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## ‘Alī ibn ‘Īsā al-Aṣṭurlābī

Marvin Bolt

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### *Flourished Damascus, (Syria), 832*

‘Alī ibn ‘Īsā al-Aṣṭurlābī, author of an early Arabic treatise on the astrolabe and an opponent of astrology, enjoyed renown as an astronomical instrument maker and contributed to observations initiated by the ‘Abbāsid caliph **Ma’mūn**. He took part with **Khālīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Marwarrūdhī** and others in an expedition to the Plain of Sinjār to measure 1° of latitude and, thus, the size of the Earth. ‘Alī ibn ‘Īsā made astronomical observations at Baghdad in 829/830 and at Damascus in 832-833. He divided the mural quadrant used for the Damascus observations to confirm results of the earlier missions.

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Sayılı, Aydın (1960). *The Observatory in Islam*. Ankara: Turkish Historical Society. (See Chap. 2, "Al Mamūn's Observatory Building Activity," pp. 50-87, for a valuable discussion, beginning with a thorough analysis of early Islamic astronomical observations.)