

March 2014

RENAISSANCE MONTHLY

Your monthly update on The Renaissance Project



LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER

Mohamed Al Qadi



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the March edition of our monthly newsletter. This month, we celebrate the life of Jabir ibn Hayyan, one of the most brilliant scientists of all time and the founder of chemistry.

We also travel to Erbil to visit the Jalil Al Khayat Mosque. Finally, we take a look at Teshkeel Comics, the founders of one of the most innovative and important initiatives launched by the Arab world in recent years. The initiative is the middle eastern inspired comic book series (The 99), that has taken the world by storm. Hope you enjoy this month's newsletter.

News:

The Renaissance Project is happy to announce a vacancy; we are looking to employ a research analyst in our organization. It is a full-time job that will involve a lot of interesting work focused on socio-economic research in the Arab world and incubation of some of our upcoming projects.

Applicants must have a bachelors degree in economics and must be proficient in both English and Arabic. If you know anyone who is a good fit, please have them email their CV to therenaissanceproj@gmail.com

In other news, Chapter 14 of Al Kitab is scheduled to be released in the month of April. The chapter takes a look at other life forms and is probably one of the most interesting reads I have come across. Please stay tuned for more details

Regards,
Mohamed Qadi

"The Founder of Chemistry"

Muslim of the Month By Yasmine Saqer, Newsletter Editor



A man ahead of his time, Jabir ibn Hayyan is regarded by scholars across the globe as the founder of chemistry for his countless contributions to the scientific community.

The son of a druggist, Jabir grew up in Kufa, Iraq where he devoted his time and efforts into scientifically systemizing chemistry.

Determined to uncover the potential of chemicals and their possibilities, Jabir experimented with chemical functions and their attributes. In doing so, he discovered sulfuric nitric and nitromuriatic acids.

In addition, Jabir devised and perfected the essential processes that affect us all today, such as distillation—without which, we would not have gasoline, kerosene, asphalts, or plastics. The alcohol produced from distillation was used to make acids, medicines, and writing ink, but with respect to Islam, not drinks.

Jabir's contributions also helped turn alchemy from superstition into a science, as he emphasized systematic experimentation. He discovered that by distilling various salts, he could form nitric acid and hydrochloric acid. By combining the nitric and hydrochloric acids, Jabir invented aqua regia, which is one of the few substances that can dissolve gold.

In his distinguished career, Jabir's discoveries increased the prospects of chemical experimentation and implemented important practices used by the chemical industry today.

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Jalil al-Khayat Mosque—Erbil, Iraq *The Marvels of Islamic Art* By Yasmine Saqer



The largest mosque in the city of Erbil with a unique and breathtakingly beautiful design, the Jalil al-Khayat Mosque is nothing short of incredible.

Built in the center of Erbil, the Jalil al-Khayat is a fantastic sight.

The walls of the mosque were constructed with bricks, with a signature turquoise dome at the entrance. The minarets are 65 meters high and can be seen all across the city. Inside, the mosque can hold between 1,500 to 2,000 people.

The interior of the mosque is decorated with colorful Zakhrafa (Islamic paintings), scripts of Holy Quran verses, and huge ceiling lamps. Ornamented by hand, golden ink used to write verses of the Holy Quran, and the chandeliers were made with original crystals.

A mosque unlike any other, Jalil al-Khayat remarkable design is the product of the combined efforts of experts from around the region and now stands as a true Islamic marvel



Heroes of Today Teshkeel Comics “The 99”



A creative comic book series by Teshkeel Comics, *The 99* features a team of superheroes promoting the culture and concepts of Islam.

The main character of the comics, a scholar and social activist named Dr. Ramzi, leads 99 teenagers and adults with special abilities (bestowed upon them by “Noor” gemstones) in pursuit of social justice and peace against evil forces. Each of the 99 superheroes are based on one of the 99 attributes of Allah in the Quran, including everything from wisdom to generosity.

The series was designed to encourage values such as cooperation and unity throughout the Islamic world. But overall, the characters come from a variety of countries and have different physical characteristics, furthering universal virtues.

The creative team behind *The 99* consists of experienced comic book veterans, all of whom have worked with Marvel and DC Comics.

The comics, which now sell about one million copies a year in several languages, are soon to be made into an animated film by Dutch media company Endemol.

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Therenaissanceproj@gmail.com