

Manuel I Komnenos and Michael Glykas: A Twelfth-Century Defence and Refutation of Astrology

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Abstract

Manuel Komnenos I, Emperor of the Byzantine Empire composed a defence of astrology to the Church Fathers, in which he asserted that this discipline was compatible with Christian doctrine. Theologian Michael Glykas, possibly imprisoned and blinded by Manuel for political sedition, refuted this defence, claiming that the astrological art was heretical. This is the first time that this exchange of treatises has been translated into any language since their composition in the twelfth-century. The introduction sets these works into their historical framework, at a time when the belief in the validity of astrology was held by some of the best scholars of this century as a result of the flood of Arabic astrological translations coming into the Latin West and Greek East. The writings of these two antagonists precipitated anew in mediaeval thought the problem of the correct relationship between man, the celestial bodies and God who dwelled in Heaven.

Part 1. History and Background

Introduction

Manuel I Komnenos, emperor of the Eastern Byzantine Empire from 1143-1180 wrote a public defence of astrology to the Church Fathers, integrating his belief in the astrological science with Christian doctrines.¹ Michael Glykas, a monastic theologian, responded to this letter with a famous refutation.² While Manuel's astrological defence, aside from legislation and dialogues in which he is featured, is his only surviving document,³ this is the first time that it, as well as Glykas' refutation, have been translated from the Greek since their composition in the twelfth century. The lack of academic interest in these two tracts points to the marginal position in which historians have placed the field of astrology as

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a body of knowledge in the Middle Ages. However as Lemay asserts, 'It has always been a great mistake of historians of mediaeval thought to minimize or to totally overlook this field of inquiry as of no importance or as having negligible bearing on the intellectual outlook of the time'.⁴

The first part of this introduction presents an overview of the historical development of astrology in antiquity faced with the continual opposition from both pagan philosophers and Christian writers. The debate that takes place between Manuel and Glykas over the validity and legitimacy of astrology was not an isolated twelfth century exchange between an emperor and a monk, but the continuation of a long tradition of controversy over what was the proper relationship between the divine and the stars. The question of whether a belief in astrology constituted heresy was at the core of their dispute, and the significance of what transpired between Manuel and Glykas can best be comprehended when placed within a larger historical context.

Manuel lived during an intellectual revival of astrological thought, and his stance on the subject, far from being a superstitious defect of his character, was reasonable and in accordance with the interests and beliefs of some of the best scholars of his time. Glykas, in his repudiation of Manuel, was drawing upon a long standing anti-fatalistic tradition of both pagan philosophers and Christian writers who condemned the notion that the stars, rather than human or divine will, determined a person's fate and destiny.⁵

The conflict of opinion between these antagonists over astrology mirrored the tension that existed between the two of them in their personal lives. Modern historians, if they even mention this dispute at all, generally denigrate Manuel as a 'dabbler in astrology',⁶ while depicting Glykas as a learned, conservative, Orthodox theologian, whose response to Manuel 'shows him at his critical best'.⁷ The second part of this introduction will explore the biographies of each man as they pertain to the issue at hand, and question the traditional assessments of their characters. Manuel was a well-educated individual who had access to the tradition of ancient scholarly astrological texts and his dedication to astrology was revealed from his serious commitment to supporting translation of occult texts in his court. And digging deeper into Glykas' life reveals a man who had dual identities, the devout scholar and the shadowy figure who in his youth was known for his occult interests, suspected of political sedition against Manuel, and imprisoned and blinded by his Emperor for sorcery.

The two primary source biographies for the life of Manuel were written by John Kinnamos [hereafter Kinn] and Nicetas Choniates [hereafter Chon].⁸ Kinnamos was the official historian for John II and Manuel I Komnenos, having spent a number of years in Manuel's service and often accompanying him on military campaigns. An admirer of the Komnenii dynasty, he composed his history within two years of Manuel's death and is generally considered to be the more accurate of the two biographers. He was silent on the subject of astrology.

Choniates' work recounts several incidents in which Manuel used astrology in both his professional and personal life. Choniates, who was still a youth when Manuel ascended to the throne, wrote his account near the end of his own life around 1215, many years after Manuel's death. He is quite critical of the Komnenii rulers and blames Manuel for the subsequent decline of the Byzantine Empire. While his distance, both in regard to time and proximity to the royal family, gives him more perspective on the consequences of Manuel's policies, it also contributes to the many factual inaccuracies found in his work.

Byzantine Astrology and the Opposition to Stellar Fatalism.

1. The Problem

The relationship between the stars, the gods - and God - was central in the determination of whether or not a belief in astral influences implied a corresponding inevitable fate for human beings. When astrology first appeared as a mode of divination in the second millennium BCE in Mesopotamia, their appearances and movements signified portents of coming events; but because the stars were understood as one of the manifestations of the gods, the gods themselves could be (and were) entreated to change their minds. Thus the future signified was by no means fixed and inevitable, and consequently there existed no concept of astral fatalism.⁹

In Greek philosophy Plato and Aristotle concurred that the stars were living intelligences and composed of divine material.^{10, 11} When the Greeks identified the planets and stars, they gave them the names of gods, such as the star of Aphrodite signifying the planet Venus, and those of heroes immortalized in the constellations, such as Hercules. Thus, in later Greek thinking, the general concept of divinity was embedded in notions of celestial bodies.

With the advent of Hellenistic astrology, there existed, on one hand, a mystical current as evidenced in the hermetic writings that were said to have been divinely revealed. The hermetic treatise *The Poimandres* spoke of the planets as governors of fate, but whose decree one could escape through *gnosis* and union with God.¹² There also existed a more predominant scientific current which was clearly articulated by Ptolemy. He utilized Stoic and Aristotelian doctrines to assert that the planets were material and functioned as the physical causes of sublunar change.¹³ When the Stoic viewpoint that all of nature operated according to a law of necessity leading to predictable and inevitable results was incorporated into astrological doctrine, the concept of an unalterable astral fatalism was born. Because sentient divinity had been removed from the stars, which now operated according to natural mathematical laws rather than by the will of the gods, they could no longer be entreated to reverse negative portents. Similar to the extreme deterministic position of Stoicism, the only choice allowed through a knowledge of one's fate as revealed by astrology was whether to accept it willingly or unwillingly.

It was to this state of hopelessness resulting from the unchangeable decree of the celestial bodies that the polemics of the anti-fatalism against the stars were addressed. The pagan philosophers affirming the power of human will over the stars utilized scientific arguments to invalidate the precepts of astrology. And the Christian writers asserted that the will of the monotheistic God was superior to that of the stars. The saving grace of Christianity was the conviction that believers could be liberated from the astral decrees, and that it was the presence of Christ in the world that freed them from this tyranny.

The philosophical dilemma is rooted in the contradiction between the assumption that, if the stars are sentient and operate by divine will, they can be entreated, and therefore are not fatalistic on the one hand, and the implication then exists that they are of a divine nature which has volition and power on the other. Yet, if the stars are not sentient and operate according to physical laws of necessity, they cannot be entreated. Thus, though not divine, they are fatalistic and invalidate human free will. From a Christian point of view, if the stars are alive and can be entreated, they challenge the supremacy of God. If they are fatalistic and deny human choice, the system of reward for righteousness and punishment for sin, the efficacy of prayer, God's salvation for the repentant, and Judgment all become meaningless.

Let us now turn to a discussion of the opposition against the fatalism of the stars in the context of astrology's historical development and its

provisional use by the emperors. The alternating rise and fall of astrology through the centuries culminated in the twelfth century with an intellectual revival that occurred in the lifetimes of Manuel Komnenos and Michael Glykas.

2. From Babylon to Byzantium

The concepts of Mesopotamian celestial omen divination from the second millennium BCE that had been imported into Hellenistic Egypt were imbedded with the tenets of an astrological religion in which the stars and planets were manifestations of the gods. Scientific Hellenistic astrology gradually divested the stars of their associations with the gods, although the more spiritual conceptions continued to survive in esoteric traditions of late antiquity such as the hermetica and theurgy.¹⁴ When astrological doctrines first entered into Rome, they were dismissed or viewed with suspicion. However, by the first century BCE they had gained acceptance by the Roman elite, because of the pervasive influence of Stoicism that both spoke of the cosmic sympathy existing in all parts of the universe and maintained the validity of divination.

Hellenistic philosophy tended to object to astrology on technical and dialectical grounds rather than because of its curtailment of human freedom.¹⁵ While Posidonius was 'much given to astrology'¹⁶ Cicero, dismissing the subject, stated that he concurred with Panaetius, the only leading Stoic to have rejected astrology and spoke at length about the problem of the twins.¹⁷ The Epicureans, in their belief that the gods were not concerned with human affairs, discredited the astrological art as they did all forms of divination. The Skeptics discounted the possibility of ascertaining positive knowledge of any discipline, and included astrology in their attack, suggesting that it must have been sufficiently influential at that time to merit their denunciation.

This limited opposition did little to stem the astrology's spread and the first Roman emperors were heavily involved with their court astrologers, Thrasyllus and his son Balbillus, who were advisors in turn to Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero. The emperors frequently outlawed the practice of astrology, fearing that political rivals were using it to plan revolts based upon the determination of their vulnerable periods, while simultaneously employing it for their own benefit.¹⁸ In the first century CE astrology was approaching its peak of popularity and influence as evidenced by the works of astrologers such as Dortheus of Sidon and Teucer of Babylon, and the philosophers were quiet on the subject.

Greek astrology peaked in the second century CE which saw the production of substantial literature by Vettius Valens, Claudius Ptolemy, and Antiochus of Athens.¹⁹ Taking the staunch fatalistic position, Valens wrote that it was useless to offer prayers and sacrifices to the gods since all was ruled by an inexorable fate.²⁰ Ptolemy, favoring a less deterministic stance, refuted absolute astral determination and added the factors of heredity and environment to the formation of character.²¹

In general the critics of astrology did not deny that the stars had influence over terrestrial events; this was a basic precept of Aristotle's natural philosophy which held that all sub-lunar change was effected by the movements of the celestial bodies. What was questioned was the effect that the planets had on human will as well as the astrologer's ability to predict these influences. Issues concerning the fatalism of the stars became paramount.

The opposition to astrology from the second century onwards centered around the issue of fate and free-will. The philosophers challenged the notion that the stars rather than human will were the arbiters of a person's destiny, a belief that allowed for a denial of moral accountability for one's actions. The Christians concurred with this objection, adding the concern that the will of God should be greater than the power of the stars to effect results in the world. If human actions were pre-determined and inevitable, what was the incentive for the apportionment of rewards and punishments for one's choices.

The rationalist Favorinus of Arles (85-155) and the Pyrrhonian Skeptic Sextus Empiricus (late 2nd century) attacked astrology primarily on the scientific grounds that it was impossible to determine all of the manifold planetary and stellar influences and to accurately determine the exact moment of birth for the calculation of the horoscope.²² Favorinus asserted that the idea that every human action, even the most trivial detail, was immutably predestined was ridiculous and unbearable. Sextus Empiricus claimed that it was impossible to make an accurate prediction in regard to someone's actions because they had no original predetermined cause.²³

The Peripatetic Alexander of Aphrodisias presented the argument that would become the core of the mediaeval compromise on the issue of determinism. He conceded that all physical matter was under the control of the stars, but maintained that this influence did not extend to the realm of the soul and human decision.²⁴ Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-215) acknowledged that while 'astrologers can indicate the desire which a

malignant power [planetary configuration] produces, 'the acting out of that desire' depends upon freedom of human will'.²⁵

The third century saw a decline in the scientific rationalism which had previously characterized Greek philosophy, and with the advent of Neoplatonism a trend toward a more mystical philosophical world view emerged. In astrology this became manifest in the proliferation of astral cults such as Mithraism, Sol Invictus, and the astrological cosmologies in the *Corpus Hermeticum* and Gnostic *Pistis Sophia*.²⁶ Christian writers voicing strong opposition to pagan philosophy also became prominent. When they directed their attention toward astrology, they objected to an astral fatalism that denied the power of God to intervene in His creations, that provided knowledge of the future acquired through human divination rather than divine inspiration, and the outright worship of celestial bodies as gods. The Christians, in general, maintained that all forms of magic and divination were the invention of the devil.

Tatian, in his assault upon pagan philosophy (c. 180), clearly associated the demons with the gods of Greek mythology who, embodied in the stars and constellations, introduced 'the doctrine of fate-ordained nativity.' Whenever 'the light of one of them was in the ascendant' they would be amused as the fortunes of people rose and fell.²⁷ Tertullian of Carthage (c 200) asserted that it was the fallen angels who brought forward magic and astrology, warning that these wiles were forbidden by God and should not be practiced by Christians.²⁸ The notion that the stars were evil powers was also evidenced in the doctrines of some Hermetic and Gnostic sects whose practitioners sought to free their souls from the tyrannical power of the stars, ascending through successive planetary spheres to heavens where they could reside beyond the control of the planets. These notions most likely arise from the *Apocryphal Book of Enoch* which recognized the connections of angels and stars, whereby the angels who attended the phases of the moon and the revolutions of the sun and stars taught mankind the various occult arts.²⁹

The problem of the star of the Magi as related by Matthew in the New Testament was an ongoing obstacle to the early Church Fathers, and there were many attempts to dismiss the implications that Christ was subject to the decree of the stars. Ignatius proclaimed that the star at Christ's birth, heralding God's presence in human form, was so brilliant that magic was destroyed, ignorance dispelled, and the rules of demons ended.³⁰ Tertullian put forth the explanation that astrology and magic had been permitted only until the birth of Christ, so that afterwards no one should interpret the nativity of another from the heavens. The dream sent

to Magi telling them to return home by a different route was a message that they should 'walk otherwise' and abandon their former practice of astrology.³¹ In the following centuries other Christian writers would add to this explanation the notion that the star was not truly a star.

Early in the third century the great Church Father Origen and the Neoplatonist philosopher Plotinus, who both were students of Ammonius Saccas of Alexandria, set forth similar views on the nature of the stars. They concluded that the stars were signs of coming events rather than the actual physical causes of those events. The merging of religion and philosophy in late antiquity, as characterized by Neoplatonism, was in large part a reaction to the scientific rationalism of earlier Greek philosophy. It is probably no accident that many of the Neo-Platonists were of Semitic origin and this would account for some similarity between their teachings and Babylonian astral doctrines. Plotinus denied that the stars caused evil, and adhering to the doctrine of unity in the universe, he maintained that the stars could be seen as God's handwriting in the heavens announcing the future for those capable of reading it.³² Origen added that these signs were revealed for the instruction of divine powers, such as angels, that are greater than humans, and that God's foreknowledge did not necessitate the foreknown events. While granting the stars influences as signs, he fully articulated the problem of how a belief in astral determinism destroyed the concept of free-will, upon which the basic premises of Christian doctrine stand. Origen thus set the stage for the consideration of astrology as a heretical creed.³³

The fourth century opened with the ascension of Constantine the Great (306-357) to the throne of the Roman Empire. In 330, after he had established his capital at Constantinople and converted to Christianity, he began the process of Christianizing the empire. As part of an anti-pagan legislative effort, a series of secular and church laws were instituted over the next century (in 438 Theodosius II codified these laws, along with other imperial legislation, in the Theodosian Code), including injunctions against magicians and astrologers under penalty of death, although the use of astrology for medical and agricultural purposes was excluded from punishment.

In 319 Constantine declared that any soothsayer who approached someone's house would be burned alive and the person who summoned him exiled and his property confiscated.³⁴ However, he excluded from punishment those magical practices which sought medical remedies for human bodies or weather cooperation for agricultural purposes in rural districts.³⁵ In 357 Constantius II decreed that "the inquisitiveness of men

for divination shall cease forever," and ordered death by sword for those who consulted soothsayers, astrologers or diviners.³⁶ In 358 he ruled that any person imbued with magical contamination...even an astrologer who was found in his retinue would not be protected by his high rank from being sent to the torture house where iron claws would rip out his sides.³⁷ The Emperors Valentinian and Valens in 373 forbade the teaching and learning of astrology,³⁸ and Honorius and Theodosius in 409 required that astrologers burn their books in the presence of bishops and return to the Catholic religion under penalty of exile.³⁹

The Council of Nicaea in 325 classified those whose beliefs fell outside of the strict Church doctrines as heretics, and astrologers fell into this category. In 365 the Council of Laodikea forbade the clergy to be astrologers or magicians, and the Constitution of the Apostles in the 4th century refused astrologers, along with debauchers, magicians, and philosophers, the rite of baptism.⁴⁰ This repression of all kinds of divination can be seen as part of the struggle against paganism whose methods of foretelling the future rivaled Christian prophecy. However, there exists much evidence that these laws and edicts were not strictly enforced nor obeyed, even by the emperors themselves, which was not unlike the responses of the first Roman emperors. The historian Ammianus Marcellinus recounted that the emperor Valens (364-68), upon being told by the astrologer Heliodorus of a plot against him, made Heliodorus his own astrologer and gave him a high office.⁴¹ During the turbulent reign of Emperor Zeno (474-91) a group of horoscopes dating 474-88 have been preserved in later compendia which were cast by astrologers employed by Zeno analyzing the prospects of his political rivals.⁴²

In fact, astrologers continued to compose new works, as well as compiling, editing, and teaching the doctrines of their predecessors. The fourth century marks the transition of the classification of astrological literature from that of late classical to Byzantine, and writings from a host of astrologers have survived, including Pancharious, Maximus, Paulus Alexandrinus, Anonymous of 379, Hephastion of Thebes, and Proclus.⁴³

Christian writers continued to assail astrology, and these ongoing attacks suggest the extent to which people continued to cleave to the art. Singling out all the groups which he considered to be heretics, Epiphanius of Cyprus (315-403) denounced astral fatalism in the context of his attack upon the Stoics and Pharisees and claimed that the Pharisees translated the Greek names of zodiac signs and planets, and thus 'introduced the untenable, insane, nonsense of astrology to the world'.⁴⁴

Basil of Caesarea (330-79), in a discourse reconciling examples of natural science with the processes in the six days of Creation, recognized that the moon 'makes all of nature participate in her changes.' However, he denied that the stars could indicate human personality, claiming the impossibility of determining the exact moment of birth. He also objected to the notion that a 'malefic star' was evil either by the dictate of its Creator who made it or evil by its own volition, which notion suggested that stars are endowed with intelligence and will.⁴⁵

John Chrysostom (347-407) wrote a frequently cited homily concerning the Magi and the Star of Bethlehem in which he discredited the implication that the story of Christ's birth as related by Matthew could be interpreted as a verification of astrology. Reiterating the sentiments of Tatian, Ignatius, and Tertullian, he asserted that 'the star was not a star at all... but some invisible power transformed into the appearance of a star' as was evidenced from its unusual course. Its divine nature was so powerful that its mere appearance was sufficient to bring the barbarian Magi to the feet of Christ.⁴⁶

But it was Augustine (354-430) who made the most extensive and influential condemnation of astrology during this era. In the *Confessions* he admitted that once he was attracted to astrologers but after his conversion to Christianity, he vehemently denounced the fatalism of astrology as 'having the effect to persuade men not to worship any god at all'.⁴⁷ In the midst of a host of other arguments, he acknowledged that accurate astrological predictions are due to the help of demons and that while the stars affect terrestrial change, 'it does not follow that the wills of men are subject to the configurations of the stars'.⁴⁸ In another work Augustine discussed the problem of the Star of Bethlehem and, like Chrysostom, asserted that it was a new star that shone *because* Christ was born and its purpose was to point the way for the Magi to find the Word of God.⁴⁹

During the reign of Constantine and his sons, Julius Firmicus Maternus demonstrated that Christianity and astrology could be compatible. Writing in Latin, he composed a textbook on astrology, the *Mathesis*, and an exhortation to abolish pagan cults. Answering the Christian objections to astrology, he maintained that through prayer to an omnipotent Deity who governed the universe, humans could resist the decrees of the stars.⁵⁰ The polemics of the theologians and the secular and holy decrees had little effect upon the astrologers. They did not bother to defend their art, they simply continued to practice it. The fourth century was the most prolific period of Byzantine astrological literature. As for

those who consulted astrologers, as today, their desire to know their destiny obviously outweighed their concern that the belief in such an art might nullify their free will.

In 476 the Roman Empire in the West came to an end, and with its collapse, knowledge of the Greek language virtually died out. Along with the loss of the language, knowledge of astrology, which had been predominantly written in Greek, disappeared.⁵¹ In the East, while Latin was the official language, it was Greek that was actually used throughout the empire. Many astrological writings remained available, and thus the teaching survived over the next thousand years, in spite of continued periodic opposition from the Christian Church. Two years after the ascension of Justinian in 527, the philosophical schools of Athens were closed and many pagan scholars emigrated to the more liberal courts of Persia, as well as to those in Harran and India. In Persia and India, Greek astrological texts were translated into Pahlavi and Sanskrit, and these would later find their way into Islamic literature in the eighth and ninth centuries, and thence return to Byzantium in the eleventh century and the Latin West in the twelfth century.

But Justinian, like Constantine before him, could not completely eradicate the activities of the astrologers. The names of the astrologers Olympiodorus (c 564), Julian of Laodica (c 500), John of Lydus, and Rhetorius of Egypt were prominent astrological writers and teachers in the sixth and seventh centuries.⁵² After the fall of Alexandria to the Arabs in 642, the contributions of its resident Greek astrologers to the Byzantine Empire ceased, and the relentless opposition of the Church finally effected a general decline of astrology over the next two centuries. There do not appear to be any significant theological attacks, and this suggests that the problem had been put to rest, at least for the time being.

At the end of the eighth century, Stephanus the Philosopher moved to Constantinople from Baghdad where he had studied with Theophilus of Edessa (d.785), the Greek-speaking military astrologer of the Caliph al-Mahdi. Stephanus brought with him a treasury of astrological manuscripts from the library at Baghdad. As such, he was said to have reintroduced the art back into the Byzantine Empire.⁵³ These manuscripts then appear to have passed through the hands of Leo the Mathematician who was a ninth century scholar, teacher, and astrologer in Constantinople as well as an archbishop of Thessalonika for a period of time.⁵⁴

There was no further influx of Arabic astrology into Byzantium in the ninth and tenth centuries. However, by the late tenth well-known

astrologers such as Demophilus and Theodosius edited and compiled compendia of excerpts of ancient astrological books which began to circulate for the first time in many centuries, initiating the beginnings of an astrological revival. By the early eleventh century during the Komnenian period there was a proliferation of Greek translations of Arabic astrological works, by such astrological authors as Mash'allah, al-Kindi, Abu Ma'shar, and Achmat the Persian, and the translation of the *Karpos* or *Centiloquium* falsely attributed to Ptolemy.⁵⁵ Virtually all of the thousands of astrological manuscripts listed in the *Catalogus codicum astrologorum Graecorum* that were compiled in Byzantium date from the twelfth to fifteenth centuries.⁵⁶ It was in the midst of this astrological revival that gradually but steadily increased, peaking in the fourteenth century, when astrologers such as John Katrones, John Abramious, and Eluetherias Zebelenos revised major classical and early Byzantine astrological treatises, that Manuel's advocacy of astrology took place.

The re-discovery of ancient astrological knowledge that came in large part through Arabic channels was not confined to the Byzantine East. In the Latin West a similar phenomenon began about a century later. With the re-conquest of Spain (1085) and Sicily (1060-91), scholars were drawn to these areas to partake of the knowledge of the Saracen cultures. Here they translated Islamic material, a great deal of which had been derived from ancient Greek writers, whose teachings the Arabs had preserved and modified.

It was in the area of science that this intellectual revival was most pronounced, and the medical, scientific, and mathematical treatises contained elements of *astrologia*, i.e., astrology seen as the practical application of theoretical astronomy. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries a vast body of both Greek and Arabic astronomical and astrological works were translated into Latin. Richard Lemay argued that it was through the translation of Abu Ma'shar's *Greater Introduction* that Aristotelian natural philosophy entered into the West some twenty years before any specific work of Aristotle's natural philosophy was actually translated into Latin.⁵⁷ Many twelfth century scholars who were interested in natural sciences associated with Aristotle were also firm believers in the validity of astrology, including Adelard of Bath, John of Seville, Hermann of Carinthia, William of Conches, Bernard Silvester, Roger of Hereford, Daniel Morley, Raymond of Marseilles, Robert of Chester, Alfred of Sareshel, Alanus de Insulis and Raoul of Longchamp.⁵⁸

In the following century Aristotle would be Christianized, purged of astrology and pantheistic cosmology that had been embedded into his philosophy by the Arabs. However, 'In the twelfth century,' as Tullio Gregory said, 'astrology was one of the physical sciences men had to study—as a physical science, not as something based on imaginary data—because it really was a positive science for mediaeval men'.⁵⁹ That all operations of the inferior world of nature were governed by the movements and influences of heavenly bodies was universally accepted until the sixteenth century.⁶⁰

Thus Manuel's interest and belief in astrology must be seen in light of the twelfth century intellectual renaissance that was taking place in both the Byzantine East and Latin West, an era when substantial translations of astrological works from Arabic were contributing to the shaping of the scientific world view. While knowledge of astrology had disappeared in the West, the tradition had been relatively continuous in the East, and the revival that had begun during the reign of Manuel's grandfather Alexios I was swelling in Manuel's own lifetime. That he had access to this vast compendia of literature is attested by the catalog of astrological works which were a part of the special 'restricted' collection in his own imperial library,⁶¹ and his knowledge of the art was based upon the recent availability of the works of ancient Greek authors and the best of the Arabic astrologers.

Manuel was not unique in his sentiments. Greenfield, discussing politics and magic in twelfth century Byzantium, underscores this fact:

Nevertheless, when emperors ...make use of astrology when making important decisions, when leading intellectuals and scholars seriously discuss magical practices and cast horoscopes, when manuscripts of sorcery that require extremely high levels of erudition are copied and employed, and when senior churchmen are condemned for using, and actually being practitioners of magic, it is quite clear that what is being dealt with here is not to be dismissed as 'superstition,' as the misguided, ignorant, and unrepresentative beliefs of a lowly social group or a few isolated individuals, but is something that was an integral part of general Byzantine culture and thought.⁶²

This new wave of ancient scientific knowledge, including that of astrology, hit the Latin West when Manuel was Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire. In his endeavors to break down the barriers between East

and West through a cultural exchange of ideas, Manuel could not help but be aware of the intellectual renaissance that was occurring. He found in the scholarship of the West a confirmation that his own beliefs in astrology were in complete accordance with those of the best thinkers of his generation and saw himself as an active participant in the intellectual renaissance of his time.

In arguing his defence Manuel drew upon a fifteen hundred year tradition of Western astrology that steadfastly survived despite continual attacks from philosophers and theologians. As an upholder of the Orthodoxy, he sought to reconcile his religious and scientific convictions in the assertion that astrological beliefs were not heretical. Glykas, also well-educated in religious, scientific, and occult matters drew upon the equally resilient tradition of opposition to the fatalism of the stars in his refutation of Manuel's defence. He was the first person in many centuries to stir up all the old objections. Manuel Komnenos and Michael Glykas are two voices who, in the twelfth century, summarize and re-articulate for their era the ageless debate concerning humanity's correct relationship with the stars.

Manuel I Komnenos and His Dedication to Astrology

Manuel I Komnenos was an advocate of astrology and his court was known for its interest in divination and wonders. While astrology was by no means his main enterprise, it shaped the way that he viewed the world. In his 1993 biography of Manuel, Magdalino challenges the traditional less-than-favorable view of this emperor arguing that Manuel's reign was, 'in some sense the high point of medieval Greek civilization.'⁶³ However, he is at a loss to understand Manuel's strong commitment to astrology, wondering if it derived from a particularly successful astrological prediction or if he had fallen under the spell of charismatic astrologers.⁶⁴

Manuel's position on astrology did not arise from an uninformed and uncritical acceptance of a superstitious belief nor was it an idiosyncratic mark or character defect of an otherwise rational man as his contemporary biographer Choniates maintained.⁶⁵ Rather, well-educated, widely read, and distinguished for his profound intellect Manuel lived at a juncture in time when his natural interest in astrology as part of his cultural and familial heritage coincided with a renaissance in the West in which some of the best scholars of the century likewise believed in the validity of this art.

Divinatory Signs of Manuel's Destiny

Born on November 28, 1118,⁶⁶ Manuel was the fourth and youngest son of John II and the Hungarian princess Eirene. After receiving a mortal wound in a hunting accident while on campaign in Cilicia in 1143, John II proclaimed Manuel, who was accompanying him at the time, heir, even though he had an older son Isaac in Constantinople.⁶⁷ Many signs and portents confirming his nomination surrounded the new emperor, still a young man in his early twenties.

Both Kinnamos and Choniates record the speech that John II made on his deathbed in which he justified his choice of the younger son over the elder (Kinn. 1.26-27; Chon. 1.1.45). While praising both of his sons for virtue, nobility and intelligence, John II deemed that, 'my last-born son would be the better administrator of the empire'. He goes on to affirm that, 'proof that God has destined and chosen him to be emperor are the many predictions and prophecies of the men beloved of God, all which foretold that Manuel should be emperor of the Romans' (Chon. 1.1.45). Kinnamos gives us further words that John uttered,

'I would tell you also some of the tokens which revealed the present fate to him [Manuel], except that I am aware that these things are deemed irrational by the multitude; for nothing leads more easily to slander than stories of dreams and predictions of the future' (Kinn. 1.28).

Thus not only did the young Manuel have a sense of having been chosen to rule by destiny, but these passages also reveal the seriousness with which his own father believed in portents. The use of the word 'prediction' has the uncanny connotation of astrological prediction. It was the custom for the nativities of potential rulers to be cast and evaluated for indications of success or failure. Thus Manuel's predilection for astrology may have been part of a family tradition which before him had not been made public or had been played down for the reasons that his father explicitly stated. Manuel's paternal aunt, Anna Komnena, in *The Alexiad* (a history of her father, Alexios I's, reign), admitted that 'we also at one time investigated in this [the astrological science]', although she qualified this admission with the fact that she despised it.⁶⁸

Choniates, who was scathingly critical to Manuel's devotion astrology, himself believed the prophecy of the renowned seer, Niketas the Bishop of Chonai, who happened to be his godfather. When the young emperor

passed through his land on his way to claim the throne in Constantinople, many doubted Manuel's ability to wrest it from his older brother who was ensconced in the Great Palace. The seer proclaimed that Manuel's sovereignty had been ordained and decreed by God, and he also predicted that Manuel would go mad toward the end of his reign (Chon. 2.7.121). This story highlights the distinction that was made by the Church in the Middle Ages between the knowledge of the future gained through divination by stars and that acquired through Christian prophecy. That the future could be known was not contested, but the means by which this was accomplished was a critical doctrinal issue. Manuel succeeded to the throne in a peaceful manner, and was crowned at St. Sophia on March 31, 1143. The time of his coronation was noted and the astrological chart of this event is preserved in a twelfth century codex (see Fig. 2).⁶⁹

Well known for his great stature, personal charm, and swarthy good looks, Manuel cut a dashing figure. He was noted for his physical strength, bravery, skill in battle, and willingness to share the toils of his soldiers while on campaign. A brilliant statesman, he was also renowned for his broad intellect (Chon. 2.1.50-51). Well educated, he had a particular interest in science and medicine, enjoyed discussing philosophy and immersing himself in theological debates as an arbiter of Orthodoxy (Chon.2.7.212-219). He simultaneously supported monasticism and held a lavish and extensive court where he promoted the arts and literature. His appetites for sensual pleasures, banqueting, reveling, and women were legendary (Chon. 2.1.54).

Manuel and His Relationship with the Latin West

Manuel was a lover of all things Latin; he sought to interact with and emulate the culture of the West, gaining the reputation of a Latinophile. His strong affinities were due, in part, to personal relationships. He was born to a Hungarian mother Eirene and married to two Western princesses, the German Bertha of Sulzbach (renamed Eirene after her marriage) and the Norman Mary of Antioch. But even more it was his expansive and curious intellect, prompting him to explore and expand the horizons of his mind beyond the limits of the Eastern empire that led him to establish cultural connections with Westerners. This extension to the West was also prompted by his foreign policy whereby he sought to acquaint himself with and utilize the skills and knowledge of the West as a means by which to strengthen his empire from the threats of their encroachment.⁷⁰

For all these reasons, not the least of which was his aspiration to a cosmopolitan self-image, he welcomed foreigners from all nations to his magnificent court, whether they be Germans, Normans, Italians, French, or English. He employed them as soldiers, appointed them to diplomatic and civil administrative positions, and gave them grants of land (Chon.2.7.200). This policy generated tremendous anger among the Byzantines leading to a national hatred which erupted in the reign of Andronikos.⁷¹

In addition to receiving many Latin missions, Manuel sent a continuous succession of Greek embassies to the West, with a reciprocal exchange of scientific and literary knowledge.⁷² It has been suggested that this was a deliberate policy in an attempt to dissolve the barrier between East and West. The western crusading movements that passed through Byzantium generated an awareness of new trends that existed outside of the borders of the Eastern empire. Manuel's policy of cultural foreign exchange aimed at introducing these Latin ideas in order to stimulate Byzantine thinking;⁷³ this policy also allowed Manuel himself ample opportunities to be in contact with the new intellectual movements that were percolating in Western Europe.

In particular a renaissance was occurring in Western Europe that was precipitated by the flood of translations from Arabic of ancient Greek scientific and philosophical treatises. These included several hundred astrological works which were imbued with the doctrines of Aristotle's natural philosophy. Manuel's questing intellect that looked westwards saw that astrology was being considered by scholars as a legitimate aspect of natural science, and thus he found confirmation of his own beliefs as well as the assurance that he was a 'man of his time'.

Manuel as a Patron of Astrology

Let us now turn to the evidence of the ways in which Manuel patronized astrology and the occult arts in his court. Astrologers were no newcomers in the Komnenian courts. The art was flourishing in Byzantium in the eleventh century when vast compendia of astrological writings were being compiled by well known astrologers such as Theodosius and Demophilus.⁷⁴ Anna Komnena gave a detailed description of a number of astrologers who were active at the court of her father Alexios I (1081-1118) and whom many people consulted. Anna mentioned the names of the astrologer Seth who accurately forecast the fate of Robert Guiscard, the Egyptian Alexandros who gave correct a prediction to the Emperor

himself, the Egyptian Eleutherius, and the Athenian Catanances. Even though Alexios I consulted astrologers upon occasion (he inquired into the significance of the great comet that appeared for 40 days just prior to the first crusade), Anna stated that he showed 'some hostility' to the teaching out of fear that the guileless would reject their faith in God and gape at the stars instead.⁷⁵ Anna's attack on astrology clearly showed the powerful hold that it had on her contemporaries, in spite of the effort of past emperors to abolish it. Her father's hostility was not due to a disbelief in the art so much as to a concern for the people in his role as the protector of the Faith.

Manuel was likewise surrounded by astrologers whose names are unknown. Among the artists and writers who were patronized at Manuel's court, we have evidence of two poets who composed astrological poems and several scholars who were commissioned to translate occult treatises that were a part of the special collections of Manuel's library.

John Kammateros who became archbishop of Bulgaria ca. 1183 was Manuel's drinking companion and shared his interest in astrology. Kammateros wrote two astrological poems which he dedicated to Manuel. In *On The Zodiac* he used primary sources of ancient astrologers such as Hephaiston of Thebes and Rhetorius of Egypt and made many classical allusions in his discussion of the twelve signs of the Zodiac, planets, fixed stars, the decans, and all matters of genethliology and catarchic astrology.⁷⁶ The *Introduction to Astronomy*, written in the political verse of the vernacular, was directed to a more popular audience, explaining the terrestrial influences of the stars on matters such as civil war, poor crops, unsuccessful campaigns.⁷⁷

Theodore Prodromos is another name that comes up in connection with astrological poetry. He was court poet to Empress Eirene Doukaina, her son John II, and her grandson Manuel. He dedicated a lengthy astrological poem to Manuel's sister-in-law, the *Sebestokratorissa* Irene, who had gathered around her an array of literary talent.⁷⁸ Recent scholarship has shown that this poem may have been written by Constantine Manasses, who also belonged to her circle.⁷⁹

Twelfth century scholars flocked not only to Spain and Sicily in order to avail themselves of the ancient knowledge that was now available for translation, but also some found their way to Manuel's court to discover the treatises that had been stored in Byzantium. There they learned Greek and made Latin translations of a number of occult works from Manuel's library, some of which were of restricted circulation. A brief catalog of the astrological works from this collection has survived.⁸⁰

An Italian writer, Pascal the Roman, who was known for his interest in occult matters appeared at the Byzantine court and, at Manuel's order, translated in 1169 the alchemical *Kiranides*--a treatise on the ancient lore of animals, stones, and plants which makes reference to other works on the magical virtues of herbs and planets. While at Manuel's court, he also compiled the *Liber Thesauri occulti*, a dream book from Latin, Greek, and Arabic sources, citing Aristotle and Hippocrates.⁸¹

The Pisean Leo Tuscus, a career diplomat and Greek scholar from Pisa, served Manuel as imperial secretary during the 1176 Asiatic campaigns. While in Manuel's orb, he was credited with translating from the Greek to Latin the *Liturgy of St. Chrysostom* as well as the *Oνειροcriton*, a ninth century dream book of Ahmed ben Sirin who also wrote an astrological treatise extant in Greek.⁸² References to Manuel occur in connection with other alchemical treatises which he collected and commissioned. Michael Scot mentions his name along with that of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa, in his *Summula* and the *De Perfecto Magisterio* states that it was taken from the 'Liber Emanuelis'.⁸³ The legend of Prester John, a Christian holy man living in India, was widely circulated in the twelfth century. He was said to have written a letter to Manuel which described the wonders and marvels of the East. Manuel then purportedly transmitted this letter to Frederick, who then saw to its Latin translation.⁸⁴ While this letter has since proven to be a Western forgery, it points out that Manuel's reputation for his occult interests spanned the divide between East and West.

We also see Manuel's direct participation in facilitating the exchange of learning in the areas of astronomy and divination. He sent a beautiful codex of Ptolemy's *Almagest* as a diplomatic gift to the court in Sicily. Henricus Aristippus, one of the principal Sicilian translators carried this and other manuscripts from Manuel's library, and it was from this copy that the first Latin translation was made in 1160 by a visiting scholar who wrote that he was assisted by Eugene the Emir who had translated Ptolemy's *Optics* from the Arabic.⁸⁵

Eugene the Emir was also associated with the translation from Greek to Latin of the prophecy of the Erythraean Sibyl, an oracular forecast of the deeds of kings and emperors. This text explicitly stated that it was brought from the treasury of Emperor Manuel, having first been translated from Chaldean by Doxopater who appeared as imperial nomophylax (i.e. guardian of the laws) at Constantinople during Manuel's reign.⁸⁶

Manuel actively supported the translations of astrological, alchemical, and other occult works in his own court and his astrological knowledge was based upon direct contact with ancient scholarly texts, as opposed to hearsay. In addition, by providing astrologically related texts from his own library, he participated in a larger effort to make this knowledge available to the countries outside of his empire. These actions can be seen as attempts to enhance his own status and to establish his court as a center and source of ancient knowledge, comparable to the translation activities taking place in Spain and Sicily. Manuel had pride in his astrological identity and had no qualms about making it public.

Manuel's Personal Use of Astrology

Manuel's personal use of astrology was described by Choniates, who relates that astrologers advised the Emperor on auspicious times for beginning political actions, kept him apprised of upcoming significant planetary alignments, were present at the birth of his son, and in attendance during Manuel's last months of life (Chon.2.2.96;5.154; 5.169; 7.220-21). Manuel relied upon astrological considerations in his decisions concerning military affairs and in the aftermath of the Second Crusade of 1147, he prepared a second expedition (1154) under Constantine Angelos against Roger II of Sicily, who had attacked Greek cities just as the Crusaders were first passing through and plundering Byzantine territories. Manuel determined the time of the fleet's departure by means of astrological timing. According to Choniates:

Manuel held the reprehensible belief that the retrograde and progressive motion of stars and their positions, as well as the configurations of the planets, their proximity and distances, influence the fortunes and circumstances of human life; and he believed in all those other things that astrologers falsely attribute to Divine Providence while deceptively introducing such phrases as 'it is decreed' and 'the decrees of Necessity are unchangeable and irreversible.' In such fashion he determined that Angelos' expedition would be propitious.

Having made the necessary arrangements, he sent Constantine Angelos on his way. But what happened? The sun had not set before Constantine returned at the emperor's command, for the departure had been ill-timed, and Angelos had set out when there were no favorable configuration of the stars to decree such an action, or

rather there was an inaccurate reading of the tables of the astronomical sphere. As the babblers conceded, they were guilty of making indiscriminate projections, and consequently they erred in finding the propitious time for undertaking the expedition. The horoscope was cast once again and the astrological tables carefully scrutinized. And thus, after a searching investigation, close inquiry, and careful observation of the stars, Angelos moved out, urged on by the beneficent influence of the stars.

So advantageous was the determination of the exact moment to the success of Roman affairs, or in redressing the failures of the preceding commanders, and in redeeming every adversity, that forthwith Constantine Angelos was delivered into the hands of the enemy (Chon. 2.2.96)

In the next decade Manuel faced a coalition of Normans, Serbs, Hungarians, and Kievans in which he had some successes. At the battle of Semlin, in 1167, against the Hungarians, just as the Byzantine general was about to charge into battle, a courier suddenly arrived bearing a letter from Manuel ordering the commander to put off the engagement until another day. Choniates comments:

That particular day was rejected as being unlucky and unfavorable for a military encounter, but since the successful completion or failure of great and mighty deeds depends on the goodwill of God, I do not know how it was that Manuel could put his trust in the conjunctions and positions and movements of the stars, and obey the prattle of astrologers as though they were equal to judgments coming from God's throne (Chon. 2.5.154).

The general ignored Manuel's order and went on to victory. The only incidents that Choniates relates are those in which Manuel's astrological judgments were in error. It could be surmised that because of the historian's anti-astrological attitude, it is unlikely that he would have included the successes. However, unless Manuel had seen positive results gained by taking planetary configurations into consideration, he would not have continued to make use of the art. What is clear, however, is Manuel's attentiveness to astrology and his confidence in its practitioners, even in regard to major military undertakings and affairs of state.

Concerning Manuel's private life, Choniates acknowledged the presence of astrologers at the pivotal moments of birth and death. When the pregnant Empress went into labor:

The sight of the emperor, who was in attendance and anxious for his wife, eased her pangs; even more, he cast frequent glances at the stargazer, the gaper at heavenly signs. Since it was a male child that issued forth from the womb, and the astrologers' art predicted that he should be blessed, a child of destiny, and successor to his father's throne, prayers of thanksgiving were offered up to God, and everyone applauded and rejoiced (Chon. 2.5.169).

Kinnamos offers the additional insight that the birth of this son was a vindication of a stance that Manuel had taken in regard to a theological dispute concerning the superiority of the Father to the Son. During a discussion of the controversy he received news of his wife's miscarriage of her first pregnancy. He made a supplication to God that if he was mistaken, would that he never bear another child, but if his opinion was pleasing, to allow this hope be fulfilled quickly (Kinn. 6.257). Manuel's previous children from his first wife were two daughters. A male heir who would survive to succeed to the throne was even more important than a military victory, and Manuel looked to his astrologer for immediate confirmation of his son's destiny who was born not long after this entreaty.

It was during the final months of Manuel's life that an incident occurred, described by Choniates in a lengthy condemnation of the Emperor's belief in astrology. He stated that Manuel's astrologers foretold the coming of a grand planetary alignment that would precipitate the eruption of violent winds and that consequently Manuel had the glass removed from the imperial buildings and ordered that caves and underground places be prepared for habitation and protection from the winds (2.7.220-21). Choniates disparagingly described their activity as:

... being glib of speech and accustomed to lying, they foretold the ... convergence and conjunctions of the largest stars, and the eruption of violent winds. Not only did they reckon the number of years and months and count the weeks until these things would take place and clearly point them out to the emperor, but they also designated the exact day and anticipated the very moment as though they had

precise knowledge of those things which the Father had put in his own power' (2.7.221).

In the years immediately preceding Manuel's death, various prophecies began to be made concerning a grand conjunction of planets on September 16, 1186. Manuel's Byzantine astrologers were in active correspondence with their Arab and Western colleagues, predicting that there would be great political and natural disasters, including violent weather upheavals.⁸⁷ But Manuel who, as it seems, was part of the international community of scholars who at that time believed in the validity of astrology, had every reason to take their warnings seriously. As protector of the empire, the responsible action from his perspective would be to take the necessary precautions for the safety of his people.

At the onset of his serious illness in March 1180, Manuel did not accept his approaching death, because his astrologers who were in attendance had predicted that he would soon recover and live for another fourteen years to yet level cities to the ground. Thus, even though Alexios II was still in puberty, Manuel refused to make provisions for the running of his government during his son's minority. By September of 1180, as his symptoms worsened, he finally appointed his Norman wife Mary as regent, renounced his earlier trust in astrology on the advice of the patriarch, and taking the monastic habit as was customary, passed away in the thirty-eighth year of his reign.

Manuel's Reception of the Provocative Letter

At some point during his reign, probably in the 1170's, a letter criticizing astrology and denouncing its proponents as heretics was put into Manuel's hands by the Patriarch.⁸⁸ It had been written by a simple monk of the Pantokrator Monastery which had been founded by Manuel's father John II and funded by the Komnenian dynasty. Given the extent of Manuel's belief and use of astrology, and his support of the art in his court, Manuel could not help but take it as a personal affront. Moreover, as Emperor and Defender of the Faith, he could not allow a charge of heresy to be directed against himself. In addition to being a staunch supporter of the Orthodoxy, he relished doctrinal debate, and thus composed a defence of the subject, employing arguments from ancient astrologers, scriptural passages, and the writings of Church fathers. Michael Glykas, who by this time had a reputation for theological astuteness, and who maintained that he had been unjustly wronged by

Manuel some years earlier, wrote a refutation. Let us now turn to Glykas' story as it relates to the exchange of these documents.

Michael Glykas and His Motivation for the Refutation

There exists much evidence to suggest that Michael Glykas, the conservative theologian who wrote a refutation against Manuel's defence of astrology was the same person as Michael Sikidites who was convicted of sorcery, and imprisoned and blinded by the orders of Manuel. Some scholars have proposed that Glykas' punishment was the direct result of his criticism of Manuel's use of scriptural passages whereby he accused him of falsifying the claims that the Church Fathers supported the astrological art.⁸⁹ However, it seems more plausible that Glykas' refutation was, in part, an act of retaliation against the emperor due to his conviction that he had been falsely accused of magic in connection with political sedition, and consequently an attempt to redeem his reputation.⁹⁰ Let us try to unravel the mystery of Glykas' identity and the motivation for his critical refutation of Manuel's defence of astrology.

Michael Glykas was born in the first third of the twelfth century on Corfu, and served as *grammatikos*, an imperial secretary, in Manuel's court until 1159.⁹¹ While in his later writings he took a stand against astrology, he was quite knowledgeable in the subject as evidenced in his *Chronicles*.⁹² In the earlier part of his life he was known for his interest in the occult and, as such, the young Glykas would have easily fitted in with others in the imperial environs.⁹³

Glykas' Suspected Role in the Political Conspiracy

In 1158-59 while Manuel was on an expedition to Cilicia and Syria, a conspiracy to overthrow his throne occurred in Constantinople. It was led by Theodore Stypepiotes, the 'keeper of the inkstand' and head of the civil administration. According to Manuel's official biographer Kinnamos, Stypepiotes 'foretold to many, as if from a prophet's tripod, that the span of the emperor's life had already been measured out,' and that the Roman senate should bestow authority upon a more mature man who would conduct 'the state's business as in a democracy' (Kinn.184). When Manuel was informed of the plot by his empress Eirene, he sent orders to arrest and blind Stypepiotes and the other conspirators.

It was at the very time of Stypepiotes' disgrace that Glykas was being held in prison, as was Manuel's cousin Andronikos, who was a continual

source of trouble because of his own aspirations to the throne.(After Manuel's death, Andronikos, usurping power, executed Manuel's wife and heir Alexios II and installed himself as Emperor). An anonymous Syrian chronicle states that Manuel made peace with Nureddin 'because he had heard that Andronikos, one of his nobles, had rebelled in the capital',⁹⁴ causing him to cut short his campaign. While Andronikos was 'allowed' to escape, saving the Emperor the embarrassment of having to convict a close relative of treason, Glykas was partially blinded and retained in prison for some years afterwards. The specific charge against Glykas is not known.

While all the twelfth century historians give varying accounts of this conspiracy, none of them explicitly link Glykas, Styppeiotos, and Andronikos as co-conspirators.⁹⁵ Kresten speculated that Glykas may have been instrumental in composing the prophecy in folk verse about the approaching death of the Emperor and putting it into circulation.⁹⁶ Astrologically based predictions concerning the imminent death of an emperor as part of sedition plots were a common practice as far back as Augustus, whose edicts against astrologers were aimed to prevent this very thing.⁹⁷

Michael Glykas *alias* Michael Sikidites

The matter might have ended there, except for the fact that Choniates, who did not mention the name of Glykas in his history, did relate a story about a Michael Sikidites who was punished with blinding and imprisonment by the command of Emperor Manuel for his 'devotion to astrology and the practice of demonic magical arts' (Chon. 2.4.148). Sikidites was reported to have put magical spells upon a boatsman and bathers in a bathhouse, 'tricking them into believing that what they saw was real, and diverting his viewers as he conjured up ranks of demons to attack those he wished to terrify' (Chon. 2.4.148). After being deprived of his sight, Sikidites became 'tonsured as a monk, and composed after some time a treatise on the Divine Mysteries' (Chon. 2.4.150) concerning the corruptibility of the Eucharist which was to provoke a great theological debate and divide the church toward the end of the century.⁹⁸

Many of the biographical details of the life of Michael Glykas correspond to those of Michael Sikidites as set down by Choniates. Choniates confirmed that it was 'the false monk Sikidites who introduced this novel doctrine, 'and that there was an attempt by the Patriarch John Kamateros 'to subject to anathema its author as heresiarch' (6.2.514).

Michael Glykas also authored a theological chapter on the corruptibility of the Eucharist that took the same position as the one attributed to Michael Sikidites by Choniates and is the subject of such an attack. In another work.⁹⁹ Choniates stated, 'In regard to the court of Manuel Komnenos there was a certain man by the name of Michael, whose surname was Sikidites, who was counted among the imperial secretaries'.¹⁰⁰

While Michael Glykas was imprisoned he wrote a note as a preface in one of his manuscripts of verse in which he stated that he was a *grammatikos* who was blinded by the Emperor due to false rumors, and then turned to the writing of holy books in monastic solitude:

The distinguished *grammatikos* wrote the above lines while he was imprisoned hoping that they would be shown to the holy king and he would receive his freedom. But he did not manage to obtain his objective. For ignoble rumors were spreading everywhere at that time strongly rousing that kind and quite reasonable man to anger. These things happened: A swift royal command came from Cilicia and because the matter had not been examined, he was blinded but continued his profound education as it was before the inquiry. What to do after these things? He received a flood of woes. He took responsibility for this situation. He did not fall down before suffering. He bore the misfortunes of his trial nobly. He was not troubled because of this, but rather he allowed that these events were graces to the one who accedes to God and he spoke according to the words of divine David, 'It is good for me that I was afflicted that I might learn your statutes.' (*Ps.* 119.71) In this way he embraced the solitude and he became engrossed with sacred books.¹⁰¹

Given the facts that both men were imperial secretaries, both were imprisoned and blinded by the command of Manuel, both then turned to 'holy books', and both were attributed with writing a controversial doctrine on the Eucharist, there exists strong evidence that Michael Glykas and Michael Sikidites were the same person. Apparently Glykas was only partially blinded as he was able to continue reading and writing, and there is no mention of a reader assisting him with literary tasks. The difference in surnames may be explained by the monastic custom of taking on a new name. Another explanation offered by Kresten is that the Greek meaning of Sikidites is a derogatory term indicating a melon or cucumber which has connotations of 'a loser.' Alternately it means fig

which has obscene overtones and may therefore have been used to ridicule him after his disgrace.¹⁰²

Dating the Refutation

During Glykas' confinement in the years after 1159 he composed a number of political verses, including a six hundred line poem entitled 'Verses While Held Imprisoned' that beseeched Manuel for his release, claiming that he had been falsely accused.¹⁰³ It was written in vernacular speech, a new literary form in the twelfth century, and incorporated oral proverbial lore that he knew would appeal to the literary tastes of the Emperor.¹⁰⁴ In this poem he lamented about his misery because of the ill will of his neighbors who defamed him, implying that he was falsely charged. However, there is no mention of an apology for his critique of Manuel's astrological exposition, and this omission strongly suggests that it was not for this reason that he was condemned. Kresten points out that the fact that Glykas lost his eyes had nothing to do with the fact that Manuel didn't like his poem in the folk language, but because a charge of conspiracy did not allow any leniency.¹⁰⁵

If it is the case that Glykas' imprisonment was on account of the accusations, either rightly or falsely, of conspiracy, and his contribution to the plot was the composition of folk verses predicting the Emperor's imminent death, this would account for the charges of demonic acts, especially in connection with his reputation for astrological knowledge. If afterwards he then turned to the writing of holy books within a monastic context, we can dismiss the argument that he was punished because he attacked Manuel's astrological beliefs and criticized his integrity in interpreting scriptural doctrines. Therefore we can look to a later date for the composition of the astrological refutation.

The astrological refutation was letter number forty of a collection of ninety-five letters contained in Glykas' work known as the *Theological Chapters*.¹⁰⁶ Covering a wide range of topics, they were written as responses to both monks and lay persons who were seeking spiritual guidance from him. Krumbacher has given convincing proof that this corpus of letters was composed by Glykas toward the end of Manuel's reign 1170-80 and in the time following his death.¹⁰⁷ There did not appear to be any repercussions from Manuel at this time because of the letter. We must even question if perhaps it could have been written after Manuel's death in 1180. However, the introductory tone of the letter suggests that it was being written to a living person.

Glykas was correct when he pointed out that some of the claims that Manuel made regarding the writings of the Church Fathers were simply not supported by the evidence of the texts themselves. And if, in fact, Glykas had repented his former occult interest in the light of his theological conversion, he may truly have believed that astrology was heretical. However, there also is a thinly veiled bitterness and sarcasm in the letter, and as Kresten pointed out, this response can be understood as a kind of literary revenge against an emperor who blinded him, and ruined his reputation and career upon perhaps false charges of sorcery. He was demonstrating to his contemporaries the contempt in which he held the astrological art as an attempt to redeem his reputation and emphasizing the injustice of having been disgraced for an astrological belief that the Emperor himself held.¹⁰⁸

Another letter in the collection that adds to the intrigue of imperial politics and personal retaliation is that addressed to Princess Theodora Komnena, Manuel's niece and mistress.¹⁰⁹ She had murdered another woman out of jealousy, and Glykas consoled her that as long as she was truly penitent, salvation was still possible for her. It is not clear whether or not this letter was solicited, but again one must wonder at Glykas' motives in acting as a spiritual counselor to his enemy's lavishly supported royal mistress who bore the Emperor many sons (Chon.2.7.204).¹¹⁰

Other Works by Glykas

After Glykas' eventual release from prison sometime after 1164, he turned to a monastic life, as he explained in his preface, and became a major theological expert. Politically Glykas was anti-Komnenian, intellectually he was considered a rationalist, and theologically he was a defender of the Orthodoxy and a voice of traditional common-sense. His views on theological problems were eagerly sought as he had a reputation for wisdom, offering practical problem-solving advice. Yet Glykas the theologian functioned at the fringes of the ecclesiastical hierarchy.¹¹¹ If he was in fact disgraced, expelled from the court, and known by an appellation of ridicule, those members of Byzantine society who were aspiring for political and personal favor from the court would naturally distance themselves from association with him.

In addition to his collection of political poems written in folk verse while in confinement, he is credited with authoring the *Chronicle*.¹¹² This work is an annalistic narrative of events from creation to 1118 (the reign of

Alexios I) incorporating history, theology, curiosities, and natural science, and showing a familiarity with both Pagan and Christian authors. Twelfth century writers in Byzantium were concerned with the problem of fate and necessity in the development of history, and Glykas took a firm stand against a determinist view of history and attacked the belief in fate.¹¹³ Glykas was anti-astrology, but in his account of creation he discusses an astrological perspective, displaying some knowledge of the subject¹¹⁴

In Glykas' role as a theological commentator on spiritual problems and his anti-deterministic position, addressing a charge of heresy in connection with astrology would have been entirely within his province. Thus, we must consider the possibility that his response was simply in keeping with the character of his other works. However, given the nature of the personal relationship between these two men, it is equally as likely that Glykas took great personal satisfaction in the composition of his refutation and that his life long embitterment was a contributing factor to his motivation, despite his Stoic statement of the acceptance of his fate. Whether or not he was actually guilty of the crime for which he was punished cannot be determined from the available evidence. However, the truth of one's guilt or innocence is not always the critical factor in the build up of resentment toward another who has been the cause of one's disgrace. His attack against Manuel, accusing him of impious beliefs which he claimed were indeed heretical and of literary dishonesty in misrepresenting his doctrinal sources must be also considered in the light of his own grievances against the Emperor.

Summary and Analysis of the Arguments

1. Manuel's Argument

In the opening of Manuel's letter, he presents the circumstances which led to his defence of astrology. A 'simple' monk of the Komnenian funded Pantokrator Monastery in Constantinople had written an attack against astrology based upon passages from 'authoritative writings.' This letter was sent to the Patriarch who then passed it on to Manuel, along with a conclusion that those who pursue the science of astrology are heretics. Because Manuel himself was an ardent and public supporter of this art, the implication that he too must be a heretic was an untenable position for an Emperor. Thus he composed a reply 'to defend the truth itself and

those who have been excluded from the community of Christians for the belief'.

Manuel's problem in creating an argument whereby astrology was not seen as heretical depended upon the assertion that God's will was superior to the powers of the stars. Thus Manuel in his defence of astrology must argue, if he is a Christian and not a heretic, that the stars do not have an independent volition that supersedes the power of God, but that the apparent power that comes through them to effect results in the world, is that of God Himself utilizing the stars to send signs to humanity.

Employing both natural and scriptural proofs, Manuel's argument has three major components. He acknowledges that there do exist some types of astrology that are indeed impious and worthy of condemnation, namely those that consider the stars as alive and intelligent. In this kind, the stars are entreated with amulets and invocations to accomplish certain results which is the essence of astral magic. He then distinguishes another kind of astrology whereby the stars are understood as God's creations which are good, natural, have a purpose, are given by God's providence for man's use and are under His dominion as messengers of his mysteries. Finally, Manuel cites passages from a variety of holy kings and fathers, pointing out that if these esteemed men who are not heretics use and endorse astrology, it cannot thus be considered a heretical art.

Is Manuel successful? Beginning from the assumption that everything that God has introduced is good and useful for man, he presents the often cited environmental arguments that point to the beneficial effects that the sun and moon have on agricultural cycles and their correspondences with meteorological phenomena, ocean tides, and rhythms in the lives of animals. He posits that if the physical world is so obviously affected by the two lights as something natural, so too must the other planets have an effect. He also puts forth the notion that just as the medical art uses natural substances by which to regulate health, so also can the natural laws of stars be used in this way. Manuel has chosen these examples very carefully, most likely aware that of all the injunctions against astrology in the Theodosian Code, its use for agricultural and medical purposes was excluded from punishment.

Manuel concedes that the art is likely to fail, not only from the faulty calculations of its practitioners, but even more so because of God's ability to suspend natural law out his desire to work miracles. Here he clearly asserts the supremacy of God over the natural laws which regulate the stars. Manuel then launches into a discussion concerning the Star of the Magi at the birth of Christ and the eclipse at his crucifixion. Again he is

very aware of the tradition of Tertullian, Ignatius, Augustine and Chrysostom which refuted that these stellar manifestations were an affirmation of astrology. Like the Church Fathers, Manuel maintains that these were unnatural occurrences, evidences of God's wonderworking in his desire to utilize the stars as divine signs of his mysteries occurring on earth. Here he echoed the sentiments of both Origen and Plotinus who put forth the explanation that the images of the stars were God's handwriting in sky announcing the future to those who could read it.

It is in Manuel's presentation of the writings of the Church Fathers that his argument is the weakest on account of the questionable accuracy of his citations. Optimally Manuel would have like to have shown that the Church Fathers endorsed astrology, and, minimally, even if they outright dismissed astrology that at least they did not brand it as heretical. Here Manuel had limited success in his endeavor.

His citation of these authorities demonstrates his tendency toward exaggeration of the facts and the ability to walk a fine line between truth and falsehood. As his biographer Choniates points out, Manuel 'distorted the meaning of the written word to accord with his own intent, providing definitions and giving exegeses of doctrines whose correct meaning the Fathers had formulated...' (Chon. 2.7.210). The story of Basil the Great's validation of the Jew who prophesied his death according to astrology was clearly a fabrication of the actual events. The evidence in regard to John the Damascene, Anastasios, and Basil's *Hexameron* was true in so far as they did writes treatises on the stars. However, John the Damascene concluded that the stars did not cause anything except weather changes, Anastasios dismissed astrological suppositions as 'foolish prattle,' and Basil asserted that it was impossible to accurately construct a horoscope.

Yet to Manuel's credit, he never outright said that these men validated astrology, only that they did not explicitly condemn the natural activities of the stars functioning as signs according to God's will. And on this point Manuel was technically correct. Manuel maintained that the reason that the holy men silenced astrology was to protect the rank of Christians, many of whom were easily deceived, from any notions that might present obstacles to their belief in Christ.

Manuel concludes his treatise with Biblical examples drawn from stories such as David and Goliath, stressing that what power the stars have to seemingly effect results is due to God's power working through them. That power can be recognized analogously in the heavens, which is God's throne, declaring the glory of his creations through the stars as good entities. In as much as they are inanimate and obediently remain in

their orbits given to them by God, they are not contrary to God as is the devil who has volition and autonomy. Here Manuel is refuting the many Christian doctrines beginning with Tatian and augmented by Augustine that the stars are demonic. His final statement is that even if the stars had sense perception, their intelligence could not be comprehended by astrologers.

Manuel's defence of astrology is only marginally directed at proving its validity; his concern is to create a convincing demonstration that it is not heretical. He is careful to avoid any suggestion that the stars are sentient, have volition, or are the physical causes of effects, and he denounces any astrology that is based upon these assumptions. Instead, he aims to show that the stars are natural, good creations of God which function as signs transmitting God's power and will. When the art fails, it is due to its practitioners or to the intervention of God who reigns supreme over the stars. Manuel's strength is that he never wavers from this position; his weakness is in the use of his evidence, and it is on this point that Glykas thrusts the brunt of his attack and shreds Manuel's argument.

2. Glykas' Argument

Glykas opens with a sarcastic jab at Manuel's profundity of thought, and immediately discredits the example of Basil and the Jew. Glykas points out throughout his treatise that his copies of the texts which Manuel cites do not contain the claims that Manuel is making, and he demands that this discrepancy be remedied. Glykas is using the opportunity to challenge Manuel's defence of astrology for a greater purpose, namely to cast doubt upon his adversary's integrity as he believed that he himself had been slandered by his Emperor.

Glykas states that Basil and Chrysostom attacked those who tried to use the Star of the Magi as an affirmation of astrology, and insists, like Chrysostom, that the Magi were inspired by God, not the Star, in their search for Christ and afterwards renounced their astrological beliefs. Like Augustine, Glykas upholds the supremacy of Christian prophecy over any other form of human divination such as astrology. Glykas then launches into a discussion of the *thema mundi* (the horoscope of the world) of which Manuel had made no mention. Either these segments are missing from the text of Manuel's defence, or Glykas, in the enthusiasm of his attack, allows his own extensive knowledge of the subject to seep through.

Glykas confronts Manuel's assertion that the stars are signs rather than causes in Manuel's example of Constantine employing the astrologer Vettius Valens to elect the time for the founding of Constantinople so that it would forever remain impregnable to its enemies. While subsequent scholarship has proven that this story is not true, the point is well taken. Manuel, who himself used catarchic astrology to time the initiation of military campaigns in order to assure victory, contradicts himself here in his assertion that the stars do not effect specific results.

The bulk of Glykas' refutation is devoted to presenting counter-arguments and different interpretations of all of the authorities that Manuel cited, claiming that Manuel's evidence is unreliable and his examples are absurd. Glykas attempts to demonstrate that the writings of the Church Fathers and Scriptural passages, for the most part, not only denounce the validity of astrology, but also reject it upon the grounds that it is impious, i.e., heretical.

One example that illustrates the nature of the quibbling that takes place between the two authors' respective use of the sources is found in the passage on astrology in Basil's *Hexameron*. Basil stated that all of nature participates in the moon's changes and that this must be due to some remarkable power in accordance with the testimony of the Scripture.¹¹⁵ Manuel is justified in accurately citing Basil in regard to his position that it is God's power that works through the stars. Basil also said that horoscopic astrology which purports to describe an individual's nature is both impossible to calculate and ridiculous,¹¹⁶ so Glykas is not altogether incorrect either in his counter-argument. Glykas' assertion that Basil's view that astrology was impious was based upon the Saint's objection that the notion of being born under a malefic star implied that its evil was due to it Creator or else to its own volition as an intelligent entity. However, Manuel is absolutely clear that he also considers this interpretation of astrology to be unholy. Glykas' evidence that Basil stated that no one should apply the teaching of astrology to the Star of the Magi comes from a spurious homily.¹¹⁷

On the whole, Glykas is more reliable than Manuel in his assessment of the evidence, but he is not above using it incorrectly, as does Manuel, to strengthen his arguments. And though Manuel is attentive to being very precise in what he specifically claims, in some cases, while technically correct, he distorts the meaning of the passage in its entirety.

Glykas questions Manuel's medical argument, asserting that medicine operates according to natural rather than astrological laws according to the eminent physicians Hippocrates and Galen who did not endorse

astrology. While that might be an accurate statement in general, in fact Galen authored two very specific astrological treatises on diagnosing an illness from the astral configurations at the time of its onset. Glykas is indeed at his critical best when he scrutinizes the Ptolemaic explanation of Jupiter as strengthening the physical constitution because of its temperate nature. He spots a contradiction in Ptolemy's reasoning when he classified the planets in accordance with the Aristotelian categories of hot, wet, cold, and dry. It is noteworthy that Glykas pulls back at this point in his refutation, admitting his ignorance of pagan matters, when in fact such an observation could only have come out of a mind that was astutely knowledgeable about such doctrines.

Returning to the Star in his conclusion, Glykas reemphasizes the Chrysostomian argument that the star was an unnatural occurrence, divinely inspired by God, displaying itself in a form that would be familiar to the Magi in order to lure the barbarian Magi to a knowledge of Christ and cause them to thereafter renounce astrology. His final words are an affirmation of his own role in the dispelling of doubt concerning these matters.

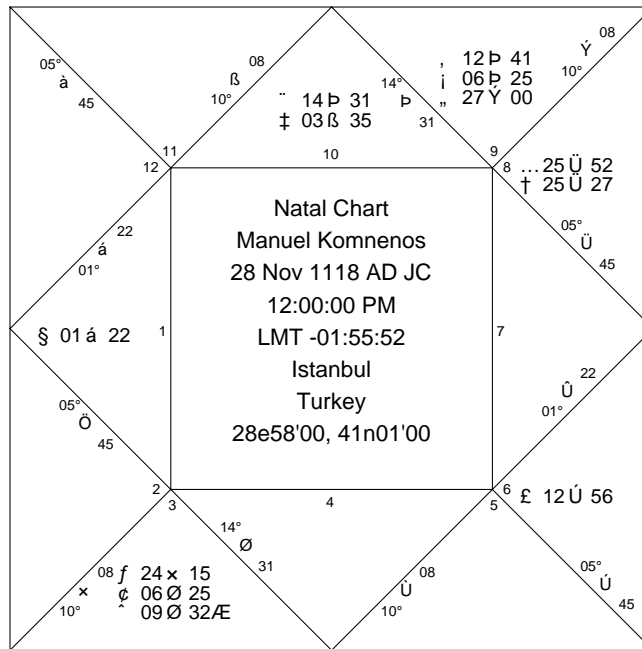
Conclusion

Manuel's aim was to construct an argument demonstrating that there was a kind of astrology that did not conflict with Christian doctrine. The position that he took that the stars function as signs rather than causes is the perspective that has been most endorsed by the majority of astrologers over the course of astrology's history. This view does not contradict a basic Christian premise of the supremacy of God and the manifold ways in which he makes his will known. To this extent Manuel was successful in his endeavor. Glykas directs his refutation not so much against Manuel's philosophical arguments as against the claims of his evidence, which indeed were highly questionable in some places and skirted a fine line of truth in other places. With intelligence, skill, discriminating perception, command of his sources, and critical astuteness, Glykas destroyed not only Manuel's argument, but also cast doubt on the moral and literary integrity of its author. In this way Michael Glykas sought to redeem his reputation in the eyes of posterity.

Acknowledgment

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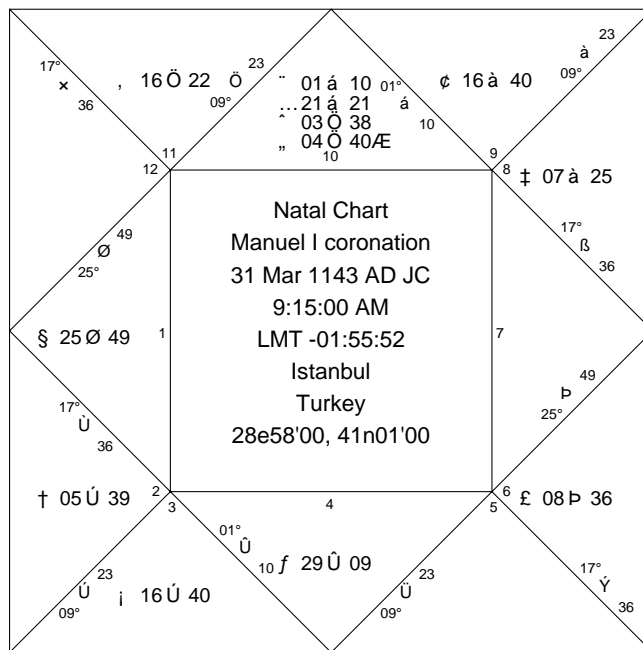
Fig. 1. Birth chart of Manuel I Komnenos
November 28 1118, Constantinople, time unknown, cast for noon.
Source: Varzos, TITLE, I: 205, n., 13.
 (computed using Janus software, Porphyry houses)



**Fig 2. Coronation Chart of Manuel I Komnenos
9.15 am, 31 March 1143, Constantinople**

Source: Vat. gr. 1056, a fourteenth-century manuscript of a twelfth-century codex, gives the horoscopes for the coronations of Alexius I Komnenos in 1081 and Manuel I Komnenos in 1143: see David Pingree, 'Gregory Choniates and the Palaeologan Astronomy', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 18 (1964), p. 139, n., 29. The birth and coronation horoscopes for Manuel are in Appendix B.

The horoscope below is computed using Janus software: Porphyry houses The original manuscript gives the following positions: ascendant $25^{\circ} \square 49'$, midheaven $1^{\circ} \bullet 11'$, Saturn $6^{\circ} \square 00'$, Jupiter $9^{\circ} \square 15'$, Mars $9^{\circ} \square 36'$, Sun $16^{\circ} \bullet 52'$, Venus $22^{\circ} \square 28'$, Mercury $16^{\circ} \square 52'$, Moon $1^{\circ} \square 04'$.



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86. Haskins, *Mediaeval Science*, p. 164; 173-4.
87. Roger of Hoveden wrote in his Chronicle, 'In that year, the astrologers both Spanish and Sicilian—and indeed almost all the world's prognosticators, Greek and Latin—wrote much the same prediction about the conjunction of the planets.' *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Hovedene*, ed. W. Stubbs (Roll Series 51, 1869) 2. pp. 290-298 as cited by Tester, *History*, pp. 148-48.
88. Karl Krumbacher, 'Michael Glykas Eine Skizze seiner Biographie und seiner litterarischen Thatigkeit nebst einigen unedierten Gedichte und Briefe desselben,' (Munich: *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, philologische-historische Klasse*, 1894, part 3, 1895, pp. 441-42.
89. Cumont, CCAG 5.1.107; and Hans-Georg Beck, *Kirche Und Theologische Literatur im Byzantinischen Reich* (Munich: C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1959), 654.
90. Otto Kresten, 'Zum Sturz des Theodoros Styppeiotes,' *Jahrbuch Der Osterreichischen Byzantinistik* 27 (1978), pp. 49-104.
91. Krumbacher, 'Michael Glycas', p. 381
92. Michael Glykas, *Chronicles*, ed., I. Bekker (Bonn: Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, 1836), 44-56.

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93. Magdalino, *Manuel*, p.199.
94. *Anon. Sry.* 119 as cited by Magdalino, *Manuel*, p.199.
95. John Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, trans. Charles Brand (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), pp. 232-3, 184-5; Choniates., 103, 106-08, 110-13; Otto of Freising, continued by Rahewin, *Gesta Frederici seu rectius Cronica*, ed., F. J. Schmale, trans., A. Schmidt (Darmstadt, 1965) pp. 506-8 as cited by Magdalino, *Manuel*, p. 199.
96. Kresten, 'Zum Sturz des Theodoros Styppeiotes', p. 95.
97. In 11 BCE Augustus, knowing he did not have long to live, passed an edict against astrological consultations about one's own political future or about the well-being and death of the ruler as evidence of treason. See Cramer, 232.
98. See Michael Angold, *Church and Society in Byzantium Under the Comneni, 1081-1261*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 128-31.
99. Eustratiades, ed., Glykas, pp. 133-135.
100. *Panophlia dogmata* 15, as cited by Kresten, 'Zum Sturz des Theodoros Styppeiotes', p. 91.
101. Krumbacher, 'Michael Glykas', pp. 416-16.
102. Kresten, 'Zum Sturz des Theodoros Styppeiotes', p. 90 ff.
103. Michael Glykas, *Mixaθl Glukç, stεxoi oÓw ¶gpace kay"n katesx°yh kaipÒn*, ed., E. Tsolakes (Thessaloniki: ÉEpisthmovik± ÉÉpethr<w t∞w Filofofik∞w Sxol∞w toÉ PanepisthmÉou YessalovÉkns, Parárhma 3, 1959).
104. Glykas was known as the first Byzantine to have recorded a collection of proverbs which is still extant. (ed., Eustratiades, I) Also see Beck, *Geschichte Der Byzantinischen Volksliteratur* (Munich: C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1971), pp. 206-07. The twelfth century saw several experiments in writing of Greek vernacular verse, which were all written in political verse and in the orbit of the court. Glykas stands out as a prime example of this literary innovation, and he alternated the vernacular with the more formal language at rhetorically appropriate moments to highlight the poets predicament. Such experiments ceased after Emperor Manuel's death and did not resume again for another one and one half centuries later in Greek lands ruled by Westerners.

See E.M. and M. J. Jeffreys, *Popular Literature in Late Byzantium* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1983), p. 483

105. Kresten, 'Zum Sturz des Theodoros Styppeiotes', pp. 95.

106. See note 1.

107. Krumbacher, 'Michael Glykas', pp. 441-42.

108. Kresten, 'Zum Sturz des Theodoros Styppeiotes', pp. 94.

109. Eustratiades, 'Glykas', 2:118-27; also Krumbacher, 'Michael Glykas', pp. 452-60.

110. Manuel had four nieces, all named Theodora Komnena. Choniates (2.1.54; 2.3.104) claims that the kinswoman whom Manuel 'unlawfully penetrated' was the daughter of Manuel's brother Andronikos. However, according to Varzos, the Theodora who was Manuel's mistress was the daughter of his sister Eudokia Vol. 2 (150), cf. (131). See also Krumbacher, pp. 427-28.

111. See Magdalino, *Manuel*, pp. 370-77.

112. Bekker, *Chronicles*.

113. Glykas, *Annales*, 53. 3-10; Eustratiades, 'Gycas', 1: 385, 394, 410, 437, 446; 2: 436, 442; *CCAG* 5.1. 140.30; 141.23.

114. Glykas, *Chron.* 44-57.

115. Basil *Hexameron* 6.10.

116. Basil *Hexameron* 6.5.

117. Pseudo-Basil, 'Homily on Generation', ed. J. P.Migne in *Patrologiae cursus completus* (PG), Series Graeca, (Paris: apud fratres Garnier ditores, 1912.), PG 31. 1469A-1475B.

CHAPTER II MANUEL I KOMNENOS' DEFENSE OF ASTROLOGY*

A letter issued by the illustrious and pious king Porphyrogennetos,¹ lord Manuel Komnenos, filled with many lofty and compelling arguments, a defense against a letter from a certain monk of the imperial Pantokrator monastery² which disparaged the doctrines of the astrological art and called the teaching a sacrilege.

Most honored father, your letter which has been entrusted to my highness was read through to me at once. Just as you supposed, it consisted of an attack against the science and art of astrology,³ composed from passages from authoritative writings.⁴ The letter, worthy of a simple monk, was not written in a well-planned and logical manner, but rather altogether ignorant and inaccurate. It is clear that the monk who wrote it does not have any erudition nor is he a sensible scholar in accordance of our holy teachings and its interpreters.⁵ At any rate it seemed to my highness at first best to not reply to the letter, but to restrain myself from taking offense in all matters. However I also wished fully to assure you who are hesitant in regards to the more serious doctrines and in regards to the matters with which a man who is receptive to thought and knowledge concerns himself. Also you inappropriately and in many ways overturn the creation which has been rightly and harmoniously made and set in order by God, (and for this reason, it is in need of much study). You have not discerned correctly the place of astrology, but included together under a single name the ill-omened practices as well, which wrongly are supposed to be the subjects of astrology, since you considered the stars as ensouled and for this reason the making of charms and invocations,⁶ which very attempt is unholy and rejected by all wise men. Even if you had not laid this matter out, still my highness was moved to a defense and to the composition of the present letter. All the more, because you called heretics those persons who pursue the science of astrology, my highness defends the truth itself and these people. Because you have excluded them from the community of Christians, my highness writes to you that nothing which has been introduced by God is useless to the life of men and is to be rejected, but everything was introduced and came to be by His providence so as to be useful for the life of man,⁷ (but rather by those who suppose these matters thus or otherwise, if these matters seem of little account or not). If at least in the case of the slightest objects, that is plants and roots and fish and rocks, indeed if there is a purpose even for a heap of soil, how much more in the case of that heavenly

* Go to Chapter IV, pp., 108-128 for commentary notes.

and very beautiful body and of the celestial bodies in it [.....lacuna] God put into this group what was useful for the constitution of the objects there.

Therefore if we see that the great light of heaven ascending towards the north and evaporating the water of the earth impregnates the plants, heating and warming them for a longer time, makes them greatly flourish and return to life as if they had previously died due to the cold, and arouses plant life for generation, and even more so, if it arouses and restores beasts to breeding, the sun also prepares the environment in the bottoms of the waters to procreate by warming in it the seeds of the fish, and it disposes the souls of men to regard their work in a more stalwart manner. The moon which is arrayed at the beginning of the night by God is a helper to the sun, and moistens the crops and warms them with a certain moderate heat and it grants that they ripen through the glow of the sun and its eternal fire. We observe that the conditions here of both men and animals under the moonlight are in sympathy with the moon's waning and waxing. For instance, the weasel is denied the liver during the moon's waning, and, in turn, when the moon waxes the weasel recovers that which was given up. The oysters, clams, zoophytes, and all the cartilaginous fish are simultaneously affected with the light of the moon. The marrow and brains of animals have a greater amount of their matter when the moon is full, but in some way are more depleted when the moon is diminished.⁸ And as we specifically see that when the stars rise toward the north, at their conjunctions, and at the full moons, the weather changes in diverse ways. The winds blow more violently when the stars rise, and, in turn, relax more and abate with their declinations. Seas fill up and then recede in accordance with the rhythm of the positions of the lights, and, in general, rivers also are affected with the light of moon. Bodies placed under the moon's light putrefy. In every way the environment is affected by these lights, and the animals here who by necessity are a part of the environment are likewise disposed in accordance with the quality of the environment.⁹ How can we not affirm that there are certain powers in the other stars as well, whose meetings and combinations reveal the manifold qualities of bodies and in accordance with the emanations of these things from the heavens to the earth clearly indicate the manifestations of the future? In all ways, unless someone desires to clearly refute this argument and to contend the clarity and truth of the matter at hand, will he agree to these propositions and accept that is not only the two lights which are active in the cosmos, and will he reject the notion that the rest of the sky is fixed and does not have any practical effect? For if the sun and moon have an effect, then by necessity so do the other stars. If someone were to destroy the power of the stars and their

indications, by necessity he would also destroy the power of the sun and of the moon and the rest of the planets. But this cannot be so, save that the indications from the celestial bodies are known to few and to those who consider and apprehend rather subtly and scientifically.

For if an ignorant man should hear a wise man saying, "Do not touch a certain part of the body with iron when the moon is next to the animal that is closely related to that part," he will hear what is said as meaningless and useless.¹⁰ But the wise man will hear these words as an adage which is governed by natural law, and will accept it as worthwhile. The moon also has the closest relationship with all things here on earth, including our bodies, and it indicates this whenever it passes through the Zodiac, which is physically analogous and related to each part of our bodies.¹¹ The moon is naturally moister than everything else because it is nearer to the earth than the other stars, and it partakes most of the earth's exhalations.¹² Thus the moon places more moisture in the part of the body that is analogous to the zodiacal sign through which it is passing. Therefore one must be cautious when touching this part of the body with a scalpel, because if it is somehow cut, the flow of moisture to that place becomes greater; as moisture flows to it, inflammation consequently will follow.

Again if an ignorant person should hear, "Do not give anyone a purgative when the moon conjuncts Jupiter," the man who is unknowledgeable surely will not understand.¹³ But the man who is skilled in these teachings knows that Jupiter is temperate by nature, the reason for which will be given below, and correspondingly it strengthens bodies. Thereupon he seeks to understand why the power of the purgative is blunted during the conjunction of this planet, and on account of this the drug becomes too impotent to draw out the toxic matter and to wrestle against his disposition. It is always the case that when the physical constitution is weak, the drug completely prevails and is able to extract matter from the depth, acting in accordance with its appropriate nature.

Therefore if a person should pay attention to these and similar sayings, and attempts the deed at the correct time, knowing the physical causes behind the sayings and taking precautions, and doing all things with God, in no way will he offend God. Thus when a person knows the substances which are in excess in his own body and properly uses a regimen appropriate to the temperament of the body, administering this as if the sickness came about from an excess of black bile or yellow bile or some other evil humour, he will diminish the illness through the use of a healthy regimen. Therefore in the same way that a person does not err by administering these

procedures in accordance with his own temperament by utilizing a healthy regimen, neither does the person who is attentive to this astrological theory. It is something natural and has been given from God for the opportune management of life and of this human body, and it does not transgress against the holy writings.¹⁴ For the use of those opportune and serviceable aids which arise from an uncontrived source for the management of one's own bodily concerns is not unholy, as you have said. It is the effects of these things alone which foretell the powers and the combinations and qualities which have been given by God to the stars. The misuse of the art clearly appears in the case when certain people discourse with stars through invocations, such as those who cast nativities.¹⁵ It is for this reason that astrologers are called magicians, because they turn away from the straight path and deviate toward the unholy. This is in everyway a sacrilege which should be overturned according to the teachings of holy men, as will be discussed below. Indeed to know in advance what will be, either bad or good, and not be willing to avert the bad nor to appropriate the good through prayer and beneficence, but to rest confident on the grounds that what is expected, whether bad or good, will turn out without opposition according to the goodwill of God or according to surrender to the changing power of the stars, when it is clear that this has come about in accordance with God's will, and for this reason to be carelessly disposed toward providence and the other benefits through which God is propitiated, this is an error.¹⁶ It is the unreasonable use of this art in an unsuitable and overly-complex manner pursued for destructive purposes that is worthy of absolute silence and truly worthy of condemnation.¹⁷

Therefore according to the arguments that have been presented, the stars are only indications of the three times, the past, the present, and the future, and they act in accordance with natural laws and with their own specific natures. That which acts according to its nature is also useful for life. Therefore it is not worthless. The stars are not causative because their bodies are lifeless, unintelligent and without perception. Thus when dealing with the stars through close observation, one does make requests of them nor gain knowledge from their responses, as do those who make enchantments to the daimons. Rather by knowing the nature of the stars and their combinations and the revealing configuration, one infers what is and what will be.¹⁸

However the art seem liable to err for two reasons, and this will be the case in certain conditions, –one from the shortcomings of men who practice it, "for the calculations of men are faulty and their thinking is liable to be in error."¹⁹ The other reason is due to men laying claim to the plans of God. Just as he wishes, there he desires

to work miracles. For this reason the wonder truly is a wonder, whenever events occur contrary to expectation and already are in despair of human salvation, and then the power and strength of God shines forth just as we will demonstrate from the examples as our argument continues.

If you introduce the argument from the books of Moses, "Let these things [i.e., the sun, the moon and the stars] be for signs and for seasons and for days and years,"²⁰ we will accept this verse as prophetic, but we will show you from the (most) authoritative writing itself, the Gospel and of our Lord, that the gospel bears witness to astrology.²¹ Matthew said, "For we have seen his star in the East and we have come to worship him."²² Therefore if astrology was not indicative of the future, but was non-existent and false, the evangelist would not have mentioned the star's name.²³ For the rest of the signs that followed closely at that time sufficed. But as it is, he inquires and gives additional evidence that through the beholding of this star, the Magi were led on the road toward the recognition of the truth. They were fully aware when our Lord fully accomplished the great mystery of divine incarnation upon the earth,²⁴ but he was known to them through an unfamiliar and newly shining star as God upon earth and as man, king, and mortal.²⁵ They indicated this recognition through their gifts, bringing him gold as to a king, frankincense as to a god, and myrrh as to a mortal. Because the Magi were experts in the prognostications of human destiny from the positions of the stars, they knew the place and the nation where Jesus would be born from the appearance of a particular star and of the zodiacal sign in which this star appeared, noting its inclination and its configuration.²⁶ For stars, by their different motions and manifestations, both in terms of their configuration and the Zodiacal sign in which they appear, clearly indicate beforehand variations of great matters.²⁷

If someone asserts that the star was a new star that never had been seen before and that its motion was contrary to nature, as it seemed to move in a path from north to south,²⁸ then we may say that this is a wonder in the same way that the eclipse of the sun at the crucifixion was a wonder. And we accept the authority of Matthew who has said this. For it was likely that some extraordinary portent should be manifest in heaven at the time of such a mystery which would be indicative of the mystery that was brought to completion upon earth, from which it was possible for the strangest part of the mystery to be known to those men who are engaged in such activities.²⁹ From this observation they gathered together and conjectured about the one who was begotten, that he was God and king and mortal. The star was called the newly appearing star because it was different from the stars which normally appear. In the same way that the

eclipse which occurred at the time of the passion of Christ was unnatural, but nevertheless made clear to the expert his voluntary suffering, as will be demonstrated more fully, so also the new and unusual star which occurred at his birth made a prior indication beyond the other stars the extraordinary nature of the one who was born and that the astrological art is substantial. For even if we assert that the star was a comet and was a natural occurrence, or if we say that it was extraordinary and new, from either argument we can establish the substantiality of the art and the unwavering accuracy of those who made the observation. We also establish from both arguments the capacity to discover personal salvation and its usefulness for those who truly consider such matters.³⁰

And consider the possibility that what you say is actually the opposite [of the truth]. Knowledgeable men who have employed this have been found using it for the discovery of a common eternal salvation, and for these men, this art has become the protection of the soul's salvation. Therefore it is clear that these arts are not forbidden by God. For if they were, neither in his birth nor in his crucifixion would such extraordinary celestial phenomena have attended as signs. At any rate God made these celestial phenomena for signs of the greatest events. So how can you say that they are the opposite and have no effect? You see how God was well-pleased that stars that he introduced and created are known, and how he placed into them their own powers that indicate future events. For first of all, just as God separated the light from the darkness, afterwards he then introduced the sun and placed the disorderly scattered light in its disc, so that no one would think that the light existed from the beginning along with the sun, but rather that it be universally recognized that it was from the creative power of God that both exist, namely the creation of the light and the sun individually and their union over disparate parts. Thus both at the time of the crucifixion and at the birth, God showed the indicatory power of the stars. At the birth the star was unnatural and its movement was opposite to a star's usual path. It was due to these observations and from their art that the Magi knew about the wonder, but not only from their perception of the star, but also as God was well-pleased, he desired by means of a wonder to make a prior indication through the star about the mystery that was going to occur. Thus even the moon was attendant at the time of the unnatural eclipse, having conjuncted the sun. It was from this realization that even the Areopagite knew that God was suffering.

If someone explains that this star was an angel,³¹ we concede the truth of the argument and we accept the explanation. In this manner we affirm and we conjecture, since the star itself was an indication of that beneficent world savior such as

the one who was born. For if it was a messenger, that which is second by nature after the first light, the intelligible and immaterial substance would not have revealed or communicated the mystery to the unbelieving Magi. For the entire miracle of the messenger would have been less, so to speak, and not filled with such unspeakable awe and amazement when it made clear to the Magi that the one who had been born was god-man, king, and both immortal and mortal, having been born in the area of Jerusalem.

Indeed comets that always appear from time to time are said by our ancestors to be messengers, prognosticators and guides of certain great changes in the world. In order that we might show from the events that have occurred in our latter time that which we have asserted and in order that an example might be drawn from the lesser occurrence, a star appeared that was a comet when the Germans came through the country of the Romanians whose transit the astrologers had predicted.³² Moreover they also knew that a similar comet had appeared, in the days of Lord Alexios famous among kings, the grandfather of my highness, when the western peoples were about to pass through the land of the Romanians.³³ So behold that the art was not faulty, but events came to fruition just as the astrologers proclaimed.

After the passage of some time from the resurrection of Christ, was not the great theologian Dionysus the Areopagite guided toward his faith, but not from these things? When he heard the great Paul teaching in Athens about Christ who had died on the cross for us, he asked the time of the passion. Upon cross-examining him, he recognized that that person was Christ Himself, because based upon the time, he knew that the eclipse was unnatural. For Dionysus the Areopagite was a learned man and accurately knew that a solar eclipse can never take place when the moon is fourteen days past the conjunction with the sun. It only occurs when the moon conjoins the sun and it is located at one of the nodes.³⁴ For this reason, you know, he even said to one of his friends who was traveling with him at that time, "Either God suffers or the son of God also suffers together with he who suffers." As we learn from the letter, he immediately became a disciple of the apostle, perceiving from the clearly unnatural eclipse of the sun that the herald was speaking the truth. In this way he was cleaved to Christ through Paul.³⁵ It is clear to you from this story that there exists a very great abundance of divine knowledge and the hope of salvation belongs to those who make a wise use of it as well as to those who are capable in a knowledgeable way of directing every thought toward Christ. So understand from the fact that the eclipse occurred unnaturally that a person who is capable of knowledge recognized that God suffered

and also that the wonder was shown to be a true wonder. Such a realization would not have been apparent to those who do not know how eclipses naturally occur, since eclipses always take place in a specific manner, but only to one who knows about such things. In a similar manner at the birth of Christ, the wonder of the mystery was known to have been brought to completion by those who know these things through the unaccustomed manifestation of the newly shining star. Consequently it was through the stars that God was pleased to confirm to the messengers the recent mystery that was unknowable and difficult to understand. Therefore reflect upon the fact that when God innovates nature, he cannot oppose anything which operates according to its own nature, and consider this, even in the case of the moon. For at the time of Christ's passion the moon, attendant of the eastern horizon, was quite a distance from the sun, and by God's will ascended and was united with the sun. Thus it is clear from these observations that the events judged from stars are unailing to those men among the scientific astrologers who observe them carefully.

Also it is said that a certain archbishop of Thessalonika³⁶ ended a famine by being attentive to the risings of the stars when he cleaved the furrows in the earth and immediately cast in the seed, and through this careful observation he prepared the earth at the best time for the bearing of fruit. And a certain man who was digging in the long wall found a coffin and when he took off its lid he discovered a very large dead body and a letter which was attached to the chest stating these things: "Christ will be born from the Virgin Mary and I believe in him. At the time of the sovereigns Constantine and Irene, you will see me again. o sun!"

We hear also that the bishop of Patara, famed for excellence, saying that many things which touch upon the truth come from such arts. For example, the judgment later showed, that even John the Damascian, the wisest among the fathers, conducted many physical inquiries concerning these matters and also wrote treatises about them.³⁷ And that the great Anastasios alluded to these things in his chapters where he provides natural arguments concerning the elements, which in all ways enjoy in the effluences of the stars.³⁸ The person who knows and rightly conjectures that the stars do not have perception is not mistaken, rather he says that through the hope of God the properties of the stars act according to signs and not according to active causes.³⁹

Let us use an analogy. In sexual intercourse and union, the sanctioned manner in which a rational man comes to be born seems to be through lawful union, as God commanded, which is at all events blameless because it is accomplished naturally.

Indeed the abuse of intercourse against the laws and the command of God is reproached as sinful, even if at that time man effects reproduction naturally and unconsciously. In the same way concerning the powers of stars, if a person utilizes a sound calculation to the best of his ability and according to the command of God, as at the time of the crucifixion, the eclipse and, at the time of the birth, the star, he would not be mistaken. But if somehow he goes beyond what is necessary [in his thoughts] in regards to the intelligence of these ensouled, active, and causative stars, as rational and perceptive, he is condemned. For without perception and in accordance with natural properties which the Demiurge placed in the stars [...lacuna] they effect the environment and the beings in it. If someone were to ask, how are the stars not always active in accordance with these qualities, he would hear that just as every sperm that has been released from a man does not result in a human being, because the generative sperm is hindered due to the dryness, moisture, or heat of the womb or due to the greater or lesser amount of sperm, or any other cause, in the same manner because of certain unseen causes, but mainly due to the will and power of God, the stars are not activated according to their own power. As neither nature nor the womb nor the sperm are considered the cause or creator, even if they seem to be active as causes in accordance with the material and specific form, so also neither are the stars considered to be creative and perceptive, because they also have influence from the ordinance of God. At any rate the person who perceives in this way and conjectures piously about the law and aim of the Demiurge's divine providence does not offend God in any way.

Let us also consider that the following arguments are similar to the previous ones. They assert that Abraham apprehended the creator from his creations,⁴⁰ also in regards to Seth, son of Adam, it was said that these matters were first taught by an angel.⁴¹ For it was necessary that knowledge which existed so long ago be conveyed through an angel to this mundane human nature.

Well then, after these men, did not Constantine, the father and the apostle of kings, use this art when he wanted to lay the foundation for this New Rome of ours being concerned that the city should forever remain invincible to its enemies and that it be filled with faith? As a sign of these things he carefully observed the northernmost position and movement of the stars. When he consulted Valens, the wisest practitioner of this sort of inquiry, Valens advised waiting for fourteen years for auspicious configurations to take place.⁴² But if perhaps from time to time difficulties should befall the city as a result of earthquakes or fire, and he should become denounced by the more learned of the inhabitants of the city, this example too serves as an illustration for the

veracity of the horoscope at that time.⁴³ And the astrologer predicted this, for he was unable to wholly bring into accord all the larger and smaller variables, and to accomplish everything that was wanted by Constantine. So if in fact the astrologer foretells these events and you see the events actually occur, do you not accept the astrologer and do you not glorify the teaching? And moreover he took note that the star of Saturn lying in the second sector of the zodiac made clear that the wealth of the citizens was being spent on the monks, since Saturn itself is solitary, just as we see this occurring even until today.⁴⁴ Or will you reproach and cast off this art as something renounced? In no way. For if Constantine, that Christ-loving king, that apostle among apostles and zealot of piety and the most pious kings and bishops along with him knew the teaching was heretical, –as you called it and named those who use it heretics, in the words of the fathers who hold contrary opinions–, if anyone of whom had presented an argument such as this against those Christians who follow this teaching, and for any other reasons and higher dispensations had condemned the teachings to silence, they would not have used it at critical times.⁴⁵ Since the holy men are revered as the voices concerning this teaching, we believe and we affirm these things, but we revere and we worship and we do not speak against them. But we are opposed to your crude and uneducated discourse which did not distinguish nor clearly state which part of astrology is rejected and reviled as I explained above and will further describe below. Rather you called those who pursue this art unholy and moreover that they transgress beyond the measure of every unholiness, among which, as we have said, many of the great kings and bishops are numbered.

For even the great theologian Gregory,⁴⁶ when praising Basil the Great in regards to his other doctrines, added the following, "He partook of astrology to the extent that he was not driven into confusion by those who were clever in these matters; he disregarded the rest as useless." And he did not say that it was heretical or daimonical or against God, but that it was useless, indicating that this aspect of astrology simply had no value to those beings who live a spiritual life. He said that the rest also is superfluous, namely philosophy or a regimen, the tools, the drugs, the therapies, the so-called pleasures, but not for those who are concerned with life and worldly matters. It is also clear that this is the case from the written statements of the *Hexameron* of Basil whom you introduced and that he called the art difficult to comprehend due to the most subtle division of hours, and the consequent failure of predictions.⁴⁷ And he said astrology is likely to be faulty for this reason, but in truth he did not call it heretical or the people who use it heretics. For in one place Basil considers

the difficulty in comprehending the art as virtually impossible, and he declares this. In another place he considers that more noteworthy persons make use of astrology through invocations and enchantments, on the basis of which the ignorant believe that the stars are ensouled, but he rejects this as unholy, and so it is. For reasonably Basil stigmatizes this art as liable to fail in many ways, but not only because of its calculations, but also because God frequently wants to work wonders.

For know that the Jew who prophesied to that great bishop about his death, having determined this from abundantly clear signs, was not in error because of the art, but due to the fact that God desired to work a miracle through the prayers of this holy man, namely the salvation of the unbeliever and his entire household. The bishop awaited out his death in the flesh, according to the length of time the Hebrew had calculated, and when he had baptized the Hebrew along with the entire household, after three hours he gave over his life to the Lord. He said to the Hebrew, "It is not because of the art that you have spoken wrongly. For it was bound to happen to me that I die at that hour, but God graced me with these three hours for your salvation, wishing to assure you that he is Lord of life and death." And see how even the bishop truly bore witness to the significations from such an art.

It was not necessary that when you attended to these matters to consider that which is non-existent as existent and to brand as heretic, delighting in your own opinion, even the very men who were not named as heretics by the saints, but rather to accurately observe what is written and its purpose. For the fact that holy men and the civil law itself imposes silence in regards to these matters is in the nature of information control. The holy men were considerate of the rank of Christians, so they would not experience any obstacle toward the belief in Christ when they heard prophecies from the genethliologists and other astrologers about a person's destiny and predictions of earthquakes and eclipses and deaths of men due to heights, wars, shipwrecks, or other chance occurrences. They were also concerned that Christians not think that the planets are gods, or that they are creative agents, causes and perceptive—for in the masses, the majority are easily deceived and more thick-witted about the subtle considerations of existence—and that they do not suppose that the entire power of the administrations here lie in them. Furthermore that they do not presume that there is no providence here or that they believe in atheism or polytheism, and that the gospel of Christ and the zeal and proclamation of the apostles not be found empty. Due to all these reasons, they laid down as a law silence concerning these teachings.⁴⁸ Also the taunt that was hurled against Babylon, "Where are your astrologers? Let them stand and save you."⁴⁹ was said

sarcastically by the prophet Isaiah against those who think the planets are gods, namely those who have placed their hope in them and not in the creator of them, and those who do not, as we do suppose that there exists that the power of God which truly stands over the stars, namely the power which is capable of preventing the events that have been signified and that are approaching. And Isaiah bore witness that there is some power in addition to that of the stars such as the power that exists through the use of weapons, the army, horses, machines, military counsel, practical advice. For God would not have confirmed what is insubstantial through the use of the term, but rather through the term he indicated its substantiality and that that power in which they too had confidence was greater and more evident than these things; and yet power in its own right is present in all the things that were mentioned previously [i.e., star], and yet apart from God, it is unsound, but it is great with the support of God. Therefore in the same way that the previous things that were enumerated are not entirely inefficacious by themselves, so neither are the stars or those who busy themselves with them considered useless. However God reasonably brought retribution to the Babylonians and he reproached the infidelity of those people who had used the knowledge from these sources against God himself and his plan and his will. It is necessary as well for one to look down upon that which is viewed by the eyes of sense through the investigation of such things, for the eyes are short-sighted and empty, bowing to the earth and incapable of looking up. Similarly we know God as the Lord of heaven and all that is in it, who makes people poor and wealthy, causes death and engenders life, arbitrates for kings and dynasts and beggars, and changes everything whenever he wills and as he wills. In turn, between those who are clearly making creation into a god and those of us who think correctly, the Scripture arbitrates, "They summon chariots and men on horses, we summon the name of our Lord."⁵⁰ For according to what has been said, "The war horse is a vain hope for victory, and the king is not saved by his great army, and the giant is not saved in the magnitude of his strength."⁵¹

And David, the son of Jesse who used a sling and killed Goliath is a witness to the power of God, a feat which no contemporary in any way would venture to do in that manner. For how would anyone with three stones take a stand against a person who has been fully armed with a set of armor, unless through the power of God? Or when would a dwarf too throw down a giant in wrestling? The person who uses material weapons and strength as instruments for his own safety, looking towards God and hoping for his mercy, possesses the weapons well and securely, because he understands correctly. But the person who believes in his own safety through these

things alone, he is thwarted in every respect and will not be helped in the least by these weapons. For the fastest running horse, is tripped up by nothing and falls, or otherwise when he unexpectedly stumbles, he is found useless in battle. The weapons which were well fortified, when struck by a small javelin, reveal that the person who has placed his entire safety on them and considered himself safe through his own agency is oftentimes a corpse. Indeed by this argument even the great apostle Paul called the elemental spirits beggars,⁵² since they are bereft of their own power, and act in accordance with divine command and, again, are composed by his own activity, whenever their creator wants, just like the fire in the Chaldean oven.⁵³ And once, the nature of water which had been activated red hot around the sacrificial wood was seen through the third pouring of water and through the hands of Thesbitos.⁵⁴ And so that we might believe the argument from the examples which we observe, often when a bad occurrence is expected by the astrologers and it is averted through prayer and other good deeds, we attribute this as a miracle of God and we acknowledge the grace of God who has ordained this. And, in turn, when a favorable expectation is set forth that something good will come about, with the approval of God beyond expectation, often a complete reversal occurs. As Paul said, "In order that God may be everything in all things," that all is of God and not of us.⁵⁵

In the case of those who have been given up by the doctors and who expect no aid from the medical art, but who clearly await death, whenever we see a remission through beneficence and repentance, we attribute it to the power of God. We do not reproach the medicine for being faulty, whenever God desires to work wonders, and we would never say that this medicine is ineffective. In the same way we should not reproach such discipline even as the astrological art, since both the medical and astrological arts are a skilled guess which aim at the diminution of the expected bad outcome.⁵⁶ For we attribute to the power of God the surfeit of good things and an increase which was anticipated and not which was a demand in accordance with the prediction of the astrologer. If this were not the case, the occurrence would not be a wonder nor even considered a wonder, but simply as following nature and a matter of fact. We could not distinguish precisely that which is an intermediary between the power of God and the nature of heaven, nor would we wonder at God as someone awesome in his deeds.

But now in the assurance that the stars are senseless and inanimate, we say that heaven is a throne of God and has a certain influence, as it were, a declaration of the utmost power of God.⁵⁷ The extreme power of the person who is sitting above

them is known analogously from this. Moreover it is necessary for those who are capable of understanding well and correctly to make a closer and more searching inquiry about the matters concerning heaven in order that the magnificence of God may be known from his creation as in the verse, "The heavens declare the glory of God"⁵⁸ not by using speech, nor by words, but by silently sounding in the ears of reason, shouting forth the divine power and providence through themselves and through the manifestations of the natural effects of celestial bodies. Thus the knowledgeable person might better understand the contemplations of God and be illuminated toward a knowledge of God from the power which has been concealed in those heavenly bodies, by seeing the comparisons and contrasts towards each other and apprehending the wisdom of God and the demiurgic intelligence.

If a throne of a man who is shining forth with excellence, or if his robe or sandals have a certain power and imperceptible effect, and we do not completely see them nor approach them directly, but if we reflect upon the power in them when we look with the eyes of the heart to the one who uses these things when we touch them with caution, we receive the grace from them. In the same manner when we see the throne of the king we approach it with reverence when we consider the person who sits in it. From his reputation we consider that the throne too must be honored, and as we gaze intently upon a throne in the realm of sense perception in the aforementioned way, –and the throne is truly so this way. For everyone is made to understand and is humbled, even if he is disorderly and stubborn by nature, when he sees the throne of the king before him–, are we to think that the throne of God has no share of influence and hidden grace and power, and will we thus forget his reputation? And how will we escape the condemnation from the people of good will if we have such an attitude? Mind, we do not revere and worship this throne, but we see it only as the throne of God and we interpret it as an indication of his activity.

Come now, let us suppose that someone is the best of artificers and he has credentials among many people in regards to his knowledge concerning building houses, and he has built a very beautiful house, and made this structure a wonder worthy of praise. Then if from somewhere a person of low stature who was a rustic crawling on the ground should come upon it and should approach this house without praise, his mind not being temperate or capable of understanding suitably and wondering at the framework, and if he should praise some parts and criticize other parts, does he not insult the builder? Is the builder not vexed when his works and creations and designs are insulted and despised? On all accounts. Or do you not think

that God too is so insulted in regards to his very fine and wondrous creations and the grand workings of his craft, whenever we overlook these things carelessly as if they were incidental, just as if we were some barbarians in want of reason. And furthermore when we call those who are capable of subtle thought impious.

Apart from all of these things since the Scripture says, "God saw everything, as many things as he created, and behold, it was very good," and nothing was contrary and disorderly to the foundations of God, why ever would we overlook the stars as being creations of God, considering them to be contrary to God because we do not accurately know the works of God. For if they are the creations of God, they are all together good. See the variety and the harmony and the orderly arrangement and movement of the stars and how they orbit the heavenly circuit in sequence.⁵⁹ You think and you speak unsuitably about this, and you make broad declarations on matters about which you know nothing. You desire to go deeply into those areas which you did not search out correctly, with a very narrow vessel, namely your own heart, you believe in the expansiveness of God's creation and you desire to encompass the whole by your narrow reckoning and to clearly expound the demiurgic creations of God, which very thing no one up to now has done. Without appropriate experience, you have imagined these things, these things in a way opposite to the holy kings and to the truth. You also have insulted the honorable works and creations of God.

But you might say that the devil too is one of God's creations, so thus we ought pay attention to him? But the devil acquired his purpose self-willingly being opposite to the good because of his arrogance, and is said to be against God. The stars are lifeless creatures, without perception and without premeditation. For this reason they not opposite to God but they remain in their own orbits in which they were arranged by the Demiurge, and also they have imperceptible natural effects, and not according to any intention of their own. Sometimes the effects effect a particular outcome, and other times they do not. The stars are also active just in this way, just as they have been arranged by the Demiurge, unless there is some hindrance of their activities through the wondrous working of God, as has been said many times. And even if the stars had sense perception, the astrologer would not be able to comprehend what has been signified by them, since they lie concealed in plan and in mystery.

CHAPTER III

MICHAEL GLYKAS' REFUTATION OF ASTROLOGY*

A partial response toward the letter, which has been put into my hands, by our strong and holy king, lord Manuel Komnenos, which was delivered against a certain monk who found great fault with him due to discipline of astrology, which contends that this discipline was established through natural and scriptural proofs.

I dare to make mention. The previous letter of your highness has just come into my hands also, and having first read it I embraced and cherished it warmly. Why? Because in a truly mild and gentle voice and in imitation of Christ who said, "Learn from me that I am gentle and humble in heart,"¹ your letter composed a reply to that monk who was inveighing so thoughtlessly against your crowned power. But afterwards I am amazed at the letter, at least in regard to the remarkable austerity and rhythm of its diction and the depth and complexity of the thoughts. Indeed when I encountered those thoughts, I hardly knew how to beg for a helping hand to be given to me and to be drawn back into an orderly manner before I was completely suffocated.² For at once I have difficulty concerning the Jew whom Basil the Great, at the time when he was departing for the Lord, thought worthy of sacred baptism. For my copy of my text explicitly states that the Jew was a physician and that he foretold the great man's death by feeling for the pulse of the saint.³ Your letter that was put into my hand calls him an astrologer who told the death of the saint through the indications of the stars. And not only this, but also it introduces Basil the Great as agreeing with the astrological science of the Jew and calling it true, and both doing and saying more beyond these things which my book is found to make no mention at all.⁴ At any rate either its text is in error and nothing more, or I will demand this discrepancy to be remedied. For it is not on this evidence, I think, that the claims of astrology are firmly founded, even if the letter which was entrusted to me affirms confidently that this art is not prevented by God, indeed if it is even actually real. For if this were not the case, he would not have intimated through the stars his birth in the flesh and his voluntary suffering. But on the contrary we are reckless to trust those who speak about it. For how could we so readily be persuaded by this letter, when John Chrysostom in his sixth sermon on the gospel of Matthew clearly made a great attack on those who believe and speak in this way?⁵ And how can we say that such an art is real if we see that it has been rejected on the very

* Go to Chapter V, pp., 129-140 for commentary notes.

evidence from which it seems to acquire confirmation? And to pass over the rest, arguments about the Magi themselves and the divine Dionysus the Aeropagite, whom the letter introduces probably as speaking on his own behalf, they shout this most clearly. For the Magi when they had abandoned their ancient practices with the stars and had come to the true knowledge according to Christ, they could no longer bear to be involved with their former interests. Which practices, at any rate as your letter says, Christ by his birth confirmed how those people, when they had become believers, shook off these former beliefs?⁶ Moreover if that star which incredulously indicated the birth of God's word in the flesh to the Magi shows the substantiality of astrology, it is entirely necessary that augury too is confirmed hereby if indeed by means of a dove flying down from above, the father indicated the son when he was being baptized in Jordan.⁷ Also the very practice of necromancy would not seem to require rejection, if indeed many bodies of those who are dead, when awoken from the dead in accordance with the saving passion, clearly agreed that he who suffered was God. And this in spite of the fact that the law from the books of Moses admonishes Israel about these things, "Thou shalt not divine from omens and thou shalt not interpret the flight and cries of birds."⁸ For the gentiles, whom the Lord God will utterly blast out from his view, let these people hearken unto omens and prophecies, but you shall not.

So do not permit us to be thrown into confusion about these things too. For the controversy which arises from that source is not small, and especially as concerns the things the letter describes, that through the rising of such a star, indeed through the rising of that zodiacal sign in which such a star appeared above the horizon, that the Magi since they have accurate knowledge of such things knew that the same being was God and man, at the same time mortal and immortal, king and born in Jerusalem. These things even Ptolemy the most eminent of astrologers said that it was typical to declare so subtly about the matters of divine inspiration.⁹ For if the Magi had discovered those things from the human art and not from the divine, they would not have gathered there. They would not have set out upon such a journey. They would not have acquired the star as a guide upon their way. If that star was standing still these men would not have been diverted from their path in Israel. And if it had been in motion and had been, as it were, indicating the way, would Magi not have begun the journey? When they were in Jerusalem and had lost him completely, they would not have gone around in the streets saying, "Where he, the king who has been born?"¹⁰ When they had seen him, they would not have forthwith rejoiced with great happiness. And so, it is clear from this, if I do not raise the specific problems, that there was some

divine power compelling them to speak or do these things. For unless this were so, Basil the Great could not have said these things in addition to the others in his treatises on the birth of the our lord Jesus Christ. "Let no one apply the technique of astrology to the rising of that star. For those who had introduced the birth as indicated by the stars which were already in existence purport to predict the future. For no form of star then indicated the royal birth, as the star itself was not an ordinary star."¹¹ Furthermore it was certainly not by following their own art, looking to the zodiacal signs and the stars, that the Magi came near to Jerusalem, but, just as the eminent holy man himself said this occurred by following thus the prophecy of Balaam which foretold that, "A star will rise from Jacob and a man shall come forth from Israel."¹² And since they remembered such a prophecy they searched Judea, wishing to learn the location of the begotten king of the Jews. And so much concerning these things .

It is clear that the stated letter which recalls the history of Abraham, struggles to confirm astrology from that evidence. And we are in great doubt concerning this issue. For if the most holy Abraham witnessed the Lord from his creations, why does the defender this study introduce such an history in the middle? In what way will he contribute to advance his goal? For the man was truly a trustworthy astrologer, since he came from Chaldea. But having witnessed the creator from the creations, after the clearly divine revelation he later despised such practices. But also, in the case of Abimelech, when Abraham went down into Egypt he all together dishonored those who believed such doctrines.¹³ I do not know, furthermore, whether the story of Abraham will advanced the proposed goal. I fear that also the proverbial saying achieves its ends, "We had a dog and he was providing help to the wild beasts."

There is not less of a problem in the prediction of that Greek which said, "Christ was born from the virgin Mary and I believe in him. At the time of the holy sovereigns Constantine and Irene, you will see me again, o sun." I hardly know what to say. I do not think that substantiality of the teaching is shown from this claim. A man reveals himself to be an accurate knower whether questioned by any causal person or by himself makes repeated inquiries when he is able to conjecture about the future in a broad manner granted that those men who are clever concerning such things define astrology as nothing other than a skilled guess. But for that Greek to have so paradoxically foretold an event that occurred more than one thousand years ago which represented Christ as being born and mention the sovereign by name and some such unspeakable things that could not have been, someone would certainly not say this sort of prediction is of a human art. Unless somehow we also mention the saying of the

famous Sibylline priestess, "At long last let someone march upon this manifold earth and without a fault he will become flesh," and similarly the words of the prophet Balaam foretold according to the human art, "The star rises from Jacob." But this is not it, no. For these insights come from divine inspiration and through the godless Greeks, they reveal the human nature of our Savior. Moreover, they spoke not by human art, but moved by divine grace and they uttered what they themselves did not know. And in addition to the other proofs, the famous Cairphas also establishes the substance of the argument when he said: "It is useful for one to die on behalf of the people."¹⁴

That is how these things stand. But as for the matters the letter discusses, namely when God established the entire universe, or at any rate the first beginning of the universe, in Cancer which is clearly a tropical zodiacal sign, never standing still and always changing, he conceived the inconstancy of cosmic things and elemental change and dissolution again into nothing, I do not know how to respond.¹⁵ From what evidence these claims are proved and where they have been written and which of the saints have affirmed them even up until today, I, an ignorant man, have not discovered that. Now Basil the Great explaining the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The heavens will be angry and the earth will be shaken out of its foundations,"¹⁶ also introduces the following saying that, "the foundations of the earth are unknown to the nature of man." He confirms his account through the words that the Lord said to Job when he was seeking to be answered, "Where were you when I founded the earth? Tell me if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Or who stretched the line upon it?"¹⁷ This is so, if the Lord indicating the incomprehensibility of the earth and, as it were, priding himself on this speaks to Job who is so confident of himself in his contention that he knows that first pattern of the cosmos, that is to say its first beginning? How and when was it introduced, and what zodiacal sign was on the ascendant, especially considering that the stars through which zodiacal circle, as they say, is outlined were not yet introduced by the demiurge. And so it is impossible to say that the things that were introduced on the fourth day existed also on the first and were on the ascendant at that time. If these things are not, one could not know furthermore that hour when that first foundation of the cosmos came to pass. For if this were the case, Basil the Great would not have said that the foundations of the earth are unknown to the nature of man. Also granted that Cancer was ascending at that time, granted that it indicated the inconstancy of things introduced then and dissolution again and release into nothing, still at all events it clearly should have indicated the undoing of that first heaven at whose introduction it was ascending. And truly that cosmos will not pass

away nor will wholly withdraw into dissolution as the Scriptures say, but rather its duration will be eternal. This is what the prophet Isaiah says concerning that heaven: "And there will be a new heaven and a new earth."¹⁸ For when that which obscure the sight of that heaven has been removed, i.e., the very foundation, the stars, the elements and the rest, one after another, –for also according to the utterance of Paul: "He introduces the form of this world"¹⁹– that first heaven would appear as truly heaven, whose permanence for the most part the entire Scripture proclaims. Thus that heaven ought to have passed gone into absolute dissolution, since the tropical zodiacal sign, clearly Cancer, was rising in the horoscope at the time of its introduction. But this is not so, it is not, as the argument has already first shown. For if, as the letter says, Cancer was at rising at this time, and from this fact indicating an absolute dissolution of things, why do we not further consider the saying of Paul as full of error with respect to the argument: "For creation awaits with eager longing the revealing of the sons of God."²⁰ For that which withdraws into dissolution and is reduced to nothing is entirely not of such a nature as to receive any renewal. Why we do not admit the truth of the rest of the opinions of the heathen and conjecture, as they do, many renewals of the universe, at least in the revolutions and returns of the planets from the same position to the same to same position.²¹ Moreover these things are invisible and hidden, as Basil the Great said, and are known only to God. For if though the letter confidentially affirms that art is proved as substantial from the Gospel –for if this were not so, the star could not summon the Magi toward the knowledge of the truth. For the rest of the signs which followed that one then were sufficient. Still we offer no objection either way, but nevertheless we demand to know what were the signs that occurred and when and how, with the result that foreign men arose from Persia and came to Jerusalem. For if Chrysostom, before the crowd, confidentially affirmed that the star was seen by the Magi long before the birth of Christ, so as to cause them to fall down and worship Christ in swaddling clothes –for they were going to spend much time on the journey– it is not reasonable to say furthermore that signs which followed that one then were strong enough to draw the Magi?²²

And this too has been stated distinctly by the letter along with the other claims. Anastasios of Sinai when he accurately examined certain natural phenomena, I suppose, clearly mixing astrological doctrines with them. But my book introduces the most holy Anastasios as teaching all together wisely concerning certain natural things and especially concerning the formations and also combinations of man, but nevertheless at the end of his instruction revising and saying: "...even if the foolish

astrologers attribute those things to the stars."²³ Well then, I do not know whether the most holy Anastasios by writing such things will contribute in any way to the goal set forth.

The stated letter embraces the opinion that the figures of the stars are signs of certain outcomes, but not by necessity productive of certain results. And at this time since we are in doubt, we speak. If according to this inclusion in his letter, this is the case, why is that famous Valens introduced in the middle, summoned, as they say, by the great Constantine, waiting patiently for the 14th year for the election of the foundation of the cities of this kingdom?²⁴ For it is quite clear that if he was waiting for an extent of such a long period of time, so that the city would always remain unconquered by enemies and would prosper in faith and in the other matters, he was waiting for the opportune time which would contribute to his goal, even though the letter does not mean to say this very clearly. For from this reasoning the stars are admitted to be unjust –not to say their creator– making by necessity some men adulterers, other murderers. And if it is necessary to say the truth, it was entirely unfitting to introduce Valens in the middle of the issue. For the claims of the astrology from that evidence even more are shown to be deceptive. For Valens himself, being a most wise astrologer at that with respect to these things, prophesied that this city would survive for six hundred years in addition to the ninety-six years, and thus, from the results, he demonstrated that the art had utterly failed.²⁵ But if someone should say that the aforementioned Valens had awaited the fourteenth year, but nevertheless for the sake of discovering the right time revealed certain good things for the city, we would accept his writing, but straightway we would be at a loss and say the following. Well then, if without being investigated and without the observations of Valens, the foundation of the city had been laid down, would it not have been destined to be as indeed it is today? We entreat you to not allow us to be tossed about helplessly concerning this. For either the matters of the city things were bound to happen thus, and that he waited in vain for so long a time, or it was not so bound. And why is it necessary to say more things? For it appears from this fact that the stars are not only indications but also necessary agents of results. For if this were so, the letter which you wrote in defense of that astrologer who was defending the individual things that unexpectedly happened to the city, specifically earthquakes, fires, and other such things, would not have explicitly stated verbatim: "And the astrologer predicted this, for he unable to wholly bring into accord all the larger and smaller variables, and to accomplish everything that was wanted by Constantine." Now notice: if Valens had first

taken everything into consideration, the greater and the smaller variables, and the Davidian psalm itself saying in reference to God, "The Lord who looks upon the earth and makes it tremble,"²⁶ he necessarily would have waited until that time to no avail, in as much as much the accurate study of the expert averted the earth's turmoil. Moreover if at the hour coinciding with the beginning of the foundations of the city it is necessary that the faith increase and the city itself remain unconquered by the enemy, it is certainly no thanks to the inhabitants of the city if they are so pious and are increased in each respect through love of Christ. But in vain we make petitions to the all blameless mother of God's word and we enlist her as our protectress, if indeed Valens undertook our salvation in the future through the indications of the stars. And so do not allow us still to be in such doubt and to be thrown into confusion by absurd arguments.

As for the theological comment set as a funeral oration for Basil the Great which said, "Accepting so much of astrology and geometry, so as not be thrown into confusion by those who are clever about these things," and similarly in the epistles of the Great Dionysius, in which that holy man deals with the unnatural eclipse which occurred at the time of the saving passion, what must one say?²⁷ Either the texts of our copy are utterly wrong and will be waste for fire, or the words of the text have speciously silenced the truth. For the meaning of the passage has been utterly destroyed, the text has been altered, and all the rest has been maliciously corrupted. They have been quoted for his own purpose and not according to their correct interpretation. For this reason I have feared that such a letter which has been propped up with a shaft of reed, should so easily be overturned by chance events, and for this reason it will fall forthwith having withstood no single attack from there.²⁸

In addition to those things which have been stated distinctly above, the letter relates these things, "Basil the Great in his discussion of the sixth day of God's creation said in regards to astrology that it is difficult to comprehend, but he does not demonstrate it to be heretical, because truly it does not cause results through invocations and enchantments. This the saint repudiates as unholy." The letter relates thus; from which we wonder just a little at these things, since our book contains considerable disagreements in this respect also. Basil the Great clearly does not mention either any absurd invocations or enchantments in these treatises, but he shows that this apparatus and pursuit of astrology is exposed as bringing with itself "much that is foolish, manifold that is unholy."²⁹

In order that I not mention the several individual points that are being criticized by me, the letter which has been cited many times used certain analogies,

doubtless, for the defense of astrology, stating, "Just as the husband who has been joined to a wife by law of marriage is not guilty, but the one who surrendered himself to harlots is liable to penalties, so also the one who has made use of astrology not against the law, in accordance with the command of God will not be caught in error." Now the elements of the analogy are such and have this manner, but to my mind the analogy is very inept for his purposed aim, because we do not have a divine command that allows such a teaching in any way at all.

And why is it necessary to say more things? When I hear the letter stating, "That the men who do not accept the truth of this teaching on the grounds that it is ill-omened are of contrary opinion to the holy fathers," great wonder came upon me, since we find for the most part the entire holy Scripture all together speaking against astrology. For straightway since we agree to spend some time mentioning specific cases, we have the blessed Paul himself saying thus to the Galatians, "Watch closely the days and months and years! I fear that somehow I have labored in vain without a plan for you."³⁰ And so Chrysostom taking up from there says that to entrust human affairs to the cycles of the days is the work of the devil.³¹ One day is not different from another. The great theologian Gregory, who wrote that the mysteries according to Christ are not like those of the Greeks, adds the following, "Neither the Magis' divining art and haruspicy, nor the Chaldeans' astronomy and genethiology by the motions of the planets agree with our doctrines since they are of people incapable of knowing whatever they themselves are or will be."³² In the funeral lamentation to Basil the Great these things also are said, "Accepting so much astrology and geometry, to the extent that one is not confused by clever men concerning these things, he rejected any more as useless to those who desire to live piously." Therefore if it is useless to those who desire to live piously, it is entirely clear that such a teaching also will be useful as many people who do not desire to live piously. In the letter to his brother Caesarion the following words are found, "While having chosen as much as is useful from geometry and astrology and the education dangerous to others, still it remained to wonder at the demiurge due to the suitability and arrangement of the heavenly bodies, how much of its harmfulness he escaped, by not ascribing to the motions of the stars the events that are and those that come to be."³³ John Chrysostom, in his sixth homily on Matthew, related these things in accordance with the verse, "Those who are zealous to show the substantiality of astrology from that star which was seen by the Magi in its rising and which was guiding them to Palestine are hateful of the truth and are inspired by the devil himself."³⁴ In addition to these things, we have Basil the Great rejecting these

claims and saying the following in his canons, "The man who entrusts himself to prophets or to the like will himself be punished for as long a time as are murderers."³⁵ The holy father himself rules upon these matters following by necessity the law which says, "There shall not be in Israel a consulter of oracles or portents or female prophetess."³⁶ In accordance with these things the great Epiphanius called heretics those who pay attention to nativities and fate, astronomy and astrology.³⁷ The most holy among the patriarchs Nikephorus Constantine said these things, "It is not necessary to accept the revelation of Paul and the thunder oracles and lunar omens. For these are unhallowed."³⁸ In addition to these things we have the most divine Cyril³⁹ saying, "God, when he spoke through the prophet Isaiah, 'let the astrologers of heaven stand forth and save you,' proved the accursed astral magicians worthy of laughter."⁴⁰ Why is it necessary to say something concerning Basil the Great? For he said it is very foolish to consider entire calculation and construction of the so called nativity chart, but much more it is unholy.⁴¹ And why is it necessary to say many things and to recount these things individually? Let the great Paul suffice in place of them all when he says, "See to it that no one will rob you through philosophy and empty deceit according to the transmission of men, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ."⁴² For even if we grant that the matters of astrology have been permitted according to those men, still the Divine Word which is present to us through the flesh, did away with these such things as harmful in place of the others.⁴³ For even if this were not the case, he would not easily have dragged the Magi away from Persia and he would not have led them toward the his knowledge. And hear what John Chrysostom says in his explanation of the Gospel according to Matthew that, "When Christ was born he destroyed astrology and limited the powers of the demons, he destroyed fate and overturned all other magical trickery."⁴⁴

And the following are a few chosen from many possibilities. Wherefore, if it is not too daring to say, the arguments that recently have been put forward in the letter on behalf of astrology are unstable or, in truth, even unreliable. For as I think, one could not find the fathers holy, if they are opposed, as was said above, by those who do not accept this teaching on the ground that it is ill-omened. And the most eminent of the physicians, I mean Galen and Hippocrates, are surely not safely retained here as witnesses, that they do not entirely approve of this sort of teaching since they are for the most part natural philosophers and through great efforts have examined all the matters in regards to mortal bodies.⁴⁵ Indeed they said that the days of diseases have even been ordered in sequence, and that they return in determinate periods of time, namely when

a certain force comes down from above, except not from necessity, as the letter says, but, as those men say, where the nature of the disease is found more powerfully than the matter. For at that time if the matter does not get the upper hand, the nature of the disease acts in every way in accordance with its nature. For even if he says that these days possess a certain resemblance and commonalty with the lunar cycles, still they do not necessarily derive the regularity from that source. For if this were the case, the crises of the disease of the fourth day would not often be brought to crisis by the third or fifth day. And when matter rules supreme, the whole would not move in a disorderly manner. And so it is quite clear they set forth that their teachings not on the basis of astrological principles, but on natural principles. And so to pay attention to the risings and settings of the stars, as if it were for this reason that the environment alternates toward colder or warmer and thence hinders or promotes the medicines, even I know men who suggest this successfully and among them there is a determinate group who say, "The medicines are troublesome at the time of the Dog Star and before the Dog Star."⁴⁶ In no way would someone find these men agreeing with astrologies and genethliologies on the basis of which men who are clever about these matters seem to predict the events that occur unexpectedly in each person's life, I mean good things and bad, length of their lives and appointed times of their death. For how could they admit it, since in their writings they call the genethliologists magicians? And if both Galen and Hippocrates who were Greeks think and speak this way about these matters, by so much more do the Holy Fathers who have learned to speak as did David, "Cast your concerns upon the Lord and he will support you."⁴⁷

For if the letter introduces John the Damascene, who is wise with respect to holy doctrines, as widely engaged in natural speculation concerning the position and arrangement of the heavens, and indeed about the universal indications of celestial phenomena on the basis of the verse which reads, "And he placed these things for signs and for seasons and for years."⁴⁸ However it is not on this basis that the divine man himself composed his doctrine of astrology. For how could he, since all the more he shows from this that the free will which has been given to us is annulled and that God himself has been proved on great evidence of being unjust? For if things that happen occur according to fate, how does it not destroy free will? And if God punishes those who do wrong from necessity, how will he not have been found more unjust than the wrongdoers, chastising afterwards the person who has been dragged involuntarily into evil? As for the rest, that holy man has not been correctly cited by the letter, since he writes such treatises against the astrological teaching.⁴⁹

But that clever Leo, the so-called archbishop of Thessalonika, who was so wickedly appointed by that patriarch John the wizard who forthwith was condemned most heinously on the grounds that he was devoted to the war against the icons, should absolutely not have been cited by the letter as testimony.⁵⁰ For if the civil laws demand that those who bear testimony concerning someone be all together unassailable, by how much more are holy rules and sacred laws of the church. Therefore that aforementioned ought not to have been introduced as testimony. Even if he was an archbishop, even if he was engaged in the observation of the heavens, and even if he stopped the famine as they say when he persuaded the Thessalonikians to sow the seed at the rising of the stars, still we do not deem it right for this reason to turn to astrology, nor are we compelled to look towards such a person as a model, unless out of embarrassment we choose to say this proverb, "When our priests are possessed, who will cure us?" For how are they not possessed, if they count as nothing the three hundred and sixth rule of the Council of Laodikaea which states, "It is not permitted that priests be enchanters or astrologers,"⁵¹ and proceed despitefully against the proper decree? I am persuaded from this, most powerful king, that that monk should never cease from denouncing the doctrine, since the witnesses brought forth against him are rendered so easily inadmissible. And so much for that.

How must we respond that physical doctrine, according to which the planet Jupiter is called temperate by the Greeks and is shown forthwith from this fact to be beneficent because it lies between Saturn and Mars, since it seems that the implications of this theory are not sound? I summon this argument to be submitted to a thorough examination from many angles. They say that Saturn is very cold and that it is dry due to its great distance from the exhalations of the earth and because it lies quite a distance above the sphere of the sun, and for this reason it also causes malefic events because of its bad temperament. Mars is very hot and dry due to its proximity to the sun and partaking of its heat, and because of this it completely evaporates; thus it also is evil. Jupiter lying between these two and partaking of both qualities is temperate due to this fact and thus beneficent. If this is the case, as those men say, it is by all means appropriate to observe that from this fact that Jupiter is not correctly understood to be temperate. For if Jupiter is temperate because it lies between the heat of Mars and the cold of Saturn, it is all together necessary to say that it is bad tempered, in as much as it lies between two dry qualities. For not only is Mars hot, but also dry, and Saturn is not only cold, but also dry. And so it is quite clear from this fact that Jupiter is not temperate, if indeed it partakes of dryness more than the others. Now if Saturn were

cold and wet, they would have something to say. For then, Jupiter being mixed equally from opposite qualities of those planets on each side could be admitted to share in temperateness. But as it is, it is not truly temperate because it partakes of dryness more than others. For the equal portions of qualities are true temperateness according to Galen, who is wise with respect to such things. And why is it necessary to say more? If they had conjectured that this planet was in its own nature temperate, the falsehood of their tale would not have been as obvious. Just as we see many plants curing terrible illnesses, but by means of formulae entirely unspeakable. But if due to lying between Saturn and Mars, they set the planet in place so as to receive such a nature, nothing prevents them from saying that the late autumn is of a temperate nature, in as much it lies between summer and winter. That the way this is.

But if on the other hand Ptolemy says that such a planet is temperate because it is productive of heat, but on the contrary we do not readily accept the reasoning concerning this, because no one will agree that this kind of constitution, clearly being hot and moist, is temperate; nay much rather it is bad-tempered and from that fact subjects our bodies to many kinds of ills.⁵² As for the conditions that are moist, hot, and wet, the meat itself when it is cured under these conditions gives credence to the argument. And in addition to these points, read the second or third Book of Epidemics of Hippocrates, and from this I would have you learn you learn more accurately, that the hot and wet conditions are not productive of temperate qualities, but rather are part of the causes of putrefaction that happen to our bodies.⁵³ If this is the case, how, in the end, is Jupiter being hot and wet, said to strengthen our bodies through temperateness, whenever it conjuncts the moon, and for this reason be detrimental to draughts of drugs, since the liquids are not easily drawn down due to the power that has been imbued into them from the planet. I demand to learn this along with the other matters. For I am not ashamed to admit my ignorance in these things. And to this extent: that it was not seemly for us who are ignorant of pagan matters to dwell upon this point further since we are wholly uninitiated in such things.

What is it necessary to say concerning that star which the Magi saw in their own country from which, as the letter says, the doctrines of astrology arise? For the matters that have been recounted by the letter in regards to this are for the most part obviously irreconcilable and inconsistent, especially since we do have John Chrysostom saying that the star is not truly a star, that a certain invisible power assumed this visible appearance.⁵⁴ And not only saying, but also presenting this by undeniable proofs that it was not a star that roused the Magi to set forth, as he says,

upon such a journey, unless God moved their souls to this. For the star since it was solitary, and appeared, at that, much before the time of the birth could not have led them to Jerusalem, the apparent star -if it was truly a star--could not have sunk downwards from on high and it could not have unexpectedly rested over the child that was born, and made everything clear to the Magi, would have not become invisible after the adorations of those men.⁵⁵ For when the one who was born led them in an orderly manner and caused them to stand at the manger and led them to true knowledge, he communicated the rest to them not through the star, but through the angel. "For those who have received divine revelation, he says, according to a vision, they return home by another road."⁵⁶ So it was some divine messenger that called the Magi from Persia at that time. And it was likely that those men were led up into Jerusalem by a more holy vision, but in order that those who were summoned upon seeing the unwonted and fearful sight stalked off in astonishment at the strangeness of the sight, as it seems the incorporeal nature changed entirely into the form of a star in an all-together deliberate manner. Also unless he had used such condescension, unless he revealed a familiar form to the astrologers, he would not have caught the prey so easily, he would have not led them to Jerusalem, since we are not otherwise able to draw up a fish from the ocean depths, unless we first hide the fishhook with a some bait. The very great Paul also was found doing this when he started his discourse to the Athenians from the altar when they were busy doing business in the market place, and after circumcision making popular speeches to the Jews on the basis of circumcision.⁵⁷ For familiar things are dear to each person.⁵⁸ It is right to be persuaded by the facts themselves, if not by what is said. For when these men had come forth and had fallen down worshipping faithfully and had been made steadfast by the unchangeable knowledge according to Christ, that stellar form then grew dim, because there was no longer need for it, but instead that holy angel communicated to them through a dream and persuaded them to return by another road to their land, and to pay attention not to Mageian theology and stars, as before this, but to loudly proclaim this presence of Christ.⁵⁹ The golden speeched John explained these things in detail and more, but he did instruct about the doubt which befalls us, which we require to be dispelled. Granted this could not otherwise come about, unless I, through living speech as a slave and the least of slaves, undertook to explain.

2.4.144-50). See also Henry Maguire, ed., *Byzantine Magic* (Washington, DC.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1995).

⁷The supposition that everything that God makes has a purpose and is not to be rejected was articulated by Basil, "not a single thing has been created without a reason; not a single thing is useless" (*Hex.* 6.4).

⁸The law of increase and decrease in accordance with the waxing and waning of moon is discussed by Basil (*Hex.* 6.10), and Manuel paraphrases his examples. Abu Ma'shar also described these and other effects of the moon's phases in his *Greater Introduction* 3.13. Also see Cicero *Div.* 2. 19.

⁹Manuel here follows rather closely the opening arguments in Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos* 1.2 stating that the sun affects everything on earth including the generation of animals, the productiveness of plants, that the moon bestows her effluence on mundane things wherein rivers, seas, plants and animals wax and wane in sympathy with her, and the passages of fixed stars affect various weather conditions. Boll, *Studien*, 133ff. enumerates parallels to this passage concerning the sun and moon in Cicero (*Div.* 2.42), Philo Judaeus, Cleomedes, and Manilius, and ascribes their likeness to the influence of Posidonius as cited by F.R. Robbins trans., *Tetrabiblos*, (Cambridge 1940), 7. St. Augustine in *Civ. Dei* 5.6 also reiterates the belief that "It is not entirely absurd to say....that there are certain sidereal influences. We see that the seasons of the year change with the approach and receding of the sun. And with the waxing and waning of the Moon we see certain kinds of things grow and shrink, such as sea-urchins and oysters, and the moon and the tides of the ocean. But the choices of the will are not subject to the positions of the stars." Here St. Augustine sets forth the essence of the compromise that was eventually formulated by later theologians which held that while the stars have an effect upon the mundane world and physical bodies, they do not influence the soul of man.

¹⁰"Pierce not with iron that part of the body which may be governed by the sign actually occupied by the Moon" is the twentieth aphorism from *The Centiloquium*, known in Greek as $\gamma\text{Karp}\acute{\upsilon}\omega$. This work has been ascribed to Ptolemy as well as to Hermes Trismegistus, but Richard Lemay has shown that it actually belongs to Achmad Abu'Ja'far. See Helen Lemay, "The Stars and Human Sexuality: Some Medieval Scientific Views," *Isis* 71 (1980), 127 ff. *The Centiloquium* was translated from Arabic to Latin by Plato of Tivoli and/or John of Seville in 1136 and became one of the basic textbooks of late medieval astrology. See Haskins, 68-68.

This aphorism remains today as one of the basic astrological rules in electing dates for surgery. It is based upon the supposition that each zodiacal sign is analogous to a certain part of the body, such as Leo "ruling" the heart, Pisces ruling the feet, Cancer ruling the stomach and breasts. It is advised not to have surgery on a day when the moon, which transits through each sign every two and one half days, is in the same sign that rules the corresponding body part. As Manuel implies, it is thought that the flow of blood to that area is greater on these days and therefore increases the possibility of hemorrhage.

¹¹The notion that the zodiac and the planets are analogous to various parts of the body arises from pre-Socratic speculations concerning the correspondences between the macrocosm and microcosm, such as Anaximenes who stated that the human being is a microcosmic model of the macrocosmic Universe, "Just as our soul which is air holds us together, so it is breath and air which encompass the whole world" (Aet. *Plac.* 1.3.4).

This axiom of "as above, so below," the correspondence between the whole and the part is central to astrological theory, and this idea was to culminate in the Stoic doctrine of cosmic sympathy which provided a justification for the possibility of divination, including astrology. The astrological term for the distribution of parts of the body to the planets and signs is *melothesia*. This concept is the foundation of medical astrology which continued to be widely practiced throughout the Middle Ages.

There exists evidence from the fifth century in a pseudo-Hippocratic treatise entitled *De hebdomadibus* for the development of a medical astrology based upon Iranian doctrines. This work contains a theory on the correspondences between the parts of the body and parts of the whole world which has striking parallels to the 28th chapter of the Zoroastrian cosmological work, the *Greater Bundahishn*, (Zatspram 30. 5-11). See: M.L. West, "The Cosmology of Hippocrates, De Hebdomadibus," *The Classical Quarterly*, 21 (1971), 365-388.

¹²Ptolemy stated that, "Most of the moon's power consists of humidifying, clearly because it is close to the earth and because of the moist exhalations therefrom" (*Tetra.* 1.4.2). Robbins (p. 34) notes that it was a doctrine as old as Thales that moisture arising from the earth nourished the heavenly bodies; cf. Diels, *Doxographi Graeci* (Berlin, 1879), 276.

¹³*Centiloquium*, XIX. "The efficacy of purgation is impeded by the Moon's conjunction with Jupiter. "As this aphorism is directly above the preceding one (number

XX) that Manuel used, it is likely that he had a text of the work in front of him. Manuel was known for his keen interest in and practice of medicine, and in terms of laying out a medical justification for the use of astrology in this section of his argument, he himself most likely took celestial configurations into consideration in matters of health decisions. This work was translated directly into Greek in eleventh century. See Pingree, *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 1:215.

¹⁴Manuel is correct when he declares that the medical use of astrology is not condemned. Emperor Constantine circa 320 CE issued the following edict:

The science of those men who are equipped with magic arts and who are revealed to have worked against the safety of men or to have turned virtuous minds to lust shall be punished and deserved avenged by the most severe laws. *But remedies sought for human bodies shall not be involved in criminal accusation*, nor the assistance that is innocently employed in rural districts in order that the rains may not be feared for the ripe grape harvest or that the harvests may not be shattered by the stones of ruinous hail, since by such devices no person's safety or reputation is injured, but by their action they bring it about that divine gifts and the labors of men are not destroyed (*Theodosian Code* 16.3). (Italics mine).

¹⁵Manuel is not all together accurate here. In regards to the ancient astrologers who cast nativities, i.e., the genethliologists, while some might be guilty of a belief in astral fatalism, this did not imply that they used astrology in a magical or theurgical manner. As early as the first century, there arose a distinction between an astrology that had a spiritual purpose and was transmitted through divine revelation such as the hermetic astrology of Nechepso and Petosiris, and an astrology was based upon astronomical and mathematical foundations in the tradition of Hipparchus and Ptolemy focusing more on mundane applications such as political, medical, or meteorological prognostications. However Manuel did denounce genethliologists in this passage to make clear that he did not endorse the notion that astrologers could forecast a person's destiny from their horoscope, as part of his general argument concerning the supremacy of God over the stars.

¹⁶Here Manuel is contrasting the Stoic attitude of resignation to one's fate that is determined either by God or the stars with the Christian point of view that God reserves the right to interfere in his own creations and to suspend natural laws at will. Therefore praying to God for intervention is an affirmation of the Christian belief in God's power and willingness to respond, while resignation or passivity implies less

than devout practice. For the Stoic point of view on the benefits of knowing one's future, see Ptolemy *Tetra* 1.3.11

¹⁷See note 14 above in regards to the *Theodosian Code* 16.3. Magical arts that are used for destructive purposes are to be condemned, but those used for beneficial purposes are tolerated.

¹⁸The question of whether the stars are signs or causes, i.e., as the actual physical premeditated causes of events or as portents of coming events was discussed by both the Neo-Platonist Plotinus and his contemporary the Church father Origen. Plotinus maintained that the stars do not cause human events, and explained that they function as handwriting inscribed upon the heavens announcing the future to those who can read it (*Are the Stars Causes*, *Enn.* 2.3). Origen explicitly stated, "The stars are not causes of men, they are signs. Men are not capable of having a precise knowledge of these things, but they are revealed for the sake of powers greater than human" (*In genes. comm.*, in Eusebius *Prep. Ev.*, 6.11). Origen allowed for the prescience of God which does not deny free will, and conceded that the stars, when purged of the doctrine of astral fatalism, could offer information and knowledge of the future. Manuel likewise took this position in his own argument that the stars are signs, not causes, whose information is of use to mankind.

¹⁹Ptolemy pointed out that errors in astrological predictions were due to the inaccurate instruction of the practitioners of the art, rather than of the art itself, as well as to charlatans who for financial profit falsely claimed to be astrologers. Error were also due to the long intervals of time that it took for astronomical configurations to exactly repeat themselves, and thus the disparity of the examples on which predictions are based (*Tetra* 1.2.6-8). To these considerations for the failure of predictions, Manuel added God's volition to intercede over the portents of coming events and to work miracles.

²⁰*Gen.* 1.14.

²¹The following verses describing signs from celestial phenomena have been used to argue the case for astrology as testified to by the Bible. The Star of Bethlehem that appeared at the birth of Jesus: *Matth* 2.1-12; the eclipse and earthquake that occurred at the crucifixion: *Matthew* 27.45; *Mark* 15.33; *Luke* 23.44; the signs that will indicate the end of times: *Matthew* 24.29; *Mark* 13.24-25; *Luke* 21.25.

²²*Matth* 2.2.

²³Thorndike in *History*, 1: 471 points out that the story of the wise men from the east who had seen the star was formulated and inserted into this gospel in order to secure the support for the kingship of Jesus from the art and science of astrology which so many persons then held in high esteem.

²⁴ο κonomεα has a specialized meaning of incarnation. See G. W. H. Lampe, ed., *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1961), 942.6d.

²⁵The star of the Magi was an ongoing obstacle to the early Church Fathers' attempts to dismiss the influence of astrology, and in particular to counter the implication that Christ Himself had been "born under the decree of the stars." In the fourth century several theologians put forth assertions that the star of the Magi was not a star at all. John Chrysostom argued that the star was not even a planet or comet, but a miracle from God that was outside the normal course of events (*Hom. on Matth. 6*, Migne, PG 57. 61-72). Diodorus of Tarsus said that it was a divine power with the form of a star (Migne, PG 103.829-77). St. Augustine suggested that Christ caused the star to make a marvelous appearance (*Conta Faustum* 2.15, PL 42,212). Basil of Caesarea (*Hom. on gener.*, PG 31.1469A-1475B) also reiterates these ideas, but this homily is now considered to be spurious.

²⁶The Magi were a sect of the Persian priesthood who, after the Persian conquest of Babylon in 539 BCE, were exposed to Chaldean astrotheology and celestial divination. It was during the Persian rule of Mesopotamia that art of horoscopy was invented, and subsequently the Seleucid and Parthian periods saw the development of a sophisticated Hellenistic astrology. The Magi over time acquired among the ancient Greeks the reputation for being well-versed in magic and astrology.

²⁷A number of natural theories have been set forth for the identity of the star of Bethlehem including that it was a comet, a supernova, and a conjunction of several planets. Astronomer Michael R. Molnar proposes the date of April 17, 6 BCE as containing the astrological configurations that would, according to the rules of ancient astrology, portend a regal birth in Judea. He makes a case that "the star in the East" was the helical rising (at the eastern horizon at dawn) of the planet Jupiter. see the *Star of Bethlehem: The Legacy of the Magi*, Rutgers (NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1999).

²⁸John Chrysostom (*Hom. on Matth. 6.3*) proposed that the proof that the star of the Magi was not an ordinary star was shown by the fact that it had a "peculiar motion, shining by day, a rare intelligence in hiding itself at the right time, and a miraculous ability in standing over the head of the child." See Thorndike, *History*, 1: 473. Molnar,

note 27 above, explains that the unusual behavior of the Magi's star was due to its helical rising (i.e., shining by day), Jupiter's occultation (eclipse) by the moon (i.e., hiding itself), and its retrograde, stationary (i.e., standing over the head), and direct motions over the year of 6 BCE (85-96).

²⁹It is the ageless and usual practice of astrologers when looking ahead to upcoming significant planetary alignments to watch for the occurrence of major events, and also when momentous events have taken place to look retrospectively for the corresponding celestial signifiers.

³⁰While Manuel, following the doctrines of the Church Fathers that the star was not an ordinary star, also allows for the possibility that it might have been a natural occurrence such as a comet. To Manuel's way of thinking, either case establishes the validity of astrology and its usefulness for personal salvation.

³¹Stars are sometimes considered to be angels, which are understood by Christians as God's messengers to humans. The Greek word *éggelōw* means both angel and messenger. Biblical references in which stars are seen as messengers include, "When the morning stars sang together, and all of the sons of God shouted for joy?" (Job: 38.7). For planets as messengers of God, see Lester J. Ness, "Astrology and Judaism in Late Antiquity," *The Ancient World* 26, no. 2 (1995), 126-33 as cited by Molnar, 146.

³²"R(h)omania," in the twelfth century was in official Byzantine use to designate the empire. See Robert Lee Wolff, "Romania: The Latin Empire of Constantinople," *Speculum*, 23 (1948), 5-8 as cited by Brand, trans., 240.

³³Comets are small icy masses wandering through space, and visible only when they approach the Sun. Some have elongated orbits, and these are periodic and return at fixed intervals. The significance of comets upon terrestrial events was recorded as early as the second millennium BCE in the Mesopotamian *Enuma Anu Enlil*, and the ancient Greeks thought comets to be harbingers of disaster, often the death of king. A famous comet appeared in 44 BCE around the time of the assassination of Julius Caesar, and the comet of 1182 was thought to have foretold the vicious death of Andronikos I by his subjects. The comet that Manuel mentioned refers to the expedition of Conrad III of Germany en route to the Second Crusade, whose soldiers pillaged and plundered the Byzantine land through which they were passing. Niketas Choniates describes them as "a cloud of enemies, a dreadful and death-dealing pestilence, fell upon the Roman borders, I speak of the campaign of the Germans" (2.1.60). The second example of a comet that Manuel used in regards to the reign of his grandfather Alexios spoke to the

approach of the First Crusade circa 1095. Anna Komnena described this terrifying comet which blazed in the sky for forty nights (*The Alexiad*, 12.4).

³⁴An eclipse is a celestial phenomenon that involves Sun, Moon and Earth when either the Sun's or Moon's light is temporarily darkened. There are two kinds of eclipses, solar and lunar. A solar eclipse occurs when the Moon stands between the Sun and Earth, blocking out the light of the sun. It occurs only when the Sun and Moon are conjunct and near one of the Nodes at which the orbits of the Moon and Earth intersect, and it comes from the West. A lunar eclipse occurs when the Earth stands between the Sun and Moon, obscuring the moon's reflected light from the Sun. A lunar eclipse occurs only at the opposition of the Sun and Moon and close to the Nodes, and it comes from the East (Nicholas de Vore, *Encyclopedia of Astrology* (Totowa, NJ: Littlefield, Adams & Co., 1976), 132. Like comets, ancient astrologers considered eclipses as harbingers of evil.

Manuel's argument that the solar eclipse that occurred at Christ's crucifixion as recorded in the Bible (*Matth. 27.45; Mark 15.33; Luke 23.44*) was an unnatural occurrence was based upon the fact that the moon was at the fourteenth day in its twenty-eight day orbit around the Earth, thus positing the Moon at the opposition point from the Sun where it would have been impossible for a solar eclipse to take place. Thus such a phenomena, contrary to natural law, could only be explained as a wonderworking of God.

³⁵Dionysios the Aeropagite, converted to Christianity by St. Paul at Athens, was credited in the sixth century with the authorship of several works and letters which combine Neoplatonic philosophy and biblical symbolism, such as *The Celestial Hierarchy* which describes a choir of angels corresponding to the cosmic spheres. This attribution is now considered spurious. The story that Manuel tells about Dionysios has a number of variations, based upon Latin legends which confused him with a missionary in Gaul, and which later served as the source for the vita written around 833. See Halloix, *Vita Dionysii*, apud Migne, PG 4: 669-84 and *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 1:629) The discussion of the unnatural eclipse as a miracle, as related by Manuel, is contained in Pseudo-Dionysios' *Letter to Polycarp*, no. 7 (Migne, PG 3, col.1081). See also note 27 below in Commentary to Glykas for the text of this passage.

³⁶In the ninth century Leo the Mathematician, also known as Leo the Philosopher, was a scholar and teacher in Constantinople and served for a period of time as archbishop of Thessalonika. His library contained astrological manuscripts of

Ptolemy, Paulus of Alexandria and John Lydus. Legends preserved by George Hamartolos, Symeon Logothete and others present him as an astrologer able to predict the future who knew how to utilize astrology for the raising of crops. He wrote a number of astrological works. See Pingree, *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 2:1217; 3:1854 and *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, 3:190-91.

³⁷John of Damascus (ca 675-749) was the greatest Eastern systematizer of Christian dogma. In *De Fide Orthodoxa* 2.7, he included a treatise entitled "Concerning the light, fire, luminaries, sun, moon, and stars" (Migne, PG 94: col. 885-99) in which he displayed a comprehensive understanding of astrological principles. However he concluded this section with a statement that while the stars are signs of meteorological change, they have nothing whatsoever to do with human actions, as "we have been created with free wills by our Creator."

³⁸Anastasios of Sinai lived in the seventh century, and his major work, the *Guidebook (Hodegos)* is a polemic against heresies. Cumont wrote that he did not find the passage of Anastasios of Sinai that Manuel mentioned, but he referred the reader to PG 89. col. 735A, *Question 95* where Anastasios concluded a response with the comment that, "...prudence and temperance are natural qualities, which are not called virtues by the holy Father, but rather natural advantages and gifts which the most foolish astrologers prattle on that they come to men in accordance with the motion of the stars."

³⁹ See note 18 above concerning Origen.

⁴⁰Abram or Abraham was considered to be one of the founders of astrology by ancient writers such as Vettius Valens (*CCAG*, 5.2,71) and Firmacus Maternus (*Math* 4. Proe. 5). It should be noted that he came from Ur which was the home of Babylonian celestial divination in the second and first millennia BCE, and he was generally credited with an important role in the transmission of astrology from Seth. *The Recognitions*, also known as the *Pseudo-Clementines*, which contain an account of the events that occurred not long after the crucifixion concerning the apostle Peter, Simon Magus and Clement of Rome states that Abraham, "being an astrologer, was able from the rational system of the stars to recognize the Creator, while all other men were in error, and understood that all things are regulated by His Providence" (1.32); cf. *Gen.* 15.5-6. See Thorndike, *History*, 1:401; 411. Tester (141) noted that "Abraham" in later authors of the Middle Ages, when the Arabic sources have been used, often refers to Hipparchus, by a misunderstanding of the Arabic form of his name.

⁴¹Seth, son of Adam, was regarded in the Middle Ages as the recipient of divine revelation and as the author of sacred books. The historian Josephus stated in his *Jewish Antiquities* that Seth and his descendants discovered the art of astronomy, and that one of the two pillars on which they recorded their findings was still extant in his time, the first century (1.2.3) as cited by Thorndike, *History*, 1:366.

⁴²Both Cedrenus (ed., I. Bekker, Bonn 1838, 1:497) and Zonaras (ed., L. Dindorf, Leipzig 1870, 3:180 as cited by Cumont, 118) during the twelfth century report that the horoscope for the founding of Constantinople on 11 May 330 was cast by the renowned Vettius Valens at the command of Emperor Constantine. However this was impossible as Valens flourished in the late second century CE. Pingree demonstrates that this horoscope was calculated by the astrologer Demophilus ca. 990 and interpreted "according to the method of Vettius Valens," which accounts for how the authorship of this nativity later became attributed to Valens by the twelfth century historians. See Pingree, "The Horoscope of Constantinople," *Prismata*, Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1977. Cumont agreed with this, however he added, "But yet, we know that Constantine had consulted certain astrologers for the nativity of new Rome because at that time it was the custom for this to be done for the construction of monuments, and it was of special concern in regard to royal cities." See *CCAG* 9, 2, p. 4-16 for the horoscopes of Antioch, Alexandria, Gaza, Caesaria and Neopolis. Also see Cicero *Div.* 2.47 for a discussion of an attempt by Lucius Tarutius of Firmum to retrospectively reconstruct the horoscope of the founding of Rome.

⁴³In Demophilus' discussion of the horoscope of Constantinople, in one of his examples he presents an astrological explanation of an earthquake that destroyed almost a third of the city on October 25, 989. See Pingree, *Prismata*, 306.

⁴⁴In astrological interpretation, the second house is the domain of movable resources, i.e., money, wealth, possessions. One of the attributes of the planet Saturn (star of Kronus) is that of monastics because of the solitary and disciplined nature of their lives (Valens, *CCAG* 2.89.18). Therefore the statement, "the star of Kronus lies in the second place of the zodiac" could be interpreted that the monks would receive the wealth of the city. See Appendix B below for the horoscope of the founding of Constantinople.

⁴⁵Beginning with Augustus, laws were periodically passed in the Roman Empire forbidding the practice of astrology and expelling astrologers. These laws were directed against the apparently widespread practice of predicting the date of the emperor's

death as a means to foment political revolts. However the emperors themselves continued to employ court astrologers for their own purposes, often to execute those men whose nativities revealed an imperial future. Augustus, Tiberius, Claudius, Nero, Domitian, Vespasian, Hadrian, Septimus Severus are all associated with a use of astrology. See Cramer, *Astrology in Roman Law and Politics*. In the Eastern empire, even after the rash of anti-divination and magic laws passed in the fourth century, there exists evidence that the emperors Valens (Ammianus Marcellinius 29.1.5ff) and Zeno employed court astrologers. See Pingree, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 30, 133-50. Thus Manuel was not all together mistaken when he asserts that the emperors used astrology at opportune times and were not considered heretics.

⁴⁶The citation in regards to Gregory, *Gregory in laud. Basil* PG 26 col. 528, as given by both Cumont and Eustratiades is incorrect.

⁴⁷Basil of Caesarea (330-379), referred to by Manuel as Basil the Great, in discussing the creation of the lights of heaven (*Hexaemeron* 6) acknowledged that the observation of the signs given by the luminaries, as they indicate weather changes and such, are useful for human livelihood. However he rejected the notion that the stars forecast human fate, and argued the impossibility of accurate interpretations due to difficulties in accessing the exact moment of birth. He ended this brief digression with a comment that if the stars are the determiners of fate and not human will, the entire system of rewarding virtue and punishing crime is useless. "Where necessity and destiny prevail, merit, which is the special condition for just [Christian] judgment, has no place." He did grant that "variations of the moon do not take place without exerting a great influence upon the organization of animals and of all living things, and the moon makes all nature participate in her changes (*Ham* VI, 10), Migne, PG 29. 1285.

⁴⁸During the fourth century a series of secular and church laws were instituted that included injunctions against magicians and astrologers as a part of an anti-pagan legislation. There exist twelve pronouncements from 319 to 409 concerning divination that were issued by the emperors Constantine, Constantius, Valentinian, Valens, Honorius, and Theodosius that have survived in a codification of early imperial legislation known Theodosian Code, published in 438 under Theodosius II. Among these laws was an edict outlawing the teaching or learning of astrology (16.8). While an edict of 357 prohibited any attempt at divination under penalty of capital punishment (16.4), it was modified in 371 with the declaration that divination was not condemned, but forbidden to be practiced harmfully (16.9). See David Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), 177-82.

⁴⁹ *Isaiah* 47.13.

⁵⁰ *Ps.* 20.7.

⁵¹ *Ps.* 33.16-17.

⁵² *Ep. Galat.* 4.9 The Galatians prior to Christianity worshipped pagan deities, which Paul calls "the weak and beggarly elemental spirits of the universe" to whom they were slaves.

⁵³ *Daniel* 3. 20-26 The Jews Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego when thrown into a fiery furnace by Nebuchadnezzar were not burned due to God's intervention.

⁵⁴ *Kings* 1.18.31ff. Elijah built a stone altar upon which he placed a heap of wood and a sacrificial bull. He poured water three times over the offerings and into the deep trench which had been built around them. The fire of the Lord fell down and consumed the offering as well as all the water that was in the trench.

⁵⁵ *Corinth* 1.15.28.

⁵⁶ Ptolemy also drew a comparison between the prognostications of astrologers and physicians (*Tetra* I. 13-17). Cicero (*Div.* 2.6) compares divination and medicine, and stated that both are sciences capable of error.

⁵⁷ *Matth.* 5.34. "Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King."

⁵⁸ *Psalms* 19.1-4

The heavens are telling the glory of God;

and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.

Day to day pours forth speech,

and night to night declares knowledge.

There is no speech, nor are there words;

their voice is not heard;

yet their voice goes out through all the earth,

and their words to the end of the world.

⁵⁹ Plato considered the planets to be divine because of the mathematical beauty of their perfect circular motion. (*Timaeus* 37-40, *Epinomis* 982b)

⁶⁰While Manuel argues that all of God's creations, including the stars, are good, the Christian polemic in general maintained that astrology was the invention of the devil (Lactantius, *Divinarum Institutionum* 2.17) and could be accomplished only through the help of demons. Tatian wrote that the demons, impersonating pagan gods, were embodied in the planets and constellations (*Oration to the Greeks*, 9).

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CHAPTER V

COMMENTARY TO MICHAEL GLYKAS' REFUTATION OF ASTROLOGY

¹*Matth. 2. 29.*

²These opening statements illustrate Glykas' thinly veiled sarcasm and condescension towards Manuel's literary style and arguments. It parallels Manuel's opening statements criticizing the initial letter which he characterized "as worthy of a simple monk."

³The story of the Jew is contained in Pseudo-Amphilochus' *Life of Saint Basil* (Migne, PG 29. 114 ff.). He is referred to as Joseph the Hebrew who is, as Glykas states, a physician who was an expert in diagnosis through the taking of pulses.

⁴Throughout his refutation, Glykas repeatedly states that his texts do not contain the passages which Manuel cites. Granted that there existed different versions of the same manuscripts and there existed disagreement as to which texts were attributed to various authors; but the citations given by the editors Cumont and Eustratiades in Migne's PG, for the most part support Glykas' claims. However, it should be noted that Byzantine editors and copyists were likely to purge occult and pagan references that were abhorant to Christian beliefs from the manuscripts on which they were working. See the discussion of this practice in reference to the hermetic treatises by Brian P. Copenhaver, *Hermetica* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), xl-xli.

⁵John Chrysostom in his *Hom. on Matth. 6* (Migne, PG 57. col. 61ff.) was concerned to prove that the appearance of the star at Christ's birth was not to be taken as a confirmation of astrology.

⁶The notion that the Magi forsook their astrological practices after coming to a knowledge of Christ began with Tertullian (*Idol.* 9) and was an argument that was frequently repeated by Christian writers. See A. Bouche-LeClercq, *L'Astrologie Grecque* (Paris, 1899), 609-27 for a thorough discussion of the early Church's opposition to astrology.

⁷In Plotinus' discussion on the possibility of stars as signs, he states that all things are full of signs, and if a comprehensive principle of coordination can be established, then there exists a reasonable basis for the divination, not only by stars, but also by birds and entrails and other omens (*Enn. 2.3.7*).

⁸*Levit. 19. 26.*

⁹Ptolemy, discussing the ways in which the astrological art is seen to fail, said that many practioners, for the sake of gain/finding, deceive the ignorant by seeming to foretell many things even about those matters that *do not* possess any nature at all subject to prognostication; while to the more inquisitive they equally provide an occasion for forming a judgment against those things that *do* have a nature subject to prophecy (*Tetra*. 1.2.6, trans., Robert Schmidt (Berkeley Springs, WV: The Golden Hind Press, 1994).

¹⁰*Matth*. 2. 2.

¹¹Pseudo-Basil, *Homil. in gener.*, 5 (Migne, PG 31, 1469 A-1475A). It is disputed as to whether this is a treatise of Basil's.

¹²*Num*. 24.17. In a spurious homily attributed to John Chrysostom (Migne, PG, 56. 637ff.), he repeated the suggestion made by others that the Magi knew of the star from the books of the diviner Balaam whose prophecy was also put into the Old Testament. Origen related that the Magi owned the written prophecies of Balaam because they were descended from him (*In Numeros Homilia* 13, Migne, PG 12, 675); and there is some speculation that Balaam himself was an astrologer. See Thorndike, *History* 1: 444, n.5).

¹³Abraham, see note 40 in Commentary to Manuel. Abimelech, who wished to have Sarah, Abraham's wife for his harem, was not a king in Egypt, but rather of Gerar in the land of the Philistines (*Gen*. 20. 1). There is no mention of Abraham dishonoring those who believed in astrology.

¹⁴The Sibylline priestesses, said to be inspired by the god Apollo, foretold events of general significance which they uttered in verse. The *Oracula Sibyllina*, a collection of their prophecies, were assembled in their present form by some Byzantine scholar about the sixth century CE. See H. W. Parke, *Sibyls and Sibylline Prophecy in Classical Antiquity* (London & New York: Routledge, 1988). For Balaam, see note 12 above. Caiaphas, who was a high priest of the Pharisses, made an unconscious prophecy concerning the benefit of Christ's death for the safety of the Jewish nation (*John* 11. 50-51). The point that Glykas is making was one that was first defined by Plato (*Phaed* 244c) and later fully developed by Cicero (*Div.* 1.6;18) distinguishing between direct divination, such as prophecy and dreams which are inspired by the gods directly contacting the mind of the recipient and thus a divine art; and indirect divination which is based upon the observations of signs in nature such as augury, haruspicy, and the movements of celestial bodies, and thus a human art.

¹⁵Glykas is referring to the *thema mundi*, the birth chart of the creation. However, Manuel did not made any mention of this topic in his treatise as Cumont found it. Unless we are missing a portion of Manuel's treatise, this section demonstrates that Glykas had quite a bit of astrological knowledge independent from responding to Manuel's points, as has been suggested in the introduction.

The *thema mundi*, the horoscope of the world, had the 15th degree of Cancer as its rising sign and all the planets in the signs of their exaltation (The Sun at the 19th degree of Aries, the Moon at the 15th degree of Cancer, Saturn at the 15th degree of Capricorn, Jupiter at the 15th degree of Sagittarius, Mars at the 15th degree of Scorpio, Venus at the 3rd degree of Libra, and Mercury at the 15th degree of Virgo as per Paulus Alexandrius). It was quite ancient as attested to by the following authors: Antiochus, (*Introductio*, 2.1 in *CCAG* 8.3.112,120-26), Paulus Alexandrius (Chap. 37), Firmacus Maternus (*Math* 3.1), Macrobius (*Somn.* 1.21;23) and Rhetorius. Firmacus Maternus said that the *thema mundi* was devised by Hermes, handed down to Asklepius and Hanubius, and adopted by Petosiris and Nechepso. Its origins may go back to Babylon where Marduk, in the Epic of Creation, set the stars and planets in place at the time of the creation (*Enuma Elish*, Tablet V).

¹⁶ *Isaiah* 13.13. Pseudo-Basil (Migne, PG 30.593).

¹⁷ *Job* 38. 4-6.

¹⁸ *Isaiah* 64.17.

¹⁹ I *Corin.* 7.31.

²⁰ *Romans* 8.19.

²¹ This is a Stoic doctrine of the Great Year, periodic universal conflagration (*ekpyrosis*), and eternal recurrence. As articulated by Nemesius (*On Human Nature*, 38):

The Stoics say that when the planets return to the same point in longitude and latitude, where each was at the beginning when the cosmos was first formed, at specific periods of time they bring about a conflagration and destruction of the world, and then return the cosmos to the same state. When the stars are brought back to the same position everything that happened in the previous period is repeated in exactly the same way.

²² John Chrysostom in *Hom. on Matth.* 6. 2 (Migne, PG 57. col. 63).

²³ See note 38 in the Commentary to Manuel.

²⁴Electing, i.e., choosing an auspicious time on which to begin an enterprise such as the opening of a business, marriage, surgery, or in this case the founding of a city is the branch of astrology called *catarchic* by ancient astrologers and *electional* by modern ones. The idea behind catarchic astrology is that any act is influenced by the horoscope of its inception, and thus one should select a time when the planets are most advantageously positioned for successful attainment of the desired goal. See note 42 above in the Commentary to Manuel.

²⁵According to Pingree, the astrologer Demophilus cast the horoscope of Constantinople in about 990, and based upon the methods of Valens judged that its end would occur in 1026 CE, 696 years after its founding. This prediction was attributed to Valens himself by twelfth century historians. See Pingree, *Prismata*.

²⁶*Ps.* 104. 32.

²⁷*Letter to Polycarp*, no. 7, Migne, PG 3. col. 1081. See note 35 above in Commentary to Manuel. The passage in question reads as follows:

What do you believe in regards to the disappearance of the sun which happened at the time of the crucifixion? For then we both were watching near Heliopolis being present and on the spot when in a wonderful manner the moon fell into the sun (and it was not the time for an eclipse), and was once more restored after the ninth hour of the afternoon in a supernatural manner, diametrically opposite the sun. Remember something else: he knows in what way we saw that conjunction of the moon beginning from the east and continuing on to the limit of the sun, and then at last leaping back again, and moreover it did not go forth and return from the same part of the sky, but from the opposite part of the sky. These are the things which came about at that time generally as contrary to nature and could happen only by the creator of all things Christ who makes things wonderful and amazing beyond number.

²⁸These two sentences contain Glykas' most scathing criticism, not about the relative merits of Manuel's arguments, but against Manuel himself whom he accuses of fabricating and deliberately misquoting evidence. It was this slander of the Emperor that had led some scholars such as Beck (see Glykas' biography in the introduction) to speculate that Glykas had been imprisoned because of this letter. Choniates corroborated Glykas' evaluation of Manuel's scholarship. In the midst of extolling Manuel's skill in letter writing and composing public sermons, he qualified it, saying: All this would have been praiseworthy ... if he had not distorted the meaning of the written word, as he often did, to accord with his own intent, providing definitions and

giving exegeses of doctrines whose correct meaning the Fathers had formulated as though he fully comprehended Christ due to his having received from the Divine the most lucid instructions pertaining to the mysteries of his person (2. 7. 210).

²⁹Basil, *Hex.* 6. 5-8 (Migne, PG 29. col. 128- 132). See note 47 above in Commentary to Manuel.

³⁰*Gal.* 4.10-11.

³¹John Chrysostom, *In Calendas.* Migne, PG 1, col. 955.

³²Gregory of Nazianzus (329-390) Bishop of Constantinople was a close friend of Basil the Great. This passage *Or.* 39.5 (Migne, PG 36, col 340) is but one section of a long list of pagan mysteries which he is dismissing.

³³Gregory of Nazianzus, praising the intellectual skills of his brother Caesarius, wrote:

From geometry and astronomy, that science so dangerous to anyone else [i.e., astrology], he gathered all that was helpful (I mean that he was led by the harmony and the order of the heavenly bodies to reverence their Maker), and avoided what is injurious; not attributing all things that are or will be to the influence of the stars, like those who raise their own fellow servant, the creation, in rebellion against the Creator, but referring, as it reasonable, the motion of these bodies, and all other things, to God (*In laude. Caesar.*, 7, Migne, PG 35. col 761).

³⁴John Chrysostom in *Hom. on Matth.* 6.1 (Migne, PG 57. col. 61).

³⁵Basil, *Epist.*, 217. 72 (Migne, PG 32. col 802).

³⁶*Deut.* 18.10.

³⁷Epiphanius of Cyprus (315-403) in the *Medicine Chest for the Cure of All Heresies* made an extensive attack on all sorts of heretics, including astrologers. He denounced astral fatalism in the context of his attack upon the Stoics, stating, "Rather than the man, who does the deed under necessity, the stars, which have imposed necessity, must pay the penalty (*Panarion* I. 5). He also denounced the Pharisee because "fate and astrology meant much to them" (*Panarion* 1. 16, Migne, PG 41. col. 252).

³⁸Nikephoros I, patriarch of Constantinople (806-813) was a historian and saint who was an anti-Iconoclast. (*Juris graeco-romani*, p. 169).

³⁹Cyril (378-444), patriarch of Alexandria, whose early years in office were marked by conflicts with Jews, Novatians, and pagans, including a suspicion that he was involved with the murder of Hypatia. (*In Es.*, 4. 3, Migne, PG 70. 1011).

⁴⁰*Isaiah* 48.13.

⁴¹Basil, *Hex.* 6. 5-8 (Migne, PG 29. col. 128- 132). See note 47 above in Commentary to Manuel.

⁴²*Ep. to Colossians* 2.8.

⁴³Tertullian asserted that astrology had been permitted until the time of the Gospel (*Idbid.* 9), and Ignatius argued that the birth of Christ destroyed all harmful magic and other evils (*Epist ad Ephes.*, 19).

⁴⁴John Chrysostom in *Hom. on Matth* 6.1 (Migne, PG 57. col. 62).

⁴⁵Galen of Pergamum (129-?199/216) who had a spectacular career as a physician composed voluminous writings on the subject. While there is a lack of astrology in most of Galen's medicine, two treatises were devoted to astrological medicine. *The Prognostication of Disease by Astrology* discussed the planetary influences at the time the patient becomes ill and went to bed, by which to predict the course, treatment and duration of the illness (*Prognostica de decubitu ex mathematica scientia*, ed., Kuehn, 19: 529-573). The other treatise on critical days, based upon the premise that "we receive the forces of the stars above," discussed the particularly significant influences of the sun and moon on the course of disease (περὶ κρίσεμν ἡμερῶν, 3 books, ed., Kuhn, 14: 298. 1 ff.) which was based on Hippocrates doctrine of critical days. See "On the Prognostics" in *The Genuine Works of Hippocrates*, trans., Francis Adams (New York: William Wood & Co) 1:208-09. Hippocrates is cited as having said that a study of geometry and astronomy (which also meant astrology) is essential in medicine (Hippocrates, *On Airs, Waters, and Places*, 2). See also Cramer, 188-190 and Thorndike, *History*, 1: 178 ff.

⁴⁶Hippocrates said that, "About the time of the dog-days, and before it, the administration of purgatives is unsuitable" (*Aphorism* 31.5 in the *The Genuine Works of Hippocrates*, trans., Francis Adams, 2 vols., New York: William Wood & Co). Galen also was concerned with the powers of the dog-star Sirius on the course of diseases and the preparation of drugs (*de theriaca ad Pisonem*, ed., Kuhn, 14:285). The belief that the rays from certain stars can make medicines more potent was held by the Babylonians. See

Erica Reiner, *Astral Magic in Babylonia* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1995).

⁴⁷ *Ps.* 54.23.

⁴⁸ *Gen.* 1.14.

⁴⁹ John of Damascus in his treatise *Concerning light, fire, the luminaries, sun, moon, and stars* concluded his discourse on the precepts of astrology with a statement affirming human free will over the fatalism of stars, and that the stars are essentially only signs of meteorological change (*On Faith* 2. 7, Migne, PG 94. col. 885).

⁵⁰ Leo the Mathematician served as archbishop of Thessalonica (840-843) having received the position due to the political influence of his cousin John VII Morocharzianus the Grammarian who had been patriarch (837-43). He was disposed when the iconodule Methodius I succeeded his iconoclast cousin John as patriarch in 843. See *Dictionary of Scientific Biographies*, 8:190-91.

⁵¹ In 365 the Council of Laodikaea forbade the clergy to be astrologers or magicians.

⁵² In the *Tetrabiblos* Ptolemy attempted to give astrology a rational foundation by proposing a physical explanation for the powers of the planets based upon Aristotle's theories of natural philosophy. In this passage to which Glykas is referring (*Tetra.* 1.3,18) and elsewhere Ptolemy made use of the four Aristotelian principles, hot, cold, wet and dry (*De generatione et corruptione*, 2.2.3).

⁵³ Hippocrates, *Opera*, ed., Kuhlwein 1: 184 ff.

⁵⁴ John Chrysostom, *Hom. on Matth* 6.1, Migne, PG 57. col. 62.

⁵⁵ See notes 27 and 28 above in Commentary to Manuel.

⁵⁶ *Matth.* 2.12.

⁵⁷ *Act. apost.* 17. 23.

⁵⁸ *Epist. Rom.* 2. 25.

⁵⁹ John Chrysostom, *Hom. on Matth* 6.1, Migne, PG 57. col. 62.