



## Network and Relations of Islamic Libraries in the Era of the Islamic State: Medieval Islamic Libraries

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DOI: 10.30742/tb.v8i1.3670

Received: 28 March 2024

Revised: 1 April 2024

Accepted: 5 April 2024

### ABSTRACT

**Purpose Research.** The development of libraries during the Islamic Daulah era grew rapidly, and this was inseparable from the role of the leaders of the state who had noble ideals by collecting research results from various philosophers. After the research was collected, they put the results or writings in the library. Therefore, this research aims to determine the role of libraries during the Islamic Daulah era because many works and activities were produced during this medieval era, and libraries developed as a center for study for scientists. **Method.** This research uses a qualitative descriptive research method, which means that it uses the Naturalistic Inquiry method. **Data Analysis.** The data analysis method used is literature review. The method research action by examining sources related to the theme of this research until the concrete data will be found. **Results and Discussions.** Research result, 1) During the Umayyah period, it made a breakthrough by developing private libraries, but also developing public libraries, 2) in the Abasiyyah dynasty there were technical activities regarding libraries starting from procurement, processing library materials. 3) The existence of a conflict between the Umayyah dynasty and the Abbasid dynasty was not a problem for these two dynasties.

**Keywords:** *Library, library collaboration, Daulah Islam*

### A. INTRODUCTION

The scope of the history of Islamic civilization is extensive and spans a very long time. From the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW until today, In the long course of history, history and civilization have always experienced periods of ups and downs at different stages. The development of Islamic civilization during this period was characterized by a combination of Islamic civilization with the institutional patterns of the Eastern and Central empires.

The growth of Islamic literature occurred in line with the social and cultural progress of Islamic society and its power structure. Islamic literature can be considered an integral part of Islamic civilization, which began in the early days of Islam and the caliphate of al-Khulafa al-Rashidun and continued to develop during Islamic rule, especially during the 'Abbasid Daulah in Baghdad, Iraq. Islamic

literature is interpreted as a phenomenon related to Islamic civilization (Hak: 2013). The development of Islamic literature cannot be separated from the process of development of Islamic civilization, where there are 3 era stages in the development of historical libraries, as for these 3 parts according to Qulyubi (Qulyubi: 2003).

The first stage, the embryo of the emergence and development of libraries, began with the first revelation that came down to the Prophet Muhammad; the first revelation received by the Prophet Muhammad was the command to read "Iqra", which means reading after the Prophet Muhammad received this revelation, the Prophet himself gave orders to his friends to write it, which was initially intended as a guide/mushaf owned by a private person, this is what we often hear under the name "Usmani Mushaf, which was reproduced and developed during the era of Khulafurrasidin Usman bin Affan".

The second stage is the period of a place's development and formation, which eventually becomes a library. At this stage, we have started to codify the Al-Hadith and Al-Qur'an, and then the next stage is to translate research results and essays in book form on works originating from Greece and Persia. In this era, the discovery of paper making also resulted in papyrus and leather being abandoned by many users.

The glory of Islamic libraries developed and achieved progress during the time of Al-Ma'mun in 815 M. During this Abbasid era, many changes were made, for example, changes to research institutions; these institutions began to make breakthroughs by collecting or uniting separate works. Became one, then at this time also the development of an educational institution known as Bait Al-Hikmah; apart from being an educational institution, Bait Al-Hikmah also became the first library whose existence was not only used by figures or scientists but its existence was intended for the general public. If you want to seek knowledge, research, or make books, these works will be stored in the Bait Al-Hikmah Library, one of the most complete libraries. Besides research activities, this library collects works from India, Ethiopia, Persia and Byzantium. Because it has such an extensive collection, this library has been used by several figures and circles as a centre for research, astronomy and mathematics. Many figures and scientists gather here to develop knowledge in various fields.

The third stage in the development of knowledge and the Bait Al-Hikmah library lasted only a short time; this library, which was previously used as a library and study centre, began to decline. However, the decline of classical Islamic libraries gave rise to libraries owned by individuals owned by merchants, and scholars; from the results of literature studies, there are approximately 36 libraries, including the Bait Al-Hikmah Library, the Nizamiyah Library, the Dar Al-Ilm Library, Al-Baiqani Library. In the medieval period, two stages were starting from 661 to 1258 M. A very long period, the period of Islamic history seen from the Middle Ages was divided into stages, namely:

1. Umayyah era (661-750 M)
2. Abbasid Era (750 – 1258 M)

The era of the Umayyah Bani was an era after the time of the Rasyidin Khulafur; during this era, Islam also developed rapidly; the name of the Umayyah

Bani itself was taken from one of its founding figures, namely Umayyah bin Abdul Syam, from the Quraysh tribe, Umayyah bin Abdul Syam and his family converted to Islam at that time—the occurrence of the Mecca fath.

When the Prophet was still 23 years old, he was appointed secretary for writing revelations. He narrated 163 hadiths (Saefudin: 2002: 53). The Umayyah dynasty had an Arabic, militaristic and secular style of government, but even though the style of government was like that, during the Umayyah era, they had achievements, namely pioneering the birth of Arabic Islamic science and culture. This dynasty once experienced glory, but this dynasty experienced destruction due to rebellions and disputes within power. Among them were challenges and fierce resistance from the radical Khawarij group and the Bani Abbas group (Saefudin: 2002: 59). Historians' rebellions and disputes here are social revolutions.

The era of the Bani Abbas emerged as an era that continued the Umayyah era; it was the Bani Abbas that Islam developed rapidly; from this era, Islam was also categorized as the golden age of Islam, the era of the Abbasids was founded by one of the descendants of Al-Abbas, one of the uncles of the Prophet, namely Abu Al-Abbas, the Abbasids were founded in 750 M, until they experienced destruction around 1258. (Saefudin: 2002: 63). During this period, it had a pluralistic-ethnic, scientific and religious pattern, from which the Bani Abbas was the longest dynasty, and here Islam developed and became a golden symbol of classical Islamic civilization.

Apart from having their characteristics in the system of government, these two acts also have great works used as human references in terms of science. These works are considered one of the reasons for the founding of libraries during the Middle Ages. Libraries emerged from the Islamic state. Before libraries, early Islamic educational institutions emerged, such as mosques, al-Kuttab, Majalis al-Munadharah and Al-Madrasah (Hak: 2013).

The development of Islamic libraries during the era of the Islamic states shows that Islam and libraries are interrelated from a historical perspective, meaning Islam developed there. The founding figures of the Islamic states developed knowledge, which was collected into one unit in one place. That is what is called a library. This forerunner is the guideline that Islamic daulabs have a massive role in science and libraries as a place to store this information. The library's existence as a place of knowledge makes it very interesting.

With this library, people during the Daulah era could get to know the development of science. This development of science was not only known during the Islamic daulah era, but this information also reached the continents of Europe, Africa, and Asia. There were many discoveries and developments in science during the Islamic daulabs, which became the forerunners of discoveries and developments carried out by other societies such as Europe, Africa and Asia (Sou'yb: 1978). At this time, libraries have an essential role in preserving human cultural heritage in the form of printed and other recorded documents and in conveying ideas, thoughts, experiences and knowledge from previous generations to future generations.

The library functions as a records management system that stores and safeguards these works to ensure they are not lost and remain accessible to the



public (Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 43 Tahun 2007). The statement of Law No. 43 above fits perfectly with the general descriptions of the situation during the era of the Islamic State, especially in the Middle Ages. During the Islamic State era, there were many works in the form of ideas, thoughts, and experiences produced by scientists/figures in each stage, which were then stored in a place called a library.

## **B. METHODS**

This research uses qualitative descriptive research. Qualitative descriptive research uses the Naturalistic Inquiry method, meaning that the researcher outlines explanations based on his understanding of the problem to be studied. The type of this study is library research (Kartini: 1996: 71). Literature study is a research action that involves conducting studies of sources related to the theme of this research. So, at the end of this article, you will find concrete data (Sugiono: 2014:145).

## **C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### ***History of Literature in the Umayyah Era***

The period of the Umayyah Daulah was a period of early development of Islamic literature. Many figures here carried out translation activities, and this was a tradition of the elite of the Caliphate under the command of Khalid bin Yazid bin Muawiyah.

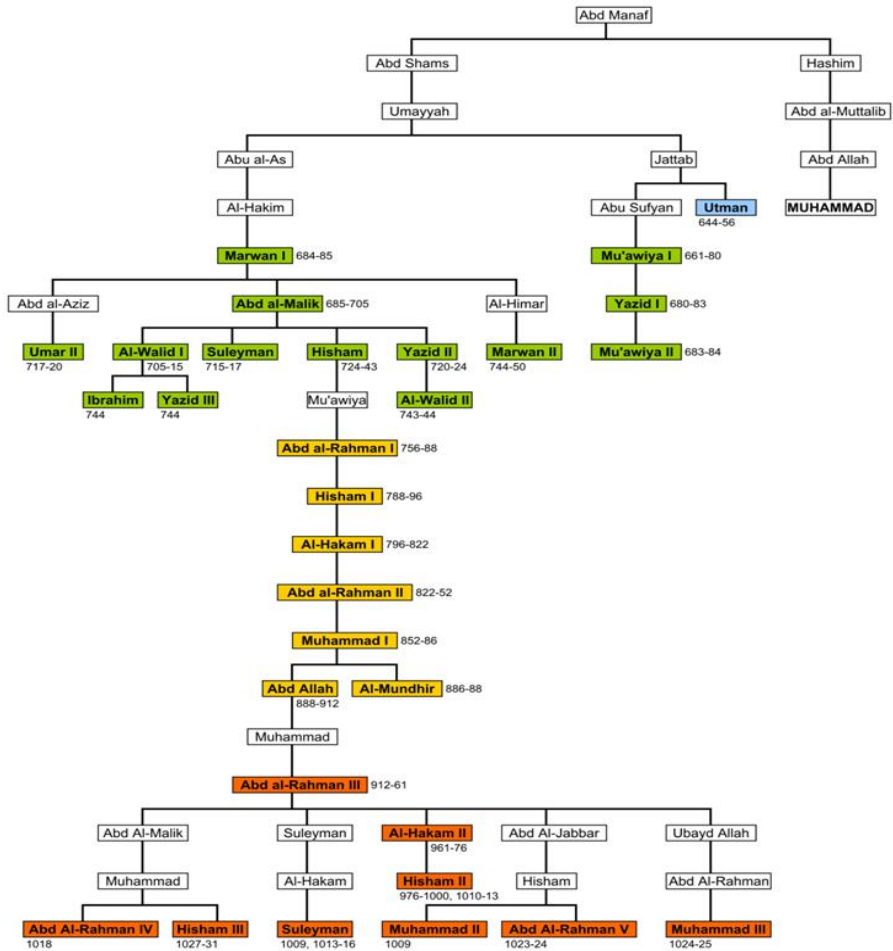


Figure 1. Flow of Library Development

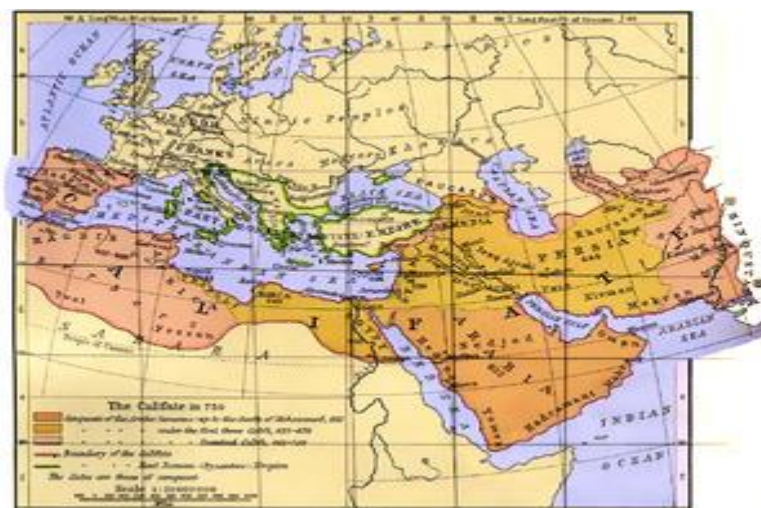


Figure 2. Map of development of the Umayyah library

During the time of the Bani Umayyah I in Syria, the caliph's palace had full rights to the library, meaning that the library here was held directly by the caliph, so that this library could quickly develop rapidly, one of the famous libraries was the al-kutub khizanah or also called the book treasury, this library manages many books or books. Khizanah al-kutub was developed by figures of this era, namely the caliph Mu'awiyah bin Abu Sufyan, who held power from 41 to 60 Hijriyah or 662 to 680 AD, caliph Mu'awiyah bin Abu Sufyan was the caliph and was the first person to collect experts, figures, philosophers to research and understand the history of the ancient Arabs (Hak: 2013).

In this era, innovations were also found in the development of libraries, not only in building a luxurious building for the library but in terms of collections, and many were also provided by the Umayyah caliphs, as was done by Al-Hakam, the leader of Spanish Andalusia who had a considerable collection. For his library, Al-Hakam had a great love for science; if he heard an interesting book, he would send 1000 gold dinars to the author to get the collection (Ali: 2000).

**Language Works:** At the time of the recognition of Arabic as a language of communication, a figure named Sibaweah wrote the Arabic grammar; the aim was for this Arabic language to have meaning and a good language structure; the result of Sibaweah's writing was given the title Al-Kitab. The al-Kitab here is not a holy book for a particular religion, but the al-Kitab provides information on how a person can communicate well and fluently; this is the book that is the forerunner to the development of the science of Nahwu, which is widely used by Islamic education in studying Arabic, among Islamic boarding schools. This book is the basis for how to learn Arabic well because many scientists made the Bible part of the science of Nahwu and then the Sibaweah people; figures at that time were called the fathers of Nahwu science. Apart from Nahwu science, many figures/scientists have authored several writings, including Qays bin Al-Mulawwah, Jamil al-Qudhri, al-Akhtal, and Jarir. They are figures who wrote Arabic poetry (Nasution: 1979:63). **Religious Works:** The development of knowledge during the Umayyah era was not only in linguistic works, but many figures wrote and conducted research on religion; these religious works included tafsir, fiqh, hadith. However, during the Umayyah era, the development of religious works was only limited to the basics. It did not go deep into the content context of fiqh, hadith, or figures who began to develop religious works, such as Wasil bin Ata, Ibnu Sihab, and Al-Bakri. So, with the existence of this religious work, education in the Umayyah era was entirely developed because books were a guide for learning. Some religious education was provided during the Umayyah era.

Maktab/Kuttab, maktab/kuttab have the same meaning, namely a place to study and write; from learning to write activities here, it is hoped that many works will



emerge as an effort to develop knowledge. If we talk about it nowadays, Maktab/Kuttab is the same as an Islamic Educational Institution that teaches reading and writing at an early stage. Many figures or writers of literary works and religious works provide teaching here, teaching nahwu (Arabic grammar), writing poetry, poetry, and so on. This educational institution also has stages or levels after a person can read. Moreover, writing then he moved to the next level, namely learning in the field of the Koran, although only at the initial level.

A mosque is a place of worship for the Islamic community; a mosque is synonymous with a place where a servant communicates with his Rabb. In the time of the Prophet, apart from being a place of worship, the mosque was used as a place for discussion, deliberation, a place to spread knowledge, and also as a place for Islamic religious doctrine; spreading knowledge means that the mosque can be used as a centre for scientific learning. During the Umayyah era, the mosque was used for continuous education from the maktab/kuttab, also known as middle and high-level education. Meanwhile, middle and high-level education was taught during these times, including Al-Quran, Tafsir, and Hadist dan Fiqh. I also learned other fields such as literature, Arabic grammar, astronomy, geophysics, mathematics, and arithmetic.

Literary assembly, apart from mosques during the Umayyah era, was developed by the Literary Assembly. The Literary Assembly was not a place but a community for people who wanted to study literary works. The Umayyah caliph founded this assembly to be able to produce literary works. However, this assembly was still specifically for prominent scholars and scholars as time passed. What is discussed is not only writing literary works; this is where the characters discuss existing problems and solve them together. It can also formulate a problem that can be passed through a fierce debate between the writers and scholars involved.

Palace education is education that is formed and specialized for the sons and daughters of the caliph and palace officials; apart from studying the basic sciences of religion, literature, and astronomy, this palace education teaches how they master the sciences of government whose aim is for sons and daughters the palace could continue this caliphate.

## Library Management During the Abbasid Period

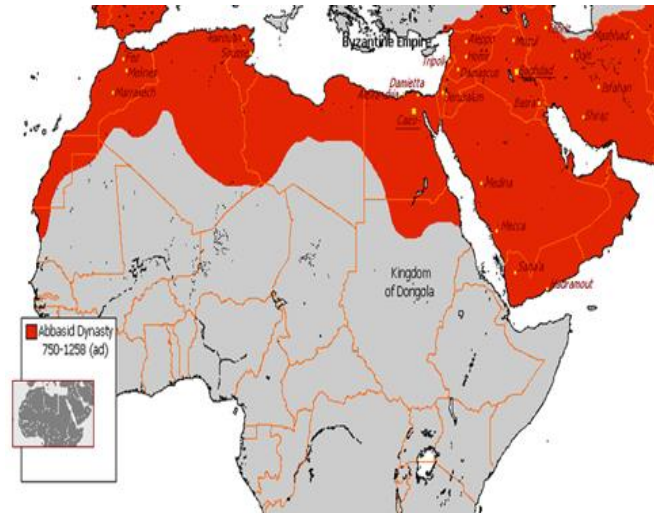


Figure 3: Map of the development of the Abbasid library

During the time of the Abbasids, practically all Islamic rule was also controlled by science, and various kinds of knowledge spread, including medical science, arithmetic or mathematics, and astronomy. The figures who created and authored these books were not only involved in writing, but they also traded and marketed the books they wrote to the general public who wanted to buy the results of their writings; when selling the results of their writings, it was of course not limited to the process just buying and selling, but it is found that the buyer has tested the material of the book, they discuss, argue first, if the author can explain it well then the buyer will buy the book, it is rare to find authors who cannot explain it well because they are indeed people who are experts in the field of knowledge, research. The books that are written are bought and sold by scientists and in fact to libraries; these libraries are used as a place to discuss the results of knowledge research.

The library was a storage place for the works of figures or scientists who felt these scientists to be very useful, so the library during the Abbasid era was running and managed well; the Caliph Harun Ar-Rasyid appointed Al-Kwarismi to be the Head of the library, this library was called the Bayt Al-Hikmah library so that the collections owned by this library can be well systemized, al-Kwarismi tries to develop and manage the books by marking them so that later the books that have been arranged on the shelves can be easily found. The management system implemented during the Abbasid era shows that dividing and grouping libraries was already done. Marking each book is done by grouping the book's theme/title.

When a book user searches for a collection, these indicators/signs are useful in the collection search process. Al-Kwarismi made improvements to the Bayt al-Hikmah library, dividing rooms, because Kwarismi believes that the library is not only a place to store works but also a means for conducting discussions, creating research, and artistic activities. , look for information in the books you have. Alyan





stated that in those days, libraries were neatly arranged, and books were arranged in an orderly manner based on the theme/title of the book (Alyan: 2003)

Library management during the time of the Abbasids up to this moment can be seen in various regional libraries in Egypt and Tunisia; from the results of research conducted by figures on the library management system during the Abbasids' era, which still exists and the system is still adopted by several libraries, mainly traditional mosque libraries. A library manager in the Shiraz area named Al-Maqrizi explained that the mosque library is arranged and divided into several parts, namely one long domed room with a path to the book collection rooms (book collection shelves. The book/work shelves are arranged on a shelf 3 yards wide; this shelf is vast enough to accommodate a collection of books. Al-Kwarismi, as the head of the library during the Abbasid era, tried to ensure that this library could be managed well. Al-Kwarismi, apart from providing codes, also began to distribute the collections. Of the collection, room A is The philosophy collection, and room B is used as a place for astronomical collections/works,

During the Abbasid era, apart from al-Kwarismi, there was also a library figure named Ibn Al-Nadim. This figure was also a writer of books, one of which was Al-Fihrist (index), who composed this collection in 936 M to 995 M. However, Ibn Al-Nadim was someone other than the one who developed the library; he was the one who donated many of his books to the library because he was also a trader and owned a bookstore. According to the information, the bookstore had several rooms to discuss books. In the shop, there is also a room just for reading for people who want to study the books in the shop. Is this what is called a library or just a place to read?

This grouping system still needs to answer whether Dewey created the classification system. As discussed above, more detailed information should be given regarding the classification patterns used by libraries in the classical period. However, the classification system most likely followed the classification patterns listed in bibliographic books or science curriculum books by ulama. Therefore, here we will learn a little about the scientific mapping model or classification of library materials related to these books. We will take the book al-Fihrist by al-Nadim as one of the bibliographic works.

### ***Relations and Networks of Islamic Literature***

The scientific relationship about Islamic literature is complex. From a historical perspective, this relationship existed between West and East and vice versa long before the emergence of Islam on the Arabian Peninsula, when the influence of Hellenism spread widely in the East. Persia, Alexandria, Iraq, Shiria-Nestorian and Egypt were Eastern countries that were active in developing Hellenistic philosophy. These cultures were still alive until the early days of Islam and gained momentum during the Umayyah era. However, only a few of them were forerunners during the Abbasid era; during the Abbaiyah era, Caliph al-Ma'mun was the golden age of Islam. It is also established through sea and land routes and diplomatic relations



between countries. Sea routes, for example, are carried out through trade (Hak: 2013:74).

Literature during the Umayyah era already had the forerunners of primary literature. Then, it developed because many works were published during the Umayyah era; this is where the first literature appeared under the name Khizanah Al-Khutub. Even though it was only palace literature, the Umayyah era had pervasive power extending to Syria; the literature during the Umayyah era also had an influence on Islamic literature in Cordova Andalusia; in recorded history, the Syrian Umayyah had close relations with the eastern (Arab) world. After the Umayyad dynasty was destroyed, publishing and creating research works could be continued in the Abbasid dynasty. These activities were still carried out during the time of the Abbasids, and science and literature developed rapidly during that era, which was called the golden age of Islam.

Many relationships and networks are found between Andalusia, Syria, and Iraq, where Syria is the largest sender of books or works. Iraq is also the same but smaller than Syria; this indicates a cooperative relationship between libraries in Andalusia and Syria and Bahdad in procuring books. This relationship has developed very rapidly. Apart from the relationship between the problem of procuring books, it turns out that this relationship occurs among many workers, students of knowledge, and scientists who have migrated to eastern countries (especially Arabia, Iraq, and Syria) and the Andalusia region. Scientists in various cities of the Umayyah Daula became disseminators of knowledge, teachers and book writers. From here, literature during the Umayyah period experienced development before the Abbasids finally came to power.

The relationship and network of literature development during the Abbasid era were very complex because, during the Abbasid era, the government system adhered to a scientific and religious system, which meant that it prioritized efforts to improve the quality of knowledge of a religious nature, from this system many of the existence of libraries were discovered. For example, during the time of the caliph Al-Mansur and the caliph Harun Ar-Rashid (789-809 M), many works were created, both translations and scientific discoveries, the works of which were kept in libraries. The development of literature was then continued by Harun A-Rasyid's successor, namely his son, Al-Ma'mun, from 813 AD to 833 AD, which at this time was called the golden age of Islam in the development of science and literature. From this, it is clear that the relationship and network of literature in the Abbasid era had a structure that was related between one government and another.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

During the Umayyah period, a breakthrough was made by developing private libraries, not only private libraries but also public libraries, including Al-Hakam; this Andalusian leader was a leader who loved reading books; he dared to buy books even though he had to spend money. / so big gold to get the book "Al-Aqani".



In the Abbasids, it was also found that the development of Islamic literature was proliferating. The leadership of Harun Ar-Rasyid, who appointed Al-Kwarismi, a figure, writer and scientist, to occupy the position of head of the Al-Hikmah Bayt Library, was an extraordinary breakthrough. Al-Kwarismi began to implement Al-Kwarismi's technique of the procurement method, making the library not only a place to read but also a place to discuss, create works, and collect works, including works from ancient Greek manuscripts that exist today. Al-Kwarismi also pays attention to the library processing system. He takes steps to ensure that the collection has a reserve collection, so he carries out the act of copying collections and placing books in storage by giving them their characteristics or codes based on the theme of the work. This is an effort to make it easier for visiting people to quickly find the collection they want.

The scientific relationship about Islamic literature is complex. This relationship has been established from a historical perspective, starting with the relationship between the Umayyahs and the Abbasids. Even though the two of them had conflicts regarding the development of science and literature, they had something in common: they both created works in the field of science. Then, the relationship between the West and the East was vice versa, long before the emergence of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula, when the influence of Hellenism had spread widely in the East. Persia, Alexandria, Iraq.

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