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As is well known, Franciscans have been interested in and often directly concerned with science over the centuries. Many wrote treatises on astronomy, physics, mathematics, chemistry, and medicine, demonstrating competence and originality. Regarding astronomy, in particular, famous members of the Order, from John Peckham and Pietro Gallego to Ilario Altobelli and Teofilo Bruni, wrote about it as early as the 13th century. These texts, manuscripts, incunabula, sixteenth and seventeenth-century are preserved in some prestigious libraries. This paper is a brief foray into one of the most precious of the Franciscan library collections, that of the Sacro Convento Library in Assisi. The volumes can be grouped according to two main types. On the one hand, volumes of more theoretical contents, on the other of practical and applied approaches. Notes and projects by Franciscan masters and friar inventors will be shown, but also handbooks about the use of “instruments” for scientific practice and astronomy are discussed. Indeed, Franciscan sources for scientific knowledge were also treatises about the theory and the technique for constructing astrolabes, armillary spheres, and sundials. The Sacro Convento Library preserves medieval manuscripts mostly devoid of images, up to the more articulate and richly illustrated texts of the 17th century. The exploration will conclude with a quick mention of some 18th-century volumes to understand the evolution of Franciscan scientific interests.

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