

**PAN-ISLAMIC INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION  
AND ANTICOLONIALISM: SOUTH ASIA,  
TURKEY AND SOUTHEAST ASIA**

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**Abstract**

Non-Western cultures and peoples, such as the Islamic, Hindu, Confucian, and Orthodox Christian, have been systematically oppressed, colonized, and dominated by the ideology, arms, and economies of the West for over two centuries under the imperialist clash of civilizations'. Numerous techniques have been adopted by the oppressed peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America to resist this domination, to promote peace, harmony, and stability. One of these strategies that was manifest during the anti-colonial movement in South Asia, Turkey, and Southeast Asia was pan-Islamism. It was relatively forgotten until interest was re-awakened in the Ottoman legacy of Turkey as a leading civilization in Asia and the wider Muslim world. Most modern developed literature is premised on the assumption that western civilization is the model to be aspired by all developing nations. Assistance in economic development is generally assumed as accepting a raft of western neo-imperialist demands that may be contrary to Asian and African cultural mores. In response to this, nationalist movements have become increasingly sceptical about the international development agenda, therefore, Eurasian and South Asian countries such as China, India, Pakistan, Russia, and Turkey are increasingly rejecting subservience to the political and cultural demands of the West. This paper examines the impact of the pan-Islamic cooperation and civilizational exchanges between Turkey, Central Asia, South and Southeast Asia. This is mainly based on Persian, Urdu, English and Dutch sources, focused on the intellectual legacy, achievements, and role of Muslim intellectuals on the unity of the Muslim Ummah against the colonial drive and preserve legacy of caliphate supporting physical and monetary cooperation. This paper also explores the examples of the role of pan-Islamism in resisting European colonialism. It particularly analyses the role of Indian Muslims

in assisting the Ottoman Caliphate, the role of the Ottomans in Sumatran resistance to Dutch colonialism, and the resumption of pan-Islamic ties manifest in modern Turkish disaster relief efforts in Indonesia. Pan-Islamism is already a powerful force in international development. The paper concludes that Pan-Islamic platform offers great scope for developing countries to autonomously assist each other without the shackles of the neo-imperialist agendas, recovering their historical position and dignity as vibrant, compassionate societies.

**Key words:** Islamic Civilization, Pakistan, Pan-Islamism, Turkey, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Western Civilization.

## 1. Introduction

The 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries were the most tumultuous periods in the history of the Muslim world. Following the Turko-Russian War (1768-1774) and Russian annexation of the Crimea in 1783, the Ottoman Empire lost its hegemony in the Black Sea and it began an interminable process of decline. The Muslims of Central Asia and other parts of the world at large increasingly came under the influence and then direct control of European imperial interests, particularly the French, British, and Russian empires. In some cases, reigns of terror, inhuman suppression, and persecution led to influxes of Muslim refugees to regions still under Ottoman protection. Muslims were unable to halt encroachment in the Caucasus in the 1850s and 1860s, Yunan province in China in the 1860s, Egypt (1881) and the Sudan (1884). The string of continual defeats exposed the weakness of institutions and regimes in the Muslim world, and their susceptibility to European hostility. Early attempts at liberal economic reforms and adopting superficial aspects of Western culture under Tanzimat during the period 1839-1876 did little to reverse the Ottomans' decline. A series of wars and corrupt self-serving political entrepreneurs hampered development, until Sultan Abdul Hamid II (r. 1876-1909) began to centralize authority from 1878, which enabled the coordination and development of Ottoman infrastructure throughout the Empire, facilitated in some cases by pan-Islamic financing, and pan-Islamism became the cornerstone of Ottoman foreign policy until the end of World War I (WWI) (Farooqi 1983, 283; Kia 1996, 30-31; Ozcan 1997, 52; Nadvi 2015, 152-53; Pay 2015, 284; Niemeijer 1981, 35, 37; Qureshi 1999, 52-53).

This study presents a brief review of notable studies in this field in the next section, followed by an explanation of the political ideology of

pan-Islamism. It then explores the implications of Pan-Islamism in regard to South Asia, explaining British policies toward Muslims, the role of Abdul Hamid II and the Hejaz Railway, Allama Shibli (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*) and Indian Muslim activism and the medical mission of Dr. Mukhtar Ansari (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*). It then explains Indian Muslims' support for the Khilafat Movement (1919-1924), followed by an analysis of Ottoman engagement with Southeast Asia, with its implications for modern Islamic cooperation between Turkey and the region.

## 2 Literature Review

This study explores the global implications of pan-Islamism in anticolonial resistance and development, looking at the cases of South Asia, Turkey, and Southeast Asia, utilizing primary and secondary sources. Some key studies that have contributed to this field include Naimur Rahman Farooqi's "Pan-Islamism in the Nineteenth Century" (1983), which galvanised modern appreciation of this neglected aspect of late Ottoman foreign policy. With regard to other areas of the Muslim world, Mehrdad Kia (1996) explored "Pan-Islamism in Late Nineteenth-century Iran." However, this study is primarily concerned with South Asia, and Indian Muslims' responses to pan-Islamism. Qureshi (1985) analysed the political activities of Islamic scholars in the Indian Subcontinent from 1556-1847, including Ottoman pan-Islamism. Niemeijer (1981) specifically outlined the nature of the Khilafat Movement in India (1919-1924), while more general studies of Indian Muslim engagement with the Ottomans relative to British imperialism are given by Ozcan (1997) and Pay (2015). The most authoritative source on Allama Shibli (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*), the most prominent pro-Ottoman activist in South Asia, is the Urdu biography *Hayat-i-Shibli* by Syed Sulaiman Nadvi (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*).

## 3 Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- To explore the political ideology of Ottoman pan-Islamism and its engagement with South and Southeast Asia.
- To analyze South Indian responses to pan-Islamism in relation to Sultan Abdul Hamid II, the Hejaz Railway, and material and ideological support for the Ottoman Empire among South Asian Muslims.

- To identify the contemporary relevance of this historical experience as a basis for modern international cooperation among Muslim countries, with relevance to Turkish relief efforts in Southeast Asia.

#### 4. Pan-Islamism

Pan-Islamism is rooted in the doctrinal belief in the unity of all Muslim believers in a single community (the ummah). In Islam, the eponymous submission of Muslims in obedience to Allah Almighty and His Messenger, the Prophet Muhammad (*Sal Allah-u- 'alaihi wa sallam*), is their goal in life. It is a matter of faith for Muslims to follow Islam, as part of which they must submit their egos to the revealed knowledge of the Holy Qur'ān and Sunnah. This is reflected in the believers being united together in this project, and Allah Almighty has warned the Muslims not be divided, which will be a cause of defeat in worldly terms, arising from the spiritual illness of disputation and egoism, as iterated in the following Qur'ānic verses:

*“O ye who believe! fear God as He should be feared and die not except in a state of Islam. And hold fast all together by the rope which God (stretches out for you) and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude God's favor on you; for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts in love so that by His grace ye became brethren; and ye were on the brink of the pit of fire and He saved you from it. Thus doth God make his signs clear to you: that ye may be guided.”(The Holy Qur'ān, 3: 102-3)*

*“And obey God and His apostle; and fall into no disputes lest ye lose heart and your power depart; and be patient and persevering: for God is with those who patiently persevere.”(The Holy Qur'ān, 8: 46)*

These verses allude to the fact that from the beginning of its history, the Muslim ummah has only been able to resist those seeking to extirpate it by submission to Allah Almighty, unity, and patience, seeking the blessing of continued existence from Allah Almighty. Consequently, Muslims throughout the world essentially aspire to be one spiritual unit, like cells

in a body, mutually assisting each other in times of need, which is exactly how the Prophet (*Ṣalālah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) described the nature of the ummah as being is equivalent to a human body:

*“The likeness of the believers in their mutual love, mercy and compassion is that of the body; when one part of it is in pain, the rest of the body joins it in restlessness and fever”*(*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri*, 6011, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muslim*, 2586)

The European colonial project sought to replace this primordial ethos of Islamic religion with various forms of tribalism (i.e. nationalism), which they did with great success throughout the Muslim world in a classic divide-and-rule strategy, pitting Arab against Turk and Jew, Albanian against Greek, Muslim against Hindu, and so on, sowing the seeds of many of the geopolitical problems that continue to blight the world today (and fill the bank vaults of Europe and North America). However, there was resistance to this strategy throughout the oppressed lands, notably the case of pan-Islamism, to which Sultan Abdul Hamid II appealed. The Ottoman “Sultans” became Caliphs after Sultan Selim I (r. 1512-1520) defeated and hanged the last Mamluk Sultan Tumanbay on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1517 at one of the main gates of Cairo. The ‘Abbasid Caliph al-Mutawakkil (d. 1543) formally assigned to Sultan Selim and to his heirs all rights to the Caliphate, at a ritual held in the mosque of Aya Sofya in Istanbul, assuming responsibility to maintain the Holy sanctuaries at Makkah and Madinah and the pilgrimage routes. In Aleppo, Sultan Selim I took the title, prior held by the Mamluk Sultans of Servant of the Two Holy Sanctuaries (*Khādim al-Ḥaramayn al-Sharīfayn*). The title of “Caliph” was rarely used in practice by the Ottomans until this vestigial relic of the prophetic era was galvanized by its utility in anticolonial resistance by the Ottomans and other Muslim peoples from the late-18<sup>th</sup> century to the final demise of the Ottoman state following WWI (Hitti 1970, 704-05; Holt 1970, 319-20; Ozcan 1997, 51; Nadvi, 2015, 550-51).

Sultan Abdul Hamid II promulgated this idea and asserted his position as the “Commander of the Believers”. The Ottoman sultans explicitly used the phrases of Islamic unity (including *Itteḥād-e-Islami*, *Itteḥād-e-Dīn*, and *Ukhuwwat-e-Dīn*) in their official correspondence with Muslim rulers in India, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia, specifically warning against foreign incursions, advising Muslims to unite and rally against their common enemies (Tekin and Islam 2018, 1051). The historic role

of the Ottomans in helping other Muslim lands resist imperialism is often deliberately forgotten nowadays, but they were particularly instrumental in warding off Russian aggression against central Asian khanates who demanded help and protection from the caliphs against Russian expansionism, including in Bukhara, Khiva, and Khokand (Farooqi 1983, 287; Ozcan 1997, 46; Pay 2015, 285; Wasti 2006, 957).

Pan-Islamism is for Muslims essentially a religious concept, associated with the Islamic prohibition of discrimination based on ethnicity, and in modern political terminology is can be understood as an ideology calling for socio-political solidarity among all Muslims. The Darwinian empires of Europe, with their obsessions of racial hierarchies and taxonomies of “national” cultures, always found the cosmopolitan and eclectic tapestries of Muslim societies very difficult to apprehend, and watched with consternation how an oppression or outrage against Muslims on one side of the world could cause an insurrection on the other. This existential bond among Muslims was activated by Sultan Abdul Hamid II during the ‘golden era’ of European imperialism in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries to arouse the Islamic conscience and mobilise Muslims to seek emancipation and advancement by fighting imperialism and the process of Westernization, and fostering the unification of the Muslim ummah (Qureshi 1985, 17-19; Farooqi 1983, 290; Ozcan 1997, 48-48; Wasti 2006, 959).

## **5. South Asia**

### **5.1 British Policies towards the Muslims**

Following its alliance with the Ottomans in the Crimean War (1853-1856), British policy in relation to Muslims was based on an Anglo-Islamic alliance to contain Russian influence in Central Asia and Eastern Europe, and avoiding discontent among subject Muslim populations in India, Southeast Asia, Africa and elsewhere. The British had always cynically leveraged their generally favourable relations with the Ottomans to boost their credentials in dealing with Muslim governments. For instance, in 1799 they prevailed upon Sultan Selim III (r. 1789-1808) to recommend them to Tipu Sultan (r. 1782-99), the ruler of Mysore, to cement friendly relations with the British and pave the way for their insidious colonization of India. In the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this strategy was applied on a larger level to thwart Russian encroachment in Central Asia, which

was perceived as an implicit threat to British India. British expeditions into the Northwest Frontier in 1838-1842 and 1878-1880 had failed to establish any permanent foothold, thus they attempted to establish an alliance between Bukhara, Kashgar, and British India under Ottoman suzerainty. Between 1870 and 1873, all these efforts were made in the name of pan-Islamic activities, with full cooperation from the Ottomans. In April 1877, just after the beginning of the Russo-Turkish War, Sultan Abdul Hamid II sent a diplomatic mission to Afghanistan to seek support for ongoing war against Russia, which was in British as well as Ottoman interests (Qureshi 1985, 243; Farooqi 1983, 287; Kia 1996, 32; Ozcan 1997, 12-13, 75; Husain 2001, 20; Wasti 2006, 956; Pay 2015, 286).

Apart from these flirtations with pan-Islamism as part of their colonial strategy, the British authorities in India continued their duplicitous power games and betrayals to extend their creeping domination over South Asia. On the pretence of the fear of Russian aggression in Afghanistan, the British authorities secured permission from the Amir of Sindh to navigate the Indus up to the Afghan border, which formed the pretext for the British machinations to conquer Sindh in 1843. In the same style, the British authorities used Sultan Selim III to ingratiate themselves with Tipu Sultan of Mysore, then betrayed the Third Anglo-Mysore treaty of 1792 and made a wanton attack on Mysore in three directions, killing the heroic Sultan in battle on 4<sup>th</sup> May 1799 (Burton 1877, 31; Kirmani 1958, 145, 156-58; Khan 1959, 155; Qureshi 1985, 243; Ozcan 1997, 12-13; Quddusi 2004, 13, 15, 33).

## **5.2. Sultan Abdul Hamid II's Pan-Islamic Appeal and Indian Muslims' Support**

Two decades after the devastating results of the Indian Revolt (1857), the Muslims of South Asia were greatly affected by the Turko-Russian War of 1877-78. Due to the gravity of the situation Indian Muslims mobilised the masses to raise donations and collect funds to support their Turkish brothers and sisters, led by the *ulama*. Allama Shibli Nu'mani (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*) (1857-1914) was instrumental in collecting donations in his hometown, Azamgarh, for the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II. Shibli raised 3, 000 rupees and handed the amount to Husain Hasib Afendi, the Ottoman Consul in Bombay. In addition, a number of other eminent Indian scholars like Maulana Qasim Nanatawi (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*) (1833-80), Ahmad Ali Muhaddith (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*)

(d. 1880), Maulana Muhammad Mazhar Nanatawi (*Raḥmat Allah ‘alaih*) (1823-85), and Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (*Raḥmat Allah ‘alaih*) (1826-1905) raised funds for the financial backing to the *mujāhidīn*, their widows, and orphans, and common Muslims in Eastern Europe. This monetary aid was anticipated to raise Ottoman morale and express the global solidarity of the Muslims. For this benign cause fervent support came from the well-known Islamic centres, like Darul-Ulum Deoband, Nadvat ul-Ulama Lucknow, and the Farangi Mahal. The Colonial Government was greatly vexed by these developments, and was apoplectic when Shibli (*Raḥmat Allah ‘alaih*) and other prominent *ulama* from across South Asia held a meeting at Kanpur in 1898 in which they declared Sultan Abdul Hamid II the true Caliph and leader of all Muslims (Nadvi, 2015, 152-53; Sepetcioglu 2015, 54; Qureshi 1985, 237, 241; Metcalf 1982, 168).

### **5.3. The Hejaz Railway**

Apart from raising funds for the Ottoman military cause, Indian Muslims donated a huge sum to finance the Hejaz Railway. This project was the brainchild of Sultan Abdul Hamid II, who used pan-Islamism to strengthen his rule and to rally the Muslims throughout the world, raising resistance to encroaching European imperialism. It was designed to improve communications between Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Levant, and modern Turkey, in addition to making it easier for people to perform the Hajj pilgrimage. The Hejaz Railway, funded by global Muslim support, was also the flagship of the pan-Islamism policy. The faithful donated to the railway through Ottoman consulates worldwide, including in Egypt, India, Kazan, Morocco, and South Africa. Apart from common Muslims' donations, huge sums were generously paid by the Khedive of Egypt, the Shah of Iran, and the Nizam of Hyderabad. The railway was 1,464 kilometres long, costing 3 million Ottoman liras, equating to around 430 kg of gold. The South Asian Muslims were at the forefront of this endeavour, with great solidarity and Islamic brotherhood being manifest in lavish mass donations by from almost all the major cities of the Subcontinent, including Baluchistan, Bombay, Calcutta, Hyderabad, Karachi, and Rangoon. In India, a special committee was set up for the purpose of collecting contributions for the Ottomans, and Indians from all walks of life donated about 40,000 Ottoman liras. Contributions from India and Egypt were viewed as a protest to the British colonial authorities (Ekinci 2016, 1-3; Ozcan 1997, 108-110; Pay 2015, 286; Ochsenswald 1980, 3, 5; Usul 1999, 19-21).



#### 5.4 Allama Shibli and Indian Muslim Activism

During 1895 and 1896 the Western press raised much furore about the Armenian-Turkish civil war and actively spread salacious reports demonizing the Turkish forces. On 21<sup>st</sup> February 1896, Shibli (*Raḥmat Allah ‘alaih*) wrote a sarcastic retort in the Azad newspaper of Lucknow, in which he exposed the propaganda issues at play and critically analysed the rumours being spread by the Western press. In 1897, when Greece attacked Turkey, Shibli (*Raḥmat Allah ‘alaih*) refrained from active political activity as a member of Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College (MAO), and he restrained himself from uttering anything on this issue. Shibli was overjoyed when, in 1908, Sultan Abdul Hamid II declared that Turkey would set up democratic institutions on the plan of Enver Bey (1881-1922) and others. The Sultan would mention each member of the *Anjuman-i-Ittihād wa Tarraqi*, including the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) (*İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*) that took the lead in this regard, and spoke highly of each individual. Shibli (*Raḥmat Allah ‘alaih*) praised the perspicuity of Sultan Abdul Hamid II in conceding to the demands of his people to take Turkey towards democracy, without destroying the nation, thus avoiding bloodshed and civil strife. A revolution took place without a single drop of blood being shed. Shibli (*Raḥmat Allah ‘alaih*) had hoped for many momentous and positive events to follow this major shift from absolute monarchy to a more democratic framework (Ozcan 1997, 133; Nadvi 2015, 552-54; Pay 2015, 286; Sepetcioglu 2015, 51-53).

In the Indian Subcontinent, Shibli (*Raḥmat Allah ‘alaih*) inspired a younger generation of intellectuals, particularly in their concern about the Ottoman Caliphate and pan-Islamism. His passionate poems and articles published in the Muslim Gazette stirred up many political activists, like Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958), Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (1873-1956), Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar (1878-1931), and his brother Maulana Shaukat Ali (1873-1938) (*Raḥmat Allah ‘alaih*). Shibli’s radical ideas inspired the Muslim masses in general, and they also had a profound impact on Muslim intellectuals. Zafar Ali Khan (*Raḥmat Allah ‘alaih*) was moved by Shibli’s poems on the evils inflicted upon Islam and inspired by his articles published in the *Muslim Gazette*. He was also influenced by the writings of the editor of *Al-Hilal*, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (*Raḥmat Allah ‘alaih*) (Nadvi 2015, 508-09, 557; Qureshi 1985, 244; Sepetcioglu 2015, 55-56; Minault 1999, 156-57; Minault 1999, 40).

Shibli’s revolutionary poems published in *Muslim Gazette* (Urdu

weekly, 1912-13, by Wahiduddin Selim and Syed Shabbir Hasan, Lucknow), *Al-Hilal* (Urdu weekly, 1912, by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Calcutta), *Hamdard* (Urdu daily, 1913, by Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar, Delhi) and *Zamindar* (Urdu daily, 1903, by Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, Lahore) created a sensation in the country that developed political interest among the Muslims. Soon his collection of poems was seized by colonial officials in Bengal and the United Provinces. On the occasion of the Balkan wars (1912), Shibli wrote his most stirring poem *Shahr-i Ashūb-i Islām* ('City of Islam in Ruins') to show his solidarity with the Turks, which left a great impact upon the Indian Muslims (Nadvi 2012, 119-21; Nadvi 2015, 554-55; Qureshi 1985, 233, 244; Qureshi 1999, 37, 64; Niemeijer 1981, 38; Sepetcioglu 2015, 56-57; Minault 1999, 158). He recited this long and stirring poem before a public gathering at Lucknow for the collection of donations for Turkey, to wailing crowds. Shibli's poems prophesied many things that turned out to be true. Khwaja Kamaluddin (1870-1932) a from Lahore repeatedly shed tears after reading these verses in London, and wrote a letter to Shibli (*Raḥmat Allah 'alaiḥ*) in which he quoted the verse "*Chārāgh-i-kushta-e maḥfil se uthega dhuān kabtak?*" ('How long will rise the billowing smoke from the extinguished lamp?') (Nadvi 2015, 556-57; Minault 1999, 40-44). Written in the aftermath of the Italian-Turkish and Balkan Wars, this lament represents a genre of poetry in which the poet bemoans the destruction or social, economic and political decline of a city, country or state. This genre of poetry is known as *Shahr-i Ashāb-i Islām* (City of Islam in Ruins)

How long will remain the prestige of a nation when dominion is gone,  
How long will rise the billowing smoke from the extinguished lamp?

The very mantle of the Sultanate has been torn to smithereens,  
How long will the fragments continue to fly in the sky?

Morocco has fallen, Iran gone; it is to be seen,  
How long the diehard sick Turkey survives?

Fast deluge of unmitigated calamity that is surging from the Balkans,  
How long could it be warded off by desperate sighs of the oppressed?!

How long could it be stopped by the smokecreen of the sighs of the  
oppressed,  
How long will the half-dead martyred to keep the show going?!

They revel in listening to the cries of the oppressed,  
How long will the infirm orphan keep on this chord?!

### **5.5. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari's Medical Mission**

On the initiative and with the great efforts of Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*), a medical mission under the stewardship of Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari (1880-1936) (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*) was sent to Turkey in November and reached Istanbul on the last day of 1912, remaining in Turkey until late June 1913, to provide medical aid to the casualties of the Balkan Wars, assisting injured soldiers and refugees. The other members of this mission included Shuaib Qureshi, a minister in the state of Bhopal, Chaudhry Khaleeq al-Zaman, an advocate of Lucknow, Abdul Rahman Siddiqi, a member of the Bengal assembly, Abdul Aziz Ansari, and others. Most of these young volunteers were then pursuing their studies at MAO College. Such was their Islamic bond and commitment to the cause and attachment with the Turks that they put their educational pursuits on hold, to be part of the noble medical mission to help their Muslim brethren in grieving Turkey. This was the first major contribution of the Indian Muslims to their Turkish brethren and it was as significant in inspiring pride among Muslims at home in India as it was in providing the help needed. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*) got more print media attention because of the regular reports sent home by him that was published in *The Comrade*, an English weekly newspaper published at Calcutta, 1911 by Maulana Muhammad Ali (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*). In an act of vengeance and frustration, the British authorities hurriedly closed *The Comrade* after the letters on Turkey were published (Nadvi 2015, 556-57; Nadvi 2012, 122-24; Qureshi 1985, 233; Sepetcioglu, 2015, 57).

There was a deeply moving and emotional scene at the Lucknow railway station, when Dr. Ansari (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*) was leaving for Delhi, en route to Constantinople. Many local dignitaries had come to see him off. Dr. Ansari (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*) was standing at the door of the railway compartment, while Allama Shibli (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*) was standing on the platform, looking up at him. Just as it was time to say goodbye, the head of this great scholar, which had refused to bow down before powerful tyrants, bent down and kissed the boots of Dr. Ansari (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*), in veneration of his service to the Allah Almighty and His Messenger (*Sal Allah-u-'alaihe wa sallam*) by

departing to the Ottoman Caliphate to serve the victims of war; tears rolling down his eyes and washing the dust of the boots. The train moved on, taking with it the precious jewels of Islamic honour and dignity (Nadvi 2015, 558; Qureshi 1985, 233).

After the end of the Balkan Wars (1912), Dr. Ansari's medical mission returned to India and landed at Bombay. By sheer chance Allama Shibli (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*) was in Bombay, and without delay, he went to receive Dr. Ansari and the delegation at the Docks. As he was disembarking, Allama Shibli (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*) stepped forward to kiss his feet, but this time Dr. Ansari excused himself, Allama Shibli (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*) said, "It is not your feet, rather they represent the suffering of Islam". It was these very sentiments that found expression in the form of a lament which he read out before a gathering in Bombay that had been convened to felicitate members of the medical mission which had just returned from Turkey. It is a very heart-rending poem.

#### **5.6. Welcoming Dr. Ansari**

This poem was recited in a gathering, in Bombay, convened in honour of the returning Indian Medical Mission to Turkey led by Dr. Ansari (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*) (Nadim 2014, 307-08; Nadvi 2015, 558-59; Nadvi 2012, 128-29; Qureshi 1985, 233-34; Sepetcioglu, 2015, 58).

#### ***Balkan War: 1912***

We offer our fervent thanks to Allah Almighty, the Almighty  
On the safe return of the delegation of Ansari.

You traversed thousands of miles to serve our brethren;  
This was true Islamic spirit, this was manifest compassion.

Leaving the country, forsaking the family, and traversing a vast distance  
bravely,  
By God's Grace, you did endure these travails admirably.

For stopping you there was much in form of tumult,  
Voices of anguish and pain and lament

The grieving eyes of relatives, and their piercing, longing looks;  
Anguish of torn hearts, and the soaring sparks of filial love.

But the love for Islam overcame all hurdles;  
Leaving everything behind you managed to reach there in spite of many  
problems.

In truth, you're both an Ansar (helper) and a *Muhājir* (migrant);  
As forsaking your countrymen you reached there to fulfil the requisites  
of friendship.

None can attain, even in their dream, such wonderful bliss;  
Night-vigil for the sick and injured which you did endure.

In truth, it befits you to claim leadership;  
Because the Turkish *mujāhidīn* you nursed with care tender.

No amount of accolades the community may shower on you may be  
adequate,  
For pains you endured in providing succour to soldiers of religion.

For you a string of pearls has far less value glass pebbles  
For, you have witnessed, in the eyes of the orphans, gems real.

Appreciate you will how cherishes Islam life,  
Having witnessed wanton blood-letting of the Christians.

Despite the virtual effacement of the Islamic sympathy,  
One can still discern, within your throbbing heart, some flickers of  
compassion.

Seen you have the declining fortune of the Muslims,  
The turning of tides of time you have observed.

How can the dwellers of Hindustan fathom your heart's pains,  
For, seen you have the ever-increasing tyranny.

You have heard the heart-wrenching lament of the orphans;  
Seen you have the unhappy faces of the destitute widows.

Burning alive the dwellers, after plundering their homes;  
Seen you have, the new norms of the Western powers.

The massacre of the Muslims, and the destruction of the Turks;  
Seen you have, the results of consequences of the assurances of Gladstone.

It is you who have sutured the wounds of the warriors;  
Seen you have, the blood-stained garments of the martyrs.

We have seen those many varied calamities,  
Seen we have, many kinds of distress.

Have seen the shades of tear shedding eyes,  
Have seen the rose-coloured cheeks of the faithful martyred play?

From you we get some trace of those who love the community;  
Seen you have since those enamoured of Islam.

Intense love and fervour of Islam, if anyone has understood, it's you;  
Seen you have since the *Majnūn* of Islam's Layla.

If there is still some hope to hold on,  
Seen you have also, since, the signs of the secrets power.

It would be no surprise, should bounce back the ship after being drowned,  
Seen we have, since, the overturning of fortunes like this.

If acceptable to Providence is an old person's supplication,  
These, then, are hands raised in prayer, and this then is Shibli Nu'mani!  
(Nadvi 2015, 558-59).

## **6. Indian Muslims' Support for Khilafat Movement (1919-24)**

After Abdul Hamid II was deposed in 1909, the Caliphate continued in name only, with increasing realisation among Muslims worldwide that it was no longer an authentic political force. The Muslims of the Indian Subcontinent wholeheartedly supported the idea of the restoration of the Caliphate, thus they launched Khilafat Movement, led by Maulana Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali (*Raḥmat Allah 'alaihimā*) (known as the Ali brothers) (Qureshi 1999, 68-69; Qureshi 1985, 256-57; Niemeijer 1981, 35). The movement gained mass support, and Abadi Bano Begum, aka *Bī Ammā* (*Raḥmat Allah 'alaih*) (1850-1924), the mother of the Ali brothers, called on her sons to die for the restoration of the Caliphate.

Her support became the talk of the day and was sung by people in public gatherings. Shafiq Rampuri (*Rahmat Allah 'alaih*), a local poet, recounted her sentiments in his rhetorical poetry:

Said the mother of Muhammad Ali:  
Sacrifice your life for Khilafat!

With you is also Shaukat Ali -  
Sacrifice your life for Khilafat!

If I see you tarrying  
I will renounce my motherly rights over you,

And I will never consider you a brave man!  
Sacrifice your life for Khilafat!

Unseen hands will come to help;  
Now this government will surely perish -

Until Doomsday it will never rise again.  
Sacrifice your life for Khilafat!

If you suffer from a cough  
Never ask the government for water;

Never ever feel worried for your old mother –  
You have to courageously step forward, uttering ‘the declaration of faith’

So as to be successful in the exam  
Sacrifice your life for Khilafat!

Had I have seven sons  
I would have sacrificed all of them in the cause of Khilafat -

This is the way of Islam.  
I will give a clarion call on the Day of Judgment

And will take in the presence of the Truth  
And file a petition against this government.

Sacrifice your life, my son, for Khilafat!

We did not feel peace now.

Sacrifice your life, my son, for Khilafat! (Zaidi 1998, 593.)

## 7. Southeast Asia

This section gives an overview of the pan-Islamic links between the Turks and the Acehnese. The first official relations between the two countries started in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century when Portuguese conquered Malacca and the Sultanate of Aceh petitioned the Sublime Porte for military support from the Caliph against the aggressor. The Ottoman Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520-66), responded to the call of both Sultans Qutb-ud-Din Bahadur Shah (d.1537) of Gujarat, and Sultan Alauddin Ri'ayat Shah al-Qahhar (r. 1537-71) of Aceh. This bond was further cemented on the earnest request of the Acehnese ruler to the Ottoman Sultan Selim II (r. 1566-74), who agreed to lend a hand to the Aceh against the Portuguese. However, the planned military assistance was disrupted and unable to reach Aceh due to a Zaidi rebellion in Yemen. Ottoman military experts sent to the region in the 16<sup>th</sup> century established a military academy named *Askar-i Bayt al-Muqaddas* during the period of Sultan Iskandar Muda. These soldiers permanently settled there and never returned to their homeland, and it is believed that these soldiers were buried in the Turkish graveyard of Banda Aceh that exists today. This diplomatic relationship between the two states continued until the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda (r. 1607-36). After this there is no report of any official mission continued between the two states until the mid-19th century (Qureshi 1985, 241-42; Reid 1967, 267-68; Schmidt 1992, 62; Rozali 2014, 94-95; Casale 2010, 59).

Diplomatic links were resumed when the Acehnese Sultan Ibrahim Mansur Shah (r. 1838-70) sent an appeal to the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Majid I (r.1839-61) in 1849, swearing fealty to the Ottoman Caliphate. However, at this juncture the dwindling Ottoman Empire led to it being preoccupied with its own domestic troubles towards Westernization, afar from its traditional Islamic drive, until the pan-Islamic vision of the last *defacto* Caliph, Sultan Abdul Hamid II, who was very much concerned about the Aceh-Dutch War of 1870-1903. Sultan Abdul Hamid II effectively extended Ottoman foreign policy worldwide due to the authority of the Caliphate, and took very strong stances that forced the Dutch to reverse their policy of seeking to restrict inhabitants of the 'Dutch East



Indies' from going on the Hajj pilgrimage. Pan-Islamism broadened Ottoman links to help the Muslims of Aceh from the Dutch onslaught (Schmidt 1992, 57; Tekin and Islam 2018, 1050). The Ottoman Sultans and their subjects displayed their concern for Muslims worldwide. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, both states ceased to exist, but the Islamic bond between their peoples was re-established a century later in 2004 after the Acehese tsunami, which reactivated Islamic brotherhood in the form of Turkish Awqaf, Red Crescent, and individual charity organizations in Aceh, which played a crucial role in rehabilitating the people by building/restoring houses, schools, hostels, hospitals, clinics, mosques, orphanages, and giving scholarships to poor and needy students (Schmidt 1992, 57; Ozcan 1997, 27).

## **8. Conclusion**

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the development of industrial capitalism in Europe led to European imperialism throughout the world, and Muslim communities during the 19<sup>th</sup> century experienced numerous popular movements and state-led initiatives in response to the emerging new world order. At the political level, the traditional Muslim empires (the most important of which were the Ottomans in the Middle East and Mediterranean, the Safavids in Persia, and the Mughals in India) seemed to be in inexorable decline. The territories under the auspices of the Ottoman government shrank and the state was impoverished by a series of ruinous wars with Russia and Austria during the period (1768–1830), inaugurating a period of intense introspection and attempts at reform.

In its formative period, during its continual expansions, the Ottoman state was based on a war footing, extracting booty and taxes from conquered and subject peoples in exchange for living under the relative peace of Ottoman rule. Following the end of Ottoman expansionism, military elites deprived of booty began turning to internal plunder during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, extorting onerous taxes and bribes from the populace, and strangling economic potential in bureaucracy and corruption. Attempts to stop the rot, such as the Auspicious Incident (1826) and the Tanzimat reforms (1839-76), appeared to make limited headway. The state sought to increase agricultural production and achieve social peace by gradually offering a variety of incentives to villagers, first to the Christian peasants in the Balkans and ultimately to the Muslims, including the right to own land and freely sell their crops. However, it was never able to create the conditions to facilitate industrial capitalist development on par with the

European states that increasingly encroached upon and colonised former Ottoman territories.

This paper finds that the most significant attempt to reinvigorate the Ottoman state and the Muslim ummah in general was achieved by Sultan Abdul Hamid II, at the cost of bankruptcy. Under his pan-Islamic programme, the Ottoman state became a bastion of anticolonial resistance and practical financial and logistical assistance to promote socioeconomic development. He created far-reaching and profound links with Muslim communities around the world, giving hope and succour to millions of Muslims, and providing a model of resistance that was followed by generations of anticolonial leaders, Muslim and non-Muslim alike, including Abul Kalam Azad (*Raḥmat Allah ‘alaiḥ*) (d. 1958), Mahatma Gandhi (d. 1948), and Muhammad Ali Jinnah (*Raḥmat Allah ‘alaiḥ*) (d. 1948) who ultimately ended the British Empire in India, and Soekarno and Mahathir who built modern Indonesia and Malaysia.

The historical experience of Ottoman pan-Islamism offers scope for modern efforts toward socio-economic development in the spirit of Muslim cooperation, which can be explored by further research on similar phenomena, in a state and non-governmental organizational context. Sultan Abdul Hamid II and pan-Islamism marked a sea change, between the inexorable managed decline of ancient non-European civilizations, seen in the end of Mughal India, Qing China, and the Indo-Malay Sultanates during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and a new dawn of the possibility of genuine resistance to occupation and domination among the peoples of the Muslim world, potentially involving civil society actors as manifest by the Muslim responses of South Asia, with the scope for positive socio-economic development without capitulating to the imperialists' demands. It was only through the disease of nationalism that the imperialists were able to divide and conquer the peoples of Africa and Asia, but the case of pan-Islamism offers a transcendent humanitarian ideology that can support mutual cooperation, support, and respect among Muslims and with others that can offer a genuine path toward political and social freedom that remains as relevant today, in the era of IMF domination, as it was in the era of the European empires.

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