

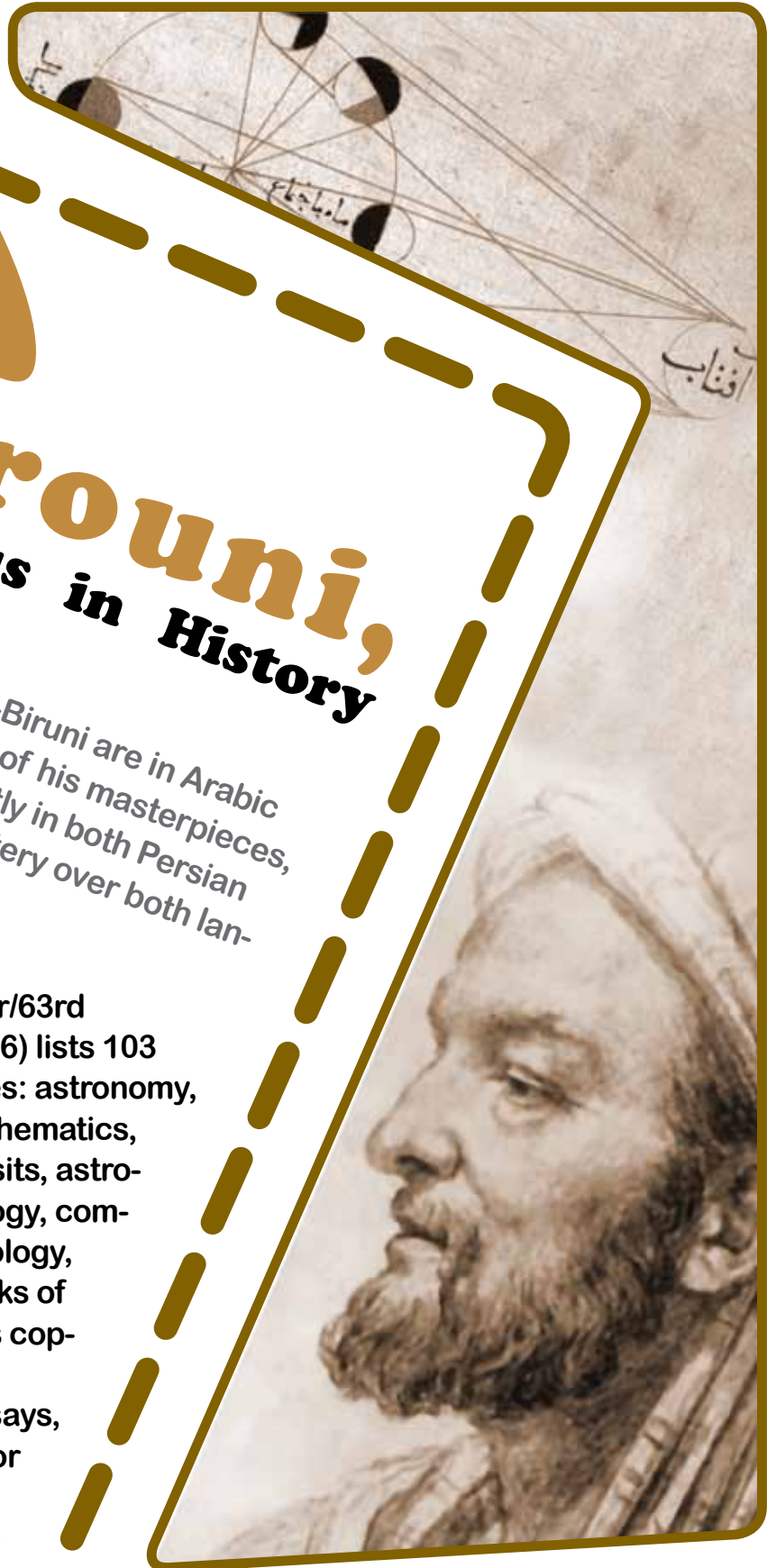
Al-Birouni, a Great Genius in History,

Sepideh Afshar Rezaee

Most of the works of Al-Biruni are in Arabic, although he wrote one of his masterpieces, the *Kitab al-Tafhim* apparently in both Persian and Arabic, showing his mastery over both languages.

Al-Birouni's catalogue of his own literary production up to his 65th lunar/63rd solar year (the end of 427/1036) lists 103 titles divided into 12 categories: astronomy, mathematical geography, mathematics, astrological aspects and transits, astronomical instruments, chronology, comets, an untitled category, astrology, anecdotes, religion, and books of which he no longer possesses copies. His extant works include:

- Critical study of what India says, whether accepted by reason or refused (Arabic تحقيق ما للهند من مقولة تحقيق ما للهند من مقولة معقولة في العقل أم مردولة), also known as the *Indica* - a compendium of



India's religion and philosophy

- The Book of Instruction in the Elements of the Art of Astrology (Kitab al-tafhim li-awa'il sina'at al-tanjim).
- The Remaining Signs of Past Centuries (Arabic الآثار الباقية عن القرون الخالية) - a comparative study of calendars of different cultures and civilizations, interlaced with mathematical, astronomical, and historical information.
- The Mas'udi Canon (Persian قانون مسعودي) - an extensive encyclopedia on astronomy, geography, and engineering, named after Mas'ud, son of Mahmud of Ghazni, to whom he dedicated.
- Understanding Astrology (Arabic التفهيم لصناعة التنجيم) - a question and answer style book about mathematics and astronomy, in Arabic and Persian.
- Pharmacy - about drugs and medicines.
- Gems (Arabic الجواهر في معرفة الجواهر) about geology, minerals, and gems, dedicated to Mawdud son of Mas'ud.
- Astrolabe.
- A historical summary book.
- History of Mahmud of Ghazni and his father.
- History of Khawarazm.

His books have been translated into many languages and have been used by people from around the world.

Al-Birouni craved knowledge and even when his powers of sight and hearing had been weakened, he continued his researches and writings with the assistance of his students. One of the famous fuqaha who was by his side during the last moments of his life writes, "When his breaths were numbered, he asked me a

question regarding fiqh. I asked him why he was asking the question at that time, and he responded asking: 'Which one is better? Dying while I know the answer or dying while I am ignorant of the answer? I answered his question and then left. It was only a short while since I had left his house when I heard sounds of crying from his house.' Al-Birouni died in the year of 440 – Hijri Calendar – in the city of Ghazni. Al-Birouni was a scientist whose knowledge belongs to all people of the world. All the scientists of the world benefit from his works and theories in their researches. In the Persian Calendar, the 13th day of Shahrivar – his birthday – has been named after him.