.g. BW no. 63 p. 105; no. 64 p. 107; no. 65 p. 109-110; no. 101 p. 167.

Chapter IV

Horoscopes and the laureation of poets

1. The horoscope of Celtis's laureation

On a spring day in 1487, in the castle of Nuremberg, Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III placed the laurel wreath on Konrad Celtis's head. Thus, the first German *poeta laureatus* was created, through the mediation of Frederick the Wise of Saxony, who went there with his retinue to participate in the imperial assembly. The most detailed source about the laureation comes from the poet himself, who gave thanks to the emperor in the *Proseuticum*, a print that appeared soon after the event and recorded, among other things, the panegyrics that he "sang." The horoscope of the laureation appears at the end of the print. Mertens has written in detail about the circumstances of the event and its biographical, institutional historical, and intellectual historical preliminaries;¹ furthermore, the scholarly literature deals to a satisfactory extent with the laureation as a phenomenon of growing importance in the Renaissance, reflecting the relation of the *poeta laureatus* and his patron.² Here I focus on what can be further revealed by analyzing the horoscope about his poetical self-fashioning and the significance of the laureation in his thinking.

Beginning with Petrarch – whose laureation (1341) served as a model for the later ones – more and more poets were granted a laurel wreath in the Renaissance. The act is related to contemporary graduation ceremonies,³ and goes back to antiquity.⁴ The laureation created (or

¹ Mertens, "Dichterkrönung."

² A. Schirrmester, *Triumph des Dichters. Gekrönte Intellektuelle im 16. Jahrhundert* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2003). At the time of Maximilian I the alliance of ruler and poet laureate grew especially strong, and by far the most wreath-laying fell in his reign: cf. Alois Schmid, "'Poeta et orator a Caesare laureatus.' Die Dichterkrönungen Kaiser Maximilians I," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 109 (1989), 56-108; D. Mertens, "Zu Sozialgeschichte und Funktion des poeta laureatus im Zeitalter Maximilians I," in *Gelehrte im Reich. Zur Sozial- und Wirkungsgeschichte akademischer Eliten des 14. bis 16. Jahrhunderts*, ed. R. C. Schwinges et al. (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1996), 327-348. A useful general handbook is J. L. Flood, *Poets Laureate in the Holy Roman Empire. A Bio-Bibliographical Handbook*. 4 Vols. (Berlin et al.: de Gruyter, 2006).

³ The speeches and poems delivered at the celebration, the symbols of laureation (the ring, *birreta* and so on) are all related to the traditions of university graduation. In theory, the poet proved his suitability for the distinction by delivering proper speeches or poems, as if he did an *examen*. Mertens, "Dichterkrönung," esp. 335-341.

⁴ Poets' competitions took place for instance in Delphoi, with laurel wreath as a reward for the winner. The motif of laureation has been kept in the cultural memory of the Middle Ages owing to such works as Horace's famous ode to Melpomene (III,30,15f) or Dante's *Divina Commedia* (Par. I,13-32; K. Arnold, "Poeta laureatus – Die Dichterkrönung Ulrichs von Hutten," in *Ulrich von Hutten. Katalog zur Ausstellung des Landes Hessen anlässlich des 500. Geburtstages*, ed. P. Laub, Kassel: Hessischer Museumsverband, 1988, 237). The idea that the outstanding poets should be rewarded with a similar prize as the *triumphatores*, the winners of competitions, is a classical topos; Petrarch referred to it in his speech of laureation, humanists like Enea Silvio mediated the idea to Germany (Wortsbrock, "die Konstitution," 15), and Celtis echoed it in the *Ars versificandi* (Robert,

strengthened further) a kind of “symbiosis of fame” between poet and ruler; the poet sang the praise of the ruler, whose patronage provided the means for the poet’s glorious career. One can imagine what the laureation meant for Celtis, who was yearning for glory and royal support, or what the very fact could have meant for him that he, of peasant origin, could kneel face to face with the emperor. More than that, he contended for a leading role in literary life and he had already alluded to the laureation in the *Ars versificandi* dedicated to Frederick the Wise.⁵ As Mertens summarizes Celtis’s ideology of the laureation: “After Petrarch, Konrad Celtis is the first to make the laureation an integrant part of his individual career and his epoch-making literary oeuvre,” so that he could be seen “as the creator of a new literary and cultural period in Germany.”⁶

Several of his works attest how he surrounded the laureation with a mythical aura. In an epigram he sings:

<i>Phoebe, veni, capitiq̄ue meo sacer imprime laurum, Ut tibi Palladia carmina mente canam.</i> ⁷	Come, Phoebus, and place the sacred laurel on my head, so that I can sing to you with a Palladian mind.
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Phoebus may signify here the emperor,⁸ but the emphasis is on the divine support; he receives the wreath from the god of poetry and this enables him to sing with divine wisdom (Pallas Athene / Minerva is the goddess of *artes* and wisdom). The laureation was not simply an appreciation of the poet’s skills, it mediates sacred powers. In the *Proseuticum* itself the poet ends his *Ode monocolos...* with the idea that the proper praise of the emperor is difficult even for the famous singers, nor is Celtis’s muse able to do that until he receives the wreath.⁹ The reworked version of this poem in the *Libri odarum*, ends like this:

<i>...dum vires dabis ac ingenium mihi, atque inculta probes si mea carmina, ornans laurigeris tempora frondibus, me gustasse putem nectar Olympicum.</i> ¹⁰	If you give me strength and talent, and accept my rude songs, ornating my temples with laurel leaves, then I will think I tasted the Olympic nectar.
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Konrad Celtis, 42). A woodcut in Jacob Locher’s Horace-edition (*Horatii Flacci... concentus et sententias*, Strasbourg: J. Grüninger, 1498; right after the title page) represents Calliope laying the laurel wreath on Horace, and Locher handles the visual representations in the edition in a way that the figures of Horace and Locher almost merge (Coppel, “Jakob Locher Philomusus,” 160).

⁵ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 42; Schirrmester, *Triumph*, 92.

⁶ Mertens, “Dichterkrönung,” 42. About the laureation in the context of Celtis’s ideology of “epoch-making” cf. Robert, “Carmina Pieridum,” 111-2.

⁷ Ep. II,93 *Ad Phoebum et musas dedicatas*.

⁸ The parallelism between the ruler and the Sun is an age-old idea.

⁹ *Ode monocolos...*, 43: ... *dum doctis dederit premia frontibus*. This is the transposition of the well-known Horatian lines (Carm. III,30,29 and 35)

¹⁰ Od. I,1,40-3.

Similarly, in the *Amores* he remembers a moment of divine inspiration concerning the event:

<i>Quo duce Daphnaea cinxit mea tempora lauro Caesar et Aoniis ora sacravit aquis</i> ¹¹	Under whose [Frederick the Wise's] patronage the emperor layed the laurel on my temples and consecrated my mouth with Aonian [musaic] waters.
---	---

Celtis activates well known topoi of musaic initiation and inspiration, which can also be related to the idea of poetic frenzy. The poet's *ingenium* is resuscitated, "reactivated," he wins divine powers; he is reborn.

Considering this ideology, and Celtis's predilection for the stars in general, it is small wonder that he intended to perpetuate the "moment" of his laureation by publishing its horoscope. Furthermore, one may suspect that the indicated moment was well chosen. Indeed, Mertens has proved that Celtis suppressed the real time of his laureation, and replaced it with a "symbolic" one.¹² But what is this symbolism like? Much can be revealed by the horoscope, so far not analyzed by scholars.

Earlier it had not been customary to make a horoscope of laureation, so the very fact of casting a chart already suggests (as intended by Celtis) how exceptional this event was. Nevertheless, horoscopes were often cast for significant events in general, mainly in courtly life, and the poet's idea may have come from the practice of casting horoscopes of crowning (the possibility of analogizing laureation with coronation is already implied by the fact that *corona* can mean both kinds of head-dress).¹³ According to the text under the chart, its maker was Johannes Canter, astrologer of Frederick III at that time; he must have been on friendly terms with Celtis and the humanists, if only because his brother was Jakob Canter, the famous poet with whom Celtis had a good relationship and exchanged several letters.¹⁴ Celtis himself had certainly much to do with the details of the horoscope, since the final form of the chart is characteristic of him. The way of representation is special, differing from what was customary in that age (fig. 13a). It displays the four cardinal houses and the four "in-between" areas, perhaps drawing on a specific concept of some classical astrological authorities according to whom a horoscope has to be divided to eight houses. In fact, this is a traditional horoscope

¹¹ Am. III,3,29.

¹² Mertens, "Dichterkrönung," 32-7.

¹³ Cf. the horoscopes for Mathias of Hungary's crowning (Orbán, "Astrology at the Court of Matthias Corvinus," 135-6), or George of Poděbrady who wanted astrologers to define the propitious time for his crowning (Z. Žalud, "Astrology, Particularly Court Astrology, in Bohemia in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries. A Survey," *Historica: Historical Sciences in the Czech Republic* 14. [2010], 91-123). From another perspective, Celtis's idea might also have come from Martin Pollich, who was an astrologer and physician of Frederick the Wise, and paved the way for Celtis (Mertens, "Dichterkrönung," 45).

¹⁴ Cf. Canter's four letters from 1492-98 in BW. About the two Canters cf. also Mertens, "Dichterkrönung," 35.

with twelve houses, only the representation is unusual.¹⁵ After comparing it with its modern equivalent, a computer-generated horoscope based on exact calculations (fig. 13 b-c), one can see that a relatively precise horoscope has been cast for the date (18 April 1487, 18:01:20 with equal hours). For the planets, the difference is at most 1-2°, and among the houses only the second and third differ by more than 5°. ¹⁶ However, the date itself may be different indeed from the real date of the laureation, since it entails a conspicuously favorable horoscope, while it remains a rather theoretical possibility that this date would have been chosen in advance by the method of catarchic astrology, and everything would have been organized so that the laureation would happen just at this moment.¹⁷

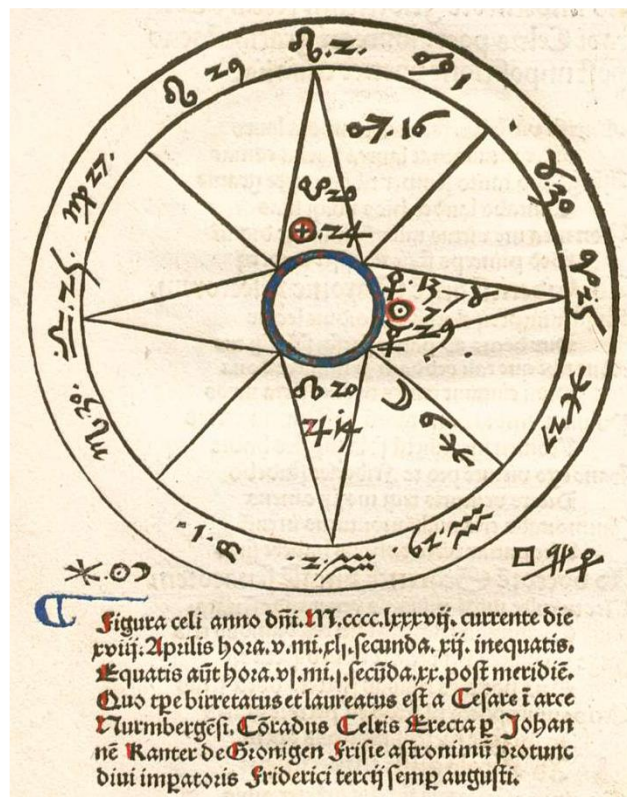


Fig. 13a. Celtis's horoscope of laureation in the *Proseuticum*.

¹⁵ J. D. North, *Horoscopes and History* (London: Warburg Inst., Univ. of London, 1986), 173-5. North connects the method of eight-house division only to Manilius, although this alternative also occurs in Firmicus Maternus: *Mathesis* II, 14.

¹⁶ Among the planets, the greatest difference is in the case of Mars (2°); among the houses, the cusp of the fifth house does not fall in the same sign as the fifth house of the real chart. These differences are not significant, in contrast to the “disappearance” of Saturn, discussed below.

¹⁷ Otherwise the real date would not have been hushed up (see above).

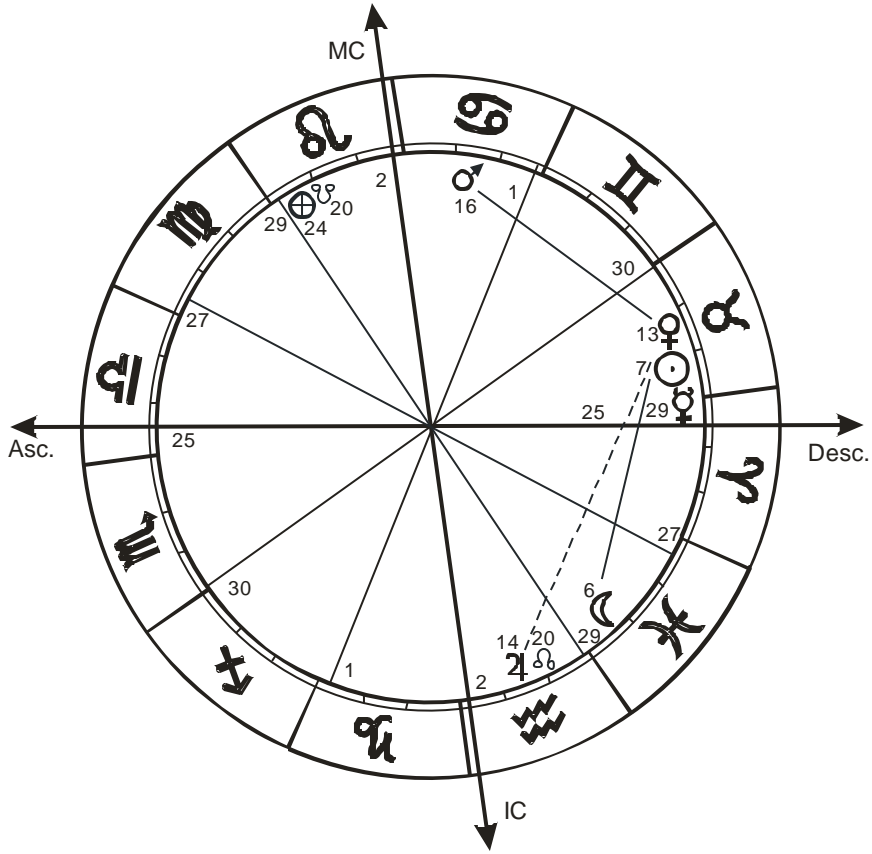


Fig. 13b. Celtis's horoscope of laureation in modern form, after the horoscope in the *Proseuticum*.

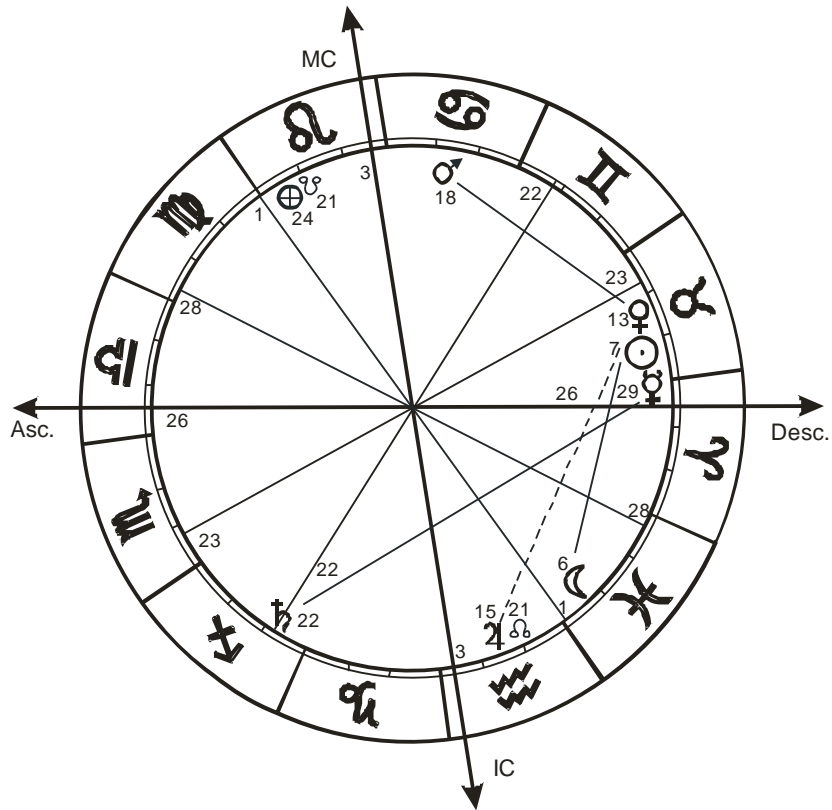


Fig. 13c. Celtis' horoscope of laureation in modern calculations, based on the given date (18.04.1487, 18:01:20, Nuremberg).

What can the contemporary reader, well-versed in astronomy-astrology, see when looking at the chart? First of all, the Mercury–Sun–Venus triple conjunction. Although it is a rather wide conjunction, the contemporary astrological practice allowed the 6-8° difference that can be seen between the planets,¹⁸ Celtis and his contemporaries must have considered it to be a conjunction. When a triple conjunction occurs – a relatively rare but spectacular aspect – it is a highly significant element of the horoscope, and if it contains mainly good or well situated planets, such a conjunction must be desirable; it can provide excellent opportunities for a favorable interpretation. Several contemporary examples attest to this. Federigo de Montefeltro features the triple conjunction of his birth, the Mars–Jupiter–Venus trio, on his medal;¹⁹ in the coronation horoscope of Mathias of Hungary, Venus, Jupiter and Saturn are in conjunction, illuminated by positive aspects.²⁰ Furthermore – to mention an example from Celtis’s circles – the nativity of Caritas Pirckheimer contains a Sun–Saturn–Venus conjunction, with Mercury in the most significant first house.²¹ However, there is something more in Celtis’s horoscope; exactly the three planets closest to the muses come together: Mercury, Phoebus, and Venus (moreover, the latter is in the Bull, her own domicile, and she is the birth ruler on account of the Scales Ascendant). To be sure, there is nothing new in assigning someone’s outstanding intellectual or artistic talent to various combinations of these three planets. The greatest astrological authority, Ptolemy, while enumerating the properties of a native who profited from a favorably situated conjunction of Venus and Mercury, mentions the love of beauty, poetry, and the muses several times.²² Pontano echoes this: Venus and Mercury together create poets.²³ In an epigram, Naldo Naldi explains to Johannes Guido, *vir doctissimus*, how much Mercury increases the strength of Jupiter and Venus by joining them or illuminating them in a positive aspect.²⁴ As for the surviving nativities of Italian poets, the chart of Battista Mantovano (*Frater Baptista Carmelita poeta*), for instance, has the Sun, Mercury, and Venus all in the first house, which determines the character of the native the most; his Mercury and Venus are in tight conjunction.²⁵ Not surprisingly, Ficino, a

¹⁸ Reisinger, *Historische*, 66.

¹⁹ Wind, *Pagan Mysteries*, 95.

²⁰ Orbán, “Astrology at the Court,” 135-6.

²¹ Almut Fricke-Hilgers, “Horoskope für Familienangehörige,” in *Caritas Pirckheimer 1467-1532 (Katalog)*, ed. L. Kurras and F. Machilek (Munich: Prestel, 1982; no. 31, p. 56, the horoscope below, with some interpretation.

²² Ptol. *Tetr.* III,12,166 (ed. G. P. Goold, tr. F. E. Robbin. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980). Ptolemy does not involve the Sun and the Moon in the discussion of planet combinations.

²³ *De rebus coelestibus* 6, 11 p. 2315; 7, 4 p. 2339; 7, 6 p. 2349 (*Opera omnia*, vol. 3, Basel, 1519). Hübner, “Die Rezeption,” 54.

²⁴ Naldi, Ep. 183,1-6.

²⁵ Gauricus, *Tractatus*, f. 63r.

philosopher of beauty (in the Platonic sense) who contemplated astrology gladly and creatively, often plays with the idea of the juncture of the planets in question, especially in his letters.²⁶ Naturally, these three planets' traditional association with poetry and muse-like characteristics is trivial enough, there is no need to reveal direct Italian influences on Celtis. The above examples are meant to show the intellectual climate in which a positive interpretation of such a triple conjunction (especially positive for poets) was natural. When Celtis refers in his works to the power received from the gods, he may think of the conjunction, too, and it is also *possible* to take the three stars that feature on Celtis's coat-of-arms as a reference to this conjunction.²⁷

Many other elements of the horoscope would have been interpreted as favorable in contemporary astrological practice. The point of fortune (*pars fortunae*) is certainly indicated because it falls in the tenth house, so it could convey a similar message with regard to fame and career as Jupiter–MC in the nativity. The MC itself falls to the Lion, the most “royal” sign, that of the Sun. A planet's conjunction with the Dragon's Head (*caput draconis*, the “positive” lunar node) generally means luck,²⁸ and in this chart Jupiter, the *fortuna maior*, is in wide conjunction with the dragon's head. It is in a quadrate with Venus and the Sun, but the Sun and the Moon are connected with a favorable aspect, a sextile (see the indication under the chart to the left), just as Venus and Mars. Looking at the Ascendant, at first one can only see that it falls to the Scales, the sign of Venus. However, if one checks the data of the rising stars reported by classical authorities, one finds in Manilius's *Astronomicon* that the *Lyra*, the constellation giving musical and literary talent, stands at Scales 26°, that is, at the Ascendant of this horoscope.²⁹ The coincidence cannot be accidental, and it connects the whole symbolism of *Lyra* in the nativity with the laureation. True, the *Lyra* falls to another sign in the nativity; his interest there was the consideration of other astrological authorities. Celtis had a selective attitude; the point is that the rise of this constellation undoubtedly suggests the rebirth of the poet, the singer. (Less importantly, the *Pleiades* standing at Bull 6°

²⁶ E.g., according to his letter to Canisianus (*De musica*, OO p. 690-1) astrologers often speak about the conjunction of the Mercury and the Venus that results in good musical skills. The three planets / gods appear as an allegorical triad, too: Mercury – *veritas*, Apollo – *concordia*, Venus – *pulchritudo*; cf. C. Wiener, “Der Liebhaber in vielen Gestalten. Überlegungen zum Einfluß des Neuplatonismus auf die Amores des Konrad Celtis,” in *Violae solutae. Im Andenken an unseren Lehrer Prof. Dr. Hans Thurn* (Würzburg, 1994), 113.

²⁷ The shield with the stars can be seen in several woodcuts, e.g., the *Amores*-woodcut with the writing Celtis and the gods (*Autorenbild*, “The author” woodcut) or the “Concert of gods” of the *Melopoiae*). Maria Lanckoronska, “Die Holzschnitte zu den ‘Amores’ des Conrad Celtis,” *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* 46 (1971), 331 refers to the stars as “the three stars of his birth hour;” however, no group of three stars “stick out” in Celtis's nativity as “the” significant planets (detached from their sign and aspects), and anyway, stars are traditional ornamental devices on coats-of-arms.

²⁸ Reisinger, *Historische*, 57.

²⁹ Manil. V,337-8.

in Manilius is in conjunction with the Sun standing at Bull 7° in the horoscope; see below.) This selective attitude is even more noticeable in this horoscope than in the other; Saturn disappears from the chart, although it was only the “secondary” components like the fixed stars or the various “points” (e.g., *pars fortunae*) that could be indicated optionally in contemporary astrological practice; the planets always had to be there.³⁰ Saturn would be at Archer 22°, in retrograde motion, but with good aspects (trine with *pars fortunae*, trine with Mercury, sextile with the Ascendant). The traditional idea of Saturn as the planet of misfortune seems to have been of greater weight.

All this meets expectations; the horoscope records the divine, muse-inspired “intervention” of the heavens, thus the new powers won by the poet, and the favorable perspectives for his future. As for the selection of the date and the horoscope, two factors seem to have been of the greatest account (beyond the requirement that one must not deviate too much from the real date of the laureation): the presence of the triple conjunction (this conjunction existed between around 17 April and 4 May in the given year), and the linking of *Lyra* with the Ascendant (this is the bottle-neck, it is possible only for a short period within a day). The horoscope that was eventually cast (either before or after the real laureation) proved a good choice with regard to the position of the MC, Venus and the point of fortune, too. The symbolism of the horoscope is comparable to that of the nativity. The poet displays his luck, glory, power, and *ingenium* received from the gods / planets, involving the *Lyra* (the instrument of Orpheus) from among the non-zodiac fixed stars. The way he considers the horoscope elements, selects among the astrological authorities – he relies mainly on Manilius – and selects the horoscope itself, is arbitrary, or from a more sanguine perspective, playful and poetic. (To be sure, the arbitrariness is characteristic of the practice of astrological interpretation in general.) While the nativity presents the birth of the talented poet, the horoscope of laureation presents his rebirth; that is why Celtis counts the years from the year of laureation in the *Codex epistolaris*.³¹ The idea of rebirth may also be connected to the facts that the laureation fell in the spring, the conjunction was in spring signs (mainly the Bull, and also the Ram), and in the *Ode Sapphica...* of the *Proseuticum*, which beautifully describes

³⁰ Saturn can only be discovered among the aspect data under the chart, to the right; it is supposed to stand in quadrate with Venus. However, this is false information, Venus stands at an angle of 140° to the real position of Saturn (Archer 22°) and Venus stands in a quadrate with Jupiter.

³¹ Mertens, “Dichterkrönung,” 49.

spring and the regeneration of the world, it is April, the Sun stands in the Bull, and his rays “scorch” the *Pleiades* (which is in conjunction with him in the horoscope).³²

The role of astrology in fifteenth-century Neo-Latin poetry in general is a neglected area in scholarship, but the way Celtis used astrology seems to have been original compared to the patterns provided by contemporary poetical literature. Astrology appears, on the one hand, in long, didactic astronomical-astrological poems composed by humanists like Basinio da Parma, Lorenzo Bonincontri or Giovanni Pontano in the second half of the fifteenth century,³³ but in these the astronomical aspect dominates; with regard to astrology, typically the general effects of the planets and signs are mentioned, they almost never appear in a horoscopic context. On the other hand, astrological references in lyrical poetry tend to be topical, general, and pertain rather to mundane astrology (e.g. comet-predictions) than individual astrology; when elements of a horoscope are mentioned, it is most often the patron’s – imaginary or real – horoscope. A typical example for such uses of astrological references is provided by Janus Pannonius, the greatest humanist of Hungary, who had been trained Italy; contrary to the conjectures of previous scholarship, he did not use his own nativity, and was in general skeptical about horoscopes.³⁴ It is very rare that fifteenth-century Neo-Latin poets referred to technical details of their own horoscopes: I have already mentioned the examples of Pontano and Pico above, and have found one more example, Naldo Naldi, who attributes the failure of their love affair to unfavorable planetary positions in his nativity.³⁵ These, however, do not apply astrology for self-representative purposes.

As for astrological methods that can be gathered from the above analyzed nativities and the horoscope of lauration, Celtis typically takes into consideration basic components of the horoscope (planets, signs, aspects, Ascendant, MC, sometimes non-zodiacal fixed stars) and their standard meanings. Nevertheless, in many respects he deviates from the contemporary traditions of apotelesmatics and horoscope interpretations, which is conspicuous even if one considers the difference between the poetic and “scientific” genres. While the houses were generally central and organizing factors in standard interpretations, Celtis was interested in the cardinal houses at most; he does not consider specific components (e.g., decanes, *termini*, *pars amoris*, *Alhocodan* and so on). While astrologers scrutinized mainly the future in the horoscopes, Celtis lays the stress on the specification of character (which also means that

³² V. 5-8: *Taurus Arctoo propior Coluro, / oritur tecum [with Phoebus], referens tepores, / cum vagas sentit Pleiades aduri / lampade Phoebi.*

³³ Cf. Benedetto Soldati, *La poesia astrologica nel quattrocento* (Florence: Le Lettere, 1986).

³⁴ Cf. Á. Orbán, *The Role of Astrology in the Poetry of Janus Pannonius*, MA Thesis, Central European University, Budapest, 2012.

³⁵ In his elegy *Ad Albam* (El. I,10,55-60). For astrology in Naldi, cf. Orbán, *The role*, 31-32.

Celtis's astrology did not collide with Christian concepts of God's omnipotence and human free will, which were hot issues in the debates over astrology in that age). He has the attitude of a poet to the horoscopes, which in any case provide a wide range of possible interpretations, and he takes advantage of the poet's freedom even to the point of breaking basic rules (see the "disappearance" of Saturn from the horoscope of laureation). As regards the reception of astrological literature, texts by Celtis show no sign of a direct use of medieval astrological works, for instance those translated from Arabic to Latin (Albumasar and so on), and among the classical authors he draws far more frequently on Manilius's poetic *Astronomicon* than on Ptolemy or Firmicus Maternus (as astrologers in general).

Celtis's use of sources, just as the whole idea of (his) heavenly supported poetry, which seems to be the main message of his horoscope-related works, is perfectly in line with the Italian and German *vates*-ideology outlined in the first chapter: the essence of this ideology is the poet's manifold and close relation to the Divine.

2. Digression: astrologically favorable laureations of later humanists?

Under no other ruler were so many humanists laureated than under Maximilian I (Holy Roman Emperor 1493-1519). A number of these humanists were acquaintances, friends or students of Celtis; as leader of the CPM, Celtis, too, had the right to laureate poets, although only one such case is known (the laureation of Stabius in 1502), and he was not present at the laureation.³⁶ The significance of astrology in Maximilian's court is also known.³⁷ The question offers itself: may laureations under Maximilian's reign have to do with astrologically favorable dates? As far as I know, horoscopes of laureation have not survived from this period, but the day of the event is known in many cases, which makes possible a partial reconstruction of horoscopes that the astrologers may have theoretically cast for the event (as seen above, the calculation of planetary data was relatively exact in that period, the data match well those generated by the computer). Without the exact time, the houses cannot be recast, only the planets in the different signs,³⁸ but a planet's affiliation to a sign or certain

³⁶ Mühlberger, "Bemerkungen," 772.

³⁷ See ch. II,3,c.

³⁸ Among the planets, only the moon's daily movement is significant enough (c. 10°) to make a difference in its aspect-relations at the beginning and the end of the day. In the indication of degrees in the charts I take into account the whole interval within which the laureation probably took place (8 a. m. – 8 p. m.). To be sure, one cannot exclude the possibility that the day of laureation indicated in the given source itself has to do with

specific aspects between the planets were most important in the interpretation: if there were, for instance, spectacular (e.g. triple) conjunctions or exact trine-triangles between three planets, that meant a conspicuous planetary situation the effects of which were to be considered by the contemporaries. If there is a number of such astrologically special dates among the dates of lauration, it is suspicious; and this seems to be the case with the laureations under Maximilian. There are several astrologically interesting dates, especially in case of four humanists: Joseph Grünpeck, Joachim Vadianus, Heinrich Glareanus and Ulrich von Hutten. The laureations happened, with one exception, after Celtis's time, and the four humanists do not overlap with those whose are investigated in this study because of their relevant works, so the issue falls a bit out of our scope; I have not conducted a comprehensive research on these laureations. The following is just a digression where I present the partial reconstruction of hypothetical horoscopes based on the date of lauration, and argue for the *possibility* that special planetary relations could have been considered, for instance, at the choice of the date. A thorough research in the future will have to decide whether the astrological facts presented here have any relevance; the circumstances of lauration have to be clarified as far as possible, in several respects, including the question whether the laureations were part of some significant event that day (nevertheless, if this was the case and the astrological situation has to do with the date of this greater event, this makes the issue no less interesting).

Joseph Grünpeck (1473– c. 1530) was humanist, astrologer, and historian at the court of Maximilian I; beyond a number of *prognostica*, he cast nativities of members of the Habsburg dynasty, and took into consideration the stars of Maximilian's nativity in the "Latin Autobiography" of the emperor, too.³⁹ One can see his involvement in Celtis's circles already from the early stations of his career:⁴⁰ he was Celtis's colleague as a teacher in Ingolstadt, he went to the university of Cracow, and entered the service of Maximilian. In 1497 he had two comedies performed in the presence of the emperor, for which he was laureated on 20 August 1498 in Freiburg in Breisgau, by Sigismund Kreuzer on behalf of Maximilian.⁴¹ This day (fig. 14) the Sun was in conjunction with Mars and composed an exact trine-triangle (a 120° aspect three times between three planets) with Jupiter and Saturn. The trine was supposed to be the

astrological election or rectification, thus it might not be the real day of lauration. In this case the data would even more suggest the significance of astrology in that age.

³⁹ Cf. A. Czerny, "Der humanist und historiograph Kaiser Maximilians I Joseph Grünpeck," *Archiv für österreichische Geschichte* 73 (1888), 315-364; Sarah Slattery's and J. Klaus Kipf's article about Grünpeck in VL-DH; Hayton, *Astrology*, ch. 1. about Grünpeck's "Latin Autobiography."

⁴⁰ Schöner, *Mathematik*, 248.

⁴¹ Czerny, "Der humanist," 321.

most favorable aspect in astrology, and an exact (the difference is below 1°) trine-triangle – involving the Sun in conjunction with another planet – is rare and outstanding in any case. Is it not curious that Grünpeck, who certainly knew about Celtis’s horoscope of laureation advertized in the *Proseuticum*, and who was both an astrologer of Maximilian and a follower of Celtis, had such a day for his laureation?

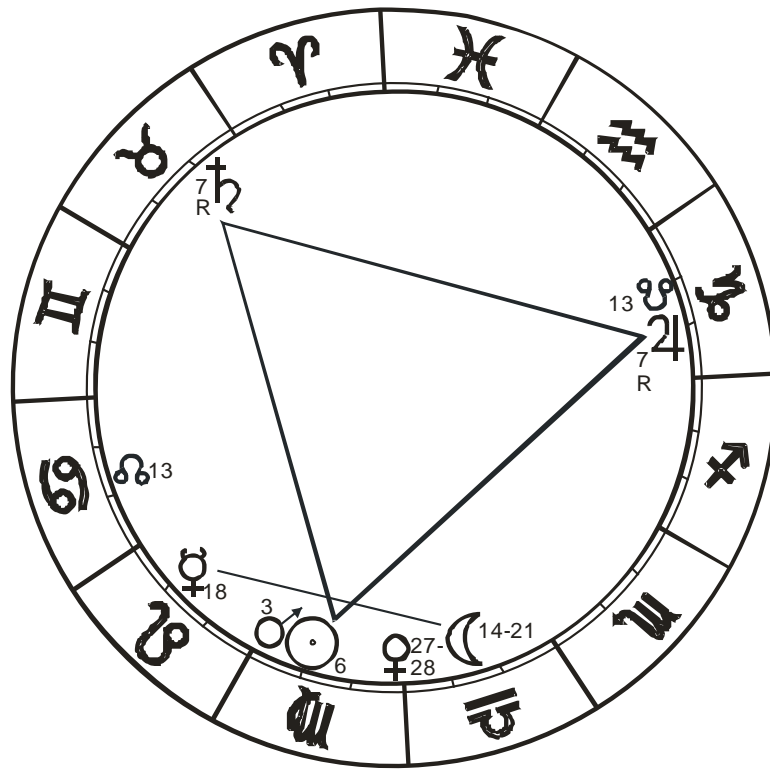


Fig. 14. Planetary aspects at the day of Grünpeck’s laureation (20 August 1498, Freiburg in Breisgau)

Vadianus (Joachim Watt, 1484-1551), the Swiss humanist, later reformer and mayor of St. Gallen, spent most of the 1500s and 1510s at the University of Vienna. As Gaier has put it, “he took Celtis as a model in almost all parts of his work and not only in his literary production.”⁴² He was a disciple of Celtis in the CPM, and in the 1510s he cultivated a close friendship with the astronomer / astrologer Georg Tannstetter.⁴³ As lecturer at the chair of poetry and rhetorics he wrote the already mentioned *De poetica et carminis ratione* (1518); in this work he kept mentioning that an astrologically favorable birth is indispensable for the poet’s *ingenium*.⁴⁴ He had written a panegyric to Frederick III and Maximilian I for a

⁴² U. Gaier, “Vadianus und die Literatur des 16. Jahrhunderts,” in *St. Gallen: Geschichte einer literarischen Kultur* (2 vols.), ed. W. Wunderlich (St. Gallen: UVK, 1999), vol. I, 254-5.

⁴³ For the importance of this relationship: W. Näf, *Vadian und seine Stadt St. Gallen* (2 vols.; St. Gallen: Fehr, 1944), 176-180.

⁴⁴ Steppich has highlighted natal astrology as a significant aspect of Vadianus’s idea of poetical inspiration: Steppich, ‘*Numine*,’ 264; id., “Die Begründung der dichterischen Kreativität in ‘*De Poetica et Carminis Ratione*’ (Wien, 1518) des Joachim Vadian,” in *Inspiration und Adaptation. Tarnkappen mittelalterlicher Autorschaft*, ed.

ceremonial occasion in November 1513, the transfer of the coffin of Frederick to a new grave in the St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna; this seems to have been the direct reason why Maximilian laured him in Linz on 12 March 1514.⁴⁵ He caught the atmosphere of the solemn moment – his laureation from the hands of the emperor and in the presence of a number of magnates – in a brief description in the *De poetica*. After the indication of the place and date, he remarks that it happened “when I was twenty-eight years old”⁴⁶; Celtis, his admired master was laured at the same age, and Dürer has recorded that he made his self-portrait in 1500 at the age of twenty-eight; according to Isidore of Seville, manhood begins at this age.⁴⁷ Vadianus also remarks that distinctions do not make one either more learned or better,⁴⁸ and he does not refer to the stars in this work; at any rate, these seem to have been conspicuously propitious that day (fig. 15). The Sun – Phoebus – was at Ram 1°, which is the astrological beginning of the year, the *revolutiones* were also based on this. Mercury and Venus, the two other planets that have the most to do with poetry (see the foregoing subchapter on Celtis's horoscope) are in a wide conjunction, and Venus composes the peak of an *exact* sextile-sextile-trine triangle with Jupiter and Mars: these are all favorable aspects (the only disturbing element might be the Dragon's Tail at the Fish 11°). Three planets are in exaltation (Sun, Venus, Mars), one is in detriment (Mercury). It would have been hardly possible not to interpret such planetary relations favorably for the poet in contemporary astrology.

R. Schlesier et al. (Hildesheim: Weidmann, 2008), 168, 172. Steppich has already noted *De poetica* (ed., tr., comm. P. Schäffer, Munich: Fink, 1973-1977), p. 96, 103, 160, 296; these can be completed at least with p. 19, 30-31.

⁴⁵ W. Näf, “Die Vorbereitung von Vadians Dichterkrönung,” in id., *Vadianische Analekten* (Vadian Studien 1; St. Gallen, 1945), 1-4.

⁴⁶ *De poetica* (ed. Schäffer), p. 208-210; quotation at p. 208.

⁴⁷ D. Wuttke, “Dürer und Celtis: von der Bedeutung des Jahres 1500 für den deutschen Humanismus,” in *Humanismus und Reformation als kulturelle Kräfte in der deutschen Geschichte*, ed. L. W. Spitz (Berlin / New York: de Gruyter, 1981), 128-9.

⁴⁸ *De poetica* (ed. Schäffer), p. 210.

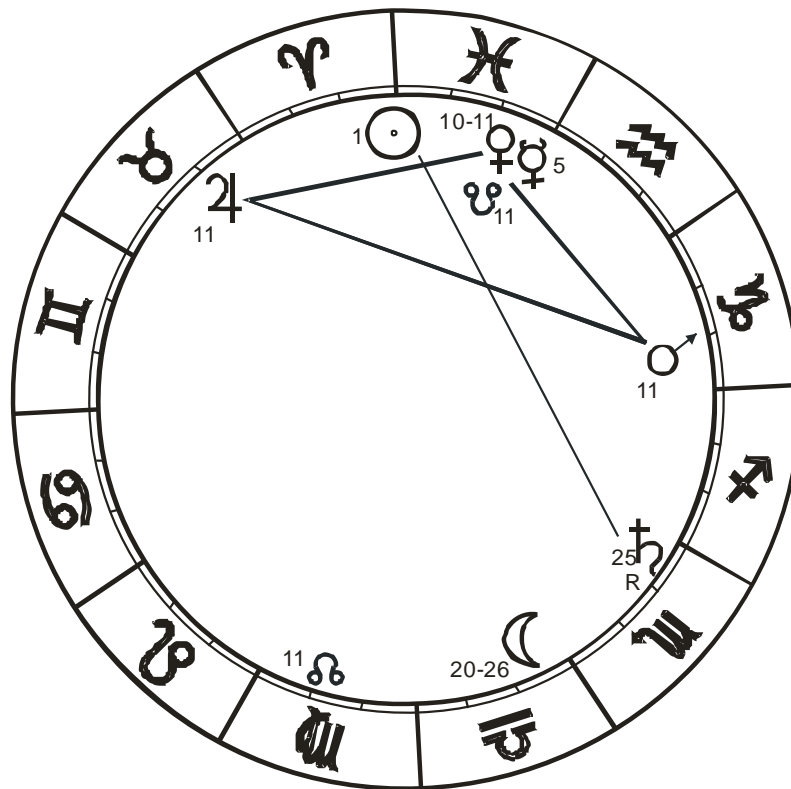


Fig. 15. Planetary aspects at the day of Vadianus's laureaion (12 March 1514, Linz)

The two remaining humanists I touch on here were not Celtis's friends, and it is not known to what extent they were interested in astrology; at any rate, Maximilian and his astrologers were interested, and the planetary relations of these two laureaions, too, must have been quite propitious in the eyes of the contemporaries if these data were indicated in horoscopes. Heinrich Glareanus (1488-1563), a Swiss humanist and music theorist, whose most famous work is probably the *Dodekachordon* (1547), performed a panegyric to Maximilian in the Dorian mode, and the emperor rewarded him with laurel. He was crowned poet on 25 August 1512 during the diet in Cologne.⁴⁹ This day (fig. 16) Mercury was in dominion (the Virgin being his domicile) and stood a wide conjunction with the Sun. Mercury-Sun conjunctions were relatively frequent; not so the exact sextile-sextile-trine triangle that can be seen between Venus, Saturn and Mars (the highest difference is only 1°15'). Ulrich von Hutten (1488–1523), humanist and “Imperial Knight” of the Holy Roman Empire, the most famous

⁴⁹ McDonald, 'Orpheus,' 254. Reference to the event in the *Dodekachordon* (Basel: H. Petri, 1547), p. 118: “[the Dorian mode] *heroicis carminibus aptissimus, quod ipse olim iuvenis coram Maxaemyliano inclyto Caesare expertus sum Agrippinae in praesentia multorum principum, non absque merita lauri (absit verbo invidia) praemio.*”

among the humanists discussed here, was crowned poet by Maximilian in Augsburg on 12 July 1517 (fig. 17), through the mediation of the emperor's three humanist counsellors (with the astronomer Stabius among them).⁵⁰ Jupiter, Mercury and Mars compose a triple conjunction in the Lion (the Sun's sign), and this conjunction is favorably illuminated by the trine of Saturn. Together with minor aspects of the horoscope,⁵¹ this could seem to be a highly propitious day, too.

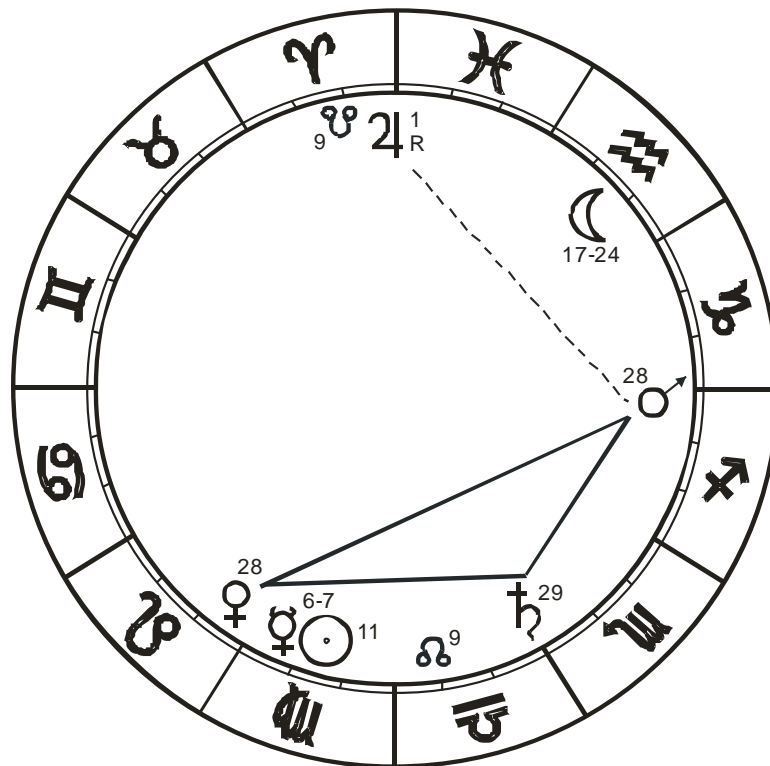


Fig. 16. Planetary aspects at the day of Glareanus's laureation (25 August 1512, Cologne)

⁵⁰ According to Hutten's letter to Erasmus on 21 July 1517, *Venetiis ad Germanos nostros redii, cumque Augustam appulissem, in Peutingerum, Iacobum Spiegel et Stabium mathematicum incidi, et productus ab illis ad Caesarem corona poetica in magno Nobilium conventu donatus sum* (Ulrich von Hutten, *Opera*, ed. E. Böcking, Leipzig, 1859, vol. I, p. 147). For the laureation cf. K. Arnold, "Poeta laureatus – Die Dichterkrönung Ulrichs von Hutten," in *Ulrich von Hutten. Katalog zur Ausstellung des Landes Hessen anlässlich des 500. Geburtstages*, ed. P. Laub (Kassel: Hessischer Museumsverband, 1988), esp. 242-3. For similar traits in Hutten's and Celtis's character: E. Schäfer, "Ulrich von Hutten als lateinischer Poet," in *Ulrich von Hutten 1488-1988. Akten des Internationalen Ulrich-von-Hutten Symposions 15.-17. Juli 1988 in Schlüchtern*, ed. S. Füssel (Munich: Fink, 1989), 61-65.

⁵¹ There is a wide quadrature between the Moon and Jupiter / Mercury; however, the moon illuminates Venus with a propitious sextile, and the proximity of Venus and the Sun (6° distance according to modern calculations) may have been taken as a conjunction.

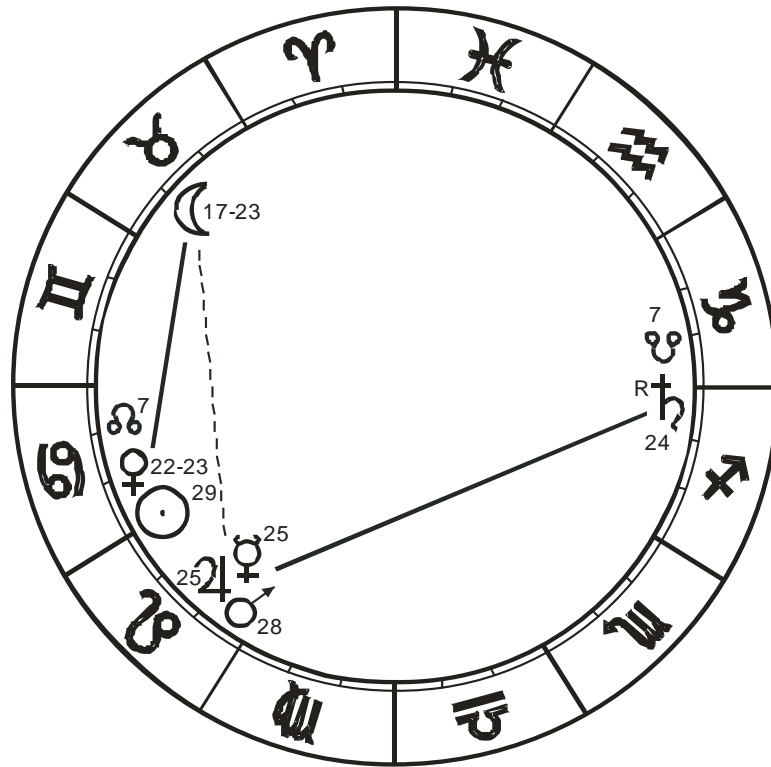


Fig. 17. Planetary aspects at the day of Ulrich von Hutten's laureaion (12 July 1517, Augsburg)

If only one or two days of laureaion showed outstanding aspect relations, it could easily be accidental; we have, however, at least four cases, and one also has to consider that an astrological practice that produced favorable horoscopes (either electional or rectified) for crowning did exist: the examples of Celtis's horoscope of laureaion and rulers' crowning horoscopes have already been mentioned. Future research will have to explore first of all the historical circumstances of the laureaions, the event in which it took place, and whether astrological election could be involved; astrology-related documents or information about the time of laureaion would be especially helpful. Examples for a favorable interpretation of conjunctions of mostly "good" planets, trines or sextiles are known, but a comprehensive research on astrological techniques and apotelesmatics of the period would be necessary. The humanists' general attitude to astrology has yet to be explored in most cases. Such investigations would be useful not just for the issue of laureaion, but for a better understanding of the astrological habits of mind of the age in general.

Chapter V

The poet and the Sun-god

1. The central role of Phoebus / the Sun in Celtis's oeuvre

That the poets are supported by and belong to Apollo and the muses is one of the central group of topoi in humanist poetry. The related classical topoi reappeared and were sometimes elaborated further in Italian and German humanism, encouraged also by the dialogical character of humanist poetry: while obligatory modesty generally kept back the poet from emphasising his closeness to the gods of poetry, humanists could uninhibitedly praise each other's Phoebean characteristics. Belonging to Apollo was one of the symbols of humanist identity. Examples are legion also in the *respublica litteraria* around Celtis: he distributes such praises abundantly in his odes, and receives even more in poems and letters of his humanist friends;¹ Celtis's sodalities themselves could also be collectively characterized as Phoebean.² In the following I am not going to discuss in detail all the related Phoebean and musaic commonplaces as they appear in the poetry and letters of Celtis and his friends; I would like just to call attention to the special and unusual significance and characteristics of Celtis's Phoebean symbolism. First, his frequent references to his strong relationship to Phoebus, who is sometimes staged in elaborate scenes, show that Celtis consciously applies this mythological symbolism in his self-representation as an Arch-humanist; second, the way he combines the solar and *vates*-functions of this god, the way he lends a cosmic dimension to well-known motifs, is also unique.

Phoebo nascere, quisquis eris – told Phoebus at Celtis's birth in the horoscope-elegy; and indeed, this divinity will accompany our poet all through his life, as appears from the poems altogether. In the "Elysium"-like countryside of Franconia, his birth place, Apollo taught him

¹ A few typical simple examples: Celtis calls Fuchsmagen and Krachenberger as *Phoebei nostri heroes* in the preface of the *De mundo* (BW p. 297); he tells Zazius in an ode that *Te Phoebus alto pectore possidet, / qui culta profers carmina barbito...* (Od. III,25,25-26); Jacobus Dracontius speaks of Celtis's *ingenuas virtutes, quibuscum te divus Apollo donavit, ornavit et nobilem fecit* (BW p. 196); in Ulsenius's words about Celtis's letter – *litterae tuae Phoebo plenae* (BW p. 131) – Phoebus becomes almost an abstract notion, standing for all humanist virtues.

² For the Heidelberg sodality: according to Jacobus Dracontius, Apollo is present at the feasts, *altissima... virorum ingenia movens* (BW p. 196). For Celtis's sodality in Vienna: according to Jakob Canter, *Quum enim societatis vestrae sum memor, videor mihi Apollinis, Mercurii Musarumque in ipso choro versari* (BW p. 329). In 1502 Celtis himself refers to their Viennese circle as *Phoebea sodalitas nostra* (BW p. 473).

to play the lyre;³ he was crowned poet with the Apollonian laurel-wreath; Apollo defends him against slanderers with his arrows;⁴ the poetical frenzy comes from Apollo and the muses. Taken alone, each of these are trite humanist commonplaces, but taken together, and used – as here – in poetical self-representation instead of praising others, these form part of a kind of comprehensive self-mythology. Moreover, in certain cases he pictures scenes with Apollo and himself in which he goes well beyond commonplaces. Apollo appears in an epiphany in order to initiate the poet, or to endow him with a poetical quest, and Celtis elaborates on Apollo as a god of inspiration in certain written and visual sources; the investigation of these will require distinct supchapters. He presented his initiation in the *Poema ad Fridericum*, the opening poem of the *Ars versificandi*, at the end of which one can find the *Ode ad Apollinem* calling the god to Germany: already at the beginning of his oeuvre, Celtis figures as Phoebus’s elect poet.

The functions of the *vates* (in the idealistic humanist sense) – poetical skills, wisdom, divination, mediatory role between humans and gods – are comprised in the notion of the “priest” (*sacerdos*) or “interpreter” (*interpres*) of Phoebus and the muses; originally it referred to the Pythia in Delphoi, but such Golden Age classics as Horace or Ovid called themselves so.⁵ Unsurprisingly, Italian humanists took over the motif,⁶ just as the Germans. As for Celtis, his correspondence abounds in letters where he is addressed as Apollo’s priest, sending forth his light, his wisdom to his friends.⁷ Among the poems addressed to him, the poems of the *Epidosia* excellently exemplify that this sacral role was an important aspect of his constructed image: Krachenberger details the sacrificial feast that should follow Celtis’s arrival; Augustinus Moravus addresses him as Phoebean *sacerdos*, too; and several other *sodales* praise him as one who brings rich presents and Phoebus’s light.⁸ Celtis himself, too, referred

³ Am. I,12,57-58; cf. also Od. IV,8.

⁴ Od. I,19 *In Crispum Clogomuram*; Od. II,16,21f *Ad vetulum poetastrum* (Riedner); Epod. 9 *In Bassareum medicum*; Ep. I,27 *In maledicum*; Ep. III,53 *Ad lectorem*; Ep. III,54 *Ad invidum*. Apollo stretching his bow and targeting his enemies is represented in “The author” woodcut of the *Amores* (f. a7r).

⁵ E.g. Hor. Carm. III,1,3 *Musarum sacerdos*; Ov. Am. III,8,23 *Musarum purus Phoebique sacerdos*.

⁶ E.g. Basinio da Parma, *Carmina varia*, 16,65 about Leonello d’Este as *Phoebi sacerdos*; Naldi, *Epigrammatum appendix II,1: Angelo Policiano Christi atque Musarum sacerdoti sanctissimo*; G. A. Augurelli, *Geronticon liber*, 1,36 about himself as *Musarum dudum Phoebique sacerdos*. Texts and edition data are available at www.poetiditalia.it (14.05.2015).

⁷ E.g. BW p. 409 from Tolhopf: *Phoebi Dianaeque sacerdos*; BW p. 226 from Ulsenius: *Bachi aut Phoebi... sacerdos*; BW p. 68 from Theodoricus Rhenanus: *Clarissimo Phoebey adyti custodi domino Conrado Celtis, laureato poetae, bene merenti Apollinis interpreti, abditissimarum humanarumque rerum decantatori doctissimo, maiori fautori suo observandissimo*; in the text: *meus quondam tripodis Apollineae instructor*; BW p. 88 from Michael Styrius: *Phoebey numinis interpres*; BW p. 544, J. Ziegler’s poem: *Interpres coelo Celtis venit omne recludens*.

⁸ BW p. 299-307. Cf. also the *Panegyris*-edition: in the opening poem, Henricus Euticus addresses him as *Aoniis dicat Musis, Sacri Pieridum chori sacerdos*, and as if answering this poem, Celtis presents himself as inspired by Phoebus in the beginning of the *Paneg.*

to his priester-role, although implicitly rather than explicitly.⁹ Other German humanists, too, appeared as Phoeban priests, and one of the reasons for this was that the Delphic divination was well reconcilable on a rhetorical level with the astrological predictions that some humanists pursued. Poets like Sebastian Brant or Jakob Locher interpreted celestial omens to their contemporaries and drew moral conclusions from them; in doing so, actualized the divinatory role of the *vates* that the humanist poet was called anyway.¹⁰ Humanists who wrote astrological *prognostica* in prose, like Augustinus Moravus, were likewise *vates* in the sense of “inspired” divination. Concrete examples have already been discussed: we have seen how Locher expressed his inspired state when interpreting a comet,¹¹ or how Tolhopf represented himself with a key opening the secrets of heaven and a *lituus pontificalis*. Celtis, however, was not a Phoeban priest because of his divinatory activity – as seen above, he did not like astrological prediction – but because this status, with divine knowledge and a mediatory role between humans and gods, excellently fitted the leading role in German humanism he aspired to.

The central role of Phoebus, god of poetry, in the life of the self-constructed poet Celtis corresponds to the central role of Phoebus, the Sun, in the operation of the cosmos. As already mentioned, Celtis grasped every opportunity to involve the Sun in his poem. He circumscribes the summer heat like this: “Phoebus has already come with his wandering light under the Cancer’s heaven and the fiery dog [Canicula].”¹² In some cases, for instance when he begins the poem with the indication of the weather, the time of the year or day, he could draw on classical patterns, otherwise his references to the Sun are far more abundant than was usual in classical or Italian non-astronomical poetry; several times he provides longer descriptions of the Sun’s course and activity.¹³ Macrobius’s words in the *Somnium Scipionis*-commentary may be regarded as a summary for Celtis’s emphasis on the Sun:

all things that we see recurring in the sky under fixed law—the variations of the days and nights, now long, now short, now equal, falling at definite intervals, the gentle warmth of spring, the

⁹ For instance, he plays with this idea at the beginning and end of the *Paneg.*: see p. 189. Od. I,16 (*Ad Sepulum disidaemonem*) contrasts the activity of priests and dogmatic Christianity to a pantheistic view of the cosmos; Beyond citing the famous Ovidian phrase, *est deus in nobis*, the passage *Miraris campos liquidos Phoebumque calentem / me cupidum expetere* (v. 9-10) refers to Virgil’s cult of the muses in Verg. Georg. II. 474-6, thus Steppich (*‘Numine,’* 242-4) rightly argues that Celtis implicitly assumes the role of the muse-priest here. A similar contrast between the monk and the Phoeban priest appears, although in an ironical context, in Ep. IV,17. Celtis’s *Rhapsodia*-edition ends with a short *Oraculum Apollinis ad Celtem*.

¹⁰ Cf. Wuttke, “Sebastian Brants Verhältnis,” 272-286. In assuming the *augur*-role, Brant was primarily inspired by Virgil’s *Georgica*: E. L. Harrison, “Virgil, Sebastian Brant, and Maximilian I,” *The Modern Language Review*, 76/1 (1981), 101f.

¹¹ See p. 51.

¹² Od. II,12,57f: *Cancri sub axem iam vaga lumina / Phoebus reduxit cum cane fervido*.

¹³ E.g. Od. I,2,1-32; I,4,9-12; I,29; II,2,33-40; III,15,5-8.

scorching heat of Cancer and Leo, the mildness of the autumn breeze, and the biting cold of winter, midway between autumn and spring – all follow the course and plan of the Sun.¹⁴

Moreover, the Ciceronian-Macrobian idea in this chapter of the commentary that the Sun as the middle planet governs, moves the other planets also appears in Celtis. As the beginning of the *Rhapsodia* reads,

*Ceu septem adverso discurrunt sidera motu
Inter quae medius, splendide Phoebus, micas,
Sic Caesar residet septeno numine cinctus
Sancta ubi maiestas et Iovis ales adest.*

Just as the seven heavenly bodies run in counter motion, among which you, bright Phoebus, shine in the middle, so sits the emperor surrounded by sevenfold divinity, where sacred majesty reigns and Jupiter's bird.

This special application of the ancient Sun / ruler parallel involves the idea of the Sun's predominance: the emperor – in this case Maximilian I – governs the (seven or six?¹⁵) prince-electors, and the Sun the planets. The opening of his ode to Kaufmann (Cumanus) also voices the Sun's middle position:

*Phoebus, Cumano modulans sub antro,
inter aeternas medius Camenas...*¹⁶

Phoebus, you, who play [the lyre] in the cave of Cumae, in the middle among the eternal muses...

The muses' adjective – “eternal” – may be a reference to the correspondence between the muses and the spheres,¹⁷ which reinforces that the *medius* (literally: “the middle one”), too, can be taken in an astronomical sense.¹⁸ In another ode Phoebus is referred to as *omnimovens*.¹⁹ Grössing has suggested that the *Rhapsodia*-passage mirrors the heliosatellite or the heliodynamic theory,²⁰ but there is no reference to any of the planets revolving around the Sun, and anyway, there is no trace that Celtis drew on any contemporary astronomical scholarly literature or theory. We can rather simply assume that he took over the Ciceronian-Macrobian idea (that the Sun is the source of light and regulates the movements of the

¹⁴ Tr. W. H. Stahl; Macr. Comm. S. Sc. II,20,9: *omnia quae statuta ratione per caelum fieri videmus, diem noctemque et migrantes inter utrumque prolixitatis brevitatisque vices et certis temporibus aequam utriusque mensuram, dein veris clementem teporem, torridum Cancris ac Leonis aestum, mollitiem auctumnalis aurae, vim frigoris inter utramque temperiem, omnia haec solis cursus et ratio dispensat.*

¹⁵ The Sun was supposed to be one of the planets; accordingly, there would be only six prince-electors around the emperor instead of seven. According to Dietl (*Die Dramen*, 242) this may be related to the debated position of the Bohemian king in that period.

¹⁶ Od. II. 17,1-2.

¹⁷ For the various systems of correspondence between the nine spheres (that are, according to a basic version, the seven planets completed with the Earth and the sphere of the fixed stars) and the nine muses cf. summarily Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 264.

¹⁸ Cf. also Od. I,29,13-16: *Phoebus, qui fatum sociis gubernas / orbibus, divum medius vagantum...* and *Inter quae medius...* in the above cited *Rhapsodia*-passage.

¹⁹ Od. II,12,44: *omnimovente Phoebus.*

²⁰ Grössing, “Die Lehrtätigkeit,” 227.

planets) because it supported his intention to present the Sun as a central cosmic force. Other German humanists like Laurentius Corvinus or Vadianus – both of whom were close friends and admirers of Celtis – echo word for word the Ciceronian-Macrobian formulation of the idea in their treatises.²¹ Identifying a number of gods with Apollo in the *Saturnalia*, Macrobius even outlined a kind of solar monotheism;²² Celtis and other humanists seem to have drawn on these passages, too.²³ Florentine Platonism played a mediatory role in the transmission of the Macrobian ideas: Landino echoes in the *Che cosa sia poesia...*, a poetological chapter of his Dante-commentary, the idea of solar monotheism,²⁴ and Ficino highlights the central role of the Sun from every possible perspective in the *De sole* (both authors explicitly refer to Macrobius).

In classical and Italian Neo-Latin poetry, Apollo was primarily the god of poetry. Naturally, the classical identification of Apollo and the Sun remained valid, and with mythology as a basic humanist conceptual framework, they often referred to the Sun as Phoebus or Apollo, but the different functions of the god were relatively rarely mentioned at the same time; it occurred, in astronomical didactic poetry wrote by humanists (Basinio da Parma, Bonincontri, Pontano) or in other poems,²⁵ but it was not usual. Celtis, however, repeatedly presents Phoebus in a way that the identity of the god of poetry and the Sun receives emphasis. The very fact that Celtis calls the god almost always “Phoebus” (“radiant, bright”) is already telling.²⁶ When he speaks about his beloved god, turns to him for inspiration, we can expect that he refers somehow to the solar aspect and thus the cosmic role of the divinity; to a lesser extent this is also true for the muses and the spheres. These references range from simple allusions to astronomical digressions; Celtis displays creativity in combining the different Phoebean aspects by the means of poetry, or by means of visual representation, this is an intriguing feature of his oeuvre. Here I present only some representative examples. In one of the philosophical-cosmological digressions of the *Amores*, where the poet praises the benefits of poetry and philosophy which free one from the prison of

²¹ For Corvinus, see ch. II,3,a; Vadianus, *De poetica* (ed. Schäffer), p. 207.

²² Macr. Sat. I,17-23.

²³ For Celtis and the “Apollo on Mount Parnassus” woodcut, see ch. V,2; for Tolhopf and the R-initial, see ch. III,2.

²⁴ At the end of the *Che cosa sia poesia et poeta, et della origine sua divina, et antichissima*, in *Comento... sopra la Comedia di Danthe...* Cf. Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 262.

²⁵ E. g. Fausto Andreelino, *Amores sive Livia* 2,1,11; Marullo’s hymn to the Sun (*Hymni naturales* 3,1) provides an example for the impact of Florentine Platonic solar syncretism. Texts and edition data are available at www.poetitalia.it (14.05.2015).

²⁶ Occasionally, he calls the Sun *Phoebi vertex* (Od. I,18,41) or *mundi caput* (Od. III,15,15: *illustre mundi, Phoebae pater, caput*), thus rendering the identification more perceptible.

love and suffering, there is an elegant pair of verses with multiple meanings, exemplifying at the same Celtis's involvement in the Pythagorean-Platonic cosmological tradition:

*Verba lyrae sociare fuit mihi summa voluptas
Astrorumque vias Pieridumque choros.*²⁷

I had the greatest pleasure combining my words with the lyre, combining the courses of the stars and the muses' choirs.

In the precedings he spoke about various branches of philosophy, and the passage culminates in the praise of the spheres and the muses, rendering perceptible the eternal benefits and divine pleasures of philosophy; it is intentionally undecided whether the *Pieridum chori* are the muses or the spheres mentioned in the beginning of the verse, and the verse may refer both to singing about these divine entities or composing with the help of these (the idea of poetical inspiration); these are two aspects of the same celestial-terrestrial link. This symmetrical verse about stars and muses summarizes both the inherent order and the sensual beauty of the universe, and the passage expresses the unity of music and poetry, poetry and philosophy, philosophy and divinity. Another verse from an ode, *lucidum Phoebum et nitidas sorores*,²⁸ likewise exemplifies a polysemantic application of the topos of singing about Phoebus and the muses.

On the other hand, he has complete odes addressed to Phoebus both as solar and inspirational deity,²⁹ as well as shorter poems addressed to “his muse.”³⁰ these express an intimate, personal relationship to the deities of inspiration. Ode I,29, addressed *Ad Phoebum et musam suam*, begins with natural philosophical questions and presents the Sun as the cyclical renewer of the world, and it is after this cosmological introduction (which is an *ekphrasis* of a hymn, in rhetorical terms) that he turns to the god for inspiration and knowledge about the afterlife. Individual astrology provided another strategical means for the poet to combine the cosmic and the personal spheres: if the stars define character, the objective “deities” can become in a way subjective, personal. This excellently fitted Celtis's

²⁷ Am. IV,3,19-20. Steppich has cited the passage as an example for the multiple – literal and cosmic – meanings of the muses's chorus in German humanist poetry (‘*Numine*,’ 325).

²⁸ Od. II,25,5-6: *Noricis nemo cecinisset agris / lucidum Phoebum et nitidas sorores*. Similar simple allusions can be found in other German humanists, like in Bebel's *Egloga: iam chorus astrigerus (tue qui lustravit amore / Pectora divino) gaudet iam flavus Appollo / Perstrepet argutos sacrum inspiranda furorem*. In [...] *Opuscula nova* [...] (Strasbourg: M. Schürer, 1512; VD 16 B 1209), f. p4v.

²⁹ Od. I,29; Od. III,15; Epod. 16. The first half of Od. I,2 (1-32) is a beautiful description of the spring, centering around Phoebus as a cosmic force that renews the world.

³⁰ In Ep. I,48 *Ad Musam suam, dum littus prussie peteret*, this muse is Calliope; in Od. III,6 *Ad musam suam* (where the muse raises him to the sphere of the stars) and in Od. III,18 *Ad musam suam* (where the muse with a *nitida frons* helps him prepare for Bishop Dalberg's visit) the muse's identity is undefined. Steppich's suggestion (‘*Numine*’ 206, 301) that in such poems by German humanists the muse may be identified with the author's *ingenium* or *genius* can only be reinforced by a comprehensive comparative analysis of the related German and Italian humanist works.

intention: it was analyzed above in detail how he exploited the astrological possibilities of self-representation, and he did involve Phoebus / the Sun in these works, too. Still another possibility to render perceptible the cosmic power of the god of poetry was the presentation of the summer strength of the Sun. In a long ode to Andreas Pegasus Celtis insists that it will do his friend good to see and feel the fervent, glowing Sun during his southern journeys, Phoebus takes care of the *sacri vates*.³¹ Other cases will be discussed below: Celtis's Phoebean initiation takes place in a hot summer, some humanist feasts are supposed to happen at the summer or winter solstices, and visual representations of Apollo may also involve specific solar references.

Supported so much by such a mighty deity, our hero could appear himself having Phoebean characteristics, a personal radiance, as it were. He did not present himself as a second Apollo, but in some skilful references or metaphors he decreased the difference between poet and god. When he declares at the end of an ode that he sang the foregoing "in the middle (*medius*) of the musaic choir," with "Phoebus's lyre,"³² he almost identifies with Phoebus whom he presented in the middle of the muse-host or the planets in many other works. When in another ode he shortly overviews the course of his life, which goes straight towards *Gades* standing on the ocean's shore,³³ that is Hercules's pillars in the west where the Sun was traditionally supposed to sink below the horizon, then he assumes metaphorically the role of the Sun. This is not simply the application of the ancient topos concerning the Sun's course and human life: Celtis's metaphor harmonizes with the similarity between the cyclical journey of the hero of the *Amores* and that of the Sun, already pointed out above. His friends or disciples could more overtly endow him with Phoebean / solar characteristics. *Cynthius alter eris*, "you will be a second Apollo," claims Locher, after comparing him to the radiant Sun in his commemorative poem about Celtis, his teacher in Ingolstadt³⁴ (such direct panegyric "deifications" occurred in Italian poetry as well, for instance in Raffaele Zovenzoni's *Istrias* where he claimed about Lucanus Carseolus Tolmaetius: *Phoebus es*³⁵).

³¹ Od. I,18,41-48: *Phoebi calentem cernere verticem / iuvabit, umbras corporibus negans, quando levatus stat sub axe / ignivomo radiatus ore. / Aestum feremus sideris ardui, et nulla vitae crede pericula, dum cura sit Phoebos sacris de / vatibus, atque animis benignis.*

³² Od. II,19,53-56: *Haec tuus Celtis tibi personabat, / dum choros inter medius sororum / cantat, et Phoebi fidibus per Istrum / carmina spargit.*

³³ Od. IV,8,15-16 *et petit praeceps mea vita stantes / litore Gades.*

³⁴ Locher, *Elegia* 67-68 (1498, in BW p. 344-5): *Lustrabisque tuo radio distantia mundi / Climata, quandoquidem Cynthius alter eris.* Cf. also his letter to Celtis at the end of the same year (BW p. 346): *uti Apollineus quidam rapsodus buccas meas poetica harmonia inflasti...*

³⁵ *Istrias* (in Raffaele Zovenzoni, *la vita, i carmi*, ed. B. Ziliotto, Triest: Smolars, 1950) II,77,1-6: *Credidimus te Carseolum, Lucane, poetam / Cuius et ingenii crassa Minerva foret, / Ast ubi divinis foliis responsa dedisti, / Te*

Vadianus, too, commemorated his beloved master in Vienna with an *Encomion* ending like this:

*Quem puto Melpomene caelis et Phoebus Apollo
non menso circum iugiter orbe ferunt
nectareosque haustus praebet sibi Juppiter ingens.
Sic terram fama, sidera mente tenet.*³⁶

Whom I think Melpomene and Phoebus Apollo carry around unendingly in the sky, along an untrodden circle, and mighty Jupiter hands him a drink sweet as nectar. So he endures on earth by his fame and in the stars as a soul.

Vadianus develops further the well-known astral mystical topos in an astronomical direction. Apollo and Melpomene carry him around *non menso orbe, iugiter*: since the motion is both circular (*circum, orbe*) and infinite (*iugiter*), the passage evokes the image of a planet and its orbit; in a foregoing passage of the poem Vadianus commemorated how Celtis transmitted his cosmological knowledge to his students.³⁷ Interestingly, it is the muse Melpomene whom the poet names next to Phoebus. In the Platonic series of the muses and planets, Melpomene belongs to the Sun; besides, the term *mens*, too, evokes Platonic connotations. A bit later, in the *De poetica*, Vadianus expanded on Phoebean / solar symbolism, the correspondence of spheres and muses and the Ficinian chain of inspiration.³⁸ The Vadianus-passage is a skilful praise rendering perceptible his master's eternal fame, and at the same time a commemoration of the Arch-humanist's astronomical and Platonic interests.

There is still another factor involved in the above outlined complex of Phoebean symbolism: the ruler, that is, the patron, Celtis's most important ally in his cultural mission. Renaissance panegyric poetry boosted the use of the ancient parallelism between the ruler and the Sun. I mention only two of the reasons why the Renaissance patron was frequently endowed with solar, Phoebean characteristics, or addressed as the deity himself (if humanists could address each other as Phoebus, the ruler could be all the more easily addressed as such). If he supported the humanists, he was a friend of the muses, and naturally he himself was easily praised as an educated, erudite patron, so both the cultural and solar aspects of Phoebus fitted the idealized ruler-image.³⁹ Moreover, the Renaissance was supposed to restore classical

natum magni credimus esse Iovis. / Phoebus es: o nostri salve lux unica mundi, / O salve Aonium Pieridumque decus.

³⁶ *Encomion* (in BW p. 627), 69-72.

³⁷ V. 56-58: *Vixit et in laudes, docta Vienna, tuas, / ore ubi facundo docuit, quae sidera possent, / quae deus et quicquid cardine mundus agit.*

³⁸ Cf. Steppich, 'Numine,' 252-272.

³⁹ Two representative examples from late fifteenth-century Italian Neo-Latin poetry: Pietro Antonio Piatti, *Carmina ad Alfonso de Aragonia* 3,11-18: *Scilicet, o reges, vos estis numina Phoebi, / In vobis lauri sunt laticesque sacri, / Vos facitis vates, vestrum est dare sarta poetis / Et plus Aonia labra rigatis aqua. / Cur mihi non licuit tenerae lanuginis annos, / Dux Alphonse, tua composuisse domo? / O qualis Phoebi nunc regia bella sacerdos / Et decus aggredere dicere grande tuum!* Girolamo Balbi, *Carm. 153 Michaeli Vitezio: Dulcia Pelignum redolent tua carmina nectar; / O mihi Orestaea iuncte poeta fide! / Et tibi Phoebus adest, et adest*

wisdom, it was the *dawn* of a new era after the *medium aevum*, and the poet could easily claim that his patron was the representant of a new Golden Age; these topoi were related on the basis of the ancient Sun–gold analogy, and could be implicitly or explicitly involved in the solar / Phoebian eulogy of the ruler.⁴⁰ Celtis profited much from these topoi. They could give him ideas for the construction of his own Phoebian image,⁴¹ and referring to *both* his own and the ruler’s Phoebian nature, he could emphasize his *Herrschnähe* and his elect status, within society in general and among humanists in particular. Already in his first published poem, the *Poema ad Fridericum*,⁴² Celtis rendered perceptible his specific relationship to Phoebus and at the same time the astrologically determined erudition and poetry-supporting attitude of Frederick the Wise. In the *Panegyris* the Phoebus-motif explicitly connects the poet and the ruler. In the beginning of the poem, he feels something like a Phoebian rapture. Then he claims not to be capable of it, Phoebus is too far away in the south; Georg is the poet’s Phoebus, *Ille mihi Phoebus semperque in carmine nostro / Rite vocandus erit* (v. 10-11). At the end of the poem, however, Celtis reveals himself as Apollo’s priest: it was the god who inspired to him all the favorable prospect of cultural renewal that he sang about.⁴³

The most important earthly Phoebus for Celtis was Emperor Maximilian. Already before his emperorship from 1493, Celtis aspired to his patronage: the *Ode Sapphica* of the *Proseuticum* (1487), which combined a description of the vernal rejuvenation of the world with the topos of the Golden Age brought about by the ruler, addressed both Emperor Frederick and his son, Maximilian, and the *Epitoma* (1492) hails Maximilian, the dedicatee, as a “Phoebian” patron and friend of the arts.⁴⁴ By the turn of the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries Celtis managed to make a close humanist ally of Emperor Maximilian: the panegyric *Ludus Dianae* staged in front of the ruler, the erection of the CPM, the representative *Amores*-edition all indicate the Arch-humanist’s rising star. As mentioned before, the intensification of

sacra turba sororum; / Seria sive velis, sive iocosa sequi. / O dilecta Deis; o felicissima tellus! / In qua tu fausto sidere progenitus. / Per te Pannonium migravit Phoebus in orbem, / Mixtus et Aoniis defluit Ister aquis. Texts and edition data are available at www.poetitalia.it (14.05.2015).

⁴⁰ That the ruler brings back the Golden Age was an extremely frequent topos in Renaissance poetry, repeated *ad nauseam*. Cf., for instance, for the Elizabethan English Renaissance F. A. Yates, *Astraea* (London: Routledge, 1976). Examples by humanists around Celtis are also legion: Laurentius Corvinus, for instance, adapted it to Jan Olbracht in his *Laus antiquae aetatis (Carminum structura* f. d4r-v; Glomsky, “Poetry,” 162); for Maximilian I as the restorer of the Golden Age, see the examples below.

⁴¹ In humanist poetry, elements of Phoebian symbolism first applied to a ruler could be transmitted to humanist poets, and vice versa.

⁴² See ch. V,3,a.

⁴³ Paneg. 154-6: *Talia fatidici iussere oracula Phoebi / Me canere et laeto praedicere tempora caelo, / Sobria Germanis dum vivunt pectora terris.*

⁴⁴ *Epitoma in utramque Ciceronis rhetoricam* (Ingolstadt: [J. Kachelofen], after 28 March 1492), dedication: *externos... homines... ad Phoebum tuum latus stare et accumbere faciens...*

dynastical self-representation during the reign of Maximilian entailed a strengthening of the ruler–humanist alliance and a higher frequency of laureations; Golden Age / Phoebean topoi were naturally involved in the panegyric poetry about him.⁴⁵ Celtis was in a privileged position among the humanists. He referred to his close affinity to the ruler both in word⁴⁶ and image,⁴⁷ and indeed, he acquired the right to crown poets himself. When he eulogized on Maximilian, he himself shared the emperor’s “radiance,” even if their common Phoebean features were not explicitly voiced. In the *Amores*, the protagonist of which received his quest from Apollo, Maximilian, the patron of the CPM (announced at the end of the work) was also called *musarum pater*.⁴⁸ The *Rhapsodia*-passage which compares the emperor to the Sun was already cited⁴⁹ (similar comparisons occurred in other contemporary works as well⁵⁰). There are other solar references in this work, like the exclamation to the ruler, *O mundi lux alma* (v. 55).⁵¹ In the “Imperial eagle” woodcut,⁵² likewise related to the CPM, an explicit identification of Maximilian and Apollo can be seen: Maximilian is enthroned on the highest level of the central axis, above the muses’ fountain, with his leg on the Delphic tripod. The laurel of poets and that of rulers are of equal rank;⁵³ poetical and imperial glory, Celtis’s and Maximilian’s glory are inseparably intertwined in the woodcut.

In blending royal and self-representation, Celtis could draw inspiration from contemporary humanism. Here I briefly mention only one important example: Tolhopf’s versatile use of Hercules, the mythical hero. King Mathias was one of the rulers identified with Hercules in

⁴⁵ Some examples for the Habsburg-related application of the New Golden Age topos by contemporary German humanists: Stabius, *Carmen saphicum* (in the App. of Celtis, *Quattuor libri amorum*, ed. Pindter); Brant, a passage about the return of the *Saturnia regna* in the *Fulgetre...* in *Sebastian Brants Narrenschiff*, ed. Zarncke, p. 186; Adrianus Wolphardus, *Panegyris*, f. b3v.

⁴⁶ Cf. the already mentioned passage in the *Amores* about the similar time of birth, p. 117 n. 264.

⁴⁷ Cf., first of all, the dedicational woodcut of the *Amores* (“Celtis kneeling before Maximilian,” f. a1v).

⁴⁸ Am. IV,14,154.

⁴⁹ See p. 178.

⁵⁰ The title page of the *Zaiger* of Mennel’s *Geburtspiegel* shows Maximilian before a mirror with the Sun at the center, and a 1518 woodcut by Dürer, representing the “Triumphal Chariot” of Maximilian, has the inscription *Quod in celis sol, hoc in terra Caesar est* (Silver, *Marketing*, 47). An example for solar parallelism adapted to other rulers is provided by Ficino, who dedicated the third book of his letters to King Mathias of Hungary, and ended his dedication with this sentence: *Summus ille Deus, qui Solem in Deo constituit, stellarum coelique Regem, Matthiam quoque solum sub sole constituit, imperium Oceano, famam qui terminet astris* (OO p. 712; the final hexameter comes from Verg. Aen. I,287).

⁵¹ On the one hand, *lux mundi* is a biblical phrase (Matth. 5,14), on the other hand, *lux alma* referred to dawn and sunrise in several classical and late antique non-Christian authors. Balbi has already used the phrase *O mundi lux alma* in the *De laudibus bellicis* addressed to King Mathias (v. 25). In the *Ludus Dianae* and the *Rhapsodia*, the idea of *princeps Christianus* is often combined with classical hymnical and panegyric traditions: cf. J-D. Müller, “Maximilian,” 6.

⁵² See p. 71.

⁵³ Wuttke, “Humanismus,” 89. Already Petrarch voiced the idea: cf. Arnold, “Die Dichterkrönung,” 239.

royal propaganda,⁵⁴ and at least one of the medallions of the title page of the *Stellarium* shows Hercules fighting, which most probably alludes to Mathias.⁵⁵ (Interestingly, it has not been perceived so far that Hercules may figure as a solar symbol in the title page: the heroic figures⁵⁶ seem to be surrounded by rays, the identification of the works of Hercules with the Sun going through the twelve zodiacal signs is a classical tradition – Macrobius and Ficino mentions it, too⁵⁷ –, and the Sun does appear in the upper part of the title page.) Later, when not Mathias but Maximilian had to be praised, Tolhopf took over that Hercules-symbolism that was used to eulogize Maximilian:⁵⁸ as we have seen in the 1496 woodcut, Maximilian was *Hercules Germanicus*, and Tolhopf the *vates Herculeus*. The adjective *Herculeus*, however, can be understood in more than one way, and indeed, in some of his letters Tolhopf spoke also about himself as Hercules, pursued by the goddess Juno.⁵⁹ The Hercules-symbolism, as used by Tolhopf, helped him to create the vision of *Herschernähe*, and Luh has rightly stressed that in the use of the Hercules-figure and in the representation of *Herschernähe* Tolhopf and Celtis applied similar strategies.⁶⁰

Some of the Phoebus-related Celtis-works will be analyzed in more detail below, but the foregoing non-comprehensive summary might have already persuaded the reader about the complexity of Celtis's Phoebean symbolism, which involved well-known commonplaces but at the same time went beyond them and combined them in unique ways. Several reasons contributed to the specifically extensive use of Phoebean motifs in his poetry:

- His cosmological interests and the already existing Sun-Phoebus identification;
- The uniqueness of the Sun as a heavenly body, with its luminosity and other prosperous features, made it a proper symbol for the European Renaissance ideology of cultural rebirth in general and Celtis's Arch-humanist role in Germany in particular;
- The relatively frequent mention of Phoebus in the poetry of Horace and Propertius, the main models of Celtis's odes and elegies, respectively (see the following subchapters);
- Royal patronage and *Herrschernähe* played a specific role in Celtis's missionary ideology, and the Phoebean symbolism could help to approach the poet to the ruler;

⁵⁴ Cf. e.g. Dániel Pócs, "Il Mito di Ercole: Arte Fiorentina al servizio della rappresentazione del potere di Mattia Corvino," in Mattia Corvino e Firenze, ed. P. Farbaky (Firenze: Giunti, 2013).

⁵⁵ Csapodi-Gárdonyi, "Tolhopff János," 339-340; cf. also Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 344. The left middle medallion most probably shows Hercules's fight with the Nemean lion, and the upper middle medallion may represent Hercules's fight with Anteus (Mikó, "Über den Miniator," 224).

⁵⁶ Beyond those discussed in the previous note, cf. the lower middle medallion with Perseus and Medusa.

⁵⁷ Macr. Sat. I,20; Fic. Epist. to F. Valori (*Apologia in librum suum de sole, et lumine*), OO p. 949.

⁵⁸ For Maximilian as Hercules, cf. e.g. Silver, *Marketing*, esp. 23-24.

⁵⁹ BW no. 41 p. 71; no. 63 p. 103-4.

⁶⁰ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 344.

– He was certainly encouraged by Platonic (especially Macrobean and Ficinian) solar syncretism, just as some of his *furor poeticus* representations (see below) demonstrably have a Florentine Platonic background.

Over and over again, the reader of Celtis sees him in relation to the god Phoebus, either as the god of poetry, the Sun or the deified earthly patron; this relationship is central in the whole oeuvre, from the two Apollo-related poems of the *Ars versificandi* to the several woodcuts of the 1500s with Phoebus as the central figure.

2. Celtis and the *furor poeticus*

Despite extensive Celtis-scholarship, his general attitude to the idea of poetical inspiration, *furor poeticus* has not been clarified so far, although this is one of the core ideas of the German *vates*-ideology. Stejskal was wondered that there was no extensive discussion of the “Platonic system” of inspiration in Celtis, neither in his letters nor in his poetical works; “he expressly avoids the term *furor poeticus*, instead, he prefers *spiritus* or δαίμων,” influenced by Ficino.⁶¹ Heidloff has echoed Stejskal’s opinion.⁶² Steppich wrote a whole monograph about ideas of poetical inspiration in German humanism (*Numine afflatur...*), still, he involved in his research only a couple of such poems by Celtis – one of the leading German humanists – that are not the most telling about his ideas of inspiration; most importantly, all these scholars have neglected the *Melopoiae*-woodcuts which explicitly display such ideas. Luh did analyze in detail these woodcuts, but Celtis-texts about inspiration fell a little outside of his scope. Not that Celtis was expressly original in this respect, and that revelative discoveries are to be made; still, a clarification of his views on inspiration – based both on visual and textual evidence – is necessary in order to see better his place in the German *vates*-ideology outlined in the first chapter, and to see in what respects his ideas converge or diverge from those of his fellow humanists. This overview does not require a long subchapter. Only those ideas require deeper analysis that are more than simple topoi, and these complex ideas, displayed mostly in woodcuts, have been in large part analyzed in detail by other scholars. With regard to the interpretation of specific works, it is in case of two intriguing woodcuts, the *Philosophia* and the “Parnassus” woodcuts, that I am going to contribute to research the most.

⁶¹ Stejskal, *Die Gestalt*, 127: “...ja er meidet geradezu den Ausdruck und setzt statt dessen lieber spiritus oder δαίμων. Dabei ist aber sein Denken über den Schaffensvorgang massgebend von Marsilius beeinflusst.”

⁶² Heidloff, *Untersuchungen*, 214.

The types of sources where Celtis mentions or presents the idea of poetical inspiration can be divided into three groups: poems, a letter, and woodcuts with the adjacent paratexts. In the poems, the idea appears generally in a topical, conventional context, referring to the divine inspiration as something indispensable for true poetry; on the other hand, the quantity and great variety of these poetical references already suggest that this is a consciously applied and basic component of his *vates*-ideology. Contrary to what Stejskal and Heidloff alleged, it is not the terms *spiritus* and δαίμων with which Celtis generally expresses the idea (δαίμων appears only once, in the letter discussed below), but primarily *spiritus*, *furor* or *calor*. *Spiritu inflari* / *afflari* is the main term in one of the basic texts on poetical inspiration, Cicero's *Pro Archia poeta*,⁶³ and Celtis uses it as early as in the *Poema ad Fridericum*⁶⁴ (the whole *Ars versificandi* was highly influenced by Ciceronian rhetorics⁶⁵) and in later texts as well.⁶⁶ The *furor* of the *vates* appears both literally⁶⁷ and through obvious synonyms: when the Celtis of the *Amores* complains that love made him give up singing and he is “not enraptured any more by Phoebus or Apollo's wrath (*ira*),”⁶⁸ the poet exchanged *furor* for *ira*, playing with the notion of fury in Greek-Roman mythology;⁶⁹ calling Venus's wrath *furor* in v. 42 shows the interchangeability of the two terms. In *Amores* I,12 Celtis is indeed angry with Hasilina because of her fraudulent behaviour, and revengefully promises to sing about her evil deeds:

Et mea iam totum spirant praecordia Phoebum my breast already breathes all Phoebus,
*Et mea iam Bromius pectora totus agit.*⁷⁰ and Bromius [Bacchus] wholly rules my heart.

It is in fact the deities themselves who speak through the medium of the poet. Phoebus and Bacchus are here almost abstract notions for poetical inspiration, spiritual energy that can be used for various aims, here for revenge (The words *totum spirant praecordia Phoebum* come from a passage of Claudian's *De raptu Proserpinae* where the divine *furor* is explicitly referred to.⁷¹) Old crones with divinatory power are also supposed to have *furor* in Celtis⁷²

⁶³ Cic. Arch. 18: *poetam natura ipsa valere, et mentis viribus excitari, et quasi divino quodam spiritu inflari*. Later *afflare* became more general, based for instance on Verg. Aen. VI,50: the Sybilla *adflata est numine*.

⁶⁴ V. 61-2: *Ha deus, afflata vatium qui pectora pulsas / Cuique recurvato pectine Musa sonat*.

⁶⁵ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 33.

⁶⁶ E.g. Epod. 15,17: *peritus augur spiritu afflatus tuo*.

⁶⁷ Od. I,29,13-16: *Phoebe, qui fatum sociis gubernas / orbibus, divum medius vagantum, / quique divino stimulas furore / pectora vatium...* Epod. 15,11-12: *Quo, Phoebe, lectus pontifex pridem tuus? / Quo numen et sacer furor?*

⁶⁸ Am. I,2,3: *Non ego iam Phoebos rapior nec Apollinis ira*.

⁶⁹ Apollo was indeed furious when he took revenge on his adversaries in various myths (humanists, too, often called him for help against slanderers, as mentioned above). Anyway, wrath is a key notion in Homer's *Iliad*, as already its invocation shows.

⁷⁰ Am. I,12,77-78.

⁷¹ *De raptu Pros.* I,5-6: *Iam furor humanos nostro de pectore sensus / Expulit et totum spirant praecordia Phoebum*.

(who does not make difference between *furor poeticus* and *vaticinius*, a *vates* has this *furor*⁷³), and the term also appears outside the context of inspiration.⁷⁴ Unlike the phrases with *spiritus*, *afflari* and *furor*, the notion of having the *calor* (“heat”) of inspiration is a rare topos in Neo-Latin poetry;⁷⁵ Celtis uses it at least three times, obviously because *calor* can refer both to the inspired, “fervent” condition of the poet and the heat of Phoebus / the Sun (who is involved in all the three passages⁷⁶). For instance, he encourages Georg Morinus in an ode this way:

*Has graves curas fidibus canoris
pelle, divinas relegens Camenas,
quas sacer vatum calor expolito
carmine promit;*⁷⁷

Banish these grave anxieties with resounding strings, reading again the muses that the poet’s sacred heat brings forth in polished songs.

However Celtis expresses the *furor poeticus*, it is supposed to be indispensable for poets, thus an important ideological element of humanist group-identity. In several letters addressed to him, *furor* appears almost as a requirement for the “membership” in the actual humanist circle;⁷⁸ in Celtis’s *Epitoma*, the term *sacro numine afflati* is involved in the characterization of the poet in general,⁷⁹ and the *Celtis-vita*, too, records his opinion *poeticam divinum esse motum animi*.

What is specific in Celtis’s use of *furor*-topoi? When the concrete source of inspiration is named, it is almost always Phoebus – mostly alone, rarely paired with Bacchus or a muse –, while in other Neo-Latin poets in general Phoebus is only one of the possible deities, not preferred to others like the muses, the *numen* and so on. When the main figure or addressee of

⁷² Epod. 8,13-4: ...*ut mihi praedixerat / plena furoris anus*; Am. IV,10,59-62: *Carmina dum possunt humanas vertere mentes / Et vires magicis artibus esse solent, / Dum furor antiquas vetulas prurigoque vexat, / Invidiae et stimulis saeva calescit anus...*

⁷³ For this, Steppich (‘*Numine*,’ 327) provides the example of Od. I,29, already noted above.

⁷⁴ In this case it mostly has a negative meaning: it can refer, for instance, to the dangers of love (as in Am. III,11,27) or *hybris* (Od. I,17,49) and selfish passions.

⁷⁵ Before Celtis, it occurs e.g. in Orazio Romano, Carm. 2,1,7-9: *Tu mea Musa pater virtus mihi numen et aura / Ingeniique calor, nostro qui tempore solus / Vatibus extinctas refoves in carmina vires*. Text and edition data are available at www.poetitalia.it (14.05.2015).

⁷⁶ Ep. III,33 *Ad Udalicum Zasium* 1-2: *Cum sacer ille calor, vatum quo pectora fervent, / Te tenet et Phoebus Pieridumque cohors*; Od. I,20,71-78: *Has graves curas studiis levato, / candidus rerum repetendo causas / siderum cursus et amoena clari / lumina Phoebi. / Has graves curas fidibus canoris / pelle, divinas relegens Camenas, / quas sacer vatum calor expolito / carmine promit*; Ep. V,29,4: ...*Et cui Phoebaeo pectus amore calet*.

⁷⁷ Od. I,20,75-78.

⁷⁸ E.g. Michael Styrius in 1492 (BW p. 89): *Scribis praeterea me musarum amatorem: probe quidem; Isthmiacas enim diligo Camenas, Appolloque meo placet ingenio. Utinam fata tulissent, ut exiberet mihi Euterpe tibias, Poly[hy]m[n]iaque barbiton traderet, Phoebus et furor mea concitaret exta...* Dracontius in 1496 (BW p. 198): *Tu nosti, quanto furore te institutore plurima scitu admodum iucunda nanciscebar: hactenus me huiusmodi fervor insatiatum tollit*. Cf. also Schreyer in 1496 about members of the Nuremberg senate (BW p. 190): *spero tamen propediem eos Phoebaeo afflari*.

⁷⁹ *Vates, musarum alumnos, lauro insignes, Apollini sacerdotes, Phoebi interpretes, rerum naturae scientes, historiae patres, divinos poetas, sacro numine afflatos*, etc. (BW p. 647; *Epitoma*, f. c1v.)

Celtis's poem is Phoebus, there is reference to him as a distributor of *furor*,⁸⁰ and when it is the poetical frenzy he mentions first, he links it to Phoebus.⁸¹ Phoebus becomes sometimes an abstract notion, as the central source of poetical beauty and spiritual energy: the passage with the poet's heart mediating Bacchus and *totum Phoebum* was already cited above, and when Celtis speaks about Phoebus residing within the poet's heart, the deity stands for all kinds of poetical skills, including the ability for inspiration.⁸² Addressing Phoebus as a kind of personal god of inspiration has its classical and Neo-Latin precedents, although none of the earlier poets seem to have stuck to this god as consequently as Celtis. Among the classics, Horace, Celtis's chief model, provides the most important example: *Spiritum Phoebus mihi, Phoebus artem / carminis nomenque dedit poetae*⁸³ (in J. H. Kaimowitz's translation: "Phoebus gave me inspiration, gave me skill in verse-craft and the name of poet"), sings Horace in his hymn to Apollo. When Celtis asks in the beginning of his *Panegyris* (v. 3-4): *quo, Phoebus, furore / Barbara crassiloqui stimulas praecordia vatis?* ("with what frenzy do you, Phoebus, stimulate the barbarian heart of the unskilled poet", so that he can sing in the appropriate classical style), the intertextual references of these few words include a number of classical passages.⁸⁴ Florentine Platonism, in which Phoebus / the Sun figured large, may have also directly or indirectly influenced Celtis: in Italian poetry, too, it occurs primarily in poets heavily influenced by Ficino – Landino, Poliziano, Marullo – that both the identity of Phoebus and the Sun and Phoebus as a source of personal inspiration are highlighted.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ Od. I,29,13-16; Epod. 15,11-17; *Poema ad Fridericum*, 61-62 (all these cited just above).

⁸¹ E.g. Am. I,2,3; Paneg. 3-6 (all these cited just above).

⁸² Am III,7, 23-5 about the happy life of the philosopher / poet: *Et rerum causas discere semper amet / Excudatque aliquid residens sub pectore Phoebus, / Quod bona posteritas laudet, honoret, amet*. The motif is also used in praise of other poets, as in two epigrams to Augustinus Moravus: Ep. V,28,3-4: *Quem Graecae et Latiae stimulant sub pectore Musae, / Cuique sacer Phoebi mente redundat amor*; Ep. V,29,4: *...Et cui Phoebaeo pectus amore calet*; or in Ep. V,35 *Ad Christophorum Vitimollerium Bohemum*, 7-8: *Doctus Apollineum gestas sub pectore Phoebum, / Quo ludis variis carmina docta lyris*.

⁸³ Hor. Carm. IV,6,29-30.

⁸⁴ Gruber (*Panegyris*, p. 62) has already noted the above cited Horace-passage (Hor. Carm. IV,6,29) as a possible source, but there are more similar texts. The above discussed Claudian-passage (*De raptu Pros.* I,5-6: *Iam furor humanos nostro de pectore sensus / Expulit et totum spirant praecordia Phoebum*, the last words cited by Celtis elsewhere) also renders perceptible the condition of being inspired by Phoebus, and uses the term *praecordia*. Horace's ode to Bacchus (III,25) begins with a question expressing the poet's bewilderment about the unusual *furor* (*Quo me, Bacche, rapis tui / plenum? Quae nemora aut quos agor in specus / velox mente nova?* etc.): Celtis's question is similar. Celtis's term *afflata* reminds one of Verg. Aen. VI,50, where the Sybilla *adflata est numine*.

⁸⁵ Landino, *Xandra*, I,7,25-29: *Praeteritos referam laeto iam tempore luctus, / Te duce, Phoebus. Tuo vati da, Phoebus quietem, / Da mentem mihi, Phoebus, novam sanctumque furorem / Inspira, ut vanos valeam enarrare labores, / Tu, Phoebus, tuo mea corda furore...* etc.; Marullo, *Soli*, esp. the beginning: *Quis novus hic animis furor incidit? unde repente / Mens fremit horrentique sonant praecordia motu?* (the question-form, the god Phoebus and the terms *furor* and *praecordia* render the passage similar to the above cited beginning of Celtis's *Panegyris*, but the *Hymni naturales* appeared in 1497, later than the *Panegyris*); Poliziano, *Sylvae 4: Argumentum, de poetica et poetis*, esp. 139-216. Texts and edition data are available at www.poetitalia.it (14.05.2015).

While the poetical references are too short and conventional to see whether Florentine Platonic accounts of poetical inspiration had a direct or indirect impact on Celtis, this background becomes evident in some of the more complex sources about inspiration. These do not follow in detail the Ficinian ramifications of the Platonic idea, but Celtis does take up Ficinian elements and uses them according to the genre concerned.

The only narrative production-aesthetical account related to poetic frenzy can be found in a Celtis-letter from 1 February 1502⁸⁶ (his forty-third birthday and the foundation of the CPM) answering Schreyer's letter that urged the *Amores*-edition. Celtis informs his audience (the letter was obviously meant for a wider audience than just Schreyer) that he is pregnant with the work for twelve years already (this is a "prolongation" of the Pythagorean-Platonic motif of "ten years wandering" that Celtis adapted for himself and the *Amores* several times),⁸⁷ but everything has its proper time. Just as all animated beings conceive at an astrologically determined time and then give birth accordingly, so the *vir doctissimus* can only produce songs and orations when *nescio quo δαίμονε aut spiritu concitati, ad scribendum incalescant et rapiuntur* ("stimulated by whatever daemon or spirit, they are made fervent and enraptured and they write").⁸⁸ The germ has to go through the various phases of artistic production (*inventio, dispositio, elocutio*; Celtis refers explicitly to Quintilian), until it becomes ripe for birth. In sum, Celtis compares the *furor poeticus* to generation-conception and the artistic production to pregnancy and birth.

The comparison is in fact an elaboration of a humanist topos – exemplified by another Celtis-letter or Locher – which calls the prospective poem a fetus.⁸⁹ Müller has already referred to the Florentine Platonic connotation of the word δαίμων in this letter;⁹⁰ Ficino used it both for the *ingenium* and stellar spirits, internal or external spirit,⁹¹ and this complex of ideas may lurk in the background of the otherwise indefinite reference to δαίμονε *aut spiritu*.

⁸⁶ BW no. 270, p. 472-3.

⁸⁷ *Admones me [...], ut opuscula mea, quae iam ferme in duodecimum annum parturio, in lucem proferam.*

⁸⁸ *Ut enim animalia quaeque non nisi ex certo stellarum χρονικῶ aut ἡλιοκῶ ortu certum et praefixum sui coitus tempus habent et ad certam in utero moram foetus edunt, ita cum his accidere video et viris doctissimis, qui aut carmine aut oratione quidpiam illustre et dignum lectione cudunt et producunt, non semper quando volunt aut cupiunt, nisi, nescio quo δαίμονε aut spiritu concitati, ad scribendum incalescant et rapiuntur.*

⁸⁹ Celtis to Schreyer in 1495 (BW p. 143): *offero... carmen, quod his diebus, quamvis diu conceptum, plena et perfecta nativitate absolvi...* Calliope's words in Locher's *Hortamen* especially harmonize with the 1502 Celtis-letter, since the passage connects the *furor*-idea to the *foetus*-topos: *Te decet ut referas quales foecundas poetas / In lucem dederit musa, bonosque viros. / Divinus nos fulgor agit, nos astra serena / Illustres foetus edere nempe iubent.* In: Locher, *Continentur. In hoc opusculo*, f. b1r.

⁹⁰ Müller, *Die 'Germania generalis,'* 444.

⁹¹ Cf. Steppich, 'Numine,' 197-206.

The comparison also reminds one of a chapter in the *De vita*⁹² about how the production and quality of a song depends on stellar influences; and the underlying idea is the analogy between artistic production and generation, organic development in nature, both made possible by the amatory instinct (as can be read in the *Theologia Platonica*).⁹³ Anyway, the motif of the productivity of humanist poets as opposed to the sterility and impotency of his scholastic adversaries was part of the humanist discourse: it is certainly Locher who provides the most spectacular example, with the already mentioned *Mulae ad musam... comparatio*.⁹⁴ In the letter, Celtis himself does not develop a theory in germinal form, it should rather be considered as a half serious, half playful philosophical excuse for his delay with the publication; nevertheless, the text attests again to the firm place of the *furor poeticus* in his *vates*-ideology as well as to his penchant to place the poet's work in a cosmic context, drawing on the Platonic-Ficinian tradition.

Turning to the woodcuts, I make first a comment on a basic structural element of the *Philosophia*-woodcut (fig. 3), the wreath that connects the medallions representing the *translatio studii*. This woodcut by Celtis and Dürer comprises in great density some basic aspects of the comprehensive concept of philosophy / poetry. Poetic frenzy was seen as essential for true poetry; is it somehow involved in the woodcut, too?

In the scholarly investigation of the wreath made from four plants, the main trend has been to explain the choice of the plants with the four elements represented by the four wind-heads in the corners, and this correspondence was supposed to help in the very identification of the two plants to the right of the receiver the identity of which has been dubious. Luh seems to have said the final word in this respect. Following Lottlisa Behling,⁹⁵ Luh has argued that Celtis's main intention was to incorporate the world of plants in his tetradic system, and in choosing plants corresponding to the elements, he drew from the *De vegetabilibus*⁹⁶ of Albert the Great (himself represented in the woodcut, and admired in many Celtis-poems), according to which different elements dominate in the *complexio* of the different plants. Thus the fire of *Eurus* corresponds to the fiery wine made from the grape (upper left part of the wreath), *Boreas* and earth to the terrestrial oak-tree (lower left), *Auster* and water to the hydrophile

⁹² III,21 (ed. Clark and Kaske).

⁹³ Theol. Plat. (ed. Hankins) XIII,4,3-5; S. Koder, "Ingenium.' Marsilio Ficino über die menschliche Kreativität," in *Platon, Plotin und Marsilio Ficino: Studien zu den Vorläufern und zur Rezeption des Florentiner Neuplatonismus; internationales Symposium in Wien, 25- 27 Oktober 2007*, ed. M. C. Leitgeb (Vienna: ÖAW, 2009), esp. 156-8.

⁹⁴ See p. 52.

⁹⁵ Before Luh, the most detailed interpretation of the plants of the wreath was L. Behling, "Betrachtungen zu einigen Dürer-Pflanzen," *Pantheon* 23 (1965), 284-7.

⁹⁶ *De vegetabilibus libri VII*, ed. K. Jessen (Berlin, 1867).

plane-tree⁹⁷ (lower right), and *Zephyrus* and air to the moist and warm olive (upper right); the relevant *De vegetabilibus*-passages cited by Luh in each case prove that Celtis really had sound reason to think that the indicated plants had the indicated quality.⁹⁸ However, Luh does not explain why exactly these specific plants were chosen,⁹⁹ and the the identification of the upper right plant as olive has no firm grounds. Both problem is solved if one attempts to justify the choice of the plants with the idea of poetic frenzy and divine inspiration.

Already classical poets or their gods were referred to as wearing a wreath made from certain plants, most frequently laurel and ivy (for Apollo and Bacchus), and in general, the whole ideological context of the woodcut, as well as the general significance of laureation in Celtis, suggest that it may be worth investigating whether the plants somehow symbolize the divine support of poetry. The vines and grapes can be naturally related to Bacchus, one of the gods of poetical inspiration in the Renaissance in general and in Celtis in particular;¹⁰⁰ examples will follow in this subchapter. The oak can be related to the oracle of Zeus / Jupiter in Dodona, referred to in Tolhopf's coat-of-arms as well; Celtis, too, may have been inspired by the *Phaedrus*-passage that refers both to the Delphic Pythia and the priestesses of Dodona in the context of divine frenzy.¹⁰¹ (In Laurentius Corvinus's *Carmen... de novem musis*, modeled to a great extent after Celtis's *Poema ad Fridericum*, the *locus amoenus* where the poet enters is called Jupiter's grove,¹⁰² which might be a reference to Dodona; in general, the motif of the inspiring *locus amoenus* outside the city roots in Platonic tradition, discussed in the following.) The plane-tree¹⁰³ reminds anyone acquainted with the theoretical tradition of frenzy, of Socrates's frenzy under the plane-tree in a *locus amoenus*,¹⁰⁴ already mentioned in the discussion of Augustinus Moravus's *Dialogus*. Cicero have also remembered the plane-tree in the context of Socrates's inspiration,¹⁰⁵ and Ficino mused at length on the scene in the *Phaedrus*-commentary, considering the place to be a sacred grove, and trying to link

⁹⁷ Lat. *Platanus*; in the Renaissance no distinction was made between maple and plane-tree (Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 97).

⁹⁸ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 93-98.

⁹⁹ The fiery wine occurs elsewhere, too, in Celtis's poetry; Ficino and others praise the olive for its healthy properties; the oak were related to Northern-Europe already in antiquity; however, these heterogeneous remarks of Luh do no make out a comprehensive explanation for the choice of the plants.

¹⁰⁰ See below in this subchapter.

¹⁰¹ *Phaedrus* 244A.

¹⁰² *Carmen... de novem musis*, 3-4: *Sole fatigatus querna cum fronde virentem / Intravi lucum, Iuppiter alme, tuum.* (J. Krókowski, "Laurentii Corvini poetae Silesii carmina duo," in *Charisteria Th. Sinko Oblata*, ed. K. F. Kumaniecki (Warsawa, 1951).

¹⁰³ The identification of the plant by E. Panofsky (*The Art and Life of Albrecht Dürer*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1948, 163) and others as water-ranunculus is false: Behling ("Betrachtungen," 286) and Luh (*Werkausgabe*, 96-97) have demonstrated that it is ahorn.

¹⁰⁴ In *Phaedrus* 238C-D, Socrates himself alleges that he is enraptured; the shady plane-tree and the *locus amoenus* around it is praised in 229A, 230B, 236D.

¹⁰⁵ *De oratore* I,28.

Socrates's rapture to a number of deities or daemons.¹⁰⁶ Augustinus Moravus similarly staged his characters in a *locus amoenus* with brook and plane-tree, outside the city, and similarly presented them as if enraptured by the end of the *Dialogus*. The upper right plant has been identified as laurel,¹⁰⁷ lily-of-the-valley (*Convallaria majalis*, *Maiglöckchen*)¹⁰⁸ or olive (*Olea europaea*).¹⁰⁹ Of these three plants, it is in fact the laurel-leaves to which the represented leaves are the most similar: the leaves of the olive are definitely thinner, and the leaves of the lily-of-the-valley are more longish, too. Furthermore, the leaves on the woodcut highly resemble to laurel-leaves in other Celtis-related woodcuts, as in the *Insignia poetarum*¹¹⁰ of the *Rhapsodia* (fig. 18). And indeed, what other plant is more suitable to express the idea of poetical inspiration than the laurel? As discussed in the previous chapter, Celtis used creatively the idea of divine inspiration in his own laureation-ideology, and the laurel-tree is a central element of the “Parnassus” woodcut, the main subject of which is the poetical inspiration. In the foregoing interpretation of the wreath, the medallions, too, find their place: in the course of the *translatio studii*, the *philosophi* inspire one another.¹¹¹ Luh's idea about the olive is forced, it is simply the result of the scholar's intention of corresponding the plants to the elements; this is also true for Behling's idea about the lily-of-the-valley (anyway, Celtis himself was not too strict in the application of his systems of correspondences). Celtis did not have such an intention, but it could be overwritten by his primary concern in the choice of the plants, the idea of poetical inspiration; even if the “fiery” character of the laurel did not exactly fit the sanguinic *Zephyrus*, Apollo's laurel – just as Bacchus's grape, likewise fiery – could not be left out from a wreath representing poetical inspiration in the first place. The blowing wind-heads in the corners are traditional iconographic motifs, but they also fit well in the context of poetical frenzy.¹¹²

¹⁰⁶ Allen, *The Platonism*, 3-40. Landino, too, took over the *Phaedrus*-scenery in *Disputationes Camaldulenses*, I (Svoboda, “Il dialogo,” 39).

¹⁰⁷ E.g. Panofsky, *The Art*, 163.

¹⁰⁸ Behling, “Betrachtungen,” 286.

¹⁰⁹ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 96; also Luh admits that the leaves may be interpreted as laurel-leaves.

¹¹⁰ *Rhapsodia*-edition, f. b1v.

¹¹¹ This is, of course, another kind of inspiration than the *furor poeticus*, nevertheless, the idea of transmission of divine wisdom through human media is the same. The idea that inspiration may come as a consequence of reading the works of the divinely inspired authors becomes explicit e.g. in Vadianus's *De poetica* (ed. Schäffer), I, p. 244 (Steppich, ‘*Numine*,’ 268-9).

¹¹² There are examples for the wind as metaphor for divine inspiration. One of the components in a metaphor in Dante about poetical inspiration is Minerva as a wind that drives the poet's boat on (Par. II,8-9; Steppich, ‘*Numine*,’ 107 n. 104). Ficino identifies Boreas as the breath of divine inspiration in the context of the *Phaedrus*-scene about Socrates's frenzy where he also mentions the altar of Boreas (Allen, *The Platonism*, 5).



Fig. 18. *Insignia poetarum* from the *Rhapsodia*-print.

For the next discussions of Celtis-related woodcuts a brief overview of one branch of Bacchic symbolism, *Dionysos / Bacchus as a god of poetical inspiration*, is necessary. Given the frequency of feasts and wine-drinking in Celtis's sodalities (discussed below in more detail), it is not surprising that our humanists caught up the idea of Bacchus as an inspirational deity. The idea had been evolving gradually.¹¹³ In the Greek world, Dionysos was the god of stage plays. Plato compared poetical rapture to that of the Bacchantes;¹¹⁴ on the other hand Bacchus, together with Apollo and the muses, helped people relax with the help of music and dance.¹¹⁵ It was only in Roman poetry that Bacchus clearly appeared as a god of (lyrical) poets. Horace was sometimes quite enthusiastic about how Bacchus can teach him poetry through inspiration;¹¹⁶ Propertius and Ovid referred to him as an inspirer or protector of

¹¹³ For an overview of Bacchus-traditions up to the Renaissance cf. A. Emmerling-Skala. *Bacchus in der Renaissance* (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1994). For the Renaissance, cf. also P. P. Bober, "Appropriation Contexts: Decor, Furor Bacchicus, Convivium," in *Antiquity and Its Interpreters*, ed. A. Payne et al. (Cambridge: University Press, 2000), 229-243.

¹¹⁴ *Ion* 534 A

¹¹⁵ *Laws* 653 D.

¹¹⁶ *Carm.* II,19,1-4; III,25.

poetry.¹¹⁷ Another branch of tradition began with the pairing or indeed identification of Apollo and Bacchus. Macrobius, building on the identification made by Plutarch, made Apollo the day-side and Liber / Bacchus the night-side of the same god, who dwelled on Mount Parnassus.¹¹⁸ These classical – late antique ideas of Bacchus as god of inspiration developed further in Italian Renaissance literature¹¹⁹ and philosophy, notably in Florentine Platonism. In Plato's and Ficino's system of the four frenzies, the mystery belonged to Bacchus; for Ficino and Pico, Bacchus was a means of knowing God.¹²⁰ As will be seen, the Apollo-Bacchus identification appears in more than one version in Ficino.

Naturally, this ambivalent god was assessed differently in different works and periods. In the Middle Ages, his negative role as drunkard, immoral wine-god came to the front, while the Renaissance revival of the “triumph of Bacchus” and other traditions made the overall picture more balanced again. In Celtis, the ambivalence can be felt all the more since both the “immoral” and the “poetical” Bacchus figures large in his poetry. Wine can both elevate and deprave us. Epigram II,21¹²¹ sharply opposes the negative effects, which one witnesses in the present, to the benefits of the wine, which the poet attaches here to the remote past;¹²² interestingly, it is not the extent of wine consuming the effects depend on but the purity of the wine. When only the depraving effects are mentioned, Bacchus is often paired with Venus, and the immoral way of life hallmarked by these two deities is projected to various persons and folks: contemporary Germans, Poles and so on.¹²³ Less commonplace-like and more conspicuous are those *loci* where Bacchus appears in his inspiring role; in the following only these will be discussed. When Celtis does not apply the wine-motif in a satirical context, the liquor itself reminds the poet of its most blessed property, its inspiring effect: when writing about a wine cellar,¹²⁴ about Dalberg's, his patron's wine,¹²⁵ or about the vineyards on the

¹¹⁷ Prop. II,30,38; III,2,7; III,17; IV,1,62; Ov. Fast. III,790.

¹¹⁸ Macr. Sat. I,18; Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 230. About the Greek, Roman and Renaissance tradition of this identification cf. E. Panofsky, “The Subject of the Stockholm Painting: ‘Bacchus, Master, Lover of the Laurel,’” in id., *A Mythological Painting by Poussin in the Nationalmuseum Stockholm* (Stockholm: Norstedt, 1960), 37ff. The two identical gods could appear as a *numen mixtum*, as in Lucan, *Pharsalia* V,73-74: *mons Phoebo Bromioque sacer, cui numine mixto / Delphica Thebanae referunt trieterica Bacchae*.

¹¹⁹ Cf. the Bacchus-hymns of M. A. Flaminio, Marullo etc. (cf. Emmerling-Skala, *Bacchus*, 234f).

¹²⁰ *Phaedrus* 265B; *Ion*-comm. (ed., tr. Allen), p. 196; De hom. dign. 20 (*De hominis dignitate, Heptaplus, De ente et uno, e scritti vari*, ed. E. Garin, Florence: Vallecchi, 1942).

¹²¹ *De caristia vini per Germaniam*.

¹²² As for the benefits of the wine, the epigram draws on Horace's ode III,21, with textual similia in some cases.

¹²³ Examples for both Bacchus and Venus in a negative role: Am. II,8,14; II,9,48; IV,8,42; IV,9,48-60; Od. II,12,18.

¹²⁴ Ep. III. 85 *In cellam vinariam: Bacche, veni trustes abigens de pectore curas, / Ut tribuas nostris carmina docta lyris*.

¹²⁵ Ep. III,35.

banks of the Rhine,¹²⁶ he mentions that this liquor gives “power of the talent (*ingenium*)” or “produces poems.” One can find similar verses in Celtis’s two panegyric plays, the *Ludus Dianae* and the *Rhapsodia*, both of which have Bacchus appear on the stage.¹²⁷ Another appraisal is involved in the title page of *Melopoiae* (discussed at the end of this subchapter).

Furthermore, Celtis drew on the tradition which linked both Bacchus and Phoebus to the Sun; thus Bacchus, too, could be involved to some extent in a cosmic context. Celtis composed a hymn to Bacchus (Od. III,12) in which the poet praises his inspiring and healing powers, and supplicates for rich grape yield. Bacchus’s strong affinity to Phoebus is stated in the very first strophe:

*O Bacche, Phoebi candidior comes,
cornuta cingens tempora pampino.
Qui vatibus docto liquore
ingenium vegetas amoenum...*

Oh Bacchus, the bright(er) companion of
Phoebus, wearing ivy around the horned temples,
you, who enhance the poets’ charming genius
with learned liquor...

The motif of the poets’ ivy-wreath, as it appears in line 2, corresponds to a line in Horace’s Bacchus-ode,¹²⁸ and the motif recurs at the end of Celtis’s ode,¹²⁹ this time in a wording that comes from the Bacchus-hymn of Seneca’s *Oedipus*.¹³⁰ In this latter passage Bacchus appears partly as a celestial phenomenon: “Bright glory of the sky,” “with thy star-bright countenance drive away the clouds.”¹³¹ The first line of Celtis’s ode, too, has a celestial atmosphere. The pairing of Phoebus and Bacchus clearly builds on the tradition that unites the two as a Sun-god, and the adjective *candidus* (“bright, shining, pure”)¹³² also approaches Bacchus to the heavenly spheres, though it is uncertain whom the author compares the god to.¹³³ The expression *Phoebi comes* makes it probable that Ficino’s version of the Phoebus-Bacchus pairing could be Celtis’s main source.¹³⁴ As Ficino’s *De vita* reads,

¹²⁶ Od. II,26,13-14, about the banks of the Rhine: *Bacchi quae pia munera sudant, / ingenii vires qui fert, et pectoris artes, / laetitiam et potoribus auget.*

¹²⁷ *Ludus*, v. 161-2: *Bacchus nunc vocitor laetitiae dator / Impellens animos scribere carmina.* (*Ludus Dianae*, Nuremberg: H. Hölzel, 1501.) *Rhapsodia*, v. 26-27: *Nec me deesse decet, circum qui salto Camenas / Inspirans pateris carmina docta meis.*

¹²⁸ Hor. Carm. III,25,20 ...*cingentem viridi tempora pampino.*

¹²⁹ V. 39-40: *dum barbiton frons lata cantat / pampineis redimita sertis.*

¹³⁰ Sen. Oed. 430: *pampineis redimitus tempora certis.* Beyond the poems of Horace and Seneca, Nemesianus’s third eclogue was another important source of Celtis’s ode (*Humanistische*, 967).

¹³¹ Tr. F. J. Miller; v. 405: *lucidum caeli decus*; v. 410: *vultu sidereo discute nubila.*

¹³² Cf. v. 503 in the same choir-part of Seneca’s *Oedipus*: *candida formosi venerabimur ora Lyaei.*

¹³³ In a cosmic context, it might be Mercury, the Sun’s ordinary companion (the distance between Mercury and the Sun is never more than 45°), whom Bacchus surpasses in brightness; on a mythological level, the muses were also often called Phoebus’s *comites*.

¹³⁴ Discussing the ode, Steppich (*‘Numine,’* 355) has already referred to the two *De vita*-passages, without further comment.

...Phoebus and Bacchus are brothers and inseparable companions. Phoebus brings us principally two things, namely light and the lyre; just so, Bacchus brings us principally two things in particular, wine and the odor of wine to renew the spirit, by the daily use of which the spirit finally becomes Phoebean and liberated [pun on Bacchus as Liber].¹³⁵

Elsewhere in the *De vita* Ficino details how the two deities represent just two aspects of the same Sun.¹³⁶ Bacchus and Phoebus could be variously combined. According to the latter *De vita*-passage, Bacchus is the Sun as “the creator of wine,”¹³⁷ because the Sun ripens the grape in fall. In his *Norimberga*, Celtis states that it is “the stars and the ornament of the world, Phoebus” that ripens the pure wine;¹³⁸ he opposes this to the falsified wine that was produced in Nuremberg, and about which the above discussed Celtis-ode also complains (v. 21-24).¹³⁹ It is the spirit of Phoebus that dwells in the wine; this, too, is a way of relating the wine to the celestial spheres. Otherwise, Celtis pairs Phoebus and Bacchus explicitly several times, for instance in some poems about his birthday-feast.¹⁴⁰

Bacchus could also appear in the sources as a god personally related to Celtis. In a 1496 letter Ulsenius expresses his wish to have a great festive banquet at Celtis’s place, whom he calls “a not ignoble (or: not spiritless) priest of Bacchus and Phoebus.”¹⁴¹ To be sure, the way he stylizes is facetious: the term *orgia* originally meant secret Bacchic rites, and the expression *Bachi sacerdos* occurs in other letters in an ironical context, referring, among others, to the love of wine the person in question exhibits.¹⁴² On the other hand, Celtis was linked to this god in an official context in at least one case: in 1503 he was a special guest at a Baccalaureus graduation in Wittemberg, and at the end of the festive speech Nikolaus Marschalk styled him *Dionysius Celtis Hercynius, philosophus acutissimus*.¹⁴³ The “Bacchic” component of Celtis’s poetical profile goes back to Celtis himself. We have already seen how the lyrical subject can define his identity through the circumstances of birth, and the Bacchic

¹³⁵ *De vita* (ed., tr. Clark and Kaske) III. 24: *Fratres certe sunt individuique comites Phoebus atque Bacchus. Ille quidem duo potissimum vobis affert: lumen videlicet atque lyram; hic item praecipue duo: vinum odoremque vini ad spiritum recreandum, quorum usu quotidiano spiritus ipse tandem Phoebeus evadit et liber.* Cf. also his discussion of the four *furores* in the *Phaedrus*-commentary (OO p. 1375), about the united power of Apollo and Dionysus.

¹³⁶ *De vita* (ed. Clark and Kaske) II,20.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*: ...*Sol idem, auctor vini, Bacchus existit.*

¹³⁸ *Norim.* p. 15: *naturae munus et quo non aliud praestantius sidera ipsa ornamentumque mundi, Phebus, excoquit.*

¹³⁹ *Humanistische*, 967.

¹⁴⁰ E. g. in *Od.* app. 1,15-16, or *Am.* III,12,33-38; cf. also the subchapter about the birthday-poems.

¹⁴¹ *BW* p. 226: ...*Cimbricum divortium per cumulatissimam orgiam apud te celebrare intendo, Bachi et Phoebi non ignavam sacerdotem.*

¹⁴² Cf. Ulsenius’s 1494 letter (*BW* no. 79 p. 131) about a drunkard teacher, *Bachi non minus quam Phoebi pontifex*; or Finkh’s 1492 letter (*BW* no. 26 p. 47) where he speaks about Stabius as *Bachi fidus sacerdos*. Cf. also G. Nitsch’s reference to another member of the Olomouc circle (*BW* no. 281 p. 511), Marcus Rustinimicus, *bacchanalia mirifice celebrans in dies magis ac magis* (Wörster, “Humanismus,” 50).

¹⁴³ Wuttke, “Conradus Celtis Protucius,” 187-8.

landscape with the vineyards formed an integral part of the *locus amoenus* that Celtis presented several times as his place of birth; according to the “ode to his birth place,” Celtis, born “among Bacchic hills,” often praised Bacchus and Minerva on his lyre.¹⁴⁴

In conclusion, Bacchus figures in a predominantly positive role in Celtis’s poetry; the topos of Bacchus as god of inspiration appears in various versions and relatively often. From other humanists around Celtis, too, several examples could have been mentioned, from the topos of Bacchus finding a new home in the north (together with Apollo)¹⁴⁵ to Vadianus’s *florilegium* concerning the inspiring effect of Bacchus and the wine.¹⁴⁶ Paired with Phoebus, Bacchus was also involved in Celtis’s literary (self-)representation, though to a lesser extent and often in a facetious context. From a biographical perspective, the appraisal of Bacchus perfectly mirrors an important characteristic of the sodalities, the frequent feasts and the popularity of wine among them.

Apollo, Bacchus, related deities and symbols of inspiration are all involved in the “Mount Parnassus” woodcut (fig. 19), of which Luh has provided a thorough iconographical analysis;¹⁴⁷ I will only highlight one more aspect to enrich the possibilities of interpretation. Although the woodcut appeared in two Celtis-related works published in 1507, the *Melopoiae*- and the *Ligurinus*-editions,¹⁴⁸ it demonstrably belonged originally to the woodcuts made in Nuremberg before the 1502 *Amores*-edition and was a counterpart of the “Apollo and Daphne” woodcut, where Daphne, chased by Apollo, is changing into a laurel-tree.¹⁴⁹ The scene on “*Mons Parnassus*” heavily draws on literary and iconographical traditions concerning the singing-playing Apollo, the muses and most of the deities and symbols seen in the image; representations of Mount Parnassus that “absorbed” the mounts Helicon and Cythæron have an own history from Lucanus or Servius through Petrarch, Boccaccio and other Renaissance authors.¹⁵⁰ The main peculiarity of the woodcut is the spectacular differentiation of two aspects of inspiration: the right side of the image (to the left of the

¹⁴⁴ Od. IV,8 *Ad locum suae nativitatis*, 1-8: *Bacchicos inter generatus olim et / Francicos colles, ubi Moenus altis / flectitur ripis, et aprica silvis / culmina vestit. / Hic ego Bacchum, nitidam et Minervam / barbito molli cecini frequenter, / vallibus dulcis mihi voce ubi re- / sponderat echo.* Cf. also Am. I,12,53-60.

¹⁴⁵ E. g. in Longinus’s *Panegyricus* to Maximilian (in the *Amores*-edition, f. q8v–r1r) or Laurentius Corvinus, *Ad Bacchum*, in *Carminum structura* c2r–v.

¹⁴⁶ *De poetica* (ed. Schäffer) I,210-4.

¹⁴⁷ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 220-238.

¹⁴⁸ In the *Melopoiae*-edition, f. [3r], and in some exemplars of the *Ligurinus*-edition: Gunther (von Pairis), *Ligurini de gestis Imp. Caesaris Friderici primi augusti libri decem*, ed. C. Celtis (Augsburg, 1507), f. m6r. Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 210.

¹⁴⁹ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 210.

¹⁵⁰ Luh, just as many other art historians, draws heavily on E. Schröter, *Die Ikonographie des Themas Parnassus vor Rafaell. Die Schrift- und Bildtraditionen von der Spätantike bis zum fünfzehnten Jahrhundert* (Hildesheim / New York: Olms, 1977).



Fig. 19. The “Apollo on Mount Parnassus” woodcut from the *Melopoiae*-print.

receiver) represents musaic deities of poetry and arts, while their counterparts on the left are deities of nature. Based on the above mentioned Mount Parnassus tradition and the three elegiac couplets of the *superscriptio*, the two sides can be called the Phoebian and the Bacchic aspects; Apollo himself, however, is actually seated in the center of the image under a “*laurus obumbrans*” (“laurel-tree providing shade”), singing and playing the *lyra da braccio*. To his left, Diana and her temple can be seen on the top, ruling over a scene from the Actaeon-myth, the satyres or fauns with instruments, the “*Oreades*” and “*Dryades*,” the sleeping Bacchus, and the drinking Silenus riding an ass; divine knowledge about the secrets of nature was attributed to these deities of nature in antiquity. Diana as ruler of nymphs or nature-deities in general is classical tradition, and the main source of the whole scene is a passage in Petrarch’s *Africa* (III,224-231), the *ekphrasis* of the dancing Diana and her followers. The scene to Apollo’s right is ruled by Minerva and her temple, under her the nine muses play their instruments, the muses’ fountain is spurting its inspiring waters, and the flying Pegasus (his representation similar to that of the constellation *Equus*) touches the fountain’s shell. Minerva’s leading role among the muses is quite unusual, but classical references by Ovid or Martianus Capella can support it.¹⁵¹ The whole woodcut, centered around Apollo himself as an enraptured singer and lyre-player, expresses in a most direct way Celtis’s ideal of poetical production¹⁵² supported by divine inspiration.

The peculiar contrast and parallelism between the Phoebian and Bacchic aspects of inspiration is rendered perceptible by the correspondence of each components on the same level: Minerva and Diana, both closely related to Apollo; the muses and the fauns or satyres, both identified with the nymphs already in antiquity;¹⁵³ inspiring water and wine; winged horse and ass. The most significant classical source for such a complementary relationship between Apollo and Bacchus comes from Macrobius: the *Saturnalia* identifies a number of gods with Apollo / the Sun, but it dwells especially long on the Apollo / Bacchus (Liber) identity, their rituals on Mount Parnassus, the astronomical explanation of the identification (Bacchus refers to the Sun at night, when it is in the lower hemisphere).¹⁵⁴ Luh has mentioned briefly the Macrobian idea, but he has not related it directly to the woodcut,¹⁵⁵ and instead he opined that Celtis contrasted the enjoyment of nature, wine and feasts with the hard path of

¹⁵¹ E.g. Ov. Fast. III,833 and 837; Met. V,250ff; Mart. Cap. VI,574. Petrarch’s *Africa* (III,156-173) provided patterns for the representation of Apollo and the muses on Mount Parnassus, too. Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 223-9.

¹⁵² Luh (ibid., 234): “Apoll aber ist das Vorbild poetischen Schaffens schlechthin...”

¹⁵³ Ibid., 221.

¹⁵⁴ Macr. Sat. I,18,1-24.

¹⁵⁵ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 230.

learning and wisdom, which is a misleading interpretation.¹⁵⁶ As seen above, Celtis often connected Phoebus and Bacchus, and Florentine Platonism seems to have contributed to the mediation of the idea of a complementary relationship between the two gods, involving their semi-divine followers.¹⁵⁷ The nocturnal aspect of Bacchus that had been occasionally highlighted in antiquity appears in Celtis mostly in the context of feasting and other joys of the night (in this context, he also used *Nyctelius*, “Nocturnal”, a relatively rare classical name of Bacchus¹⁵⁸). Diana is explicitly connected to night. In the woodcut, Diana has moon-horns (to be sure, this roots in classical tradition, Horace provides a prominent example in the *Carmen saeculare*¹⁵⁹), just as in the *Ludus Dianae*; as Luh has pointed out, this festive play, dominated by the same characters that can be seen to the left of Apollo, has much in common with the woodcut, including the outer appearance of the figures.¹⁶⁰ But if the woodcut can be divided to nocturnal and diurnal sides, it is possible to interpret Apollo in the center, turning his face to the right, as the rising Sun. There is no compelling evidence for such an interpretation, so this can be at most an implicit reference, nevertheless, there is at least one contemporary humanist who seems to have treated the woodcut in the context of the Phoebean / solar imagery about Celtis. In the *Melopoiae*-edition, the woodcut is preceded by paratexts that hail the power of music and poetry, represented by the edition itself, and hail its contributors (Celtis compares himself to Orpheus, among others¹⁶¹). In the last poem, Benedictus Chelidonius of Nuremberg, Celtis’s disciple (later abbot of the Scottish monastery at Vienna) expresses in three Sapphic strophes his gratitude and appreciation of his master and his books, which are full of deep meaning, elegance and beauty; at the end he summarizes his master’s inspiring impact on him: *furor meus es, poesis Auror[a] in arte*, “You are my

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 234-6. It is not the striving after knowledge that is usually contrasted to the joys of life and the *carpe diem* attitude in Celtis’s oeuvre, but the power of fate and anxiety about the future (also in the case of Od. I,29, Luh’s example); in fact, the knowledge of nature and the *rerum causas*, feasts and scholarly discussions all belong to the muses, to *otium*, contrasted to *negotium*. Cf. the subchapter about the Pythagorean-Platonic cosmological tradition.

¹⁵⁷ See above in this subchapter. For the the extension of the complementary relationship to the followers of the two gods, Ficino provides an example in the *Theologica Platonica*, where he analogizes the nine muses with nine particular “*Bacchi*”: these “together celebrate their ecstatic rites around the single figure of Apollo, that is, around the splendor of the invisible Sun.” Tr. M. J. B. Allen; Theol. Plat. (ed. Hankins) IV,1,28: ...*Quapropter apud Orpheum singulis Musis praeest Bacchus aliquis, quo vires illarum divinae cognitionis nectare ebriae designantur. Ideo Musae novem cum Bacchis novem circa unum Apollinem, id est circa splendorem solis invisibilis debacchantur. Sed haec de nominibus divinatorum animorum dicta sufficiant.*

¹⁵⁸ Od. II,13,14.

¹⁵⁹ V. 35: *siderum regina bicornis*. In Am. I,14,47 Celtis calls her *corniculata Cynthia* (Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 232).

¹⁶⁰ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 231.

¹⁶¹ In the title page, *Conradus Celtis ad musiphilos*, v. 7.

frenzy, the dawn / sunrise in the art of poetry.”¹⁶² There follows the woodcut on the opposite page.

Dawn and sunrise formed part of the symbolism of Renaissance as an age of cultural and general renewal;¹⁶³ Petrarch provides an early example in his *Africa*, where he yearns for the return of the daylight after the age of darkness and deep sleep¹⁶⁴ (that he calls elsewhere *medium aevum*, coining the term Middle Ages). Celtis used the symbolism of the returning Sun both in the context of day and night (in his birthday poems) and that of summer and winter.¹⁶⁵ In the beginning of the second book of Reuchlin’s *De verbo mirifico*, Capnion deliberately begins to speak just at sunrise.¹⁶⁶ The combination of *furor* and sunrise explicitly appears in Locher’s *Sapphicon*, an introductory poem to the *Stultifera navis*, a *recusatio*-poem about the abilities of the poet.¹⁶⁷ In the first three strophes the author accumulates in great density a number of well-known terms and topoi of the poetical / divinatory frenzy: as in other poems, Locher most explicitly expresses that only divine inspiration makes the poet, and he uses the rhetoric of the poet’s sacred, initiated status (*rebus externis procul hinc abactis... Delphica sensa... etc.*).¹⁶⁸ The next strophes are about the poet’s search for the *rerum causae*:

*Inclitus vates radios Eoi
Solis inquiri: refugasque stellas
Mente rimatur: numerisque condit
sidera coeli.
Saepe ventorum rabiem sonorum
Versibus pinguit: boreaeque flatus.
Frigida et septem numeris revolvit
Plaustra trionis.*

The glorious poet examines the rays of the morning Sun, explores with his mind the receding stars, and composes the stars of the heaven into songs.

He often depicts in verses the fury of the loud winds, the blowing of Boreas, and repeatedly sings about the cold northern Cart [the constellation Great Bear].

¹⁶² F. [2v], *Benedictus Chelidonius Norimber[gensis] ad C[onradum] Cel[tem]: Quamvis ad nigros rapiaris indos / Scu [sic!] legas plaustrum glacialis ursae / Solis ad casum properes vel ortum / Ut nova visas / Te tamen mecum teneo magistrum / Dum tui Celtis mihi sunt libelli / Quos frequens specto. lego. sed recondo / Cordis in archa / Regios ex iis vigilando sensus / Syllabae tempus: simul et decorem / Carminis furor: meus es poesis / Auror in arte.* Grammatically, the last strophe only makes sense if divided as follows: *Regios... carminis* as a participial clause belonging to *specto, lego, sed recondo*; *furor meus es; poesis [gen.] Auror[a] in arte* (scanning the poem, the final -a of *Aurora* falls out).

¹⁶³ J. Schlobach, *Zyklentheorie und Epochenmetaphorik. Studien zur bildlichen Sprache der Geschichtsreflexion in Frankreich von der Renaissance bis zur Frühaufklärung* (Munich: Fink, 1980), 79ff.

¹⁶⁴ Afr. IX,451-7 (Schlobach, *Zyklentheorie*, 79).

¹⁶⁵ See ch. VI,3 about Od. III,15 and Epod. 16.

¹⁶⁶ *De verbo mirifico* (ed. Ehlers), p. 140.

¹⁶⁷ *Sapphicon eiusdem philomusi: excusantis ingenii sui parvitatem*, in *Stultifera navis* (Basel: J. Bergmann von Olpe, 1498), a5r-a6r.

¹⁶⁸ V. 1-12: *Grandibus possunt numeris tonare / Quos facit Paeon celebres poetas: / Quos et aspirant tenerae camaenae / Numine sacro. / Mentis hi crasse tenebris fugatis: / Rebus externis procul hinc abactis. / In poli tendunt superos meatus / Pectore docto. / Flatibus sacris agitantur usque / Candidi vates: monimenta condunt / In quibus fulgent animi furentis / Delphica sensa.*

*Candidus vates rutilo sub ortu
Colligit versus: quia magna quaerit
Facta: scit causas varias latentis
Reddere mundi.*

The bright¹⁶⁹ poet collects his verses under the golden red sunrise, because he seeks great events; he is able to recover the various hidden causes in the world.

So the poet does well to make use of the rising Sun in order to sing about the *latentis causas* of the cosmos. Locher was certainly influenced by a passage of Ficino's *De vita*, according to which those who wake up with the sunrise can "explore things most acutely and write and compose their findings most eloquently", since the dawn and the approaching Sun arouses their blood and spirits.¹⁷⁰ Imagining a concrete quasi-ritual practice, Locher rendered most perceptible the solar aspect of the inspiring Phoebus, and connected it to the topos of the poet's search and singing about the cosmos, a theme that he could quite often hear and read from Celtis, his master in Ingolstadt.

In sum, the "Mount Parnassus" woodcut harmonizes with the Phoebus-centered *furor-topoi* of Celtis's poems and the Phoebean imagery in which there is a constant play of references between Phoebus as god of poetical inspiration, Phoebus as the Sun, Celtis as Arch-humanist, and occasionally the Phoebean patron.¹⁷¹ All the more so since in the counterpart of this woodcut in the *Melopoiae*-edition¹⁷² (Augsburg, 1507), the "Concert of gods" woodcut (fig. 20), Apollo, likewise placed in the center, appears demonstrably in a cosmic context. Luh,

¹⁶⁹ The primary meaning of the adjective *candidus* – "bright, radiant" – makes it a synonym of Phoebus (*phoibos*), which fits the cosmic context of the poem; on the other hand, *candidus* as "famous" may also be synonymous with *inclitus*, the most frequent adjective of *vates* in this poem.

¹⁷⁰ *De vita* (ed., tr. Clark and Kaske) I,7 p. 124: [1] *Principio tres planetae, quemadmodum in superioribus dicebamus, contemplationi et eloquentiae maxime favent: Sol, Venus atque Mercurius. Hi vero paribus ferme passibus concurrentes adventante nocte nos fugiunt, die vero vel propinquante vel iam surgente resurgunt nosque revisunt. Post vero Solis ortum in plagam coeli duodecimam, quae carceri tenebrisque ab astronomis assignatur, repente truduntur. Ergo non qui vel nocte, quando nos fugiunt, vel die post Solis ortum, quando carceris tenebrarumque domum intrans, sed qui vel propemodum petentibus ortum, vel iam surgentibus ad contemplandum scribendumque ipsi quoque consurgunt, ii soli acutissime speculantur, et eloquentissime inventa sua scribunt atque componunt. [2] Ratio secunda, scilicet ab elementis, est talis: oriente sole movetur aer tenuaturque et claret, occidente vero contra. Sanguis autem et spiritus motum qualitatemque aeris circumfusi naturaque similis sequi necessario compelluntur. [3] Tertia ratio, quae ab humoribus ducitur, est eiusmodi: in aurora movetur sanguis et regnat motuque tenuatur et cdescit et claret; spiritus vero sanguinem sequi imitarique solent. Verum accedente nocte melancholia illa crassior et frigidior atque pituita dominantur, quae spiritus ad speculandum ineptissimos proculdubio reddunt. [4] Quarta ratio, quae trahitur ab ordine rerum, haec erit: dies vigiliae, nox somno tributa est, quoniam cum Sol vel ad hemisphaerium nostrum accedit vel super ipsum incedit, radiis suis meatus corporis aperit, atque a centro ad circumferentiam humores spiritusque dilatat, quod quidem ad vigiliam actionesque excitat atque conducit. Cf. also the already cited passage of the *Commentarium in Plotinum*, OO p. 1745: *Solem Socrates orientem salutans ectasim saepe patiebatur: Orienti soli Pythagorici hymnos lyra canebant.**

¹⁷¹ Writing about the woodcut, McDonald ('*Orpheus*,' 188) remarks that Maximilian was also represented at least once as Apollo playing the *lyra da braccio*. Although this fact cannot be considered as an argument for the involvement of Maximilian in the interpretation of the woodcut, it is a further example for the interchangeability of the above mentioned elements of the Phoebean imagery.

¹⁷² See p. 70 n. 292.

who has analyzed this woodcut in sufficient detail,¹⁷³ has convincingly argued that it must have been made before 1502, together with the other *Amores*-related woodcuts,¹⁷⁴ and the similar features in contents (a divine concert, poetical inspiration) and form make it a counterpart of the “Mount Parnassus” (the “Concert of gods” appears on the last page, so the two woodcuts frame the musical material of the *Melopoiae*). Before summarizing Luh’s results, let us have a look at the upper text of the title page, shaped as a goblet and called “*crater Bachi* (the mixing bowl of Bacchus)” (fig. 21). According to the text, the *Melopoiae* with the odes set to music by Tritonius¹⁷⁵ (Celtis’s former disciple in Ingolstadt) was supervised, edited and published *ductu* (“under the lead / guidance of”) *Chunradi Celtis*, and indeed, the contents of the two woodcuts, the involvement of Celtis’s odes beside those of Horace in the musical material, and the paratexts written by or addressed to Celtis all attest to his decisive role in the edition; probably the whole title page was formulated by him. The lower part of the goblet, under a Sapphic strophe about the musical performance of the odes, reads: “Dear lover of the Muses, diligently observe the strophes [that is, the repetitions of the verses], the coming together of the syllables, and the joining and wedding of the feet for the passions of the mind and the motions and gestures of the body.”¹⁷⁶ McDonald has rightly observed that the text recalls Ficino’s theory about how the music affects the *spiritus* and thus the body of the hearer; beyond the letter cited by McDonald,¹⁷⁷ there are other related Ficino-passages, for instance the already mentioned *De vita*-chapter about the celestial influence on singing, in which the terms *affectus*, *gestus*, *motus* of the *animus* and *corpus* all occur.¹⁷⁸ Celtis’s words at the bottom of the goblet-form and the inscription *Crater Bachi* refer naturally to the idea of poetical-musical inspiration.¹⁷⁹ There may be several reasons why Celtis chose here Bacchus from among the gods of inspiration. The goblet-form is based on the Renaissance practice of triangle-shaped text-representation on title pages.¹⁸⁰ Bacchus is the counterpart of Apollo who is in the center of the woodcuts. Finally, this may be an

¹⁷³ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 247-268.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 250.

¹⁷⁵ The best summary of the life and work of Tritonius (Peter Treibenreif) seems to be Armin Brinzing’s article in the VH-DH.

¹⁷⁶ Tr. McDonald, ‘*Orpheus*,’ 183-4.

¹⁷⁷ Epist. to A. Canusianus *De Musica*, OO p. 651.

¹⁷⁸ *De vita* (ed., tr. Clark and Kaske) III,21, p. 358: *Memento vero cantum esse imitorem omnium potentissimum. Hic enim intentiones affectionesque animi imitatur et verba, refert quoque gestus motusque et actus hominum atque mores; tamque vehementer omnia imitatur et agit, ut ad eadem imitanda vel agenda tum cantantem, tum audientes subito provocet. Eadem quoque virtute quando coelestia imitatur, hinc quidem spiritum nostrum ad coelestem influxum, inde vero influxum ad spiritum mirifice provocat.*

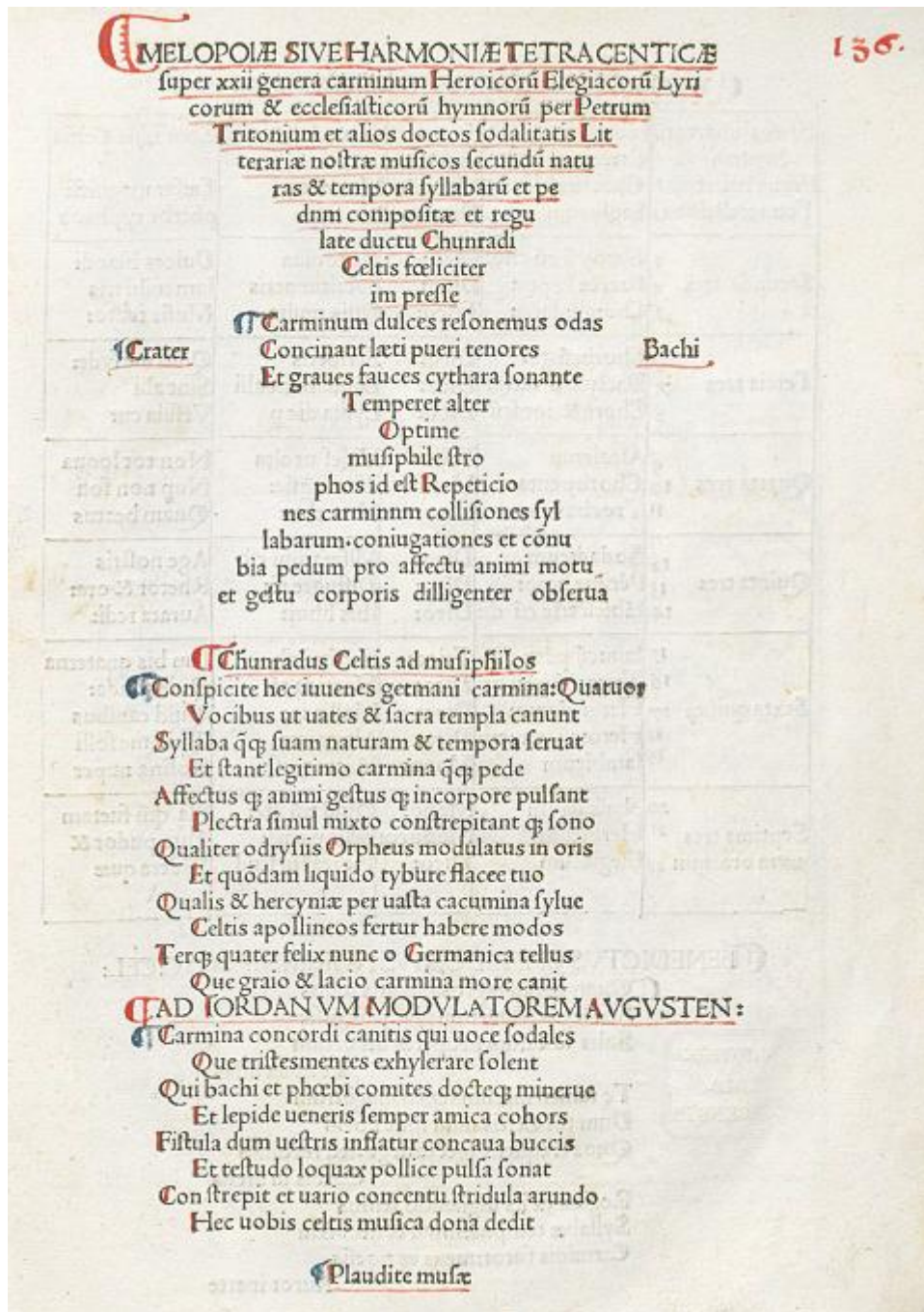
¹⁷⁹ McDonald (‘*Orpheus*,’ 181) mentions the Bacchic *furor mysterialis* as Ficino’s idea, although he was only a mediator of an ancient tradition, as discussed above.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. also the form of the title in the title page of the *Rhapsodia*-edition (VD 16 C 1897), highlighted with golden color in the exemplar of Wolfenbüttel, HAB.

implicit self-ironical reference to the intensive wine-consumption in Celtis's "*sodalitas Litteraria*," appearing in the same text; as in the case of other references to the inspiring effects of Bacchus's wine (see below the discussion of the golden bowl of Augustinus Moravus, made around the same time), the *iocosus* Celtis winks at the reader.



Fig. 20. The "Concert of gods" woodcut from the *Melopoiæ*-print.

Fig. 21. The title page of the *Melopoiaie*-print.

The influence of Florentine Platonism is demonstrable in the “Concert of gods” woodcut, too. Apollo is in the center of a double oval structure, this time he is playing the harp; the tripod next to him refers to the divinatory frenzy which is inseparable from the musical-poetical frenzy of the *vates*, and the inscription *Phebus* just behind his literally radiant head refers to his solar function. He is flanked by *Pallas* and *Mercurius*, both of whom are gods of art and *ingenium*. Above Phoebus is Jupiter, below him Pegasus opening the muses’ spring.

Edgar Wind has already referred to the Christian connotations of this arrangement:¹⁸¹ the reference to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit involves a further reference to the tradition of Ancient Theology, according to which Christianity is the last phase in the revelation of divine truths made before by a series of *vates*. The inspiration comes from heaven: on the top, Urania, the muse of astronomy / astrology can be seen, and Jupiter sends the inspiration from the clouds through Phoebus and Pegasus's spring to the poet, Celtis, represented by his coat-of-arms (the letters CCPP are formed like slits of a sound box). The central axis of the woodcut represents a version of the Ficinian chain of *furor*, according to which the inspiration comes from Jupiter through Apollo and the muses to the poet. Urania's place on the top, the clouds, the rays, the constellation-like representation of Pegasus, the three stars on the coat-of-arms all show the celestial origin of poetry / music. The nine muses playing different instruments are present in their multiple role as deities of poetry and music, philosophy and science, and as representants of the spheres. Even if there is no explicit reference to their cosmic aspect inside the nine medallions, this is evident from their circular arrangement around the central Phoebus, with Urania on the top, and from the other celestial symbols of the woodcut.¹⁸² Luh and the previous scholars have not realized that the muses are arranged according to a conscious pattern. If one reads the muses from the bottom to the top and from the left to the right, this results in the same order in which the muses of the *Rhapsodia* speak one after the other: Clio, Thalia, Melpomene, Euterpe, Polyhymnia, Erato, Terpsichore, Calliope, Urania. This specific order is based on the most standard order of the muses, that of Fulgentius, but Celtis modified it in a "cosmic" direction: the changes refer to Martianus Capella's order, who mediated the tradition of identifying the muses and the spheres.¹⁸³ With Erato and Thalia changing place, Clio and Thalia became the first two muses (Martianus Capella identified them with the Earth and the Moon), and with Calliope and Urania changing place, Urania, standing for the sphere of fixed stars, became the last and uppermost muse.

The idea of poetical inspiration receives emphasis in the "Imperial eagle" woodcut, too, as seen above. Poetry / philosophy is explicitly placed between the terrestrial and celestial regions, represented by the two wings of the eagle; and the muses' fountain is in the center of the whole image. Beyond the imperial symbols, it is even possible to interpret the central axis according to the pattern of the Ficinian chain of *furor*: under the heads of Jupiter's eagle Apollo / Maximilian sits on the throne, above the muses' fountain from which the inspiring

¹⁸¹ Wind, *Pagan Mysteries*, 242.

¹⁸² Luh's analysis of the woodcut: *Werkausgabe*, 247-268.

¹⁸³ Summarily about the different traditional orders of the muses: *ibid.*, 264 n. 79.

water flows down to the would-be poet / philosopher and the mythological representants of the arts. The muses' fountain also appears in "The author" woodcut.¹⁸⁴ Considering the Celtis-related visual sources made in the 1500s, it can be summarily stated that wherever poetry appears as a central issue, the idea of poetic frenzy is somehow represented, including the most famous and most comprehensive woodcut, the *Philosophia*.

After all, the suggestion of earlier scholars that Celtis was somehow less concerned with the idea of poetical inspiration than the contemporary German defenders of poetry cannot be maintained. Luh's characterization of the "Imperial eagle" woodcut as a "visual *apologia poetarum*"¹⁸⁵ applies more or less to the other woodcuts about poetry / philosophy, too: although they do not present the apologetical arguments and the idea of poetical frenzy as systematically as the theoretical writings of Lupinus or Augustinus Moravus, these woodcuts do defend poetry referring to the well-known arguments, including the idea of inspiration. As for the textual sources, Celtis did refer frequently to poetical frenzy as something indispensable for the poet, and he formulated the idea in many ways, using *furor* and other terms. Our survey has reinforced that suggestion of earlier scholars that in many cases Florentine Platonic elements of the *vates*-ideology appear, although not so explicitly as in Locher or Lupinus; in Florentine Platonism the cosmic dimensions of poetry were even more emphasized than in the classical – late antique tradition. In sum, Celtis's attitude to the idea of inspiration was perfectly in line with that of his fellow defenders of poetry, and the use of different media could only enhance the efficiency of spreading their ideas. What was specific in Celtis's ideology was his focus on Phoebus / the Sun as by far the most important symbol of inspiration, and this is in line with his general focus on Phoebus that was summarized in the previous subchapter.

3. Epiphanies of Apollo: Phoebean consecration of German humanists

A god appears before the poet, and initiates him into the secrets of good poetry: is there a more spectacular way of representing through fiction the divine origin of poetry? Humanists were inclined to play with mythological fiction and reality, to stage the mythological gods; many poets stood on the ground of what we called *vates*-ideology, and were inclined to a self-

¹⁸⁴ *Amores*-edition, f. a7r.

¹⁸⁵ Luh, *Reichsadler*, 93.

representation in compliance with it. Small wonder that a number of humanists applied the motif of Apollo appearing before and consecrating the poet. All the more since such epiphany-scenes rooted in classical tradition. As early as in the classical period of Greek literature, gods may have appeared in a dream or vision to consecrate the poet and / or to instruct him to compose in specific genres (similarly to the gods' repeated order to Socrates to deal with philosophy: see *Phaedrus* 60E);¹⁸⁶ the motivic tradition ramifies through Roman and – after Petrarch's *Africa* – through Renaissance poetry.¹⁸⁷ The motif of the warning and prohibiting Apollo¹⁸⁸ may be considered to represent the mainstream branch of the tradition. This originates in Callimachus, the hellenistic poet. In the prologue to his *Aetia*, Apollo visits him in a dream and sets metaphorical guidelines for his poetry: slender muse should be preferred to fat sheep, untrodden path to public road and so on (similar but stronger oppositions can be found in his Apollo-hymn).¹⁸⁹ In Roman poetry, the most important appearance of the Callimachean apologetical *recusatio*-topos is Propertius III,3. Propertius develops the motif to a scene (and duplicates the gods, staging Calliope after Apollo): in the poet's dream, Apollo appears to him in Mount Helicon, and warns him to compose love poems instead of heroic songs. Apollo represents the poet's personal talent rather than a general poetical ideal, as in Callimachus.¹⁹⁰

Considering the frequent Renaissance humanist propensity for symbols, (self-) mythologizing and mystification, it is unsurprising that the poet's consecration by Apollo is even more likely to appear as a quasi initiation, where the divine powers granted by the god are explicitly emphasized, and divine secrets are shared instead of just instructions concerning poetry. For instance, in certain Italian panegyric poems Apollo appears as god of poetry and divination, and enables the poet to sing the future great deeds of the patron.¹⁹¹ German humanists jumped at the motif all the more since they could connect earth and sky, the terrestrial and celestial spheres in one Phoebian scene. An Apollonic epiphany-poem gave opportunity, among others, to display cosmological aspects of Apollo and the muses, and to place the poet in a cosmic context. The power and divinity of poetry could be rendered

¹⁸⁶ A. Kambylis, *Die Dichterweihe und ihre Symbolik. Untersuchungen zu Hesiodos, Kallimachos, Properz und Ennius* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1965), 107.

¹⁸⁷ W. Suerbaum, *Untersuchungen zur Selbstdarstellung älterer Römischer Dichter* (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1968), 94.

¹⁸⁸ Summarily: Wimmel, *Kallimachos in Rom*, 135-141.

¹⁸⁹ *Aetia* I, frag. 1, v. 21-28; Apollo-hymn, v. 105ff.

¹⁹⁰ Wimmel, *Kallimachos in Rom*, 136. Some of the other appearances of the topos: Hor. Carm. IV,15,1ff.; Ov. *Ars amat.* II,493ff.; Nemesianus, *Cynegetica*, 5ff.

¹⁹¹ Balbi, Carm. 2 *De successibus et futuris victoriis Caroli Imperatoris et Ferdinandi Regis Vaticinatio*; Naldi, *Elegiae ad Laurentium Medicen* II, 6. Texts and edition data are available at www.poetitalia.it (15.05.2015).

palpable. What follows here is not a comprehensive survey of Phoebian epiphanies¹⁹² in German humanism around 1500, nevertheless I intend to point out that the application of the motif was considerable in the period. I focus on how the cosmic context appears in these poems, which mirror in great concentration a *vates*-ideology à la Celtis.

a. Phoebus appearing to Celtis, Locher and other German humanists

Probably none of the humanists used the motif of the Apollo-epiphany for idealistic self-representation, self-mythologizing to such an extent as Celtis did: in his *Poema ad Fridericum*, which introduces his whole poetical oeuvre (this is the first poem in the *Ars versificandi*), Apollo makes him a downright (re)founder of lyric poetry in general, and the cosmic phenomena that accompany the god's appearance allude even to John's Apocalypse. It is difficult to add anything to Robert's meticulous analysis of the poem;¹⁹³ in the following it will suffice to overview the elegy briefly with the help of Robert's interpretation and highlight the significance of the cosmic settings (see the full text of the elegy in Appendix I/1). The context one has to consider in the first place is the *Ars versificandi* itself: Apollo's present is the lore of *metra*, practically the contents of the *Ars versificandi*, while the poem itself – just as its counterpart, the *Ode ad Apollinem* – is supposed to be an exemplary piece of the recovered lyric poetry, as suggested by the sensuous description of nature, the composite adjectives and many other formal characteristics. The poem opens with the topical description of a hot summer. Our poet finds refuge from the Sun's heat in a pleasant and beautiful grove, a *locus amoenus* where a purling brook and shady trees inspire the *ingenium* to sing and play; suddenly Apollo appears, accompanied by deities of nature and wonderful music. The author develops the scene according to the literary tradition of the “warning and prohibiting Apollo;” the model to which Celtis's version is the closest is Propertius's elegy (III,3). However, it is not a problem of choice between poetical genres that Celtis's poem presents, as in Propertius's *recusatio*-elegy (elegiac instead of heroic poetry), but Apollo enables the poet to abandon a schoolish elegiac versification and make lyric poetry thrive through the adoption of the various metrical rules. Apollo and his music embodies lyrical poetry (Celtis and his contemporaries supposed that the odes of Horace, which exemplified the variety of lyric poetry in the first place, had had musical setting); on the other hand he fulfils his function as a god of divination through the revelation of a divine lore that will be used in the future. As

¹⁹² For convenience, I call the god's appearance to the poet an epiphany, whether he appears in a dream or a vision; sometimes it is deliberately left undecided whether it is a dream or a vision.

¹⁹³ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 25-41.

Phoebus details how and why the poet should adopt the rules of poetry, the author's narrow poetological perspective – determined by Ciceronian rhetoric and the *ars versificandi* tradition – becomes clear. In this early poem of Celtis, the idea of the inspired *vates* and the Orphic power of music / poetry appears only at a commonplace level, without the complexity of the tradition of Ancient Theology and Platonic-Ficinian divine inspiration. Still, the miraculous and sacred quality of the event is emphasized by all rhetorical means; such poems were not produced before, the revelation means a caesura in history, the author does not take into account the historical development of poetry.¹⁹⁴ When Phoebus disappears, the lyrical subject expresses his wish to know more about the *praecepta* of poetry. All at once a tempest comes with thunder and lightning, followed suddenly by genial weather and sunshine, and a book appears in front of the poet's eyes, containing the rules of metric poetry, as a sound from heaven reveals: a most direct reference to Celtis's *Ars versificandi*. In John's Apocalypse (10,8-11) a divine book appeared in similar circumstances; and the urge of the heavenly sound to spread the book through printing is parallel to the angel's urge in John's Apocalypse to spread the verb. (Another biblical model could be Exod. 19,16ff., the giving of the Law to Moses after a windstorm.) The poem ends with the praise of the dedicatee, Frederick the Wise, through the description of his nativity, discussed above.¹⁹⁵

As Robert has already remarked,¹⁹⁶ the summer as the setting of the elegy represents the full power of Apollo as Sun-god:¹⁹⁷

*Aestifer aethereo rutilat modo Cancer Olympo
Et canis aestivo corpora sole gravat.
Torrida vulnificis pandit Leo rictibus ora,
Fervet et ignivomas quassat in orbe iugas.*¹⁹⁸

The summer-bringing Cancer shines now glowing in the ethereal heaven, and the dog [the constellation *Canicula*] plagues the bodies with its summer heat. The Lion opens wide his parched mouth, his wounding jaws; he rages and shakes his fire-spitting mane into the world.

Then follows the description of the harvest. The astronomical paraphrase as a means of *amplificatio* belonged to the abilities required from the *poeta doctus* (as for the *similia* of the Celtis-passage, the author has drawn primarily from classical astronomical literature¹⁹⁹), but

¹⁹⁴ V. 39: *Carmina Pieridum nulli celebrata priorum*. In his article with the same quotation in the title, Robert has contextualized further this aspect of the *Poema ad Fridericum*.

¹⁹⁵ See p. 143.

¹⁹⁶ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 26 n. 44.

¹⁹⁷ Celtis has a whole ode addressed to Phoebus and his summer heat (IV,7).

¹⁹⁸ V. 1-4.

¹⁹⁹ Robert (*Konrad Celtis*, 26 n. 44) has already noted Manil. III,625-636, with *Cancer, Ceres*, hexameter-ending *Olympo*. Furthermore, the passage – especially the first word – reminds one of Cicero's translation of Aratus's *Phaenomena*, v. 320-2: *Aestifer est, pandens ferventia sidera, Cancer. / Hunc subter fulgens cedit vis torva Leonis, / Quem rutilo sequitur conlucens corpore Virgo*. (The *Falcifera dea* in v. 6 of the Celtis-elegy refers to

the cosmological dimensions gain a new significance in the context of the Apollo-epiphany. The last part of the poem has an astrological context, so the cosmological frameworks of the *Poema ad Fridericum* is rendered palpable by its structure;²⁰⁰ the cosmological / universal and the poetical / individual are intertwined, and the Phoebean affiliation of both poet and patron are referred to. The cosmic perspective of the poem is strengthened by the concomitant phenomena of the epiphany itself, the storm, the lightnings and the sunshine after that, which symbolize a purifying renewal, too; in terms of Greek-Roman mythology, they refer to Jupiter and Apollo.

The elegy of Celtis, a young teacher of poetry in Leipzig, at the beginning of his *Ars versificandi* is a spectacular self-introduction – maybe too spectacular, even considering that it is based on the literary tradition of Apollo-epiphanies. He claims for himself most explicitly a missionary role and a sacred *vates*-aura before his laureation and his whole career, and he does this with a work that is mostly a compilation of earlier grammatical-poetological works, so anything else than a revelative work standing above historical development. Scholars have rightly made critical remarks: according to Schäfer, the parallel with the scene in John’s Apocalypse “feels almost blasphemic,”²⁰¹ and the tension between the narrow poetological horizon of the work (the focus on *metrum*) and the elevation of the *vates* to prophetic and cosmic dimensions has already been noted by Stejskal²⁰² and repeatedly pointed out by Robert. At any rate, the Phoebus-epiphany is most characteristic of the oeuvre of Celtis who emphasized his Phoebean affiliation by all means; a similar epiphany occurs in *Amores* I,3, in one of the central scenes of the cycle, where Celtis receives his quest to wander through *Germania* and formulate his experience *carmine Phoebo*.²⁰³

In *Amores* I,3 (full text in Appendix I/2), Phoebus as the Sun appears as early as the opening of the elegy, and this opening has more significance than the topical indication of the Sun’s position in many Celtis-poems. It is spring:

<i>Tempus erat, pluvio dum Phoebus surgit in austro Phrixaeaque petit sidera blandus ovis,</i>	It was the time when Apollo climbs up from the rainy south and sweetly seeks the stars of
--	--

Ceres as goddess of grain crops, but it might also implicitly refer to Virgo as representant of August, the third month of summer, since Virgo is identified with Ceres in Manilius’s often used system of correspondence between the Olympian gods and the zodiacal signs.)

²⁰⁰ Interestingly, a similar combination of solar-astronomical and horoscopic structural units occurs in *Amores* II,5, entitled *Ad Elsulam Noricam cum horoscopo suo stellas de prima magnitudine commemorans et signum aestivum*: in the description of summer at the beginning, Celtis paraphrases himself, taking over whole lines from the *Poema ad Fridericum*; at the end the author outlines Elsula’s already discussed fictive nativity, where the position of the Sun relates to Celtis as *cultor Phoebi*.

²⁰¹ Schäfer, “Ode an Apoll,” 84.

²⁰² Stejskal, *Die Gestalt*, 72.

²⁰³ Am. I,3,19-74; *carmine Phoebo* in v. 68.

*Iuppiter ad gremium sese cum Virginis alnum
 Suscipit, ut prolem proferat illa novam,
 Et novus in verno pubescit tempore mundus
 Et solvit tepidos humida terra sinus...*²⁰⁴

Phrixus's sheep [the Ram], when Jove betakes himself to the bountiful lap of the Virgin, so that she'll bring forth new offspring, and the world in the springtime ripens anew and the damp earth opens up her warm bosom...²⁰⁵

The multi-layered symbolism of the nature introduction has already been pointed out.²⁰⁶ The classical, conventional analogy of spring and love, the sacred marriage of Heaven and Earth is given an individual meaning, an autobiographical concern in more than one sense: the cosmic love prepares the protagonist's individual love with Hasilina (the spring-description in Landino's *Xandra* I,3, on which Celtis drew, had a similar function), and the spring refers to the *pueritia*, the first of the four phases of the protagonist's life, and the beginning of his journey. The elegy forms part of the three introductory elegies of the *Amores* which build up the lyrical subject's character and his double Phoebean–Veneric affiliation. Robert's observations have to be completed at one point. Since in the first elegiac couplet Phoebus stands for the Sun and the *Phrixea ovis* for the Ram (the first spring sign), Jupiter in the “lap” of *Virgo* must primarily mean the planet's presence in that zodiacal sign (so this is not a “conjunction,” as Robert calls it), while the author naturally alludes jokingly to Jupiter's / Zeus's fertile love adventures with mortal women.²⁰⁷ Contrary to the Sun's presence in the Ram, the position of Jupiter in *Virgo* does not refer to spring. However, it certainly refers to the same planetary position in Celtis's nativity, highlighted in *Amores* I,1, and the Jupiter returns to the same sign every twelve years. Considering the protagonist's young adult age, does Celtis refer here to the second return of Jupiter, at the age of twenty-four? It seems so: Celtis, who was in love with Hasilina for about a year,²⁰⁸ complains in a later elegy that she refused him, at a time when he “was given five *lustrum*” after his day of birth, that is twenty-five years so far.²⁰⁹ (In contemporary astrological practice it occurred that “solar revolutions” were made at the end of twelve-year periods when the Jupiter returned to the favorable

²⁰⁴ Am. I,3,1-6

²⁰⁵ Tr. F. J. Nichols; in *An Anthology of Neo-Latin Poetry*, ed., tr. F. J. Nichols (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979).

²⁰⁶ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 356-9.

²⁰⁷ God himself, too, was called Jupiter by Celtis, and he often provoked the Church, but hopefully he did not think here of God, Virgin Mary and Christ as their offspring, which would be highly blasphemous.

²⁰⁸ Am. I,3,91-94: *En semel obliquum lustravit Cynthus orbem / Duodeciesque tulit cornua plena soror, / Ex quo dura meas tenuisti tempore curas / Igneque non facili mollia corda coquis.*

²⁰⁹ Am. I,9,3-6: *Cum mihi iam dederant natalia sidera quinque / Lustra per hibernum continuata diem, / Phoebus Febriles ubi fecit in orbe Calendas / Lumina purpureus sub Ganymede regens.*

position that it had at the birth date.²¹⁰) Later in the *Amores*, too, Celtis seems to combine the twelve-year system with the classical system of *lustra*, five-year periods, when indicating the age of the protagonist. In Book II, he celebrates with Elsula his thirtieth birthday;²¹¹ in Book III, it is the thirty-sixth birthday, just after seven *lustra*;²¹² in Book IV he reaches his fortieth year.²¹³ Meanwhile, the Sun's position in *Cancer*, *Libra* and *Capricornus* in Books II-IV indicates summer, autumn, winter, the aging of the protagonist. In this interpretation of *Amores* I,3, not only the time of the year but also the exact age of the protagonist refer to a new beginning in his life. Naturally, this young age, too, belongs to the *Amores*-Celtis, the constructed figure: in reality, Celtis went to Cracow in 1489, at the age of thirty.

The epiphany-scene of *Amores* I,3 belongs to the *hodoeporicon*-part of the elegy. No sooner the wanderer catches sight of Cracow than a tempest breaks out. A raven, a harbinger bird, comes fluttering and behaves aggressively, so that the frightened horse turns to flee and Celtis falls off (this is an anticipation of the epiphany, the raven being Apollo's bird²¹⁴). He begs Jupiter for favor, but another lightning strikes him. Phoebus comes, however, as god of medicine, poetry and divination (v. 55: *Phoebus, pater vatum*); he heals Celtis and endows him with the quest of describing *Germania*, before he flies away on golden wings, together with the muses. As Robert has observed, the author imitated himself here – as he did at many other occasions –, the structure of the scene follows that of the *Poema ad Fridericum*: Sun-related nature introduction, tempest and lightning, the epiphany and speech of Apollo, and the mission, adjusted to the Celtis-work concerned.²¹⁵ The biblical parallel is not missing either: this time it is basically Saul's conversion before Damascus (Acts 9), as Wenk has pointed out.²¹⁶ In both narratives the hero approaches a town when a heavenly phenomenon (heavenly light in the story of Saulus / Paulus²¹⁷) makes him fall to the ground, and the divine speech gives a new meaning to his life (Celtis refers even to the motif of blindness²¹⁸). Phoebus's statement that one has to go through a great amount of suffering in order to fulfil the divine

²¹⁰ Cf. the horoscopes of János Corvin for his birth and his twelfth birthday: J. Csontos, "Corvin János két horoscopja Krakkóban" [János Corvin's two horoscopes in Cracow], *Magyar Könyvszemle* 5 (1880), 382-7.

²¹¹ Am. II,10,3: *Quippe ego in hac numero terdenas nocte Calendas...*

²¹² Am. III,12,29-30: *Quippe duodecimam mihi cras trieteriden implet / Phoebus ab Eoa Tethyos ortus aqua.*

²¹³ Am. IV,3,1-3: *Terdenos Phoebi mihi iam facit orbita cursus, / Et super hos decimus cardo volutus adest. V. 9-10: Bis mihi vigenus hinc currit lubricus annus, / Prima mihi Phoebi visa ubi lampas erat.*

²¹⁴ In Wenk's interpretation the raven may represent the dark, endangered, demonic aspect of an artist's life ("Mirifica," 593-4)

²¹⁵ Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 362.

²¹⁶ Wenk, "Mirifica," 595-9.

²¹⁷ Acts 9,3 (Clementine Vulgate): *et cum iter faceret contigit ut adpropinquaret Damasco et subito circumfulsit eum lux de caelo.*

²¹⁸ Am. I,3,77-78: *Et iacet obductum multa caligine pectus, / Exercet vires mens neque caeca suas.*

mission and reach glory,²¹⁹ has its biblical model, too, in Jesus's appearance to Ananias.²²⁰ The obvious biblical references in the two epiphany-poems, as in many other Celtis-works, do not simply function as a means to enhance the significance of the event or develop the atmosphere of the sacred and the miraculous, but to express the same universal view about religion that is at the core of the idea of Ancient Theology. On the other hand, scholars have rightly pointed out the highly secular attitude of Celtis:²²¹ as a poet, he played with biblical motifs, he often incorporated them in poems that were not concerned with religion, and he was far from the serious attitude of a Ficino who intended to reconcile Christian and classical lore.

Apollo appeared to Locher, too, in the beginning of his *Oratio* (1495/96). This work has been briefly reviewed above:²²² among the German defenses of poetry, it stands out with its sensuous approach. Locher imbeds his theoretical considerations in a fictional narrative. He dreams of Phoebus who speaks to him and guides him through the Elysium, showing him famous military leaders, statesmen, philosophers, legislators, and finally poets: these enjoy the highest status in Locher's humanistic heaven. The most emphasized message of the work, that only the poetic frenzy makes the poet (an echo from Plato's *Ion*), is not only repeatedly formulated by Apollo, but the partly metric speeches and exclamations render palpable the inspired condition of the speakers. The epiphany itself has a unique motif: it is worth taking a cursory glance at the scene, even if Locher does not highlight the cosmological aspects of Apollo. After an *Exordium metricum* with the obligatory modesty-topos and the praise of eloquence and poetic frenzy, he starts narrating a "dream" of his. He was immersed in sweet sleep, when suddenly he felt someone standing at his bedstead: Apollo with his lyre and the bright-faced muses. Most impressed, the poet erupted in praise of their splendour and divinity, and insisted that he, a barbarous singer with polluted hands, was not worthy of such an honour. Apollo, however, stepped closer, "laid both his hands on our breast," and spoke to him. The god addressed him as a true cultivator of the muses, and reassured him: they did not come to terrify him as apparitions but "to fill you more with our most delicious liquor."²²³ He

²¹⁹ Am. I,3,71-72: *Magna venit nulli sine magno fama labore / Et vaga sudorem gloria semper habet.*

²²⁰ Acts 9,16 (Clementine Vulgate): *Ego enim ostendam illi quanta oporteat eum pro nomine meo pati.* Wenk, "Mirifica," 597-8.

²²¹ E.g. Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 389.

²²² See p. 50.

²²³ F. a3r-v, the appearance of Apollo and the muses: *Ecce dulcius mihi cogitanti: non importune: sed tamen subito murmure nostri lectuli sponde: vultu lepido fronteque iucunda argutissimus adstat pegasidum chorus cum Apolline cythara decoro: et bellerophonteï laticis clarissimo vate. Ego quamprimum tam venerandas musarum imagines contemplatus: mecum tacito nutu: labellisque stridulis meditabar: O dii inquam immortales: quid in me miraculi statuet: turba puellarum hyppocrenidumque gregatim stipata adversus me somniantem concedens. Non etenim illis sororibus: quarum candor sole clarior germinat: nitor phoebe mundior lucet: accessus diana*

expounded on the indispensibility of poetic frenzy, and then came the “sight-seeing tour” in Elysium.

With Apollo’s hand on Locher’s breast, a physical contact has been established between the mortal and the divine; with this gesture, Apollo mediates spiritual energy in a most direct way. This is a most spectacular representation of poetical inspiration,²²⁴ not characteristic of the literary tradition of Apollo-epiphanies. (I know of only one epiphanic scene with a similar motif: the appearance of *Philosophia* in Boethius’s *Consolatio*. At one point during their conversation, *Philosophia* lays her hand on Boethius’s breast and reassures him that she will heal him.²²⁵ It cannot be excluded that the widely used²²⁶ *Consolatio* gave Locher the idea of the gesture; however, he does not seem to have consciously referred to this work. The laying on of hand is only one of *Philosophia*’s comforting gestures, she lays only one hand on his breast, and in general, the two works have quite different narratives and messages.) The *Poema ad Fridericum* of Celtis, Locher’s master and friend in Ingolstadt, is likely to have contributed to Locher’s idea of a spectacular poetical self-representation in the frameworks of a Phoebean epiphany, and the “uncritical blending of Christian and classical” elements²²⁷ in the *Oratio* also reminds one of Celtis. On the other hand, while Celtis’s two epiphanies have to be primarily seen in the context of his own oeuvre, Locher’s *Oratio*, held at the beginning of a semester at the university of Freiburg, more directly concerns the humanist-scholastic poetological debates in Germany; for all the elaborated narrative, the *Oratio* is rather about poets than one specific poet. It is highly characteristic of Locher how he puts the epiphanic scenery in the service of his *vates*- and *furor*-ideology.

Phoebean epiphanies occur elsewhere, too, in the German humanist literature around 1500 (and later in the sixteenth century²²⁸), both in Celtis’s circles (e.g. in Laurentius Corvinus or

*celebrior apparet: mortatilitas ulla: sed vultus immortalis celestisque splendescit. Abeant, precor, ne intemerata ac sacra cohors manus nostras varia pollutas macula attingant. non me tali dignior honore: ut tam insignis chorus ad illepidum barbarumque rapsodum proficiscatur. dum ista mecum intra precordia cogito: proprius accedit pulcher latone natus Apollo tam venerandi ductor exercitus: manus utrasque nostro pectori applicans: inquit. O verus integerque heliconis alumnus: o verus musarum cultor: ne trepidas ob insolentem nostri adventus terrorem: non equidem ut larve formidabiles: que mentes mortalium quibusdam prestigiis vexare perturbareque solent: ad te concessimus: sed ut nostri delicatissimi liquoris te pleniorum faceremus... (This liquor is the water from the muses’ spring that was previously mentioned, f. a3r: *bellerophonteï laticis clarissimo vate*).*

²²⁴ Heidloff, *Untersuchungen*, 206.

²²⁵ Cons. I pr. 2: *Cumque me non modo tacitum sed elinguem prorsus mutumque vidisset, ammovit pectori meo leniter manum et: nihil, inquit, pericli est, lethargum patitur, communem illusarum mentium morbum. Sui paulisper oblitus est. Recordabitur facile, si quidem nos ante cognoverit; quod ut possit, paulisper lumina eius mortalium rerum nube caligantia tergamus. Haec dixit oculosque meos fletibus undantes contracta in rugam veste siccavit.*

²²⁶ Luh, *Werkausgabe*, 69.

²²⁷ Heidloff, *Untersuchungen*, 209.

²²⁸ Cf. Steppich, ‘*Numine*,’ 309-324.

Jacobus Piso) or outside it (e.g. in Murmellius, a Westfalian poet²²⁹), but among these, Laurentius Corvinus's soon-to-be-discussed elegy seems to be the only one where the cosmological context is significant. Piso's *Hecatostichon* is worth a few sentences here because of its extraordinary narrative and some traits reminiscent of Celtis's poetry. Jacobus Piso, humanist and statesman, the tutor of King Louis II of Hungary, was of Transylvanian Saxon origin, lived mostly in Buda, travelled a lot and had a wide correspondence, involving Erasmus;²³⁰ he was on good terms with Celtis.²³¹ The *Elegia ex Hecatostico*, that was written in the early 1500s and can be found among the poems of the "Codex Fuchsmagen,"²³² relates a curious dream of the poet. Piso falls in love with the muses; when Apollo appears and learns of the poet's passion, guides him to the muses' spring on Mount Helicon. Apollo, the muses' "parent," calls them out of their cave, and orders Calliope to go into marriage (!) with Piso; he reassures the poet that the dowry will be covered by Fuchsmagen,²³³ the addressee of the poem. Finally, Mercury presents him with a "Delphic" lyre. Although the mythological scenery never turns into a cosmic one, the author repeatedly and playfully indicates that he is aware of the "planetary" aspect of the divinities: the muses are called *errantes*, "wandering" girls (*πλανήτης* = "wandering"),²³⁴ the "fast" Phoebus "sees everything,"²³⁵ his face radiates,²³⁶ and after the episode he goes up to the sky to shine;²³⁷ Mercurius is called *Stilbos*, a Greek name of the planet Mercury.²³⁸ The mythological self-representation in which the poet intends to display his divine affiliation as spectacularly as possible is similar to the cases of Celtis or Locher; in fact, with the marriage-scene²³⁹ Piso manages to overbid all other humanists. Naturally, this is just a poem, and Piso's *iocosus* attitude can be felt at many points

²²⁹ Murmellius's *Ad Rodolphum Langium de somnio Murmellii* follows the Propertian model, Apollo orders the poet to compose elegiac instead of heroic poetry: cf. Steppich, 'Numine,' 312-5.

²³⁰ László Jankovits, "Jacobus Piso levelezése Erasmusszal" [The correspondence of Jacobus Piso with Erasmus], in *Convivium Pajorin Klára 70. születésnapjára* [Convivium for the seventeenth birthday of Klára Pajorin], ed. E. Békés and I. Tegyei (Debrecen: Debreceni Egyetem Klasszika-Filológia Tanszéke, 2012). 91-98.

²³¹ Cf. his 1501 letter to Celtis in BW p. 454-5, Celtis's Od. II,2 to the Hungarian *sodales*, and Am. II,9,125-6 where he mentions and praises Piso.

²³² Ms.: Universitätsbibliothek Innsbruck, Codex 664, f. 136v-138v. I use the edited but not yet published text that was circulated at the presentation of László Jankovits at the conference "Vadianus and the University of Vienna" (Vienna, November 2014).

²³³ Johannes Fuchsmagen was one of Maximilian's imperial advisors; Celtis, too, dedicated his *De mundo* edition to him and Krachenberger.

²³⁴ V. 19-20: *Hic procul errantes diverso rure puellas / vidi...*

²³⁵ V. 25-26: *Haec ubi me Phoebus (nam conspicit omnia) pernix / affectare videt...*

²³⁶ V. 61-62: *Quae [the muses] dum Phoebeae viderunt lumina frontis, / omnia continuis vocibus arva sonant* (the muses' concert may refer to the music of spheres).

²³⁷ V. 93-94: *Ad sua dehinc celeri properabat munia gressu, / ut claram nitido ferret in axe diem.*

²³⁸ V. 95-96: *Iam quoque quadrupedes iunxit, cum Stilbos ad annem / Castalium erranti Delphica plectra dedit.*

²³⁹ The motif of muse-marriage itself occurs in a playful epigram of Celtis, Ep. IV,68 *De molestiis uxorum: Unica te dicis quod femina saepe molestat, / Quae tibi legitimo sit sociata thoro: / Ast ego coniugibus sum cinctus, Jane, novenis, / Gaudia sollicito quae mihi multa ferunt.*

of the work, for instance when he speaks of the strong wine and his digestive problems at that night,²⁴⁰ or when he burdens the dowry on Fuchsmagen.²⁴¹

b. Laurentius Corvinus's Carmen elegiacum

Laurentius Corvinus, the Silesian German humanist schoolmaster and notary,²⁴² published a unique work of his in 20 April 1503 in Wrocław: the *Carmen elegiacum... de Apolline et novem musis*.²⁴³ The frontispiece is fully occupied by an image representing the author's encounter with Apollo and the muses: already this suggests the author's interest in the poetological ideas defending and idealizing the poet, which were especially fashionable in German humanist circles around 1500. A further look at the main text, a 260-line elegy, and its self-commentary that makes the work amount to thirty folios, reveals that Corvinus was highly concerned with combining poetology and cosmology, a tendency exemplified by Ficino in the area of theoretical thinking and by Celtis's poetical oeuvre. The addition of a commentary must have had primarily educational reasons:²⁴⁴ from 1499 to around the summer of 1503 he was the rector of the parochial school of St. Elizabeth in Wrocław.²⁴⁵ The use of contemporary or own poems in teaching and their publication with commentary occurred in contemporary Central-European teaching practice;²⁴⁶ already in the *Carminum structura* (1496), Corvinus used own poems for demonstrating poetical rules and the art of imitation. This and other works of his (like the *Hortulus elegantiarum* or the *Latinum Ydeoma*) revealed his innovative interest in poetical-rhetorical education; the *Cosmographia* showed his natural philosophical interest brought from Cracow; what makes the *Carmen elegiacum* unique is the combination of these concerns in a composite genre that includes woodcut, prose summary, poem and extensive commentary. The work has heretofore been only superficially discussed in scholarship;²⁴⁷ in the following I will look at it only from the perspective of the *vates*-ideology of the period. Extensive humanist commentaries are often

²⁴⁰ V. 5-12.

²⁴¹ V. 87-92.

²⁴² See p. 38.

²⁴³ *Carmen elegiacum Magistri Laurentii Corvini Novoforensis De Apolline et novem Musis* (Wrocław: K. Baumgarthen, 1503).

²⁴⁴ J. Krókowski, "Laurentii Corvini poetae Silesii carmina duo," in *Charisteria Th. Sinko Oblata*, ed. K. F. Kumaniecki (Warsaw, 1951), 125.

²⁴⁵ Bauch, "Laurentius Corvinus," 248; 261.

²⁴⁶ An example from Cracow: Adriano Castellesi's *Venatio* (Venice: Aldus, 1505) was edited with a commentary by Leonard Cox, an English humanist teaching in East-Central Europe (composed in Košice and issued in Cracow: Vietor, 1524).

²⁴⁷ Bauch has briefly overviewed the work ("Laurentius Corvinus," 257-260); later scholars have only touched on it (like Krókowski, "Laurentii," 125-6; Steppich, 'Numine,' 325).

due to an intention of displaying the encyclopedic knowledge of the *poeta doctus*; beyond this, how does the work relate to Celtis's integrative humanism and his emphasis on cosmology? To what extent the combination of poetology and cosmology mirrors "modern," Platonic poetological currents? How the idea of poetic frenzy appears and how it relates to the epiphanic scenery?

The work has been developed from an earlier, 106-line version of the elegy, which Krókowski, the editor of the text entitled *Carmen... de novem musis*.²⁴⁸ Corvinus wrote it in his Cracowian period (before 1494)²⁴⁹ and as Krókowski has rightly observed, the poem breathes the spirit of the school:²⁵⁰ just like the poems of the *Carminum structura*, it represents the art of the imitation of classics; it presents the muses and encourages the students to study the arts. This poem is relatively concise. It is summer, and our poet finds a shady oak grove by the river Vistula. He is musing on Minerva and the muses (i. e. the arts) when he hears a sudden thunder, sees a lightning and the grove shines with light: Minerva and the muses are coming. Minerva, the "goddess of art"²⁵¹ presents herself in a short speech, then presents each muses in two lines as goddesses of the musical-poetical genres.²⁵² Minerva encourages the poet to speak about them to those who aspire to "sweet poetry;" at the request of the poet, the goddess makes Castalian waters fall from the heaven on him. Thus the poet becomes initiated, rather than just receiving a verbal education. Among the reasons why Corvinus exchanged Apollo for Minerva as the leader of the muses may be that Minerva could be more definitely associated with arts than Apollo with his many functions, and that Ovid also hailed her as the goddess of *carmen*.²⁵³ As appears from Krókowski's commentary²⁵⁴ and collected *similia*, Ovid was Corvinus's main model here, especially Janus's epiphany and speech (Fast. I,93ff) and the description of Minerva and her feast (Fast. III,808ff). However, Corvinus drew inspiration from contemporary poetry as well: only Schwarz mentions Celtis's *Poema ad Fridericum*, but he too, only concerning the *Carmen elegiacum*.²⁵⁵ The opening situation of the *Poema ad Fridericum*, with the poet finding refuge from the summer heat in a grove, is already present in the *Carmen de novem musis*. The very

²⁴⁸ Ms.: Munich, BSB, clm. 4422 f. 190r-191v, edited by Krókowski, "Laurentii," 128-134 as *Carmen Magistri Lau. Cor. Novoforensis de novem musis elegantissime congestum*.

²⁴⁹ Krókowski, "Laurentii," 124.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ V. 55: *Artis ego dea sum, sacris comitata Camenis...*

²⁵² The order of the muses is the standard order of Fulgentius, but Calliope and Urania changed place.

²⁵³ Fast. III,833; Cf. also Minerva's visit at the muses in Ov. Met. V,250ff.

²⁵⁴ Krókowski, "Laurentii," 127.

²⁵⁵ O. Schwarz, "De Laurentii Corvini studiis Platonis," *Eos* 34 (1932/33), 145.

first word of the elegy is the same as in Celtis's poem:²⁵⁶ it is clearly *Estiferi*, and not *Astriferi*, as Krókowski has read it; *torreo*, *Cancer*, *Falcifer* in the first two lines also occur in Celtis's nature introduction,²⁵⁷ just as Jupiter's thunder and lightning later. Nevertheless, the cosmological dimension is missing from this early didactic epiphany-poem of Corvinus.

Conspicuous are the changes between this work and the 1503 *Carmen elegiacum... de Apolline et novem musis*. As the title indicates, Apollo is now the central deity, which fact may already suggest to the reader a step toward the poetical world of the above discussed German humanists. The poem presenting the epiphany grew not simply more detailed, but more sensuous, the representation of nature and cosmos received emphasis in both the description of the events and in the speeches of Apollo and the muses. The style became more flowery, the intertextual range grew wider, the *similia* refer for instance to such classical dramas – by Seneca, Plautus – that Corvinus taught and staged with his students around 1500²⁵⁸ (besides, Corvinus borrowed phrases and lines not only from his earlier *Carmen de novem musis* but also his *Cosmographia*²⁵⁹). The commentary was meant to make this richness explicit: more than just explaining the meaning of the text and adding grammatical-stylistical or etymological notes, the comments mirror to a great extent the literary and the real cosmos that lived in the author's mind. The epiphany, this miraculous event, is emphasized by a threefold representation: the image with both the mortal and divine characters highlights the encounter, indeed, the momentary fusion of the two spheres; the *Argumentum*, the prose summary focuses on the events and does not summarize Apollo's didactic speech; and then comes the poem describing in detail the epiphany. In the following I overview the main text, the poem (Appendix I/3), taking into account also the woodcut and the *Argumentum*. (Fig. 22 shows the title page with the woodcut, and fig. 23 fol. 1r, the beginning of the poem.)

²⁵⁶ See p. 211.

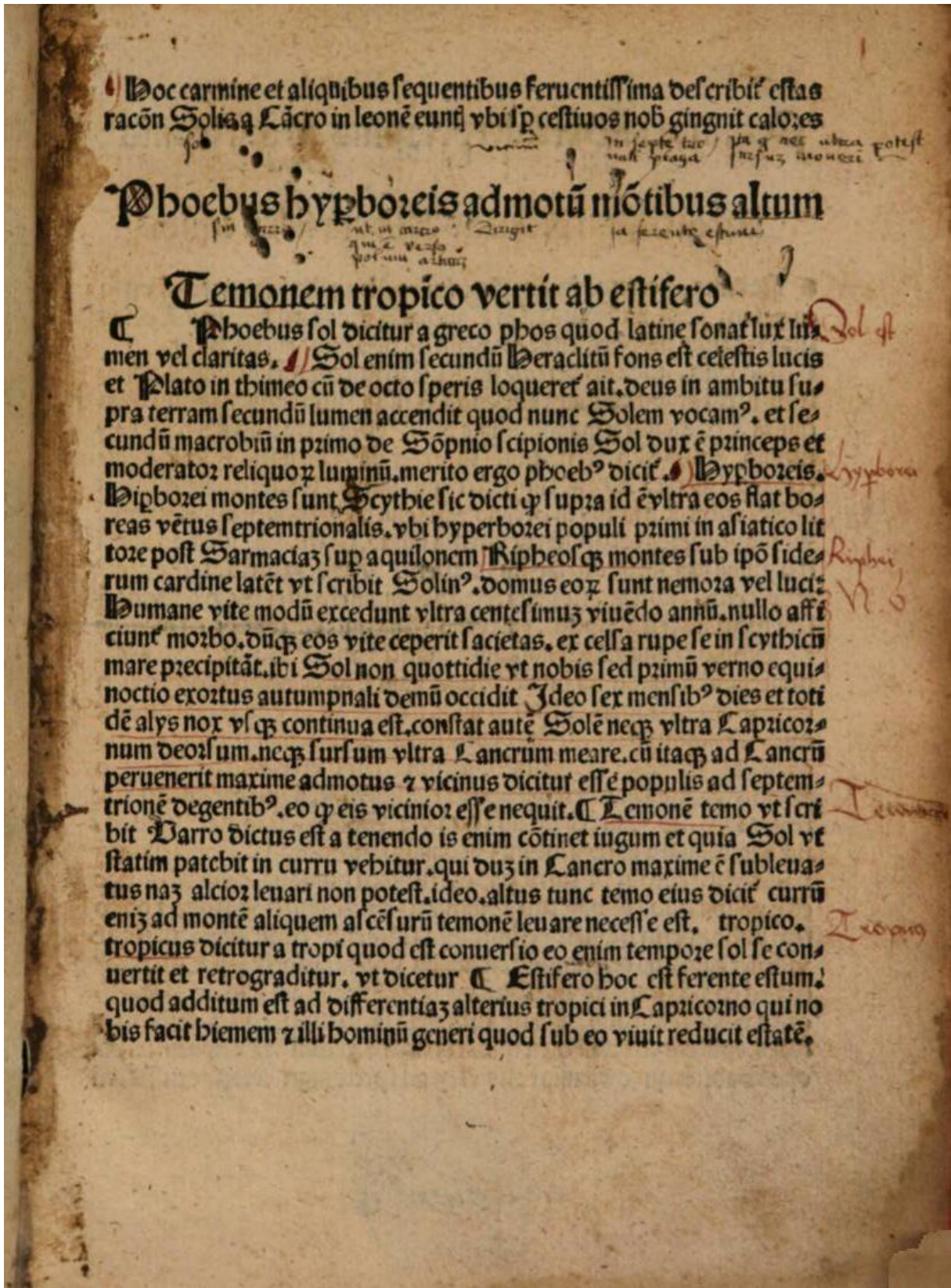
²⁵⁷ *Carmen... de novem musis*, v. 1-2: *Estiferi Titan torreat brachia Cancri / Falcifer inque suum rusticus ibat agrum*.

²⁵⁸ Krókowski, "Laurentii," 126.

²⁵⁹ Bauch, "Laurentius Corvinus," 260-1.



Fig. 22. The title page of Laurentius Corvinus's *Carmen elegiacum*

Fig. 23. The beginning of the *Carmen elegiacum* in the Wrocław print.

Phoebus is the first word, the god appears first in his solar function. The poet describes the summer heat (v. 1-30) longer than *Celtis* in the *Poema ad Fridericum*: it is as if the poet wanted to present the whole Earth, the whole universe right at the beginning, indicating the cosmic perspective of the poem. It is the time of the summer solstice, Phoebus turns south from the Hyperboreans, the heat is like in Africa, the animals thirst, the ocean evaporates, even the constellations sweat. Next the author presents the earthly settings (v. 31-49): at midday²⁶⁰ of this summer day in Wrocław he crosses the Odera by a bridge near a saw-mill, arrives to a green island, a shady grove with a purling spring, and sweet sleep overwhelms him. Real biographical experience provides here details for the traditional description of a *locus amoenus*. The shady, idyllic grove is part of the inventory of epiphany-poems since Propertius, but the references involve other literary traditions. The “acorn-bearing oak” is a typical tree of that region, but together with the “bramble thicket” it refers to the Golden Age as described in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (the *Argumentum*, too, indicates these plants, and the oak, which might be seen as the northern, “Dodonaic” counterpart of the laurel, appears just above the poet in the image).²⁶¹ The poet is away from town, in the green, enjoying the refreshing air and solitude: this Horatian-Petrarchian *Silva placet musis* tradition found a wide reception in contemporary humanist poetry.²⁶² The poem continues with the epiphany (v. 49-76): Jupiter’s lightning and thunder terrifies our hero, and radiant Apollo appears with the muses:

*Ecce sub obscura ducens secum arboris umbra
Virgineum cetum vir venit eximius
Ostro palla rubet: viret a parnaside Lauro
Frons: gerit auratam splendida dextra chelin
Emicuit croceo iubaris tantum huius ab ore
Clarius ut visum est quam fuit ante nemus*²⁶³

and here comes the excellent god, accompanied by the group of virgins, appearing under the shade of the tree; his gown is purple, his head is adorned with the laurel of Parnassus, his splendid right hand holds a golden lyre; his yellow face was so radiant that the grove grew brighter than before.

While he is dressed in purple²⁶⁴ and wears laurel wreath, the beautiful muses wear even gems.

²⁶⁰ *Argumentum*: ...tempore meridiei...

²⁶¹ V. 33 *arbuteum rubetum*; v. 47 *sub glandifera quercu*; *Argumentum*: ...graditurin rubetum pomiferis et glandiferis arboribus plenum; Cf. Ov. Met. I,101-6: *ipsa quoque immunis rastro que intacta nec ullis / saucia vomeribus per se dabat omnia tellus, / contenti que cibus nullo cogente creatis / arbuteos fetus montanaque fraga legebant / cornaque et in duris haerentia mora rubetis / et, quae deciderant patula Iovis arbore, glandes.*

²⁶² Cf. esp. v. 40-42: *Contuleram nullo concomitante gradum / Gramen ut herbosum vegetaret pectus anhelum / Et recreet sensus mitior aura meos*. Some examples of the tradition: Hor. Epist. II,2,77 *Scriptorum chorus omnis amat nemus et fugit urbem*; Petr. Ep. metr. II,3,43 *Silva placet musis, urbs est inimica poetis*; both appears in the marginal gloss in f. 6v of the Viennese exemplar of the *Carmen elegiacum*, and *Celtis* refers to both in his *Sepulus-ode* (Od. I,16,13-14). Building on this tradition, Vadianus wrote a nice chapter in his *De poetica* (ed. Schäffer, I, p. 109-118) about the poet’s need for solitude.

²⁶³ V. 61-66.

The first speech, that of Phoebus (v. 75-132) is an astronomical “initiation,” and he clearly assumes the perspective of the Pythagorean-Platonic cosmological tradition. First he expresses the Ciceronian-Macrobian idea of his dominance over the planets, and arrives to the issue of the spheres and their muses, their music. As the author explicitly states in the commentary, “Apollo is going to show” the Platonic idea that “the muses are the song of the celestial spheres.”²⁶⁵ In the description of the planets, their most important astronomical and astrological characteristics are comprised in two lines for each planet (four in the Sun’s case), and the commentary expounds on them. For instance, he notes to Mercury’s “cunningness” (v. 99 *versutum*) that it refers to his intelligence and eloquence; furthermore, to his fraudulence (all these come from Ptolemy, as he indicates); and he notes to the “winged feet” (v. 100 *Alatos... pedes*) that “it indicates the swiftness of the planet as well as of the speech.”²⁶⁶ From the voices of the eight spheres harmony is born: the ninth muse, Calliope. This again, gives opportunity for the author to a small *laus musicae* from a micro-macrocosmical perspective: it is because the music of the spheres that the embodied souls rejoice in the earthly music, and that music is played and sung at burials, and when gods are praised. “Since I govern this varied concert of the heavens [spheres], I, Apollo, am called the ruler of the sidereal lyre”²⁶⁷ – finishes Phoebus his speech, in the commentary of which Plato and Macrobius are the most often indicated sources. The cosmological speech makes the next part, the self-introduction of the muses, appear in a different light than in the *Carmen de novem musis*.

In the second half of the poem, almost until the end (v. 133-246) the muses present themselves basically in line with the most standard tradition, as representants of the various poetical-musical arts: Clio, the muse of epic poetry, tells examples for the wars she sings about, and so on; Fulgentius is cited at the beginning of the commentary-parts to each muse. However, in this part, too, Corvinus makes natural philosophical comments wherever possible,²⁶⁸ and he ensures that the activity of the muses really cover all arts, including natural philosophy. Referring to Virgil,²⁶⁹ Corvinus assigns Erato natural philosophical functions,

²⁶⁴ V. 63 *Ostro palla rubet*, while in the woodcut he wears a light blue cloak; the royal purple may refer to power, while the blue to the celestial dwelling. The nudity of the muses in the woodcut is certainly related to the muses’ standard identification with the nymphs.

²⁶⁵ F. 12v: *Apollo ostensus musas esse celestium sperarum cantum...* Cf. v. 115-6: *Orbibus his veluti Sirenes semper adherent / Musae, celestis numina sancta lyrae.*

²⁶⁶ F. 13r: *...et planete et eloquentie indicatur celeritas.*

²⁶⁷ V. 129-130: *Hos quoniam in variis moderor concentibus axes / Dicor sideree rector Apollo lyre.*

²⁶⁸ For instance, Corvinus relates *Erigone* (v. 137) to the constellation *Virgo*, or *Aversus... Sol* (v. 160) to the solar eclipse.

²⁶⁹ F. 22r, at the beginning of the commentary-part to Erato: *secundum Vergilium geometriam terrarum et maris tractum et partim naturalem philosophiam ministrat.* At other muses, too, Virgil is referred to; at Urania, for

geometry and geography, instead of lyric and love poetry: according to the main text (v. 191-206), she measures the Earth, sings about the Sun's course, about mountains and rivers; in sum, she represents *cosmographia*, comprehensive geography. Urania is also given a relatively long section (v. 217-234). Summarizing the Sun's annual course through the zodiac, she dedicates a line to each zodiacal sign, and the author explains them from the perspective of *interpretatio physica*, drawing mostly on Macrobius; the comments altogether are meant to show the Sun's strength and power. Finally Calliopeia, the representant of harmony itself, is placed above all the other muses. At the end of the poem (v. 242-260), Apollo reminds the poet that "the way" to Helicon / Parnassus "is hard"²⁷⁰ (a popular humanist topos), and the commentary makes explicit that he refers both to wisdom (*ingenium* and experience) and the production of poems based on these.²⁷¹ Corvinus's elegy reflects first of all on the poetological discourse of the period; the didaxis of the work points toward the realization, formulation of the (cosmological and other) wisdom through the *carmen*. Before the god leaves, Corvinus asks him for celestial dew, and "sweet rain fell with odorous water,"²⁷² so he returned to the town *roscidus*,²⁷³ "dewy:" the poet naturally needs the muses' water²⁷⁴ and divine inspiration in order to sing divine songs.

Bauch has already called attention to the extensiveness of the commentary, which "illuminates the trains of thought, explains the meaning of the poetical phrases, pays a great attention to synonyms and etymology,"²⁷⁵ in addition, I would like to emphasize the abundance of the commentary in natural philosophical information. Not that the commentary took the poem to a natural philosophical direction: it is the poem that seems to have been constructed and enriched in such a way that together with the commentary it became suitable for transmitting a great amount of natural, mostly geographical / cosmological lore. This can be seen already from the first section, the thirty-line description of the summer heat that required only two lines in the *Carmen de novem musis*. It touches on the Sun's course to north and then south, the *Ethiopes* and the northern regions with their constellations, furthermore

instance (f. 24r *iuxtam illud Vergilii Urania poli motus scrutatur et astra*), he cites from the poem *Nomina musarum / De musis* attributed to Cato, Ausonius or Virgil (Auson. Appendix 4), that was also used by other Renaissance authors interested in the Pythagorean-Platonic tradition: cf. the inscription *Mentis Apollineae vis has movet undique musas* in Gafurius's famous woodcut in the *Practica musicae* (1496) representing the spheres and the musical intervals (cf. Seznec, *Survival*, 140-1).

²⁷⁰ V. 247: *Durum iter est...*

²⁷¹ F. 28r, to *Heliconis*...: *...quia ad carminum quibus musae presunt perfectam structuram non cum mediocri ingenii labore et per variarum et difficilium rerum perspicientiam quasi per scrupulosam viam pervenitur.*

²⁷² V. 257-8: *Vix hec edideram cum coelo missus aquoso / Dulcis odorifera depluit imber aqua.*

²⁷³ V. 259 *rossidus* = *roscidus*.

²⁷⁴ F. 29r, to *dulcis*: *dulcis enim est et suavis ex musarum fontibus liquor...*

²⁷⁵ Bauch, "Laurentius Corvinus," 260.

winds and bodies of water, animals and plants, and the relation of all these to climate or meteorology, here the summer heat. Already in the commentary to this part, a great many of the most standard classical-medieval scientific authorities appear, from Aristotle through Ptolemy and Avicenna.²⁷⁶ In general, the extensive use of Albert the Great²⁷⁷ mirrors his Central European affiliation, while he obviously used Renaissance Italian sources more than he indicated.²⁷⁸ The reader of the poem repeatedly feels that certain details were inserted only for the sake of scientific explanation, like in the case of the many precious stones worn, rather unusually, by the muses (f. 9v). Even within the fictitious narrative, it occurs that the poet is said to think about secrets of nature like the origin of lightning.²⁷⁹ Given the mythological frameworks of the narrative, the author could draw to a great extent on the classical traditions of *interpretatio physica* that provided mythological motifs with natural philosophical explanations;²⁸⁰ and in the background lurks the idea of Ancient Theology (indeed, sometimes it is explicitly mentioned²⁸¹), according to which already the pre-Christian philosophers / poets knew and sang about secrets of the cosmos.

Corvinus's cosmological interests can be explained in large part with the influence of the university of Cracow; nevertheless, this is not a *poema naturale*, a work on natural philosophical issues in poetical form, but a work about cosmos *and* poetry; the “cosmographical” function of poetry is not only implicitly demonstrated by the descriptive details but is also suggested by the Phoebean scenery. To be sure, all this reminds one primarily of Celtis, his master and friend since Cracow. Already in the poetry-definition of the *Ars versificandi* (a work that demonstrably had an impact on the *Carminum structura*²⁸²) Celtis explicitly included “lands, rivers, the course of the stars,” among the subjects of poetry;²⁸³ later his integrative humanistic program developed further – against the background of Platonic traditions – and manifested itself most importantly in the 1502 *Amores*-edition,

²⁷⁶ F. 1r-5r: Macrobius, *Rabi Moyses* (Moses Maimonides), Aristotle, Ptolemy, Avicenna, Apollonius (of Tyana), Diomedes, Strabo, Varro, Aratus, Solinus, Albertus Magnus.

²⁷⁷ E.g. f. 2r about the Sun's rays, f. 4r about the winds, f. 7v about Jupiter, thunder and the sorts of lightning, f. 8v about sulphur and so on.

²⁷⁸ See below about Ficino; only in few cases are Italians or other contemporaries indicated by name (like the humanist G. Tortelli in f. 12v).

²⁷⁹ V. 59-60: *Dumque ita sulphurei versarem in pectore causas / Fulguris et dulces cur vapor urget aquas...*

²⁸⁰ From the vast number of examples, two typical ones: in f. 7r, to *Siculo camino*, he relates Vulcanus to the Vulcanic isles near Sicily (drawing on Strabo); in f. 12v, to *Nec mihi...*, he explains the Sun's turn to north at the tropic of Capricorn with the characteristic of *caper*: *Capre vero consuetudo hec in pastu esse videtur, ut semper altum pascendo petatur et Sol in Capricorno incipit ab imis in alta remeare*. Corvinus does not indicate that he cited here Macrobius, Sat. I,17,63.

²⁸¹ As in f. 14r, to *Rossidula rota*: *...hinc poete Philosophie succum fabulosis figmentis exprimentes, aiunt lune globum ex rore compositum...*

²⁸² See p. 38.

²⁸³ See ch. I,2,b.

which displayed a great predilection for cosmology and comprehensive geography. Corvinus's *Carmen elegiacum* breathes the spirit of an integrative humanism and a "cosmic" poetical self-representation à la Celtis. The epiphanic scenery, especially the summer settings, already remind the reader of Celtis, and his influence can be further demonstrated by their surviving correspondence that falls just to the years before the publication of the *Carmen elegiacum*, to 1499-1503.²⁸⁴ In each of three letters (1499, 1500, 1502) Corvinus remembers Celtis as his master in Cracow, deploras that he did not take full advantage of this time for learning poetry from the master, and expresses that he has modest abilities to write *carmina* that Celtis asked for.²⁸⁵ In the 1500 letter he sends a panegyric praising Celtis's fruitful activity in Austria and his teaching about the stars, the Sun's course and the seasons;²⁸⁶ the rhetorical eulogies in the 1502 letter include Celtis's identification with the muses' spring.²⁸⁷ He repeatedly asks for all the works of the *Amores*-edition, and he praises twice the "natural" and "astrological sweetness" of the *Amores*,²⁸⁸ referring both to the cosmological contents and the sweetness of honey or the muses' nectar, a topos for the delightful poetical form.

There is a micro-macrocosmical relation between poetry and cosmos, the poet is supported by divine, celestial forces, and mirrors back the cosmos and its secrets by his divine song. Corvinus's elegy perfectly reflects the philosophical tradition that places poetry / music in cosmic context, and that is hallmarked most importantly by Pythagoras, Plato, Macrobius and Ficino. Schwarz has argued that Celtis aroused Corvinus's interest in Platonic studies,²⁸⁹ this is probably an exaggeration – Corvinus could meet the tradition anyway, in Cracow and later –, but Celtis was certainly one of the mediators. Schwarz has demonstrated Corvinus's interest in Plato in his poetological, rhetorical-stylistical works (*Carminum structura*, *Hortulus*, *Ydeoma*) as well as poetical works; with regard to the *Carmen elegiacum*, he has pointed out the frequent use of Plato (especially the *Republic*), and exemplified the occasional

²⁸⁴ Bauch ("Laurentius Corvinus," 256-7) has already called attention to this correspondence, but he touched only superficially on the letters.

²⁸⁵ BW no. 217 p. 361-2 (1499); no. 236 p. 393-6 (1500); no. 285 p. 517-8 (1502).

²⁸⁶ BW p. 395, v. 26-38: *Sic paululo dives sub Austriaco polo / Pavidum timoris expers describis sacro / Labore pictos ignei aetheris globos, / Obducta lunae cur lampas caligine / Animos stupentes territat mortalium, / Stygis profundae et Manes sollicitat leves, / Aut cur tepescens aurei currus rota / Properante dum vagos pergit sol ad Scythas, / Campus soluta roscidus vernat nive, / Leonis hirti crispa flavescit iuba / Horisque multo dives autumnalibus / Fetu gravatur brumae cur pigrae caper / Auctor nivosa terras veste contegit.*

²⁸⁷ BW p. 518: *Tu enim litterarum mearum fons et origo, a quo, si paululum adhuc Castalii liquoris in aridum et sterilem ingenioli mei agrum effluxerint, maturam tibi segetem excrescere et flosculos odoratissimos celeberrimi nominis tui famam ampliuros in prato tuis surculis plantato pullulare compertum habebis.*

²⁸⁸ BW no. 288 p. 521-2 (25 Nov. 1502): *Fuerunt apud me pridie carmina tua elegantissimo conscripta stilo naturalis succi et astrologicae suavitatis plena (...) Non parum inde Castalii roris hauriam...;* BW no. 294, p. 530 (Jan. 1503): *Delectant enim [carmina tua] me plurimum, cum presertim astrologie et naturalis dulcedinis sint plena.* The word *astrologia* can also mean astronomy.

²⁸⁹ Schwarz, "De Laurentii," 136-7: *Quare nullus dubito, quin Celte impulsore Corvinus se ad studia Platonica converterit.*

use of Ficino, his Plato-commentaries and other works.²⁹⁰ Indeed, Ficino was the primary mediator of the Platonic tradition to Corvinus, and Ficino's further emphasis on the Sun is also mirrored in the elegy. This is exemplified by his comment to *Omnipotentis ego* (v. 81) where he expounds on the relation between God and the Sun, drawing mostly on Ficino's *De sole* and *De lumine* (Corvinus's Plato-reference itself also comes from Ficino, which exemplifies that he used Ficino more frequently than he indicated²⁹¹ in the commentary).²⁹² In general, the poem breathes a Florentine Platonic spirit in that the author's endeavour for a synthesis of classical and Christian lore can be repeatedly felt; he formulates many passages of both the main text and the commentary in a way that fuses the two conceptual frameworks.

To remain at the foregoing example, in the line *Omnipotentis ego sacro sum sanguine cretus* ("I was born from the sacred blood of the Omnipotent") Apollo speaks about himself and Jupiter, but Jesus could also have said it about God (*omnipotens* and *ego sum* has Christian connotations). In his comment to *Elysium* (v. 240), the land of pure souls and eternal abundance, he blurs the difference between the classical Elysium and the Christian Paradise.²⁹³ The most important example for us is the representation of poetical inspiration. He expresses on several levels that divine inspiration is indispensable for the poet,²⁹⁴ but he does not insist on the Platonic or Ficinian versions of the *furor poeticus*. He represents it in the form of celestial dew, which has definitely Christian connotations. The dew (or rain) of grace falling on the heart's arid land is a frequent motif in the Bible, in the exegetical tradition and liturgical practice; authors, too (including high medieval German poets), asked for this gift of the Holy Spirit to be able to write sermons, religious poems, hagiographic works.²⁹⁵ The muses' water, when mentioned at all, was as a rule opposed to God's dew from above;²⁹⁶ Corvinus, however, *unites* the two. Christian tradition is mixed with the classical: as the

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 136-8.

²⁹¹ Example for Ficino's explicit indication: f. 15v, to *Pari tenore* (about *concordia*): *nam secundum Marsilium ficinum. super decimum de re publica Platonis...*

²⁹² F. 10v, excerpts from the comment to *Omnipotentis ego*: *Plato enim in libris de re publica, Lumen solis et inde ipsum Solem nominavit filium ipsius boni hoc est dei...* cf. Ficino, *De lumine*, OO p. 984: *Plato noster in libro de repub. hoc ipsius boni filium nominaverit*; Corvinus: *huius enim presentia reviviscunt cuncta, et illius absentia videntur cuncta mori...* cf. Ficino, *De lumine*, OO p. 984: *Absque huius praesentia mori cuncta videntur, huius autem praesentia reviviscere*; Corvinus: *Sol dei vicarius miranda videtur efficere...* cf. Ficino, *De sole*, OO p. 972: *Quemadmodum vero Deus lumen hoc ingens in Sole lumini Solis primo mirabiliter addidit, ita Sol statim vicarius in hoc officio Dei hoc additum sibi lumen nativis stellarum luminibus addit etc.* Schwarz ("De Laurentii," 138) has already noted these Ficino-loci, without indicating the related Corvinus-loci.

²⁹³ F. 27r, to *Elysiis deliciis*: *... Sedem enim beatam quam nos paradysum dicimus, vates campum nominant Elisium.*

²⁹⁴ E.g. f. 26v, at the beginning of the commentary-part to Calliopeia: *Nemo autem ad poeticas fores accedit nisi qui celesti quadam vi inspiratur etc.*; in the end, Corvinus receives the celestial dew (see below); and in general, the whole poem presents the encounter of the poet with the divine *numina*.

²⁹⁵ Friedrich Ohly, "Metaphern für die Inspiration," *Euphorion* 87 (1993), 143-171.

²⁹⁶ As in Fulco's twelfth-century German prayer: *ibid.*, 122-3.

author formulates in the *Argumentum*, the celestial water is from the “Castalian spring,”²⁹⁷ and in the woodcut the dew comes from the Sun (symbol for both God and Apollo) beyond a cloud. The encounter of heat / fire and water and the fact that the dew comes after night refer to creation itself: when the poet digresses on the creation of the world (v. 91-94) and refers both to the biblical creation and the famous passage in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (I,5-31), he uses the phrase “warm dew” here, too.²⁹⁸ Poetical creation is analogous with the divine creation, as the Florentine Platonics repeatedly formulated. (Furthermore, the celestial dew in the elegy refreshes the poet on the hot summer day.) Later in his life and work Corvinus will even more rely on Ficino. In his *Dialogus... de mentis saluberrima persuasione* (1516),²⁹⁹ a dialogue-treatise staging Corvinus and *Mens* (a beautiful virgin accompanied by four muses), the author aims for the reader’s better understanding of both Plato’s teachings and the passion of Christ and other Christian doctrines; the idea of poetical inspiration appears peripherally, in a definitely Christian context.³⁰⁰

Celtis’s *Poema ad Fridericum* and – to some extent – other German humanist poems of the period around 1500 have shown how suitable the epiphanic scenery can be for “cosmologizing” poet and poetry; for this, Corvinus’s *Carmen elegiacum* seems to be the most important example. Beyond its basic Platonic orientation, the work reveals clear traces of Celtis’s inspiration, in both the settings and the integrative humanistic message. The publication of the poem with the long commentary and the large woodcut must have had representative reasons beyond the didactic ones, it suggested where Corvinus stood in the poetological discourse of the period. The difference between the *Carmen de novem musis* and the *Carmen elegiacum de Apolline et novem musis* mirrors in an exemplary way how much happened in this discourse from the early 1490s to the early 1500s, due to Celtis and other humanists (Locher, Lupinus, Augustinus Moravus and so on).

²⁹⁷ *Argumentum: Corvinum... celestis roris percupidum, aqua de castalio fonte hausta madefecit...*

²⁹⁸ V. 91-94: *Dum pater omnipotens ignave pondera molis / Edidit in formas lite iuvante novas / Et glebam tepido coeli de rore madentem / In vestrum mira fingeret arte genus...*

²⁹⁹ *Laurentii Corvinis Novoforensis Dialogus carmine et soluta oratione conflatus: de mentis saluberrima persuasione...* (Leipzig: V. Schumann, 1516).

³⁰⁰ The work has been discussed by Bauch, “Laurentius Corvinus,” 271-6, and most importantly by Schwarz, “De Laurentii.” Concerning the mixed prose and metric dialogue form, Corvinus imitates Boethius’s *Consolatio*; the theologically and ethically oriented dialogue circles around such issues as the human soul, *mens*; its relation to divine *mens*, Goodness; the Holy trinity; the requirements for a pious life. In these issues, the author heavily relies on Ficino. The work does not belong to our investigated period, but the beginning of the fifth prose part addresses the issues of the origin of poetry and poetical inspiration, so Corvinus’s work (just as Vadianus’s 1518 *De poetica* with a similar Platonic and Christian orientation) should be involved in a future comprehensive investigation of the Central European poetological discourse of the (early) sixteenth century. At one point of his work, Corvinus uses the image of the celestial dew or spray for the inspiration: *...nihil prorsus sapientie contulisset, nisi aspergine divinitus delapsa irrigati componendi et divinandi spiritum accepissent* (p. 26, 33, quoted by Schwarz, “De Laurentii,” 158). In sum, the inspiration comes from God; Corvinus also named Christ, the Holy Spirit, the grace as the source of poetical inspiration (*ibid.*).

Chapter VI

Sacrifices to Phoebus and Bacchus. Solar symbolism of humanist feasts

Feasts and banquets played an essential role in the life of humanist sodalities; as for Celtis's various circles, there is rich and spectacular evidence about such feasts. In humanist circles, the ideal model for any feast attended by scholars was naturally the classical *symposion* or *convivium*, which involved both scholarly discourse and various sorts of entertainment;³⁰¹ in most Celtis-related sources, especially the poetical ones, one can feel the author's intention to approach the actual feast to this classical pattern. Celtis provides a relatively detailed poetical description of a feast in his ode to Wacker / Vigilius (Od. III,5), who hosted the gatherings of the Heidelberg sodality:³⁰² cups of wine (*Bacchi... cymbia*) were served, they were joking, dicing, singing, dancing, and they did not lack the "joys of Venus" either (v. 45-63. Naturally, the description is stylized, and one of the five strophes ascends to the sphere of mythology – with fauns and satyrs –, but most of these activities, primarily the abundant wine-drinking, appear in many other sources, too). Celtis mentions in the poem his and Wacker's more serious activities, too, although what they allegedly did just before the feast is quite topical: they were watching the night sky, identifying the stars (v. 37-44); this part is of the same type of cosmological catalogue that was discussed earlier. One can find a similar succession of serious and merry conversation, heavenly wonders and earthly enjoyments, in Celtis's ode to the *sodales* of Buda (Od. II,2): they were discussing cosmological issues like the movement of the Sun (v. 25-40), and they had excellent feasts, expelling the winter cold with the help of Bacchus's warmth (v. 41-44; 81-84). The humanists were happy to apply the term *symposion* or *convivium* to any type of feasting and drinking. These terms had a wide range of meaning: in a humanist context, *symposion* always evoked to some extent the Platonic banquet, the most exalted meaning of the word, but in most cases the actual feasts seem to have been rather *syn-posia* in a literal sense (just drinking together). Celtis's ode *De cena Miricae* (Od. 1,21 "On Mirica's dinner") records a "*convivium*" at

³⁰¹ Two basic traditional types of *convivia* can be discerned: the one, exemplified by Plato's *Symposion*, was more scientific and had relatively strict rules; the other, modelled after Xenophon's *Symposion*, was more loosely organized and involved various sorts of entertainment. The feasts of Celtis's sodalities in general seem to have stood closer to the latter type of *convivium*. In general, the humanists' feast provided the basis for the development of scientific academies in the Renaissance; the early sodalities had a more liberal and open character than the later academies (V. De Caprio, "I cenacoli umanistici," in *Letteratura italiana*, vol. I, ed. A. A. Rosa, Torino: Einaudi, 1982, 809).

³⁰² According to Entner ("Was steckt," 1079), the poem records memories of Celtis's 1485 stay in Heidelberg, when the circle there was not called *Sodalitas Rhenana* yet. About Vigilius as a host: Wiegand, "*Phoebea*," 41.

Celtis's German friend in Poland where they simply got as drunk as lords; *symposion* could also appear in a context that makes clear its simple meaning as "feast."³⁰³ The enjoyment of wine is frequently mentioned in sources related to the Vienna, Buda or Olomouc circles around 1500; the wine of *Sirmium* (in the southern part of *Pannonia*³⁰⁴) "recurs as a key-word in their works."³⁰⁵ As the common letter of the Buda *sodales* that invites Celtis on 8 December 1497 reads, good Sirmian wine awaits Celtis, because *Liber pater* [Bacchus], "having realized that Celtis, his poet (*vates*), was riding to the region of Pannonia, produced more and better wine and made it milder."³⁰⁶ In 1503 Augustinus Moravus sent Celtis a letter wine-stained, in which he cited classical authors on the benefits of wine-drinking.³⁰⁷ In 1504 Sinapinus from the Olomouc circle refers jokingly to themselves as *conbibones* (fellow drinkers) instead of the usual *commilitones* (fellow soldiers); the Pannonian Bacchus "has not evaporated" from them yet.³⁰⁸ Bohuslav Lobkovic of Hassenstein expressly writes (though probably with some poetical exaggeration and self-irony) in a poem to Šlechta that they in the Buda circle just "live and drink;" Minerva gives way to Bacchus, the muse of Virgil gives way to the Sirmian wine.³⁰⁹

As seen above, humanists like Celtis liked to exploit any biographical-historical fact for the purpose of the individual or collective self-representation of the *vates*, and the humanist feasts, "*convivia*" were such occasions, even if the poet had particularly to stylize and mythologize in his poem in order to elevate the event to sacred spheres. Bacchus's above discussed³¹⁰ role as god of poetical inspiration came in handy for our humanists; whenever they mention the god, this function of his may be in the background, even if Bacchus seems to appear simply as a wine-god in a *carpe diem* context or in a feast-description.³¹¹ In the humanists' poetical world, the secular turns sacred, the feast becomes a ritual, a sacrifice to Phoebus and Bacchus, a celebration of poetical genius. All the more since the original event

³⁰³ E. g. in Nitsch's letter to Celtis in 1503 (BW no. 298 p. 535); about the "*symposia*" in the Olomouc sodality, cf. also Machilek, "Konrad Celtis," 152.

³⁰⁴ "Szerémség" in Hungarian, "Srijem" in Croatian, "Срем / Srem" in Serbian.

³⁰⁵ Klaniczay, *A magyarországi*, 66-7, with several examples, some of which I also mention in the following.

³⁰⁶ BW p. 310: *Putamus ista [Seremica vina] Liberum patrem nulla alia causa effecisse, quam cum suum vatem Celtim tractum Pannoniae obequitare sensit, plura solito et meliora vina produxit et temperavit.*

³⁰⁷ BW no. 231 p. 386.

³⁰⁸ BW no. 319 p. 574: *...tuorum non commilitonum, sed conbibonum Maierhovianorum, quibus nondum tyrsiger Pannonicus evaporat.*

³⁰⁹ *Inter Pannonios versamur, Sslechta, penates; / Si, quae agimus, quaeris? vivimus et bibimus. / Carminibusque mihi plus Bacchi dona probantur, / Cornigero et cedit casta Minerva deo. / Plusque placet crater, quam magni Musa Maronis, / Plus calices ipso denique Maeonide. / Tu tamen ad flammam ventas adiungere flammam / Utque bibam sitiens Sirmica vina, iubes (Ad eundem v. 1-8, in Lobkovic, *Farrago poematum in ordinem digestorum ac editorum*, ed. T. Mitis, Prague: G. Melantrichus, 1570, p. 132f).*

³¹⁰ See p. 194ff.

³¹¹ E. g. Od. I,29,49-52 or Od. II,14,41-48.

was sometimes indeed a special occasion, for instance a birthday. The Phoebean–Bacchic symbolism of humanist feasts excellently fits a general tendency of humanist literature around 1500: the presentation of the humanist groups as quasi-ritual communities through various religious, mythical symbols, the evocation of the aura of the sacred, in order to enhance their elite status within society and to reinforce their group identity.³¹² The humanist works concerned are interesting both from a literary / intellectual historical and a social historical perspective.

1. *The golden bowl of Augustinus Moravus*

The *patera* or golden bowl of Augustinus Moravus, now preserved in the *Grünes Gewölbe* of Dresden, is one of the most precious art historical treasures related to Central European humanism of that period, and at the same time an intriguing source concerning humanist group-identity and the idea of poetical inspiration. The only certain information about its origin comes from the inscription at the bottom of the bowl: AVG[USTINUS]. OLOM[UCENSIS]. SIBI. ET. GRATIAE. POSTERITATI. MDVIII. (“Augustine of Olomouc for himself and the grateful posterity in 1508”; Augustinus’s coat-of-arms is included). There is no evidence that Augustinus had it made for either the “Danubian” or the Olomoucian (“*Maierhofiana*”) sodality.³¹³ In literature,³¹⁴ several possibilities have been put forward as its place of origin, but neither could be proved so far.³¹⁵ The bowl imitates in style a *patera*, a

³¹² About this aspect of the *sodalitas*-movement cf. e.g. Machilek, “Konrad Celtis,” 154-5; Garber, *Sozietäten*, 367-8. An elitarian character permeates the whole Ancient Theology tradition: only the few learned men, the elect can understand the message of the poet-theologians, as Celtis has emphasized for instance in his *Oratio*, 9,4; cf. Robert, *Konrad Celtis*, 148.

³¹³ Tibor Klaniczay, for instance, regarded the *patera* as belonging to the Danubian Sodality (*A magyarországi*, 67f). Though later scholars (e.g. Konečný, “Augustine,” 193) rightly emphasize the lack of evidence, Klaniczay made an interesting assumption regarding the Augustinus–Cuspinianus relationship, the truth of which cannot be excluded. Cuspinianus (a leading member of the Vienna circle after Celtis’s death) mentions in the dedicatory letter of the edition of Marbod’s *Libellus de lapidibus preciosis* (Vienna: Vietor, 1511) a certain new year’s present of great beauty and artistic value, given to him by Augustinus (*me strena Saturnalia et pulcherrima simul et artificiosissima donasses*, f. a1v). In Augustinus’s *Catalogus episcoporum Olomucensium*, that appeared likewise in 1511 in Vienna, the first line of Cuspinianus’s dedicatory epigram (*Cuspinianus lectori*, f. a1r) seems to be a reference to the *patera*-inscription: *Ite leves procul hinc, moneo, procul ite prophani*. As Klaniczay suggested, the two data render it possible that the present concerned was the *patera* (*A magyarországi*, 72).

³¹⁴ The *patera* has been reviewed in many studies, though generally shortly; for this literature cf. Konečný, “Augustine,” n. 1. The most important study seems to be this article of Konečný.

³¹⁵ In Konečný’s opinion (“Augustine,” 186-9) at least the Bacchus roundel is likely to be of Italian origin, but this, too, is just an assumption without serious evidence.

classical sacrificial bowl.³¹⁶ Its bottom consists of a medal representing a winged Bacchus figure, surrounded by an inscription; its sides are adorned with twenty-two golden Roman coins, mostly original, but some has been replaced (Fig. 24a-b). There is a further inscription along the edge of the *patera*. In the following I am going to focus on those components that concern my topic the most, on the two inscriptions around Bacchus and around the edge: they clearly belong together and can be interpreted in similar mythological-poetological contexts, while the coins could be most conveniently analyzed in a historical-political context.³¹⁷ The inscription around the winged figure reads:

GENIO LIBERO Q[ue] PATRI (“For Genius and Father Liber”)

That around the edge reads:

PHOEBIGENUM SAC(T)RATA COHORS ET MYSTICUS ORDO
HAC PATERA BACCHI MVNERA LARGA FER(R)ANT
PROCVL HINC PROCVL ESTE PROPHANI

(“Let the sacred host³¹⁸ and mystical order of Phoebus’s sons offer the rich presents of Bacchus in this bowl.³¹⁹ Away, away, you uninitiated!”)



Fig. 24a. The golden bowl of Augustinus Moravus.

³¹⁶ Hlobil – Petrů, *Humanism*, 160.

³¹⁷ About the coins, cf. Paul Arnold, “Die goldene Schale (Patera) des Augustin Kesenbrot und ihre Veränderungen im 18. Jahrhundert,” *Jahrbuch der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Dresden* 26 (1996-7), 87-98; or Ernő Marosi’s recent paper at the “Augustinus Moravus Olomucensis 500” conference (Budapest, 2013), entitled “Die goldene Trinkschale des Augustinus Moravus,” not published yet. Here I thank Prof. Marosi for putting the paper at my disposal.

³¹⁸ Following Konečný, I opted for “host” instead of “group” or “team.” On the one hand, *cohors* in a poetic context does not always mean armed forces, see e.g. the phrase *cohors musarum*. On the other hand, humanists liked to refer to themselves in military terms, e.g. as *commilitones*.

³¹⁹ Or “the rich presents in this bowl of Bacchus.”



Fig. 24b. The golden bowl of Augustinus Moravus from above.

LIBER PATER was a god identified with Bacchus in Roman times; as an adjective, *liber* means “free,” and it has become a commonplace to associate the name *Liber* to the liberating effects of wine or Bacchic rituals. In Celtis’s circles, too, the wine-god was often denoted by the name *Liber Pater*.³²⁰ *Genius*, the other “addressee” of the shorter inscription, is also primarily a god, to whom sacrifice is offered at a festive occasion. Since only one deity is represented in the picture, and its characteristics refer both to *Liber pater* and *Genius*,³²¹ it

³²⁰ An example from Celtis’s poetry that can be well related to the *patera*-inscriptions: *Ergo viventes capiamus arctae / gaudium vitae, pateris sacrautes / Liberi patris...* a few lines below: *...Genioque nostro / sacrificabo* (Od. II,17,53-55; 59-60). The letter that invited Celtis to Vienna holding out *Liber Pater*’s promises has already been cited above, p. 231 n. 306.

³²¹ On the one hand, there are grapes next to the winged boy, on the other hand, *Genius* was often represented as a winged being or a youth holding a *cornucopia* in Roman art.

may be regarded as a double deity, uniting *Liber pater* and *Genius* in one god (such a *numen mixtum* was not a rare phenomenon in Renaissance art³²²), but the *-que* conjunction still indicates the possibility to interpret them as different gods.³²³ Dionysos worshipped as *psilax*, as a winged god, was first mentioned in Pausanias's *Description of Greece* (III,19,6); Konečný points out that the Bacchus-image of the bowl must go back to this passage, and that the *patera* provides the first *Bacchus Psilax* representation in Renaissance art.³²⁴

For both this and the next subchapter, it will be fruitful to investigate GENIUS, probably the most complex notion in the two inscriptions. In antiquity, *Genius* / *genius* primarily meant the male spirit of the family to whom the *pater familias* offered sacrifices; besides, many other things could be regarded as having a divine aspect or guardian spirit. Ordinary mortals, emperors, gods, corporations, places all could have their *genius*. As appears from the name itself, it is related to generative power, procreation and birth. With the revival of classical gods in the Renaissance, *genius*, too, figured more frequently in literature and philosophy, and its semantic range was occasionally further extended (as in Ficino³²⁵). Here I overview its semantic range only in one specific literary culture: how *genius* appears in the poetry of Celtis and his circles around 1500?

a. As in classical literature (e. g. Horace's poetry³²⁶), *genius* could appear in a festive, ritual context, as a deity to whom wine is offered in the frameworks of a (more or less) ceremonial feast. In Celtis, this occasion is most often his birthday: building on the Roman tradition that the *genius* was celebrated on the birthday of the *pater familias*, the motif of the sacrifice to the *Genius* at Celtis' birthday feast figures four times in his poetry, as will be seen in the next subchapter. *Genius* might have also occurred in a more general sense, as the spirit of the feast; in such expressions as *genio indulgere*, *genium curare*, the term *genius* lost its meaning as a deity. In a *Ludus Dianae* passage, just as in a Tibullus-elegy,³²⁷ *genius* seems to be on the verge of these two meanings ("spirit" as deity / "good spirits"), nevertheless, the context associates *genius* with Bacchus: in the "*Chorus Bacchi et comitum*" part of the *Ludus*,

³²² Cf. e.g. Panofsky, "The Subject."

³²³ The older literature (e.g. Hummel, *Die humanistischen*, 70; Treml, *Humanistische*, 154) generally regards him as *Genius*; Konečný ("Augustine," 189) regards him as a double being.

³²⁴ Konečný, "Augustine," 189.

³²⁵ Ficino extends the notion of *genius* / *daemon geniturae* / *vitae custos* in an astral direction; he relates but does not equate it with *ingenium*. Cf. Steppich, 'Numine,' 197-206.

³²⁶ Hor. Epist. II,1,144; De arte p. 210.

³²⁷ Tib. I,7,37-52.

satyrs, fauns and everybody are exhorted to eulogize Maximilian and his wife, and to dedicate the night to the *genius* or to the good spirits.³²⁸

b. Referring to the poet himself, *genius* meant his potentially divine spirit, the inborn literary or even prophetic talent of a *vates*. The quasi-equation of *genius* and *ingenium* had begun to take shape in Roman poetry,³²⁹ and became more definite in Renaissance poetry. In our German humanists, one can read either about the poet's *genius* in this sense³³⁰ or about "his muse," which, again,³³¹ could mean his *genius / ingenium*.

c. The *sodales* must have been well aware of the close relation of *genius* to procreation. In Celtis, it appears several times in a sexual context; beyond using the classical phrase *lectum geniale* ("marriage-bed"),³³² he referred, for instance, to someone's *Genius* as a power responsible for successful sexual intercourse and procreation.³³³ In general, procreation and poetical creation could be regarded as two aspects of the same miraculous phenomenon, and sometimes Renaissance authors made this parallel explicit.

In any of these cases, one may not always be able to exclude either the external or the internal aspect of *genius*; it might be interpreted *both* as an external deity, divine protector or someone's divine spirit, true self. *Genius* had this ambiguous character already in antiquity, it was, in the words of Argetsinger, "neither entirely a 'self' nor a 'patron', but a bit of both at once."³³⁴ The German humanists concerned could well exploit this ambiguity; as will be seen, this seems to be the case with the GENIUS of the *patera*, too, and it may have referred to all the above mentioned meanings.

Reading the longer inscription, one immediately feels the strong opposition between the sacred and the profane spheres, all this in a classical, paganizing (which does not mean anti-Christian) context. First, it refers to something more than an ordinary feast: a sacrifice, a festive act is referred to. A festive period, a time of ritual acts is sacred time, it stands out

³²⁸ Ludus v. 97-98: *Dedicat hanc Genio Caesar cum coniuge noctem, / O nox perpetuo carmine digna coli!* The passage is reminiscent of Stat. Silv. IV,6,17-19: *o bona nox iunctaque utinam Tiryntia luna! / nox et Erythraeis Thetidis signanda lapillis / et memoranda diu geniumque habitura perennem!*

³²⁹ E. g. Mart. VI,61,10; Macr. V,15,16. In *De deo socratis*, Apuleius explicitly equated *Genius* with *animus*: E. Cesareo, *Il carne natalizio nella poesia latina* (Palermo: Orfani guerra, 1929), 155-7.

³³⁰ E. g. Jacobus Piso, *Hecatostichon*, v. 100: *Sic hominis Genius saepe futura videt*; Locher, *De origine et officio poetarum...* v. 37-38: *In quibus est Genius bene castigatus ad unguem: / in quibus et quadrant seria mixta iocis*, in Locher, *Catalogus illustrium auditorum*, f. L1r.

³³¹ Steppich, 'Numine,' 206-7.

³³² Ep. II,21,11.

³³³ Od I,5,89-92: *Ille spe ductus sobolis creandae, / duxit uxorem (ut voluit) pudicam, / sed sibi dulcem Genius negavit / surgere prolem.* In Am. IV,13,30, *Placabit genium cena superba meum*, the direct meaning of *genius* is his natural appetite; however, the scene has a sexual context, the feast is followed by a sexual intercourse in order to celebrate the anniversary of Celtis' conception, as the title of the elegy indicates (...*diem conceptionis suae celebret...*).

³³⁴ Kathryn Argetsinger, "Birthday Rituals: Friends and Patrons in Roman Poetry and Cult," *Classical Antiquity* 11/2 (1992), 186.

from time's ordinary flow; in such periods mortals can establish contact to the immortal sphere of the gods. Second, the text distinguishes those who sacrifice from the *prophani*, the uninitiated. Almost every word of the first line elevates the participants to the divine sphere: they are sons of Apollo, their group is a sacred and mystical order. It is the act of sacrifice that makes them a distinct elite group, a ritual community. One can see here in a great concentration such strategies of mythological stylizing that help construct humanist group identity.

As has been perceived,³³⁵ the line PROCUL HINC PROCUL ESTE PROPHANI originates in the *Aeneid* ('*procul, o procul este, profani,*'),³³⁶ and the evocation of the underworld scene with the Sybil enhances the mysterious atmosphere of the text. Renaissance works with similar exclamations about the *profani* may have also inspired the author of the inscription. First of all, one of the most famous Orphic fragments, called for instance *Testamentum*, has *procul hinc miseri, procul ite prophani* in the fourth line in Ficino's translation: according to the beginning of this fragment, "Orpheus" wants to reveal the monotheistic lores only to the initiate.³³⁷ A very similar line (v. 1: *Ite leves procul hinc, moneo, procul ite prophani*) in Cuspinianus's dedicatory epigram to Augustinus's *Catalogus episcoporum Olomucensium* (Vienna, 1511) is certainly a reference to the Orphic fragment as translated by Ficino, and perhaps also to the *patera*, as mentioned above. In general, monotheistic-pantheistic "Orphic" teachings about Jupiter / God permeating everything were central in Ficino³³⁸ and found their way to German humanism around Celtis, too;³³⁹ the addressee of the Ficino-letter with the Orphic fragments was the German Martin "Uranus" Prenninger. According to one branch of the Orpheus-mythology, he was Apollo's son, thus a *Phoebigenus*, and he has much to do with both poetry and Bacchic mysteries, so it is possible that the author of the inscription referred with the PROCUL HINC... line to the Orphic fragment beyond the Virgil-passage. Anyway, one can find examples for the use of the Virgil-line in the context of *furor poeticus* / *mysterialis* in both Italian and German poetry around 1500.³⁴⁰

³³⁵ István Genthon, "Egy budai humanista arany csészéje [The golden bowl of a humanist in Buda]," *Tanulmányok Budapest múltjából* 3 (1934), 141.

³³⁶ VI, 258-9: ... '*procul, o procul este, profani,*' / *conclamat vates, 'totoque absistite luco.'*

³³⁷ OO p. 934 (letter to Martin "Uranus" Prenninger, 9 June 1492), *Orphei versus de Deo*, v. 1-4: *Vos qui virtutem colitis, vos ad mea tantum / dicta aures adhibite animosque intendite vestros. / Contra qui sanctas leges contemnit, hinc vos / Effugite, et procul hinc miseri, procul ite prophani.*

³³⁸ Cf. e.g. Walker, "Orpheus," 109-115.

³³⁹ For these ideas in the work of Celtis himself, cf. e.g. Steppich, '*Numine,*' 242 or Spitz, "The Philosophy," 32f.

³⁴⁰ E.g. Marullo, *Hymni naturales* III, 1 (*Soli*), 3; Locher, *Sapphicon*, v. 6.

Do the divine qualities of the community and their ritual contact with the deity mean that they can even defeat death? It is Bacchus or Bacchus-Genius to whom the sacrifice is offered, the god who was reborn according to Greek-Roman mythology, and Bacchic mysteries were famed for offering a certain new life after death for the initiate; in the Renaissance, too (from Boccaccio on), Bacchus could be regarded as representing the everlasting cosmic cycle of birth, death and rebirth.³⁴¹ In the roundel, Bacchus as a child, having wings, reminds one of a soul reborn; what he sits on is uncertain, but it is reminiscent of a sarcophagus, among others (according Jan Bažant and Konečný it is a *cista praenestina*³⁴²). The two mating snakes in that form definitely refer to the caduceus, the staff of Hermes / Mercurius, who also functioned as psychagogue, conductor of souls; his wand could, among others, bring back the dead to life.³⁴³ The inscription around the edge evokes the atmosphere of mystery cults. All this corroborates the uncertain suggestion of previous scholars³⁴⁴ that the bowl also plays with that aspect of *Liber pater* that means liberation from death. The victory over death does not have to be taken in a physical sense, it may also refer to the everlasting fame of the poets, and this leads to another layer of possible interpretations, more specific to those German humanists.

I have already overviewed above the classical and Renaissance tradition of Bacchus as a god of poetical inspiration; there can be no doubt that the *patera*, too, belongs to this tradition. Konečný has already argued for this interpretation of the winged Bacchus,³⁴⁵ in the following I reinforce the validity of this reading by bringing up further motifs appearing both in the *patera* and other works of the *sodales*. First of all, it is the “sons of Phoebus” who venerate Bacchus. Belonging to Phoebus was a commonplace distinctive mark of the true poets in humanist ideology in general, all the more so in Celtis’s circles; it is not by chance that the word PHOEBIGENUM figures as the first word of the inscription. The *patera* evokes both Phoebus’s and Bacchus’s spirit, even with its external appearance: its circular shape and its material, the pure gold reminds one of the Sun, while the bowl itself was meant to hold wine. We have already seen examples for the reception of the Phoebus-Bacchus tradition in the Renaissance. In this regard, Konečný brings up Augustinus’s *Dialogus in defensionem poetices*, in which the author shortly recapitulates Macrobius’s argument for a kind of solar

³⁴¹ Emmerling-Skala, *Bacchus*, 127ff.

³⁴² Konečný, “Augustine,” 185, 194.

³⁴³ Ficino, too, refers to this ability of Mercurius, after drawing a parallel between Christ’s and the Sun’s power to raise living things from the dead: *Hinc Mercurius tanquam Solis Achates caduceo quodam excitare dicitur dormientes (De Sole, 9)*.

³⁴⁴ E. g. Marosi, “Die goldene.”

³⁴⁵ Konečný, “Augustine,” 189-193. Beginning with Niceratus’s verse “May wine be Pegasean wings to the excellent poet,” many works contributed to the tradition of the winged Bacchus.

monotheism.³⁴⁶ It is indeed important for our analysis that Augustinus wrote a whole treatise in defense of poetry, but since he does not expand on Bacchus here, it is not the *Dialogus* that can be directly related to the *patera*, but rather some pieces of the correspondence between Augustinus and Celtis. I have already mentioned the wine-stained letter in which Augustinus cites Horace praising the wine.³⁴⁷ That letter which invites Celtis to Vienna and brings up the rich presents of *Liber Pater*³⁴⁸ is also likely to have been composed by Augustinus.³⁴⁹ As for the other “deity” of the shorter inscription, GENIO, it has been argued above that it may also refer to the *ingenium* of the poets.

The element of joke and fun is not missing from the *patera* either. Indeed, such excessive terms as SACRATA COHORS and MYSTICUS ORDO just corroborate that the whole can also be considered from a facetious perspective. On the one hand, humanists were earnest about themselves as an intellectual elite social group; on the other hand, they were earthly mortals, they knew and often made fun about each other’s weaknesses; their usual critical attitude often turned into joking self-criticism. What we know for sure about the feasts of the sodalities that were supposed to belong to the *Sodalitas Danubiana* is their merry character, with a considerable amount of wine, and many kinds of joys – not necessarily only the joys of Bacchus, but such that the kissing snakes at the bottom of the Bacchus-roundel remind one of. It has not been perceived earlier that the words MUNERA LARGA FERANT certainly come from the *Priapea* of the *Appendix Vergiliana*, a work attributed to Virgil:³⁵⁰ here the rich presents, grapes³⁵¹ and other fruits, are offered to Priapus, the guardian of the garden, whose phallic character is explicitly referred to in the poem. Priapus was often associated with Bacchus, for instance as his and Venus’s son.³⁵² If the words MUNERA LARGA FERANT hid a slight joking reference to this phallic god, this would perfectly fit the intellectual climate of the humanist circles of Celtis or Augustinus. Whatever the reality, the humanist feasts, as they appear in the poetical oeuvre of the *sodales*, did not always miss the joys of Venus; I mentioned above the description of a feast in Celtis’s ode to Vigilius,³⁵³ and I could bring up

³⁴⁶ *Dialogus* (ed. Svoboda), p. 30-31.

³⁴⁷ BW no. 231, p. 386.

³⁴⁸ See the beginning of this chapter.

³⁴⁹ Klaniczay, *A magyarországi*, 67.

³⁵⁰ V. 33: *alter parva manu ferens semper munera larga*. A number of editions of Virgil’s *Opera* (containing the *Appendix Vergiliana*) was in circulation in Central Europe, e.g. Venice: P. Maufer, 1482 (GW M49840) or Nuremberg: A. Koberger, 1492 (GW M49940).

³⁵¹ Grapes can be seen in the Bacchus-roundel of the *patera*, too (Bacchus touches them).

³⁵² E. g. Diod. IV,6,4. For the considerable reception of the Bacchus–Venus–Priapus tradition in the Renaissance: Emmerling-Skala, *Bacchus*, 261ff.

³⁵³ See the beginning of this chapter.

other, much more explicit examples.³⁵⁴ Erotic themes in general often appear in Celtis's oeuvre, in works issued by Augustinus, and in the poetical or prose correspondence between them. Augustinus's collection of poems entitled *Erotica* has been lost; in Celtis's oeuvre, especially in the *Amores*, one can witness his interest in the most earthly aspects of love, too. In a facetious ode to Augustinus, Celtis taunts him with staying too long at a girl's place;³⁵⁵ Bohuslav Lobkovic also wrote about Augustinus's love affairs.³⁵⁶ As for Priapus, he also occurs in Celtis in a sexual context,³⁵⁷ and in 1504 Augustinus urged Celtis in two letters that he should send him a previously promised work, the *Auri et Priapi de eminentia certamen* (in which *Priapus* stands for the *virilis cauda* itself).³⁵⁸ Augustinus himself issued G. Avanzi's, his Paduan professor's emendations to the *Priapeia*, the classical collection of Priapus-poems.³⁵⁹

Since the *patera* was made or donated in 1508, in Celtis's year of death, it was brought up in scholarship³⁶⁰ that the bowl might have been made to his memory. This cannot be proved, but the above analysis seems to have rendered this *possibility* more probable: the main motifs of the Bacchus-roundel and the inscriptions overlap to a great extent with some of the leading ideas of the Celtis-oeuvre. The predilection for *symposia*, feasts and ceremonies, the special emphasis on Phoebus, Bacchus and the idea of poetical inspiration (as seen above, he was called *Bacchi and Phoebi sacerdos* in a letter), the inclination to both mythologizing, paganizing mystification and joking³⁶¹ (including sexual allusions): all this the *patera* and Celtis's poetry has in common. The warm friendship between the two humanists is attested by

³⁵⁴ The best example is the orgiastic epigram that Wuttke has discovered in the Nuremberg fair copy of the Celtis-epigrams (Ms.: Nuremberg, Cent V. A. 3, f. 108v); it was crossed out and was not involved in the Kassel Manuscript. It mocks a certain *Pinifer* who is drinking wine ("*Bacchus*") and copulating at the same time at a feast, thus wetting both his *mentula* and his *guttur*. Two hands have written down the poem, "at your order, eloquent Celtis" (*iussu celti diserte tuo*): "Balbus," who can only be Girolamo Balbi, member of the Vienna circle, and "Italus," not identified yet. D. Wuttke, "Drei Celtis-Funde," in *Horaz und Celtis*, ed. U. Auhagen et al. (Tübingen: Narr, 2000), 325-6.

³⁵⁵ Od. IV,6 *Ad Augustinum Olomuncium, dum apud puellam consenesceret* ["To Augustine of Olomouc, when he grew old at a girl's place"].

³⁵⁶ Lobkovic, *Farrago poematum*, p. 125-6.

³⁵⁷ Od. I,28,14-18: *Nec cunnum hispida labra comprimentem, / salinis specubus profundiozem, / et portis Tyriis patentiorem, / quem mille exterebraverant Priapi, / et mille exterebrent salaciores.*

³⁵⁸ BW no. 313, p. 566; no. 317, p. 572. There is no sign that Celtis has published this work.

³⁵⁹ *Hieronimi Avancii Veronensis artium doctoris in Val. Catullum et in Priapeias Emendationes...* (Venice: J. Tacuinus, 1495, GW 3098). This work, just as many of the above examples for Augustinus's and Celtis's erotic interests, were mentioned by Klaniczay (*A magyarországi*, 66-67), but he did not relate them to the *patera*.

³⁶⁰ Marosi, "Die goldene."

³⁶¹ Cf. Marosi, "Die goldene": "Es handelt sich vom Humanistenwitz, und zwar in beiden Bedeutungen des Worts, sowohl des älteren, des Weistums als auch im modernen, des Spasses."

their correspondence.³⁶² Can thus the GENIUS of the *patera* refer, among others, to Celtis's personal guardian spirit, and the idea of victory-over-death to Celtis's incessant desire for everlasting fame? This connotation cannot be excluded. Apart from the question whether the *patera* can be *directly* related to Celtis or not, it may have been donated to a specific sodality to which both Celtis and Augustinus was closely related, i. e., either the Olomouc sodality or the "Danubian Sodality," whatever it meant.³⁶³ Another possibility is what Konečný has formulated like this: "the Dresden bowl was not owned by any particular sodality but used jointly by Augustine's friends wherever they met."³⁶⁴

Whoever the *patera* belonged to, the above analysis has demonstrated that the investigated components of the bowl are carefully thought-out, that they are polysemous in an intriguing way, and that the intellectual values of the bowl are worthy of its beautiful external appearance. The range of possible interpretations of the inscriptions and the Bacchus-image can be summarized well by recapitulating in a sentence the possible meanings of GENIUS. It may refer (either identified with Bacchus or not) both to a mystical deity to whom sacrifice is offered at a ritual, and simply the merry spirits of a feast; it may represent the protector deity of the whole ritual community (one of the sodalities?); it may be identified with the poets' *ingenium*, whose fame defeats death.

2. Candle-light for beneficial Sun-rays: Celtis's birthday poems

In the next two subchapters I will discuss Celtis-poems about banquets on a ceremonial occasion; their atmosphere has something in common with that of the *patera*, in these cases, however, the feasts are definitely connected to concrete festive days. One such a day is Celtis's birthday. In classical poetry, birthday celebration was not a neglected subject, it could appear in different contexts and genres, like Martial's epigrams, Tibullus's or Ovid's elegies, Horace's congratulatory odes.³⁶⁵ It was relatively rare that the author wrote about his own birthday; Celtis does just this. He has four poems written on the occasion of his (*dies*) *natalis*

³⁶² Summarized by C. Gastgeber, "Augustinus Moravus und seine Beziehungen zum Wiener Humanistenkreis," in *Augustinus Moravus Olomucensis. Proceedings of the International Symposium to Mark the 500th Anniversary of the Death of Augustinus Moravus Olomucensis (1467-1513)*, ed. P. Ekler, F. G. Kiss (Budapest: OSZK et al., 2015), 11-18.

³⁶³ Some scholars related the *patera* closely to the "Danubian Sodality," e.g. Treml, *Humanistische*, 154.

³⁶⁴ Konečný, "Augustine," 193.

³⁶⁵ In general cf. Cesareo, *Il carne natalizio*; Argetsinger, "Birthday Rituals," 175-193.

(indicated in their title), and two of them describes the celebration in detail (with obviously fictive elements); as far as I know, this is unprecedented in contemporary Neo-Latin literature, too.³⁶⁶ A birthday poem could provide excellent means for self-representation. Even addressing another person on the occasion of his birth anniversary, namely Blasius Hölztl in the ode *In natalem diem*, Celtis could speak about his own birth, since it fell on the same day as Hölztl's birth, as seen above.³⁶⁷

The two birthday-poems that describe the event in detail are in the *Amores*, and they fit the general nature of this collection of love elegies. In elegy II,10, Celtis calls upon Elsula to prepare his thirtieth³⁶⁸ birthday feast for him and his friends; he details the ceremonial – indeed, ritual – accessories, and the prospective event from the learned conversation at the feast to the... best wishes and the “consummation” of the festive day, i. e. the love-making at night. Elegy III,12 invites Ursula to his thirty-sixth³⁶⁹ birthday; here, too, the poet instructs his lover how the event should be celebrated, and the instructions are in line with the general *carpe diem* theme of the poem. Ode III,2 is basically a short invitation-poem to his friends, probably for his thirty-fifth birthday,³⁷⁰ but in this, too, the poet expresses his longing for Ursula. The core of ode II,17, addressed to “Cumanus” Athesinus (Johann Kaufmann), is the friend's invitation to Celtis's birthday feast (v. 57-72), but this is incorporated in a structure typical for Celtis's odes to his friends: praising this professor of law in Ingolstadt, Celtis recalls his birth and excellent education, reminds him of the stoic virtues and the benefits of a *carpe diem* attitude. In all these poems, the prospective celebration is stylized as a religious rite, at least the motif of sacrifice to the *Genius* always appears. In classical Rome, the core of the birthday celebration was the ritual activity related primarily to the *Genius*, and the poetical sources indicate the main elements of this rite: offerings of wine and cake for the *Genius*, its anointment and wreath-laying, religious vow or wish (*votum*), all this in circumstances

³⁶⁶ Those birthday-poems that I know are of a different nature than those of Celtis: Jakob Locher's *De natali suo* is basically a prayer to the gods to turn his – so far quite ill – fate for the better (in *Apologia...*, f. b4r); for congratulatory poems for the birthday of the patron, Michael Transylvanus's *in natalem Blasii H.* (to Hölztl; in *Complurium eruditorum vatum carmina, ad magnificum virum D. Blasium Holcelium, sacri Caesaris Maximiliani consiliarium Moecenatem eorum precipuum*, ed. P. Bonomo, Augsburg, 1518, f. c3v–d1r) is a good example.

³⁶⁷ See p. 129.

³⁶⁸ V. 3: *Quippe ego in hac numero terdenas nocte Calendas*

³⁶⁹ V. 29-30: *Quippe duodecimam mihi cras trieteriden implet / Phoebus ab Eoa Tethyos ortus aqua.*

³⁷⁰ Schäfer states in his commentary (*Oden*, p. 212) that it is the thirty-fifth birthday. In theory, the words *septimi lustri mea dum revolvunt fila sorores* (v. 3-4) allow another interpretation, too, namely that the seventh period of five years has just begun, thus it is the thirtieth birthday; however, Am. II,10 refers to the thirtieth birthday in a different way, with a different woman. It is not probable that Celtis stylized the same birthday in two different ways.

required by the ritual (e. g. holy silence, appropriate robes).³⁷¹ Celtis, too, referred to a sacrifice to the *Genius* consistently and explicitly,³⁷² since this was not only a learned reference to classical poetry, but it lent a certain sacred aura to his own birthday. On the other hand, it is only the wine and the sacrificial feast that he mentions from among the elements of the classical rite (drinking and feasting did take place on these birthdays), and he found other ways, too, for connecting the earthly and divine spheres: a stylized birthday celebration provided manifold opportunities for the poet to apply a cosmic perspective.

An overview of *Amores* II,10 (full text in Appendix I/4) is highly suitable for demonstrating the multiplicity of strategies applied by Celtis to lend the earthly events a cosmic dimension in the frameworks of the microcosm-macrocosm analogy. The elegy is obviously modeled after Propertius III,10, which is about Cynthia's birthday; the main events of this – ritual preparations, feast and merriment, Venus's joys at night – constitute the spine of the Celtis-poem, too, but the details are different, and it is just the cosmic dimensions that differentiate the most the two works. Within Neo-Latin poetry, Callimachus has a birthday poem entitled *Ad Fanniam natali die*,³⁷³ where Fannia is supposed to pray to Phoebus Apollo, *mentor annorum*, for a prosperous future. Some textual similarities reveal that Celtis drew on this ode regarding their attitude to the Sun, otherwise the two poems have a different structure and different emphases.

The *natalicium convivium* that, as the title of the Celtis-elegy reads, Elsula should prepare,³⁷⁴ should begin after sunset (v. 1-2). Phoebus / the Sun is given a key role, which it will keep all throughout the poem. Elsula should, among others, light a candle on which these two verses should stand (v. 9-10):

<i>Phoebe, sub aëria qui stas modo candidus Urna, Luce salutari cras tuus orbis eat!</i>	You, Phoebus, who is just staying in the aerial Urn [Aquarius], may your globe come with beneficial rays tomorrow!
--	--

This sounds a bit like magic. The magical universe of the *Amores* does allow strange interactions between the micro- and macrocosm, effects can work in both ways: the Sun gives life on earth, but earthly mortals, too, can influence cosmic events. The certainly fictive ritual

³⁷¹ Argetsinger, "Birthday Rituals," 182-4. In case of "divine" patrons the elements of the rite may have been different.

³⁷² Od. II,17,58-60: *...celebrabo prisco / more natalem, Genioque nostro / sacrificabo*. Od. III,2,18: *Cras ego Phoebos geniale ponam / prandium...* Am. II,10,36-7: *Ipse ego tunc veniam caris comitatus amicis / Et Genio solitas sacrificabo dapes*. Am III,12,41-2: *Ergo age natales cras pones Ursula mensas / Et Genio sacras instrue larga dapes...*

³⁷³ Carm. 6.

³⁷⁴ *Ad Elsulam, ut natalicium sibi convivium instruat*

act combines real classical traditions, basically the birthday *votum* and the lighting of fires or candles for (Sun-)gods (Sol, Mithras etc.); in the poem, Celtis is explicit about the Sun–fire correspondence. Earthly fire corresponds to the heavenly fire, the lighting of a candle is obviously related to the Sun being reborn; it is the ritual acts and the sacred time of the festive day that strengthen these bonds. All this has a personal aspect: in *Amores* I,1, Celtis, the poet said to have been born at sunrise, together with Phoebus, the god of poetry; now, it is the same they of they year, and they are waiting for the “rebirth” of both Celtis and the Sun at dawn. That’s why he refers to both the position of the Sun in the zodiac (Aquarius) and the time of the day, the *rediturus* Sun (v. 7).

Bacchus cannot be missing from the feast, either: the poet is particular about what kinds of wine *Elsula* should serve, in what kinds of vessels (v. 13-18). The topic of wine-growing regions gives occasion for a geographical *digressio* about a mountain close to his birth place, the *pinifer mons* or Fichtelgebirge, from which four rivers spring (v. 19-30):³⁷⁵ this is *cosmographia* à la Celtis, that kind of geography in which the characteristics of a country mirror the structure of the whole cosmos. When the house is clean, and wine, bread and everything is ready, Celtis will come “accompanied by dear friends,” and make offerings to the *Genius* (v. 31-36). A learned discussion begins: the title of the elegy already denoted the whole occasion with the well-ringing³⁷⁶ term *convivium*. Characteristically, the topic is the secret causes in nature (*reddere causas naturae*) and the structure of the universe: who created the three continents, the stars and the planets with their different properties, what kind of love holds the world together (v. 37-48). They are speaking about cosmic forces that link the different spheres, and the ritual acts in the poem are based on just these forces. The “serious” part of the evening is followed by merriment: lyre play and *carmina*, round dance, and wine drinking (v. 49-57); in this passage, again, the poet involves the Sun in the description wherever possible.³⁷⁷ According to Celtis’ playful suggestion, *Elsula* should draw three times from the wine, because of the three Graces, while he should draw nine times, because of the Muses, plus he asks a “tenth chalice” from Phoebus, “who controls the stars from his path [sphere] in the middle.”³⁷⁸ This is again a quasi-ritual act, which is based on a

³⁷⁵ Cf. Müller, *Die 'Germania Generalis,'* 370-3.

³⁷⁶ See the beginning of this chapter.

³⁷⁷ V. 53-54: *Pulchrius ignifluo nihil est sub sole creatum, / Quam relevans curas blanda puella graves*; see below v. 57-58. In v. 52, the circle composed by the dancers is denoted with *orbes*, a term with strong cosmic connotations, used for instance for the Sun’s globe in v. 10.

³⁷⁸ V. 55-58: *Interea ternos cyathos tibi Gratia praestat / Vertere, sed Musae dant mihi rite novem / Et Phoebus decimum calicem mihi forte favebit, / Phoebus qui media temperat astra via.*

classical custom, and which Celtis develops in a “cosmic” direction.³⁷⁹ According to one possible interpretation, Celtis refers with the three Graces and nine Muses to the sum of these, twelve, this cosmic number, the number of the zodiacal signs for instance, that the Sun goes through each year. This combination also appears on Arbogast Strub’s grave inscription made by Cuspinianus for the Danubian Sodality: it enumerates twelve names,³⁸⁰ followed by the words *MUSAE NOVEN CARITES TRIS*.³⁸¹ In another interpretation the numbers here might refer to thirty, the years of Celtis.³⁸²

The happiest part of the celebration comes after the guests went home: Elsula should call Celtis to her bed, and they should “consummate” the birthday (v. 59-66). This should happen in a specific time of day: “on the hour of birth, so that the whole year may be prosperous by this omen.”³⁸³ Celtis plays with the idea of a kind of sexual magic; at any rate, the “hour of birth” concerned is known from *Amores* I,1: three o’clock at night. One can see again Celtis’s consciousness about his birth-mythology. *Amores* I,1 had analyzed the astrological situation at his birth, and the planetary positions at his conception, too, interested Celtis in the elegy; according to *Amores* IV,13, Celtis and Barbara celebrated the anniversary of this conception with love-making. Now the birth anniversary is combined with love-making. What about the astrological situation on the thirtieth birthday? As one might have expected, the poem ends with an astrological part, though in a special way. At sunrise Elsula should, while hanging on the breast of his lover, chant verses (v. 71-74) – a quasi-magical *votum* again, harmonizing with the inscription on the candle:

³⁷⁹ The classical custom is exemplified by Ausonius: *Ter bibe vel toties ternos, sic mystica lex est / Vel tria potanti vel ter tria multiplicanti* (Pindter, *Die Lyrik*, 160). Already Horace referred to the three or nine *potula*, related to the Graces and the muses (Hor. Carm. III,19,11-12). The deities and numbers had been involved in cosmological speculations from antiquity through the Renaissance; e.g. the nine muses were correlated to the Earth plus the eight heavenly spheres, or number ten was the basic sacred number in Pythagorean philosophy. About the rethinking of the three Graces in the Renaissance, cf. Wind, *Pagan Mysteries*, 26-52.

³⁸⁰ See Introduction, *A note on Celtis’s sodalities*.

³⁸¹ Ankwicz-Kleehoven, *Das Leben*, 90.

³⁸² In Am. III,12,43-46 a similar drinking rite takes place, and according to a probable interpretation of the two elegiac couples, each of the two should drink as many times as the number of their years. On this ground it is possible that in Am. II,10 the ten *potula* of Celtis and the three of Elsula have to do with the product of the two, thirty. The importance of the thirtieth birthday for Celtis may be supported by another argument. In ode II,10, Celtis, following Martianus Capella (*De nuptiis* VII,742; Ryan, “The mystique of numbers,” 184), combines each planet with a *denarius*, a ten-year period of human life. The Sun, the middle and at the same time the most important planet, is given not ten but twenty years, those between the thirtieth and the fiftieth years, and it gives such positive properties (e.g. wisdom) that characterizes a mature man and a *vates*. There is no textual evidence that Celtis has drawn on this speculative classical theory in the birthday-elegy as well; at any rate, both Celtis-poems link Phoebus and the thirtieth year, and suggest that it promises a prosperous period in man’s life.

³⁸³ V. 65-66: *Quoque iterum tibi mille dabo natalibus horis, / Auspicio felix totus ut annus eat*. The last line comes from Ov. Fast. I,25: *auspice te felix totus ut annus eat*. Callimachus Experiens has already used this line in the praise of the Sun-God in the above mentioned *Ad Fanniam natali die*, 37-8: *Et refer hanc semper meliori lampade lucem, / Prosper ab auspicio totus ut annus eat*.

*“Iuppiter aeternos tribuat tibi, Celtis, honores
Nec tibi Mars noceat nec gravis ille senex,
Mercurius citharam, faveat tibi carmina Phoebus
Nostraque contineat mutua corda Venus!”*

“May Jupiter give you, Celtis, everlasting honor; neither Mars nor that grave old man [Saturn] may hurt you; may Mercury favor your lyre and Phoebus your songs; and may Venus maintain the mutual [affection of our] hearts.”

The motif of the wish for the long duration of mutual love comes from Tibullus: in elegy III,12, after offerings have been made to Cerinthus’s *genius* at his birthday, Sulpicia prays to the gods that her love for him should be long and mutual; in elegy III,11, Sulpicia does the same at her own birthday. Characteristically, Celtis lends the motif a cosmic context: the woman prays to the “planetary” gods, and *amor* enriches itself with a Platonic, metaphysical sense. Nevertheless, these are still wishes, and not an astrological forecast. Within natal astrology, there existed the method of “solar returns,”³⁸⁴ Celtis certainly new this method, and this might have given the idea of involving astrology in his birthday poem. However, in contrast to *Amores* I,1, here one cannot find any trace of a horoscope cast for this occasion. It is only his birth horoscope that he refers back to: he has mentioned the Sun’s position in Aquarius, the time of birth, and perhaps some lines of the astrological passage can also be interpreted along these lines. He mentions Jupiter, the most important planet of the birth horoscope, in the first place, and *honores* may refer to its position in the tenth house; and in v. 73 Mercury and Phoebus figures together and their lyre is referred to, just as in the horoscope-elegy. Otherwise, the passage enumerates commonplaces. In sum, the final words combine love, magic, astrology and birthday *votum* in a playful and witty manner, and the whole event builds upon the astrological mythification of his birth in the first book of the *Amores*.

The elegy has an elaborate structure; while it is framed by the quasi-magical *vota*, the course of events lead to the culmination, the *hieros gamos* of the lovers. It harmonizes well with both the birth-mythology of the horoscope-elegy and the generic requirements laid by the *Amores*. The copulation should happen exactly thirty years after the birth, under the same position of the Sun. Then a creation, now a procreation; or, from another perspective, the original glorious birth will be in a sense repeated, and this rebirth or rejuvenation may be symbolized by the rising Sun, mentioned immediately after the erotical passage (v. 67). In elegy III,12, too, the climax of the celebration takes place in the bed, this time Ursula is

³⁸⁴ See p. 213.

Celtis's lover. Celtis's birthday celebration is at the same time the celebration of glorious *amor*, at least in the world of the *Amores*.³⁸⁵

Besides elegy II,10, the other, less detailed birthday-descriptions also “revolve” around Phoebus / the Sun. Ode II,17 begins with an invocation to Phoebus, in which his middle position among the planets is referred to.³⁸⁶ The addressee of the ode, “Cumanus” (as the Cumaean Sibyl) belongs to Phoebus, just as the world of poetry, feasting with a *carpe diem* attitude, and life itself, opposed to the underworld that in the end devours everything. The feast itself, too, should begin just after sunrise (v. 57-58). In ode III,2,18, he invites the *sodales* as follows: “Tomorrow I am going to give a birthday banquet to Phoebus.”³⁸⁷ So the feast is dedicated to Phoebus, *genius* appears only in adjective form (*geniale prandium*). The description of the prospective events in elegy III,12 is similar to that of elegy II,10; on the one hand, the author explicitly states that it is a celebration for Phoebus and Bacchus, and pairs them several times,³⁸⁸ on the other hand, Phoebus receives more emphasis, the time of the day, the meals, the music, the drinking ritual, everything is connected to Phoebus; only between lines 29-36 his name figures six times:

*Quippe duodecimam mihi cras trieteriden implet
Phoebus ab Eoa Tethyos ortus aqua.
Phoebe, bis undenas Ganymedis sidere partes
Servabas, vitam ut das mihi in orbe meam.
Pythia cras Phoebos, trieterica festa Lyaeo
Instituam numeris candida dona meis.
Phoebus amor vatam, Phoebus mihi computat annos,
Iste dies Phoebos festa superba trahet.*

Tomorrow Phoebus completes the twelfth three-year-period, rising from Tethys's eastern waters. Phoebus, you guarded the twenty-second degree in Ganymede's star [Aquarius], when you gave me my life in this world. Tomorrow I will organize the Pythian feast for Phoebus and the triennial feast for Bacchus, as bright presents on account of my years. Phoebus, the love of the poets, Phoebus reckons my years, that day should be a splendid feast-day for Phoebus.

In v. 31-32 the poet provides the exact planetary position of the Sun on this day of the year, Aquarius 22°; and he does not forget to mention that he was born at sunrise (v. 29-30). His reference to his “mythologized” birth that I discussed concerning elegy II,10 appears in the other poems as well, and the time of birth had an influence on the prospective time of the celebration, too, at least in the fictive (?) world of those two poems which specifies the time of the day. The climax of elegy II,10, as we have seen, is the love-making of the couple

³⁸⁵ Though *Elsula* and *Ursula* appear in the two odes, too, their role is different from that in the *Amores*. In ode II,17, the poet warns *Cumanus* of falling in love with *Elsula*; in ode III,2, the poet associates an unpleasant memory to his birthday: he was caught making love with *Ursula*, and he could hardly escape.

³⁸⁶ V. 2: *inter aeternas medius Camenas*.

³⁸⁷ *Cras ego Phoebos geniale ponam / prandium...*

³⁸⁸ V. 33-38.

natalibus horis; this and the sunrise mentioned a little below must mean the night or dawn of 1 February, so the sunset which is supposed to mark the beginning of the celebration falls to 31 January, that is the eve of the birthday. In ode II,17, however, the poet fixes the sunrise of his birthday (1 February) as the *beginning* of the celebration: “ Tomorrow, when the bright Apollo shows again his rosy face, I am going to celebrate my birthday according to the ancient custom ... ”³⁸⁹ Whatever the real time of the celebrations, in his poetical world Celtis adjusts it to the sunrise of 1 February, the festive period should either begin or end at this time.

1 February is that day of the year which Celtis seems to claim for himself; these are meant to be “Celtis-days”, and the poems about this day have a free scope of self-representation. The cosmic settings serve as a means of this enhanced self-representation, on the one hand, and as an explicit topic, on the other: the emphasis on the Sun and the involvement of some other astronomical, astrological, geographical topics (in *Amores* II,10 as well as in his other poems) are meant to show his (and his *sodales*’) natural philosophical interests and competence. These Phoebian or Phoebian-Bacchic celebrations present him succinctly: Celtis the natural philosopher, Celtis the lover of earthly life, Celtis the lover of *amor* (also in the Platonic sense) – and, of course, Celtis the poet. “Phoebus, the love of the poets, Phoebus reckons my years”³⁹⁰ – exclaims Celtis in elegy III,12. In the descriptions of the feasts he always involves the motifs of lyre-play and *carmina*.³⁹¹ The idea can be best exemplified by the relevant lines of ode II,17, addressed to that “Cumanus” whom Celtis associated with Phoebus and the prophetic powers of the Sibyl (as the very name shows):

*Cras ubi clarus roseum reduxit
Cynthius vultum, celebrabo prisco
more natalem, Genioque nostro
sacrificabo.*

*Tu veni nostris studiis amicus,
Lesbiae pulsans citharam puellae,
huic ego lauri nitidus corona
carmina iungam.*³⁹²

Tomorrow, when the bright Apollo shows again his rosy face, I am going to celebrate my birthday according to the ancient custom, and I sacrifice to our Genius.

Come, friend of our studies, pluck the lyre of the Lesbian girl [Sappho], and let me sing my songs to your play, with a laurel wreath decorating my head.

In the given context, *Genius* can also refer to the poets’ *ingenium*. This remark of Baier³⁹³ can be further supported by the fact that *studia* is endowed with the same possessive pronoun as

³⁸⁹ V. 57-59: *Cras ubi clarus roseum reduxit / Cynthius vultum, celebrabo prisco / more natalem...*

³⁹⁰ Am. III,12,35: *Phoebus amor vatium, Phoebus mihi computat annos*

³⁹¹ Thomas Baier’s remark on ode II,17 (“Celtis’ Einladungsgedicht Ode 2, 17 und die Vorbilder,” in *Horaz und Celtis*, ed. U. Auhagen et al., Tübingen: G. Narr, 2000, 127) that Celtis, in contrast to Catullus and others, emphasizes the literary element in the feasts, is more or less valid for his other birthday-poems, too.

³⁹² V. 57-64.

Genius. Noster is in the first place a poetical plural, meaning Celtis himself; however, “our genius,” as a depersonified entity, can refer to the divine talent that the *sodales* have in common.

Celtis’s birthday poems have provided manifold opportunities for the poet to apply the Phoebean symbolism. It is still difficult to answer how his birthdays were celebrated in reality, and whether they were really adjusted to a specific time of the day. Without any doubt, Celtis used the event for self-representative purposes; all the more since the CPM was founded on his birthday, so from then on the two kinds of anniversaries overlapped. Celtis or his friends may have been inspired by the celebrations of Plato’s and Ficino’s birthday that seem to have taken place in certain German humanist circles. The circle of Ficino himself seem to have yearly celebrated Plato’s birthday.³⁹⁴ A debated phrase in an 1496 letter of Vigilius to Celtis that probably reads *omnium* (and not *annuum*) *philosophorum festum* probably refers to Plato’s birthday as celebrated also in the Heidelberg circle;³⁹⁵ and the Tübingen humanists seem to have celebrated Ficino’s birthday.³⁹⁶ Since there are many question marks around these feasts, their possible functional similarity to Celtis’s birthdays cannot be clarified yet. Nevertheless, although Celtis could not be celebrated as a new Plato, he could hope to be celebrated in the long run as the father of what we now call German humanism.

3. *Two Celtis-odes on feasts celebrating the summer and winter solstice*

It belonged to the basic characteristics of most premodern cultures that they kept an eye on the course of the heavenly bodies, especially the Sun and the Moon, and adjusted the calendar and the system of rituals in large part to important astronomical turning points of the year. This was not really the case with the Christian festivals of medieval Europe. Even in those festivals whose date were adjusted to the course of the Sun or the Moon (e. g. Easter, but the issue of the origin of Christmas can also be mentioned here), the heavenly bodies themselves

³⁹³ Baier, “Celtis’ Einladungsgedicht,” 127.

³⁹⁴ Cf. Ficino’s letter to Cosimo in Suppl. Fic. p. 88, and Naldi, El. II, 41 *Ad Marsilium Ficinum de vita Platonis*, v. 85-86; these discussed e.g. by Della Torre, *Storia dell’Accademia Platonica di Firenze* (Florence: Tip. G. Carnesecchi e figli, 1902), 812.

³⁹⁵ BW p. 224; cf. Klaniczay, “Konrad Celtis,” 87; Wiegand, “Phoebea,” 37.

³⁹⁶ Lorenz, “Von Johannes Reuchlin,” 44; McDonald, ‘*Orpheus*,’ 163; both based on Ficino’s letter to Prenninger, OO p. 929.

were not addressed in the rituals and they did not have a specific role in the Christian narratives that belonged to these festivals; since late antiquity and the church fathers any kind of Sun, Moon or star worship was suspect and reminiscent of the pagan past. From this perspective, it is remarkable that Celtis's ode III,15 and epode 16 involve a direct celebration of the Sun in a paganizing context. Though most elements of the ritual activities displayed here might be explained away as classical commonplaces and playful poetical motifs, and though Christian ideas are involved in the syncretic world of these poems, still, we are witnessing here Phoebus-celebrations based on turning points in the Sun's annual course. The odes attracted the notice of several scholars, but they discussed them mostly in the frameworks of the *sodalitas*-issue, and they did not go into much detail. The odes deserve a deeper analysis; certainly not every problem raised by the texts will be and can be solved, but the following considerations may help to understand better what exactly is celebrated, in what contexts the Sun / Phoebus appears, and how this relates to humanist group-identity. Ode III,15 is about a feast of the Heidelberg circle who often called themselves *Sodalitas Rhenana*. It is an Alcaic ode in 11 stanzas:

AD SODALITATEM LITTERARIAM
RHENANAM, UT SECUM EPULUM
REDEUNTE PHOEBO AB CAPRICORNO
INSTRUANT.

Intende nervis, Calliope, novis,
oro, latinae carmina tibiae,
et quicquid olim mota claro
Graia cohors modulata Phoebus est,
5 qui nunc retorquet vertice fulgido
rotam coruscantem, noctibus imperans,
barbam regentis Capricorni
ignivoma feriens lucerna.
Idcirco Phoebi grata sodalitas,
10 quam Rhenus altis litoribus fovet,
sidus salutemus, vetusti
pocula concelebrando Bacchi,
nec mensa largis cum dapibus vacet,
sub Africanis qualis erat plagis,
15 Sic nos sacris Phoebi peractis
ad citharam facilem canemus.
Illustre mundi, Phoebus pater, caput,
cuius recessum singula sentiunt,
et cuius adventu recentes
20 parturiunt elementa formas:³⁹⁷

TO THE LEARNED RHINISH SODALITY,
THAT THEY SHOULD PREPARE WITH
HIM A FEAST ON PHOEBUS'S RETURN³⁹⁸
FROM CAPRICORN.

Calliope, intone on new strings the songs of the Latin flute, I pray, and whatever the Greek host once sang inspired by bright Phoebus, who is now turning around the flashing wheels [of the chariot] at the shining vertex,³⁹⁹ commanding the nights, and beats down upon the beard of frozen Capricorn with his fire-spitting lamp.

So, dear sodality, nourished by the high-banked Rhine, let us greet Phoebus's star, and revere cups of old Bacchus in communal celebration;

a table rich with meals should not be missing either, such as there was under African climes; and after the sacrifices to Phoebus, let us sing with the lyre in harmony in this way:

Father Phoebus, bright head of the world, whose departure everything feels, and upon whose return new forms are born from the elements:

³⁹⁷ The address of Phoebus is followed by a request, so I opted here for a colon instead of the period in Schäfer's edition.

³⁹⁸ *Redeunte Phoebus* can be interpreted both as a causative or a temporal ablativus absolutus.

- adesto doctis te rogo vatibus
 lucem ferendo, ut carmina posteris
 annosa scribamus disertis,
 continuis placitura saeculis.*
- 25 *Hinc quae requirit nostra necessitas,
 victum atque amictum corporis annuas,
 et stet beato fama cursu,
 spiritus hos ubi liquit artus.
 Non linquo taetram Tartareos lacus*
- 30 *timere mentem, nec canis inferus,
 triforme monstrum, me movebit,
 Aeacus aut Rhadamanthus urna.
 Ieiuniorum difficiles dies
 servet, cucullus quem tetricus gravat,*
- 35 *longique murmuris susurro
 concutiens sua labra vulgo.
 Mi sed beatum docta sodalitas
 reddat favorem, scriptaque comprobet,
 [lost line]*
- 40 *fortuito ruitura fato,
 praeter moventem corpora spiritum,
 qui clara linquit munera posteris,
 virtutibus qui praemium dant,
 et vitiis sua probra pangunt.*

Attend your learned poets,⁴⁰⁰ I ask you, by bringing us your light, so that we may eloquently compose long-living songs for posterity, songs that the following centuries will appreciate.

Then grant us whatever we need, food and clothing for the body, and may our fame stay on a blessed path, after the breath left the members of the body.

I will not bequeath a soul so foul that I should be afraid of the lake of Tartarus, nor will the infernal dog, the three-headed monster, affect me, or Aeacus or Rhadamanthus with his urn.

May the exhausting days of the fasting be observed by those whom the grim hood burdens, and who keep moving their lips murmuring and whispering in front of the crowd.

For me, however, may the learned sodality grant their blessed support, and approve my works; [anyway, everything?]⁴⁰¹ will be destroyed by fortuitous destiny, except for the spirit that moves the body, and which bequeathes its splendid gifts to posterity, which rewards virtue, and condemns the faults.

It has been noted⁴⁰² that the invocation combines a phrase from the *Aeneid* (IX,776), *intendere nervis*, with Horace's invocation in ode III,4,1-2⁴⁰³ to Calliope who should sing, among others, upon the *tibia*; however, another invocation to Calliope, that of the Homeric hymn to Helios,⁴⁰⁴ seems to me a more important pattern, since it has the same addressee as the Celtis-ode. Indeed, the Celtis-poem is a hymn to Phoebus / the Sun in its core (which is rare but not unprecedented in Neo-Latin poetry⁴⁰⁵). Stanzas 5-7, exactly the middle part of the ode, can be regarded as a small hymn, with a direct invocation to Phoebus in v. 17 and a prayer in v. 21-28 (the invocation is followed by an ekphrasis in v. 18-20, but the second stanza can also be regarded as a description of Phoebus as the Sun). The verb forms, too (the vocative and the subjunctive) separate the middle part from the rest. The first part of the ode

³⁹⁹ In astronomical literature *vertex* denotes the point at which the Sun reaches the highest point in its orbit. Here *vertice fulgido* may also refer to the Sun's head: see Epod. 16.

⁴⁰⁰ Here the meaning of *vates* as priests of Apollo, mediators between Apollo and the people, is also connotated on grounds of the ritual context.

⁴⁰¹ Replacement after Schäfer, in Celtis, *Oden*, 253.

⁴⁰² Schäfer, in Celtis, *Oden*, 255.

⁴⁰³ *Descende caelo et dic age tibia / regina longum Calliope melos...*

⁴⁰⁴ Ἥλιον ὑμνεῖν αὐτὴ Διὸς τέκος ἄρχο Μοῦσα ("Of Helios again begin your song, daughter of Zeus, Muse Calliope"). *Homeric hymns, Homeric Apocrypha, Lives of Homer*, ed. and tr. M. L. West (London / Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, 2003), 214-5.

⁴⁰⁵ Beyond Marullo's already mentioned hymn to the Sun (*Hymni naturales* 3,1) cf. Pontano's *Ad solem* (*Lyra* 5).

consists of an invocation to Calliope and indirectly Phoebus and the other muses (v. 1-8), and Celtis's instructions to the sodality to prepare a special celebration (v. 9-16); it follows from the last line of this part, "let us sing unto the easy lyre-play," that the hymn is supposed to be sung by the *sodales*. In the third part (v. 29-44) the poet expresses, among others, his belief that his poetry will secure him a favorable fate after death. Before going into more detail, let us have a look at epode 16, which can be paired with ode III,15 for a number of reasons: both poems address Phoebus primarily as a Sun-god, in both poems a celebration should be prepared related to a turning point in the course of the Sun, and the details of the celebration overlap to a great extent.

AD PHOEBUM, UT A TROPICO HIBERNO
REDEAT

TO PHOEBUS, THAT HE SHOULD
RETURN FROM THE WINTER TROPIC

- Quo fulgurantem, Phoebе, celas lampadem
claro serenam lumine?
Quid ultimum lustrare tardas Caucasum,
orbisque fines extimos?*
- 5 *Quis te morantem detinet ferox amor,
magnus vel error devium?
Huc huc celer flagrante curru labere,
caeli decus pulcherrimum,
simulque vernos protinus refer dies,*
- 10 *et floridos Favonios!
Pleno redundet mensa dives poculo,
curas resolvens anxias,
frontemque tristem vina laxent fervida
et explicent iucundius.*
- 15 *Phoebi nitentis concinemus verticem
et fulgidum flammis caput,
iamque obsoletas instruemus hostias,
vetusta facturi sacra,
certusque sit divinus instigans furor,*
- 20 *falsoque nil pronuntiet.
Sic nos quotannis, Phoebе, te vocabimus,
arisque libemus tuis,
et tura flammis concremabimus sacris,
Sabaea quae dives legit.*
- 25 *His invitatus, Phoebе, laetus emica,
vultu relucens aureo!*

Phoebus, where (or: why) are you hiding your shining lamp with its bright light? Why are you slow to throw light on the distant Caucasus and the outerrmost regions of the world? What passionate love detains you, or what a long erratic wandering? Here, hurry here quick with your blazing chariot, you, the most beautiful ornament of the sky, and at the same time bring along the spring days, and the west wind with the flowers! Let our rich table abound with full cups, freeing us from anxiety, and let fiery wine smooth away and cheer up our sad features. We will sing together of shining Phoebus' head, glittering with flames, and we will prepare the obsolete sacrifices and observe the ancient sacred rituals; may the divine frenzy that inspires [us] be reliable, and may it utter nothing falsely. So we will call you, Phoebus, every year, and pour a libation on your altar, and burn incense on the sacred flames, which the rich Arabian collects. Invited (or: encouraged) through these [acts], shine out gladly (or: favorably), Phoebus, bright with a golden face!

Scholarly literature has not clarified yet what exactly they celebrate in the two poems. Treml and Wiegand have declared without further explanation that the feast in Ode III,15 is at the summer solstice; Treml adds that Epod. 16 is about the winter solstice.⁴⁰⁶ In Entner's view, since both the idea of winter solstice and a protest against the fasting appears in ode

⁴⁰⁶ Treml, *Humanistische*, 151-3; Wiegand, "Phoebе," 38.

III,15, the call may refer to a “feast a little before the beginning of Lenten season (which began on 17 February in 1496), so an opulent Carnival night. It is around this time that one can sensually feel the return of the Sun from the Tropic of Capricorn...”⁴⁰⁷ It is obviously the vague phrase in the title, *redeunte Phoebus ab Capricorno*, and perhaps the other reference to Capricorn in v. 7, that have raised a difficulty. The text of ode III,15, however, provides internal evidence that the poem must be about the summer solstice (around 21 June). First, in v. 5-6, *qui nunc retorquet vertice fulgido / rotam coruscantem* refers to the Sun just turning back with his chariot, so this must be a solstice. Second, this cannot be the winter solstice, since it is the Sun’s return that they celebrate according to the title, and indeed, the Sun appears as being in his full power⁴⁰⁸ in v. 17-20, resuscitating nature. *Noctibus imperans* (v. 6) obviously refer to the time of the year when the days are the longest and the nights are the shortest. In v. 7-8, the Sun does not affect Capricorn because he is in this sign, but because the rays of the Sun, who has just arrived in the Cancer, suddenly fall on Capricorn, the opposite sign, as the chariot has turned (in other poems, too, Celtis imagines the Sun’s annual movement as proceeding alternately northward and southward⁴⁰⁹). In contrast to ode III,15, the occasion for the feast in epode 16 cannot be established for certain. The titles of the two poems are similar; *redeo*, however, is in the subjunctive in the epode, which entails that the Sun is still around the Capricorn, so it is still winter. (Epode 15, too, complains that the Sun is in the south; this time, the southern place is specified, it is Delos, Phoebus’s birth place.) The first two pairs of iambic trimeter + dimeter complain about the tardiness of the Sun, meaning the too long nights in this period of the year. In v. 9-10 the poet explicitly urges the spring to come, so, again, it must be still winter in the time of the poem. As for the exact date, the most plausible option is indeed the winter solstice (as Treml has suggested), when the Sun enters the Capricorn. The way of addressing Phoebus and the whole celebration which is similar to that in ode III,15 (and which is supposed to be repeated every year according to v. 21) suggest that a turning point in the Sun’s course is in question again, but this time it is Phoebus’s “weakest” day. In contrast to ode III,15, where he was *noctibus imperans*, here the poem begins with complaints about his tardiness and absence. Otherwise the two poems eulogizes Phoebus in a similar way, and a number of common motifs link the two works. In case we interpret the

⁴⁰⁷ Entner, “Was steckt,” 1099.

⁴⁰⁸ The summer Sun could be felt either destructive or beneficial in Latin poetry, depending on the perspective and purpose of the poem. There is at least one more example in Celtis where the positive effects of Phoebus’s power were more important for him: Od. I,18,41-48: *Phoebi calentem cernere verticem / iuvabit, umbras corporibus negans, quando levatus stat sub axe / ignivomo radiatus ore. / Aestum feremus sideris ardui, et nulla vitae crede pericula, dum cura sit Phoebus sacris de / vatibus, atque animis benignis.*

⁴⁰⁹ E.g. Od. I,2,1-4.

epode as describing a feast at winter solstice – which is only one possible interpretation –, it may again involve an anticlerical message, but a more indirect one than in ode III,15: the Christian feast around the winter solstice is Christmas,⁴¹⁰ the celebration in the epode, however, has ostentatiously pagan components.

Phoebus's complexity or multifunctionality is even more apparent in the two odes than in the previous poems discussed in this chapter. First, Phoebus is addressed as the Sun. In ode III,15 this heavenly body is even more often referred to than one would think at first sight. Just before the description of the Sun's solstitial position, *clarus Phoebus* is said to move the *Graia cohors* (v. 3-4), which may also refer here to the muses who are often described as composing a *cohors* (Calliope was already mentioned in the first line). In the cosmic context of the poem, the muses moved by Phoebus remind one of the planets moved by the Sun: we have already seen the reception of this classical idea by Celtis. This is at best a playful reference; more important and certain is the one in v. 13-14. The *mensa... sub Africanis qualis erat plagis* certainly refers to the tale of the Sun's table reported by Herodotus (III,17f): during a campaign against the Aethiopians, the men of Kambyses report about a wonderful table that is always replete with various kinds of cooked meat: whenever someone takes from it, the food is always supplied. That Celtis was interested in the story is evident from a 1503 Pirckheimer-letter which, probably answering to Celtis' inquiry, gives him advice where to read about *solis mensa*.⁴¹¹ "These meats, say the people of the country, are ever produced by the earth of itself,"⁴¹² the story continues: one might relate this aspect of the story to Celtis's description of the Sun as a regenerating power (v. 17-20). This eulogizing stanza (whose first line seems to have been inspired by two lines of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*⁴¹³) emphasize the Sun's central role in the operation of the cosmos (*mundi caput*) while summarizing his annual activity (*cuius recessum... et cuius adventu...*). Again, the Sun is not presented in a way that is characteristic of nature poems, but rather in a cosmic context, in a natural philosophical style (cf. the terms *elementum* or *forma*). One can find similar ideas in Ficino, even textual similia to the expressions *mundi caput* or *recessus-adventus* in an astronomical context;⁴¹⁴

⁴¹⁰ On the issue of the connection between Christmas and the winter solstice, cf. e.g. S. Hijmans, "Sol Invictus, the Winter Solstice, and the Origins of Christmas," *Mouseion Calgary* 3/3 (2003), 377–398. Already pope Leo complained that some people celebrate Christmas not because of Christ's birth but the Sun... (J. Fr. Dölger, 'Sol salutis.' *Gebet und Gesang im christlichen Altertum. Mit besonderer Rücksicht auf die Ostung in Gebet und Liturgie*, Münster: Verl. der Aschendorffschen Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1920, 4).

⁴¹¹ BW no. 302, p. 542.

⁴¹² III,18, tr. A. D. Godley.

⁴¹³ Ov. Met. II,35-36: *ille refert: 'o lux inmensi publica mundi, / Phoebus pater, si das usum mihi nominis huius.*

⁴¹⁴ *De Sole* ch. 5 (OO p. 968), about the Sun: *Lumine pariter et calore generat, vegetatque, et movet, et regenerat omnia, et exhyllarat, atque fovet, et quae occulta fuerant, primo adventu efficit manifesta, accessuque vicissim*

however, the description is too short and general to associate it definitely to particular sources. This is the case in epode 16, too, which links *amor* (v. 5) or beauty (v. 8: *caeli pulcherrimum decus*) to the Sun. In this poem, the astronomical aspect is similarly in the foreground, the first ten lines are devoted to the Sun's description, its position and effects at the given time of day or year.

Secondly, Phoebus is addressed as the god of poetry. In ode III,15, it is from the prayer (v. 21 *Adesto doctis, te rogo, vatibus*) onwards that we see this face of Apollo. He should support, first of all, the writing of long-living poems: this is mentioned in the first place (v. 22-24). *Lucem ferendo* may primarily refer to the light of knowledge, to a kind of intellectual enlightenment that is characteristic of *furor poeticus*. The poets yearn after literary productivity and eternal fame, and in the given context these are associated with Phoebus's / the Sun's productivity and eternity. At the end of the ode, too (v. 37-42), the poet emphasizes his wish to write *carmina* of high quality (approved by the *sodales*), such that can be everlasting gifts for the posterity. In epode 16, the poet explicitly refers to *furor poeticus* (v. 19), which is at the same time prophetic frenzy, judging from the formulation *falsoque nil pronuntiet* (v. 20) and the fact that the previous epode presents Phoebus primarily as a god of divination.

Thirdly, the poet implicitly compares the power of Phoebus / the Sun to that of God, at least in the longer ode. Stylizing him as *pater* or *caput mundi* in v. 17, the author has already reminded us of the monotheistic Christian view (or a syncretic monotheistic view in a Florentine Platonic sense). The Christian context becomes more apparent from v. 25: they pray for the satisfaction of all their needs, as if Phoebus was an omnipotent god, and the phrase *victum atque amictum* has obviously Christian connotations: the saying originally comes from the Vulgate.⁴¹⁵ The opposition between the classically stylized underworld and the *beatus cursus* of the soul (v. 27-32; cf. also v. 40-41) can also be compared to the Christian opposition of heaven and hell. Otherwise, the way he speaks about the soul is again reminiscent of Platonic philosophy (e.g. in v. 40-41 the spirit "that moves the body" can escape death).

To sum up, the reader of the odes witnesses a Phoebus Apollo who is put in an astronomical, poetological and (in ode III,15) Christian context at the same time, and this kind of syncretism is highly reminiscent of Florentine Platonism (the reception of which was

atque recessu quatuor efficit anni partes...; *De vita* (ed. Clark and Kaske) III,11, p. 290 about the *vita communis* ("universal life"): *Et denique coelestia corpora quasi mundi caput vel cor vel oculos quam maxime vegetat.*

⁴¹⁵ Clementine Vulgate, I Tim. 6,8 *Habentes victum et amictum, his contenti simus.*

significant in the Heidelberg sodality⁴¹⁶). The parallelism of the Sun and God, which has a long tradition and is attested in several works of Ficino,⁴¹⁷ is all the more important here since it helps in the appropriate interpretation of the anticlerical digression in v. 33-36. These are really just anticlerical and not anti-Christian lines, even if the poet's sarcastic attack is quite strong: beyond the (in Celtis quite usual) opposition of monks and humanists, this time the fasting, too, is contrasted to the Phoebean-Bacchic feast. In general, Celtis's use of "pagan" gods or symbols in his poetry (like his emphasis on Apollo) does not mean at all that he turned somehow against Christianity in general; he could reconcile his Christian faith with his classically inspired concepts.⁴¹⁸

Taken into consideration the cosmic dimensions of the Phoebean symbolism, I do not agree with Wiegand's suggestion that Apollo may also refer to Bishop Dalberg, the patron of the Rhinish *sodales*, in ode III,15.⁴¹⁹ It is true that in the poetry of the humanists in Heidelberg Dalberg and his patronage was sometimes compared to Apollo and his beneficent effects – Wiegand cites Gresemund's panegyric as an example –, but this comparison, which was a staple commonplace in panegyric poetry, would not fit the astronomical frameworks of this ode. From among the contemporary texts brought up by Wiegand, the only passage that bears resemblance to a locus of the Celtis-ode is a 1496 letter of Vigilius according to whom Dalberg *victum, amictum, viaticum, libros et denique se ipsum totum omnibus (?) liberaliter exhibeat*⁴²⁰ ("he generously provides everybody with food, clothes, provisions for journey, books and indeed his whole personality"); however, as it was mentioned above, *victum atque amictum* (v. 26) was a commonplace biblical phrase, appearing in other medieval or Renaissance works as well.⁴²¹ According to Wiegand, too, Phoebus is primarily the Sun-god and the god of poetry, he suspects a reference to Dalberg only as a secondary interpretation, "at least for the initiated;" but in the lack of sound textual evidence, this suggestion remains arbitrary.

Although we will probably never know what exactly the *sodales* made at such occasions, we have no grounds to doubt that festive feasts did take place on or around the astronomically important days referred to in the two odes, with events partly similar to those described in the poems. True, these events are described in a stylized way; the astronomical references,

⁴¹⁶ I just mention here Prenninger and Reuchlin, who had had personal contacts with Ficino.

⁴¹⁷ See ch. II,1, *The role of Florentine Platonism*.

⁴¹⁸ Wuttke has repeatedly emphasized that the basically Christian frameworks of thought of the age were characteristic of Celtis, too (cf. e.g. "Humanismus" or "Dürer und Celtis")

⁴¹⁹ Wiegand, "*Phoebea*," 39-40.

⁴²⁰ BW no. 139, p. 228.

⁴²¹ E. g. St. Bonaventura, *Collationes in Hexaameron* III,6; Laurentius of Brindisi, *Quadragesimale tertium, in feria sexta post dominicam tertiam quadragesimae*, 1,3.

however, are too concrete to be just poetical fictions of Celtis. The skeptical Entner has not seen more in ode III,15 than an “invitation to a carnival feast, spiced with poetry and music, without underlying mystical meanings;”⁴²² those interpreters, however, who have “dated” the poem to the summer solstice – Treml⁴²³ and Wiegand⁴²⁴ – rightly consider it a specific celebration that serves, among others, the aim of reinforcing group identity. Some contemporary parallels for specific celebrations – paganizing on the level of symbols – also corroborate the reality and importance of the occasions described in the two odes. The *Palilia* revived by Leto’s Roman academy or the annual celebration of Plato’s birthday in Ficino’s circles seem to have been similar celebrations in that (1) they were out of the system of Church festivals, (2) they were said to take place annually, (3) they involved some kind of ritual or quasi-ritual activity, that obviously strengthened the elite *sodalitas*-identity of the given humanist group. Ideally, the feasts in Celtis’s circles also served to strengthen their identity as humanist poets or scholars in general. In such works as the solstice-odes or Augustinus’s *patera*, a composite Phoebean-Bacchic symbolism could excellently serve the purpose of stylizing, idealizing humanist feasts as sacred celebrations, celebrations of humanist poetry-philosophy.

⁴²² Entner, “Was steckt,” 1099.

⁴²³ *Humanistische*, 154

⁴²⁴ “*Phoebea*,” 39.

Conclusion

Our investigations have revealed that astrological and / or Phoebean-solar imagery had a key role in the construction of *vates*-image and the poetical self-representation of Conrad Celtis and some other humanists around him – like Johannes Tolhopf or Laurentius Corvinus –, and that this “cosmic” symbolism is even more significant in their oeuvre than it was previously recognized in scholarship. Although literary historians of German humanism around 1500 acknowledged at least the wide use of astronomy-astrology and the significance of Apollo-poems in Celtis, they generally neglected the serious investigation of these aspects of his oeuvre, except for sporadic analyses of some works; historians of astronomy-astrology of the period, on the other hand, have rarely included in their scope non-astronomical poetry, poetry-related woodcuts or poets’ horoscopes. I hope the interdisciplinary approach of this study has helped to see better how many ways and in what intriguing ways the early German humanists could make use of the heavenly bodies and the cosmological or literary traditions behind them.

Renaissance astrology had its own symbols and methods, thus its use is basically well recognizable in poetical works or woodcuts. In the works of Celtis and Tolhopf, it is not mundane astrology, divinations and *prognostica* that stand in the foreground (as in court astrology in general), but individual and character-oriented (mostly natal) horoscope-astrology – because it was used as a strategical means in the enhanced self-representation, indeed, self-mythologizing of these poets. Some patterns for the literary application of astrological symbols were already available to Celtis, to some extent in classical literature, to greater extent in fifteenth-century Italian Neo-Latin literature (e.g., in Naldo Naldi or Pico). These influences seem to have been more significant than has previously been thought, however, one must not overemphasize them, either. In non-astronomical Italian poetry astrological references are rare and scattered, almost always commonplaces and they occur most often in certain types of contexts, for instance, in praises of the ruler. Celtis does apply similar topoi, but he likes to develop them further, to render them more concrete. He often goes into technical details, referring to actual horoscope elements, and it is unprecedented in contemporary literature that a key poem – in this case the very first elegy, the exposition of the whole *Amores*, his main work – is entirely based on his nativity. On the other hand, Celtis’s approach differs to great extent also from the style, special techniques and future-

orientation of the typical contemporary apotelesmatics (horoscope-interpretations), *iudicia* and *prognostica*.

Celtis (and Tolhopf, at least in one or two surviving works) used the potentialities of individual astrology primarily for fashioning his own poetic character, also taking advantage of the fact that the borderline between fiction and reality is uncertain, and wide-ranging possibilities open up for self-mystification. The image of the "elect" poet is reflected even when he speaks about the stars of other elect *sodales*. Both Celtis's horoscope-elegy and the horoscope of his laureation displays exceptional positions that fit well the role of the pioneering *vates*. In certain astrologically relevant parts of the *Amores* a playful attitude and fiction dominates, as in the presentation of the idealized horoscope of the beloved woman or when he explains his love problems with the Saturn-Venus quadrature. However, the other pole of the horoscope elegy, the idea of the Orpheus-like Phoebean poet, goes well beyond the world of the *Amores*. Although most probably rectified, the nativity, just like the horoscope of laureation, is presented as real. Horoscopes draw their power just from this "reality", that is why they are important for Celtis; the position and characteristics he emphasized were supported by actual planetary positions and could be related to the will of the heavens. Moreover, a further reason why star symbolism has a prominent role in his arsenal is the sensual power of symbols in general; horoscope elements can be highly spectacular and more expressive than words. No wonder that later German humanists like Eobanus Hessus also wrote horoscope-poems, encouraged by Celtis's example; it is an issue of future research whether horoscopes of laureation, too, were cast after Celtis.

Solar symbolism in Celtis is less clear-cut than astrological symbolism – with which it overlaps –, since it is part of what can be called a complex Phoebean symbolism. Celtis not only uses all the traditional functions of Phoebus Apollo – Sun-god, god of poetry (also as an origin of *furor poeticus*), symbol of the ruler, to a lesser extent god of divination⁴²⁵ or medicine⁴²⁶ –, but makes use of the multifunctionality itself in order to express his ideas about world and poetry (the centrality of Phoebus in many sense). Our investigations, especially chapters V and VI, may have persuaded the reader that these different aspects of Phoebus are intertwined and cannot be treated separately, and that Phoebean imagery really permeates Celtis's oeuvre; with regard to Phoebus's role in most of the key poems and woodcuts related to the arch-humanist (from the two Phoebus-poems in the *Ars versificandi* through *Amores* I,1 and I,3 to the *Melopoiae*-woodcuts), it can be argued that this symbolism is an organizing

⁴²⁵ Od. I,29 or Epod. 15

⁴²⁶ Am. I,3.

factor of his oeuvre. A similar Phoebean symbolism (and similar epiphanic settings) appear in surviving key works of Celtis's friends, like Laurentius Corvinus (*Carmen elegiacum*) or Jakob Locher (*Oratio* or *Sapphicon*). The muses naturally accompany Phoebus, but more specific to Celtis is the frequent pairing of Phoebus and Bacchus. In poems about Phoebean-Bacchic feasts (or artworks like Augustinus's *patera*), which are based on real feasts of the sodalities but are stylized in the poetical world as rituals of an elite humanist circle, the role of this paganizing (but not anti-Christian) symbolism as a group-identity building factor comes to the foreground. Using motifs of Phoebus, Bacchus or the muses, our humanists rely on classical topoi and traditions that were reenacted in the Renaissance, but they like to develop them further, which results – at least in Celtis's case – in a complex intertextual network of Phoebean motifs, connecting not only the works of Celtis and classical, Italian or contemporary German authors, but also his works themselves. The operation of the cosmos and the Sun's central role in it; the Sun as indicator of specific anniversaries; the poet's divine support; the humanist *vates* who spreads the light of wisdom; the sunrise of a new Latin poetry; the symbiosis of poet and ruler – in all these Celtis was interested, and he could express all these with the complex Phoebean symbolism.

While a cosmic symbolism in the above outlined sense is a characteristic and *relatively* original trait of Celtis's oeuvre, it is perfectly in line with his biographical circumstances and some basic intellectual historical currents of the period. First of all, the enhanced, “cosmic” self-representation of Celtis and some of his friends is based on a general humanist (in this case Italian and German) *vates*-ideology that elevated high the poet's status and increasingly involved the poet in a cosmic context; and this ideology in turn originates in the Renaissance defense of poetry tradition and the humanist-scholastic debates in the universities. Florentine Platonism (including Florentine humanists drawing on the philosophers' ideas, like Landino) combined poetology and cosmology more than any earlier period (in general, it had a key role in mediating the Pythagorean-Platonic cosmological tradition); in the Italian and German Platonic defenses of poetry, the idea of poetic frenzy, upgraded versions of the idea of Ancient Theology, and the poet's close relation to musaic deities and the heavenly spheres come to the foreground. My study has provided further evidence on Ficino's direct or indirect influence on Celtis (and also Locher or Corvinus); textual similarities were also revealed, but more important are the general emphases on micro-macrocosmical relations, astrology and the Sun's role (all this in syncretic frameworks), which are combined both in Ficino and Celtis. As for astronomy-astrology in general, Renaissance Europe witnessed a growing interest in the discipline in the period, and in most of those places where Celtis stayed in his life,

astronomy-astrology really formed an integral part of university education, courtly or humanist culture.

In accordance with Celtis's humanistic program, the cosmic frameworks grew in significance in more than one ways: the heavenly bodies frequently appeared both as the divine supporters of poetry, and also as topic of learned poetry-philosophy. Compared to the Platonic defenses of poetry by German humanists of the period, Celtis seems to have made a *further* step in "cosmologizing" poet and poetry, although related rather to himself than poets in general. A similar enhanced cosmic self-representative symbolism appears in a couple of surviving works by Johannes Tolhopf and Laurentius Corvinus; if at least the bulk of the poetical oeuvre of Tolhopf, Corvinus, Augustinus Moravus and other humanists of the period survived, we could perhaps speak about this kind of cosmic symbolism as a collective distinctive characteristic of this humanist literature.

I hope that my investigations have revealed to the reader more than just one more specific trait of the poetry of specific humanists. First, the analyses of humanist literary works and artworks – including such important works as Celtis's and Dürer's *Philosophia*-woodcut – may be useful for scholars interested in other aspects of these humanist oeuvres, or in other late medieval / early modern authors with similar ideas. Secondly, the investigated works of Celtis, Tolhopf, Laurentius Corvinus and Locher are mostly key works of theirs, which are definitely telling concerning their poet-image and world view. Thirdly, I repeat my strong conviction that these works mirror general basic characteristics of the intellectual life of the age: self-assertive individualism, an optimistic belief in cultural renewal, an enhanced interest in the secrets of nature, a predilection for mystique, allegories and micro-macrocosmical correspondences; in my view, the works investigated in this study provide a quite representative cross-section of Renaissance culture in general.

Appendix I: Texts

1. *Poema, quod pro tempore caniculari ad Fridericum, inclytum Saxoniae ducem, in artem carminum lusimus.*

In *Ars versificandi et carminum* (Leipzig: Martin Landsberg, c. 1492-95), f. 2r-3v.

Edition: Robert, “Carmina,” 116-8.

<i>Aestifer aethereo rutilat modo Cancer Olympo</i>	[A2r]
<i>Et Canis aestivo corpora sole gravat.</i>	
<i>Torrída vulnificis pandit Leo rictibus ora,</i>	
<i>Fervet et ignivomas quassat in orbe iubas.</i>	
<i>Horridus hinc gravidis flavescit campus aristas</i>	5
<i>Falciferamque deam messor in arva vocat.</i>	
<i>Colligit in fasces avidus segmenta colonus</i>	
<i>Itque reditque vias, ut sibi poscat opes.</i>	[A 2v]
<i>Musae, quid facimus aestivi solis in umbra?</i>	
<i>Quo nos ferre iocos, ludere quove decet?</i>	10
<i>Nonne sub umbrosis placidum est requiescere silvis</i>	
<i>Et premere in gelidis gramina lenta iugis?</i>	
<i>Hic, ubi sit tremulus lapidoso murmure rivus,</i>	
<i>Qui placidos somnos, carmina grata movet,</i>	
<i>Suscitat ingenium latebrosi ubi caespitis arbos,</i>	15
<i>Frigida cum densis funditur umbra comis;</i>	
<i>Musarum cantus graciles ibi pangere et odas,</i>	
<i>Blanda repercussa vox ubi valle sonat?</i>	
<i>Talia dum repeto modulandaque carmina duco</i>	
<i>Et studeo senis iungere quinque pedes,</i>	20
<i>Protinus humanum visus superare decorem</i>	
<i>Phoebus et ante oculos constitit ipse deus.</i>	
<i>Naiades et Dryades habuit Faunosque sequaces</i>	
<i>Mirificans placidos valle sonante tonos.</i>	
<i>Intremui torsique genas et mente relictas</i>	25
<i>Surrexere comae, membra stupore cadunt.</i>	
<i>Dixit et incusso sonuerunt carmina plectro,</i>	
<i>Verba mihi placidis intulit illa lyris:</i>	
» <i>Quid legisse iuvat sacrorum carmina vatum</i>	
<i>Et Musis avidas implicuisse manus,</i>	30
<i>Quidve iuvat dulces totidem audisse poetas</i>	
<i>Et docilem auditos volvere saepe libros,</i>	
<i>Si non mellitos dabitur cognoscere versus,</i>	
<i>Ut legere aut recte pangere metra queas?</i>	
<i>Rumpe moras, tersis qui condere carmina verbis</i>	35
<i>Et studuisse cupis – me duce doctus eris!</i>	
<i>Advola Apollineas, cupias qui scandere ad arces,</i>	
<i>Musarum cantus me duce nosse potes!</i>	
<i>Carmina Pieridum nulli celebrata priorum</i>	
<i>Nota dabo atque breves quas decet isse vias.</i>	40
<i>Edoceam, lepidos quo pacto fingere versus</i>	
<i>Metra vel ad formam constituisse decet.</i>	
<i>Quo pede carmen eat, qua lege resolvere versum</i>	
<i>Quemque decet, plures noscere do species.</i>	
<i>Carmina quemque iuvat componere: laudis amore</i>	45
<i>Captus: et ad Musas vel properare novem.</i>	
<i>Si quis in aeternum cupiens extendere famam,</i>	

Versibus Aeoliis instituendus erit!
Orphea cum silvis ducentem flumina et undas
Carmina commemorant laudeque digna ferunt. 50
Amphion immotas attraxit carmine rupes
Saxa trahens fidibus, fila canora movens. [A 3r]
uem cecinisse iuvat, rumpantur ut ilia Codro,
Carmine Maeonio me duce tantus erit!«
Sic ait et trepidos quatiens mihi corporis artus 55
Aere diffuso laetus in astra subit.
Ceu solet in tenues fumus dispargier auras,
Ora per amfractus linquere nostra vagos.
Mox ego per varios flectens mea lumina gyros
Attonitus tenui murmure verba dedi: 60
»Ha deus, afflata vatum qui pectora pulsas
Cuique recurvato pectine Musa sonat:
Quo capiam praecepta volens tibi condere carmen,
Quo duce vel numeris nectere verba queam?
Non mihi sunt praecepta tuis servanda loquelis, 65
Quo valeam numeros fingere in arte comis.«
Talia dum meditor, visum mihi turbine caelum
Et tremulo scissus luxerat igne polus.
Haud aliter, trepidis volitant cum fulmina terris
Fulgurat et validis motibus aura crepit. 70
Mox pecudes, armenta, viri, genus omne ferarum
Concutitur, tutis quaeritat antra locis.
Sed sua per sudum reparat cum lumina Phoebus
Et reduci clarum fulget in orbe iubar,
Evolat et madidas replicat sua membra per herbas 75
Aethere pacato roscida prata terens.
Sic ego collisos tersi stupefactus ocellos
Turbine depulso lumina clara videns.
Ecce mihi visus subito est ante ora libellus,
Quem deus ipse tulit fulmine grata ferens. 80
Laetus ego placidum resero sub luce libellum
Carmina et haec visa sunt mihi fronte libri:
»Rumpe moras subito mellitam quaere poesim,
Ars pateat monitis metrica prima meis!
Hunc ego contextum trado tibi in arte libellum, 85
Ut praeceptorum iam memor esse velis!
Publicus ut doctos adeat meus iste libellus,
Te iubeo pressas finge sub aere notas!«
Inde haec praecepta pando, inclyte et optime princeps,
Et tibi praeclaro scribo legenda duci. 90
Te Gemini aspiciunt, vitale, Caducifer, astrum
Et Venus assurgunt: haec genitura tua est.
Per varios cantus Gemini modulataque verba
Et gracilis calamos te, Friderice, trahunt. [A 3v]
Atlantis, †Tege(ae)†, nepos facundus in astro 95
Ingenii vires blandaque verba movet,
Et Cytherea tuos aptavit corporis artus
Membra decora fovens, mollibus apta iocis.
Dux, decus es patriae, si quid mea carmina possunt,
Cantabunt laudes, dum mihi vita, tuas. 100
Vive, vale et longos felix victurus in annos,
Et tandem aethereum det deus ipse polum!
Lipsensis sed et ipse vale, suavissime lector,
Ad quem forte mea scripta venire queant!

2. Am. I,3 *Ad Hasilinam de aborta tempestate, dum Cracoviam Sarmatiae peteret, et signo veris* (from Pindter's edition)

Tempus erat, pluvio dum Phoebus surgit in austro
Phrixaeaeque petit sidera blandus ovis,
Iuppiter ad gremium sese cum Virginis alnum
Suscipit, ut prolem proferat illa novam,
Et novus in verno pubescit tempore mundus 5
Et solvit tepidos humida terra sinus
Ut pariat flores roseis et lilia campis
Et tegat umbrosis frondea tecta comis,
Iamque Amor ad coitus properat stimulatque Cupido
Eiaculans tacitas sole calente faces. 10
Ipsa peregrinas cupiens tum visere terras
Regna malis avibus Celtis Eoa peto,
Exercet vacuos ubi crudus Sarmata campos
Et male compositis incolit arva casis
Quaque suis vastis cum cornibus explicat undas 15
Vistula, Teutonicis qui modo meta plagis.
Ventum erat ad collem, quo regia tecta videntur
Et surgit muris Croca superba suis.
Vix mihi visa vagum mox cingunt nubila solem
Flabraque de variis confremuere plagis: 20
Eurus Achaemeniis vertisset flatibus orbem,
Ni Caurus rapidis obvius isset equis;
Frigidus hinc Boreas madidis notus hinc ruit alis
Et gravis effusus decidit imber aquis,
Murmure quin etiam concussus inhorruit aether, 25
Ruperat ut scissum Iuppiter igne polum.
Mox querulae maestis volucres tacuere sub arvis,
Dum reboat gemitu silva nemusque suo;
Sed volat infausto feralis gutture corvus
Perque suas voces omnia dira canit 30
Et modo conversis mea tempora verberat alis
Ungue truci refugas collacerando genas.
Ter stupefactus equus submisit sessile tergum,
Ungula constiterat terque quaterque solo,
Excutiesque leves mea pendula membra per armos 35
Corripuit volucrem versus ab urbe fugam.
 "Summe pate, merui tua si modo fulmina," – dixi, –
 "Non mora sit, lapsum fulminis igne cremes,
Vel face, quod tollat subitus mea corpora torrens
Ut sim Sarmatico piscibus esca salo, 40
Qua Scogus et stricto stat Trendulus aequore mersus
Et stadus et Codano Scandia clara sinu.
Gloria, fama, decus, virtus genialis abire
Me patria atque alias cogit adire plagas.
Illo ego si merui, pater o, tua fulmina caeli, 45
Iam mea sub Stygios, fac, meet umbra lacus.
Sed si laeva tuis monuisti pectora flammis,
Auspice te felix hoc mihi restet iter!"

<i>Auspice te felix sit iter, dum repet, saeva Flamma re percussis ignibus ora ferit.</i>	50
<i>Tunc iacuit longo sine sensu tempore corpus, Nullus et exangui visus in ore color. Ultimus ille dies clausisset tempora vati, Ni Phoebus solitam forte tulisset opem.</i>	
<i>“Phoebe, pater vatium,” – fuerat dixisse voluntas, – “Fac, releves vatis tristia fata, deus!</i>	55
<i>Ipsa sub Eoas veniens tua numina terras Clara canam Aoniis te celebrando lyris.”</i>	
<i>Audiit et venit cinctus sacra tempora lauro, Concutiens nitidum terque quaterque caput</i>	60
<i>“Surge!” – ait, – “et priscum capiant tua membra vigorem, Ut patriae fines quatuor ipse canas, Turgidus Eois quam claudit Vistula ab oris, Sed latus austrinum maximus Hister habet,</i>	
<i>Rhenus ab occiduis limes sed dicitur oris Et boreae partem gens Codonea tenet.</i>	65
<i>Hinc quicquid mediis Germania continet oris, Carminum Phoebeo nota sub orbe dabis. Sed patiens varias tolerabis, Celtis, aerumnas, Orbe decennalis dum peregrinus eris.</i>	70
<i>Magna venit nulli sine magno fama labore Et vaga sudorem gloria semper habet.”</i>	
<i>Dixit et aurivagis fugiens secat aera pennis Aonidumque simul concomitata cohors.</i>	
<i>Multa ferens animo trepidus proficiscor in urbem Captus luminibus mox, Hasilina, tuis Et iacet obductum multa caligine pectus, Exercet vires mens neque caeca suas.</i>	75
<i>Et nisi te toto complexam pectore versat, Semper et ante oculos stat tua forma meos.</i>	80
<i>Qualiter umbrosis exercent guttura silvis Iam volucres verno et sideris igne calent Concutiuntque vagas sperata ob gaudia pennas Et sua respondent oribus ora simul:</i>	
<i>Sic mea ferventi vocitant te carmina plectro, Ut fruar amplexu, blanda puella, tuo.</i>	85
<i>Aspice consumptas, o femina cruda, medullas Et resoluta tuis ignibus ossa vide!</i>	
<i>Aspice, quod fessos prope linquat spiritus artus Teque suae causam praedicat esse necis.</i>	90
<i>En semel obliquum lustravit Cynthius orbem Duodeciesque tulit cornua plena soror, Ex quo dura meas tenuisti tempore curas Igneque non facili mollia corda coquis.</i>	
<i>Seu videant Phoebum terrae vel opaca trahantur Tempora, non requies nec modus ullus adest; Vel mihi fatales neverunt fila sorores Talia, quae cogant me sub amore mori, Noxius aut semper mea corda ἐπόνοσος habebit, Quem morbum stellae forte dedere meae.</i>	95
	100

3. Laurentius Corvinus's poem in the *Carmen Elegiacum Magistri Laurentii Corvini Novoforensis De Apolline et novem musis* (Wrocław: K. Baumgarthen, 1503).

<i>Phoebus hyperboreis admotum montibus altum</i>	f. 1r
<i>Temonem tropico vertit ab estifero</i>	
(comm.)	
<i>Pronus et Herculei delapsus ad ora leonis</i>	f. 1v
<i>Ad medium bibulos aethra flexit equos</i>	
(comm.)	f. 2r
<i>Flaventem usque adeo morbosa canicula messem</i>	5
<i>Torruit ut moriens languit alma Ceres</i>	
(comm.)	
<i>Non reor Ethiopes iuga post montana Sienes</i>	f. 2v
<i>Exuri tantis estibus inter oves</i>	
<i>Ursa pruinoso concreta rigore: Bootes</i>	
<i>Tutor innocidui cardinis incaluit.</i>	10
(comm.)	f. 3r
<i>Lucidus ante trahens sinuosa volumina Serpens</i>	
<i>Laxat ad ignivomam lubrica terga facem</i>	
<i>Atque immota diu glacialis in equore ponti</i>	
<i>Ignibus ethereis unda soluta fluit</i>	
(comm.)	f. 3v
<i>Aereum tellus siciebat hiulca liquorem</i>	15
<i>Arva petunt pluvium pulverulenta Iovem</i>	
<i>Nulla etenim a libycis sinuaverat aphricus oris</i>	
<i>Nubila letiferam depositura sitim</i>	
<i>Nec vapor a calido sublatus ad aethera phoebo</i>	
<i>Unquam in casuras consolidatur aquas.</i>	20
<i>verum ubi iam nostrum conscendit in aera: rarus</i>	
<i>Continuo in ventos cesserat ille leves</i>	f. 4r
(comm.)	f. 4v
<i>Muscosi fontes piscosaque stagna: paludes</i>	
<i>Uluifere:⁴²⁷ aruerant: parva fluentia: lacus.</i>	
<i>Ranula limosis que rauca coaxat in undis</i>	25
<i>Cogitur in vivos tunc resilire sinus</i>	
<i>Et que glebosis errant animalia pratis</i>	
<i>Fessa sub umbrosis delituere rubis</i>	
<i>Falcifer aphrico concedens messor ab agro</i>	
<i>Frigora ab arboreis sumit opaca comis</i>	30
(comm.)	f. 5r
<i>Hic ubi Bresla potens et in edibus inclita sacris</i>	
<i>Menia preruptis tollit in astra iugis</i>	
<i>Itur in arbuteum suspenso ponte rubetum</i>	f. 5v
<i>Serra ubi mordaci robora dente secat</i>	
<i>Et qua multivagis agitata rotatibus alme</i>	35
<i>Matris eleusine munera saxa terunt</i>	
<i>Spumeus hoc circum sinuosis volvitur undis</i>	
<i>Odera: harenosam et gurgite. radit humum:</i>	
(comm.)	f. 6r
<i>Lucum ego non paciens estivi Solis ad istum</i>	
<i>Contuleram nullo concomitante gradum</i>	40

⁴²⁷ Correctly: *ulnifere*

<i>Gramen ut herbosum vegetaret pectus anhelum</i>	f. 6v
<i>Et recreet sensus micior aura meos</i>	
(comm.)	
<i>Fonticulus viva scatebris de rupe profusus</i>	
<i>Perplacido vitreas murmure fundit aquas</i>	
<i>Dumque susurrantis sedissem ad flumina rivi</i>	45
<i>Et mea ceruleus proluit ora latex</i>	
<i>Hinc sub glandifera traho dum suspiria quercu</i>	
<i>Corripuit blandus languida membra sopor</i>	
(comm.)	f. 7r
<i>Interea inglomerat nubes ferus Auster aquosas</i>	
<i>Lucentem et subito nox fugat atra diem</i>	50
<i>Juppiter in terras siculo fabricata camino</i>	
<i>Ignea terrifico tela fragore iacit</i>	
<i>Amnicole salices et fulmine scissa trisulco</i>	
<i>Ligna resultantes querna dedere sonos</i>	
<i>Aere silva vago magnum concussa boatum</i>	55
<i>Mittit et horrendum littora abesa gemunt</i>	
(comm.)	f. 7v-8r
<i>Attonitus tanto coeli de murmure ocellos</i>	
<i>Sustuleram ad piceas corde micante faces</i>	
<i>Dumque ita sulphurei versarem in pectore causas</i>	
<i>Fulguris et dulces cur vapor urget aquas</i>	60
<i>Ecce sub obscura ducens secum arboris umbra</i>	
<i>Virgineum cetum vir venit eximius</i>	
<i>Ostro palla rubet: viret a parnaside Lauro</i>	
<i>Frons: gerit auratam splendida dextra chelin</i>	f. 8v
<i>Emicuit croceo iubaris tantum huius ab ore</i>	65
<i>Clarius ut visum est quam fuit ante nemus</i>	
(comm.)	f. 9r
<i>Turba puellarum cytharas tenet atque virenti</i>	
<i>Ex lauro ac hederaserta ligata tulit</i>	
<i>Flavus et eos Arabum spirabat odores</i>	
<i>Crinis et in Solymo balsama creta solo</i>	70 f. 9v
<i>Harum alie virides nivea cervice Smaragdos</i>	
<i>Berillumque alie coraliiumque ferunt</i>	
<i>Exornant alias carbunculus atque Topasus</i>	
<i>LECTA quoque in phario concha rotunda freto</i>	
(comm.)	f. 10r
<i>Ut vidi obstupui: gelidusque a corpore sudor</i>	75
<i>Sicut ab aphricis nix fluit alba iugis</i>	
<i>Ille ubi me exanimem vocesque in fauce prementem</i>	
<i>Senserat elingui sic prior orsus erat</i>	
<i>Pelle metum non huc manes de sede barathri</i>	
<i>Ulla nec ex tepidis umbra citata rogis</i>	80
<i>Omnipotentis ego sacro sum sanguine cretus</i>	
<i>Solve metum phoebe numina sancta vides</i>	
(comm.)	f. 10v-11r
<i>Quidquid habent lucis capiunt a lampade nostra</i>	
<i>Fixa in nocturno signa minora globo</i>	
<i>Nostra soror phoebe nostris argentea flammis</i>	85
<i>Humida fecunda cornua luce novat</i>	
<i>Et que multivagis peragunt erroribus orbes</i>	
<i>Concipiunt nostram sidera magna facem</i>	
(comm.)	f. 11v

<i>Dux ego musarum quas conspicis atque magister</i>	
<i>Inde meum famule concomitantur iter</i>	90
<i>Dum pater omnipotens ignave pondera molis</i>	
<i>Edidit in formas lite iuvante novas</i>	
<i>Et glebam tepido coeli de rore madentem</i>	f. 12r
<i>In vestrum mira fingeret arte genus</i>	
<i>Octo perpetuos mundi fabricaverat arcus</i>	95
<i>Quemlibet et proprium iussit habere melos</i>	
(comm.)	f. 12v
<i>Germanam aetheree iussit contermina flammae</i>	
<i>Et loca rossidula prima tenere rotam</i>	
<i>Versutum hinc pandens proles cillenia sydus</i>	
<i>Alatos celeri gyrat in orbe pedes</i>	100
<i>Inde columbino vehitur venus aurea tractu</i>	
<i>Et blandum roseo fingit in ore iocum</i>	
(comm.)	f. 13r-v
<i>Tunc meus obliqua rapitur vertigine currus</i>	
<i>Sidera monstriferi per duodena globi</i>	
<i>Nec michi littoreum fas est transcendere Cancrum</i>	105
<i>Nec post hyberni pergere terga Capri</i>	
(comm.)	
<i>Mars hinc ulnifico quoniam furit horridus ense</i>	f. 14r
<i>Puniceo tinctum sanguine sydus habet</i>	
<i>Deinde salutiferos volvens iovis orbita giros</i>	
<i>Fulmineam calido spirat ab axe facem</i>	110
(comm.)	
<i>Lucifer inde gravem plumbo Saturnus olympum</i>	
<i>Vertit et incurva gaudia falce necat</i>	
<i>Octavus tremulis scintillans ignibus aether</i>	
<i>Fixa inter geminos fert sua signa polos</i>	f. 14v
(comm.)	f. 15r
<i>Orbibus hys veluti Sirenes semper adherent</i>	115
<i>Musae celestis numina sancta lyrae</i>	
<i>Inde tenore pari Symphonia maxima vocum</i>	
<i>Exoritur nonum Calliopeia melos</i>	
(comm.)	f. 15v
<i>Hoc superi gaudent cantu: Letantur et omnes</i>	
<i>Spirituum turme coelicolumque chori</i>	120
<i>Inde est ut vestros animus delapsus in artus</i>	
<i>Terrenos suavi gaudeat usque sono</i>	
<i>Utque sit aetheream felix rediturus ad arcem</i>	
<i>Cantibus illius funus humatur iners</i>	f. 16r
(comm.)	
<i>Turba sacerdotum diis sacros concinit hymnos</i>	125
<i>Et psallit nostris cantica facta modis</i>	f. 16v
<i>Dulcia ventosis pulsantur et organa cannis</i>	
<i>Atque utero reboant tympana magna cavo</i>	
(comm.)	f. 17r
<i>Hos quoniam in variis moderor concentibus axes</i>	
<i>Dicor sydereae rector Apollo lyre</i>	130
<i>Hec ait et pulchro distinxit in ordine musas</i>	
<i>Dulcisoneque iubet tangere plectra fidis</i>	
(comm.)	f. 17v
<i>Pulchra corimbiferas Clio inter prima sorores</i>	
<i>Hec tetigit docta verba canora manu</i>	

<i>Per me bella patent illis primum orta diebus</i>	135
<i>Natus ab aetherea dum fugat arce patrem</i>	
<i>Cum secum Erigone pacem intemerata togatam</i>	
<i>A tellure domos traxit ad astriferas</i>	
<i>Tunc pater arma locat gradivus ubique locorum</i>	
<i>Antequae communes scindit iniquus opes</i>	140
(comm.)	f. 18r
<i>Concinit argolicis cur diruta pergama flammis</i>	
<i>Nunc sunt aequoreo semisepulta sinu</i>	
<i>Et michi cur Babylon cecinisset versa iaceret</i>	
<i>Ipsa sed a phoebo iussa silere silet</i>	
(comm.)	
<i>Euterpe primum calamos inflare canoros</i>	145 f. 18v
<i>Ceperat: hinc tali plectra movere sono</i>	
<i>Prima rudem docui populum inspirare cicutis</i>	
<i>Tortilis atque mea tybia facta manu est</i>	
<i>Inventumque meum est curvo cava buccina cornu</i>	
<i>Et que dulcisonum stridet harundo melos</i>	150
<i>Rustica me pubes duce structis cantat avenis</i>	
<i>Dum fruticosa vagum cogit in arva pecus</i>	
(comm.)	f. 19r
<i>Tercia melpomene tragicis induta cothurnis</i>	
<i>Luctisona cecinit tristia fata tuba</i>	
<i>Obtulit ut nati: bimari dominator in Isthmo</i>	155
<i>Tantalus: hospitibus membra voranda deis</i>	
<i>Nunc quoque det penas stigia sitibundus in unda</i>	
<i>Oreque mordacem stringit hiantem famem</i>	
<i>Utque thiestee stupet ad convivium cenae</i>	
<i>Aversus medium Sol tenebrando diem</i>	160
(comm.)	f. 19v-20r
<i>Candida civili ritu vestita Thalia</i>	
<i>Insonuit pulchris comica verba iocis</i>	
<i>Qualiter ille senex fulvum qui abstruserat aurum</i>	
<i>Multibibam diro verbere pulsat anum</i>	
<i>Aridus et tenuem dum fumus abiret in auram</i>	165
<i>Continuo clamat divum hominumque fidem</i>	
<i>Sordidulas gelido lavit dum flumine palmas</i>	
<i>Si quid aque effluxit flebat et ingemuit</i>	
(comm.)	f. 20v
<i>Tonsor ubi curvos ferro sibi dempserat ungues</i>	
<i>Presegmen turpes servat avaros opes</i>	170
<i>Dum sibi pulmentum fumantem et caulibus ollam</i>	
<i>Insultans avido Milvus ab ore rapit</i>	
<i>Viventem furto trahit in sua iura volucrem</i>	
<i>Instat ut in sacra pendeat illa cruce</i>	
<i>Deinde suam gnatam nuptum sine dote daturus</i>	175
<i>Versuto amittit fulva talenta dolo</i>	
(comm.)	f. 21r
<i>Omnibus hys niveo prelata Polymnia vultu</i>	
<i>Formoso lepidos mittit ab ore sonos</i>	
<i>Venit in humanas duce me sapiencia mentes</i>	
<i>Docta que rethoricum venit in ora decus</i>	180
<i>Verba locuturis mortalibus ipsa ministro</i>	
<i>Dummodo grandiloqui rethores esse velint</i>	
(comm.)	f. 21v

<i>Barbaries primo per inercia guttura seculo</i>	
<i>Iverat et vocem format ubique rudem</i>	
<i>Sed postquam imperium nostram ingeniosus in artem</i>	185
<i>Cepit Atlantiades in fera regna soli</i>	
<i>Illius ipsa comes supera delabor ab aula</i>	
<i>Duraque mellifluos fundo per ora favos</i>	
<i>Grecia me primum doctis excepit Athenis</i>	
<i>Nunc habet ausonio subdita terra lari</i>	190
(comm.)	f. 22r
<i>Inde fides Eratho radio pulsare sonoras</i>	
<i>Incipit aurata concrepitante lyra</i>	
<i>Quidquid ab herculeis spacii ultima terra columpnis</i>	
<i>Servat ad eos usque reducta sinus</i>	
<i>Quidquid et ad septem gelidos porrecta triones</i>	195
<i>Occupat: austrino vel calefacta polo</i>	
<i>Mecior hoc radio: diffusaque brachia magni</i>	
<i>Occeani indicio sunt patefacta meo</i>	
(comm.)	f. 22v
<i>Occultas rerum causas indagine mira.</i>	
<i>Duco ex ignavo semina prima chaos</i>	200
<i>Cur citus in gelidum brumali frigore pontum</i>	
<i>Sol ruit: umbriferos noctis et auget equos</i>	
<i>Rursus ripheis vicinus lampade terris</i>	
<i>Explicat estivo tempora longa die</i>	
<i>Nubiferos montes fluviosque ex montibus ortos</i>	205
<i>Hospita quidquid habet denique terra cano.</i>	
(comm.)	f. 23r
<i>Terpsicore modulos plectro psallebat eburno</i>	
<i>Et cecinit lyrico carmina docta pede</i>	
<i>Vicerit ut david Bethlemica regna gubernans</i>	f. 23v
<i>Threicium altisonis Orphea carminibus</i>	210
<i>Et veluti ille Hemi traxit de rupibus Ornos</i>	
<i>Atque hebri gelidas stare coegit aquas</i>	
<i>Palmiferi sic iste sacrum Iordanis ad amnem</i>	
<i>Dum cecinit dulces sistere fecit aquas</i>	
<i>Argutum et gelido Libani de vertice Cedrus</i>	215
<i>Auditura melos vallis in ima cadit</i>	
(comm.)	f. 24r
<i>Deinceps stellato faciem redimita nitore</i>	
<i>Urania levi talia voce notat</i>	
<i>Noctivagae phoebes docui fratrisque laborem</i>	
<i>Quo contra extremum nititur ire globum</i>	220
<i>Prima sacerdotes memphytica templa colentes</i>	
<i>Clivosi edocui signa tenere poli</i>	
(comm.)	f. 24v
<i>Hellespontiacis Aries ablatas ab oris</i>	
<i>Florea cur tepidi tempora veris habet</i>	
<i>Bos quid agenorius frontem stellatus aquoso</i>	225
<i>Agmine: quid fratrum sydus utrumque ferat</i>	
(comm.)	f. 25r
<i>Obliqui peragunt quid aquatica brachia Cancri</i>	
<i>Flavaque flammivomus cur coquit arva Leo</i>	
(comm.)	f. 25v
<i>Triticea Erigone cur fert de messe maniplos</i>	
<i>Iusta quid equatur pondere libra gravi</i>	230

<i>Quem necat in coelis viroso Scorpius astro:</i> <i>Tessalici aut ledant livida tela senis:</i> (comm.)	f. 26r
<i>Quid caper: imbrifera vel aquarius efficit urna</i> <i>Squameus et sicco piscis in orbe parat</i> (comm.)	f. 26v
<i>Coelestes inter michi Calliopeia camenas</i> <i>Plus veneranda gravi ruperat ora sono</i>	235
<i>Quid pius Aeneas: quid strenuus egerit hector</i> <i>Fortis et Alcides: Romulus atque Numa</i> <i>Hos ob virtutem clara regione potitos</i> <i>Dixit in Elisys vivere delicys</i> (comm.)	240 f. 27r
<i>Ut tetigere dee blandis hec carmina nervis</i> <i>Fatus erat tali doctus Apollo sono</i> <i>Nunc Corvine sapis quis sim: castaeque cohortis</i> <i>Audisti imparibus munera tacta modis</i> <i>Virtutum asuescas sacrum conscendere montem</i> <i>Dulceque Pierii carmen inire chori</i> (comm.)	245 f. 27v
<i>Durum iter est: fateor: prerruptam Heliconis ad arcem</i> <i>Artaque saxoso semita colle riget</i> <i>Sed tibi eo postquam ventum est: placidissima tempe</i> <i>Invenies croceis semper odora rosis</i> <i>Sudorem posuit deus illius ante penates</i> <i>Ardua nam multo nulla labore carent</i> (comm.)	f. 28r 250 f. 28v
<i>Hec ait: et calidum siccus ceu fumus in Eurum</i> <i>Cessit: parnasi culmina forte petens</i> <i>Quam cito phoebe fugis me: terque quater sequebar</i> <i>Rore prius madeant tempora nostra tuo</i> <i>Vix hec edideram cum coelo missus ab aquoso</i> <i>Dulcis odorifera depluit imber aqua</i> <i>Rossidus inde tuli gressus: dum fessus anhelum</i> <i>Occiduo reficit phoebus in amne globum</i> (comm.)	255 260 f. 29r

4. Am. II,10 *Ad Elsulam, ut natalicium sibi convivium instruat* (from Pindter's edition)

<i>Elsula cara, tuas veniam cras laetus in aedes,</i> <i>Phoebus ubi Libycas mersus habebit aquas;</i> <i>Quippe ego in hac numero terdenas nocte Calendas</i> <i>Febrilis mensis, dum mihi vita data est.</i> <i>Quapropter cultas componas, Elsula, mappas</i> <i>Fornacemque cavam plurimus ignis alat.</i>	5
<i>Cerea quin etiam redituro lumina Phoebos</i> <i>Accende et ceram carmina bina notent:</i> <i>Phoebe, sub aerea qui stas modo candidus Urna,</i> <i>Luce salutari cras tuus orbis eat!</i> <i>Fervida tum primum vidit tua lumina Celtis,</i> <i>Fluctibus Eois quando renatus eras.</i>	10

Hinc Baccho compone scyphos paterasque capaces
Plenaque stent vario stannea vasa mero.
Illud cum Coe iubeas spumare Falernoque 15
Et Tergestino cantharus ille fluat.
Oppano reliquos repleas et Draminiano
Vel quod Feldlini terra beata creat.
Alter Helvetium, Rhenanum conferat ille,
Hic Cetium vel quod Francia nostra creat . 20
Francia Germano mihi stirps et origo poetae
Hercyniae medio cincta beata sinu,
Quam Moenus mediam perlambit vitifer oram,
Cuius quadrifluo nascitur unda iugo:
Pinifer est, cuius de vertice flumina quattuor 25
Quatuor in partes orbis amoena cadunt.
Moenus ad occasum Francorum fertur in oras,
Sala sed Arctois perditur Albis aquis,
Egra sed Eoi petit ardua regna Boemi,
Sed Nabus Histrinis insinuatur aquis, 30
Triticeum Cereri componas, Elsula, panem
Atque focus varios concoquat igne cibos.
Haec ubi cuncta meo constabunt iussa tenore
Et nitet in cunctis partibus ipsa domus,
Ipsa ego tunc veniam caris comitatus amicis 35
Et genio solitas sacrificabo dapes.
Quas inter laeti certemus reddere causas
Naturae et magni quaerere iura poli:
In tres divisit partes quis pondera terrae
Per Nilum et Tanain per mediumque fretum, 40
Quis numeros stellis, quis primus nomina fecit,
Quis septem adversa prendidit ire via,
Saturnus timido, laeto et cur Iuppiter astro,
Mars furibundus eat Mercuriusque sagax,
Ut Venus adstringat cupidorum pectora amantum 45
Et sociat nexu cuncta elementa suo,
Quo caelum sub amore meat tellusque quiescit
Et generant species foedere iuncta suas?
Hoc citharam blandis fidibus resonare iubebo,
Coniungens chordis carmina nostra suis. 50
Tunc terram tremulo pulsabunt corpore plantae
Et varios orbis laeta chorea reget.
Pulchrius ignifluo nihil est sub sole creatum,
Quam relevans curas blanda puella graves.
Interea ternos cyathos tibi Gratia praestat 55
Vertere, sed Musae dant mihi rite novem
Et Phoebus decimum calicem mihi forte favebit,
Phoebus qui media temperat astra via.
Sic postquam caeli fuerint duo signa peracta
Et languent multo corpora pressa mero, 60
Elsula, dic proprias convivas ire sub aedes
Meque iube ad lectum pergere cauta tuum,
Quo totiens blandos suscepi corpore somnos
Et quo mille tibi basia saepe dedi
Quoque iterum tibi mille dabo natalibus horis, 65
Auspicio felix totus ut annus eat.
Cumque sua Phoebus natali lampade surgit

*Meque tuum cogit linquere luce sinum,
Tunc tu cum lacrimis circum mea pectora pendens
Hos mihi versiculos in mea fata canes: 70
“Iuppiter aeternos tribuat tibi, Celtis, honores
Nec tibi Mars noceat, nec gravis ille senex,
Mercurius citharam, faveat tibi carmina Phoebus
Nostraque contineat mutua corda Venus!”*

Appendix II: A note on the exactness of horoscopes made in Central European courts in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries

In my study I have sometimes applied the method of (partially) reconstructing hypothetical horoscopes for a known date (fig. 8, 9, 14-17), based on the assumption that in general the planetary data calculated by the professional astrologers were relatively correct by the late fifteenth century, so the reconstructed horoscopes look similar to those cast in that age. As mentioned before, I calculate the real, exact planetary data for a given time with the help of a reliable computer program (ZET 8 Lite). Though several scholars have pointed out the advanced state of astronomy in the period, and referred to the exactness of the investigated horoscopes, a comprehensive survey about the exactness of horoscopes in the period has not yet been made, so here I would like to support my argument by investigating the data of a set of specific contemporary horoscopes. The mathematical principles and methods of casting horoscopes in the period (including Regiomontanus's new method of unequal houses) have already been explored;⁴²⁸ in the following I simply take a sample collection of surviving horoscopes cast in various Central European courts in the late fifteenth century, and compare their main data to the exact data calculated by the computer. I focus on the planetary data, since these are the most relevant from the perspective of my research (in four of the six reconstructions in my study the house cusps are not known); from among the house cusps I include the most important ones, the Ascendant and the MC. The following horoscopes come from the same period and the same Central European astronomical-astrological culture that I have investigated in my study; I indicate if the maker of the horoscope is known. (If the horoscope uses rounded planetary data, I indicate it by italicizing the number.)

The nativity of Eleanor of Portugal, wife of Frederick III

Time: 16 Sept. 1436, 4:11 (Torres Vedras)⁴²⁹

Maker: Peurbach or Regiomontanus⁴³⁰

Source: *Joannis Regiomontani opera collectanea*, ed. Felix Schmeidler (Osnabrück: Zeller, 1972), 6f.

Component	horoscope data	computer data	difference
Moon	Sag 13°58'	Sag 13°56'	+0°02'
Mercury	Lib 8	Lib 9°30'	-1°30'
Venus	Sco 16°24'	Sco 17°29'	-1°05'
Sun	Lib 1°57'	Lib 2°00'	-0°03'
Mars	Vir 26°11'	Vir 26°39'	-0°28'
Jupiter	Lib 24°32'	Lib 25°27'	-0°55'
Saturn	Pis 21°53'	Pis 21°17'	+0°36'
Asc.	Vir 10°00'	Vir 11°11'	-1°11'
MC	Gem 6°30'	Gem 8°26'	-1°54'

⁴²⁸ Cf. e.g. North, *Horoscopes*, esp. 1-70; Reisinger, *Historische*.

⁴²⁹ In general, the place of birth or other event for which horoscope was cast was not indicated in the horoscopes, but they are known in most cases, and I use these places in the computer-based calculations; nevertheless, the place of the event does not affect much the data of a horoscope.

⁴³⁰ Cf. H. Grössing, "Die Horoskope Eleonores von Portugal und Kaiser Maximilian I," in: *Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Geschichte der Mathematik, Naturwissenschaften und Medizin*, Heft 31 (Vienna: ÖAW, 1981).

The nativity of Mathias I of Hungary

Time: 24 Feb. 1443 03:07 (Cluj)

Maker: probably Martin Bylica, astrologer of King Mathias⁴³¹

Source: Cracow, Bibliotheka Jagiellonska, cod. 3225.

Component	horoscope data	computer data	difference
Moon	Cap 9°	Cap 8°01'	+0°59'
Mercury	Aqu 20°46'	Aqu 21°35'	-0°49'
Venus	Ari 27°	Ari 26°14'	+0°46'
Sun	Pis 14°18'	Pis 13°51'	+0°27'
Mars	Pis 8°04'	Pis 7°09'	+0°55'
Jupiter	Tau 12°34'	Tau 11°37'	+0°57'
Saturn	Gem 12°22'	Gem 11°14'	+1°08'
Asc.	Cap 4°18'	Cap 1°07'	+3°11'
MC	Sco 4°43'	Sco 0°56'	+3°47'

The coronation horoscope of Mathias I of Hungary

Time: 29 March 1464 08:40 (Székesfehérvár)

Source: Cracow, Bibliotheka Jagiellonska, cod. 3225.

Component	horoscope data	computer data	difference
Moon	Cap 5°	Cap 4°55'	+0°05'
Mercury	Tau 8°	Tau 6°56'	+1°04'
Venus	Ari 2°	Pis 1°18'	+0°42'
Sun	Ari 18°	Ari 17°36'	+0°24'
Mars	Tau 12°	Tau 12°58'	-0°58'
Jupiter	Pis 3°	Pis 2°37'	+0°23'
Saturn	Pis 4°	Pis 3°38'	+0°22'
Asc.	Gem 24°47'	Gem 24°04'	+0°43'
MC	Aqu 24°15'	Aqu 23°21'	+0°54'

The nativity of Frederick III made at the court of Mathias I of Hungary⁴³²

Time: 21 Sept. 1415 22:22 (Innsbruck)

Maker: probably Martin Bylica, astrologer of King Mathias

Source: Cracow, Bibliotheka Jagiellonska, cod. 3225.

Component	horoscope data	computer data	difference
Moon	Tau 14°42'	Tau 15°53'	+1°11'
Mercury	Lib 28°30'	Sco 1°38'	-3°18'
Venus	Sco 15°12'	Sco 16°30'	-1°18'
Sun	Lib 6°39'	Lib 6°42'	-0°03'
Mars	Leo 27°01'	Leo 27°41'	-0°40'
Jupiter	Cap 7°52'	Cap 8°21'	-0°29'
Saturn	Can 22°33'	Can 21°09'	+1°24'

⁴³¹ Cf. Orbán, "Astrology at the Court of Matthias Corvinus," 134.⁴³² Cf. Orbán, "Astrology in Janus," 124-6.

Asc.	Can 10°52'	Can 10°52'	0°
MC	Pis 13°	Pis 12°47'	+0°13'

The nativity of Albrecht Scheurl

Time: 3 Feb. 1525 23:52 (Nuremberg)

Maker: Johannes Carion, between 1530-32⁴³³

Source: Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, J. H. Msc. jur 3 (I 29)

Component	horoscope data	computer data	difference
Moon	Can 2°	Can 1°29'	+0°31'
Mercury	Pis 0°	Aqu 29°02'	+0°58'
Venus	Cap 11°	Cap 11°40'	-0°40'
Sun	Aqu 25°	Aqu 24°50'	+0°10'
Mars	Lib 21°	Lib 22°50'	-1°50'
Jupiter	Ari 9°	Ari 8°48'	+0°12'
Saturn	Pis 21°	Pis 20°47'	+0°13'
Asc.	Sco 13°	Sco 7°24'	+5°36'
MC	Leo 23°	Leo 18°55'	+4°05'

Celtis's horoscope of laureation in the *Proseuticum* (see fig. 13)

Time: 18 Apr. 1487, 18:01, Nuremberg

Maker: Johannes Canter, astrologer of Frederick III.

Source: Celtis, *Proseuticum*.

Component	horoscope data	computer data	difference
Moon	Pis 6°	Pis 5°47'	+0°13'
Mercury	Ari 29°	Ari 28°35'	+0°25'
Venus	Tau 13°	Tau 12°39'	+0°21'
Sun	Tau 7°	Tau 6°54'	+0°06'
Mars	Can 16°	Can 17°35'	-1°35'
Jupiter	Aqu 14°	Aqu 14°40'	-0°40'
Saturn	-	Sag 22°30'	-
Asc.	Lib 25°	Lib 25°36'	-0°36'
MC	Leo 2°	Leo 3°12'	-1°12'

The examples demonstrate that the difference between the (rounded or exact) planetary data of the horoscopes and their computer-based equivalent remains mostly below 1°, in few cases falls between 1-2°, and only in one case falls around 3°. The house cusp data are less important from the perspective of my investigations; they may deviate a little more, in case of the Asc. and MC data of the above examples the difference is sometimes around 3-5°. All these relatively small differences may be due to a number of reasons, for instance that the data of the tables from which the astrologer worked referred to slightly different spatial coordinates and time.

⁴³³ For the horoscope cf. Reisinger, *Historische*.

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