

Editorial

Where do we come from? Where are we going? Who or what made life? These questions have kept us awake at night. They have for centuries intrigued the minds of the greatest scientists. From the Greeks to modern times, we have still not discovered with certainty the origin of life. It is indeed one of the most promising, intriguing, and perhaps least understood questions of the humanities and sciences. How close are we to discovering the truth? How are our lives going to change when we do? Will it set the time for a new generation of science? It is us, the new generation of scientists, who will uncover the truth. Can you, young scientist, imagine yourself discovering the biggest secret of life?

In this special edition about The Origin of Life, we will travel through the ancient discoveries, modern science and beyond to find how close we are to unraveling the true meaning of this mystery. Many important theories have been conceived in human history. In this issue, we bring you a score of information in the form of articles and interviews with experts in the field. These include the best articles from our latest aptly-themed competition. The winner is entitled "Are we alone after all?"; it is a very interesting article about life on other planets. Other articles from the competition discuss the quantum world, complex cells, evolution, supernovae, and more that will bring you even closer to the origin of life. There is also a review of ten of the best books on this subject.

This issue also contains articles on a wide range of other topics from coronary heart disease to questioning the compatibility of science and religion.

On another subject, this is going to be my last issue as Chief Editor. I would like to thank all the editors involved and give special recognition to Professor Butrous, founder of the Young Scientists Journal, who has allowed my voice as a young scientist to be heard. Christina Astin and the Young Scientists team are an amazing group of young science communicators that are always open to collaboration from all around the world. I invite all young readers to join the team and to recruit other enthusiasts; this is a life changing experience. Cleodie Swire is already doing excellent work leading the editorial team, and will now take on the role of Chief Editor. I am sure that she will take the journal to even greater heights.



Pamela Barraza Flores
Chief Editor

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The Young Scientists Journal is going to run a competition with the theme, 'The Dark Ages'. We are looking for articles about many scientific advances occurring in the East during the so-called Dark Ages, which were actually a very fruitful time in the Muslim world. This theme is based on The 1001 Inventions Exhibition, and some ideas for topics are detailed below.

The 1001 Inventions Exhibition, which acts to educate people about the advances in all types of technology by the Muslim communities that were going on during the so-called 'Dark Ages', was started by a group called FSTC, which is based in Manchester. It, initially, was a smaller exhibition in 2006, funded by a range of sponsors, which travelled the UK and had great success. Due to this, a decision was made to develop the exhibition even further, and tour internationally. Scholars and scientists from all over the world have verified the information collected for the exhibition, which was in The Science Museum from the 21st January until the 30th June 2010, and proved to be the most successful temporary exhibition there ever. Around 10,000 people visited the exhibition per week, which is now going to Turkey, and then America.

The exhibition comprises of various stations with information on advances on a diverse selection of subjects. It puts a lot of emphasis on the idea that the objects we use now only exist due to the discoveries made by the Muslim civilizations during the 'black hole in history' between 700 and 1700 AD.

The exhibition is divided into about six sections, each dealing with a different topic:

- There is one dedicated to mechanical technology, which featured the famous elephant clock and the Banu Musa brothers' trick flask.
- Another focused on education, explaining about the libraries full of handwritten books, and universities – one of which (Al-Qarawiyyin in Morocco) still functions today.
- Industries such as glassmaking, papermaking, and distillation are described – all paid for in early currencies, such as cowry shells in the Maldives.
- Many medical methods and tools that we still rely were used in these societies, such as scalpels, drills, and forceps. Although William Harvey is credited with the discovery of the blood circulatory system, he was only elaborating on the recently-translated works of Ibn Nafis, who lived in Syria in the 13th century.
- Architecture since the Dark Ages has been greatly influenced by the designs and fashions of the Middle East.
- The study of the stars was something that greatly interested the Muslims, and many of the constellations still studied today were identified and named by these civilizations.

One of the highlights of the exhibit is a short video featuring Sir Ben Kingsley, which demonstrates the aim of the exhibition: To educate people about the Arabic world and its heritage, which is publically ignored in comparison to Ancient Egyptian or Roman life. The video introduces some of the main characters featured in the exhibition, such as 'Abbas Ibn Firnas, the first person to attempt to construct a flying machine, and Abul al-Zahrawi, one of the most famous Muslim surgeons of his time.

There are many interactive elements to the exhibition, such as a room where you can place the constellations in the sky by pointing your hand, as well as many interactive boards. These include an exhibit to link up words in our language that are derived from Arabic sources, such as the word 'giraffe' which came from the Arabic 'Zarafa', and 'sofa' which stems from the word 'suffah', meaning 'long bench'.

Although nearly every conceivable aspect of modern life has been directly influenced by the discoveries and inventions made by the Muslims in these times, only a limited number of examples could be presented in

the exhibition, but the book, *Muslim Heritage in Our World*, gives full justice to the scale of the research that has gone into the project.



Cleodie Swire
Head of the Editorial Team

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The screenshot shows the homepage of the 1001 Inventions website. At the top, there are language options for Turkish (Türkçe) and Arabic (العربية), a search bar, and a 'JOIN US' button. The main header features the text 'MUSLIM HERITAGE IN OUR WORLD' and '1001 INVENTIONS' with a gear logo, followed by 'uncover 1000 years of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY'. A navigation menu includes links for HOME, PRODUCTIONS, IN THE PRESS, LATEST NEWS, PARTNERS, RESOURCES, GIFT SHOP, and 1001 INVENTIONS. A secondary navigation bar states '1001 Inventions exhibition now open in Los Angeles. Over 2 million visitors in New York, London, Istanbul & Abu Dhabi' and includes social media links for Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. The main content area is divided into several sections: a large banner for the Los Angeles exhibition with a video player; a text block titled '1001 Inventions: The Enduring Legacy of Muslim Civilisation' with a paragraph about the exhibition's reach and a link to learn more; a 'JOIN OUR GLOBAL COMMUNITY' section with a world map; a 'CURRENT EXHIBITIONS' section listing the California Science Center in Los Angeles as the current location and previous venues in Abu Dhabi, New York, London, Istanbul, and the United Nations; a 'Global Sponsor' section for Abdul Latif Jameel Community Initiatives; a 'TOP STORIES' section featuring a video of Hillary Clinton launching the exhibition; a 'LATEST TWEETS' section with a tweet from @L10eb; and a 'LATEST NEWS' section with an article about the exhibition's extension in LA.