

December 2012

RENAISSANCE MONTHLY

Your monthly update on The Renaissance Project



LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER

Mohamed Al Qadi

Friends,

Welcome to our second edition of the renaissance project's newsletter. I am overwhelmed by the positive response we have received so far on our first edition; thank you for your continued support.



November has been all about *Al Kitab* – Chapters 8,9 and 10 have been released over the past few weeks while Chapter 11 (the final chapter of this saga), will be released in the next few days. Addressing the element of Water, Chapter 11 is without a doubt my favorite; its content is nothing less than awe inspiring.

On the events front-- we urge all our readers in the UAE to contribute to the Red Crescent Drive that intends to provide winter clothing and warm bed sheets to Syrian refugees living in Jordan. For more information on this initiative, please contact the Red Crescent directly on 055 1661145. Confirmed donation drop-offs are located outside Marina Mall and Carrefour on Airport Road.

November has also witnessed the launch of our new website (we hope you like it) and our very first competition! We have received some great essays so far and I hope the rest of our readers can join in soon. The winner will receive a dinner for two and will get his article published. Deadline is on the 31st of December.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to express by sincerest sympathies and grief towards the current situation in Syria and Gaza. If anyone has any ideas on how we can provide assistance, please contact us directly.

Best Regards,

Mohamed Al Qadi

"Obstacles are Meant to be Overcome"

The Story of Zheng He

It is hard to imagine how a Muslim boy, castrated at 11 years old, could ever achieve greatness; yet this is exactly what Zheng He had done in the 15th Century.



He would somehow become one of the most revered men of his century, the "most towering maritime figure in the 4,000-year annals of China", one of the most celebrated explorers and maritime commanders of all time, and a Chinese cult hero who is adored by hundreds of millions worldwide.

How could he achieve such greatness? – he would, among other things, command the greatest Armada ever known to man.

More than 600 years ago, out of the port of Nanjing China set sail an Armada like no other. "Even the European expeditions centuries later would seem paltry by comparison: All the ships of Columbus and de Gama combined could have been stored on a single deck of a single vessel in the fleet" (the fleet having more than 300 ships!). It was a city that moved across international waters, wooing all insight; from Africa to Asia Pacific, the Great Ming Armada projected Chinese power, sophistication, and technology at an unprecedented scale, and by doing so, reshaped Asia forever.

Of Zheng He's command, he is often described as "brilliant", "a visionary who imagined a new world and set out consciously to fashion it... Maritime history in the 15th century was essentially the Zheng He story and the effects of his voyages."

It is worth learning more about Zheng He: a Chinese Eunuch who would overcome all odds and cement his place in Chinese and World history.

DID YOU KNOW: MUSLIMS IN CHINA

The spread of Islam in China can be traced back to the 7th Century. Chinese Muslims make up 1-2% of China's total population and are most present in the north western regions.

The Huaisheng Mosque in Guangzhou is one of the oldest mosques in the world, said to be built by Prophet Muhammad's maternal uncle, Sa'd ibn AbiWaqas.

OUT NOW: AI KITAB CHAPTER 10

Chapter 10, entitled "Fire and Earth" is up on our website!. Download the new chapter at: <http://www.the-renaissance-project.com/#!ai-kitab/c199t>

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AYE OF THE MONTH

”مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ“ (٤) سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ



THE SPIRIT OF THE UNION UAE CELEBRATES 41 YEARS



The UAE celebrated 41 years since announcing its union. For such a young country, the United Arab Emirates has many achievements to be proud of. And while celebrations sprinkled around the Nation this weekend, from the car parades on the Abu Dhabi Corniche, to the festivities up North in Ras Al Khaimah, it is now time to reflect on the commitment and sacrifices of our forefathers to provide us with such a reality. The UAE was named the [happiest country in the Middle East](#) and one of the [safest countries](#) in the world among other achievements. But the road to progress and prosperity is not over, so let us dwell on a quote from the Founder of our Nation, a man so dear to our hearts and homes that we named him “Baba Zayed” :

"What we have achieved, my dear young people of the Emirates, will not survive, unless you yourselves engage in further work and efforts, and sacrifices. You should work hard to protect our national achievements, to foster and support the continued march of our Federation, and to make more achievements that contribute to the dignity and prestige of our country and to the welfare of our people. This cannot be achieved without positive and effective participation from all of you."

WHO WE'RE THANKFUL FOR Dr Laila Alabidi: Scientist and Book Editor



In this segment, we recognize the work of individuals who have contributed to the success of the project. This month we recognize the contribution of

Dr Laila Alabidi whose support has been integral to the development of the book. A

PostDocotral Fellow at Kyoto University, she took time out of her busy schedule to review Part One of *Al Kitab*; her insight, diligence, and above all else, patience, has been nothing short of extraordinary. Please join me in thanking her for her time and effort. I will forever be grateful.

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