

Summary

THE *QUESTIO ASTRONOMICALIS* OF ZDENĚK OF LABOUNĚ. A CRITICAL EDITION

The subject of this edition is a response to the *quaestio* (raised at the discussion *de quodlibet* organised by John Hus in 1411), “whether there are seven planets, whether they move in epicycles and on eccentric orbits, and whether their conjunction influences humans and gives rise to comets, blazing dragon (*i.e.* meteor), halo, rainbow, *sub* and *asub* (another meteors) and *hyatus* and *bochim* (aurora borealis or clouds coloured by sunlight).”

The astronomer Zdeněk of Labouň starts with an astronomical description of the planets, their movements and conjunctions, and then he turns to the question of the influence of planetary conjunctions on earthly matters – on people as well as on the specific optical phenomena. The answers he gives are as follows: yes, there are seven planets; the planets move in epicycles and on eccentric orbits; their conjunctions influence what happens on the Earth and in the air. Zdeněk of Labouň believed that the heat produced by the planetary conjunctions might release exhalations from the Earth surface that cause specific phenomena: comets and meteors through the ignition of dry exhalations; halo and rainbow through the reflection of light rays from particles of vapour. By discussing astronomy, astrology and meteorology at the same time, this *quaestio* differs from typical works on these subjects. John Hus’ choice of such a unique question might have been motivated by his effort to persuade the public about a high standard of the Prague University, even in this difficult period of its history.

The text of this critical edition is based on the only two preserved manuscripts: (A) National Library of the Czech Republic, Prague, Ms. X E 24, fol. 155v–165r; (B) Austrian National Library, Vienna, no. 4673, fol. 156v–159r.

Keywords: astronomy; astrology; meteorology; *quaestio*; *quodlibet*; critical edition; Zdeněk of Labouň

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