

Nicolaus Copernicus- The Father of Modern Astronomy

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Nicolaus Copernicus was one of the great polymaths of the Renaissance. He was an astronomer, mathematician, economist, physician and clergyman. Copernicus was born on February 19, 1473 in the city of Toruń, in Royal Prussia, an autonomous province of the Kingdom of Poland. He was the first astronomer to develop a complete theory of the universe with the sun at the center. With his "heliocentric model" published in 1543, Copernicus showed that the motions of celestial bodies could be explained without placing Earth at the center. During 1972-73 several countries issued stamps to commemorate the 500th birth anniversary of Copernicus.

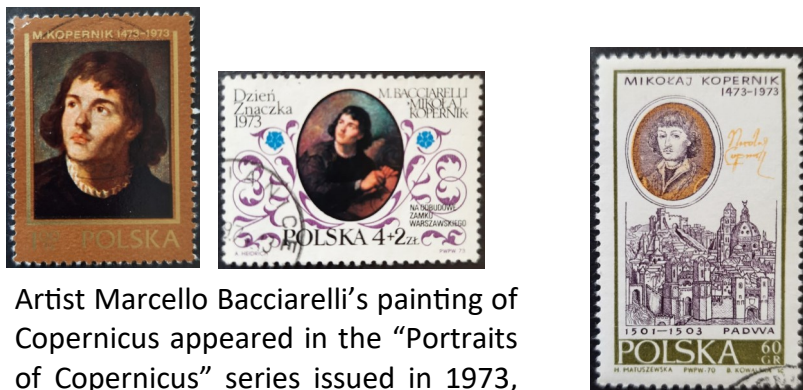


The oldest portrait of Copernicus is on the astronomical clock in the Notre-Dame Cathedral in Strasbourg. It was painted by Tobias Stimmer. He also made a wood-engraved portrait of Copernicus.



An authentic self portrait of Nicolaus Copernicus existed in the 16th century. Several stamps have been designed depicting this image from Toruń.

In 1873, artist Jan Matejko painted Nicolaus Copernicus ("Conversations with God") observing the heavens from a balcony in a tower with the cathedral in Frombork in the background.



Artist Marcello Bacciarelli's painting of Copernicus appeared in the "Portraits of Copernicus" series issued in 1973, and also as a Charity postage stamp in the same year.

Copernicus by Wincenty de Lesseur



Copernicus's portrait by an anonymous artist next to a coin symbolizing his "Treatise on Money" written at the request of Sigismund I the Old, King of Poland.



Engraver Jeremias Falck designed a copperplate of Copernicus.

Portrait of Copernicus etched from a biography of the astronomer by Pierre Gassendi, 1654.



The so-called Gotuchów portrait of Copernicus – an oil painting of the German school by Nora Zinck.