



Prof. Mohammed Miyan

From the Vice-Chancellor's desk

We shall become the best to honour Maulana Azad's memory

He was not a product of modern education system. He had his early education at home. His father Maulana Khairuddin was a peer, a spiritual guide, with a large following in Kolkata. He was also a scholar of Islam. He imparted basic education to Maulana Azad in Arabic, Persian and Urdu. Maulana learnt English at a later stage in life. When Maulana Azad started writing poetry and prose at an early age the readers took him for a person of matured age. Some even thought that it was not him who was penning those amazing pieces it must be some ghost writer, may be his teacher, who is doing the job for him.

The one thing Maulana did not learn from his father was the practice of emulating the peer. He believed in striking his own path. His mind became a home to all kinds of doubts. He, for a while followed people who believed in bringing about a revolution in India against the British rule. He followed keenly the developments in the nationalist movements in the Arab world, especially Egypt and tried to imbibe and reflect them in his writings. He finally made the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah (traditions of the Prophet, peace be upon him) his guiding light.

Maulana realized that the Muslims were not fully involved in the independence movement in India. Many of his co-religionists believed that the continuation of the British rule would be in their interest. But for him it was a grave mistake, and he called upon the Muslims to join the movement with full vigour. He told them through his newspaper, Al Hilal, in clear terms that seeking freedom from the British colonial rule may be a national duty for other Indians, but for them it was a religious obligation.

Maulana came in contact with Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in 1920 and decided to join hands with him. It was their association that led to an unprecedented unity between Hindus and Muslims during the Khilafat Movement. He became the president of Indian National Congress at the young age of 35 years in 1923 and later went on to head the party again during the turbulent decade of 1940s. His

strong will and unwavering stand against the two-nation theory in the face of incessant attacks from a considerable number of leaders from his own community made him a superstar that would always shine bright on the horizon of India. He suffered imprisonments and humiliations but never compromised on his cherished principle that India should remain one country.

Mahatma Gandhi was so impressed by his farsightedness and wisdom that he called him the emperor of knowledge and a scholar of the calibre of Plato, Aristotle and Pythagoras. He had complete understanding of the tenets of Indian learning and a clear vision on the requirements of India to become a leading nation in the world. That is the reason why he was first made the education minister in the interim government and held that position again after the independence in 1947.

The personality of Maulana Azad is multi-faceted and exemplary from which we can draw numerous lessons. One of the most distinguished contributions of Maulana to the country was in the form of a strong foundation of an education system which is still yielding results.

To honour the memory of this Gem of India, the government has set up or named several institutions. But the one gift in his name to the nation that has already started to play the role of a harbinger of change is Maulana Azad National Urdu University. Established through an Act of Parliament in 1998 there are two things that make this university different from all others. First of all, it has been mandated to impart education in the primary language used by Maulana—that is Urdu. It was through this language that he brought about a change in the Muslim mindset of that time.

It was also through this language that he led the Indian Movement for Independence along with stalwarts like Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel. He is known for his contribution to a new style of journalism and writing in that language which is the mother tongue of millions across the country and abroad. Secondly, the University with its jurisdiction spreading all over the country and beyond is following the distance education mode as

well as on campus teaching. While offering traditional subjects, the University has also begun to give admissions to students in highly technical and modern subjects such as engineering, technology and computer sciences as well as business management. The target audience of the University are those sections, for example grownups, who have missed the opportunity to go to schools or colleges. It was also felt that women have been left out of the march for better learning owing to various social and economic reasons. The University has been successful in reaching out to these and other sections of the society.

We, at MANUU believe that it is just the beginning for the University to meet a gigantic task chalked out for it. The magnitude of the challenge has spurred the MANUU community to contribute its best to make it one of the most coveted institutions of learning, not only in India but across the world. We shall become the best to honour the memory of Maulana Azad. Mahatma Gandhi was so impressed by his farsightedness and wisdom that he called him the emperor of knowledge and a scholar of the calibre of Plato, Aristotle and Pythagoras. He had complete understanding of the tenets of Indian learning and a clear vision on the requirements of India to become a leading nation in the world. That is the reason why he was first made the education minister in the interim government and held that position again after the independence in 1947.

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Maulana Azad - an icon of Hindu-Muslim unity

Mohiuddin Ahmed or Ghulam Mohiuddin Azad or Abul Kalam Mohiuddin Azad or Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958)

is considered by historians as one of the most towering and leading personalities of our freedom movement. He led the freedom movement from the front. He is rightly called by his supporters among ulema as Imam-ul Hind.

Maulana possessed a multi-dimensional personality. However, writings on Maulana Azad mostly cover four main aspects of his life--his contribution to Islamic thought and studies; his journalistic marvels; his literary heights and, his struggle for Hindu-Muslim unity as an integral constituent of India's Independence.

Maulana Azad's insistence on unity between Muslims and Hindus of India was loud and unambiguous. In his famous address of 1923, Maulana Azad made his views clear when he said, "Even if an angel descends from heaven today and announces from the top of Qutab Minar that Swaraj could be achieved in twenty four hours provided India gives up Hindu Muslim unity, I will give up Swaraj but not unity between Hindus and Muslims. Because if there is delay in achieving Swaraj, it will be a loss to India; but if our unity is vanished, it will be a loss to the humanity."

Maulana Azad's patriotism was rooted in his unbridled faith in Almighty and love for the country. According to him, the need to build a strong and indivisible nationalism was not only a political necessity for Muslims, at that point of time, but a religious duty arising out of Sharia and examples from the life of the Holy Prophet. He firmly believed that Hindu-Muslim unity was the focal point of the success of freedom movement.

Azad's concept of nationalism was indivisible and unified consisting of its constituents viz Hindu, Muslims and others. He explained Indian nationalism as an outcome of a historical process which cannot be folded back. He said at the Congress session of Ramgarh that he is a proud Muslim and he proudly inherited the great traditions of Islam. He was not willing to even give up a smallest portion of this heritage. He claimed that it was his duty to protect the Islamic history, knowledge, art and culture or Islamic civilization. But he also identified himself with another feeling of being an Indian. He said, "I hold another feeling too which has been aroused by the

I feel proud that I am an Indian. I am a part of India's indivisible unified nation ... and I cannot forego my right on it."

He continued to inform the audience that right from the beginning of history, India had been the destination of caravans of different civilizations, races and religions who settled down in this land. These waves of different races and civilizations merged themselves to form a new civilization which emerged as an Indian nation. He added that now Islam has the same claim on this great land as Hindus. According to him, this joint ownership of languages, dresses, literature, tastes, dealings, food, architecture, customs and likes are the treasure of our unified nationalism. We should not think of giving up this wealth of indivisible nationalism. Instead we should happily accept this decision of the nature and should not at all cultivate the unrealistic thought of going back in history and desire that this oneness will again be divided into two separate entities.

Maulana's firm and sincere conviction in his ideology of one Indian nation was not merely a political or situational response but was the outcome of his thorough knowledge of Islam and understanding of its history. He drew his conviction from his unflinching faith in the verses of Quran and sayings of the Prophet. In an earlier address during Khilafat Movement of 1920s he told Muslims, "Now, I want to inform Muslim brethrens that most powerful voice after the voice of God is that of Hazrat Mohammad, peace be upon him. The exact words of the covenant of peace penned by this holy man were these: 'we agree to peace with all those tribes who inhabit around Madina. We agree that all of us jointly want to become one nation, want to become one qaum' (umma wahida)."





His own Congress party which he led as its president two times also let him down by accepting the partition.

R. Venkataraman, former President of India, has noted that Azad pleaded before the Congress Working Committee in June 1947 that accepting partition is as good as a defeat; but his pleas went unheeded.

A Pakistani scholar Prof. Nazeer Ahmed later wrote, "Jinnah won and Azad lost; politics won and wisdom lost."

We can legitimately ask whether Azad's ideology failed? The answer is an emphatic No. Pakistan did not remain united on religious grounds. How correct Azad was!

Maulana Azad with his Philosophy of unified nationalism supported by religious, historical and, of course, political understanding opposed two-nation theory of Jinnah as a matter of faith. His political wisdom also told him that a separate homeland on religious ground is not a viable or even good solution to the fears which were put in the minds of Muslims. In his not-much-publicized interview of April 1946 he was candid, "Division of territories on the basis of religion is a contraption devised by Muslim League. They can pursue it as their political agenda, but it finds no sanction in Islam or Quran."

He forcefully opposed division of the country in the name of Islam. He added, "An entity conceived in hatred will last only as long as that hatred lasts." He prophesied, "It will not be possible for East Pakistan to stay with West Pakistan for considerable period of time." He also warned, "The incompetent political leadership will pave the way for military dictatorship." He reminded Muslims that the Holy Prophet has said, "God has made whole earth a mosque for me." Muslims did not listen to him. In his address to Muslims at Jama Masjid of Delhi soon after the partition he poured out his heart in the following words:

*"I called you, you cut my tongue;
I raised my hands, you cut my hands;
I wanted to move ahead, you cut my legs;
I wanted to bring a change, and you
broke my backbone."*

Similarly, his claim for unified nationhood has been enshrined in the constitution of India. One secular Indian nation with Hindu-Muslim unity cannot be denied or easily wished away. India is inherently secular. Azad is always bound to succeed as truth always triumphs (Satyamev Jayate). Riazur Rehman Shervani has recently reminded us about Azad's advice when we were sad and worried i.e. to protect our minds, our thinking and our rationalism. The need of the hour is to follow Azad. The country should not showcase him as a nationalist Muslim alone but a pioneer of Hindu-Muslim unity, national integration and nationalism whose life should be imbibed for strong patriotism and secular values in India of 21st century.

Dr. Khwaja M. Shahid is Pro Vice Chancellor



Maulana Azad laid foundation of a profound education system in India

It is interesting to note that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was not a product of modern system of education.

"As a student, I was not even for a day in any college or school. I was brought up in a family where the old traditions of Indian learning and culture prevailed and there could not be the slightest trace of English education. Whatever education I received as a student was in Arabic and Persian and imparted in the old style. I came to learn English much later by self-study only."

Maulana Azad, though a product of traditional style of education was of the view that the people in the East and West, were largely in agreement regarding the mysteries of existence. He points out that the Eastern and Western concepts of man are in some ways complementary. The East has highlighted the spiritual content of human nature, while the West refers to the spiritual excellence requiring a physical basis. Azad concludes that, "If in spite of difference in emphasis, the Western and the Eastern concepts of man can be reconciled. There is no reason why the philosophy of education in these two regions should not also be fitted in to a wider philosophy of education for the world."

Azad's definition of education in the modern world is one that can profoundly affect the development of individuals and, through individuals, of societies. If the individual is not an integrated personality, society cannot be harmonious. The function of education in the modern world is therefore to build up integrated individuals in an integrated society and the concept of both the East and the West must contribute to such a development.

Azad's thinking evolves out of the tenets of Indian tradition. His analysis of education for India appears to be rooted in the Indian tradition. He thinks that India has maintained her intellectual strength because of the strong roots of learning and wisdom.

"When her doors were wide open to all who came from abroad she freely partook of whatever lessons the world had to teach and equally freely gave the world best. The acceptance of unity in diversity has been her motto throughout the age. The essence of this principle is a large and wide hearted toleration in which differences are recognized and given their due. The Indian genius has always recognized that truth has many facets, and conflict and hatred arise because people claim a monopoly of truth and virtue."

Now, against this theoretical background, let us examine Azad's view of education in India. He considers education as a powerful means to create an atmosphere in which human beings can interact with each other on a plane of friendship and equality. He laments that the youth have been trained in a manner that they have become prisoners of race, class or nationality. All efforts should be made "to educate the future generations for world citizenship. If from their early days, the children of today are trained to think of one another in terms of unity and brotherhood, they will, when they grow up, develop an attitude of mind in which the present conflicts will become unnecessary and unreal."

On the sensitive issue of the relationship between education and religion, he suggests that in order to deal with such issues the new aspirations of New India will require fresh outlook and new measures to deal with them. He points out that we are surrounded by 'over religiosity'. In a significant way he suggests that,

"Our present difficulties, unlike those of Europe, are not creations of materialistic zealots but of religious fanatics. If we want to overcome them, the solution lies not in rejecting religious instruction in elementary stages but in imparting sound and healthy religious education under our direct supervision so that misguided credulism may not affect the children in their plastic stage."

He argues that if the government undertakes only secular education, the peoples, attached to



their faith, will make their own arrangements to provide religious education to their children. Azad proposes that in order to safeguard the intellectual life of our country against this danger, religious education should not be left to the private administration. However, he was not sure whether making religious education a part of basic education by the government would be possible, at all.

As Education Minister of Free India, Maulana Azad was involved in developing a policy framework to meet this challenge. He started with studying the existing system. He was of the opinion that the existing education was shaped by non-nationals in non-national interests. This system, nevertheless, had opened to the Indians a new world of new science and modern technology. Azad gave primary importance to basic education, only on which an abiding superstructure can be built up.

He also considered the social education as of prime importance. Social education, according to him, was, "a course of study toward the production of a consciousness of citizenship among the people and the promotion of social solidarity among them."

He explains that social education includes the induction of literacy among grown-up illiterates and production of an educated mind in the inculcation of a lively sense of rights and duties of citizenship, both as individuals and as members of a mighty nation.

He also gave urgent attention to the standards of University education which, according to him, do not enjoy the public esteem. Two of the main causes are: the largely academic character of the instruction in the universities which, instead of developing the personality of the student and enabling him to make a place in society for himself, often converts him into misfit. Secondly, the standards of academic education have fallen so much that persons who have reached the highest stage are not only ill informed and ill-educated about the affairs of the world but are sometimes ignorant of the elementary things in their own fields of study.

Maulana Azad wonders whether degrees should be related to employment. He thinks that, "The fact that a university degree is an indispensable condition for employment in most types of service has induced a rush for degrees and led to overcrowding in the universities. Treating degrees as pre-requisites for employment had resulted in paying more attention to the passing of examinations than to the acquisition of knowledge. In fact a es

proposal in the Ministry was under consideration to delink employment from degrees except for posts that require specialized training."

Azad was in favour of autonomy for universities and was against undue interference by the government or any other body with the internal affairs of the universities. Azad attached great importance to teaching of history and geography. According to him, the way in which we teach 'history and geography today militates against the concept of unity of humanity.

"This terrestrial globe which nature has created as one has been divided by us for our purposes in to different compartments. Not content with this, we have painted the common world in different colours in order to ensure that these divisions are maintained and demarcated them as Asia, America and Africa."

Thus, a child grows up not as a citizen of the world but merely as a resident of a city or a country. Similarly, our history books refer to peoples belonging to different races and nations and their internal and external conflicts are taught so that their relations become a record of discord and of mutual hatred. Again, history is taught as the history of races, while, our religions have taught the common origin of human beings. Azad strongly feels that till we recast the teaching of history and geography, many obstacles would continue to create problems. The greatest of these problems is of narrow nationalism.

It is strange that nationalism which developed as a defence against the autocracy of kings has itself become aggressive today". He has dwelt on the need to introducing reforms in the system of Indian education. He believed that universities cannot play any effective role unless schools improve. At the same time, secondary education required immediate reforms. Secondary education should be structured in a way that it should be the completion of education for the majority of the peoples. It should serve the needs of different groups of people.

So far as the university education is considered, he was in favour of maintaining them as centres of higher learning for a select few who are fit to undergo extensive academic training in very specialized fields, while education at all other levels would serve the overwhelming majority of the peoples. The basic principle which he appeared to have followed was providing education according to requirements of the Indian peoples, keeping in view the elements of Indian academic and cultural traditions.

Anwar Moazzam is a leading intellectual



What was unique about the Indian subcontinent in the late 19th and the early 20th Centuries was the emergence of a group of Indian Nationalists who promoted the ideas of nationhood and self governance in the minds of their compatriots. This group personified the national spirit. The winds that shaped the intellectual mind of that era can be defined through personalities like that of Gandhi.

Gandhi was unique and phenomenal in the effect he created. It was also opportune that he was able to inspire a number of intellectuals who stood around him, each in his or her own way great, but each ready to subsume personal greatness under the charisma of Gandhi and speak the idiom of selfless patriotism. The members of this large group strode like giants on the Indian scene.

Among these giants, some stool tall. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was surely one of the tallest. He had made a mark for himself even before his role in the Indian National Congress began. His voice of strong nationalism had already been raised in his journalistic oeuvre. One can say that the historians of Indian National Movement do not appear to have done justice to his personality and its impact as well as they should have. Fortunately however, for a student of the times, there is large number of records to analyse and understand the greatness of Azad. The first source would be the reportage of the then current newspapers and periodicals and government records which could be used as being informants untouched by biased editing by later hands. Azad Studies would also benefit from Azad's rich polificity. His writings are a good indicator of his mind and a fine commentary of the events of his time. The third source is the work of the biographers

Holistic approach required to study Maulana Azad



and commentators on Azad (books and speeches on Azad, letters, poems, and even lampoons).

Interestingly Abul Kalam Azad had a number of Boswells who appeared to have followed their subject diligently, struck by the greatness of Azad even while he still evolved from a young Islamic scholar into a nationalist leader and a secular philosopher. The graphic recording of

detail by Azad's followers is useful as authentic evidence in tracing the evolution of the great leader. The critical researcher on Azad should however learn to whittle out the high panegyric as well as the lampoon and arrive at unbiased understanding of the Azad Text, because there is a tendency for hagiography as well as subjective negativity in most contemporary writings.

Much of Azad's own writing surprises us by the extreme youth of the moment of the output. Azad was barely twenty years old when he embarked on his journalistic career; and just twenty four or so when people took note of him through *Al Hilal*, as he emerged as a confident journalist on the scene of Urdu journalism. There is not much evidence of his having had any training or having apprenticed with any senior journalist, in India or in Egypt, where he is said to have gathered his models from.

It will be interesting to ask – was Azad a child prodigy, a rare phenomenon? Was Azad the product of a particular school of education and training which nurtured the individual holistically? Or, was Azad the natural product of the times?

One has to take the larger picture into consideration and apply a theoretical model that can move beyond the personal. Hippolyte Taine's formula of Race, Milieu and Moment is an uch of his

interesting start perhaps, despite the fact that as a historicist Taine's use of the notion of Race as the primary element in his triangular formula had come under fire. Be that as it may, Taine's model may help us to arrive at a logical analysis of the man that was Azad. It is not difficult to see that Azad owed much of his zeal for learning and his deep wisdom from the fact of his belonging to a lineage where such qualities were inherent and part of early training. Around the 1920s and 1930s, Azad found himself thrown into a milieu that inspired all towards a selfless nationalism. To be an individualist and an idealist simultaneously was not difficult in a surrounding rich with elements of greatness. It is as if the zeitgeist itself was an invitation to aspire for greatness.

Abul Kalam Azad was a man of such rich versatility that is breathtakingly awesome; awesome because he was no peddler of talent and no pedant who crammed his lines with a show of his scholarship. He worked in many genres and had a great respect for the inner discipline that each of the genres demanded; so much so that his writings became trend setters. His model of Urdu journalism is par excellence. He read the Journalist's role as that of an influential opinion maker. As an Epistle writer he brings forth the elegance of the form which had fascinated writers in the Hellenic as well as the Oriental traditions. His parables are fluent in their combination of readability and purposefulness. His Tarjuman is a model of erudition and spontaneous religiosity. In all his works he comes out as a man who knew his craft.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's own essay on Egotistical literature (Ghubare Khatir, his epistolary masterpiece), is an interesting treatise that can help us to understand the workings of his mind on the lines of self-conscious genius. His references to historic figures like Ghazali, Ibne Khaldun and Tolstoy give us an insight into the influences that shaped his personality towards being a leader of men. In those days of the rising spirit of nationalism, to be secular and to be a liberal was the idealised norm and to be able to lead the nation towards concerted action was the coveted dream of the leaders. The leaders were not only admired and

celebrated. They were the compulsive need of the hour. By all these standards Azad was an ideal leader. In his public dealings, Azad was undeniably a voice to be reckoned with: fair minded and bold. He took both accolades and criticism in his stride and was always clear sighted about his ideas. Maulana Azad offered to the Muslims a voice to be emulated and a philosophy to be followed.

Azad's leadership was inspirational. His early education and his classical learning set him apart and accorded a natural grandeur to his personality. His language, his choice of themes and even his posturing are drawn from the classical models. His religiosity lent a tone of rectitude to his writings and speeches. His progressive ideals and his social awareness put him in the groove of secularism. The heady winds of liberty and the times of the Indian National Movement shaped his patriotic zeal. His early quest for independence of thought (as against blind emulation) put him on the path of positive individualism. The rounded personality of the Maulana emerged from all those elements which contributed to his stature. Azad's type of leadership is time-independent. Admittedly, India of the pre-Independence times was well and richly served by this humane version of leadership. The self-consciousness is saved from narrow Egotism by the selfless use to which Azad used his potential of knowledge, language, ideas and his talent for the pen and voice.

Our age operates under the twin predilections of attachment for the inspirational and a fascination for the sceptical. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Chair at MANUU and other institutions in the country have to work towards objective scholarship. What needs to be done is to place Abul Kalam Azad in the framework of objective assessment and evaluation, and examine his personality from the different dimensions contained in the theoretical prepositions. Such an objective and scientific assessment of history and individual value alone can help us analyse the worth of a personality like Maulana Abul Kalam Azad who was obviously the product of more than one historical and cultural context.

Amina Kishore

The raison d'être of Teaching *India Wins Freedom*

Autobiographies are recorded statements of eminent personalities. They are also historical accounts of the past and portray socio-political and economic conditions, often laced with subjective interpretation of events that occurred in the period of history corresponding to which the author lives. As such autobiographies are a literary genre where it is difficult to disassociate the author from the text and hence the application of 'New Historicism' as a theory for evaluation of writings in the genre appears to be the most appropriate approach.

Confessional and self-revelatory autonomous writings can be used for cathartic effect apart from being cited as didactic examples. They also serve as a catalyst for reformation or in establishment of truth.

Autobiographies of politicians are essentially memoirs that attempt to highlight the author's interventions in the political and social domain, where he has played a significant part. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's account of incidents leading up to India winning freedom from colonial rule records his reflections and interpretations regarding events and personalities impacting the history of this crucial period. The account is a perceptive recording of circumstances and dwells on the actions of leaders, some fired by purely nationalistic intentions and others driven by parochial motives, which are stated in a frank and unbiased tenor in his seminal work, *India Wins Freedom*.

This political/historical autobiography serves as an important artefact providing a rare critical insight into a cataclysmic event of Indian history. It has been an essential reading for every generation and remains relevant for all times; not just because of its historicity but also, more importantly, for its ability to enrich the reader's personality. It helps the reader guard against repeating past mistakes by cautioning and warning him through historic evidences and providing illuminating glimpses regarding the fallacy in ignoring the past. Apart

from these laudable achievements Azad's autobiography also empowers readers in negotiating with people of different temperaments and ideologies.

On the basis of Azad's description of his relationship with Gandhi and Nehru, one is able to comprehend with ease that difference of opinion on issues can be healthy, fruitful and essential in shaping and strengthening an individual's resolve regarding his own point of view. The writing also

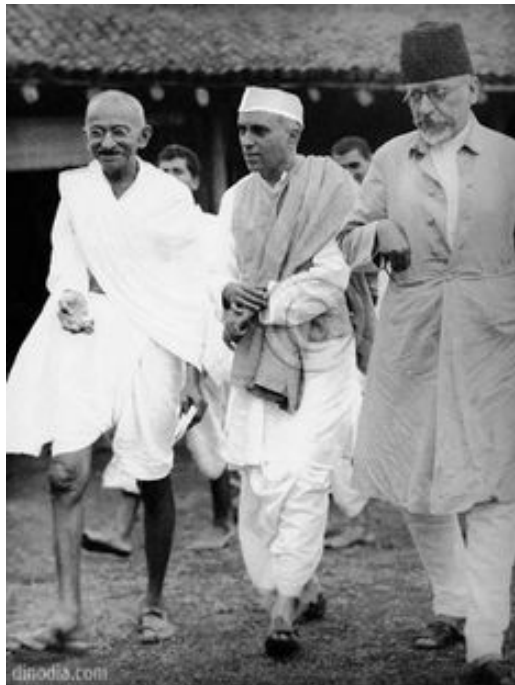
helps one understand the various political undercurrents active during the period and at the same time highlights the fact that disagreements on general issues did not mar or influence personal relationships of the towering personalities who occupied centre stage at this critical juncture in the freedom struggle. This autobiography emphasizes the essentiality of a practical, action oriented approach, which contributes to establish individual character and bestow prominence on the author among a group of equally capable peers.

The consequences of pursuing individual, immediate, selfish and temporal advantages and

the damage that such a path inflicts on the nation as a whole, with residual effects impacting the national polity through a mass scarring of its emotional psyche, are chronicled in a matter of fact manner, bereft of any insinuations or accusations maligning contemporaries.

The autobiography of Azad is especially important and relevant for all time and for all people as it moves beyond the boundary of a political memoir and helps inculcate high principles and values in its readers. It is the most potent tool for attaining collective development of society while at the same time ensuring character building of the individual exposed to the powerful and impacting narrative style. Readers are bound to benefit from the practical and visionary experiences of such a towering personality.

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IMPACT OF ARABIC ON MAULANA AZAD'S WRITING

Though caught in the whirlwind of politics, Maulana Azad, in essence, was a literary personality.

The captivating penmanship of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad indicates that he was deeply impressed by the ideas of Jamaluddin al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh, who published 'al-Urwat-ul Wuthqah' a revolutionary journal which propagated views against the British colonialism.

In 1897 Sheikh Mohammed Rashid Rida collaborated with Muhammad Abduh in his mission. The next year Sheikh Rida launched his own journal 'al-Manar'. The traumatic situation in the Islamic world made the heart of Rashid Rida bleed. When Maulana Azad came to know of the struggle being carried out in that part of

the world, he expressed his solidarity.

By the turn of the twentieth century Maulana Azad traveled to Bombay and stayed there for a short period. The Arabic publications from Cairo and Istanbul to Bombay arrived frequently then. He got an opportunity to go through them carefully.

Meanwhile, a gentleman known as Mohammad Moosa expressed his intention to set up a commercial printing press. The idea appealed to Maulana Azad. He encouraged Moosa to execute the idea to which the gentleman finally agreed. They decided to publish a weekly. The title of this newspaper was Al-Misbah. The name of the publication, as stated by the Maulana later, was take from an Egyptian journal known as Misbah-ul-Sharq. This was the first newspaper edited by him.

In 1901 a newspaper titled Ahsan-ul-Akhbar came out. It was published from Calcutta by Abdul Ghaffar, in association with Maulavi Ahmad Husain Fatehpuri. The former was the proprietor of the Mustafai Press. Maulana Azad said later that the publication of Ahsan-ul-Akhbar benefited him immensely in his early age.

In exchange of this journal many Arabic newspapers and magazines from Egypt, Syria, Turkey, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya and America had started coming in. It was for the first time that through these publications he had come to of the social and political situations in different parts of the world. He studied them seriously and made himself acquainted with the issues and problems of the Muslim World.

Another factor that contributed to his interest in such matters was his family relations with this region. He stated later that this element was firmly rooted in his disposition. Against this backdrop the interest continued growing as a result he remained preoccupied with the developments taking place in the Middle East. He claimed that it was a vibrant phase of study in his life which he enjoyed thoroughly. Among the Egyptian academic journals Maulana Azad got introduced to with the ones like Al-Hilal, Al-Muqtataf and Al-Manar for the first time in the office of Ahsan-ul-Akhbar.

The articles of Abdur Rahman Al-Kwakibi were a regular feature in Al-Manar and Mohammad Abduh was a prominent name on its pages. The style of discourse assumed by Muhammad Abduh in response to the Christian intellectual onslaught

was exciting for Maulana. He said, "What I found on the pages of Al-Manar, was new for me whether it be in the context of eloquence and rhetoric or style and discourse. Religious topics did attract me to some extent. But the impact of the expression and articulation of the language, the use of literary idioms and the persuasive style of composition in Arabic was so enormous and enduring that it proved immensely useful and beneficial in later stages of my life. Undoubtedly I am indebted to Al-Manar in this respect."

In the first issue of Al-Hilal (July 12, 1912) Maulana Azad elaborately glorifies the mission of Al Afghani and Abduh. On the visit of Rashid Rida to India Maulana Azad writes, "Whatever took place on the bank of river Gomti was indeed a wave of the ambition and enthusiasm that gusted from the Nile Valley. It was thanks to the visit of a 'tourist' who came and departed. But he had come to wail and mourn the autumn of decline and devastation. His heart was wounded and bleeding because the phase of academic excellence of the Muslims was buried in the soil of history."

Maulana Azad trod the same path through his journalistic initiative by arousing the Islamic and nationalistic fervor in the Indian subcontinent. He advocated Pan Islamic Identity and unity. It was quite logical against the mounting European assault on the Asian society and culture. He analysed the global political scenario with such great sensibility and rationality that it forced Mahatma Gandhi to stand up and raise his voice in favour of the Khilafat movement.

Dr. Javed Nadeem Nadwi is associate professor with the Department of Arabic



The writings and speeches of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad on the unity of Hindus and Muslims and integrated India remain unmatched documents related to the Indian National Movement. They stirred up the Indians to levels where they were ready to sacrifice everything they had to achieve the freedom of their country. The Muslims who had remained on the margins in the initial stages of the freedom struggle were jolted out of their dream world by the writings of Maulana Azad and joined in hordes in very action that was taken up to drive away the British colonialists from the Indian soil.

Maulana Azad headed the Indian National Congress twice. First in 1923 when he was only 35 years of age and then in 1940 when he was being acknowledged as a statesman. On both occasions his passion for Hindu-Muslim unity and commitment to retain the common historical and cultural heritage in undivided India was spectacular.

In 1923, in his presidential address he said:

"If an angel descends from the heavens, stands atop Qutb Minar and declares that Swaraj will be granted in 24 hours if the Hindus and Muslims withdraw from their unity. I would say I can withdraw from the demand of Swaraj but not from the unity of Hindus and Muslims. It is so because if there is delay in getting the Swaraj it will be the loss of India. But if the unity of the Hindus and Muslims is gone it will be the loss of entire humanity."

He did not change his belief in Hindu-Muslim unity a bit nor did he agree to the partition of the country. In his presidential address in 1940 he emphasised on how Hindus and Muslims living together for ages have brought about a pleasant change on the landscape of the country. Said he, "Our common history of eleven centuries has filled all dimensions of our Indian life with constructive elements. Our languages, our poetry, our literature, our social behaviour, our appreciations, our attires, our customs and tradition, the innumerable realities of our daily life—there is no aspect which does not have the imprints of the life lived together. Our languages were different but we started speaking in one voice; our customs and traditions were different but together they made a new mould; our old dresses can be seen in the old historical photographs but it is not there on our bodies anymore; this is all common heritage—wealth of our common nationhood. We do not wish to leave this

and go back to the times when the commonness in lives had not started.

If there are some Hindu minds among us who wish to bring back the one thousand-year-old Hindu lifestyle, they should know that they are only dreaming. That dream cannot be fulfilled ever. Likewise, if there exist such Muslim minds who wish to bring back to life the civilization and social norms they had brought with them from Iran and Middle East, I would like to tell them to wake up from that dream as soon as possible because it is an unnatural idea. Such thoughts cannot grow on the soil of realities.

Our one thousand years of common life has created a cast of common nationhood. Such casts cannot be built; they come to life by themselves over centuries by the hidden hands of nature. Now the cast has been made and sealed by fate. We may like it or not but we have become an Indian nation, an indivisible Indian nation. Any artificial idea of separation would not be able to remove this oneness of ours. We should accept the decision of nature and get busy in constructing our kismet."

These words of wisdom were spoken when India was under the British yoke and its demographic character was different. Now that the ground realities have changed, would any politician, from any spectrum of thought, stand up and speak with similar passion and commitment? Once again the Indian society appears to be in flux. New terminologies and definitions are being debated with emphasis on change of different kind. Therefore, this is the time to re-endorse the ideas of Maulana Azad about the oneness of Indian nationhood where all will enjoy equality, respect and dignity.

Mir Ayoob Ali Khan is senior consultant Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Chair



AZAD DAY CELEBRATIONS 2010

An unforgettable evening of Dastangoi



Dastangoi is a centuries old Urdu oral storytelling art form, which unfortunately has lost its appeal in the modern times. However two young men, Mahmood Farooqui and Danish Husain, have taken it upon themselves to resurrect this dying tradition. As part Azad Day celebrations, Centre for Urdu Language, Literature and Culture organised a programme of dastangoi on 8th of November 2010. The programme was coordinated by Prof. Amina Kishore and Dr. (now Prof.) Salma Farooqui.

The programme started with the presentation of the famous Dastan-e-Amir Hamza, which was beautifully rendered by Sheikh Usman and Rana Pratap Sengar. Later Mahmood Farooqui and Danish Husain transported the audience to a mythical world with the narration of the adventures of Afrasiab, the king of sorcerers and Aiyyar, the king of tricksters. In addition to these ancient mythical stories, the duo also narrated their self-crafted story based on the partition of the country at the time of independence.

Among those present in the audience were Dr Syeda Syedain Hameed, Chancellor Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Prof. Mohammad Miyan, Vice Chancellor MANUU, Prof. H. Khadija Begum, then Registrar of the university, Prof. Khalid Sayeed, Prof. Shahid Mehdi, Mr. Narendar Luthar, Ms. Bindi Luthar, Mr. Aslam Farshori, Prof. Rahmat Yousufzai, Dr. Ziauddin Shakeeb, Mr. Shujat Ali Shujah, Mr. Ayooob Ali Khan, Dr. Habeeb Ghatala, and Dr. Mazhar Husain.

Prof. Amina Kishore presented shawls to the artists at the end of the programme.

SHAM-E-GHAZAL ENTHRALLS AUDIENCE

An evening of Ghazal singing was organised at the Directorate of Distance Education auditorium of the Maulana Azad National Urdu University on 10th of November 2010 as part of the university's Azad Day celebrations.

Ghazal singers Neerja Giri, Mohammad Shoaib, Adnan Salim, Sangeeta Mitra, and Poorva Guru enthralled the audience with their renditions of famous ghazals of poets like Atib Ajiz, Shamim Jairajpuri, Saleem Kausar, and Qatil Shifai. Poorva Guru ended the evening on high note when she presented the famous damadam mast qalandar on audience demand.

Prof. Mohammad Miyan honoured the artists with shawls.



School children present Colourful cultural programme

Children from various schools of Hyderabad and Secundrabad participated in a colourful cultural programme organised by the Maulana Azad National Urdu University on 10th of November as part of Azad Day celebrations 2010.

Besides songs, qawwali, and drama, the students also presented tableaux representing all the states of the country and depicting the theme of national integration.

Safdariya Girls High School bagged the first prize. The second prize went to the MANUU Model School, and the third prize was taken by B.J.R. Girls School, Golconda.

Later Prof. Mohd. Miyan announced awards for all the participating students. Chief guest on the occasion, Prof. Mohd. Zafaruddin, commended the efforts of the students.

Azad Day Celebrations 2011



Ghalib ki Haweli staged at MANUU

Mumbai based theatre group Idea staged a drama based on the legendary poet Mirza Ghalib's life and times. It was directed by the famous theatre personality Mr. Mujeeb Khan and the role of Ghalib was played by the noted Bollywood lyricist Mr. Ibrahim Ashq.

The play highlighted the downfall of Mughal Empire, the Revolt of 1857 and the consequent destruction of Delhi. It consisted of two acts and ran for about two hours.

It was staged in the university's open auditorium, and attended among others by the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor Prof. Mohammad Miyan.

The play was organised as part of the university's Azad Day 2011 celebrations.

Electronic media owes its success to Urdu



While expressing their views in a seminar organised by the Dept. of Mass Communication and Journalism, media experts emphasised that electronic mass media in India owe their success primarily to Urdu.

ETV Urdu's chief coordinator, Mr. Rajesh Raina, said that ETV Urdu's success has proved that Urdu is not only alive and kicking, it possesses all the qualities a language should have to become a language of mass communication.

Former ETV urdu producer Mr. Aslam Farshori in his paper argued that only a language that can influence public opinion will make an effective mass media language, and Urdu has this quality of touching peoples' hearts.

Shujat Ali Shujah, however, expressed his disappointment with Doordarshan's Urdu channel.

On this occasion ETV Urdu's business director, S.P. Singh presented a paper on Urdu Television Marketing and Advertising. Senior producer Mr. Sajid Azam in his paper argued that even in so-called Hindi channels, 90 percent of the expression is actually in Urdu.