

Learning an astronomical vocabulary in the Late Middle Ages: a Castilian example at the University of Salamanca

The creation and spread of the university institution is one of the great phenomena that marked the processes of teaching and learning in the Middle Ages. Among the disciplines studied there, one of the arts of the *Quadrivium* was fundamental to the training of all students: Astronomy. In the Crown of Castile, the *Studium Generale* of Salamanca was founded in 1218, which obtained its status as a university in 1252. In 1460, the first chair of Astronomy in the Iberian Peninsula was founded at the University of Salamanca, which made the University a pioneering centre in the teaching of this discipline, attracting professors from different parts of Europe, such as its first professor, Nicolás Polonio.

This paper aims to unravel what were the main tools for the teaching and study of astronomy at the University based on the book sources preserved in the library of the institution. It is evident that the students used Latin books, such as the *Poeticon Astronomicum* by Gaius Julius Hyginus in its 1482 edition, a key work for astronomical knowledge at the end of the Middle Ages. However, it has not been considered so far what the role of Arabic works may have been in the consolidation of teaching at this time. The iconography of the *Cielo de Salamanca*, a pictorial work with an astronomical theme that crowns the University Library, commissioned by the professors of the *Studium*, demonstrates a clear knowledge of this type of works written in Arabic. In addition to all this, there was the presence of professors of Jewish origin, such as Abraham Zacut, as professors of astronomy. All these factors outline a multilingual panorama at the University of Salamanca at the end of the 15th century.