

## A Horoscope Cast Upon the Birth of King Sebastian of Portugal (1554-1578)

A generous reference in Peter Russell's recent biography of Prince Henry 'the Navigator'<sup>1</sup> led me recently to the manuscript of a "nativity" or natal horoscope that was cast for the future King Sebastian soon after his birth in 1554.<sup>2</sup>

As Russell makes clear, great store was set by horoscopes at royal courts during the Renaissance and early modern periods and Portugal certainly was no exception to this.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, King Manuel "the Fortunate," the great-grandfather of Sebastian, was well known for his devotion to astrology and astrological science,<sup>4</sup> and it therefore comes as

---

\* I would like to thank Prof. Francis Dutra of the University of California, Santa Barbara, for his kindness in reading the article in manuscript and suggesting improvements to it. Needless to say, I alone am responsible for the ideas and interpretations presented.

<sup>1</sup> Peter Russell, Prince Henry 'the Navigator' A Life (New Haven, 2000), p. 375, n.6. Russell discusses historical horoscopes in general and that of Prince Henry in particular on pages 15-19.

<sup>2</sup> Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa (BNL), Reservados, COD 8920, ff. 39v-41v. My transcription of the document is given in Appendix I. Francisco de Andrada, Crónica de D. João III, ed. M. Lopes de Almeida (Porto, 1976), p. 1192, puts the time of his birth at "has oito oras da menham pouco mais ou menos...." I have been able to narrow this down to 8:15 A.M., the time that best satisfies the information provided in his nascimento. (I am indebted to Peter Morrell, of Stoke-on-Trent College, U. K., for his astrological advice with regard to certain aspects of the document).

<sup>3</sup> For example on July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1493, D. João II made a gift of ten gold "espadins" to Rabi Abraão "estrolico." On late medieval and Renaissance astrology see, inter alia, S. J. Tester, A history of western astrology (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1987); Maxime Préaud, Les astrologues à fin du Moyen Age (Paris, 1984); Hilary M. Carey, Courting Disaster: astrology at the English court and university in the later middle ages (London, 1992); Eugenio Garin, Astrology in the Renaissance: the zodiac of life (London, 1983); Robert K. DeKosky, Knowledge and cosmos: development and decline of the medieval perspective (Washington, 1979); as well as the article "Astrología" in volume I of the Dicionário de História de Portugal (Lisbon, 1963). Astrology was generally divided into two parts: so-called (1) "natural astrology" that concerned itself with the weather---when it might rain or snow, or when droughts might occur, as well as matters of illness and health---and (2) "judiciary astrology" that attempted to predict the course of one's life or one's character from the conjunction of the planets at the time of one's birth. The first was considered generally licit although often erroneous. On the other hand, "judiciary" astrology" was "totally superstitious" and forbidden by the Roman Church for it was thought to infringe upon the doctrine of free will: see Juan Machado de Chaves, Perfeto Confessor y Cura de Almas (Madrid, 1647), I, p.241; and the bull of Sixtus V of 1586, Terrae et Coeli Creator, that I have edited and freely translated in Appendix III from the Latin text in Bullarium Privilegiorum ac Diplomatum romanorum Pontificum Amplissima Collectio, . . . tomus quartus, pars quarta, ab anno X. GREGORII XIII usque ad annum III. SIXTI V, scilicet ab anno 1581 ad 1588 (Rome, 1747), pp. 176-179. In addition to the Roman Church there were also

no surprise that he saw to it that his son, the future João III, was taught, along with his Virgil and Sallust, the rudiments of astrology from a tender age. According to Francisco de Andrade, João, along with some other children of the court, was tutored by D. Diogo Ortiz de Vilhegas, bishop of Tanger, who "...read him...the counsels of Cato, read him Terence, Virgil, Sallust and some part(s) of the Bible; the theory of the planets and some easy things about astrology he heard from Tomás de Torres an eminent doctor and astrologer of that time."<sup>5</sup>

Later in the 1550's, Cipião de Aragão, a Neapolitan-born astrologer then much in vogue in Portugal, received various astrological commissions including one to predict whether or not the illness of Sebastian's father was going to prove fatal.<sup>6</sup> [It was.]

---

other critics of judicial astrology, especially after the publication of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's Disputationes adversus astrologiam divinatricem in 1497 (see the edition of Eugenia Garin in 2 vols. (Florence, 1946-1952)). For the reign of João III see, e.g., Christóvão Rodrigues Acenheiro, "Chroncias [sic] dos Senhores Reis de Portugal," Collecção de Inéditos de História Portuguesa, (Lisbon, 1936), V, p. 363: "Nom deixo d'escrever que hu Estroleguo saiba a vertude dos Planetas más, ou boas de suas influencias pro suas regras Astrologais naturalmente: o Senhor Deos he sobre natural, e ussa de sua piadade como o que fês milagrosamente: Deos aterno, que todo vê amte sim, e Estroleguo vê por pineiras, como sol cris; e assim que fica emguanado com seu saber, como se vê cada dia ao olho." In 1523 a Portuguese follower of Pico della Mirandola, Fr. António de Beja, also wrote, interestingly enough at the request of Dona Leonor [widow of King Manuel?], a tract inveighing against judicial astrology, Contra os Juízos dos Astrólogos (1523): see the edition of J. de Pina Martins, Fr. António de Beja contra a Astrologia Judiciaria (Lisbon, 1962). Luis de Albuquerque is the author of an interesting article about criticism of the astrological arts in Portugal during the sixteenth century: Crónicas de História de Portugal (Lisbon, 1987), pp. 107-111.

<sup>4</sup> Damião de Góis, Crónica do Felicíssimo Rei D. Manuel (Coimbra, 1955), IV, chap. 84, pp. 201-202. King Manuel (1495-1521) set high store by his doctor (physico), Tomás de Tórres ("homem mui experto, assi na Astrologia, quomo em outras sciencias"), and is reported to have consulted him regarding the stars and the planets before deciding when to send his ships to India. He also favored other astrologers such as a certain "Mestre João" to whom he granted a tença of 12,000 reaes to begin on January 1, 1514 (Anselmo Braamcamp Freire, Crítica e História, vol I, (Lisbon, 1910), p. 249.)

<sup>5</sup> Francisco de Andrade, Crónica de D. João III, ed. M. Lopes de Almeida (Porto, 1976), p. 6: "leolhe...os conselhos de Catão, leolhe Terencio, Virgílio, Salustio, e alguma parte da Bíblia: a teorica dos planetas, e algumas cousas faciles da astrologia ouuido de Tomas de torres medico e austrologo naquelle tempo insigne." Torres was most likely the doctor [physician] satirized by Gil Vicente in his Auto dos Físicos:

"Bisexto he anno agora,  
em Picis estava Jupiter,  
Saturno ha de desfazer  
quanto natureza melhora:  
bem ha qui que guarecer.  
Tambem em Picis a luna...  
isso foy em quarta feyra;  
Mercurio à ora primeyra...  
nam vejo causa nenhuma  
pera febre verdadeyra."

See Anselmo Braamcamp Freire, Gil Vicente Trovador, Mestre da Balança, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Lisbon, 1944), pp. 96-97.

<sup>6</sup> Auctos de Cipião dAragona napolitano morador en esta cydade de Lixboa preso no carcere do Sancto officio apud Francisco Bethencourt, "Astrologia e Sociedade

So far, however, no one [aside from Russell] appears to have noticed this particular horoscope, natal chart or nativity<sup>7</sup> cast soon after the birth of Sebastian by a certain [J?] Maldonado.<sup>8</sup> It is remarkably full and holds for us, I think, a special interest given his ultimate destiny as King.

\*\*\*\*\*

The horoscope begins by choosing the Ascendant or First House of Sebastian's chart as the "principal predictor" of his life. The existence, however, of three planets (the Sun, Mars, and Mercury) in the twelfth house of the horoscope with the Sun being opposite its own house (Leo) [see chart], indicates that Sebastian's early years will be "difficult". Still, because of the location of Venus and Jupiter (the benefic planets) and their relationship to Saturn it will be possible for him to survive the problems that arise during his childhood.

Mercury, in the twelfth house, and the Moon in the sixth, will cause Sebastian to be persistent in pursuing his aims and give him good judgment, while Mercury, being under the rule of Saturn, will give him good understanding and wisdom. On the other hand, the malefic planet, Saturn, located in the Ascendant or first house, will make him deceitful at times and inclined to go back on his word.

Venus in "sextile aspect" (a favorable position) to the Ascendant promises him a good memory, patience and love of letters. In addition the situation of Venus indicates that he will be much given to his "pleasures" with women, and musical instruments, as well as to clothes, to song, to scents and to horses. In general, because of the "temper" of his body, he will sometimes prove to be extremely gay and at others very melancholic.

This temper will be cold and humid, or "phlegmatic," as is indicated by the Ascendant and sextile rays of Venus. Furthermore, in appearance he will be dark (preto) and short, but nonetheless elegant and attractive due to the aforesaid sextile rays of Venus and Saturn's location in the house of Jupiter. Saturn in that house gives him some facial deformity but the influence of Venus lessens it.

Illnesses will come to him because the Moon is in the sixth house and its rays hostile to Mercury indicate a loose complexion and illness in the parts of the body signified by Leo, namely the heart or the back or the stomach. The Moon in the sixth

---

no Século XVI: Uma primeira abordagem," Revista de História Económica e Social, VIII (1981), pp. 68-71.

<sup>7</sup> nascimento in Portuguese. (See Appendix I).

<sup>8</sup> The text, which I could consult only in microfilm at the BNL, may have an "F" before "Maldonado" though this is not certain. In any case, the identity of the author is now clear. It was cast, without doubt, by Dr. Fernan (or Fernando or Fernão) Abarca Maldonado, a "médico" from an important Salamancan family who came to Portugal in the entourage of Sebastian's mother, Doña Juana de Áustria. See José Maria de Queiros Velloso, D. Sebastião, 1554-1578 (Lisbon, 1935), p. 14. As was so often the case at the time "physicos" or medical doctors were also versed in astrology and cast horoscopes as part of their profession. Dr. Maldonado was likely in attendance when Sebastian was born and thus would have had a very exact knowledge of the time of his birth. Also Sousa Viterbo, Notícia sobre Alguns Médicos Portuguezes (Lisbon, 1895), pp. 46-47. Maldonado received a tença vitalícia of 40\$000 per year from King João III on February 12, 1554, shortly after Sebastian's birth, for services rendered to Doña Juana ("minha filha") as well as for those expected from him in the future. Maldonado died in Portugal in October of 1574. (An earlier version of this study tentatively, but wrongly, suggested that the author might have been Juan de Maldonado (1534?-1583), a Jesuit theologian known for his commentaries on the Bible.)

house also indicates that he will have weak eyes, while the position of Saturn will bring him pains in the right ear and in the bladder. All this will happen to him in his early years.

The Sun in his chart is accompanied by three great "infortunios" [malefic planets]; this indicates that his father either is dead or will die shortly, unless the goodness of the Lord does not intervene,<sup>9</sup> while the Moon in the middle of the heart of Leo indicates that Sebastian will have great authority and powers of command. Saturn in the first house indicates that either he is the first-born or else that all his siblings have died.

The nobility will be much "dearer" to him than the "people" [povo] because of Jupiter's position as lord of the Ascendant. And because of the opposition of Mercury and the Moon [see chart] he will be confronted by some acts of sedition by the common people. Venus in the 11<sup>th</sup> house will fill him with confidence, while the Moon in the eastern quarter of his chart indicates that he will be married in his youth, to a good and virtuous wife who will give him children, all of whom will be noble, handsome and fortunate. Venus being in the sign of Capricorn will stimulate his sexuality but this will take place within the context of his marriage.

With regard to the preferred places for him to reside, he will find Lisbon to be suitable since it is under the sign of Libra "where Jupiter is found." Other favorable locations are those under the signs of Pisces and Sagittarius as well as those below Jupiter and Venus. Unsuitable places for him are those that are beneath the lords of the signs of the sixth, eighth, and twelfth houses of Saturn and Mars.

\*\*\*\*\*

Now let us attempt to assess as far as possible the accuracy of the predictions made in his horoscope, and then follow these up by giving the relevant facts as known.

1. He would have difficult ("difícil i trabalhosa") childhood.

Sebastian had Aleixo de Menenses as his aió, from the age of 4 up to his 14<sup>th</sup> year (1568), when he assumed the throne in his own right; and, to act as his tutor, the Jesuit Luís Gonçalves da Câmara.<sup>10</sup> Sebastian turned out to be a child "de difícil trato e com um certo desequilíbrio psicológico, apesar de possuidor de uma inteligência viva."<sup>11</sup> The principal problems that arose during his childhood, however, concerned his health,--more of which later. Taught reading by his aió and humane letters by his tutor, Sebastian was considered a good, indeed quite bright, pupil. However the knowledge he acquired, while varied, revealed, according to Veloso, "uma estranha confusão de ideias [and] uma obscuridade de pensamento."<sup>12</sup> In spite of this, Sebastian, described as proud ("orgulhoso") and unruly, had a high opinion of himself, and increasingly resented the discipline to which his paternal grandmother, dowager Queen Catherine, subjected

---

<sup>9</sup> One has to suspect here that Maldonado had some knowledge, independent of the horoscope, that Sebastian's father had died some weeks before his birth. In addition, the provision that God could reverse the fate decreed by the stars in this case, would appear to be a concession to those critics of judicial astrology who condemned it on the grounds that it usurps the powers of God.

<sup>10</sup> Câmara, for whom Sebastian would appear to have developed a genuine affection, was anything but attractive: he stuttered ["gago"] and was blind in one eye. See also note 50.

<sup>11</sup> J. J. Alves Dias, coord., Portugal do Renascimento à Crise Dinástica (Lisbon, 1998), p. 746.

<sup>12</sup> J. M. Queirós Veloso, "História Política" in História de Portugal, V (Barcelos, 1933), p. 49. [Hereafter simply "Veloso."]

him.<sup>13</sup> The overall result of the education that he received from Câmara was to turn him into a beato,<sup>14</sup> although he also developed an intense liking for horseback riding, jousting and hunting.

2. His horoscope predicted that he would be "constant and firm" in the things he proposed to do and would further have a good sense of justice, excellent understanding and be capable of giving good advice.

Sebastian was regarded as rather more than merely "constant and firm" in what he proposed to do; in certain matters he was clearly "obsessed". Paramount among these was his determination to lead an ill-conceived "crusade" against the Moors in Morocco, a goal that he pursued so obstinately and against all wiser advice that he became the despair of sensible minds at court. He managed, however, to ignore and overcome all sage counsel and ended up leading his army to destruction in the battle of Alcazer-Kebir.<sup>15</sup> Hence while the horoscope is right about (though it considerably understates) his "firmness and constancy," it is completely wrong with regard to his "boom entendimento e excelente conselho."

3. Sebastian was predicted to be pertinacious in "avarice" and endowed with a "very big heart" that would lead him to attempt great and elevated undertakings ("grandes i altas empresas") described as a good thing for princes and "especially for their poor" (subjects)!

As far as any signs of avarice, Sebastian was reputed to show none whatsoever; rather it was his "liberality" that was remembered.<sup>16</sup> With regard to attempts at "great and elevated undertakings," this is surely how he would have viewed his determination to lead a crusading army into Morocco. Finally, in spite of the horoscope's prediction that the nobility would be "dearer" to him than the "povo," his legislation is generally regarded as having done a good deal to protect the interests of the "less fortunate" of his subjects.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Since she apparently forced Sebastian up to the age of 7 to sleep in the same room as she did, his resentment of her may well have had some cause: (Veloso, p. 50).

<sup>14</sup> The male equivalent of beata: "Homen dado a rezar, e a devoções com descuido dos seus deveres" (António de Moraes Silva, Diccionario da Lingua Portuguesa (Rio de Janeiro, 1877), I, p. 328). Indeed, Sebastian was noted for going to confession every eight days, something apparently considered remarkable in court circles of the time.

<sup>15</sup> According to Veloso, Sebastian prayed to God to make him into His captain for war against the infidel: "Era uma ideia fixa que se foi pouco a pouco transformando na orgulhosa convicção de estar predestinado para grandes cousas" (Veloso, p. 52); also, "A brandura e letras que auia de misturar com a altieuz de seu espirito por estranha metamerfose se conuertia em brios affeição à guerra que com as primeiras palauras hia concebendo as materias que auia de treladar e omitido as lições que auia de ouuir tudo erão estimulos de intempestiua e desproporcionada gloria": in Luciano Ribeiro, "Documentos Inéditos para a História do Reinado de D. Sebastião," Stúdia, V (1960), p. 38 [hereafter "LR, Documentos."]

<sup>16</sup> Joaquim V. Serrão, "Documentos Inéditos para a História do reinado de D. Sebastião," Boletim da Biblioteca da Universidade de Coimbra, XXIV (1958), p. 123: "Foy elRey D. Sebastião de condiçãõ muy liberal, sem mostra alguma de cobiça." (Hereafter, "JVS, Documentos.")

<sup>17</sup> Francisco de Sales Loureiro, "D. Sebastião e Alcácer Quibir," in José H. Saraiva, dir., Historia de Portugal, IV (1983), p. 137: "A preocupação social empregna o sentido mais amplo na sua legislação-caso verdadeiramente único no

4. He was predicted to have a "good memory," as well as patience and a love of letters.

Although he was regarded as a bright and apt pupil, he was most definitely not noted for his patience, but rather for his quasi-pathological impetuosity; and, as far as his other interests went, while he fancied himself something of an intellectual, most of his interest was directed toward military matters.

5. He would be much given to his "pleasures" with women, musical instruments, clothing, songs, scents and horses.

If there was anything which did NOT interest Sebastian [possibly homosexual?] it was women,<sup>18</sup> and his open aversion to them was often noted and much commented on by his contemporaries. Whether he had much if any use for musical instruments, or songs, or scents is not known. On the other hand he liked to ride horseback, and was devoted to jousting and hunting.

6. Since his chart places Venus in the sign of Capricorn he will be given to all the things signified by Saturn and Venus. This will make him sometimes very gay and at other times very melancholic due to the temper of his body which will be cold and humid, that is to say, "phlegmatic." In appearance he will be black (preto) and of small stature but nonetheless beautiful and elegant. He will also have some deformity in his face but Venus will lessen, if not remove, this defect.

The personality of Dom Sebastião, according to one specialist on his reign, was "não equilibrada," denoting a lack of good sense, as well as an impulsive and capricious nature demanding obedience. His surviving letters reveal a confusion of ideas, with repetition of narrative material and almost never responding to the questions supposedly addressed.<sup>19</sup>

His appearance as he grew up was certainly not that predicted by his horoscope. Instead of small or short he was of medium height and instead of dark he had reddish-blond hair and blue eyes, set in a white face with freckles<sup>20</sup>. His lower lip was very full,

---

século XVI. Muitas são as leis que revelam ser seu primacial objetivo evitar a opressão do povo, especialmente dos mais desfavorecidos." Whether this actually did much for the poor is doubtful since in fact income inequality was rising markedly in Portugal during his reign: see the relevant information in Harold B. Johnson, "Malthus Confirmed? Being Some Reflections on the Changing Distribution of Wealth and Income in Portugal (1309-1789)," (unpublished).

<sup>18</sup> "Os padres do triumvirato [i.e., his aió, Meneses; his tutor, Câmara; and his confessor, Fr. Luiz de Montoya; or possibly instead, Câmara; Leão Henriques, the Jesuit confessor to Cardinal Henry; and Miguel de Torres, Jesuit confessor to Dowager Queen Catarina] dissimulauão acomodandose ao seu castissimo Rey, segundo a uoz comuna pelo menos inimigo publico de mulheres".: LR, Documentos, p. 50; also: "...elRey de nenhuma maneira pode ver molher," Manuel Lopes de Almeida, ed., Memorial de Pero Roiz Soares (Coimbra, 1953) p. 44. See also the letter to Philip II's from one of his envoy-reporters at the Portuguese court, Don Juan da Silva: "...elRey muestra tanto odio a las mujeres, que aparta los ojos dellas, e se una dama le sierva la copa, busca como tomarla sin tocarle la mano..." quoted in Joaquim V. Serrão, Historia de Portugal, III (Lisbon, 1978), p. 69.

<sup>19</sup> Joaquim V. Serrão, Historia de Portugal, III (Lisbon, 1978), p. 68.

<sup>20</sup> His appearance at age 17 is known to us from the oil portrait of him by Cristóvão de Morais (1571), now in the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga (Lisbon),

giving him, in the portrait of 1571, a rather feminine, "rose-bud" mouth. He also had a tendency to suffer from chills and attempted to counter these by wearing heavy clothing that covered his legs, by eating hot foods, and by keeping his rooms well heated. The horoscope here is as far off the mark as it is with regard to his relationship to the feminine sex.

7. He will fall sick because of his weakness and loose complexion and be ill in some parts of his body, namely the heart or back or stomach. He will also have weak eyesight and pains in the right ear, as well as problems with his hearing and his bladder. These things will occur during his early years.

Sebastian's health problems began around the age of 11 according to Veloso.<sup>21</sup> But they did not, so far as is known, involve his heart or his back or stomach. Rather he suffered from a malady described as the "expulsion of a certain substance from his organs". Veloso has opined that this was some sort of seminal ejaculation or effusion, very possibly gonorrhea.<sup>22</sup> According to the sources it was exacerbated by the violent exercise he often took on horseback or hunting, and receded when he was quiet. But along with these "effusions" he also suffered from attacks of vertigo and fainting spells. His ailments were the object of considerable international interest, and especially to Philip II of Spain, who kept himself informed about them through special envoys that he placed in the Portuguese court. Because of these reports he remained hesitant about promising his eldest daughter, Isabel Clara Eugénia, to Sebastian in marriage.

8. The condition and life of persons born under the sign of Venus are better and happier than those of the parents which are born under the sign of the Sun, when the sun carries with it three great misfortunes: either the father is dead or will die before long or experience some great misfortune "if the goodness of our Lord does not prevent it".

Entirely correct here, which makes one wonder if the author of the horoscope might not have had special knowledge of his subject. Sebastian's father, Prince João, the son of King João III, was sickly for most of his short life (1537-1554), suffering probably from juvenile diabetes<sup>23</sup> and died on January 2, 1554, eighteen days before his only son, Sebastian, was born.

9. Sebastian would become the leader of a band of young men whom he would support.

It was arranged for Sebastian to have about him a small group of young noblemen with whom he studied his lessons; later on he was accompanied by a group,

---

where he appears reasonably tall and with "reddish-blond" hair. There are no noticeable facial defects, the artist not painting, quite understandably, his freckles.

<sup>21</sup> Veloso, p. 53.

<sup>22</sup> Sebastian expelled "por sus organos cierta substancia" according to Castilian reporters. I discuss this matter further in APPENDIX II.

<sup>23</sup> João would have had "type I" diabetes, now thought to be caused by a viral infection or some nutritional factor in childhood or early adulthood [see The Merck Manual of Medical Information (Whitehouse Station, NJ, 1997), p. 718]. He suffered from abnormal thirst but was prohibited by his doctors from drinking enough water to quench it. He died on January 2, 1554, soon after he frantically downed a considerable amount of rainwater that he had managed, in desperation, to collect for himself.

called his "chacotada," with whom he "joked around," most likely with them as the butt of his jokes rather than the reverse. He was also rumored to spend his nights with "gente de pouca autoridade e menos mostras de uirtude."<sup>24</sup>

10. He will be married in his youth to a good and faithful wife who will give him noble and handsome children.

Sebastian's possible marriage partners were an ongoing matter of international diplomacy. He was tentatively linked to a number of candidates, but nothing ever came of it,<sup>25</sup> due to Sebastian's repeated procrastination regarding the matter---most probably the result of his undisguised dislike of feminine company---as well as to Philip II's hesitation in marrying any of his daughters to a man with a possible venereal illness and an unstable personality. Unmarried, and possibly homosexual, Sebastian obviously produced no children. The predictions of his horoscope go blatantly wrong here.

11. Lisbon as well as places under the signs of Pisces and Sagittarius and those beneath Jupiter and Venus will be appropriate places for him to live, while those beneath the lords of the signs of the sixth, eighth, and twelfth house of Saturn and Mars will not.

Sebastian never traveled north of the Mondego river and seldom farther north than Santarém. He preferred the south,---the Alentejo and the Algarve,---and spent most of his time in four localities, Lisbon, Almerim, Sintra and Evora.<sup>26</sup>

So, how well did Sebastian's "nativity" do in predicting the events of his life? The most that can be said, I think, is that it got some things surprisingly right and others astonishingly wrong, not much better than simple chance. Among the former were its predictions about his "difficult" childhood, his determination to pursue his dreams, his efforts to help the common people, and the fact that he would suffer numerous ailments, although it failed to get the exact nature of these correct. It also proved correct with regard to his father's early demise and the fact that Sebastian would be the leader of a gang of young men.

On the other hand it went badly astray regarding his sexuality and marriage, predicting that he would be intensely interested in women, be married early on to a faithful wife and have (many?) children. What in fact happened was almost exactly the opposite; his lack of interest in women was notorious, he avoided getting married, and he certainly had no children. The nativity was also very mistaken about his appearance. Instead of small and dark, he was of middling stature, with blue eyes, reddish-blond hair, and freckles.

Whether or not he was aware of the horoscope and, if so, whether it played any role in shaping his life's goals is not known. There is little evidence during his life that he made any particular effort to fulfill predictions, as Russell indicates that his ancestor, Prince Henry 'the Navigator', did in the case of his horoscope.<sup>27</sup> But if in fact he ignored

<sup>24</sup> LR, Documentos, p. 44.

<sup>25</sup> On the various marriage negotiations that went on see, inter alia, Joaquim V. Serrão, Historia de Portugal, III (Lisbon, 1978), pp. 68-69; and the detailed account in Francisco Rodrigues, S. J., História de Companhia de Jesus na Assistência de Portugal, 2 vols., (Porto, 1938), II:2, pp. 313-340.

<sup>26</sup> J. J. Alves Dias, op. cit., pp. 746-747. Whether or not the places where he chose to reside were influenced to any degree by his horoscope I cannot say; I have not been able to determine the astrological signs under which these towns [aside from Lisbon] are situated.

<sup>27</sup> Russell, p. 18.

it, the main reason may well have been its very mistaken predictions about his appearance, something that would have been noticed early on. Indeed, this may well have led him and others to regard most of the rest of it as unworthy of much credence.

## APPENDIX I

(f. 39v.)

V nascimento del rrei dom sebastiao noso/senhor  
tirado pollo (j?)<sup>28</sup> maldonado

naõ achando neste nacimiento dia nem ao sol/ nem a lluã nem ao senhor da oposicaõ precedente/ a esta nacenca em llugares propios pera seu signi/ficador da uida, ho atribuo ao ascendente o qual/ como principal significador de uida, polla doutrina/ de tolopmeu<sup>29</sup> (sic), sera necesario dirigir ao corpo i rraios/ malignos de planetas que contrariaõ a uida o que/ se podera fazer em tempo i em llugar, pollo pre/semte he necessaria uer da criaçaõ// (f.40r) A criaçaõ deste senhor sera dificil i trabalhosa porque tres planetas estaõ em a dozena casa i o sol huma dellas<sup>30</sup> estaa em a oposicaõ da sua/ casa conJunto com mars i a lluã em a sexta casa/ i o ascendente com saturno; todavia estando uenus/quase a direito da planeta sobre o ascendente bem/ desposta i em fauorael rresguardo daquelle ascendente/i de Jupiter seu senhor i mais o sol no trono de/ Jupiter i uenus lleuando os rraios deste Jupiter a/ Saturno; todos as quais cousas daõ tal socorro/ a uida deste naçido que podera pasar os anos de/ criaçaõ<sup>31</sup> posto que aja a dificuldade que digo/

Mercurio i a lluã estando em signos fixos<sup>32</sup> i moui/mento tardo imcliaõ a uontade deste nacido a ser/ constante i firme nas cousas que propuser de fazer/ i lhe daõ segurança de justica i mais estando mer/curio na casa de saturno com algunas estrelas fixas/ de sua natura o fazem de boom emtendimento i exce//lente conselho; todauia esta significacaõ sera algumas/ uezes trocada a mal como sera emganar i tras/tocar o detremiado; o que estaa confirmado por satur/no constituido do ascendente. o qual llugar eu inclino/ a emganar<sup>33</sup> i ser pertinaz em auaricia i doado de/ coracaõ muito grande com itento de grandes i altas/ empresas, cousa boa a principes i principalmente/ pera pobres. O aspeito sextil de uenus nas par/tes interiores do ascendente daa graca aos comdi/cõs; Saturno taõbem em aspeito fauorael de ue/nus lhe doa boa memoria, paciencia, delleitacaõ aas/ lletras i a toda rrezaõ; que todo este prazer daa uenus/ (40v) estando bem desposta; digo que este nacido sera muito dado a seus prazeres como a

<sup>28</sup> There may be a "J" before Maldonado, but due to the scratches on the microfilm this is not certain.

<sup>29</sup> He doubtless refers to Claudius Ptolemy, the Alexandrine astronomer-geographer of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D. Maldonado's presentation and interpretation of the horoscope shows that he was using Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos* as a guide and he follows it closely throughout his commentary on the horoscope. See Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos*, ed. and trans. By F. E. Robbins (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), *passim*. [Hereafter "TB"]. It is unlikely, though possible, that Maldonado used the Greek text (first printed by Froben at Nurnberg in 1535); more likely he used a Latin translation (first one printed in 1484).

<sup>30</sup> Though Copernicus's work on the solar system was printed in 1543, it obviously had not been disseminated or accepted in Europe by 1554; hence the sun is still regarded as one of the planets that circle the earth, center of the universe.

<sup>31</sup> TB, p. 253: For Ptolemy the first stage of life went from 0 to age 4; the second from 4 to 14.

<sup>32</sup> The "fixed signs" [of the Zodiac] are Taurus, Leo, Scorpio and Aquarius.

<sup>33</sup> The sense of this phrase is not entirely clear. It might be that Maldonado is commenting upon his own abilities; on the other hand the sense might be that he is inclined to see the position of Saturn as indicative of Sebastian's deceitful nature.

mulheres/ instrumentos musicais, vestidos, cantigas, cheiros/ i cauallos ho que he testemunho disto uenus estan/do no signo do capricornio i asi sera inclinado/ i dado a todas as cousas significados por/saturno i uenus donde aquecera/ que algumas/ uezes sera eXtremamente alegre i muito ma/lhonconico o que lhe procedera pollas tempernaça/ do corpo de que agora fallarei.

A temperança do corpo sera frio i humedo que se chama/ fleimatico porque asi o testemunha o ascendente i os/ rraios sextilles de uenus; este todauia parteçipara/ mais de secura polla presemça de saturno no mesmo/ amgulo do ascendente i a llua em a seXta casa na/ oposiçaõ do aspeito de mercurio, donde aquecera que/sera preto i de pequeno corpo<sup>34</sup> i todauia fermosura/ i rracca por rrezaõ dos ditos rraios seXtiles de uenus/ no ascendente i saturno que he achado na casa de Jupi/ter; este saturno no dito llugar daa alguma diffor/midade no rrosto mas o aspeito de uenus o tira i/o deminue.

As doencas lhe uiraõ porque a llua estando na seXta casa/ omde caem os rraios opostos a mercurio mostraõ/ fraqueza i copleiçaõ flaco i mal na parte do corpo/ que he significada do signo do lliaõ a llua he como/ seja o coracao o costado i o estamago; ha significacaõ taobem de ter alguma flaqueza nos olhos por rrezaõ/ que a llua estaa na seXta casa na casa do sol i o ascen/dente com a costolaçaõ i o sol com ascendente do capricornio/(f.41r) Saturno daa door na orelha direita<sup>35</sup> i no ouço i/ na bexiga as quais cousas lhe uiraõ na primeira/ idade/

O estado i uida de mais que he significado e aos nacenças/ ordiarias por uenus saõ muito milhores i ditosas que os/ dos pais que saõ rrepresentadas pello sol, na nacenca este/ sol estando ifortunado de tres grandes infortunios mostra/ o pai ser morto ou que em breue morrera ou que caira/ em algum grande infortunio<sup>36</sup> se a bondade de noso senhor/ lhe naõ socorre.

A llua estando com huma estrella no meo do coraçãõ do lliaõ/ promete muito grande autoridade i poder pera mandar/ o que staa seguro por jupiter senhor do ascendente i da decima/ i saturno na primeira casa o mostra primeiro nascido/ por natura ou por morte de seus irmaõs se os tiuese<sup>37</sup>/ A nobreza lhe sera muito mais cara que o pouo porque jupiter/ he senhor do ascendente i da coraçãõ do ceo donde aquecera que/ exprimentara algumas sedicois do pouo aa causa da oposiçaõ/ de mercurio i da llua. Venus na omzena casa o emche de/ confianca i esperanca de poder auer tudo o que elle desejar i mui/to grandes rriquezas em a quesicaõ das quais sera muito/ imtento porque Jupiter significador das rriquezas he rresgar/do de uenus. A llua em aquarta parte oriental diz que/ elle sera casado em sua mocidade i sera sua mulher boa/ i honesta que he significada por jupiter em a septima/ casa<sup>38</sup> i venus em trino aspeito da casa septima nota/ que sera a norrecedor de companhia de mancebos, porque a llua i/

<sup>34</sup> **TB**, p. 309: "If Saturn is setting, in appearance he makes them dark, slender, small, straight-haired, with little hair on the body, rather graceful, and black-eyed..."

<sup>35</sup> **TB**, p. 319: "Saturn is lord of the right ear."

<sup>36</sup> **TB**, p. 245, discusses the signs governing the state of the father.

<sup>37</sup> **TB**, p. 253: "...in case Saturn is in the ascendant, they are the first-born or the first to be reared."

<sup>38</sup> **TB**, p. 393: "For men [with regard to their marriage] it is necessary to observe the position of the moon in their genitures. For...if she chances to be in the eastern quadrants she makes men marry young;" "...if the planets to which she applies, either by propinquity, or by testimony are beneficent, the men get good wives." (p. 395)

uenus são lliuradas de corrupcaõ i aspeito de todos infortu/nios. Aimda que venus no signo de capricornio lha daa/ inclinacaõ gramde nas cousas uenereas. Aimda que esto sera/ com ligitimo matrimonio. o tempo do qual se achara pelas dirreiçãoens i as emcerra uenus i na omzena casa promete/ filhos o questa firmado pola cabeça do dragão de jupiter<sup>39</sup>/(f.41v) i de mars em a quinta casa i serao estes filhos nobres/ fermosos i bem fortunados. estando no signo de llibra/ jupiter em a septima casa demonstraõ que a criaçaõ/ i conuersacaõ ordinaria deste nacido sera em casa rreal/ constituida sobre negocios pubricos/

A cidade de llisboa lhe sera comoda porque he sugeita ao signo/ de libra omde jupiter se acha i serao em geral commodos/ i proprios os becos(?)<sup>40</sup> que são sugeitos aos signos dos peixes/ i do sagitario<sup>41</sup> i taõbem aquelles que são debaixo de/ jupiter i uenus<sup>42</sup> desta nacença/

Os llugares incommodos i que deue euitar são estes/ que são debaixo dos senhores dos signos da sexta/ oitaua i dozena casa de saturno i mars<sup>43</sup> porque/ estes são muito incomodos i contraires pera nelles/ habitar mas sede seguros disto pollo presente; ho/ resto das elleicõis i taõbem das direicõis i rreuolu/cõis que são muito necesarios pera elle i inteligen/cõis do tempo i accidentes nos o rremetemos/ a outro tempo de mais uagar

fim

<sup>39</sup> The North Node; the "Tail of the Dragon" is the South Node.

<sup>40</sup> beims? or beins?: the reading is uncertain.

<sup>41</sup> TB, p. 159, places Spain [Portugal is not mentioned separately] under Sagittarius.

<sup>42</sup> TB, p. 425: "If Jupiter and Venus are the rulers of the places which govern travel...they make the journeys not only safe but also pleasant."

<sup>43</sup> TB, p. 425: "If Saturn and Mars control the luminaries...they will... involve the subject in great dangers, through unfortunate voyages and shipwreck if they are in watery signs.... "

## APPENDIX II

## Was Sebastian the Victim of Sexual Abuse?

Deprived by fate both of a father who would be his natural protector and of a mother in whom he might confide, Sebastian soon after his birth was turned over to a "triumvirate" of padres<sup>44</sup> who saw to most of his upbringing. Although his grandmother Catherine did her best to take his mother's place,<sup>45</sup> she was often busy with administrative affairs and too distant from him in age to win the boy's confidence or trust; while his great-uncle, Henry, the Inquisitor General from 1539 on, was too occupied with his extensive duties, spending much of his time before 1562 away from the court in Évora, to give much time to his grand-nephew. As a result Sebastian was left largely unprotected: a vulnerable child, with blue-eyes and reddish-blond hair, he undoubtedly would have been an attractive target for sexual abuse by unscrupulous handlers.

And, indeed, sexual abuse, most likely at the hands of one or more of the virtuous padres to whom his upbringing was entrusted,<sup>46</sup> would explain a great deal

---

<sup>44</sup> See note 46.

<sup>45</sup> It was reported that she insisted that Sebastian sleep and eat in her apartments up to age 7; after that he had his own rooms. See J. M. de Quieroz Veloso, D. Sebastião, 1554-1578, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Lisbon, 1935) p. 93; hereafter "Veloso, Sebastião."

<sup>46</sup> In fact, exactly this was rumored about in 1570, when "pasquins" (the sixteenth century equivalent of today's National Enquirer) in Coimbra claimed the King was "abarregado" with the two brothers Câmara, Luís (his erstwhile tutor and confessor) and Martim: see Joaquim V. Serrão, Historia de Portugal, III (Lisbon, 1978), p. 65, fn. 192. Hereafter "JVS, Historia." The means used to reduce Catherine's influence over her grandson and place him almost entirely at the disposal of Câmara are related by Alfonso Danvila y Burguero, Don Cristobal de Moura, Primer Marqués de Castelo Rodrigo, 1538-1613 (Madrid, 1900), pp. 112-113; see also Dauril Alden, The Making of an Enterprise; The Society of Jesus in Portugal, its Empire and Beyond, 1540-1750 (Stanford, 1996), p. 82: "...the queen mother, who came to regard Luís Gonçalves's influence upon Sebastian as...unhealthy." Also the somewhat confused account of Catherine's decision (later reversed) to return to Castile due to her frustrations and dismay at her inability to alter Sebastian's "vicious" life-style that upset her mightily: Luciano Ribeiro, "Colectânea de documentos acerca de D. Sebastião," Stúdia, 5 (1960), pp. 174-175. In 1560 Luís Gonçalves became Sebastian's confessor as well as tutor, a position he resigned, apparently at the insistence of Dowager Queen Catherine, in 1566, soon after Sebastian's illness first appeared. He was, however, reinstated in the position two years later in 1568 at Sebastian's insistence when his minority came to an end: Dauril Alden, The Making of an Enterprise; The Society of Jesus in Portugal, its Empire and Beyond, 1540-1750 (Stanford, 1996), p. 82. This would mean that Luís Gonçalves was acting as the king's confessor when he first came down with his "doença" at age 11 [although António Cândido Franco, Vida de Sebastião Rei de Portugal (Lisbon, 1993), p. 72, says the symptoms first appeared at age 10.] Alden, op.cit., discusses the hold that the Jesuits at court had upon the young monarch (pp. 81-85), without however picking up on their possible connection to his sexually transmitted disease. Veloso, Sebastião, pp. 97-98, claims that Gonçalves assumed the position of confessor in 1566 much to the dismay of Sebastian's aió (Menenses) since this gave him almost complete control over his charge. Meneses' comment was: "O padre (Gonçalves) já conheceu a natureza do rei; não tarda a apoderar-se-lhe do ânimo": Antero de Figueiredo, D. Sebastião, Rei de Portugal (Lisbon, 1924), 61; the term "natureza" in opposition to

about Sebastian that has heretofore puzzled historians.<sup>47</sup> To begin with, it would explain the mysterious "seminal fluxes" from which he began to suffer beginning around age 11 or 12.<sup>48</sup> And if, as the result of early "initiation," it lead him to a homosexual orientation,<sup>49</sup> much else that has puzzled historians about him would suddenly make sense. Passive anal intercourse in a young man could be one of the explanations for the difficulties he had at times in walking or riding horseback, while his difficulties in sleeping could well be one of the psychological results of such abuse.<sup>50</sup> A homosexual orientation would also be the most reasonable explanation for his obvious and unmistakable aversion to women which was noted by numerous observers. All this would be the most likely cause for his evasive behavior about marriage,<sup>51</sup> as well as the hesitations of Philip II (who was

"ânimo" would imply physical or carnal knowledge of his charge. See also the ferocious attack on the brothers Câmara by the humanist bishop Jerónimo Osório (1506-1580), in his Cartas Portuguesas (Coimbra, 1922): "...a language da gente mais graue he têrem um Rei capitvo de dous Irmãos que pouco e pouco vam fazendo outro Rei de Ormuz." (p. 25). The tone of the whole letter hints that their relationship with Sebastian was "unsavory".

<sup>47</sup> Sebastian's numerous maladies have produced the most amusing collection of misdiagnoses, from "diabetic" to "epileptic" to "neuropathic," and almost everything conceivable in between. See JVS, Historia, 69-70; and Mário Saraiva, Dom Sebastião na História e na Lenda (Lisbon, 1994?). Hereafter "Saraiva, Sebastião."

<sup>48</sup> J. J. Alves Dias sensibly agrees that these were the result of some type of urethritis but he errs, in my opinion, in accepting Saraiva's explanation for this: Portugal do Renascimento à Crise Dinástica (Lisbon, 1998), p. 746. Any competent doctor today, confronted with symptoms of urethritis, whether gonococcal or not, in a pre-adolescent boy, would have immediately to suspect sexual abuse as the most likely cause. Furthermore, such diseases can cause painful swelling of the scrotum on one or both sides, as well as the eye inflammation and other complaints from which Sebastian suffered. Untreated gonorrhoea as well as other sexual diseases would also be one logical explanation for his difficulties in riding horseback. See notes 50 and 51 below.

<sup>49</sup> The passage in Luciano Ribeiro, "Colectânea de documentos acerca de D. Sebastião," Stúdia, 5 (1960), p. 176, would suggest that this may have been the case: "...passeava de noite cõ gente de pouca autoridade e menos mostras de uirtude."

<sup>50</sup> "A young child who has been sexually abused may have difficulty in walking or sitting because of a physical injury...a urinary tract infection...may develop...the child may be irritable...or may sleep fitfully": see the Merck Manual of Medical Information (Merck Research Laboratories; Whitehouse Station, N. J., 1997), p.1323; further, "If gonorrhoea is not treated quickly complications may occur. In men the bacteria can spread up the urethra...An abscess will form causing pain, fever and chills (one of Sebastian's complaints was "calafrios"). This abscess will eventually drain which releases pus into the urethra or anus. Men may suffer from infertility...Any form of sexual penetration (oral, anal and vaginal) can transmit gonorrhoea":

(www.sexhealth.org). It should be noted that Câmara was blind in one eye (see note 10), a common result of untreated gonorrhoea: The Merck Manual of Medical Information (Whitehouse Station, NJ, 1997), p. 942: "In adults...often only one eye is affected. Blindness may result if the infection isn't treated."

Gonçalves would have had numerous opportunities to contract gonorrhoea while ministering to Christian captives in North African prisons, since it was his charitable practice, according to his biographer, to sleep beside them: see António Franco, Imagem da virtude em o noviciado da Companhia de Jesu..., 2 vols. (Évora & Coimbra, 1719), I, 21-54.

<sup>51</sup> Untreated urethritis can leave the victim impotent. If that were the case with Sebastian, obviously marriage and the attendant revelation of his condition would be unthinkable.

kept well informed about Sebastian by his agents at the Portuguese court) to promise his daughter to Sebastian in marriage.

Needless to say there have been those who argue that he did not suffer from any sexually transmitted disease. Perhaps the most outspoken of these dissenters is Mário Saraiva. Bolstered by his credentials as a medical doctor,<sup>52</sup> Saraiva claims that Sebastian's urethritis (which he acknowledges) was merely the result of mistreatments by his physicians. And what mistreatments might these be? Well, referring to some treatises on the malady written over a century or more later (one from 1688; another from 1844),<sup>53</sup> Saraiva simply presumes that Sebastian was treated by invasive methods (syringes, etc.) that "turned" what was only "espermatorreia" ("wet dreams") into urethritis. The fact is that the only treatments administered to Sebastian that are mentioned in the sources were bleedings and the application of "emplastos."<sup>54</sup> Nothing else: no syringes, no "lavatórios deffecativos,"<sup>55</sup> nor anything else gratuitously imagined by Saraiva. Thus what we have here, in my view, is a transparent attempt to whitewash an unpleasant and embarrassing situation to avoid having to come to grips with the most obvious explanation: that at about the age of eleven Sebastian contracted gonorrhea<sup>56</sup> most likely due to sexual abuse by those close to him; and that this is the only reasonable explanation for his "seminal effusions" as well as a number of his other ailments.<sup>57</sup>

In conclusion, although we cannot state as a proven fact (since obviously he is not here to be tested by modern medical methods) that he was the victim of sexual abuse, and, as a result, most likely developed a homosexual orientation, this hypothesis provides so reasonable and convincing an explanation for so many of the physical maladies from which he is known to have suffered, as well as for his "abnormal" psychology to which almost all contemporary observers testified, that it must, I think, to be carefully weighed by any future biographer of this unfortunate young man and ill-fated king.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Saraiva apparently received a degree in medicine from the University of Coimbra in 1936.

<sup>53</sup> François Foy, Formulaire des médecins praticiens (Paris, 1844).

<sup>54</sup> Veloso, Sebastião, p. 104.

<sup>55</sup> How a rectal lavage, even if it were administered, could possibly turn "wet dreams" ("espermatorreia") into urethritis Dr. Saraiva fails to explain to us.

<sup>56</sup> Indeed, doctors specifically called his illness gonorrhea: "...une secrette maladie qu'on appelle gonorrhée, à laquelle il est subject." (Veloso, Sebastião, p. 107). They, of course, did not understand its etiology but knew it, so to speak, when they saw it.

<sup>57</sup> Even Veloso, Sebastião, p. 107, who accepts the idea that he had a sexually transmitted infection would prefer to believe that it was contracted "indirectly," thought he fails to offer any explanation why it would be more likely to have been contracted indirectly rather than directly.

<sup>58</sup> The attempt of Francisco Rodrigues, História da Companhia de Jesus na Assistência de Portugal, II:2 (Porto, 1939), pp. 329-338, to refute this explanation can be dismissed as tendentious. Clearly a 20<sup>th</sup> century Jesuit historian could not be expected to entertain, much less endorse, the idea that a Portuguese king, even in the sixteenth century, might have been sexually molested by Jesuit padres of the court. The rest of Rodrigues' examination of Sebastian's unsuccessful marriage negotiations is unconvincing: he fails to pick up on the large amount of evidence presented by disinterested observers about Sebastian's profound dislike of women, as well as the "hold" that the brothers Câmara had over him. He likewise fails to understand that they had no need to "prevent" his marriage: the misogynic orientation of the personality they had crafted took care of that matter by itself with no need for further intervention from them. Finally, Rodrigues appears to be just as confused about Sebastian's "doença" as were some of his doctors (though not Philip II or

## APPENDIX III

Against those practicing the art of judicial astrology, and any other types of divination, and against those reading, or having books about these subjects.<sup>59</sup>

Bishop Sixtus V, Servant of the servants of God

Although God, creator of Heaven and Earth, the Omnipotent One, gave to man, whom He created in his own image and likeness, a mind colored not only by the divine light of faith, so that he might not only know the mysteries which surpass human reason, but might also, albeit with difficulty, look into and know many magnificent things, nonetheless he made him in such a way that he might comprehend such profound matters not as a haughty animal, but rather so that he would fear, and, prostrate on the ground, venerate the immense majesty of his maker. To Himself alone did God reserve the knowledge of those things that will come to pass and the awareness of future matters. For it is He alone, before whose eyes all things are naked and transparent Who sees through to the deepest thoughts of men, and consequently understands their actions; it is He alone who calls upon those things which are not yet in existence as if they were in existence; He who beholds all things present and set out before his eyes; and finally He alone who knows all things, including each and every thing, from the beginning of time, and for all eternity. And with wondrous providence has He created these things that not only does the human mind in its frailty not know, but even evil spirits themselves are unable to know before they come to pass. Thus in the book of Isaiah the Holy Spirit mocks the falsity and foolishness of idols in revealing future events, and the vanity of those who give credence to them, with these words: Proclaim what things are to be in the future, and we will know them, because you are Gods; and in the New Testament Christ, Our Lord, turned aside the inquiries of His disciples who were persistently asking about the future events, with this answer, which in fact He used to repress the curiosity of all His faithful: It is not for you to know the times, or the instances, which the Father, in his power, has established. Nor indeed are there any true ways or methods for knowing future events and chance circumstances beforehand (necessarily leaving out future events known from natural causes, or those known from common occurrences which have nothing to do with divination ), but all those ways and methods are false and empty because they come from the tricks of evil spirits, from whose action, advice or aid, every type of divination springs. Indeed, they know these things not through any divine quality, nor from a true knowledge of future things, but by the keenness of their craftier natures, and by certain other means of which the dull knowledge of men does not perceive. For this reason it must not be doubted, that in

---

Catherine de Medici), failing, as he does, to understand that it was sexually transmitted.

<sup>59</sup> Edited and freely translated in Appendix III from the Latin text in Bullarium Privilegiorum ac Diplomatum romanorum Pontificum Amplissima Collectio, ...tomus quartus, pars quarta, ab anno X. GREGORII XIII usque ad annum III. SIXTI V, scilicet ab anno 1581 ad 1588 (Rome, 1747), pp. 176-179.

seeking the precognition of chance circumstances and important things to come, the devil acts with false intent, so that by his deceptions and tricks he may turn men away from the path of salvation and trap them in the snare of damnation.

Even though these things are as they are, some faithful and religious persons, not giving much thought to it, but eagerly pursuing curious matters, do grave offense to God, going astray themselves, and sending others into error. Most notable of these are the astrologers once called mathematicians, the readers of birth signs, and those persons called Planetarii, who making a show of their false knowledge of the stars and constellations, and most rashly busying themselves to anticipate the decree of the divine order which will in its own time be revealed, make predictions with regard to expectant mothers or the birthdays of men according to the movement of the constellations or the course of the stars. They pass judgements on future events, or even present events, as well as things hidden in the past, and they presume to have precognition and to make rash predictions from the births of children, and from their birthdays...concerning their [future] status, circumstances, courses of life, offices, riches, offspring, salvation, death, journeys, struggles, enmities, imprisonments, slaughters, various crises, and other events, good and bad. And not without great danger of error and infidelity do they do this. Saint Augustine, the esteemed light of the Church, makes clear that anyone who takes heed of these things, or who studies them, or who takes these persons into his home, or who looks for truth in them, has violated baptism and the Christian faith; and so he accuses them rightly, and upbraids them with these words: Pay attention to the days and months and seasons and years, I fear that perhaps I have labored on your behalf for no good reason. Therefore these very rash and petty men, to the wretched destruction of their souls, the downfall of the faithful, and the detriment of the Christian faith, attribute to the stars and constellations the future outcomes of things, and whatever will come to pass for good or ill, in short, those things which ultimately issue from the free will of men. They attribute to the stars and constellations the ability or the power to make known future things, and on this basis they do not hesitate to make judgements concerning all these matters and to sell these predictions openly. A few people, unsophisticated, lacking in experience and good sense, and too trusting in others give such great faith to these men that on account of...judgements and predictions of this sort, they believe or hope that something is certain to take place. Truly the foolishness of these people, as well as the credulity of their unfortunate disciples, must be particularly deplored. People who, even though warned by divine writings, do not understand the excellence of man, to whom the Heavens, and the Stars, and the brightest constellations of the sky, Sun and Moon,...do not give commands, but rather they serve man. For thus did Moses forewarn the people of God to beware of this error: Do not, by chance with eyes elevated to the sky, look upon the Sun and Moon and all the stars of the Sky, and, deceived by error, worship and adore those things which your Lord God created to give aid to all the races which exist below the sky. But why is it so surprising that the constellations serve man? Are not the Angels themselves sent to aid those who receive the birthright of salvation? For it so pleased God that he ordained not only Bishops, just as it was written by St. Ambrose, to watch over his flock of right thinking sheep, but he even set aside Angels for that purpose. Indeed Saint Jerome expresses it very well: The great dignity of every soul is that each has, from birth, an angel chosen to be its guardian. But if Angels guard men, what can stars, that are by no means to be compared to with Angels, do or achieve in comparison to the guardianship and tutelage of Angels? Nor, indeed at this point should we pass over the statement of an outstanding doctor of the church, the most blessed Pope Gregory the Great, who confutes the Priscillian heretics with the great weight of his words for thinking that each man is born under sway of the constellations: Let it be no part of the hearts of the

faithful to say that anything is 'fate'. Indeed a single builder, who created the lives of men, watches over them. Indeed man was not made for the sake of stars, but stars were made for the sake of man.

It has long since been established by the rules of the Index of forbidden books, according to the decree of the Holy Ecumenical Council held at Trent, that Bishops should diligently watch out ...lest books, handbooks, and indices about this sort of judicial astrology be read, or possessed....

We, therefore, who, in accordance with the duty of our Pastoral office, must preserve the integrity of the faith inviolate, and who wish...as far as we are able, with the help of divine grace, to look after the safety of souls, condemn and rebuke all types of divination that usually arise from the Devil in order to deceive the faithful....desiring moreover that the holy innocence of the Christian Religion, .... be... kept whole and uncorrupted from every slip of error. We establish and command by virtue of ....our apostolic authority that to the same degree as in the past ...Bishops, Prelates, Superiors, as well as Inquisitors of heretical depravity diligently seek out and take harsh action in these cases, in accordance with Church discipline, against astrologers, mathematicians and any others practicing the astrological arts who make predictions especially as concerns agriculture, navigation, the art of magic, and birth charts of men, in which they dare to affirm anything yet to take place concerning important future events, chance occurrences, or actions that depend upon human will, even if they claim or testify to the effect that they did not affirm it as a certainty. Let the men of the Church turn their minds to the judgment of these persons, irrespective of whatever station, rank or kind they may be.

Therefore we prohibit each and every book, work, and treatise of judiciary astrology, geomancy, hydromancy, pyromancy, onomancy, chiromancy, necromancy and the art of magic, or in which fortune-telling, potions, augury, omens, accursed chants, and superstitions are contained, and just as in the Index mentioned above, those forbidden to be read by any of the Christian faithful under penalty of the censures and punishments contained in that Index. All those books ought to be handed over and registered by bishops, the local church authorities, or the aforementioned inquisitors. And to no lesser degree, we decree and command by the same authority that in similar fashion the same inquisitors are free and permitted to take action against those who knowingly read, or keep books and writings of this sort and to confine and punish them with appropriate punishments.

Moreover, in order that our present writings may more easily be brought to the common attention of all, we order them to be affixed or hung on the folding doors of the Lateran Basilica of St. John, from the city of the first of the Apostles, and on the edge of the plain of Flora, and should they be torn down, we order printed copies of them to be left attached in the same places.

In addition we command each and every one of our Venerable Brothers Patriarch, Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, local priests and prelates and of course the Inquisitors of heretical wrongdoing everywhere that, in accordance with the virtue of holy obedience, they, after they have received or taken notice of these decrees, will, through their own agency or that of others, make these same decrees public in an ordinary sermon or whenever a great number of people has convened for the purpose of divine services. This will be done once a year, or as often as seems to be useful.

Given in Rome at St. Peter's, in the year of the incarnation of our Lord, 1586, on the Nones of January, in the first year of our current Pontificate.

---