

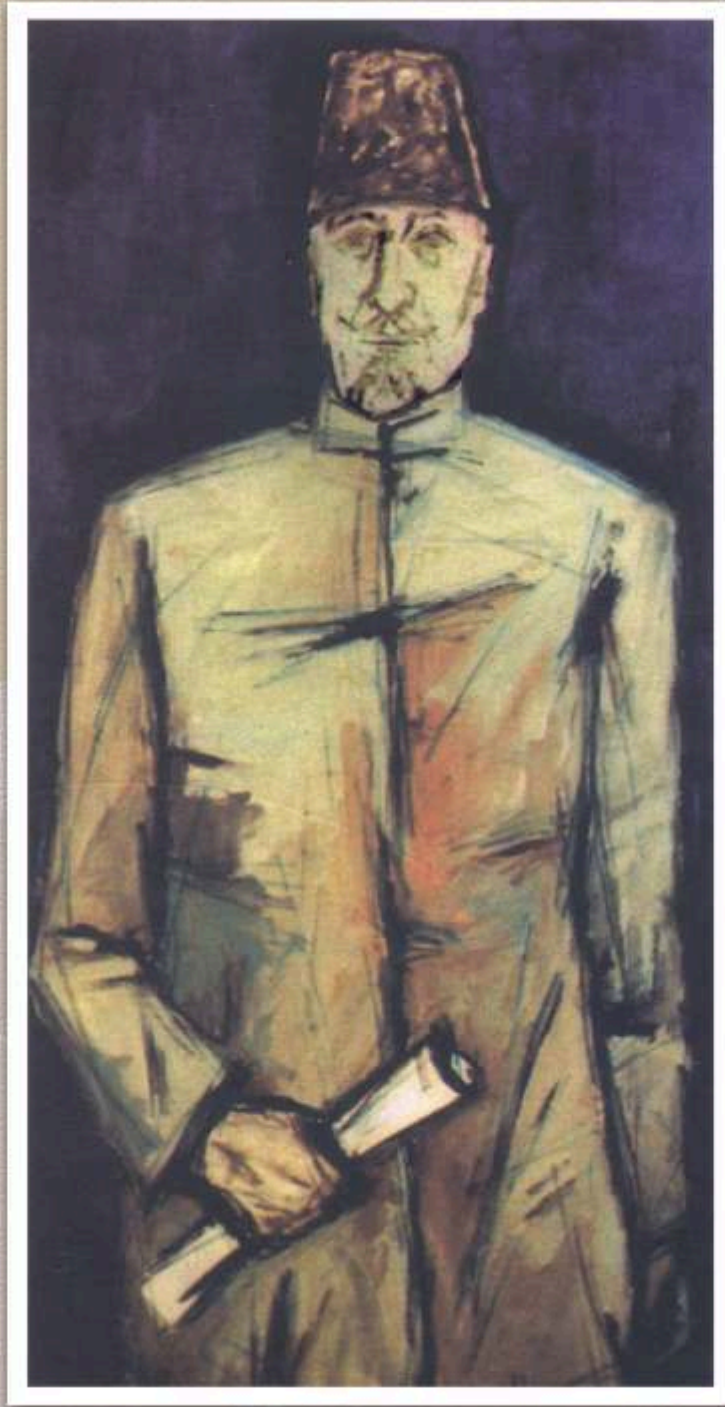
MAULANA AZAD NATIONAL URDU UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

الكلام

Al kalam

ISSUE XXI, NOVEMBER 2015

MAULANA AZAD



SPECIAL EDITION

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Chair

MANUU was selected by the UGC in 2008 for the award
of the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Chair

It is one of the six Universities in the country to be given this special chair.
The Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Chair started its activities in 2011-12

Thrust Areas

- Maulana Azad as a journalist
- Maulana Azad's contribution in the field of higher education
- Maulana Azad's role in the promotion of Urdu and Arabic literature in India
- Political, social and religious dimensions of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's personality,
with special reference to the Indian Freedom Movement
- Comparative study of religions in the light of Maulana Azad's ideas
- Views of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad on secularism and inclusive education
- The values and morals as evidenced in Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's personality



Al kalam - Maulana Azad National Urdu University Magazine - XXI Issue - November, 2015
Public Relations Office, Gachibowli, Hyderabad - 500 032, Telangana
Phone Fax: 040-2300 6606
Website: www.manuu.ac.in, Email: editornewsmagazine@gmail.com, manuupro1@gmail.com

Editor-in-Chief : Dr. Mohammad Aslam Parvaiz, Vice-Chancellor

EDITORIAL PANEL

Amina Kishore - Mir Ayoob Ali Khan - Aftab Alam Baig - Shams Imran - Salma Ashraf
Supported by: Amena Anjum and Mohammed Ather Ahmed Siddiqui

Printer & Publisher : Prof. S.M.Rahmatullah, Registrar

مولانا آزاد نیشنل اردو یونیورسٹی
मौलाना आज़ाद नेशनल उर्दू यूनिवर्सिटी

Maulana Azad National Urdu University

(A Central University Established by an Act of Parliament in 1998)

Gachibowli, Hyderabad - 500 032, Phone: 91 040 23006612-15, www.manuu.ac.in



Courtesy : The cover page painting is by famous painter Mr. M. F. Hussain which has been reproduced in the book
"Islam, Pluralism, Nationhood: legacy of Maulana Azad" by Mushirul Hasan.

Nehru on Azad in *Discovery of India*

The year 1912 was notable (also) in the development of the Muslim mind in India because of the appearance of two new weeklies, the *Al Hilal* in Urdu and *The Comrade* in English. The *Al Hilal* was started by Abul Kalam Azad (the present

Congress President), a brilliant young man of twenty-four, who had received his early education in Al Azhar University of Cairo and, while yet in his teens, had become well-known for his Arabic and Persian scholarship and deep learning. To this he added knowledge of the Islamic world outside India and of the reform movements that were coursing through it, as well as of European developments. Rationalist in outlook and yet profoundly versed in Islamic lore and history, he interpreted scripture from a rationalist point of view. Soaked in Islamic tradition and with many personal contacts with prominent Muslim leaders and reformers in Egypt, Turkey, Syria, Palestine, Iraq and Iran, he was powerfully affected by political and cultural developments in these countries. Because of his writings he was known in the Islamic countries probably more than any other Indian Muslim.

The wars in which Turkey became involved aroused his intense interest and sympathy; and yet his approach was different from that of the older Muslim leaders. He had a wider and more rationalist outlook which kept him away from the feudal and narrowly religious and separatist approach of these older leaders, and inevitably made him an Indian nationalist. He had himself seen nationalism growing in Turkey and the other Islamic countries and he applied that knowledge to India and saw in the Indian national movement a similar development. Other Muslims in India were hardly aware of these movements elsewhere and, wrapped up in their own feudal

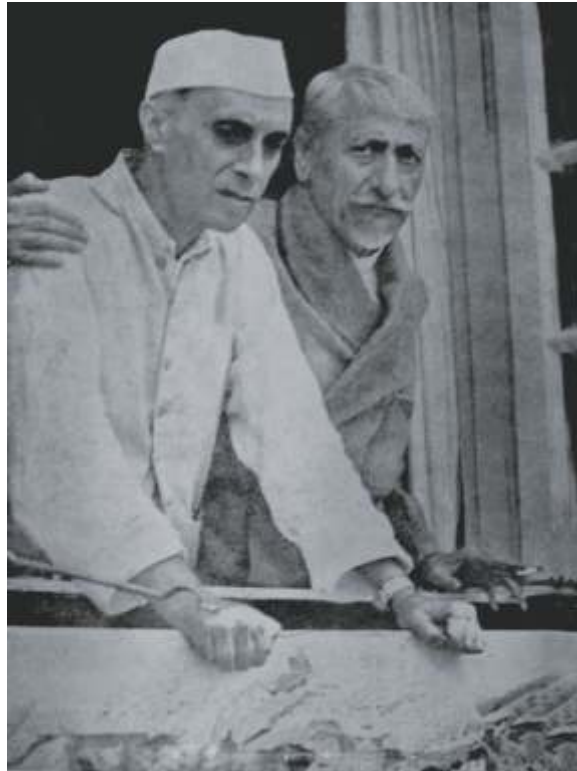
atmosphere, had little appreciation of what was happening there. They thought in religious terms only and if they sympathised with Turkey it was chiefly because of that religious bond. In spite of that intense sympathy, they were not in tune with the nationalist and rather secular movements in Turkey. (Pg.380-381)

Abul Kalam Azad spoke in a new language to them in his weekly *Al Hilal*. It was not only a new language in thought and approach, even its texture was different, for Azad's style was tense and virile, thought sometimes a little difficult because of its Persian background. He used new phrases for new ideas and was a definite influence in giving shape to the Urdu language, as it is today. The older

conservative leaders among the Muslims did not react favourably to all this and criticized Azad's opinions and approach. Yet not even the most learned of them could easily meet Azad in debate and argument, even on the basis of scripture and old tradition, for Azad's knowledge of these happened to be greater than theirs. He was a strange mixture of medieval scholasticism, eighteenth century rationalism, and the modern outlook. (Pg.381)

Abul Kalam Azad attacked this stronghold of conservatism and anti-nationalism not directly but by spreading ideas which undermined the Aligarh tradition. This very youthful

writer and journalist caused a sensation in Muslim intellectual circles and, though the elders frowned upon him, his words created a ferment in the minds of the younger generation. That ferment had already started because of events in Turkey, Egypt and Iran, as well as the development of the Indian nationalist movement. Azad gave a definite trend to it by pointing out that there was no conflict between Islam and sympathy for Islamic countries and Indian nationalism. This helped in bringing the Muslim League nearer to the Congress. Azad had himself joined the League, whilst yet a boy, at its first session in 1906.





Dr Mohammad Aslam Parvaiz

From the Vice-Chancellor's Desk Relevance of Maulana Azad

Dear colleagues,

This is for the first time that I am communicating with you through the medium of *Al Kalam*, the University magazine. This happens to be the

Special Edition on Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to mark his 126th birth anniversary, second in the series, the first was brought out in November 2014. The Special Edition is a part of the Maulana Azad Day Celebrations that are being held with gusto between November 4 and 13 this year.

Today when India, despite many challenges, is all set to make it to the next level of development, one must remember the visionaries who laid the foundations of this nation on solid ground even before it had become free from colonial rule.

A cursory look at the constellation of the national stalwarts will tell us that Maulana Azad's name figures among the top half a dozen personalities whose ideas and efforts were instrumental in not only putting the nation on the track of progress, but also deciding a humane, inclusive and tolerant path for it.

Maulana Azad, a towering leader of the freedom struggle, was a unique personality even among his illustrious colleagues in the freedom struggle. Although born and brought up in an orthodox religious family with no formal school education, he became a champion of Hindu-Muslim unity. Even as he was conscious of his Muslim identity, he took great pride in his 'Indianness', which he shared with his countrymen of all faiths and beliefs. Similarly, his informal education in traditional Islamic scholarship did not deter him from exploring the frontiers of modern western knowledge.

Maulana Azad's personality was a perfect blend of

the traditional and the modern, both at peace with and complementing each other. As Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said on his death, "He combined in himself the greatness of the past with the greatness of the present."

At a time when debates about past and future, tradition and modernity, and religion and politics are again in vogue, Maulana Azad's life and ideas can serve as a beacon for the nation.

As free India's first Minister of Education, Maulana Azad established such important institutions as the University Grants Commission, the Indian Institute of Technology and, All India Council of Technical Education. Indian Council of Cultural Relations, which seeks to strengthen India's cultural relations with other countries, was also founded by Maulana Azad during this period. He also set up three important national academies, viz., Sangeet Natak Akademi, Sahitya Akademi, and Lalit Kala Akademi to promote the fine arts.

It will not be an exaggeration to claim that India's rise in the last couple of decades is the result of, among other things, the strong educational framework given by Maulana Azad immediately after independence.

Some of the challenges in the field of education that Maulana Azad identified during his tenure as Minister of Education are still relevant today. Maulana's dream of universal compulsory education found acknowledgement some time back in the form of The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009. Although, the country has made great strides as far as literacy rate is concerned, much still needs to be done.

Maulana Azad also realised the importance of technical education very early in the day. His aim was to make India self sufficient as far as technical manpower was concerned. On the question of medium of instruction in schools, he firmly believed anything other than the mother tongue would not do justice to the child.

Maulana Azad, however, did not see education merely as a means of getting employment and earning livelihood. He saw it primarily as a means to change the hearts and minds of his fellow countrymen; to inculcate in them the values of democracy, secularism and tolerance. It was this broad and humane vision of education that Maulana Azad imprinted on the education system of India for a long time to come, and whose benefits the country must continue to reap in the future.

Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU) has the unique privilege of being named after this great son of the soil. At the same time it is a challenge for us to live up to his name. In other words, MANUU must strive to imbibe the same passion for knowledge, dedication to its aims and concern for the weak that Maulana Azad exhibited. The university must not only uphold, but also symbolise the ideals espoused by Maulana Azad. Scientific temperament, democracy, tolerance and communal harmony should be our guiding principles.

The four main mandates of MANUU are preservation and promotion of Urdu language;

imparting education through campus and distant mode; providing technical and vocational education in Urdu medium and; to help women obtain education with dignity. All the four mandates have been drawn from the works of Maulana Azad.

For instance, MANUU offers education to those whose mother tongue is Urdu and who wish to pursue their education in that beautiful language. Its concern for women is the other objective of the university as it shall continue to provide a safe, secure and enabling atmosphere for women to pursue their academic goals. The University also focuses on skill development through its ITI and Polytechnic institutions.

No institution of higher learning can exist in an isolated space. It is part and parcel of the society it operates in. Moreover, a university is not only a repository of past and present knowledge, and producer of new one, but it also has to act as an informed guide for the society in times of crises. Therefore, it is MANUU's responsibility to reach out to the society at large and familiarize the present generation with Maulana Azad's thought. This will surely help in untangling many of the knots in the current socio-politico-religious discourse in the country.



Maulana Azad in Group Photo. Nehru and Indra Gandhi can also be seen



Prof Amina Kishore

Maulana Azad for Today's youth

Mohiuddin Ahmed (1888-1958), to become better known to the world as Abul Kalam Azad, had been always different from others. He was a prodigious child, a sober young boy, a seeking young adult who grew into the stature of being a highly respected and admired adult. The aspects of Azad's personality are so many and so admirable as to defy human possibility. Many of his contemporary seniors were dumbstruck at the enormous knowledge that Azad so self-containedly carried on his young shoulders. However, Azad's growth into mature adulthood was not without its share of troubles and anxieties.

As a young man he had gone into deep states of self questioning. He had also entered into periods of deep rebelliousness and near apostasy in reaction to the expectations of total surrender to a way of life. Conformity without question was distasteful to him. All these are stages that Azad confessed to in his later life in passing references.

Even his mastery of Urdu has been described as something that Azad achieved at the risk of breaking a pattern set by a dominant parent, who was ambitious for his son. But the rebellion in Azad was never translated into defiance. His different autobiographical texts indicate only a silent and independent quest to realize his dreams without ruffling the rules of the household.

One can see a restless movement towards self discovery through multiple avenues. [The path to his self-discovery is very interesting to trace. It is also a difficult process since Azad is quite reticent about himself, in spite of his seeming loquaciousness as a speaker and his prolific writings].

As is quite well known, Azad mastered Urdu against the background of his father's firm belief that Urdu was not a language of the elite, and not fit to be the language of a true scholar. He also indulged in his passion for music by learning it despite family orthodoxy. He refused to be heir to such family traditions which his mind did not accept as right. Azad's viewpoints on communal harmony as heard throughout in his speeches, his dislike for blind *tagleed* (emulation) as explained in his autobiographical works, his desire for the upliftment in the thought process of his coreligionists as expressed in his journalistic writings, were all the result of his deep understanding of the tenets of Islam. Time and again during the Freedom struggle, faced with conflict situations, Azad not only shunned any kind of confrontation but also combated maliciousness with dignity and dislike with noble aloofness. In spite of being a man of the crowds, he was a loner. At the same time he was given to wit and humor of a very elegant kind. Many of his close associates remember incidents which bring out the witty side of Azad's personality. Azad often spoke of the habit that he had cultivated, to keep one aspect of his career and work separate from the other. That explains the notion of 'many Azads', one so different from the other.

The breadth of Azad's thought owes itself partly to his travels, his association with people of different castes creeds and religions, and above all his vast readings. His oral and written works show that he was not only a man of deep erudition but also a person with genuine and independent thinking. His mind was evolved enough to distinguish between right and wrong; and to hold fast to his convictions.

The 19th century and the early 20th century threw up many figures that stood out for their learning, their democratic spirit, their patriotism and altruistic zeal. Among all these people of good stature and prominence in public space, Maulana Azad was perhaps one of the best. He carried himself aloft, dignified and gracious at all times.

Abul Kalam Azad was a man of good taste. His refinement spills out in the images of sartorial style, studied expression, dignified carriage and, above all, his communicative finesse. His literary tastes, his reading choices (be it the western philosophical texts, the Eastern scholarly tomes, poets or story tellers) indicate the vastness of his knowledge and also his understanding of life.

His personal fads and his personal habits stood him among a class of connoisseurs of the fine things of life. The way he writes in *Ghubaar-e-Khaatir* about his pet fads and his weakness for good tea and good cigarettes is very interesting to read. Of all things of life, he seems to treasure his cup of tea very passionately. His *chai noshi* was of a

unique kind, and he invariably took pleasure in describing the tea-making process almost as though it were a sacred 'ceremony' or a serious ritual. The best gift he would offer to his dear friend Nawab Habeebur Rahman Khan Sherwani (the *Sadeeq-e-Mukarram* of the *Ghubaar-e-Khaatir* letters) was a packet of the choice tea, carefully and ceremoniously sent. Azad's pleasure in talking about the flora and fauna of Ahmednagar Fort jail, his description of music, his visit to an old bookshop-- all are anecdotal in spirit, in essence conveying a feel of reminiscences, as though to talk about these things so dear to his heart were to relive the moments. These memories are like anodyne for loneliness and they add a delicate pathos to the communiqués. One wonders at the large body of the literary output by Azad; his best writings having been composed during one prison term or the other.

The idea that Maulana Azad so vociferously supported throughout his life still begs realization. It is ironic that we should still be in need of justification for the notion of Hindu-Muslim amity; and that we should still fall short of the realization of this ideal state. At no time in history perhaps was this question troublesome so much as in the times of Indian National Movement. From those years up till now the Hindu-Muslim question has been exploited and it has been increasingly difficult to elude. One cannot find a more vocal and passionate votary to the notion of communal harmony than Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in the history of India.

If we deconstruct the arguments of Azad about the Hindu-Muslim question we find a few interesting things. The first of these is that it is possible to coexist with differences. The second is that pride in your own religion and antecedents need not preclude a respect for the other. He neither opted for a false pride in his roots nor did he go overboard in praising the other. His approach to the idea of co-existence was more accommodative than confrontationalist.

The paradox of Maulana Azad is that though he was much sought after for his oratorical skills and for his writings, his personality eluded simple definitions. His coreligionists could not gauge his words and actions. There was respect perhaps for his erudition but not full understanding of his approach to matters. His colleagues in Indian National Movement gave him grudging admiration and a place on the platforms of political action. His difference from all of them was too pronounced to be ignored. He was heaped with praise; and at the same time there was enough criticism and skepticism, from his colleagues in politics, his coreligionists and even from those who fell out with him owing to differences of opinion.

It has been a bye-line of most Azad admirers to hold out that Azad had been ignored or that he had been sidelined during the last part of the INM and transfer of power. Knowing Azad's stand on partition and his dismay at his dream of a united country going to pieces, one can understand his growing reclusiveness from public pronouncements. In spite of the sorrow over partition that engulfed him, he rose to the occasion and handled one of the most important ministries in a most proactive manner, laying the foundations of a culturally rich and altruistic system of education. His vision was to set up an education system which was friendly to the common people and also allowed the country to build on its cultural potential.

Today's youth should look on Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as an embodiment of all the qualities of mind and heart that go towards creating the picture of a well rounded human personality. His command over many scholarly disciplines like History, Philosophy, Science; his consciously acquired mastery over many languages and literatures; his ability to combine personal modesty with a candid consciousness of his Self; his moral courage; and his a-political humane vision of the society are attributes that can be used as models today. Men like Maulana Azad are rare. It is easy to see that this rounded personality that we find in Azad was the result of his life-long education and his dialogue with the best minds through literature and through dialogue. As Vivekananda had said: "Education is the process of man-making, character forming, and life-building assimilation of ideas"

In his Maulana Azad Memorial Lecture (2012) Hamid Karzai, former President Afghanistan, had referred to a Tagore poem composed in the last years of his life and had astutely translated it to describe his understanding of the relevance of Maulana Azad today:

Tagore's poem starts thus:

"The Ocean of peace lies ahead of me, sail the boat, O pilot".

Karzai's interpolation went thus:

"The ocean of peace lies before me, sail the boat O Maulana..."

We have analysed the role of Azad in history enough. Let us look at Maulana as a model for genuine humaneness to be emulated by youth of today.



BOOK REVIEW

Islam, Pluralism, Nationhood: Legacy of Maulana Azad by Mushirul Hasan

Dr. Salma Ashraf

The book *Islam, Pluralism, Nationhood: Legacy of Maulana Azad* is introduced and edited by Mushirul Hasan, an internationally known historian and writer.

Having closely worked with the archives for his numerous books and other projects on issues of national importance, Mushirul Hasan uniquely qualifies to edit a book of this kind on Maulana Azad.

The cover of the book looks striking as it carries Maulana Azad's portrait by famous painter M F Hussain, taken from the collection of the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi. A quick glance through the book published in 2014 by Niyogi Books, New Delhi, gives an unusual impression, in the sense that it consists of varied documents in the form of confidential letters, memos, notes and photographs etc. Some are written in English, some in Arabic and some others in Urdu. Some of these documents are typed while others are hand-written. "I chose the unusual form to tell Azad's story because of the authentic nature of the archived documents," says Mushirul Hasan in the preface to the book.

Nevertheless, when one reads through entirely, one feels thrilled not because almost every document provides the reader with some authentic information or the documents are rare, but also because they are well organised to keep the reader absorbed.

The book is divided into three parts. Part 1: The Anguished Heart (1888-1918), Part 2: Prince among Patriots (1919-1948) and Part 3: Emblem of Unity (1948-1958), thus chronologically arranged. All the three parts start with a couplet either by

Mirza Ghalib or by Maulana Azad.

The preface and the introduction of the book are helpful in understanding why and how certain documents could not be included in the book.

In the introduction, Mushirul Hasan writes, "these documents reveal the 'truth,' in a manner of speaking, for those who wrote the numerous notes and comments had no idea that they would be so critically scrutinised by the coming generation of historians. They wrote for the moment to provide to their officers, at least from their point of view, a correct picture of the political events and movements."

The Anguished Heart captures the time between 1888 and 1918. It mostly includes the documents dispatched to Maulana Azad when he was in jail. It also includes the period between 1912 and 1913 when the Maulana was under close watch by the Government. To quote from a document sent from the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa to The Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, "Abul Kalam Azad has no claims of birth or domicile on the local Government of Bihar and Orissa, and the Lieutenant-Governor in Council

sees no reason why the man who is considered so dangerous, should be allowed to take up his residence within this province..."

Some parts in this section have documents which claim that Maulana Azad was a threat, a dangerous man and a Pan-Islamist. In a section titled 'Note extracted from the Secret History of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad' W. Sealy writes, "He is an extremist and agitator. His speeches on the Balkan War and the general tone of *Al Hilal*



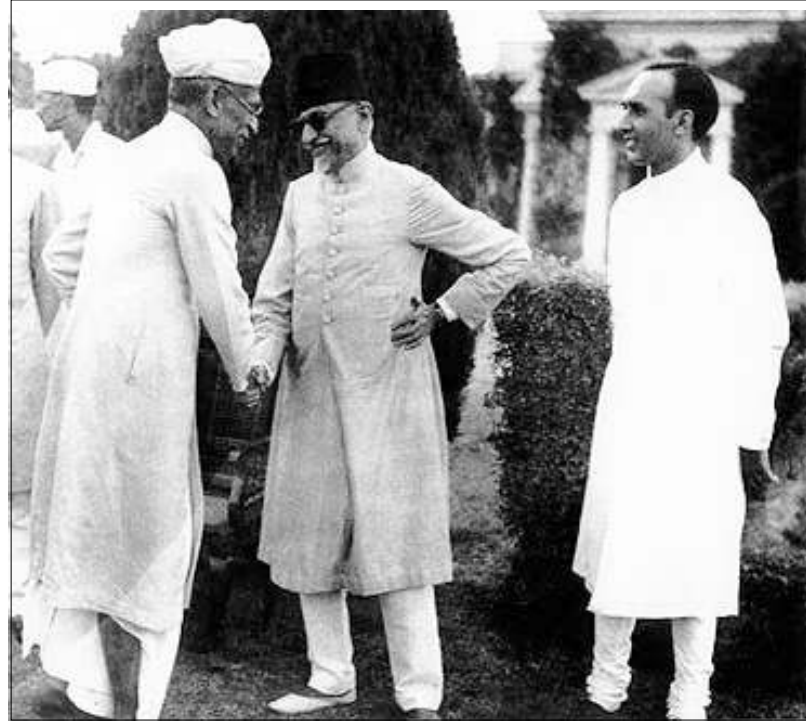
disclose an anti-British tendency. He is considered an extremely able and dangerous man with very pronounced Pan-Islamist views." Apart from this, it contains documents when Azad was banned from Bengal, the United Provinces, Delhi and Punjab. Moreover, it contains the documents that "reveal bits and pieces of information on Azad's three-and-a-half years of interment in Ranchi." Overall, as the title of this section suggests, it was an agonising time in the political life of Azad.

Part 2 represents the period between 1919 and 1948 in the life of Maulana Azad. This section carries translation of some of his speeches. It was during this period that Maulana Azad was elected Congress President at the age of 35. The Maulana, a staunch believer in Hindu-Muslim unity justified his stand by invoking the Quran. Says the author quoting Azad, "...the Quran distinguishes between those who commit aggression against Muslims and those who do not.....Without looking around to find a mirror that would reflect radical faces, he (Maulana Azad) identified pluralism to be the weapon of the strong and the weak against British."

Some of the speeches in this section belong to the Khilafat Agitation. This section also carries a number of photographs of the Working Committee of Shimla Conference of 1945.

Part 3, Emblem of Unity (1948-1958), covers the period when Maulana Azad was serving as the first Education Minister of independent India. During this time he constituted the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Sahitya Academy.

This section mostly consists of the letters sent by Maulana Azad to different ministers. It presents the



Abul Kalam Azad with S. Radhakrishnan

manifold activities the Maulana undertook as a Minister.

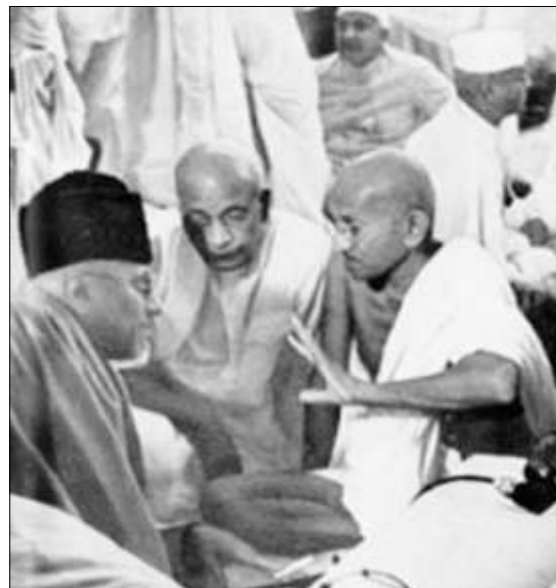
An incredibly important contribution to history writing, the book reveals hitherto unknown dimensions of Maulana Azad's personality. Some historians have called it a narrative on the Maulana but very interestingly it brings out his political role more vibrantly. We are aware of the fact that it is his role in freedom struggle that makes him an important figure in the recent history. He stood for certain values which were being contested by his own community and many others.

"Little is known about Azad's early life but there is ample evidence to indicate a strong discomfort with the traditional order of things," but still he pursued the old value system "which is where lies his greatness," writes Mushirul Hasan.

The book is not a collage of documents. The connective the author provides with the documents

makes it an interesting read.

It is a must read because it provides the 'rarest of the rare' documents and helps understand how wisely Maulana Azad integrated the benevolence of Islam and pluralism into the folds of nationhood.



Maulana Azad with Sardar Patel and Gandhiji

Quotable Quotes of Azad

"I feel proud that I am an Indian. I am heir to the 1300 year old glorious tradition of Islam. I am not prepared to waste even a particle of that grand heritage. Islamic learning, Islamic history, Islamic Arts and wisdom and culture of Islam are my prized possessions. It is my duty to protect and cherish them. As a Muslim I claim a special status and position. I can brook no interference with this....I am guided ...by the Islamic principles. I proudly acknowledge my identity as an Indian.

"I am a part and parcel of that indivisible national oneness without which the structure of India's greatness would remain incomplete. I am an inevitable factor in its structure; I will never forfeit this claim."

(Presidential Address at Congress Meet in Ramgarh 1940)

"Sach poochcho to mai(n) ek jamood hoo(n); ya ek door uftaada sadaa, jis ne watan mei(n) rah kar bhi ghareebul watani ki zindagi guzaari hai" (Truly I am a Stassis, or a distant lament; who has been homeless even while in the native land)

Azad in his remarkable khutba (sermon) he delivered on Friday 24 October 1947

"Our common life of over a thousand years had shaped a united nationalism. Such moulds cannot be ordinarily fabricated. The secret hands of Nature have shaped them automatically in the course of centuries. The die has been cast and destiny has set her seal upon it."

Azad. [Speech at Urdu Park on August 1, 1942.]

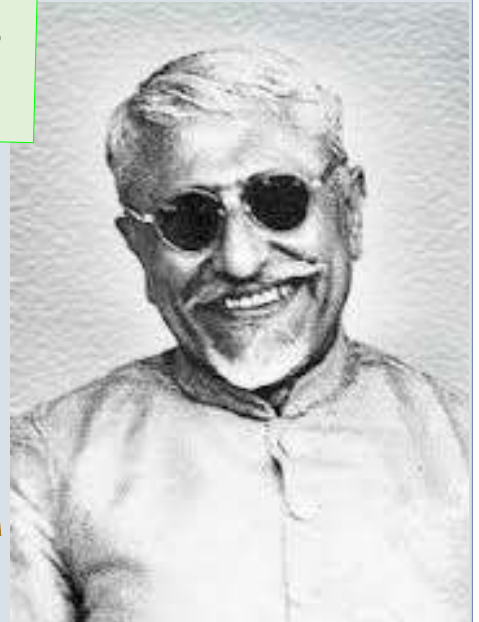
"Not one of my beliefs had escaped the needles of distrust and skepticism. No covenant of faith that my soul experienced had gone without the challenges of negation and questionings. I have drunk poison from many cups and have experimented with draughts of tiriyaq from all kinds of hospitals. When I went thirsty, the deprivation felt by my parched lips was unlike any others; and when I was fulfilled, the high stream of my satiation was not of a common order"

[Tarjumaanul Qur'an]

"Today if an Angel were to descend from Heaven and declare from the top of Qutb Minar that India will get Swaraj within 24 hours, provided she relinquishes Hindu-Muslim unity, I will relinquish Swaraj rather than give up Hindu-Muslim unity. Delay in the attainment of Swaraj will be a loss to India but if our unity is lost, it will be a loss for entire mankind."

"We are all sons of this land. We have to live together.... Believe me there is no progress for India until the Muslims and Hindus are united"

I called out to you, you cut my tongue; I raised my hands to beckon, you cut my hands; I wanted to move ahead, you cut my legs; I wanted to bring a change, and you broke my backbone" *Azad in his remarkable khutba (sermon) he delivered on Friday 24 October 1947*



Quotable Quotes of Azad

At the age of 24, when most people start on the journey of pleasure-seeking philandering, I had finished my wanderings and was picking the thorns from the soles of my feet. You could say that I was moving against the general current. When people were tightening their belts to embark on life's mission, I was already loosening up my belt"
Last chapter of *Tarjumaanul Qur'an*

"Forty years ago I had made a program to dedicate my life to the service of the Nation; and I was hardly 19 years old then. My life has been like an open book before all. I have now no desires left; the larger portion of my life is over; one does not know when the rest will be finished. When desire is no more, the person becomes unfond by anything."

Maulana Azad's Speech in Parliament on 29 March 1954]

Great men on Azad

Gandhi described the intellectual greatness of Maulana Azad as being of the "caliber of Plato, Aristotle, Pythagoras", and called him an "Emperor of Learning"; a "mir e Kaarvaan"

"An eloquent thesis, giving Maulana's views on Khilafat and Nationalism..... an oration deserving penal servitude for life"

Gandhi in *Young India* commenting on the grand presentation of Azad in his last Peshi before the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Calcutta Court on 24. 1. 1922: *Qaul e Faisal*. Context: Azad's arrest consequent upon his protest speeches against the arrest of Ali Brothers on 18 August 1921

Maulana Azad was a "man of luminous intelligence and a mighty intellect with an amazing capacity to pierce through a problem to its core" Nehru [at the time of his death in 1958]

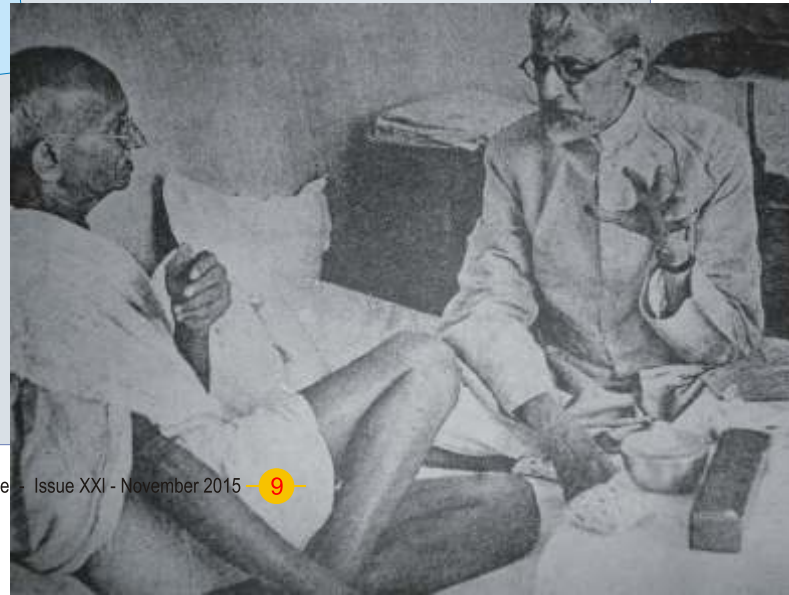
In *The Discovery of India* Nehru compared Maulana Azad to "the great men of Renaissance, or, in a later period, of the Encyclopaedists who preceded the French Revolution, men of intellect, men of action"

"The ocean of peace lies ahead of us, Sail the boat, O Maulana Azad."
Hamid Karzai, former President of Afghanistan, borrowed and extrapolated on a line from a 1939 poem by Tagore by applying it to Maulana Azad in his memorial lecture in 2012.

Azad was described once by Shibli Nomani as "ilmi numaishgaah" (a veritable museum of Learning)
Quoted in *Azad ki Kahani Khud Unki Zubaani*

"Maulana ko kis se badlei(n)?"
With whom shall we exchange Maulana Azad? [Anguished remark of Gandhi in the context of Muslims being repatriated to Pakistan: quoted in the book *Maulana Azad, Islam and Indian National Movement* by Syeda Saiyyadain Hameed

"The best mind of the century,"
Syeda Saiyyadain Hameed, describing Maulana Azad



Allow all languages to grow, says Maulana Azad in an emotional speech

Tandonji [Purushottamdas Tandon] next referred to this year's non-recurring grant of sixty thousand rupees to the Shibli Academy. This Academy has functioned for the last thirty or forty years. All the books published by the Academy are in Urdu, and Gandhiji liked their books, patronized the Academy, and wrote many articles about it. Anyway, the Academy has done useful and valuable work in Urdu. Since the people working in this Academy are those who took part in the Congress movement, they have contacts with Congressmen. About eight months ago, these people called on Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and explained to him the condition of the Academy. They said that prior to the partition, their books were in demand in Punjab and Sind, but now they had lost this market, and owing to differences in the value of the rupee, other complications had arisen.

They stated that the financial condition of the Academy was such that in the absence of an emergency grant of Rs. 60,000 they would be compelled to close it down. They did not ask for a recurring grant, but, on the basis of their figures, requested a one-time grant of Rs. 60,000 which would enable the society to continue. The Prime Minister wrote one letter to the Finance Ministry and one to the Education Ministry, expressing the view that it would be undesirable to close down the Academy for want of such a small amount. The Ministry felt that if this society was forced to close down, Pakistan would exploit the fact for propaganda purposes; it would be said that after the partition the situation in India was such that a society of this type could not survive. So I agreed that a lump sum, non-recurring grant of Rs. 60,000 should be given to this society.

I want to draw your attention to one point which we should think over in a calm and collected manner. The Central Education Ministry spends about fourteen crore rupees annually. If, out of this amount, a sum of Rs. 60,000 is given to a society that works for Urdu, is it anything against which there should have been such severe complaints and such strong oppositions? We should recognize the fact that our mind works in very narrow grooves. A sum of Rs. 60,000/- has been granted for a certain language of our Country; we cannot tolerate it and we complain about it.

Urdu is not the language of any religious group. Hindus, Muslims, Christians and others are equally conversant with this language. Were it only Muslims who spoke Urdu, though that is not true, do we not have four and a half crore Muslims in India? And if a society that

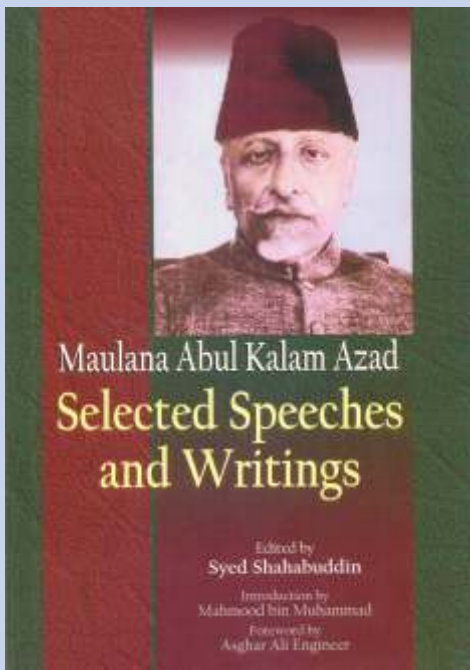
renders valuable service to Urdu is once given a sum of 60,000 rupees, is it anything that should be opposed and criticized, as being a step towards the promotion of Muslim culture? Did the opposition criticize it because they love Hindi? No.

Who is opposed to Hindi? So far as the progress of Hindi is concerned there are no two opinions. Those who criticize the above policy are not motivated by their love for

Hindi, but by their aversion to seeing any other language making progress. If you want to rise to great heights, by all means do so, but not by stumping others. That is not the right way. So far as Hindi is concerned, I can assure you that there is not one single individual in the whole North India who does not want this language to progress, or, who is opposed to it. In North India even those people who do not themselves know Hindi, want their Children to study it. If anything stands in the way of the progress of Hindi, it is this very same mentality. In 1949, a society in Madras compiled an encyclopaedia in Tamil, and requested the Government of India for assistance. Since they were doing good and useful work, they were given a grant of Rs. 80,000. I remember how people protested at that time, and what all was said. The fact that we had granted Rs. 80,000 for the preparations of an encyclopaedia in Tamil was hardly something that should have disturbed anybody. But the same strong feelings were working at that time too.

It was not love for Hindi that caused the furore. The feeling was; why should another language be given an opportunity to make progress? There is a desire that no other language should be permitted to exist. This means that it is not the progress of Hindi, but the fall of other languages. This is a bad attitude. It is because of this very attitude that Hindi does not make the progress that it ought to. This is behind the opposition to Hindi in the South? We should see to it that we do not oppose any other language of India. We should be happy to see every language prosper. At the same time, we must remember that Hindi is the national language of India, and it is the duty of every Indian to be firm on this issue and make a sincere effort to boost Hindi. But a different attitude is apparent here, an attitude that my friend demonstrated the other day when he said that a grant of Rs. 60,000 to a society meant that this was done in the interest of Islamic culture. This is absolutely uncalled for. No question of Islamic culture is involved in it.

I want to tell you that should not expect me to talk in



flattering tones. One, a man who has his axe to grind, who wants everybody to be pleased with him, and who does not wish to lose the office of a Minister indulges in flattery. I have no self-interest. Forty years ago, when some of my friends sittings here today, were unknowns, I decided to dedicate

my life to the service of my country. I am talking of 1907 when I was eighteen or nineteen year old, and joined the Revolutionary Party of Bengal. Since then my whole life has been an open book before the world. There is no desire left in me now. The larger part of my life is over. Whatever little remains will also end one day. Let me tell you that when a man has no personal motive, he becomes boundless, shoreless.

Such a man is immune from worldly setbacks. He is unassailable by weapons because this body is vulnerable only so long as there is self-interest in him. Once this weakness disappears nothing can harm or injure a man. Candidly speaking, the misfortune that befell this country as a result of the two-nation theory and the establishment of Pakistan, has been caused by this mentality. This attitude has been as much responsible for the split, as the misguided Muslims and the Muslim League ... The blame may be directed at people of such mentality because they walk along the path of narrow-mindedness, when they claim that there is no place for any-other languages, or for any other community or for any other's rights. It is only natural that the separatists would have exploited every such, opportunity which came their way. They would have said, "How can we leave our governance in the hands of such people?"

You know that all along I resisted such forces. I said that the Hindu intellect in India, the Hindu mind in India is not represented by this mentality. The Hindu mind and outlook are represented by Gandhiji and others who stand by him. I drew the attention of the Muslims to this fact. I created a revolution in the minds of lakhs of Muslims. I have not been able to control my feelings in this matter; but I must tell you that so long as you continue to have this narrow-minded approach, you cannot achieve your objective.

“...The question of Secondary Education was more important than that of University Education, because, as a matter of fact, the real defect of our system is precisely that. The British Government evolved this system not to educate the people of India, but because they needed English speaking persons of a special type for carrying on their official business. University Education could not exist without the simultaneous existence of Secondary and Primary Education. Secondary Education was evolved only as a means to University Education. No consideration was given to the fact that for thousands and millions of persons who would not reach the stage of University Education. Secondary Education, therefore, should have been of the type that contained the elements which could serve as an end for ninety percent of our people rather than remain a mere means. The result of the British policy was that the whole system of our education was misshaped.”

The above two excerpts are from a speech given by Maulana Azad in Lok Sabha on March 29, 1954 in reply to questions raised by Acharya Kirplani and Purshottamdas Tandon.

The above speech has been reproduced in Syed Shahabuddin's Maulana Abul Kalam Azad: Selected Speeches and Writings



Creation of Pakistan has not solved communal problem; made it more intense - Azad

A new state called Pakistan was called into being. Pakistan was the creation of the Muslim League. Naturally the Muslim League party became the dominant power in this new State. I have already described how the Muslim League was originally founded to oppose the Congress. The League therefore had hardly any members who had fought for the independence of the country. They had neither made any sacrifice nor gone through the discipline of a struggle. They were either retired officials or men who had been brought into public life under British patronage. The result was that when the new State was formed, power came into the hands of people who had no record of service or sacrifice. Many of the rulers of the new State were selfish people who had come into public life only for the sake of personal interest.

A majority of the leaders of the new State came from the UP, Bihar and Bombay. In most cases, they could not even speak the language of the areas which now formed Pakistan. There was thus a gulf between the rulers and the ruled in the new State. These self-imposed leaders feared that if free elections were held, most of them had very little chance of being even returned. Their aim therefore was to postpone the elections as long as possible and build up their fortunes and their power in the country. Ten years have passed and it is only recently that a Constitution has been framed. Even this does not seem final, for every now and then there are proposals for further changes in the Constitution. Nobody yet knows if and when the first elections under the new Constitution will be held.

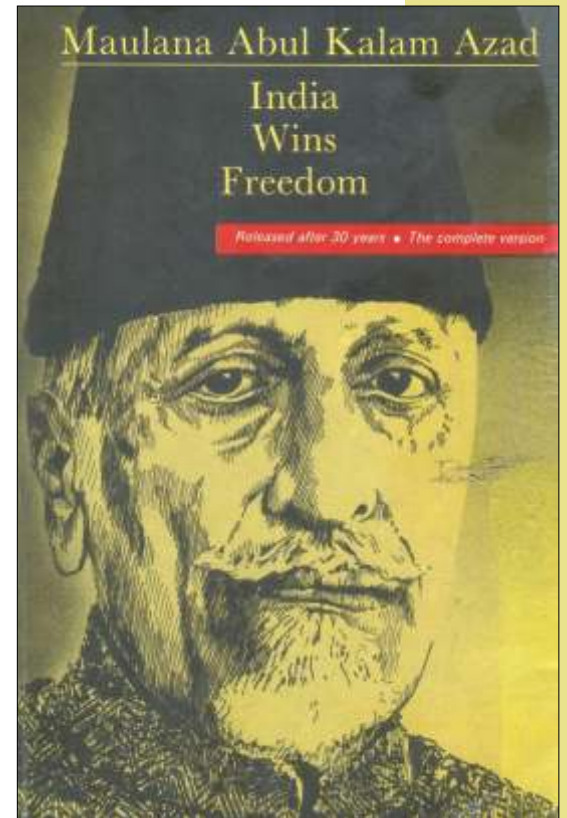
The only result of the creation of Pakistan was to weaken the position of the Muslims in the subcontinent of India. The 45 million Muslims who have remained in India have been weakened. On the other hand, there is as yet no indication that a strong and efficient Government can be established in Pakistan. If one judges the question only from the point of view of the Muslim community, can anybody deny today that Pakistan has been for them a very unfortunate and unhappy development? In fact, the more I think about it the more I am convinced that the creation of Pakistan has solved no problem. One may argue that the relations between Hindus and Muslims had become so estranged in India that there was no alternative to partition. This view was held by most of the supporters of the Muslim League and after partition, many of the Congress leaders have held similar views. Whenever I discussed the question with Jawaharlal or Sardar Patel after partition this is the argument they gave in support of their decision. If however we think over the matter coolly, we will find

that their analysis is not correct. I am convinced that the scheme I had framed on the occasion of the Cabinet Mission and which the Mission had largely accepted was a far better solution from every point of view. If we had remained steadfast and refused to accept partition, I am confident that a safer and more glorious future could have awaited us.

Can anyone deny that the creation of Pakistan has not solved the communal problem but made it more intense and harmful?

The basis of partition was enmity between Hindus and Muslims. The creation of Pakistan gave it a permanent constitutional form and made it much more permanent constitutional form and made it much more difficult of solution. The most regrettable feature of this situation is that the subcontinent of India is divided into two States which look at

one another with hatred and fear. Pakistan believes that India will not allow her to rest in peace and will destroy her whenever she has an opportunity. Similarly India is afraid that whenever Pakistan gets an opportunity, she will move against India and attack her. This has led both the States to increase their defence expenditure. After the war, undivided India spent only about a hundred crores for defence. Lord Wavell himself held that a hundred crores should suffice for the three wings of the Defence Forces. Then came partition. One fourth of the undivided army went to Pakistan. In spite of this, India has to spend almost 250 crores for the maintenance of her Defence Forces. Of the



AN EXTRACT FROM M J AKBAR'S TINDERBOX

revenues of the Government of India, almost half goes to meet the expenses of defence. Pakistan's position is if anything worse. In spite of the fact that she has only one fourth of the territories and armies of India, she is spending at least 100 crores from her own revenues besides the aid she gets from the United States. If we pause to think, we shall realise what great national wastage all this involves. If this fund could be used for economic development, the progress of the country could be greatly accelerated.

Mr Jinnah and his followers did not seem to realise that geography was against them. Indian Muslims were distributed in a way which made it impossible to form a separate State in a consolidated area. The Muslim majority areas were in the north-west and north-east. These two regions have no point of Physical contact. People in these two areas are completely different from one another in every respect except religion. It is one of the greatest frauds on the people to suggest that religious affinity can unite areas which are geographically, economically, linguistically and culturally different. It is true that Islam sought to establish a society which transcends racial, linguistic, economic and political frontiers. History has however proved that after the first few decades or at the most after the first century, Islam was not able to unite all the Muslim countries on the basis of Islam alone.

This was the position in the past and this is the position today. No one can hope that east and west Pakistan will compose all their

differences and form one nation. Even within West Pakistan the three provinces of Sind, Punjab and the Frontier have internal incompatibility and are working for separate aims and interest. Nevertheless the die is cast. The new State of Pakistan is a fact. It is to the interest of India and Pakistan that they should develop friendly relations and act in cooperation with one another. Any other courses of action can lead only to greater trouble, suffering and misfortune. Some people hold that what has happened was inevitable. Others equally strongly believe that what has happened is wrong and could have been avoided. We cannot say today which reading is correct. History alone will decide whether we had acted wisely and correctly.

(September 1957) An excerpt from Epilogue of Maulana Azad's India Wins Freedom

Its geography was fantastic: its western and eastern halves were separated by more than a thousand miles of hostile India, and by sharp differences in ethnicity and culture, for the east was Bengali while the west was Punjabi, Pakhtoon, Baloch and Sindhi. Its professed ideology, Islam, was unprecedented as a glue for nationalism, since no nation state had yet been created on the basis of Islam. The great theologian-politician, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958), president of the Indian National Congress between 1940 and 1946, repeatedly pointed this out to fellow Muslims, but to shrinking audiences. In a remarkably prescient interview, given to Shorish Kashmiri for the Lahore-based Urdu magazine Chattan, published in April 1946, Azad argued that the division of territory on the basis of religion 'finds no sanction in Islam or the Quran . . . "Who among the scholars of Islam has divided the dominion of God on this basis? . . . Do they realize that if Islam had approved this principle then it would not have permitted its followers to go to non-Muslim lands and many ancestors of the supporters of Pakistan would not have even entered the fold of Islam?' Islam was a value system for the transformation of the human soul, not an instrument of political power." (Pg.1)

Azad saw no contradiction between a pan-Islamic alliance against Western colonization and Hindu-Muslim unity against British rule in India. They were two pillars of the same architecture and reinforced each other. Azad believed that it was the duty of Muslims to declare a jihad against any power that had occupied even a small part of Dar al-Islam. Islamic solidarity could be extended to Hindus through a 'federation of faiths', an alliance of all eastern people against the West. He used the Prophet Muhammad's pact with Jews in Median as a precedent for Hindu-Muslim unity, arguing that this was reinforced by the Qur'anic injunction to befriend those who believed in peace. (pg. 126)



'As Minister Azad had little to intervene on behalf of Urdu'

Azad shared Gandhiji's belief that English should be replaced as the language of official business as soon as possible. Now, however, he accepted that in most cases it would take at least fifteen years to reach that goal. For over twenty-five years, he had argued that the goal should be to let the common frame of Hindi and Urdu grow and develop without official restraints and open to whatever speakers and writers might choose to do with it. Only a language which is open to change, that has amplitude and flexibility could be a language for the whole country. And Azad made clear that ultimately that language is in fact Urdu, whatever it may be called a language "born and bred and brought up in India," the mother-tongue of millions of Hindus and Muslims," that continues to be the "medium of expression between different provinces," a living language, not the artificially constructed one that was being imposed on the country. As a concession to such views, the Constitution included Urdu on its Eighth Schedule of recognized languages along with Sanskrit. This is the only mention of Urdu in the document. And there is a single mention of Hindustani in Article 351: Directive for development of the Hindi language:

"It shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language, to develop it so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India and to secure its enrichment by assimilating without interfering with its genius, the forms, style and expressions used in Hindustani and in the other languages of India specified in the Eighth Schedule, and by drawing, wherever necessary or desirable, for its vocabulary, primarily on Sanskrit and secondarily on other languages."

What was left to Urdu, at least in India, was its status as a minority right, a right to government supported educational facilities, for example, and one that was almost immediately ignored, leaving most of Urdu education to private religious institutions.

As Minister of Education, Maulana Azad had only limited opportunity to intervene on behalf of Urdu, since education was mostly in the hands of the

separate states. And deeply demoralized, Azad was not inspired to continue what had been his major contribution to Urdu, his own use of it as a great writer. He had once argued that Urdu did not need government sponsorship to succeed in the world of print capitalism, and he probably shared Sir Syed's notion that the language belonged ultimately to a relatively small, cultivated section of the population, the *abl-i-zubaan*.

On the other hand, he also wanted a language that was open to wide influences and free of what he called narrow-minded purism. Perhaps Hindi could eventually be such a language. But what Azad certainly did not want is what Sir Syed conceded in his later years and has persisted throughout the years since independence: the enduring domination of English.

Excerpt from *Sir Sayyid, Maulana Azad and the Uses of Urdu* by David Lelyveld. The paper was prepared for a conference on "Cultural Institutions, Knowledge Arenas, post-1947: Revisiting the Roles of Maulana Azad," Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi



Maulana Azad's House in Kolkata