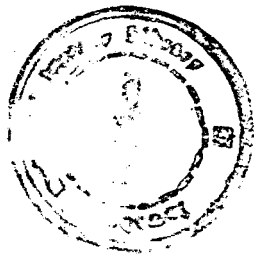


**Nationalist Muslims and Indian Struggle
For Freedom: A Study of The Role of
Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, 1906-1924**

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the Degree of
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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C E R T I F I C A T E

It is certified that the dissertation entitled
"NATIONALIST MUSLIMS AND INDIAN STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM:
A STUDY OF THE ROLE OF MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD 1906-
1924" submitted by Rizwan Qaiser in partial fulfilment
of the requirements of the Degree of Master of Philosophy
of this University. This is his original work according
to the best of our knowledge and may be placed before
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P R E F A C E

While there has been a continuous flow of literature dealing with the Muslim separatist politics, which culminated in Pakistan, a very scanty attention has been paid to explore the contribution of the nationalist Muslims towards the freedom struggle. Among all those Muslim leaders who, against the heaviest of odds stood by Indian nationalism, Maulana Azad emerges as the most dominating personality.

Maulana Azad began his political career as a nationalist and maintained a remarkable consistency throughout. He joined one of the revolutionary terrorist organisations of Bengal, which had become active in the wake of anti-Bengal Partition agitation. Azad did not mind his Hindu compatriots using their religious symbols to arouse the masses for the freedom of the country.

During the revolutionary phase of his political career, Azad had argued with his comrades that Muslims should also be brought into the folds of freedom fighters. This idea of Azad received a fillip, when he visited some of the West Asian countries and Turkey, where he came in contact with Shaikh Abduh, a disciple of Jamaluddin Afghani, young Turks and also the revolutionaries of Iran. All of these revolutionaries impressed upon Azad that the Indian Muslims must take an active part, along with others in the freedom struggle.

After his return from the prolonged tour, Azad began to contemplate over the issue of mobilising the Muslims for the freedom of India. Since he did not have any platform to speak from, Azad decided to start a journal in order to establish contacts with the Muslim masses in general. Subsequently, he established Al-Hilal in 1912, and began to call upon the Muslims to rise to the occasion and fight the British. While doing so Azad made incessant use of the Islamic religious idioms to make his ideas of freedom struggle more comprehensible to the common Muslims. During the Al-Hilal phase, Azad had argued with his co-religionists that in order to fight the British they must organize themselves on their own instead of following others. But at the same time he exhorted them to establish an unconditional alliance with the Hindus without which the attainment of the freedom would become difficult.

Fiery tone of Azad could not be tolerated by the government. Consequently he was externed from Calcutta in the beginning of 1916 and was forced to live in Ranchi under house imprisonment. He was released only in January 1920. By the time Azad was released the situation was ripe for another movement in the country, which came to be known as non-cooperation Khilafat movement. Azad played an important role

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in this movement. Issue of the Khilafat ^a give an opportunity to Azad to mobilise the Muslims for the freedom of the country. He continuously reminded the members of this community that fight over Khilafat was nothing but to strive to attain independence from the British. He also emphasised the necessity of unity between the Hindus and the Muslims.

Unprecedented mass upsurge and fraternity between the Hindus and the Muslims during the course of ^{the} movement, somehow was quite shortlived. Soon after the suspension of the non-cooperation-Khilafat movement the Muslims began to drift away from the path of fraternity and freedom. Abolition of the Khilafat itself by the Turkish Government was a further blow to the Muslims. Both the communities parted with from each other. The Muslims groaned with the pain of supposed betrayal of the Hindus and the abolition of Khilafat by Kemal Ataturk. By and large, the Muslims wavered on the path of communalism, still there were many Muslims who abhorred the very idea itself. But such a group turn ^{ed} into a minority among the Muslims. Azad remained an integral part of this minority and stood by nationalism.

Despite the fact that Azad was an important character during the freedom struggle, yet his political ideas have not been understood and analysed objectively. If Azad has not

been understood properly in Pakistan, it should not surprise us. But if he is not subjected to an objective study on the ^{of} ~~the~~ ^{side} fence, injustice would be done to a great leader of Indian Freedom Movement.

Azad without having been a subject of critical study, has become a historical character who is partly understood and partly misunderstood. He has been unduly criticised for invoking religion in Indian politics which according to some historians, heightened the communal consciousness among the Muslims. Peter Hardy in his book, The Muslims of British India, while discussing the religion and politics among the Muslims makes a brief survey of the role of Azad and others during the Khilafat movement, comes to ~~the~~ a hasty conclusion, "In 1920-22 Abul Kalam Azad and the Jamiyyat were advocating the mental partition of India", without realising that arguments of Azad, although loaded with religiosity, were directed to arouse the Muslims against the foreign rule and subjugation of India. Francis Robinson in his paper, "Islam and Muslim Separatism: A Historical Debate" argues, "...how did the Ulema of the Jamiyat reconcile their support for Indian nationalism with the tendencies of political separatism inherent in basic Islamic ideas?", resulting in distortion of the role played by such people. In the same vein he says, "that men like Hasrat Mohani, Mohammad Ali,

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Azad or Mahmudal Hasan... above all things they wanted to do something for Islam." To accept this argument would mean that for Azad, as for others, ideals of Islam and not the freedom of the country was important. At least for Azad, ideals of Islam and the freedom of the country both, were equally important.

Prabha Dixit in her paper "Political objective of the Khilafat Movement in India," says that Azad, "offered religious argument to justify non-cooperation with Hindus." She also says, "the ideology of the Pan-Islamic movement, as conceived by Maulana Azad and Mohammad Ali, not only provided justification for the Khilafat cause, but also a virtual statement of Muslim nationalism, later modified and elaborated by the Muslim League". Problem involved in this kind of argument is that religious nationalism is confused with that of "Muslim nationalism", whereas the fact remains that good many nationalist leaders, who were Hindus also used religion in their politics. Likewise, Azad also tried to arouse the Muslim masses in the name of religion. Secondly, to say that Azad justified 'non-cooperation' with Hindus would amount to completely deny what Azad spoke all through his life.

On the other hand Moin Shakir, in his book, Khilafat to Partition: A Survey of Major Political Trends Among Indian Muslims During 1919-1947, does not argue that use of the

religion made by Azad caused a sense of separatism among the Muslims but he says, "Azad's earlier life, political thought and programmes are characterised by this "romantism". The chief aim was the realisation of Shariat and the integration of millat". He also argues that, "the substance of the political programme outlined in Al-Hilal during this "romantic" period was the sovereignty of God, establishment of Divine Kingdom, maintenance of peace, order of good government and the supremacy of truth". Such an understanding too, does not do any justice to Azad. He undoubtedly wished his community to lead their lives according to the teachings of Islam. He also used religion to instil a sense of confidence among his co-religionists, but while doing so he aimed at another cause as well - that was freedom of the country. Contrary to the establishment of "Divine Kingdom", Azad had spoken in favour of a parliamentary and constitutional form of government.

In the works discussed above, Azad has not been the main focus of the study. Other than these, there are studies on Azad, which are more impressionistic, descriptive and biographical in nature than analytical. Such works are by and large the version of the people, who were closely associated with Maulana Azad at one point of the time of the other. They include; A.R. Malihabadi's Zikr-i-Azad;

Mahadev Desai's Maulana

Abul Kalam Azad; a Biographical Memoir; Humayun Kabir's, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, etc. Also the works like H.L.Kumar's Maulana Azad: The Apostle of Unity and A.B.Rajput's Abul Kalam Azad do not throw enough light on various facets of Azad's political life.

On the other hand there are number of works in Urdu also. Like, Arsh Malsiani's Abul Kalam Azad; A.Y. Ansari's Maulana Azad; Ek Siasi Diary; Malik Zada Manzoor Ahmad's Maulana Azad Al-Hilal ke Aina Mein etc. These works are more eulogistic and narrative than anything else.

Near absence of any serious work on Azad has prompted to make a modest attempt to study Azad and his political ideas during the period under discussion. It is felt that to study Azad and his politics out of historical context, would fail to give us the true picture of his character and the role in the freedom struggle. Therefore, it is important to study him only against the background of various trends in the freedom movement itself, otherwise it is feared that delineation of the picture of Azad would remain blurred and hazy.

It should be noted that in this study stress has been more to focus upon the political as well as religious ideas of Azad, than merely maintaining a chronology of events. It should also be noted that events of non-cooperation-Khilafat movement have not been dealt extensively, so that it does not divert the attention from Azad.

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Rezwan Qaiser
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CHAPTER I

Chapter I

POLITICO-IDEOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL BASE OF MUSLIM

POLITICS 1857-1906

The Muslims in India, during the later half of 19th century and the first half of 20th century, did not constitute a monolithic community. The Muslims were (as they are even today) divided horizontally as well as vertically into numerous regional and cultural groups on the one hand and into caste and class on the other.¹ Added to this was division between the descendants of the foreign invaders (Ashrafs) and the native Indian converts (Ajlaf).² Another point, equally significant, is to interpret social as well as political actions of the Muslims with a reference to the Quranic injunctions would amount to distortions in an understanding of the Muslim politics.³ Also, any attempt to reify Islam would result in postulations of a Quranic political culture, which would be based on the formal theology of the religion instead of other considerations like political ideas a particular group of Muslims would hold, and the relations between these groups and the social conditions

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1. Asghar Ali Engineer, Indian Muslims: A Study of the Minority Problem in India, Delhi, 1985, p.1.
 2. Anil Seal, The Emergence of Indian Nationalism: Competition and Collaboration in the Later Nineteenth Century, Cambridge University Press, 1968, p.300.
 3. Rajani Kanth, "A Muslim Political Culture," in Zafar Imam (ed.), Muslims in India, Delhi, 1975, p.138.

practices etc.⁴ Thus, logically, it would be valid to assume that the response of the entire Muslim community to various events, could not have been uniform.

Demographically also, the Muslims were dispersed. A brief look at the proportion of the Muslim populations in the whole of India would give us enough idea that they were widely scattered.

Table 1⁵

Population of the Hindus and the Muslims
by Province in 1913

Province	(Figures in percentage)	
	Hindus	Muslims
Madras	88.90	11.8
Bombay	76.02	20.32
Bengal	44.80	52.74
Bihar and Orissa	82.40	10.63
United Province	85.32	14.11
Punjab	33.46	54.85
Central Province	82.62	4.06
Assam	35.55	50.25

4. Peter B. Mayor, "Tomb and Dark Houses: Ideology, Intellectuals and Proletarians in the Study of Contemporary Indian Islam," in Intiaz Ahmad (ed.), Modernization and Social Change Among Muslims in India, Delhi, 1983, p.5.
5. David Page, Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control 1920-1932, New Delhi, 1982, p.8. This is the modified version of the table used by David Page to show the percentage share of executive and judicial services among the Hindus and Muslims. Here it is adapted to show the province-wise distribution of Muslim population.

Despite the fact that Muslims were not a monolithic community there was (as has been) a common denominator i.e. Islam which could bring the Muslims closer and forge a strong sense of Islamic brotherhood. The common faith of the Muslims in India facilitated articulation of a common identity based on religion.⁶ Also, the Muslims tended to react as a homogenous group under a given situation of external threats,⁷ whether such threats had any sound basis or were product of imagination in order to cater to certain interests of an individual or groups of individuals.

From the ensuing discussion it would appear that politics of the Muslims remained as fragmented as their own social divisions. Yet more often than not it were the elites of the community who largely dominated the political scenario. In most of the cases they (the elites) articulated the interests which concerned the class of their own but always spoke in the name of the whole community. For instance in United Province the low percentage of the Muslim population gave the elites an opportunity to generate a minority psyche among the Muslim masses, which gradually took roots in their minds. Such minority consciousness was made the basis to raise the demands of protection of certain privileges of the

6. Gail Minault, The Khilafat Movement: Religious and Political Mobilisation in India, Delhi, 1982, p.3

7. Engineer, n.1, p.2.

elites and subsequently separate representation.

The places where the share of the Muslim population was larger than the Hindus, the elites did not have much of scope to exploit the minority consciousness. Bengal, for example was one such a place where Muslims outnumbered the Hindus. The elites here, in order to protect their privileged position argued that since the Muslims were economically and educationally backward, they needed protection and the governmental support. It was attempted to impress upon the government that Muslims at large were backward and as such would not be able to rise without its support. Such an impression was sought to be given even by the leaders of Northern Provinces, particularly Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and others, where the condition of the Muslims was far better than Bengal.

It ^{is} would also be noted that in this chapter attempt will be made to ascertain various shades of the Muslim politics and its ideological leanings during the period under discussion.

Bengal, being the first province in India to come under direct political control of the British, experienced various mechanism of colonial exploitation. Such exploitation consequently made the local populace realise the contradiction between the indigenous and colonial interests, although in its rudimentary form.

During the second half of the 18th century, Bengal was most adversely affected on account of the rising supremacy of the British. With the growth of the political power of the Britishers, their attempt to extract the wealth of Bengal also grew. A process of de-industrialisation began with the monopolisation of production process of handicraft, most particularly the weaving units in Bengal.⁸ Use of coercion on weavers was not infrequent, which resulted in weavers quitting their looms.⁹ By 1793, a process of wholesale extinction of the weavers in Bengal had begun. Disappearance of domestic handicrafts caused great damage to Bengal's economy, since it was famous for its handicrafts than agriculture. These weavers cum agriculturist, now came to be heavily dependent on agriculture, which resulted in weakening the position of tenants vis-a-vis land lords.¹⁰

Introduction of Permanent Settlement in 1793, with all its ramifications did not alter the position of tenants and landless labourers. Newly created "landlords" were invested with new powers in regard to collection of increased

8. N.K. Sinha, The Economic History of Bengal from Plassey to Permanent Settlement, Vol. 1, Calcutta 1965, p.181.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

tribute, such as laws, courts and police. Such powers enabled the contractors of revenue in time, to increase their own share in the rent from the land by reducing the total size of the social surplus left with the villages.¹¹ It may be noted, here, that the majority of peasantry in Bengal, at that time were Muslims. Even among the weavers, a vast chunk belonged to the same community.¹² Decline in the position of weavers, tenants and landless labourers provided the background to the emergence of Faraizi movement in Bengal, which had the support from peasant's economic grievances.¹³ The founder of Faraizi movement was Haji Shariatullah, who gathered a vast mass of oppressed peasantry around himself. He used all sorts of religious symbols to articulate the grievances of the peasantry and landless labourers. After death, his son Dadu Mian took up the tasks left by his father. Titumir, a contemporary of Dudu Mian also led a violent movement against the zamindars of both the communities as well as European planters. Faraizi movement

11. Ratnalekha Ray, Changes in Bengal Agrarian Society, C 1760-1850, Delhi, 1979, p.290.

12. Engineer, n.1, p.10.

13. Francis, Robinson, "Islam and Muslim Separatism: A Historical Debate," in Mushirul Hasan (ed.), Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India, Delhi 1985, p.358.

led to an open conflict with the landlords and the government¹⁴ which was consequently ruthlessly suppressed.

While analysing the Faraizi movement, and the reform movement of Syed Ahmad Brelvi, Peter Hardy, argues that such movements contributed to the transformation of Indian Muslim community into a political association with a will to "joint action",¹⁵ whereas the truth lies somewhere else. The movement started by Syed Ahmad Brelvi apart, Faraizi movement was of a local nature, which made attempts to articulate economic grievances of the oppressed peasantry of East Bengal. It did not transcend the boundary of the region where it was primarily operating. Also basic essence of the movement was not something as suggested, "...but the important point was that their solution was to strive to realise their vision of Islamic ideal."¹⁶ As a matter of fact in a traditional and peasant society, near absence of an alternative ideology necessitates the use of religion and its symbols to organise the masses vis-a-vis the oppressors.¹⁷

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14. For details of Faraizi movement, see Prem Anand and Ibne Azad, "Politics and Society in Bengal" in Robin Blackburn (ed.), Explosion in a Sub-Continent, Pelican 1975, Santinoy Ray, Freedom Movement and Indian Muslims, Peoples Publishing House, Delhi 1979. Also refer to Peter Hardy, Muslims in British India, CUP, 1972. W.C. Smith, Modern Islam in India, Princeton University Press, 1963.
15. Peter Hardy, n. 14, p.58.
16. Frances Robinson, n. 13, p.358.
17. For a detailed study of this aspect of the problem of modern Indian history, refer to Sumit Sarkar, Popular Movements and middle class leadership in late Colonial India; Perspective and Problems of history from below Calcutta, 1983.

Although, it is a different matter that this movement did evoke certain amount of religious fanaticism,¹⁸ "but it would be wrong to ignore its economic content and look at from purely religious angle as such."¹⁹

The Wahabi movement was almost contemporaneous with the Faraizi movement of Bengal. Wahabi movement began in Northern India during the first quarter of 19th century and continued to operate till early seventies. This movement was basically religio-political in nature. At a later point of time, it took the shape of political and economic movement²⁰ but never lost its religious fervour.

Wahabi movement in India began as a religious reform movement initiated by Syed Ahmad Barelvi, who attempted to purge the religion of its accretions and corruptions²¹ and emphasized the fundamentals of Islam. Initially the movement apart from stressing the "fundamentals" of Islam to be followed by adherents, also contained an element of anti-Sikh feelings. However, after 1847, when the whole of the Punjab came under the direct administration of the British, Wahabi movement became flagrantly anti-British in nature.²² Support structure of this movement came from

18. Engineer, n.1, p.11.

19. Ibid.

20. Smith, n.14, p.191.

21. Ibid.

22. Santimoy Ray, n.14, p.14.

the cultivators and labouring class.²³ Upper class Muslims, despite religious appeals of the Wahabis, had opposed them. W.W. Hunter in his famous documentary "Indian Musalmans" wrote, "....The presence of Wahabis in a district is a standing menace to all classes.... possessed of property or vested rights... Every Musalman priest with a dozen acres attached to his mosque or way-side shrine has been shrieking against the Wahabis during the past half century."²⁴ Thus, it would appear that Wahabis made use of religious symbols to articulate the grievances of the oppressed peasantry of the Muslim community and as such should not be considered communalist.²⁵ Despite such a character of the Wahabi movement, it did encourage communal attitude,²⁶ as it has been noticed in case of the Faraizi movement. Such developments among the Muslim masses made them vulnerable,²⁷ to the communalist propaganda during the later course of the development of Muslim politics.

Around the same time, even the elites of the Muslim community in Bengal found themselves in a disadvantageous

23. Moin Shakir, "Dynamics of Muslim Political Thought" in P. Thomas and K. Deutsch (ed.), Political Thoughts in Modern India, Delhi, 1986, p. 146.

24. W.W. Hunter, Indian Musalman, Delhi, 1969, p. 107.

25. Smith, n. 14, p. 192.

26. Ibid., p. 193.

27. Ibid.

position, on account of introduction of new machinery of civil and military administration. The elites or to call them aristocracy, earlier had the patronage of the imperial bureaucracy of the Mughals or local Nawabs. Decline in the political power of the Mughals and Nawabs meant deprivation of all kinds for the aristocratic section of the community. Even in this case it was Bengal, which experienced such a fate first as it came under British rule much earlier compared to Northern India.

During the first phase of the colonial rule, the British were largely occupied with maximum extraction of wealth, through the existing administrative machinery. But as the colonialism moved into its second phase, during the early part of 19th century it necessitated sweeping changes in the administrative structure, laws and education system. Of all such attempts, to impose and perpetuate a cultural hegemony was clearly discernible. All this was done to cater to the requirements of growing industries in the metropolis,²⁸ at the cost of the colony.

Changes which were introduced in Bengal in 1830s and 1840s affected the people at large, but Muslims had to bear the brunt much more than any other group or community. For the old Muslim aristocracy the source of livelihood began

28. For details refer to Bipin Chandra, Colonialism, Metropolitan Control and the Colonial State: Modification of European Theory, Mozambique; 1975 (JNU Library).

to shrink. It suffered the loss of privileges of all types; the levy of tolls, the monopoly of posts in the army and in some branches of civil employment.²⁹ Long term effects of Permanent Settlement caused expropriation of most of the Muslim landlords and resumption proceedings after 1828 hastened the process of their decay.³⁰ Noted, W.W. Hunter, "Hundred of ancient families were ruined and the educational system of the Musalmans which was entirely maintained by rent free grants, received the death-blow."³¹ These developments not only hit the pocket of the Muslim aristocracy but also hurt their pride.³² Muslim aristocracy of Bengal felt threatened economically, politically as well as culturally, which precipitated attempts to guard themselves from external onslaughts.

British attempt towards cultural hegemony was distinctly manifest in the "Education Minute" of 1835 prepared by Lord Macaulay, which was finally approved by the Governor General, Lord William Bentinck. Apart from stressing the need to give impetus to English education, the minute rejected the need for oriental learning.

29. Anil Seal, n.2, p. 301.

30. Ibid.

31. Hunter, n.24, p.177.

32. Peter Hardy, n. 14, p.49.

Advocacy, favouring English education affected the indigenous system of education. It also intentionally made a reference to the traditional mode of learning among Muslims, through the medium of Arabic, Persian and Urdu. It said, "...while the colleges of oriental learning were not to be abolished; the practice of supporting their students during their period of education was to be discontinued."³³ This part of the resolution was largely welcomed by the Hindus, as they were not averse to English education, but it injured the feelings of the Muslims.³⁴

Apart from the injury caused to the feelings of the Muslims by announcement of Macaulay's resolution, the growing emphasis on Christianity, particularly in missionary school, which were forerunners of the government institutions also created a sense of apprehension in the minds of the Muslims. Suspicion of the Muslims towards English education was further heightened by late 1830s, when the missionary schools came to adopt a new policy that English education itself would lead to spread of Christianity.³⁵ In such a situation governments pronouncements of religious neutrality was of no avail. Therefore, Muslims largely kept themselves away from English education.³⁶

33. Ram Gopal, Indian Muslims: A Political History, 1858-1947
Bombay, 1959, p.18.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid., p.19.

36. Ibid., p.20.

Considerations for the Muslims of Bengal for not taking to English education were other than threat to their religion and culture as well. Relatively poor financial position of the Muslims in general was one strong reason for they not joining English schools. Whereas "higher and more respectable" Muslims were showing a desire for English education.³⁷ Keeness of upper class Muslims was not matched with opportunities, as initially schools and colleges were opened in Calcutta where predominant population was of Hindus. The Muslim districts of East and North Bengal were neglected by the government.³⁸

It was made a matter of policy in 1844, that government jobs would be made open to only those persons who would acquire knowledge of English. Hindus, largely, did not face much of problem in this regard but the Muslims felt the pinch of it,³⁹ since government jobs had become the only source of employment for the educated Muslims. Muslims felt the deprivation on such counts. Also the sense of lagging behind the Hindus, added with deprivation made a mark on future politics of India.⁴⁰

37. Anil Seal, n.2, p.309.

38. Uma Kaura, Muslims and Indian Nationalism: The Emergence of Demand for India's Partition 1928-1940, Delhi, 1975, pp.4-5.

39. Ram Gopal, n.33, p.20.

40. Ibid.

The case was not the same in Northern India, as major part of it came under British supremacy at a later stage. Even when the Northern India, particularly United Province, Oudh and the Punjab came under the sway of the British, they did not alter the system of administration completely. Muslims despite having a lower percentage in proportion to the whole population had fair representation in administrative jobs, particularly in judiciary. Overall condition of the Muslims in United Province, Oudh etc. was reasonably much better than Muslims of Bengal.

The Revolt of 1857 (details of its causes, course of events and its subsequent suppression are so widely known that they need not be recounted here), made an indelible impact on British policy towards Indians in general and the Muslims in particular. About the time Delhi was going through a ruthless suppression at the hands of British soldiers, Lord Canning, the Governor General, on 25 September 1857, wrote to the Queen Victoria, hinting that vast majority of Europeans would like to: "...hear with pleasure and approval that every Hindu and Mohammedan had been proscribed and that none would be admitted to serve the Government, except in a menial capacity. That which they desire to see a broad line of separation, and of declared distrust drawn between us

Englishmen and every subject of Your Majesty, who is not a Christian and who has a dark skin."⁴¹

The amount of fear in the minds of the Europeans was so enormously generated by the Revolt that they responded to it by striking out madly in all direction.⁴²

The Revolt was not, merely the outburst of the Sepoys, rather it was reaction of both the communities viz. Hindus and Muslims, towards the exploitative mechanism of the British rule. Members of both the communities participated in it jointly in order to throw away the yoke of British rule. But the government officials considered it a conspiracy of the Muslims alone. Thus the most bitter and widespread hostility was reserved for the Muslim community.⁴³

Horror which was perpetrated on Delhi, particularly the Muslims, found a vivid description in Dastanbuy (Diary of the Revolt) of the famous poet Ghalib. Muslims were badly haunted, Lamented Ghalib:

The Hindus can carry their dead to the shores of the river and burn them, but Muslims dare not go abroad, even in groups of two or three, so how can their dead be borne from the city.⁴⁴

41. Quoted in T.R. Metcalf, Aftermath of the Revolt, Princeton University Press, 1965, p.292.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid., p.298.

44. Ghalib, Dastanbuy, translation, Khawja Ahmad Farooque, Delhi, 1971, p.53.

As late as January 1858, wrote Ghalib:

Also, when this account reaches the hands of my friends, I want them to know that the city is empty of the Muslims, their houses are not lit at night and during the day their chimney give no smoke.⁴⁵

British perception of Muslim hostility initiated a systematic though largely unenunciated discrimination against Muslim in government jobs and other fields. Resurgence of Wahabi movement in the post 1857 in Bengal and United Province, further strengthened the hostility of the British towards the Muslims. In Bengal, discrimination against the Muslims was intensified, particularly in judicial services. Such discrimination can be gauged from the fact that, by 1886, in Judicial Services, Muslims could lay claim on only nine posts out of a total of 284.⁴⁶ In North-Western Provinces also, a process of Muslims losing the hold over such services had begun. By 1880, Muslims no longer held the monopoly over higher posts as it was the case earlier.⁴⁷ For Muslims, losing the opportunity in government employment, there were other factors as well, but the point to be emphasised here is that they fell victim to the discrimination.

Once the dust of the revolt had settled down, the community of the Muslims was responding to the British rule

45. Ibid., p.67.

46. Metcalf, n.41, p.302.

47. Ibid.

not as a monolithic body. Instead, every section was reacting towards the government according to its own class and cultural background. On one hand there was the group of aristocracy, who after the virtual decline of the Mughals had taken patronage of the British. Association of the Muslim aristocracy with the British, made them to be critical of the Revolt.⁴⁸ Later such a group came to be represented by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and his cohorts (a point which would be discussed later). On the other hand there was a group of religious scholars (Ulema) though largely concerning themselves with upholding the ideals of Islam among the Muslims, felt extremely critical of the British rule. They were also opposed to that group of Muslims, who were advocating loyalty towards the British rule, for the simple reason that Ulema did not believe in a policy of compromise and appeasement.⁴⁹

The government had come to the realisation that the united force of the Hindus and the Muslims would pose a threat to the existence of the British rule.⁵⁰ Hence, attempts were made to find allies in both the communities. But, such a policy of alignment, with one or other community

48. Reflection of such an attitude can be seen in "Dastanbuy" of Ghalib. It may be noted that Ghalib was a pension holder of the British.

49. For details see, Ziaul Hasan Farooqui, The Deoband School and the Demand for Pakistan, Bombay, 1963.

50. Peter Hardy, n. 14, p.89.

was dependent on the exigencies of the circumstances. That is how in the immediate post-1857 period, it was considered justified to discriminate against the Muslims and express favour for the Hindus in general. But the growing nationalistic consciousness (although in its proto form) among Hindus in late 1860s and 1870s ^{tilted} the balance in favour of the Muslim. Precisely, because of this policy Sir Syed was not accorded much of attention till mid 1870s.⁵¹

A search for an ally among the Muslim became a success, when the aristocratic section of the community aligned its interests with the British. In a traditional, religious and largely peasant society, such section earned respectability, because of its position in social and political hierarchy. However, this section in most of the cases articulated its own interests but always spoke in the name of the whole community and at times used religion i.e. Islam, irrespective of the fact whether any issue had any direct or indirect concern for the whole community.

Of the Muslim aristocracy, who aligned itself with the British, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan turned out to be the chief representative.

The association of Syed Ahmad Khan with Company's Judicial Services and before the Revolt his links with the

51. Metcalf, n.41, p.302.

Mughal Court played a decisive role in his politics. His links with the Mughal Court, made him extremely conscious of belonging to the aristocratic lot, a point, which never allowed him to come nearer to the masses.

Syed Ahmad Khan, who popularly came to be known as Sir Syed, was on the Judicial Services of the government. During the tumultuous days of the Revolt, he expressed sympathy towards the British and in many cases offered his help to them as it was the case with good number of people having links with the government. He was also aware of the fact that the Raj's official mind suspected the Muslim community as chief fomentor of the Revolt. For, his association with Raj and to a certain extent his passion for the community, which he always referred as "Qaum" encouraged him to efface the guilt and restore a good name for the community, by denying that they had conspired against the Raj.⁵² He wrote "Asbab-i.-Baghavat-i-Hind" (The Causes for India's Revolt) in 1858, where he pointed out certain errors of the Raj, which could not make Indians affectionate towards it.⁵³ But, at the same time, he went on to argue that since "the English government does not

52. Anil Seal, n.2, p.316.

53. Raj Mohan Gandhi, Eight Lives: A Study of Hindu Muslim Encounter, Delhi, 1985, p.25.

interfere with the Mohammadans in the practice of their religion, Muslims had no reason to launch Jihad."⁵⁴ Two years after he had written "Asbab-i-Baghavat-i-Hind," he wrote, "Loyal Mohammedans of India," in which he made attempts to assert that not all Muslims had backed the Revolt.⁵⁵ He added that most of the Muslims had rather stood by the Raj. In 1871, when W.W. Hunter published his monograph, "Indian Musalmans" where he had argued that Muslim ^{volcano} was dormant but not extinct, Sir Syed tried to deny such an understanding of Hunter with regard to the Muslims. Thus, Sir Syed had initiated his politics at two ends of the Raj-Qaum relationship,⁵⁶ which became a sheet-anchor of his politics until the death in 1898.

After the attempts to efface the suspicion of the British against the Muslims he moved in the direction of educating the community and broaden their political outlook in order to be more tolerant towards the government. Through education he desired the community to come closer to Western learning, particularly in the field of science, but according to him, it should not be at the cost of faith in Islam. Accordingly he launched a double edged movement. Firstly,

54. Anil Seal, n.2, p.316.

55. Raj Mohan Gandhi, n.53, p.25.

56. Ibid.

to encourage the Muslims to take to science education and secondly, he channelised all his efforts to reconcile the faith with study of science, which was until then considered to be contradictory to each other.

Sir Syed began his efforts to educate the Muslims on Western model of science education by establishing the Translation Society in 1864, which soon came to be known as Scientific Society. He hoped to bring the eastern people closer to the knowledge and literature of Western world,⁵⁷

Sir Syed spoke for Hindu-Muslim unity. His understanding of Hindu-Muslim unity remained largely unchanged till the end.⁵⁸ Despite this, passion for the betterment of the community was never to be compromised. There were certain developments which further strengthened his conviction to work more enthusiastically for the Muslims. Of such developments, Hindi-Urdu controversy was one. During his posting in Benares, some leading Hindus of that place launched a campaign for replacement of Urdu by Hindi in the courts. Although good number of Hindus were opposed to such a campaign it affected Sir Syed. Once he is reported to have said to his friend Shakespaer:

57. Ibid., p.25.

58. See Shan Mohammad, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan: A Political Biography, Lahore, 1976.

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Now I am convinced that both these communities will not join whole heartedly in anything... On account of so called 'educated people, hostility between the two communities will increase immensely in the future. He who lives will see.⁵⁹

Sir Syed's obsession with the betterment of the community resulted in every possible reconciliatory gesture towards the government. The government found Sir Syed's gestures of great value. Because, growing nationalist consciousness among the Hindus was causing apprehension in the official mind and a counter weight was to be put around. On this account they found Sir Syed and his group as trusted ally. The government reciprocated the gestures of Sir Syed by assisting him in founding the M.A.O. College at Aligarh. Foundation of the college was laid by Lord Lyton in January 1877. The college offered arts, science and law courses in English. By now, Sir Syed had abandoned his earlier emphasis on vernacular. He declared it a "fallacy" and argued with the government that system of imparting instruction in vernacular should be abolished.⁶⁰ Not only this, he had declared the aim of the college as "to form a class of persons, Mohammedan in religion, Indian in blood and colour but English in tastes, in opinion and intellect."⁶¹ It clearly reflects

59. Quoted in Raj Mohan Gandhi, n.53, p.27.

60. Ibid., p.32.

61. Quoted in Engineer, n.1, p.34.

the concern of Sir Syed that he wished the members of his community should rise in the government jobs. In the plans of education Sir Syed did not visualise any significance of women's education, as he considered that menfolks should be educated first.⁶²

Ideas of Sir Syed on growth of education among Muslims not through vernacular but English, his efforts to educate his co-religionists but only males, his lack of understanding about the contradiction between the colonial power and colonised masses are ample evidences to show that his outlook on all such issues was conditioned by his feudal background.

Even in the political field he suffered from the same limitations. The point which occupied a predominant place in his thinking was to secure more political clout for the members of his own class, certainly not the community. This he thought, was possible only when the government was not antagonised. When local self government Bill was introduced, Sir Syed felt that in such a system, Muslims may not derive as much benefit as others would do. He considered that the time was not ripe for introduction of such a system and as such he was opposed to the introduction of this system".⁶³

He argued against it:

62. Shan Mohammad, n. 58, pp. 211-12.

63. Ibid., p. 205.

But my Lord, in a country like India, where caste distinctions still flourish, where there is no fusion of the races, where religious distinctions are still violent... The larger community would totally override the interests of smaller community, and the ignorant public would hold the government responsible for introducing measures which might make the differences of race and creed more violent than ever.⁶⁴

It would appear that Sir Syed's opposition to the introduction of such representative institution, was more based on fear that "the larger community would totally override the interests of smaller community", than anything else. That is why he argued that since Muslims were historically important, so their right he conferred on them by the present government,⁶⁵ instead of they going through the process of elections. He also despised the possibility of ordinary persons, being elected to high offices, because that would hurt the vanity of the Mughal scion and the members of his own class. He spoke, quite harshly on the issues of elections and holding the civil services examination in India:

Will the members of noble families in our country like it that a person of lower class or lower status, even if he has taken the B.A. or M.A. degree and possesses the necessary ability, should govern them and dispose of their wealth, property and honour? Never. Not one of them will like it. The seat of the Counsellor of the government is a place of honour. Government cannot give it to anybody except a man of high social status, neither can the Viceroy address him as "my colleague" or

64. Quoted in Engineer, n.1, p.30.

65. Uma Kaura, n.38, p.7.

"my honourable colleague" nor can he be invited to royal levees which attended by dukes, earls and other men of high rank. So government can never be blamed if it nominates men of noble families.⁶⁶

To Sir Syed, very idea of the emerging middle class or the lower middle class acquiring certain powers under the changed dispensation of the British rule was highly repugnant. His prejudice were so strong that once he spoke:

...Now, I take Mohammedans and the Hindus of our province together, and ask whether they are able to compete with the Bengalis or not? Most certainly not. When this is the case, how can competitive examination be introduced in our country... overall races not only over Mohammadans but over Rajputs who have not forgotten the swords of their ancestors, would be placed as a ruler, a Bengali who at sight of a table knife would crawl under his chair.⁶⁷

Such was the vengeance of Sir Syed against the emerging middle class in general and Bengalis in particular. While speaking for the gentry of both the communities, he did not forget to mention in the same speech:

Now I ask you, have Mohammadans attained to such a position as regards higher education, which is necessary for higher appointments, as to put them on a level with Hindus or not? most certainly not.⁶⁸

The arguments of Sir Syed clearly manifested class bias. It is not to deny that he did not express the concern

66. Ibid., pp.7-8.

67. Quoted in Engineer, n.1, p.31.

68. Ibid.

for the community but the content of his argument was such that it could not have been of any help to any other section of the community but his own.

The existence of the Congress, which came to be formed in 1885, under the guiding inspiration of A.O. Hume was inimical to Sir Syed. Before the second annual session of the Congress in 1886, he branded it as "seditious".⁶⁹ Attempts made by the Congress to induce the Muslims in its fold infuriated Sir Syed and he spoke that if Muslims joined the Congress, "nothing but national disaster lay in store for them."⁷⁰ He was quite antagonistic to the demands of the Congress for more of representative institutions and facilities for Indians to compete in civil services. Sir Syed wanted to maintain the privileged status of minority, and argued that the government should continue to hold the power to appoint the members to local boards and district councils so that, "...due and just balance in the representation of the various sections of the Indian population which the system of election pure and simple would fail to achieve."⁷¹

Among the close associates of Sir Syed there were certain individuals who expressed their disagreement with him on educational as well as political matters. It had dawned upon them

69. Anil Seal, n.2, p.320.

70. Uma Kaura, n.38, p.6.

71. Ibid., pp.6-7.

that all was not good in the pro-British policy. It was argued by some individuals that to "live with honour and prestige" one had to rely on ones own spiritual and moral resources.⁷² The person largely responsible for the formation of this attitude was no less than Maulana Shibli (1857-1914).

Educated in the old system, he had excelled in Arabic and Persian. He joined Aligarh college in 1882 and resigned from there in 1898. While still at Aligarh, he had travelled to Turkey, Syria and Egypt in 1892.⁷³ During his visit to Cairo he came in contact with Shaikh Mohammad Abduh, a disciple of legendry Jamaluddin Afghani.⁷⁴ There he was influenced by the ideas of Afghani and began to fall from the line of Sir Syed and his loyalism.

The major occupation of Shibli was religious studies. It was through academic excellence that he influenced the younger generation. He never closed his eyes to the European and institutions, but he accepted them only to the extent that they did not affect the faith.

When Nadwatul-Ulema at Lucknow was founded in 1894, Shibli felt attracted towards, it and finally joined it in

72. Farooqui, n.49, p.49.

73. I.H. Qureshi, Ulema in Politics, Karachi, 1972, p.232.

74. Aziz Ahmad, Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan 1858-1964, OUP, 1967, p.77.

1898, leaving Aligarh. He took full charge of Nadwa in 1904.⁷⁵ Nadwa was an attempt towards making up the deficiency of the Darul uloom, Deohand. Here Shibli had hoped that it would be possible to combine the study of religion and secular subjects in such a way to realise the value of both, which, however could not be realised.⁷⁶ Despite this Shibli's writings particularly 'Seerat-un-Nabi' and a biography of Khaleefa O'mar and other such pieces became a source of inspiration for the younger generation.⁷⁷

Shibli was not involved in direct politics but did not hesitate in expressing his leanings. He disagreed with Sir Syed on political matters and gave an indirect support to the Congress.⁷⁸ When Muslim league came into the existence Shibli felt opposed to it. In 1912 in an article published in the "Muslim Gazette" of Lucknow he remarked that, "...a tree is judged by the fruit it gives. If our politics had been serious politics they would have evoked zest for struggle and a readiness to suffer and sacrifice for an ideal."⁷⁹

75. Ibid.

76. M.Mujeeb, Indian Muslims, Delhi (first edition), 1985, p.523.

77. I.H. Qureshi, n.73, p.232.

78. Farooqui, n.49, p.50.

79. Quoted in *ibid.*

Ideas of Shibli with regard to religion, education and polity influenced the younger generation and a good many individuals earlier associated with Aligarh, broke away from it and took an independent line - a line which did not express Loyalism but defiance to the British rule. Newspapers, which were started between 1906 and 1912 like "Urdu-i-Mualla," "Muslim Gazette," "Zamindar," "Comrade", "Hamdard," and A-Hilal, were heavily influenced by the ideas of Shibli of all these papers and its editors Azad was "more influenced by Shibli through his association with Nadwat-ul-Ulema and its organ al Nadwa."⁸⁰

Hali was another close associate of Sir Syed and worked with him till Sir Syed was alive. Hali, too was not active in politics but he always expressed his love for the motherland. His notion of love for motherland was, "unless one regards every India, whether Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist or Brahma Samaji as the apple of the eye one cannot consider oneself a real patriot."⁸¹

Hali gave support to the British but unlike Sir Syed criticised the policy of divide et impera, since he considered Hindus and Muslims as indivisible part of "Hindustani Qaum". He also deplored the British policy of discrimination between

80. Ibid., pp. 52-53.

81. Quoted in Mushirul Haq, Muslim Politics in Modern India, Meerut, 1970, p.35.

Indians and Britishers.⁸² He considered the Hindu-Muslim unity, important for the progress of the country. In a letter to Abdul Haleem Sharar in 1904, he spoke in an unambiguous terms:

Nothing can be more inaccurate than to say that friendly and cordial relations between the Hindus and the Muslims cannot be achieved;.. they will realise that none of the communities will survive with honour if they are not united.⁸³

Innumerable poems of Hali would reflect the same concern for the country and "Hindustani Qaum". But he has been criticised for having subscribed to the "two nation theory".⁸⁴ Imposition of such an idea on Hali emanates from the fact that he wrote "Mussaddas Maddo-Jazr-i-Islam" (Rise and fall of Islam) popularly known as Mussaddas-i-Hali where he surveyed the history of Islam in terms of its achievements and failures. To him, present condition of his co-religionists was deplorable and he wished them to improve their lot. Hali also felt very satisfied over certain developments in the freedom struggle. When Swadeshi movement had started in the wake of anti-partition agitation, he expressed satisfaction.

82. Ibid., p.37.

83. Quoted in ibid., p.39.

84. Muin Ahsan Jazbi, Hali ka Siasee Shaur, Aligarh, 1959, quoted in ibid., p.39.

At the annual session of All India Muslim Educational Conference in 1907 he spoke that, "since the Swadeshi movement has been started our compatriots are taking long strides in that direction".⁸⁵ But Hali lamented the lack of participation of the Muslims in general in the movement. He said, "likewise their [Muslims] indifference to the Swadeshi movement might keep them far behind their compatriots".⁸⁶ Hali, despite being a protege of Sir Syed moved away from the path of loyalism to that of defiance and influenced the politics of those individuals who stood by nationalism.

Apart from these individuals there was a group of Ulema, who, though not directly involved in politics, was indirectly giving moral support to the people, who were opposed to the British rule. The main occupation of the Ulema was to guide the Muslim masses to lead a life according to Shariat, but their alignment with nationalist cause deserves our attention.

Of the two disciples of Haji Imadullah, who was supposed to have taken part in the Revolt of 1857, Maulana Qasim and Maulana Rashid Ahmad, started a new religious seminary called Darul Uloom for the Muslims in Deoband.

85. Quoted in Khawja Ahmad Abbas, "Hali as a Nationalist," in Hali 1837-1914, S.Y. Qureshi (ed.), P.R.Deptt., Government of Haryana, 1972, p.9.

86. Ibid.

However, it was Maulana Qasim, who had initially thought of establishing a religious school. Thus Darul uloom was founded in 1867 at Deoband, for which public contributions were welcomed but government grants were discouraged,⁸⁷ on account of the fear that government grants may invite intervention by the officials, which would be harmful for the school.⁸⁸

The founder of Darul uloom of Deoband, basically represented that element of the Muslim society, which felt disgruntled about the perpetuation of a foreign rule in India.⁸⁹ They did not intend to surrender before the sufferings of the Indians in general and Muslims in particular in the aftermath of the Revolt. They also did not believe in a policy of compromise and appeasement⁹⁰ as Sir Syed and group did.

After the death of Maulana Qasim in 1880, entire management of Darul uloom passed on in the hands of Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, who became its chief patron and spokesman. Rashid Ahmad Gangohi was an extremely orthodox Alim

87. Mushirul Haq, n.81, p.18.

88. Ibid.

89. Farooqui, n.49, p.24.

90. Ibid.

(scholar) who had a strong conviction that India remained a Darul-Harab, which conditioned his social understanding.⁹¹ Despite his conservative outlook towards the society, politically he showed progressive tendencies.

Sir Syed had expressed strong opposition to the Indian National Congress certainly not on any religious ground, but Maulana Rashid Ahmad gave a 'fatwa' declaring that in worldly matters cooperation with the Hindus was permissible, so long it did not violate any basic principle of Islam.⁹² Ulama of Deoband continued to hold such political ideas even later. They remained aligned with the cause of the freedom of the country until it was achieved.⁹³

Contrary to what Ulama were thinking about the politics in India, there were other groups of the Muslims as well as certain individuals, in other parts of the country, whose line of thinking was by and large the same as Sir Syed had held. But there was a difference. Sir Syed had talked about nomination of the Muslim to certain political posts but others talked of political separatism.

91. Mushirul Haq, n.81,

92. Farooqui, n.49, p.43.

93. Engineer, n.1, p.37.

In Calcutta, Abdul Latif, a leading public servant, organised the Muhammadan literary and scientific society in 1863. This organisation was meant to represent those "Bengal Muslims, who wish to adopt English education and European customs... without contravening the essential principles of Islam."⁹⁴ By 1865, the Society came to have about 200 members and by 1877, the membership rose to 500. Members of this body were keen to remove the stigma and suspicion of disloyalty. In 1870, one, Maulvi Karamat Ali gave a lecture in the Society telling them to refrain from any attempt to wage a war on the British.⁹⁵

Another prominent personality in Calcutta, Amir Ali, who was a barrister-at-Law, launched National Mohammedan Association in 1878. This organisation too spoke of loyalty to the Raj and Western education.⁹⁶ Amir Ali held the views that the Muslims in order to revive their fortune needed the government support and if it was to be won needed a political organisation of their own. On these assumption he had turned down the offer of Surendranath Banerjee to join the Indian Association. They likewise, feared that simultaneous examination, elections of local boards, municipalities and legislative councils on franchise of property, wealth and education would

94. Anil Seal, n.2, p.309.

95. Ibid.

96. Ibid., p.310.

leave the Muslims in a highly disadvantageous position. Introduction of local self government further heightened such a fear, which resulted in demand for a separate representation for the Muslims by Yusuf Ali, a Muslim spokesman in the Bengal legislative council.⁹⁷ Amir Ali suggested that Muslims must form a sort of pressure group, which should be based on demand for preferential treatment.⁹⁸ The National Mohammadan Association presented a memorial to the government in 1882, which listed its demand concerning a proportion of jobs to be reserved for the Muslims, less emphasis on university education as a qualification of the government offices etc.⁹⁹

Attempts were made to associate Muslims from other parts of the country and by 1888, more than fifty branches had been affiliated in different parts of the country. Amir Ali's efforts did not exclude the possibility of cooperation with the Hindus.¹⁰⁰ Despite pronouncements of cooperation with the Hindus, such groups always feared political extinction under the electoral franchise and ultimately stuck to the politics of nomination and separate representation which was considered essential for the protection of

97. Ibid., p.311.

98. Ibid., p.312.

99. Ibid.

100. Ibid.

the Muslim interests.¹⁰¹ Such an understanding of politics by these groups, necessitated government support.

Already existing fear and apprehension of the Muslim about their future, received few shots because of certain developments which took place around then. In 1880, Sir Ashlay, the Lt. Governor of Bengal ordered that "Nagri" script be used in official documents in Bihar from January 1881, and use of Persian for the same should be forbidden.¹⁰² This measure of the government antagonised the Muslims against the Hindus at whose instance the government had taken this step.¹⁰³ Muslims, whenever got a chance, made representation to the government on this issue, since it had further reduced already shrinking job opportunities for them.

In North-Western Provinces, the government did not decide in favour of 'Nagri' script in place of Urdu until 1898. But the movement to replace Urdu had already started in 1867 from Banaras.¹⁰⁴ This language issue had caused a split in the Translation Society of Sir Syed, when Shiva Prasad proposed that Devanagri should be used for translation.¹⁰⁵ On this issue of the language Sir Syed had felt heart broken,

101. Ibid., p.314.

102. Ram Gopal, n.33, p.40.

103. Ibid.

104. Anil Seal, n.2, p.326.

105. Ibid.

who once lamanted, "...I am now convinced that these two communities cannot come together with heart and soul on any issue."¹⁰⁶ The Hindi-Urdu controversy made the educated Muslims more suspicious of the rising Hindu leadership and became apprehensive of their future.¹⁰⁷ Despite the fact that the language issue concerned only the educated and intellectuals of both the communities, the controversy distanced them further.¹⁰⁸

Emergence of revivalism among the Hindus was another factor by which the Muslims felt threatened. Hindu revivalist movement of late 19th century was, directed to arrest the internal decay as well as instil. a new sense of confidence and national pride.¹⁰⁹ Also the ascendancy of Arya Samaj in Punjab, reinforced the aggressive Hindu image and strengthened the suspicion of the Muslims because many active members of the Congress came from Arya Samaj movement.¹¹⁰ Although Arya Samaj movement, initially was not anti-Muslim but later it acquired such a bias, which frequently caused communal tensions. It is noted by Francis Robinson:

106. Engineer, n.1, p.36.

107. Rafique Zakaria, Rise of Muslims in Indian Politics, 1885-1905, Bombay, 1970, pp.293-94.

108. Ram Gopal, n.33, p.42.

109. Engineer, n.1, p.23.

110. Uma Kaura, n.38, p.11.

...in 1880s and 1890s, Arya Samajists attacked the Muslims with increasing intensity. The leader of the crusade, Pandit Lekh Ram condemned all forms of Islam, particularly the naturalist Mohammadans and demanded that Muslims should be expelled from India or converted to Aryanism (the crusade lost vigour only after the Lekh Ram's assassination in 1897). Such antagonism towards the Muslims and Muslim culture resulted almost inevitably from the growth of a new sense of Hindu identity. It had important political implication.¹¹¹

Also, the aggressive Hinduism of Tilak and his colleagues during the annual festival of Ganpati and Shivaji celebrations, made the politically conscious Muslims feel even more insecure.¹¹²

Meanwhile there emerged another group among the Muslims, unhindered by the fear generated by certain section of the community, associated themselves with the Congress ideology and called upon the Muslim to join it. Such a group basically constituted of professionals of various fields.

Presence of the Muslims within the Congress was not very impressive in the beginning. At the first Congress there were two Muslim delegates. The number rose to thirty three in the second Congress. The third Congress had

111. Francis Robinson, Separatism Among Indian Muslims: The Politics of the United Province Muslim 1860-1923, CUP 1974, pp.68-69.

112. Uma Kaura, n.38, p.11.

seventy nine Muslims delegates and by Allahabad Congress in 1888 the number rose to two hundred and twenty two.¹¹³ These Muslim delegates came from almost every province. Most prominent of the Muslims, who joined the Congress was Badruddin Tyabji, who presided the third Congress at Madras. He called upon the Muslims to join the Congress and argued that Muslims should join others on issues which concerned the whole country.¹¹⁴ He emphatically argued that Muslims must work shoulder to shoulder with other fellow countrymen for the common benefit of all. In order to allay the fear of the Muslims in general that Congress was predominantly a Hindu body and would override the interests of the Muslims, Badruddin Tyabji requested the standing Committee to consider a proposition that a rule should be passed to drop any subject or any resolution in case it was objected to, unanimously by the Hindu or Muslim delegates. This proposition was adopted by the Congress.¹¹⁵

Twelfth annual session of the Congress in 1896, saw Rahmatullah Sayani as its President. In his address, he tried to deny that all the Muslims were against Congress. He argued that since the majority of Muslims were uneducated it was not expected from them to know about it. However,

113. Anil Seal, n.2, p.329.

114. Uma Kaura, n.38, p.8.

115. Bipin Chandra, Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern India, Delhi, 1979, p.254.

according to Sayani, there were some Muslims, though small in number but "destined soon to come to the front", who had educated themselves in the right direction and were with the Congress.¹¹⁶ Regarding the suspicion of the Muslims in general, Sayani argued that Muslims "need not be frightened by phantoms created by their own imagination, phantoms which had no place in the realm of realities."¹¹⁷

Despite such pronouncements of the Muslim leaders in the Congress, the community by and large kept itself aloof from the Congress. Elites of the Muslim community in North Western Provinces and Bengal were wary of the Congress not only because they considered it a Hindu dominated body but they were also afraid of coming in clash with the government. They feared that since the discrimination against the Muslims by the government had already put them in disadvantageous position vis-a-vis Hindus, a policy of clash with the Raj, would further worsen their lot. Attempts to acquire political power seemed to them possible only with the help of the government. But they hardly realised or even if they realised they turned a blind eye towards it, that government was doing nothing except for using the politics of Muslim elite as counter weight to rising nationalism among Hindus

116. Rafiq Zakaria, n. 107, p. 86.

117. Ibid.

and others. It was only a minor section of professionals and extremely religious group of Ulema, who were aligning themselves with the cause of freedom.

By the time century took the turn the Muslim politics in general also took a new turn. There emerged a realisation among elites of the Muslim that there should be a political organisation of their own.¹¹⁸ This is worth our notice that North-Western Provinces because of its earlier political and cultural importance had retained its prominence. Compared to the Muslims of other areas particularly Bengal Muslim of this part of India were in a better position. Despite all sorts of discrimination they had maintained their place in administration and other fields. They constituted administrative and cultural elite. However, political separatism became the obsession of such a group in order to protect its privileges.¹¹⁹ It were these people who exploited the problems of the Muslims throughout India, to their own advantage.¹²⁰

Growing popularity of the Congress among Muslims had threatened the position of the elites of the Muslims,¹²¹

118. Uma Kaura, n.38, p.12.

119. Engineer, n.1, p.49.

120. Ibid., p.51.

121. Sumit Sarkar, Modern India, 1885-1947, Delhi, 1983, p.141.

particularly in North-Western Provinces. They soon wished to found a party of the Muslims. Such initiative came from Mohsinul Mulk, who had drawn a memorial, which was submitted to Muslim delegates from all over India in Lucknow on 15th and 16th September 1906.¹²² On 1st October a delegation of the Muslim^s, which constituted of nobles, jagidars, zamindars, taluqdars, lawyers, merchants and retired officials,¹²³ was taken to Lord Minto at Simla, where slightly amended version of the same memorial of Mohsinul Mulk was presented to him. Greater part of the memorial was devoted to securing for Muslims as strong a position as possible in the new power structure, revolving around legislative councils. The memorialists insisted on separate representation to be determined in accordance with the "numerical strength, social status and special requirements of either community".¹²⁴

Lord Minto gave a sympathetic hearing to the deputation. He spoke that, "any electoral representation in India would be doomed to mischievous failure which aimed at granting a personal enfranchisement, regardless of beliefs and traditions of the communities comprising of the population of this continent." He further added that the Muslims "Political

122. Engineer, n.1, p.52.

123. Una Kaura, n.38, p.15.

124. Engineer, n.1, p.52.

rights and interests will be safeguarded in any administration with which I am concerned."¹²⁵ Mohsinul Mulk, to this gesture of the Viceroy, expressed his gratitude, "a clear and sympathetic recognition of the rights of the Mohammadans of India, as a distinct community."¹²⁶

But the need to have a political organisation of the Muslims was given a concrete shape by Nawab Salimullah of Dacca. He came out with a scheme of "The Muslim All India Confederacy," of whose aim would be to support the government and protect the interest of the Muslims. The issue was discussed at All India Mohammadan Educational Conference at Dacca on 30 December 1906 under the presidentship of Vigarul Mulk. Here it was decided to form the All India Muslim League.¹²⁷ Nawab Salimullah moved the first resolution, which defined the aims and objectives of the League: (a) to promote loyalty among the Muslims towards the Raj and remove any misconception concerning any of its measures, (b) to protect and advance the political rights of the Muslims and also represent their needs and aspirations to the government, (c) to prevent the rise among the Muslims of any feeling of hostility towards other communities without prejudice to the other aforementioned objects of the League.¹²⁸

125. Uma Kaura, n. 38, p. 16.

126. Ibid., p. 17.

127. Ibid.

128. Ibid., p. 18.

This brief survey of the Muslim politics would make it clear that various groups of the Muslim leadership reflected their own class, cultural and religious bias in their politics vis-a-vis the government and other communities. The group which came under the influence of Sir Syed and other Bengali Muslim elites, adopted conciliatory attitude towards the government. Such a group constituted of the people who were considered modernists and as such belonged to the elite section of the community. They desired the government support to secure jobs and political clout vis-a-vis Hindus. It was this group which initiated the politics of separate representation and later separatism.

The other group was represented by the Ulema. The Ulema saw the contradiction between British rule and fulfilment of religious duties of the Muslim. Although they took a slightly narrow view of such a contradiction, they opposed the continual existence of the foreign rule. Whenever occasion arose good many of them aligned themselves with forces, who expressed defiance to the British rule. They did not hesitate in taking a cudgel against the government. At the same time there was another group of professionals among the Muslims, who not in the name of the religion but on other considerations associated themselves with the Congress and worked in the direction of articulating Indian interests vis-a-vis the colonial interests. But this group remained in minority.

Politics of different groups of the Muslims remained at a variance but still there was a common point to be found everywhere. All of them expressed the concern for the community in direct terms. It is not to say that ideological leanings of any particular group would have benefitted the whole community.

In this light, when Azad began his politics he also felt concerned about the community, but with a difference. To him the end of the British rule would automatically result in all round development of the Muslims. For Azad the end of the British rule was the primary concern.

CHAPTER II

Chapter II

THE FORMATIVE PHASE OF AZAD'S POLITICAL IDEAS 1906-1916

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad occupies an outstanding position among the galaxy of freedom fighters and intellectuals. He represented a rare combination of "religiosity and political liberalism" throughout his life. Azad, remained unparalleled among contemporaries for his immense erudition in Islamic Sciences. Patriotic zeal of Azad was not to be easily matched by any other Muslim leader who stood by nationalism.

It is significant that Azad maintained the tradition of anti-British Ulema of previous days and described the participation of the Muslims in the freedom struggle as Jehad. Still he was different from them, as he did not characterise India as Darul Harab. He held the view that Islam and nationalism do not stand in contradiction to each other, but complimented each other. Azad argued that Islam teaches freedom, which was not the case under the British rule. Hence he called upon the Muslims to fight the British tooth and nail. According him this fight could be taken to its logical end only if there was an unconditional alliance with the Hindus. He argued that Hindu Muslim unity should not depend on any adjustment of sharing the assembly seats and

other jobs. Instead, he said that notion of unity should be taken as a fact of life, sanctioned by religion i.e. Islam.

Azad was born in Mecca in 1888. His father, Khairuddin was an eminent Islamic Scholar of his time and had belonged to the family of theologicians. Khairuddin spent almost thirty years in Arabia where, he married Alia, daughter of a learned Arab Scholar Shaikh Mohammad Zahir Vatri.¹ In 1890, he came to Calcutta for some treatment and finally settled there. Khairuddin himself, believing in orthodox Islamic ways of life wanted Azad to follow the same pattern. His opposition to anything Western, particularly education resulted in Azad being given education on traditional religious lines. At the age of sixteen Azad had completed the course of instruction in Arabic, Persian and religious studies, and attained a high level of excellence in all these subjects.

The code within the family was to lead a conventional religious way of life, where any deviation was never to be condoned. But Azad, who possessed a deep intellect and an enquiring mind, could not stand up to the teachings, which he was imparted with. He began questioning the prevailing

1. Abul Kalam Azad, India Wins Freedom, Delhi, 1959, p.1.

customs and beliefs and felt "a new sense of Revolt". He ultimately set on a journey to find "the truth" for himself. He wrote, "Almost instinctively I began to move out of family orbit and seek my own path",² which of course he did but not as a mendicant. Instead he turned into a fierce freedom fighter deriving all strength from the religion.

At the turn of the century, the whimper of the nationalists was turning into crescendo. The cauldron of the freedom movement had begun to feel the simmering heat of discontent of Indians at large vis-a-vis the government. By now, Indian National Congress had come to be accepted as the main vehicle of the nationalist aspiration of Indians in opposition to the British rule.

The Congress was growing but not on lines which was initially thought of it. Right from its inception, the Congress attempted to bring in its fold almost all the sections of Indian society, irrespective of the religious allegiance of a group or the community. Rather it was declared policy of the Congress that "No subject shall be passed for discussion by the subjects committee or allowed to be discussed at any Congress by the President thereof, to the introduction of which the Hindu or Mohammadan delegates

2. Ibid., p.3.

as a body object unanimously or nearly unanimously."³ Even after the Congress declared such a policy, it was faced with the problems of communalism, which had emerged simultaneously with nationalism.⁴ Emergence of communalism, posed a hurdle in developing the sense of nationhood among Indians in general. In the course of national movement most particularly under the aegis of the Congress, it was tried to solve the problem of communalism by bringing unity from the top. A central feature of such a strategy was the notion of giving 'protection' and providing 'safeguards' to the interests of the elite and upper middle class Muslims.⁵ Also, the discussions, within the Congress remained confined to jobs and political powers for this section of the Muslim community.⁶

In all its earnest, at least theoretically, the Congress was not to represent the interests of any religious group. But in practice it could not keep itself completely unaffected by the Hindu chauvinist elements within. The Congress inspite of its secular declarations more often than not, was drawn into activities or associations pioneered by

3.. Bipan Chandra, Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern India, Delhi, 1979, p.254.

4. Ibid., p.253.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid., p.254.

Hindu revivalists.⁷ Many of the Congress members in different parts of the country were active in campaign against cow slaughter and replacement of Urdu by Hindi in Law Courts and government offices.⁸ Tilak, though not a communalist, had attempted to arouse the masses through the use of Hindu religious symbols and idioms, which could not have appealed to the Muslims. Already sceptical and apprehensive Muslims were alienated further.⁹ Also the ascendancy of the Arya Samaj in the Punjab reinforced the aggressive Hindu image and strengthened the Muslim suspicion because most of the active members of the Punjab Congress were also the members of the Arya Samaj.¹⁰ Such developments were interpreted by the Muslims as foreshadowing the "virtual establishment of a Hindu Raj" in India once the British relinquished their power.¹¹

Fear and apprehension among the Muslims vis-a-vis Hindus, apart from having certain basis, was also the product of imagination of the elites of the Muslim community, since they wanted to safeguard their narrow interests but in the name of the whole community. Attempts of the Muslim elite,

7. Mushirul Hasan, "Communal and Revivalist Trend in the Congress" in M. Hasan (ed.), Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India, Delhi, 1985, p.197.

8. Ibid.

9. Tara Chand, History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol.III, Delhi, 1971, p.389; also Mushirul Hasan, n.7, p.197.

10. Uma Kaura, Muslims and Indian Nationalism: The Emergence of Demand for India's Partition, 1928-1940, Delhi, 1975, p.11.

11. Ibid.

to be treated as a distinct political community had the official patronage.¹²

Once the wheel was set in motion, it kept on rolling. The Congress despite, many hurdles kept on growing from strength to strength, to a great anxiety of the government. The government was also aware of the growing consciousness among Indians, particularly the middle class, with regard to contradiction between imperialism and nationalist aspirations. The demands for equal benefits, equal opportunities as "the loyal citizens of the Empire" were turning strong, around the turn of the century.¹³ It was this class of Indians which was strongly despised by the government. While maintaining the tradition of earlier Viceroy's to express vengeance against the Congress, Curzon went a step ahead, when he spoke, "my own belief is that the Congress is tottering to its fall and one of my ambitions is to assist it to a peaceful demise."¹⁴ He was so averse to the influence of intelligentsia that he wanted to subdue them to unquestioning obedience.¹⁵

12. Ibid., p.9, also Sumit Sarkar, Modern India, 1885-1947, Delhi, 1983, p.141.

13. Prabha Dixit, "The Ideology of Hindu Nationalism," in T. Panthem and K. Deutsch (eds.), Political Thoughts in Modern India, Delhi, 1986, p.122.

14. Quoted in Tara Chand, n.9, p.300.

15. Ibid.

Since the imperialist interests had to be maintained, Indian interests and aspirations had to be suppressed and ignored. The middle class, which had formed the backbone of the national movement, was posing a united front to the government. Hence means were to be found to create division among them. Such attempts were tried to be put into effect through partition of Bengal, of which announcement was made on 19th July 1905.¹⁶ It is a common place fact of history that administrative convenience was used as a ploy to create a division between the Hindus and the Muslims of Bengal. At the same time another equally important political motive was to create division among pre-dominantly Hindu politicians of West and East Bengal.¹⁷

The partition of Bengal was considered as a national insult.¹⁸ Even before the actual announcement, the partition had been opposed through innumerable moderate methods of press campaigns, petitions and conferences. But the failure of such techniques, necessitated a search for an alternative technique which came up as boycott of British goods or Swadeshi.¹⁹ Swadeshi movement caught popular imagination and led to an experience of mass involvement in politics. It brought the

16. Sarkar, n. 12, p. 106.

17. Ibid., p. 107; also Prabha Dixit, n. 13, p. 122.

18. Sarkar, n. 12, p. 109.

19. Ibid., p. 111.

idea of freedom into the public, a goal which could be pressed with determination.²⁰

Swadeshi movement also brought to the surface the differences among Congressmen. Moderate elements in the Congress and their techniques were put on test. For the first time they accepted the boycott as a means to pressurise the government though with great reluctance,²¹ and in an apologetic tone. However, the significance of it lay in the fact that moderates made an attempt to reach out to the people, who were not English educated. Their Westernism did not deter them from giving religious colouring to the movement in order to draw the mass support.²²

On the other hand extremists had resorted to a direct tone in regard to condemnation of the government decision of the partition. In order to arouse the masses to oppose the partition the extremists made blatant use of Hindu religious symbols. Orthodox Hinduism during the Swadeshi movement served the purpose of boosting the morale of the activists. At the same time it acted as the principal agency of mass contact.²³ Among all the leaders of the

20. Sumit Sarkar, Swadeshi Movement in Bengal, 1903-1908, Delhi 1973, p.64.

21. Ibid., p.45.

22. Ibid., p.41.

23. Ibid., p.74.

extremist brand, Bipin Chandra Pal was the chief advocate of colouring the politics with Hindu orthodoxy, despite his faith in "composite nationalism".²⁴ According to him the idea of separation of national life from religion would amount to abandonment of religion and moral ideas in personal life as well.²⁵

During the Swadeshi movement there were number of occasions when Muslims in general opposed the partition. Prayers were held in the mosques in different places and practice of sending out agitators in couples, consisting of a Hindu and Muslim, was quite common.²⁶ Still Muslim masses at large could not be drawn into the movement. Rather the movement failed to develop solidarity between both the communities. Failure to win the Muslims caused a shift from methods of mass action to elite action, which was finally transformed into terrorism. Ideological content of terrorist activities apart from being anti-British was also anti-Muslim, because they were considered a hurdle in their way.

It is against this background of Swadeshi movement, that any attempt to delineate Azad's political character would be useful.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid., p.75.

26. Ibid., p.425.

According to the evidences, which are at the disposal of the historians, it is established that Azad had attended the annual session of the Muslim Educational Conference, at Dacca where eventually politics of separate representation played by the elites of Bengal and Northern India, gave birth to the Muslim League. Here, Azad found it difficult to reconcile himself to the professed loyalty of the Muslim League to the Raj. Consequently he rebelled against such loyalism of the Muslim League.²⁷

Undaunted by the ideological leanings of the Revolutionary Terrorists in Bengal, Azad joined one such organization where he had to face many ^{odds} for the reason that almost all such organizations had an exclusive Hindu bias. Many of such underground revolutionary organizations had declared that no Muslim should be taken into their fold. For example "Anushilan Samiti" of Dacca laid down that no Muslim was eligible for its membership.²⁹ Other major group 'Yugantar' not as such anti Muslim but was in all its exclusiveness

27. Raj Mohan Gandhi, Eight Lives : A Study of Hindu Muslim Encounter, Delhi, 1985, p.220.

28. Rajat Ray, "Revolutionaries, Pan Islamists and Bolsheviks: Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Political Underworld Calcutta 1905-1925," in M.Hasem (ed.), n.7, p.102.

29. Ibid.

Hindu in composition.³⁰ Such revolutionaries had developed an understanding that Muslim were against them and as such could not be trusted. Muslims were unreliable and feared that they would side with the British in the event of an armed uprising.³¹ Hindu religious symbols which were used by such organisations, according to the revolutionaries, would not be considered sacred by the Muslims.

Azad had to fight these odds. He attempted to convince revolutionaries that "they were wrong in thinking that the Muslim as a community were their enemies."³² Azad came into contact with Shyam Sundar Chakraborty, who in turn brought him closer to many other Revolutionaries. Thus he became involved with the fringes of extremist-revolutionary movement.³³ As stated earlier, because of their anti-Muslim bias Azad was not fully trusted and they mostly kept him "outside their inner council".³⁴ After he got the entry into possibly one of the cells of 'Yugantar', he began to argue with fellow revolutionaries and attempted to convince them not to distrust the whole community, as it would be detrimental to the struggle for political liberty.³⁵ He therefore, argued with them to

30. Ibid., pp.102-03.

31. Ibid., p.103.

32. Azad, n.1, p.4.

33. Rajat Ray, n.28, p.103.

34. Azad, n.1, p.4.

35. Ibid.

"make every effort to win the support and friendship of the community"³⁶ and also impressed upon his coreligionists not to distrust the Hindus and exhorted them to form an alliance with Hindus to fight the British.

Once Azad had won the confidence of other comrades, as he says in his memoirs, he gave a suggestion to extend the revolutionary activities in other parts of India as well for which a few evidences are available, although partial. Intelligence branch enquiry which was conducted to trace his antecedents in the wake of fiery writings in Al-Hilal, concluded that Azad was "an active helper of the extremist party in Lahore,"³⁷ and had established contacts with Amba Prasad, Sufi Ajit Singh and other Punjab extremists. Another report which was made to criminal intelligence office in Simla said, "He is a staunch advocate of Swaraj and says that the Muhammadans should undergo every possible trouble and sacrifice in order to be able to cultivate friendly relations with the Hindus".³⁸ Such was the beginning of Azad's political career.

Before we proceed to Al-Hilal phase of Azad's political life, it would not be out of place to take note of initial

36. Ibid.

37. Rajat Ray, n.28, p.104.

38. Intelligence Branch files, 1913, Newspaper, Al-Hilal, quoted in *ibid.*

streaks in Azad's political thinking. Unlike many other Muslim patriots, except for those, who were within the fold of the Congress, Azad began his political career as a fire brand nationalist. Although activities of the revolutionary terrorists were basically examples of individual valour and as such amounted to indulging in 'elite' action,³⁹ the fact that they were ideologically determined to achieve nothing short of 'Independence' for the motherland as compared to the moderate politics of the Congress, in itself was a reflection of their commitment to the cause, at times risking their lives and other losses. Azad became a part of it. Secondly, those who argue that Azad's nationalism began with Pan-Islamism,⁴⁰ would see that such an understanding does not stand the scrutiny of facts. Contrary to that, Azad's nationalism began much before the fire of Pan-Islamism caught the imagination of the Muslims in India. Thirdly, despite Azad's grooming in an exclusively religious atmosphere, he showed remarkable tolerance towards the Hindu symbols and idioms which were used by the terrorist organisations of Bengal. Perhaps the cause of freedom to him was more important

39. For details see, Sarkar, n.20.

40. Moin Shakir, Khilafat to Partition, A Survey of Major Political Trends Among Indian Muslims During 1919-1924 Delhi, 1970. Refer to chapter "A Study in Synthetic Nationalism, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1938)," pp.137-77.

than the problem of symbols used by revolutionaries. Lastly, Azad was not deterred by the anti-Muslim manifestations of the revolutionaries. Rather he remained unmindful of such squabbles and spoke a different language. More than that he showed it by his deeds that minor irritants could be avoided for the cause of the freedom, a point, which he emphasized right through his political career.

These were the broad lines of Azad's political understanding before he launched Al-Hilal, from Calcutta in 1912. Through the pages of Al-Hilal he sent the message of freedom across the country and elaborated it on the lines he had picked up during his revolutionary phase.

Historians are largely in dark, about the motive behind Azad's visit to some of the West Asian countries and Turkey. But what we know from his account is that in 1908, he went on a prolonged tour of Iraq, Egypt, Syria and Turkey.⁴¹ Here, again it is intriguing that Azad in his memoirs is silent about his activities in those countries. But what he has mentioned in it is that in those countries, the kind of people whom he met were invariably revolutionaries of their own countries. For example he says that in Iraq he met Iranian revolutionaries,⁴² who were fighting against Qajar

41. Azad, n.1, p.5.

42. Ibid., p.6.

autocracy for establishing constitutional government (Mashruta).⁴³ In Egypt, apart from knowing the followers of Ataturk, he also came into contact with Shaikh Mohammad Abduh and Saeed Pasha,⁴⁴ a fact which Azad has not mentioned in his memoirs. While in Turkey, he met some leaders of the young Turk movement, with whom he maintained contacts even after he came back to India.⁴⁵ Thus the assessment of Azad's encounters with the revolutionaries of those countries, which he had visited, gives the impression as if he was on some kind of mission.

Until the time Azad paid a visit to the countries mentioned above he never talked of Muslims organising on their own to fight the British. Had he even thought so, possibly he would not have associated himself with the revolutionaries. However, after he came back from those countries, he began to think differently. He says, "contact with these Arab and Turk revolutionaries confirmed my political beliefs",⁴⁶ firstly to fight the perpetual rule of the British and secondly Muslims should be an active party to this fight. But the mode to fight the government for the Muslims was to be different and not the one which he himself had taken to, earlier.

43. Tara Chand, n.9, p.268.

44. Ibid.

45. Azad, n.1, p.6.

46. Ibid.

Azad was given to understand that Indian Muslims "should have led the national struggle for freedom". This realisation of Azad that Muslims must be mobilised to take part in the freedom struggle, brought him much closer to the people. It became a matter of conviction for Azad that nationalism and Islamic brotherhood were not contradictory, but one and the same thing.⁴⁷

Azad began to contemplate over the mode through which Muslims could be mobilised for the liberation of the country. Around this time he did not have any platform to speak from. He felt that "we must build up public opinion and for this a journal was essential".⁴⁸ Necessity to build up public opinion, prompted him to launch a journal, which was famously known as Al-Hilal. Contrary to the prevailing notion that Azad started his journal under the influence of Pan-Islamism, it should be noted that first Balkan wars had started in October 1912, which gave rise to countrywide Pan-Islamic agitation,⁴⁹ whereas Azad, began the publication of his journal in June 1912. It was revolutionary nationalism of Azad, added with the fate of Turkey, which inspired its publication.⁵⁰

47. Rajat Ray, n.28, p.106.

48. Azad, n.1, p.6.

49. Rajat Ray, n.28, p.107.

50. Ibid., p.107.

Azad was endowed with creative genius in writing and speech. Said, Tara Chand, "His Command over Urdu prose was extraordinary. He could be witting, charming and refined and subtly humorous, bitterly satirical and compulsively exhortatory".⁵¹ He could spell a charm over his audience by his careful and apt use of vocabulary, idioms and semantics. He possessed the quality of writing and speaking breathlessly to incredible length without losing the appeal and power of the arguments. Azad made precise use of all these qualities in Al-Hilal and later in his speeches.

The first issue of Al-Hilal was brought out on July 13, 1912,⁵² in which Azad did not mention the motivating force to start this journal, as it should have been the case. In the third issue, he makes a cursory remark in regard to starting the paper.⁵³ Later, he spoke quite elaborately about the policy of Al-Hilal. He argued that the cause with which Al-Hilal would concern itself, would be to call upon the Muslims to follow the true spirit of the Book

51. Tara Chand, n.9, p.266.

52. See Mushirul Haq, Muslim Politics in Modern India, 1857-1947, Meerut 1970. Haq says that the date, 1 June 1912, given by Hafeez Mallik in his book Muslim Nationalism in India and Pakistan (p.269) is incorrect. However, even Azad in India Wins Freedom, says "journal was published in June 1912" but he has not mentioned the date. File of Al-Hilal available in NMML also begins from July 13, 1912.

53. Al Hilal, Vol.1, No.3, July 27, 1912.

of God (The Quran) and the Sunnah of Prophet Mohammad in regard to their belief and practices. He added, whether it would pertain to the problems of education, culture, politics or anything else. It calls upon the Muslims to be true Muslims.⁵⁴ He repeated the same message by saying that Al-Hilal believed that the day Muslims would get back to the fold of the Quran, they would experience a new life being infused among them. Thus Al-Hilal aspired to spread the messages of Islam and call upon the Muslim to the right path.⁵⁵

Initially, readers of Al-Hilal were baffled to make out the content of the messages which Azad was putting forward. Religious issues were almost mixed up with political issues which posed vexed questions before his readers. In response to the queries regarding religious and political teachings of Al-Hilal, Azad wrote:

The question whether political discussion should be separated from religious education is very important. But you must know that this is the very foundation on which we intend to build the whole edifice of Al-Hilal. If you say that the arch is not beautiful we may try to alter its shape, but if you wish that the keystone be removed, then we cannot accede to your wishes. There will be nothing left with us if we separate politics from religion⁵⁶ (emphasis added)

54. Ibid., Vol. 1, No. 9, September 8, 1912.

55. Ibid., Vol. 1, No. 11, September 22, 1912.

56. Ibid., Vol. 1, No. 9, September 8, 1912.

It would appear as if he had taken a cue from Bipin Chandra Pal and other extremist leaders of Swadeshi phase of freedom struggle, while arguing that politics and religion were different sides of the same coin. Even Mahatma Gandhi, as late as 1925, spoke almost the same language, through his 'Young India' as Azad was doing in Al-Hilal. Once Gandhiji wrote: "Your argument tends to show that there must be complete divorce between politics and religion or spirituality. This is what we see in every day life under modern conditions. Passive resistance seeks to rejoin politics and religion and to test any one of our sections in the light of ethical principles."⁵⁷

Mahatma Gandhi's Hinduism was different from what it was commonly understood. He said:

Hinduism is not an exclusive religion. In it there is room for the worship of all the prophets of the world. It is not a missionary religion in ordinary sense of the term. It has absorbed many tribes in its fold, but this absorption has been of a revolutionary imperceptible character. Hinduism tells every one to worship God according to his own faith or Dharma and so it lives at peace with all the religions.⁵⁸

Azad's perception of the religion was never a narrow one. According to him, all religions of the world were the manifestations of one and the same truth.⁵⁹ He said:

57. Young India, September 3, 1925, quoted Indira Rothermund, "Gandhi's Satyagrah and Hindu Thought" in T.Panthen and K.Deutsch (eds.), n.13, p.296.

58. Young India, October 12, 1921, quoted in *ibid.*, p.298.

59. Mushirul Haq, n.52, p.73.

If all the curtains due to external forms and terminologies could be removed and reality were to appear before us unveiled, all the (religious) differences of this world would suddenly vanish and all quarrelsome people would see that their object was the same, though it had different names.⁶⁰

Such was an understanding of Azad in regard to the religion, of which he made a very careful use to arouse the Muslims in order to be a Party to the fight against the British. He used the religion i.e. Islam and its symbols during the Al-Hilal phase and even later for the same purpose, a point which we would come across time and again in the course of the discussion.

After making his readers aware of the political philosophy of Al-Hilal, Azad embarked on analysing the existing politics of the Muslims vis-a-vis national movement. While doing so, he picked up the issue of the birth and politics of the Muslim League.

As noted earlier that Azad had attended the annual session of the Muslim Educational Conference, at Dacca where Muslim League came into existence. There Azad had rebelled against the politics of loyalty of the League and instead, he had joined the revolutionaries of Bengal.

60. Azad, "Presidential Address, Bengal Khilafat Conference," in Khutabat-i-Azad, Delhi, 1959, p.93, quoted in ibid., p.73.

However, when he picked up his pen to write on the Muslim League, he came down upon it harshly. According to Azad's Muslim League was the brain-child of the so-called leaders of the Muslim community, who wanted to serve their own interest and instead of guiding the community, were misleading it. While making a scathing attack on the politics of the league, he argued that since the pre-occupations of the Muslims with problems of education was reaching a point of saturation, a Naya Khilona (new toy) had to be thrust upon the Muslims in the shape of Muslim League in order to keep them occupied with it for some more time. To him, all this was done in the name of awakening, whereas, it reflected the political stupor and humiliated existence of the Muslims.⁶¹

The perception of Azad did not fail him. He was aware of the fact that the Muslim League did not come into existence on the strength of the community, rather it was given the support by the government.⁶² He accused the leadership of misguiding and channelling the energy of the community in wrong direction. Azad contended that condition of the Muslims would have been better if they had united with Hindus.⁶³ He described the existence of the Muslim League as unfortunate for the whole community.⁶⁴ Contrary to what Azad thought and

61. Al-Hilal, Vol. 1, No. 8, September 1, 1912.

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid.

spoke of the Muslim League, others did not think of the same way. For instance Aurobindo considered the emergence of the League as self-expression of the whole community and welcomed it:

...we do not fear Mohammadan opposition so long as it is the honest Swadeshi article and not manufactured in Shillong or Simla. We welcome it as a sign of life and aspiration... In that faith we are ready, when the time comes for us to meet in the political field, to exchange with the Musalmans, just as he chooses, the firm clasp of the brother or resolute grip of the wrestler... (India's new nationalism) is not afraid of Pan-Islamism or any sign of the growth of a special Mohammadan self consciousness, but rather welcomes it.⁶⁵

Indian Council Act of 1909, commonly known as Morley-Minto reform, granted separate communal representation to the Muslims, keeping in view the demands of the Muslim League. The provision of separate electorate under this Council Act was considered a victory for the League.⁶⁶ But the Congress opposed it. Annual session of the Congress expressed "its strong sense of disapproval of the certain electorate on the basis of the religion" and resolved that the regulation framed under the Act had "caused widespread disaffection throughout the country".⁶⁷

65. Bande Matram, December 17, 1907, quoted in Dixit, "Ideology of Hindu Nationalism" in T. Panthan and K. Deutsch (eds.), n.13, p.124.

66. Kaura, n.10, p.18.

67. Ram Gopal, Indian Muslims: A Political History 1858-1947, Bombay 1959, p.113.

Under the changed circumstances even the Congress in an attempt to bring unity from the top, struck an agreement with the Muslim League; a scheme of communal representation and constitutional reforms was drawn up and was adopted by both the parties, famously known as Lucknow Pact of 1916.⁶⁸

Reaction of Azad to Morley-Minto Reform was different. He spoke about it three years later in Al-Hilal. He did not consider the provision of separate electorate more than a crumb being thrown before the Muslims. He said that the politics of loyalty, by very nature of its existence, could not hope to get bigger rewards, so it had to be content with petty concessions, and even these concessions to the leaders of the community were big gains. He accused the present leadership of the community for dragging the community in wrong direction and argued that Muslims would have been in a better position if they had got along with the Hindus,⁶⁹ (perhaps, hinting at the Congress).

Azad held the leadership responsible for the political inertia of the Muslims vis-a-vis the freedom struggle. According to him there were two kinds of leadership among the Muslims. First was the group of Ulema and second was

68. Ibid., pp. 129-30. Also see Sarkar, n. 12., p. 150.

69. Al-Hilal, Vol. 1, No. 8, 1 September 1912.

the group of Muslims educated on modern lines. To him both were inadequate to provide leadership because Ulema were caught in religious obscurantism and the modernists were flagrantly loyalist.⁷⁰ He argued that Muslim faltered right from the beginning, when they chose to rely on the government and could not possibly make any fresh move without its support. Such a politics of the Muslims made them merely a pawn in the hands of government.⁷¹ Consequences of this kind of the politics of the Muslims proved disastrous for the whole country. He said:

The outcome was that the Muslim became a stumbling block in the progress of India, and their existence nothing more than a bloc. Whenever the government desired it used the Muslims as stones to crush the aspiration of the country.

First of all Muslims alienated themselves from the Hindus, who have been the main politically active group. Thus the government felt quite assured of the failure of the demands of the nationalists.⁷²

Annulment of partition of Bengal in 1911 and a simultaneous decision to shift the capital to Delhi was a rude shock for the Muslims all over India in general and Bengal in particular. They felt cheated that the government because of the pressure of other community, annulled the partition which was beneficial to certain section of the Muslims. However, the annulment of partition shook the

70. Ibid., Vol. 1, No. 4, August 4, 1912.

71. Ibid., Vol. 1, No. 8, September 1, 1912.

72. Ibid., p. 7.

Muslims but did not evoke any response from them. Azad reacted to such a development in his own fashion. He wrote:

To our understanding, the British Government right from the day of its rule if at all, has done anything good for the Muslims, it has annulled the partition of Bengal and said about the right way to reach it. But the Muslims must mourn over their fate that even this last blow to them has gone unnoticed. Their humiliated existence has digested even this bitter dose.⁷³

Azad's task was not yet over. He was faced with a far more formidable challenge to shake the Muslims who were until then "mere camp followers", and make them realise the contradiction between Indian interests and the imperialist interests. The method adopted by Azad; to scorn them, encourage them and fill them with fire to fight the British, became the keystone of his writings in Al-Hilal. He was equally aware of the fact, as noted earlier, that so far, the Muslim politics controlled by the elites of the Community, was concerned with sharing the constitutional spoils thrown up by the government. He was also conscious of the fact that different section of the Muslims were having different aspirations and as such their interests varied from one another. In such a situation the only force, which could cut across all the lines of demarcation within the community was

73. Ibid., Vol. 1, No. 4, August 4, 1912.

religion. With the help of the religion he wished to delineate a picture which people would find comprehensible, that Islam and slavery were two contradictory things. As he argued later that to be a true Muslim would mean to cut the chains of bondage and attain liberty. To him path was arduous but could be made easy if every one joined hands with one another. Thus he advocated ^{an} unconditional unity between the two communities.

The course, according to Azad, the Muslims should adopt to fight the British was to be their own instead of following any other group or political organisation. In response to a letter, which had posed a question to Azad, "These days there are two political groups among the Hindus, which one you are with?", he said that followers of Islam, in order to determine the course of political action, need not follow the Hindus. He argued that there could not be an act of bigger shame than Muslims following others in the field of politics. They should form their own organisation and provide the leadership to the rest.⁷⁴

Azad had changed his position from the revolutionary phase when he did not mind the smaller issue of symbols and anti-Muslim attitude of the revolutionary organisations and had joined them, because the goal was far more important

74. Ibid., Vol. 1, No. 9, September 8, 1912.

than the means. During Al-Hilal era as well the goal remained the same but means had changed. However, the motive behind this change was, perhaps to instil a sense of confidence, in the minds of his co-religionists, so that they also could rise and contribute their own share in the freedom struggle.

The means which Azad adopted to bring the Muslims to the forefront of the freedom struggle was Islam and its symbols. He made incessant use of religious symbols to stir the whole community. He described the fight against the British as Jehad and continued to do so till the end. Once he wrote:

Thus, like many other things, the call of Al-Hilal is that neither trust the government nor follow the Hindus. Take only to right path (Seerat-ul-Mustequeem) as suggested by Islam.

He further added:

If we shall take to the political path as suggested by Islam then of course, we shall be a powerful group. We shall not be daunted by anything. We shall express ourselves fearlessly as we would not be afraid of any one but God.⁷⁵

Repeated use of the term "Seerat-ul-Mustaqueem" (The Right Path) made by Azad, implied only to make the Muslim realise that they must rise to the occasion and fight the slavery of British rule. But at the same time he did

75. Ibid., Vol.1, No.9, September 8, 1912.

not leave any doubt in the minds of his audience that to resort to Jehad would mean to achieve democracy, equality and a parliamentary and constitutional government. He said:

Islam stands for freedom and is against those who wish to perpetuate an autocratic rule through brute and force. It (Islam) wants its followers to be in action in order to attain freedom. It (Islam) is the soul of Democracy and equality and considers that government against the will of God which is not parliamentary and constitutional. This lesson is not to be learnt from the Hindus but from the Quran and should be as such made the motto of life.⁷⁶

As noted earlier, the politics of separate representation initiated by the elites of the Muslim community had managed to create the impression among the masses that once the British left, the majority community would completely overshadow the interests and aspirations of the Muslim. Hence demands of constitutional protection were raised time and again. The government always showed the enthusiasm to the demands of protection to the minority, which in turn had made the Muslims always look forward to the government for any such help. Azad was alive to this fact of contemporary Indian politics. He knew that it was a mere bogey which did not have any sound basis. He attempted to allay the fears and apprehension of the Muslim by arguing with them that it was no time to get bogged down with ill

76. Ibid., Vol.1, No.9, September 8, 1912.

conceived problems of majority over riding the interests of the minority. To repeat that, to Azad such a fear was a stumbling block in the way of forming a united front vis-a-vis the government. He further stated:

Apprehensions regarding the minority and majority is not something which has emanated from within. Rather it has been imposed from without. And now, it has become the centre of our ills. There is fear in joining the Congress because Muslims are in minority and Hindus would eliminate them. Aspiration to have self government is completely lacking because Muslims are less in number and the government would become a Hindu government. Though the advantages of education are not refuted but it is feared that Hindus are bigger in number. Hence they would drive the Muslims away.⁷⁷

He further ridiculed the community:

No doubt, the conditions which you (Muslims) have put yourself in, does not require the majority of Hindus, instead you only would destroy yourself.⁷⁸

After assuring the Muslims not to fear the Hindus he went a step ahead and called upon the Muslims to join hands with them. Azad knew that the politics of the Muslim elite was driving the community away from the Hindus, who according to ^{him}, were the main flag bearers of the liberation of the country. He was perhaps fully aware of this fact too that the Congress had problems in wooing the Muslim into its fold, despite secular protestations. Knowing all these hurdles and knowing it too that without active cooperatio

77. Ibid., Vol.1, No.8, September 1, 1912.

78. Ibid.

between both the communities the fight against the British would lack teeth, he suggested:

There is no need to fear Hindus, if at all you fear anyone you should fear God. If you want to live in India then embrace your neighbours. You have seen the consequences of keeping aloof from them, now you should join them.⁷⁹

In the same breath he reassured them:

If there is any hurdle from their (Hindus) side, do not pay any heed to that. You should see what position do you hold in the world. You are the soldiers of God. Thus for God sake look at others from above. If others do not treat you nicely, you should behave gently with them. Elderly persons do not cry if teased by youngsters, rather they forgive them.⁸⁰

The appeals which Azad made to his co-religionists to unite with Hindus, was a novel idea introduced by him. It was new in many senses. So far attempts towards unity between both the communities were made from the top. Secondly, all these attempts revolved around adjustment of assembly seats and sharing the government jobs. Compared to attempts made earlier in this regard, Azad spoke a different language, which his readers found difficult to digest. A letter from a reader to Al-Hilal hinted that cooperation between the Hindus and the Muslims would not be in the interest of the latter to which Azad replied, "Perhaps, you seem to be suggesting that unity with Hindus is injurious to the interests of Muslims. But sorry to say, we do not agree

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid.

to that."⁸¹ Hindu-Muslim unity, to Azad was not a matter of exigencies, rather it was his firm conviction, which could not be shaken even under heaviest of odds. As late as 1940, when Muslim League at its Lahore Session passed the Pakistan Resolution, Azad, while delivering the Presidential address to the annual session of the Congress at Ramgarh spoke the same language in regard to Hindu Muslim unity, which he had spoken in 1912.

With regard to techniques through which Independence was to be achieved Azad said, "...we may get excited but our excitement (political) and agitation would be peaceful and remain within the limit of laws, because God has asked not to create a chaos."⁸² He clearly implied that the movement would remain within the limits of peace and tranquility would not be disturbed. Such thinking of Azad was more akin to the strategy of the Congress moderates. This stand of Azad was a departure from his revolutionary phase, as noted earlier. Compared to this Azad in an earlier issue of Al-Hilal had spoken the language of extremist terrorist tradition:

Parliament and Democracy demands peace and liberty but for the sake of peace, autocratic rule has to be eliminated and to check any further persecution many are to be killed.⁸³

81. Ibid., Vol. 1, No. 12, September 29, 1912.

82. Ibid., Vol. 1, No. 9, September 8, 1912.

83. Ibid., Vol. 1, No. 7, August 25, 1912.

Thus, it appears that while Azad spoke of the need for national movement to be launched on peaceful methods he did not rule out the possible use of violence to achieve the goal, a point on which he later differed with Mahatma Gandhi.

Another plank of Azad's political understanding during Al-Hilal phase was his Pan-Islamism. Around this time Pan-Islamic fervour was taking the whole community in its grip. Muslims had become extremely anxious about the developments which were taking place in Balkan wars. What would be the fate of Turkey was the major question confronting the community. Muslims were particularly disappointed with the role of Britain.⁸⁴ Suspicion against Britain grew more, when Britain acquiesced in the Italian attack on Tripoli and concluded treaties with Russia and France under which partition of the Ottoman empire was decided.⁸⁵ It was Turko-Italian war which brought various section of the Muslims closer to one another.⁸⁶

These were the developments concerning Turkey, which provided backdrop to Azad's Pan-Islamism. Developments of the Balkan wars were given prominent place in the pages of

84. Mushirul Hasan, Nationalism and Communal Politics in India, 1916-1928, Delhi, 1979, p.55.

85. Ibid.

86. Ibid.

Al-Hilal. Attitude of Britain and other European countries towards Turkey, made Azad come to the conclusion that entire West was bent upon destroying Islamic culture and its politico-religious Centre,⁸⁷ from which Sunni Muslims world over derived inspiration, at least theoretically. Azad wrote :

It becomes a religious duty that seat of Khilafat should be held dear to every Muslim purely as a matter of religious relationship. Any government which is its (Khilafat) enemy should be considered enemy of Islam and the one which is friendly toward it, a friend. Because the friendship and enmity for a Muslim should not depend on personal losses or gains; rather it should be for the sake of religion.⁸⁸

Azad tried to impress upon the Muslims that existence of Khilafat was a matter of purely religious importance, which every devout Muslim must hold dear to him. But in the same speech, which he had made in Calcutta he said, "As we know that no nation can survive without a political centre. And if there is any political Centre of Islam then it is Khilafat."⁸⁹

There appears to be certain amount of dichotomy in Azad's perception of Khilafat and its preserverence. On the

87. Taqreer Ittihad-i-Islami, October 27, 1914, Calcutta in Khutbat-i-Azad, Malik Ram (ed.), Delhi, 1981, pp.20-25.

88. Al-Hilal, Vol. 1, No. 16, November 6, 1912.

89. Ibid., pp.20-25.

one hand he considered Khilafat only in terms of religious centre of the Muslims world over particularly of Sunnis, but on the other he considered it as the political centre of Islam. To consider Khilafat as the 'Political centre of Islam' gives rise to certain questions. For example what were the implications of propagating such a notion or was he merely giving reflection to the existing thinking among the Muslim with regard to Khilafat. Did such a notion produce any sense to extra territorial identity among the Muslims? All these questions could possibly be answered by his perception of Khilafat (which underwent changes) during Khilafat movement. The point which can be emphasized here that whatever his perception of Khilafat might have been, ^{he} simply made use of it to arouse the Muslims against the Raj.

Words of Maulana Azad fell on receptive ears. Perhaps, the educated section of the Muslims was, for the first time hearing the words full of magical charms. Response of the Urdu knowing population to this weekly of Azad can easily be imagined by the fact that "within two years, Al-Hilal, reached a circulation of 26,000 copies per week; a figure which was unheard of in Urdu journalism".⁹⁰ Innumerable letters, Azad began to receive

90. Azad, n.1, p.7.

in which readers gave the suggestion that he should keep up the tone and the spirit of the paper. But, at the same time there was a section among Muslims, who either felt threatened or exposed because of Azad's writings, went to the extent of threatening him of dire consequences if he did not stop writing on issues which wished to arouse the Muslims.

Azad remained undaunted and stuck to his mission. Overwhelming response to his paper, encouraged him to take a step ahead and channelise the emotion of his readers. In April 1913, he announced his intentions of establishing an organization, which was to be called Hizbullah. He invited those persons for the membership of Hizbullah, who had agreement with the policy of Al-Hilal. He said that programme of the party would be announced only after receiving a considerable number of applications from the people who wished to join the party.⁹¹ Within a week Azad had received the names of 800 volunteers, who offered their services at the call of Azad.

Nature of Hizbullah remained a mystery for many because of the secrecy which Azad maintained about its activities. once he wrote on the organisational structure of Hizbullah:

91. Al-Hilal, Vol. II, No. 16, April 23, 1913.

The members of Hizbullah will be divided into three orders. Initially every applicant will be admitted to the first order. Depending upon their qualities some of them will be promoted to the second order. From the second order some members will be selected for the third. That will be the highest mark of the Hizbullah, and those who reach it will in fact form the controlling body of the Hizbullah. At the present that is all that can be disclosed. The method and function of the controlling body is a secret. A member of one order is not permitted to attempt to find out the secrets of any other order than his own.⁹²

Despite secrecy maintained by Azad, what can be said with certainty is that Hizbullah was committed to organise the Muslims to work for Independence.⁹³ It was largely financed by immigrant Muslim community of merchants, shop keepers and contractors.⁹⁴ However this attempt of Azad did not prove to be a success.

His next step was directed towards the foundation of Darul Irshad, to produce a new breed of Ulema, since he did not have faith in the existing group of Ulema. According to him all of them were beset by obscurantism and narrow vision. Azad was also aware of the fact that Muslims would not be willing to take part in active politics unless they were told that it was a 'religious duty for them.'⁹⁵ Therefore a new set of Ulema were required to carry the messages of freedom, though

92. Ibid., Vol. II, No. 23, December 1913.

93. Mushirul Haq, n. 52, p. 93.

94. Rajat Ray, n. 28, p. 108.

95. Mushirul Haq, no. 52, p. 95.

sanctioned by the religion i.e. Islam. For it, Azad started Darul Irshad, a residential college at his own residence in Calcutta in October 1914.⁹⁶ It was a smaller and more secret body than Hizbullah.⁹⁷ Select students from each province were admitted to Darul Irshad, and each one was assigned the task in a particular part of the country.⁹⁸ Impression was sought to be given that it was an educational institution but in reality it was imparting revolutionary training to the Muslim youth.⁹⁹

Darul-Irshad avoided any open activity for the fear of wrath of the Raj. But it carried on the work of propaganda and secret preparation. At a closed door meeting, Azad is supposed to have made a speech :

For a Jehad, it is not always obligatory that there should be a battle field, a sword or military organisation. But on every Indian it is obligatory to inflict injury by any means which may cause to the enemy loss in life property, land, nationality, commerce or in morals.¹⁰⁰

It would be clear that Darul-Irshad was not merely a body in pursuit of religious education alone, rather it

96. Raj Mohan Gandhi, n.27, p.224.

97. Rajat Ray, n.28, p.109.

98. Ibid.

99. Ibid.

100. IB 1916 "Objectionable Lectures made in Darul-Irshad," Calcutta, Quoted in Rajat Ray, n.28, p.110.

was an organisation where anti-British teachings were imparted to the students.

All these attempts of Azad came to a failure because of his externment from Calcutta. Azad's words in the pages of Al-Hilal became a source of great anxiety to the government particularly during the war years. Also the popularity of Al-Hilal prompted them to take some measure against the paper. To curb the tone of Al-Hilal, the government demanded a security of Rs. 2,000, under the Press Act.¹⁰¹ Azad remained undaunted and carried on with his mission soon a deposit of Rs. 10,000 was demanded, which was also lost. In November 1915, Al-Hilal was suppressed and confiscated.¹⁰² Unrelenting Azad started a new press under the name of Al-Baqagh in the beginning months of 1916 and spoke the same language which he was doing in Al-Hilal. "The government now felt that they could not stop my activities by using only the Press Act" and Azad was finally externed from Calcutta in April 1916 under Defence of India Regulations.¹⁰³

Externment of Azad from Calcutta brought his political as well as literary activities to a sudden halt. In Ranchi he was compelled to live in confinement, where any contact

101. Azad, n. 1, p.7.

102. Arsh Malsiyan, Abul Kalam Azad, Delhi, 1976, p.21.

103. Azad, n. 1, p.7.

with outside world was made virtually impossible. Yet it did not dishearten him. Even in confinement he felt free but only in realm of ideas. His messages through Al-Hilal and Al-Balagh were resounding in the minds of his readers. Since the messages of Azad in his journals were so much in the light of the Quran that he felt to present the real essence of it (the Quran) before the world by translating the Quran itself in Urdu and there upon writing a commentary on it. A task which he had already begun before his exterment.

CHAPTER III

Chapter III

EMERGING TRENDS IN AZAD'S POLITICAL THOUGHT 1916-1924

As stated in the last chapter we find that Azad's political activities came to a temporary halt with his externment from Calcutta, but it did not dishearten him as he felt, "for long I had yearned for the peace of heart and freedom of thought and action but the pressure of work and the entanglement of relationship never permitted this to happen so far. I have it now."¹

In Ranchi, at a village called Morabadi, Azad was to live among Munda and Oraon tribals. Occassionally he visited the town where Muslims constituted a sizeable chunk of the population but most of them lived in abject poverty. Seeing the condition of the Muslims there, he said to himself, "the world has seen what manner of work I could do while I was free and unfettered. Let it see what can I accomplish during the detention and imprisonment, for the real challenge and real test is here and now".² Azad began to work among them; he organised many associations and helped in building small educational institutions.³

These activities apart, at Ranchi the intellectual and the original thinker in Azad was at its best. Tranquility

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1. Quoted in Arsh Malsiyani, Abul Kalam Azad, Delhi, 1976, p.27.
 2. Quoted in *ibid.*, p.28.
 3. A.B. Rajput, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Lahore, 1946, p.54.

of the atmosphere and the abundance of time gave an opportunity to Azad to set himself on a stupendous task of translating the Quran and writing a commentary on it. As a matter of fact Azad had already begun the work of translation while he was still in Calcutta. As he said later that he had announced the publication of translation and commentary on the Quran through Al-Balagh. By then, five parts of the Quran had been translated and the commentary had covered up to Al-Imran or Chapter 3 of the Quran. He wished at least his first volume, to be published by the end of the same year but the fate had willed it otherwise.⁴

The objectives, which Azad had set before himself for such a stupendous task can be best understood in his own words as:

When the project was originally conceived in 1915, I had three objectives before me. One was to prepare a translation of the Quran in Urdu, the second was to write a commentary there on and the third was to write an introduction to the commentary. The three pieces of work, as I thought were to meet the needs of three distinct sets of people interested in the Quran - the translation, the needs of average reader; the commentary, of those who cared to make a detailed study of the Quran; and the introduction, the needs of the intellectuals elite or the more advanced scholars.⁵

4. Syed Abdul Latif, "An Unfinished Masterpiece," in Humayun Kabir (ed.), Maulana Abul Kalam Azad - A Memorial, Bombay, 1959, p.124.

5. Quoted in *ibid.*, p.124.

But Azad could not accomplish his desire till 1930, when the first volume of his translation and commentary was published. Even then its circulation was extremely limited and could not reach a larger audience.

From the beginning of the task till its accomplishment the manuscript was seized by the government thrice. First seizure took place when the order of his internment was passed; second time, during a search of his residence where he was put in confinement of a house at Ranchi. Third seizure took place when he was arrested at the height of non-cooperation - Khilafat movement in December 1921. The last seizure was a shattering blow to the enthusiasm of Azad to get his translation and commentary published. Later Azad lamented:

The trial was agonising; and yet I tried to rise equal to the occasion. This was the bitterest cup fate ever held to my lips. I drank its content without the slightest demur.⁶

During the internment in Ranchi Azad produced another master piece of prose writing, 'Tazkirah', a kind of autobiography in symbols, a study of which would give enough insight into the personality of Azad. However, the major achievement was his Tarjumanul-Quran, but as noted earlier he had to rewrite the whole thing after he was released in 1923.

6. Quoted in *ibid.*, p.128.

Azad's objectives to render the Quran into Urdu was to make larger number of people to have access to the real essence of it. But at the same time his path breaking and bold interpretation of the Quran was also directed towards making his co-religionists break the shackles of obscurantism and bigotry. Through the translation he wished to present the real essence of Islam before the world.

In the exhaustive introduction of the Tarjumanul Quran, the point which Azad stressed, was the basic unity of all the religions. According to him the roots of all the religion have been one and the same. Apart from the argument of Azad, which was in the light of the Quran that there was a basic thread of universal truth which runs through all the religions, he also stressed the point that the Quran teaches universal brotherhood. He wrote in the introduction of his magnum opus: .

The Quran also says that God created all men as human beings, but they adopted varying names and labels and broke the unity of mankind to pieces... there are countless other divisions - rich and poor, master and servant, high born and low born, strong and weak, and so on. All these divisions cannot but make the discord and strife. What then is the silken string that can thread these scattered beads and make of divided mankind one united brotherhood. That silken string, that sacred link, is the worship of one God... you will then realise that world is your country and mankind is one family and you are children of the same Father.

7. Quoted in Mahadev Desai, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, A Biographical Memoir, London, 1946, pp. 100-101.

The Quran, Azad said, "declared that religion does not consist in the direction facing which a man offers prayers, whether it should be the East or the West. The essence of religion lies in the worship of one God and the right conduct."⁸ At another point Azad wrote that:

The Quran declares that human nature is so constituted that these outward forms will differ and everyone thinks that his way is superior to that of others, he cannot look at his own way from point of view of his own opponents. But even as your way is excellent in your own eye, even so in other peoples eyes their way is excellent. Toleration, therefore, is the only way.⁹ (emphasis added).

Azad, while translating the Quran, also emphasised the point that God's outstanding qualities lies in His 'Lordship' and thus He is called Rabbil-Alemeen¹⁰ (Lord of the universe).

The point which he wished to drive hom among his co-religionists was that since God, being Rabbil-Alemeen does not make any distinction among human beings, except on the basis of good conduct or bad conduct, men also should sink all such outward differences and strive for developing love and compassion for others. That was the main emphasis of Azad's eclectic theology.¹¹

8. Quoted in *ibid.*, p.102.

9. *Ibid.*

10. Annemarie Schimmel, Islam in Indian Sub-Continent, Netherlands, 1980, p.233.

11. *Ibid.*, p.234.

It should be noted that the points which Azad emphasized in Al-Hilal and later Al-Balagh, were based on his understanding of Islam. Although it becomes a matter of conjecture in history but still one may say that had Azad's Tarjumanul Quran been published around the time, which he initially had thought of "a renaissance might have set in".¹² But the delay virtually killed the original purpose of Maulana's stupendous work. Even when it was published in 1930, the copies of the Tarjumanul Quran were not available to the general public. It was only around 1945 that the copies of Azad's were easily available but by then "it was too late to serve its original purpose".¹³ If it was published earlier, possibility of emergence of a new ideological school of Maulana's thought, would have been there, which in due course "might have won some followers".¹⁴

Speculations on the possible effects of Azad's Tarjumanul Quran apart, the available facts are that religious scholars condemned him to the hilt and framed three charges against him, one of Bidat, second of Iratqum and third of Iradat. They were also indignant at Azad,¹⁵ but no one had the guts and calibre to challenge Azad's erudition.

12. Latif, n.4, p.131.

13. N.A.Karandikar, "The Maulana in Indian Politics," in Azad, Islam and Nationalism, Delhi, no. date, p.74.

14. Ibid.

15. Rajput, n.3, p.55.

During the war years Azad was kept under confinement. He was not released for another year. Finally amnesty was granted to him, by the Royal Proclamation on December 25, 1919 and released in the beginning of January 1920.¹⁶

While Azad was serving his term of internment at Ranchi, the country was generally getting prepared for a movement against the government. The substance for such a movement lay within the country as well as outside it.

In the war efforts, the government received support from the Indians at large. Bigger enthusiasm was shown by the Indian Muslims to the British, hoping that Turkey would not be meted out serious punishment for having sided with Axis powers in the war.¹⁷ The concern of the Muslims to save the honour of Turkey was involved because the Sultan of Turkey was considered Khalifa of the Muslims (Sunnis) world over. Hence to save the honour of Khalifa would be a religious duty for the Muslims.¹⁸ The concern of the Muslims in India was taken note of by the British Government. The British government had given the assurance that after the termination of war Turkey would not be treated harshly and

16. Ibid.

17. S.R. Wasti, The Political Triangle in India, 1858-1924, Lahore, 1976, p.220.

18. Uma Kaura, Muslims and Indian Nationalism: The Emergence of Demand for India's Partion 1928-1940, Delhi, 1975, p.21.

holy places would be protected.¹⁹ However, at the end of the war all such hopes were belied and the belief of the Muslims was badly shattered, as they came to know the secret agreements, among allies to offer harsh terms to Turkey.²⁰

At the end of the war, Turkey was made to sign Armistice, and it seemed to appear that Turkey was heading towards total disintegration.²¹ There was also the fear of the influence of non-Muslims over the holy places of the Muslims, which were under the suzerainty of Khalifa. This fear caused an outburst of Muslims feelings against the British, which were given expression in the press and platforms.²² Such an outburst resulted in the formation of an all India based organisation, the central Khilafat Committee of India at Bombay aimed at securing a just and honourable place for Turkey, through agitation. The leading role in the formation of Central Khilafat Committee was played by Abdul Bari of Firangi Mahal, in collaboration with Hakim Ajmal Kha, M.A. Ansari and others.

Inside the country, there were certain developments taking place, which created a situation of outrage among the Indians, against the British. Announcement, of Edwin Montagu,

19. B.M. Taunk, Non-Cooperation in Indian Politics 1919-1924, A Historical Debate, Delhi, 1978, p.16.

20. Wasti, n. 17, p.220.

21. Ibid., p.222.

22. Taunk, n. 19.

the Secretary of State, intending to increase "the association of Indians in every branch of administration and the gradual development of self governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India, as an integral part of the British empire."²³ Such an announcement was not unexpected by the Indians for their cooperation with the British government during the wars. Also, the notion of Woodrow Wilson regarding the principles of democracy and self determination, had in a way kindled the hopes among Indians to share the legislative and administrative powers.

The Report on the Indian Constitutional Reforms (1918) prepared by Montagu and the then Viceroy, Chelmsford, recommended that central government would continue to be responsible to the British Parliament but there a beginning might be made with responsible government in the provinces. In 1919, the British government finally conceded the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms.

While on one hand such reforms were conceded to have more of association of Indians in administration, on the other passed the Rowlatt Acts in the early months of 1919,

23. Quoted in Bimal Prasad, Gandhi, Nehru and J.P., Studies in Leadership, Delhi, 1985, p.4.

to crush the agitation of the extremists and other subversive activities.²⁴ The provisions of the Rowlatt Acts were extremely objectionable to Indians. Gandhiji, who by now had caught the imagination of the masses as a leader through his kheda and champaran movements, gave a call for a nation wide satyagrah campaign to resist Rowlatt Act.²⁵ Gandhiji by now, quite significantly, had become popular among the Muslims as well. There was quite an enthusiastic response to Gandhi's call of satyagraha. Abdul Bari of Firangi Mahal supported the passive resistance movement, against Rowlatt Act, at the same time he said that Satyagraha was in accordance with Islamic principles.²⁶

Mahatma Gandhi announced that on March 30, 1919 an All India Hartal would be observed. The date was later on postponed to 6th of April. On this day demonstration took place throughout the country and no untoward incident was reported. Satyagraha, apart from highlighting Indian grievances, stimulated the fraternization between Hindus and the Muslims.²⁷

In Amritsar, preparations were afoot to hold the annual session of the Congress. Meanwhile the news of the

24. S. Abid Hussain, The Destiny of Indian Muslims, Bombay 1965, p.69.

25. Taunk, n. 19, p. 12.

26. Mushirul Hasan, Nationalism and Communal Politics in India, 1916-1928, Delhi, 1979, p.115.

27. Ibid.

arrest of Mahatma Gandhi and two Punjab leaders, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal, caused strong resentment among the people. In reaction to this measure of the government, a meeting was organised at Jallianwala Bagh, at Amritsar, on April 12, 1919. General O'Dyer, who had taken the command of the troops in the city, made indiscriminate firing on the people gathered there. Hundreds died and many more people were injured. In the wake of such developments, Mahatma Gandhi temporarily suspended the Satyagraha movement on April 18, 1919.

Resentment, against the government, among the Indians at large and ~~the~~ Muslims in particular was gathering momentum. As noted earlier, the Khilafat Committee established in Bombay had become quite active. It organised Khilafat day on several occasions and demanded a lenient treatment to Turkey and requested the British government to desist from any act directed ^{hce} towards disintegration and any disrespect shown towards the religious places which were under Turkish control.

Religious fervour of the Muslims over Khilafat issue generated anti-British feelings. Pan-Islamism which in some form or the other was finding place in the writings of Muslim intellectuals from the beginning of the second decade, around this time turned against Pax-Britanica.²⁸ Gandhiji was quick

28. Mushirul Hasan, Pan-Islamism v/s Indian Nationalism: A Reappraisal, Occasional Papers on History and Society, No. XXVI, NMML, 1985, p.11.

to grasp this reality of Indian politics and offered all possible help to the Khilafat leaders, in order to win the confidence of the Muslims and channelise their support for the Freedom movement.²⁹ As a matter of fact Gandhiji considered the Khilafat as Kamdhenu and admitted "If I were not interested in the Indian Muhammadans, I would not interest in the welfare of Turks,"³⁰ Gandhiji was interested in not only the injured feelings of the Muslims of India over Khilafat, but he was equally interested in forging an unity between Hindus and Muslims, as he knew that any movement, short of unity between both the communities, would not carry enough weight. He felt convinced that "such an opportunity of winning over the Muslims, and forging unity of Indian people to fight the British would not come in hundred years."³¹

On November 23, 1919, Khilafat Conference held its first session at Delhi under the Chairmanship of A.K. Fazlul Haq. Here, it was decided that in the event of the Muslim demands being rejected by the government, there would be a boycott of British goods, and they would non-cooperate with the government.³² At another session of the Khilafat

29. Kaura, n. 18, p. 22.

30. Quoted in Taunk, n. 19, p. 19.

31. Quoted in Wasti, n. 17, p. 224.

32. Ibid.

conference at Amritsar, under the Chairmanship of Shaukat Ali, the decision was taken that Khilafat movement would be organised under the leadership of Gandhi, who later enlisted the support of the Congress, behind the non-cooperation - Khilafat movement. At this Khilafat conference, it was also decided to send a deputation to the Viceroy of India.

After his release, Azad found himself being pulled in two different directions. One was towards seclusion and studies and the other was ~~t~~owards the greater cause of freedom of the motherland. As Azad himself said, "one of the programmes that I wanted to carry out was to return to some secluded place with a group of companions and disciples and start teaching and writing."³³ But on the other hand he felt, "it was a torrent in consonance with my^will and intent, a torrent in which I could hear the voice of heavens, calling a man to accept God's will instead of his own."³⁴ Ultimately, Azad upheld the God's ill and surrendered his own, thus made a sacrifice for the cause of the country.³⁵ It was around this time Azad, "happened to meet Gandhiji on January 18, 1920".³⁶

33. Quoted in Arsh Malsiyani, n.1, p.33.

34. Quoted in *ibid*.

35. J.B. Kriplani, "The Voice of Reason," in Humayun Kabir (ed.), n.4, p.36.

36. Quoted in Mahadev Desai, n.7, p.63.

By the time Azad met Gandhiji, the Khilafat conference had already decided to send a deputation to the Viceroy to present Muslims point of view in regard to Khilafat. A memorandum was signed by the prominent Muslim leaders. Azad was also a signatory to this memorandum but declined to join the deputation to the Viceroy as he considered, "old method of begging, petitioning, waiting in deputation and so on could not be of much avail. We had to try to find some means of exerting direct pressure."³⁷
 (emphasis added)

Apprehensions expressed by Azad came true. A deputation of Khilafat leaders under the leadership of M.A. Ansari, on January 19, 1920 waited on the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford. Response of the Viceroy to the delegation was more than discouraging, although he made a promise to the leaders of the deputation that all helps would be provided if a delegation wished to visit England. Subsequently another deputation was sent to England under the leadership of Mohammad Ali, who in England met Lloyed George, the British Prime Minister, whose response became a source of resentment than a solace. Later the same delegation visited many European countries, to impress upon their views on Khilafat but in practical sense did not achieve much.³⁸

37. Quoted in *ibid.*, p.64.

38. Wasti, n. 17, p.227.

The Government of India on May 15, 1920 published the Peace Terms offered to Turkey, which were extremely harsh. The Sultan despite being allowed to retain Constantinople, there was every possibility of complete disintegration of Turkey. The resentment of Indian Muslims had tuned into a powder keg. Assessing the mood of the Muslims, Gandhiji once again reiterated that, "non-cooperation is the only effective remedy both for avoiding violence and healing the wound inflicted on Mohammadans of India."³⁹ Accordingly on May 28, 1920 at a public meeting organised by the Central Khilafat Committee, it was adopted that non-cooperation was the only political course of action. At another meeting of Central Khilafat Committee on June 1, and 2, 1920, held at Allahabad, attended by Hindus and Muslims both, sympathy with the Khilafat was declared. It was at this meeting a non-cooperation Committee was formed, which consisted of Gandhiji, Azad, Mohammad Ali, Shaukat Ali, Saifuddin Kitchlew, Hasrat Mohani, and Haji Ahmad Khatri. The Committee was formed to propagate the scheme of non-cooperation-Khilafat movement. Thus Azad, along with others became an integral part of the movement.

During the course of the movement Azad occupied the position of one of the chief theoreticians. In the wake of

39. Ibid., p.228.

emotional excitement of the Muslims he issued a fatwa without declaring India as Darul-Harab and exhorted his co-religionists to migrate to some other Muslim land. The fatwa was issued in July 1920, a month before the non-cooperation - Khilafat movement was formally launched.⁴⁰

The Fatwa issued by Azad argued:

After examining all reasons contained in the sharia, as well as contemporary events... I feel definitely satisfied from the view point of sharia, the Muslims of India have no choice but to migrate from India. All Muslims who would like to fulfil Islamic obligations must quit India.

He added:

Migration before World War I was desirable; now it is mandatory.⁴¹

The effect of such a call upon the less educated Muslim was immense. The people from all parts of India but most particularly from Sindh began to migrate from India to Afghanistan.⁴² The Hijrat movement involved around 18,000 Muslims, mostly from poorer classes, who sold off all their belongings and migrated to Afghanistan.⁴³ The

40. It should be noted that some historians have ascribed the issue of fatwa to Azad only. Whereas the fatwa of migration was first issued by a zealot called Aziz Hindi, who mooted out the idea of Hijrat in April 1920 itself. Maulana Abdul Bari of Firangi Mahal was also responsible for such a fatwa. However, only when Aziz Hindi had migrated to Afghanistan, Azad took the responsibility of organising Hijrat. For details see, I.H. Qureshi, Ulema in Politics, Karachi, 1972; M.Mujeeb, The Indian Muslims, Delhi, 1985.

41. Azad, Tabarrukat-i-Azad (ed.) Ghulam Rasool Mehr, Delhi, 1963, pp.164-65.

42. Schimmel, n.10, p.220.

43. Aziz Ahmad, Islamic Modernization in India and Pakistan, 1857-1964. London. 1967. p.136.

movement became a source of great sufferings for the Muhajirs and to their dismay initial enthusiasm shown by the Afghan government, gave way to a ban on the entry of Muhajirs into that country. Even the negotiations of prominent Khilafat leaders with the king Amanullah, did not result in any solution. As a result Muhajirs had to come back to India. While on the way back, most of them perished and others found their way into Soviet Central Asia.⁴⁴

On the issue of fatwa, Azad has been singularly criticised by the historians. It is said that while issuing such a fatwa, exhorting the Muslims to migrate to a Muslim country, economic realities were not taken in account.⁴⁵ Yet at another place it is argued that "the concept of nationhood did not find favour with the ideologues of the Khilafat movement. In place of love for the country, allegiance was sought for Islamic supra-nationalism".⁴⁶

It is true that Azad issued a fatwa asking the Muslims to migrate to a Muslim land. It is also true that in regard to Khilafat, he frequently spoke that it should be considered as political centre of the Muslims world over. In the light

44. Schimmel, n.10, p.220.

45. Aziz Ahmed, n.43, p.136.

46. Prabha Dixit, "Political Objectives of the Khilafat Movement in India," in Mushirul Hasan (ed.) Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India, Delhi, 1985, p.74.

of such utterances of Azad, it appears that he had nothing to do with the country or even if he had, it acquired a secondary place in his scheme of political action. Again, it is not to deny that fatwa in regard to Hijrat was quite out of tune with his political thinking. But as we have noted that momentum of Hijrat had already picked up, and what Azad did in July 1920 was to continue on with the programme of Hijrat, instead of stopping it altogether or at least checking it. However, to argue that Azad in league with other Khilafat leaders, generated a sense of supra-nationalism, among Indian Muslims, would be contrary to available evidences, as we would see later.

Non-cooperation-Khilafat movement was formally launched in the beginning of August 1920, by the Central Khilafat Committee in league with Gandhiji and others. The Congress as an organisation had yet to put the seal of its sanction on the movement which was eventually done in the special session of the Congress in the month of September 1920, in Calcutta. The annual session of the Congress at Nagpur fully endorsed the whole scheme of non-violent non-cooperation Khilafat movement.

As noted earlier Azad had become one of the chief ideologues of the movement. He was in total agreement with the programmes of the movement as it were enunciated by Gandhiji, except that he (Azad) did not accept non-violence.

It was acceptable to him ^{only} as a matter of political expediency. Despite holding different opinion in regard to the use of violence, Azad associated himself with Gandhiji and his programmes. The companionship between Azad and Gandhiji lasted until the latter's death. During the course of the movement Azad toured extensively with Gandhiji and Ali brothers. He made speeches before large audiences, explained the nuances of the non-violent movement and reiterated the importance of Khilafat. Whenever occasion arose Azad contributed his best in regard to the movement.

The impact of the movement was felt in distant corners of the country. Even remote places like Assam, and Malabar came under the influence of non-cooperation-Khilafat movement. Aligarh also, which had sincerely followed the old dictum of loyalty, could not remain unaffected. Nationalist activities had come to surface even there. Encouraged by this new development, Gandhiji, along with Azad, Ali brothers and Ajmal Khan went to Aligarh on October 11, 1920. Gandhiji spoke on the movement and asked the students to join it. But Gandhiji's radical non-cooperation did not appeal the students, because of their economic and political background⁴⁷ undeterred by such a negative response, Azad, along with M.A. Ansari and Ali Brothers, again visited Aligarh on October 23, 1920

47. Mushirul Hasan, Nationalist and Separatist Trend in Aligarh, 1920-1946, Occasional Papers on History and Society, No. XII, NMML, 1984, p.9.

and addressed numerous meetings, though of small group of students, led by Zakir Husain, Kunwar Mohammad Ashraf and others. These groups responded positively to the calls of non-cooperation and agreed to enroll themselves in Jamia Millia Islamia (The National Muslim University), which came into existence on October 29, 1920. The establishment of Jamia was the result of untiring efforts of Khilafat leaders.

Jamia Millia Islamia was the fruit of joint efforts of many, but Madrssa Islamia, Calcutta was the brainchild of Azad. He took pains, mostly single handedly to establish Madrssa Islamia (Jama Masjid, Calcutta) in order to provide an alternative to the government aided institutions of Arabic learning. This Madrssa was formally inaugurated by Gandhiji on December 13, 1920, where ^{he} , while delivering the speech appreciated the courage of the students who had given up the comforts of government Institute of Arabic learning, and responded to the call of Azad. Gandhiji after the speech wrote in the register of the Madrssa, "I pray for the progress of the Madrssa"⁴⁸ (mein Madrssa kee Taraqquee ke leye dua karta hoon).

48. Letters of Azad to A.R.Malihabadi in Kakatib-i-Abul Kalam Azad, edited by Abu Salman Shahjahanpuri, Karachi, 1968, p.110.

Azad had begun the preparation for the establishment of this Madrsa for a long time. In a letter addressed to Abdur Razzaque Malihabadi, dated September 20, 1920 Azad had written:

In the wake of non-cooperation it has become essential to withdraw from government aided schools, most particularly government aided Arabic schools. Situation in Bengal is ripe for such a move.

It is felt that Madrsa Jama Masjid, Calcutta must be started forthwith. Two hundred students are ready to join it... in Bengal Arabic schools are in plenty... There are two thousand students enrolled in such schools. If such a big group of students decide to withdraw from the government aided schools, it will have far reaching impact (on the movement).⁴⁹

Azad had to face great difficulty in arranging the finance for the Madrsa. In numerous letters to A.R. Malihabadi, Azad asked him to mobilise the resources to pay the teachers and give stipends to the students.⁵⁰ Enthusiasm of the students of Madrsa was such that ever since it was declared that every non-cooperator should adorn Khadi, they also demanded charkhas, for themselves, which were promptly arranged.⁵¹ Azad's enthusiasm was not matched by the response of the Ulama, who could not offer their services to his Madrsa at a lesser salary on which Azad was quite disheartened.

49. Ibid., pp. 111-13.

50. Ibid., pp. 114-19.

51. Ibid., p. 118.

Azad had made full use of religion and its symbols to arouse the Muslims to take part in the freedom struggle, as he knew that Muslim would respond to the call of religion only. Because of this understanding he had attempted to start Hizbullah and Darul-Irshad, before his internment in Ranchi. At the same time he was aware of the fact that use of religion in politics needed a careful handling. Once in the course of conversation with Mahadev Desai, Azad said:

Religion is a force, whose power it is impossible to gauge. Religion is like the mighty steam engine, which needs to be in charge of skilful and wide awake driver. In the hands of an unworthy driver it can cause untold misery.⁵²

Azad also wished to use the services of Ulama to impart the political teachings to the Muslims. On the other he was aware of their limitations. Shortsightedness of the most of Ulama made Azad express the desire of being elected Imamul-Hind. It should be noted that Azad was too proud to ask for such a position for his personal ambitions. Instead, it can safely be asserted that through the conferment of the title of Imamul-Hind he wished to make his arguments more acceptable to the common Muslims. He made some overtures towards Mahmudul Hasan and later Maulana Abdul Bari of Firangi Mahal, but finally abandoned

52. Quoted in Desai, n.7, p.118.

the idea as he felt that response of these two was not encouraging. In any case, Azad was known as Imamul Hind but formally he was never elected to this post.⁵³

Even if the title of Imamul Hind was not conferred on Azad, it did not stop him from speaking his mind to the people. As noted earlier Azad moved from one place to another, addressed large gatherings of the people on non-cooperation-Khilafat movement. Azad, most often than not moved the audience by his eloquence and clarity of ideas. He did not wish his community to blurr its vision of freedom for India, with that of just the Khilafat issue. Like Gandhiji, Azad also used the issue of Khilafat to mobilise the Muslims to forge the unity between the Hindus and the Muslims, a life-time dream of Azad, and wage a war against the continual existence of colonial rule. While delivering his presidential address to Majlis-i-Khilafat at Agra, on August 25, 1921, Azad spoke:

The first goal, which was necessary for your success did not fall outside India. The goal was not Iraq or Syria or Asia Minor or Smyrna. The goal was the test of your faith, determination and action. And in place of so many words, if I may say, the goal was your own country and its success or defeat. The Khilafat movement is nothing but a movement to achieve India's freedom.⁵⁴

53. For details see Mushirul Haq's, Muslim Politics in India, 1857-1947, Meerut, 1970.

54. Azad, Khutba-i-Sadarat, Majlis-i-Khilafat, Agra, August 25, 1921 in Malik Ram (ed.), Khutbat-i-Azad, Delhi 1981, pp.42-58.

In the same speech Azad said that, "it was Khilafat movement which awakened the Indians to fight the British. Different groups and communities sunk all their differences and established a unity to face the common enemy." He also added, "It is by the grace of God that the Lamp of Khilafat had lit the Lamp of India. This was the third major success of the movement, which was achieved in the field of India."⁵⁵

A careful examination of the whole speech, would make it abundantly clear that Azad's main concern during the course of the movement was India and its freedom, rather than Turkey. Azad appeared to be overwhelmed when he found the Muslims rising to the occasion and forging unity with Hindus. At the same time it should also be noted that in his entire speech he rarely referred to Turkey and the problem of Khilafat. Instead of referring to Turkey every now and then he referred to the problems of India, its freedom and Hindu Muslim unity.

The Khilafat movement, had undoubtedly a nationalist dimension and desired the removal of British rule over India,⁵⁶ but the emphasis of the leaders of the movement varied from one another. Once Mohammad Ali remarked, "The Muslims must fight for Swaraj by plunging into non-cooperation movement

55. Ibid., p.46.

56. *Speeches of Murshirul Hasan*, n.28, p.11.

with their non-Muslim bretherens, for in this would be possible to achieve Khilafat aims.⁵⁷ (emphasis added).

It is not to argue that Mohammad Ali did not have the freedom of the country in his mind, but it can safely be asserted that his (Mohammad Ali's) focus on Turkey was a shade deeper than on India. The point involved here is that intentions of the Khilafat leaders were the same but emphasis varied. It is here that we find clarity of Azad's perception and eloquence unmatched.

Encouraged by the response of the masses towards the movement, the Khilafat leaders had started issuing statements and fatwas that muslim soldiers should give up their jobs in the British army.⁵⁸ As a matter of fact such a statement had become the basis of the arrest of Ali Brothers and some others, in September 1921. Azad knew it and still unmindful of the consequences exhorted: "...Today I announce and until the time I am alive I would consider it a primary duty to ask the soldiers to quit the government jobs."⁵⁹

Mass upsurge, at such calls of the non-cooperation-Khilafat leaders had come to cast impact on the government. When the visit of the Prince of Wales was successfully

57. Quoted in *ibid.*, p.11.

58. Wasti, n.17, p.232.

59. Azad, *Khutba-i-Ikhtemamaya*, Majlis Khilafat, Agra, October 26, 1921, in Malik Ram (eds.), n.54, p.74.

boycotted, the government expressed the willingness to negotiate with Gandhiji, who put a condition that until Ali Brothers were released there was no possibility of any negotiation.

The movement was pacing through, by and large on the stipulated lines of action. But around the last quarter of 1921, some cracks had begun to appear. In a remote corner of Kerala, on the hills of Malabar, lived Moplas, who were descendants of Arabs and were mostly peasants. They had responded to the call of Khilafat quite enthusiastically. Soon the surcharged emotion turned against the local landlords, who were mostly Hindus. The Moplas, indulged in excesses over the Hindus. Initially the response of the Moplas to the movement made the leaders shower the praise but soon it was realised that violent method were counter productive. Congress Working Committee in September 1921, deplored the Moplas for resorting to violence. Azad also, hearing the news of the excesses on Hindus perpetrated by the Moplas reacted sharply and condemned such use of violence to which he said, that rest of the Muslims of India were not a party to such wanton acts of violence.⁶⁰

60. Azad, Khutba-i-Sadarat, Jameatul-Ulama-i-Hind, Lahore, November 18, 1921, in Malik Ram (ed.), n.54, p.153.

Azad was an integral part of the non-violent non-cooperation-Khilafat movement, but in his underground activities he did not hesitate to make use of violence to overthrow the government. In 1921, he reactivated his secret society in Calcutta, .. developed the contacts with Bolsheviks and revived the connections with other underground revolutionaries of Bengal. But finally such attempts of Azad could not cut much of ice.⁶¹

By the end of 1921, good many leaders of the movement were arrested and put behind the bars. In Bengal C.R. Das and Azad were the two most prominent leaders, who were carrying on with the struggle incessantly. Their activities were a source of embarassement for the government who wished to create situation whereby Azad would leave Calcutta. Azad's determination could not be shaken so easily. Finally, the government on the pretext of two speeches made by Azad earlier, arrested him, on December 10, 1921 and was prosecuted under the section 124-A of the Indian Penal code. After the trial Azad was sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment on February 9, 1922. Reacting to the judgement, Maulana Azad told the magistrate,

61. For details of this aspect of Azad's politics, see Rajat Rays paper, "Revolutionaries, Pan-Islamists and Bolsheviks: Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Political Underworld in Calcutta, 1905-1925," in Mushirul Hasan (ed), Pan Islamic and Communal Trends in Colonial India, Delhi, 1985.

"The sentence is too light, much below my expectations". During the course of trial Azad had not tried to defend himself as it was laid down by the Congress Working Committee that, "in the event of prosecution or a civil suit being brought against non-cooperators, they should not participate in the proceedings beyond making before the court a full statement of facts in order to establish their innocence before the public".⁶²

Accordingly, Azad, instead of defending himself in the court, issued a written statement titled Qaul-i-Faisal (the final verdict) which became not only a piece of political importance but also of great literary value. In Qaul-i-Faisal Azad cited the reference of the speech which he had made earlier and reiterated the same: "Undoubtedly I said that the present government is tyrant... I do not know why should I be expected not to call it (the government) by its real name... I refuse to call black as white".⁶³

He, once again reminded his co-religionists that
"if they (the Muslims) wish to have rights and justice,

62. Rajput, n.3, p.81.

63. Azad, Qaul-i-Faisal, p.91.

then in order to attain these, there is only one path open to them - that is attainment of Swaraj. This (Swaraj) would mean the government of Indians in India and for Indians."⁶⁴ In almost every single page of Qaul-i-Faisal, Azad went on to explain the character of the colonial rule, its mechanism of exploitation of the colonised people, its reactionary attitude towards the just demands of the Indians etc.

While Azad was under detention, the movement marched on unhaltingly. A further short was given to it, when the annual session of the Congress in December 1921, under the Chairmanship of Hakim Ajmal Khan, approved the proposal, of the Civil Disobedience which started with a campaign for non-payment of taxes from the district of Bardoli.⁶⁵ When the Civil Disobedience was in progress, a violent incident took place at a village Chauri Chaura in Gorakhpur district in which twenty two policemen were burnt alive. Such occurrence of violence prompted Gandhiji to suspend the civil disobedience movement on February 11, 1922 which was confirmed by the Congress Working Committee, the following day.⁶⁶ Withdrawal of the movement by Gandhiji

64. Ibid., p.118.

65. Wasti, n.17, p.233.

66. Ibid., p.234.

was solely his own decision as he had not consulted any one over it. Abrupt withdrawal caused dismay among other leaders of the movement, who were mostly in jails and sharply criticised Gandhiji. Of all the leaders Jawaharlal Nehru expressed his sense of shock to Gandhiji quite frankly, to which he replied, "I assure you that if the thing had not been suspended, we would have been leading not a non-violent struggle but essentially a violent one".⁶⁷ The suspension of the movement particularly annoyed the Muslims, who felt betrayed and frustrated.

For many Muslims and its leaders, the Khilafat question remained a vital issue and the suspension of the Civil Disobedience "took the sting out of their agitation".⁶⁸ In various meetings of Jamiyat-Ulema and Central Khilafat Committee Gandhiji was attacked which continued on even after his arrest on March 10, 1922. Khilafat movement received a further blow when the Turkish National Assembly at Ankara, decided on November 22, 1922 to separate the Khilafat from the Sultanate.⁶⁹

67. Quoted in Raj Mohan Gandhi, Eight Lives: A Study of Hindu Muslim Encounter, Delhi, 1985, p.229.

68. Mushirul Hasan, "Religion and Politics in India: The Ulema and Khilafat Movement," in Mushirul Hasan (ed.), Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India, Delhi 1985, p.34.

69. Ibid.

Suspension of the movement produced negative consequences. The fraternity between Hindus and Muslims, achieved during the hey-days of this movement gave way to the communal violence. Organisation of Shudhi and Sangathan on one hand and Tanzim and Tableegh on the other further vitiated the atmosphere.

Within the Congress also, a schism took place. In June 1922, civil disobedience committee was set up by All India Congress Committee to recommend the future course of action. Within the Committee, Vallabhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, M.A. Ansari, Rajgopalachari and Iyengar advocated concentration on Gandhiji's constructive work whereas another group of Motilal Nehru, Vithal Bhai Patel, Hakim Ajmal Khan and C.R. Das were in favour of participation in the council election. The tussle between these two groups acquired a new dimension when at Gaya annual session of the Congress, resolution regarding the Council entry was defeated. Consequently C.R. Das, Motilal Nehru and others decided to set up Swaraj Party in March 1923. The division within the Congress appeared imminent but the intermediary role played by Azad saved the situation.

Azad was respected by both the groups and expressed confidence in him. He was conferred a rare honour of presiding over the special session of the Congress in September 1923,

at Delhi, where he used all his mediatory skill while addressing the session he spoke:

If anybody's conscience was elastic enough and he could gulp down the oath of allegiance without compunction, he was welcome to go to the legislative bodies and curse the government to his hearts content for its wrongs to the people. Those who desired to spend their impotent rage on the government from the safe and comfortable seats in the legislative chambers had every right to do so. Those who believed in the efficacy of moral pressure and who for some reason or the other, were not prepared for work outside the legislators had nothing to do but let off gas now and then in that safe atmosphere.⁷⁰

At this session of the Congress Azad was successful in averting a split in the organisation, but his attention was not confined to this issue only, as he touched upon other vital issue of the freedom movement as well. Vitiating communal situation in the country had pained Azad and he attempted to chalk out a strategy to calm down the fanatic passion of both the communities. Azad said:

For God sake we must take a decision today that whether India would keep up its injured hopes of freedom or bury it in the blood stained ground of Agra and Saharanpur... We must spend all our energies for it (unity of the people and freedom of the country). If we delay it for a day our journey of freedom will be reversed for several years.⁷¹

70. Quoted in Rajput, n.3, pp.112-13.

71. Azad, *Ajalas-i-Khusoosi*, INC, Delhi, 1923, in Malik Ram (ed.), n.54, p.206.

In the same speech Azad once again reiterated, "freedom is my goal". While saying so Azad reiterated his dedication to the nationalist cause. But at the same time he differed from his position during the Al-Hilal period, when he spoke:

Without any hesitation I wish to make it clear that today in India, we do not need any Hindu or Muslim organisation (sangathan). We need just one organisation and that is Indian National Congress.⁷²

In 1912, in one of the issues of Al-Hilal, Azad had spoken that Muslim need not follow anybody, instead they should form their own organisation, taking all inspiration from the Quran in order to fight the British. But what prompted him to declare that the need of the hour was the Indian National Congress and no other organisation, becomes a moot question?

It may be noted that the question which confronted Azad was the freedom of the country. The question of the freedom for him had precedence over any thing else. On his own he wished to fight the British, but at the same time he wanted to take the community along with him. Irony of the fate for Azad was that *the* community had begun to drift from the path of freedom to that of communalism.

72. Ibid., p.207.

At the height of the non-cooperation Khilafat movement, "words like 'Khilafat' 'Kisan ekta', 'swaraj' 'Gandhi' were all intended to conjure up in the minds of the people a picture of bringing about a better world under the direction of better leaders",⁷³ no longer held much of water. Secondly the withdrawal of the movement by Gandhiji was considered a fraud played upon them (the Muslims) and subsequently when the Khilafat itself was brought to an end by the National Assembly of Turkey, Muslim went through a strong sense of despair. Ideals of the movement had withered away and gap was filled by petty squabbles and narrow interests. In a situation of despair, Muslims felt the need of some one who could speak their language, the language of condemnation of Gandhi, the Congress and Turkish government. But Azad preferred to speak his own, as for him the cause of the freedom was far more important than the temporary sense of frustration of his community. That is why when the Kemal Pasha had finally abolished Khilafat in the beginning of 1924 it shocked the whole community and "Maulana Mohd Ali reacted strongly and indignantly against it, he (Azad) did not say a word against the Kemal Revolution".⁷⁴

73. Mushirul Hasan, "Khilafat Movement: A Reappraisal," in Mushirul Hasan (ed.), n.68, pp.10-11.

74. Ziaul Hasan Farooqui, Deoband School and the Demand for Pakistan, Bombay, 1963, p.52.

Efforts of Azad to bring the Muslims to the forefront of the freedom struggle had borne the fruit, yet it was quite short lived. Azad and his co-religionists started becoming strangers to each other as soon as the non-cooperation Khilafat movement was suspended. Abolition of the Khilafat itself by the Turkish government was another blow to the sentiments of the Muslims. Nothing could have been more disheartening to Azad than to see his co-religionists drifting from the path of freedom struggle to that of communalism, as also the crumbling alliance between the two communities. Despite such an experience, Azad did not lose his vision and foresight. He held on to the ground of his conviction - the freedom of India.

CHAPTER IV

Chapter IV

C O N C L U S I O N

We have seen how Azad was using religion and its idioms in order to arouse the Muslims to be an equal partner in the struggle for freedom of India. Azad perceived the religion as a force which had the potential of cutting across the class as well as other demarcations and help in formulating a uniform opinion among the Muslims that British rule was to be fought, as its existence was antithetical to Islam and India, both.

The use of religion in the Indian politics was not new as it had an earlier tradition as well. Among the Hindus the person who invoked the use of religion in order to mobilise the masses behind nationalist aspirations was Bal Ganga Dhar Tilak. "Tilak from the outset of his political career as a leader of men in the early 1890s placed the goal of activating the masses before himself. He wanted to bring the mass of people into the vortex of Indian politics, through wide spread agitation on popular issues of the day".¹ Such a thinking of Tilak was quite out of tune with the politics of the moderates, who believed in constitutional methods only, in order to bring pressure on the foreign government. As a matter of fact most

1. Bipan Chandra, Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern India Delhi, 1979, p.368.

of the moderate leaders of the Congress had feared that the arousal of the masses would prove counter productive. But Tilak had stood on a different ground altogether. It should be noted that in the initial years when nationalism as a feeling was still underdeveloped and Tilak was not able to perceive economic issues very clearly, he relied upon religious and cultural issues in order to organise a mass national consciousness through his opposition to the Age of Consent Bill and the Ganpati and Shivaji festivals.²

Tilak, without being a communalist, had attempted through the door of religion to regenerate confidence among the people to express defiance to the alien rule. While Hindu masses felt the appeal of their religious symbols, the Muslims could not be drawn into it, as they found it irreligious and at the same time feared the aggressive Hindu image.

At the turn of the century, when the Swadeshi movement had started in the wake of anti-Bengal Partition agitation, religion was again invoked quite vigorously to arouse the masses. Many extremist leaders, who emerged in the wake of this movement, staunchly favoured the use of religion in political life. Chief spokesman of such an idea was Bipin Chandra Pál, about whom we have already discussed in the

2. Ibid., p.370.

second chapter. In both the cases the use of religion had paid the dividends, politically.

Because of the use of Hindu religious symbols although for secular end i.e. Freedom of India, Muslims could not be drawn into the national movement. Not only that the Muslims could not be drawn into the movement, they started fearing the Hindu domination.

Fear of the Hindu domination in the minds of the Muslims, did not emerge simply because Hindus were making use of their religious symbols, it was also the result of fear psychosis generated by the leaders of the Muslim community. The leaders of the Muslims did so in the narrow interest of only the elite's but the slogan invariably was raised in the name of whole community. They also embarked on a policy of protection of the interest of the minority through government support.

Quite strangely, the group led by Sir Syed and other Bengal Muslim elites, did not mix up religion with politics, since to them securing jobs and political power did not require any pressure to be brought on the government. Rather, they expressed loyalty towards the government and in turn sought its support. Moreover attempts were made by this group to impress upon the Muslims at large that there was no need to wage a war against the government, since the Muslims were free to follow their religion.

In contrast to the group of modernists and the loyalists, the Ulema considered the British rule inimical to Islam and issued number of fatwas declaring that the Muslims must fight the British rule. They also impressed upon the Muslims in general that in worldly affairs it was justified to have cooperation with the Hindus. The opposition expressed by the Ulema towards the British rule had a negative premise of threat to Islam and the Muslim culture.

Despite the fact that Azad had followed the tradition of the Ulema to express defiance to the British rule, he differed from them. Azad, instead of generating a fear psychosis among the Muslims, embarked on positive programmes.

Political programmes of Azad were given reflection through Al-Hilal and Al-Balagh, two journals, started by him. In the pages of Al-Hilal the content and tenor of the arguments were out and out religious but the goal was the freedom of the country. It was argued by him that if a Muslim becomes a true Muslim he would not remain a slave of any one, as Islam and slavery were two contradictory things. On the other hand he also emphasised the complementarity of Islam and nationalism.

While Azad equated Islam and nationalism, he was aware of the fact that this nationalism would not mean

anything if Hindus and Muslims were not united. Throughout the Al-Hilal phases Azad, repeatedly argued with his co-religionists that they should not follow any other group while determining their own course of political action. But according to Azad, not following Hindus would never mean a non-cooperation with them. He, time and again reminded the Muslims that the unity between the two communities was a prerequisite to achieve independence.

History of Hindu-Muslim relation for the last forty years was disheartening to Azad, as the conflict between the two communities had taken an acute form. It was the result of the attempts of the leaders of both the communities to acquire political power. Such a game of power would prove detrimental to the cause of freedom, was the thinking of Azad. Because of this understanding he did not take up the issues which were considered "practical problems" of the Muslims. It is in this context, we would see that his notion of unity was not to depend on sharing of the jobs and adjustment of the seats in various councils, or in other words unity from the top. His notion of unity had religious sanction which was to be accepted as an article of faith. Hindu-Muslim unity was so dear to Azad that he was willing to forsake the freedom for a while but not the unity. He argued the same, while delivering

his presidential speech at the annual session of the Congress in Delhi in 1923, He spoke:

If an angel descends today from the clouds and announces standing on the top of the Qutub Minar of Delhi that India will get her independence provided she gives up the desire for Hindu-Muslim unity, I shall certainly refuse to accept independence and keep on preaching unity. If independence is lost it will be a loss only for India, but if our unity is gone that will be the loss of humanity.³

Azad was overwhelmed to see the fraternity between the two communities during the heydays of the non-cooperation-Khilafat movement, that once for ever he declared:

When Prophet Mohammad migrated to Medina he prepared a covenant between the Muslims and the Jews of Medina. In the covenant it was mentioned that ultimately the Muslims and non-Muslims would become a nation (Ummah Wahidah). Umma means gaum or nation, Wahidah means one. Thus if I say that the Muslims of India cannot perform their duty unless they are united with the Hindus, it is in accordance with the tradition of the Prophet who himself wanted to make a nation of Muslims and non-Muslims to meet the challenge of the people of Mecca.⁴

Freedom of the country and Hindu-Muslim unity, both were a matter of conviction for Azad. Right from the day he began his politics till the time freedom was achieved Azad did not move an inch from his stand on freedom. At the height of non-cooperation-Khilafat movement, when the emotion of the Muslims was running very high Azad had

3. Azad, Khutba-i-Sadarat, Ajas-i-Khusoosi, Indian National Congress, Delhi, 15 September 1923, Malik Ram (ed.), Khutbat-i-Azad, Delhi 1981, p.205. (Trans. by Mushirul Haq, Muslim Politics in Modern India, 1857-1947, Meerut, 1970.)

4. Azad, Khutba-i-Sadarat, Majlis Khilafat, Agra, 25 August 1921, in *ibid.*, p.51.

declared that issue of Khilafat meant nothing but India's freedom.

Azad remained a popular leader among the Muslims until the time Khilafat movement lost the ground. It was through Al-Hilal that Muslims had come to know Azad and his views on Islam, India's freedom and Hindu-Muslim unity. They accepted his voice as the most authentic and the validity of his arguments was never challenged. Impressed by Azad's political as well as religious ideas, Muslims reposed confidence in him. Precisely on account of authenticity of his arguments and integrity of character, Muslim youths had volunteered to work for Hizbullah and enrolled in Darul-Irshad; both the bodies were directed towards the freedom of the country.

Impact of Azad's political and religious idea on the minds of the Muslims was quite significant. Till Al-Hilal phase, Azad was only popular among the Muslims but did not have any following. During the non-cooperation Khilafat he began to have many followers. But immediately after the suspension of this movement and later the abolition of Khilafat itself, dismayed the entire Muslim community. Suspension of the movement was considered by the Muslims a betrayal of the Hindus. Also the involvement of some

of the Congress leaders in Shudhi movement made the Muslims more apprehensive about the sincerity of the Congress, with regard to the Hindu-Muslim relations. In a number of meetings organised by various Muslim organisations, Gandhiji, Congress and the Turkish Government were condemned in strong words. By now, since Azad had become a part of the Congress, his sincerity and integrity as the protector of the Muslim interests was suspected. As a result whatever following Azad had come to have, began to thin down. Gradually, the Muslim at large began to distance themselves from Azad. Eventually there appeared a deep gulf between them. Another tragedy of Azad was that even the Congress could not make use of his ideas in order to arouse the Muslims to take part in the freedom struggle, since to the Congress, freedom movement was more important than paying any serious attention to the Hindu-Muslims problem. Azad also, after becoming the part of the Congress, could not formulate an alternative programme through which the Muslims at large could be drawn into the national movement.

Yet, the authenticity of the ideas of Azad remained unchallenged. The gulf between the Muslims and Azad which had emerged, came to be filled only after the Independence, when the Muslims who remained in India realised their folly

for having voted for the Muslim League on the demand of Pakistan. And for Azad, who kept on changing positions but his political goals—Hindu-Muslim unity and the freedom of the country remained unchanged till the end.

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