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MAMUN ACADEMY AND THE GREAT THINKERS OF THE EASTERN RENAISSANCE

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"The easiest way to achieve the goal is to know the legends of the ancient peoples and the information about the ancestors in the descendants"

Abu Rayhan al-Biruni

Annotation

In medieval times, there were many scientists and scientific schools in Central Asia, and the Mamun Academy in Khorezm can serve as a vivid example of this. According to its role and significance in the development of human civilization, the Khorezm Academy of Mamun is one of the most famous scientific centers. The Khorezm Mamun Academy, which United more than a hundred famous thinkers, scientists, philosophers, representatives of medicine, had a rich library, a madrasah for gifted youth, and had all the conditions for scientific research, fully corresponds to the modern concept of "Academy of Sciences".

Keyword: Academy of Sciences, medieval, science fiction, Central Asian region.

Аннотация

В средневековые времена в Средней Азии существовало множество ученых и научных школ, ярким примером которых может служить Академия Мамуна в Хорезме. По своей роли и значению в развитии человеческой цивилизации Хорезмская академия Мамуна является одним из самых известных научных центров. Хорезмская академия Мамуна, объединившая более ста известных мыслителей, ученых, философов, представителей медицины, имевшая богатую библиотеку, медресе для одаренной молодежи и располагавшая всеми условиями для научных исследований, полностью соответствует



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современному понятию "Академия наук".

Ключевые слова: Академия наук, средневековые, научная фантастика, Центрально-Азиатский регион.

Every nation is eager to know its past, proud of its rich historical heritage, unforgettable historical dates, courageous heroes and great scientists. One of the criteria for determining the cultural level of a people is the degree to which they appreciate their past. The legendary Khorezm region, which has created a unique heritage and enriched the world history with endless social and cultural events over the centuries, has become a treasury of the past with its countless historical monuments and is the pride of its people.

The great political, economic and cultural changes that took place in the early Middle Ages on the basis of the Eastern Renaissance brought Khorezm to the world stage. Hundreds of mute monuments preserved among the barchan sands of Karakum and Kyzylkum keep the secrets of many historical events.

It is known that in the 9th-12th centuries, science and culture developed rapidly in the whole of Central Asia, including the powerful Khorezm state, which gave the world al-Khwarizmi, Abu Ali ibn Sina, al-Biruni and other famous scientists and military leaders such as Jalaliddin Manguberdy. The culture that rose to such a high level could undoubtedly emerge only on the basis of a civilisation formed over a long period of time. In fact, turning the pages of ancient history, especially in the period after the Eastern Renaissance, one can see that Maverannahr and Khorezm began to develop rapidly. Science and enlightenment rose to a high level, and great scientists appeared.

The Ma'mun Academy, which remains one of the most interesting topics of Uzbek historical science, also enriched the world science. The contribution of an outstanding orientalist, Professor Sergei Pavlovich Tolstov, an honourable academician of Uzbekistan, who was the first "discoverer" of the Ma'mun Academy and in its study, is invaluable. Thanks to many years of research of the Khorezm expedition led by S.P. Tolstov, the white pages of the distant past were filled in and the deserted fortresses of the waterless steppe began to speak,



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revealing their secrets one by one, gradually telling about past times and past events.

The emergence of prominent thinkers in the Arab world after a relatively short period of stagnation in Khorezm is not accidental and is largely due to a common language of communication. In Central Asia, as well as in the multinational and multilingual Arab Caliphate, the Arabic language played an important role. The same position it occupied throughout the medieval East. While Latin was officially recognised as the language of science in Europe, Arabic played the same role in the creation of science in the East. In principle, true science was created by the scientists of Central Asia and Asia Minor, Transcaucasia, Iran, and then Spain. The Arabic language united scientists of different nationalities and facilitated mutual understanding between them.

Abu Rayhan al-Biruni regretted that he did not write his works in his mother tongue. He emphasised that, contrary to his wish, his mother tongue did not become the language of science: "All over the world, scientific works have been translated into Arabic. Every nation loves its mother tongue and every person wants to communicate with others in the same language. I started writing in Arabic and Iranian, but both languages are not my mother tongue, so it is difficult for me to express my thoughts in these languages." Of course, it should be realised that al-Biruni's last words only show the scholar's modesty, as his level of proficiency in Arabic was very high. He was fluent in and utilised the rich arsenal of Arabic literary language. Abu Rayhan al-Biruni, in addition to his native Turkic and working Arabic, was proficient in Persian, Sanskrit and Greek.

In the "Academy of Mamun", where the flower of science and art of the Islamic world gathered, scholars from Maverannahr and Khorezm enjoyed well-deserved authority, especially in the field of exact sciences and philosophy. Al-Biruni was a "star of the first magnitude" among them. Abu Rayhan Muhammad ibn Ahmad (d. 440/1048), a major scholar from Khorezm, was the author of more than 150 scientific works on history, ethnography, geology, geodesy, chemistry, astronomy, and mathematics. In the field of astronomy, al-Biruni questioned outdated ideas about the immobility of the Earth. He proposed an original method of determining the size of the globe, and is the author of the idea of creating a globe.



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In 385/995 he moved to Jurjan, where he lived at the court of the local ruler, Qaboos ibn Wushmaghir, and dedicated to him his historical work "al-Asar al-baqiyya 'an al-kurun al-haliyya" ("Monuments of Past Generations"), also known as "Chronology". The work was devoted to the description of the chronological systems of various peoples and contains rich material on history and ethnography. In particular, the author provides data on the Sogdian and Khorezmian calendars, rituals and customs associated with this culture.

In 400/1010. Al-Biruni returned to Khorezm and lived at the court of Khorezm Shah Ma'mun ibn Ma'mun. In 407/1017 he witnessed a revolt against him, his assassination, and the invasion of the country by Mahmud Ghaznavi. In 408/1018, together with other scholars, he moved from Khorezm to Ghazna and lived at the court of Sultan Mahmud. Between 408/421/1018 and 1030, he travelled to India, where he studied the history, science, and culture of that country. As a result of his journey, al-Bīrūnī wrote his second historical work, *India*, in which he provided valuable insights into Indian culture and Hindu religious beliefs based on his personal observations. Other sources indicate that al-Biruni also wrote an extant History of Khorezm, a History of the Karmatians, and several other historical works. Al-Biruni also wrote many works on mathematical, astronomical, natural and medical sciences. His work "al-Qanun al-Mas'udi" ("Canon of Mas'ud") on astronomy also contains valuable information on the history and geography of Central Asia. The Arabic text of the "Chronology" was published by E. Zahau; English and Russian translations are also available.

Al-Biruni's historical and geographical works "Monuments of the Past Generations" and "India" are the greatest contribution to world science, the value of which is enduring. Al-Biruni became an outstanding representative of Khorezm and an unrivalled scholar in the "Academy" of Ma'mun II and the first advisor to Khorezm Shah. A great scientist and organiser of scientific research, author of many scientific works translated into dozens of world languages, al-Biruni made a significant contribution to the development of world science and culture.



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