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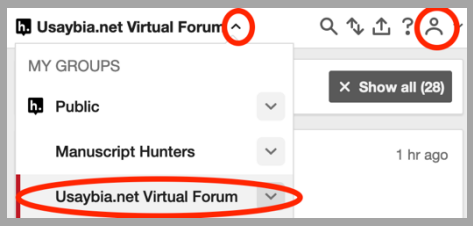

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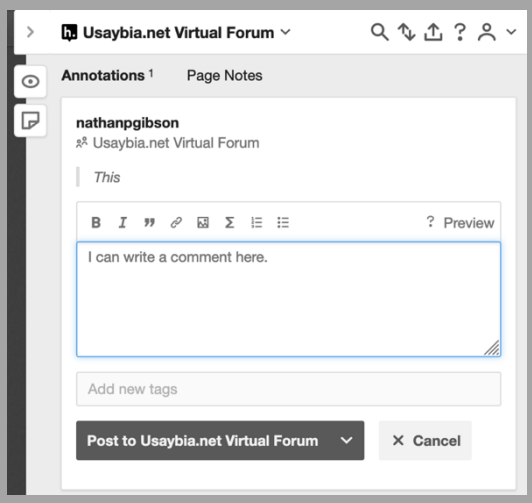

Interreligious Scholarly Collaboration in Ibn al-Nadīm's *Fihrist*

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Ibn al-Nadīm's *Fihrist* as a renewed and global field of inquiry for the history of the Abbasid scholarly milieu

> This is a catalogue of the books of all peoples, Arab and foreign, existing in the language of the Arabs, as well as of their scripts, dealing with various sciences, with accounts of those who composed them and the categories of their authors, together with their relationships and records of their times of birth, length of life, and times of death, and also of the localities of their cities, their virtues and faults, from the beginning of the formation of each science to this our own times[1].

It is with these lines that Ibn al-Nadīm (d. c. 380/990), a Baghdadi bookseller, opens his *Catalogue* (*Fihrist*), an encyclopedic attempt to gather in a single place an account of all the books ever composed and ultimately translated to Arabic or written in Arabic, and of the lives of their authors, he completed in 377/987, few years before his death. It announces the breadth of the topics it will cover, being interested in all kinds of knowledge, from religious sciences to occult sciences. It is to the abundance of its material, going through literary works, storytellers, physicians and philosophers, to name but a few, and to the amount of information gathered about pre-Islamic as well as Islamic scholars, that this work owes its fame, a monument embodying the strive for a universal knowledge at the heart of the Abbasid society.

There is nevertheless a paradox regarding the status of this work in the past and current scholarship. On the one hand, it is one of the most famous source for anyone interested in the intellectual history of early Islam and in the reception of the ancient knowledge in the Islamic society. It was edited for the first time by the end of the 19th century[2] and was the object of other editions during the following century[3]. This work is an essential resource for the knowledge of the written culture of the first centuries of Islam and for the biography of the scholars of the time, and it is systematically quoted in that regard, along with later ones when it is relevant, such as Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa's *ʿUyūn al-anbāʾ* and Ibn al-Qifṭī's *Taʾrīḫ al-ḥukamāʾ*.

On the other hand, there is a striking lack of studies that take into account the work as a whole and pay attention to its overarching structure ; one could say that everybody tries to go beyond Ibn al-Nadīm's work to collect specific biographical and bibliographical information, and benefits from its rich content while trying to cancel the effects of Ibn al-Nadīm's filter. The most common use of the *Fihrist* consists of choosing small pieces of information, generally related to one specific character, and to compare or to combine it with the accounts regarding the same character in other sources. To say it otherwise, it is generally used as a repository of biographical et bibliographical details, and not as a work deserving scholarly attention *per se*[4]. There is therefore much work left to do with this text, by studying it at a larger scale, either as a whole coherent text, or at the level of its different sections (*maqāla*).

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[1] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, vol. 1, p. 3, English translation by Bayard Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm, a Tenth-Century Survey of Muslim Culture*, 1970, vol. p. 1-2.

[2] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, ed. Gustav Flügel (Leipzig, 1871-1872).

[3] It was edited by Riḍā Tağaddud (Tehran, 1971) et Muṣṭafā al-Šuwaymī (Tunis, 1985).

[4] The only work that tackles with this work as a whole is V. V. Polosin's short work, in Russian, *Fixrist Ibn an-Nadima kak istoriko-kulturniy pamyatnik X veka* (Moscow, 1989).

Another good reason for giving a new look at this work is the recent edition published by Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid[5], that provides us now with a much better version of this text, grounded in a meticulous study of the available manuscripts, although it still suffers from some shortcomings, that are nevertheless far less serious than Gustav Flügel's edition's deficiencies [6].

All these elements point out the need and the interest of a new approach of this text, to shed some light on several lines of questioning it is related to. That is what I am willing to do in this paper: grounding the analysis of a specific question – that of the religious affiliation of scholars and of interreligious collaboration – in the study of a coherent part of the *Fihrist*, that of its 7th section (*maqāla*) – devoted to the philosophers (*falāsifa*) and to the "ancient sciences" (*al-ʿulūm al-qadīma*) and the works composed in this field [7]– , taken as a whole, with parallels related to Ibn al-Nadīm's work and intellectual project in its entirety.

Religious affiliation, interreligious collaboration, and methodological issues

First, I should stress that I am not a specialist of religious sciences or of religious minorities of the Medieval Middle East. I am coming from the field of the political and cultural history of the Abbasid period, and I am particularly interested in the status of the scholarly milieu and the identities and representations of Islamic scholars. It is from this perspective that I happened to come across the issue of the religious affiliation of these scholars, of the various ways of labelling it, and of its varying importance in the characterization of specific characters. This paper therefore approaches this topic from the point of view of the scholarly identities and of the intellectual production, and takes Ibn al-Nadīm's work as its field of enquiry.

As we suggested above, the question we are taking here under consideration is twofold. One aspect consists in exploring whether Ibn al-Nadīm explicitly acknowledges the religious identity of the scholars he mentions, with what vocabulary, under what textual configuration, and according to which logic. From this points derives a subsidiary question, that of the clues we deem relevant with a reasonable degree of reliability in order to assess the religious affiliation of a given character.

The other aspect deals with the specific cases of what we refer to as "interreligious scholarly collaboration", that is to say the situations in which scholars sharing different religious backgrounds are depicted as working together on a given subject. In that respect, we're trying here to identify such situations, to study their context and the Baghdadi bookseller's attitude towards them, whether he uses specific categories to describe them, or just doesn't explicitly outline their existence. Both aspects can give as an idea of the meaning and the significance of religious affiliation and interreligious collaboration of the scholars mentioned by Ibn al-Nadīm.

Before we get to this two aspects of our enquiry, I should make a last remark regarding the method I followed in order to build the data I use for this analysis. In order to identify religious affiliations and interreligious collaborations, one could be tempted to rely on the very rich and very detailed *indices* provided in Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid's edition[8]. Unfortunately, though undoubtedly useful, they prove seriously insufficient in that matter. It is not surprising to see that there is no specific entry for the cases of interreligious collaboration, and we would rarely find *indices* taking this kind of phenomenon into account. What is more remarkable is that religious affiliations are

[5] London, 2014.

[6] Devin J. Stewart, « Editing the Fihrist of Ibn al-Nadīm », *Journal of Abbasid Studies*, 1 (2014), p. 159-205.

[7] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, vol. 2, p. 131. This section is divided in three subsections (*fann*). The first focuses on the philosophers (vol. 2, p. 131-206), the second on the specialists of mathematics, geometry, astronomy mostly (vol. 2, p. 207-266), and the third on the physicians (vol. 2, p. 267-317).

[8] See in particular the *Kaššāf al-muṣṭalaḥāt wa-l-waẓāʾif wa-l-alqāb* (vol. 4, p. 438-448) and the *Kaššāf al-firaq wa-l-qabāʾil wa-l-ṭawāʾif wa-l-ǧamāʿāt* (vol. 4, p. 449-458).

not really accounted for either: there is no way to spot easily characters explicitly described as "Christian", "Jew", or "Zoroastrian" for example, since the corresponding entries *al-naṣrānī*, *al-yahūdī* and *al-maǧūsī* do not exist [9]. The only relevant entries are those referring to faith-based categories applied collectively, such as "Christians" (*naṣārā*), "Jews" (*Yahūd*) or "Zoroastrians" (*Maǧūs*), or in combination with the term "group" or "doctrine" (*maḏhab*), such as "the group of the Jacobite Christians" (*maḏhab al-naṣārā al-yaʿqūbiyya*). Even in that case, we found several instances belonging to such categories that do not appear in these *indices* where they are expected. For example, if we take under consideration the 7th section, the *indices* allow us to spot 6 mentions of collective religious labels, where there is in reality 6 more that should have been mentioned, and we find an additional amount of 18 cases where Ibn al-Nadīm directly indicates the religious affiliation of scholars. As is always the case, only the close and continuous reading of the *Fihrist* can help us grasp the religious affiliations and the interreligious collaborations mentioned in this work.

Ibn al-Nadīm's discretion regarding religious affiliations

When going through Ibn al-Nadīm's depiction of the Islamic scholarly world, it is striking to see that when it comes to describing scholars, he doesn't highlight their religious affiliation, and shows a much stronger interest in their geographical origin, their rank among other specialists of the same field, the language(s) they master, and above all, of course, the works they composed.

However, the Baghdadi bookseller does give us some hints about the scholars' religion. In the most obvious cases, he mentions *nisba*-s that directly point towards a specific faith. In the 7th section alone, 16 individuals – all belonging to the Islamic era except for one – are associated with such unambiguous terms[10]. For example, Ibrāhīm b. ʿAbd Allāh is described as the "Christian translator" (*al-nāqil al-naṣrānī*)[11]; the famous astronomer al-Battānī appears as a Sabian coming from Ḥarrān (*wa-kāna aṣlu-hu min Ḥarrān ṣābiʾan*) [12]. Sometimes, the qualifications are more precise, for example in the case of Ḥunayn b. Isḥāq, a member of the ʿIbād (*al-ʿibādī*), the famous Christian community of al-Ḥīra. The physician Sinān b. Ṯābit is the only scholar explicitly described as Muslim, in two different places, both time in the context of his conversion leaving the Sabian faith in order to become a Muslim. The first time, Ibn al-Nadīm simply states that he "died being Muslim" (*wa-māta musliman*[13]), without giving more details; the second time, in the last part of the 7th section, who takes physicians under review, he gives a fuller account of his life and tells the story of his conversion, in relation with the caliph al-Qāhir[14].

Aside from these straightforward *nisba*-s and adjectives, it is sometimes possible to deduce with some confidence the religion of some scholars on the basis of other clues such as titles or profession names – "the priest" (*al-Qass*), like Yūḥannā al-Qass[15] – , native city of region – for example people coming from Ḥarrān are more likely to be Sabian, people from Ǧundīsābūr are more likely to be Christian – , or even some names – Greek and Syriac sounding names possibly pointing at (former) Christians, and Persian sounding names possibly pointing at (former) Zoroastrians. It should be stressed, however, that these elements have to be treated with extreme

[9] One could object that such entries are frequently discarded from the *indices* since they would return to many results and would therefore prove useless for the reader. In the present case, this is not true, since as we are going to see, these explicit religious affiliations, although not inexistent, are not widely used by Ibn al-Nadīm throughout his work.
[10] See Appendix 1. This chart contains 18 entries, but two scholars – Sanad b. ʿAlī and Sinān b. Ṯābit – appear twice.
[11] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, éd. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, vol. 2, p. 174.
[12] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, éd. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, vol. 2, p. 249.
[13] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, éd. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, vol. 2, p. 229.
[14] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, éd. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, vol. 2, p. 313.
[15] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, éd. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, vol. 2, p. 257.

caution, since they can be totally misleading, and can never be used independently to assert with certainty a scholar's religion [16].

This first overview of the religious affiliations scattered throughout this section seems to indicate that Ibn al-Nadīm doesn't seem to see religion as a crucial criterion for selecting the scholars he devotes an entry to or to arrange their order in a given section. To him, it clearly isn't as meaningful a characteristic as for example their skills or their native region. It should be added that one of the reasons for him not to underline this element might be that it is largely obvious for him and for his readership. He keeps count of books and epistles written by leading scholars of all fields of human knowledge, and has a strong Baghdadi focus when it comes to scholars from the Abbasid period, so that their respective religious affiliation might have been common knowledge in his circles, and he would therefore not have felt the need for expressing it as systematically as other features [17].

However, it would be exaggerated to say that religion doesn't have any effect on the field of knowledge according to Ibn al-Nadīm, and that it doesn't play a role in the architecture of his work. Religious affiliations can be an important criterion for him when they define not scholars but sciences and the political and social environment where they develop. At the beginning of this seventh section, he presents several stories that can be seen as a kind of introduction to the biographical and bibliographical entries that follow, and that deal with the alleged origins of the "ancient sciences" and of their introduction in the Islamic culture. The first one is borrowed from Abū Sahl al-Faḍl b. Nawbaḫt and focuses on the origin of astrology; the second one comes from the astrologer Abū Maʿšar and also deals with the same kind of knowledge; the third one emphasizes the hostility of the Byzantines towards the *falsafa*, and the fourth one is devoted to the translation activity [18]. One of the most important features of these narratives are the strong anti-Christian bias they reveal . As a religion linked with political power, Christianism appear in the eyes of the accounts he quotes as profoundly hostile to the rational sciences he is going to explore in this section. That way, the Baghdadi bookseller conveys the idea that the rational sciences he deals with in this section of his encyclopedia are partly coming from a Christian background, but are now rejected by the Christian polities, implying that their new home is the Islamic society of scholars. We see here the trace of the philhellenism combined with an anti-byzantine ideology carefully described by Dimitri Gutas [19]. A Christian religious, political and social context therefore appears as a dangerous environment for this kind of knowledge, that would have been threatened by destruction if it had not been saved by the Islamic scholars, according to the well-known narrative.

[16] A speaking example of the unreliability of such clues is that of al-Biṭrīq and his son Yaḥyā b. al-Biṭrīq, who worked for Abbasid caliphs, the first one for al-Manṣūr and the second one for al-Maʾmūn. Whereas the title "al-Biṭrīq" is sometimes interpreted as meaning "patriarch", it is to be understood as "patrician", and points toward the social status of al-Biṭrīq's family rather than his religious affiliation. See for example D. M. Dunlop, "The Translations of al-Biṭrīq and and Yaḥyā (Yuḥannā) b. al-Biṭrīq", The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, no. 3/4 (Oct., 1959), pp. 140-150.

[17] This familiarity of the Baghdadi bookseller with the Abbasid scholarly milieu would also account for his well-known tendency to refer to some scholars in a very allusive and almost informal way, that sometimes make it difficult for the reader to know exactly who he has in mind. See for example his mention of "Abū ʿAlī", a very common *kunya* that could point towards lots of scholars, where only the context can help the reader guess that he probably has in mind Ibn Zurʿa (Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, vol. 2, p. 209).

[18] For a general analysis of these introductive narratives, see George Saliba, *Islamic Science and the Making of the European Renaissance*, 2007, p. 29-49.

[19] Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture*, p. 83 *sq*.

Physical and virtual loci of interreligious collaborations

Now that we have a better grasp of the *Fihrist*'s content regarding religious affiliations, what can we say about scholarly activities that go beyond religious boundaries? Two facts appear clearly regarding this matter. First, Ibn al-Nadīm doesn't specifically underline the situations than can be described as "interreligious scholarly collaborations". He never draws the reader's attention to this specific setting, and doesn't resort to a specific term or a specific category to report it, so that it can remain completely unnoticed. The use of explicit *nisba*-s is too rare and too scattered, and is never made in such a way that it makes immediately visible the crossing of religious boundaries implied by a given academic activity.

Second, in spite of their relative invisibility, the *Fihrist* contains a significant number of situations that can be labelled as "interreligious scholarly collaborations", and their analysis can help us better understand the bookseller's intellectual and encyclopedic project. If we understand these "collaborations" as activities involving at least two characters having different religious backgrounds, including when a ruler or an official commissions a work – which is all the more relevant that several of them like some Barmakids or the caliph al-Maʾmūn were extremely invested in scientific and intellectual endeavors – , we count 28 such cases throughout the *Fihrist*'s 7th section. If we focus exclusively on the collaborations involving scholars strictly speaking, the result comes down to 16 cases[20]. It therefore appears as a circumstance that cannot be described as massive, but that has nonetheless an indisputable statistical significance.

There is behind these numbers a diversity of situations. The two main modalities of such collaborations are on the one hand the teaching, and on the other hand the collective work on a given work, be it in order to translate it (or to correct a preexisting translation) or to comment on it. The disciplines that are most adapted to such collaborations are *falsafa* and astronomy, translation playing in both cases an important role. To illustrate this kind of collegial intellectual activity, we can see the example of the polymath Ṯābit b. Qurra. After sketching the outlines of his life – his full name, his date of birth (221 AH) and of death (288 AH.), his alleged profession of money changer in Ḥarrān, his association with the Banū Mūsa and then al-Muʿtaḍid, and his Sabian faith – , Ibn al-Nadīm gives a list of his works[21]. Just after, he enumerates his students, naming among others the Christian ʿĪsā b. Usayd and his own son Sinān b. Ṯābit, a physician who converted to Islam, as we just saw[22]. When he can, he gives us more details about the scientific collaboration that resulted from their master-student relationship: ʿIsā b. Usayd is said to have translated from Syriac to Arabic, in Ṯābit's presence, a *Book of Ṯābit's answers to the questions asked by ʿĪsā b. Usayd* (*Kitāb ǧawābāt Ṯābit li-masāʾil ʿĪsā b. Usayd*)[23]. In the other cases where we notice such a collaboration between scholars from different religious background, we find the same lack of emphasis on this specific setting, and the same kind of information combining the nature of the link between them and the scientific outcome of their collective work around one or several books or epistles.

Furthermore, it could be argued that interreligious collaborations also happen in other settings than the mere direct collective work of contemporary scholars physically teaching, translating and commenting together. It is striking to see how Ibn al-Nadīm's depiction of the collective work produced by generations of scholars sharing different cultural and religious backgrounds around the scientific legacy of some of the greatest pre-Islamic and Islamic scientific authorities can also appear metaphorically as a place of interreligious collaboration.

One of the most illuminating cases involves Euclid's *Elements*: Ibn al-Nadīm reports all the successive translations and commentaries of this fundamental work for the science of geometry:

[20] See Appendix 2.
[21] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, vol. 2, p. 227-228.
[22] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, vol. 2, p. 229.
[23] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, vol. 2, p. 229.

he describes the two translations made by al-Ḥaǧǧāǧ b. Yūsuf b. Maṭar, and then by Isḥāq b. Ḥunayn, corrected by Ṯābit b. Qurra; the partial translation by Abū ʿUṯmān al-Dimašqī, seen by Ibn al-Nadīm himself in ʿAlī b. Aḥmad al-ʿImrānī's library[24]. If we leave the domain of the translations for the domain of the commentaries, we find a similarly intense and cross-cultural activity: Irun, al-Nayrīzī, al-Karābīsī, al-Ǧawharī and al-Māhānī all commented on it either completely or partially[25]. A couple of lines further, we see other renowned scholars involved in this collective work, such as Abū Ǧaʿfar al-Ḫāzin al-Ḫurāsānī, Abū al-Wafāʾ al-Būzǧānī, Ibn Rāhawayh al-Arǧānī, Abū al-Qāsim al-Anṭākī, Sanad b. ʿAlī and Abū Yūsuf al-Rāzī[26]. Here, we cannot speak of actual collaboration, since all these characters did not actually work together, and all of them were not contemporary. It is the work of Euclid that constitutes here the common ground of these intellectual efforts, rather than the direct exchange of contemporary scholars, and it can be seen as a metaphorical collaboration that happens to have a strong interreligious dimension. The account of this collective scientific endeavor therefore appears as the materialization of an uninterrupted and asynchronous conversation that takes it roots in the work of a 4th-3rd century BC Greek mathematician and goes all the way to 10th century Baghdad, and crosses linguistic, cultural and – regarding our present topic – religious boundaries.

Similar interpretations could be made from the fate of Galen's works[27], or in a different context, from the construction of astronomical instruments[28], or the tradition of the books constituting the curriculum of the *mutaṭabbibūn*[29]. They work as virtual *loci* of collaboration, symbolic places where scholars meet, comment, argue with each other throughout centuries, and their continuous exchanges, built on the sense of common methods and common authorities, and producing in the end a cultural and scientific blending that is at the heart of the Abbasid scholarly identity[30].

The building of an "Arabic" and "Islamic" knowledge

How can we account for Ibn al-Nadīm's position regarding both religious affiliations and interreligious collaborations? If we take a step back and look at the results of our enquiry so far, we see that we are dealing with an bookseller who has an excellent knowledge of the scholarly milieu and its production, who seems perfectly aware of the impact of the religious factor on the development of scientific works and generally knows the religious affiliation of the scholars he mentions but doesn't emphasize it, and who depicts several cases of interreligious collaborations without labelling them under a specific and noteworthy category. Whereas he carefully pays attention to geographical and "national" origins, both regarding the kinds of science and the scholars themselves, he doesn't picture the scholarly milieu as divided along faith-based boundaries.

If we compare with the much later work of Ibn al-Qifṭī, who uses Ibn al-Nadīm as one of his main sources of information, but adds many details and especially a certain amount of anecdotes involving cultural and religious difference among scholars, we see that we have to deal with a

[24] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, vol. 2, p. 208.
[25] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, vol. 2, p. 208.
[26] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, vol. 2, p. 209.
[27] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, vol. 2, p. 273.
[28] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, vol. 2, p. 265.
[29] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, vol. 2, p. 277.
[30] This idea of a continuous scholarly conversation that spreads across centuries and boundaries, and of this conversation as a virtual "place" has been very convincingly argued by Muhsin J. al-Musawi around his concept of "Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters" (*The Medieval Islamci Republic of Letters. Arabic Knowledge Construction*, 2015). On the fruitful conceptualization of texts as *loci*, see also Christian Jacob's concept of "places of knowledge" ("lieux de savoir") (*Des mondes lettréss aux lieux de savoir*, 2018).

completely different perspective[31]. It has of course to do with the different nature of the project of both authors, the Egyptian encyclopedist aiming at the redaction of a "history" (*Taʾrīḫ*) which involves a greater role played by narratives, whereas the Baghdadi bookseller wants to establish a "catalogue" (*Fihrist*) focusing mainly on the written production and secondarily on the biography of the scholars, but that alone doesn't account for the divergent treatment of their material. It calls for a recontextualization of Ibn al-Nadīm's work, an approach often neglected because of the manner in which his catalogue is usually regarded, and which is nevertheless essential.

Ibn al-Nadīm writes at the end of the 10th century, in the aftermath of vivid debates that mobilized grammarians, philologists, poets and more broadly the intellectual milieu around the meaning of an "Arabic identity" and of the cultural features defining "Arabness" [32]. He inherits the outcome of this still ongoing discussion, especially regarding the status of the *ʿarabiyya*[33]. By focusing explicitly on the Arabic language as a decisive criteria for selecting and ordering his encyclopaedical compilation, he directly engages in this debate. He depicts a community of scholars who share a link with the Arabic language, either because their work has been ultimately translated into Arabic, or because it has been written in Arabic from the outset. At the same time, Ibn al-Nadīm aims at the promotion of an Islamic culture that mixes features and material coming both from the Islamic period itself and from the legacy of pre-Islamic knowledge. There is therefore a dialectic between the unifying and prevailing status of the Arabic language and the diversity of the intellectual production and of its pre-Islamic and Islamic roots. By describing the physical and the virtual loci of collaborations, including interreligious collaborations but without making it stand out, he shapes the representation of an Islamic intellectual world defined by its common features – shared language, shared authorities, shared references and shared methods – rather than divided along religious boundaries. This brings us back to the concept of "Communities of Knowledge" and to its meaning: what we see here is precisely the description of a community of knowledge, a depiction of the scholarly field that is not polarized by religious boundaries, and where scholars strive for the construction of a culture that is not Muslim, nor Jew, nor Christian, but Arabic and Islamic.

[31] See for example Ibn al-Qifṭī's account of the relationship between Ḥunayn b. Isḥāq and Yuḥannā b. Māsawayh, both Christian but from different communities – the first from al-Ḥīra and the second from Ǧundīšābūr – , and his commentary regarding the Christian religion (*Taʾrīḫ al-ḥukamāʾ*, ed. Julius Lippert, p. 173-174).

[32] See Peter Webb, *Imagining the Arabs. Arab Identity and the Rise of Islam*, 2016, especially chapters 5 and 6.

[33] Peter Webb show for example how Ibn al-Nadīm's contemporary, the philologist Ibn Fāris (d. 395/1004) strongly stresses the link between Arabic language and Arabic identity (Peter Webb, *Imagining the Arabs. Arab Identity and the Rise of Islam*, 2016, p. 312 *sq.*).

Appendix 1 – Explicit religious affiliations in the 7th section of Ibn al-Nadīm's *Fihrist*

Name of the scholar	Faith-based *nisba* or adjective	Reference	*Maqāla*	*Fann*
Ibrāhīm b. ʿAbd Allāh	*al-naṣrānī*	vol. 2, p. 174	7	1
Diqlaṭyānūs	*al-qibṭī*	vol. 2, p. 180	7	1
ʿĪsā b. Usayd	*al-naṣrānī*	vol. 2, p. 229	7	2
Sinān b. Ṯābit	*muslim*	vol. 2, p. 229	7	2
Māšāʾallāḥ b. Aṯrī	*yahūdī*	vol. 2, p. 233	7	2
Sahl b. Bišr	*al-yahūdī*	vol. 2, p. 234	7	2
Sanad b. ʿAlī	*al-yahūdī*	vol. 2, p. 236	7	2
Sanad b. ʿAlī	*al-yahūdī*	vol. 2, p. 236	7	2
Sahl b. Bišr	*al-yahūdī*	vol. 2, p. 239	7	2
ʿAbd Allāh b. Masrūr	*al-naṣrānī*	vol. 2, p. 244	7	2
Ibn Saymūyah	*yahūdī*	vol. 2, p. 246	7	2
al-Battānī	*ṣābiʾ*	vol. 2, p. 249	7	2
al-Dandānī	*al-naṣrānī*	vol. 2, p. 251	7	2
Ibn Rawḥ	*al-ṣābiʾ*	vol. 2, p. 257	7	2
Ḥunayn b. Isḥāq	*al-ʿibādī*	vol. 2, p. 289	7	3
Sābūr b. Sahl	*naṣrānī*	vol. 2, p. 300	7	3
Sīs al-Mannānī	*al-mannānī*	vol. 2, p. 308	7	3
Sinān b. Ṯābit b. Qurra	*muslim*	vol. 2, p. 313	7	3

Appendix 2 – Interreligious collaborations in the 7th section of Ibn al-Nadīm's *Fihrist*

Scholar (or patron)	Scholar(s) involved with preceding scholar	Type of collaboration	Intellectual field	Involved religions	Reference	*Maqāla*	*Fann*
Banū al-Munaǧǧim	Ḥunayn b. Isḥāq, Ḥubayš b. al-Ḥasan, Ṯābit b. Qurra	funds	translation (*falsafa*)	Christianism, Islam	vol. 2, p. 143	7	1
Ḫālid b. Yazīd b. Muʿāwiya	Iṣṭifān al-Qadīm	funds	translation (*falsafa*)	Christianism, Islam	vol. 2, p. 144	7	1
al-Manṣūr	al-Biṭrīq	funds	translation (*falsafa*)	Christianism, Islam	vol. 2, p. 144	7	1
Yaḥyā b. al-Biṭrīq	al-Ḥasan b. Sahl	collaborates	translation (*falsafa*)	Christianism, Islam	vol. 2, p. 145	7	1
al-Maʾmūn	Yaḥyā b. al-Biṭrīq	funds	translation (*falsafa*)	Christianism, Islam	vol. 2, p. 145	7	1
al-Maʾmūn	Ḥabīb b. Bahrīz (bishop of al-Mawṣil)	funds	commentary (*falsafa*)	Christianism, Islam	vol. 2, p. 146	7	1
Marlāḥī	ʿAlī b. Ibrāhīm al-Dahkī	collaborates	translation (*falsafa*)	Christianism, Islam	vol. 2, p. 149	7	1
Isḥāq b. Sulaymān b. ʿAlī al-Hāšimī	Dādīšūʿ	funds	commentary/translation (*falsafa*)	Christianism, Islam	vol. 2, p. 149	7	1
al-Kindī	Ḥasnawayh, Nafṭawayh, Salmawayh, Aḥmad b. al-Ṭayyib al-Saraḫsī	teaches	*falsafa*	Christianism (+ Zoroastrian and Sabian background)	vol. 2, p. 195	7	1
Ibn Kurnayb	Abū Bišr Mattā b. Yūnus	teaches	*falsafa*	Christianism, Islam	vol. 2, p. 201	7	1
al-Fārābī	Yaḥyā b ; ʿAdī	teaches	*falsafa*	Christianism (Jacobite), Islam	vol. 2, p. 202	7	1
Muḥammad b. Mūsā	Ṯābit b. Qurra	teaches, collaborates	astronomy	Islam, Sabianism	vol. 2, p. 227	7	2
al-Muʿtaḍid	Ṯābit b. Qurra	funds	astronomy	Islam, Sabianism	vol. 2, p. 227	7	2
Ṯābit b. Qurra	ʿĪsāb b. Usayd	teaches, collaborates	translation, rational sciences	Christianism, Sabianism	vol. 2, p. 229	7	2
Ṯābit b. Qurra	Sinān b. Ṯābit	teaches	unspecified	Islam, Sabianism	vol. 2, p. 229	7	2
Ṯābit b. Qurra	Ibn Kurnayb and his brother Abū al-ʿAlāʾ	teaches	unspecified	Islam, Sabianism	vol. 2, p. 229	7	2

Ṯābit b. Qurra	al-Ḥasan b. ʿUbayd Allāh b. Sulaymān b. Wahb	teaches	unspecified	Islam, Sabianism	vol. 2, p. 231	7	2
Yaḥyā b. al-Biṭrīq	ʿUmar b. al-Farruḫān	funds	translation (astronomy)	Christianism, Islam	vol. 2, p. 232	7	2
al-Ḥasan b. Sahl	Sahl b. Bišr	funds	unspecified	Judaism, Islam	vol. 2, p. 234	7	2
al-Maʾmūn	Sanad b. ʿAlī	funds	astronomy	Islam, Judaism (+ conversion to Islam)	vol. 2, p. 236	7	2
Sahl b. Bišr	Ḫurzāḏ b. Dāršād al-Ḥāsib	teaches	astronomy	Judaism, Islam (?)	vol. 2, p. 239	7	2
Māšāʾallāh	Yaḥyā b. Ġālib al-Ḫayyāṭ	teaches	astronomy	Judaism, Islam (?)	vol. 2, p. 240	7	2
Abū Maʿšar	ʿAbd Allāh b. Masrūr	teaches	astronomy	Christianism, Islam	vol. 2, p. 244	7	2
(Collective)	(Collective)	teaches	astronomical devices	Christianism, Islam, Sabianism	vol. 2, p. 265	7	2
Muḥammad b. Mūsā	Ḥunayn b. Isḥāq	funds	translation (medicine)	Christianism, Islam	vol. 2, p. 273	7	3
Banū Mūsā	Ḥunayn b. Isḥāq	funds	translation (medicine)	Christianism, Islam	vol. 2, p. 290	7	3
Qusṭā b. Lūqā	Aḥmad b. ʿAlī b. Yaḥyā al-Munaǧǧim	argues with	theology	Christianism, Islam	vol. 2, p. 293	7	3
Several Abbasid caliphs	Baḫtīšūʿ b. Ǧūrǧis	funds	medicine	Christianism, Islam	vol. 2, p. 298	7	3