

« Copernicus and his Islamic Predecessors: Some Historical Remarks ». *History of Science*, 45, 2007, p. 65-81.

Benno van Dalen



Édition électronique

URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/abstractairanica/39750>

DOI : [10.4000/abstractairanica.39750](https://doi.org/10.4000/abstractairanica.39750)

ISSN : 1961-960X

Éditeur :

CNRS (UMR 7528 Mondes iraniens et indiens), Éditions de l'IFRI

Édition imprimée

Date de publication : 15 mai 2011

ISSN : 0240-8910

Référence électronique

Benno van Dalen, « « Copernicus and his Islamic Predecessors: Some Historical Remarks ». *History of Science*, 45, 2007, p. 65-81. », *Abstracta Iranica* [En ligne], Volume 31 | 2011, document 259, mis en ligne le 11 octobre 2012, consulté le 04 octobre 2020. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/abstractairanica/39750> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/abstractairanica.39750>

Ce document a été généré automatiquement le 4 octobre 2020.

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- 1 This article summarizes the various pieces of evidence that, since the beginning of the 20th century, have gradually built up to show Copernicus's dependence on Islamic predecessors in the development of his heliocentric planetary theory. Starting with the occurrence in *De revolutionibus* of the so-called Ṭūsī couple and Ibn al-Shāṭir's (ca. AD 1350) planetary models involving multiple epicycles, recently also cosmological arguments have been considered. The 15th-century astronomer 'Alī Qūšjī, who initially worked at the observatory of Ulugh Beg in Samarkand and ended his career in the service of Mehmet II in Constantinople, not only proposed an astronomically based on physics, allowing a rotating earth, in order to replace the traditional Aristotelian physics, but also produced a proof of a theorem that allows epicycles in a planetary model to be converted to eccenters. The author argues that both these aspects have influenced Copernicus.

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Thèmes : 10. Histoire des Sciences et des Techniques

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