

Résumé des interventions

Steven Vanden Broecke (Universiteit Gent) – « Making sense of Jean-Baptiste Morin (1583-1656)? »

By focusing on the double heritage of Piconian astrological skepticism and the disciplinary matrix of the science of the stars, Robert Westman opened up important new resources for approaching the story of early modern Copernicanism. However, the trail of astrological skepticism appears to run cold in "The Copernican Question" after the period 1620-1640. On the one hand, Westman points out how English astrologers of the mid-17th century brought "closure to Piconian doubts" by securing their art's "quantitative foundations". On the other hand, he writes that the "heyday of the philosophizing astronomer-astrologers was rapidly being superseded by new-style natural philosophers like Descartes, Hobbes, and Gassendi", who were neo-Piconians themselves. This raises the question how we can make sense of the astrologers whose "heyday" was "rapidly being superseded". In this paper, I explore this question with reference to Jean-Baptiste Morin (1583-1656). If Morin is mentioned at all today, it is usually as the last of a dying breed: that of the high-profile astrologer working in a courtly context, accredited as an astronomer and mathematician, and pushing the boundaries of his art through Latin textbooks for an audience that was dwindling rapidly. However, Morin also stands out by his active engagement with the social circles and intellectual debates promoting a modernizing natural philosophy, and by the fact that his astrological convictions were never absent from this.

Rafael Mandressi (CNRS – Centre Koyré) – « La reine mère, le médecin et l'astrologue : politiques de l'influence auprès de Marie de Médicis en exil »

Au cours des derniers mois avant la mort de Marie de Médicis à Cologne en 1642, son premier médecin, Jean Riolan fils, se retrouve aux prises avec l'astrologue et « principal ministre » de la reine mère, Luca Fabbroni, dans un jeu d'influences contradictoires concernant la santé de Marie. On analysera ce conflit et ses enjeux politiques à travers les rapports rédigés par Jean Riolan à l'intention du cardinal de Richelieu, dont il était un des informateurs.

Aaron Spink (Ohio State University) – « Cartesians Against Astrology »

There was a brief moment when Descartes and many of his early followers were seen as the bane of astrology. However, not only was the Cartesian system embraced by anti-astrologers, but it aided astrological research as well. Claude Gadyrois (1642-1678), for example, found little difficulty in adapting Cartesian physics to explain astral influence on Earth. Through detailing some of the context of anti-astrological arguments before, during, and after the rise of Descartes, I will consider how the impact of non-Cartesian anti-astrological arguments motivated the natural philosophical systems of the most influential early Cartesians.

Darrel Rutkin (Università Ca' Foscari Venezia) – « Divination, Superstition and the Marginalization of Astrology: Discourses of Legitimacy and Marginalization from Thomas Aquinas to the Index of Prohibited Books (1564), the Two Anti-Astrological Bulls (1586 and 1631) and Beyond »

In his vastly influential *Summa theologiae*, Thomas Aquinas made a strong and sharp distinction between astrology and astronomy, on the one hand, and what he called divination, on the other, in discussing legitimate and illegitimate modes of predicting the future. As we will see, the legitimate modes, astronomy and astrology, both made their predictions on the basis of causal analysis, whereas the divinatory modes, including augury and geomancy, had no such causal foundations and thus relied on demons, and were

thereby superstitious and sinful. In this talk, I will argue that this influential 13th century distinction—and its significant modifications, both pro and contra, in the wake of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's *Disputationes adversus astrologiam divinatricem* (composed 1493-94, published 1496)—became the basis for 16th century analyses that argued both for and against astrology's legitimacy. I will mainly discuss Rule IX of the *Index of Prohibited Books* (especially in the standard 1564 edition) in relation to the two famous anti-astrological Papal Bulls of 1586 and 1631, and some of the subsequent debates on this central topic for understanding the increasing marginalization of astrology in the early modern period.

Jean Sanchez (École Normale Supérieure) – « L'érudition historique dans les débats sur la légitimité de l'astrologie au 17^e siècle »

À travers l'exemple des savants français, nous voulons montrer le rôle primordial que joue l'érudition historique dans les débats sur la légitimité de l'astrologie au 17^e siècle. Alors que la question des origines devient un élément fondamental des argumentations pour ou contre cette science à la Renaissance, c'est l'image même de l'astrologie antique qui connaît un profond renouvellement suite aux travaux des philologues, érudits et astronomes français à partir des années 1570. Cependant, dès les années 1650, retrouver la science originelle par les textes semble illusoire et modèle baconien de recreation de la science d'Adam s'impose, centrant la question de l'astrologie sur celle des influences célestes. En parallèle, un nouveau modèle de superstition émerge pour qualifier l'astrologie ancienne, qui se détache de la notion de croyance diabolique pour se centrer sur les mécanismes de l'erreur.

Rodolfo Garau (Università Ca' Foscari Venezia) – « *The Anatomy of a Ridiculous Mouse? The Polemic between Pierre Gassendi and Jean Baptiste Morin on Astrology, Copernicanism, and Galileism.* »

Focusing on the polemics between Pierre Gassendi (1592-1655) and Jean Baptiste Morin (1591-1659), this talk investigates a case study on the formation of, and clash between, competing cosmological "epistemic cultures" in Catholic Europe in the aftermath of the condemnation of Copernicanism (1616) and of the Galileo-affaire (1633). The polemic followed the publication of the first of Gassendi's letters *De motu impresso a motore translato* in 1642. Containing a defense and an attempt to systematize the Galilean theory of motion, Gassendi's letter constituted an endorsement, albeit implicit, of Copernicanism. As proof of this, Gassendi ambiguously included the account of the first performance, by his own hand, of the Galilean mental experiment of the fall of the grave from the mast of a moving ship, which Galileo had put forward as proof of the possibility that the earth could move without for this reason to ruffle, as asserted (on the wake of Ptolemy) by Simplicio in the *Dialogo*, the objects on its surface. Morin — who had underpinned his project of providing a comprehensive renewal of astronomy on a fierce defense of geocentrism — understood immediately the implications of Gassendi's defense of Galilean relativity. The polemic that his response — followed reciprocally by others — triggered, involved the statute of astrology, of Copernicanism, Galileian physics, Epicureanism, and the relationship between theology and cosmology. Providing a reconstruction of this polemic, this talk investigates a relevant case of the clash between Geocentric astrology and (crypto-?) Copernican cosmology in early modern France.

