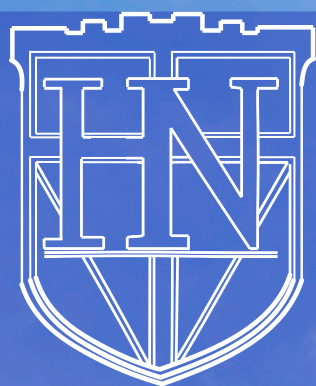

Historia Nova

Duke Undergraduate Review

DUKE UNIVERSITY - SPRING 2019 VOLUME II

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Historia Nova

An Undergraduate Historical Review

DUKE UNIVERSITY

SPRING 2019 - VOLUME II

HN

Letter from the Editors

Dear Readers,

In an effort to curate new history, Historia Nova recognizes the provocative and presents the conservative, whilst rendering traditional and emerging perspectives equally valid in historical scholarship. We strive to incite discussions across geographic and temporal boundaries, build networks between institutions across the country and the globe, and inspire younger generations of scholars to understand that history is modernity.

The present allows us to experience a walking history of tomorrow. Today's modernity features divides regarding wars, politics, climate change, poverty, and inequality, while their respective fates seemingly rest in tomorrow's history. John Milton's *Paradise Lost* suggests, "The mind is its own place and in itself, can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven." As we walk, we encounter numerous angles and ideologies from which we can formulate insightful, interdisciplinary narratives of new history. In the plodding ticker of modernity becoming history, we know the past and imagine the future. Historia Nova does not restrict submissions to particular topics or themes. We hope to leave room for readers themselves to draw interesting parallels between articles.

Within this edition lies reflections of the Muslim leader Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's redefining humanistic philosophy, Southern universities' complex relationship with regard to American slavery, and the Tatar Bolshevik Mirsaid Sultan-Galiev's ushering Muslim national communism into Central Asia, Crimea, and the Caucuses. This issue also features a work of art history that re-defines German nationalism through Max Beckmann's religious Expressionism, as well as a piece on film history that evaluates the creation of a Holocaust memory through *Schlinder's List*. Whether it is religious, nationalist, humanist, or capitalist ideologies, the papers presented in this issue demand us to hesitate in making quick conclusions. They are microhistories that when situated within the broader context of the historical period and region, reveal deeper divides, stronger bonds, and complicated realities. And in this way, each author crafts the beginning strands of reevaluating existing history and writing new history.

We would like to extend a sincere thank you to both the Duke History Department and its Chairman, Dr. John J. Martin, for continually guiding the direction of the Duke History Union and Historia Nova in our efforts to steer dialogues of the historical memory into perspectives of the modern world. We would also like to recognize the *Chicago Journal of History* for helping to debut Historia Nova's design within our second edition. Furthermore, we encourage any reader to reach out, ask questions, and submit manuscripts.

Sincerely,
HN Editorial Board

Mission

Historia Nova features exceptional historical analysis from undergraduate students at institutions across the United States and around the world with the ultimate mission of showing that history can be both innovative and new. Our publication reveals the field's dynamism and challenges the ways in which history is interpreted and scholars reinterpret history. We hope you enjoy this Spring Volume.
For more information about our organization at Duke University please visit our website at (https://history.duke.edu/new-events/undergraduate) or reach us at (dukehistorianova@gmail.com).

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Between Pan-Islamism and Indian Nationalism:

The Khilafat, Humanism, and Abul Kalam Azad

BY AHMED ELBENNI, YALE UNIVERSITY

Few figures in Indian history have presented an interpretive conundrum so acutely as has Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (1886-1958), a Muslim scholar who spent his first adult years as a journalist and his last as Minister of Education. His complex and apparently contradictory philosophical and political stances — running the gamut from radical pan-Islamism to Muslim communalism to secular Indian nationalism — have frustrated attempts to identify him with any particular school of thought.[1] The struggle to render him intelligible has produced numerous competing theories as to the ultimate meaning of his legacy — theories typically informed by the sociopolitical context of modern-day India. Some hold Azad and the Khilafat Movement in which he played a leading role responsible for seeding the pan-Islamic ideology that informs radical Muslim terrorists today.[2] Others, like Ammar Anwer, view Azad as a champion of Indian nationalism and a model for reconciling Islam with the modern secular nation-state.[3] Most notable scholars of South Asian history — including I. H. Qureshi, Shuakat Ali, Peter Hardy, and Marietta Stepaniants — agree that the Khilafat Movement of 1919-1924 represented a turning point that transitioned Azad from pan-Islamic revivalism to secular Indian nationalism.[4] But there is reason to doubt each of these aforementioned narratives, as all fail to fully grasp and account for the complex, sometimes apparently contradictory views expressed in Azad's political writings.

In this paper, I will closely examine Azad's writings in *Al-Hilal*, a newspaper typically classified as "Pan-Islamist," and Azad's leadership of the Khilafat movement to argue that, far from representing a transitional phase between pan-Islamism and secular nationalism, his actions (and words) in the Khilafat movement in fact capture the core philosophy that shaped Azad's action throughout his political career:

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1 C.P. Bhambhri, "Maulana Azad's contested legacy." *Business Standard*, December 19, 2013. Accessed December 20, 2017. http://www.business-standard.com/article/beyond-business/maulana-azad-s-contested-legacy-113121901091_1.html.

2 Uday Mahurkar, "How Pakistan would view Abul Kalam Azad and Deoband School," *DailyO* - Opinion News & Analysis on Latest Breaking News India, July 26, 2015. Accessed December 20, 2017. https://www.dailyo.in/politics/maulana-abdul-kalam-azad-partition-pakistan-deoband-indian-muslims/story/1/5223.html.

3 Ammar Anwer, "Abul Kalam Azad's legacy provides the counter-narrative for radical Pan-Islamism." *The Nation*. Accessed December 20, 2017. http://nation.com.pk/21-Dec-2015/abul-kalam-azad-s-legacy-provides-the-counter-narrative-for-radical-pan-islamism.

4 Ian Henderson Douglas, Gail Minault, and Christian W. Troll, *Abul Kalam Azad, an Intellectual and Religious Biography* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993), 283-284.

Islamic humanism. "Pan-Islamism" and "secular nationalism" both fail to comprehensively account for Azad's political thought, thereby establishing the necessity of an alternative means of classification. Rather, Azad's "pan-Islamic" writings and his leadership of the Khilafat movement to illuminate a humanistic philosophy undergirded his religious and nationalist allegiances.

HISTORIOGRAPHY -

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was born as Mohiuddin Ahmad in Mecca on November 18, 1888, but he spent the majority of his life in India.[5] He first rose to prominence with the publication of his Urdu-language newspaper *Al-Hilal* in 1912, where he preached anti-British resistance and cultivated pro-Turkish support. He eventually came to play a leading role in the Khilafat movement (1919-1924). The Khilafat movement, generally remembered as a Pan-Islamic, anti-imperialist movement against the British Empire's potential abolishment of the Ottoman Empire post-WWI, politically mobilized Muslims across India and helped foster Hindu-Muslim unity via collaboration with Mahatma Gandhi's nationalist non-cooperation movement.[6] However, after Gandhi halted non-cooperation in 1922, the Khilafat movement weakened and eventually collapsed in 1924 when Kemal Ataturk abolished the position of Sultan and Caliph, rendering the drive to preserve the Khilafat irrelevant. After this point, according to the popular historical narrative, Azad shed his pan-Islamist activism in favor of a more domestic and inclusive campaign for a secular Indian nationalism that encompassed Muslims and Hindus alike.[7] He led the Indian National Congress as president in 1931, remaining prominent within the Indian nationalist movement up until his vote against partition in 1947 and his eventual appointment as the new Indian state's first Minister of Education.[8]

The suggestion that Azad ever "embraced" secular Indian nationalism, however, is as dubious as the notion that he ever espoused pure pan-Islamism. Azad undoubtedly participated and took on leading roles in both of these movements, but rather than assuming that such support evidenced a full-fledged philosophical adoption of their principles, it may be more productive to consider that said movements manifested principles — principles, as we shall see, which were fundamentally humanistic — that simply overlapped with his own rather than totally circumscribing them. That Azad played an active role in a movement does not necessitate that he adopted wholesale that movement's philosophical

5 Douglas et al, *Abul Kalam Azad*, 1-2.
6 M. Naeem Qureshi, *Pan-Islam in British Indian Politics: A Study of the Khilafat Movement, 1918-1924* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 1999), 1-7.
7 Douglas et al, *Abul Kalam Azad*, 283.
8 Douglas et al, *Abul Kalam Azad*, 283.

commitments. Instead, Azad's political activism must be understood in the context of his political writings, most importantly his numerous articles in his newspaper *Al-Hilal*.

Was Azad an ardent pan-Islamist, in the sense that he believed in establishing a worldwide caliphate for Muslims and cared little for India as a discrete political entity? Historical evidence suggests otherwise. As observed by Gail Minault, Azad reacted to the 1924 abolishment of the Ottoman Khilafat by advising the movement's leaders (including himself) to focus on "matters close at home," by which he meant the "political organization of Indian Muslims."[9] Minault builds on this to argue that the Khilafat movement was "based on a pan-Islamic symbol [the Ottoman Caliphate] but directed toward Muslim participation in Indian nationalism." And indeed, Azad was very much concerned with fostering cooperative Hindu-Muslim relations for the sake of attaining Indian *swaraj* (self-rule). In the 1923 presidential address he delivered to the Indian National Congress, a time during which he politically identified as a Khilafatist, Azad emphasized the importance of inter-communal unity and Indian independence before stressing that he'd preserve Hindu-Muslim unity at the cost of Indian independence: "Today, if an angel were to descend from the heaven and declare from the top of the Qutab Minar, that India will get Swaraj within twenty-four hours, provided she relinquishes Hindu-Muslim unity, I will relinquish Swaraj rather than give up Hindu-Muslim unity."[10] Azad understood the Khilafat movement's agenda to be primarily national; in a 1921 article he wrote for his Urdu weekly in Calcutta, *Paigham*, he stressed that "the purpose of the Khilafat movement is Indian freedom."[11] Azad's tendency to pair calls for the preservation of the Khilafat with calls for Indian independence betrayed the movement's domestic and nationalist character. The Khilafat movement then cannot be characterized as a purely pan-Islamic, extraterritorial movement unconcerned with Indian issues; to do so would be to fixate on the lofty pan-Islamic rhetoric while neglecting the ways that such rhetoric, with its religiously charged demonization of the British Empire, politically mobilized Muslims for anti-colonialist struggle within India. More so, the Khilafatists, in allying with Gandhi (an Indian nationalist), pushed the non-cooperation movement forward and thereby furthered the development of a nationalist Indian movement.[12] Thus the Khilafat

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9 Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 204-205.

10 Saiyidain Hameed, *Maulana Azad, Islam and the Indian National Movement* (Kolkata: Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, 2014), 130.

11 Mushirul Hasan, *Islam and Indian Nationalism: Reflections on Abul Kalam Azad* (New Delhi: Manohar Publications, 1992), 24.

12 Mushirul Hasan, *Islam, Pluralism, Nationhood: Legacy of Maulana Azad* (New Delhi: Niyogi Books, 2014), 56.

movement, in effect if not in rhetoric, was essentially an Indian nationalist one. Should we therefore classify Azad, based on his leadership of the Khilafat movement, a nationalist?

A similar categorical insufficiency reveals itself when we look at Azad's path post-Khilafat. Even during his leadership of the Indian National Congress, Azad never abandoned the Turkish fez that marked his support for the Ottoman Caliphate.[13] More significant still was the view expressed in his 1940 address to the Congress, where Azad declared that "I am a Muslim, [but] I have another deep realization… which is strengthened, not hindered, by the spirit of Islam. I am equally proud of the fact that I am Indian."[14] Azad's reframing of Indian nationalism in this manner has important implications—it does not subordinate Islamic identity to an all-inclusive secular ideal of Indian identity, but rather suggests that Islam determined the contours of his Indian nationalism. The most decisive evidence against Azad's ostensible nationalism, though, is quite simple: he believed nationalism an inherently regressive form of communalism. Writing an article titled "Islam and Nationalism" in a rebooted *Al-Hilal* in 1927, just as he was beginning what is commonly seen as the "secular nationalist" phase of his life, Azad launched a scathing critique on the modern conception of nationalism, arguing that it is little more than aggressive, chauvinistic, and glorified tribalism.[15]

Hence the contradictions that render the most common political orientations ascribed to Azad—pan-Islamism and secular nationalism—basically untenable. If Azad were indeed a pan-Islamist, why did he concern himself so deeply with Hindu-Muslim unity and Indian independence, quintessentially national problems? If he were a secular Indian nationalist, why did he couch his nationalism in religious terms and maintain a public appearance that deliberately recalled his days as a pan-Islamist leader? Clearly, the totalizing descriptions of "pan-Islamism" and "secular nationalism" do not sufficiently delineate Azad's thought.

AZAD'S HUMANISM -

Freedom and human brotherhood—the essentially humanistic character of Azad's thought is evident even from his early writings in *Al-Hilal*. Indeed, Azad's clearest articulation of his humanistic ideals came in this supposedly pan-Islamist newspaper, most notably in the aforementioned 1927 article titled "Islam and Nationalism." Even as Azad dismissed nationalism as a retrograde variant of communalism, he advanced humanism

13 Hasan, *Islam, pluralism, nationhood*, p. 144-146.
14 Hameed, *Maulana Azad*, 182.
15 Abūlkalām Āzād and Ali Ashraf, *The Dawn of Hope: Selections from the al-Hilal of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad* (New Delhi: Indian Council of Historical Research, 2002), 222-251.

as a superior alternative. He first outlined a linear model of communal development through which he believed human history has progressed. The most primitive of these stages, Azad said, was "matriarchy" (bonding with one's mother), which then advanced through to patriarchal, familial, tribal, and eventually national attachments. The higher form of social organization that proceeded from nationalism was "Islamism," which then culminated in the recognition that humanity as a whole is one brotherhood that transcends geographic, ethnic, racial, and national lines: "humanism."[16]

"Because I am an Indian, I am a Muslim, I am a human being."[17] These lines, written by Azad at the peak of the Khilafat movement in early 1922, succinctly encapsulate the philosophy of humanism that determined his lifelong personal and political principles. They neatly align with the hierarchy of human communal development that he would explicate in the 1927 article five years later: nationalism (Indian), followed by Islamism (Muslim), and culminating in humanism (human being). Azad presented an imbricated view of these identities, so that they are concentric rather than mutually exclusive.

But Azad's humanism is not the Enlightenment-based secular humanism of the modern West; instead, it is one specifically rooted in the traditional Islamic sources of the Quran and Prophetic Sunnah. There exists no systematized conception of humanism in the Islamic tradition in the manner of Sufism (mysticism) or Mu'tazilism (rationalist theology). Azad was not situating himself within an established school of Islamic thought so much as generating his own philosophical category. This is not to say, however, that humanistic ideas — identified here as individualism, pluralism, cosmopolitanism, equality, and most importantly freedom — have no precedent in the Islamic intellectual tradition. As observed by Goodman Evan, "Islamic humanism has a long and sometimes splendid history," but "it does not come ready made" for modern Muslims. To that end, Evan's penetrating study does not outline a coherent doctrine of Islamic humanism so much as identify "some of the threads of Islamic humanism in the past."[18] What the likes of historical Islamic theologians and philosophers like Miskawayah, Farabi, Avicenna, Hamadhani, Ibn Tufayl and Ibn Khaldun share is not a common subscription to a well-defined school of Islamic thought, but an "ability to examine the tradition they live in, to look at it both sympathetically and critically, and to select, develop, and combine ideas that are conducive to human understanding, human growth, and human flourishing...old traditions are taken up and examined eagerly, ideas devoured

16 Āzād and Ashraf, *The Dawn of Hope*, 230-239.
17 Hameed, *Maulana Azad*, 114.
18 Evan Goodman, *Islamic Humanism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

with gusto, made whole, made new, made over." Such articulations were not necessarily identical, but they shared a humanistic spirit.

So, too, do we find in Azad yet another unique articulation of Islamic humanism, one emergent from and responsive to his immediate historical context. Like other Indian Muslim reformers shaped by and opposed to colonial modernity, Azad sought to harmonize Western and Islamic values. His development of an Islamically-grounded humanism anticipated that of subsequent Muslim intellectuals, on the Indian subcontinent and beyond it, who too sought to find a theologically robust basis for values of freedom and pluralism.

Note that it would be erroneous to frame Azad's intellectual project in terms of of "construction" and "theorizing," as doing so would suggest that Azad's apprehension of religious truth was that of a systematic theologian. In reality, as noted by Azad's biographer Douglas, Azad's understanding of his faith was closer to that of a poet. I do not mean to say that Azad's religious thinking lacked consistent, identifiable principles which lent it coherence — this essay aims to demonstrate exactly that — but rather that Azad did not approach his religion as an organized theologian or thorough philosopher, actively shaping it into an objective belief system. His Islamic humanism arose from a more organic process, a gradual coalescence of ideas and influences and lived experiences.

In his *Al-Hilal* article, Azad declared that Islam "could not recognize any unreal relation based on race, homeland, patriotism, color, and language; it called upon human beings to accept only one relationship—the natural relationship of humanity and brotherhood."[19] To substantiate this claim, Azad quoted one of the Qur'an's most famous verses: "[We] made you into nations and tribes that may know one another." This verse provided a religious basis for Azad's claim that Islam wishes to guide humanity in the direction of pluralistic reconciliation.[20] Azad went further by arguing for the fundamental unity of mankind on the basis of another Qur'anic chapter: "Mankind was but one nation. Had it not been for a Word that went forth before from thy Lord, their differences would have been settled between them."[21] It is in these verses that Azad locates inclusivity within an intellectual and spiritual space (Islam) that appears inherently exclusive, and thereby formulates a coherent construct of a humanism informed by religion. Thus Azad's "Islamic humanism" essentially united the philosophy of classical liberalism with the conceptual framework of Islamic orthodoxy.

Azad's humanism, though it would find potent

19 Āzād and Ashraf, *The Dawn of Hope*, 232-239.
20 Āzād and Ashraf, *The Dawn of Hope*, 232.
21 Āzād and Ashraf, *The Dawn of Hope*, 235.

political expression in the Khilafat years, was visible even during his writings in *Al-Hilal* between 1912 and 1916. There, as with his rhetoric during the Khilafat movement, Azad coded his calls for the anti-colonialist struggle and Indian freedom in strictly Islamic terms. In one particularly passionate article in *Al-Hilal,* Azad called upon his fellows Muslims to wage "jihad in the cause of freedom," thus reframing the movement for Indian independence as not a secular responsibility but rather a religious duty.[22] The purpose of a Muslim's existence, Azad argued, is to be "courageous, free and independent."[23] Note that Azad did not restrict this liberty to just India or to the Muslim community; rather, he demanded that Muslims secure freedom for both themselves *and* "bring freedom to other nations, and liberate them from fetters of oppression."[24] The struggle for freedom, in other words, was pluralistic. Muslims were compelled to freedom on the basis of Islam, but the impact of their actions had to reverberate beyond the Muslim community. Through this line of thought Azad established the legitimacy of the call for Hindu-Muslim unity that would be so prominent in his Khilafat years. Such exaltation of human freedom, typical tenets of secular humanism, is reflected in his pen name, adopted when he first founded the monthly magazine *Lisan-us-Sidq* in 1903.[25] *Azadi* literally means "freedom" in Urdu. It was the humanistic ideals expressed in these articles that found their political outlet in the pan-Islamism of the Khilafat movement.

Azad's leadership of the Khilafat movement both demonstrates his belief in Islamic humanism and illustrates its practical implications. The humanistic character of his pan-Islamism is evident in one of his central arguments for the Khilafat movement: the fight for religious freedom. In a 1921 speech before the Agra Khilafat Conference, Azad argued that since preserving the Khilafat was a critical religious obligation for Muslims, the British attempt to abolish it threatened Muslims' freedom to practice their religious beliefs, thus justifying rebellion.[26] This is essentially the same argument by which Azad justified his call for jihad against the British in *Al-Hilal*, but repackaged: the British rob Muslims of their liberty, and therefore Muslims are religiously obliged to resist their repression. The fixation on freedom, especially religious freedom, is classically liberal and yet deeply embedded in religious tradition. More to the point, just as in *Al-Hilal* Azad had advocated for a vision of pluralistic freedom grounded in Muslims' religious obligation to liberate others, so did here Azad encourage Muslims to unite with Hindus on the basis

22 Āzād and Ashraf, *The Dawn of Hope*, 95.
23 Āzād and Ashraf, *The Dawn of Hope*, 98
24 Āzād and Ashraf, *The Dawn of Hope*, 95-98.
25 Hameed, *Maulana Azad*, 4.
26 Minault, *The Khilafat Movement*, 176.

of their shared repression.[27]

And yet Azad's doctrine of freedom and inclusivity had its limits. His humanism was not secular but *Islamic*; as such, it did not transcend Islam but was dictated by it. Azad's Islamic humanism was not merely secular humanism shrouded in the garb of religion; rather, it espoused liberal ideals of freedom, tolerance, and universality but kept them conditional on submission to God and adherence to his Word. In his 1927 article in *Al-Hilal,* Azad cited a prophetic tradition (*hadith*) about a prayer that the Prophet would offer after the five daily prayers. This prayer, Azad noted, contains three affirmations in an ordered sequence: the first affirms the unity of God, the second affirms the Prophethood of Muhammad, and the third affirms the brotherhood of humanity.[28] Azad then employed this tradition in the service of a powerful argument: that the unity of mankind is affirmed directly after the *shahada,* the fundamental basis of all Islamic faith, evidences its integrity to Islamic belief. Azad is thus able to evolve, from within a specifically Islamic discursive tradition, a mandate for engaging and allying with non-Muslims. He utilizes religious doctrine to arrive at the same inclusionary ethics that secular humanism arrives at through autonomous reason. At the same time, however, he situates this universal imperative within a hierarchy of religious obligations that privileges submission to God and his Prophet, thereby limiting its applicability to only that which is deemed acceptable by the first two.

HUMANISM'S EFFECTS ON RELIGION/ POLITICAL MOVEMENTS -

That Azad's humanism was one tempered by Islam explains its apparent contradictions. As rightly observed by Hamza Alavi, at the heart of the Khilafat movement sat a fundamental (and hypocritical) contradiction: it espoused Indian self-determination even as it sought to preserve a regime (the Ottoman Empire) that actively suppressed Arabs seeking similar self-determination.[29] Alavi is incorrect, however, to suggest that this contradiction evidences the incoherence of Azad's thought. Quite the contrary; Azad believed that the legitimacy of liberty was predicated on its consistency with the dictates of the Qur'an and Sunnah. To Azad, Indian Muslims were religiously obligated to push for self-rule because Muslims must oppose injustice, and the British were unjust. However, since preserving the Khilafat, according to Azad, was a religious duty equal in importance to the daily prayers,[30] it necessarily overrode any and all nationalistic aspirations. As such, though they might appear contradictory, Azad's

27 Minault, *The Khilafat Movement*, 176.
28 Āzād and Ashraf, *The Dawn of Hope*. 235.
29 Hamza Alavi, "Contradictions of the Khilafat Movement," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 17, no. 1 (1997): 1-16.
30 Qureshi, *Pan-Islam*.

differing stances on Indian self-determination and Arab self-determination are harmonized by the logic of Islamic humanism. In the Indian context, submission to God and his Prophet permitted the application of liberal ideals; in the Arab context, it did not.

Azad's adherence to this logic is further confirmed by his support for the 1925 Saudi conquest of Mecca and Medina and subsequent establishment of a conservative, exclusionary regime of "public piety."[31] What at first appears to be a betrayal of Azad's liberal ideals becomes in fact an affirmation of them once Azad's support is contextualized by Islamic humanism. On the one hand, Azad had claimed in a 1920 tract called "*Khilafat aur Jazirat al-'Arab"* that Mecca should serve as a universal "city of refuge" for the downtrodden peoples of humanity. On the other hand, since the Prophet had commanded Muslims "to leave no two faiths in the Arabian Peninsula," Azad believed it a religious obligation to maintain a religiously exclusionary order in the Hijaz and the holy cities.[32] Azad's universalism, therefore, was mediated by the particularism of his Islamic faith. This is how he could see no contradiction between simultaneously espousing inclusionary and exclusionary politics. Thus, Azad championed human agency and religious pluralism, but only so long as it did not transgress the boundaries established by God and his Prophet.

Since Azad's brand of Islamic humanism mandates that all applications of liberal ideals take religion as a reference point, it by necessity came with in-built exclusionary mechanisms. It is these mechanisms that allowed Azad the flexibility to simultaneously call for self-rule in India and authoritarian rule in Arabia. It was through such mechanisms that, during the Khilafat movement, Azad was able to religiously justify both anti-imperialistic policy (the Prophet had called for Muslims to always fight injustice) and Hindu reconciliation (Muslims were allowed to take non-Muslims as allies, as demonstrated by the Prophet's treaty with the Jews of Medina).[33] Azad further argued for Hindu-Muslim unity on the basis of a verse in Surat Al-Mumtahanah that divided non-Muslims into two categories: those do not attack Muslims, and those who do. Since the Hindus have not attacked Indian Muslims, Azad argued, they fell into the first category and thus could enjoy an alliance with Muslims. The British, however, fell into the second category and therefore

31 John M. Willis, "Azad's Mecca: On the Limits of Indian Ocean Cosmopolitanism," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 34, no. 3 (2014): 574-581.
32 Willis, John M. "Azad's Mecca: On the Limits of Indian Ocean Cosmopolitanism." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 2014: 574-581.
33 Hameed, *Maulana Azad*, 94.

had to be treated with hostility.[34] Thus, again, Islamic humanism provided Azad a framework within which to simultaneously argue in favor of pluralism and exclusion.

CONCLUSION -

Interpreting Azad's later life without the lens of Islamic humanism has led historians like I. H. Qureshi to confuse his "embrace" of Indian nationalism with an abandonment of the religiously charged, pan-Islamic thought of his Khilafat years. In reality, both are different manifestations of the same Islamic humanistic principles. From writing *Al-Hilal* to leading the Indian National Congress, Azad had always maintained a consistent commitment to two central objectives: Indian independence and Hindu-Muslim unity. Both objectives manifested Azad's Islamic humanism in political form. Indian independence corresponded to Azad's drive for freedom, while Hindu-Muslim unity reflected his pluralistic vision of human brotherhood. Thus, we can see how Azad's Islamic humanism, though universal in its aspirations, developed and expressed itself in a specifically Indian context. The unique sociopolitical dynamics of said context meant that Azad's political activism would, at different times, be perceived as essentially pan-Islamist or essentially nationalist, but such labels do not capture the sophistication of his thought. Hence why, for example, describing Azad as an Indian nationalist is erroneous; such a description assumes that nationalism was Azad's highest principle, rather than a (partial) political embodiment of his principles. Labeling Azad a nationalist confuses cause (Islamic humanism) for effect (Indian nationalism). Azad's actions were nationalistic, but the philosophical system that undergirded them was not. The flexibility that Islamic humanism afforded Azad is what has allowed Azad to appear, at different times of his life, both a pan-Islamist and a secular nationalist. He was neither.

Ultimately, understanding Azad's personal philosophy as that of Islamic humanism does more than merely harmonize the disparate threads of his political life. It illustrates the need to move beyond monolithic, undifferentiated categories like "pan-Islamism" and "secular nationalism" in order to understand not just Indian thought, but South Asian thought more broadly. The intricacy of Azad's thought reflects that of his intellectual upbringing—he was raised in a household of ultraconservative Islamic orthodoxy, obsessively read Sir Sayyed Khan's modernist and reformist writings, became an atheist, and then eventually returned to Islam.[35] Azad's understanding of Islamic humanism, with its blend of classical Western liberalism and traditional Islamic

34 Henderson et al, *Abul Kalam Azad*, 175.
35 Henderson et al, *Abul Kalam Azad*, 27-96.

dogma, arose from and as a response to those lived experiences. Slapping simplistic labels like "pan-Islamist" and "nationalist" on Azad obscures the complexity of his life and the sociopolitical milieu in which he developed and practiced his beliefs. The challenge presented by Azad's intellectual legacy thus demonstrates the discursive limits of a political vocabulary evolved in primarily Western contexts. To render intelligible Azad and his contemporaries, historians must be willing to meet them on their own terms.

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