

ISLAMIC MODERATION IN THE GOLDEN AGE OF ISLAM

Ahmad Choirul Rofiq

State Islamic Institute of Ponorogo
ahmadchoirulrofiq@iainponorogo.ac.id

Abstract: *There was a harmonious relation between Muslims and non-Muslims in the era of classical Islam, especially in the Abbasid dynasty. The Abbasids achieved the golden age of Islamic civilization because of their religious tolerance. Many non-Muslim scholars contributed their valuable works to intellectual achievement during the Abbasid reign. This paper expects to give an inspirative viewpoint on the relationship between Muslim and non-Muslim communities. Indonesia and its plural characteristic should build a harmonious multicultural relationship to imitate Abbasid achievements. Indonesia with its Muslim majority must prove that Islam is moderate and tolerant. Indonesian government together with all Islamic organizations and their followers should promote tolerant Islamic teachings, such as through multicultural Islamic education.*

Keywords: *Islamic Moderation, the Abbasids, Tolerance, Islamic Civilization*

Abstrak: Ada hubungan yang harmonis antara muslim dan non-muslim di era Islam klasik, terutama di dinasti Abbasiyah. Tdia Abbasiyah mencapai zaman keemasan peradaban Islam karena toleransi agama mereka. Msetiap cendekiawan non-Muslim menyumbangkan karya-karya berharga mereka untuk pencapaian intelektual selama pemerintahan Abbasiyah. Tulisan ini diharapkan dapat memberikansudut pandang yang menginspirasi tentang hubungan antara komunitas Muslim dan non-Muslim. Indonesia dan karakteristik jamaknya harus membangun hubungan multikultural yang harmonis untuk meniru prestasi Abbasiyah. Indonesia dengan mayoritas muslimnya harus membuktikan bahwa Islam itu moderat dan toleran. Pemerintah Indonesia bersama dengan semua organisasi Islam dan pengikutnya harus mempromosikan ajaran Islam yang toleran, seperti melaluipendidikan Islam m ultikultural.

Kata Kunci: *Moderasi Islam, kaum Abbasiyah, Toleransi, Peradaban Islam*

INTRODUCTION

The Islamic history is not a history of Muslims alone. Without attention to the non-Muslim elements of society and their role, it is hard to imagine a sound history of crafts and commerce, of science and medicine, even of governmental.¹ Based on genealogical and historical roots, Islam, Christianity, and Judaism originated from the same Prophet, Abraham. Therefore, these religions are called Abrahamic Religions. Theologically, the

¹ R. Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry* (London: Princetown University Press, 1991), 255.

Abrahamic religions have specific characteristics, i.e. the belief in The One Supreme God (monotheism), although there are differences in this doctrine among them subsequently.²

Many historical studies have recorded a harmonious relation among the followers of Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and other religion in the Abbasid dynasty. The Abbasids successfully achieved the golden age of Islamic civilization because of this religious tolerance. At that time, the adherents of these religions lived together with great harmony. Moreover, non-Muslim community contributed to intellectual achievement during the Abbasid reign. The following article expects to give a positive outlook on the relationship between the Muslim and non-Muslim communities in daily life. As we know, Indonesian people composed of various ethnicities and religions. They can emulate the success of Abbasid government in creating a harmonious multicultural relationship along with the achievements of civilization. Perhaps, the plural society of Indonesia can obtain their splendour by maintaining this multicultural diversity.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A Glimpse of The Abbasid Dynasty

The name of Abbasid dynasty which derived from the name of 'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muththalib, Muhammad's uncle, was declared by 'Abd Allah al-Saffah ibn Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abbas.³ It was Muhammad ibn 'Ali, al-Saffah's father, who became a new leader of the Hasyimiyyah and transformed this small secret organization into the instrument of the Abbasid party. From about 100 AH (718 AD), Hasyimiyyah emissaries from Kufah were sent there to begin an intensive propaganda campaign. Although some of these agents were executed in Merv in 118 AH (736 AD), the leaders of the movement were never discouraged and indeed continued to intensify their efforts there.⁴ Before his death in 125 AH (743 AD), Muhammad chose his sons, Ibrahim, 'Abd Allah Abu al-'Abbas al-Saffah, and 'Abd Allah Abu Ja'far al-Manshur, as his successors, one after the other.⁵

Every possible sign in the eschatological prophecies of the time was used to proclaim the approach of the revolution. Black flags had been hoisted by earlier rebels and had already acquired messianic significance. Legends and prophecies were widely circulated referring to the rise of the black banners in the East and pointing to the end of Umayyad rule. The propaganda related to the rights of the members of the House of the Prophet and the martyrdom of some of them at the hands of the Umayyads. Taking

² Norman Solomon, *Abraham's Children: Jews, Christians, and Muslims in Conversation* (New York: T. Clark, 2005).

³ Ahmad Shalaby, *History of Muslim Education* (Beirut: Dar al-Kashshaf, 1954), 19.

⁴ M. A. Shaban, *Islamic History: A New Interpretation*, Vol. 1. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 181

⁵ Ameer Ali, *A Short History of the Saracens* (New Delhi: Nusrat Ali Nasri for Kitab Bhavan, 1994), 135.

advantage of this widespread feeling, the impending revolution was preached in the name of *al-Ridha min Ali Muhammad*, a member of the House of the Prophet who would be acceptable to all.⁶

At that moment, the movement had three centres, i.e. Humaymah, Kufah, and Khurasan. Finally, the Abbasids rose to the power when Abu al-‘Abbas al-Saffah had recited the Friday sermon in Kufah and declared himself as the Caliph of the Muslims or *Amir al-Mu‘minin* (Commander of the Faithful) on 15th Rabi’ al-Awwal 132 AH (31st October 749 AD).⁷ The Abbasids were able to overthrow the Umayyads because they secured the support of most of the Muslims in Khurasan. The integration of Arabs with local converts was aided by their participation in the long wars against the Umayyads. Many of the leaders of movement were Arab origin but spoke Persian and had intermarried with the local people. These loyal armies of Khurasan were led by Abu Muslim.⁸

Although al-Saffah (132-136 AH / 749-754 AD) was the first sovereign of the Abbasids, Abu Ja’far al-Manshur (136-158 AH / 754-775 AD) must be regarded as the real founder of the dynasty. The permanence of the family, the power they wielded, and the influence they exercised were due to his foresight.⁹ The political foundations, which had been laid by al-Manshur, proved durable and strong. The early Abbasid state owed much to the Umayyad example. Al-Manshur himself acknowledged the debt he owed to the examples of ‘Abd al-Malik and Hisyam.¹⁰ Al-Manshur bestowed titles with religious connotations upon himself and performed a highly centralized government from Baghdad. Al-Mahdi came to power for a reign of about ten years (158-169 AH / 775-785 AD). He was succeeded by his son, Musa al-Hadi, whose rule lasted only for a little over a year (169-170 AH / 785-786 AD). Then, the celebrated Harun al-Rasyid ascended the throne (170-809 AH / 786-809 AD). He appointed Yahya ibn Khalid ibn Barmak, a man whose loyalty to the Abbasids was absolutely beyond any shade of doubt.¹¹

The reign of al-Rasyid was the last period when all the central Islamic lands from Ifriqiya in the west to Sind in the east were under the control of the caliph. He left a vast surplus in the treasury. Baghdad was an expanding and prosperous city.¹² It had, by that time, grown from nothingness to a world centre of prodigious wealth and international significance, standing alone as the rival of Byzantium.¹³ Al-Rasyid’s rule was very famous. The stories of *the Arabian Nights* have lent a fascination to the name of this

⁶ Shaban, *Islamic History*, 183.

⁷ Muhammad al-Khudhari, *Muhadharat Tarikh al-Umam al-Islamiyah: Al-Dawlah al-‘Abbasiyah* (Cairo: Al-Maktabah al-Tijariyah al-Kubra, 1970), 15.

⁸ Hugh Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates: The Islamic Near East from the Sixth to the Eleventh Century* (New York: Longman, 1986), 126-127

⁹ Ali, *A Short History*, 212.

¹⁰ Kennedy, *The Prophet*, 133.

¹¹ Shaban, *Islamic History*, vol. 2, 9, 21, and 26-28.

¹² Kennedy, *The Prophet*, 146-147.

¹³ Philip K Hitti, *History of the Arabs: From the Earliest Times to the Present* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1967), 301.

remarkable caliph. Besides, the mosques, colleges, schools, hospitals, dispensaries, caravanserais, roads, bridges, and canals with which he covered the countries under his sway, spoke of his lively interest in the welfare of his people.¹⁴ He was excellently educated. In his presence, poetical contest, religious debates, and literary conferences were often held. The poets Abu Nuwas, Abu al-‘Atahiyah, Di‘bil, Muslim ibn al-Walid, and ‘Abba ibn al-Ahnaf; the musicians Ibrahim of Mosul and his son, Ishaq; the philologists Abu ‘Ubaydah, al-Asma‘i, and al-Kisa‘i; the preacher Ibn Sammak, and the historian al-Waqidi, these were a few names in the galaxy of talent which al-Rasyid gathered around him at Baghdad.¹⁵

After the death of al-Rasyid, the Abbasid civil war began during the reign of Muhammad al-Amin (186-198 AH / 802-813 AD), who was defeated by ‘Abd Allah al-Ma‘mun, his brother. Al-Ma‘mun came to Baghdad and proceeded to reconcile as many groups as he could. To aid him in the work, he turned to Thahir ibn al-Husayn and his family.¹⁶ The reign of al-Ma‘mun (198-218 AH / 813-833 AD) has been called the Augustan period. The caliph was a scholar and he selected the most eminent scholars from the East and the West for his companions. His court was crowded with men of science, poets, physicians, and philosophers from every part of the civilized world and of diverse creeds and nationalities.¹⁷ In this period, the intellectual movement of the Abbasids reached its summit.¹⁸ Shortly before his death, al-Ma‘mun had nominated his brother, Abu Ishaq Muhammad al-Mu‘tashim bi Allah, his successor to the caliphate in 218 AH (833 AD). Perhaps he considered the stronger and maturer character of al-Mu‘tashim as more certain of maintaining a continuity of action. Then in 227 AH (842 AD) al-Mu‘tashim was succeeded by his son, al-Watsiq. His reign (227-232 AH / 842-847 AD) was uneventful. Everything continued as it had been under his father.

On the death of al-Watsiq, al-Mutawakkil was elected as his successor. This “Nero of the Arabs” ruled for fifteen years, and the decline of the empire commenced under him. Nevertheless, he was keen for the restoration of orthodoxy.¹⁹ Because of this decline, some historians wrote that the Abbasid rule from the reign of al-Saffah to al-Watsiq was regarded as the golden age of the Abbasids and the Islamic history. After this period, the Abbasid rulers were much influenced by the military Turks (232-334 AH / 847-946 AD), the Buwayhids (334-447 AH / 946-1055 AD), and the Seljuqs (447-590 AH / 1055-1195 AD). The sovereigns were independent when the Seljuqs had fallen dawn.²⁰ The Abbasid dynasty was annihilated by the Mongol cataclysm, and in 656 AH (1258 AD) Hulegu murdered the last caliph of Baghdad. Afterwards, the Mamluk sultan of Egypt, Baybars,

¹⁴ Ali, *A Short History*, 237-238.

¹⁵ Shalaby, *History*, 36.

¹⁶ Kennedy, *The Prophet*, 154-155.

¹⁷ Shalaby, *History*, 37.

¹⁸ Muhammad Suhayl Thaqqus, *Tarikh al-Dawlah al-‘Abbasiyah* (Beirut : Dar al-Nafais, 2009), 134.

¹⁹ Ali, *A Short History*, 281-288 and Shaban, *Islamic History*, vol. 2, 69.

²⁰ Aminah Baythar, *Tarikh al-‘Asr al-‘Abbasi* (Damaskus: Mathba‘ah Jami‘ah Dimasq, 1980), 56-57.

decided himself to install a caliph and invited an uncle of the last Abbasid of Baghdad to Cairo in 659 AH (1261 AD). This establishment of a caliph served to legitimize the Mamluk rule. The caliphs continued to act as heads of the chivalric orders, but they had no practical power in the Mamluk state. The last caliph, al-Mutawakkil III, was carried off to Istanbul in 923 AH (1517 AD) by Salim who then transferred his rights in the caliphate to the Ottoman sultans.²¹

Religious Life of Abbasid Reign

The Abbasid citizens composed of Muslims and non-Muslims. The non-Muslims comprised Christians, Jews, Sabaeans, and Zoroastrians.²² They were highly regarded by the Abbasid government because Islam doctrine orders its followers to esteem another religion and considers them as *Ahl al-Dzimmah* (the free non-Muslim subjects living in Muslim countries who, in return for paying the capital tax, enjoyed protection and safety) or *Ahl al-Kitab* (the People of the Book), especially Christians and Jews.²³ The non-Muslims were respected by the Abbasids. They enjoyed the practice of their religion and their customs. Moreover, they frequently became influential in the government (Grunebaum 1953, 179-180). This fact was different from the Christian empire which attempted to impose Christianity on its subjects.²⁴ The *dzimmah* on the whole worked well. The non-Muslims managed to thrive under Muslim rule, and even to make a significant contribution to Islamic civilization. The restrictions were not onerous and were usually less severe in practice than in theory.²⁵

A negative incident related to non-Muslims occurred in the reign of al-Mutawakkil. With the accession of al-Mutawakkil, the Mu'tazilite policy was abandoned and no Abbasid caliph ever attempted to return to it subsequently. Moreover, in 235 AH (850 AD) and 239 AH (853 AD) al-Mutawakkil issued decrees designed to ensure the strict application to Christians and Jews of the discriminatory status which was imposed on them. They were forbidden in particular to hold office under the administration, or to send their children to schools where they would learn Arabic, the object being to keep Christians and Jews strictly segregated from Muslims.²⁶ Upon al-Mutawakkil's death in 847 AH (1063 AD), his son, al-Muntashir bi Allah proclaimed that he is the next caliph. He was described as a pious and just sovereign, forbearing and generous in character, possessed of a keen intellect and honestly desirous for the welfare of his subjects. He rebuilt the desecrated mausoleum of 'Ali and Husayn, restored to their descendants the

²¹ Clifford Edmund Bosworth, *The Islamic Dynasties* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1980), 10

²² Ali, *A Short History*, 275 and Mehdi Nakosteen, *History of Islamic Origins of Western Education A.D. 800-1350 with an Introduction to Medieval Muslim Education* (Colorado: University of Colorado Press, 1964), 22, 145

²³ Husayn al-Udat, *Al-'Arab al-Nashara: 'Ardh Tarikhi* (Damascus: al-Ahali, 1992), 64.

²⁴ Saleh Hussain al-Aayed, *The Rights of Non-Muslims in the Islamic World* (Riyadh: Dar Eshbelia, 2002), 11.

²⁵ Bernard Lewis, *Islam from the Prophet to the Capture of Constantinople* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), 217.

²⁶ Hitti, *History*, 126-127.

property that had been confiscated by al-Mutawakkil, and withdrew all the disabilities and restrictions that had been placed by his father upon non-Muslims. However, it was said that al-Mutawakkil had revised his discriminative policy and appointed some Christian physicians in his court.²⁷

Actually, the role of non-Muslims had appeared in the beginning of the Abbasid dynasty. Feeling insecure in the fickle and pro-Alid Kufa and Basra, al-Saffah built a courtly residence, al-Hasyimiyyah (after Hasyim, an ancestor of his family), in al-Anbar on the left bank of the Euphrates, in the north of Iraq.²⁸ The Abbasids had no desire to go to Syria where prevailing feeling was strongly pro-Umayyad. But al-Manshur determined to found a new capital. After considering various sites, he decided to build at Baghdad. In making this choice, he was guided by the advice of his minister, the Persian Khalid ibn Barmak, and having resolved on building he called in the services of two astrologers to lay out the foundations and select a propitious hour for setting the first stone in position. The astrologers chosen for that purpose were Abu Sahl al-Fadhl ibn Nawbakht, who was a Persian Christian, and Ma Sya' Allah (Mashallah) ibn Atsari, a Persian Jew, of Marw. Guided by these astrologers al-Manshur laid the first stone of his new capital towards the end of the year 144 AH (762 AD), and three years later the building was sufficiently advanced for occupation to commence. Many of the inhabitants came from the neighbouring camp cities of Basra and Kufa, both hotbeds of sedition and always restless and fanatical. The presence of these new citizens helps to explain why from the outset Baghdad showed a turbulent and troublesome atmosphere.²⁹

In the administration, clerks of Christian origin from Syria continued to play an important role, but they were joined by Iranians like the Barmakids and, increasingly, by *dihqans*, small landowners of non-Arabs extraction from the Sawad of Iraq whose expertise and local knowledge made them indispensable to the regime. The Abbasid government was Persian in character and personnel in contrast to the Arab rule of the Umayyads. There is some truth in this and it is clear that people of Iranian origin became more important in both army and administration.³⁰

Al-Ma'mun caliphate recognized no distinction of creed or race. All his subjects were declared eligible for public offices and every religious distinction was effaced. He established a regular council of state, composed of representatives from all the communities under his sway. It included Muslims, Jews, Christians, Sabaeans, and Zoroastrians. Liberty of conscience and freedom of worship had been enjoyed by non-Muslims. In his reign, eleven thousand Christian churches besides hundreds of

²⁷ Ali, *A Short History*, 290 and al-'Udat, *Al-'Arab al-Nashara*, 100-104.

²⁸ Hitti, *History*, 289-290.

²⁹ De Lacy O'Leary, *How Greek Science Passed to the Arabs* (London: Routledge and Kegan Bank Ltd., 2002), 103-104 and Hasan Ibrahim Hasan, *Tarikh al-Islam*, Vol. 2 (Cairo: Maktabat al-Nahdhah al-Mishriyah, 1976), 296.

³⁰ Kennedy, *The Prophet*, 135.

synagogues and fire-temples. They all retained their privileges.³¹ Because of this tolerant policy, the reign of al-Ma'mun constituted the most glorious period in the history of Islam. It has been truly said that all the intellectual movements of Islamic countries could eventually be traced back to his reign.³²

Intellectual Contribution of Non-Muslims

Before elaborating the intellectual contribution of non-Muslims during the Abbasid dynasty, it is necessary to explain educational centres by which non-Muslims contributed their valuable works to participate in the establishment of Islamic civilization. Among the educational places were Jundi-Shapur and Bayt al-Hikmah.³³

The academy of Jundi-Shapur was located in the city bearing that name in southeastern Persia (actually east of Shush or Saisanna, southeast of Dizful and northwest of Shustar) where the present village of Shah Abad is located. It was founded by Shapur I (241-271 AD). He used Roman prisoners of war to lay the foundation of the city and ordered collections of Greek scientific-philosophic works and their translations into Pahlavi for the library of Jundi-Shapur. During the reign of Anushirwan-i-Adel (531-579 AD), the academy reached the peak of its development. It became an important medical centre. Its medical school survived until the end of the tenth century. Anushirwan also welcomed scholar-refugees, mainly Nestorians from Edessa. He encouraged Nestorians and neo-Platonists to use Syrian translations of Greek works in Jundi-Shapur and had Persian translators of the Syrian versions of Plato and Aristotle made under his personal supervision. Then, Jundi-Shapur was a centre of scholarship in philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, and medicine. After the Muslim conquest, scholars, educators, and physicians from Jundi-Shapur went to the Muslim cities (Damascus and Baghdad). The academy disappeared as the centre of intellectual influence in the late 880's.³⁴

The next educational institution was Bayt al-Hikmah in Baghdad. Some historians said that the outstanding Bayt al-Hikmah was founded by al-Rasyid or al-Ma'mun.³⁵ In fact, the nucleus of Bayt al-Hikmah was al-Manshur's private library. Al-Manshur ordered the translation of Greek works into Arabic and collected them in his library. Al-Manshur was very fond of the books, then he bequeathed his library to his son and successor, al-Mahdi, in order to maintain it. But al-Mahdi paid inadequate attention to this valuable legacy. It was caused by the spread of the *zandaqah* movement (religious deviation) during his reign. He tended to overcome the religious movement. Consequently, the translation movement became increasingly weak and did not develop.

³¹ Ali, *A Short History*, 274-275.

³² Shalaby, *History*, 205.

³³ *Ibid.*, 96 and Nakosteen, *History*, 17.

³⁴ Nakosteen, *History*, 19-22.

³⁵ Ahmad Farid Rifa'i, *Ashr al- al-Ma'mun* (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Mishriyyah, 1927), 75 and George Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981), 25.

Moreover, the scholars at that time were away from the translation of books of philosophy and astronomy.

In the reign of al-Rasyid, who had a great interest in science (wisdom or philosophy) and enthusiastically ordered the translation of foreign books into Arabic, the collections of his grandfather increased in number. The library was expanded and divided into several divisions headed by supervisors. Al-Rasyid built Bayt al-Hikmah to facilitate intellectual activity because the number of books increased quickly. His military expeditions were motivated by military aim as well as bringing Greek manuscripts to be translated.³⁶ The Persian scholar, Abu Sahl al-Fadhl ibn Nawbakht translated many Persian books. After the triumph in the battles of Ankara and ‘Ammuriyyah, al-Rasyid acquired a considerable number of Greek books for the translation of which Yuhanna ibn Masawayh was appointed. Under al-Ma’mun, the intellectual activity received the full attention. He obtained a great number of foreign works, placed them in Bayt al-Hikmah, and employed the best scholars of the time to translate them with useful comments.³⁷

Al-Ma’mun was displaced by al-Mu’tashim who removed capital city from Baghdad to Samarra. The political disorders affected scholarship adversely and Bayt al-Hikmah fell into decay which was not checked during the brief reign of al-Watsiq. As al-Watsiq’s son was too young to occupy the throne, his brother al-Mutawakkil, was enthroned with the caliphate. Although al-Mutawakkil was not a scholar, he was a generous patron of science and scholarship. He reopened Bayt al-Hikmah. The best work of translation was done during his reign, as the training of the staff and experience were bearing fruit. In addition to the impact of removal capital city, many discreditable events affected the glory of Bayt al-Hikmah. Bayt al-Hikmah survived all these troubles and continued to exist for some centuries. It existed until the fall of Baghdad into the hands of the Tartars in 656 AH / 1258 AD.³⁸

The period of translation actually began at the turn of the seventh-eight centuries when a prince of the reigning Umayyad family arranged for the translation of some Greek writings on alchemy. The translator was Stephen, by his name clearly a Christian. The earliest translations were made for private use. The choice was determined by practical considerations and concentrated on two fields, medicine and alchemy. Therefore, the collection of books was associated with the name of Khalid ibn Yazid ibn Mu’awiyah. He devoted his life to the study of Greek sciences. The translation movement ended more or less about 287 AH (900 AD). Muslim sciences were founded nonetheless firmly upon Greek, Persian, and Indian thoughts. From the tenth century, however, Islam began to

³⁶ Sa’id al-Diyuhji, *Bayt al-Hikmah* (Mosul: Dar al-Kutub, 1972), 31-34.

³⁷ Shalaby, *History*, 88.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 97 and O’Leary, *How Greek Science*, 108.

rely more upon its own resources and to develop from within until the twelfth century. The sciences became the possession of Muslim scholars.³⁹

The following names were non-Muslim scholars who contributed their works to the establishment of Islamic civilization.

Christian Scholars

1. Bakhtisyu'

In 147 AH (765 AD) al-Manshur was taken seriously ill with some gastric disorder and was advised to send for the Nestorian physician Jurjis ibn Bakhtisyu' (d. 151 AH / 769 AD), head of the academy and hospital at Jundi-Shapur. This was the first contact of the court at Baghdad with the family of Bakhtyishu' which afterwards played an important part in the cultural education of the Arabs. Nothing is known of the Bakhtyishu' who was the father of this Jurjis, but as the name occurs several times in the course of the history of Baghdad it is convenient to classify him as Bakhtisyu' I. Jurjis ibn Bakhtyishu' remained in Baghdad as court physician until advancing years caused him to ask to be released and he retired full of honour to Jundi-Shapur where he died in 769 AD. In 168 AH (785 AD) al-Hadi invited his son Bakhtisyu' II, who had succeeded his father as head of the academy and hospital to go to Baghdad, but at court he had to face such determined opposition from Abu Quraysy, the Queen's physician that for the sake of peace he was sent back to Jundi-Shapur.

Under al-Rasyid, Bakhtisyu' II was summoned to court to treat the caliph for severe headaches, and later his son Jibra'il was brought to court and remained there. Before his death in 184 AH (801 AD), Jibra'il recommended his son Jibra'il II to the caliph, and he in due course became court physician. He held an influential position in Baghdad even before his appointment as court physician. After al-Rasyid's death, he continued to serve his son, al-Amin. But this led to his imprisonment when al-Ma'mun became master of Baghdad and all those who had been supporters of his brother, al-Amin, fell into disgrace. He was set free in 201 AH (817 AD) to attend the wazir Hasan ibn Sahl and lived without other disturbance until 213 AH (829 AD). He was a patron and encourager of the work of translation from the Greek, a great admirer of Greek medical science. It was largely at his suggestion that al-Rasyid sent into the Roman Empire to obtain manuscripts and commissioned translations from the Greek. He and other contemporary patrons not only provided for Arabic translations but also encouraged the preparation of improved Syriac version. Translation into Syriac went on as long as the Jundi-Shapur academy was in existence.⁴⁰

³⁹ Bernard Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1982), 73, Shalaby, *History*, 87, and Nakosteen, *History*, 22.

⁴⁰ O'Leary, *How Greek Science*, 103-105.

The Bakhtisyu's family enjoyed their service to the Muslim caliphs until 449 AH (1058 AD). Among them were Bakhtisyu' III (physician for al-Mumtaz), 'Ubayd Allah (physician for al-Muttaqi), Jibra'il II (physician for 'Adhud al-Dawlah), Bakhtisyu' IV (physician for al-Muqtadir), and Abu Sa'id 'Ubayd Allah. In addition to their profession as court physicians, they led many hospitals and played intellectual role. Jurjis ibn Bakhtisyu' translated Greek works and gave them to al-Manshur. Bakhtisyu' ibn Jurjis wrote *Kunnasy*, a medical compendium in Syriac in which he drew freely from Galen Hippocrates and Paul of Aegina.⁴¹ Jibra'il I (Gabriel) ibn 'Abd Allah ibn Bakhtisyu' wrote *al-Kafi*. He also wrote introduction to logic, a manual on medicine on Galen, *Deoscorus* (*Dioscorides*), *Paul of Aegina*, and *Medical Pandects*. Abu Sa'id 'Ubayd Allah ibn Jibra'il wrote *Tadzkirat al-Hadir* (Philosophical terms used in medicine) and *Kitab al-'Isyq Maradhan* (treatise on love-sickness). Bakhtyishu' is essential in any educational assessment of Jundi-Shapur because this Christian doctor's family produced distinguished physician-scholars for Islam for better than seven generations. It was through this family that the tradition of Greco-Persian-Hindu medical knowledge was conveyed to Islam, to be enriched and extended by its own scholars (mostly Persians, such as al-Razi from Rayy and Ibn Sina from Hamadan) before its transmission to Europe.⁴²

2. Yuhanna (Yahya) ibn Masawayh (160-234 AH / 777-857 AD)

Abu Zakariyya Yuhanna (Yahya) ibn Masawayh was born in Syria and grew up in Baghdad. He was appointed by al-Rasyid as the head of Bayt al-Hikmah and ordered to translate Greek works. Among his works were *Kitab al-Burhan*, *Kitab al-Bashirah*, *Kitab al-Tamam wa al-Kamal*, *Kitab al-Aghdiah*, *Kitab al-Fashd wa al-Hijamah*, *Kitab Musyajair al-Kunna lahu Qadar*, *Kitab al-Judam Syarif*, *Kitab Ishlah al-Aghdiah*, *Kitab al-Rajhan fi al-Ma'iddah*, *Kitab al-Nujh Kunnas Shagir li al-Ma'mun*, *Kitab al-Adwiyah al-Mushalah*, *Kitab al-Himam*, *Kitab al-Kamil*, *Kitab al-Ishal*, *Kitab 'Ilaj al-Shuda'*, *Kitab al-Sudur wa al-Duwar*, *Kitab lam Amtani'al-Athibba' min 'Ilaj al-Hawamil fi Ba'dh Syuhur Hamlihinna*, *Kitab Mihan al-Thabib*, *Kitab al-Shawt wa al-Buhtah*, *Kitab Majassat al-'Uruq*, *Kitab Ma' al-Sya'ir*, *Kitab al-Mirrah al-Sawda'*, *Kitab 'Ilaj al-Nisa' al-lawati lam Yahmilna*, *Kitab al-Siwak wa al-Sanunat*, *Kitab Ishlah al-Adwiyah al-Mushalah*, *Kitab al-Qawlanj*, *Kitab al-Tasyrih*, *Kitab al-Azminah*, *Kitab al-Nawadir al-Thibbiyah*, *Kitab al-Fawz al-Ashghar*, *Kitab Ma'rifat al-'Ayn wa Thabaqatuha*, *Kitab al-Hummayat*, *Daghal al-'Ayn*, and *Kitab Khawash al-Aghdiah wa al-Buqul*. His *al-Hummayat* was translated into Hebrew. During the reign of al-Watsiq, he became al-Watsiq's righthand man and got endless present from the caliph.⁴³

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Nakosteen, *History*, 34, and Khayr al-Din al-Zirikli, *Al-A'lam: Qamus Tarajim li Asyhar al-Rijal wa al-Nisa' min al-'Arab wa al-Musta'ribin wa al-Mustasyriqin*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dar al-'Ilm li al-Malayin, 1980), 44.

⁴² Khidr Ahmad 'Atha' Allah, *Bayt al-Hikmah fi 'Ashr al-Abbasiyin* (Cairo: Dar al-Fikr al-'Arabi, nd), 33, 36, 38 and Nakosteen, *History*, 22, 207, 250.

⁴³ Al-Zirikli, *Al-A'lam*, Vol. 8, 211 and Shalaby, *History*, 94.

3. Hunayn ibn Ishaq (194-260 AH / 810-873 AD)

The most celebrated of all translators of Greek scientific works into Arabic was Abu Zayd Hunayn ibn Ishaq al-'Ibadi. He was a native of Hira, the son of a Christian (Nestorian) druggist. He learned Arabic, so presumably he did not belong to the ruling class of Hira which was Arabic-speaking, and this is endorsed by his name al-'Ibadi, which shows that he belonged to the subject people of Hira. He attended the lectures of Yuhanna ibn Masawayh at Jundi-Shapur. He went away to the land of the Greeks and there obtained a sound knowledge of the Greek language and familiarity with textual criticism such as had been developed in Alexandria. In due course, he returned and settled for a time at Basra where he studied Arabic. He proceeded to Baghdad where he obtained the patronage of Jibra'il and for him prepared translations of some of Galen's works.

Under al-Ma'mun, the work of translation went on steadily, and before long Arabian students found themselves equipped with the greater part of the works of Galen, Hippocrates, Ptolemy, Euclid, Aristotle, and various other Greek authorities. Yuhanna ibn Masawayh became his warm supporter. Hunayn had many other friends and clients, mostly physicians of Jundi-Shapur and those who had removed to Baghdad and used the Arabic language. Hunayn translated into Syriac twenty books of Galen, and also revised the sixteen translations made by Sergius of Rashayn. He translated fourteen treatises into Arabic. He and his assistants produced versions, both in Syriac and Arabic. Most of the translators of the next generation received their training from Hunayn or his pupils, so that he stands out as the leading translator of the better type, though some of his versions were afterwards revised by later writers.⁴⁴

Among his translations were *On Distinction between Matter and Genus (Species) of Porphyry of Aphoridias*, *Timaeus of Plato*, *The Summaries of Aristotle's Metaphysics*, *On Spiritual Influences (Fi Ta'tsir al-Ruhaniyyat) of Pliny*, *The Prognostics (Taqaddamat al-Ma'rifah) of Hippocrates*, *On Human Nature (Thabi'at al-Insan) of Hippocrates*, *al-Kasr wa al-Jabr of Hippocrates*, *The Quadripartitum of Hippocrates*, *Aphorisms of Hippocrates*, *al-Risalah al-Jabriyyah of Hippocrates*, *Kitab al-Akhlaq of Hippocrates*, *Kitab al-Ashabi' (Septenaries) of Hippocrates as Interpreted by Galen*, *The Epidemics of Hippocrates as Interpreted by Galen*, *The Book of Water and Air (Risalat al-Ma' wa al-Hawa')*, *Amrath al-Haddeh of Hippocrates*, *Farq al-Talat of Galen*, *Kitab al-Sanah al-Safhirah of Galen*, *Book of Pulse (Kitab al-Nabth)*, *Book of the Elements (al-Istiqsat) of Hippocrates from Galen's Sixteen Collections*, *The Book of Physical Health (al-Mizaj) of Hippocrates from Galen's Sixteen Collections*, *Galen's Seven Discourses (Commentaries) of Hippocrates*, *On Anatomy (De Anatomicis) of Galen's Sixteen*, *On Names of Bodily Organs (The Jawami' al-Iskandaraniyyin)*, *The Grand Method (al-Sanah al-Kabirah) of Galen's Sixteen*, *On Regulations of Health (Tadbir al-Asha) of Galen's Sixteen*, *On Diseases and Symptoms (al-'Ilal wa Amradh)*, *Kitab al-Sanah (Medical Art) of Galen's Sixteen*, *Kitab al-Quwwah al-Thabi'iyah (Natural Faculties) of*

⁴⁴ O'Leary, *How Greek Science*, 114-115.

*Galen's Sixteen, On Types of Fevers (Kitab Ashnaf al-Hamyat) of Galen's Sixteen, The Five Discourses (al-Maqalat al-Khams) of Galen's Sixteen, The Major Book on Pulse (Kitab al-Nabth al-Kabir) of Galen's Sixteen, Book of Crisis (Kitab al-Buhran) of Galen's Sixteen, Kitab Ayyam al-Buhran (On Depressed Days) of Galen's Sixteen, On Description (Explanation) of Galen's Works, On Stars of Galen (Aftisal al-Hay'ah), On Pure Drugs (Kitab al-Adwiyah al-Mufradah), Book of Antidotes (Kitab al-Tiryaq), and Kitab al-A'tsa al-Alimah (The Book of Types of Diseases).*⁴⁵

Hunayn also wrote *Tarikh al-'Alam wa al-Mabda' wa al-Anbiya' wa al-Muluk wa al-Umam, al-Fushul al-Abqrathiyah, Salaman wa Absal, al-Qawl fi Hifzh al-Asnan wa Istishlahiha, al-Dhaw' wa Haqiqatuh, Hilyat al-Bar', Kitab Ahkam al-A'rab 'ala Madzhab al-Yunaniyin, Kitab al-Masail fi al-Thibb li al-Muta'allimin, Kitab al-Himam, Kitab al-Layyin, Kitab al-Aghdiyah, Kitab Taqasim 'Ilal al-'Ayn, Kitab Ikhtiyar Adwiyat 'Ilal al-'Ayn, Kitab Mudawat Amradh al-'Ayn bi al-Hadid, Kitab Alat al-Ghada', Kitab al-Asnan wa al-Litsah, Kitab al-Ba', Kitab Ma'rifat Awja' al-Ma'iddah wa 'Ilajuha, Kitab Tadbir al-Nahiqin, Kitab al-Madd wa al-Jazr, Kitab al-Sabab al-ladzi Sharat lahu Miyah al-Bahr Malihah, Kitab al-Alwan, Kitab al-Mawludin li Sittah Asyhur, Kitab fi al-Bawl 'ala Thariq al-Mas'alah wa al-Jawab, Kitab Qathighuriyas 'ala Ra'y Themisthiyus (Themistius), Kitab Qarsh al-Ward, Kitab al-Qarh wa Tawalluduh, Kitab al-Ajal, Kitab Tawallud al-Hashah, Kitab Tawallud al-Nar bayn Hajarayn, Kitab Ikhtiyar al-Adwiyah al-Muhriqah, and Kitab Istikhraj Kammiyat Kutub Jalinus.*⁴⁶

4. Qustha ibn Luqa al-Ba'labakki (204-300 AH / 820-912 AD)

Qustha was a translator, physician, astronomer, philosopher, logician, mathematician, and architect. Among his works were *Kitab fi Awja' al-Niqris, Kitab al-Rawaih wa 'Ilaluha, Risalah fi al-Bah wa Asbabih, Kitab Jami' fi a-Dukhul ila 'Ilm al-Thibb, Kitab al-Nabidz wa Syurbuh fi al-Walaim, Kitab fi al-Istiqsat, Kitab fi al-Sahr, Kitab fi al-'Athasy, Kitab fi al-Quwwah wa al-Dhu'f, Kitab fi al-Aghdiyah, Kitab fi al-Nabdh wa Ma'rifat al-Humyat wa Dhurub al-Buhranat, Kitab fi 'Illat al-Mawt Fuja'ah, Kitab fi Ma'rifat al-Khadzr wa Anwa'ih wa 'Ilalih wa Asbabih wa 'Ilajih, Kitab fi Ayyam al-Buhran fi al-Amradh al-Haddah, Kitab fi al-Akhlath al-Arba'ah wa Ma Tasytarik fih, Kitab fi al-Kabid wa Khalqatuha wa Ma Ya'ridh fiha min al-Amradh, Risalah fi al-Asyya' al-Mirwahah wa Asbab al-Rih, Kitab fi Maratib Qira'at al-Kutub al-Thibbiyah, Kitab Tadbir al-Abdan fi Safar al-Hajj, Kitab Daf' al-Dharar al-Sumum, Kitab al-Madkhal ila 'Ilm al-Handasah, Kitab Adab al-Falasisfah, Kitab al-Farq bayn al-Nafs wa al-Ruh, Kitab fi al-Hayawan al-Nathiq, Kitab fi al-Juz' alladzi la Yatajazza', Kitab fi Harakat al-Syiryah, Kitab fi al-Nawm wa al-Ru'ya, Kitab fi al-'Adhwa' al-Raisi min al-Badan, Kitab fi al-Balgham wa Ilalih, Kitab fi al-Dam, Kitab fi al-Mirrah al-Shafra', Kitab fi al-Mirrah al-Sawda', Kitab fi al-Kurah al-Sawda', Kitab fi Syakl al-Kurah wa al-Ustuwanat, Kitab fi al-Hay'ah wa Tarkib al-Aflak, Kitab fi Hisab al-Talaqi 'ala Jihat al-Jabr wa al-*

⁴⁵ Nakosteen, *History*, 28-29.

⁴⁶ Al-Zirikli, *Al-A'lam*, Vol. 8, 287-288.

Muqabalah, Kitab fi al-'Amal bi al-Kurah al-Nujumiyah, Kitab fi Syakl al-Alah allati Tarsum 'alayha al-Jawami' wa Ta'mal minha al-Nata'ij, Kitab fi al-Maraya al-Muhriqah, Kitab fi al-Awzan wa al-Makayil, Kitab fi al-Siyasah, Kitab fi al-Qiristhun, Kitab al-Istidlal bi al-Nazhar ila Ashnaf al-Bawl, Kitab al-Madkhal ila al-Manthiq, Kitab Syarh Madzhab al-Yunaniyin, Risalah fi Kitab al-Khidhab, Kitab fi Syukuk Kitab Aqlids (Euclid), Kitab al-Madkhal ila 'Ilm al-Nujum, Kitab al-Himam, Kitab al-Firdaws fi al-Tarikh, Risalah fi Istikhraj Masail 'Adadiyah min al-Maqalah al-Tsalitsah min Aqlids, Tafsir Tsalats Maqalat wa Nishf min Kitab Dziyufinthus fi al-Masail al-'Adadiyah, Kitab fi al-Bukhar, Masail fi al-Hudud 'ala Ra'y al-Falasifah, Risalah ila Abi 'Ali ibn Banan ibn al-Harits Mawla Amir al-Mu'minin fi ma Su'ila 'anhu min 'Ilal Ikhtilaf al-Nas fi Akhlaqihim wa Siyarihim wa Syahawatihim wa Ikhtiyarihim, al-Fallahah al-Yunaniyah, Tsalats Maqalat fi Raf'al-Ajsam al-Tsaqilah, al-Firdaws fi al-Tarikh, al-Mathali', Risalah Dzat al-Kursi al-Afaqi, Risalah fi 'Ilal al-Sya'r, Kitab al-'Amal bi al-Asthurlab, Kitab Hay'at al-Aflak, 'Ibarah Kutub al-Manthiq, Nawadir al-Yunaniyyin, Kitab al-Siyasah, Kitab al-A'da', and Kitab al-'illah fi Iswidad al-Khays wa Taghayyurih min al-Rasy.⁴⁷

5. Ishaq ibn Hunayn (210-298 AH / 830-910 AD)

Abu Ya'qub Ishaq ibn Hunayn was a physician, writer, and translator. He wrote *al-Adwiyah al-Mufradah, Ikhtishar Kitab Aqlids, Adab al-Falasifah wa Nawadiruh, Tarikh al-Athibba'*, and *al-Kunnasy al-Lathif*. He also translated *Kulliyat Aristhathalis, Syarh Maqalat Aristhu fi 'Ilm al-Nafs, 'Unshur al-Musiqa, al-Majisthi li Bathlimus (Ptolemy), and al-Ushul li Aqlids.⁴⁸*

6. Yahya ibn al-Bithriq (d. 200 AH / 815 AD)

Yahya (Yuhanna) ibn al-Bithriq was a righthand man of al-Ma'mun. He translated Greek works into Arabic, especially in philosophy. Among his translations were *al-Siyasah fi Tadbir al-Riyasah, Kitab al-Hayawan, and Kitab al-Sama' wa al-'Alam.⁴⁹*

7. Ibn Buthlan (d. 461 AH / 1068 AD)

Al-Mukhtar ibn al-Husayn ibn 'Abdun (Ibn Buthlan) was a physician and writer. He wrote *Da'wat al-Athibba', Taqwim al-Shihhah bi al-Asbab al-Sittah, al-Amradh al-'Aridhah, Kunnasy al-Adyirah wa al-Ruhban, al-Madkhal ila al-Thibb, 'Umdat al-Thabib fi Ma'rifat al-Nabat, Maqalah ila 'Ali ibn Ridhwan, Maqalah fi al-I'tiradh 'ala Man Qal Inna al-Farkh Aharr min al-Farruj, Syira' al-Raqiq wa Taqlib al-'Abid atau Syira' al-'Abid wa Taqlib al-Mamalik wa al-Jawari, Maqalah fi 'Illat Naql al-Athibba' Tadbir Aktsar al-Amradh, Da'wat al-Qusus, Maqalat Sittah Muhimmah fi al-Thibb, Maqalah fi al-Da' al-Mushal, and Maqalah fi Mudawat Shabi 'Aradhat lahu Hashah.⁵⁰*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 5, 196-197.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 294.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 8, 10.

⁵⁰ Isma'il Basa al-Baghdadi, *Hadiyyat al-'Arifin: Asma' al-Mu'allifin wa Atsar al-Mushannifin*, vol.2 (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turats al-'Arabi, 1951), 422-433.

8. Matta ibn Yunus (d. 328 AH / 940 AD)

Abu Bisyr Matta ibn Yunus was a physician, logician, writer, and translator. Among his works were *Tafsir al-Tsalats Maqalat al-Awakhir fi Tafsir Tamisthiyus* (Themistius), *Poetica Aristotle*, *al-Burhan*, *al-Sukun wa al-Fasad*, *I'tibar al-Hukm wa Ta'qib al-Mawadhi' li Tamisthiyus*, *Kitab al-Sama'*, *Tafsir isaguji (Isagoge) li Furfuriyus* (Porphyry), *Kitab al-Maqayis al-Syarthiyah*, *Maqalah fi Muqaddamat*, *Aristotle's Analytica Posteriora*, and *Alexander Aphrodisias' commentary on generation and corruption*.⁵¹

9. Salmawayh ibn Bunan (d. 225 AH / 840 AD)

Salmawayh was a court physician for al-Mu'tashim (217-227 H / 833-842 M). In translation activity, he translated *Galen's Methodus Medendi*.⁵²

10. Yahya ibn 'Adi (280-364 AH / 894-975 AD)

Abu Zakariyya Yahya ibn 'Adi ibn Hamid ibn Zakariyya was a philosopher, logician, writer, and translator. Among his works were *Maqalah fi al-Buhuts al-Khamsah 'an al-Ru'us al-Tsamaniyah*, *Kitab fi Tabyin al-Fadhl bayn Shina'atay al-Manthiq al-Falsafi wa al-Nahw al-'Arabi*, *Kitab fi Fadhl Shina'at al-Manthiq*, *Kitab Man Tah ila Sabil al-Najah*, *Kitab fi Tabyin anna li al-Adad wa al-Idhafah Dzatayni Mawjudatayn fi al-A'dad*, *Maqalah fi Istikhraj al-'Adad al-Mudhmar*, *Maqalah fi Tsalats Buhuts ghayr al-Mutanahi*, *Maqalah fi anna Kulla Muttashil innama Yanqasim ila Munfashil*, *Kitab Jawab Yahya ibn 'Adi 'an Fashl min Kitab Abi al-Habsy al-Nahwi fi ma Zhannahu anna al-'Adad ghayr Mutanah*, *Maqalah fi al-Kalam fi anna al-Af'al Khalq Allah wa Iktisab al-'Ibadah*, *Kitab Ajwibah Bisyr al-Yahudi 'an Masailih*, *Syarh Maqalah al-Iskandar fi al-Farq bayn al-Jins wa al-Maddah*, *Maqalah fi anna Hararat al-Nar laysat Jawharan li al-Nar*, *Maqalah fi ghayr al-Mutanahi*, *Maqalah fi al-Radd 'ala Man Qal bi anna al-Ajsam Majlabah 'ala Thariq al-Jadal*, *Tafsir Fashl fi al-Maqalah al-Tsamimah min al-Sama; al-Thabi'i li Aristhuthalis*, *Maqalah fi Man lays Syay' Mawjud ghayr Mutanah la 'Adadan wa la 'Azhman*, *Maqalah fi Tazyif Qawl al-Qailin bi Tarkib al-Ajsam min Ajza' la Tatajazza'*, *Maqalah fi Tabyin Dhalalat Man Ya'taqid anna 'Ilm al-Bari bi al-Umur Wujudiha*, *Maqalah fi anna al-Kamm lays fih Tadhadh*, *Maqalah fi anna al-Syakhsh Ism Musytarak*, *Maqalah fi al-Kull wa al-Ajza'*, *Maqalah fi al-Mawjudat*, *Kitab Itsbat Thabi'at al-Mumkin wa Aqwa al-Hujaj 'ala Dzalik wa al-Tanbih 'ala Fasadiha*, *Maqalah fi al-Tawhid*, *Maqalah fi anna al-Maqulat 'Asyrah la Aqall la Aktsar*, *Maqalah fi Tabyin Wujud al-Umur al-'Amiyah*, *Maqalah fi al-Buhuts al-'Ilmiyah al-Arba'ah 'an Ashnaf al-Mawjud al-Tsalatsh al-Ilahi wa al-Thabi'i wa al-Manthiqi*, *Maqalah fi Nahj al-Sabil ila*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 4 and Nakosteen, *History*, 207.

⁵² Al-Zirikli, *Al-A'lam*, Vol. 3, 114 and Nakosteen, *History*, 250.

*Tahlil al-Qiyasat, Tahdzib al-Akhlaq, Maqalah fi Siyasat al-Nafs, Maqalah fi al-Mathalib al-Khamsah li al-Ru'us al-Tsamaniyah, and Kitab al-Syubhah fi Ibthal al-Mumkin.*⁵³

11. Isa ibn Hakam (d. 225 AH / 839 AD)

Isa ibn Hakam was a physician. He wrote *Kunnasy Kabir fi al-Thibb* and *Manafi' al-Hayawan*.⁵⁴

Jewish Scholars

1. Ma Sya' Allah ibn Atsari (122-220 AH / 740-815 AD)

Ma Sya' Allah (Mashallah) was an astrologer and astronomer. He helped al-Manshur in the founding of Baghdad in 144 AH / 762 AD. He lived until the reign of al-Ma'mun. He wrote *Kitab al-As'ar, Kitab al-Amthar wa al-Riyah, Kitab Tahwil Sani al-Mawalid, Kitab al-Huruf, Kitab al-Hukm 'ala al-Ijtima'at wa al-Istiqbalat, Kitab al-Duwal wa al-Milal, Kitab Dzāt al-Halaq, Kitab al-Sabi' wa al-'Isyryn, Kitab al-Safar, Kitab al-Sulthan, Kitab al-Sahmayn, Kitab Shun'at al-Asthurlabat wa al-'Amal biha, Kitab Mathrah al-Syu'a', Kitab al-Mawalid al-Shaghir, Kitab al-Mawalid al-Kabir, Kitab al-Mardha, Kitab al-Wahid wa al-'Isyryn, Kitab al-Ma'ani, and Kitab al-Shuwar wa al-Hukm 'alayha*.⁵⁵

2. Sahl ibn Bisyr ibn Hani'

He was an astronomer. He wrote *Kitab al-Ahkam fi al-Nujum, Kitab al-Ikhtiyarat, Kitab al-I'tibarat, Kitab al-Amthar wa al-Riyah, Kitab al-Awqat, Kitab Tahawil Sani al-Alam, Kitab Tahawil Sani al-Mawalid, Kitab al-Tarkib, Kitab al-Jabr wa al-Muqabalah, Kitab al-Sahmayn, Kitab al-Asyir, Kitab al-Kusufat, Kitab al-Madkhal al-Shaghir, Kitab al-Madkhal al-Kabir, Kitab al-Masa'il, Kitab al-Ma'ani, Kitab al-Mafatih al-Qadha', Kitab al-Mawalid al-Shaghir, Kitab al-Mawalid al-Kabir, and Kitab al-Hay'ah wa 'Ilm al-Hisab*.⁵⁶

3. John Bar Maserjoye

He was a physician and also head of medical school in Baghdad. He translated *Syntagma of Aaron* into Syriac.⁵⁷

⁵³ *Ibid.*, vol. 8, 156.

⁵⁴ Al-Baghdadi, *Hadiyyat al-'Arifin*, vol. 1, 806.

⁵⁵ Ibnu al-Nadim, *al-Fihrist*, vol. 1 (Cairo: Rahmaniyyah, 1929), 333.

⁵⁶ Al-Baghdadi, *Hadiyyat al-'Arifin*, vol., 1, 412.

⁵⁷ Nakosteen, *History*, 207.

Sabaeen Scholars

1. Tsabit ibn Qurrah al-Harrani (211-288 AH / 826-900 AD)

He was an astronomer and physician. Among his works were *Kitab Ikhtishar Kitab Ma Ba'da al-Thabi'ah*, *Kitab Ikhtishar Kitab al-Nabdh al-Shaghir*, *Kitab Ashnaf al-Amradh*, *Kitab Aghalith al-Sufsthaniyyah*, *Kitab fi Alat al-Sa'at allati Tusamma al-Rahamat*, *Kitab fi Asykal al-Khuthuth*, *Kitab fi Asykal al-Qitha'*, *Kitab fi al-Akhlaq*, *Kitab fi al-Athlal*, *Kitab fi Alat al-Zumar*, *Kitab fi al-Anwa'*, *Kitab fi Istikhraj Masa'il al-Handasah*, *Kitab fi Ibtha' al-Harakah*, *Kitab fi al-'A'dad*, *Kitab fi Idhah Masirat al-Qamar al-Dawriyyah*, *Kitab fi Asykal al-Majisthi*, *Kitab fi al-Bayadh alladzi Yazhhar fi al-Badan*, *Kitab fi Tadbir al-Shihhah*, *Kitab fi al-Bashar wa al-Bashirah fi 'Ilm al-'Ayn*, *Kitab fi Tashil al-Majisthi*, *Kitab fi Tarkib al-Aflak*, *Kitab fi Tadbir al-Amradh al-Haddah*, *Kitab fi Tasyrih Ba'dh al-Thuyur*, *Kitab fi Tafsir al-Arba'ah*, *Kitab fi al-Tasharruf fi Asykal al-Qiyas*, *Kitab fi Jawami' al-Maskunah*, *Kitab fi al-Khashshah fi Tasyrif Shina'at al-Thibb*, *Kitab fi al-Hatsts 'Ala Ta'allum al-Thibb wa al-Hikmah*, *Kitab Jawami' Kitab al-Amradh*, *Kitab Jawami' Kitab al-Adwiyah al-Mufradah*, *Kitab Jawami' Kitab Tasyrih al-Rahm*, and *Kitab fi Maratib Qira'at al-'Ulum*.⁵⁸

2. Ibrahim ibn Sinan ibn Tsabit ibn Qurrah (d. 335 AH / 946 AD)

He was a physician. He wrote *Zubdat al-Hikam min al-Hikmah*, *Aghradh Kitab al-Majisthi*, *Tafsir al-Maqalah al-Ula*, *Kitab Alat al-Zhilal*, *Kitab al-Rahmah*, and *al-Nukhbah al-Hikamiyyah*.⁵⁹

The names of scholars above were some of non-Muslim scholars who had intellectual contribution to the Muslim civilization. Their quantity will be greater if the non-Muslim scholars who had converted to Islam were included.

CONCLUSION

Donald V. Gawronski said that history is the interpretative study of the recorded fact of bygone human beings and societies. The purpose of historical study is to develop an understanding of human actions, not only in the past but for the present as well. History seeks to understand the human past in an effort to understand a changing present, with the ambitious hope that such an understanding will provide worthwhile guidelines for future use.⁶⁰ This is the valuable benefit of history. Relating to the plurality of Indonesian people, the historical study on the intellectual contribution of non-Muslim scholars to the Muslim civilization gives us many advantages. By this historical reading, it can be

⁵⁸ Al-Baghdadi, *Hadiyyat al-'Arifin*, vol. 1, 246-247.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁶⁰ Donald V. Gawronski, *History: Meaning and Method* (Illinois: Scott, Foresman, and Company, 1969), 3-5.

concluded that the successful advancement of the Abbasid caliphate was influenced by their policy to perform great tolerance among their plural citizens.

Plurality is an indisputable fact of Indonesian society. The Indonesian Constitution and Pancasila guarantee all persons the freedom of worship according to his/her own religion or belief. Indonesia is the plural country with the largest Muslim population in the world. Hence, Indonesia potentially can be the model of other Islamic nations to prove moderation and tolerance of Islam. Indonesia with its Muslim majority must prove that Islam is moderate and tolerant. Indonesian government together with all Islamic organizations and their followers should promote tolerant Islamic teachings, such as through multicultural Islamic education based on the principle of Unity in Diversity (*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*) to develop inclusive religiosity.

REFERENCES

- Al-Aayed, Saleh Hussain. *The Rights of Non-Muslims in the Islamic World*. Riyadh: Dar Eshbelia, 2002.
- Al-Baghdadi, Isma'il Basa. *Hadiyyat al-'Arifin: Asma' al-Mu'allifin wa Atsar al-Mushannifin*. Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turats al-'Arabi, 1951.
- Al-Diyuhji, Sa'id. *Bayt al-Hikmah*. Mosul: Dar al-Kutub, 1972.
- Ali, Ameer. *A Short History of the Saracens*. New Delhi: Nusrat Ali Nasri for Kitab Bhavan, 1994.
- Al-Khudhari Bik, Muhammad. *Muhadharat Tarikh al-Umam al-Islamiyah: Al-Dawlah al-'Abbasiyah*. Cairo: Al-Maktabah al-Tijariyah al-Kubra, 1970.
- Al-'Udat, Husayn. *Al-'Arab al-Nashara: 'Ardh Tarikhi*. Damascus: al-Ahali, 1992.
- Al-Zirikli, Khayr al-Din. *Al-A'lam: Qamus Tarajim li Asyhar al-Rijal wa al-Nisa' min al-'Arab wa al-Musta'ribin wa al-Mustasyriqin*. Beirut: Dar al-'Ilm li al-Malayin, 1984.
- 'Atha' Allah, Khidr Ahmad. *Bayt al-Hikmah fi 'Ashr al-Abbasiyin*. Cairo: Dar al-Fikr al-'Arabi, nd.
- Baythar, Aminah. *Tarikh al-'Asr al-'Abbasi*. Damaskus: Mathba'ah Jami'ah Dimasq, 1980.
- Bosworth, Clifford Edmund. *The Islamic Dynasties*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1980.
- Gawronski, Donald V. *History: Meaning and Method*. Illinois: Scott, Foresman, and Company, 1969.
- Hasan, Hasan Ibrahim. *Tarikh al-Islam*. Cairo: Maktabat al-Nahdhah al-Mishriyah, 1976.
- Hitti, Philip K. *History of the Arabs: From the Earliest Times to the Present*. New York: St. Martin Press, 1967.
- Humphreys, R. Stephen. *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry*. London: Princetown University Press, 1991.
- Ibnu al-Nadim, *al-Fihrist*. Cairo: Rahmaniyyah, 1929.
- Kennedy, Hugh. *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates: The Islamic Near East from the Sixth to the Eleventh Century*. New York: Longman, 1986.

- Lewis, Bernard. *Islam from the Prophet to the Capture of Constantinople*. New York: Harper & Row, 1974.
- Lewis, Bernard. *The Muslim Discovery of Europe*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1982.
- Makdisi, George. *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981.
- Nakosteen, Mehdi. *History of Islamic Origins of Western Education A.D. 800-1350 with an Introduction to Medieval Muslim Education*. Colorado: University of Colorado Press, 1964.
- O'Leary, De Lacy. *How Greek Science Passed to the Arabs*. London: Routledge and Kegan Bank Ltd., 2002.
- Rifa'i, Ahmad Farid. *'Ashr al- al-Ma'mun*. Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Mishriyyah, 1927.
- Shaban, M. A. *Islamic History: A New Interpretation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Shalaby, Ahmad. *History of Muslim Education*. Beirut: Dar al-Kashshaf, 1954.
- Solomon, Norman. *Abraham's Children: Jews, Christians, and Muslims in Conversation*. New York: T. Clark, 2005.
- Thaqqus, Muhammad Suhayl. *Tarikh al-Dawlah al-'Abbasiyyah*. Beirut : Dar al-Nafais, 2009.