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## ‘Uṭārid: ‘Uṭārid ibn Muḥammad al-Ḥāsib

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*Flourished* **9th century**

‘Uṭārid ibn Muḥammad is sometimes also referred to as al-Kātib (the scribe), but the usual appellation, al-Ḥāsib (the arithmetician), is more appropriate. Little is known of his life. Ibn al-Nadīm tells us that he was an arithmetician and an astrologer (*al-munajjim*) as well as a man of excellence and learning. From Ibn al-Nadīm we also know the titles of five books by ‘Uṭārid:

- (1) *Kitāb al-Jafr al-hindī* (Book on Indian divination), which may have dealt with divination based upon letters of the alphabet or perhaps meteorological predictions;
- (2) *Kitāb al-‘Amal bi-’l-asṭurlāb* (Book on using the astrolabe);
- (3) *Kitāb al-‘Amal bi-dhāt al-ḥalaq* (Book on using the armillary sphere);
- (4) *Kitāb Tarkīb al-aflāk* (Book on the arrangement of the heavens); and
- (5) *Kitāb al-Marāyā al-muḥriqa* (Book on burning mirrors).

There is also a report that ‘**Abd al-Raḥman al-Sūfi** saw a book of ‘Uṭārid (in latter's own handwriting) about the 48 constellations. In addition, both **Birūnī** and **Sijzī** attribute to ‘Uṭārid a *Kitāb al-Miḥna al-munajjim* (Book on examining astrologers), a work specifically for testing the skills of astrologers. A text with a similar subject is by **Qabīṣī**. None of the above mentioned works attributed to ‘Uṭārid are extant.

Of ‘Uṭārid's works, only two have reached us. One is an astrological work entitled *Sirr al-asrār* (Secret of secrets) or *al-Asrār al-samāwiyya* (The secrets of the heavens), and also known as *Fuṣūl li-‘Uṭārid al-Ḥāsib fī al-asrār al-samāwiyya*. One can find excerpts in **Majritī**'s *Ghāyat al-ḥakīm* that deal with the astrological topic of elections (*ihktiyārāt*). The other is *Kitāb al-Jawāhir wa-’l-aḥjār* (Book on the properties of stones), perhaps the earliest work of its kind in Arabic, which follows the so called Lapidary of **Aristotle**.

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