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Shakib Arslan, 'Why Muslims Lagged Behind and Others Progressed' (Excerpts)

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Summary:

The author of the text from which the below excerpts are taken, Amir Shakib Arslan (1869-1946), was born into a high-standing Druze family in the Ottoman (now Lebanese) village of ShouEIFat, near Beirut. He was a prolific writer known as Amir al-Bayan, Prince of Eloquence, as well as a political activist, who “brought to the age of emerging national states the organizing principle of universal Islamic empire,” as William Cleveland put it in *Islam against the West: Shakib Arslan and the Campaign for Islamic Nationalism* (1985). As long as the Ottoman Empire existed, Arslan believed in, politically worked for, and even fought for that polity, e.g. in the 1914 wartime campaign to capture the Suez Canal in British-occupied Egypt. He supported the pan-Islamic policies, also outside the empire, of the government of Sultan Abdul Hamid II (r. 1876-1909). That is, he believed that strengthening the empire vis-à-vis European powers was crucial for its own survival and for the defense of Islam as a religion and a political force. Vice versa, he believed that a defense of Islam—or, to be more precise, an Islam reformed along the lines outlined by Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838-1897) and Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905), whom he knew—would strengthen the Ottoman Empire. After World War I, Arslan made Geneva his base of operations, leading the Syro-Palestinian delegation, which inter alia lobbied the League of Nations. More broadly, he reacted to the shock of the Ottoman Empire’s demise and of the Caliphate’s abolition by becoming, until his death, the world’s perhaps most central post-Ottoman Muslim nationalist activist.

A point in case is the book from which the below excerpts are taken, *Li-madha ta’akhhara al-Muslimun wa-li-madha taqaddama ghairuhum*, which he published in Arabic in 1930. Moreover, Arslan not only published prolifically and edited the French-language journal *La Nation Arabe*. He also corresponded with scores of people and got involved in anti-colonial thinking and activities in many Muslim countries, from Morocco via Syria to Indonesia; thus, he wrote the below text as a long response to a question sent to him by a Muslim living in the Dutch East Indies, present-day Indonesia.

To this anti-colonial end, he also worked with Fascist Italy in the 1930s and with Nazi Germany in World War II, causing leftist Arabs like Salim Khayyata—excerpts from whose *Al-Habasha al-mazluma* [Oppressed Ethiopia] are included in this collection—to bitterly condemn him.

Nadeem M. Qureshi is thanked for permitting us to use excerpts from his English translation of Shakib Arslan's Arabic book *Li-madha ta'akhhara al-Muslimun wa-li-madha taqaddama ghairuhum* (Cairo, 1930), titled *Why Muslims Lagged Behind and Others Progressed*, published in 2021 by Austin Macauley Publishers (London).

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Chapter One

Prince Shakib Arslan Responds

The weakness and backwardness of the Muslims is a general phenomenon both in the West and the East. It is not limited to Java and Malaya or to any other place. Indeed, it varies an extent. In places, it is extreme and others, moderate. In places it is very dangerous and then others, less so.

In general, the conditions of Muslims in the 20th century is disappointing for even those most enamored of Islam, not to mention those who are less so.

Uniformity of Weakness in Islamic Peoples

Their condition today is not satisfactory, not in regard to religion, nor in regard to worldly matters, nor in regard to what is essential and significant. You will find that in the lands where Muslims live with people of other religions that they (the Muslims) are rarely at par with the others. And I do not know of Muslims in this age who are better materially than those of other religions except for some rare exceptions.

The Muslims of Bosnia, for example, are in general materially better off than the Catholics and orthodox Christians with whom they share this land. In fact, they are in a much better position.^[i] Similarly the Christians of Russia do not enjoy a higher status than Muslims. Also, it is not disputed that the Muslims of China, despite their backwardness, are in a better position than the majority of Buddhists among whom they live.

Other than these lands, we see the Muslims to be relatively backward compared to their neighbors with slight variations depending on geography.

It is said that the Muslims of Singapore island are richer in terms of wealth than all the other people who live there, including the English in relation to their numbers. I am not aware of the truth of this assertion but even if it is correct, it does not in any way impact the general global position of Muslims around the world.

There is no doubt that the Islamic world today is going through a period of intense transformation at all levels – material and spiritual. There is an impressive awakening that has caught the attention of the Europeans. Some of whom are wary of its consequences. This wariness is not hidden from the public writings. However, this awakening has not taken the Muslims to a level where they are equal to the Europeans or the Americans or the Japanese.

This being established, we need now to look at the reasons behind the retreat of the Islamic world from a position of leadership which it retained for the best part of one thousand years. This was a period during which it ruled the world and was respected and feared by all nations. But before we look at the reasons for its retreat, we need to understand the factors that lifted it, in the first place, to a position of leadership among nations.

Reasons for the Rise of Muslims of the Past

The reasons for the rise of Muslims can be attributed in general to the new Islamic faith that had appeared on the Arabian peninsula. The Arabian tribes accepted the new religion and were transformed by it; from discord to unity, from primitivity to civilisation, from tyranny to mercy, and from the worship of idols to the worship of the One God.

Their essence was remoulded and imbued with a new spirit which led them to the heights of power and invulnerability, to glory and knowledge and wealth. In half a century, they conquered half of the globe. And we're it not for the dispute that engulfed them during the last days of the Caliphate of Uthman^[ii] and during the Caliphate of Ali ^[iii], they would have completed the conquest of the world and no one would have been able to stop them.

Their conquests during the first 50 to 75 years of Islam - despite the internecine wars that broke out due to the disputes between Muawiya^[iv] and Ali, and later between the Bani Umayyah^[v] and Ibn Zubair^[vi] - dazzled the minds of wise men, historians and thinkers. And impressed the great conquerors of a later age such as Napoleon Bonaparte, the greatest of them all. That Napoleon stated as much is mentioned by Las Cases who accompanied him to the island of Saint Helena and by others who have written about Napoleon.

Their writings establish beyond a doubt that Napoleon, during his time in Egypt, was

impressed by the Prophet Mohammad, Omar ^[viii] and many other heroes of Islam. It is also reported that his soul whispered to him about what he saw in Egypt and implored him to take up the Islamic faith.

Though this reality is not disputed, no significance is given to the state of Arabs before Islam and what is related to their conquests, deep seated civilisations and high moral values. The historical record is clear: There is no doubt that they were possessors of an ancient civilisation that was perhaps the older of all civilisations. It is likely that writing began with them. It is assumed that the Phoenicians invented writing, but they were in fact Semitic Arabs.

The reach of Arab civilisation in the period prior to Islam, the *Jahiliya* as it is known - was limited to the Arabian Peninsula. And then there came a time when outsiders began to rule over the Arabs and subjugate them in their own land. These were the Persians in Yemen and Oman, the Ethiopians in parts of Yemen, the Romans on the edges of the Hijaz and the border of the Levant.

In fact, the Arabs were able to become truly independent only with the arrival of Islam. That they came to be known to distant nations, subjugated the Roman and Persian empires, and came to occupy a position of prominence amongst the ranks of conquering nations is due only to Prophet Mohammad.

We need to fully understand and grasp the factors behind the rise of the Arabs, their conquests and dominance and to know whether these factors remain with them today. Or whether they have lagged behind despite these factors being present, and in the process have brought down with them, other Muslim peoples.

Or, whether these factors are no more, and there does not remain of belief (*Emaan*) but its name, and of Islam but its ruins, and of the Quran only its recitation with no regard to its commands and prohibitions? Nor does the remain the spirit of the early age of Islam and the authority of the Sharia.

Factors That Allowed Earlier Muslims to Progress Are No More

If we look deeply, we will discover that the factors that allowed the Muslims of earlier times to dominate are no more. All that remains are traces, much like a fading tattoo on the back of a hand. And had Allah promised the believers power and glory by belief alone, without effort or toil, then we would have been justified in asking: Where is the glory and power that He has promised to believers in this verse: *Power and glory belong to Allah, His Prophet, and the believers.*?

And if Allah had said: *It is incumbent upon Us to help the believers*, in the sense that He would help them in the absence of any quality in them other than a declaration that they are Muslims then there could have been room for surprise at this deception after His clear declaration of support. But the text of the Quran does not say this. Indeed, Allah never breaks His vows. The Quran has not changed. It is the Muslims who have changed. And Allah has warned of this in His Book:

Indeed, Allah does not change what (afflicts) a nation until they (strive to) change what (afflicts) them.

The Muslims had indeed strived to change their situation then it would have been surprising if Allah had not helped them and had not replaced their ignominy and weakness with the power and glory that He promised. This would've been contrary to Divine Justice. Indeed Allah - Glory be to Him - *is* Justice.

How could it be that Allah will support a nation that does not strive and toil; and grace it with the blessings that he bestowed upon their forefathers when it has retreated from their great deeds? That would've been contrary to the Divine Wisdom. Indeed, He is Wise, Powerful.

What do you say about glory without merit, harvest without sowing, victory without effort and help without the slightest reason for that help? There is no doubt that this false expectation is what has enticed people to sloth and indolence and has come between them and the need to strive and toil. This is an expectation that is in violation of the basic law on which Allah has built the cosmos. It is as if truth and falsehood, beneficial and harmful, positive and negative are equal. Far be it for Allah to do so.

Had Allah helped his creatures in the absence of effort on their part, then indeed he would have helped His Prophet Mohammad and would not have required him to do

battle, or to strive and struggle, or to conform with the natural laws of the universe to achieve his objectives.

Consider a nation that has 100 but only gives 5 out of the 100. Would it consider itself to have given what was due from it and expect to be rewarded by Allah as He are used to reward their ancestors who would give 100 of 100, and if they were unable to give 100 would give either 80 or 90?

This expectation is in violation of Allah's promise to his messengers (peace be upon them), in violation of logic and common sense and of the wisdom of the Shariah. This is not the promise that Allah made to the believers and nor is it the 'bargain' in which the believers rejoice. Allah says:

Lo! Allah hath brought from the believers their lives and their wealth because Paradise will be theirs: they shall fight in the way of Allah and shall slay and be slain. It is a promise which is binding on Him in the Torah and the Gospel and the Qur'an. Who is it that fulfils His covenant better than Allah? Rejoice then in your bargain that you have made, for that is the supreme triumph.

Where are the Muslims today in regard to this description in the Book of Allah? And where do they stand in regard to their ancestors who would fall over each other for death and martyrdom on the battlefield? Many times, they would seek death only to be disappointed that it did not seek them. And the horsemen (*faris*) would advance and battle whispering to himself: I smell the scent of Paradise. He would continue to fight, if he was martyred, he would say: "This is a day of joy." And if martyrdom escaped him despite his longing for it, he would return sad and dejected to his tribe.

A Comparison of the Conditions of Muslims and Europeans Today

Today the Muslims, or at least most of them, have lost the fervour of their forefathers. Indeed, this fervour has been embraced by the enemies of Islam even though their own Book^[viii] does not impose this on them. You will find their soldiers falling over each other to drink from there watering holes of death and to embrace the swords and spears that stand in their way.

The extent of what they spent their wealth and the number of lives they sacrificed in the General War^[ix] is beyond human imagination. The Germans alone, lost about 2 million men; the French, a million and a half; the English, 600 thousand; the Italians, 450 thousand and the Russians, a number beyond estimate.

The English spent 7 billion Guineas; the French about two billion; the Germans, three billion and Italy 500 million. As for Russia, it spent to such an extent that the resulting famine triggered the Bolshevik revolution.

So, let someone tell me: which Muslim nation today has sacrificed what these Christians have sacrificed their lives and their wealth in the interest of their people and nations? Should we wonder then why Allah has given them great power, wealth and blessings, and has given the Muslims only a small part of these?

It is said that the Muslims are poor and that they don't have the wealth to spend in this way. We say: Let us consider the proportion the Europeans have spent in regard to their per capita income. And then let us ask the Muslims to spend of their per capita income in the same proportion. Will the Islamic nations of today be generous to the extent of the European nations, some of which spent on the General War more than half of their wealth?

The answer: There is no one among the Muslims today, be it nations or individuals who would do this. And indeed, it is the rare Muslim who spends what is required to spend of the mandatory *Zakat*.

It could be sad, that the Turkish nation, a Muslim nation, spent all that it was able to spend on its war with Greece and did not fall short of the Europeans in terms of sacrifice of life and wealth.

Yes, there were among the Turks who spent a third of their wealth and those who spent half of their wealth. And for this, they were rewarded with victory and the blessings of Allah. They liberated themselves and achieved independence. They were lifted after they had fallen. They exchanged ignominy for glory. So if the Islamic nations are guided in their disputes by what their Book has commanded them and the ways of their forefathers, or at least by the sacrifice of their lives and wealth in the same way as the Europeans do today in defence of their lands and values, they would

have reaped the fruits of sacrifice just as others have and would have won't the blessings and pleasure of Allah.

But the Islamic nations want to keep their independence without any sacrifice: not spending of their wealth, nor risking their lives and nor descending on the battlefield when beckoned. All the time calling on Allah for His help with no regard to the condition that He has imposed for this help:

Indeed, Allah helps one who helps Him.

And He says to the believers.

If you help Allah, He will help you and make you stand firm.

It is clear that Allah does not need to help anyone. His help is intended only to aid people to comply with what He has ordained and to desist from what He has proscribed. But the Muslims have ignored all, or at least most of what He has ordained in their Book. They have sought to obtain His help only on the basis of their being Muslims and worshiping Him. They have come to believe that this act alone obviates the need for them to strive and to spend of their lives and wealth. And among them are those who have depended solely on prayers and supplication to Allah because they find this easier than fighting and spending.

If prayer alone were to obviate the need to strive and fight then indeed the Prophet and his companions and the forefathers of this nation were more worthy of their prayers being answered. And were hopes and desires to be achieved with prayer and recitation alone without work or effort, the laws of the universe would have been up ended, and the Sharia rendered invalid.

And Allah would not have said:

And for man is only that for which he strives.

Nor would He have said: Say (O Mohammad).

Work; Allah, His messenger and the Believers will see what you have achieved.

And nor would He have said tho those who excused themselves from battle:

Make no excuse, we (the Muslims) do not believe you. Allah has informed us of your news. He and his messenger will see your deeds.

And He would not have said:

Indeed, I will not let the (reward for the) work you have done be lost.

Many Muslims have come to assume that they are Muslims only because of their prayers and fasting and that nothing of sacrifice in the way of blood and wealth is expected of them. On the basis of these assumptions, they have come to expect the help of Allah.

But alas! This is not the way it is. The imperatives of Islam are not limited to prayer and fasting, nor to supplication and seeking forgiveness. How can Allah accept supplication from those who have sat out conflicts and retreated when it was in their ability to rise and sacrifice?

The Muslim excuse and Its Rejection

They say: The Muslims do not have what the Europeans do of wealth and ability to spend on works of charity and to help each other. We say to those who make this excuse: We will be pleased with them if, as we have mentioned earlier, they spend in proportion to their wealth. Will the Muslims do this?

We have seen them destroy the tradition of giving and the institutions of charity that their forefathers had left behind not to mention giving of their personal wealth. They are not able to match the Europeans in regard to contributions to public projects. So how can the Muslims aspire to the position of Europeans in terms of power and influence when they are so far behind them in terms of the spirit of sacrifice?

Indeed, the effort to seek power on Earth is equivalent to reaping the crops of harvest: Your gain is proportional to the efforts you put in. If you are lax in effort, so too will be the fruits of your labour. The Muslims want power similar to the power of the Europeans without effort and sacrifice and without losing their pleasures and comforts. They forget that Allah says:

And surely, we shall try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and crops; bit give glad tidings to the patient.

And they will say: "But we have tried effort and sacrifice and have been tested by loss of wealth and lives and the fruits of our harvest and we have been patient. But all of this has been of no avail; the Europeans continue to dominate us." I relate this saying because I have heard it said many times.

And my answer: Are they able to say that what they are claiming in terms of effort and sacrifice is even remotely close to what the Christians and Jews do in this regard? What's more, can they claim that our giving is even one percent of what others give?

We have a recent example in the matter of Palestine: Bloody skirmishes broke out between the Arabs and Jews. They were injured on both sides. Jews around the world, started to collect donations for their injured. At the same time, the Islamic world called for donations for their injured. Lo and behold, the contributions of the Jews amounted to one million Guineas and that of all Muslims to 13,000 Guineas - less than a fraction of one percent![\[x\]](#)

And they will say: But the Muslims do not have as much wealth as the Jews. So, we repeat what we have said: We will be happy if they spend of their wealth the same proportion as the Jews and Europeans do of theirs. And of course, we do not call on the poor, those have only enough to feed their families, to do the same because Allah says:

There is no blame on those who are weak, or sick, or those who are unable to support their families (if they do not strive in the way of Allah) if they are sincere to Allah and his Messenger. And there is no reproaching those who enjoin to good.

And then He says:

Indeed, reproach is for those who seek your (Mohammad's) permission to abstain even though they are wealthy, and choose instead to remain behind.

We also say: Even if the Jews as individuals have more wealth, the Muslims substantially outnumber them. There are 20 million Jews while the Muslims number about 400 million.[\[xi\]](#) So if every Muslim were to donate a penny each, an amount that even the poorest can afford, we could gather a total of three and a half million Guineas.

But let us leave out the nine tenths of the Muslim population and impose this donation on only the one tenth of them who live in and around Palestine. The Muslims in Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Iraq, Najd, Hijaz, and Yemen number some 35 million. One penny from each of them would amount to 350 thousand Guineas. And yet they only managed to donate 13,000 Guineas! This works out to three tenths of a Penny per head from one tenth of the global Muslim population. Is this what they call 'sacrifice'? Is this how you 'fight in the way of Allah with your lives and wealth?'

And is this the extent of your support for your brothers in faith and your neighbours who safeguard, on your behalf, the *Masjid Al-Aqsa*, the third holy sanctuary and the first of the two *Qiblas*? Did Allah not say: *Indeed, the believers are brothers.*?

They say: how has the English nation come to dominate the world? The answer: They have come to dominate the world because of their principles and high sense of nationality. A man I trust, related to me the story of an Englishman who held an important position in the East. The Englishman would send his servant to buy the daily needs of his house from a local shop in their locality. One day, the servant came back with a monthly invoice showing he had saved 20 Guineas.

And asked how he managed this, the servant replied: I stopped buying from the shop owned by an Englishman and started to buy instead from a shop owned by local. The Englishman was not pleased and ask the servant to continue buying from the first shop. The servant, taking aback, asked: Even if that means spending 20 Guineas extra? The reply was: Even if it means spending 20 Guineas extra!

I have heard that many of the English posted abroad do not purchase anything of value from the colonies. They specify whatever they need and send out for it to London so that their wealth is not spent abroad.

Compare this to the ways of the Muslims: No matter how much you urge them to buy from their own nations and people, if they discover they can save half a Penny in buying from an Englishman they will do so. Is it not things like this that led to the collapse of the Arab boycott of the Jews in Palestine?[\[xii\]](#) The Muslims denied

themselves the most powerful weapon at their disposal against the Jews – prohibiting trade with them – for the sake of trifling gains. Not realising that the damage they did to themselves was a thousand times greater than the saving from these minor differences in prices.

The Results of Egypt's Support for the Fighters of Tripoli[xiii] and Cyrenaica

[xiv]

I've approached once a high-level Egyptian official on Egypt's neglect of fighters in Tripoli and Cyrenaica saying: If it was not incumbent upon Egypt to help in line with the Islamic imperative of helping brothers and neighbours then at least they should have considered the independence and security of Egypt. Because the presence of the English in Sudan and the Italians in Cyrenaica is a constant threat to Egypt.

[...]

Epilogue

The Muslims Will Rise, As Others Have

It is incumbent on the Muslims to rise, progress, ascend the heights of glory and advance just as other nations have done. This is the Jihad[xv] with wealth and life that Allah has decreed in his Quran many times. It is what they call today 'sacrifice'.

Success will never be possible for Muslims or for any other nation without sacrifice. Perhaps Sheikh Basyuni Imran or others who have asked our opinion on this subject had thought that I would answer that the key to progress is to read the theories of Einstein on relativity, or study Röntgen's rays, or Pasteur's microbes, or to rely on radio transmission on short waves rather than long, or study the inventions of Edison, or other similar matters.

But the reality is that these matters are ramifications not fundamentals, consequences not principles. Sacrifice, or Jihad with wealth and life, is the highest knowledge which calls out to all other knowledge. If a nation requires this knowledge and acts upon it, all remaining knowledge and signs submit to it, and the benefits that these can yield come with in its reach.

It is not necessary for a person in need of something to know about it for him to know that he needs it. The stage of the East, Jamal-ud-deen Al-Afghani[xvi] mentioned to me once:

A loving father may be amongst the most ignorant of people but if his son falls sick, he chooses from his the best of doctors. And he knows that there is something useful called knowledge although he may know nothing about it. And he knows, driven by concern for the life of his child, that knowledge is necessary.

Muhammad Ali[xvii] may not have been scientist, he may even not have been literate, but he pulled Egypt out of oblivion in a short time driven by the high knowledge that is common sense and will power, and made it a great nation. It is this high knowledge that drives its possessor to seek knowledge and to push his nation to do likewise.

So, it is possible for Muslims if they resuscitate their determination and work in accordance with what their Book urges to reach the level of the Europeans and Americans and Japanese in terms of knowledge and advancement while remaining connected to their Islam just as these others have remained connected to their religions. They are men and we are men. The only thing we lack is work. And the only thing that hurts us is pessimism, submission and hopelessness.

So, let us dust off the grime of pessimism and move forward. And let us understand that we will reach our destination only by work and perseverance and courage. And, finally, by fulfilling the conditions of the faith that are in the Quran: And those who strive for Us We will guide them to Our paths. Indeed, Allah is with those who do good.

Shakib Arsalan

Lausanne

11th November, 1930

[i] Muslims were better off materially than the Catholics and the orthodox Christians because 80% of the land area of Bosnia was owned by Muslims. The farm labor

working these lands consisted entirely of Serbs. But a few decades ago, the government and Belgrade passed a law which allowed them to confiscate these lands from the Muslims and give them to Serbian farmers with only a minimum of reparation. Today, Muslims only 25% of the land. As a result, their economic importance has declined. But they remain culturally dominant to this date. (S)

[iii] Uthman ibn'Affan (577-656) Third Caliph of Islam

[iiii] Ali ibn Abi Talib (599-661) Cousin and son in law of the Prophet. Fourth Caliph of Islam

[iv] Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan (602-680) Founder and first Caliph of the Umayyad Caliphate

[v] Bani Umayyah or Umayyads: Ruling family of Islamic Caliphate between 661 and 750

[vi] Abdullah ibn Al-Zubair: Leader of Caliphate based in Makkah that rivaled the Umayyads from 683 to his death in 692

[vii] Omar ibn Al-Khattab (584-644) Second Caliph of Islam.

[viii] The Bible

[ix] What we now call World War I

[x] I refer here to events that occurred in 1929. The total amount that Arabs donated to Palestine was 13,000 Guineas. But these events came as a warning to Muslims and woke them from their slumber. The fire of trial and tribulation changed them. And in these past 10 years, they have started to follow the way Jews and Christians strive for their causes. But they are still at the beginning of the road. I have calculated the Arab donations to their brothers in Palestine during the years 1937 and 1938. They have exceeded those in past years. And they have succeeded in producing results. The resolve of the Arabs against the Jews and the English has strengthened to the extent that the English have been forced to deploy 30,000 troops who for the past two years are continuously in battle with the Arabs. The troops are supported by other powerful forces such as the police, Jews, armed fighters, and yes, also traitorous Arabs from eastern Jordan. Yet, combined, they have not been able to suppress the revolution or to make any gains. As a result, the English have relented and called for a summit in London, inviting all Arab nations to help them solve the Palestinian conundrum. They have also retreated from their original intention to give Palestine to the Jews accepting that the Jewish settlers not exceed a third of the number of Palestinians. The change in approach by the English is the product of generosity and the disdain for the Dunya by the supporters of Palestine. Indeed, whoever disdains the Dunya, discovers that it seeks him out. And whoever disdains life, finds that it rushes to seek him out. This is the law Allah has established for his creatures. And there is no changing the laws of Allah. (S)

[xi] An official census has confirmed that there are 50 million Muslims in China. So, it is now established that the total number of Muslims is about 400 million. Of these 24 million are Arabs in Asia, 17 million are Turks in Asia Minor, 16 million in Iran, 10 million in Afghanistan, 85 million in India, 56 million in Java, 25 million in Russia, 3 million in Europe, 50 million in China, and 100 million in Africa. (S)

[xii] However, now the vast majority of them have started to spend generously of life and wealth in defense of their homeland, Palestine, in a way that has lifted the heads of all Arabs. But had this effort been forthcoming from them right at the beginning, the calamity would not have reached this limit. (S)

[xiii] A province in Northern Libya during Italian rule. Not to be confused with the city of Tripoli which was its administrative headquarters.

[xiv] The province in Eastern Libya known in Arabic as Burqa.

[xv] 213 Verbal noun of the verb jahada: To strive, to endeavour

[xvi] 214 (1838-1897) Reformist Islamic scholar and leading figure in the Egyptian renaissance.

[xvii] Muhammad Ali Pasha (1769-1849) Ottoman governor of Egypt from 1805 to 1848.