CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION
Pan-Islamism as a movement derived its inspiration from Islam as a religion and philosophy of life. As a political creed, it originated in the idea of Muslim brotherhood to form a bulwark against imperialism. In other words Pan-Islamism signified a religious as well as political response to the Challenges of Western Civilization and Western imperialism. During the reign of Abdul Hamid II (1876-1909), the Pan-Islamic movement served as a counterpoise to the Western expansion in the world of Islam. Islam was viewed by the Pan-Islamists as a potent anti-colonialist ideology to liberate the Muslims from foreign rule. The term "Pan-Islamism" could have been coined in the imitation of terms like "Pan-Slavism" or "Pan-Germanism" which became popular in the 1870's. However its closest Ottoman equivalents, Ittihad-i-Islam or the terms Ittihad-i-Din and Uhuvvet-i-Din carrying similar connotation, had long been used in the correspondence between the Ottomans and the Muslim rulers of India, Central Asia and Indonesia.

The Pan-Islamic movement in India had similar origins. Ever since the fall of Mughal Empire, the religious elite (Ulema), already deprived of their past power and privileges, nurtured sentiments of hostility towards the British colonial rule. The anti-western and anti-imperialist orient-
tations of Pan-Islam brought all sections of people into the vortex of nationalism to fight against the common enemy which eventually found expression in the Khilafat movement.

The Indian Muslims have always taken keen interest in the affairs of the Muslim world. This was perhaps natural in view of a common religion which binds its followers together theoretically as one nation and recognizes no geographical boundaries in its ultimate world-view. However, the attitude of the Indian Muslims towards Turkey was peculiar and distinct. The Indian Muslims shared the joys and sorrows of the Turks on every occasion particularly from the second half of the nineteenth century. Their attachment to the Ottoman Empire was not only because its Sultan was viewed as the Caliph of all Muslims but also it was the only strong Muslim power which could have dealt with imperial powers effectively. Thus, with the expansion of British rule the small kingdoms in India felt threatened and sought help from the Ottoman Sultans.

Whenever there was attack on the Ottoman Empire, the Indian Muslims rendered every possible help and showed solidarity with Turkey. A book¹ on the Khilafat movement regards it as a campaign by a group of Indian leaders to unite

¹ Minault Gail, The Khilafat Movement: Religions Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India (Delhi 1982).
their community politically by means of religious and cultural symbols meaningful to all strata of Muslim community. As such, it could be viewed as a quest for "Pan-Indian Islam", rather than Pan-Islamic movement. If mobilized, a United Indian Muslim Constituency would permit genuine Muslim participation in the national movement and at the same time, offset the minority status of the community strengthening its ability to bargain, whether with the British or Hindus. The book further states that the Khilafat leadership genuinely wished to assist the freedom movement, but their nationalism was based on the premise of Indian Muslim unity. The Khilafat leaders sought to create Indian Muslim unity just as the congress leaders sought to mitigate differences within their own movement. These quests were not identical but they may be viewed as parallel rather than contradictory. The book's final contention is that the Khilafat movement though nominally supportive of Indian nationalism, was actually working at cross purposes to it, at best, ambivalent nationalist. Indian Muslims felt threatened by the development of nationalism and looked to the caliphate for protection and defence.

It is difficult to agree with the above mentioned points of the book. The Khilafat movement, in the first instance was not a "Pan-Indian Islamic" movement; it was
rather pan-Islamic movement. Even before the start of the Russo-Turkish war in 1877, virtually hundreds of resolutions from all parts of India was sent to the government of India expressing the Indo-Muslim concern and feelings for the Ottomans. During the war the state of affairs in Turkey was the most common topic of discussion among the Muslims. The vernacular press was so critic of the British policy towards Ottoman Empire that this led to Lytton to pass vernacular press act in 1878 in India. Even during Turko-Italian war (1911), Balkan Wars (1912-13) the amount of solidarity shown by Indian Muslims was unprecedented.

Other points of the book can also be refuted in the light of facts. From the very beginning we find unity between the two communities for the cause of Turkey. They not only participated in demonstrations, protest meetings but also contributed for the Turkish fund. The nationalist movement and Hindu-Muslim unity went ahead after World War I and during the time of the Khilafat movement, the Rowlatt Acts and the non-cooperation movement. When the Hindus and the Muslims united under the banner of the Khilafat movement it did not represent a quest for religious unity alone, the self-respect of the Asian people was at stake. The caliphate became the symbol of the struggle for survival of an Asian country against European imperialism. At this junc-
ture, it was made abundantly clear that the Khilafat and swaraj were closely linked and interdependent. And the independence of India as a prerequisite for the achievement of the Khilafat ideals. Thus Khilafat movement pioneered the excuse of complete independence from British rule.

It is true that the Khilafat was a religious issue, but, linked up with the struggle for Swaraj, it had the effect of raising the national consciousness of the Muslims. Also, for the first time, large sections of the Hindus and the Muslims collaborated for the national goal, the goal of Independence for India. They participated in various forms of direct action decided upon by the United leadership of the congress and Muslims.

Also, it is difficult to agree with the contention that Indian Muslims felt threatened by the development of nationalism and looked to the caliphate for protection and defence. As a matter of fact, the Khilafat movement was the outcome of first world war in which Ottoman Empire was defeated and the position of the Caliph and the very heart land of Turkey was under attack. The Khilafat movement was basically aimed at maintaining the position of Caliph and territorial integrity of Turkey rather than to take caliph's help for their protection and defence. At this time the
Caliph himself was in dire need of help, then how could he help the Indian Muslim?

In Turkey, the war of liberation against foreign occupation was fought under the dynamic leadership of Mustafa Kemal. The Turks alone among the defeated powers of the first World War succeeded in rising against foreign occupation rejecting the dictated peace treaty of Sevres, imposed on them by the victors. Then the Turkey went through the process of secularization which entailed the abolition of the Sultanate in November 1922, the proclamation of the Republic on 29 October 1923 and finally the abolition of the Caliphate in March 1924. The abolition of the Caliphate deprived the Khilafat movement in India of its very reason de'tre.

The Secularism of the Turkish republic aimed at bringing to an end all the old institutions and it excluded formally religious institutions from all political arena and rejected social distinctions based on religion. However, the programme did not reject Islam or opposed religion in general; rather it aimed at making adherence to Islam a personal, individual matter in an environment where a person would not be obliged to follow some externally established set of rules and doctrines. It was a secularist rather than an atheistic programme of modernizing reform. As a nation-
alist programme, Kemal wanted to "nationalise" Islam by making it more Turkish in order that all Turks could understand their faith without having to resort to professional interpreters. In this effort, the language of the faith was an important key. Through Kemal's leadership, the call to prayer and sermons came to be given in Turkish rather than in Arabic. In this way, the secularist adaptation of Kemal worked to create a modern individualistic Islamic style.

If the pan-Islamic consciousness had given the ideological basic to the movement, the radical transformation of Turkey rendered this very basis irrelevant. Mustafa Kemal's struggle for national liberation had widely been interpreted as being simultaneously a struggle in defence of the Khilafat. However, the Khilafatists failed to comprehend the main trends in Turkish politics.

The response to the changes in Turkey was a mixed one. One section of Indian Muslims failed to reconcile themselves with Turkey's new identity. Yet their was another view which saw the developments in Turkey as part of the process of re-interpretation of the law of Islam. They argued that the Caliphate is not like the papacy; it could not truly exist separated from temporal power. So the most powerful independent Islamic government automatically has the Caliphate vested in it. That government can be in Turkey or
anywhere else. Formally Turkey was not recognized as the seat of Caliph, nevertheless it continued to reside with the Turkish government.

The principle of the Caliphate in relation to Muslim world was also expressed by the poet-philosopher Muhammad Iqbal. He argued that the responsibility was vested in Muslim community and not in a single individual. If the community selects an individual as the head of the state, he is invested with an authority which is more presidential than sovereign. If at a stage in history the exigencies of the situation demand a navel approach to a problem, such as the one facing the world of Islam in the twentieth century when the concept of a universal Caliphate was not a practical proposition, the consensus of Muslim opinion could be considered a sovereign authority which could propose or adopt alternative solutions. The Turkish National Assembly was therefore within its rights in seeking an alternative, i.e. a republican solution.

Muhammed Iqbal's feeling was also shared by other scholars who regarded the abolition of the Caliphate as the final fruition of purely Islamic ideas long struggle for supremacy. It ends a fiction and ushers in modern as opposed to medieval ideas. It opened the path for the development of nationalism and liberalism.
For a long time Turkey had been a source of inspiration for the Indian Muslims and the changes in Turkey had its impact on India. The young Turk revolution was seen as an example for self-government and constitutional development in India. When Turkey, once the "Custodian of Islam" after the war of liberation, repudiated outdated principles and adopted modern national outlook it was natural that Indian Muslims would feel the profound impact.

It was the cause of the Turks that had inspired the Indian Muslims to provide them help and to fight against the Common enemy. Now when the Turks themselves underwent an ideological metamorphosis, it was inevitable for the Indian Muslims too to change their ideological perspective. Now they began to realise keenly that they had a common goal with other communities of India and India's freedom became their prime concern.