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The Contribution of the Early Abbasid Caliphs (232-132 AH) to the Development of Scholarly Disciplines

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ABSTRACT:
The emergence of Islam prompted Muslim Arabs to embrace literacy. As the Abbasid Caliphate was established and the Muslim intellect expanded, the burgeoning civilization sought eagerly to acquire knowledge and scientific understanding, leading to Iranian involvement in diverse spheres. The rich heritage of ancient Iran thrived within the Islamic empires, and Muslims delved into scholarly pursuits. The initial link between Baghdad, the seat of the Caliphate, and Gundeshapur, as well as the early phases of the Translation Movement for scholarly disciplines, were initiated during the rule of al-Mansur (158-136 AH). This momentum was sustained and enhanced under Harun al-Rashid (193-170 AH). The zenith of the Translation Movement and the advancement of scholarly disciplines was achieved during the reign of al-Ma'mun (218-198 AH), marking his era as a pinnacle of scientific advancement in the early Abbasid Caliphate (232-132 AH). A hallmark of this period was al-Ma'mun's keen interest in scholarly disciplines, theological debates, and the work of Mu'tazilite scholars. Following al-Ma'mun's demise and the accession of al-Mu'tasim (227-218 AH), the Translation Movement for scholarly disciplines began to show signs of discord.

Keywords: intellectual sciences, Abbasid caliphs, translation movement, Baghdad, Iranians

INTRODUCTION:

During the Jahiliyyah period, the Arabs, living their uncomplicated lifestyle, had gained fundamental knowledge in various aspects of life. (Mohammadi, 1995: 128; Jan Ahmadi, 2009: 91)

Despite the Arabs' initial unfamiliarity with the art of writing and book compilation following the rise of Islam, their knowledge—about the Quran or their historical works—was disseminated through oral tradition. It was initially thought that Islam had eradicated all preceding works, leading to a disregard for any scientific texts or literature discovered among other civilizations, except for the Quran. (Mohammadi, 1995: 128-129)

Conversely, the triumph and dominance of the Abbasid Caliphate can be attributed to several factors, including the unwavering efforts of the Iranians, the backing of factions opposed to the Umayyad dynasty, the establishment of a robust and structured communication network between the Abbasid Caliphate and its proponents, the forging of a strong alliance between the Abbasid Caliphate and the Alavids, and, most significantly, the endeavors of the Iranians. Inspired by the Iranians' passion for science and literature, which in turn motivated the caliphs, scholars began to translate texts from Iranian, Greek, and other learned cultures of the time. This endeavor was further fueled by substantial encouragement and compensation, leading to the gradual elevation of this translation movement to new heights. (Khezri, 2000: 250)

The early era of the Abbasid Caliphate, commencing in 132 AH and concluding with the demise of Caliph Al-Wathiq in 232 AH, is widely recognized as the golden age and the zenith of Islamic civilization. The caliphs of this period, notably Al-Mansur, Harun al-Rashid, and Al-Ma'mun were instrumental in fostering the development of sciences, with a particular emphasis on intellectual disciplines, within the Islamic world. They leveraged their substantial wealth and influence to draw scholars from diverse fields of knowledge to their courts, thereby stimulating scientific advancement.

The progression of intellectual sciences over this century was influenced not only by the presence of Iranian ministers and officials within the Abbasid administration and the relocation of the capital to Baghdad but also by the early Abbasid caliphs' (132-232 AH) keen interest in and openness to intellectual pursuits.

Concerning the early Abbasid caliphs' role in the advancement of intellectual sciences, recent sources—including works by Orientalists on the caliphs' lives and courts, such as Jurji Zaydan's "The History of Islamic Civilization," Carl Brockelmann's "History of Islamic Peoples and States," Seyyed Hossein Nasr's "Science and Islamic Civilization," and contributions by Iranian scholars like Zabihollah Safa's "The History of Intellectual Sciences" and Abdolhossein

Zarrinkoob's "The Agenda of Islam"—have provided broad accounts of scientific progress during the early Abbasid Caliphate. The current study seeks to measure the individual contributions of each caliph to the development of various intellectual sciences.
The research methodology adopted here is historical, relying on theoretical data collection through library research and note-taking from credible primary historical sources and contemporary scholarly works.

Research Question
What was the contribution of the early Abbasid caliphs (132-232 AH) to the advancement of intellectual sciences in Islamic civilization?

FINDINGS

Intellectual Sciences during the Era of al-Mansur (132-136 AH)

During the early years of the Abbasid Caliphate, after the relocation of the capital from Damascus to Baghdad, Arabs and Muslims were introduced to the authentic concept of scientific geography. The annexation of Iran, Egypt, and Sindh granted Muslims the chance to obtain direct insights into the scientific and cultural accomplishments of these three civilizational centers or to readily utilize their scientific facilities, laboratories, and observatories. Nonetheless, the systematic acquisition and integration of external knowledge did not commence until the reign of al-Mansur (158-136 AH), the architect of Baghdad. (Taeschner and Ahmed, 1996: 3-2; Makki, 2004: 364)

The Role of Iranians in Shaping Islamic Astronomy

Many astronomers at the court of the Abbasid Caliphate were of Iranian origin, and as such, they introduced numerous mathematical and astronomical terms into Arabic, such as Hezarat, Darigan (Darijan), Noh-bahr, Haft-bahr, Davazdah-bahr, Nim-bahr, Seh-bahr, Kadkhoda, Pori (Badr), Nim-pori (Tarbi'), Hilaj, Janbakhtan, Dasturit, Pargar (Farjar), Zig (Zij in Arabic), Owj (Owg in Pahlavi), Dahak, Dahgan, Jowzhar, Zaycheh, Kordjeh, Kenar-ruzi, and Kenar-shabi, which likely originated from Middle Persian and Pahlavi. Iranians popularized the study of celestial spheres and astronomical tables from the time of al-Mansur, the Abbasid caliph. (Nallino, 1970: 187; Navigeh, 1996: 185; Herzfeld, 2002: 61)

Translation and Composition of Astronomical Books during the Era of al-Mansur

A multitude of factors propelled Muslims to engage in the study and research of celestial bodies, their locations, and their features, surpassing other civilizations in this pursuit. The Holy Quran, replete with verses, inspired Muslims to investigate the cosmos, including the sun, the moon, the stars, and all celestial entities. Furthermore, the relevance of specific Islamic religious practices, such as ascertaining the direction of prayer (Qibla), scheduling daily prayers, timing prayers during eclipses, and defining the boundaries of fasting during Ramadan, necessitated a keen awareness of astronomical events and the stars.
George Sarton notes: In those eras, mathematical scholarship was not distinct from astronomy; every mathematician had some expertise in astronomy judicial astrology, or both. Similarly, astronomical works relied on precise astronomical tables, akin to those used in judicial astrology. This field required the calculation of the ascendant by measuring the stars' elevation above the horizon at a specific moment, a feat achievable solely through observational instruments. In this period, astronomers supported themselves through the practice of judicial astrology. (Sarton, 1981, 632-631: 1)

Medicine and Physicians during the Era of al-Mansur (132-232 AH)

Zabihollah Safa observes: Among the Abbasid caliphs, it was Abu Ja'far al-Mansur (136-158 AH) who initially displayed a keen interest in the sciences, particularly medicine and astronomy. His fascination with physicians was sparked by a personal health crisis, a stomach disorder he contracted soon after the establishment of Baghdad (148 AH), which reduced his appetite and perplexed the physicians attending to him. (Ibn Abi Usaybi'a, 1970, 1: 317; Safa, 2005: 58-57)
The author posits that through the examination of diverse sources, it can be asserted that the initial direct connection and impact of Gundeshapur within Islamic scholarly circles was established with the arrival of Jirjis (George) at the court of al-Mansur. Jirjis's proficiency, ethical conduct, and professional acumen secured the continued presence of his descendants at the courts of successive caliphs. As Edward Browne documents in his work "Islamic Medicine," the Bukhtishu family remained unparalleled and preeminent in the medical field for six generations or over 250 years. The final member of this lineage, Jibra'il ibn 'Abdallah ibn Bukhtishu ibn Bukhtishu ibn Jirjis ibn Jibra'il, who died in 397 AH, maintained the same lofty status and proximity to the ruling elite as his predecessors. (Browne, 1972: 57)

Intellectual Sciences during the Era of al-Mahdi (158-169 AH) and al-Hadi (169-170 AH)

The scientific movement initiated by al-Mansur experienced considerable fluctuations during the reign of al-Mahdi (158-169 AH). Religious differences, along with theological disputes and debates among the theologians of that era—undoubtedly influenced by the spread and prevalence of religious ideas from the territories under the Abbasid Caliphate—revitalized this movement. The translation of numerous intellectual and philosophical works from the conquered lands, particularly Iran and Rome, stimulated the dissemination of theological opinions, debates, and sectarian disputes. This led the caliph to invite theologians and scholars from distant regions to

his court and encourage them to write books against Zandaqa. Consequently, al-Mahdi became the first caliph to encourage theologians to compose theological works. However, much of al-Mahdi's reign was characterized by indulgence, generosity, and increasing luxuries, preventing him from fully realizing the plans initiated by his father. Upon his death, al-Hadi ascended to the caliphate, but his brief one-year reign (169-170 AH) was marked by turmoil and unrest, hindering his contribution to the Translation Movement. (Jan Ahmadi, 2009: 100)

Following al-Mansur, al-Mahdi (158-169 AH) assumed the caliphate but was primarily preoccupied with religious matters and combating the Zandaqa, who were actively spreading their beliefs. The main outcome of this struggle was the focus on theology and theologians, who were encouraged to create articles refuting Zandaqa and Marcion of Sinope, among others. Al-Hadi (169-170 AH) also did not have sufficient time to pursue this endeavor. (Safa, 2005: 59)

The primary and significant reasons for the lack of attention to rational sciences during the reigns of the two Abbasid caliphs, al-Mahdi (158-169 AH) and al-Hadi (169-170 AH), besides the short duration of their rule, were their disinterest and lack of attention to the pursuit of knowledge and science.

Intellectual Sciences during the Era of Harun al-Rashid (170-193 AH)

Harun al-Rashid is esteemed as one of the most distinguished caliphs of the Abbasid dynasty. His renown transcended the Eastern world, permeating the West, where scholars scrutinized his life and European sovereigns sought to forge alliances with him (Taqoush, 2014: 88). His reign, bolstered by substantial revenues and wealth, and marked by progress in science and philosophy, was an epoch of opulence and deep engagement with the cultural refinements of the time. Conversely, al-Rashid was nurtured in an environment of ease and affluence, and his education was steeped in the principles of military command and the ethos of jihad. The period of Harun al-Rashid's governance is often hailed as the zenith of the Abbasid Caliphate, a time when the empire attained unprecedented prosperity, emerging as a hub of international commerce and a lodestar for scholars and literati. Yet, his attributes, rather than mirroring the broader history of humanity, are more reflective of the historical context of his own time. (Ibn al-Tiqtaqa, 1971: 268-267; Zarrinkoob, 2013: 89)

Harun al-Rashid (170-193 AH) acceded to the caliphate during an era when the intellectual milieu of Baghdad had been significantly enhanced by the presence and contributions of scholars and physicians from India, Iran, and Syria. Non-Muslim academics, having mastered the Arabic language and engaged with their Muslim counterparts, encouraged the pursuit of ancient knowledge, although Muslims remained cautious about embracing foreign sciences, except medicine, due to concerns that such knowledge might conflict with Islamic teachings. Nevertheless, as physicians rose in esteem among the caliphs and demonstrated a keen interest in logic and philosophy, they inadvertently drew the caliphs into delving into these subjects. Over time, the caliphs developed a familiarity with and an appreciation for philosophy and logic, leading them to preserve rather than destroy the books they encountered during their conquests. They issued orders for these books to be brought to Baghdad and rendered into Arabic.

An illustrative example of this occurred after Harun al-Rashid's successful campaigns against Ankara, Amorium, and other Roman cities, where he acquired a substantial collection of books. These were subsequently transported to Baghdad, and he commissioned his physician, Masawaiyh, to translate them into Arabic. (Zeydan, 2010, 555: 3) The Barmakids played a pivotal role in nurturing Harun al-Rashid's passion for the sciences.

Translation and Composition during the Era of Harun al-Rashid (170-193 AH) and the Role of the Barmakids

As the collective intellect of the public expanded and a burgeoning interest in science and the arts took hold, there was a corresponding increase in the scrutiny of the scientific achievements of ancient civilizations. Harun al-Rashid was particularly captivated by the annals of monarchs, the Kisras, the Caesars, and the narratives of past ages. Subsequently, under the influence of the physicians and scholars in his proximity, who were predominantly advocates of logic and philosophy and harbored profound wisdom, he cultivated a keen interest in these disciplines. As a result, the caliph decreed that any scientific tome discovered in the territories he had conquered or in subjugated realms should be conveyed to Baghdad. (Ibn Juljul, 1940: 138; Jan Ahmadi, 2009: 102)

The author posits that the sustained motivation and encouragement of skilled translators to persist in their craft and enhance their output were significantly bolstered by the munificence of the caliph and the Barmakid family, who bestowed upon them substantial rewards and valuable gifts. It is plausible that this generosity, coupled with the insatiable quest for knowledge among scholars and translators, served as a pivotal magnet for attracting and retaining scientists—even on a familial level—within the court of the Islamic caliphate. Illustrative of this are families such as the Bukhtishus, the Nobakhts, Hunayn, and Shaker, who were affiliated with the Abbasid court and played an instrumental role in the Translation Movement and the scientific progress of the period.

Intellectual Sciences during the Era of al-Ma'mun (198-218 AH)

Al-Ma'mun exhibited a fervent passion for reading from a tender age, excelling in the disciplines of jurisprudence, history, hadith, exegesis, and linguistics. He harbored a profound love for knowledge and was zealous about its propagation, fostering intellectual

discourse and engaging in it himself. He exploited every resource at his disposal and adopted diverse strategies to unearth the intellectual gems concealed within the libraries of Constantinople and Cyprus. (Tabari, 1996, 5704: 13; Taqoush, 2014: 157)

Al-Ma'mun's unique governance, characterized by his exceptional traits of open-mindedness, generosity, visionary thinking, a penchant for science, and cultural enhancement, ushered in a resplendent and unmatched epoch in the nascent centuries of Islamic history. His unwavering commitment to the pursuit of knowledge bestowed upon him the esteemed epithet of "The Hakim Abbasid." (Ibn al-Nadim, 2002: 443; Jan Ahmadi, 2009: 104)

Al-Ma'mun was distinguished by his bravery, ambition, and magnanimity, emerging as a luminary of knowledge and wisdom within the Abbasid dynasty, with a laudable comprehension of all the arts and sciences. (Dinvari, 2001, 442)

The author posits that al-Ma'mun immersed himself in the academic milieu of Merv, absorbing wisdom from the scholars and notables of this imperial bastion. His exposure to the Sassanian library, which Yazdegerd III had relocated from Ctesiphon to Merv, significantly amplified his curiosity about the myriad sciences. The most impactful elements of his caliphate were the teachings he gleaned from the company of Imam Ali al-Rida and the insights he acquired from the Ahl al-Bayt, which were instrumental in molding the caliph's perspective.

Philosophy during the Era of al-Ma'mun

During the tenure of al-Ma'mun, the Translation Movement facilitated the introduction of Greek philosophical texts to the Muslim world, rendered into Arabic. Abu Yusuf Ya‘qub ibn ’Ishaq as-Sabbah al-Kindi (260-85 AH), esteemed as the inaugural Muslim philosopher, was a pioneer in delving into scientific and philosophical research, a contribution that earned him the sobriquet "The Philosopher of the Arabs." In the second and third centuries of the Islamic calendar, Kufa stood as a bastion for the study of intellectual sciences, where al-Kindi received his education and honed his expertise in science and philosophy. He acquired proficiency in Greek and Syriac, enabling him to translate invaluable works into Arabic. Notably, he revised the translation of the Theology of Aristotle, derived from the Enneads of Plotinus. Al-Kindi's extensive oeuvre, comprising approximately 270 works, spans seventeen distinct categories, encompassing philosophy, logic, mathematics, music, astronomy, geometry, and medicine. (Ibn al-Nadim, 2002: 465; Safa, 2005: 189-188; Nasr, 1980: 39)

Al-Kindi was instrumental in harmonizing religion and philosophy, laying the groundwork for subsequent philosophers such as al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Ibn Rushd. Initially, he embraced the approach of logicians, positioning religion beneath the realm of philosophy. Conversely, in a later theory, he ascribed to religion the status of divine science, elevating it above philosophy, thereby acknowledging this knowledge through the lens of prophetic insight. Through this philosophical exegesis, he also achieved a reconciliation between religion and philosophy. (Corbin, 1982: 211; Nasr, 1980: 39)

Mathematics

During this period, Muslims achieved remarkable advancements in mathematics, notably in the realms of algebra and geometry, leading scholars like Gustave Le Bon and other Orientalists to credit them as the pioneers of these disciplines. The fascination with algebra and geometry among Muslims was such that in the ninth century, al-Ma'mun tasked Al-Khwarizmi, a court mathematician, with composing an accessible treatise on these subjects. Al-Khwarizmi not only penned a seminal work on algebra and geometry but also pioneered spherical trigonometry, addressing intricate geometric challenges and transforming the field with techniques that remain in use worldwide. (Emadzadeh, 1982: 110; Ghorbani, 1986: 7)

More accurately, it is acknowledged that the annals of mathematics in Islam commenced with Al-Khwarizmi, whose scholarly contributions synthesized Greek and Indian mathematical principles.

This distinguished mathematician of the third Islamic century bequeathed to posterity a corpus of work, the most eminent of which is the treatise "Al-Mukhtaṣar fī Ḥisāb al-Jabr wa-l-Muqābala." (Nasr, 1980: 137)

Astronomy and Geography

Among the caliphs of the Abbasid dynasty, al-Ma'mun displayed an unparalleled fascination with astronomical literature and the ancient manuscripts of Iran, committing himself to their exploration and discourse. In his early years, particularly under the sway of Fadl ibn Sahl, al-Ma'mun immersed himself in the intricacies of astronomical subjects, adhering to their tenets. Emulating the scholarly pursuits of former Sassanian monarchs such as Pabag, he invested substantial energy in perusing ancient texts and engaging in their analysis and debate, thereby acquiring a profound comprehension of their contents. (Ibn al-Tiqtaqa, 1988: 306; Mohammadi, 1995: 228)

Al-Ma'mun's unwavering and equitable patronage of knowledge and science catalyzed the progression of the sciences, in tandem with the advancement of all domains of learning. Consequently, the intellectual renaissance spearheaded by al-Ma'mun within Islamic civilization prompted the translation of a plethora of works on astronomy, logic, philosophy, mathematics, and medicine from Greek, Pahlavi, Indian, Syriac, and Nabataean into Arabic, establishing the groundwork for subsequent Muslim inquiries across various scientific fields. (Safa, 2005: 64; Gharachanlou, 2008, 55: 1)

Translation Movement

During this cultural movement, which commenced under the rule of Harun al-Rashid, the comprehensive translation of foreign texts into Arabic during al-Ma'mun's era brought seminal Greek astronomical

works within the grasp of scholars, to such an extent that they largely supplanted the Indian and Iranian texts that were prevalent at the time. The Almagest was rendered into Arabic on several occasions, as was Ptolemy's treatise on astronomical principles, which was translated and known as "Al-Arbaʿah." (Safa, 2005: 63; Nasr, 1980: 159)

To streamline the translation and assimilation of scientific knowledge into the Arabic language, al-Ma'mun initiated the importation of scientific manuscripts from Greece and Rome. To this end, he dispatched a cadre of translators and individuals versed in Greek to the territories of Rome and Greece. (Safa, 2005: 67)

Al-Ma'mun, through his ardent interest in the dissemination of scientific knowledge, ushered in the second significant epoch of translation within the Abbasid Caliphate. This period was pivotal for the translation and concentration on the sciences, their transmission, and compilation, attracting eminent translators and scholars from diverse backgrounds who contributed to the movement initiated by al-Ma'mun and sustained this scholarly endeavor for a considerable time after his reign. This era commenced in the early third century and, given that the scholars of this period often established lineages of translators, transmitters, and academics, they typically mentored disciples who subsequently engaged in the translation, transmission, and compilation of scientific knowledge, thereby extending this second era into the late fourth century. (Safa, 2005: 63)

Medicine and Physicians during the Era of al-Ma'mun (198-218 AH)

The author posits that medicine, akin to astronomy, stands as one of the earliest fields to have captured the interest of Muslims. The inception of medical science within the Islamic era can be traced back to the translation of Greek and Indian texts. Muslims achieved significant advancements and exhibited notable ingenuity in the medical specialties of ophthalmology and pharmacology.

Philip Hitti elucidates: "The pervasive incidence of eye ailments, a consequence of the intense sun in Iraq and other regions of the Islamic world, naturally directed medical focus toward this concern. The earliest comprehensive Arabic text on ophthalmology is credited to Ibn Masawaih. Furthermore, a work entitled 'Ten Treatises on the Eye' is ascribed to his pupil Hunayn ibn Ishaq, which has been recently released with an English translation and is recognized as the oldest extant textbook on eye diseases. (Hitti, 1965, 464: 1) After the era of al-Ma'mun, pharmacists were obligated to undergo an examination, and those who met the criteria were granted licenses. (Al-Qifti, 1992: 143; Hitti, 1965, 464: 1)"

Intellectual Sciences during the Era of al-Mu'tasim (218-227 AH)

The author notes that an examination of historical records indicates that the early Abbasid Caliphate, spanning from 132 to 218 AH, was characterized by significant Iranian influence within the administrative apparatus and a period of burgeoning scientific progress. It was during this time that the ranks of viziers, scribes, physicians, and astrologers were predominantly filled by individuals of Iranian descent. These individuals were repositories of varied scientific knowledge, advocates for scholars, and benefactors to scientists and translators, thereby fostering an environment in which certain Abbasid caliphs emerged as champions of scientific endeavors.

In the era of al-Mu'tasim's rule (218-227 AH), the incorporation of Turks into the caliphate's bureaucracy ignited fierce competition among the Turks, Arabs, and Iranians, transforming Baghdad into a cauldron of machinations and plots. Notwithstanding the Turks' reputation as a bellicose, bold, and imperious people, lacking in nationalist fervor and ethnic biases, and removed from the refinements of civilization and urban life that typically engender a fondness for one's native land and forebears, al-Mu'tasim persisted in his support of them. (Taqoush, 2014: 172; Khezri, 2007: 92-91)

Jafar Shahidi remarks: "One of the measures instituted by al-Mu'tasim during his reign was the infusion of Turks into the administrative and courtly spheres. It seems that al-Mu'tasim aimed to marginalize the Arabs through the elevation of Turks, to stave off internal strife and the feud between the Qays and Kalb tribes, and to curtail Iranian meddling in state affairs. This strategy, however, boomeranged on the Abbasids, as the Turks slowly began to pursue their interests. (Shahidi, 2013: 316)

The author posits that, as per the prevailing historical accounts, the apogee of the scientific renaissance was achieved during the caliphate of al-Ma'mun (218-198 AH). Subsequently, with the advent of al-Mu'tasim's reign and the influx of Turks, the scientific movement encountered turbulence, culminating in the dimming of its luminous presence by the time of al-Mutawakkil's rule.

Translation Movement during the Era of al-Mu'tasim (218-227 AH)

Following the demise of al-Ma'mun, the impetus of the Translation Movement was diminished, and the reign of al-Mu'tasim (218-227 AH) unfolded amidst a contest between the Turkic factions and the influential Iranians and Arabs, which circumscribed the realm for scholars. Notwithstanding the abundance of exceptional translators during this epoch, the Bayt al-Hikmah (House of Wisdom) failed to replicate the dynamism of al-Ma'mun's era. The misgovernance by al-Mu'tasim, coupled with his disregard for scientific pursuits and the relocation of the caliphate's seat to Samarra, markedly tarnished Baghdad's reputation as a bastion of knowledge. (Zarrinkoob, 2013: 290; Jan Ahmadi, 2009: 109)

The initial indications of discord in this period were evident in the Translation Movement. From this juncture until the rule of al-Mutawakkil, when the

radiant beacon of the scientific renaissance was quenched, numerous scholars sought refuge in distant lands, contributing to the dissolution of Baghdad's cultural nexus. The eclipse of Baghdad's scientific prominence heralded the ascendancy of other intellectual hubs within the Islamic realm, including the courts of the Samanids, Buyids, Andalusia, Córdoba, and the Fatimid Caliphate. (Zarrinkoob, 2008: 41-43)

A period distinguished by an abundance of scientific disputations, sermons, and dialogues was the era of al-Ma'mun (198-218 AH), culminating in the scientific renaissance attaining its zenith of evolution and refinement. Conversely, in the ensuing periods (the era of al-Mu'tasim), the dwindling of these exchanges or their monopolization by certain parties resulted in a moribund state within the scientific domain. (Jan Ahmadi, 2009: 138)

CONCLUSION:

The Abbasid Era stands as a pivotal and formative chapter in Islamic civilization. The Abbasids, having ascended to power with Iranian support, reciprocated by assigning Iranians to positions of importance. This led to a marked increase in the presence of Iranian academics, scientists, and dignitaries at the courts of Islamic caliphs.

The patronage extended by caliphs such as al-Mansur, Harun al-Rashid, and al-Ma'mun was inclusive, disregarding the scholars' ethnic or religious backgrounds, and it fostered an environment of intellectual freedom. This, combined with the lavish support for their protégés in the realm of scholarly production, whether through translation or original authorship, resulted in the proliferation of educational institutions and the rise of eminent scholars. An abundance of literature was generated across diverse scientific and artistic disciplines, in both Arabic and Persian. Within these scholarly circles, Jewish, Christian, Zoroastrian, Sabian, and Muslim scholars engaged in their pursuits without hindrance, each honored by the caliphs and princes for their erudition.

The convergence of books at the heart of the Islamic caliphate, alongside the widespread adoption of paper—a hallmark development of the era—created a pressing need for a dedicated space to preserve and conserve these works, especially considering the multitude of translations and copies meticulously produced by scribes. In response, a public library known as Bayt al-Hikmah (House of Wisdom), characterized by its open access and chambers brimming with books, was established. It functioned not only as an archive for written treasures but also as an ideal setting for scholarly research and the pursuit of knowledge. Consequently, Harun al-Rashid is credited with founding Bayt al-Hikmah, which became the premier library for Muslims in Baghdad.

Al-Ma'mun (198-218 AH) harbored a deep fascination with logical and philosophical explorations and familiarized himself with the analogical reasoning embraced by the Mu'tazilites through the perusal of translated texts. He was introduced to Mu'tazilite thought on the cusp of his ascension to power and found it resonant with his own inclinations and intellectual pursuits. After he acceded to the caliphate, in 212 AH, he proclaimed the Mu'tazilite school as the official creed.

Upon the demise of al-Ma'mun, the impetus of the Translation Movement waned, and the epoch of al-Mu'tasim (218-227 AH) advanced amidst a contest between the Turkic factions and the preeminent Iranians and Arabs, which circumscribed the realm for scholars. Notwithstanding the abundance of exceptional translators during this era, the Bayt al-Hikmah failed to replicate the dynamism of al-Ma'mun's tenure. Al-Mu'tasim's disregard for scientific endeavors and the relocation of the caliphate's seat to Samarra markedly tarnished Baghdad's reputation as a bastion of knowledge. A multitude of scholars sought refuge in far-flung territories, contributing to the dissolution of Baghdad's intellectual nexus.

Al-Wathiq (227-232 AH) was an ardent patron of science and literature. He relished intellectual discourse and accorded high respect to scholars, possessing a comprehensive understanding of the sciences and the doctrines of both ancient and contemporary philosophers, as well as those adhering to the Sharia. His reign witnessed daring and hazardous research and scientific ventures, motivated not solely by the Muslims' thirst for scientific discovery but also by the caliph's avid interest in Quranic narratives and the examination of various cities and cultures. Despite his fervent support and munificent endowments, and the Abbasid vizier al-Wathiq's passion for science and learning, the truncated duration of his caliphate forestalled any reversal of the scientific decline. With his passing, the golden age of the Abbasids inaugurated in 132 AH, drew to a close.

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