

FACTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THINKING IN THE ABBASID DYNASTY

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Abstract. Abbasid is the pinnacle of Islamic civilization in the realm of science. During approximately 526 glorious years with 37 caliphs, many achievements were achieved, including the emergence of many scientists. The glory earned needs to be an inspiration in alleviating and saving people from being left behind by other people. This study aims to present the factors of the progress of the civilization of the Abbasid dynasty, which were born from the personalities and policies of the caliphs. Guidelines from the Caliph influence the people to create a rational climate and culture of society in living life. This research method is library research or library research, namely research conducted to collect information through various media, both print and electronic, that have been studied. The result is a figure of a strong leader providing policies that favor the development of science. In the first period of the caliphate, economic stability and state security were achieved so that people prospered and focused on developing science.

Keywords: Abbasid, Caliph, progress

Abstrak. Abbasiyah merupakan puncak peradaban umat Islam dalam ranah ilmu pengetahuan. Selama kurang lebih 526 tahun Berjaya dengan 37 khalifah banyak prestasi yang diraih salah satunya banyak ilmuwan yang muncul. Kegemilangan yang diraih perlu menjadi inspirasi dalam mengentaskan dan menyelamatkan umat dari

ketertinggalannya dengan umat lain. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyajikan faktor-faktor kemajuan peradaban Dinasti Abbasiyah yang lahir dari personalitas dan kebijakan para Khalifahnya. Kebijakan dari khalifah yang memberikan pengaruh kepada masyarakatnya sehingga tercipta iklim dan budaya masyarakat yang rasional dalam menjalani kehidupan. Metode penelitian ini adalah *library research* atau penelitian kepustakaan yaitu penelitian yang dilakukan mengumpulkan informasi melalui berbagai media baik cetak maupun elektronik yang pernah diteliti. Hasilnya figure dari pemimpin yang kuat memberikan kebijakan yang berpihak dalam pengembangan ilmu pengetahuan. Selain itu pada periode pertama kekhalifahan kestabilan ekonomi dan keamanan Negara tercapai sehingga masyarakat makmur dan memfokuskan diri pada pengembangan ilmu pengetahuan.

Keywords: abbasiyah, khalifah, kemajuan

Introduction

The peak of Muslim civilization during the Abbasid Dynasty is interesting to study, in addition to increasing knowledge and being an inspiration for the development of people who are in disadvantaged conditions. Recorded for approximately 526 years (132-656H/750-1258M), stood and ruled with 37 Caliphs.¹ Many historians have seen the Abbasid era as the Golden Age of Islamic history, where several technological and educational advancements occurred.² This progress was also one of the contributions of the Caliphs in maintaining stability. At the beginning of the emergence and development of this dynasty, there were many conflicts with military movements and opposition revolutions. Eliminating and removing influences from the previous dynasty did not become an Arab-centric government.

¹Ahmad Rofi' Usmani, *Jejak-Jejak Islam: Kamus Sejarah Dan Peradaban Islam Dari Masa Ke Masa* (Sleman: Benteng Psutaka, 2015).

²Ahmad Al-Uairy, "Sejarah Islam: Sejak Zaman Nabi Adam Hingga Abad XX," 1999, 574.

Research from Hakiki explains four periods in the Abbasid Office. The first period was the pioneering period of the Abbasid Dynasty from Caliph Al-Shaffah to eradicate and eliminate all influences from the Umayyad Dynasty and other groups that destabilized the dynasty in various regions.³ Then, Caliph Al-Mansur was the foundation of controlled state finances. The peak period was during the time of Ar-Rashid and Al-Ma'mun, who focused on the internal dynasty with the development of science and culture. The second period was a decline characterized by competition between the military and various groups in the power struggle. The influence of the Turks strengthened and played an essential role in selecting the Caliphs. The third period was the period of the de facto puppet Abbasids by the Buwaihi Banu, and the Abbasid ideology changed to Shi'ah. Finally, the fourth period was the Seljuk Banu's takeover and control of the caliphate. After that, it was closed by the invasion of the Mongol Dynasty in the era of Al-Mu'tashimBillah. So, this research explains more about the dynamics of the long journey of the dynasty's rise and fall.

Megawati explains the achievements that have been made in the progress of the Abbasid Dynasty civilization. The birth of works from Muslim scientists from various disciplines, such as astronomy, psychology, philosophy, medicine, technology, and others, has supported the development of the dynasty. Three nations, namely Arabs, Persians, and Turks, worked together to develop Muslim civilization. Two factors underlie its progress, namely politics and economics. The political factors applied an egalitarian system, justice, and brotherhood. The conditions of society that varied in background, such as religion, tribe, caste, and others, the equality system became the mediator. It conditioned the inequality and social jealousy during the Umayyad Dynasty. In addition, fraternal efforts were made to instill and maintain *ukhuwah Islamiyah*. *Ukhuwah Islamiyah* is expanded not only among Muslims but also embraces non-Muslims to achieve egalitarianism in society so that the country is internally safe.

³Kiki Muhammad Hakiki, "MENGAJI ULANG SEJARAH POLITIK KEKUASAAN DINASTI ABBASIYAH," *Jurnal TAPIS* VIII, no. 1 (2012): 113-34, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24042/tps.v8i1.1547>.

Economic factors include state finances that need improvement because there are improvements in other sectors, such as the city of Bagdad, which has become a trade transportation route. They are increasing the number of docks to reach several regions, such as Europe and Southeast Asia.⁴ However, this needs to be expanded on the figure of the Caliph, his policies, and the community's conditions, such as government policies that facilitate and increase social welfare and open thinking to other peoples or nations to absorb knowledge and develop it.

Research from A. KhudoriSoleh states that the ability of Muslims to think highly or rationally begins with language. Language is an excellent stimulus for growing new thoughts that will come. The Qur'an was revealed with its vast vocabulary. Three schools of *nahwu* are known for studying it, namely, the Basrah School, which tends to coordinate rationality with language. Second, the Kufa school tends to the sociology of language and emphasizes regional linguistic principles. Third, the Baghdad School seeks to summarize the differences between the two schools. However, language is the basis of human rationality. It is universal, but the researcher wants to present the differences that stand out from a straightforward but complex thing, namely the influence of the leader's personality who influences the community.

This research aims to present the factors of the progress of the Abbasid Dynasty civilization that was born from the policies of the Caliphs. Guidelines from the central government influenced the people to create a climate and culture of a rational society in living life.

Research Method

The type of research used in this research is qualitative research. Research that is explained using various sources. This research is also historic in

⁴Betti Megawati, "Prestasi Abbasiyah Dalam Bidang Peradaban," *Pena Cendikia* 1, no. 2 (2019): 1–10.

the process of collecting data through the Library Research process⁵. This research method contains and studies information from previous researchers' literature or literature reviews. Information regarding the history of the development of Abbasid Dynasty thought is obtained from various electronic sources such as websites, online journals, e-books, and printed media such as books, newspapers, and magazines. The information obtained was grouped with relevance to the theme raised. Then, it is analyzed by the interpretation method, describing the findings descriptively and associated with psychological theory and analysis from other references.

Findings and Discussion

1. *Internal Factor*

The Personality of the Caliphs in the First Period

The success of the Abbasid Dynasty cannot be separated from the figure of the Caliph, who was very strong politically and religiously.⁶ The inspiring life attitudes of the caliphs of the early dynastic period. Caliph Al-Saffah, meaning the flower of blood, with his terrible title but his high moral personality by upholding the covenant and having extensive knowledge.⁷ As a founding father of state stability and security, Caliph Al-Mansur upheld an anti-entertainment attitude and hedonism.⁸ They lived a simple life despite the splendor they had acquired. Caliph Al-Mahdi was known to be generous, gracious, merciful, and favored by his people, but he was very harsh in fighting the Zindiqs. Caliph Ar-Rashid, who ushered in the peak of Islamic and Abbasid civilization, was a wise and authoritative man with extensive knowledge of literature and fiqh and a worshipper who did not leave

⁵ Rasyid, N. A., & Nurdin, N. (2021). The Diaspora of the Sufis in Indonesia: Moving From Western to Eastern Islands. *International Journal of History and Philosophical Research*, 9(1), 33-45.

⁶ Badri Yatim, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam*, ed. Hafiz Anshari (Depok: Rajawali Press, 2017).

⁷ Imam As-Sayuti, *Tarikh Khulafa' Sejarah Para Penguasa Islam* (Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2001).

⁸ Joeosef Sou'yb, *Sejarah Daulat Abbasiah I* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1978).

one hundred rak'ahs of prayer daily. In addition, he respected scholars; when Ar-Rashid wanted to perform Hajj, he would serve one hundred *fuqaha* and his son.⁹

A lifestyle that is not wasteful and is more concerned with building civilization. During the time of Caliph Al-Mansur, with the state treasury remaining, state wealth was as much as 810,000,000 dirhams. While in the Caliph, Harun al-Rashid left a state wealth of 900,000,000 dirhams.¹⁰ This was because the caliphs were skillful and wise in using the state budget. The caliphs and umara strengthened knowledge and civilization. Their lives strongly influenced the people to increase their knowledge and explore the depths of society.¹¹ Intellectual activities in the palace were always lively, such as scientific competitions, open discussions, and special education for the crown prince and the royal family.¹² These figures will later give birth to policies inclined toward the quality of civilization.

Political and Economy Stability

The geography of the Abbasid Dynasty supported almost all aspects of life, including the economy. This began with the transfer of the capital city by Caliph Al-Mansur to Bagdad. The condition of Bagdad City, which is located between two rivers, namely the Tigris and Euphrates, supports the local economy, namely helping irrigation, especially agriculture, and supporting sea transportation from the West to various regions that can reach as far as Mongolia as three continents, namely Europe, Asia, and Africa. In addition, mining products from the Levant, such as gold and iron, also support it. Progress in the economy had a positive impact on other aspects of life.

⁹Ali Muhammad Ash-Shallabi, *Sejarah Daulah Umawiyah & Abbasiyah*, ed. Firman Arifianto (Jakarta: Ummul Qura, 2016).

¹⁰Naila Farah, "Perkembangan Ekonomi Dan Administrasi Pada Masa Bani Umayyah Dan Bani Abbasiyah," *Jurnal Kajian Ekonomi Dan Perbankan Syari'ah* 6, no. 2 (2014): 80–94.

¹¹Munjahid Munjahid, "Kebijakan Pendidikan Khalifah Al-Ma'mun Dan Implikasinya Terhadap Kemajuan Ilmu Pengetahuan," *Risalah, Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Studi Islam* 6, no. 2 (2020): 273–88, https://doi.org/10.31943/jurnal_risalah.v6i2.152.

¹²Fachrul Rahman, "Pendidikan Islam Pada Zaman Abbasiyah" 1, no. 2 (2021): 1–12.

State finances have stabilized and increased since Al-Mansur, and food self-sufficiency has increased since Al-Mahdi. It culminated in Caliphs Ar-Rashid and Al-Makmun, with state finances being maximized for education, science, culture, health, and improving social welfare. People lived in food and economic prosperity.¹³

The Freedom of Thoughts

Al-Mansur gave judges, muftis, and faqih the freedom to determine the law by methodology and methods. Imam Malik was once asked to create a scientific work with the methods and ijihad he used so that the Book of Al-Muwattha was born.¹⁴ Before the reign of Al-Ma'mun, literature translations and the free flow of knowledge from various nations added to the diversity of thought. As a result of the scientific activities carried out by the rulers of the Banu Abbas, a revolution of free thinking emerged. This free-thinking pattern was the leading cause of the influx of Hellenism into Muslim thought.¹⁵

Support for the Development of Sciences

The Abbasid caliphs loved knowledge and scholars and encouraged them to work and present new scientists. Caliph Al-Rashid and Al-Makmun established and optimized the first library, which was Khizanah Al-Hikmah, then developed into Bait al-Hikmah. They made it easy for scientists to find their literature.¹⁶ The wealth of the state was used to establish various facilities that supported the educational process at this institution, such as building observatories and financing the provision of rare manuscripts from Greece, Rome, India, and Persia to be translated into Arabic at a high cost.¹⁷In addition, during the time

¹³Benson Bobrick, *Kejayaan Sang Khalifah Harun Ar-Rasyid: Kemajuan Peradaban Dunia Pada Zaman Keemasan Islam* (Tangerang Selatan: PT Pustaka Alvabet, 2013).

¹⁴Rusdiyah, "KONSTRUKSI TASYRI' PADA MASA LAHIRNIYA MAZHAB FIKIH" 14, no. 2 (2014): 103-14.

¹⁵Tsuraya Kiswati, "Al-Juwaini, Peletak Dasar Teologi Rasional Dalam Islam," 2015, 1-218.

¹⁶Sahidi, "PERAN KEPUSTAKAAN DAN PERPUSTAKAAN DALAM MEMBANGUN PERADABAN ISLAM (SEBUAH TINJAUAN HISTORIS PERADABAN PERPUSTAKAAN ISLAM)," *Iqra* 14, no. 2 (2020): 146-69.

¹⁷Hepi Andi Bastoni, *Sejarah Para Khalifah* (Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2008).

of Caliph Ar-Rashid, he highly valued the works of Muslim scientists, paying for these works with dinars as much as the weight of the works.¹⁸ The heavier the weight, the more expensive the scientist's income. The scholars also received special treatment from the Caliph. Caliph Al-Ma'mun's love for knowledge and scholars is reflected in the way he was privileged. He approached the philologist Al-Farra' (d. 820) and asked him to write a work on language. The scientist was given a special place that provided all forms of comfort to focus on his palace, such as good servants, and also gave him a scribe.¹⁹

Unarab-Centrist

The Abbasids were not just an empire born from the Arab womb but much more than that. This dynasty embraced all elements of society from various tribes. Baghdad, as the capital of an international country, was open to multiple nations, such as Arabs, Turks, Persians, and so on, because it became the center of political, social, trade, and cultural activities.²⁰ Diverse tribes within an empire, restrained by religious law, were able to subdue the dominance of the Arabs and other nations in controlling the ambitiousness to achieve the state's goals.²¹ Although Arabs hold the majority of positions, they are still embraced. Non-Arabs receive facilities and strategic positions in government, law, and the military.²² In addition, the mothers of the Caliphs were not of noble and Arab descent, such as Al-Mansur from Salamah al-Barbariah (a formerly enslaved person from Barbar), Al-Mahdi from Khairuzan (a formerly enslaved person from Barbar), Ar-

¹⁸Mohamad Samsudin and Mahbub Zuhri, "Perkembangan Pendidikan Islam Pada Masa Harun Al-Rasyid Dan Al-Ma'mun," *Jurnal Al-Ashriyyah* 4, no. 1 (2018): 64–79, <https://jurnal.nuruliman.or.id/index.php/alashriyyah/article/view/35>.

¹⁹Munjahid, "Kebijakan Pendidikan Khalifah Al-Ma'Mun Dan Implikasinya Terhadap Kemajuan Ilmu Pengetahuan."

²⁰Nani Ismiyati, Sutijtro, and Nurul Umamah, "Peranan Harun Al-Rasyid Dalam Kekhalifahan Abbasiyah Tahun 786-809 M," *Artikel Ilmiah Mahasiswa* 1, no. 1 (2015): 1–12.

²¹Septia Mardiana, "KOSMOPOLITANISME DAN TRANSMISI KEILMUAN PADA KEJAYAAN INTELEKTUAL MASA DINASTI ABBASIYAH" (UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2013).

²²Ahkmad Saufi and Hasmi Fadiillah, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam* (Sleman: Deepublish, n.d.).

Rashid from Khairuzan (a formerly enslaved person from Barbar) and so on except Al-Saffah, Al-Mahdi and Al-Amien.²³

2. *External Factor*

Heterogeneous Social Life

The Abbasid dynasty expanded its territory to various regions to strengthen geopolitical security and progress. As a result, there were physical clashes and clashes of language, aspirations, social and economic systems, laws, and others between the simple Arabs and the complex non-Arabs.²⁴ Muslims made contact with people who already had other highly developed civilizations, such as India, Persia, Egypt, and Greece. The open attitude of Muslims towards all humanity encouraged non-Arabs to convert to Islam. Muslims became ready to develop culturally and intellectually by absorbing the culture and treasures of great civilizations and developing them creatively.

Translation of Foreign Literature

The translations of ancient manuscripts such as Greek, Indian, Persian, Sanskrit, and Syrian were intensified. Translations had previously been done since the Umayyads but not as massively as the Abbasids. This translation movement took place in three phases. The first phase, during the time of Caliph Al-Manshur until Ar-Rashid, was mostly the translation of manuscripts in the fields of astronomy and mantiq, and the second phase, during the time of Al-Ma'mun until 300 H, was mostly in the fields of philosophy and medicine.

The personalities of the Caliphs had a positive impact on the formation of a good civilization. They modeled productive living to the people. Rich but straightforward, high but down to earth. The community is inspired by the behavior that has been exemplified by the Caliphs, such as not splurging and preferring a productive life. His policies leaned towards the development of

²³As-Sayuti, *Tarikh Khulafa' Sejarah Para Penguasa Islam*.

²⁴Muhammad Tohir, "Sejarah Islam Dari Andalus Sampai Indus," 1981, 1-486.

science, which was also not separated from their strong personalities so that the development of Islamic civilization and culture became more optimal.

The transfer of the royal capital became the starting point for the progress of Islamic civilization. The city of Bagdad was geopolitically favorable to the dynasty. Prosperity from various sectors affects the productivity of its people. The people met their primary needs, such as food, health, and other supports that occurred from Caliph Al-Mansur to its peak during Al-Rashid, so they were no longer preoccupied with meeting these needs.²⁵

Based on the postulate of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, individual actualization becomes optimal if all human needs are met.²⁶ Basic needs, namely food, health, and other needs, were met during the golden age of the first period. The Caliphs created the stability of the food supply and the economy, as well as supporting primary needs such as health and the area of the community. People are no longer focused on fulfilling their immediate needs and how not to worry about hunger, thirst, illness, and so on. Security needs, political stability, and security in the country were achieved. Threats from dynastic and broad dynastic opposition movements can be thwarted as a whole so that people feel safe and comfortable in living life. Social needs The open city of Baghdad as an international city for various nations provides flexibility for people to interact. Communication patterns become not monotonous because of the variety of cultures present. The need for appreciation and respect for scientific work is a great motive for people to compete in studying and writing books. In actuality, the needs of the community are met so that people can dedicate themselves to the development of science, how new knowledge is obtained, and the depth of

²⁵Muhammad Nurul Huda, "Sejarah Pemikiran Ekonomi Islam Pada Masa Daulah Bani Umayyah Dan Bani Abbasiyah," *Estoria: Journal of Social Science and Humanities* 1, no. 2 (2021): 135–48, <https://doi.org/10.30998/je.v1i1.466>.

²⁶Alwisol, *Psikologi Kepribadian* (Malang: UMM Press, 2011).

knowledge obtained.²⁷ As a result, progress in thinking increased, and Islamic scientists emerged whose work is known to this day.

The support of the first caliphs of the time facilitated the creation of a high intellectual climate. Optimization of libraries included massive translation of literature from various languages such as Greek, Persian, and Indian into Arabic. High scholarships and stipends were given. Utilization of dynastic wealth and material support was encouraged in various intellectual activities.²⁸ This stimulated Muslims to study it. Thereafter, the integration of various disciplines with Islam developed. The active translation movement was also carried out in various places such as private homes, scientific research houses, private libraries, mosque libraries, schools, and other institutions or places spread throughout the Islamic peninsula. Cooperation between the government and scientists gave birth to scientists from various disciplines. Scientists were asked and even forced to hold honorable positions so as to encourage them to conduct more serious and in-depth studies in their fields of science. The government also loosened freedom of thought and freedom of speech in a large proportion so that people avoid *Taqlid*.

The opening of Baghdad to other nations indirectly shaped the attitude of Abbasid society to become cosmopolitan. An attitude that recognized the diversity of identities emphasized the dynamic character of various groups and was responsive to the potential to create new cultural combinations.²⁹ The result was the assimilation and acculturation of culture and knowledge. The conditions of society are ready to absorb the culture and treasures of great civilizations before Muslims and then develop them creatively. Non-Arab groups who converted to Islam also contributed to the advancement of civilization. The Abbasid community was open to not only learning from what was owned by the

²⁷A Apriyanto, "Civilization in the Era of Harun Al-Rashid: The Synergy of Islamic Education and Economics in Building The Golden Age of Islam," *Review of Islamic Economics and Finance (RIEF)* 3, no. 2 (2020): 66–79, <https://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/rief/article/view/30337>.

²⁸Yanto, "Sejarah Perpustakaan Bait Al-Hikmah Pada Masa Keemasan Dinasti Abbasiyah," *Tamaddun* 15, no. 1 (2015): 225–44.

²⁹Mardiana, "KOSMOPOLITANISME DAN TRANSMISI KEILMUAN PADA KEJAYAAN INTELEKTUAL MASA DINASTI ABBASIYAH."

Abbasids but also taking things from outside and then synchronizing them in accordance with Islamic teachings. Persian influence in the fields of government, philosophy, and literature. Indian influence was seen in the fields of medicine, mathematics, and astronomy. Meanwhile, Greek influence entered through translations in many fields of science, especially philosophy.³⁰In addition, the foundation of diversity has been formed from several previous periods since the time of the Prophet Muhammad, the caliphate of the Companions, and Bani Umayyah.³¹ So, scientists at this time occupied an important position and were able to foster the spirit of scientific development and the birth of a scientific spirit that was so high in the community at that time; an adage was born that knowledge must be aliyah, and charity must be scientific.³²

The policy of Caliph Al-Makmun made the Muktazila sect the foundation of the state. The services of Muktazilah leaders who were persistent in defending Islam from Jewish, Christian, and Wasani attacks. Muktazilah is a sect that first introduced the science of God and the first sect of kalam that has a systematic concept. The Muktazilahs were the first to use philosophical thoughts and debates in dealing with groups that opposed them, including non-Muslim groups. This was one of the reasons for the development of their thinking because they had armed themselves with the same weapons used by their enemies, namely Greek philosophy.³³

Conclusion

In short, the progress of the development of knowledge and civilization of the Abbasid Dynasty was optimal. This was inseparable from the role of a strong

³⁰A Alimni, "Gerakan Intelektual Masa Abbasiyah," *At-Ta'lim: Media Informasi Pendidikan Islam* 13, no. 2 (2017): 333–46.

³¹Siswanto, *Dinamika Pendidikan Islam Perspektif Historis*, ed. Abdul Aziz, Pena Salsabila (Surabaya: Pena Salsabila, 2013).

³²Megawati, "Prestasi Abbasiyah Dalam Bidang Peradaban."

³³Abdul Rahman Haji Abdullah, *Sejarah Dan Tamadun Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: Teks Publishing Sdn. Bhd, 1988).

caliph and had an impact on his social policy. The Caliph's policy, which was inclined towards science, fulfilled his society's primary needs through science's productivity. Then, the cosmopolitan attitude created by the opening of access to the Abbasid region supported the progress of thinking of its people. As such, the Abbasid region was able to create the welfare and progress of high-minded human resources with technical expertise and experience resulting from independent efforts and support from the caliphs.

This research is certainly far from perfect. The lack of excavation of facts from the literature makes this research less factual. In addition, a more in-depth analysis is needed to find out how these factors can influence rational social life through various related views and theories, especially the scope of social psychology.

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