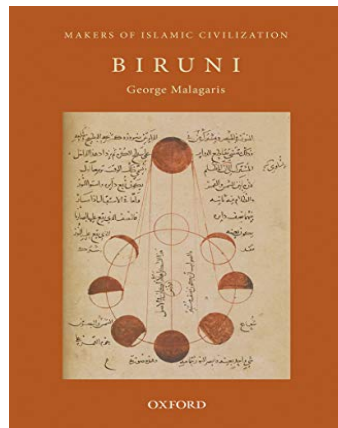


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Abu al-Rayhan al-Biruni (973–1048) was a brilliant polymath who wrote on diverse subjects in the natural and human sciences, including calendars, history, geography, astronomy, Indology, mineralogy, and pharmacology. Born in Khwarazm, he lived in various places in Central Asia, Iran, and medieval Afghanistan. His fortunes came to be closely linked with the Ghaznavid dynasty at its apogee, during the reign of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna (d. 1030). He was widely famed for the meticulous, objective and systematic quality of his thought, and remained an admired scientist and scholar of the eastern Islamic world in subsequent centuries. His curiosity ranged across cosmic, earthly, and human timescales and his willingness to be puzzled by reality and interested in others' perspectives, strikingly in his observations on Indian culture and religion, demonstrate a remarkably open and tolerant mind.

In this book, Malagaris places Biruni in his historical and cultural context within the long-term history of Central Asia.

He outlines the trajectory of Biruni's life, clarifying key questions about his associations, travels, and patrons. Following an overview of Biruni's chief interests, Malagaris details Biruni's major works to illustrate the breadth of his output and his intellectual approach, especially his attention to language, his esteem for knowledge, and his commitment to objective truth. An account of the institutional context and

competition among patrons helps explain some of his friendships and rivalries, notably with Avicenna. Malagaris also shows how varied paths of transmission affected the legacy of Biruni and his reception in global scientific and literary traditions. Finally, a detailed bibliographic essay, timeline, and list of key works will guide readers into further study of Biruni and his thought.

Über den Autor und weitere Mitwirkende

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