

November 2013

# RENAISSANCE MONTHLY

Your monthly update on The Renaissance Project



## LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER

Mohamed Al Qadi



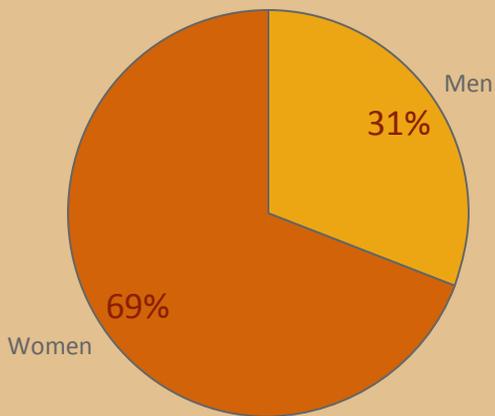
Dear Friends,

Today, we celebrate the 1 year anniversary of our monthly newsletter! Thank you all for your continued support and positive responses; I really do appreciate it.

This month, we travel to Al Madina and look at one of the holiest and most iconic structures in the world today – “Al Masjid Al Nabawi” – The Mosque of the Prophet. In our Muslim of the Month Segment, we also celebrate the life of Ibn-Battuta who is arguably, the most renowned traveler of all time. Finally, we highlight the work of Ibtisamati, a non-for-profit group that works towards supporting orphans in Jordan.

I would like to take this opportunity to announce that I have found 9 new students for our scholarship program which raises the total number of students being sponsored to 13! The majority of our students are women (9) and are all in their first or second year.

In %, Students by Gender



A full profile of our student portfolio will be featured next month.

Regards

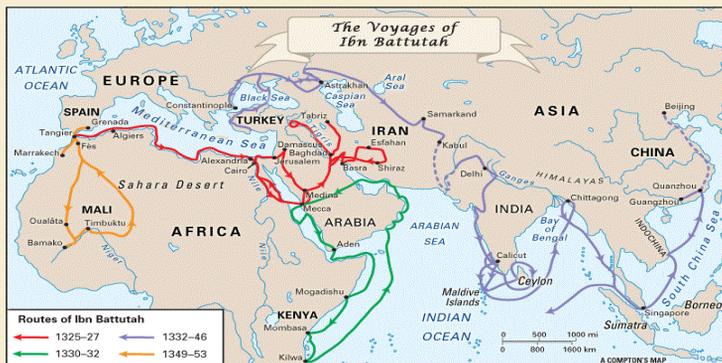
## “The Adventurer”

Ibn Battuta - Muslim of the Month



Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Battuta, more commonly known as “Ibn Battuta”, is arguably the most accomplished and famous traveler of all time. Born in Tangier Morrocco in 1304, he grew up to study Islamic law. At the age of 21, he started a

journey that would last 29 years, covered over 120,000km, and took him to over 44 countries which would eventually make his story one of the most entertaining and celebrated works in human history.



In 1325, Ibn Battuta embarked on a trip to Mecca to perform the Islamic duty of Haj. This journey would ultimately change his life; Ibn Battuta would discover a passion for adventure and for exploring the far reaches of the earth. He would subsequently visit North Africa, the Middle East, Turkey, Persia, India, China, Southeast Asia, the Horn of Africa, Sub Sahara, Andalusia and many more regions before settling down to write his travel memoirs “A Gift to Those Who Contemplate the Wonders of Cities and the Marvels of Travelling”.

The legacy of Ibn Battuta cannot be understated; his numerous cultural shocks, encounters with death, descriptions of other worlds and humorous stories have entertained millions of readers. More importantly, his travel accounts provide important historical insights on the customs and practices of people in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. His descriptions have enabled Islamic and non-islamic cities, architecture, and medieval urban planning to survive, at least in mind, to this very day.

Ibn Battuta will always be remembered for his extraordinary feat and contribution to world history; he is, the ultimate adventurer

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**Al-Masjid al-Nabawi—Medina, Saudi Arabia**  
*Mosques Around the World* By Yasmine Saqer



Known as “The Mosque of the Prophet,” Al-Masjid al-Nabawi is one of the earliest and holiest mosques in history.

Al-Masjid al-Nabawi was built in 622 by Prophet Muhammad and his companions following his arrival to Medina. The site of the mosque was situated next to the Prophet’s house, and it was where the Muslim community first began to flourish in Medina.

The dome of the mosque was painted green in 1837, and is now famously known as the “Green Dome.” The Green Dome was originally the house of Prophet Muhammad’s wife Aisha, which is now the resting place for the Prophet’s tomb.

Since Prophet Muhammad’s time, the mosque has expanded 100 times more than its original size, and can now accommodate half a million people. The old structure of the mosque has been preserved within the new one, keeping intact the colorful decorations and small pillars of its former design.

The heart of the mosque is an area called *Riad ul-Jannah*, meaning “The Gardens of Paradise.” The area extends from Prophet Muhammad’s tomb to the minbar, where the imam leads prayer. Narrated by Abu-Hurayrah, Prophet Muhammad said, “*The area between my house and my minbar is one of the gardens of Paradise, and my minbar is on my cistern (hawd).*”

The second holiest mosque after the Masjid al-Haram in Mecca, Al-Masjid al-Nabawi is one of Islam’s profoundly historic and holiest piece of architecture.

## Heroes of Today

“Ibtisamati” – Bring Cheer to Jordanian Orphans



Ibtisamti is a non-for-profit initiative launched by a group of Jordanian youth in 2011. Its objective is to support orphans through a variety of educational and community programs that develop their skills and self-esteem.

But what is truly special about Ibtisamti is its emphasis on community involvement and volunteering work. Each of its events is specially tailored to maximize the interaction between orphans and volunteers. In this way, Ibtisamti is helping to create a volunteering culture in Jordan. Furthermore, these personalized interactions are usually key motivators for volunteers to contribute to the good of their community. An example of such a program that was run during Eid was the “make a wish” event. Orphans were asked to prepare a wish list and volunteers were personally responsible for making those wishes come true. If you are interested in volunteering to this cause, please email: [ibtisamti@gmail.com](mailto:ibtisamti@gmail.com)

## WHO WE ARE GRATEFUL TO

**Mona Al Alami - Translator**



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

This month, I would like to thank **Mona Al Alami**, a keen supporter of the project and one of Al Kitab’s important editors.

As a professional translator and a person who is very well versed in both the English and Arabic language, Mona has been kind enough to proof read and review Al Kitab’s published chapters, spotting errors and providing valuable feedback. Thank you Mona for all your hard work!

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