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Just as the Sun moves through the Zodiac, medieval astrologers of the Islamic world also noted the movement of the Moon through a zodiac of its own, known as manzil al qamar or the lunar mansions.

A thread on the astrology and magic of the moon

There are 28 stations the moon travels through forming the basis of a lunar calendar used in ancient Arabia and drawn into the medieval astrology of the Islamic world.

A quick list of some of the mansions (though not all)

The first mansion is Sharatayn is of the nature of fire and is the period to take medicine and to avoid trade.

Its talismans are made to cause harm and destruction

The second mansion is Butayn of the nature of fire and is a period favorable to rulers, but less favorable for marriage.

Its talismans are made to find buried treasure and to soften the anger of kings.

The third mansion Thuraya is a good time to make requests of rulers and to travel.

Its talisman is made to grant wishes and acquire wonders and goods.

The fourth mansion is Dabaran of the nature of earth. Do not start new work or plant crops. It is a period of enmity and war.

Its talismans are made to cause strife and to kill poisonous animals

The fifth mansion is Haqa of the nature of earth it is a time to perform exorcisms and to communicate with family

Its talismans are made for protection and for skill

The sixth mansion is Hana of the nature of air and it is the time to plant crops and to make friendships.

Its talismans are made for love and friendship.

The seventh is Dhira of the nature of air and is a time for building.

Its talismans are made to increase trade and wealth

Scholars debate the origins of the mansions with Pingree indicating a Mesopotamian connection.

I, and other scholars believe they originated in India with Vedic astrology's nakshratas and made their way to the Middle East via Yemen and Southern Arabia.

In Yemen they are still used as a calendar system and this likely hints at their original function: as a celestial calendar used to organize human activity.

A person in-sync with the cycles of the Moon would know when to get married (6th Mansion) or when to enter a business agreement (10th Mansion).

This original use lends itself to the electional astrology of the medieval period.

Astrologers of the Islamic world would use the mansions of the moon to time major events, when to go to war, when to enter into diplomacy, and even advise rulers when to conceive children

Electional work was at the heart of astrological talismans. Texts like the Ghaya advise how to construct talismans for each of the mansions to accomplish various ends.

Blending together natural and astral magic, the mage could invoke the powers of the moon for wonders

For example, a talisman made under the auspices of the 6th Mansion could bring a person love.

The mansions of the moon were also at the heart of the mystical thought of Ibn Arabi.

Like Buni, Ibn Arabi imagined the whole of the cosmos fashioned by sacred letters, utterances of God's Divine Names which gave life to the universe.

The mystic could understand the reality behind creation through a mastery of the letters, through chanting, and breath work.

The key linking the celestial and imaginative realms of the letters with the material world was the lunar mansions.

Each mansion was associated with a letter. For example, the 7th Mansion Al Dhira was connected to the Throne and the letter Qaf.

According to Burckhardt, Ibn Arabi believed the rational soul was given form through the lunar mansions.

The philosophical and mystical thought of Ibn Arabi has roots in older Islamic cosmology.

Suyuti and Ibn Kathir writes during the lunar month of Ramadan or Shaban, God inscribes the decrees of all life on the Tablets of Faith, Lawh al Mahfuz.

The lifespan of humans are decreed and then the tablets are taken by Mikai'l to the angel of death, Azrail.

In medieval astrology, in addition to electional and talismanic work, the lunar mansions would then be used to understand the nature of a person's soul.

The placement of the moon in a particular mansion would be interpreted as part of their character.

Additionally, the moon would be projected onto the 12th Parts, as unveiling the deepest recesses of a person's spiritual character.

In the same way delineations of the ascendant would reveal the long-term trajectory of life, the 12th Part of the Moon delineations all revolve around the nature of the soul and heart.

The lunar mansions offers scholars a rich site of exploration; from tracing historical influences to examination of the deep philosophical roots of the nature of the soul, the mind, and character.

We can see the origins of astrological thought in a calendar system meant to organize life activities

We can also see the complex interplay of early astronomy, philosophy, religious thought, and mysticism

On my patreon, I've shared instructions on the most famous lunar mansion operation, the wish-granting talisman! https://t.co/OWDXsBjUiR

We'll continue our exploration of astrology, magic, and esotericism in future threads.