

## PRISM ASTROLABE

The prism astrolabe was invented by French engineers Ludovic Driencourt (1858-1940) and Claude André (18? -19?) and patented in 1905. Its manufacture in series takes place in the decade of 1910-1920, in the workshops of Amédée Jobin (1861-1945), an important maker of optical and mechanical instruments.

The prism astrolabe is portable and has the same function as the millenary astrolabe: it enables the determination of latitude based on star observation. The difference is that this astrolabe does it through optical principles: a telescope, a prism and an artificial horizon (mercury mirror).

This particular prism astrolabe was used in the Astronomy Course of the Faculty of Sciences (University of Lisbon), in the 1950s. Also on display is a report made by a student, José Paulo Sousa Mendes, during the academic year of 1957/58, where he records observations made to determine latitudes with this prism astrolabe.

