



Figure 129. The reconstruction of the medieval procedure for dating the birth of Christ

Passovers, are calculated from the Orthodox Easter Book). But according to the Easter Book, Passovers fell on Saturday, March 24, and Easters on Sunday, March 25 in the years: ... 209 B.C., 31 A.D., 126 A.D., 221 A.D., 316 A.D., ... He could not admit 209 B.C. as the date of the birth of Christ because the equinox that year fell on March 25. The earliest admissible date was 31 A.D., and this date was chosen! (see Fig. 129).

In dating the First Oecumenical Council, the chronologist knew that in the time of the Council the spring point fell not later than on March 21 (otherwise the Easter Book in which the earliest Easter fell on March 22 could not have been compiled because Easter comes at least one day later than the spring equinox—see Sec. 1). The spring point fell on March 21 at the end of 3rd century, and before this time the spring point occurred later. Hence a chronologist of the 16th century *could not* assign the Council of Nicaea to an earlier date than the end of the 3rd century (and he assigned it to the beginning of the 4th century)—see Fig. 130. Thus, we get

*Statement 5. The chronologists of the 15–17th centuries could not move the date of the First Oecumenical Council further back than to the 4th century A.D. because in the 3rd century and earlier, the spring equinoxes came before the earliest calendar Easters on March 22 (which is forbidden by the apostolic Easter rule).*

Dionysius the Little could not assign the birth of Christ to a date before 1st century B.C. because in the 2nd century B.C. and earlier, the position of the spring equinoxes ruled out the Passovers on March 24, which contradicted the “First Easter condition”. *In both cases these easily calculable lower boundaries for the dates were almost reached by the chronologists.*

*Remark.* Let us stress once more that determination of dates from spring equinoxes is a very attractive method of dating *only at first sight* because of the extreme