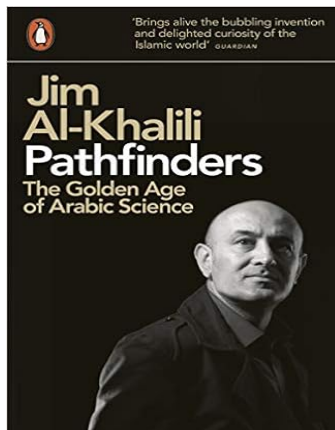


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Beschreibung:

For over 700 years the international language of science was Arabic. In Pathfinders, Jim al-Khalili celebrates the forgotten pioneers who helped shape our understanding of the world.

All scientists have stood on the shoulders of giants. But most historical accounts today suggest that the achievements of the ancient Greeks were not matched until the European Renaissance in the 16th century, a 1,000-year period dismissed as the Dark Ages. In the ninth-century, however, the Abbasid caliph of Baghdad, Abu Ja'far Abdullah al-Ma'mun, created the greatest centre of learning the world had ever seen, known as Bayt al-Hikma, the House of Wisdom. The scientists and philosophers he brought together sparked a period of extraordinary discovery, in every field imaginable, launching a golden age of Arabic science.

Few of these scientists, however, are now known in the western world. Abu Rayhan al-Biruni, a polymath who outshines everyone in history except Leonardo da Vinci? The Syrian astronomer Ibn al-Shatir, whose manuscripts would inspire Copernicus's heliocentric model of the solar system? Or the 13th-century Andalusian physician Ibn al-Nafees, who correctly described blood circulation 400 years before William Harvey? Iraqi Ibn al-Haytham who practised the modern scientific method 700 years before Bacon and Descartes, and founded the field of modern optics before

Newton? Or even ninth-century zoologist al-Jahith, who developed a theory of natural selection a thousand years before Darwin?

The West needs to see the Islamic world through new eyes and the Islamic world, in turn, to take pride in its extraordinarily rich heritage. Anyone who reads this book will understand why.