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The Last 'Official' Court Astrologer

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Extrait de l'article

Jean-Baptiste Morin is one of those many individuals in the past who chose what history later showed to be the wrong side of a controversy. As a result, until recently, he has suffered either neglect or denigration by historians. In Morin's case, his bad judgment caused him to support astrology in a period when it was beginning to lose its intellectual respectability. He also rejected the Copernican hypothesis, even using his astrological principles to argue against it, despite advice from friends who treated Copernicanism much more sympathetically (Delambre 21235-274). If we add to that the fact that he also carried on a vigorous dispute with some of the leading French mathematicians over their rejection of his claim to have invented a method for determining longitude at sea, we see a further reason for historical disdain. If he had made some outstanding scientific discovery, such indiscretions might have been overlooked, or explained away, but, unfortunately for him, he did not, his idea on longitude being his only real claim to such fame.

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