

PAN-ISLAMISM AND THE NORTH WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE OF BRITISH INDIA (1897-1918)

Dr. Abdul RAUF*

Abstract

The North West Frontier Province NWFP, being a strategic region of the Indo-Pak Subcontinent, played a very important role in the political upheavals in British India. Religion played a pivotal role in shaping events which took place in the region. The Pan-Islamic slogans raised in India, not only attracted the Muslims of the NWFP but it augmented their armed struggle against the British in a more forceful vigour. Consequently, they faced a more severe treatment from the British including several military expeditions against them. The role of Pan Islamic feelings in the resistance movements, launched in the province, has not been dealt properly by the researchers. In the following pages, an effort has been made to assess the role of these feelings in the on going armed struggle of the Pukhtuns; particularly in tribal areas (North West of India) against the British and also to bring out details of some of the personalities of the province who went to Turkey and contributed physically to the cause of Pan-Islamism.

Introduction

Pan-Islamism¹ refers to the movement which aims to unite the diversified Muslims on the basis of their common religion. There are several instances in the Holy Qur‘an and the traditions of the Holy prophet Mohammad (PBUH), which emphasises the concept of Muslim brotherhood and good feelings for the fellow Muslims. However, the political unity of the Muslims under one caliph lasted till the fall of the Umayyads and the establishment of Abbaside rule in 132 A.H. (750 A.D.) in Baghdad. A parallel caliphate was founded by the Umayyad prince Abdur Rahman Al Dakhil in 138 A.H. (756 A.D.) in Cordoba. Since then, Muslim theologians and scholars have not opposed the existence of more than one Muslim state in the world. It shows that the unity of Muslims under one ruler is desirable but not obligatory. However, the concept of Ummah (a supra—territorial spiritual and political unity of believers) has ways been a cherished dream of the enthusiasts throughout Muslim history.

* Assistant Professor Pakistan Study Centre, University of Peshawar.

¹ The origin of the term ‘Pan-Islamism’ and its actual character had been dealt in detail by Dwight E. Lee, “Notes and Suggestions—The Origin of Pan-Islamism”, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 47, No. 2, pp.278-87. Jan.,

Pan-Islamism and Turkey

The concept of Pan-Islamism by the Turks surfaced during the European colonial advancement in the Muslim lands in last quarter of the 19th century.² In the same period, Europe witnessed the rise of certain movements having extra territorial sympathies of its adherents like Pan-Slavism, and Pan-Germanism. These developments by the Christian West in the surroundings of Turkey, affected some of the thinkers and policy makers to respond in a befitting manner.³ They thought that Turkey should have broadened its base of support. In response to the efforts of Pan-Slavism and Pan-Germanism Turkey start giving attention to organise the Muslims of the world. An alternative to such efforts was attention to the Muslims of the world. The idea of Pan-Islamism was put into practice in Turkey, by Sultan Abdul Hamid II (1842-1918). He was supported by the Turkish intellectuals later known as “Young Ottomans”. The most eloquent exponent of them was Namik Kemal (1840-1888) whose ideology of patriotism was Pan-Ottomanism with Islamist nationalism as its base.⁴ Certain European powers, particularly the British did not actively resisted Pan-Islamism among Muslims even under their own jurisdiction, such as British India. It is on record that the British used the offices of Turkish Caliph when dealing with Tipu Sultan’s opposition to the British presence in Southern India.⁵ The British also used the office of the Caliph to pacify Muslims’ resistance in the turbulent period of 1857.⁶ German Kaiser Wilhelm II also encouraged the Pan-Islamic policy of Abdul Hamid, in order to increase German influence in the Muslim world in general and in the middle east in particular.⁷ The reason behind Britain’s passive policy towards Pan-Islamism was the need of a counter balance against Tsarist Russia which was slowly moving towards the east endangering the interests of Britain in the region. The idea of Pan-Islamism was also upheld by Sayyed Jamal-ud-Din Afghani (1838-1897), a non-Turkish Muslim leader whose place of birth is also contiguous to the region under discussion in this paper.⁸ In fact, he and Pan-Islamism became synonymous in the later

² Such as the French occupation of Tunisia in 1871, the British possession of Egypt in 1882 and the Russian conquest of Merv in 1884 and etc.

³ Azmi Ozcan, *Pan-Islamism-Indian Muslims, the Ottomans & Britain (1877-1924)*, Leiden, Brill, 1997, p.34.

⁴ S. Qadrattullah Fatimi, *Pakistan Movement and Kemalist Revolution A Comparative Study*, Lahore, Institute of Islamic Culture, 1977, pp. 21-22.

⁵ Lord Mornington Wellesley, the British Governor General of the East India Company produced a letter from the Ottoman Caliph Salim III in the name of Tipu Sultan stating not to oppose the British, but should make friendship with them.

⁶ Ali Ashraf, “Khilafat Movement: A Factor in Muslim Separatism” in Mushirul Hasan ed., *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India*, New Delhi, Manohar, 1985, p. 85.

⁷ Azmi Ozcan, *Pan-Islamism-Indian Muslims, the Ottomans & Britain (1877-1924)*, Leiden, Brill, 1997, p.61.

⁸ Afghani’s birth place is Asad Abad in Jalalabad (Afghanistan) which is very near to the Mohmand Agency of the N.W.F.P.

Muslim literature.⁹ According to Afghani, Muslim identity and solidarity were the prerequisites for Muslim freedom from the yoke of foreigners; and that western imperialism could be challenged only by a collective struggle of all Muslims.¹⁰ Afghani spent his whole life criss-crossing Middle East and Sub Continent for the cause of Pan-Islamism.

Sultan Abdul Hamid II began contacting Muslims in the Muslim World to get support for his policies. According to Toynbee, “During the century [19th] which begin with the negotiation of the Russo-Turkish peace treaty of Kuchuk Qaynarjah in A.D. 1774 and ended with the accession of ‘Abdu’l Hamid II to the Ottoman throne in 1878 the Ottoman Caliphate ceased to be merely titular and became for the first time an active factor in international affairs.”¹¹ Among the Indian Muslims, the move of Pan-Islamists roused considerable feelings in favour of the Turkish Caliph.¹²

Khilafat and Indo-Pak Subcontinent

Throughout history, India had never been under the political control of Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo or the Porte. It was always ruled independently by different dynasties including Slaves, Tughlaqs, Ghuris, Lodhis, Sayyeds, and Mughals, including Suris, for a brief interval. However, with the exception of Lodis and Suris, all were Turks in their ethnic origin.¹³ Some of the rulers, like Mehmud of Ghazna, Iltumtish and Muhammad Tughluq, sought to obtain an investiture from the Caliph to legitimize their rule in the eyes of their subjects. The very word “Sultan” adopted by Mehmud of Ghazna, was awarded to him by the Caliph. Some of the Muslim rulers struck the name of the Caliph along with their own names on the coins. Mohammad Shah Tughluq went to the extent of replacing his own name with that of the Caliph on the coins.¹⁴ None of the Indian Muslim rulers claimed the title of Khalifa except Jalaluddin Akbar but it did get no roots among the Muslims.¹⁵ After the ascendancy of

⁹ Shaukat Ali, *Pan Movements in the Third World Pan-Arabism, Pan-Africanism, Pan-Islamism*, Lahore, Publishers United Ltd., [pref. 1976], p.196. According to Keddie, “Pan-Islam, like Asian and African nationalism, was primarily a reaction to Western imperialism (Nikki R. Keddie, Pan-Islam as Proto-Nationalism, *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 41, No. 1 (March, 1961), p. 18.

¹⁰ Dr. Ziaullah Khan, “Sayyed Jamal-ud-Din Afghani’s reflections on Western Imperialism—An Analysis” *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, July-December 1989, pp.54-67.

¹¹ Arnold J. Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs 1925*, London, Oxford University Press, 1927, pp. 32-33.

¹² Gail Manult Graham, *The Khilafat Movement: A Study of Indian Muslim Leadership, 1919-24*, USA, University of Pennsylvania, 1977, p.22.

¹³ M. Naeem Qureshi, *Pan-Islamism in British Indian Politics- A Study of the Khilafat Movement, 1918-1924*, Leiden, Brill, 1999, p. 14.

¹⁴ Sayyed Suleman Nadvi, “Khilafat Awr Hindustan”, Sayyed Sabah al Din, M.A., ed. *Maqalat-i-Nadvi* vol. I, Karachi, National Book Foundation, 1989, pp. 115, 124

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Ottomans in Turkey, the status quo remained the same in India. This status quo changed after the decline of Mughals and the ascendancy of British and other European nations on the Indian scene. The princely Indian Muslim states began mentioning the names of the Turkish Caliphs from the pulpits in their Friday prayers.¹⁶

Mawlana Mohammad Ishaq, grandson of Shah Waliullah, while visiting Hijaz in 1840's, supported Ottoman political polices. The Muslims of British India also extended great respect to the Caliph and continued the recitation of the Ottoman Caliph's name in the Friday sermons. They considered it a symbol of Muslim unity and reacted with strong condemnation to any aggressive move against the Ottoman Empire. This school of thought i.e., Shah Waliullah and the Nadwat-ul-Ulama,¹⁷ almost recognised the Ottoman claim of Khilafat in India.¹⁸ Mawlana Shibli, after his departure from Aligarh in 1898, expressed his sympathies with the Turkish cause and wrote many stirring poems depicting the past glory of Muslims and the agonies they suffered at the hands of non-Muslims and their intrigues against the Turkish Caliph. These poems greatly influenced the feelings of the Muslims of India.

Pan-Islamism, British India and the NWFP

Pan-Islamic sentiments of Muslims down the country in India affected the feelings and thinking of the people of NWFP. This province was strategically the most important province of British India. Another contributing factor to these feelings was the antagonistic policy of the British towards the Pakhtuns. Historically speaking, NWFP remained one of the most important regions in the Indo-Subcontinent and whoever occupied it usually got the throne of Delhi. After the defeat of the Sikh in 1849, the British came into direct contact with the Pakhtuns and Afghanistan. Afghanistan attracted the British for military and political penetration into Iran, China and Central Asia. On the other hand, tsarist Russia had already started a steady move towards Central Asia. Under the "Forward Policy" adopted in 1878, the British tried to occupy Afghanistan, or a part of it, in order to defend India against any possible Russian or foreign attack on the border.¹⁹ The

¹⁶ Nadvi, p. 162; Sayyed Mahmud, *The Khilafat and England*, Patna (India), Sidaqat Ashram, 1922, p. 45.

¹⁷ It refers to a school of thought emerged in the 1990s claiming to adopt a middle path in the two extreme groups of Muslims of India i.e. Deuband and Aligarh. The most prominent figure this school was Mawlana Shibli Naumani (1857-1914.)

¹⁸ Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan (1857-1964)*, London, Oxford University Press, 1967, pp.123-24.

¹⁹ Diwan Chand Obhrai, *The Evolution of North-West Frontier Province*, Peshawar, Saeed Book and Subscription Agency, 1983, p. 42.

British tried their best to bring Kabul under its suzerainty and thus conducted three wars (1839, 1878, and 1919) against Afghanistan. In case of failure, the British were satisfied to keep Afghanistan as a satellite.²⁰ The people of NWFP had a historical relationship with the people of Afghanistan on the basis of religious and ethnic similarities. The Pakhtuns resisted the British in every corner of the province, particularly in the tribal areas.²¹ British rule was not extended as easily as in other parts of India. They launched several expeditions against the people in NWFP. Some of the expeditions against Pakhtun caused heavy losses.²² In all this period of British occupation and popular resistance, the Pakhtuns always drew great inspiration from their religion. The reports about the attempts of devastation of Turkey-the symbol of Islamic grandeur, by the British imperialists had greatly aggrieved the people of NWFP. Their sentiments echoed those of the other Muslims of the world in favour of the Turks.

The Tribal Uprising 1897

Since the arrival of the British in 1849, the Pakhtuns in every corner of the tribal territory confronted the British. It was in the interest of the British to engage separately with each tribe. However, the 1897 uprising is memorable in the history of NWFP. For the first time all major tribes mounted against the British. It was reported by one Englishman as: "With astonishing rapidity the conflagration spread until in short period the whole frontier line from Malakand to Kurram was ablaze and all the tribesmen more or less were under arms."²³ Najmuddin alias Hadda Mullah, Saadullah alias Mad Mullah, Mohyuddin alias Mullah Powindah, Mawlana Hamza Khan, and Sayyed Akbar of Khyber agency were some of the leaders of the uprising.²⁴ The strength of the fighting force of the trans-border tribesmen was roughly estimated at 2 00,000 men.²⁵

²⁰ S. A. Akhtar, *Anglo Afghan Tussle*, Islamabad, National Book Foundation, 1984, pp. 42, 75, 115.

²¹ The British government on strategic consideration divided the province into "Settled" and "Tribal Areas." The first were headed by deputy commissioner, while the second were controlled by a political agent enjoying enormous power.

²² For example, in one expedition against Waziristan in 1919-20, the British employed more than 80,000 troops and cost was a sum of £1, 000,000 -several times greater than the cost of the actual war with Afghanistan (James W. Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, the Hague, Mouton & Co., 1963, p.183

²³ H. Woosnam Mills, *The Pathan Revolt in North-West India*, Lahore, The Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1897 rep. Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1996, p.6.

²⁴ Sir George Macmann, *The Romance of the Indian Frontier*, Quetta, Nisa Traders, 1978, pp.197, 216, 255; Professor Preshan Khattak, "Anti Colonial Movement in Muslim World: North West Frontier", *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, Islamabad, July-December 1980, p.173.

²⁵ Mills, p.7; Obhari, p. 108.

Many views have been expressed about the causes of this uprising; such as the discontent on the demarcation of border “Durand Line” by the British in 1893 between Afghanistan and British India which divided Pukhtuns, the resentment towards the “British Forward Policy”, the imposition of Excise tax on salt rock in Kohat, the isolation of tribes in political administration, a threat to the social norms of the locals by the introduction of schools and churches in their territories and finally the instigation of the Afghan government for revolt against the British.

However, one important explanation reported for the 1897 uprising was the war between the Turks and the Greeks in Thessaly in the same year. It is recorded by H. Woosnam Mills, from *the Civil and Military Gazette* (Lahore), that people of the area thought that “the Turks waged a war against the Christians on the plains of Thessaly and the Indian Muslims too inspired to exterminate the infidels from India.”²⁶ At the same time, the Afghan authorities conducted successful operations against the natives of *Kafiristan* (abode of the infidels), which had fired the enthusiasm of the Mussalman [Muslims] tribesmen.²⁷ Mills after discussing the local causes for the uprising stated,

That the subsequent gigantic proportions to which they reached were due entirely to the momentary success over the British *Raj* which flattered the characteristic vanity of the fanatical Mussalman on the frontier and made him believe that the days of the *Srikar* (government) were numbered, that the flag of Islam was to be unfurled and all infidels from Kabul to Cape Comron [Comrin] swept into the sea.²⁸

The “British Parliamentary Papers” gave an indication of the possible communication among some of the leaders (mostly *mullah*) and with their “revered colleagues in India, and possibly in Turkey.”²⁹ In November 1896, Hussain Kamil Afandi, the official counsel general of Turkey at Karachi, made a tour of upper India. He was welcomed as representative of the Khalifa by thousands of Muslims wherever he went. The aim of this tour was to investigate the news that the recitation of the name of the Khalifa in *Juma* prayers was prohibited in some parts of British India and to get reliable information about the disturbances in the NWFP. In the next year,

²⁶ Mills, p.5.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Parliamentary Papers, 1898, LXIII, N-WR, cmd. 8713, 93 ff., cited Spain, p.179.

an influential Afghan, Said Yahya al Qadiri, visited Turkey who had been suspected of carrying a letter from the Amir of Afghanistan to the Sultan and thus the British assumed that the Port is behind the disturbances in British India.³⁰ All these developments suggest that the 1897 Tribal Uprising is carrying extra-territorial dimensions of the Pukhtuns in their war against the British forces, many times superior to them. These sympathies were skilfully exploited by the religious men against the British.

In this uprising, British troops were attacked in their forts in Malakand, Chakdara, Shabqadar, Samana, Maude, and Landi Kotal and heavy losses were inflicted upon the troops. The British being an organised army, absorbed all these shocks and retaliated in a more forceful way causing a lot of deaths, burning of houses and villages, imposing fines, putting into effect economic blockade and confiscation of rifles and swords by the people. The uprising failed to expel the British. However, the government did not succeed in uprooting the extra-territorial sympathies of the people. After only five years, in 1902, Roose Keppel (the political agent of Khyber Agency), reported to have said that “the Pan-Islamic revival... had been very marked in Afghanistan and Northern India for the last six or seven years.”³¹

Italian Attack on Tripoli

In the beginning of the 20th century, the European nations continued their incursion into the Muslim lands. In 1911, the Italian forces marched on Tripoli,³² a province of Turkey in North Africa. The British government refused to allow the Turkish forces to reach Tripoli via Egypt, then under the British control. The Muslims of India expected that the British would favour Turkey, but the refusal of the British revealed its inclination on Italian side. This news stirred up pro-Turkish and anti British sentiments among the educated and non-educated alike. Roose Keppel had been reported to admit that, “The Frontier Muslims were deeply distressed at the sorrows and troubles of Islam in other countries and there had been stray instances of school boys burning Italian made caps, having read, in other parts of India school boys done the same the Mullahs had at the Friday gatherings put up prayers for the success of Turkish arms.”³³

³⁰ Ozcan, p.104

³¹ cited by Lal Baha, “Khilafat Movement and the North West Frontier Province,” *Journal of Research Society of Pakistan, University of Punjab*, Lahore, Vol. xvi, No. 3, 1979, p.1.

³² The present capital of Libya.

³³ Baha, “Khilafat Movement”, p.1.

In NWFP, the majority of people were illiterate and were unable to read newspapers. In those days Mawlana Zafar Ali Khan's *Zamindar* from Lahore played a leading role for providing latest information from the war-front. It is reported that the people of the NWFP waited for the newspaper as desirously as a thirsty man at the time of *Iftar* (breaking of fast). In Peshawar city, the newspaper was usually read out by individuals to groups of people as majority of the people were illiterate and could not read the newspaper. When there came news of a Turkish success people would start shouting and celebrate jubilation. The interest of the people led to some persons to roam around the city and announce the war news. One such person, Karim, was named as *Karim-i-Italy* because he used to pronounce news during the Turkey-Italian confrontation. In the subsequent days, the people knew him with the same name in the freedom movement.³⁴ In villages too, newspapers were read out by the literate in *Hujra* and Mosques.³⁵ The *Afghan*, a weekly newspaper from Peshawar, echoed the feelings and sentiments of the people of the province in its columns and editorials. The *Afghan* wrote editorials about "Pan-Islamism and Indian Muslims", "Albania", "Christian Tyrannies and Atrocities on the Turks" and "the Government and Mohammedans [Muslims]."³⁶

The enthusiasm of people in the province was even communicated to the Home Department in London by the Viceroy of India. Lord Hardinge (1858-1944) sent a letter to Lord Crewe (1858-1945), the Secretary of State as, "I hear from the North West Frontier Province where practically the whole population is Mahommedan [Muslims] that the war between Italy and Turkey is sole topic of discussion in the villages and among the tribes and the bazaar version is that we have conspired with Italy to help her to seize Tripoli".³⁷ Moreover, on the pattern of other parts of India, the collection of funds in NWFP was started by Ali Abbass Bukhari,³⁸ in which the people contributed to help their Turkish brethren.³⁹ Qazi Mohammad Wali, a resident

³⁴ Allah Bakhsh Yousafi, *Aur Jaddujaha-i-Azadi*, Lahore, Markazi Urdu Board, 1968, p.123.

³⁵ Abdul Khaliq Khaliq, *Da Azadai Jang*, Peshawar, Idara Asha'at-i-Sarhad, 1972, p.9.

³⁶ Punjab Native Newspapers Reports, 1911, 1912 cited by Lal Baha "Struggle of Journalism in Frontier Province 1900-1930", *Islamic Studies*, Islamabad, vol. xvii, No. 3, Autumn 1978, p.219.

³⁷ Letter dated 12 October 1912 No. 64a of Letters of Secretary of State, Nov. 1910 Dec. 1911 no. 117of Hardinge Papers. 261. cited by P. Hardy, *The Muslims of British Indian*, Cambridge University Press, 1972, pp.182-83.

³⁸ He was secretary of the Muslim League in the NWFP province. He left his homeland and migrated to Afghanistan against the British policy during the World War I. He committed not to return his home until independence from the British.

³⁹ Yousafi, *Sarhad Aur*, p.130.

of Peshawar,⁴⁰ fought along the Turks in the war front against the Italian forces.⁴¹ The Turko-Italian war and the expression of pro-Turkish sympathies of the Muslims gave a new dimension to the Pan-Islamic feelings of the people by organising themselves in support to the Turkish and Islamic cause in the province.

The Balkan Wars 1912-13

The Balkan Peninsula, once ruled by the Turks roused against the Turks to secede in 1912. Vlachs, Greeks, Serbs, and Bulgars made an alliance and started revolting against the Turkish Ottoman authority. The news of the Balkan wars and the implicit support of the European nations to the “rebellions” worried the Muslims. On the shocking news of the Turkish defeat in the Balkans, one of the leaders of Muslims, Mohammad Ali, tried to run away from this reality by attempting to commit suicide.⁴²

The Muslim leaders appealed for financial help for the Turks. People responded very actively and a Turkish Relief Fund was established.⁴³ Surprisingly, the students of Aligarh College responded more positively. This institution was considered to be loyal to the British government. Sir Sayyed Ahmad Khan, who was the founder of the college and a great leader of the Muslims, was once a great admirer of Turkey.⁴⁴ He, in the last days of his life expressed his displeasure over the growing external territorial sympathies of Muslims. He thought that these feelings are not beneficial for the Muslims of India.⁴⁵ He warned his compatriots against a pan-Islamic adventure, which instead of helping Turkey, could complicate their own loyalty as subjects of the British Government.⁴⁶ His close colleague and successor Nawab Muhsan ul Mulk went a step further and stated that the term Khalifa denotes only the ruler of a Muslim country. Muslim history provides us that there can be more than one Khalifa of the Muslims at the same time. For all those Muslims who are residing in that country it is compulsory to obey the Khalifa, while

⁴⁰ He was well versed in certain languages and remained a tutor to the British for native languages. Later on he took an active part in the freedom struggle. He was Vice President of Muslim League and then left British India. He remained in Afghanistan and in Europe where he continued his services for the spread of Islam and independence of India. After the creation of Pakistan, he came back and died in 1956.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.126.

⁴² Afzal Iqbal, *Life and Times of Mohammad Ali* 2nd ed., Lahore, Institute of Islamic Culture, 1979, p.70.

⁴³ A sum of Rs. fifteen lacs were donated which was more than half of the total amount reached to the Ottoman Red Crescent Society from all over the world. (Ozcan, p. 150)

⁴⁴ He was perhaps the first person in India adopted Fez, the Turkish Cap as part of students uniform in Aligarh.

⁴⁵ It may be due to a change in the British friendly policy towards the Ottoman Empire at the end of the 19th century. Now the British take the Pan-Islamic feelings dangerous to the British Empire.

⁴⁶ For Sir Sayyed Ahmad Khan's views on this issue see Iqbal, p.15.

rest of the Muslims are only to extend their respect to that Khalifa. The case of the Indian Muslims was of the second category. Thus they should respect the Turkish Khalifa, but have to follow their British Indian Government. In case of war between Turkey and British, even though unhappily, the Indian Muslims are bound to support the British Indian government.⁴⁷

However, the Balkan Tragedy aroused Pan-Islamic feelings of the students of Aligarh in a way that they gave up their weekly special dishes and meat and contributed that money to the Fund which they usually spent on their friends on the occasion of jublations.^{48 49}

Medical Mission to Turkey and N.W.F.P. (1912)

In the same sympathetic spirit, a meeting at Aligarh decided to send a medical mission to Turkey to take care of the wounded soldiers. This mission was headed by Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari and comprised twenty-four members including doctors and male nurses.⁵⁰ One of the members of the medical mission was Abdur Rehman Peshawari from the NWFP. He was a senior student in Aligarh, and on the call of religion, quit his studies. Due to shortage of money, he sold all his belongings to meet the expenditures. He belonged to a well to do family of Peshawar,⁵¹ but he did not contact his family because he thought his father would not permit him to proceed to Turkey. The medical mission rendered yeomen services to the wounded Turks at the war front. The Mission was invited by the Sultan in his palace to thank them for a job well done.⁵² The services of the Mission had been constantly reported in the Indian press through letters of the mission members.⁵³ They claimed

⁴⁷ Maim Kamal Okay, *Tahrik-i-Khilafat (1919-1924)*, Karachi, Quaid-i-Azam Academy, 1991, pp.35-36.

⁴⁸ Iqbal, p. 71.

⁴⁹ Names of the doctors were: Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari, Dr. Mohammad Naim, Dr. Faizi, Dr. Bari and Dr. Mehmud Allah while the other members include Abdur Rehman Siddiqui, Abdul Aziz Ansari, Manzoor Mehmud, Mohammad Yousaf, Abdur Rehman Peshawari, Tawakal Hussain, Tafadhal Hussain, Qazi Bashiruddin, Wahiduddin, Noor al Hasan, Chiragh Ali, Shoujab Quraishi, Khaliqzaman, Raza Hussain, Ismail Shirazi, Tawangar Hussain, Hamid Rasul and Ghulam Jilani. (Mian Akbar Shah, *Azadi Ki Talash* (trans). Sayyed Wiqar Ali Shah, Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1989, pp. 404-05). According to Afzal Iqbal the delegation was comprised eighty four with fully qualified doctors five of whom had European qualifications (Iqbal, p.76).

⁵⁰ Names of the doctors were: Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari, Dr. Muhammad Naim, Dr. Faizi, Dr. Bari and Dr. Mehmud Allah while the other members include Abdur Rehman Siddiqui, Abdul Aziz Ansari, Manzoor Mehmud, Mohammad Yousaf, Abdur Rehman Peshawari, Tawakal Hussain, Tafadhal Hussain, Qazi Bashiruddin, Wahiduddin, Noor al Hasan, Chiragh Ali, Shoujab Quraishi, Khaliqzaman, Raza Hussain, Ismail Shirazi, Tawangar Hussain, Hamid Rasul and Ghulam Jilani. (Mian Akbar Sahah, *Azadi Ki Talash* (trans). Sayyed Wiqar Ali Shah, Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1989, pp. 404-05). According to Afzal Iqbal the delegation was comprised eighty four with fully qualified doctors five of whom had European qualifications (Iqbal, p. 76).

⁵¹ His father Ghulam Samadani was an established government contractor.

⁵² Qureshi, p.59.

⁵³ These reports have been reproduced in Rais Ahmad Jaafri, *Ali Biraderan*, Lahore, Muhammad Ali Academy, n.d., and Abu Sulaiman Shahjahanpuri, *Ghazi Abdul Rehman Shahid Peshawari* (ed). Mohammad Yousaf, Karachi: Educational Press, 1979.

that they rendered better services to the war affected areas than many of the missions sent by other nations including the Europeans. Some of the members such as Abdur Rehman Siddiqi, Shuaib Quraishi, Chowdry Khaliqzman⁵⁴ and Manzoor Mehmud stayed in Turkey, but after four months they returned to India except Manzoor Ahmad and Abdur Rehman Peshawari. Soon after, Manzoor Ahmad fell ill and had to return India, leaving only Abdur Rehman Peshawari in Turkey.⁵⁵

After the end of the war, Abdur Rehman did not return but stayed and remained active in Turkey. It is reported that he sided with the Pan-Islamic forces, but did not indulge himself in politics; rather he enlisted military to the serve the cause of the Khilafat.⁵⁶ He was admitted for training first in Istanbul, and then in Beirut till the First World War started. He was inducted in the regular army as a Lieutenant and sent to Dardanelles. He served the military in the capacity of commanding a military contingent and took part in many battles against the Allied Powers and proved his gallantry. In the First World War, Germany was defeated and Turkey also bore the consequences of a defeated nation. Turkey was humiliated in the Treaty of Sevres in 1920. The Allied Powers occupied Istanbul. All military activities by Turkey were to be abandoned. The Turkish Khalifa became a puppet in the hands of Allied Powers. The freedom loving Turks gathered themselves under the leadership of Mustafa Kamal Pasha and established a provisional government in Angora [Ankara]. Abdur Rehman Peshawari joined these forces and struggled for the restoration of Turkish sovereignty. Later on in 1921 he was sent to Afghanistan as an ambassador of Turkey, which shows the trust and confidence of the Turks on the ability and competence of Abdur Rehman Peshawari.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ He played a leading role in Pakistan Movement and once became president of the Pakistan Muslim League and Governor of West Pakistan.

⁵⁵ Dr. Riazul Islam, preface to *Abdur Rehman Peshawari*, p. 47-48.

⁵⁶ Shahjahanpuri, p. 174.

⁵⁷ In Afghanistan he performed multifarious functions. By his designation he served the Turks and established and strengthened the relations between these two countries. He took active part in the development of Afghanistan as it was a very poor country. He particularly supported the educational uplift of Afghans by contributing money to various projects. At the same time, he also had close contacts with all Indian freedom fighters based in Kabul. Freedom was so dear to him that he declined the offer of British officials to visit his family in Peshawar which was the nearest city of India to Kabul. When he was asked to have any intention of returning India? He said "I would return to India when it is free and the first thing I shall do will be to throw a bomb on my own house as my family is so poor-spirited as to live in slavery (Khurshad Rai alias Sardar Mal Gujrati (Punjab) statement after returning India before the British authorities File No. 12/8/4/ vol. III, S. No. 480, B. No. 30, Directorate of Achieves, NWFP Peshawar. pp. 39-49) After his return to Turkey when he was yet to play a role in the Turkish government, he was shot down and soon succumbed to his injuries in the hospital. His death was the result of a misunderstanding by the killer. He was thought to be Rauf Bay, a prominent Turkish politician and once prime minister of Turkey. Abdur Rehman Peshawari had resemblance in appearance with Rauf Bay. During his stay in Turkey he extended his support the Indian freedom fighters like Mawlana Obaidullah Sindhi and others. On the occasion of his death, Indians, Afghans and the Turks mourned alike.

In the same period, Qazi Mohammad Wali Khan, vice-president of the Frontier Muslim league, a devoted and veteran freedom fighter, also fought along with the Turkish forces.⁵⁸ He also worked as a special correspondent for the *Comrade* of Calcutta and *Zamindar* of Lahore. Similarly, another Pakhtun, Amir Muhammad Khan,⁵⁹ was attracted to the call of religion and pan-Islamic feelings. He sold his entire belongings and left India via Bombay and Egypt for Turkey where he fought alongside the Turkish army during Balkan wars and later in World War I. However, after the defeat of Turkey, he became incommunicado and was considered a martyr.⁶⁰

The pro-Turkish and anti European feelings stirred the hearts of the people and they dared to speak out even before the British authorities. On one of such occasions, 21 March 1912, Hajji Sahib of Turangzai, one of the greatest freedom fighters of the region at the foundation ceremony of Dar-ul-Ulum-i-Islamia (Islamia College) Peshawar made a prayer for the success of Turks. Following this, there were shouts of *Amin* (Amen), which bewildered the British Chief Commissioner, and a host of other British officials who were present on the occasion.⁶¹

The British Indian government faced enormous difficulties on the question of British's dubious role in Balkan affairs. The intensity of the issue is evident from one British communiqué. In August 1913, Hardinge told Crewe "that he did not think the Foreign Office in London sufficiently appreciated the difficulties which the Government of India were having with the Indian Muslims over Turkey".⁶²

During the Balkan wars, when the Turks recaptured Edirne, the Muslims of Peshawar for the first time celebrated the occasion with illumination throughout Peshawar City.⁶³ Anwar Kamal Pasha, who on many occasions conducted successful attacks upon the enemies of Turkey, was eulogised by the Muslim newspapers as their national hero.⁶⁴ During this period, coloured pictures were imported from Germany showing Turkish military superiority.

⁵⁸ Shahjahanpuri, p. 194.

⁵⁹ His father name was Khan Sahib Atta Mohammad Khan and belonged to a respectable family of Charsaddah.

⁶⁰ *Sarhad*, monthly, Peshawar, August 1925, p. 9.

⁶¹ Shafi Sabir, *Tarikh-i-Suba-i-Sarhad*, Peshawar, University Book Agency, 1986, p. 812.

⁶² Letter dated 14 August 1913 No. 70a of Letters of S of S., Jan. -Dec. 1913 no. 119 of Hardinge Papers, p. 108 cited by Hardy, p.183.

⁶³ Yousafi, p. 122.

⁶⁴ Other Turkish celebrities include Talat Pasha, Niyazi Bey, and Mehmed Shawkat Pasha.

It was reported that there was hardly a Muslim, that had not decorated their walls with these pictures.⁶⁵ People gave financial support by collecting funds for Turkey. People were so enthusiastic that in a meeting held at Islamia Club Peshawar, a woman, wife of Khwaja Mohammad, having no money, donated her four month old baby to the Turkish Fund. The organisers fully utilized the occasion for the rise of peoples' enthusiasm. The baby was auctioned. The highest bidder was Khan Bahadur Seth Karim Bakhsh who gave the money to the Turkish Fund. He returned the baby to the mother and gave her an allowance of two rupees for its upkeep.⁶⁶ The mother contributed even these two rupees to the Fund. Another event reported by a weekly *AfghanofPeshawar*, was that two men, Munshi Din Mohammad and Gulab Din announced that they were ready to be sold as slaves and the money be contributed to the Turkish Fund.⁶⁷

World War I and the NWFP

In August 1914, World War I broke out between Germany and the Allied Powers. Indian Muslims sent their views to the Turkish government not to enter the war, because it would create problems for them in India. The possible involvement of Turkey in the war circulated an unpleasant feeling among the Muslims against the British as they had traditionally good feelings for their Muslim brethren in Turkey. G. Roos Keppel, the NWFP Chief Commissioner, reported that, "at Kohat, on the occasion of the *Id*, prayers were offered for the success of the British arms, but these were combined with supplications for the security of the country of the Khilafate and a happy issue out of all its afflictions".⁶⁸ The opinion was clearly voiced by leading Muhammadan gentlemen who sympathised with the British cause. The Chief Commissioner further stated that "the contingency had to be faced that war with Turkey might unfavourably affect the situation, might chill the warmth of the popular good-will, and create a dangerous sympathy with future trans-frontier attacks launched against us in the name of religion".⁶⁹

Circumstances led Turkey to join the war in November 1914, as an ally of Germany, because the Allied Powers refused to provide protection against the Russian's threats in the Bosphorus region. The decision of the Turks

⁶⁵ Yousafi, p.123.

⁶⁶ Yousafi, p.130; Iqbal, p.71; Aziz Javid, *Sarhad ki Ayini Irtiqa*, Peshawar, Idara Tahqiq wa Tasnif, 1975, p.76.

⁶⁷ Aziz Javid, *Sarhad ki Ayini Irtiqa*, Peshawar, Idara Tahqiq wa Tasnif, 1975, p.76.

⁶⁸ The Chief Commissioner, Roos Keppel, to the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated 15th June 1915. p. 1.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

greatly perturbed the Muslims of the province. They were in a dilemma of what to do as on one side they were subjects of the British and had to obey the government command; on the other hand, the Turks were their Muslim brethren and for that reason had to support them. Indian soil provided good armament to the British army. This army had not only been used to suppress the local disturbances, but it had also been used to protect the imperialist interests in other parts of the world. When Turkey joined the war and the news spread among the British Indian Muslim soldiers, they started deserting the army. Some of deserters arrived in Afghanistan and in the tribal territories of NWFP. They circulated the stories of Turkish strength and lauded their courage and vigour in the war against their enemies. It was reported that the religious leaders, i.e. *mullah*, spread the news that “Government had few troops left, that the Germans were winning in Europe, that Turkish armies had entered Afghanistan and that “the day”⁷⁰ had arrived”.⁷¹ A large part of the British force was despatched to Europe which necessitated the calling out of reserve force, the redeployment of retired men and new recruitment on an unprecedented scale in the British Army. All this provided enough ground for propaganda to the *mullahs* to make the people to realize that the British are out of human resources. Hence it was reported that,

These feeling gravely affected the morale of trans-border soldiers serving in the Indian Army, many of whom deserted from cantonments within reach of tribal territory, while pressure by Mullahs and relatives caused large numbers of men, who had been granted short leave previous to departure on active service, to remain in the safe refuge of their homes and to refuse to return.⁷²

In the beginning of World War I there were about 5,000 people from N.W.F.P. in the British Indian Army, half of whom were Afridi tribesmen, and this number was reduced to only 1,800 by the end of the war.⁷³ The desertion of the armed forces has been reported by Roos Keppel, Chief Commissioner of the province as,

It should be noted that the list of deserters is swollen to a great extent by the inclusion of lads who deserted within a few months of their enlistment and to whose cases

⁷⁰ The day of Islamic renaissance.

⁷¹ The Chief Commissioner, Roos Keppel, to the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated 14th July 1916. p. 3.

⁷² Roos Keppel to the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, p. 1.

⁷³ Lal Baha, “The North West Frontier Province in the First World War,” *Journal of Royal Central Asian Society*, February 1970, p.31.

in normal times no particular attention is paid. Even deducting these, however, the number of desertions by sepoys of some years' standing is large enough to discredit to a great extent the Afridi as soldier....⁷⁴

During the war, Indian Muslim soldiers arrested by the Central Powers as prisoner of war, started taking part in fighting along their Turkish brethren against the British forces on various war fronts.⁷⁵ The people of independent tribal areas who were already irreconcilable with the British, got impetus from all this news. They intensified their activities along with the Mujahidin⁷⁶ encamped on borders of British India such as Asmast. Hajji Sahib Turangzai, on June 20 went to Buner, a border area with the British cantonment in Mardan, and organised the local forces against the British. About four thousand people entered the British territory, and after a heavy fight, twenty people lost their lives. The locals had to retreat as the British forces were stronger. Consequently the tribesmen were severely handled and Malandari villages were burnt by the British army. Moreover, a fine was imposed upon the tribe. At the same time, Mullah Babara organised about nine thousand men, including one thousand Afghan volunteers on the Shabqadar borders against the British army.

During the war period, Afghanistan, a neighbouring Muslim country to British India, adopted a neutral policy. It was the desire of Turkey that Afghanistan should join war against the British thus easing the war-front for Turkey. In pursuit of Afghan help, a Turko-German mission comprised by eighty persons, headed by Captain Oskar Von Niederm, W.O. Von Hanting and Kazim Bey was sent to Kabul in November, 1915.⁷⁷ Apart from one German secret agent in Persia, two Indian freedom fighters Raja Mehandar Partap and Maulavi Barkatullah Bhopali, two Afghans Abdur Rehman and Subhan Khan and three Afridi tribesmen accompanied the mission to Kabul. The Turko-German mission was warmly welcomed by the public, but Amir Habibullah Khan played a very dubious role. He assured the British of his loyalty and the neutrality of the Afghan government in the war. However,

⁷⁴ Roos Keppel to the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, p.19; Qureshi, p.79.

⁷⁵ Qureshi, p. 79.

⁷⁶ The term Mujahidin refers to remnants of Sayyed Ahmad Shahid (1764-1831) who fought against the Sikh forces in the north west region killed in 1831. His followers continued their struggle against the British forces in the tribal areas of N.W.F.P. till the establishment of Pakistan in 1947. For a detail account of Mujahidin activities in the beginning of 20th century see Abdul Rauf, "The British Empire and the Mujahidin Movement in the N.W.F.P. of India 1914-1934" *Islamic Studies*, Volume. 44 No. 3, Autumn 2005 pp. 409-439.

⁷⁷ Dr. Fazalur Rahim *The Evaluation and Growth of Communism in Afghanistan (1917-1979): An Appraisal*, Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1997, p. 121.

he could not declare his position openly because of the fear of discontent of his subjects who were in favour of Turkey. Moreover, a faction of his officials headed by Sardar Nasrullah was strongly in favour of joining the war on the side of Turkey. Realising the intricacy of the situation the Afghan king engaged the Turko-German in talks for several days and finally made a condition, which he thought served his interest. He promised to join the war if the alliance provided one lakh well equipped army.⁷⁸ Two weeks later, another delegate of the Indian Muslims Mawlana Obaidullah Sindi arrived in Kabul. He was sent by the alumni of Deuband and its rector Mawlana Mehmud ul Hasan on a special mission. In brief, some ulema of Deuband thought that during the war the British forces are engaged outside India and the position of the British is vulnerable for an adventure against them which would result in the independence of India from the British yoke. Contacts were made between the Turko-German mission and these Indian freedom fighters based in Kabul as the interests of both parties coincided with each other on this juncture. According to the plan, the people of the independent tribal territories headed by Hajji Sahib Turangzai and others including the Mujahidin leaders in the area would start fighting en mass after the verdict of declaring *jihad* given by the Ottoman Caliph through the Turkish governor, Ghalib Pasha residing in Makkah.⁷⁹ The verdict and help would be sought through Sheikh Mahmud ul Hassan who was sent to Makkah ostensibly for the Hajj. He was successful in getting consent of the Turks for Jihad in the shape of *Ghalib Nama* which was sent to his emissaries in India which was further dispatched to independent tribal territories to those engaged in fighting against the British.

In July 1916, Mawlana Obaidullah Sindhi wrote three letters on handkerchiefs and gave them to an agent, Abdul Haq, to be handed over to Sheikh Abdur Rahim in Hyderabad who was to further dispatch it through a confidant hajji, preferably by Sheikh Abdur Rahim or Mawlvi Hamdullah to Mawlana Mehmud ul Hasan in Hijaz.⁸⁰ These letters carried the work done by Obaidullah in Kabul and the situation in the bordering areas and future line of actions. The messenger was on his way to Hyderabad, when he stopped for a night in Multan. He stayed in the home of one of their colleague, Allah Nawaz Khan⁸¹ family. During this time he disclosed the secret to the host, Rab

⁷⁸ Maulana Abdullah Lughari, *Mawlana Obaidullah Sindhi Ki Sarguzasht-i-Kabul*, Islamabad, Qawmi Idara Bara-i-Tahqiq wa Thaqafat, 1980, p.60.

⁷⁹ Santimay Ray, *Freedom Movement and Indian Muslims*, Lahore, People's Publishing House, n. d., p.225.

⁸⁰ Mawlana Ubaidullah's letter to Mawlana Mehmudul Hasan, (reproduced in) Mawlana Sayyed Mohammad Mian, *Tahrik-i-Shaikhul Hind*, Lahore, Maktaba Mahmudiyah, 1978, p.357.

Nawaz Khan father of Allah Nawaz Khan who immediately reported it to the police who hastened and arrested the messenger.⁸² Soon after investigation, he revealed the whole plan written on the handkerchief in his possession. The British government arrested all the leaders and workers of the Movement in India. After the end of suzerainty of the Turks in Hijaz, through the help of Sharif, the British arrested Mawlana Mehmud ul Hasan in December 1916 along with one of his close associate from the NWFP. Mawlana Uzair Gul⁸³ and exiled them to Malta.

Hajji Sahib Turangzai, who was mainly relied upon in the Silk “Conspiracy” Movement, stationed himself in the independent tribal territory of the Mohmand tribe and continued his attacks on British troops. He mobilised the tribesmen for *Jihad* even at the borders of Peshawar. Mr. Hardinge admitted that they carried out the greatest military operation on the frontier since the Frontier Campaign of 1897.⁸⁴ When asked about the success of his attacks, he declared that his fight would make busy at least one British platoon and thus would relieve the Caliph’s army from that platoon with the support of the tribal leaders and Mujahidin. In 1916, he wrote letters to the tribesmen to rise against the British rulers. These letters show the intensity of feelings of the Frontier Muslims for Turkey. Here wrote in a letter Hajji Sahib to the tribesmen:

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. To all pious brethren, namely the Mohmands, Bajuris, Bunerwals, Swatis, Gaduns, and other tribes. After praises to God and blessing to the prophet, I, on behalf of General Kharid Beg, who is representative of the prophet’s *Khalifa*, i.e. the Sultan of Turkey, and on behalf of the Sharif of Makkah, I offer greetings to all above tribes and convey this tidings that if God pleased the tribes after the third day of *Eid* they will raise their standards with the above named tribes will at once, after seeing my letter ... raise the standards and attack the British.⁸⁵

⁸¹ He was among those sixteen students who in protest against the British migrated to Kabul to proceed to Turkey for Jihad during World War I.

⁸² Rab Nawaz Khan was awarded the title of Khan Bahadur by the British for this service.

⁸³ He belonged to Kaka Khel and got his education from Deuband and visited Hijaz along with Mawlana Mehmudul Hasan. He was deported along with Mehmud ul Hassan in December 1916 to Malta and after his release he did not discontinue his efforts for freedom struggle. He died in November, 1989. (For a detail study see Murad Ali Shah, ‘Mawlana Uzair Gul-The Prisoner of Malta’, M.A. Thesis 1981-83, Pakistan Study Centre, University of Peshawar.

⁸⁴ Baha, “Khilafat Movement”, p.5.

⁸⁵ Translation of letter sent by Hajji Sahib Turangzai to Abdul Jabbar, cited by Baha, “Khilafat Movement”, p. 3.

An attack on Peshawar was made which was repulsed. To stop further hostilities, a blockade was imposed on the Mohmands.

It is reported that the entry of Turkey in the war stirred up the voice of the *mullah* to preach jihad against the British in more forceful way. Several attacks were made upon the British levies in the Dir and Swat. The British imposed a blockade against the tribes of upper Swat and Bajur. The people under the leadership of Sandaki *mullah* and Sartor Faqir, threatened the British in the Chakdarah Fort. In another encounter, Gujar *mullah*, who attacked Chakdara via Panjkora Bridge, was killed and the lashkar was dispersed.⁸⁶ Meanwhile, the pressure of attacks of the Bajuris upon the British increased. The British repeatedly called upon the Khan of Nawagai to put a stop to the activity of those people, but all in vain. His influence in the area was decreased to such an extent that he was unable to restrain his own relatives and followers from joining in the attacks on the British troops at Shabqadar. As a punishment, his allowance of Rs. 10,000 per annum was confiscated.⁸⁷ The British also rewarded those individuals who remained at distance from the rebellious religious men. Some of these loyalists, on occasion, supported the British. In Malakand during the religious disturbances, the support of the Khans was exerted on the side of the government and this soft behaviour was recognised by the government in the shape of awarding titles to two of the Khans; the title of Khan Bahadur on Inayatullah Khan and of Khan Sahib on Bahram Khan of Thana. The Southern part of the province equally beat the drum of Pan-Islamism. In Tochi Valley it was reported,

...that their exclusion [Zadrans tribes] from the British territory was occasioning acute distress in the tribe, and everything pointed to a speedy capitulation to *force majeure*, when news was received in October that German and Turkish emissaries had arrived in Kabul with a letter from the Sultan of Turkey. The Amir, supported by Turkish troops and German engines of war was expected momentarily to join Great Britain's enemies and the usual extravagant stories were circulated and believed. The effect of these rumours was to stiffen the backs of the Khost tribes and unsettle the minds of the people of Waziristan. The British Government was violently denounced by Lala Pir, the notorious Khost mulla, and all true Muhammadans were exhorted to prepare for jihad.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ The Border Administration Report of the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1916-17., p.15.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p.17.

⁸⁸ The Border Administration Report of the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1915-16., p.17.

In Bannu, the Ber Faqir living in Lakki attracted a certain number of Marwat disciples with an invitation to join jihad. The approach of a Turkish army was widely proclaimed and 200 men joined the “crusade”, but the movement collapsed on the arrest of the Faqir and his principal disciples. They were sentenced to suffer long terms of imprisonment as well as confiscation of property.⁸⁹ The total number of serious riots occurring in the district during the year increased to 46 as compared to 11 in the year 1914-15.⁹⁰ In Waziristan, the British carried out an expedition to curb turbulence in the area. It is reported that it was due to “When the tribesmen had been touched by the wave of unrest which had set in among the Islamic people after the intervention of Turkey in the General War.”⁹¹

The Turko-German mission failed in 1915 to gain the support of the Afghan government, mainly due to Amir Habibullah Khan’s hypocritical policy. He, on one side, engaged the mission in Kabul, and on the other hand, he sent a secret mission to the British government that he is their loyal friend. They must believe in him and if they find in his words or actions anything contrary to such feeling, tell them that this is done intentionally for some purpose and his position is delicate. George Macmann reported the following words of the ruler of Afghanistan to the British King: “Don’t mind what I say, for I have kittle cattle to drive, but watch what I do.”⁹² Mohammad Ali Qasuri, who himself was a participant in the scene, is of the view that if Amir Habibullah Khan was not afraid of the British, not only the Indian scene would have been different, but the whole history of the Islamic World would have been written differently.⁹³ The Turko-German Mission left Kabul in despair leaving behind a certain number of men to look after their interest and to keep them informed about any new developments in Kabul. It is reported that they had rested their hopes on the Mujahidin party busy in independent tribal areas of British India and expressed their gratitude and satisfaction on their activities.⁹⁴ After the departure of the mission, some of the Turkish members were sent to the independent tribal territories of the NWFP. of British India. Among these emissaries, two, Kharid Bay and Nazim Bey, were sent to Khyber Agency,⁹⁵ while another visited Mohmand.⁹⁶ Khyber, being the

⁸⁹ Ibid., p.27.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p.25.

⁹¹ Toynbee, pp. 551-52.

⁹² Sir George Macmann, *The Romance of the Indian Frontiers*, Quetta: Nisa Traders, 1978, p. 256.

⁹³ Mawlana Mohammad Ali Qasuri, *Mushahidat-i-Kabul wa Yaghistan*, Lahore, Idara Ma’arif-i-Islami, 1986, pp.67-68.

⁹⁴ Translation of a document in Persian in Mawlvi Fazal Ilahi’s handwriting, Chief Commissioner Office, Chamarkand Colony, S. No. 1441., Tribal Affairs Research Cell, Directorate of Archives, N.W.F.P. Peshawar, p.167.

⁹⁵ Abdul Karim Chamarkandi, *Sarguzisht-i-Mujahid* (ed.) Mohammad Hamid, Lahore, Idara Matabua’t-i-Sulamani, 1981, p.67.

⁹⁶ General Report on Border Affairs in the North West Frontier Province for the Year 1916-17, p. 2.

most important spot between Jalalabad (Afghanistan) and Peshawar (British India), became the centre of these Turkish activities. Moreover, Mir Mast Khan⁹⁷ had already prepared ground for the mission. The local people and *mullah* welcomed the Turkish delegation. They unfurled a flag, which was blessed by the Turkish Caliph and announced themselves as plenipotentiaries of the Turkish Sultan. They offered protection and assistance to the tribesmen against the British government. They recruited the people who were mostly deserters from the British Indian army. By July 1916, the total number of the Afridi recruits was reported to have reached about four hundred. They were posted in three different places and drilled every day by Mir Mast Khan under the supervision of Kharid Bay, a Turkish Colonel.⁹⁸

Some days later, Raja Mehandar Partap (prime minister in the Indian Provisional government based in Kabul) also visited Tirah. He brought support to the Turks from Kabul and he returned to Kabul along with thirty tribesmen recruited during this period. In Afghanistan these tribesmen met with the officials who were in favour of war against the British. The Afghan officials appreciated them and reiterated their support to the tribesmen against the British. The Turks also wrote letters to the neighbouring tribes, and in the month of August some Turkish emissaries⁹⁹ visited the Mohmand areas where Hajji Sahib was busy in waging war against the British. In the middle of 1917, there was discontent among the Afridis, as the promises of money, rifles and ammunitions were not fulfilled. Mawlana Mohammad Bashir, who was a prominent leader of the Mujahidin, visited the area and pacified them; and settled a dispute among different *mullahs* and other groups.¹⁰⁰ However, most of the Afridis did not join the Turkish emissaries' activities. The tribes who were supporting the Turkish emissaries inflicted losses on those who were accused of supporting the British. In retaliation, other tribes also organised themselves under the leadership of Khan Bahadur Zaman Khan Kuki Khel and attacked and burnt the village in which the two Turkish emissaries and their Afghan followers were living in Tirah.¹⁰¹ This action of the Afridis made them unpopular among the people. The British rewarded the tribes by sanctioning a bonus of one year's allowances.¹⁰²

⁹⁷ Mir Mast Khan was Kamber Khel Afridi and ex-Jamadar of 25th Rifle in the British Army. Due to his good performance in the World War I, he was decorated with Victoria Cross, the third Indian who got this medal. But the hostility of the British towards the Khalifa was not tolerated by him and he escaped to Germany from where he accompanied with the Turko-German mission to Kabul.

⁹⁸ Lal Baha, "Activities of Turkish Agents in Khyber during World War I", *Journal of Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, Vol. xiv, No 2. August 1969, pp. 188-89.

⁹⁹ General Report on Border Affairs in the North West Frontier Province for the year 1916-17, p. 2.

¹⁰⁰ Rauf, p.424.

¹⁰¹ The Border Administration Report of the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1917-18., p.3.

¹⁰² Ibid.

The purpose of the delegation could not be achieved. Their failure was attributed to the mutual jealousy of the *mullahs*, which was tactfully exploited by Sir Abdul Qayyum.¹⁰³ The British used money to muster support in their favour.¹⁰⁴ The delegation was driven out in June 1917, from the tribal territory and finally from Kabul by the Afghan authorities. However, their presence and their propaganda against the British were effective and many of the Frontier's soldiers refused to fight against the Turks in World War I. Many of them were court marshalled and many were put to death.¹⁰⁵

Conclusion

Pukhtuns resisted the extension of the British imperial power on every nook of the northwest frontier of India. Those who led these encounters were predominantly religious holy men, the *mullah*. Their indoctrination and training provided an easy cultivation of all those ideas and actions carrying a religious posture. These ideas were easily instilled in the minds of illiterate masses who always had good ears to listen to any logic promising them independence in this world and an eternal salvation in the hereafter. The unity of Muslims remained a cherished dream of the religious holy men and when the Pan-Islamic slogan was raised, it attracted the Muslims of the region as it did in other parts of British India. Unlike other parts, Pakhtuns Pan-Islamism augmented their armed struggle against the "infidels" in a more forceful vigour. The *mullah's* call for jihad was voiced in every corner of the region in 1897 and made the year memorable for Pakhtuns resistance to the British rule since their arrival in 1849.

The local people fought with the traditional weapons including striking and stoning of rocks, knives, daggers and swords, and with rifles taken from the British soldiers during encounters and with the arms brought by the soldiers who deserted the British army. The confronting force was well organised and well equipped, with the latest arms and war strategy. The terrain of the region, climate and people's enthusiasm for freedom and hatred for the British were the positive points on the side of the people, which did not allow the British to wipe out the resistance throughout their rule (1849-1947). The British did not leave any stone unturned available to them for the

¹⁰³ He was awarded the title of Nawab to Khan Bahadur Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum Khan C.I.E. in recognition of his services as Assistant Political Agent (General Report on Border Affairs in the North West Frontier Province for the year 1916-17, p. 21)

¹⁰⁴ Chamarkandi, p.102.

¹⁰⁵ Mian Akbar Shah, *Azadi Ki Talash* (trans). Sayyed Wiqar Ali Shah, Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1989, p.10.

suppression of the resistance. The people paid the price of support to their Turkish brethren and resistance to the British in the shape of a blockade of an entire area or tribe, confiscation of money and property, the burning of houses and villages, imposition of financial punishment and last but not the least, killing and wounding of people. They were not familiar with the political means through which a nation can launch for the acceptance of demands. The reason was the isolation of the leadership, i.e. religious holy men, from the knowledge of the external changing world. They were hostile to any change in their primordial way of thinking and tried their best to dissociate all those elements who were in favour of modern education. The international players, particularly the rulers of Afghanistan, might have had their own agenda for promoting Pan-Islamism in the region as they were not on good terms with the British Indian Empire. The idea of armed support to the tribesmen by Turkey and Afghanistan, on which the locals relied for quite some time, was wishful thinking. They did not know the complexities attached with such kind of actions. They seemed to be unaware of the changes occurring in the world, particularly in India where the subjugated Hindus rose to a status of a nation in their own homeland. The whole period i.e. 1897-1917 is full of Pakhtuns' struggle for a world, which was not possible to be recreated in the changing world scenario. The subsequent upheavals in the region in the whole of the 20th century remind us of another very important fact that the Pakhtuns did not learn any lesson from the history. They continue to be exploited by their religious leaders, knowingly or unknowing, and other players in the region, in the name of religion.