

Baghdad during the first Four Centuries The Hub of all Knowledge Production, Poetry, Love, Mysticism and Denominations

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Abstract

In this article, I attempt to demonstrate how the city of Abbasid was built to be the hub of all classes of Muslim society within the whole empire, where Muslims and non-Muslims could coexist peacefully and live in harmony. It proves that it became for sure the hub for all different forms of thoughts, despite their contrasts, bringing together contradicting forces with the Ummah, sometimes leading to further intensification of their thought and paving the way for the formation of different denominations, but also to become the centre and focus of turbulence and disarray of their intellectual differences and political affiliations.

Introduction

Baghdad is Iraq's capital, located on the Tigris River, about 330 miles (530 km) from the headwater of the Gulf. It is the heart of the Cradle of Civilization in Mesopotamia; however, it was built in 762 following the instructions of one of the Caliphs of the Abbasid dynasty. For then remained the most significant cultural of the Arab and Muslim civilizations for over 500 years, until it was voraciously damaged through the conquest of Mongol leader Hulegu in 1258 AC.⁽¹⁾. It had such a significant impact on its own

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conquerors, as the Mongols later switched direction and were under the influence of Islamic teachings. Even though the Seljuks, who came after that, were willing to embrace Islam, perhaps due to their profound interest and will to transport the Caliphate location from Baghdad -as the centre to one of their territories⁽²⁾.

Building Baghdad

Al-Mansur felt that the Abbasid government could not sustain itself due to the revolt of the Rawandiyya group⁽³⁾, and the potential support for Ali in Kufa⁽⁴⁾. As a result, he decided to establish a new capital for the Abbasid dynasty, as he lacked the necessary resources to confront the widespread opposition. This decision was made in 145 AH.⁽⁵⁾ After the initial investigations, the name of Baghdad as a village was known for years ago, but it was not of much importance. Mansour's actions only led to the creation of this city to be great. The location of Baghdad in terms of climate, the presence of abundant farms around it being the median in Mesopotamia, and its being in the way of it from all directions led to the choice of location for the capital. The choice of Baghdad was also important for military, economic, and climatic conditions because the construction site of Baghdad was along the Khorasan Road, amongst other roads of merchants. The confluence of caravan roads and the establishment of a monthly market was a good channel, through which one could keep life ongoing. In addition to the military positions and the strategic, economic and other reasons made the choice of location to be exact and correct. The caliph wanted to build more than the Umayyad had, and made his enormous empire with a central centre, so he wanted to settle in Iraq, which had become so important for decades. Therefore, building Baghdad was a strategic and wise decision.

The city's construction, with more than 100,000 workers and architects from around the world, was completed in three years in 149 AH.⁽⁶⁾ The main map of the city was designed as a circle⁽⁷⁾, with the mosque and palace

in the centre⁽⁸⁾. Around it, various neighbourhoods, offices, and houses of government officials were constructed. The four sides of the four gates are called Khorasan, Shaam, Basra, and Kufa⁽⁹⁾. Around the city, a moat was also dug up, a tradition observed before Islam in the Iranian cities of the Sassanid period.

Baghdad became the new Abbasid city during Mansour's caliphate and gradually became the centre of the Muslim world. Baghdad was the centre of the Muslim rule of the Abbasids from Mansur until the fall of the Abbasid rule in 656 (except between the years that one of the Abbasid caliph changed Dar al-Khilafah to Samarra for some reason, the centre of the Islamic rule of the Abbasids). This centre, which began its political life as a garrison of the city, reached the height of civilisation during the caliphate of Harun al-Rashid (193-170). It is a symbol of the greatness of Muslim civilisation and culture. Although during this period, he experienced some unfortunate events, but still succeeded in maintaining his position as the centre of the Abbasid caliphate, and due to the political rule of the Abbasid family, the status of other groups other than the supporters of the Abbasid was not favourable. After the establishment of Baghdad as the Abbasid Dar al-Khilafah, the city soon became the centre and assembly of various races, religions such as Shias, Sunni, Nizarie, Syriac, Nestoria, Maroni, Jewish, Saebian, Zoroastrian, Manawi and Mazdaki. People and groups with all ethnic and ideological contradictions coexisted for at least a while. They were also closely related to each other, and at one time, they were competing and struggling with each other because of political and social interests' friction.

The founding of the city of Baghdad by al-Mansur -the second Abbasid caliph-, in 145 AH, is considered one of the most crucial events in the history of the Islamic world. Baghdad remained the capital of the Abbasid world for five centuries.

The Hub of Muslim Civilization

Baghdad was not only a city that was meant after building to be the capital city of the whole Muslim empire, but was also built to demonstrate the peak of the progressive Muslim civilization during its so-called 'the golden age'.

One does not doubt that Muslims who have lived in the metropolitan city since its first centuries were some of the leading, distinguished, and top figures who played key-role in knowledge production or even shaping the factions or the various denominations amongst Islamic sections development and their formation.

Based on that, it tried to demonstrate how some of these figures have played a role and how this manifested itself to be the hub of all thinkers, philosophers, physicians, theologians, and historians. Thus, it was the source of inspiration and knowledge but also the centre of dirge, religious poetry, intellectual disputes, and emotional tolerance.

Known for its Variety of Ethnicities, Schools of Thoughts, and dissimilar Factions

AS stated, the city has captivated all classes of professionals and ethnic groups. The political establishment has promoted multilingual and multi-faceted groups of thoughts and intellectual variety to enrich the intellectual milieu throughout the first centuries of that epoch. The inhabitants were both rich and poor, masters and slaves, thinkers, students, and mentors. This mosaic of people and different human beings has contributed to the knowledge to flourish and science to increase and prosper⁽¹⁰⁾. We shall now deal with the different branches of knowledge, such as medicine, poetry, and Islamic studies, including Hadith and mysticism.

Baghdad: Centre of Sophisticated Medicine

It has been recorded that the Abbassid caliphs have promoted Medicine, in general, and supported the settlement of physicians in Baghdad. What follows are just examples from some of the physicians. Some of the famous physicians were members of the Family of Al-Masoyeh.

First: Abu Zakariya, Yohan bin Masoyeh. He was one of the famous physicians of Gandishapour of old Persian root. He had served in Gandishapour Hospital for forty years⁽¹¹⁾. From the end of the second century (AH), his name was known along with the names of other doctors and translators. His significant vanity was at the beginning of the third century, especially during the time of al-Ma'amun, who had appointed him to head the (Beit Al-Hikmah) House of Wisdom, which was assigned to be as translation centre. For example, Hunayn ibn Isaac Ibadī - the famous translator- was his student for some time. The Abbasid Caliphs (al-Rashid, al-Ma'amun, al-Mu'tassim, al-Wathiq, and al-Mutawakkil) were the Abbasid caliphs, who were the most powerful of the Abbasid caliphs, and he was alive during their reign. He died in Baghdad in the year 243 AH. It is recorded that Aaron al-Rashid ordered him to translate the ancient medical books he had obtained during the conquest of Ankara and 'Ammuria, < amongst other Roman cities. Al-Rashid has supported him and provided him with learned scholars to assist him with the translation task. He died during the time of the Mutawakkil. He had great lectures, with many attending his lessons, in which all the old wisdom was taught, and many students were trained therein⁽¹²⁾.

His father Masoyeh was one of those trained in the prestigious school of Gandishapur in Medicine and pharmacology⁽¹³⁾. He was trained under Gabriel ibn Bakhtishua', and while he was very young, he became the head of the hospital and was heading the disciples of Gabriel. Johan used famous translation during that time, amongst other translated texts from Greek books, and used many of them, which were done by Hanin ibn Isaac.

- Second: The other son of Masoyeh, Michael, was one of the famous doctors of his time, had gained great status and was favoured by al-Ma'mun⁽¹⁴⁾.
- Third: 'Isa bin Shahla- He was one of the famous physicians of his time who gained fame in Baghdad at the beginning of the Abbasid period. He was a student of Georgis b. Bakhtishu'a, when the late left for Baghdad to treat the caliph Abu Ja'afar al-Mansur, he took Abraham and 'Isa b. Shahla to his company. Shahla was one of them, who were brought amongst other disciples to Baghdad-, so then 'Isa b. Shahla became a famous doctor.
- Fourth: Shapur bin Sahl Gandishapouri: S. b. Sahl Gandishapouri died in 255 AH. He was the head of Gandishapour Hospital for an extended period of time, as he was very skilful in prescribing Medicine and pharmacology. He was in charge of being the private physician of the Abbasid caliph, al-Mutawakkil. Ibn al-Nadim, the author of the book: "al-Fehrest", mentions him with a book known as the Book of "al-aqrabathin", which was designed in twenty-two chapters⁽¹⁵⁾. This book was widely used by the pharmacies, drug stores and hospitals in Baghdad, during the late third century, all the fourth, fifth centuries and part of the sixth century.
- Fifth: 'Isa b. Chaharbakht (Sahar Bokht) - One of Baghdad's famous Christian physicians and pharmacologists during the third century AH. He has written and translated many books, including his translations of three chapters from the medical collection of Galinus commentaries on the book: "Al-Falsul of Hippocrates", which its translated by Hunayn b. Isaac, had arranged -into Syriac languages- in seven chapters.

Ibn Al-Nadim writes:

"Ibn Sahar Bakht, whose name is 'Isah, is one of the students of Gundishapour, and he has authored the book: 'The Book of the Powers of Singular Medicines', "Qiwa al-'Adwiyyah al-Mufradah".

Sixth and Seventh: Dashtak and Michael - Dahstak were famous physicians of that era, and they were the head of Gandishapour Hospital for a short period of time. Georgi Zidane writes: "Haroon al-Rashid asked him to accept the position of head of the Baghdad hospital, but he refused to accept that. Michael- his nephew- was also serving at Gandishapour Hospital.

These were only few figures that are meant to explain how Baghdad was the hub of medical practice, or even the heir of Eastern and European Medical Sciences as was practiced by the previous Greek and Persian Empires.

Different Denominations

Baghdad was habituated by Muslims of various denominations, both Shi'ahs and Sunnies. Some of the rules were not in favor of the Shi'ahs, however at the beginning of the fourth century, Al-Boyeh, has succeeded in reaching power, and many significant changes have appeared. On appearance there was an endorsement of Shi'ah ceremonies and traditions. These changes were remarkable regarding mourning for Imam Hussain (as) on the event of 'Ashura'. In 352 AH, for the first time, national mourning was decreed by the government's side. They asked people to wear black clothes to show their unhappiness with Imam Hussain's (as) grief; buying and selling were forbidden. They ordered butchers not to kill, in respect of this day⁽¹⁶⁾. People set up mourning tents and camps in markets and wept and cried for Imam Hussain (as), and eulogized and lamented for him⁽¹⁷⁾. On the other hand, Al-Boyeh's governors used chain-beating and hung black felt on their necks, which was a traditional Iranian tradition for Imam Hussain's (as) mourning. Different colourful clothes and flags could be seen in most places in Shi'ah ceremonies. They reported using black clothes in Imam Hussain's mourning at 'Ashura', and white flags on pilgrimages to Shi'ah shrines, especially for Imam Hussain (as) in Karbala and Imam Ali (as) in Najaf.

These changes have provoked others and they felt that they are being marginalized. This bitter feeling, which has carried on till the Seljuks took over to support reactions against Shi'ah top figures. Ibn Juzi writes in 449 A.H: Sunni people rushed to Abu Ja'afar al-Tousi in Karkh and plundered and burnt three holy flags which the pilgrims of Karkh had carried from early days when going on pilgrimage to Imam Ali (as)⁽¹⁸⁾.

The Centre of Mosaic of Affiliation and the sporadic Turmoil

For many years, people of various groups from the theological as well as jurisprudential schools of thoughts were gathered in Baghdad. The Shi'ahs were living during the (Taqiyah), i.e. religious Camouflage, however the other groups were sometimes promoted or even-though suffering from a fluctuating bitter and sweet relationship with the rulers.

The Hanafi School of Jurisprudence was about to be established in Baghdad, while the Hanbali School was established more advancedly than the previous school. Therefore, one ought to explain this point furthermore and explore the relationship between some of these denominations.

Hanbali and Shi'ah Neighborhoods in Baghdad

After the establishment of Baghdad and the Abbasid caliphs in Baghdad, the capital of the Abbasids, the centre of sects and religions became diverse. Shi'ahs, Sunni, Nisarie, Syriac, Nestoria, Malekani, Maroni, Jewish, Saebian, Zoroastrian, Manawi, and Mazdaki lived in this city. Thus, Baghdad had become a city of religious diversity, where these groups were at peace and sometimes at war based on their ethnic and ideological differences. The four schools of jurisprudence (Hanbali, Maliki, Shafe'i, and Hanafi) and the Twelver Shi'ites significantly influenced the Bab al-Basra and Karikh neighbourhoods (with large populations). The Hanbalis and Shi'ites were dominant⁽¹⁹⁾. Karikh was located on the western side of the river Tigris and was the residence of wealthy merchants⁽²⁰⁾. This neighbourhood was the residence of Shi'ahs from the first days of Baghdad, and apart from Karikh, there were smaller neighbourhoods specific to the Shi'ahs. These neighbourhoods were usually the centre of friction between them and some radical Sunnis. However, in general Baghdad was the residence of the Shi'ahs and the Sunni communities. The population of Shi'ahs and their supporters was concentrated in Baghdad in the Karikh neighbourhood, and in the late 4th century AH, they also resided in Bab al-Taq. In the neighborhoods west of the river Tigris, especially the Bab al-Basra,

the Banu Abbas family formed a powerful group because they enjoyed the support of the government. This group had a lot of hostility towards Ala-wite Shi'ahs. The Bab al-Sha'ir neighbourhood was also one of the largest Sunni gathering centres in Baghdad in the western and northern region of Baghdad, with five neighbourhoods, some of which were connected to other neighbourhoods. The neighbourhood was in the south of Harbiyeh. Atabiyin, also known as the Athabiyeh Neighbourhood, was located south of the Ramolieh neighbourhood. This neighbourhood was known in all Islamic lands for having fabrics woven from silk and cotton in different colours. The neighbourhoods of four Souk, Nasriya, and Dar al-Qaz were located a few blocks from Baghdad. As a result, in Baghdad, Shi'ah and Sunni groups were living very close to each other and the sects were at odds with each other, looking at the sectarian and/or from an ideological or denomination angle. Due to the domination of the Caliphs of the Abbasid caliphs, the Shi'ahs were being exterminated by the caliphs. The Abbasid caliphs, especially al-Mutawakkil, the Shi'ahs were severely suppressed. Nevertheless, the Shi'ah community grew significantly in power to the extent that during the reign of Mu'tathid in 284/1987, the caliph issued a command to appease them.

The Shi'ahs

As explained before Shi'ahs were among the religious groups that had many supporters in Baghdad. The history of Shi'ah presence in Iraq and the sub-urbs of Baghdad dates back to times before the construction of Baghdad (145 AH). This presence dates back to when Muslims conquered Mada'in in the year 16 AH.⁽²¹⁾ The companion Salman al-Farsi was involved in the Mada'in war as part of the Arab forces and played a role in the conquest of Iraq. Sa'd b. Abi Waqas appointed him as the governor of Mada'in after the battle⁽²²⁾. Salman al-Farsi held the position of governor of Mada'in for an extended period of time. His leadership is characterised by benevolence, mercy, and compassion.

The Karikh neighbourhood of Baghdad was also home to Dar al-Khilafa before the establishment of Dar al-Khilafa. After joining Baghdad, it became one of this new city's most important and prominent Shi'ah neighbourhoods. The apparent caliphate of Imam Ali (as) in Kufa for many years and months was one of the most important factors in the Iraqi people's emotions for Shi'ism. Hence, the areas and villages around Kufa have been one of the most important centres of Shi'ah gatherings since the beginning of the conquest of Iraq by Muslims. This was not hidden from al-Mansur, the Abbasid caliph of Baghdad, and his followers. So, the Mansur Palace's quality and the Corps's division around the circular city of Baghdad indicate this. Al-Mansur Palace was built in the middle and centre of the city, and around it was the 'Location of the Army'. The other reasons for the gathering of Shi'ahs in Baghdad were the presence and residence of Imam Mussa B. Ja'far and Imam Muhammad Taqi al-Jawad (as), who lived -albeit the first was in jail- in Baghdad for a long period of time and were eventually martyred in this city and buried in the graveyard of Quraysh (the current Kadhimiah). Since the establishment of Baghdad and the presence of Shi'as, there have been numerous Shi'ah scholars and personalities in the city and surrounding areas. They were in contact with the Caliphate apparatus and the ministry, especially during the Bramake era. As the city of Baghdad had developed, the concentration and gathering of Shi'ah there increased too.

In the third and fourth centuries AH, the Boyids gained control over the Abbasids in Baghdad, making it a significant hub for Shia activity. As a result, Shi'ah scholars in Baghdad became the leaders of the entire Shi'ah community. This point must be further elaborated and explained.

Shi'ah Take-over Power

At the beginning of the fourth century of AH, the Shi'ahs reached memorable and remarkable power at the centre of the Islamic caliphate that they could remove a caliph from office and appoint another one to rule. For instance,

Muhammad al-Qaher (320 to 322 AH) was removed by Shi'ah forces and, with the help of the Shi'ahs Ahmad al-Radhi (322 to 329 AH), was appointed to rule.

Looking at those conditions from another angle, one may confirm that all four deputies -linked to the Twelfth Imam of Shi'ah Muslims, Al-Mahdi (as),- were settled in Baghdad. At the time of the third deputy, Hussain (as), Ibn Ruhe Nubakhti, the third deputy for the Imam Mahdi (as) "the twelfth Imam of the Shi'ahs", after a short occultation, had great power and his relatives and friends had essential positions in government⁽²³⁾.

The Al-Boyeh reign from Baghdad, the centre of Islamic countries, created remarkable changes in different politic, cultural, and social situations for the Shi'ahs. Power and sovereignty of the Shi'ahs extended and their population increased. They formed independent and separate gatherings and gradually used leadership of 'Naghīb'. Of course, the Al-Boyeh observed the condition of the majority, who were Sunnis, and the religious power of the caliphate; superficially they respected the caliphate rank. Thus, in the Al-Boyeh period, caliphs ruled for a long time; however, the caliphate was formalized. The famous historian al-Masudi, who is widely known for his book: 'Muruj ul-thahab', said that the Abbasi caliphs were just puppets who dragged the name of Amir ul-mu'menin, but had no influence and power over anything, despite the fact that the ceremonies were explicitly recited mentioning their names⁽²⁴⁾.

The historical records show that when Al-Boyeh took power, the Shi'ahs were performing their ceremonies, especially the mourning ceremonies for Imam Hussain (as), with dissimulation⁽²⁵⁾, in secret. Most of the time, they suffered difficulties and punishment, when they went for pilgrimage to the shrine of Imam Hussain (as), and while performing the eulogy about him. However, hostility of some prejudice sects was effective in these severities but most of the ruling caliphs agreed to this method.

The Hub of Deputies

During the latter half of the third and early fourth centuries of the Hijri calendar, four deputies served as the exclusive representatives of Imam al-Mahdi (as). They held the position of Shi'ah public authority for the Twelver Imamiyyah. These deputies resided in Baghdad, as this city was the centre for the knowledge of Shi'ah theology and served as the guardian of the Shi'ah teachings, due to the efforts of Hisham B. al Hakam -from Kufa- and continued until it reached its highest rank in the late 4th century by al-Shaykh al-Mufid (413-338). The authority of al-Shaykh al-Mufid and scholars such as al-Sayyid al-Murtada and al-Shaykh al-Tusi (in addition to jurisprudence) was in the knowledge of theology and removing the doubts of the opponents to strengthen the foundations of Shi'a belief. In that time and age, theology seemed superior to all sciences, even in jurisprudence and hadith. The sciences of theology, jurisprudence, and usul were potentially more significant than the two sciences of Hadith due to the flourishing nature of the science of narration in Baghdad, which served as a prominent hub for Muhaddithuns compared to other centres. All Islamic traditions and hadiths, including the hadiths of Ahl al-Bayt, infallibility, and purity, were gathered by the Haddiths of Baghdad. Kulayni (m) (329) had scientific and religious authority in the city of Raay at the end of his life, perhaps due to the publication and compilation of hadiths and narrations of the book (Kafi).

This prominent scholar published a book that he most likely wrote before he left for Baghdad in this city, and most of its narrators lived in Baghdad.

It is now necessary to elaborate about the Muslims compilations of Hadith, who were living in Baghdad and their contribution to the Islamic literatures.

Shi'ahs' Great Compilations of Hadiths are almost linked to Baghdad

In this century great narrators and compilers of Hadiths like Muhammad Ibn Ya'qub Kulayni Razi, called al-Shaikh al-Kulayni (deceased: 328 AH),

Muhammad Ibn Ali Ibn Hassan Ibn Musa Ibn Babawayeh, called Shaikh al-Saduq (deceased: 381 AH), Muhammad Ibn al-Nu'man al-Mufid, called Shaikh Mufid, and Ibn Ilm ibnul Mu'allim (361 to 473), Abu Ja'afar Muhammad Ibn Hassan Tousi, known as Shaikh ut-Ta'ifah al-Tousi (385 to 480) appeared. Four main referral books called 'al-Kuttub Al-arba'ah' were written. The first book of Shi'a is: al-Kafi, written by Muhammad Ibn Ya'qub Kulayni Razi, known as al-Shaikh al-Kulayni. It is written in response to the Al-Shi'ah who complained to al-Kulayni in a case of unawareness of their co-religionists on religious issues and traditions on the path of the Shi'ah Imams (as). Shaikh Kulayni wrote this book during the last 20 years of his life, which he spent in Baghdad. His works contain 30 books, the first of which is Al-'Aql and Fadhl ul-'Ilm, and the last one is Al-Rawdhah.

Usul al-Kafi is in three parts. The first part is 'Usul al-Kafi', itself. The second part is 'Furu' al-Kafi' and third part is 'Rauzah al-Kafi'. This work contains sixteen thousand one hundred and ninety-nine Hadiths from the Prophet (s.a.w.a.s.) and the innocent Imams (as). The author believes that 5072 Hadiths are correct and sound, 9485 Hadiths are weak and the rest of them you must say are cautious. Kulayni was born in Rayy. He was contemporary with four successors of Imam Mahdi (as) and openly distributed the Shi'ah booklets of religion. Hence, four successors of the Imam (as) did this in hiding with exceptional religious camouflage. Kulayni died in Baghdad in 328 or 329 AH and was buried in Babul Kufa in Baghdad⁽²⁶⁾. The second compilation was authored by Shaikh al-Saduq, the first narrator born due to the invocation from the very Twelfth Imam Al-Mahdi (as), through a direct letter sent to his father. His compilation was named: 'Man La Yahdhuru al-Faqih'.

The last Two compilations of Hadiths

Shaikh al-Tousi is known to be the author of two major Shi'a compilations of Hadith, i.e. Tahthib al-Ahkam, and al-istibsar, which is known with its

innovative style of composing, having established the fundamental trends amongst Shi'ah Muslims to re-examine any narration before accepting its authenticity.

However, I shall now explain how Baghdad has captivated some of the figures of mysticism.

Baghdad: Centre of Poetry, Theology and Mysticism

As explained before Baghdad was the centre of famous theologians, Mu'atazilies, Asha'aries, and even Shi'ah theologians. It has also attracted critical inter-faith meetings between Muslims, Christians, and Jewish thinkers. The initial criticism of Christians for possessing multiple gospels and the potential for distortion and alteration was first raised by a Mu'atazili theologian questioning the Christian Patriarchy of a particular Church⁽²⁷⁾.

However, it is better to explore some of the hidden sides of the city, i.e. its mystical heritage.

Poetry and Mysticism

There were many mystical and Sufis who were settled in Baghdad. The Turks, widely known for adopting different 'Tariqah', have always hailed those scholars and Sufis settled in Baghdad. One doesn't need to mention the famous Abd ul-Qadir al-Gilani, amongst others, but I shall only mention one unknown figure, i.e. the one, who was close to the Ismaili or Shi'ah in general:

Nasimi of Baghdad

He belonged to the 'Hurufiyah', a sect founded by Fadlullah Al-'Astarabadi during the reign of Timur of Gorgan. Though the Hurufi sect failed to establish itself in Iran, in the Bektashi milieu, it found a favourable place in Turkey, where it flourished.

The Hurufi sect held the opinion that the universe is very ancient and that it is in eternal movement. God becomes manifest in the person of A'dam and,

after him, in the person of Muhammad, the last prophet of Islam. Then, they would accept that He was manifested in the saints, beginning with Ali B, Abi Talib, and so on. The most important books are:

Jawidan-i Kabir, Haghghat nameh, and Hedayat nameh, amongst other works.

Some of these books are in Persian mixed with the Asterabadi dialect, and others are in Ottoman Turkish.

Nasimi and his students are two of the most famous Hurufi poets and writers.

Nasimi's poetry is in two languages, Persian and Turkish. According to some sources, Nasimi was born in Nasim, Baghdad.

Like other thinkers of his time, Nasimi believed that Man's salvation rests in looking away from religious differences. His mind was, and Nasimi's poems have the taste of mysticism, as his thoughts opposed the fanatics of his time for which he was killed. Nasimi's Mystic poems are full of symbols, while his lyrical poetry takes its roots in actual love. The doctrine of this sect is a mixture of Islamic Sufism, Christianity, and Shi'ah teachings. Several times during the Ottoman Empire, members of the Hurufi and Bektashi Sects were killed, and their properties were plundered. Finally, in 1340, many of them were killed, and their possessions were given to the followers of Naqshbandiyah⁽²⁸⁾.

It is necessary now to deal with the influence of Baghdad and its intellectual impact on other centers.

The Influence of Baghdad School of Knowledge: Regional and Global Impact
Islamic World: Regional Impact

Also, Shi'ah theologians flourished during the time of Shaikh Al-Mufid, a distinguished scholar, and many Shi'ah scholars have been trained under his teaching and lecturing lessons.

Shaikh al-Ta'aifah was born in Tous four years after Shaikh Saduq's death. Because of this, they called him Shaikh al-Tousi. He was twenty in 408

AH. and went to Baghdad during a time of degeneration of the Al-Boyeh. He was Shaikh Mufid's student for five years. After the demise of Shaikh Mufid, he went under Sayyid Mortaza 'alam ul-Huda' as a student. Then he became the Shi'ah leader in Baghdad. He was in Baghdad for forty years (408 to 448 AH). In 447 AH, Artoghrul Saljuki rushed into Baghdad, left the Shi'ah in suffering and ordered them to burn their libraries. One of those collections of books was Shaikh Tousi's library, which was burnt in 449. All of those tragediey reflect the importance of those intellectual activities.

One shall explain how his school of thought was passed on to the next generations of scholarship within Najaf or Aleppo. These points are elaborated in the next paragraphs. Therefore, one feels incumbent to explain how this knowledge was spread, as the school of the established (Kalam), i.e. theology, has been spread all over the region from Baghdad. Historical records confirm that two main locations have been influenced and inspired by Baghdad school of knowledge. The first is Najaf, within Iraq, and the second was Aleppo, in Syria. One feel compelled to mention both cases:

First: Post-Turmoil of Baghdad: Najaf

After what has happened in Baghdad, which has forced al-Tousi to move and settle in Najaf, where the 'Hawzah' was established. One ought to emphasize that Shaykh al-Tā'ifa, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī, founded the Ḥawza of Najaf. He had settled in Najaf in 449/1057, as he had to escape sectarian sedition initiated by the Seljuks, which became rampant in Baghdad.

This historical fact implies that this system is outdating the earliest globally known university, i.e. in Bologna, Italy, in 1088 AD.

Shaikh al-Tousi went to Najaf and he remained there till the end of his life in 75 (in 460 AH). He taught and wrote many books, for almost twelve years. They knew him as the founder of 'Hawzah Ilmiyeh' (The Islamic Shi'ah Advanced Seminary)⁽²⁹⁾. However, his contribution was not limited to the

Hadiths, rather it covered other fields of Islamic studies.

Furthermore, it implies that the very elevated Shi'a figure (Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī) was himself involved in establishing the foundational scientific circles as well as the technicalities related to its groundbreaking formation. He was known for his oceanic knowledge being an affluent thinker in theology, Jurisprudence and the exegesis of the Qur'an. After that he wrote two extensive works on the comparative approach between the Shi'ah and Sunni Jurisprudence (al-Khilaf), and the innovative and detailed production of Islamic Demonstrative Jurisprudence (al-Mabsut). He was the first Shi'ah scholar to have written on the 'Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence' in the famous book: (al-'Uddah). In addition, he is known for his extensive exegesis of the Qur'an (al-Tibyayan), but also his excellent works on the bibliography of Shi'ah books (al-Fihrist) and corrective methodology in writing about the narrators of Hadith in (Ikhtiyar ma'arif al-rijal). Based on those historical contributions, he was -in fact- the first scholar who established Shi'ah thoughts, methodologies, and fundamental principles and presented their foundation that is still espoused by knowledge production milieu.

Second Centre of Knowledge: Aleppo

On the other side, the theological and jurisprudential thoughts established by the scholars in Baghdad, have also been transformed to another centre, i.e. Aleppo.

Aleppo, one of the northern cities of the Levant, was never known as a Shiite centre during the life of Shia Imams, but gradually Ismailis, Shia families and descendants of Prophet were scattered in the area. The rule of Hamdanies prepared an appropriate field for Shia scholars to develop Shia doctrine in these regions. Migration of figures mentioned in this field have tried their best to demonstrate the Shi'ah thought. One effort of these figures was to explain and resolve the problem of the occultation of the 12th Imam for the Shia community in the region. As such famous scholars were

settled there and their books were also widely known and spread, like: al-Kafi, by Abu Al-Salah al-Halabi, amongst other books that different scholars authored, such the Judge Ibn Zuhreh.

Twelver's theology had flourished, especially in contrast to other Shi'ah sects, such as Ismailies. In brief, we can hold Aleppo Twelver's theology had flourished during the fifth century and the school of Baghdad influenced all of that⁽³⁰⁾.

Beyond the Islamic World: Globally

Baghdad Contribution to the Humane Post-Medieval Civilization in Europe
There're two signs that Baghdad was the source for inspiration, mathematics, logical knowledge, romanticism and love poetry. Here and now, we shall explain only two examples from each case.

Poetry of Love

Baghdad seemed to be the centre of all forms of songs performed by mistress and enslaved people, who were professionals in their fields. Many narrations were recorded in the Shi'ah narrations, reflect how these matters were done, as the individuals were indulged in lust and desires that were mainly criticized by the Shi'ah Imams (as). However, those poetries were widely desired by groups, outside the eastern part of the Arab (al-Mashriq al-'Arabi), which have spread to the Western Arab World (al-Maghrib al-'Arabi), i.e. North Africa. From there these locations poetry and the cultural of singing about love, have infiltrated towards Andulcia (Peninsula of Iberia) stretching so far to France, where the Nobles and Kings have learned and repeated those songs of love. Literature experts of the European Romantic era have praised those nobles and kings for their contributions to European literature without realizing that this culture and the literature are to be traced back to Baghdad.

Logic to the Scholars of European Enlightenment

The Arabic logicians with their innovative and mathematic minds, were brilliant enough to invent many mathematic figures, including Zero, describ-

ing it as a separated number, but were also smart enough to discover within algebra that unknown “a thing” (شئى), which is usually given the symbol: (س), nowadays. This whole literature of logic and mathematic was later on translated into Latin through the Andelucian translators. However, as this effort progressed, the works presented the symbol (X) instead of (Sh), or *S*. So why has this happened? It seems that the Spanish speakers were not good at the articulation of (Sh), and they would prefer pronouncing it as (Ch=خ) while the closest letter to it was (X) within Latin amongst other European languages. Hence nowadays all symbols reflecting “the unknown value” are given the symbol: (X).

Conclusion

Studying the crucial historical record of Islamic civilization cannot be performed without taking a precise investigation and a vigilant look at the formative period of Baghdad’s first four centuries.

The city was meant to be the central city that may attract all social classes of the Muslim society but was later transformed to be the centre of Muslim civilization with all its conditions and requirements.

The city of Baghdad became the centre of different forms of knowledge production and the focus of political turmoil and the disarray of dissimilar sectarian groups related to various denominations.

The city was the hub of all philosophers, theologians, physicians, and authors of Hussaini dirge, religious and mysticism poetry.

As Iraq was the cradle of civilization during the ancient epochs, Baghdad -despite the political corruption and surpression- played a crucial role in establishing some of the advanced and peak of progressive knowledge production that was needed for a humane civilization.

Footnotes

1 See the link from Britanica:

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Baghdad>

Accessed on 10.04.2024

2 See the link below:

<https://www.noormags.ir/view/fa/articlepage/1109501>

Accessed on 10.04.2024.

3 See: Ibn Athir 1385, vol.5, p.502; al-Tabari, (no date), vol.7, p.505.

4 See: al-Tabari, No date 7, pp.614-622.

5 See: al-Tabari, vol.7, pp.614-622; Muskuyeh, 1424, vol.3, p.94.

6 See: al-Tabari, no date, vol.8, p.28.

7 See: al-Khatib-Baghdadi, 1417, vol.1, p.88; Tabari, no date, vol.7, pg.651.

8 See: al-Tabari, no date, vol.7, p. 652, and Khatib Baghdadi, 1417, vol.1, p.12.

9 See: al-Khatib-Baghdadi, 1417, vol.1, pg.92, Yaqubi, no date, vol.2, p.373.

10 See the link from Britanica:

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Baghdad>

Accessed on 10.04.2024.

11 1¹. History of Medicine in Iran by Dr. Mahmud Najmabadi, Vol.1, p.460.

12 See the link below:

<https://www.noormags.ir/view/fa/articlepage/839014>

Accessed on 10.04.2024.

13 Ibn Musouwiye has many translated books and writings in medicine, which can be seen amongst his works. See: 'Akhbar al-Hukma'a, by al-Qefti, pp.215-16, and 'Uyun al-Anba', by Ibn Abi Usayba'ah: vol.1, p.184-183.

14 See the book in Farsi: « تاريخ علوم عقلی در تمدن اسلامی» (The history of Intellectual knowledge within Islamic Civilization, by Dr. Thabih ul-Saffa, vol.1, p.62.

15 . These are his words:

سابور بن سهل صاحب بیمارستان جنديسابور وكان فاضلاً عالماً متقدماً وله من الكتب كتاب الاقرباديين المعمول عليه في
البیاراتانات ودكاين الصیادلة اثنان وعشرون باباً. الفهرست، ابن اللندیم، ص ۴۱۳.

- 16 This practice was related to those old days, otherwise, nowadays things are different.
- 17 See: Ibn Kathir, *Al-Badaayeh wal-Nahaayeh*, vol.11, pp.183; Ibn Al-Jozi, *al-Muntazam fi tarikhul Mulook wal-Umam*. Beirut Vol.7, pp.15; Ibn Khaldun, *Tarikh Ibn Khaldun*, vol.3, pp.425; Mohammed Ibn Abdul Malik al-Hamadani *Takmalatul Tarikh ut-Tabari*, vol.1, pp.183; Abi al-Mahaasin, 'Annujoomul Zaahira fee mulookil misr wal Qahira', vol.2, pp.427.
- 18 See: Ibnul Imaad Hanbali, *Shatharat ul-thahab*, Vol.3, pp.130; Abil Mahaasin, *An-Nu-joomul Zaahire*, vol.4, pp.218.
- 19 See: al-Moghadasi, 1906, p.126.
- 20 See: al-Estakhri, 1967, pp.83-84 Ibn Huquql, no date, vol.1, p.242.
- 21 See: al-Tabari, no date, vol.4, pp.16-8.
- 22 See: Husayn Mujib, 1373, p.98, and Sayyid Ali Khan, no date, p.215.
- 23 Considering Shi'ah believes after Imam Hassan Asakary (a.s.), the eleventh imam of the Shi'a at (260 AH) the minor occultation of the twelfth imam (pb) began. This continued till 329 AH (approximately 70 years). In this period four persons, Othman Ibn Sai'ed al-umary, Muhammad Ibn Othman Ibn Sai'ed Hussain Ibn Ruh, and Ali Ibn Muhammad Sumary were deputies of Imam Mahdi (as) and had duty to relate to the Shi'ates from absent Imam (a.s.) they called them al-Nawab Al-Arba'ae (four deputies). The long occultation started from then and continued by now and whenever God means. Please see: Muhammad Ali Pour: *History of twelfth Imam of Shi,ates in Iran (from fourth to eighth century of Higry)*, pp.93-94.
- 24 Masoodi, *At-Tanbeeh wal-Ashraaf*, pp.386 and 387.
- 25 Taqiyya (dissimulation, or 'religious camouflage' means to hide beliefs and faiths which would otherwise put one in trouble and are dangerous for the individual. This issue happened to 'Ammar b. Yasir for the first time. 'Ammar who was under torture by the Quraish infidels and his parents were murdered by them; in order to protect his life, without any other option, he apparently claimed that he left Islam, but in his heart, he was a real Muslim. In Islam, that person is called a "Murtad", if it is real from his heart and belief and has a great punishment." Yasir immediately came to the Prophet (s.a.w.a.s.) crying and explained what happened. The Prophet (s.a.w.a.s.) told him that if the situation happened again, in order to escape from enemies, hide your faith in the same way, and this verse

descended about 'Ammar's action:

(مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَكِنْ مَنْ شَرَحَ بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ عَذَابٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ)

Translation: he who disbelieves in Allah after his having believed, not he who is compelled while his heart is at rest on account of faith, but he who opens (his) breast to disbelief-- on these is the wrath of Allah, and they shall have a grievous chastisement.

About Taqiyya and its conditions in Shi'ahs R. K. Mousa said: Shi'ah in Islam (pp.60 onward)

26 See: Kulayini, Al-Kafi, Vol.1, introduction, pp.4-9; Najjashi, Al-Rijaal, pp.378; Mudarisi, Rehaanatul Adab, vol.5, pp.79 to 81. Petroshfsky, Islam in Iran, pp.277 to 278.

27 See the link below:

<https://www.noormags.ir/view/fa/articlepage/1406446>

Accessed on 10.04.2024.

28 Most of these points are derived from the following sources: 1) Vajeh Nameh. By: Dr. S. Kia, published: Tehran, 1330. 2) A literary history of Iran. Edward Browne, 3rd vol., translation by A. A. Hekmat.

29 See: Shaikh Agha Buzurg Tehrani, Biography of Shaikh al-Tousi, pp.7-19. About Dar ul-Ilm and Baghdad libraries in the fourth and fifth centuries. Mohammed Kord Ali, Khi-taatush Shaam, vol.6, p.185.

30 See the link below:

<https://www.noormags.ir/view/fa/articlepage/1067798>

Accessed on 10.04.2024.