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THE INDIAN KHILĀFAT MOVEMENT (1918–1924)

The impending dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire after her defeat in the First World War threw the larger portion of the world of Islam into confusion and dismay.¹ Turkey, as the only surviving Muslim empire, ruling large Christian populations and seemingly capable of resisting Europe, had been the pride of the Muslims, especially those under foreign domination.² As a symbol of the worldly power of Islam and the seat of its “universal” caliphate, Turkey had provided them with a rallying-point. In British India she had also given them a feeling of security in the midst of the Hindu majority.³ But, since the latter half of the nineteenth century, a fear had haunted the Muslims of British India that if Turkey was to disappear they “would become like unto Jews—a mere religious sect whose kingdom was gone.”⁴ Thus, Turkey was to them “the last hope of Islam.”⁵

¹ Since the Shi‘as do not subscribe to the Sunnī theory of the *Khilāfat* this study essentially deals with the Sunnī world which is generally taken to be synonymous with the Muslim world. The varying degrees of reaction among Muslims (other than those of British India) over the Turkish question can be traced in Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī, *Duniyā-i Islām aur Mas’ala-i Khilāfat*, (Bombay, 1922).

² This fact was acknowledged even by the British administrators in the East. See Mark Sykes, “Asiatic Turkey and the New Regime,” *Proceedings of the Central Asian Society*, (December 1918), pp. 2–5.

³ India Office Records (London) [hereafter IOR], “Memorandum on Indian Moslems,” Political & Secret Subject Files [hereafter *PSSF*], 53/1915, II. Also see H. A. R. Gibb, ed., *Whither Islam?*, (London, 1932), p. 73; and Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan, 1857–1964*, (London, 1967), p. 123.

⁴ Valentine Chirol, “Pan-Islamism,” *Proceedings of the Central Asian Society*, (November 1906), p. 14. As late as the 1890s even a staunch pro-British like Sayyid Ahmad Khān (1817–98) held the same view. See Theodore Morison,

Naturally, the threatened spoliation of her empire at the end of the war in November 1918, combined with other factors, engulfed the greater part of British India in an intense agitation for the preservation of Turkey's integrity and sovereignty. It took an anti-British character because, of all the Allied Powers, Britain was held to be chiefly responsible for Turkey's as well as India's misfortunes.

The Indian Khilāfat movement (1918—1924)⁶ was apparently the result of strong pan-Islamic sentiments and propaganda, reinforced by a century of political developments and sociocultural consciousness among British Indian Muslims. Viewed in this context, their involvement with Turkey and the Ottoman *Khilāfat*, despite its disputed content, was thus a natural phenomenon. But, the symbolic adherence to the archaic fiction of a "central" caliphate aside, the ferment of the Khilāfat movement inevitably fits into the total pattern of earlier Islamic movements—from the Walī-Allāhī revivalism in the eighteenth-century India to the Sarekat-Islām and the Muḥammadiyya in the early twentieth-century Indonesia.⁷ Originally, the Khilāfat issue was raised by a small body of individuals well-known for their pan-Islamic sympathies. It was quickly seized by politicians of advanced views with the avowed object of rendering the existence of the British Government in India impossible. The delay by the Allies in settling a peace treaty with Turkey, caused as much by the rival claims to the fragments of the former Ottoman Empire as by the withdrawal of the United States from the peace negotiations, gave the Khilāfatists a godsent opportunity to build up widespread support in their favor. In these efforts, the Indian Muslim residents of Britain

"Muhammadan Movements," in Sir John Cumming, ed., *Political India, 1832—1932*, (London, 1932), pp. 95—96.

⁵ See the views of Taṣadduq Ḥusayn Khān, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Criminal Investigation Department, IOR, Political and Secret Department, [hereafter *PSD*], 2765/1918.

⁶ For a detailed study of the movement see M. Naeem Qureshi, "The Khilafat Movement in India, 1919—1924," (unpublished London University Ph.D. thesis, 1973).

⁷ The vast expanse in-between was filled in by the "*wahhābīs*" of Bareilly, the *Farā'izīs* of Bengal, the "*Bāghīs*" of the Revolt of 1857, the *Mujāhidīn* of Sittāna, the upsurges in Central Asia (from 1850s), the Senūsī of Libya (from 1880s), the Pan-Islamic activism of Jamāl al-Dīn "Afghānī" (from 1880s), and the Irānī movements of the 1890s. This is an extension of W. C. Smith's argument. See his *Islam in Modern History*, (Princeton, 1957), p. 52.

and their European Turkophile friends also took an important part.⁸ With the entry of the 'ulamā' the movement acquired strength. M. K. Gandhi's (1869—1948) participation widened its scope because it was through his influence that the Hindus were drawn into the Khilāfat movement.⁹ The non-cooperation experiment, which in essence meant the triple boycott of law courts, schools and colleges, and councils, witnessed a new phase of mass involvement in the political agitation. Never before had the Indians demonstrated such enthusiasm and capacity to suffer and sacrifice for their cause.

But in spite of its wide support and many-sided activities, the Khilāfat movement failed to achieve its ostensible objectives, i.e., the preservation of the Ottoman Empire and the institution of the *Khilāfat*. Secret wartime treaties, a strong anti-Turk bias of the Allied Governments, and the inherent weaknesses of the complex movement itself, had combined to cause this failure. The demand for *swarāj* or self-rule, the other objective of the movement, too, did not materialize. To add insult to injury, in March 1924 the Turks abolished the *Khilāfat* which to them had become an anomalous institution in a nationalistic Turkey.¹⁰ In these circumstances, the tenuous Hindu-Muslim entente, which had been under considerable strain, broke down completely. Old rivalries reappeared and the movement collapsed in due course.

Behind these apparently simple events, however, dwell issues of great complexity and significance. To begin with, the Khilāfat movement, though born of Pan-Islamic ideology, was not just "an adventure in altruism" or merely "the concomitant of romanticism."¹¹

⁸ See below.

⁹ Gandhi's participation had come about December 1917, after his meeting at Calcutta with "Bī Ammān" Ābādī Bānō Bēgum (1853—1924), the mother of the 'Ali brothers, who was then leading a campaign for the release of Muslim internees. See *Bombay Chronicle*, 1 January 1918.

¹⁰ Muṣṭafā Kamāl (1881—1938), the Turkish leader, regarded the *Khilāfat* as a constant nuisance and a perpetual danger to the Turkish republic. The *Khilāfat* and religious institutions, therefore, must be dealt with in a radical manner. Kamāl's views were supplied to a British journal by a leading Turkish Nationalist. See *Daily Telegraph*, 4 March 1924. Also see Lindsay to Ramsay MacDonald, No. 166, 27 February 1924, Public Record Office (London) [hereafter PRO], Foreign Office [hereafter F.O.], 371/10217.

¹¹ This reverses the arguments of I. H. Qureshi in his *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent*, (The Hague, 1962), Chapter XIII; and of Moin Shakir in *Khilāfat to Partition*, (New Delhi, 1970), p. 64.

True, Pan-Islamism as an ideal had romantic attraction for many, but the Indian Muslim involvement with the Ottomans was a psychological as well as a political phenomenon. In fact, Pan-Islamism in British India had come to acquire a nationalistic character—a means for the continuance of Islam as a national entity. What the Khilāfatists were after was the salvation of Muslim sovereignty and power abroad and with it the security of the Muslim community in India. This dual concern became obvious when the All-India Muslim League, at its Delhi session in December 1918, expressed its “unmitigated” fear at the adverse influence the collapse of the Muslim Powers would have on the political importance of the Muslim community in India.¹² It was to avert this situation that the Khilāfatists claimed *status quo ante bellum* for Turkey and *swarāj* for India as prerequisites of a satisfactory solution of the Khilāfat question.

In order to provide a mass base to the political agitation, the Khilāfatists used religion. “We can reach mob only through religion,” one of them is reported to have once remarked.¹³ In beating the “big drum ecclesiastic” the ‘*ulamā*’ played a significant role. Their doctrinal submission to the ideal of a “universal” caliphate was passionately sincere and classical in tradition. But whereas the politicians used religion to “reach the mob,” the motive force of the ‘*ulamā*’s action was inherently intertwined in the two spheres of religion and politics. Basically, the British Indian ‘*ulamā*’ were moved, as in the nineteenth century, by a threat to the nomocratic ideal of Islam and a challenge to their own power within this system. They had tried in 1917 to assert the role of the *sharī’a* in the administrative activity of the government, but the attempt had been a failure.¹⁴ This convinced the ‘*ulamā*’ that if they were to save Islam (as they understood it) and salvage their position, they must share the political leadership of the community. This point was calculatedly expressed by Qayyām al-Dīn Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Bārī (1879—1926) of Farangī Maḥall, to whom goes the credit of imparting religious concept to a political movement

¹² IOR, Judicial and Public Department [hereafter *J & P*], 2272/1919.

¹³ This statement is attributed to Muḥammad ‘Alī, who later denied having made it. See Muḥammad Sarwar, *Mawlānā Muḥammad ‘Alī*, (Lahore, 1962), p. 277.

¹⁴ See, for instance, the ‘*ulama*’s representation to Montagu in *Parliamentary Papers* [hereafter *PP*], 1918, Cmd. 9178, pp. 8—10; and E. S. Montagu, *An Indian Diary*, ed., V. Montagu, (London, 1930), p. 45.

and was enthusiastically supported by other 'ulamā', one of whom agreed with him that:

... علمائے کرام جب تک سیاست کی باگ ڈور اپنے ہاتھ میں
 نہ لیں گے اور بلند نشینوں کے ہم نشین ہو کر اپنی مزہبی
 آواز کو اون کی آوازوں سے نہ گرائیں گے ، علماء کا مزہبی
 اقتدار قائم ہونا سخت مشکل ہے اور نیز ان کے مطالب عالیہ
 [حفاظت اسلام] کا حصول ایک خواب پریشان سے زائد
 نہیں -

... until the 'ulamā' take the reins of politics
 in their own hands and cross their voices with
 those in authority, it will be difficult for
 them to establish their religious supremacy.
 Moreover, the fulfilment of their higher aims
 [i.e., the protection of Islam] will remain
 merely an empty dream.¹⁵

It was this motivation which had driven most of the 'ulamā' to dream of a hierarchy of their own—a sort of a “religious and jurisprudential *imperium in imperio*” under a *Shaykh al-Islām* or *Amīr-i Hind*, directly responsible to the Ottoman Caliph;¹⁶ it was the same motivation which led them to create a religio-political organization, called the Jam'īyyat al-'Ulamā'-i Hind, and to make common cause with the political élite.¹⁷ The resultant concord between the 'ulamā' and the politicians was so formidable that it turned the *Khilāfat* into one of the most memorable movements of modern India.

And yet, with all their strength and their prestige, the 'ulamā' and the politicians together failed to rise above the immediate issues or

¹⁵ Abu'l-Muhāsīn Muḥammad Sajjād to 'Abd al-Bārī, 4 December 1918, *Nuqūsh*, Lahore, CIX, (April/May 1968), p. 91.

¹⁶ P. Hardy, “The 'Ulamā' in British India,” paper read at the Centre of South Asian Studies, School of Oriental and African Studies, London, July 1969. Also see his *Partners in Freedom and True Muslims*, (Lund, 1971), pp. 12—13; Qāzī Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ghaffār, *Āsār-i Abu'l-Kalām Āzād*, (Bombay, 1949), pp. 67—68; and M. U. Haq, *Muslim Politics in Modern India*, (Meerut, 1970), pp. 88—104.

¹⁷ For details on the Jam'īyyat see Mawlānā Muḥammad Miyān, *Jam'īyyat al-'Ulamā' Kyā Hai?*, (Delhi, 1946).

to give a clear and definite lead to the Muslims of India. The *hijrat* of 1920 is a clear example of their failure. No doubt the exodus grew out of the belief that British India had become uncongenial for Islam, but the '*ulamā*' who decreed it to be mandatory and the politicians who developed it into a campaign, ignored all economic and political realities.¹⁸ In a fit of anti-British temper they had closed their eyes to its consequences. The *hijrat* spread rapidly to upper India in spite of the fact that the Jam'iyyat al-'Ulamā' and the Central Khilāfat Committee were opposed to the venture lest it should harm the non-cooperation experiment then underway. Between May and August 1920, about sixty thousand *muhājirīn* sold their worldly belongings and took refuge in Afghanistan (*dār al-Islām*). The ill-conceived and ill-organised campaign, however, ended in a fiasco when in August 1920, the Afghans decided to stop further immigration. But in the process the *hijrat* caused havoc to thousands of families. Of the *muhājirīn* approximately seventy-five percent came back to India. Others either perished or scattered to northern Afghanistan, Turkey and Russia. It took a long time for the people involved to recover from the disaster.¹⁹

The role of the Indian Muslim residents of Britain has never been properly appreciated or even assessed. The fact is that the Khilāfat movement in its embryonic stage was nurtured by these very people. In the first place it was Mushīr Ḥusayn Qidwā'ī (1878–1938), a prominent Pan-Islamist barrister, who had urged 'Abd al-Bārī to action and had kept him informed of the trends of events in the European capitals.²⁰ Then there were men like Sayyid Amīr 'Alī (1849–1928), M. H. Ispahānī, Shaykh 'Abd al-Majīd and Nawāb W. H. M. Jang, who did the difficult job of highlighting Indian feelings on the Turkish issue. They arranged public meetings, sent memorials to the Government and sought publicity through the press. They also tried to counter rabid Turkophobes like Lord Robert Cecil (1864–1958), Lord Bryce (1838–1922), Sir Donald Maclean (1864–1932), Sir Charles Oman (1860–1946), Professor D. S. Margoliouth (1858–1940) and

¹⁸ See M. Naeem Qureshi, "The '*Ulamā*' of British India and the *Hijrat* of 1920," to be published in *Modern Asian Studies*, Cambridge.

¹⁹ See M. N. Qureshi, "The Khilafat Movement in India, 1919–1924," Chapter III.

²⁰ See, e.g., Qidwā'ī to 'Abd al-Bārī, 2 September 1914, *Nuqūsh*, CIX, pp. 83–84.

historian Arnold Toynbee (1889—1974).²¹ The main work in this connection was done under the auspices of the London Muslim League, the two Islamic Societies and Qidwā'i's Islamic Information Bureau and its journal, the *Muslim Outlook*. Even the Working Mission of the Lāhōrī Aḥmadīs under Khwāja Kamāl al-Dīn (1870—1923) was utilised to serve the cause of the *Khilāfat*.²² Apart from this, Sir Agha Khān III (1877—1957) and two other prominent Indian Muslims, Ṣāhibzāda Āftāb Aḥmad Khān (1867—1930) and Yūsūf 'Alī (1872—1953), were able to present the Indian Muslim case before the Council of Four at Paris. In May 1919, they accompanied the official Indian delegation to the peace conference, consisting of Edwin Montagu (1879—1924), Lord Sinha of Raipur (1864—1928) and the Maharaja of Bikaner (1880—1943), and pleaded for leniency to Turkey.²³ Similarly, Muḥammad 'Alī Jinnāḥ (1876—1948) worked on behalf of the All-India Muslim League to save the Ottoman Empire from dismemberment.²⁴ It was only after the tempo of the *Khilāfat* movement became increasingly militant that the moderates among them, Sir Agha Khān and Sayyid Amīr 'Alī in particular, began to take a cautious course.

In their efforts the Indian Muslims in Britain were ably assisted by

²¹ The anti-Turk views of Lord Robert Cecil can be seen in *PP*, 1920, *Hansard*, 123 H. C. Deb. 5S, col. 730. For Lord Bryce see his article "The Settlement of the Near East," *Contemporary Review*, London, (January 1920), p. 1. A sample of the reaction of British parliamentarians, including Sir Donald Maclean and Sir Charles Oman, is available in *PP*, 1920, *Hansard*, 125 H. C. Deb. 5S, cols. 1949—2060. For Margoliouth's views see his article "The Caliphate," *New Europe*, London, XIV, No. 182, pp. 294—300, (1920), *passim*. For Toynbee see his articles, "A Review of the Turkish Problem," *New Europe*, XIV, No. 170, pp. 1—5, (1920), *passim*; "The Meaning of the Constantinople Decision," *ibid.*, XIV, No. 175, pp. 129—31, (1920), *passim*; and "Mr. Montagu's Pound of Flesh," *ibid.*, XIV, No. 176, pp. 145—49, (1920), *passim*.

²² IOR, *PSSF*, 380/1919, I, III & IV; and P. C. Bamford, *The Histories of the Non-Co-operation and Khilafat Movements*, (Prepared under the aegis of the Government of India's Intelligence Bureau, Delhi, 1925), pp. 142 & 145.

²³ *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States. The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, V, (Washington, 1946), pp. 690—701. The Indian delegation to the Peace Conference had already attempted to acquaint the Allied statesmen with the Indian Muslim view on the future of Turkey. For details see memoranda dated 5 February and 1 April 1919, enclosures, Montagu to Chelmsford, 31 March 1919, *Chelmsford Papers*.

²⁴ See, e.g., IOR, *PSSF*, P. 5889/1919, put away with 380/1919, III.

the British Muslims like Marmaduke Pickthall (1875—1936), 'Umar Flight and Khālid Sheldrake and the British Turkophiles such as Col. Josiah Wedgwood (1872—1943), Brig.-Gen. Sir Conyers Surtees (1858—1933), Lt.-Col. Aubury Herbert (1880—1923), Lt. Comm. Kennworthy and Sir J. D. Rees (1854—1922). Among other well-known sympathizers were Earl Winterton (1883—1962), Earl Abingdon (1836—1928), Lord Ampthill (1869—1935), Lord Carmichael (1859—1926), Sir Theodore Morison (1863—1936), Sir George Ross-Keppel (1866—1921) and Prof. E. G. Browne (1862—1926), all of whom had been connected with India in one way or the other. The Anglo-Ottoman Society of Lord Mowbray, Segrave and Strouton of Strouton (1867—1936) also gave its full support.²⁵ But they, too, failed to move the intractable British and Allied Governments.

As for the measure of support which the Khilāfatists were able to win from the rest of the Muslim world there is no direct evidence. Indian Pan-Islamism seems to have been largely a one-way process. In any case, since the last war, the Arabs and the Turks had been involved in their own immediate problems and could ill-afford to look askance at a changing world. Above all, the professed aims of the Khilāfat movement were in direct contradiction of the nationalistic aspirations of the Arabs and the Turks. On the contrary, the Turks seemed to exploit the Indian agitation to their own advantage as an instrument of their foreign policy.²⁶ So did the Afghans. Their attitude during the *hijrat* of 1920 is a good example of their real intentions. The Afghans had encouraged the exodus from India primarily to harass the Indian Government and thus to extract concessions at the Mussoorie talks then in progress. But as soon as the Anglo-Afghan relations seemed to improve the Afghans lost all interest in Muslim India and put an end to the *hijrat*.²⁷ The Bolsheviks, too, exploited the Khilāfatists though initially the Khilāfatists themselves had in-

²⁵ See IOR, *PSSF*, 380/1919, I, III & IV; *The Times* (London), 26 May & 10 September 1919, and 2 February 1920; *Contemporary Review*, CXVI, (1919), p. 116; *PP*, 1919—20, *Hansard*, *passim*; and Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī, *Barid-i Farang*, (Karachi, 1952), *passim*.

²⁶ For the Turks the Treaty of Lausanne (July 1923) was the turning point in their relations with the Indian Khilāfatists, though it was not so with the latter. See below.

²⁷ This had become evident even during the Mussoorie Conference. See IOR, *PSSF*, 1061/1919.

voked the Russian help for their grandiose anti-British scheme.²⁸ In fact, the Bolsheviks were never really serious in helping the Indian Khilāfatists most of whom, except perhaps a few like Sayyid Fazl al-Ḥasan Ḥasrat Mohānī (1878/80—1951), were unenamoured of Communist ideology.²⁹ Even those disaffected *muhājirīn* who got to Russia during the *hijrat* and renounced the religion of Muḥammad in favour of that of Karl Marx were unable to influence the course of the Khilāfat movement in India. The émigré Communist Party of India which they established at Tashkent in October 1920, did not have any impact on contemporary India.³⁰ The middle class Khilāfat/Congress leadership was on the whole inimical to Communism. The Indian nationalist movement, during the period under review, seems to have “remained largely unaffected in its actual policies and programme by the October Revolution.”³¹

The Khilāfat movement had also the support of the Hindus. But the process of cooperation among Hindus and Muslims was slow and it took almost a year before the Indian National Congress was finally persuaded to bless this collaboration.³² Gandhi, who had joined the movement at an early stage, was the key-man in this affair. However, the final Congress approval did not come until the Khilāfatists had tacked the Punjab issue with the Khilāfat question and had

²⁸ See IOR, Political & Secret Memoranda [hereafter *PSM*], B. 350 & 361; and Iqbāl Shaydā’ī’s memoirs in *Imrōz* (Lahore), 25 May 1969.

²⁹ Zafar Imam, *Colonialism in East-West Relations*, (Delhi, 1969), p. 83 ff. For Mohānī see ‘Abd al-Shukūr, *Ḥasrat Mohānī*, 3rd ed., (Lucknow, 1954), pp. 22—23; and ‘Abd al-Qawī, *Ḥasrat kī Siyāsī Zindagī: Chand Jhalkiyān*, 2nd ed., (Desna, 1956), pp. 51—61.

³⁰ Muzaffar Ahmad, *The Communist Party of India and Its Formation Abroad*, (Calcutta, 1962), pp. 56—97. For details of the *muhājirīn*’s activities in Russia see also *Madras Mail*, 27 November 1922; the experiences of *muhājir* ‘Abd al-Qādir in *The Times*, 26 & 27 February 1930; the narrative of a *muhājir* in Sirdar Ikbāl Ali Shah, *The Tragedy of Amanullah*, (London, 1933), pp. 150—56; *Communism in India, 1924—1927*, (Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Calcutta, 1927), pp. 9—10; Shaukat Usmani, *I Met Stalin Twice*, (Bombay, 1953), pp. 21—22; David N. Druhe, *Soviet Russia and Indian Communism*, (New York, 1959), p. 35; and interview with Faḏl-i Ilāhī in *Viewpoint*, Lahore, I, No. 13, (1975), p. 13.

³¹ Zafar Imam, *op.cit.*, p. 83.

³² See the proceedings of the Special Congress at Calcutta in September 1920 in *Englishman* (Calcutta), 9 September 1920; and *Bombay Chronicle*, 9 September 1920.

promised to observe strict non-violence in the campaign.³³ But quite apart from the Punjab “wrong” as a bait for the Hindu cooperation, the Khilāfat issue had come to acquire a nationalistic significance. The Hindu leaders, like Motilal Nehru (1861—1931) and his son Jawaharlal Nehru (1889—1964), C. R. Das (1870—1925), Lajpat Rai (1865—1928), Vallabhbhai Jhaverbhai Patel (1875—1950) and C. Rajagopalachari (1878—1972), who collaborated with the Khilāfatists in the struggle for *swarāj* were also moved by a desire to advance India’s political interests. It was this synchronisation of political interests and political dependence on each other that more than anything else tied the two communities together. In other words, it was a marriage of convenience and not a genuine *rapprochement*.

The role of Gandhi in the Khilāfat movement has been much advertised. A recent writer has even suggested that it was Gandhi who spurred the Muslims to action and organized the Khilāfat movement when their own leaders were lukewarm about it.³⁴ But this was not so. There is plenty of evidence that the Muslim leaders initiated and developed the agitation themselves without any inspiration from outside.³⁵ Even the experiment of “non-cooperation” or *tark-i mawālāt*, though the brainchild of Gandhi, was an item of the Khilāfat program. It had been formulated solely for the purpose of redressing the Khilāfat “wrong.” In its final form, non-cooperation had been shaped and developed by the Khilāfatists themselves, with a religious overtone imparted to it first by Sayyid Ḥusayn and Abu’l-Kalām Āzād (1888—1958) and then by ‘Abd al-Bārī and Maḥmūd Ḥasan (1851—1920) of

³³ The Punjab issue had emerged out of the excessive measures of the Government against the popular agitation in the Punjab in April 1919. Contemporary Indian point of view on the Punjab issue can be seen in Lajpat Rai, *The Agony of the Punjab*, (Madras, 1920); P. Mohan, *An Imaginary Rebellion and How it was Suppressed*, (Lahore, 1920); *Report of the Commissioners appointed by the Punjab Sub-Committee of the Indian National Congress*, 2 vols., (Lahore, 1920). The Government case is represented in *PP*, 1920, Cmd. 681, *Report of the Committee Appointed by the Government of India to Investigate the Disturbances in the Punjab, etc.* The British point of view can be seen in Arther Swinson, *Six Minutes to Sunset*, (London, 1964); and R. Furneaux, *Massacre at Amritsar*, (London, 1963). A more balanced picture is given by various writers in R. Kumar, ed., *Essays on Gandhian Politics*, (Oxford, 1971).

³⁴ See Judith M. Brown, *Gandhi’s Rise to Power: Indian Politics, 1915—1922*, (Cambridge, 1972), Chapter VI.

³⁵ See M. N. Qureshi, “The Khilafat Movement in India, 1919—1924,” Chapters II & IV.

Deōband.³⁶ Indeed, it was the Khilāfatists who had pulled Gandhi into the movement. Otherwise, Gandhi had no hold on the Muslims. His position in the Khilāfat movement was merely that of an adviser. Gandhi, too, understood his limitations. "I would not stand alone and expect to carry the Mussalman masses with me," he admitted frankly.³⁷ The fact is that Gandhi owed much of his power to the Khilāfatists under the 'Alī brothers—Shawkat (1873—1938) and Muḥammad (1878—1931). Among these two brothers, the elder, Shawkat 'Alī, since his release from internment in December 1919, had emerged as the most powerful man among the Muslims. As one of the honorary secretaries of the Central Khilāfat Committee, he wielded more power and influence than any other Khilāfatist. Sēth Jān Muḥammad Chhotānī, the burly president of the Committee, was merely a figurehead. 'Abd al-Bārī, his preceptor, was no propagandist and had chosen to remain unobtrusively behind the scenes. Abu'l-Kalām Āzād, Ḥakīm Ajmal Khān (1865—1927), Dr. Mukhtār Aḥmad Anṣārī (1880—1936), Ḥasrat Mohānī and others who were leaders in their own right had to be content with a second place. Shawkat 'Alī towered above all of them. Yet, the interdependence of Shawkat 'Alī and Gandhi was extraordinary. Neither could do without the other. And with all their limitations they were able to build up an agitation never before experienced in India.

But in spite of the remarkable response with which the movement met, the Khilāfatists were unable to mobilize the whole of India. Apart from the elusive support of the masses, large and influential sections even among the Muslims—including some '*ulamā*'—had kept themselves aloof. Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī (1863—1943), for instance, did not support the Khilāfat movement. Even the '*ulamā*' of Deōband, including Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān and Muḥammad Aḥmad, had been behaving cautiously since the discovery of the Silk Letter Conspiracy (1916) and the subsequent internment of their mentor, Maḥmūd Ḥasan. They had also found it hard to accept the non-Quraysh *Khilāfat* of the Ottomans. It was not until after the return of Maḥmūd

³⁶ See *Hindu* (Madras), 16 September 1920; *Nuqūsh*, CIX, p. 13; 'Abd al-Bārī, *Khutba-i Sadārat*, (Erode, 1921), p. 22; Abu'l-Kalām Āzād, *Mas'ala-i Khilāfat wa Jazīra-i 'Arab*, (Calcutta, 1920), pp. 141—45; and Maḥmūd Ḥasan, *Hazrat Shaykh Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan [sic] kā ěk Zārūrī Khat*, (Khilāfat Committee, Azamgarh, n. d.).

³⁷ M. K. Gandhi, *Young India, 1919—1922*, I, (Madras, 1922), pp. 197—98.

Ḥasan to India in the middle of 1920, that they joined the movement wholeheartedly.³⁸ Some like Muḥammad Shafī' (1869–1932), Faẓl-i Ḥusayn (1879–1936), Sayyid Razā 'Alī (1880–1949), the Rāja of Maḥmūdābād (1877–1931) and others, rejected extremism of any kind and worked for a "reasonable" settlement of the Turkish question through cooperation with the Government.³⁹ Others again questioned the Khilāfatists' intentions or had strong ideological differences. The Shī'ī Muslims and the Qādiyānī Aḥmadīs in particular questioned the Ottoman right to the *Khilāfat*.⁴⁰ Yet others, like Khān Bahādur Nabī Bakhsh, not only opposed the movement but with the help of some *mawlawīs* even launched a counter campaign.⁴¹

The attitude of the Hindu and Muslim moderates was reflected even more clearly in their stance towards the methods employed by the Khilāfatists in extracting concessions from the Government. The particular subject of controversy was non-cooperation which they feared was too extreme a step.⁴² But then the "extremists" themselves

³⁸ See Muḥammad Yāsīn Chiriākōtī, *Al-Tanqīd 'Al al-Khilāfa*, (Gorakhpur, [1922]).

³⁹ Shafī' and Faẓl-i Ḥusayn, like Ajmal Khān, Jinnāḥ, Iqbāl (q. v.) and others, rejected the ventures like the *hijrat*. Razā 'Alī opposed the boycott of British goods. The Rāja of Maḥmūdābād, the Nawwāb of Dacca, the Chiefs of the Punjab and other moderates had long before dissociated themselves from the Khilāfat movement. See L. F. Rushbrook Williams, *The State of Pakistan*, (London, 1962), p. 19; Qāzī Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ghaffār, *Ḥayāt-i Ajmal*, (Aligarh, 1950), p. 222; A. H. Albiruni, *Makers of Pakistan and Modern Muslim India*, (Lahore, 1950), p. 177; IOR, *PSSF*, P. 7020/1920 with 1061/1919, XI; Government of Bombay, *Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India (Collected from Bombay Government Records)* [hereafter *HFMI*], III, Part I, (Bombay, 1967), pp. 239–40; Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P., No. 1118, 25 November 1919, *Chelmsford Papers*; and Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegrams P., Nos. 62-C & 379, 15 April and 7 May 1920, *Chelmsford Papers*.

⁴⁰ Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P., No. 260, 25 March 1920, *Chelmsford Papers*; *Pioneer Mail* (Allahabad), 9 April 1920; IOR, *PSSF*, P. 2562/1920 with 380/1919; Agha Mohd. Sultan Mirza, *An Essay Towards a Better Understanding of the Caliphate*, 2nd ed., (Delhi, 1920), p. 22; and Mirzā Bashīr al-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad, *Mu'ā'ida Turkīyya awr Musalmānōn kā Ā'inda Rawayya*, (Qadiyan, 1920), pp. 4–16.

⁴¹ See Shaikh Abdulaziz Mahomed Soleman, *Anti-Khalif Intrigues in Sind*, Part I, (Sukkur, 1919), *passim*.

⁴² IOR, India Confidential Home Political Proceedings [hereafter *ICHPP*], September 1920, Pro. No. 100, Appendix II.

were not unanimous on this point, especially in regard to its extension to the educational institutions, professions and the councils. Even within the Khilāfat organization a powerful group led by Chhotani was constantly at loggerheads with the militants. This cleavage was especially witnessed at the Third Khilāfat Conference at Bombay (February 1920) over the question of subversion in the army⁴³ and still later in the summer of that year when the Khilāfatists decided to push the non-cooperation scheme with all its four stages.⁴⁴ As time passed the differences widened and spread to such other issues as civil disobedience, council entry, and, more important, to the question of violence and non-violence.⁴⁵ In the end, the divisions among the leaders spelled disaster to the movement itself.

With their own house divided, the Khilāfatists failed to influence the British policy. The British Government of Lloyd George (1863—1945) displayed no compassion for the Indian Muslim case.⁴⁶ Their attitude precisely reflected the feelings of the vocal British public.⁴⁷ But then the Turkish problem involved the clash of interests of the Allied Powers. It also had some inherent contradictions—the conflicting ambitions of the Turks, the Arabs and even the Greeks. On top of this Lloyd George pursued his own anti-Turkish policies, constantly disregarding the Indian Government and the India Office, overriding the Foreign Office and ignoring the General Staff.⁴⁸ No doubt he allow-

⁴³ IOR, *PSSF*, P. 2591/1920 with 380/1919, VI.

⁴⁴ IOR, *ICHPP*, September 1920, Pro. No. 100, above; IOR, *ICHPP*, November 1920, Pro. No. 19; *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 24 May 1920; and Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P. No. 461, 4 June 1920, *Chelmsford Papers*.

⁴⁵ See M. N. Qureshi, "The Khilafat Movement in India, 1919—1924," Chapters V & VI.

⁴⁶ See, for instance, Lloyd George's speech to the Indian Khilāfat delegation in March 1920, when he refused to concede a single demand. IOR, *PSM*, B. 371. Also see Curzon to Sir Eyre Crowe, No. 7289, 30 October 1919, enclosure, F. O. to I. O., No. 145162/M.E./44A, IOR, *PSSF*, P. 6818/1919 with 380/1919, III; Curzon's minute in PRO, F. O. 371/5141; and Hardinge's minutes in PRO, F. O., 371/5142, and IOR, *PSSF*, 380/1919, II.

⁴⁷ See, for instance, T. P. O'Conner's speech in the House of Commons on 26 February 1920, *PP*, 1920, *Hansard*, 125 H. C. Deb. 5 S, col. 1893; T. W. Arnold's minute of 17 March 1920, in IOR, *PSSF*, P. 2012/1920 with 380/1919, IV; and A. J. Toynbee, "The Question of the Caliphate" *Contemporary Review*, CXVII, pp. 192—96, (1920), *passim*.

⁴⁸ A glaring example was his decision to hand over to Greece the overwhelm-

ed the two Indian Khilāfat delegations—one in March 1920 under Muḥammad ‘Ali and the other a year later under Ḥasan Imām (1871–1933)—to represent their case,⁴⁹ but in the final settlement with Turkey the Muslim pressure had little effect. Even when the Treaty of Sèvres was replaced by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, it was the Turkish arms rather than the Indian memorials that accomplished the feat.

But this did not mean that there was no concern in the official circles about the Indian Muslim attitude towards the Khilāfat issue. In fact the Muslim unrest was the chief worry of the Government of India and the India Office. Therefore, in spite of the narrow grooves of the imperial policy within which they had to manoeuvre, the India Office under Edwin Montagu—and later under Viscount Peel (1867–1937)—and the Government of India under Lords Chelmsford (1868–1933) and Reading (1860–1935), for reasons of expediency, tried their best to exert sympathetic influence in any final settlement with Turkey. The same tactical reason moved them to adopt, as far as the agitation was concerned, a policy of non-interference where it was useful and a policy of repression where it was effective.⁵⁰ The majority of the local governments would have preferred to use stronger measures—and often did so—but the Government of India, in search of a uniform all-India policy and checked by its legal advisors, exercised a restraining influence on its satraps. But where the Provincial Governments exceeded limits, as in the Punjab in summer 1919 and in Bengal in winter 1921, it invariably upheld their actions, even if the measures employed had been unusually stringent.⁵¹ The India Office exercised but an exiguous control over the policies of the Government of India. It generally did not criticize it either as going too far in the direction of non-interference, or as being unduly repressive.⁵² But the important

ingly Muslim areas of Thrace and Smyrna. See PRO, F. O., 371/5044, 5046, 5106 and 5141; and IOR, *PSSF*, P., 8039/1920 with 4995/1919, II.

⁴⁹ For details see IOR, *PSM*, B. 371; and F/172/1/10 (b), *Lloyd George Papers*.

⁵⁰ The policy pursued by the Government of India in relation to the Khilāfat movement can best be followed from the instructions which it issued from time to time to the local governments, more appropriately if they are studied in relation to the chronological background of the main stages of the movement they were defined to deal with. For details see IOR, *J & P*, 5273/1920.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*

factor is that the Government of India managed to come out relatively unscathed from the six troubled years of the Khilāfat movement.

The last phase of the Khilāfat movement was marred by scandals, political factionalism, personal squabbles⁵³ and, worst of all, Hindu-Muslim dissensions.⁵⁴ As the famous Turkish author Halidé Edib (1883—1964) points out, the Khilāfat movement had “two curiously contradictory results in India: that of uniting the Muslims and Hindus around a common activity; and that of dividing them.”⁵⁵ Human failings, diversity of interests, inability to sustain a common effort and above all a reaction consequent to the collapse of the non-cooperation experiment had ended an entente which had been resting on weak foundations. But contrary to popular misconception the breakup was a slow process. Even the Māppillā excesses (1921) had no widespread communal repercussions.⁵⁶ Nor did Gandhi’s action to postpone the projected civil disobedience in February 1922, result in any immediate Hindu-Muslim parting. In fact both communities continued to profess and follow the same course for quite some time. It was towards the middle of 1922 that relations began to worsen. It took a full year

⁵³ Interesting material about these squabbles and scandals is available in *Nuqūsh*, CIX, pp. 73, 81—83 & 111; Afzal Ḥaq, *Tārīkh-i Aḥrār*, 2nd ed., (Lahore, 1968), pp. 68—70; *Ḥisābāt-i Waḥd-i Khilāfat Europe*, (Central Khilāfat Committee, Bombay, 1923), pp. 1—6 & 17—20; Khilāfat funds explanatory note by Col. Kaye, dated 24 May 1922, Indian National Archives (Dehli), Home Political, May 1922, No. 741; *Statesman* (Calcutta), 17 & 21 March and 5 & 21 April 1923; *Madras Mail*, 3 October 1922, and 5 & 24 April 1923; and *Hindu*, 12 July 1923.

⁵⁴ The breaking point in Hindu-Muslim relations was the harrowing riot at Kohat in the Frontier in September 1924. See IOR, *J & P*, 3714/1924, 4173/1924 and 4357/1924.

⁵⁵ Halidé Edib, *Inside India*, (London, 1937), p. 30.

⁵⁶ For a balanced study of this agrarian cum religio-political uprising in South India see, Government of Madras, *Correspondence on Moplah Outrages in Malabar for the Year 1849—53*, (Madras, 1963); W. Logan, *Malabar*, I, (Madras, 1887), pp. 190—99; J. Decosta, “The Moplahs and the Land Tax in India,” *India*, London, (June, 1896), pp. 68—70; *PP*, 1921, Cmd. 1552; IOR, *J & P*, 7247/1921; *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1921, II, pp. 131—55; and 1923, III, Part VII, p. 4792; *Council of States Debates*, 1921, II, pp. 88—110; R. H. Hitchcock, *A History of the Malabar Rebellion, 1921*, (Government of Madras, Madras, 1925); and Stephen F. Dale, “The Mappilla Outbreaks: Ideology and Social Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Kerala,” *Journal of Asian Studies*, XXXV, No. 1, (1975), pp. 85—97.

before the gulf widened and yet another year before it finally became unbridgeable.

Another very important point which emerges is that the Khilāfat movement did not end with the conclusion of the Treaty of Lausanne in July 1923, the natural culminating point of the Turkish crisis. On the contrary, the agitation continued on the secondary, and in fact flimsy, issue of the freedom of the Jazīrat al-‘Arab (Arabia, including Iraq, Syria, Trans-Jordan, Palestine and especially Ḥijāz) from non-Muslim control. Even when the Turks abolished the caliphal office in March 1924, the movement, though greatly reduced in intensity, did not terminate. The Khilāfatists simply would not accept the *fait accompli*.⁵⁷ This naturally takes one back to the earlier contention that the defence of the *Khilāfat* was only a façade. The real issue was the defence of Muslim power abroad and with it the security of the Muslim position in India.⁵⁸ But this was what the Khilāfatists failed to achieve. Their failure lies in the fact that they were unable to find a synthesis between Pan-Islamism and Indian nationalism, and to work out the community’s exact position in a future multinational state. After the abolition of the *Khilāfat* the Khilāfatists did try to divert their attention from extraterritorial matters to domestic issues, but they had no solution for the new situation.⁵⁹ Besides, the Khilāfat organization was now so faction-ridden that it had lost its credibility. The All-India Muslim Conference and later the All-India Muslim League under Muḥammad ‘Alī Jinnāḥ, evidently, seemed to be more suited to take up the new challenge.⁶⁰

But in spite of its failure, the Khilāfat movement has left its mark on the history of the Subcontinent. The movement was the first India-wide agitation of the Indian Muslims with a pivotal organisation—the Central Khilāfat Committee—to guide its course. It trained

⁵⁷ See, for instance, the proceedings of the special Khilāfat Conference at Calcutta in March 1924. *Englishman*, 21 March 1924; and *Pioneer*, 23 March 1924.

⁵⁸ IOR, *J & P*, 2272/1919, above.

⁵⁹ On 25 June 1924, a meeting of the Central Khilāfat Committee was held at Delhi. Among other things, it decided to undertake the entire responsibility of reorganising the political, social and economic life of the Muslim community. *Times of India* (Bombay), 25 & 26 June 1924.

⁶⁰ The All-India Muslim League was revived early in 1924, but it was not able to reassert itself until some years later.

them in political agitation and made them conscious of their potentialities. It gave birth to new political alignments. Provinces hitherto lagging in political experience, such as the Punjab, Sind and the Frontier, responded side by side with Bombay, Bengal and the U.P. which had well-established political traditions. It brought the Hindus and the Muslims on one platform for the first and the last time. It also produced a leadership which though concerned with the immediate issues was able, with varying fortunes, to sustain the agitation for more than six years. The Khilāfat organization which led the movement was more militant than either the Muslim League or the Congress and it acquired such importance and influence that at one stage even Dr. Chaim Weizmann (1874–1952), the Zionist leader, was anxious to win its support in his relations with the Arabs on the question of Palestine.⁶¹ The influence of the Central Khilāfat Committee, even at the fag end of the movement, was evident from the part it played in the 1924–25 internecine war in the Ḥijāz between King Ḥusayn (1856–1931) and Ibn Sa‘ūd (1880–1953) and the latter’s anxiety to please it.⁶²

In the final analysis, one can say that though the movement failed, it unwittingly left a pattern of politics which the Muslims of British India later tried to follow. After a few more years of experiments and frustrations they finally realised that the solution of their problem lay neither in narrow nationalism nor in doctrinaire “universal” Islamism, but in some kind of an Islamic “League of Nations.” “It was within the concept of this multi-national neo-pan-Islamism,” writes ‘Azīz Aḥmad (1913—), “that Iqbāl [1877–1938] evolved the theory of Pakistan.”⁶³ It is in this same concept that the national motives today in Pakistan are still deeply embedded, though the basic contradiction between the classical and the modern nationalistic concepts remains somewhat unresolved.⁶⁴

⁶¹ See note on interview dated 24 January 1931, between Shawkat ‘Alī and the British High Commissioner in Palestine in IOR, *J & P (S)*, 1212/1931.

⁶² See *Report Numā’indagān-i Majlis-i Khilāfat Hind*, (Central Khilafat Committee, Bombay, [1926]).

⁶³ Aziz Ahmad, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

⁶⁴ The promotion of bonds of unity among Muslim nations was one of the “Directive Principles of State Policy” of the 1956 Constitution—incorporated subsequently by the succeeding Constitutions of 1962, 1972 (Interim), and 1973 (present).