Taming the prophets: astrology, orthodoxy and the Word of God in early modern Sweden.



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Taming the Prophets : Astrology, Orthodoxy and the Word of God in Early Modern Sweden

Kjellgren, Martin ^{LU} (2011) Mark

Abstract (Swedish) Popular Abstract in English

In May 1619, the Finnish astrologer Sigfridus Aronus Forsius (d. 1624) was examined by clerical authorities. In the verdict, astrology was rejected as a pagan craft, forbidden for any Christian.

Yet still astrology was inseparable from the scholarly conception of the world. The principles of astral influence were more or less self-evident in physical theory and in medical practice. During the Reformation, astrology had been used as a prophetic method, revealing the Word of God as it was displayed in the Book of Nature. One of the more rabid critics, the grave and vehemently orthodox bishop of Strängnäs, Laurentius Paulinus Gothus (1565-1646), had even practiced the art in his youth,... (More)

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to analyse a displacement of the limits between allowable and illicit knowledge in the orthodox, Lutheran discourse of early modern Sweden. Focusing on the debate over astrology, exemplified in the works of Laurentius Paulinus Gothus (1565-1646) and Sigfridus Aronus Forsius (d. 1624), the thesis aims to challenge the view of how the Reformation, regarded as a preliminary stage to the Enlightenment and modern rationalism, contributed to the so-called 'disenchantment of the world', thus driving astrology and other 'occult sciences' out of the fields of established science.

Throughout the sixteenth century, astrology had been fairly accepted. The principles of astral influence were included in physical... (More)

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