

UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA
FACULDADE DE CIÊNCIAS



**Ciências
ULisboa**

**Transgressing boundaries?
Jesuits, astrology and culture in Portugal (1590-1759)**

“Documento Definitivo”

Doutoramento em História e Filosofia das Ciências

Luís Miguel Campos Ribeiro

Tese orientada por:

Professor Doutor Henrique José Sampaio Soares de Sousa Leitão

Professor Doutor Charles Stuart Freeman Burnett

Documento especialmente elaborado para a obtenção do grau de doutor

PREVIEW

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Documento especialmente elaborado para a obtenção do grau de doutor

Financiado pela Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia

PREVIEW

To Helena

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PREVIEW

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The first time I came across the astrological manuscripts of the Jesuit College of Santo Antão was around 2002-2003. By then Helena Avelar and I were surveying Portuguese astrological materials and we came across a copy of the lessons on Judiciary Astrology by Simon Fallon and the Treatise on Astrology by Luís Gonzaga. We found their contents very informative on the state of early modern Portuguese astrology. Although at the time we studied them briefly, other projects took precedence and they remained in our shelf for more than a decade. In 2016, after I finished by MA, Professor Henrique Leitão suggested a detailed study of these documents, I accepted the challenge, and the outcome was this doctoral thesis.

During the course of this research, I had the assistance of many people, without whom this work would have been less complete. To all I would like to extend my gratitude.

I want to thank above all to my two supervisors for their guidance: Henrique Leitão, who gave the impulse, and to whom I'm grateful his continuous encouragement; and to Professor Charles Burnett, who kindly shared his expertise and valuable advice throughout this research.

I would like to acknowledge also the helpful support of Lúcia Martins and the staff at the Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, as well as the head of the Ajuda Library, Cristina Pinto Basto and librarian Fátima Gomes. Also, a special thank for Professor Scot McKendrick for his assistance with the British Library materials.

I must also thank my colleagues at the University of Lisbon, Samuel Guesser, whose assistance with some source texts was most valuable, to Juan Acevedo, Luís Tirapicos, Bernardo Mota and Luís Carolino, to name only a few. My gratitude to Professor Haohao Zhu for providing some of the Chinese materials, to Patricia Konings for a copy of her unpublished research, to Alexandra Fialkovskaya and specially Jeffery Kotyk for their valuable assistance in decoding these materials. My special appreciation for the enlightening discussions with Dorian Greenbaum, David Juste, H Darrel Rutkin and Martin Gansten. Also, to Leonor, Emanuel, Qiue and Pietari, who were wonderful hosts during my research trips.

And finally, and always, to my eternal partner in life and in research, Helena!

PREVIEW

ABSTRACT

This thesis addresses the use of astrology by the Society of Jesus in the early modern period; an almost unexplored topic in both the history of astrology and Jesuit historiography. At first, this connection is unexpected since astrology was not viewed favourably by the Church, and the Jesuits, one of the most powerful orders of this period, were strong defenders of the Catholic faith and orthodoxy. From this premise, many historians assumed that their religious fervour was matched by an equally strong rejection of astrology. This was apparently confirmed by some well-known anti-astrology publications authored by Jesuits. However, a detailed study of what Jesuits wrote and taught in the field of astrology reveals a much more positive, practical, and nuanced attitude towards the subject.

This study shows that, while some members of the Society actively opposed astrology based on religious grounds, others accepted it, albeit under the strictures established by Thomistic theology and the rules of the Index and the papal bulls. This acceptance was more evident among Jesuit scholars who debated astrology as a part of the established corpus of pre-modern scientific knowledge, placed within the fields of mathematics and astronomy. Although this attitude towards astrology is already incipient in Jesuit printed works, it is in their corpus of scientific manuscripts that these views come into full expression.

At the core of this study are several manuscripts containing lessons on astrology taught in one of the main Jesuit educational institutions in Portugal, the ‘class on the sphere’ of the college of Santo Antão. To these were added other testimonies of Jesuit authorship from Europe, the Far East, and the New World. This corpus of documents has allowed an in-depth study of their writings defending astrology, their religious and scientifically tailored astrological curricula, and the existing testimonies of Jesuit astrological practice. The result is a novel view on the relationship of Jesuits with astrology, revealing them as competent teachers and prudent practitioners.

KEYWORDS:

Astrology, Jesuit science, astrological curricula, early modern culture.

PREVIEW

RESUMO

Esta tese estuda a prática e o ensino da astrologia pela Companhia de Jesus nos séculos XVI, XVII e princípio do XVIII. Numa primeira análise esta ligação parece inesperada pois a astrologia não era vista favoravelmente pela Igreja e os Jesuítas, uma das ordens mais poderosas da contrarreforma, e firmes defensores da ortodoxia. Com base nesta premissa, muitos historiadores assumiram que o fervor religioso dos jesuítas seria acompanhado por uma igualmente intensa rejeição da astrologia. Esta noção era aparentemente consolidada por publicações anti-astrológicas de autores da Companhia. No entanto, um estudo detalhado de textos e ensinamentos jesuítas sobre a astrologia revelam uma atitude de maior aceitação deste assunto.

Este estudo mostra que embora alguns membros da Companhia tivessem uma postura anti-astrológica de base religiosa, outros aceitavam-na como um conhecimento válido, compatível com os limites estabelecidos pela teologia tomista e pelas regras do Index e das bulas papais (1586 e 1631). Esta aceitação da astrologia é mais evidente entre os astrónomos jesuítas, que a consideravam parte do corpus científico pré-moderno, no contexto das ciências matemáticas. Embora presente de forma mais discreta nos textos impressos, é no corpus de manuscritos científicos jesuítas que esta postura se torna plenamente evidente.

No centro do presente estudo estão as sebtas de astrologia lecionadas na Aula da Esfera do Colégio de Santo Antão, uma das principais instituições Jesuítas de ensino em Portugal. Aqui a astrologia foi ensinada em conjunto com outras ciências matemáticas, como a astronomia e a navegação. Paralelamente a estas lições foram também analisados outros documentos astrológicos jesuítas originários da Europa, do Extremo Oriente e do Novo Mundo. Este grupo documental permitiu uma visão detalhada das relações dos jesuítas com a astrologia, incluindo textos defendendo a sua prática, um currículo jesuíta de astrologia ajustado à prática religiosa, e vários exemplos de julgamentos astrológicos feitos por membros da Companhia.

A primeira parte da tese oferece uma visão da astrologia neste período: a sua prática, as mudanças e divulgação impulsionadas pelo advento da imprensa, os grandes debates anti-astrológicos, e a crescente marginalização no final do século XVII. Na segunda parte são abordadas as opiniões dos Jesuítas em relação ao tema: os textos anti-astrológicos, os argumentos teológicos e o seu posicionamento no discurso científico pela voz dos matemáticos e astrónomos da Ordem. A terceira parte aborda as lições de astrologia da Aula da Esfera do

Colégio de Santo Antão, demonstrando que estas faziam claramente parte do currículo público do colégio. Em seguida é apresentado um estudo detalhado do programa das aulas de astrologia, revelando as suas especificidades científicas e adequação religiosa. A quarta e última parte apresenta alguns exemplos de juízos astrológicos por autores jesuítas demonstrando que o seu uso da astrologia não se restringia à reflexão teórica e ao ensino, estendendo-se também à prática.

Desta análise resulta uma nova visão da relação dos jesuítas com a astrologia, colocando esta prática como parte integrante do corpus de conhecimentos estudados pela ciência jesuíta.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE:

Astrologia, Ciência Jesuíta, Currículo astrológico, Cultura pré-moderna.

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TRANSGRESSING BOUNDARIES?

Jesuits, astrology and culture in
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ABBREVIATIONS & SYMBOLS

Libraries and archives

ANTT	–	Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo
BA	–	Biblioteca da Ajuda
BACL	–	Biblioteca da Academia das Ciências de Lisboa
BAM	–	Biblioteca Ambrosiana
BAV	–	Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
BB	–	Biblioteca da Brotéria
BGUC	–	Biblioteca Geral da Universidade de Coimbra
BL	–	British Library
BNCR	–	Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Roma
BNE	–	Biblioteca Nacional de España
BnF	–	Bibliothèque nationale de France
BNP	–	Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal
BPE	–	Biblioteca Pública de Évora
BPMP	–	Biblioteca Pública Municipal do Porto
CDFO	–	Centro de Documentação da Fundação Oriente

Astrological symbols

♄	Saturn	♈	Aries	♌	Conjunction
♃	Jupiter	♉	Taurus	♍	Sextile
♂	Mars	♊	Gemini	♎	Square
☉	Sun	♋	Cancer	♏	Trine
♀	Venus	♌	Leo	♐	Opposition
☿	Mercury	♍	Virgo		
☾	Moon	♎	Libra		
		♏	Scorpio		
♁	North Node	♐	Sagittarius		
♂	South Node	♑	Capricorn		
☿	Lot of Fortune	♒	Aquarius		
		♓	Pisces		

Transcription and citation notes

The transcriptions follow as much as possible the original texts, printed or manuscript. Any clarifications to the text are made in square brackets.

The original spelling of the Portuguese and Spanish text is kept, and necessary clarifications or additions are made in square brackets; abbreviations are expanded for a better understanding of the text. Some of the text had to be slightly edited when translated to English to facilitate the understanding.

When the text is taken from a single manuscript, the specific folio is cited. Since most of the astrological lessons of Santo Antão, were edited from all their known copies, they will be cited according to treatise (tr.), chapter (ch.) or any other specific division of the text, such as ‘proem’ or ‘introduction’. The corresponding folios for each section in each of the surveyed manuscripts are listed in Appendix III.A.

Both the term ‘judicial astrology’ and ‘judiciary astrology’ are used. The modern form ‘judicial’ is mainly used throughout the text, but in discussing the sources the word ‘judiciary’ is used more often to maintain the original tone. Note that in the Portuguese and Spanish sources it is common for ‘Judiciary’ to be used as a noun to signify judicial astrology.

In regard to astrological terminology, the term ‘figure’ and ‘chart’ are used to designate the astrological chart instead of ‘horoscope’ because in the majority of pre-modern texts, ‘horoscope’ signifies only the ascending degree and not the chart itself. Other terms will also be used for specific types of charts, such as ‘nativity’, ‘revolution’, ‘ingress’, or ‘interrogation’. To conform to current common English convention, the word ‘lot’ will be primarily used instead of ‘part’ to translate ‘pars’, ‘parte’ or ‘sorte’.