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The Crime of Vettius Valens

Vettius Valens wrote a treatise on astrology in Antioch during the late 2nd century of our era, about the same time that Ptolemy was active in Alexandria; the book is among the richest sources we have for the use of mathematical methods in ancient astrology. Vettius Valens had a special enthusiasm for calculations predicting the length of a person's life, and he illustrates them and their efficacy through examples drawn from the lives of his clients. The details of these examples cast interesting light both on the role of mathematical methods in Greek astrology and on the manipulation, whether conscious or unconscious, of data to obtain exact agreement between theories and empirical data.