

BRITISH POLICY DURING THE ITALO-TURKISH WAR (1911-1912) AND REACTIONS OF INDIAN MUSLIMS

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Abstract

The beginning of the 20th century brought major problems for the Ottoman Empire both internally and externally. The first serious foreign issue faced by the Union and Progress Party, which came to power with the abolition of Sultan Abdülhamit II, was the 1911 Italo-Turkish War. Tripoli, the last territory of the Ottoman Empire in North Africa, became the target of Italians who wanted to take part in the race for colonialism. While European states remained silent about the Italian invasion in order not to disrupt the balance of power, Indians openly supported the Ottoman Empire. In this article, the material and moral aid provided by Indians to the Ottoman Empire is discussed. In addition, the validity of the Pan-Islamism policy was discussed by analysing the reasons why the British government did not support the Ottoman Empire despite the demands and pressures from the Indian people.

Keywords: *The Ottoman Empire, Indian Muslims, Britain, Italy, The Italo-Turkish War.*

Trablusgarp Savaşı (1911-1912) Boyunca İngiliz Politikası ve Hint Müslümanlarının Tepkisi

Öz

20. yüzyılın başları, Osmanlı Devleti için içeride ve dışarıda büyük sorunları beraberinde getirmiştir. Sultan II. Abdülhamit'in ilgisiyle birlikte yönetime gelen İttihat ve Terakki Partisi'nin karşılaştığı ilk ciddi dış mesele 1911 Trablusgarp Savaşı olmuştur. Osmanlı Devleti'nin Kuzey Afrika'daki son toprağı olan Trablusgarp, sömürgecilik yarışına dahil olmak isteyen İtalyanların hedefi haline gelmiştir. Avrupa devletleri güç dengelerini bozmamak adına İtalya'nın işgaline sessiz kalırken, Hintliler Osmanlı Devleti'ni açıkça desteklemişlerdir. Bu makalede, Hintlilerin Osmanlı Devleti'ne yaptığı maddi ve manevi yardımlar ele alınmıştır. Ayrıca İngiliz hükümetinin Hint halkından gelen talep ve baskılara rağmen Osmanlı Devleti'ne destek vermemesinin gerekçeleri analiz edilerek Panislamizm politikasının geçerliliğı tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Hint Müslümanları, İngiltere, İtalya, Trablusgarp Savaşı.*

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Introduction

Following the process of Italian unification, Italy's primary objective was to establish colonies that would signify the state's power, marking a significant stride towards becoming an imperial force within the European context. Italy faced a crucial decision regarding its colonial ambitions, primarily centred on two geographically proximate options: The Adriatic Sea and Northern Africa. This decision-making process was influenced by Austria-Hungary's intentions in the Balkans and the Adriatic Sea, as evidenced by its occupation of Bosnia. Italy was apprehensive about confronting a formidable empire like Austria-Hungary in this region, fearing the potential for disaster (Kurtcephe, 1995, p. 12-19).

In Northern Africa, Italy aspired to acquire Tunisia as a colony, but this ambition was thwarted by a French victory, closing off the opportunity. Subsequently, in 1881, Italy was forced to withdraw from the region. Following this setback, Italy shifted its focus towards Tripoli, a territory separated from the rest of the Ottoman Empire by British-controlled Egypt (Kerimoğlu, 2012, p. 164). Given the relative weakness of the Ottoman Empire compared to European powers, Italy strategically directed its expansion efforts towards Tripoli. Through diplomatic initiatives, Italy sought European support, eventually securing the backing necessary to attack Tripoli.

Tripoli remained the sole uncolonised territory in this context. Italy initially pursued peaceful penetration of the region through economic means and diplomatic channels with other European powers. Through negotiations and secret agreements, Italy successfully persuaded Britain and France to accept Tripoli under their dominion (Kurtcephe, 1990, p. 361). Italy spent several years attempting to establish satisfactory agreements with European powers regarding the fluctuating status quo in Northern Africa. In response to Italy's unacceptable demands about Tripoli, the Ottoman government sought European support but was unsuccessful in securing it. Consequently, Italy declared war on the Ottoman Empire on September 29, 1911, by landing troops in Tripoli (Şıvgın, 1989, p. 33).

The Ottoman Empire was ill-prepared for this conflict, leading to the initiation of a guerrilla war by Ottoman forces and their loyal Arab tribes in Tripoli. Notable Ottoman military figures, including Enver Bey, Mustafa Kemal Pasha, and Eşref Bey, assumed false identities and made arduous journeys through Egypt and Tunisia to reach Tripoli (Orhan, 2010, p. 47-51). Once there, they organised Arab tribes, mounting a resilient guerrilla resistance against the Italian forces. Italians found it challenging to advance beyond Tripoli, encountering strong opposition in Benghazi, Derna, and Tobruk. In an attempt to compel the Ottomans to seek peace, Italy seized twelve islands and made efforts to attack Istanbul. Concurrently, the Tripoli conflict catalysed for Balkan States to declare their independence and wage war against the Ottoman Empire. Consequently, the Ouchy Treaty was signed on October 15, 1912, necessitating the Ottoman government's relinquishment of twelve islands and

Tripoli to Italy until the conclusion of the Balkan Wars. Italian troops temporarily occupied these islands during this period (Orhan, 2010, p. 87).

The annexation of Tripoli sparked reactions in Istanbul, leading to pressure on the Committee of Union and Progress to detain all Italian citizens in the Ottoman Empire and confiscate their assets. Additionally, there were calls to sever all relations with Italy, although the government initially regarded these sanctions as a last resort. Prominent Istanbul newspapers, including *Tanin* and *İkdam*, advocated for the boycott of Italian goods. While the government did not officially endorse this decision, people began boycotting Italian shipping services, shops, and establishments (Şeber, 2011, p. 243-244). As a result, the Ottoman government mandated the departure of all Italians within three days (The Times of India, (TOI), Latest Telegrams: Italo-Turkish War, 10 October 1911, p. 7).

Despite the Ottoman Empire's inability to garner support from European powers, the Indian populace expressed sympathy for the Turkish people across various domains. Numerous meetings were convened in different parts of India, resulting in the collection of substantial sums of money to aid the Turks. Indian newspapers, which evolved from weeklies to dailies, played a pivotal role in supporting the Turkish cause. Publications such as *Comrade*, *Bengalee*, *Times*, *Muslim Gazette*, *Al-Hilal*, *Zamindar*, *the Vakil*, *the Watan*, and *Paisa-i Akhbar* criticised European duplicity toward the Turks. They framed the conflict as an "attack of Christians on Islam" (Özcan, 1997, p. 138-139). Thus, the Ottoman Empire got the most extensive support from Indian Muslims during the Italo-Turkish War.

Some studies examine the assistance India provided to the Ottoman Empire during the Italo-Turkish War. In the works of Kerimoğlu (2012) and Tellioglu (2015), the Italo-Turkish War and the Balkan Wars are collectively addressed and evaluated. On the other hand, articles by Shukla (1971) and Ali (1992) specifically focus on the Italo-Turkish War, utilising Indian sources. The common thread in these studies is the exploration of the aid extended by Indian Muslims against the occupation. However, the missing aspect in these studies is how the Italo-Turkish War shaped Indian politics and why the British did not assist the Ottomans. This study, which examines Indian contributions during the Italo-Turkish War, seeks to evaluate why the British did not support the Ottomans despite the efforts of Indian Muslims. Additionally, it aims to shed light on the Muslim-Hindu joint movement that began against the British in the Indian subcontinent. The study proposes that panislamism was not considered a serious threat for the British government in India.

1. Indian Response to the Italo-Turkish War

The war caused massive expression in the Muslim world, especially in Indian Subcontinent. It was a very stressful situation that even harsh discussions of the Tripoli war took place in India's streets and many street fights resulted from the ar-

guments and police had to involve keeping the crowd well (TOI, Tripoli Occupied: Turks Abandon the Town the Bombardment and After, 7 October 1911, p. 9). Large public meetings, rallies, and massive demonstrations were organised during the war in different cities to support the Ottoman Empire. Some of these rallies were held not only with the participation of Indian Muslims, but also with the participation of Hindus. In this way, it was aimed to emphasise that the Indian public opinion stood behind the Ottoman Empire against Western imperialism as a bloc. While the Italo-Turkish War was ongoing, the Muslims held a big rally with the Hindus. Speaking alongside the Muslim speakers at this rally, the Hindu leaders declared that the war was not a war between Muslims and Christians as claimed, but a struggle between the West and the East, and declared that they were on the side of the Ottoman state, which they described as their eastern brothers, against Western imperialism.

Meanwhile, the British administration in India wanted to prevent these meetings but could not succeed in encountering great resistance (Sırat-ı Müstakim, "Bütün Hindistan Galeyanda, 28 December 1911, p. 274). In those meetings four main arguments emerged. Those were (1) solidarity and support to the Turks, (2) boycotting Italian products (3) money collected for war victims and (4) requesting British intervention. Apart from such meetings, many newspapers from Bombay, Northern India, Bengal, Mumbai, Madras, etc., supported the Turks significantly during the Italo-Turkish war.

At the beginning of the war, Muslim people in different part of India were called meetings to protest Italy. The most reactionary place was Calcutta and one of the first reactions was under the name of "Committee for Aid to the Ottoman Red Crescent Society" on 2 October 1911. The main aim was to prevent war and collect money for the war victims (Shamshad, 1992, 572). The other protest in Calcutta against the action of Italy was held at the residence of Moidul Islam. The decisions taken in the meeting were simultaneously sent to Home the Secretary in Simla, the Foreign Secretary in London and the Grand Vizier and President of Parliament in Istanbul by President Mr Golamhossein Ariff. He requested from the Home Secretary and Foreign Secretary the intervention of Great Britain since it was the biggest Muslim power in the world. The telegram sent to Istanbul mentioned about how Indian Muslims are in sympathy with Turkey. Besides, the committee called for the aid of the Ottoman Red Crescent Society to take steps to prevent hostilities in the interest of humanity and collect funds to relieve suffering from the war.

Moreover, by communicating with essential centres in India it was requested to form local committees on similar lines (TOI, Italo-Turkish War: Operations at Tripoli Italy's Appeal to English Press, 3 October 1911, p. 7). Indian Muslims from Calcutta sent a telegraph to the Times newspaper that they kindly requested from the British to prevent women and children from Italian sacrifice (BOA, (Osmanlı Arşivi) BEO, (Bâb-ı Âli Evrak Odası), folder no. 3959/296860, 6 November 1911). On the

other hand, Persians in India also organised a meeting along with the members of the Anjuman-i Mozaffary (Organisation of Mozaffary) in Calcutta to show their sympathy with the Turks. In the meeting, they requested the British to intervene in the war in the interest of Islam and humanity (TOI, *Italo-Turkish War: Operations at Tripoli Italy's Appeal to English Press*, 3 October 1911, p. 7).

Another meeting was held by the Executive Committee of the Punjab Muslim League in Lahore. Similarly, with the others, they protested the unjustifiable aggression of Italy against Turkey by breaching international law. The committee highlighted that as the world's greatest Muslim power, the British government should exercise its influence in stopping the war. Also Muslims of Lahore organised another meeting at the Badshahi Mosque to protest against Italy's action on Friday (TOI, *Latest Telegrams: The War Bombardment of Tripoli Weak Response by Turks*, 6 October 1911, p. 7).

Madras Muslims organised another meeting against the Italo-Turkish war under the presidency of Mohamed Abdul Kadeer Badsha Sahib Bahadur. In this meeting, they condemned the Italians and pleaded the King of British to use his influence to stop the war. They thanked to the British and French press for their condemnation of Italian aggression. They called all Muslims to boycott Italian products. This boycott offer was welcomed by huge enthusiastic that people in the meeting thrown up their caps (TOI, *Latest Telegrams: The War Bombardment of Tripoli Weak Response by Turks*, 6 October 1911, p. 7).

About four thousand attentions, Muslims of Dacca organised a meeting at the Old Lines to express their sympathy with the Turks against the Italians and to subscribe in aid of the wounded in the war. They conveyed their message that the British government did not intervene the war. They sent the following message to the Ottoman Consul-General in Bombay, stressing, "We, the Mohamedan inhabitants of the capital of Eastern Bengal and Assam, have heard with deep sorrow and utmost indignation of Italy's aggressive act on the Ottoman in Tripoli. We have held a mass pray meeting, today, and we implicitly believe that our united voice, praying for the protection of Islam's interest and maintenance of its prestige, will reach the Almighty" (TOI, *Latest Telegrams: The War Bombardment of Tripoli Weak Response by Turks*, 6 October 1911, p. 7). Then, a meeting was arranged by the All-Indian Muslim League in Lucknow on 7 October 1911. In this meeting it was announced that the British should intervene in the war and Italian brigandage should be boycotted by all Indians (Kerimoğlu, 2012, p. 166).

Over 3000 Muslims in Calicut attended "Jamath Mosque" to support the Ottoman Empire. Other Muslim societies in Bareilly were offered in the Juma Mosques for the victory of the Sultan and the triumph of Islam. And people began to boycott Italian goods. Also, a public meeting Under the auspices of the Anjuma-i-Islam (Organisation of Islam) of Bombay was held on 10 October 1911 at the Anjuman Hall,

Hornby Road, to express sympathy with Turks and protest against Italy's breach of international law (TOI, Tripoli Occupied: Turks Abandon the Town the Bombardment and After, 7 October 1911, p. 9). There were people from every class and sect with a large attention in the meeting. Important Muslim people of the Indian society expressed their sympathy with the object of the meeting. Then the chairman of the meeting explained the following words about the Italo-Turkish war that showed the support of the Indians for Turkey:

"We have gathered here this evening to make our protest against this unprovoked, unjust and unrighteous war. From one point of view, this war is a menace to the world's peace. (...) Italy has undertaken an open act of piracy in defiance of all cannons of international law or international morals. Outside Italy, nowhere in the world has any attempt been made either to justify or defend the action of Italy" (TOI, Latest Telegrams: Italo-Turkish War Grain As Contraband Strong Indian Protest, 11 October 1911, p. 7).

In his words, the chairman emphasised that although the great powers of the era stood aloof and did not respond to Turkey's call to intervene and end the war, the Turkish state did not get any response from the powers. However, he said, the support and sympathy of the Muslim world entirely with Turkey. In this case, the only way for the Indian Muslims to help Turkey was to send money for the wounded soldiers or the widows and orphans of the soldiers. This resolution was supported by the notables of Indian society like Mr. Ibrahim Rahimtulla, Sheik Alibhoy Hamdani, Abdul Huq, Mr. Dayium Islam and Mr. Haji Yusuf Haji Ismail (TOI, Latest Telegrams: Italo-Turkish War Grain As Contraband Strong Indian Protest, 11 October 1911, p. 7). Other prominent Muslim leaders, Mr Kazi Kabirruddin and Mr. Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy, hoped the British would use their best efforts to end the war.

On the other hand, Myan Mohamed Haji Jan Mohamed Chhotani proposed that the managing committee of the Anjuman-i-Islam be authorised to collect funds on behalf of the families of the Turks killed or wounded in the war. Notably, Mr. Haji Yusuf Haji Ismail offered to boycott Italian goods in India, and many people supported this idea. Especially seven crores (70 Million) of Muslims were thought to have huge effect on the Italian economy with the boycott. Lastly, the meeting was concluded with the circulation of a subscription list among the attendants (TOI, Latest Telegrams: Italo-Turkish War Grain As Contraband Strong Indian Protest, 11 October 1911, p. 7).

Muslims in Karachi gathered in the square after their pray under the leadership of Mr Mir Ayyub Khan. They wired to the Foreign Secretary and the Viceroy, condemning Italy's unjust aggression on Tripoli and urging Britain's immediate intervention. Also, the Turkish Consul-General in Bombay was commissioned to convey Muslim sympathies of Islamic prestige and a Red Crescent society was formed (TOI, Latest Telegrams: Italo-Turkish War, 10 October 1911, p. 7). In a meeting in one of the biggest mosques, people gathered by holding in their hands white flags written

on *ayat* and *hadith* with red colour (Sırat-ı Müstakim, Alem-i İslam'da Galeyan, 79 November 1911, p. 147).

Another protest was held in Poona by the Bombay Presidency Moslem League council. They adopted the following resolution:

“that this League representing to express its most emphatic protest against the unprecedented action of Italy in making an unprovoked attack in defiance of international law and morality upon Turkey, a friendly state, whose independence and integrity is guaranteed by the consent of Europe. The League puts on record its high admiration of the heroic virtues and exemplary conduct of the Turks under the most trying circumstances. It earnestly appeals to the British Government, the greatest Muslim power in the world. (...) the League advises all Mohamedans to boycott Italian goods as a mark of their protest against the action of Italy” (TOI, Latest Telegrams: Italo-Turkish War, 10 October 1911, p. 7).

Lucknow Muslims held a meeting to support Turkey against Italian aggression. Besides, they formed a committee to collect fund in aid of the Red Crescent Society and to boycott Italian goods (TOI, Latest Telegrams: Italo-Turkish War Grain As Contraband Strong Indian Protest, 11 October 1911, p. 7). Another meeting by the Indian Red Crescent Society was held in Bengal on 22 October. The main emphasis was on boycotting Italian brigandage. The president of the Red Crescent Society, Ghulamhossein Arif, pointed out the necessity of boycott by saying *“not a penny should be allowed to go to into the pockets of the enemies who attacked Islam”* (Özcan, 1997, p. 139-140). At the same meeting Abul Kalam Azad said that *“The King of Turkey was the only Muhammadan King that it must be borne in mind that the bullets that pierce the bodies of the Turks, pierce the hearts of the Muhammadans from sympathising with the Turks”* (Trivedi, 1994, p. 55). This concerned British and they tried to promote relations with Hindus.

The impression of the Tripoli war on Indian Muslims was pointed out by Mufti Muhammad Sadiq who belonged to the Ahmadiyya Sect of Islam and editor of the newspaper called *Badr*. Mufti Sadiq's letter, given below, summarised what was happening in India about the war.

“The present Italo-Turkish war must have allowed you to judge how deeply the Muslims of India sympathise with the Turks. Everywhere, meetings are being held to express sympathy with the Turks. forcible articles are being published in the newspapers in their support. Nay, the Muslims have gone so far as to urge the British Government (under which they are living in perfect peace and tranquillity enjoying full religious liberty) to intervene on behalf of Turkey and to check Italy from its aggressions against the Turks. Italian goods are boycotted. All this sympathy you have seen yourself” (BOA, HR.SFR.3 (Hariciye Nezâreti Londra Sefareti Belgeleri), folder no. 639/73 19 November 1911).

Muslims of Serajganj in Bengal met under the auspices of the local Anjuman-i Islamia (organisation of Islam) presided by Syad Abdul Ghaffar on 29 September

1912. In the resolution submitted to Governor-in-Council of Bengal, “the government of India be requested to press upon the British Ministry at home the expediency of utilising Britain’s high prestige in European Diplomatic circles in expediting the termination of the war on terms honourable to the Ottoman Empire” (Indian Archive, Foreign Department, External-B, Digitized Public Records Foreign, PR_000004093738, file no. 332-333, p. 8).

Italian operations in the Red Sea made Muslims worried, because there was a possibility that they might attack to Holy places to force the Ottomans for peace. Therefore, London All-Indian Muslim League submitted many letters expressing Muslims anxiety (Özcan, 1997, p. 141). An article written in Times titled “Mohammedans’ Message to Britain” aimed to draw the attention of European powers to Italian operations in the holy places. Especially, Natal Mohammedans held meetings for this purpose and supported the Turks. “*The people of Turkey bravely continue to defend themselves and the honour and prestige of Islam against the unrighteous, unwarranted and savage aggression of Italy, and expressing the hope that no circumstances will they yield to the unlawful demands of Italy*” (BOA, HR.SFR.3, folder no. 659/2 11 January 1912).

Ottoman could not send its soldiers to Tripoli to defend the city properly; it was the same for medical purposes. The Ottoman Red Crescent Society was insufficient for first aid supplies, doctors, and teams for Ottoman soldiers and Arab tribes. Furthermore, many Ottoman doctors were imprisoned by Italians. In this hard situation Indians did not hesitate to the Ottoman Empire (Akgün and Uluğtekin, 1992, p. 21). Money was sent to Turkish people from different part of India and through the end of the war, £ 52,044,126 from Indian Muslims was sent to the Ottoman Red Crescent Society, and this money was transferred from the London Branch of Imperial Ottoman Bank Istanbul Branch (BOA, HR.SFR.3, folder no. 657/18, 12 December 1911).

2. British Policy during the Italo-Turkish War

When the war broke out, the British government, on 4 October 1911, officially declared its neutrality in the conflict and sought a similar stance for Indian Muslims. This development proved disconcerting for the Indian Muslim population, who responded by convening numerous assemblies across the Indian subcontinent to vocalise their discontent with Italy’s actions and convey their solidarity with the Ottoman Empire. Following these gatherings, the Indian government received an array of representations, resolutions, and petitions from the Indian Muslim community (Trivedi, 1994, p. 55). Throughout these communications, the prevailing sentiment among Muslims was that the British Empire, seemingly at the pinnacle of its power, possessed the capability to terminate the war by dispatching its naval vessels to the region (TOI, Forces in Tripoli, 28 October 1911, p. 9). Regrettably, the British not only lent political support to the Ottoman Empire but also declined to grant passage

to Ottoman troops through Egypt to reach Tripoli. Furthermore, they granted logistical support to the Italian forces via Egypt.

An interesting question emerges as to why the British refrained from assisting the Ottoman Empire during this conflict, despite their status as the rulers of the largest Muslim population and the widespread petitions from the Muslim community in India. At the beginning of the 20th century many Pan-Islamist writers from India emphasised the Ottoman-British alliance rather than revolt against the British (Aydın, 2017, p. 89). When one examines the political situation of the era, it becomes evident that the British government could not readily align itself with the desires articulated by the Indian Muslims. Importantly, Indian Muslims did not pose a tangible threat to the British government, which steadfastly maintained its stance that “we do not intend to let our policy be influenced by Muslim agitation” (Shamshad, 1992, 577).

In essence, it can be posited that the Pan-Islamic Movement in India did not pose a significant threat to British interests. Conversely, any actions that could potentially undermine Italian sentiments had the potential to drive Italy, a key British rival, into the arms of the Germans. Consequently, it can be asserted that the British were keen to avoid any disruptions caused by the Italians, and the most pragmatic course of action to deter Italy from targeting their colonies was to abstain from preventing Italy’s assault on Tripoli. Therefore, the most advantageous course of action for the British with regard to the Ottoman Empire was to mitigate Italian demands (Özcan, 1997, p. 182-183).

Conversely, certain newspapers in India interpreted the situation as a consequence of Turkey’s foreign policy missteps, particularly its unwarranted reliance on Germany (Trivedi, 1994, p. 56). At the time, Germany had emerged as a growing centre of power in Europe, and as a result, there were instances where Ottoman and German interests converged. The ascendance of Germany offered newfound optimism for the Ottoman Empire in its quest to regain its former prominence, and the Committee of Union and Progress viewed Germany as a promising new ally. This burgeoning closeness between the Ottoman Empire and Germany precipitated a parallel alliance between Russia and Britain. The imperative drove British interests to safeguard its colony, India, which was perceived as vulnerable to potential Russian encroachment. To achieve this, the British strategically captured Egypt from the Ottoman Empire, thereby establishing a buffer zone to secure India. These circumstances collectively fostered a climate of tension and conflict between the Ottoman Empire and the British, which consequently dampened British enthusiasm for aiding the Ottoman Empire during the Tripoli War of 1911.

The Italo-Turkish War appeared to significantly erode the loyalty of Indian Muslims towards the British Empire. Indian Muslims began to question the notion that the British were allies of the Muslim world. Consequently, the British Empire’s standing and prestige among Indian Muslims suffered a notable decline, marking

a pivotal moment in the political consciousness of the Indian Muslim community. This shift in British policy frustrated their “divide and rule” strategy in India (Sadiq, 1983, p. 29).

Paradoxically, it brought together two previously divided communities, Hindus and Muslims, uniting them under a common cause for a period. This newfound unity bolstered the “freedom struggle” against British colonial rule. As a result of this evolving political landscape, numerous influential Muslim leaders, such as Abu'l Kalam Azad, advocated for Muslims to join the Indian National Congress, which was at the forefront of the movement for India's independence (Trivedi, 1994, p. 59-60).

The Turko-Italian war played a pivotal role in the progression of the Pan-Islamic movement in India, whose origins can be traced back to the 1860s and 1870s. The Turko-Italian war served as a catalyst for an organised and sustained pro-Turkish movement in India. It also heightened the Pan-Islamic inclination among Indian Muslims, further solidifying their sense of common cause with Muslims facing European interventions across the globe (Shukla, 1971, p. 636-637).

Under immense pressure from the Indian Muslim community, Lieutenant Montague delivered a speech to the All-Muslim League of London Branch's representatives to elucidate the British government's policy. His address included the following words:

“I learnt of your intention to present me with an address in recognition of my small efforts on behalf of the Moslems, an of those poor women and children done to death in Tripoli by a brutal and cowardly enemy (...) I had always been interested in the Turks from a child, and, though not a politician, have admitted efforts of Young Turkey to go ahead and straighten out their affairs. When war loomed on the horizon I listened with keen interest to the discussions I heard on the subject, with the result that I decided to offer my services to the Turks and do my little best to help them hold their own” (BOA, HR.SFR.3, folder no. 655/1, 1 January 1912).

It is understood that Lieutenant Montague refrained from the reaction of Indian Muslims and tried to convince Muslim that he used all his reasonable efforts in Tripoli for Muslim.

Conclusion

Following the official abolition of the Mughal Empire in 1857, the 19th and 20th centuries marked a significant juncture for Indian Muslims. The dominance of the British colonial rule and the ascendancy of Hindu influence in the Indian subcontinent contributed to the marginalisation of Muslim society. Concurrently, the Ottoman Empire's Pan-Islamist policy led to the Ottoman Sultan's recognition as the Islamic world's leader, assuming the caliph's role. This development underscored the paramount importance of the Ottoman Empire in the eyes of Indian Muslims, prompting substantial support from the Indian subcontinent during the Ottoman Empire's challenging times. One noteworthy instance of this support occurred

during the Italo-Turkish War. Nevertheless, it is evident that the European powers pursued a policy of indifference during this conflict, with a self-serving perspective.

In contrast to the European powers, Indian Muslims convened numerous meetings, disseminated newspapers to raise awareness about European duplicity, contributed financial aid, and provided medical assistance to the Ottoman troops and their families. This aid extended during the Ottoman Empire's hardships and fostered a profound bond between Turks and Indian Muslims. However, a pivotal shift transpired in Indian political dynamics when the British government declined to align with Turkey during the conflict. Frustrated by their unmet expectations from the British, Indian Muslims began collaborating with the Hindu community, thereby fortifying India's struggle for independence. Ultimately, the Ottoman government recognised that the British were no longer reliable allies and subsequently cultivated relations with Germany.

A striking situation that the article has discussed is the effect of the Pan Islamism on the British policy. In the article, it is seen that although Indian Muslims put pressure on the British government to support the Ottoman Empire against Italy, the British government did not consider Pan Islamism as a threat for its rule in India. Thus, the war showed Indian people that the British cannot be trusted when its interests are on the table. However, the British attitude towards the Ottoman during the war had a place in the memory of Indians and it became the first step to the failure of the British divide and rule policy.

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