

The Warsaw pageant of planets (1580) described by Martin Gruneweg – organization, genre and iconography of an Early Modern spectacle

The main goal of the project is interdisciplinary study on one of Old Polish performances, which is a valuable source for researching the reception of astronomical and astrological knowledge in the Renaissance Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, as well as for analysis the relationship between the city and court culture in the second half of the 16th century. The event will be included in a network of references: the carnival culture, genres and organization of performances, other spectacles in the Commonwealth and Europe, the initiators and creators of the shows, as well as iconographic conventions, astronomical and astrological culture, which was related to the knowledge of nature and the reception of the ancient literature.

This spectacle is the carnival parade of planets, which took place on February 15th, 1580 in Warsaw. The court of queen Anna Jagiellon and Warsaw townspeople cooperated in its organization. The event was witnessed by Martin Gruneweg from Gdańsk (1562 – between 1606 and 1615), then a merchant's apprentice who, years later, minutely described the spectacle in his notes (1601 / 1602–1606).

Although the Warsaw parade is a little event, it deserves attention because of the richness of the traditions from which it grows. It combines the heritage of ancient mythology and astronomical/astrological knowledge, filtered through Medieval and early Renaissance reception, as well as ludic element, carnival forms, influences of the court and city culture. This variety seems to distinguish the Warsaw procession from other performances, especially those already examined. So far, the researchers have focused on initiatives of the royal, magnate or noble circle. Astronomical motifs appear there quite often, but not – as in Gruneweg's report – as the main motif, moreover, exceptionally precisely described in its iconographic aspect.

During the project, the complex genre connections of the Warsaw pageant will be described. Its form can be associated with several types of performances, primarily with city carnival plays and court ceremonial entrances, triumphal parades and *maszkary*. The search for species affinities will mainly concern two trends in culture: the city and the court. This corresponds to the two circles that most probably organized the parade and were its recipients.

Moreover, the planets procession will be analysed as a testimony of the late Renaissance astronomical/astrological culture. On the one hand, it is associated with identifying the potential source of the seven planets iconography used in the parade, on the other hand – with an attempt to define the astronomical/astrological awareness of the creators and recipients of the spectacle, as well as the author of the report on it.

An important element of the research will be the search for details on the organization of the parade. Who was responsible for its various elements? What was it organized for? To celebrate carnival joy, to win the king's kindness, or to celebrate the newlyweds who, according to Gruneweg, got married the day before? Who could be the newlyweds? What inspired the triumphal gate in the city main square through which the "planets" passed?

In order to consider the above-mentioned issues, it is necessary to find as many performances as possible, which were similar to the Warsaw one, and to research sources that will reveal data about organization and cultural connections of the spectacle. For this purpose, numerous queries must be made – both for resources already published on paper or available on the Internet, as well as those in the special collections of libraries and archives. It is also worth extending the query of studies to include works that are difficult to find in Poland. The project combines various disciplines: literary studies, art history, performance history, cultural history, as well as elements of history, history of astronomy and astrology.

The search will start in Warsaw and will be continued in Cracow where the royal court and townspeople coexisted, like in Warsaw. Then, study will move to Gdańsk, Gruneweg's hometown, next to Frombork, Kórnik, Poznań, Wrocław, Lwów and Rome. Valuable collections of sources for history of the Commonwealth in the second half of the 16th and early 17th centuries are there. Also iconographic research in London will be an important part of the project.

As a result of the research, the organization of the Warsaw planets parade, its species and iconographic affinities will be described. If possible, concrete people associated with the pageant and a graphic prototype of the planets' costumes will be indicated. The outcomes will be presented in the leading academic journals in Polish and English and at conferences in Poland and abroad. Also three databases will be created; they will be devoted the performances at the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries and the astrological iconography.