



# KYOTO SANGYO UNIVERSITY

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Kyoto, 26 September, 2011

## Recommendation

To those who are concerned,

It is my pleasure and honor that I am given an opportunity of writing a letter of recommendation for Ms. Noémie Verdon's project on al-Bīrunī.

Al-Bīrunī is one of the most respected scholars in the eastern half of the Islamic world including Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, as well as in India. His achievements in mathematics, astronomy, astrology, chronology, geography, pharmacology, minerals are most conspicuous. He can be compared with Aristotle in the ancient world and Avicenna in the middle ages, but, strangely enough, he is far less known to the European people. He has no Latinized name, except the strange French word *aliboron* which was derived from his very name. This was probably because his achievements and his life were far beyond the imagination of the ordinary people.

What al-Bīrunī impressed me most was that he was not only a natural scientist but also a humanist --- he can be regarded as the first Indologist in its modern sense. His book on India (*Kitāb fi taḥqīq mā li-l-Hind*) is a mine of information of ancient and medieval India. It was because I wanted to learn directly from al-Bīrunī that I began learning Arabic language. In this book al-Bīrunī, a true lover of the truth, showed amazingly fair attitude to different cultures and religions.

What was written above is only a part of al-Bīrunī's great contributions to the world culture. I strongly hope that Ms. Verdon's project contributes to letting more people know his achievements and footsteps better and, ultimately, to the mutual understanding between civilizations.

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