

September 2013

RENAISSANCE MONTHLY

Your monthly update on The Renaissance Project



LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER

Mohamed Al Qadi

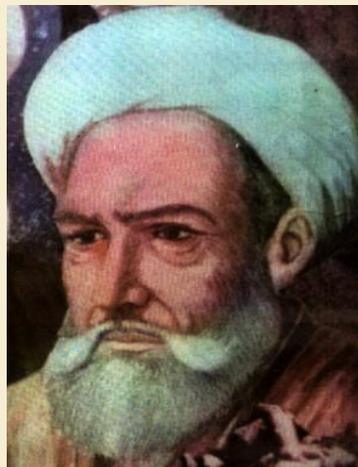
Abu-Nasr Al-Farabi : "The Second Teacher"

Muslim of the Month By Yasmine Saqer, Newsletter Editor



Dear All,

Welcome to our September edition of our monthly newsletter. In it, we celebrate Abu Nasr Al Farabi, one of the most distinguished philosophers and scientists of all time.



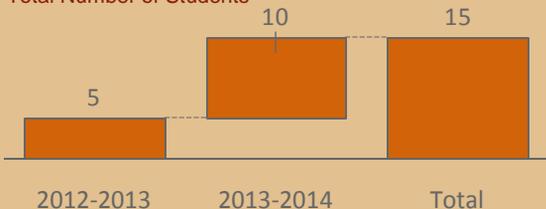
Also known as *Alpharabius*, Abu-Nasr Muhammad Al-Farabi was one of Islam's earliest and most influential philosophers, one who set the latter for those who followed. Mastering several languages, and contributing to philosophy as well as logic, math, medicine, music, science, and sociology, Al-Farabi is one of the Muslim world's most distinguished intellects.

We also travel to Rome and take a look at one of the most beautiful structures of the modern era; the Mosque of Rome. **Finally, we introduce our new segment "Heroes of Today"** which highlights the efforts of individuals or groups that are making a positive impact on their communities and the world.

Renaissance Project Updates:

Our focus this quarter is on expanding the number of students benefiting from our scholarship program. We have obtained **enough funding to sponsor 15 students this year; a 200% increase** in the number of students!

Total Number of Students



We are currently working on finding these exceptional candidates who can benefit from the fund. On the 7th of September, we interviewed the first batch of applicants recommended to us by several NGOs in Jordan. The second batch, as recommended by several universities will be interviewed in October. Once the second batch is assessed, a final assessment will be made on the eligibility of each candidate. Stay tuned for more updates

Regards,

Mohamed Al Qadi

Al-Farabi was known as "The Second Teacher," a successor to Aristotle, "The First Teacher." A wise and unbiased thinker, Al-Farabi was the first philosopher to separate philosophy from theology. He founded his own Islamic philosophy called "Farabism" or "Alfarabism," studying the limits of human knowledge. Al-Farabi used Aristotle's ideas to prove the existence of God, and was influenced by Neoplatonic ideas and Sufi mysticism.

He also provided more focus on political theory than any other Islamic philosopher. Like Plato, he also believed it was the philosopher's job to provide guidance to the state. Studying the qualities necessary to rule, Al-Farabi believed that happiness could only be achieved by the cooperation of people. He advocated the Greek system of government, and made great contributions for later philosophers.

Al-Farabi wrote more than a hundred works. Some of his famous books include "The Ideas of the Citizens of the Virtuous City," as well his notable study of Persian music entitled "Kitab al-Musiq." In regards to music, Al-Farabi invented several musical instruments, including the *shahrud*, contributed to music theory, studied music therapy and the effects of music on the soul, and was rumored to be a talented musician.

Paving the way for philosophers like Ibn Sina, Al-Farabi's work has impacted the Muslim world in more ways than one, for which he still acknowledged and remembered.

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The Mosque of Rome—Rome, Italy

Mosques Around the World By Yasmine Saqer, Newsletter Editor



Located in the heart of Italy, the stunning Mosque of Rome stands today representing Europe's largest mosque.

The only mosque in the predominantly Catholic city, the Mosque of Rome is located in the beautiful Parioli district, along the *Acqua Acetosa* ("very good water"). Completed in 1994, the land for the mosque was first donated by the Roman City Council in 1974. It was established by Afghanistan's Prince Muhammad Hasan and his wife, Princess Razia Begum, and financed by Faisal of Saudi Arabia, head of the royal family.

With an increasing number of Muslims relocating to Rome in recent years, the mosque was built to accommodate 12,000 people. In addition to worship, the Mosque of Rome has provided an Islamic Cultural Center to offer social activities, such as wedding ceremonies, funeral services, conventions, and other events.



Designed by Paolo Portoghesi, Vittorio Giglottie, and Sami Mousawi, the mosque compliments its breathtakingly green surrounding, while also blending with the Italian architectural sites of the city. Given a modern twist with hints of traditional Roman styling, the mosque has interwoven arches, and pillars that fan out in two graceful curves to suggest hands open in prayer. The gardens and fountains were designed as a metaphor for paradise, "flowing with rivers of water incorruptible..."

Europe's Islamic treasure, the Mosque of Rome is an exquisite creation.

Heroes of Today

Environmental Sustainability – The APN



The Arab Group for the Protection of Nature (APN) is a non-profit organization founded in the year 2000. As the name implies, the organization is primarily

concerned with sustaining the region's natural resources and protecting the environment.

Some of their key initiatives include "The Green Caravan" campaign which plants thousands of trees in disadvantage areas in Jordan. This not only helps provide a source of income to disadvantaged groups, it also helps improve the environment.

Another key initiative is the "One Million Trees" Campaign which attempts to reverse the environmental damage caused by the Israeli occupation in Palestine. Uprooted trees, which serve as a source of livelihood for millions of Palestinians, are replaced, providing hope for the oppressed population. Please join me in thanking the APN for their important work in saving the environment!

WHO WE ARE GRATEFUL TO

Alanoud Al Madhi – "Gifted"



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 **Alanoud Al Madhi**, one of the most brilliant individuals I have the pleasure to work with

Alanoud has supported us throughout our tenure by providing the artistic flavor that has come to define our project. From our logo to the design of *Al Kitab*; from event leaflets to our advertising campaigns, Alanoud has done it all. Thank you once again and I am so grateful for your constant support.

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