MAULANA AZAD, MUHAMMAD ALI JINNAH AND THE CREATION OF PAKISTAN

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Abstract:
The contradictions of great historical figures sometimes seem very disturbing, for example the personality of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. On one hand, he is respected in religious circles as a learned scholar, who was well versed in Islamic theology. But on the other hand, in the political, social and collective spheres, he had a heavy commitment to Indian National Congress and its politics so much so that he was ready to go to any extent for this and proved it by his words and actions. Maulana Azad was deeply committed to secularism at the educational, socio-political level. This paper seeks to analyze the thought of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and his differences with the founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, on various issues. The main topic of discussion is his political thought, which is both liked and disliked by Muslims of the sub-continent. In India, he became the first Education Minister and respected as a freedom fighter and in Pakistan he is disliked by Muslims, who thinks he misguided a large section of Indian Muslims of the Pakistan movement and separate nationalism based on religious identity.

Key Words: Indian Nationalism, Maulana Azad’s hatred towards Muslim League, Muhammad Ali Jinnah’s and Maulana Azad’s differences
INTRODUCTION:

Abul Kalam Ghulam Muhiyuddin, well known by his pen name Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, was born on November 11, 1888 (Nanang Nurcholis, 2018). He came from a family of notable Muslim scholars, his father, Maulana Khairuddin, was a Bengali Muslim of Afghan ancestry. His mother was an Arab and the daughter of Sheikh Mohammad Zaher Watri, a great Arab scholar of Madina Munawwara. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad received religious education from his father, who raised him under close supervision and hired tutors to teach him. He completed all of his education at home. Azad travelled overseas in 1908, he visited Iraq, Egypt, Syria, and Turkey where he met Shaikh Muhammad Abdh, Saeed Pasha, and other Arab revolutionaries. His interactions with everyone changed him into a nationalist revolutionary (Azad, A. K., 1989). He recorded the reaction of Muslims in these words:

“They expressed shock at Indian Muslims' lack of interest in or opposition to nationalist goals. They believed that Indian Muslims should have taken the initiative in the country's fight for independence and were perplexed as to why Indian Muslims were reduced to becoming camp followers of the British (Nanang Nurcholis, 2018).”

Upon his return to attract more Muslim revolutionaries, he launched the weekly Urdu publication Al-Hilal in 1912. Al-Hilal developed as a cutting-edge platform for radical viewpoints. In 1914, the government outlawed Al-Hilal because it was seen as a propagandist for secessionist ideas. Then, with the same goal of promoting Indian nationalism and revolutionary principles based on Hindu-Muslim solidarity, he launched another weekly named Al-Balagh. In addition to outlawing this newspaper in 1916, the government also banished him from Calcutta and imprisoned him in Ranchi, where he was eventually freed in 1920 following the First World War (Azad, A. K., 1989).

During Caliphate Movement, Non Cooperation and Migration Movement, several Muslim leaders and masses were mesmerized by Gandhiji's presence and active participation in these movements viz Maulana Abdul Bari Firangi Mahal, Maulan Muhammad Ali, Mualana Shaukat Ali, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Darul Uloom Deobnad, etc. but once when these movements ended, the artificial quoted layer of Hindu Muslim unity also vanished. Maulana Azad stuck to the idea of Indian Nationalism and adopted political stances that were radical for the majority of Muslims at that time. He vehemently criticized the British for their extreme prejudice and disregard for the needs of ordinary Indians. Additionally, he condemned the All India Muslim League's call for communal segregation and criticized Muslim leaders for prioritizing communal matters over the interests of the nation (Azad, A. K., 1989). Azad became interested in Jamal al-din al-pan-Islamic Afghani's philosophy. The well-known Hindu revolutionaries Sri Aurobindo and Syam Sunder Chakravarthy exposed Azad to revolutionary activities when he opposed the partition of Bengal in 1905 and got more involved in them. He worked covertly to plan revolutionary events and gatherings in Mumbai, Bihar, and Bengal (M.K. Singh., 2008).
Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali and Jinnah and All India Muslim League:

Mohammad Ali Jinnah's first membership in the Indian National Congress is well-known, on the other hand, although Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was present at the inaugural session of the All India Muslim, held on 31st December, 1906 at Decca, yet he did not join All India Muslim League. He was once a disciple of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's rational school of thought, but he disliked his policy of non-confrontation with the British. The irony of Azad representing traditional Muslim culture and Jinnah, a westernized leader of the Muslim Separatist movement, exemplifying the secular non-communal profession of the Congress, has been described by several authors. As per Razia Sultana, “Even Maulana Azad who was a Muslim but shared the political vision of the Congress, and was the staunch supporter of united India, has hardly got any favorable attention from Pakistani historians (Razia Sultana, 2005).”

In this background, it becomes worthwhile to trace the context of the All India Muslim League’s attitude towards Maulana Azad, and to inquire whether it was only a reflection of political differences, or whether it encompassed personal considerations also. Muhammad Ali Jinnah’s refusal to shake hands with Azad at Simla Conference in 1945 is widely discussed. It's not as if they had never interacted before or had always harbored animosity for one another. They belonged to the same two political parties as one another. The AIML Council had appointed Azad to preside over its annual meetings in 1921, one year after Jinnah's resignation from the Congress (Matloob-ul-Hasan Saiyid, 1945). He turned down the honor but stayed with the Muslim League.

Azad had known the Muslim League from within, and as such, his depiction of the Muslim League was expected to be highly perceptive; instead he shares the common notion that the Muslim League was a loyalist body in all the phases of its existence. Describing its second phase, Azad comments:

“The All India Muslim League stayed out of the political conflict for the time being, but as soon as any progress was made, it asserted itself on behalf of the Muslim population (Azad, A. K, 1989).”

AZAD’S PERSPECTIVE TOWARDS ALL INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE:

He always had disliking for Muslim League which he showed on various occasions.

“The Muslim League was first created to counter the Indian National Congress, as I've already
mentioned. Few people who had fought for the nation's independence were members of the League. They had neither given anything up nor endured the discipline of a battle. They were either retired or men who had been publicly introduced by the British (Azad, A. K, 1989)."

He could hardly have been unaware of the role the Muslim League played during the boycott of the Simon Commission because he clearly did not fit into either of the aforementioned groups. What else might have motivated Azad to join Jinnah's faction rather than the (Sir Muhammad) Shafi group if not the anti-British agitation Jinnah was spearheading? Aside from his personal involvement, Azad's argument against the AIML can be evaluated completely on its own merits by reading his own book and going back to the events of July 5, 1942, which marked the beginning of the problem he would eventually face. Early that morning Mahatma Gandhi had written to Azad to resign as President of the Congress and Member of the Working Committee, for opposing him (Gandhi) in his desire to launch a non-cooperation movement. Confiding to his readers the reason behind his stand, Azad writes:

"Japanese promises didn't hold any appeal to me, and I believed that we couldn't have any faith in their professionals. I found it quite improbable that they would halt their winning march after witnessing the British withdrawal. (Azad, A. K, 1989).

Leaving aside Azad's representative status, (since he had to give in without resigning and had to decline the Viceroy's invitation for talks) we can note that in 1942, at least Azad had thought discretion the better part of valour in launching a movement against the British. "Fighting for independence" and the "discipline of a struggle", had to be subordinated to the strategies of survival, because of the fear that it would result only in a change of masters; as credible a scale-map of the Muslim attitude and the Pakistan demand as any! On 13 July 1942, about a week after his letter to Azad, Gandhi wrote to Nehru:

"Both he and I are unable to understand one another. We are diverging on other issues as well as the Hindu-Muslim debate... Therefore, I recommend that the Maulana give up the presidency.

Maulana Azad gives the impression that his break with the Muslim League had been over the partition demand, but actually it had come earlier and more gradually. Azad, who subscribed to the Nehru Report, did not at first take a stand over it. When a Muslim League sub-committee was formed to consider the Fourteen Points, Azad’s name appeared next to Jinnah's (M.H. Saiyid, 1986).

Maulana Azad first tried a communal tack himself by forming and assuming the Presidency of the Muslim Nationalist Party on 27 July 1929, but as his party made no headway, he identified exclusively with the Indian National Congress. Even after the Nehru Report had divided Muslims into splinter groups like the All-India Muslim Conference and the Muslim Nationalist Party, Jinnah was not disheartened and continued to appeal to Azad, among others for a demonstration of Muslim solidarity. When on a short visit to India from England, Jinnah quite uncharacteristically
accepted an invitation to address the 1931 Session of the U.P. Muslim Conference—an organization of which he was not a member—only to avail of an opportunity to renew his appeal for unity. He said:

“I want to start by saying that it is crucial for Muslims to stand together and that doing so is extremely critical. For the love of God, close all of your ranks and files and put an end to this internal conflict. I pleaded fervently and as forcefully as I could in front of Dr. Ansari, Mr. Sherwani, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, and Dr. Syed Mehmud. I hope to receive the wonderful news that, despite our disagreements and regardless of our convictions, now is not the time for us to argue before I leave India's beaches (Jamiluddin Ahmed, c. L, 1969).”

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah did not harbor animosity for Azad even when differences became apparent, as seen by the force of his argument and his manner of speaking. For his part, Azad continued to communicate with Jinnah. In an effort to convince Jinnah to adopt the Nehru Report, he had accompanied Pundit Motilal Nehru and Dr. Mukhtar Ansari when they met Muhammad Ali Jinnah in Lucknow in 1928. Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Maulana Azad met on March 25, 1942, in Delhi, two years after the dispute around the term "showboy (Muhammad Anwer, 1969). " It was only where recognition of Azad's representative status was involved, such as in Simla, that Jinnah was brusque with him. In *India Wins Freedom*, Azad professes to have had reservations over the Congress interpretation of the Cabinet Mission Plan. Either Azad was going by the professed ideals of the Congress or else he was not privy to the innermost recesses of Congress objectives. According to Sudhir Ghosh:

“The provinces were granted the greatest degree of autonomy in all areas as part of Maulana Azad's solution to the sectarian problem, leaving the Centre to handle solely foreign affairs, communications, and defence (Sudhir Ghosh, 1967).”

This was a complete misreading of the Congress stance. In extenuation we can say that shortly before the Cabinet Delegation arrived, Nehru wrote to Sir Stafford Cripps (on 27 January 1946) that:

“The ideal Indian Federation would have protections to protect interests and leave the federating units in charge of everything else, with the exception of defence, external affairs, communications, and currency.”

Although the similarities between the two concepts are apparent, Azad's inability or reluctance to recognize when Nehru was making a tactical concession and when he was speaking from genuine conviction is just as stunning. What transpired afterwards demonstrates that he was unable to understand the motivations of the Congress, not that he was unwilling. Azad expressed his ideas for a loose centre, as Nehru had done, in a letter to the Cabinet Delegation. Despite serving as the Congress's President, he was later charged for writing without permission. Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur and Pyarelal each overheard: “When Gandhi asked Azad if he had written such a letter, he sought
refuge in direct denial; Azad himself understood that he could not genuinely consider himself President."

“Gandhiji directly questioned Maulana Sahib about whether he had written the Viceroy any letters on the ongoing negotiations. The Maulana vehemently denied having sent any kind of letter. While Gandhiji's original copy of the letter was lying before him, he took this action.”

Subsequently, on 22nd June 1946, Azad wrote another letter which he tried to disown, to the effect that Congress would not insist on nominating a Muslim to the Interim Government (Sudhir Ghosh, 1967). Azad wrote a letter to the Cabinet Mission in extenuation. This letter found its place among Cripps’ papers. According to Peter Clarke the letter is in Jawaharlal Nehru's handwriting, thus providing irrefutable evidence that Nehru had attempted to extricate Azad from the imbroglio he had got into (Peter Clarke, 2003). Azad repaid Nehru by launching a posthumous assault on him; singling out his Bombay, 10 July 1946 press conference for denunciation, when he fully knew that Nehru was not alone in his opposition to the grouping clause.

The validity of Nehru's interpretation is not at issue here. It was wrong per se. All communiques of the Cabinet Delegation contradict him. The point at issue is that when the controversy was current, while the Cabinet Delegation was still in India, Azad held views identical to those expressed by Jawaharlal Nehru. Be it correspondence, discourse or conference, Azad in 1946 had been as dismissive as Nehru of the Cabinet Mission Plan. He had written to the Cabinet Delegation that the Constituent Assembly would not be bound by any previous arrangement (T.Walter Wallbank,1965). Azad had spoken that the Constituent Assembly would have the "unfettered" right to make a constitution, it would be sovereign and would legislate for a united not divided India (A. B, 1947). In a meeting with the Secretary of State, Lord Pethick-Lawrence, on 26 June 1946, Azad had told him in Nehru's presence that the Constituent Assembly would obviously function’s in accordance with the rules but, clearly also, a province could stay away (Lumby, N. M, 1979). Whether provinces would have to form groups initially or not was the vital point on which the Congress had taken issue with the Cabinet Delegation and the Muslim League. In this meeting Azad was not a silent spectator but an active participant. If he privately disagreed with Nehru, he could have easily kept silent, he was under no compulsion to speak. This leads us to the inescapable conclusion that Azad took advantage of the wider publicity given to Nehru's 10 July press conference, to attack him when his own contentions on the subject had been forgotten. A confounded Nehru made only a very oblique reference to Azad's own role during the controversy, when he was obliged to deal publicly with his friend's denunciation.

So how can I assess my level of accountability? Maulana Sahib may be entirely correct in believing that I did improperly, but I bear a share of the blame. However, I would add that Maulana Sahib occasionally thinks too much in terms of an individual rather than the forces at play. Although individuals can and have changed the world, they are sometimes just the symbols of larger forces work (Azad, A. K,1989).”
This was the leader Gandhi and Nehru were pressing upon Jinnah and these were the Congress leaders who took umbrage when Jinnah refused to countenance him. In 1938 Gandhi wrote to Jinnah to the effect that while he (Gandhi) was always at Jinnah's disposal, Jinnah had better discuss Hindu-Muslim problems of communal representation with Azad (M.H. Saiyid, 1986). Replying to Gandhi's suggestion, Jinnah did not raise the question of communal representation but of Gandhi's stead fastness in such professions. He focused not on Gandhi's presentation of Azad as a leader of Muslim opinion but as a successor to Dr. Ansari. He said:

"I find that when you claim that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad would serve as your mentor now that Dr. Ansari is no longer alive, your attitude and thinking have not changed. If you continue down this path, you would be reliving the same tragedy you had when you admitted you were unable to change Dr. Ansari's adamantly held opinions and had to respond, "I'd be willing, but what would I do? (M.H. Saiyid, 1986)."

In reality, it was the leaders of the All India Congress who emphasized Azad's role as a communal spokesperson. When they began using Jinnah's social gatherings with Azad for their political gain, an undertone was added to their insistence. "A short while ago you met Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, one of our most revered leaders. There is no one more prepared to communicate the Congress viewpoint in reference to the minorities problem or any other," Jawaharlal Nehru stated in a letter to Jinnah dated February 4, 1938. This letter only helped to confirm Jinnah's concerns, and when Gandhi requested Azad join him at their upcoming meeting on April 28, 1938, Jinnah declined (Stanley Wolpert, p.160). However, these coordinated efforts go a long way to demonstrating that Azad was raised to the position of Indian National Congress President on purpose in order to challenge Jinnah and the Muslim League, rather than as a result of natural progression of events. If so, Gandhi would not have been able to so casually request Azad's resignation from this prestigious position in 1942. Azad seemed to have grown uneasy with the part that he was being given. He attempted to allay Jinnah's concerns about himself in a letter

"Please do not misunderstand me regarding the Hindu-Muslim problem. I do not wish for a moment that I should carry the laurels of having attained the communal unity, nor I had any such desire when I met you in 1937-8 and tried for Congress-League settlement. My only wish is centred round the idea that a decent agreement may be reached between the Congress and the League; as I am sure it is urgently needed for the Muslims and the country. Delay is detrimental to the interests of the both. Here I may mention that under no circumstances would I like to bring to the notice of the public, any one of my efforts in this connection. I only wish to perform my duty according to my belief. Perhaps an occasion may arrive in future which may unveil the reality to you. Then alone you will be able to find out that you have been laboring under a misunderstanding about me (Pakistan, N. A.,1939)."

Jinnah was unable to respond to the situation that led to the writing of this letter, which was the
resolution of a standstill in discussions between the Congress and the League. Three days later, Azad replied to his letter, stating that a meeting between Nandan and Jinnah had taken the place of his letter and that Jinnah did not need to react. Although he didn't agree to meet with Azad, he did reply to a telegraph sent at the same time. Azad had used the strongest language possible to communicate his anger, but it is obvious that Jinnah was more concerned about Azad's credentials than his objectives. Jinnah had made it clear that he didn't believe Azad, but his position grew more firm.

It was only after Congress continued in its attempts to confront Jinnah with Azad that Jinnah administered Azad a direct rebuff. The last straw came when Azad as President of Congress wired Jinnah asking for an appointment to discuss the communal issue with him. The complete text of their telegraphic exchange is as under:

Azad to Jinnah: Bombay 12 July 1940.

"Your July 9 Statement. The Congress Delhi resolution definitely means by National Government a composite Cabinet not limited to any single party. But is it the position of the League that she cannot agree to any provisional arrangement not based on the two-nation scheme? If so please clarify by wire."

Jinnah to Azad: "Your telegram. Cannot reciprocate confidence. I refuse to discuss with you, by correspondence or otherwise, as you have completely forfeited the confidence of Muslim India. Can't you realize you are made a Muslim showboy Congress President to give it colour that it is national and deceive foreign countries. You represent neither Muslims nor Hindus. The Congress is a Hindu body. If you have self-respect resign at once. You have done your worst against the League so far. You know you have hopelessly failed. Give it up (Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada., 1977)."

This reply infuriated the opponents of the Muslim League who raised an outcry especially over the word "showboy". The harshest statements issued by Congress Muslims proceeded from Asif Ali and Syed Mehmud, while the Jamiat ul Ulema Hind held a public meeting at Delhi to condemn the Quaid-e-Azam.\textsuperscript{ii} Liaquat Ali Khan who had been associated in negotiations with the Congress since 1928 at first demurred, but finally went to the Press with a rejoinder:

Congressmen have one standard of decency and public morality for themselves and another for others. When in November last (1939) Mr. Gandhi defamed the whole nation of 40 million Muslims in one of his articles in the Harijan, and virtually stated that anyone who could pay a higher price could buy them, the mouth of these guardians of public morality and decency were completely sealed and not even a mild murmur of protest was uttered by any one of these Congressite Muslims who today claim to be embodiments of Islamic culture and traditions. The language of a telegram is always necessarily condensed and therefore sounds more abrupt than a letter. There is nothing new in the telegram which has not been stated more than once by the
Maulana Azad, Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the Muslim League. Mr Jinnah refuses to discuss with Maulana Sahib either by correspondence or otherwise as Maulana Azad had forfeited the confidence of the Muslims (Star of India, , p.4).

Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah writing privately to Liaquat Ali Khan commented:

“Your statement was really good. Every nation has the means requisite to deal with its traitors. India is a wonderful land. If the head of the Muslim organization declines to reciprocate the confidence of a renegade and names him as a traitor, he is guilty of using strong language, discourtesy, rudeness and what not, and finally he has offended against Islamic culture and good manners. Since 1938, Muslim League leaders and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad have known that the Working Committee's policy requires that the Hindu-Muslim conflict be discussed primarily between Muslims. Instead of abandoning it, they gave him the position of President of the Congress this year with Gandhi's approval, and the news spread that he is a Muslim divine. I wish this element of what I'm saying could be highlighted. Personally, I don't think I'll descend to saying anything else at this time. Here I may also draw attention to the fact that Maulana Abul Kalam sent a wire in October when I was staying with you saying that he wanted to meet me (Q.A.P., File 17), and I told him clearly in my reply that I would not see him with regard to the Hindu-Muslim question (M.H. Saiyid.,1986).”

This letter demonstrates just how strongly Quaid-e-Azam felt the force of Maulana Azad's whim. He didn't respond in an impartial manner. Only after being irritated by Azad's second telegram did Jinnah refer to him as a “show boy”. Every party is free to promote any member to any position, but Maulana Azad's election as Congress President had the unintended consequence of confusing Muslim voters just when the Indian Muslim community was approaching a turning point in its history.

Despite sounding harsh, Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah’s irate response that he didn't speak for Muslims or Hindus reveals the essence of his tragedy. Election results from 1946 provide as proof that he did not "represent the Muslims." He has made a point of emphasizing how, in 1946, he did not represent the opinions of the Indian National Congress. The two options that are consistently available during any confrontation are resistance and appeasement, it is also true. Any criticism must be moderate because it is a difficult choice. However, the Muslim League's criticism of Azad centres on the fact that his decision was not entirely motivated by his own goals. On a related note, we must realise that despite his unfair accusations against Nehru, there is no doubt as to what Azad stood for. But this reflection offers no consolation. Azad compromised in 1947 what he held dear, a communal settlement predicated on India's unity, by choosing appeasement in 1928.

CONCLUSION:

Maulana Azad believed that Hindus and Muslims should live together in India to form a common Indian culture and Indian nationality. In his speeches and books, he thought it was natural and this process cannot be undone.
The concept of united nationalism based on secular nationalism by Maulana Azad and his colleagues was working under the assumption that if India was governed as a country with the political cooperation of Hindu majority and Muslims, then there will be no negative impact on the overall religious perspective of Muslims, and on the religious and political ideals of Muslims themselves, as if the political and economic rights of Muslims and the political ideal of not remaining "fitnah" in religion, through this common Indian nationality can be completed. Maulana Azad and his associates were promoting the illusion of a united Indian nation. He was going to destroy this political value and concept at the collective level. As Sardar Patel had said in a speech in Calcutta in 1948, "How come those Indian Muslims who have remained in India rise up after a day and tell us that we are now loyal to India and the Indian Government, while they Majority of them have been supporting Muslim League."

Maulana Azad's secular nationalism divided Indian Muslims. Undoubtedly, Maulana Azad's political ideology of united nationalism based on secular nationalism confused and weakened the Indian Muslims at the political and intellectual level. Divided them into groups. They are suspicious, hateful and indifferent to the overall interpretation of religion. Induced a significant number of Indian Muslims to oppose the Muslim League politically, socially and religiously during the Pakistan Movement. Due to which, the political bargaining of Muslim League with the Congress promoted mutual hatred and prejudice among the Muslims, the grips of which are still burning the collectivity and political will of the Muslims.

Idea of a united nation based on secular nationalism gave birth to such contemptuous hatred and alienation that the majority of Indian Muslims remained forever suspicious of Pakistani Muslims and the Indian Muslims had to put on such a shell of artificial or hatred towards the Pakistani Muslims that put them in the opposite direction of their religious perspective, religious theology and world view, and it continues to cloud the paths of the common future of the Indian Muslims in particular and of the Indian subcontinent as a whole.
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