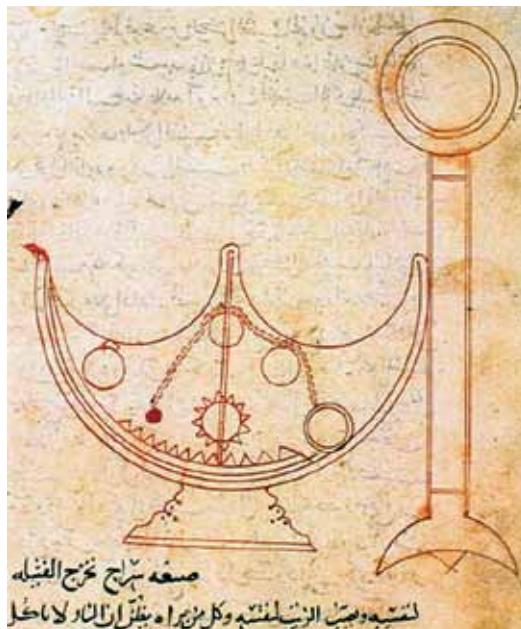


A Syrian postage stamp dedicated to the Banu Musa brothers. The stamp, issued in 1996, commemorates Science Week in Syria.

Banu Musa: The Sons Of Musa ben Shaker

The Sons of Musa ben Shaker or the Banu Musa brothers (Mohammed, Ahmad, and Hasan), and their depth of knowledge, creativity, and playfulness, are true representatives of the early Islamic Renaissance. Their work extended into almost every field of science, and they used that knowledge to improve the living conditions of their nation. They represent the true humanist renaissance spirit, which takes whatever its predecessors achieved and lifts it to greater heights, to deliver it to present and future generations far more enriched than when they received it.

Baghdad and Aleppo, a tragic tale of two cities: It is painful to compare the glorious state of the City of Baghdad during the Islamic Renaissance, with the situation today, when tragedy is revisiting city. It was even more painful for this author to both enjoy the work of the Banu Musa book, and at the same time, grieve for the people who edited and published this unique work. A team of



An original drawing of one of the "devices" described in the book of Banu Musa: a mechanical oil lamp that automatically extends the lamp's wick and refills the oil. When placed on city streets, as it was in Baghdad at the time (9th Century), it did not need to be serviced during the night.

lands.

Now, Syria and Aleppo are engulfed in the fire of the sectarian bloodshed that was started in Iraq by the Anglo-Saudi terrorist groups, following the U.S.-British invasion of Iraq. The University of Aleppo itself became a horrific crime scene on Jan. 15, 2003. Several explosions, caused by rockets, or a combination of rockets and a car bomb, targeted the buildings of the university, killing more than 89 students and others who had taken refuge there from the sectarian slaughter. While the opposition quickly accused the

Syrian government of firing the rockets, and the Western media immediately backed that claim, the government accused the terrorist militias who were besieging the city. The government troops were in control of the university and the area around it, so they had no good reason to attack it. Whatever the source of the rockets, it is still a tragedy caused by international geopolitics. The victims are not only the innocent people of Syria, but also culture and civilization itself.

The distance between the greatness of the Arab-Islamic Renaissance of the 9th Century and the current dark age is not only a distance of years, but of thought and appreciation of human life and potential.