IBN TAYMIYYA ON ASTROLOGY
ANNOTATED TRANSLATION OF
THREE FATWAS

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La uhdbin l-alfina ...
(Qur'an, 6:76)

INTRODUCTION

According to Avicenna, the famous Abū l-'Anbas al-Saymari was, in his time, the smartest man as far as swindling (zarq) is concerned. He wrote a book in which he provided instruction in swindling to every group of those [...] who held seances on the thoroughfares. He therefore also dealt with the astrologers, enumerating [for them] the various classes of people—men, women, children, the young and old, servants and others—and mentioning things appropriate for each. [The astrologers] memorized that book and, when they saw somebody, recited to him what they had memorized. Of course, the circumstances of the person [listening] were inevitably alluded to by some of what that fraudster (mamakhtisq) mentioned and others were amazed by his statements, as we have mentioned. Such is also the case of those swindlers (zarq) who run about in places and roadways and dupe (makhr aqua) women and children by telling them things of that sort. The veracity of such a fraudster is, however, greater than the veracity of one who pretends to possess the science of astrology ('ibn abk'am al-najuma).

* Author's note: My thanks to the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies where a Visiting Fellowship and the support of an Iqbal al-Gang Scholarship enabled me to undertake this work. Also to L. A. I owe much of my interest in stars as in more earthly realities. Fa āba bi-dhī bih al fanā fi qulqul ˈal-qaṣa wa ˈafta ḍa bi!

During this same third/ninth century when al-Saymari taught astrology as a useful technique for charlatans, Abū Ma‘shar al-Balkhi (Balkh, c. 170/786–Wästed, 272/886),¹ the greatest medieval astrologer, advocated its scientific character in terms of a late Neo-Platonic interpretation of Aristotle’s natural philosophy.² Despite its very uncertain nature, astrology never ceased to be widely practised in classical Islam, either in relation to magic, occultism and charlatantry,³ or in relation to cosmography, astronomy and falsafa. Of course, astrologers became the target of regular attacks and numerous condemnations, not only by theologians or jurists, but also by philosophers, mathematicians or astronomers, themselves threatened by association with astrology.⁴ However demand for the astrologers’ services never dried up, in palaces and among the elites or in shops, markets and streets, among the lowest social classes.⁵ As G. Saliba, in his excellent investigation of the social status of astrologers in medieval Islamic society, rightly concludes: while trading in a craft which was both religiously and legally frowned upon, they still managed to carve a niche for themselves which was not too different from that occupied by other professional classes in that society.⁶

French version (Vesel) is not a scholarly translation but what he himself calls a ‘compte rendu’. It also contains several mistakes. For example, in the passage here translated, Mehren reads niq instead of zang, although the latter is clearly the reading in the Leiden manuscript. (On the confusion in the sources between zang and niq, see C. A. Nallino, Zang, and C. E. Bosworth, Underworld, ii, 257–8. Avicenna’s exposition of Abū I’Arab’s book and the evidence of the lectio deficiens of the Leiden manuscript lead me to prefer zang to niq, in opposition to Nallino’s and C. E. Bosworth’s opinions.)¹

¹ See R. Lemay, Abū Ma‘shar, i, 2–49.
² As personally argued by J. Lemay (Islam, 28–9), Abū Ma‘shar al-Balkhi’s K. al-Mudhkal al-kahfi, in its version of 282/896, showed a serious and worthy effort to synthesise the astrological heritage of the Middle East (Egypt, Mesopotamia, Iran and India); and the Greek falsafa, recently brought into vogue in Baghdad under the patronage of the ‘Abbasid caliph al-Ma’mun; with the consequence that the book is visibly inspired by Aristotle’s Physics and Metaphysics as well as by the adaptation of Persipatan naturalism to astrology accomplished by Prolemy. It is indeed Aristotle himself who provided the theoretical framework on the basis of which astrologers were able to build their doctrines. In more than one text, he clearly affirmed the responsibility of the sun, the planetary spheres or the planets and their movements, in all processes of generation and corruption, including animal generation. (See the references given by G. Saliba, Rule, 45; D. Pingree, Astrology, 297–8.)
⁴ See G. Saliba, Rule, 46–7. See also History, 53–61.
⁵ Ibn Khaldūn offers a psychological explanation for the phenomenon and shows its importance in the various social classes. See his Maqaddima, trans. Rosenstock, Introduction, 19–38.
⁶ See G. Saliba, Rule, 66.
Around 700/1300, ideas and debate reached an unprecedented level of sophistication and interdisciplinarity in the Mamluk sultanate. Philosophy, theology (kalâm), sciences and even Sufism interacted on each other as if all the resources available had to be dialectically explored in order to find an exit from the cul-de-sac into which Peripatetic rationalism and Ptolemaic cosmography appeared to have led most Muslim intellectuals. Though perhaps inspired by despair, various disciplines relating to the sciences and wisdom (hikma) indeed appear to have experienced at that time some sort of ‘Golden Age’. It is undoubtedly the case with mathematics and astronomy, the latter having then become, in D. King’s phrase, an ‘astronomy in the service of Islam’, i.e. clearly distinguished from astrology and therefore Islamically acceptable by the community of believers, increasingly dependent on the patronage of religious institutions, and dedicated to the lunar calendar, the times of prayer, gībla computations, etc., as well as to questions like the necessary reform of the Ptolemaic geocentric planetary model, all of which required high standards of mathematical sophistication.

Mamluk astronomers employed by mosques no longer needed to practise astrology to earn a living. The majority were able to concentrate on purely astronomical research, theoretical and practical. D. King, who catalogued 2,500 scientific manuscripts in Cairo’s Dār al-Kutub, affirms: ‘There is in fact remarkably little astrology in the […] Mamluk scientific treats known to me.’ Astrology nevertheless persisted. Though Mamluk society as a whole had become antipathetic to their functions, astrologers retained many of their clients, not only in the streets but also, sometimes, in the citadels of the ruling military class. However as their craft, definitely repudiated by astronomers, could no longer depend on them for precise celestial and mathematical data, it inevitably became more of an occult practice, closer than ever to magic, divination and charlatanry, getting its inspiration from the sorcerer’s manual The Goal of the Sage (Ghayāt al-hakīm) of the pseudo-Majriti or from al-Buni’s Summa magica, The Sun of Supreme Knowledge (Shams al-ma'ārif al-kubra), rather than from Abū Ma’shar’s Great Introduction to

\[\text{\footnotesize \textsuperscript{1}}\] See Y. J. Michot, Vanités.
\[\text{\footnotesize \textsuperscript{2}}\] See G. Saliba, History, 66; D. Gutas, Thought, 172.
\[\text{\footnotesize \textsuperscript{3}}\] D. King, Mawṣū‘āt, 155; Astronomy, 534–5.
\[\text{\footnotesize \textsuperscript{4}}\] D. King, Mawṣū‘āt, 155; Astronomy, 550.
\[\text{\footnotesize \textsuperscript{5}}\] See A. Abid, Place, 101–4; E. Savage-Smith, Science, i, 59–71: ‘Magic and Islam’. It is the kind of astrology described in The 1001 Nights; see R. Irwin, Nights, ch. 8: ‘The Universe of Marvels’, especially 190–1, 202.
It is not surprising that such astrologers attracted the particular attention of jurists preoccupied with market inspection and the enforcement of public moral behaviour. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Ibn al-Ukhuwaa deals directly with astrology in his famous treatise on *rijal*: astrologers, whose art is forbidden anyway, must practice on main streets, not inside shops or in byways. Similarly, Umar al-Sunni forbids the study of the stars ‘except to determine the direction of the qibla and the going down of the sun’. As for Ibn Taymiyya (Harrân, 661/1263–Damascus, 728/1321), the most famous multif and theologian of the Mamluk period, whose writings remain particularly influential in modern Islam, he does not speak of astrology in his own *Hida*. As with many other topics, he nevertheless examines the question in several writings, in which he does not hesitate to repeat his analyses and condemnations. We can also be sure that, on some occasions, he provoked astrologers and attacked them publicly. He himself reports one such confrontation in Damascus, without unfortunately giving any date. He was also consulted in his capacity as a religious authority, and delivered at least three *fatwas* on the subject.

It is these three *fatwas* that are translated here, in the order in which they are published in volume XXXV of the collection of the Shaykh al-Islam’s *fatwas*. Neither their context nor date of composition is known. They are very dissimilar in length, the first being twenty-five pages long, the second six, the last only a few lines—a fact of interest in that it reveals the latitude enjoyed by a multif in his explanations of the religious Law. However, because they share the same character of juridical response intended to provide decisive guidance to the community, these three *fatwas* form a more homogeneous set of texts than pages that might have been selected from works of different kinds. Also, even if they do not constitute an exhaustive presentation of Ibn Taymiyya’s doctrinal positions on astrology, they shed very useful light on the diverse elements of the debate.

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13. Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyya (d. 738/1340) considers astrology as dead in his time and its practitioners as simply rehearsing (tajdih) the sayings and errors of the astrologers of the past, without always understanding them (*Mufidiyya*, ii, 148).


16. He only refers to ‘the performance of magical tricks and natural sleight-of-hand and other ways of counterfeiting the miracles and signs of grace peculiar to the Prophet and his companions’ (Ibn Taymiyya, *Hida*, trans. Holland, 59).


concerning this and other divinatory and magical arts within the Mamluk society of his time.

The reader will surely share my view that these fatwas entitle their author to full membership in the club of classical Muslim writers who attacked astrology. Yet, the Damascene Shaykh al-İslam has been, to date, almost completely ignored in the history of anti-astrology literature in Islam. During the last century, the list of representatives of this literature studied by Western islamologists has grown longer. In 1908 for example, C. A. Nallino quoted the names of al-Farābî (d. 339/950), Abū l-Qasim Šas b.扎实 (d. 391/1001), Avicenna (d. 428/1037), Ibn Hazm (d. 456/1064), al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111), Averroes (d. 593/1198) and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 751/1350). Later on, I. Goldziher mentioned al-Shāfi‘ī (d. 204/820), the Shi‘ī Mu‘tazilī theologian Hasan b. Ṣu‘ā al-Nawbakhshī (d. 310/920), the theologian Abū l-Ḥasan al-As‘ārī (d. 324/933), al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463/1071) and Ibn Ḥajar al-Ḥaytami (d. 974/1567). During the last decade, G. Saliba added the names of the grammarian al-Khaṭīb b. Ahmad (d. c. 170/786), the poet Abū Tāmmān (d. c. 301/845), the mathematician, philosopher and astronomer Thābit b. Qurra (d. 288/901), the mathematician Uqlīdīs (mid 4th/10th c.), the Ash‘arī theologian al-Baqqālīsī (d. 403/1013), the philosopher and man of letters Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawhīdī (d. 414/1023), the astronomer and specialist in optics Ibn al-Haytham (d. 430/1039), the astronomer al-Birānī (d. after 442/1050), the algebraist al-Samaw‘al al-Maghribī (6th/12th c.), the philosopher Abū l-Barakāt al-Baghdādī (d. after 560/1164), the biographer Khalīf al-Safādī (d. 764/1363), the astronomer Ibn al-Shatir al-Dimashqī (d. 777/1375), the encyclopaedist Muhammad al-Damiri (d. 808/1406) and the historian Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406). From G. Saliba’s lists, as in Nallino’s, Ibn Taymiyya’s name is omitted. In 1908, in a brief footnote reference to the longest of the three fatwas here presented, Nallino had observed that Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya’s master, ‘il famoso hanbalita Ibn Taymiyyah had also fought against astrology. In 1992, G. Saliba failed to pick up on this observation. I hope that the present work will go some way towards admitting Ibn Taymiyya to the history of anti-astrological polemic in classical Islam.

23 See C. A. Nallino, Astrologia, 33, n. 3. Ibn Taymiyya is also absent from M. Ullman, Natur.
To be sure, Ibn Taymiyya’s three fatwas will never supplant the long refutation developed by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya in The Key to the House of Happiness (Miftah dār al-saʿādā), which Nallino compared to Pico della Mirandola’s Adversus astrologian;23 and G. Saliba called “the most elaborate and comprehensive attack on astrology”24 or the culminating25 point in the history of systematic religious attacks on astrology in Islam.26 The examination of the positions of the master should, however, contribute to a better appreciation of the views of his famous disciple.27

That said, one should not expect to find, in Ibn Taymiyya’s three fatwas, well-structured and systematic refutations of astrology. The form and content of a fatwa are very much dependent on the nature and detail of the questions submitted to the mufti. Anyone acquainted with the Shaykh al-Islām’s style knows, moreover, how prone he is to digression. In the first fatwa, after an introductory general condemnation of astrology and magic, he does address the particular questions that were put to him: What about astral determination? Can God’s oaths by the stars in the Qur’ān be used as arguments in favour of astrology? Can astrology be related to Idris? What about the tutelary star of the Prophet? He nevertheless indulges in digressions on eclipses, the phenomenon of historical forgeries and pseudographic writings, or Islam’s grandeur.28 The second fatwa is, also, mainly structured in relation to the various aspects of the question it answers, and this time without digressiveness: is astrology forbidden, and by virtue of which hadith? What are the practical measures to be taken by authorities and individuals alike to ban the practice of astrology from the public and private spheres? What personal position should one adopt vis-à-vis the phenomenon? As for the third fatwa, it is a short, direct and clear answer to the question raised.

As usual with him and typical of many debates around 700/1300, Ibn Taymiyya’s interests and knowledge prove very wide. His fatwas are not only informed by the religious disciplines of Islam but also by his reading of the works of philosophers like al-Kindi, al-Fārābī and Avicenna, or philosophizing theologians like al-Ghazālī and

23 See C. A. Nallino, Astrologia, 33.
24 G. Saliba, History, 69.
25 Ibid. 16.
26 See Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, Miftah, ii, 125–233. This work has been analyzed in C. A. Nallino, Astrologia, 33–7, and, more recently, by J. W. Livingston in Ibn Qayyim and Science.
27 It is particularly disappointing that J. W. Livingston, who knows Ibn Taymiyya’s longest fatwa against astrology, does not exploit it more in his analysis of Ibn Qayyim’s Miftah.
Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, as well as by an impressive familiarity with the exact sciences, history, occultism and comparative religion. Religiously speaking, he remains the doctor of strict obedience we know from other texts, opposed to any deviation from the Qur’an and the Sunna of the Prophet, whether among scholars or the common people, in the form of doctrinal aberrations, pseudo-scientific mystifications or popular superstitions. That is precisely why, for example, he refuses to assimilate astrology to astronomy and, as a Peripatetic philosopher would also do for eclipses, defends the efficacy of secondary causes against Ash’ari occasionalism, speaks of the timing of God’s action and, among other and more important determinisms, acknowledges some tiny celestial influence on newborns. Being a realist and a rationalist, the great Damascene Shaykh al-Islam does also remain, essentially, a medieval thinker. How else can one explain why, in the polemical controversy on the identity of the tutelary planet of Islam, he prefers Jupiter to Venus, instead of denouncing the whole debate as nonsense?

To the best of my knowledge there is no complete translation of Ibn Taymiyya’s three fatwas against astrology into any European language.29 The present translation is based on the texts published by ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. Muhammad b. Qasim in vol. XXXV of the Majmū‘ al-fatawā, Rabat, 1401/1981 (hereafter, F).30

I have compared the first fatwa in F to the texts of two other editions:

- the edition of Faraj Allah Zaki l-Kurdī l-Azhari in the first volume of K. Majmū‘a fatawā Shaykh al-Islam Taqī l-Dīn l-Ibn Taymiyya, Cairo, 1326/1908 (hereafter, M).31

Apart from a few corrections and misreadings, K is a mere re-edition of M. It varies mostly in matters of layout and punctuation, but is of interest in that it identifies the Qur’ānic verses and the Prophetic traditions cited in the text.

The differences between F and MK are quite numerous and MK often present the better readings. In the apparatus criticus following the translation, I have not reported all these differences, but only the

29 A few lines of the longest fatwa (F) are translated in a footnote by J. W. Livingston, Ibt Qayyim, 102, n. 39.
30 MF, xxxv, 166–90, 191–7, 197.
31 KMF, i, 323–36.
32 JK, i, 57–75.
corrections I have adopted and the most significant variants. These are signalled in the translation by superscripted characters (\textsuperscript{1}, \textsuperscript{8}, etc.). I have supplied section headings in order to make the divisions in the text more intelligible. The pagination of \textit{F} is indicated in square brackets and used with the references in the \textit{apparatus criticus}. References to the Qur’an are indicated by a \textit{Q} followed by sura and verse numbers.

**FATWA I**

**QUESTION**

[166,7] concerning the person\textsuperscript{9} who believes that the planets have an influence on existence, or says that he has a star in the heaven thanks to whose fortunate character he is happy and because of whose unfortunate character he is unhappy, advances as an argument the words of God, Exalted is He: ‘The ones administering an affair’ (Q. 79.5) as well as His words: ‘I swear by the locations of the stars!’ (Q. 56.75) and says that these [things] are ‘the art of Idris’, peace be upon him. [This person] also says\textsuperscript{9}, about the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, that his star was dependent on Scorpio and Mars. Is this part of the religion of Islam or not? If it\textsuperscript{9} is not part of the religion, what must be done with one who says these things? Are those who rebuke such persons among the people who command what is to be acknowledged and prohibit what is to be condemned, or not?

**ANSWER\textsuperscript{9}**

**INTRODUCTION**

\textit{The stars as signs of God and means of His action}

‘The praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds\textsuperscript{10} (Q. 1.1)

The stars are among the signs of God that demonstrate Him, praise Him and prostrate before Him, as God the Exalted said: ‘Do you not see that to God prostrates whoever is in the heavens and on the earth, [167,1] the sun, the moon and the stars, the mountains and the trees, the beasts and many of mankind?’ Thereupon He said: ‘And many desire the torment’ (Q. 22.18). The distinction here makes it obvious that He did not refer to the prostration simply for reason of its encompassing demonstration of His lordship\textsuperscript{10}, as certain groups of
people say. All creatures indeed have in common to provide such a demonstration, and such is provided by mankind as a whole. He made a distinction and [therein] taught us that this is an added value\(^{33}\) of the kind special to the believer and by which [the believer] is distinguished from the unbeliever, who deserves the torment.\(^{33}\)

Moreover, [God] has set in the [stars] uses for His servants and has subjected them to the latter, as He has said, Exalted is He: ‘He subjected you the sun and the moon, both diligently pursuing their courses, and He subjected to you the night and the day.’ (Q. 14.33).

He also said: ‘The sun, the moon and the stars, made subservient by His command ...’ (Q. 7.45). And He said: ‘He subjected to you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, all of it, as deriving from Him’ (Q. 45.13). Among their apparent useful effects is what He sets up, Praised is He, by the sun: heat and cold, night and day, the maturation\(^{34}\) of fruits, the creation of animals, plants and minerals. The same for what He also sets up by it, for them\(^{35}\), such as moistening, drying and other observed\(^{36}\) affairs. He sets likewise radiance and burning in the fire, purification and irrigation in the water, and the other similar blessings that He mentions in His Book, as He has said, Exalted is He: ‘We sent down pure water from the sky, that We may thereby revive a dead land, and give to drink thereof to many of the beings We have created, cattle and men’ (Q. 25.48-9).

God has informed [us] in various places that He sets\(^{37}\) up the life of some of His creatures by others. Thus said He, the Exalted: ‘... that We may thereby revive a dead land’ (Q. 25.49). Also: ‘And He is Who sends the winds as a glad tidings heralding His mercy... so that, when they have brought heavy clouds, We drive them to a dead land, then We send down the water thereby, and thereby do We bring forth [168,1] fruits of every kind’ (Q. 7.75). And likewise: ‘... the water which God sends down from the sky\(^{38}\) and thereby revives the earth after its death, and disperses therein all kinds of beasts’ (Q. 2.164).

Whosoever among the theologians of the Kalam says that God does these affairs with (’inda) them, not by (bi-) them,\(^{39}\) his expression is in conflict with the Book of the Exalted God and with the observed\(^{40}\)

\(^{33}\) Creatures, good or bad, by the mere fact of being creatures and totally submitted to the ontological will of God, demonstrate His absolute lordship (’abdiyya). In Ibn Taymiyya’s opinion, the pronouncement referred to in Q. 22.18 is not an aspect of this ontological dependence of all creatures on their Lord but a religious act, which must be understood in relation to God’s godhead (’abdiyya), i.e. His right to be loved, feared and worshipped, and which, distinguishing faith and unbeliever, is therefore not universal, see the pages of Mr translated in Michel, Textes spirituels II, III, IV.

\(^{34}\) There are people who reject the forces and the natures, as is the case with Abi Iyad bin Al-Ast’ari and those who followed him, among the companions of Malik.
affairs. Likewise, whoever pretends that [these things] are acting independently is an associationist\(^a\) in conflict with reason and religion. Concerning the uses of the stars, He has also informed [us], Praised be He, in His Book [that men] are guided 'by them in the darknesses of the land and the sea' (see Q. 6.97). He has informed [us] that they are the adornment of the lowest heaven (see Q. 37.6, 67.5), and He has informed [us] that the Satans are stoned by the stars (see Q. 57.5). However, the stars by which the Satans are stoned are of another species, different from the stars fixed in the heaven by which men are guided. Indeed, these do not leave their location, contrary to the former. And these have a reality which differs from those, although the noun 'stars'\(^b\) brings them together as the nouns 'beast' and 'animal' bring together the angel, the Adamic beings, the brutes, the flies and the mosquitoes.

The function and wisdom of eclipses

It is established about the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, by the valid information about which the savants are in agreement, that he commanded prayer in the event of an eclipse of the sun and of the moon, and commanded invoking [God at that time] and asking [His] forgiveness, giving alms and freeing slaves. 'The sun and the moon, he said, are two of the signs of God. They do not become eclipsed for the death of anybody nor for his birth.'\(^c\) And in [another] report: ‘... two of the signs of God by which He frightens His servants.”\(^d\) He said this to refute what some ignorant people were saying, i.e. that the sun had become eclipsed because of the death of Ibrahim, the son of the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace. The sun indeed became eclipsed on the day of his death\(^e\) and, when it became eclipsed, some people offered the opinion that its eclipse was due to his death and that his death was [1691] the cause of its eclipse,

\(^a\) Shaf‘i, Ahmad b. Hanbal and others. Those who reject the forces and the natures also reject the causes and say that God acts with ‘(indeed) them, not by (the) them. “God”, they say, “does not satiate by the bread, nor irrigates by the water, nor makes the seed grow by the water but acts with(3) that, not by that.” These people are not only in conflict with the Book, the Tradition and the consensus of the Ancients but, also, with clear reason and sense perception. (MF, rv. 285–87)

\(^b\) See Muslim, Sahih, Kaufi, ii, 27 (‘Alam. 1499); Ibn Hanbal, Manad, Kufiyin, iv, 245 (‘Alam. 17472); Ibn Sa‘d, Tahāqīq, 1, 91.

\(^c\) See al-Bukhiṣ, Sahih, Jam‘a, vi, 56 (‘Alam. 990); Muslim, Sahih, Kaufi, ii, 29 (‘Alam. 1594).

\(^d\) Ibrahim (8:10850–611:2); see Ibn Sa‘d, Tahāqīq, i, 86–93; the son of Prophet Muhammad and Marya the Capt died a few months before the Prophet on a date which has been much debated although it should be easy to specify as a solar eclipse happened on that day.
just as disasters happen among people as a result of the death of some great men. The Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, therefore made it obvious that the eclipses of the sun and of the moon do not result from the death of anybody among the inhabitants of the earth nor from his birth. He denied death and life having any influence on an eclipse of the sun and of the moon and informed [us] that both are among the signs of God and that He frightens His servants [thereby].

He reminded [us] that the wisdom of such events consists in frightening the servants of God, just as frightening them is [what happens] in the case of other signs like strong winds and earthquakes, droughts, uninterrupted rains and similar phenomena that can be a torment. God tormented likewise [various] communities by the wind, the roaring blast and the deluge. The Exalted said: ‘Each one We seized for his sin; of them was he on whom We sent a tornado, and of them was he who was caught by the roaring blast, and of them was he whom We caused the earth to swallow, and of them was he whom We drowned’ (Q. 29.40). He also said: ‘We gave Thamúd the she-camel as a clear portent, but they treated her unjustly. We do not send [Our] signs but to frighten [them]’ (Q. 17.59).

Celestial influences, their limits and how to protect oneself against some of them

The fact that [the Prophet] informs [us] that God frightens His servants by such a [phenomenon] clearly establishes that it may be a cause of some torment that He sends down [onto us], similarly to

According to Ibn Taymiyya, al-Wajdî (d. 207/822) reports that Ibrîm’s death and the solar eclipse associated with it happened on the tenth day of some lunar month. The Shaykh al-Islâm considers this to be an error, because solar eclipses only happen at the end of a lunar month: ‘It is known that this [affirmation by al-Wajdî] is a mistake. Whoever allows this forecasts something of which he has no knowledge, and whoever argues about that argues about something of which he has no knowledge.’ (FR, iv, 426).

Ibn Sa’d (Tabaqat, i, 92) also dates the two events on the tenth day of a lunar month: Tuesday 10 Rabi’ 1, 10. Although pretending to follow him, I. Caetani (Chronographia, c. 99) speaks of the Sunday 26 June 631, with the solar eclipse happening on the 28 or 29 Rabi’ 1, 10 or 3 July 631, thus not on the same day! M. Guaderny-Demouhyes (Mahomet, 252) proposes the date 10 Jan. 632 (19 Shawaal, 10).

In my opinion, the 28 Shawaal, 10 (Sunday 26 Jan. 632) could be more correct, see the horoscope provided by the astronomer and astrologer Ahmad b. Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Jabbār al-Sīrājī (Shīrāz, 4th/10th c.) in his Book of Conjunctions, as studied by D. Pingree, ‘Thousands’, 318–19, iv 9 (the solar eclipse in question is wrongly presented as ‘indicating the death of the Prophet and the accession of ‘Abd Bārk’).
strong stormwinds. And that only happens because God made it a cause of what He sends down to the earth. Whoever means, by saying that [the stars] have an influence, that which is known by the senses and by these other affairs, this is true. God has however commanded the [various] acts of worship that repel from us whatever evil is sent by this. The Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, has likewise commanded, at the moment of a lunar eclipse, prayer and giving alms, invoking [Him], asking [His] forgiveness and freeing slaves. When the wind blew, the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, would also pace to and fro, [his face] changing. And while it was blowing, he commanded [us] to say: ‘My God, we ask of You the good of this wind and the good that [170,1] You have sent by it; and we take refuge with You from the evil of this wind and the evil of what You have sent by it.”

He also said: ‘The wind participates of the spirit of God. It brings mercy and it brings torment. So, do not curse it but ask of God the good of it and take refuge with God from its evil!’ He thus informed [us] that [the wind] brings mercy and brings torment, and commanded us to ask of God the good of it and to take refuge with God from its evil.

The prohibition, and failure, of magic

Concerning the causes of the good and the evil, this is the tradition [to follow] (al-sumai): in the case of the apparent causes of the good, the servant accomplishes some of the righteous actions because of which God brings about the good and, in the case of the apparent causes of the evil, some of the acts of worship because of which God repels from him the evil. As for what is hidden of the causes, the servant is not commanded to take upon himself to know that. Yet, when he does what he is commanded and renounces what he is prohibited, God spares him the burden of the evil and facilitates for him the causes of the good. ‘And whoever fears God, He appoints a way out for him and provides for him from whence he does not reckon. And whoever trusts in God, He suffices him. Lot God brings His command to pass. God has appointed a measure for everything’ (Q. 65.2-4).

Concerning those who are engaged in magic in order to grasp the uses of this world, He has said, Exalted is He: ‘They have followed what the devils were reciting over Solomon’s reign. Solomon did not
unbeliever but the devils unbeliever; they were teaching men magic. [They also have followed] that which had come down on the two angels in Babylon, Hārūt and Mārūt, even though these two taught no one till they had said: ‘We are but a trial; therefore do not believe!’ So people learn, from these two, things by which they bring division between a man and his wife. They are however injuring no one thereby, except by God’s permission. They are thus learning things that harm them and do not profit them! And surely they do know that he who trafficks therein, for him there is no share [of happiness] in the Hereafter. And evil indeed is that for which they have sold their souls! Had they but known! If they had believed and feared [God], a reward from God would indeed have been better! Had they but known! [Q. 2.102–3].

He has informed [us], Praised is He, that whoever takes that as a substitute [for the proper way of life] knows that for him there is no share [of happiness] in the Hereafter. He only hopes, as he claims, to profit himself in this world just as [some] hope, by that which they practice of the magic attached to the planets, etc., for things like leadership and wealth. He said furthermore: ‘If they had believed and feared [God], a reward from God [171,1] would indeed have been better! Had they but known!’ [Q. 2.103]. He thus made it obvious that to believe and to fear [God] would have been better for them in this world and in the Hereafter.

He has said, Exalted is He: ‘Surely the friends of God, no fear on them, neither shall they sorrow. They who believe and are Godfearing, for them there is the glad tidings in the life of this world and in the Hereafter. There is no changing the words of God; that is the great triumph’ [Q. 10.62-63]. He also said, Exalted is He, in the story of Joseph: ‘So We established Joseph firmly in the land, dwelling therein wherever he willed. We bestowed Our mercy on whomsoever We will, and We do not waste the wage of the good-doers. Yet is the wage of the Hereafter better for those who believe and are Godfearing’ [Q. 12.56-7]. So has He informed [us] that the wage of the Hereafter is better for the Godfearing believers than what they are given of the royalty and wealth in this world, just as Joseph was given.

In several verses, He also informed [us], Praised is He, about the bad outcome, in this world and in the Hereafter, of whoever gives up believing and Godfearing. This is why He said, Exalted is He: ‘The magician thrives not, wherever he comes’ [Q. 20.69]. The thriving one is he who attains what must be sought after and saves himself from what must be feared. Now, for the magician, that does
not happen. In Abū Dā‘ud’s Sunan it is reported of the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, that he said: ‘Whoever seeks to learn anything from the stars, seeks to learn something from magic.’ 43

REFUTATION OF ASTROLOGY

The two species of magic astrology

Magic is forbidden by the Book5, the Tradition and the consensus. The [science of the] stars (na‘āmān) which pertains to magic is indeed of (two species).

One is ‘scientific,’ (‘ilmū) and consists in inferring indications as to events from the movements of the stars. [It is of the same] genus [of practice] as seeking to cast lots by arrows. (See Q. 5.3.)

The second is practical (‘amād). It refers to their saying that the celestial forces depend on the passive terrestrial forces like talismans42 and other such. This is among the highest species of magic. Nevertheless, all that God and His Messenger have forbidden, its harmlessness is greater than its usefulness. 43

The lies of the astrologers

[172,1] If somebody deems that, in the second [species of astrology], there is foreknowledge of events and that this is useful, [his] ignorance concerning that is double and the harmfulness of that is greater than its usefulness. This is why the élite and the common people know, by experience and through recurrent reports, that in the [predictive] judgments (abkā‘) that the astrologers pronounce there is far more of lying than of telling the truth and that, in this respect, they belong to the various species4 of diviners. In the Sahih, it is established about the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, that it was said to him: ‘There are, among us, people who frequent the diviners.’ 43 ‘They are nothing!’—‘O Messenger of God, they sometimes tell us something and it comes true!’ The Messenger of God, God bless him and grant him peace, then said: ‘This utterance of the truth, it is the jinn who hears it and43 he puts it in the ear of his friend.’ 43

41 See Abū Dā‘ud, Sunan, Tīhāb, iv, 16 (‘Alam. 3406).
43 See MF, reyn, Michot, Masnad, 98.
44 See al-Bukhārī, Sahih, Taubah, ix, 162 (‘Alam. 7006); Muslim, Sahih, Sunan, vii, 36 (‘Alam. 4135).
He has also informed [us] that when God decides an affair, the angels beat their wings in submission to His word, as if it was a chain on some rocks, so that when fright is lifted from their hearts, they say: “What did your Lord say?”—“The truth!” they say (Q. 34.23). And all the inhabitants of one heaven inform the inhabitants of the heaven who follow them, so that the information gets ultimately to the lowest heaven[2]. But [devils] are there, sharp of hearing, the ones above the others, and they sometimes hear a word[3] before the shooting stars catch them or, at other times, the shooting stars catch them after He pronounces that word[4]. He has said, God bless him and grant him peace: ‘If they only said the affair as it is! But to a single word, they add one hundred lies!’

Such is also the case with the astrologers. It gets to the point that, when I addressed them in Damascus, their leaders being present with me, and exposed the corrupt nature of their art by means of the rational proofs whose validity they recognized, a leader of theirs said to me[5]: ‘By God, we lie one hundred times in order to say the truth in one word.’

A pseudo-science

[173,1] That is because the edifice of their science is based on the premise that the superior movements are the cause of events in this world, and that knowing the cause necessarily yields the knowledge of what is caused (musabbah). But this only happens when one knows the complete cause, whose rule does not fail to be implemented. The most those know, however, is that they know only a tiny part of the sum of the many causes and do not know the rest of the causes, nor their conditions, nor the things hindering them. It is for example like somebody who knows that the sun in summer rises high above his head, so that the heat becomes intense, and wants for example to know thereby if, at that moment, the grapes that are on such and such ground become sultanas … . Although there are grapes there, although they ripen and although their owner spreads them in the sun when it is hot so that they become sultanas, despite all this and even if it happens often, to infer

[2] See al-Bakhrūṭī, Sahih, ʿAbū al-Walāʾ, iv, 111 (Alam 2971); trans. Khān, Sahih, iv, 291-2, 432; Narrated ʿAbdullāh: ‘I heard the Messenger of God, God bless him and grant him peace, saying: “The angels come down in the clouds and mention this or that affair decided in the heavens. So the devils sharpen their hearing, hear it and reveal it to the diviners. The latter nevertheless add to it one hundred lies of their own.” See also Muslim, Sahih, Adīm, viii, 36-7 (Alam 4134, 41.36).
that from only the heat of the sun is severe ignorance. Indeed, there might be grapes and there might not, that vine might bear fruit if cared for and it might not, [some of] the grapes might be eaten or might be pressed out, they might be stolen, they might be dried into sultanas and similar things ....

The proofs of proving the corrupt nature of this art and its forbidden character are many and this is not the place for [mentioning] them. In Muslim’s Sahih, it is established of the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, that he said: ‘Whoever frequents a soothsayer (‘arraf) and asks him a question about anything, no prayer is accepted from him for forty days.’ It has been said that ‘soothsayer’ (‘arraf) is a general name for the diviner (kahir), the astrologer (munajim), the geomancer (ramnul) and their like: whoever speaks of foreknowledge by these methods. If it is said that, in the [Arabic] language, it is [only] a name for some of these species, the rest of them are encompassed in it by way of generalization of [its] meaning, as it has been said of wine, gambling and their like. (See Q. 5.90.) [174,1]

CELESTIAL PHENOMENA, CAUSALITY AND TIME

The real cause of eclipses and shooting stars

As for the denial, by some people, that any of the movements of the planets or of other things may be among the causes, this is also speaking without knowledge. They have no proof for that, neither Legal proofs nor others. Or, rather, the texts prove the contrary of that, as in the hadith which is [reported] in the Sunan from ‘A’ishah, may God be pleased with her: the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, looked to the moon and said: ‘O ‘A’ishah, take refuge with God from the evil of this, as this is [that which is alluded to by] “the darkness when it gathers”’. [This was also the case], earlier, in the

67 See Muslim, Sahih, Sunan, vii, 37 (‘Alam. 4137).
68 See al-Tirmidhi, Sunan, Tafseer Suna 34, v, 452, 3386 (‘Alam. 3280); Ibn Hanbal, Musnad, vi, 215 (‘Alam. 24619).
69 See Q. 113,3: ‘From the evil of the darkness when it gathers’ (mini shahr al-ghasana in al-naga’a). This conventional translation of Q. 113,3 is not very helpful in understanding the hadith just quoted. Fakhr al-Din al-Kara (Tafseer, xxxi, 195) provides a more interesting interpretation: ‘The ghast al-naga’a is the moon. ‘The bathroom’, Ibn Qayyim [I.d. 276889] said, ‘is the moon. It was called like this because it gets eclipsed and darkens (ghasana), i.e. its light fades away and it blackens. The fact that ituqata is its entering in that blackening process.’ Abu Salma reported about
hadith about the eclipse, wherein he informed [us] that God frightens His servants by the two of them.\footnote{See Muslim, Sahîh, Salâm, iv, 36; Al-Îj&macute;am, 41, 36c; al-Tirmîdî, Sunan, Tafîr;} It is also obvious that the meaning of the saying of the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, ‘They do not become eclipsed for the death of anybody nor for his birth’, i.e. the eclipse is not caused by [any] death, is to deny an active cause. It is like for the other hadith which is in Muslim’s Sahîh, from Ibn ‘Abbâs,\footnote{Ibn Taymiyya, authors: see Al-Fârîdî, al-Bukhârî, Sahîh, Manâjîz al-mutârîr, v, 35 (‘Îj&macute;am, 5519); Muslim, Sahîh, Fadîrî al-ashâb, vi, 150 (‘Îj&macute;am, 5512).} about some men of the Helpers (ânsâr): they were with the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, when a shooting star was cast and it lit up. He said: ‘What did you use to say about this during the Age of Ignorance (jâhiliyya)?’ They said: ‘We use to say: “Tonight, somebody important was born” or “Somebody important died”.’ He then said: ‘These are not cast for the death of anybody, nor for his birth. However, when God decides an affair, the carriers of the Throne praise [Him].’\footnote{See Muslim, Sahîh, Salâm, iv, 36.} [The Prophet] also mentioned the hadith concerning the [devils] sharpening their hearing.\footnote{See Muslim, Sahîh, Salâm, iv, 36.} The Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, has thus denied that the casting [of the shooting stars] is due to the fact that an important one has been born or died; rather, it happens because of the devils sharpening their hearing.

In each of the two hadiths\footnote{Great scholar of the first generation (d. 88/868–8); see L. Veccia Vaglieri, EI.}, it is [stated] that neither the death of some\footnote{Abd al-Mu&macute;ammad b. al-‘Abbâs.} people nor their birth is a cause of eclipse of sun and moon, nor [a cause] for the casting\footnote{Ibn Taymiyya, authors: see Al-Fârîdî, al-Bukhârî, Sahîh, Manâjîz al-mutârîr, v, 35 (‘Îj&macute;am, 5519); Muslim, Sahîh, Fadîrî al-ashâb, vi, 150 (‘Îj&macute;am, 5512).} of the shooting stars;\footnote{See Muslim, Sahîh, Salâm, iv, 36 (‘Îj&macute;am, 41, 36c); al-Tirmîdî, Sunan, Tafîr;} and [this] even if the death of some men implicates the advent of something in the heavens, as it is established in the [various] Sahîhs: ‘The Throne—the Throne of the Compassionate—shook because of the death of Sa’d [175,1] Ibn Mu&macute;ammad.\footnote{Al-Fârîdî has a similar opinion; see his Magâlî, 60–1.} As for the fact that an eclipse or other things can be a cause of an event on earth—a torment that entails
a death or some other thing—this has been established by the hadith itself.

The precise timing of God’s actions

What the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, has informed us about does not contradict the fact that an eclipse has a delimited time in which to occur, so that there is no solar eclipse but at the end of the month, on the night[s] of concealment of the moon, and there is no lunar eclipse but in the middle of the month, on the nights of full moon. Whoever pretends the contrary, among fiqh scholars or the common people, does so for want of knowledge of computation. It is thanks to computation that it is possible to know of the eclipses that occurred in the past and those that are to occur in the future, as it is possible to know the crescents [of the new moon] that occurred in the past and those to occur in the future. All that is indeed owed to computation, as the Exalted said: ‘He made the night [to be a source of] stillness, and the sun and the moon [to be according to some] computation’ (Q. 6.96). He also said, Exalted is He: ‘The sun and the moon follow a computation’ (Q. 55.5); ‘He is Who made the sun brightness and the moon light, and measured for it phases, that you might know the number of years and computation’ (Q. 10.5); ‘They ask you about the crescents. Say: ‘They are fixed marks of time, for mankind and for the pilgrimage’” (Q. 2.189).

So, when some of the common people saw the astrologer hit the truth with information he was giving out about a future eclipse, they came to hold the opinion that the information he was giving out about events [generally] was of the same kind. Such is ignorance.  

The first is indeed the same type [of information] as his telling us that the crescent rises either on the night of the thirtieth or thirty-first [of the month] and that is a [routine] matter in accordance with

66 Averroes has a similar analysis: ‘If [the astrologers] say—“We inform of the [future] occurrence of an eclipse and it will prove true. Similarly for other things.”—we will say: “You do not know when the eclipse will be because of your character as astrologers (adhab al-falāsafī).” Whoever knows that only knows it by computation (hisād) and solving a zij table. Yet, the astrologer is far from grasping anything like a zij table. The construction of the zij is based on a valid and demonstrated principle, as the zij is a summary of the book of the Almagest. The book of the Almagest and that which it contains is indeed known through observation (masā’il al-haram), i.e. astronomical observation (ṣuḥbat) and geometric demonstration (al-burḥan al-hamda) establishes the validity of such a process. [For] knowing an eclipse and judging that it will truly happen is therefore not like the [astrologers] saying that if the Moon is in Scorpio, it will necessarily rain. The first [affirmation] is indeed demonstrated, while the second is not so.’ [Ibn Sina,鼻im, ms. Leiden, f. 95v.]
which God has caused what is customary to happen and which
never gets disturbed. It is the same type [of information] as [the
astrologer] telling us that the sun sets at the end of the day, etc.
Whoever knows the position of the sun and of the moon, as well as
their courses, knows that, even if it is a science of little usefulness. 57
[176,1] Even if, for an eclipse, there is a determined moment, that
does not exclude God wakening [this eclipse], at that moment, a cause
of something He decides—a torment, etc.—for however God is
tormenting at that moment or for some other among those on
whom God sends that down. In the same way, God's tormenting
the people He was tormenting by a strong cold wind—such as the
people of ‘Ad—would happen at the moment convenient [for it],
namely at the end of winter—as mentioned by the exegetes and in
the stories about the Prophets.

When the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, saw a
makhlul, i.e. a cloud imagined to hold rain, he would pace to and
fro, his face changing. A’ishah said to him: 'When people see such a
cloud, they rejoice.' He said: 'O A’ishah, what guarantees my safety?
The people of ‘Ad saw the torment heading for their valleys and
said: 'This is coming to bring us rain.' 58 God said: 'No! rather is it
what you sought to hasten: a wind wherein is a painful torment'
(Q. 46:24).

Similarly, the times during which 5 God sends down [His]
mercy, like the ten last days of Ramadan and the first7 [days] of
Dhu l-Hijjah, as well as like the middle of the night, etc., are delimited
times, neither to be brought forward nor put back, during which
something comes down, of His mercy, that does not come down at
other times.

57 'For the sun and the moon, there are nights marked by certain regular
phenomena. Whoever knows these knows the solar and lunar eclipses, just as whoever
knows how many days of the month have passed knows that the crescent of the
new moon will rise during that particular night or during the one preceding it. The
knowledge of that which is regular concerning the crescent is, however, general
knowledge that all men share, while the knowledge of that which is regular concerning
the solar and lunar eclipses is only possessed by the people who know the computation
of their two courses. The information given about that by the calculator does not
belong to the science of the unknown, nor does it belong to the kind of information
he gives through [astrological] judgements (abdū), in which he tells more lies than
truths. That is indeed speaking without a firm science, and it is built on something else
than a valid foundation [...] The diviners have more science in that which they say
than the astronomers in [their] judgements. And in spite of this, it is validly reported,
about the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, that he forbade to frequent
them and to consult them. How then, [a fortiori], for the astrologer?' (Ibn Khaldūn, al-
Bar ṣ al-Siyāsah, v, 134 ('Alam. 49349); Mālid, Abdul, Ittisāb, v, 26 ('Alam. 1497).

58 See al-Bukhārī, Sahih, Jāfār, vi, 134 ('Alam. 4941); Mālid, Abdūl, Ittisāb, vi, 26 ('Alam. 1497).
Eclipses and God's manifestation

In some of the versions of the hadith about the eclipse, there appears this report by Ibn Maja and others of a saying of the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace. ‘They do not become eclipsed for the death of anybody nor for his birth. But when God manifests Himself (ta'āla) to something of His creation, it submits to Him.’

Aḥū Ḥāmid [al-Ghazālī] and his like have contested this hadith and refuted that [whole idea]. Not from the point of view of the science of hadith however—they indeed had little knowledge of it, Aḥū Ḥāmid saying for example about himself: ‘I myself have an insufficient stock in the science of hadith—but [177,1] but because they believed that, if the cause of an eclipse of the sun was, for example, that its light was prevented from reaching the earth when the moon was opposite it, [God’s] manifestation could not be given as the cause thereof.

Still, the mentioned manifestation [of God] does not contradict the mentioned cause. The submission of the sun and of the moon to God at that moment, when to its light happens the interruption that [then] happens, removes its influence from the earth and sets a bar between it and between the place of its authority, the site of its diffusion and influence. The king freely acting in a far place, if prevented from doing so, is humiliated because of that. 41

GOD’S OATHS BY THE STARS

As for these words of God, Exalted is He: ‘The ones administering an affair’ (Q. 79,5), the ‘administering ones’ are the angels.

As for the fact that God swears by the stars—He has done so for example when saying: ‘Nay, but I swear by the revolving stars, that run and hide’ (Q. 81,15)—it is like His swearing by others of the things created by Him—He has, for example, sworn by the night and

41 See Ibn Maja, Sunan, Ḥārām, i, 401, 1262 (‘Ālam, 1252); al-Nasā’i, Sunan, Kasāf, 16, iii, 145, 1487 (‘Ālam, 1468).

42 Al-Ghazālī did not write any book on the science of hadith and his knowledge of it was indeed very deficient. The fact was pointed out by several authors, for example Ibn al-Jawzī and al-Suhbī; see G. Makdisi, al-Ghazālī, 32. It is therefore with some satisfaction that Ibn Taymiyya writes that al-Ghazālī, after his Safī period, at the end of his life, adopted the way of hadith scholarship and died while studying al-Bukhārī’s Sahih; see Darʿ, i, 162, trans. Michot, Vanden (forthcoming).

43 See also the refutation of al-Ghazālī’s objection proposed by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, Miṣbah, ii, 213-14.
the day, the sun, the moon, etc. This implies an amplification of the value of that by which He is swearing and a notification about what it contains of signs, lesson, usefulness for mankind, blessing bestowed upon them, etc. That does not make it obligatory that the hearts should become attached thereto, or that one should hold the opinion that it is what gives happiness and misfortune, just as nobody would hold any such opinion about 'the night, when it covers up' (Q. 92.1) and 'the day, when it manifests itself' (Q. 92.1), 'the dust-scatterers' (Q. 51.1) and 'the load-bearers' (Q. 51.2), 'the Mount' (Q. 52.1), 'a Book inscribed' (Q. 52.2–3), and other such.

62 FAITH IN ASTRAL DETERMINISM AND UNBELIEF

The belief that one of the seven stars is in charge of one's good fortune or misfortune is a corrupt belief. And if somebody believes that this [planet] is what administers (mudaddib) him, he is an unbeliever. Similarly if, in addition to that, he invokes it and seeks its aid, it is pure unbelief and associationism.

63 This discussion about God's oracles by the stars in some Qur'anic verses may have been directed against Taqlh al-Din al-Ra's, who appears to have based his argument for the lawful character of astrology on such verses. See Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, Mu'jam, ii, 189; C. A. Naffakh, Astrology, 35–6.

64 The planets are rational spiritual beings capable of intelligence and speech, and (themselves) cause and administer (mudaddib) everything in this world by the order of the Prime Creator who controls all. Al-Kindi, quoted by G. Githa (History, 55) who comments: 'In spite of the fact that the ultimate control of human destiny remains in the hands of God, it is not hard to see why such a doctrine smacks of polytheism, if not outright atheism. There is no doubt that it was perceived as such by kind's contemporaries and by the following generations of believers.'

65 There is a lack of basic information on cubic devotion to the planets in medieval Islam, although most often relating to the self-styled Sabians of Harran (see note 68 below) and their like. See for example the Liber de locutione cum quattuor planetis of Abu 'l-Husn al-Farabikha al-Tabari (fl. 145–1777/62–812), ed. D. Pinto (Tabari, 112–16), the three treatises on the presages of the planets attributed to al-Kindi (trans. Vecchi Vagnari and Cedrazano, Epistres, or the famous Ghazāl al-fakīm, Disc. xii, ch. 7, in which parts of al-Tabari's Liber de locatione are embedded (al-Majrit, Ghazāl, 197–228); trans. Ritter and Plesekov, Piacenza, 206–41). See also Ş. Gündüz, Knowledge, 164–84.

Taqlh al-Din al-Ra's, who sometimes defended astrology, got himself interested in such astrological and for example describes the sultans that, according to Hermes, must be used for each of the seven planets. See the page of his Book of the hidden secret, as far as addressing oneself to the stars is concerned (al-İstı al-mahisim fi wakabatbat al-su'um, trans. Pinto, Tabari, 116–17. (On this book, see also Ibn Taymiyya, Radd, 286.)
**Genethliology and obscurantism**

The very farthest [178,1] anyone who says such [things] can go is to build his [theory] on the fact that, this new-born, when he was born, had such an ascendant (ta’dil). However, it is impossible that such a fate alone could be what influences the [future] circumstances of this new-born. Rather, it might, at very most, constitute a tiny fraction of the sum of the causes. Such a fate does not necessarily imply what has been mentioned. Rather, the things known to have real influence on a [new-born] are things such as the circumstances of the parents and of the country in which he lives. That indeed constitutes a tangible cause, regarding the [future] circumstances of the new-born. It is not, however, something independent.

It has been said that the earliest of those associationists Sabians and astrologers and their followers, when a baby was born to them, used to take note of the ascendant of this new-born and give him a name indicating it. Then, when grown up he was accused of his name, his questioner would take into consideration the situation of the ascendant. The adherents of such ways would thus start asking people their names and the names of their mothers, and pretend to be drawing from that an indication as to their circumstances. Such things are darknesses piled on top of each other and contradict reason as well as religion.

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65 According to al-Britini (Tafsir, trans. Wright, Elements, 149, 245), that portion of the zodiac which rises on the eastern horizon at any particular time is called the sign of the ascendant (ta’dil) or horoscope.

66 Namely, that the new-born’s life should be completely predetermined by the stars.

67 I.e., the circumstances of the parents, the state of the country and so on, are themselves dependent on causes of a higher level.

68 The Sabians of Harran were able to maintain an ancient planetary cult long after the spread of Islam to their region. They are to be distinguished from the Sabians referred to in the Qur’an (2:62, 5:69, 22:17), whose identity they most probably usurped at the end of al-Ma’mun’s reign (218/833) to preserve the existence of their pagan community. Mixing Assyro-Babylonian, Greek and monotheistic elements, their system of belief eventually combined astrology and idolatry with worship of a transcendent deity considered as a first cause. Astrology, magic and mystery played an important role in their religion. See the synthesis of S. Gandi, Knowledge, especially chapters ii and vi; see also C. Gneussand, *Idolatrie*. For Ibn Taymiyya’s conception of the Sabians as adherents of a ‘rational religion’, see MD, xx, 84, 71, trans. Michot, *Textes spirituels XV*, 25, 28; see also Radd, 284. Like other late Muslim scholars, Ibn Taymiyya often uses the term Sabian for any idol- and star-worshippers, ancient or otherwise, from Greece to China.

69 In other words, they used to cast the baby’s horoscope and give him a name whose letters transcribed the figures composing his horoscope. A story told by al-Jawhari provides an excellent illustration of the procedure described by Ibn Taymiyya. See his *Kashf*, trans. Khawram, Vols. i, 278–9.
'Ali and hemerology

As for their elections, it is the fact that they take into consideration the ascendant for whatever action they perform—they for example choose, as favourable for travelling, the moon’s being in its exaltation, i.e. Cancer, and not in its dejection, i.e. Scorpio—belong to this blameworthy category of beliefs.

When 'Ali, son of Abu Talib, wanted to travel to fight the Kharijites, an astrologer blocked his path and said: ‘O commander of the believers! Do not travel! The moon is indeed in Scorpio and, if you travel, while the moon is in Scorpio, your companions will be defeated—or as he said. ‘On the contrary, said 'Ali, I will travel, trusting in God, relying on God, and calling you a liar!’ So he travelled and was blessed in that journey to the point of en masse killing of the Kharijites, which was one of his greatest

70 Ishärát, ‘choices’, ‘elections’ (also šidād, Greek katarhés, Latin electiones), hemerology or catarharctic astrology, is one of the main parts of judicial astrology as it was practised in Islam, the others being masuald, ‘nativities’ (Latin nativitates), or genealogy, tabaskal al-sani, ‘revolutions of the years’ or astrological history, and mazali, ‘interrogations’ (Latin interrogations). Hemerology is concerned with determining, in relation to the position of the stars, the auspicious and inauspicious times for initiating ventures. While genealogy can in some way be considered as the more ‘natural’ of astrology, hemerology is more expedient as it informs somebody without drawing his horoscope. Mazali deal with responses to queries. See T. Fahd, F7, ‘Krshársat’, Aba Muhsin, Mairhal, Disc. viii, ch. 2, 435; D. Pingree, Astrol., 189–91; G. Saliba, Astrology, 70–2; J.-C. Vaudre, Aphorismes, 32–43; L’astrologue des ‘élections’ du point de vue historique et philosophique. See also Avicenna, Alm., 110, transl. Mathon, Sciences, 67, where ‘s’ era: les états ... les problèmes’ (lines 7–9) must be corrected to ‘... sera; il s’agit des états [divers] des cycles du monde et de la royauté, des royaumes et des pays. Il s’agit aussi des nativitates et des revolutiens; des prédictions calculées sur la base de trajectoires astrales artificielles (Iayyir; see O. Schirmer, F7, ‘Iayyir’; and G. Saliba, Astrology, 71), des élections et des interrogations.’

71 (i.e. the fact that they cast a horoscope for whatever action they perform.) According to astrology, it is not in Cancer but in Taurus (3) that the moon attains its maximum influence or ‘exaltation’ (sharāf). Ibn Taymiyya in fact confounds the moon’s exaltation sign and its domicile (haypat). The moon is indeed the lord of Cancer as its domicile; when the moon stands in it, its influence is also particularly great. On the contrary, when the moon stands in the sign diametrically opposite to Taurus, i.e. Scorpio, it is said to stand in its dejection, or ‘depression’ (hubur), and its influence becomes negligible. See W. Hartner, Vasa, 104–5.

72 See Alm’s aphorism 47: ‘Pour les voyages ... les signes mobiles (Bélier, Cancer, Balance, Capricorne) sont recommandés’ (trans. J.-C. Vaudre, Aphorismes, 77). See also the explanations given by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, Mafatih, ii, 235–16.

contentments, as he had been fighting them on the command of the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace.

As for what some people say, i.e. that the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, would have said: ‘Do not travel while the moon is in Scorpio’, it is a fabricated lie, according to the unanimous agreement of the hadith scholars.

THE SO-CALLED ‘ART OF IDRIS’

Four arguments against relating the origin of astrology to Idris

Idris and Hermes

As for the affirmation of one who says that this is the art of Idris, it will be said, firstly, that this is talking without knowledge. Such a thing could by no means be known except through an authentically transmitted tradition; yet, for the [person] saying this, there is no

77 The Prophet Idris’ identity is not clearly known though he is twice mentioned in the Qur’an (19.56, 21.83). Sunni tradition places him between Adam and Noah. Muslim sources also identify him, frequently, with Enoch (Abtumur), Elijah (Yahya) or al-Khidr, while some orientalists connect him with Ezra, the apostle Andrew, or the code of Alexander the Great. In addition, just as happened with the Sabaeans of the Qur’an, Idris’ personality was usurped by some syncretist thinkers (for example Abu Mu‘tah) or groups who identified him with Hermes and credited him with a number of more or less occult writings and inventions. This confusion of identities was already known to al-Jahiz around 229–232/842–845 (see his Tahfe’, 26, 240, trans. Abd, Tahfe’, 33–41; See G. Vajda, 23, 2, ‘Idris’.

The claim that astrology goes back to Idris had already been refuted by Avicenna: ‘If the astrologers say: “What we say was revealed by God, Exalted is He, to Idris, peace be upon him, and what a Messenger of God says is true and incontestable”; we will say: “These are not the sayings of Idris but something of your invention that you attribute to him.” The proof of the truth of what I say is that it is not permitted [for the sayings of one Prophet] to contradict the sayings of another Prophet in matters to do with the principles. Do you not see that it is not permitted for one Prophet to say that God, Exalted is He, is one and for another Prophet to say that God is two? Yet, to wonder if man does, or does not, perceive that which is hidden (al-qiyasi) belongs to the principles. And the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, denied such a peculiarity. In the Book of God, Exalted is He, it is mentioned that man knows that which is hidden but God [see for example Q. 27.65] and the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: “The things that I fear the most for my community are two: belief in the stars and unbelief in [God’s] Decree.” One knows, because of this, that Idris, peace be upon him, is innocent of things such as those that the astrologers say’ (Ibn Sin, Nashr, ms. Leiden, f. 9r). See also al-Ghazali, Ihya’s, trans. Fars, Knowledge, 75; C. A. Nallino, Astrologiae, 29, 33.

According to al-Jawhari, it is geography which is Idris’ art. It was revealed to him by Gabriel and he himself taught it to the Hermeneus, forty disciples whom he had chosen among the heads of his people’s tribes. See his Ruzbi, trans. Khawam, Yafe, 1, 281–6.
way leading to that! Sure, in the books of those, reference is made to the Hermes of the Hermes (hirmis al-barāmīs) and they pretend that it is Idris! ‘The Hermes’ is, among them, a generic name and this is why they say ‘The Hermes of the Hermes’. The believer definitely knows that the volume of things that they mention about their Hermes is not properly taken from any of the Prophets, on account of the lies and vain elements that it contains.

Prophetic science versus experience and analogy
Secondly, it will be said that if the basis of [astrology] is taken from Idris, it was, for him, a miracle and a science that God had given him. It is thus among the Prophetic sciences. Yet, those only advance as arguments experience and analogical reasoning, not information [coming] from the Prophets, blessing and peace be upon them!

A ‘Prophetic message’ more corrupt than the sciences
of the People of the Book
[180,1] Thirdly, it will be said that even if some part of this [so-called ‘art of Idris’] is taken from a Prophet, it is definitely known that it contains far more lies and vain elements than things taken from that Prophet. It is also definitely known that the lies and the vain elements that it contains are far more numerous than the lies and the

75 During the first centuries AD, an extensive literature of a syncretic character, mainly concerned with philosophy, sciences, magic, astrology and other occult disciplines, developed in Greek under the name of Hermes, the Thrice-Great, 'Trismegistos'. According to these writings, Hermes was both the divine messenger and revealer of the gods and the teacher of wisdom. Hermes’ literature exerted a great influence on the development of alchemy and gnosticism among Muslims. Hermes became the alleged author of numerous astrological treatises. Presumably thinking of the epithet 'Thrice-Great,' the astrologer Abu Ma’shar hypothesized three different Hermes, whose respective mythological biographies were developed by several posterior Muslim authors (see D. Pingree, Thousands, 14–19). According to al-Sharaf, the pagans of Harran adopted Hermes as one of their two principal divine masters, the other being Agathodaimon, also a famous Greek mythological figure. Acting as intermediaries to the superior beings and intercessors with the supreme God, Hermes and Agathodaimon were supposed to have taught the Harräns the true way and to have given them their Laws. See M. Plessner, FT, ‘Hermes’; M. Ullmann, Namen (index); S. Güllü, Knowledge, 157–8, 209–11; D. Pingree, Astrology, 292.

hirmis al-barāmīs is one of the various forms of his name by which Hermes Trismegistus was known to Muslim authors. In Ibn Taymiyya’s time, it is also found in the geographer al-Dimashq (634–757/1236–1326); see Sh. D. al-Dimashq, Nahhār, 44, trans. Mehran, Manuel, 47; S. Güllü, Knowledge, 157). While Ibn Taymiyya regards hirmis as a generic name (ism ‘ain), Ibn Jahl (Dhahabi, 332/944 – after 384/994) writes that ‘the name Hermes is a title (laqādī), like Caesar or Khusrāw’ (cited in D. Pingree, Thousands, 14).
vain elements that [one finds] among the Jews and the Nazarenes, as far as the things that they report about the Prophets are concerned. Of the Jews and the Nazarenes, we are definitely certain that the basis of their religion is taken from the Envoys and that God sent down the Torah, the Gospel and the Psalms as He sent down the Qur’ān. And indeed, God has made it compulsory for us to believe in what He sent down unto us and in what He sent down unto the people who lived before us, as He has said, Exalted is He: ‘Say: “We believe in God, and that which has been sent down to us, and that which has been sent down to Abraham and Ishmael, Isaac and Jacob, and the Tribes, and that which Moses and Jesus were given and that which the Prophets were given from their Lord. We do not differentiate between any of them and to Him we are submitting.”’ (Q. 2:136).

Thereupon, and in spite of that, God has informed us that the People of the Book have distorted and replaced [some of its content], lied and concealed [things]. Such, then, is the situation of a certified Revelation and of Books that have certainly been sent down, although they belong to an age closer to us than Idris and although their transmitters were greater than the transmitters of [the science of] the stars (ajā'ib), further from any deliberate invention of lies and vain things and further from unbelief in God, His Messenger and the Last Day. So, a fortiori, what opinion [must] one hold about this amount [of astrological material] if it contains something that is transmitted from Idris? We indeed know that it contains more important lies, vain elements and distortion than that which can be found in the sciences of the People of the Book.

In al-Bukhārī’s Sahīḥ, it is established about the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, that he said: ‘When the People of the Book talk to you, do not consider them as veracious nor as lying! Say instead [181,1]: “We believe in God and that which has been sent down to us and that which has been sent down to you. Our God and your God are one and to him we are submitting.”’ As we are commanded, concerning that which the People of the Book tell us, to consider as veracious nothing but that which we know to be true, nor to consider anything as a lie but that which we know to be vain, how could one consider these [astrologers] as veracious concerning that which they pretend to be transmitted from Idris, peace upon him, when they are, in this matter, further from knowing something reliable8 than [even] the People of the Book?

8 See al-Bukhārī, Sahīḥ, Kitāb al-Ālam, 6814, quoting Q. 29:46.
The science of astronomy versus the magic of judicial astrology

Fourthly, it will be said that there is no doubt that the [science of the] stars (al-najâam) is of two species: computation (hisâh) and judgements (akâm).7

As for computation, it consists in the knowledge of the sizes of the spheres and of the planets, their attributes, the measures of their movements and what follows from that. This is, fundamentally, a valid science, about which there is no suspicion, just as is the knowledge of the earth, its description, etc. The mass of its details, however, requires much toil and is of little interest, as is the case with one knowing for example the measures of the minutes, the seconds and the thirds in the movements of the seven planets, ‘the revolving stars that run and hide’ (Q. 83:15). If the basis of this is taken from Idris, this is possible and God knows better the truth of that. It is similar to people saying that the basis of medicine is taken from one of the Prophets.

Regarding, on the other hand, the judgements (akâm) that belong to the genus of magic, it is impossible that any one of the Prophets could have been a magician. Yet, these people mention several species of [things] belonging to magic and say: ‘This is good for implementing the nu'mûs (nâjâsîmis), i.e. the Laws (sharî'ât) and the Traditions (sunûn). Some of these things consist in invoking the planets and in worshipping them, as well as in several species of associationism that whoever believes in God and in His Messenger obligatorily knows none of the Prophets ever commanded [182:1], nor had knowledge of. To attribute to some of the Prophets is to act like those who attribute similar things to Solomon, peace be upon him: as God had made jinn, mankind and birds subservient to him, some people pretended that that had been done by means of several species of

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7 For Ibn Taymiyya, al-najâam, ‘the stars’, to be understood as ‘al-nu'mûs, ‘the science of the stars’, encompasses both astronomy and astrology. Hence the need to introduce some complementary parameter to differentiate the two. ‘Computation’ (hisâh) refers to astronomy, which is indeed a part of mathematics. ‘Judgements’ (akâm) refers to astrology or, more particularly, in what is traditionally understood as the second of its two main parts, judicial astrology, the first part being natural astrology. While natural astrology consists in the observation of the influences of the stars on the natural elements, the purpose of judicial astrology is to know their influences on human destiny. Ibn Taymiyya alluded to the heavenly influences studied in natural astrology at the beginning of his fawâdia (see above, p. 155). He also explained earlier how he divides judicial astrology into a ‘scientific’ and a ‘practical’ disciplines (see above, p. 166). On the ambiguity of the Arabic vocabulary for astrology and the place of the latter in Muslim classifications of sciences, see C. A. Nallino, Astrologia, I–IV; S. Pines, Distinction; T.-A. Drauert, Astronomie.
magic. Certain groups of Jews and Nazarenes even do not consider him as a Prophet but as a sage. 29 God has however exorcised him from that. He said, Exalted is He: ‘They have followed what the devils used to recite over Solomon’s reign. Solomon did not unbelieve but the devils unbelieved: they were teaching men magic. [They have also followed] that which had come down on the two angels in Babylon, Harît and Marît…’ to the end of the verse 30 (Q. 2.102-3).

In a similar way, drawing indications as to events from the things from which they draw them from—[i.e.] the superior movements—or choosing [in relation thereto] the actions to perform, it is definitely known that none of the Prophets ever commanded that. Indeed, it contains lies and vain elements from which the intelligent are already exonerated, who are far below the Prophets! As for what [little] it contains of the truth, the case is similar to what the imam of these and their ‘second teacher’, Abû Nasr al-Fârâbî, 31 has said when saying something whose content is: ‘If you reversed the inventions of the astrologers and substituted misfortune in place of good fortune and good fortune instead of misfortune, or cold instead of hot and hot instead of cold, or female instead of male and male instead of female, and then judged, your judgement would be of the same kind as their judgements: at times it would be correct and, at other times, it would be wrong.’ 32

29 See for example Ibn Ishâq, Sârû, ii, 138; trans. Guillaume, 255: ‘One of the rabbis said: “Don’t you wonder at Muhammad? He alleges that Solomon was a Prophet, and by God he was nothing but a sorcerer (sâfîr).” So God sent down concerning that: “Solomon did not disbelieve…”’
30 See above, p. 158-9, n. 40.
31 Al-Fârâbî is known as the ‘second teacher’, the first being Aristotle, because of his vast knowledge of Greek thought and the importance of his own philosophical production, especially in logic. See R. Walker, El, ‘al-Fârâbî’.
32 Ibn Taymiyya refers to, and adequately paraphrases, the following passage of al-Fârâbî’s Notes concerning that which, among the astrological judgements, is valid and that which is not valid. ‘Whoever is of the opinion that it is after experiences’ with them that such things have been found to be indications and testimonies of these stars, let him apply himself to the rest of what was invented [by the astrologers], take the opposite of each element and judge on the basis of that, reversed as it then is, concerning the nativities (maqâ’il), the interrogations (maqâ’il) and the revolutions [of the years] (sâhîfûs). If he then finds that some of these things are valid while others are not, just as was the case with what had [first] been invented, the way it had been invented, he will surely know that [the whole of] that is [merely] opinion and conjecture, interest and illusion.’ (Maqâ’il, 64, 30) [‘hâjîjârûs ap. or. sâhîhûs.] A similar argument can also be found in Avicenna’s refutation of astrology: ‘For none of the things that the astrologers mention is there either an argument or a proof, and the statements of whoever would say the contrary of what [they say] could not be rejected. If somebody came and reversed all their principles, each for each, and their contraries, composed a book in conformity with what we said and then judged
From [errors and lies of that kind they exonerate Hippocrates, 23] Plato, Aristotle and his companions, the Peripatetic philosophers, in whose discourses one finds greater24 vain things and elements of error than are found in the discourses of the Jews and of the Nazarenes. So, if they do not67 exonerate from this those Sabians and their prophets who have a lesser rank6 and are further from knowing the reality than the Jews and the Nazarenes, how would it be permitted to ascribe it to a noble Prophet?

A common feature through history: the invention of lies and pseudoepigraphs

Ja’far al-Sadiq
[183,1] We know ourselves, from the history of our imams5, that to Ja’far al-Sadiq,64 who was not even one of the Prophets, things have been attributed that belong to this genus of affairs and are lies told about him, anybody knowing the situation of Ja’far, may God be pleased with him, knows that. The lies told about him are indeed among the gravest. Judgments have even been ascribed to him concerning the inferior movements such as the shaking of the limbs and atmospheric events—thunder and lightning, the halo, the rainbow (qa’as Allah, ‘God’s bow’), which is called ‘Quzah’s bow’ (qa’as Quzah), etc.65 Yet the scholars know that Ja’far al-Sadiq is innocent of all that. Similarly ascribed to him is the table (jadwal)66 on which

according to their method on the basis of that book, he would inevitably hit the truth in some [of his judgements] and lie in others, and the veracity of his statements would probably be even greater. It is therefore true that the principles [of the astrologers] are not to be trusted. (Ibn Sinā, Nuzūm, ms. Leiden, f. 93v.)

51 The greatest Greek physician (Cos, c. 460 bc–Larissa, c. 375), well-known to the Arabs not only as the type of the ‘true physicians’ but as a master of alchemy, astrology and magic. See A. Dietrich, FE, suppl., ‘Baktrian’.

55 Ja’far al-Sadiq, ‘the veracious’ (Madina, c. 83–146/703–765), the sixth imam of the Twelve Shi’is (the fifth of the Isma’ilis). While regarded by the Twelvers as their greatest teacher of fiqh, he is respected by the Sunnis themselves as an authority in several fields: Tradition, Law, theology, Sufism . . . . He is also the supposed author of numerous works dealing with occult sciences. See M. G. S. Hodgson, FE, ‘Ja’far al-Sadiq’.

65 Quzah is the plural of qa’as, which means ‘a coloured band of yellow, red and green’. It also designates a god of the pre-Islamic Arabian pantheon. ‘Quzah’s bow’ is still one of the most common expressions used in Arabic to denote the rainbow, in spite of this saying attributed to the Prophet: Do not say qa’as Quzah, because Quzah is the name of a demon, but say qas Allah’! See T. Fahd, E. Wiedemann, LV, ‘Kaws Qurah’.

66 In sorcery, jadwal, ‘table’, ‘plan’, ‘chart’, means geometrical figures into which names and signs supposedly possessing magic powers are inserted. See the examples
a group of the Banu "Awam, a tribe based in Basra, who were known for their opposition to the Islamic leaders. The Banu "Awam were led by Allah's cousin and son-in-law, Ali ibn Abu Talib, who was the fourth Caliph and the first Imam of the Shia branch of Islam. The conflict between the Banu "Awam and the authorities in Basra escalated into a major rebellion, which eventually spread throughout the Arabian Peninsula and beyond.

Ali ibn Abu Talib, who had been a prominent figure in the early days of Islam, was initially viewed as a supporter of the Islamic revolution against the corrupt Umayyad dynasty. However, as the conflict with the Banu "Awam continued, Ali's role became more controversial. Some factions accused him of selling out to the caliph and failing to address the needs of the common people. Others, like Abu Tabal, supported Ali and his efforts to maintain peace and order.

This tension between Ali and Abu Tabal, along with other influential figures, contributed to the overall dynamics of the period. It was a time of great political and religious upheaval, with different groups vying for power and influence. The eventual resolution of these conflicts, or lack thereof, had a profound impact on the shape of Islam in its early stages.
under the dynasty of the Būyids,\textsuperscript{23} during the fourth [tenth] century, at the beginning of the dynasty of the ‘Ubaydids who built Cairo.\textsuperscript{24}

A group of people composed them, and pretended that they had thereby made a synthesis between the Law and philosophy. They strayed and led astray!

The companions of Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq who acquired knowledge from him, such as Mālik b. Anas,\textsuperscript{25} Sufyān b. ‘Uyayna\textsuperscript{26} and their like among the imāms—Islam’s imāms—are innocent of these lies.\textsuperscript{[184,1]} Similarly, a lot of what the shaykh Abū ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-Sulami mentions about Ja‘far in the book The Realities of Exegesis (Haqqīqat al-tafsīr) is made up of lies about whose mendacious nature nobody among the people who have knowledge thereof has any doubts. Such is also the case of a lot of the vain doctrines that the ṭāfīṣīs report about him: they are among the most obvious lies told about him.

\textquoteleft‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba\textquoteright and Paul of Tarsus

Amongst the various sects of the community, none has been more lying and fabricating\textsuperscript{27} than the ṭāfīṣīs since they appeared\textsuperscript{28}. The first to have started the nafṣ innovation\textsuperscript{29} was a hypocrite, a free-thinker (zhīdī) called \textquoteleft‘Abd Allāh b. Saba\textquoteright.\textsuperscript{30} In doing so, he wanted to corrupt the religion of the Muslims as Paul, the author of the Epistles that are in the hands of the Nazarenes, had done in starting for them some innovations by means of which he corrupted their religion.

\textsuperscript{23} The Twelver Shi‘ī Iranian dynasty of the Būyids controlled the \textquoteleft‘Abbāsid caliphate of Baghdad from 334/945 until 447/1055. See C. Cohen, EF, \textquoteleft‘Buyyids\textquoteright.

\textsuperscript{24} The Fatimid dynasty, founded in 969/290 by the Berber ‘Ubayd Allah al-Mahdi in North Africa, was the general of the fourth Fatimid caliph, al-Mustṣaf, conquered Egypt and began building Cairo in 358–359/968–970. See M. Canard, EF, \textquoteleftFatimids\textquoteright.

\textsuperscript{25} Theologian and jurist, after whom one of the four schools of Sunni Law is named (d. Madina, 136/756); see J. Schacht, EF, \textquoteleft‘Malik b. Anas\textquoteright.

\textsuperscript{26} Traditionalist and Qur‘an commentator (Kufa, 107/725–Makkah, 196/811). See S. A. Svetorysky, EF, \textquoteleftSufyān b. ‘Uyayna\textquoteright.

\textsuperscript{27} Important Qur‘an commentator, hagiographer and theoretician of Sufism (Nehawā’i, c. 330–412/940–1021). Haqqīqat al-tafsīr, his principal commentary on the Qur‘an, was probably finished in 370/980. Some extracts only have been published and studied. See G. Bowering, EF, \textquoteleftal-Sulami\textquoteright.

\textsuperscript{28} A Yemeni Jew considered as the founder of the most extreme wing of the Shi‘a. He is said to have proclaimed \textquoteleftAll’s divinity or, at least, derided his death and taught that he would in the end come again from the clouds. Sunni sources also make him the instigator of the first divisions among the Prophet’s Companions and accuse him of having roused the opposition against ‘Utbānī on the ground of \textquoteleftAll’s special rights. He is already compared with Paul of Tarsus by Sayf b. ‘Umar (d. after 193/809) in his K. al-Radd wa l-Jadīd-The Apology and the Compromises (see Radda, 132–3). See also M. G. S. Hodgson, EF, \textquoteleft‘Abd Allāh b. Saba\textquoteright.
He was a Jew and he apparently adopted Nazarenism, hypocritically, with the purpose of corrupting the [Muslim] faith (milla). Although he was unable to do so, discord and dissension did arise among the believers, during which 'Uthmān was killed, may God be pleased with him, and thus happened what happened, in the matter of dissension. However, God did not make this community reach a consensus, praise be to Him, on an error. Rather, a group did not cease existing in it who will stand up for the Truth, without being harmed by those opposed to them nor by those abandoning them, till the Hour rises—therefore witness the superabundant texts that are [collected] in the Sahīths about the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace.

‘Ali and the Shī‘i innovations

When the Shī‘i innovations were made to occur, during the caliphate of the commander of the believers ‘Ali, son of Abī Tālib, may God be pleased with him, he rejected them. There were three groups: exaggerators (ghalīyīn), insulters (saḥīḥūn) and those who preferred [somebody to others] (muṣjadi‘ā‘īn).

[185.1] The exaggerators, he burnt them with fire. As, one day, he was going out from the Kindah gate, people prostrated themselves before him. He said: “What is that?”—“You are God!” they said. Three times he called on them to repent but they did not come back [to the sound religion]. The third time, he commanded trenches. They were dug and set on fire. Then he threw them in it and said:

When I saw the matter to be a reprehensible one, I lit my fire and called Qamar.\[101\]

[One reads] in al-Bukhārī’s Sahīh that their free-thinkers (zindīqī) were brought to ‘Ali and that he burnt them. That news reached Ibn ‘Abbās, ‘who said: “Myself, if it had been me, I would not have burnt them, since the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, prohibited tormenting [people] the way God torments [them]. I would rather have beheaded them as the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, said: “Whoever replaces his religion [by something else], kill him!”’\[101\]

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\[99\] Among other traditions, see al-Bukhārī, Sahīh, Fīṣṣām; Taḥdīth, ix, 101, 136 (‘Ālam, 6767, 6906); Muslim, Sahīh, Imāma‘ī, vi, 52–2 (‘Ālam, 3544, 3547, 3548); Ibn Hishām, Manuel, v, 34, 269, 278, 279 (‘Ālam, 16276, 21386, 21369).

\[100\] A freedman of ‘Ali.

\[101\] Among other traditions, see al-Bukhārī, Sahīh, Jihād, iv, 61–2 (‘Ālam, 2794).
As for the insulators, when the news reached him that Ibn Saba' insulted Abu Bakr and 'Umar. He tried to kill him. He escaped to Quraishya102 and hid there while 'Ali treated gently his emirs, as he had no firm power and they did not obey him in everything that he commanded them.

As for those who preferred [him to others], 'Ali said: 'I will not have somebody who prefers me to Abu Bakr and 'Umar brought to me without whipping him the way slanderers are [Legally] sanctioned!' It is also reported about him, from more than eighty sources, that he said: 'The best [person] of this community, after its Prophet, is Abu Bakr, then 'Umar.'

[One reads] in al-Bukhari's Sahih,103 about Muhammad Ibn al-Hanafiyya,104 that he said to his father:

— O father, after the Messenger of God, God bless him and grant him peace, who is the best of the humans? [186:1]

— O my son, don't you know?

— No.

— Abu Bakr.

— And then, who?

— 'Umar.

In al-Tirmidhi105 and others, [one reads] that 'Ali reported this order of preference on the authority of the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace.

The point here is that various of lies have been told about 'Ali, the son of Abu Talib, such as could not be ascribed to the least of the believers. The Qarmatis,106 the Bariris,107 the Khurramites,108

102 A town in al-Jazira, on the left bank of the Euphrates, close to the confluence of the Khabur, on the site of the important Roman fortress of Ctesiphon, corresponding to the modern Syriac Busayra. See M. Strock, EF, 'Karkhaya'.

103 See Al-Bukhari, Sahih, Fadd'il al-ashab, v. 7 (Alami, 3193).

104 A son of 'Ali and Khawla, a woman of the tribe of the Banu Huttai who had come into his possession as a prisoner of war (Medina, 16-81/637-700). See Fr. Rohr, EF, 'Muhammad Ibn al-Hanafiyya'.

105 Author of al-Nihayat, one of the most important hadith collections (d. c. 275/888); see A. J. Wensinck, EF, 'al-Tirmidhi'.

106 One of the Isma'ili sects; see W. Madelung, EF, 'Qarmatii'.

107 To Ibn Taymiyya, all those who, Shi'i's, Sufis or philosophers, reject the manifest meaning of the Scripture in favour of an esoteric meaning (alain): see M. G. S. Hodgson, EF, 'Bahriyya'.

108 Khurramshin, or Khurramshinyya (from the Persian khurram-din, 'joyous, agreeable religion'), originally meant the religious movement of Mazdak in general. Later it became used for several Iranian, anti-Arab and frequently rebellious, sects influenced by Mazdakism and Manichaean beliefs as well as by extremist Shi'i doctrines.
the Mazdakis, the Isma'illis and the Nusayris have even
attributed to him their doctrines, which are among the most corrupt
doctrines of the worlds, pretending that these were sciences inherited
from him.

Avicenna and the free-thinkers
All these things, it is only the hypocrites who brought them about, the
free-thinkers (zindiq) who aimed to appear to adopt what the
believers believed in, while inwardly hiding the opposite. They were
urging [people] to follow the groups who were backing out of the
legal prescriptions. They had dynasties [who supported them] and,
because of them, [several] ordeals swept down upon the believers.
Avicenna even said: ‘I only occupied myself with the sciences of the
philosophers because my father was an adherent of the missionary
movement (da'wa) of the Egyptians,’ that is of the Rāfīḍi and
Qarmatī Ulhaydids. They had religiously embraced these philosoph-
ical sciences and this is why you find between those, the Rāfīḍīs
and their like, in respect of being far from knowing the prophethood
(nabuwat), a connection and an affiliation. They are united in this
matter by their genuine ignorance of the straight path, the path of
those to whom God has been gracious—the Prophets, the virtuous,
the martyrs and the righteous.

Khurramiya were often identified with the Muslimiya, partisans of the anti-
Umayyad leader Abū Mūsā (d. 677/735), who regarded the latter as their imām, prophet or incarnation of the divine spirit. See W. Madelung, E.F., “Kherramiya.”

[190] Dissident sectarian movement named after Mazdak, the leader of an egalitarian,
hedonistic and proto-revolutionary religious movement in Mazdaean Naxshāb-istan at the
end of the fifth and beginning of the sixth century ce. After the spread of Islam in Iran,
'Sho-Mazdaki' sects appeared in association with various Shi'i šī' groups.

They tended to be credited with a special interest in number and letter mysticism. See M. Gudk, M. Monzii, F., ‘Mazdak.’

[191] Extreme Shi'i sect named after Muhammad b. Nūsayr al-Fihrist Nusayri, a
disciple of the tenth or eleventh Twelver Shi'i imām, still existing today (‘Alawis of
Syria); see H. Hahn, E.F., ‘Nusayriyya.’ Ibn Taymiyya refutes their doctrines in a
famous fatwa in which he denounces their alliance with the Crusaders and the Tatars.
‘Les Nusairis sont plusieurs nom en vogue parmi les Musulmans. Ťont on les appeller
Mohammedan (herétiques), Ťont on Ismaïlis, Ťont on Karimites, Ťont on Bātūnites, Ťont on
Nusairis, Ťont on Khwārians, Ťont on Mahometans […] Leur religion a de beaux du
Rafidins, et au fond c’est l’idéologie pure et simple’ (Nusayriyya, trans. Guillard,
Fétis, 189).

[192] See Avicenna’s autobiography, trans. W. E. Godman, I., 19: “My father was
one of those who responded to the propaganda of the Egyptians and who received
among the Isma‘iliyya …” According to D. Gutas (Avicenna, 333), Avicenna was in
reality a Hanafa Sunni.
Idris’ innocence

Over this period close to us\(^5\), which is shorter than 700 years, such
lies were thus told about the [Prophet’s] family, his Companions
and others. Elements of the doctrines of the philosophers and the
astrologers were attributed to them of which [187,1], every intelligent
person knows, they are innocent. And this sold well among many
groups belonging to this faith (milla), despite the existence of people
who expounded their fallaciousness, prohibited that and defended
the faith (milla) with their heart, their body and their tongue. So, a
fortiori, what must one’s opinion be concerning matters, related to
the science of the stars and to philosophy, that are attributed to Idris’s
or to other Prophets—to say nothing of the length of the time passed,
the diversity of the traditions, the differentiation of\(^5\) the faiths (milla)
and the religions, the absence of people who might have expounded
the reality of the matter by means of arguments and demnotations,
and the fact that it includes countless lies and slanders—?

**ISLAM’S PLANET: VENUS OR JUPITER?**

Such is also the case of the allegation of whoever alleges that the
star of the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, was depend-
ent on Scorpio and Mars, [that] of his community on Venus, and
similar things . . .\(^1\) This is among the clearest insanities as the

Ahmad al-Halabi said in the book that he composed for Nizam al-Mulk. “The return of
Mars in Scorpio has an important influence upon the Muslim religious group, because it
is in its ascendent. The birth of the Prophet took place when the two superior planets were
in conjunction in the sign of Scorpio” . . . *Jur‘ah* said: “I have seen in the books of the
ancients that the astrologers informed Khosrow that the Arabs would gain royal
authority and the prophecy of Muhammad would appear among them. The
significator of the Arabs is Venus, which was then in its exaltation” . . . *Abi Mu‘a‘awiah*
said in the *Book of Conjunctions*: “When the section reaches the twenty-
seventh (degree) of Pisces, in which Venus has its exaltation, and when, at the
same time, the conjunction occurs in Scorpio, which is the significator of the
Arabs, then the Arab dynasty will make its appearance, and there will be a
Prophet among them. The power and duration of his rule will correspond to the
remaining degrees of the exaltation of Venus.”

The following authors link the Arabs and/or the Muslims to Venus: *Abū
Ma‘shār* (Comeniusius, in Loth, *Astrologia*, 280), al-Kindi (Loth,
253), al-Majrī (see G. Ritter, *Veneris data*, 129–30); Ibn Abī l-Rajī (see Loth,
l, 54r). Among these authors, *al-Birrini* (*Ta‘bim*, 253) and, perhaps, al-Kindi (see
*Secrets*, trans. Vecchia Vaglietti and Cefentino, 340) are the only ones who explicitly
circumstances of the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace,
and of his community were different9 from what they allege, with
respect to these judgements. Amongst the clearest lies is indeed their
affirmation that the star of the Muslims is dependent on Venus while
the star of the Nazarenes is dependent on Jupiter, adding that Jupiter
demands science and religion while Venus demands entertainment
and play. Every intelligent person indeed knows that the Nazarenes
are, among the religions (milla), the most ignorant and the most
errings, the furthest9 from the knowledge of reason and tradition, the
most preoccupied with entertainments, and the ones who worship
the most by means of the latter.

The greatest nómos, according to the philosophers

The philosophers all agree on the fact that no greater nómos11
reached the world than the nómos that Muhammad brought, God
bless him and grant him peace.114 His community is also the most
link Jupiter to Christianity. The debate concerning the identity of the tetrarchy
planets of Islam and Christianity passed to the Latin Middle Ages. In Oxford, Roger Bacon
linked Venus to the law of Islam, which he considered as tota sapientiae et renatæ but
refused Jupiter’s patronage for Christianity. For the latter, he preferred Mercury as the
complexity of the Prolemaic theory of the motion of the planet Mercury, being more
difficult to understand for the human intellect, was in his opinion a sound analogical
representation of the Christian dogmas and mysteries (see J. North, Astrology, 68). In
the Islamic world, Jesus was linked to Mercury by Ibn ‘Arabī (see Khayyām), trans.
Rapoport, Alfarabi, 61–72; T. Runamur, Aristotle, 31–3) and al-Bāri (Shams, 361), and,
as proposed by Ibn Taṣāqī, to Venus by the Ikhān al-Safī, who reserve Jupiter for Abraham and link the Prophet Muhammad to Mercury (Rāsā’il, trans.
Michot, Resurrection, 140–1).

9, 11 In this passage, Ibn Taṣāqī clearly uses Nāmin, the Arabic transliteration for
the Greek Nómos, in the sense of šārī’ā (see M. Plewener, FP. ‘Nāmin’). It is of interest
to note that such a usage, far from being exclusive to philosophers—the Ikhān al-Safī;
Avicenna et alii (see Y. J. Michot, Dostmīr, 39, n. 57; see also above, p. 176)—is also accepted by a religious scholar like the Shaykh al-Islām. Such an
explicit assimilation of the šārī’ā to the Greek law offers a good illustration of the
extent of the continuity between the classical Greek and Islamic worldviews, as
analysed by L. Strauss (see R. Bragge, Athens, 330).

114 This rather extreme, yet very interesting, statement has to be understood in
relation to Avicenna’s philosophy of religion, something that Ibn Taṣāqī knows well.
Avicenna indeed states explicitly, in his Adhārāt (85), that the law (šārī’ā) brought
by Muḥammad is the most eminent and the most perfect, which justifies his quality of
Seal of the Messengers. Avicenna’s prophethoodology is one of the reasons why Ibn Taṣāqī
considers him far superior to Aristotle. In addition, when the Shaykh al-Islām affirms the
philosophers to be unanimously favourable to this religion, it is most probably because
he cannot imagine them not sharing the prophethoodology developed by the Ikhānī, who in
his judgement as in that of three great majority, namely the best: al-ṣayyāb al-ṣafī. This
apologetic approach to Islam by Ibn Taṣāqī is also found in Qōrin, trans. Michot,
Roi croisé, 190 (with the trans. of an excerpt from Avicenna’s Adhārāt).
perfect in rationality, religion and science, according to the unanimous agreement of the philosophers, even the philosophers of the Jews and of the Nazarenes. They indeed do not doubt the fact that the Muslims are the most eminent in rationality and religion \[13\] [188,1] and each of them only holds on to his religion either because he follows his caprice and allegedly preserves his interest in this world,\[14\] or because he is of the opinion that it is permissible to adhere to whatever religion (milla) it may be and that the religions (milla) are similar to the Islamic madhab.\[15\] The mass of the philosophers—the astrologers and their like—say this, and they treat the religions (milla) as if equivalent to righteous nations (dawla) of which some might, at most, be more eminent than others.\[16\]

**God accepts no other religion than Islam**

As for the heavenly Books successively transmitted on the authority of the Prophets, blessing and peace be upon them, they explicitly say that God does not accept, from anybody, any religion but Islam,\[17\] i.e. the general Islam: worshipping God alone, without associates, and believing in His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day, as He said, Exalted is He: ‘Surely those who believe and those who are Jews, the Nazarenes and the Sabians—those who believe in God, in the Last Day and act righteously—shall have their reward with their Lord. No fear on them, neither shall they sorrow’ (Q. 2:62).

In his *Jahâl*, Ibn Taymiyya also explains how the Muslims are preferred to the Christians by the Jews and to the Jews by the Christians; see A. Morabia, *Ibn Taymiyya*, II, 104.


14 Ibn Taymiyya is convinced that a lot of sectarians no longer believe in Christianity but keep up appearances in order to preserve their wealth and power. See Qudras, trans. Michel, *Rive croce*, 141-6.

15 To consider the various religions as equivalent is, in Ibn Taymiyya’s mind as well as for other authors of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, for example ‘Ala’ al-Din as-Sa’adi, *Refutation of the Mongols*. To assimilate the religions to the Muslim madhab is an accusation that Ibn Taymiyya raises in particular against the Ilka’i viceroy Rashid al-Din, whom he calls a ‘philosophising Jew’. See MF, xxvii, 323-4, trans. Michel, *Textes spirituels XII*, 26-7. That said, he himself sometimes assimilates, from some viewpoints, the multiplicity of madhab in Islam to the multiplicity of the prophetic ways (mawali). (MF, trans. Michel, *Unatif*, 27).

16 The obvious allusion is to al-Farabi’s political philosophy of religion. See his *Opinions of the Inhabitants of the Eminent City (Arba’)*, in R. Walker, State.

17 To the Qur’an, the true, primordial, Abrahamic monotheism; see W. Montgomery Watt, *EFS*, ‘Hasil’. For Ibn Taymiyya’s definition, see MF, trans. Michel, *Mujtahid*, 80, n. 2, and *Textes spirituels* XVI, 23.
We have also been informed about that concerning the earlier Prophets and their communities. Noah said: ‘If you turn away ..., I have not asked you for any wage. My wage does not fall on anyone but God, and I have been commanded to be amongst those who submit (muslim)’ (Q. 10.72). He said about Abraham’s: ‘And who would forsake the religion (nībole) of Abraham but one who makes a fool of himself? Indeed, we elected him in this world and in the hereafter he shall be amongst the righteous. When his Lord said to him: “Submit!” he said: “I have submitted to the Lord of the worlds!” And Abraham recommended that to his sons, and Jacob also: “O my sons, God elected for you [this] religion. So, do not die but submitting [to Him] (muslim)” (Q. 2.130–2). He also said: ‘And Moses said: “O my people, if you believe in God, in Him put your trust, if you are submitting [to Him] (muslim)”’ (Q. 10.84).

Surely We sent down the Torah, wherein are guidance and light. Thereby the Prophets who had submitted (aladna) judged for those who were Jews’ (Q. 5.44). Balaam said: ‘My Lord, I wronged myself and I submit with Solomon to God, the Lord of the worlds’ (Q. 27.44). He said about [189.1] the apostles: “Believe in Me and in My Messenger!” They said: “We believe; Bear witness that we are submitting” (Q. 5.111). He indeed said, in an absolute manner: ‘God bears witness that there is no God but He—and so do the angels and those possessing the science—upholding justice. There is no God but He, the Mighty, the Wise. The religion is indeed, with God, the submission [of oneself] (al-islām)’ (Q. 3.18).

He also said: ‘Say: “We believe in God, and that which has been sent down to us”, and that which has been sent down to Abraham and Ishmael, Isaac and Jacob, and the Tribes, and that which Moses and Jesus were given and that which the Prophets were given from their Lord. We do not differentiate between any of them and to Him we are submitting”’ (Q. 2.136). [And] ‘Whoever seeks something else than submission (islām) as religion, it will not be accepted from him and he will be, in the hereafter, amongst the losers’ (Q. 3.85).

Since the Muslims are, as all those who have intelligence unanimously agree, the adherents to a religion (nībole) who are the most involved in science and rationality, justice and similar things that, in their view, correspond to the influences of Jupiter, whereas the Nazarenes are further from that and more involved in entertainment, in play and in things that correspond, in their view, to the influences of Venus, what [some people] have mentioned10 is of a manifestly corrupt nature.
Al-Kindi’s prognostication of Islam’s duration

This is why their judgements do not cease to lie and to rebuff each other. The great philosopher whom they call ‘the philosopher of Islam’, Ya’qūb b. Ishāq al-Kindi, even made a forecast (zar'uf) for this religion (milāla), claiming that it would come to an end in the year 693 [1294]. That was adopted, after him, by somebody who produced the product of the deduction from the letters of a discourse which had appeared, during unveiling (kashf), to somebody whom he was rehabilitating. And with them agreed, about that, somebody who claimed that he had deduced the remaining duration of this

111 The ‘Philosopher of the Arabs’ (c. 185-252 / c. 801-866). See J. Joest, R. Rathod, EF., al-Kindi.
112 On naráya, see n. 70, p. 169.
113 By means of universal apotlesmatics (apistelmatikē katáboλiσ), the astrologer tries to predict the future of entire peoples, regions, cities, dynasties and thus, also, wars, epidemics, floods, etc. While Ptolemy founded such predictions on solar and lunar eclipses only, the majority of Arab astrologers, probably influenced by Sasanian astrology, preferred to base their calculations on conjunctions of the superior planets, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, etc. (see Ibn Khaldūn, Maqādima, trans. R. H. Crossley, Introduction, ii, 211-31). D. Pingree, Astrology, 294. Some of these universal apotlesmatics prognostication could have a great ideological or political impact. For example when astrologers were asked to present the new ‘Abbasid regime as ordained by the stars and, hence, ultimately, by God (see D. Gutas, Thought, 45-52). Or when they claimed to know the exact date when the rule of the Arabs, or of Islam, would end. The most famous prediction of this kind is the one to which Ibn Taymiyya refers here. It was formulated by al-Kindi in a Letter on the rule of the Arabs and its length (Risāla fi milli al-/Arab wa kamāni-yi-hi) written at the request of an ‘Abbasid caliph, probably al-Mu‘tazz (reigned 252-255/866-869). Al-Kindi’s letter was long thought to have been plagiarized by the greatest Muslim astrologer, Abu Ma’shar (d. 272/886), in his Book of the Great Conjunctions, Dis. ii, ch. 2. R. Lamy has demonstrated convincingly, in my opinion that it was in fact Abu Ma’shar’s Great Conjunctions, most probably written between 247/861 and 251/865, that influenced al-Kindi in this matter. See al-Kindi, Mu’ll, ed. Loft, Addendum, 274; Abu Ma’shar, Conjunctiones, ii, 6, 8, Latin trans. in Loft, Astrology, 281); on the anti-Iranian aba‘idiyya cultural and political circumstances in which al-Kindi wrote his Risāla and on the controversy surrounding its relation to Abu Ma’shar’s Great Conjunctions, see R. Lemaître, Abu Ma’shar, i, 211-35. Islam, 21.

Al-Kindi announced the end of the Arab empire for 693/1294 in relation to the 11:33–693 through which Venus had no travel from the moment of a conjunction of Saturn and Mars in Cancer on Sunday 23 March 622, the spring equinox closest to the date of the Hijra, until it left the redical sign of Pisces—the sign of its exaltation—in which it was. See also O. Loft, Astrology, 294-7; Ibn Khaldūn, Maqādima, trans. R. H. Crossley, Introduction, ii, 215. C. A. Nallino, Astrologia, 15-16; D. Pingree, Thousand, 80, horoscope ii, 13, C. Burnett, Astrology, 98-9. Bacon, who knew of this forecast, suggested that it agreed with the Número of the Beast in Apocalypse xvi, namely 666, ‘less than the aforesaid by 30 years’ (see J. North, Astrology, 68).

114 Re’d marz d’al-aḥr. I found the sense uncertain here.
religion (millah) from the reckoning (addition) of the numerical values (hisbah al-jummal) that are those of the letters that are at [196,3] the beginnings of the sūras [of the Qur'ān] when discounting the repetitions, there are 14 such letters and their reckoning, in the great calculation, amounts to 693. Related to this is also the following story, mentioned in [Qur'ān] exegesis: when God sent down 'Alif, Lām, Mim', some Jews said: 'The duration of this religion

110 Hisbah al-jummal, literally 'computation by means of a rope', is the technical term for calculation by means of the numerical values of alphabetical letters, writing figures instead of letters or, conversely, writing numbers (for example, dates) by means of letters and other procedures reminiscent of the cabala. Hisbah al-jummal in the first sense, applied on the letters composing the most beautiful names of God, the seven letters not found in the Etzika, the 'mysterious letters' of the Qur'ān here mentioned by Ibn Taymiyya, etc., played an important role in Muslim mysticism, esoterism and divinatory arts. See G. S. Colin, FP, 'Hisbah al-jummal'; T. Fahd, FP, 'Qur'ān'; and A. T. Welch, EI, 'al-Kur'ān': 4.d. 'The mysterious letters'.

These letters, 78 in all, can in fact be reduced to 14 representing the various basic consonantal forms of written Arabic, hence of the whole Arabic alphabet: k and h, that both appear only once, alone, and 'a, b, t, s, y, t, g, t, m, ñ, and y, that appear more than once, singly or in combination with one or more other letters. Like every letter of the Arabic alphabet, these 14 letters were designated as a numerical value, sometimes different in the Eastern and in the Western Arabic worlds. According to the Eastern 'Abjad system, as for example explained by the Ilkhanid al-Sādi (Rasa'il, I, 'On Numbers', i, 26–77, trans. Goldstein, Number, 138; see also G.Wel and G. S. Colin, FP, 'Abjad') and effectively referred to here by Ibn Taymiyya, the values of these 14 letters are the following:

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As noted by Ibn Taymiyya, the total of these values is 693 'in the great calculation', i.e. when the letters representing tens and hundreds are given their full numerical value, without reduction of the tens to units. See al-Kindi, Mudh, ed. Lohs, Astronomy, 276–7, 297–9; see also Ibn Khalid, Marqaddima, trans. Rokohl, Introduction, ii, 215, regarding al-Kindi's astrological forecasting of the 693 years long duration of Islam: He said (further): 'This is the duration of Islam as generally agreed upon by the philosophers. The figure is supported by the letters that occur at the beginning of certain sūras, if one omits the repetitions and counts the numerical value of the letters.' I say: This is what was mentioned by as-Suhayrī. The most likely assumption is that al-Kindi was as-Suhayrī's source. Ibn Taymiyya must have particularly enjoyed denouncing the double failure of the astrological and numerological forecast of the end of the Muslim empire for 693/1294 to, in his opinion, Islam was then going through a phase of renaissance, particularly thanks to the Mamluks (see MF, trans. Michot, Tawdis spirituell des XVIII, 26–77, Qanun, trans. Michot, beneficiary, 180). It is true that the Crusaders had just been definitively ousted from Palestine in 693/1294 and that the Mongol efforts to invade Syria, at the turn of the century, would fail.
PROHIBITION OF ASTROLOGY
IS OBLIGATORY

These affairs that exist in the errors of the Jews and of the Nazarenes, as well as in the errors of the associationists and of the Sabians—people who philosophize and astrologers—include vain things of this kind that no one would know but God, the Exalted. These affairs and their like are outside the religion of Islam and forbidden in it. It is thus incumbent [upon us] to condemn them. To prohibit them is incumbent on the Muslims—on everyone who has the capacity to do so—by means of [his] science and of clear explanation, with his hand and with his tongue. This is indeed among the most important things that God has made incumbent, as far as commanding what is to be acknowledged and prohibiting what is to be condemned are concerned. Those people and their like are the enemies of the Messengers and the vermin of the religions (milla).

That which is vain, regarding existence, does not sell well but blended with some element of the truth. Similarly, the People of the Book clothed the truth in vain things. Because of the slight truth they have with them, they lead many creatures astray from the truth in which it is incumbent to believe and invite them to adopt the numerous vain things to which they adhere. And how frequent it is that against them stand, among the adherents of Islam, people who do not distinguish well between the truth and that which is vain, do not provide the argument which would refute their vain claims nor expound the argument of God, which He has provided by means of His Messengers—and that is why dissension arises. We have spoken extensively about those vain things, etc., elsewhere. And God knows better.

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127 The greatest calculation total of the Eastern numerical values of kanta (1), lam (30) and mim (40) is 71. See also al-Kendi, Mulh, ed. Lohr, Astrolog, 276.
128 The great calculation total of the Eastern numerical values of kanta (1), lam (30) and ra' (200) is 231.
129 The great calculation total of the Eastern numerical values of kanta (1), lam (30), mim (40) and ra' (200) is 271.
[191,1] HE WAS ASKED, may the Exalted
God have mercy upon him:

What do the masters, the legislators, the inquirers of the religion, may God be pleased with them all, say about those astrologers who hold seances on the thoroughfares,¹¹ in shops and elsewhere, and with whom women sit, as well as the pervers, because of the women? These astrologers claim to give information about the hidden affairs, relying in this matter on the art of astrology (qiṣāṭ al-tanāfîm). They write out magic squares (varq), practice magic, write talismans (ṭlism), and teach magic to women, for [use upon] their husbands and others. Because of that, women and men, assemble at the doors of their shops. The situation may even lead, sometimes, to other kinds of deeds that women commit against their husbands.¹² and to the corruption of the people’s beliefs, to their voracious attachment to magic and to the planets, to their turning away from God. Powerful is He and Majestic, and from trusting in Him concerning events and accidents. Is that licit or not?

Is the art of astrology forbidden or not? Is it permitted to get a wage for it? And to offer [such a wage], is that forbidden or not?

Is it permitted to whoever is [in some way] attached to a shop—as

¹¹ Cairo, Damascus and the other main cities of the Mamluk sultanate had a very animated street life into which the Nights and other sources offer many insights. Apart from the astrologers, there were innumerable entertainers of all kinds soliciting the attention and the money of the common people; see R. Irwin, Nights, ch. 5: “Street Entertainments”, 120–19.

¹² See the “Tale of Qamar al-Zamān” in the Nights (R. Irwin, Nights, 191) or the contemporary first-hand testimony produced by Sahl al-Din al-Hilli (Qasida, trans. Bowditch, Underworld, ii, 297–8, verses 13, 42–3, 45):

“And how often have I posed as an astrologer (kushaf) and composed a magic circle (mandall), by means of which I have demonstrated that the Jinn are my brethren [...] and how often have I stood up in the circle of soothsayers, speaking out with great eloquence, and how often have I sold favourable horoscopes and auguries to people (mudhafar), writing out my horoscope of trickery by using slant and onion juice as invisible ink! On the use of onion juice as invisible ink, see al-Jawhari, Khatib, trans. Khayat, Voila, i, 272.

And how many a day have I wandered round the houses, encouraging people to have their horoscopes cast and their fortunes told, with my staff, my two rolls of cloth embroidered with magical patterns, and my beggar’s garments [...] And I have come to know the stories and conversations of women, being able to interpret what they say by means of speech which has come to me directly from their mouths.”

As attested by the text translated above, see. 147, Avicenna had already underlined, three centuries earlier, the importance of women among the astrologers’ clientele.
inspector, owner, trustee—to let it for rent for that purpose, or not? And is the rent itself of a forbidden nature, or not? On the authorities, and on every Muslim able to do so, is it incumbent to put an end to it, or not? [192,1] And when the authority does not act to condemn the [astrologers], does the matter fall within the compass of the threat of the authentic hadith reported on the authority of the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, namely this saying: 'There is no authority with whom God entrusts a flock, who makes no effort on their behalf, nor gives them advice, but will not enter the Garden with them.'\textsuperscript{135} When, [on the contrary], an authority condemns this reprehensible phenomenon, does it come under His words, Exalted is He: 'And there may be from you a community who invite to the good, command what is to be acknowledged and prohibit what is to be condemned. These are the successful' (Q. 3.104). And, when [an authority] condemns that, will it be plentifully rewarded for doing so or not?

Would they also mention, if they thought [it appropriate], the threatening hadiths that were present in their mind about that matter. Rewarded would they then be, the Exalted God willing!

HE ANSWERED:

THE BOOK, THE TRADITION AND THE CONSENSUS FORBID ASTROLOGY

'The praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds!' (Q. 1.1)

None of those things is licit. The art of astrology, whose purport is judgements and influence—i.e. drawing indications from the states of the celestial spheres as to terrestrial events, and combining the forces of the celestial spheres with terrestrial receptacles—is an art forbidden by the Book, by the Tradition and by the consensus of the community. Moreover, it was forbidden by the tongue of all the Messengers, in all the faiths (milla). God said, Exalted is He: 'The magician thrives not, wherever he comes' (Q. 20.69). He also said: 'Have you not regarded those who were given a share of the Book? They believe in sorcery (al-jihb) and the devil (al-taghat)' (Q. 4.51). 'Umar and others said: 'Al-jihb means magic.'

In his Sūrat, Abū Dā'ūd has reported with a good chain of transmitters from Qābisa b. Muhārīn,\textsuperscript{136} about the Prophet,

\textsuperscript{135} See al-Bukhārī, Sahih, Abkār 8, ix, 64 (t. Alām. 6667); Muslim, Sahih, Alām, i, 88 (t. Alām. 205).

\textsuperscript{136} A Companion who lived in Basra; see Ibn al-Ashir, Uṣūd, iv, 192-3.
God bless him and grant him peace, that he said: ‘Mystic interpretation of the flight and the cries of birds (`ayafa),’ of lines that one traces (farag) and of fortuitous events considered as negative (itrâ) pertains to sorcery (jihin). The reporter of the hadith, said: ‘Al-`ayafa, i.e. to cause a bird to take flight (zahr al-tayr).’ Al-tarq, i.e. the line which is traced on the earth, pertains to sorcery, how [must] things be, a fortiori, for astrology (najama) itself? The fact is indeed that they generate figures on the earth.

In the strict sense, `ayafa means omenshancing, i.e. the art of divining omens from the flight of birds, their cries, their posture or even their name. See T. Fahd, EF, ``ayafa.

In the absolute, tarq designates three divinatory methods of divinatory nature: throwing pebbles and observing how they scatter on the ground (al-tarq bi-l-badd), tracing lines in sand or dust (al-khutt bi-l-samá), and mixing cotton with wool (khalt al-qum bi-l-`ajl).

The second method, which is the one Ibn Taymiyya refers to, as will become evident in the following lines, developed into geomancy and enjoyed prodigious popularity in Muslim countries. At its most elementary level, it consisted of gauging the future from the figure or pattern supposedly drawn by random marks traced in dust or sand. In more sophisticated forms of the art, combination of random lines of dots would be used to generate one of the sixteen geomancy figures, or random markings would be interpreted in relation to the horoscope of the enquirer and other astrological considerations; or, as explained here by Ibn Taymiyya, in correlation with the configurations of the celestial sphere. See T. Fahd, Divination, 195-204; E. Syurge-Smith, Science, i. 148-53; R. Irwin, Nights, 190-1.

Etymologically, `iza refers to the observation and mystic interpretation of the spontaneous flight of birds, as practised in pre-Islamic Arabia. This was progressively extended and `iza assumed the wider significance of divining omens, good or ill, in all kinds of manifestations of animate or inanimate beings, especially in the sphere of domestic life. As a method for divining ill omens, `iza was condemned by Islam as pagan. The new religion did, however, accept comparable techniques for divining favourable omens, under the name of fara. See T. Fahd, EF, ``iza; Divination, 436-8, 450-3.

On this hadith, see Abu Daud, Sunan, Tubb, iv, 16, 3907 (`Alam. 3406). See also T. Fahd, Divination, 195.

`Zur originally consisted in causing a bird to fly away by shouting or throwing a stone at it, in order to be able to give a mystic interpretation of its flight. Like this, it was thus a technique of `ayafa. The term progressively received a broader sense and eventually referred, not only to omenshancing in general, but to all kinds of omens divided into animate or inanimate beings. See T. Fahd, EF, ``iza; Divination, 438-50.

See Abu Daud, Sunan, Tubb, iv, 16, 3908 (`Alam. 3409).

Ibid. 3907 (`Alam. 3409), trans. Hasan, Sunan, ii, 1096, ch. 1441, 3998. `Fara: It is used in the sense of divination in which women throw stones. ``iza: It means geomancy by drawing lines."
on the [claim] that those are engendered by the configurations of the celestial sphere. Ahmad [Ibn Hanbal], Abū Da‘ūd, Ibn Maja and others have reported from Ibn ‘Abbās, with a sound chain of transmitters, that he said: ‘The Messenger of God, God bless him and grant him peace, said: ‘Whoever seeks to learn anything from the stars seeks to learn something from magic, and the more he seeks it the more he does.’142 The Messenger of God, God bless him and grant him peace, has clearly declared that astrology (‘ilm al-majmū‘) pertains to magic. And God said, Exalted is He: ‘The magician thrives not, wherever he comes’ (Q. 20:69). And so does it happen: induction proves that the people who deal in astrology (ahl al-majmū‘) do not thrive, neither in this world nor in the hereafter. Ahmad [Ibn Hanbal] and Muslim, in the Sahīh, have reported from Sahīya,143 daughter of [Abū] ‘Ubayy, from some of the wives of the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, about the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, that he said: ‘Whoever frequents a soothsayer (‘arāf) and asks him a question about anything, no prayer is accepted from him for forty days.’144 Yet, the astrologer comes under the term ‘soothsayer’, according to some scholars while, according to others, it has the same meaning. That being the situation of the person who puts the question, how then, a fortiori, [must] things be for the one questioned? [Muslim] also reported in his Sahīh, from Mu‘āwiyah b. al-Hakam al-Sulami,145 that he said: ‘O Messenger of God,’ I said, ‘there are people, among us, who frequent diviners.’ He said: ‘Do not frequent them!’146 The Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, thus prohibited the frequentation of diviners. Yet, the astrologer comes under the term ‘diviner’ according to al-Khaṭābī147 [194,1] and other scholars, this [assimilation] being related from the Arabs. According to others, the astrologer belongs to the genius of the diviner and is in a worse situation than him. Thus, from the viewpoint of [its] meaning, [‘astrologer’] comes after [‘diviner’].

142 See Ibn Hanbal, Musnad, i, 227 (‘Alam. 2697); Abū Da‘ūd, Sunan, Tīh, iv, 15–16, 3903 (‘Alam. 3406); Ibn Maja, Sunan, Adab, ii, 1228, 3726 (‘Alam. 3716).
143 Daughter of one of the great followers, who lived in Madina; see Ibn Sa‘d, Taḥqīq, trans. Bowley, Women, 305.
144 See Ibn Hanbal, Musnad, iv, 68, v, 380 (‘Alam. 76041, 22138); for Muslim, see p. 162, n. 47.
145 A Companion, who lived in Madina; see Ibn al-Athir, Usd, iv, 384–5.
146 See Muslim, Sahīh, Manāsik, ii, 70 (‘Alam. 836).
In the Sahih, it is also reported about him, God bless him and grant him peace, that he said: ‘The price given for a dog is disgusting, the “dower” of a prostitute is disgusting and the “tip” (balaqe) of a diviner is disgusting.’¹⁴⁹ His ‘tip’ is what the common people call his ‘sweetener’ (balaqe). In what is meant by this is also included that which is given to the astrologer, to the [soothsayer] using devices¹⁵⁰ by means of which he casts lots (for example a wooden piece on which A, B, J, D are inscribed),¹⁵¹ to the [fortune-teller] throwing pebbles¹⁵² and to their like. What is given to those is of a forbidden nature. More than one of the ‘ulama’, like al-Baghdawi,¹⁵³ al-Qadi ‘Iyad¹⁵⁴ and others, have spoken of a consensus as far as forbidding it is concerned.

In the two Sahih, it is [reported] from Zayd b. Khaliq¹⁵⁵ that he said: ‘The Messenger of God, God bless him and grant him peace, spoke to us at al-Hudaybiyya, after a rainy night. “Do you know,” he said, “what your Lord has said this night?” We said: “God and His Messenger know better!” He said: “Some of My servants entered this morning believing in Me and, some, disbelieving in Me. He who said: “We have had a rainfall due to God’s

¹⁴⁹ Ibn Taymiyya in fact mixes the two following hadith reported by Muslim: ‘[The Prophet] prohibited giving a price for a dog, a “dower” to a prostitute and a “tip” to a diviner’ (Muslim, Sahih, Bay?‘, v. 33; ‘Alam, 2930). [The Prophet] said: ‘The price given for a dog is disgusting, the “dower” of a prostitute is disgusting and the earning of a copper is disgusting.’’ (Muslim, Sahih, Bay?‘, v. 33; ‘Alam, 2932; trans. Sidiq, Sahih, ii, 823, 3806. On this last kind of earning, see R. Branschwig, Mei?eri, 47-50.)

¹⁵⁰ Sahab al-a?lam, i.e., literally, ‘the [soothsayer] using arrows’. This expression, which refers to a divinatory technique condemned in the Qur’?n (see 5:3, 590), eventually designated all kinds of for-casting procedures, in which the forbidden arrows were replaced by other things, for example the alphabet letters here mentioned by Ibn Taymiyya. See T. Fabi, Divination, 181-8.

¹⁵¹ See the two for-casting pieces, made of solid brass and bearing letters and cryptic symbols on their four faces, reproduced in E. Savage-Smith, Science, i, 159, no. 111.

¹⁵² On the popularity of for-casting, particularly that employing dice, in medieval Islamic society, see ibid. 155.

¹⁵³ Ibn al-Far? (Bagh, near Harra, c. 432/1040 – Marw al-Rudi, 516/1122?), Shafi‘i doctor, theologian and commentator of the Qur’?n, whose The Lamps of the Sunni (Masalit al-Sunnat), a collection of traditions arranged according to their subject-matter, still enjoyed a certain popularity. See J. Robert, El, ‘al-Baghdawi’.


¹⁵⁵ A Companion (d. 798/997); see Ibn al-?hidr, U?d, ii, 228.
favour and His mercy’ is believing in Me and disbelieving in the
planets.”

In Muslim’s Sahih, it is [reported] from Abu Hurayra, about the
Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, that he said: ‘God does
not send down any blessing from the sky but a group of people enter
the morning disbelieving in it. God sends down abundant rain and
they say: ‘It is due to such a planet, or to such a one!’’

In Muslim’s Sahih, it is also [reported] from him, God bless him and
grant him peace, that he said: ‘There are, in my community, four
things that belong to the Age of Ignorance (jahiliyya): boasting of
noble pedigrees, reviling [others’] lineages, waiting and asking the
stars for rain.’

In it is also reported from Ibn ’Abbās, about the Prophet, God bless
him and grant him peace, that he said: ‘‘And do you make it your
livelihood to denounce it as lies?’ (Q. 56:82): this [verse] refers to
asking the stars for rain.’’ Or as he said:’

THE PRACTICAL MEASURES TO TAKE
AGAINST ASTROLOGERS

The texts reported on the authority of the Prophet, God bless
him and grant him peace, his Companions and the rest of the imāms,
that prohibit [astrology] are too numerous for us to be able to
mention them in this place. Yet it is already obvious, by virtue of
what we have mentioned, that the wage got for such an [activity], any
gift or [act of] generosity [related to it], are of a forbidden nature,
for the payer as well as for the payer. For owners, inspectors and

See al-Bukhārī, Sahih, Bukhārī, i, 169 (‘Ālam. 801); Muslim, Sahih, Imam, i, 59
(‘Ālam. 104).

A Companion (d. c. 586/786), 21, ‘Abū Hurayra’.

See Muslim, Sahih, Imam, i, 59 (‘Ālam. 108).

See ibid, “al-‘Imām, i, 60 (‘Ālam. 107); trans. Sthānī, Sahih, i, 45, 135): Ibn ’Abbās
told me this. (Once), at the time of the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace,
people were showered with rain. The Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace,
them said: “Some people have entered the morning thanking [God] and others as
unbelievers. These indeed said: ‘This is God’s mercy’, while the others said: ‘Such
and such stars were veracious.’” The following verses, he said, then came down: “I swear
by the locations of the stars. And this is indeed a mighty oath, if you but knew! It is
indeed a noble Qur’ān, in a hidden Book. None shall touch it but the purified. A
sending-down from the Lord of the worlds! Is it such a discourse that you would
swear? And do you make it your livelihood to denounce it as lies?’” (Q. 56:82).

This formula is used when one reports faithfully the meaning of some saying
but is uncertain of the exact wording.
trustees, it is also forbidden to let to these unbelievers and perverts, for such a use, shops owned [by them] or established as shrines, etc., if in their opinion the [judging] prevails that they will practice in this damned sorcery.

It is also incumbent, on the authorities and on every [Muslim] able to do so, to endeavour to put an end to it and to prevent them from holding seances in shops or on the thoroughfares, or from coming into people's houses, in their homes, for such a purpose. If one does not do that, let these words of the Exalted suffice for him: 'Nor did they prohibit one another from the condemned actions which they committed' (Q. 5:79), as well as these words, Praised and Exalted is He: 'Why do not the rabbis and the doctors prohibit them from saying sinful things and devouring unlawful gains?' (Q. 5:65). Those damned people do indeed, according to the consensus of the Muslims, say sinful things and devour unlawful gains. It is also established about the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, following a report related about him by the Truthful [Abu Bakr] that he said: 'When people see something condemnable and do not change it, God is about to extend over them all a chastisement of His.' And what condemnable thing could be more so than the actions of those disgusting people, the vermin of the religions (muhâfiz), the enemies of the Messengers and the offshoots of the Sabians, the planet-worshippers? Was not the mission of [Abraham] the Friend [of the Merciful], God's blessing and His peace be upon him, the imam of the true monotheists (hâfit), directed but against the ancestors of those [planet-worshippers]? Nimrod,162 Kâ'irîn's son, was indeed their king, and the doctors of the Sabians are indeed the astrologers and their like. And the idols, were they not worshipped, most of the time, but because of the views of this disgusting species of individuals, who devour people's wealth by vain procedures and divert from the way of God?164

163 The Nimrod of the Bible, without being named, is alluded to in the Qur'ân (2:38, 29, 24) in relation to the story of Abraham. Many legends developed about him in Islam, borrowing not only from the Bible but from the Jewish Haggada and Persian epic. See B. Heleus, E., 'Nimrod'. See also the text translated in the following note, where Ibn Taymiyya seems in some way to assimilate Nimrod to the Buddha.
164 For Ibn Taymiyya, idolatry most often derives from astrology. 'The Greeks and the Romans were associators, as mentioned earlier. They worshipped the sun, the moon and the planets. They built temples for them on the earth and represented them in the form of idols, that they considered as talismans of them. It was an association of the [same] kind as [that practised by] Nimrod, Kâ'irîn's son, and his people, to whom Abraham, the Friend of God, God's blessings and peace be upon him, was sent.
[196] For whoever, among those people who claim some connection with practising the religion of a Book, seeks strength from [such condemnable practices] it would be appropriate to make their own this part of the words of [God]: 'And when a Messenger from God came to them, confirming what was with them, a group of those who had been given the Book cast the Book of God behind their backs, as if they did not know. They followed what the devils were reciting over Solomon’s reign. Solomon did not unbeliev but the devils unbelieved; they were teaching men magic. [They also followed] that which had come down on the two angels in Babylon, Harut and Marut, although these two taught no one till they had said: “We are but a trial; therefore do not unbeliev!” So people learn, from these two, things by which they bring division between a man and his wife. They are however injuring no one thereby, except by God’s permission. They are thus learning things that harm them and do not profit them! And surely they do know that he who traffics therein, for him there is no share of happiness in the Hereafter. And evil indeed is that for which they have sold their souls! Had they but known! If they had believed and feared [God], a reward from God would indeed have been better! Had they but known!’ (Q. 2.101–3)

Likewise, the leaders of the astrologers, ancients and moderns, have in fact recognized that those who have faith, accomplish the acts of worship and invoke [the Lord], God relieves them by virtue of the blessing of their acts of worship, their invocations and their trust in Him, from things that the astrologers claim to be necessarily implied by the celestial spheres. They also recognize that the people accomplishing the acts of worship, invoking God and having trust in Him are given, as far as the reward of this world and of the hereafter are concerned, something the getting of which is not in the power of the celestial spheres.

The praise, then, be to the God Who has put the best [thing] of this world and of the hereafter in following the Messengers and Who has made the best community those who command what is to be acknowledged and prohibit what is to be condemned. (See Q. 3.109.)

He said, Exalted is He: ‘God will bring people whom He will love

There are remains of such an associationism in the countries of the Orient—the countries of the Khuras [Khuras] and the Turks. They make idols that have the form of Nimrod. These idols are very big, and they attach rosaries to their necks. They praise the name of Nimrod and insult Abraham, the Friend of God.’ (Radd, 283–4.)
and who will love Him, lowly with the believers, mighty against the unbelievers. They will fight in the way of God and will not fear the blame of any blamer. That [197,1] is God’s favour. He gives it unto whom He will. And God is All-Embracing, All-Knowing.’ (Q. 5.54).

God supports and helps [one] to be religious and to follow the way of the believers. And God, Praised and Exalted is He, knows better and is Wiser.

FATWA III

[197,3] HE WAS ASKED, may the Exalted
God have mercy upon him:

about the art of astrology and the drawing of indications from the [stars] as to the events. Is it licit or forbidden? Is it licit to get a wage [for it], and to offer the same, or not? And is it incumbent, on the authority (usul ‘l-amr), to prevent the [astrologers from practising] and to make them cease holding seances in [their] stalls?

HE ANSWERED:

Of course, this is forbidden by the consensus of the Muslims, as is getting a wage for it. To prevent⁵ the astrologers from holding seances in [their] shops and on the thoroughfares, to prevent people from engaging them and to oppose that has a share in the most eminent striving (zahād) in the way of God. And God knows better!

APPARATUS CRITICUS

P. 166. ^mas‘ala fi-man MK: wa su‘lā rahimahu-Llāh ‘an-man F
He was also asked, may God have mercy upon him, about the person... ⁴yaqūlu F: yaqūliňa MK They also say, ⁴matā MK: hattā law F. And even if it... ⁴al-a‘wāb MK: fā-ajāba F. He answered: ⁴rabū al-‘alamīn c-MK: b-Llāh F

P. 167. ^rubūbiyyati-hi MK: rubūbiyyati-hi F ⁴qdār MK: qawl F ... is something said in addition, of... ⁴madāj MK: nida‘ F ⁴la-hum Fr: – MK ... by it such... ⁴mashhāda F: mashhāda MK well known ⁴hayāt F: – MK ... up some...

P. 168. ^mā anzala Llāh min al-sāma‘ min K (Q. 2.164): anzala min al-sāma‘ F And He sends down water from the sky... anzal-nā min
al-sama’ M And We send down water from the sky... 8mashhada F: mashhurah MK well known 8mushrik F: shirk MK ... independently, this is associationism conflicting with... 8al-nujum F: al-najm MK ‘star’ P. 169. 8ka-ma F: qad + MK ... may happen... 8nal’ F: nahah MK He refused death... 8athar MK: atharan F 8bi-ann Allah MK: bi-anna F 8yuruzluh MK: yanzulu F min + MK: nas’al-ka F P. 170. 8min MK: wa F 8yattaqi MK (Q. 65.2): yattaqi F 8F only quotes the beginning and the end of this passage of the Qur’an 8 – MK: fi F P. 171. 8la-hum MK: la-huma F 8F only quotes the beginning of this verse 8bi-l-kitab F: fi l-kitab MK ... in the Book, P. 172. 8’arnwâ F: naw’ MK ... the species of... 8ya-yuqru’-hâ MK: yuqru’-hâ F ‘sama’ MK: al-sama’ F ... of the heaven 8al-sama’ F: sama’ MK ... to this world’s heaven ’wa rubba-mâ adraka-hu l-shi’ah F: ‘wa – MK ... them, after He pronounces that word, He has...’ inti lamna M: inti F atâ (?) lamna K 8il + MK: qala F P. 173. 8al-adilla MK: al-dalîla F 8quqbal F: qa’qbal Allah MK, God does not accept from him any prayer for... 8’taqidina MK: taqaddum F P. 174. 8bal MK: fa-inna F The texts indeed prove... 8mustaqiqa MK: mustiriq F 8MK: min F 8ba’d + MK: mawr F ... of people... 8li-l-ramy bi-l-nujum MK: al-ramy bi-l-najm F P. 175. 8 – MK (Q. 35.5): wa F 8 – MK (Q. 2.189): wa F P. 176. 8allati MK: alladhi F ‘wa l-awal MK: wa l-awwal F the first 8min qawal al-nabi MK: fi qawla-hi F 8qalal F: qalil F ‘FM P. 177. 8wa dhalaika + MK: dhalaika F 8smihil + MK: yazumu F ... hold that opinion about... 8’tiqâd MK: tiqâdhu F 8’taqda MK: al-mu’taqid F 8madamma MK: anzama F P. 178. 8anna hâdha: hâdha MK anna hunna F 8al-qadar MK: al-qadr F 8sharh-hi F: sharhi-hi K ... rise, sharhi-hi M P. 179. 8usafiru F: nasîfu MK 8al-harâmisa F – MK ... to Hermes and... 8ayaslu F: – MK ... if this... 8’anna-mâ yahattajina F: mî yahattajina ’alay-hi MK Yet, what those argue for depends on experience and analogical reasoning, not on information... (?) P. 180. 8’ala F: ‘an MK from P. 181. 8’lmi-him al-musaddaq F: ilm al-sidq MK ... knowing the truth than... 8al-ta’diq MK: al-ta’diq F 8’da’a’ MK: di’aya F 8’da’ah K 8rasuli F: rasu’li MK Messengers 8am MK: la F P. 182. 8bal + MK: nabîyan F ... Prophet and a sage 8F only gives the beginning of the verse 8A’zam min-mâ MK: nazîr mî F ... finds vain things and elements of error similar to what is found... 8la+: kânû MK ... they exonerate... 8martaba MK: risba F
P. 183. 3a‘immati-nā F: ummati-nā MK community 3hawādirīb F: jauādirīb MK ... and the attraction forces of the atmosphere?)
P. 184. 3ikhlāṣān MK: ikhlāfān F ... and differing in opinion than...
1hābghātī fa-awwal F: tabā‘ulā ilā awwal K ... since they followed the first who had started the rafid innovation. He was ... tabā‘ghāwāh (1) ilā awwal M 3ibrā‘a‘a‘a MK: ibrā‘a‘a‘a MK 3qādā‘a F 3qādā‘a MK: fa-qasada F 4fa-
qasada F: fa-fasada MK ... also corrupted that [religion] and...
P. 185. 4ff F: al-yawm + i MK The third day, 3anna Ibn Saba’ yawībub F: man sabība F 3kattamā kallamā FMK ... and spoke about him, while. 3Tal-Hanāfiyya MK: al-Hanīfa F
P. 186. 3alālik MK: al-‘alālik F 3itsalān wa indimmān MK: ittsīrāl wa indimmām F 3hādhā l-zamān al-qārib MK: al-zamān F Over a period which...
P. 187. 4n F: al-mulk F: al-mulk wa F ... of the royal rules, the faiths... 4hi-
mubāyynat al-ḥāwī al-nabī sALLāh ‘alay-hi wa salātāmā wa ummati-hi MK: al-mubāyynat al-ḥāwī al-nabī sALLāh ‘alay-hi wa salātāmā F 4al-adха-i MK: al-adха-i-ibm F
P. 188. 4fi F: al-i MK ... about Abraham’s family. 4fi F: al-i MK (Q. 2, 130): inna-hu F 4la-nin MK (Q. 2, 130): 3‘an F 3wa qalāa + MK: muslinma F
P. 190. 4al-jummad al-kahīr MK: al-jumlad al-kahīr F 5sab‘ānà F: thālāthhānā FKM ... he 31 years, 4al-n F: ‘alam FM 4hi-shāwī F: yarubhū K (bi-thawbī ... but in the gash of some element...? 2ff 4bi-sab‘ān MK: bi-sab‘ā F 4al-khūl F: al-khūl MK ... about this topic, 4qalāma F: wa 1hamdu l-lāhī rabbī 5alamānu wa salāmānu-hu wa salāmānu-hu ‘alālā Muhammad wa bi-hi ajmā‘a‘a MK ... better! The praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds! His blessing and His peace be on Muhammad and on all his family!
P. 195. 5al-nilah al-mulk F
P. 197. 5man‘e: min F

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ADDENDUM

I had already corrected the first proofs of this article when K. Yamamoto and C. Burnett published their edition and translation of Abu Ma'shar, On Historical Astrology. The Book of Religions and Dynasties (On the Great Conjunctions), i: The Arabic Original; ii: The Latin Versions (Leiden: Brill, Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science. Texts and Studies, xxxii', 2000). This magisterial work is a very important contribution to the study of astrology in Islam and, had it been available earlier, I would certainly have had frequent recourse to it. Here, I cannot do more than indicate passages that are particularly worth consulting in relation to the following notes to my translation.

n. 4 (p. 148): on Abu Ma'shar's interest in Aristotelian natural philosophy, see i. 607-9.

n. 112 (p. 211): on Abu Ma'shar's linking of the Arabs to Venus, see i. 66-7, 126-7, 606, ii. xii.

n. 123 (p. 185): on Abu Ma'shar and al-Kindi's prognostications of the date when the rule of Islam would end, see i. 126-7 (Abu Ma'shar's Arabic text, with English transl.), ii. 83 (Abu Ma'shar's Latin text) and i. 532-3 (al-Kindi's Arabic text, with English transl.). For the authors (i. 525-6, 606, 613), neither of al-Kindi and Abu Ma'shar can have copied from the other on this matter and it is 'highly probable' that both were drawing from a third source, perhaps MshhAllah.

n. 126 (p. 186): on the calculation of Islam's duration by means of the numerical values of the 'mysterious' letters of the Qur'an, see i. 534-7 (al-Kindi's Arabic text, with English transl.).