

How Biruni find and describe India

A research on Biruni views in his book

تحقيق مالهند من مقولة مقبولة في العقل أو مرذولة

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A presentation for

“Iranian legacy in India”

class

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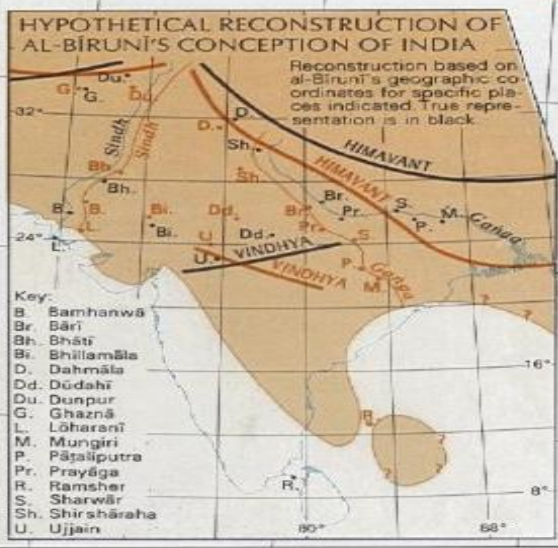
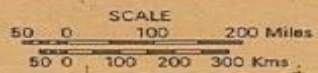
Who is Him?

- **Abu Rayhan Muhammad ibn Ahmad Biruni was born in 973 CE in Khiva now modern Uzbekistan and died in 1048 in Ghazna now modern Afghanistan.**
- **Sultan Mahmud Ghazni (971-1030 CE) In 1022 CE attack to north of India accompany him in this war; Biruni find opportunity to study about India to name himself as one of the first Indologist and he wrote a book that nowadays considers as first Indologist book in the world.**
- **His numerous books are more than 100 and he worked on Astronomy, Mathematic, Geography, optic, religion, philosophy...**

ARAB KNOWLEDGE OF SOUTH ASIA TO c.1050 A.D.

... imagine a range of towering mountains like the vertebrae of a spine stretching through the middle latitude of the earth, and in longitude from east to west. ... Long as this range is, it has also a considerable breadth, and, besides, many windings which enclose inhabited plains. ... One of these plains is India, limited in the south by the ... Indian Ocean and on all three other sides by the lofty mountains, the waters of which flow down to it. ... As for the distances between the various parts of India, those who have not themselves actually seen them must rely upon tradition; but unfortunately it is of such a nature that already Ptolemy incessantly complains of its transmitters and their bias towards storytelling.

Al-Biruni, *India*, ch. xxvi, pp. 96-97.
Tr. by Edward C. Sachau as *Alberuni's India*, London, 1910, Vol. I, pp. 195, 199.



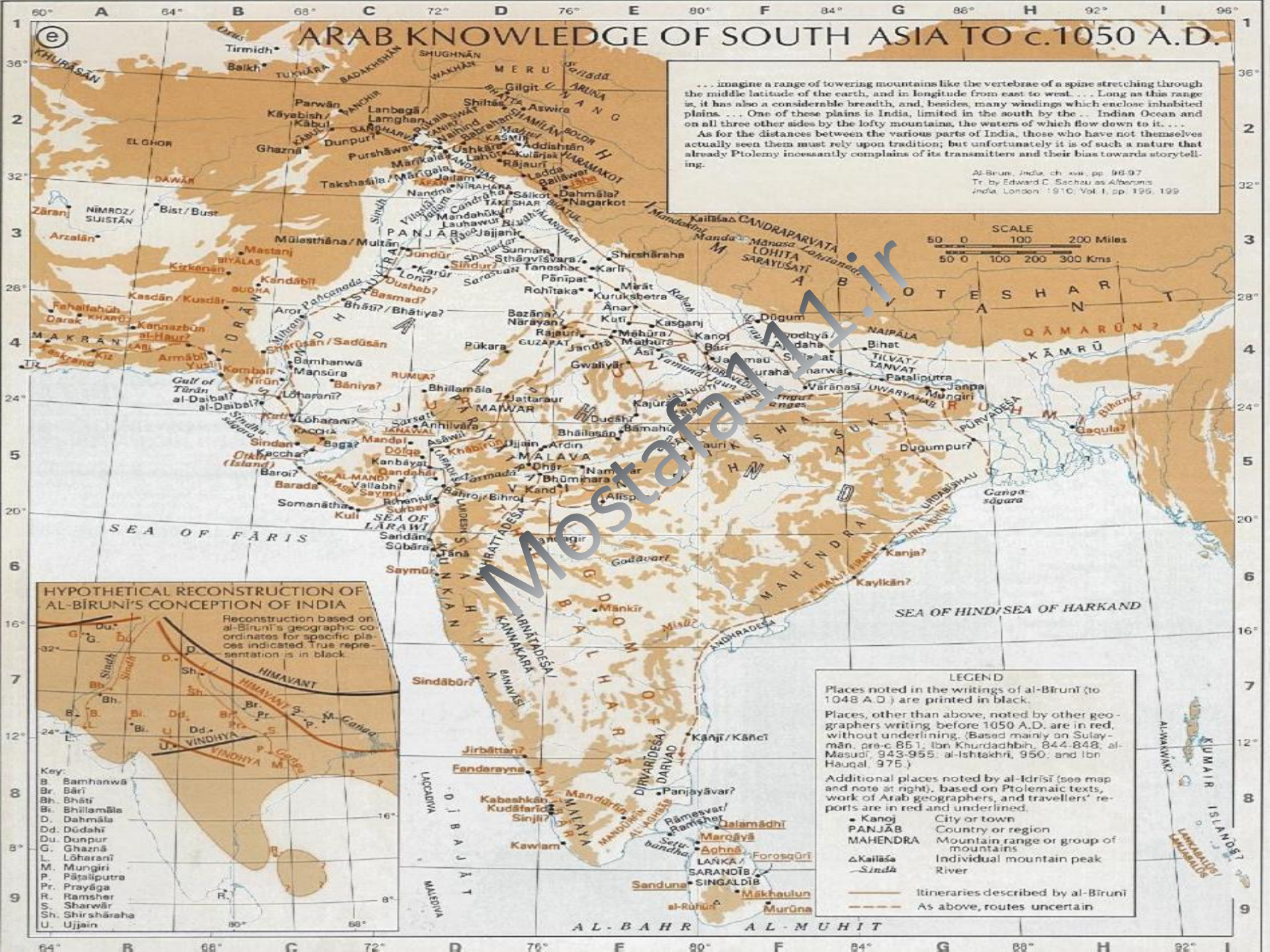
LEGEND

Places noted in the writings of al-Biruni (to 1048 A.D.) are printed in black.

Places, other than above, noted by other geographers writing before 1050 A.D. are in red, without underlining. (Based mainly on Sulaymān, pre-c. 851; Ibn Khurdadhbih, 844-848; al-Masudi, 943-955; al-Ishtakhrī, 950; and Ibn Haugal, 975.)

Additional places noted by al-Idrisī (see map and note at right), based on Ptolemaic texts, work of Arab geographers, and travellers' reports are in red and underlined.

- Kanōj City or town
- PANJĀB Country or region
- MAHENDRA Mountain range or group of mountains
- ▲ Kaillāsa Individual mountain peak
- Sindh River
- Itineraries described by al-Biruni
- - - As above, routes uncertain





سلطان محمود غزنوی شهنشاه افغان ۳۸۸ هـ - ق

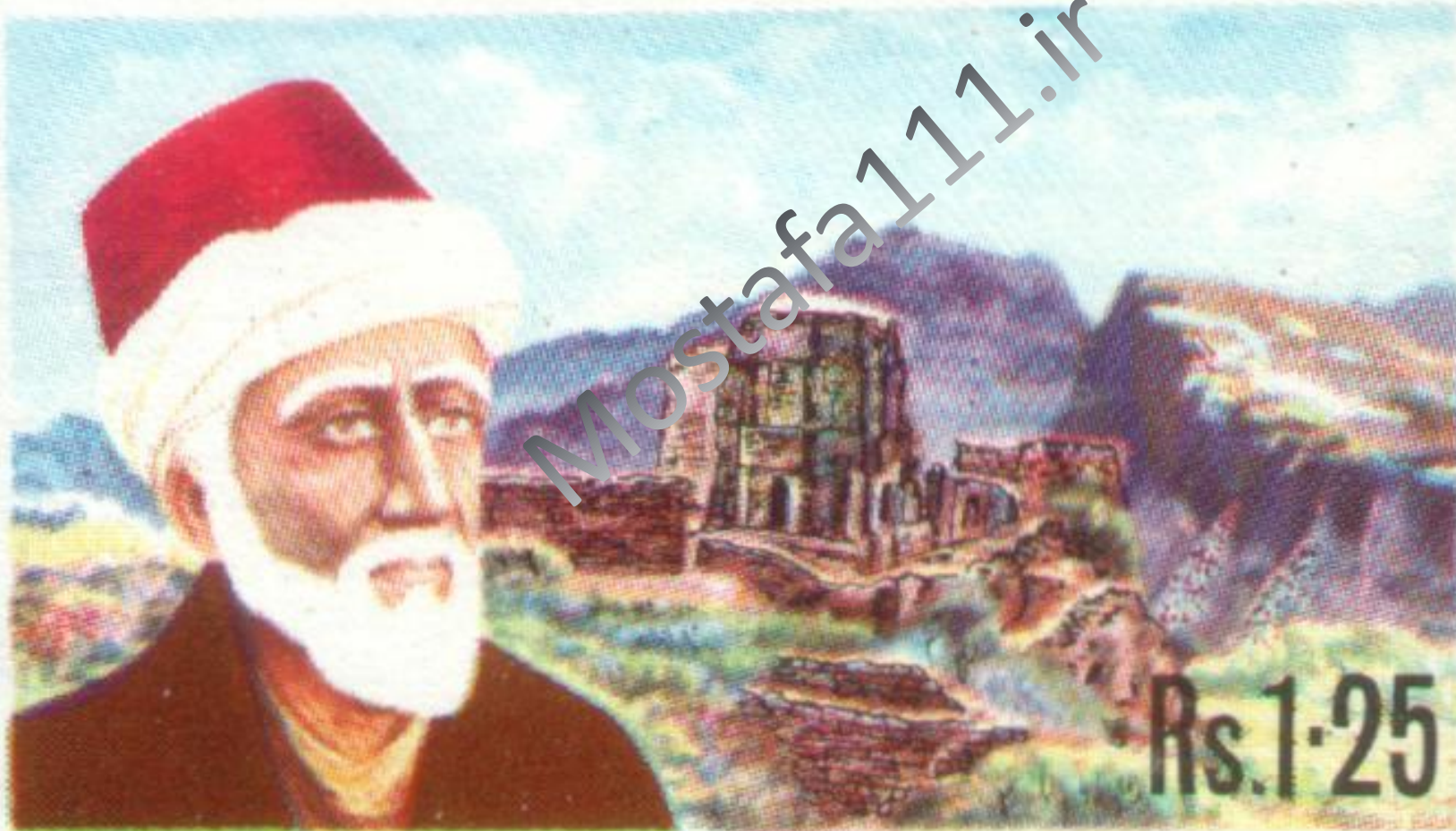
Sultan Mahmoud le Ghaznevide Empereur Afgan (998)

- 13 years opportunity (1017-1030 CE) to Biruni to learn Sanskrit (the holy and scientific language of Indian Hindus)
- direct contact with Hindus
- research on Indian society, their life style, sciences, religion, and philosophy...
- The result of this effort was a 700 pages book that named
 - تحقيق مال الهند من مقولة مقبولة في العقل أو مرذولة
- A book in research about what Hindu believe and which of them is accepted and which of them deny able, rationally and based on logic)

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS
ON MILLENARY OF AL-BIRUNI

NOV. 26 — DEC. 12, 1973

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-During this era Biruni *“both at Ghazna and in India, was not his own master, but had to obey a higher will; and lastly, that he was not a man in authority.”*

-Biruni in this case *“spent his leisure in the study of India; and that he had no official inducement for this study, nor any hope of royal reward.”*

- he actually takes a mirror toward Hindus sources to describe themselves (intellectuals and books) as they were *“He presents a picture of Indian civilization as painted by the Hindus themselves.”*

- Biruni references to Hindu books and their prominent people; at the same time he consider a kind of freedom and right for himself to accept or not accept something *“He does not blindly accept the traditions of former ages; he wants to understand and to criticize them.”*

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Elâ Râyhân el-Bârânî
973-1051

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-Biruni “ *does not blindly accept the traditions of former ages; he wants to understand and to criticize them.*”

-he was aware of hollow space knowledge among Iranian that *are not acquainted with the Hindu methods of astrology, and have never had an opportunity of studying an Indian book*” [page xxvi].

-his works on India started during wars, so getting excellent relation with the aboriginal people who affected by an outsider’s war is more difficult than other point in time. “*When Alberuni entered India; times were not favorable for opening friendly relations with native scholars.*”

الجمهورية الجزائرية الديمقراطية الشعبية

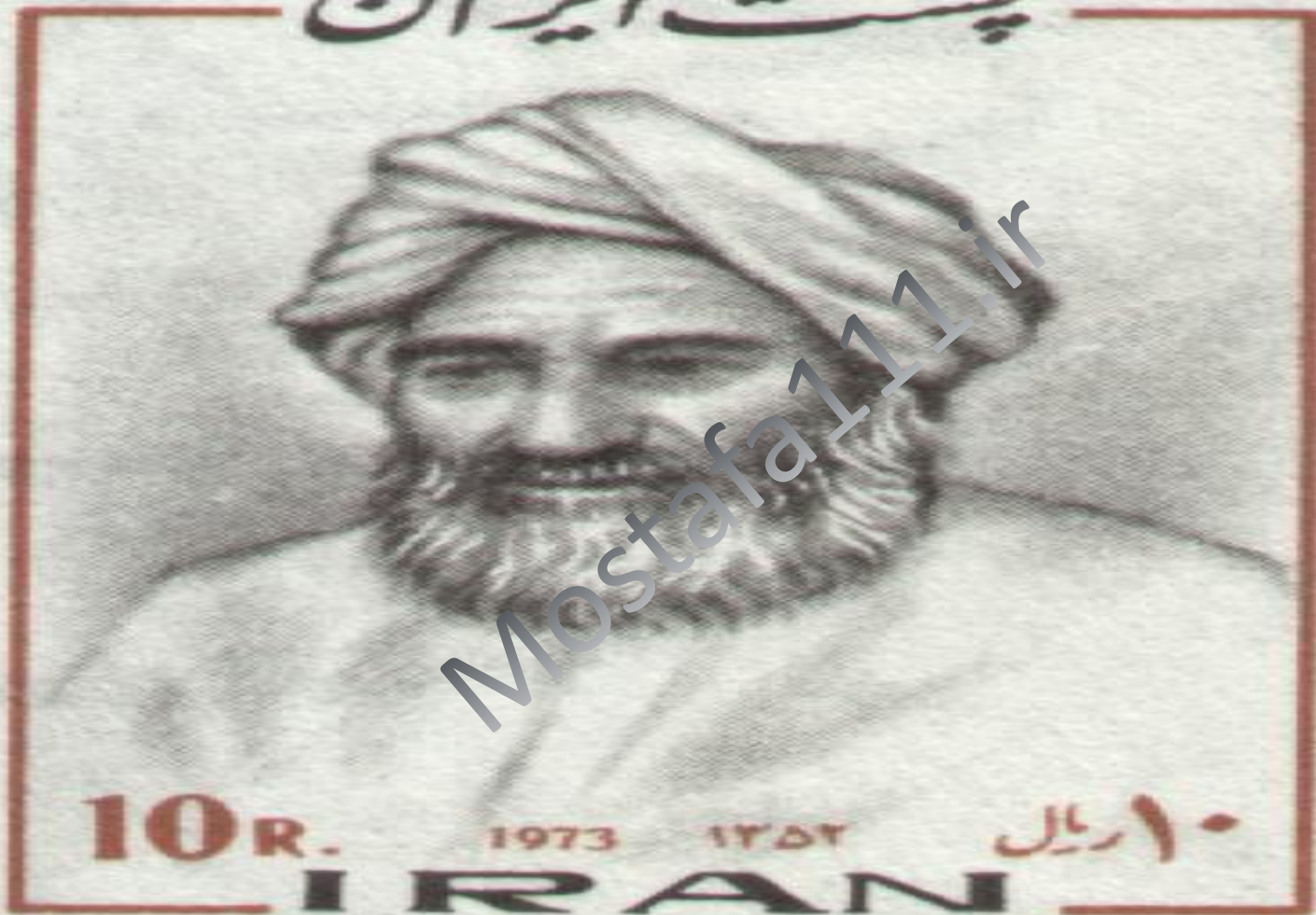


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Biruni feeling a kind of threat from hardliner in Two front

“I have written this book on the doctrines of the Hindus, never making any unfounded imputations against those, our religious antagonists, and at the same time not considering it inconsistent with my duties as a Muslim to quote their own words at full length when I thought they would contribute to elucidate a subject. If the contents of these quotations happen to be utterly heathenish, and the followers of the truth, i.e. the Muslims, find them objectionable, we can only say that such is the belief of the Hindus, and that they themselves are best qualified to defend it. My book is nothing but a simple historic record of facts. I shall place before the reader the theories of the Hindus exactly as they are, in order to show the relationship existing between them.”

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هزاره ابو بحران بیرونی

MILLENARY OF AL - BIRUNI

-Men as axes in Hindu society: “*When a child is born people show particular attention to the man, not to the woman.*”

-Their tradition of entering in their home: “*They do not ask permission to enter a house, but when they leave it they ask permission to do so. In their meetings they sit cross-legged.*”

-One of the Hindu writing traditions: “*They write the title of a book at the end of it, not at the beginning.*”

- Handing over things by Hindu is like this: “*If one of them hands over a thing to another, he expects that it should be thrown to him as we throw a thing to the dogs.*”

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WORLD SCIENCE WEEK

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AL-BIRUNI
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“the Hindus believe that there is no country but theirs, no nation like theirs, no kings like theirs, no religion like theirs, no science like theirs. They are haughty (arrogant), foolishly vain(hopeless), self-conceited, and stolid (emotionless).”

They are by nature niggardly in communicating that which they know, and they take the greatest possible care to withhold it from men of another caste among their own people, still much more, of course. from any foreigner. According to their belief, there is no other country on earth but theirs, no other race of man but theirs, and no created beings besides them have any knowledge or science whatsoever.

ПОЧТА СССР 1973

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Абу Рейхан Бируни
1000 лет со дня рождения

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if you tell them of any science or scholar in Khorasan and Persis, they will think you to be both an ignoramus and a liar. If they travelled and mixed with other nations, they would soon change their mind, for their ancestors were not as narrow-minded as the present generation is.

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POST AND TELEGRAPH ADMINISTRATION

Biruni find the necessity of dialogue among nations (Civilizations) in the best manner at that time (about 1000 years before ex-Iranian president Mr. Mohammad Khatami' mentioning dialogue among civilization) and he suggest it to the world through this message that: *"I like to confront the theories of the one nation with those of the other simply on account of their close relationship, not in order to correct them."*

GUINÉ-BISSAU

Inventou um hedômetro primitivo, e o primeiro calendário lunisolar mecânico



Abu Rayhan al-Biruni
(973-1048)

3500 FCFA
2008

“He is one, eternal, without beginning and end, acting by freewill, almighty, all-wise, living, giving life, ruling, preserving; one who in his sovereignty is unique, beyond all likeness and unlikeness, and that he does not resemble anything nor anything resemble him.”

د افغانستان پست
AFGHAN POST

973-1048 A.D. م ۹۷۳-۱۰۴۸

ابو ریحان البیرونی

ABU RAIHAN ALBERONI



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ONE THOUSANDTH ANNIVERSARY

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Conclusion:

Biruni is a royal-official scientist; who by force was at the service of a warrior king, but he used this opportunity the best, to change his side approach toward their opponents, by a scientific work. He shine a light to enemies 's believes, thought and life to knowing them better; and he wants to show to the humanity that at first you have to know your enemy, and then you can start challenge or war with them. And to know "others", you should put your believe away and then as neutral observer you should have a scientific work in this regard.

Abu Rayhan 's last moment

The man who was on his last legs time (1048 CE), faced with a meeting with one of his scientist friend who came to visit him at that situation; and the old sick man ask him a scientific question as usual; but he face with this answer that, in this disaster time is it suitable to speak such a matters?! And the patient reply, is it good to know and then die; or dying unaware and ignorant?! Yes this was the last moment of a man who spends all his life for caching knowledge. Biruni was a unique person in this regard.