A Publication of Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA)

ALIG Atlanta Nov, 2018

Carrying Forward the Aligarh Movement for the Betterment of Our Communities



Faculty of Arts, AMU

International Mushaira

Saturday, Nov 17, 2018

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ALIG Atlanta
November, 2018



From Editor's Desk

This edition consists of articles on reflection of Mercer University students and faculty to AMU visit past summer, intersection of America with Muslim world, perspective on Sir Syed's influences, AMU faculty's US travel diary (in Urdu) and Minto Circle's institutional role along with our regular columns.

Like previous years, publishing this magazine has been a team effort and many deserve gratitude and acknowledgment. All the assistance from Dr. Shoeb Ahmad, Syed Waseem, Dr. Asif Taufiq, Shahid Ali, Syed Hasan Kamal, Dr. Shahid Rafique, Dr. Farzana Bharmal, Sultan Khan and other AAAA members are gratefully acknowledged. For Urdu articles, we owe a special gratitude to Dr. Shariq Aqeel for painstakingly putting together his travelogue. We are greatly appreciative of all the sponsors and community businesses for their support. Needless to say, I sincerely thank Prof. Dr. Valeed Ahmad of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) for getting Urdu typing done. I would like to acknowledge my family's understanding and patience during preparation of the manuscript. Last but not least, I sincerely thank all the authors for the efforts in putting together their articles.

The purpose of this yearly bulletin is to publish information on AAAA activities, future projects and priorities, literary work, reminiscences, and Urdu poetry of local and guest poets, etc. Next year, we are planning to publish a special edition of ALIG Atlanta on the occasion of Federation of Aligarh Alumni Associations' (FAAA) annual convention to be held here in Atlanta in July. If interested in contributing relevant articles or helping on manuscript preparation, please do contact us.

A disclaimer. The views and opinions expressed in these articles/ads are those of the authors/sponsors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of AAAA.

AAAA *Zindabad!*

With kindest regards,
Rasheed Ahmad, Ph.D.
Honorary Editor
rasheedahmad@hotmail.com,
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INVITATION TO THE UPCOMING 18TH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE FEDERATION OF ALIGARH ALUMNI ASSOCIATIONS (FAAA) OF NORTH AMERICA

TO BE HELD IN ATLANTA IN JULY, 2019

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Mark T. Gobbel, DMD



Dr. Mark Gobbel is a 1978 graduate of the Medical College of Georgia School of Dentistry. He is an Atlanta native and an alumnus of Georgia Tech. He has practiced Family and Cosmetic Dentistry in the Decatur area since 1980. Dr. Gobbel is very pleased to be practicing dentistry in Dacula as of 2018. He is a member of the ADA, GDA, Northern District Dental Association, Hinman Dental Society and the DeKalb Dental Study Club.

Dr. Gobbel and his wife Kacie have three grown sons and a grandson. They reside in the ever-growing Gwinnett County. They enjoy travel, tennis, music, reading and spending time with their family.



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23 October 2018

MESSAGE

1. It is heartening to know that Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta is organizing an International Mushaira and on this occasion the Association is publishing their Annual Magazine 'Alig Atlanta'.

2. Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta is a social hub of intellectuals and philanthropists who actively participate in the socio-economic development of the society. It is heartening to note that the Association has actively supported and promoted endeavours to underprivileged thereby encouraging and promoting aspirations of every segment, specially the weaker sections of the society. They have always extended their support in the development and promotion of their alma mater and have always stood as a pillar of strength, to lend a global voice in support of the University, a fact which we in Aligarh deeply appreciate.

3. I am confident that the event will be a huge success and extend my good wishes to the Editorial Team and the members of the Association for the excellent job that they are doing.

Tariq Mansoor 23/10/18

(Prof. Tariq Mansoor)
Vice-Chancellor

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AAAA provides educational assistance to the needy students, helps our Alma Mater/other institutions to modernize, facilitates faculty student exchange and collaboration with institutions of higher learning, promotes Urdu language and its art forms.

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President's Message

At the entrance gate of a university in Uganda (former Pearl of Africa) the following message was posted for contemplation:

"Destroying any nation does not require the use of atomic bombs or the use of long range missiles. It only requires lowering the quality of education and allowing cheating in examinations by students."

"Patients die at the hands of such doctors.
Buildings collapse at the hands of such engineers.
Money is lost at the hands of such economists and accountants.
Humanity dies at the hands of such religious scholars.
Justice is lost at the hands of such judges.
The collapse of education is the collapse of the nation."

In order to prevent the total collapse of Muslims nations, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan founded Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College in 1875, which later became Aligarh Muslim University. This educational institution bore fruits by way of notable alumni such as Mohammad Ali Johar, Ayub Khan, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Sri K . Raja Rao, among many others.

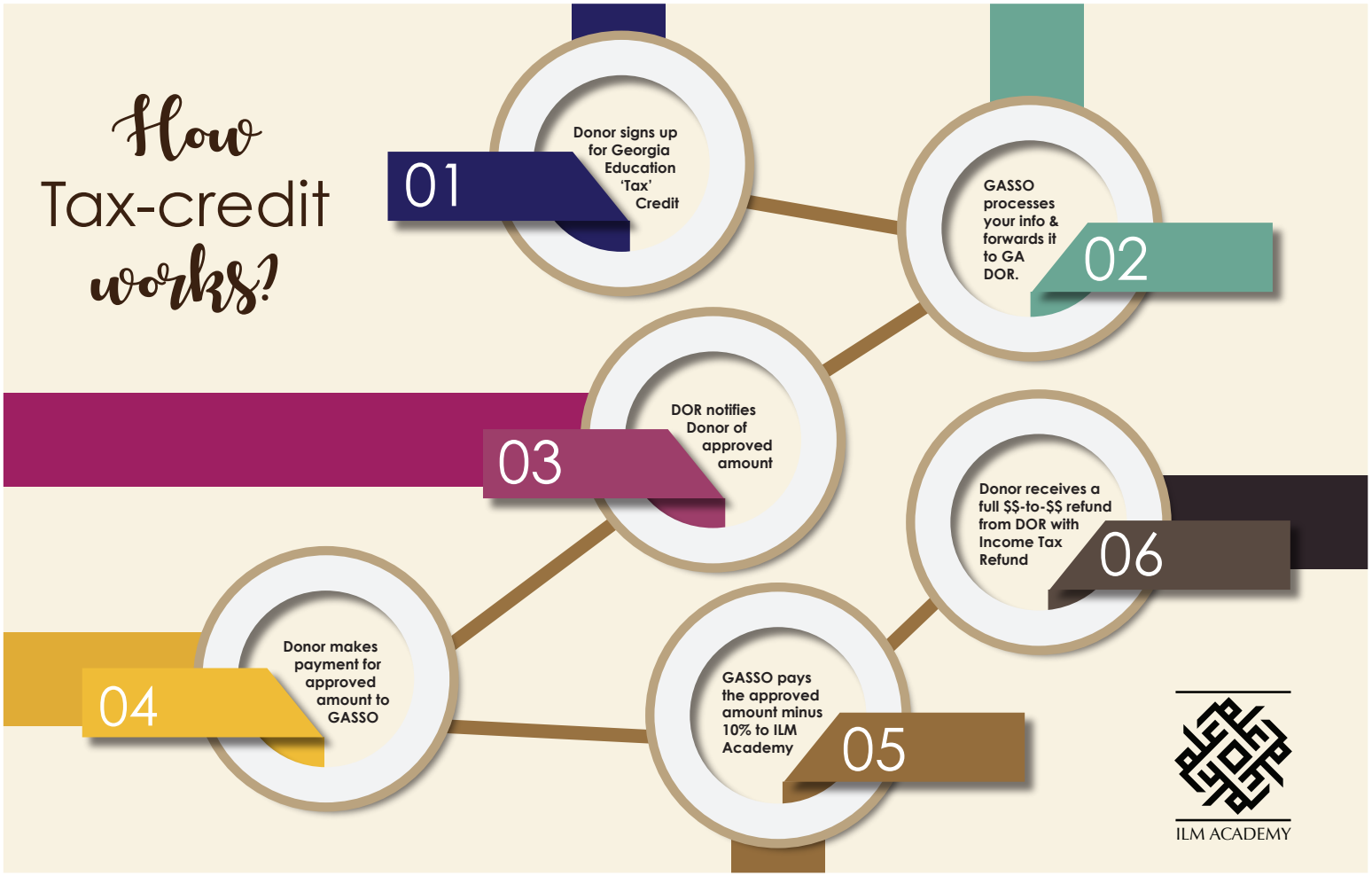
It is in this spirit Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta began dialogues with Mercer University School of Theology, resulting in faculty exchanges with twelve theology students visiting Aligarh in the summer of 2018 and the publication of a book at Aligarh Muslim University. During the reception for the Mercer University students and faculty, the students spoke about their experiences with teaching music, human values, and collecting medical data from the underserved villages near Aligarh alongside the Aligarh University medical teams. They witnessed real poverty, human suffering, lack of education and sanitary conditions.

The most profound words spoken during the reception were by Dr. Robert Nash: "You have created a space in your hearts for us, now it's our turn to create spaces in our hearts," implying that it is high time for Mercer/Aligarh Muslim University to create educational opportunities for each other, be kind and work towards peace, alleviate human suffering, and create equality. This is only possible through EDUCATION. Remember the first word by angel Gabriel to Prophet Mohammad was (PBUH) meaning "READ".

Ladies and gentlemen, we now have twelve ambassadors from Mercer University's department of Theology who will take the message of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan "Education for the Mankind" to the American masses.

Sincerely,
Khadim e Ala
Asif Taufiq DDS., MBA
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Report on 2018 Visit to Aligarh Muslim University

Dr. Wesley Barker and Dr. Robert N. Nash, Jr.**, Mercer University*



In May of this past year, twelve students and two faculty members from Mercer University visited Aligarh Muslim University for three weeks in a program designed for interfaith dialogue and community service together with the faculty and students of AMU. The visit began with a week of community service at the Ahmadi School for the Visually Challenged and included visits in a number of departments and schools at AMU, including the School of Theology, the Department of Social Work, the School of Unani Medicine, and the Department of Community Medicine.

When our Mercer delegation first arrived in India, we were like fish out of water. There was a moment at the Indira Gandhi terminal—with some students off at various kiosks exchanging money, and others wandering around the luggage carousels looking for their bags-- that it quickly became evident that we would be dependent upon the kindness and generosity of others if this trip was going to be successful.

Fortunately for us, India, Aligarh, and AMU in particular embodied the kindness and generosity that could and should inspire people of all faiths to meet the differences of others with an open, welcoming heart. Our helplessness at the airport was short-lived. As we wandered outside into the hazy orange glow of street lamps lighting the early morning sky, we were quickly greeted by the faces of two men, Suhail and Saood, who had made the trip from Aligarh in the middle of the night to welcome our group.

Our hopes for the visit were fulfilled beyond our greatest expectations! The principal and faculty of the Ahmadi School welcomed us with open arms as we led three different workshops with their students, teaching sewing and crafts, music, and conversational English. As a special treat, we were able to travel with the students and faculty of the Ahmadi School to see the Taj Mahal.

After a week of working with visually impaired students at the Ahmadi School, we gathered with members of the community for an interfaith symposium. As the lights flickered from the demands that the heat of the day had placed on the Ahmadi School's utilities, we felt as though we were being reminded that amidst all our talk about the importance of inter-religious dialogue, it was our human frailty and subsequent dependence on others to help us find our way in the darkness that connects us most intimately to the generosity of the divine.

From this introduction to the final goodbyes three weeks later, the people of Aligarh and the students, staff, faculty, and administrators at AMU cared for us as though we were their nearest and dearest family members. These incredible people fed us, sheltered us, entertained us, guided us, and worked with us in the 110-degree heat, all while faithfully fasting for Ramadan. Indeed, their hospitality toward us was a human expression of Allah's merciful revelation in the Qur'an that continues to serve to bind a community of faith together—to make a people feel at home in Allah.

We remember with great affection how much we learned from our colleagues in various university departments and schools. At the Unani School, we learned about the healing powers of natural medicine. At the Departments of Social Work and Community Medicine, we learned about community development efforts in poverty-stricken villages and about the good work being done in rural health clinics and local schools. At the School of Theology, we were able to participate in interfaith dialogue with our Muslim brothers and sisters.

The greeting of Ramadan Mubarak was a constant greeting during our visit! On many occasions we were greeted by the offerings of food and drink that others had lovingly prepared for iftar. Because of the hospitality of our Muslim, Sikh, and Hindu brothers and sisters in Aligarh, we have never felt more at home than we did sitting around the table to break the fast together.

We are deeply grateful to Vice-Chancellor Mansour for the hospitality of the AMU faculty, staff and students and to the deans and department chairs of the various departments, schools and colleges of AMU. Also, of course, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to the Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta. We went to India with the hope that our community service and teaching would make a difference. We came away from AMU having received at least as much as we sought to give.

--

** Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Department of Liberal Studies*
*** Associate Dean for the D.Min. program and Arnall-Mann-Thomasson Professor of Missions and World Religions*







Top: Dr. Nash and Dr. Barker participating in an interfaith seminar at AMU; **Middle:** Dr. Nash and Dr. Barker with AMU Vice-Chancellor Dr. Tariq Mansoor and Mrs. Dr. Mansoor; **Bottom**: Mercer students with a group of girls at AMU Ahmadi School after a music class (Photo Source: Mercer News)



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Islam/Muslims: As American as Apple Pie

Dr. S.M. Ghazanfar, Atlanta*

As a pragmatist, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan (1817-1898) launched his Aligarh Movement, which, aside from other goals, also called for amicable coexistence between Muslims and other religious communities. He was committed to promoting pluralism, a fundamental tenet of Islam, and his modernist movement emphasized interfaith/intercultural understanding. The present essay is written in that general spirit. Our focus here is on several tangible cultural links, part of our daily lives, that emanated from the Islamic world. My sincere hope is that our casual conversations, especially with non-Muslim friends, may occasionally touch upon these links and help in building bridges of understanding and goodwill. Initially, however, it is useful to briefly provide a broader, historical perspective.

First, it must be noted that we are part of the Judeo-Christian-and-Islamic heritage. With Greeks in the background, there are huge inter-civilizational connections. In his 2010 Cairo speech, President Obama stated, "As a student of history, I know civilization's debt to Islam. It was Islam that carried the light of learning through so many centuries, paving the way for Europe's Renaissance and Enlightenment." However, the "love-hate" relationship between the West and Islam has persisted for centuries; so much borrowed and absorbed from the Islamic world, yet the demonized imagery.

Second, even prior to Columbus's 1492 journey, there is evidence of Muslim presence on this side of the Atlantic. "Muslims have been part of the country since before the thirteen original colonies even declared their independence," says one scholar. Ahead of Columbus, there were 14th-century Muslim travelers from Mali, even from China. And, knowledge from the Islamic world, including Muslim guides, facilitated the "discovery" voyages.

Thirdly, evidence suggests up to 15-20 percent of the slaves brought to the U.S. were Muslims, and that heritage links with present-day Afro-American Muslims. There are still old church structures in the South which secretly faced toward Mecca.

And finally, the Founding Fathers acknowledged Islam and Muslims. In 1783, George Washington wrote, "The bosom of America [was] open to receive...the persecuted of all religions .... They may be Mohammetans, Jews, or Christians of any sect, or they may be atheists." Thomas Jefferson, the first President who hosted a fast-breaking event—and first to be "accused" of being Muslim. He borrowed from Islamic discourses in writing the Bill of Rights, and even the U.S. Constitution. Jefferson's University of Virginia displays a statue, holding a tablet with the name "Allah," along with God, Jehovah, and Brahma. And a sculpture in the U.S. Supreme Court halls recognizes the Prophet of Islam as a "source of law and justice," alongside Moses, Solomon, and Confucius. Similarly, a Qur'anic verse (Al-Nisa:123) decorates Harvard's Law College wall.

So much for this brief historical background. As for the well-embedded cultural manifestations, some more visible than others, yet hardly part of our consciousness, let me explain a few:

1. Language: There are thousands of English words that are etymologically linked to Arabic, directly or via other European languages, especially Spanish. And almost 500 such words are used in our daily conversation—alphabet, apricot, algebra, cipher, gauze, guitar, lemon, magazine, orange, tangerine, candy, saffron, syrup, chess, etc.; and the phrase "check-mate" derives from Arabic "shah-mat" ("king is dead"). Columbus spoke Arabized-Spanish, and always signed his name as "Al-Amirate Columbus" (derives from "Al-Amir," meaning "leader").

2. Academic Disciplines: Most conspicuous is algebra—and mathematics in general, but also chemistry, physics, astronomy, medicine, geography, philosophy, social-sciences, etc. These disciplines share their origins in the Islamic world, and they also incorporate numerous Arabic words—e.g., alogarithms (from Al-Khwarizmi, d.850), elements in chemistry (alkali, acids, alcohol, salts), names of stars, and Arabic numerals, also linked with early India civilization. And, indeed, in the evolution of these disciplines, Muslim scholars were the precursors of their European counterparts. "European science owes its existence to the Arabs," says one scholar.

3. Places: Almost 500 cities and towns have Arabic names: Arabi, Mecca, Cairo (Georgia); Cordova (Alaska); Al-Hambra, Baghdad, Cairo (Calif.); Mecca, Mahomet, Cairo (Illinois); Koran (Louisiana); Medina (Idaho. New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Tenn., Texas); Arabia (Nebraska); Tallahassee, Islamorada (Florida); Albuquerque (New Mexico); Palestine (Texas); Sultan (Wash.); Aladin (Wyoming); etc. Al-Hambra movie-house in Indiana, a boutique in Seattle, and a hotel in Chicago. And, in Oregon, there is a private airport called *Insha-Allah*. There are native-American tribes whose names have Arabic ancestry. Even the word 'California' is traceable to Islamic Spain, linked to the word 'Caliph.' And St. Francis of Assisi (d.1326) introduced Catholic bell-towers and prayer-beads in Europe, after having observed the mosque minaret and *tasbeeh* in Baghdad.

4. Blues Music: The origins of blues music lie in the history of slavery. "Their shouts and hollers begat blues music," says one scholar. Witness stories inform us that African-Muslim slaves would sing melancholy songs, using instruments of African origins, and their laments included Qur'anic verses. According to ethnomusicologists, Arabic musical and religious modulations were part of the African culture for centuries. And music of African-American blues singers is based on a collective memory of Africa that carried forth in slavery. Then there is the Flamenco music and lyrics, rooted in eight centuries of Islamic Spain.

5. Foods/Drinks/Cigarettes: Among the foods are: shish-kababs, bakhlawa, hamas, kus-kus, etc., but most notable is the coffee drink, or *qahwa*. Discovered in the Arabian Peninsula in the 1400s, popular among the Sufis, and once banned in Europe as "the drink of Muslim devils," the Pope later blessed it. Then it found its way to Europe in the 1600s. A century later, America became a full-fledged nation of coffee drinkers, and now the liquid is an iconic part of the culture--over 400 million cups daily, the world's leading coffee-drinkers.

And then, at the St. Louis' 1904 World's Fair, Arabic food and culture were inseparable. Holy water from River Jordon was popular, as was *zalabia*–a flat, grid-like pastry. An Arab vendor saw another vendor selling ice-cream on plates. He shaped *zalabia* into a cone and ice-cream cone was invented. He invented the cone-making machine and went into ice-cream business, still operating in Norfolk, Virginia.

And, there were cigarettes, only surviving brand is Camel. But there were others: Fatima, Cairo, Mogul, Omar, Sultan. And in the early 1900s, there were "Garden of Allah" candy-boxes.

6. Furniture, Clothing, Jewelry, Perfumes: Numerous items link with the Arab-Islamic world—Turkish/Oriental carpets and the Ottoman furniture. Jewelry and clothing designers have long looked to that world

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Dr. Justin Sol

for inspiration. Historical borrowing of perfumes from the Arab world is well-known; and the inspiration continues. "Thoughtful designers are putting the change of mood into a different context, as they talk about the 'Muslimization' of fashion," (International Herald Tribune, 2/28/2006).

7. Architecture/Arts: There are numerous architectural wonders that distinctly reflect Islamic linkages. In a delicious irony, Presidential candidate Donald Trump announced his "ban-Muslims" agenda in 2016 while surrounded by the most exquisite display of Islamic architecture and arts in Atlanta's Fox Theater. Another wonder was circus-man P.T. Barnum's mansion, called **Iranistan** in Connecticut. Its architectural design, including some Islamic scriptures, was straight out of Islamic Spain. Destroyed in 1857 fire, the only vestiges of Iranistan remain in Barnum Museum, located on a street named Iranistan Avenue, Bridgeport.

There are numerous other structures, often even ordinary dwellings, usually identified as "Spanish/Moorish architecture," really meaning "Islamic." A famous structure is thoroughly "Moorish" Hearst Castle, located in California's Big-Sur valley. And there is Al-Hambra Palace hotel in Chicago, inspired by Granada's Al-Hambra Palace of Islamic Spain.

Less well-known **places with Islamic heritage** are in the South. Nowhere is this seen more dramatically than in New Orleans and San Antonio, both under prolonged Spanish control. New Orleans' French quarter reflects a fusion of architectural norms (balconies, ironwork with geometric designs, courtyards, patios, etc.) which Spain had adopted from centuries of Islamic influence.

And the **Alamo** in San Antonio, with its battleground fame, originally built in 1924 as a Catholic seminary, has a beautifully carved "Moorish" doorway, with intricate, geometric floral pattern, and its formal style architecture and arts. The archways, featuring alternating red and white bands, are replicas of archways from the Cordoba mosque. During Spanish presence in the Americas, architects adopted numerous "Moorish" concepts, such as the arches in Cathedrals. Among the most unusual structures are at the **Citadel**, the military college in Charleston, South Carolina, which adopted the citadel architecture from Spain. And here is a surprise: Columbus was familiar with mosques and during his first voyage, he saw a hill on the Cuban coast and exclaimed, "there is a beautiful mosque."

And, the now-ruined Twin-Towers of the World Trade Center: its Japanese architect envisioned its Plaza, "festooned with Islamic representations—pointed arches, rows of slim interior columns, enclosed with lines of interlocking proportions."

8. The Shriners/Islam/Arabs: And there are the Shriners, the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, formed in 1871, identified with the Free Masons. The group began as an orientalist playground for partying and drinking, the mainstay of early Shriner events, though always with some charitable activities. They depicted Arabs/Muslims through an "orientalist" prism – a "denigration" and "commodification" of a people, as late Edward Said would call it.

With their red Moroccon-Turkish fezzes (with an inverted crescent, topped by a sword), the Shriners link themselves to a secret society traced to Mecca, and their gathering places used to be called 'mosques,' now called 'temples,' with names such as Mecca, Medina, Al-Koran, etc. Their parades, till recently, conveyed a racist image of Arabs-Muslims—complete with sword-swinging desert nomads, camels, and scantily-clad harem girls, quite like the Hollywood representations. And Shriners would mimic Islamic greetings, "Salam-o-Alaikum." Until early 1960s, the group would parade in front of the White House and Presidents, wearing the red-fez, would exchange Islamic greetings in Arabic.

Shriners' temples typically resemble mosques, often with Arabic inscriptions, and are sometimes mistaken as mosques. A distinct example is Atlanta's Yaarab Temple, located at 400 Ponce de Leon Avenue. More famous is the Al-Malaikah "mosque" in Los Angeles, which has hosted numerous Oscars, and it looks straight out of the Arabian Nights. Shriners' also have a sports facility in Chicago, the Medinah Country Club. The main gate tells exiting visitors, "Allah be with you." And with its Islamic domes, arches, and turbaned statutes, the Club offers a lake named after Prophet Mohammed's first wife, Khadija.

More recently, Shriners have re-oriented their identity, perhaps because of changed demography. Now a prominent charity-philanthropic group, they sponsor fund-raising activities (e.g., the circus). Their parades are relatively benign, not overtly racist. Yet considerable old nomenclature remains; their governing body is called the "Imperial Divan" and their 'nobles' are called "Prophets;" and they use Arabic names for some of their activities—e.g., Abu-Baker Chanters, Omar Campers, etc.

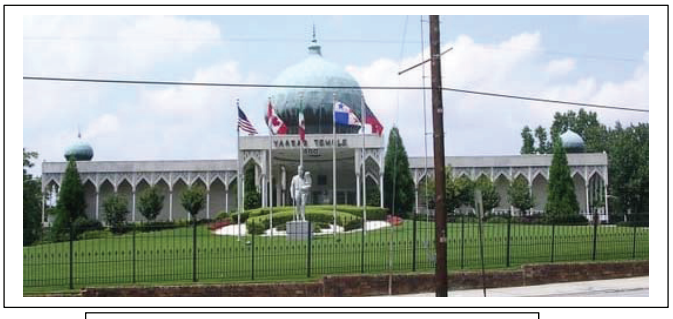
Regardless, the point remains, the Shriners introduced, for good or bad, the notion of Arab/Muslims in the country.

In conclusion, it is worth stressing that despite the current Islamophobic environment, America intersected with the Islamic world from the very beginning--borrowing from it, learning from it, admonishing it, fearing it, and co-existing with it. However, over time, Western roots have often been disconnected from some of their original sources—so badly that when we encounter these cultural links, we have no clue about their roots. Thus, it is important that, as occasions warrant, gentle references to these links be part of our cross-cultural conversations, for they are not from an "alien" culture. Muslims/Arabs are part of this mosaic called America. As a minority, subject to frequent denigration by various hucksters, our humanity—and our survival--demand that we cultivate common ground, with our vistas broadened, hearts capacious, and spirits generous.

It is safe to assume that the founder of the Aligarh Movement would enthusiastically support the message of this narrative.

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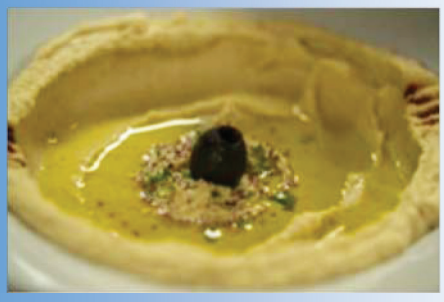
*The author is emeritus-professor/chair (1968-2008), University of Idaho, now residing in the Atlanta area. Recipient of Distinguished Alumnus Achievement Award, Hall of Fame Inductee (Washington State University), Idaho Treasure Award, and Pride of Pakistan Award (1989), MLK Award; numerous academic/civic awards; author of several books and professional publications; Idaho Human Rights Commission, 2004-13; Idaho Legislature consultant, 1974-2000; contributed to a 2003 PBS Series on Islam.



Yarab Temple in Atlanta, Georgia



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Trip to India 'EYE-OPENING' for Mercer Students*

Andrea Honaker, Mercer News

Summer travels to India helped Mercer University students see the world through new eyes. A Mercer On Mission (MOM) group worked with visually impaired children and deepened interfaith understanding through research and dialogue.

Six Penfield College students and six McAfee School of Theology students participated in the three-week experience, led by Dr. Wesley Barker, assistant professor of religious studies in Penfield, and Dr. Rob Nash, Arnall-Mann-Thomasson Professor of Missions and World Religions in McAfee. Mercer's Georgia Baptist College of Nursing hosted a separate trip to India in July.

Mercer and Aligarh Muslim University in India began a partnership about four years ago and had done faculty exchanges. Mercer wanted to involve its students, too, which led to the creation of this new MOM program for this summer, said Dr. Nash, who also serves as associate dean for doctoral programs in the School of Theology.

MOM team members worked with the Ahmadi School for the Visually Challenged, managed by Aligarh University. They provided lessons on music, crafts and conversation for the children and showed the teachers how to incorporate collaborative learning into their plans. The Ahmadi students learned to create and sew products that they could sell to make a living in the future.

Heather Franklin, who will earn her Master of Divinity degree from Mercer next spring, was head of the group that led the music lessons.

"We got them on their feet and dancing and made music fun," she said. "A lot of it was being a positive, affirmative presence for the kids but also showing the energy that can be in the classroom."

The Mercer group took the Ahmadi students to the Taj Mahal, which was a challenging but "eye-opening experience," Dr. Nash said. Most of the Indian students had never before visited this iconic site, and the Mercer students helped them discover it through their eyes.

One of Franklin's fondest memories came after that tour. They had to wait hours to get a ride back to their lodging, so the Mercer team started playing games with the Ahmadi students. Before long, vendors and village children had joined in the fun. People who were strangers to one another were "sitting on the side of the road just laughing and having a good time," she said.

As another component of the trip, the MOM participants teamed up with Aligarh medical and social work students to conduct research and interview villagers for a better understanding of their needs and challenges.

The trip coincided with the holy month of Ramadan. Mercer students and faculty were invited to dine with Muslims when they broke their fast; went to a mosque for Friday prayers; engaged in religious dialogues at Aligarh University; and read the sacred text of their own religion and of the Hindu and Muslim faiths.

"It was a real opportunity for deepening interfaith understanding," Dr. Nash said. "The experience of being in a predominantly Muslim context, seeing the commitment to fasting during Ramadan and having one-on-one conversations … comes a long way to helping overcome biases and prejudices that we all have because we don't fully understand what another religion is like."

Franklin said the trip helped her to appreciate and accept the many unique life experiences that exist in a global society. Those other perspectives are just as important as her own. Her graduate studies at Mercer have focused on community development, and the MOM trip was a great opportunity for her to travel and learn about other cultures.

"MY OWN EXPERIENCE, MY UPBRINGING, MY BELIEF SYSTEM ARE SO SMALL IN THE SCHEME OF THINGS," FRANKLIN SAID. "THERE ARE A HUNDRED MILLION PEOPLE WHO HAVE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES AND IDEAS THAN MINE."

(*Source: https://news.mercer.edu/india-trip-eye-opening-for-mercer-students/, dated Aug 8, 2018)



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2017 Annual International Mushaira





Poets on the Stage (L to R): Tahir Faraz (India), Abbas Tabish (Pakistan), Dr. Peerzada Qasim (Pakistan), Ahmad Salman (Pakistan), Salman Gilani (Pakistan), Dr. A. Abdullah (Wasinghton DC). Dr. Peerzada Qasim giving away memento to Dr. Nash of Mercer University. Below (right): Naazim-e-Mushaira, Shahid Ali













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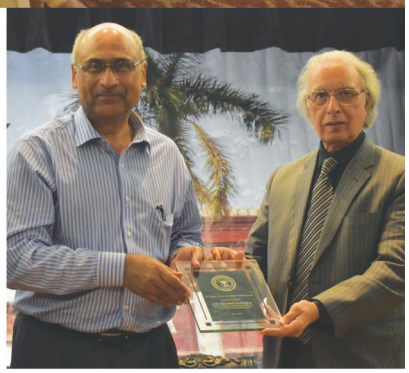
2017 International Mushaira Photographs



















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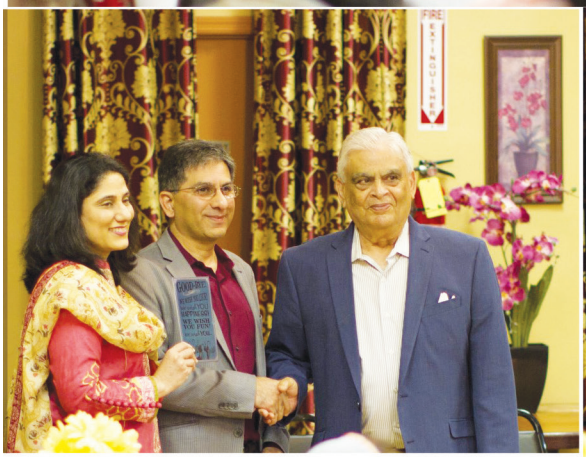
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More 2018 Event Photographs













Row 1: Dr. Shariq Aqeel, visiting AMU faculty, conducting local mushaira-cum-Zubair & Huma Asmi's farewell party

Row 2: Dr. Wasi Siddiqui and Dr. Aqeel presenting mementos to Zubair and Huma

Row 3 (left): AAAA members at a reception in honor of visiting guest, Dr. and Mrs. Zafeer Ahmad of Chicago

Row 3 (right): Dr. Farzana Bharmal speaking at Zubair & Huma Asmi's farewell party

Row 4.: AAAA members at a reception in honor of visiting guest, Dr. Abdul Jabbar Khan of Albany, NY.

AAAA 2018 Event Photographs













Row 1 & 2 (left): Visitors at Festival of India Booth

Row 2 (other): Speakers at Sir Syed Day Event

Row 3: Mercer Univ. students, who visited AMU, at stage with Hon'ble Shailesh Lakhtakia, Consul of India in Atlanta office & AAAA members. **Row 4:** Tonya Wells ghazal event , **Row 5:** AAAA Members with visiting guest Prof. M. A. Badshah, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

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Minto Circle – An Institution unto Itself

Nadeem Fatmi, Atlanta

I first joined Minto Circle as a residential student in 1986, residing in Rasool West. Some of my best memories are from the 3 years I spent in Minto Circle. I vividly remember my first day and how I was greeted by my seniors and welcomed as a younger brother. First few days were fearful as all newcomers fondly called "Juniors" were afraid of the ragging aka hazing. Well, eventually the day came and us juniors were paraded in-front of the seniors and were asked to perform certain things. I got lucky and had to only sing a song which I somehow slurred to completion. Anyhow, it was a fun night, albeit only now I laugh about it.

Officially known as Syedna Saifuddin Tahir High School (STS High School), the school is fondly known as Minto Circle the world over and the Alumni proudly call themselves Mintorian, including yours truly. Minto Circle is a boys only semi-residential High School with 4 hostels (Jamal A, Jamal B, Rasool East and Rasool West) in Aligarh Muslim University.

Minto Circle has a deep-rooted history; indeed, it was the birthplace of what is now Aligarh Muslim University. On 24 May, 1875, Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan – an associate of Sir Syed laid the foundation stone of "Muhammadan Anglo Oriental Collegiate School", which was later renamed as "Muhammaden Anglo-Oriental College" in 1877 and became the Aligarh Muslim University in 1920. The school was initially called Muslim University High School, but became popular as Minto Circle after the then Viceroy of India, Gilbert Elliot-Murray-Kynynmound, 4th Earl of Minto (1845–1914), who funded the construction for its new buildings. Henry George Impey Siddons was the first head master of this school. In 1966, the school was renamed after the then Chancellor Syedna Tahir Saifuddin, and henceforth known as STS High School.

As we settled in and learned to call our seniors "Bhai', we learned certain traditions such as calling every employee such as dining hall staff uncle. There was only one dining hall for all four hostels and was situated in between Rasool East and Rasool West. Friday dinner included variety – a sweet dish, usually ras-malai or gulab jamun. It took us a while to figure out why the light always went out during dinner time on Fridays and only for few minutes and why often the variety dish was missing from our plates. Once we learned the game, variety was the first thing we ate.

At 8 O'clock every night the proctor monitor (usually a senior in 10th grade) would take attendance and we all have to be there, unless we wanted to be paraded in-front of hostel warden the next day (Taqi Sahab, fondly called Taqi Potrha) was our warden at the time and he loved to punish us by making "murgha". As I progressed into second year at Minto Circle i.e. 9th grade, some of us became senior in our own right and would often sneak out of the hostel after the 8 PM attendance. Since the gate closed at 8 PM, we figured a way to sneak out of the rest room/bathroom area in the back. The wall was not too tall and through some efforts and tricks, we would jump the wall and using the rental cycles which we use to strategically park in the back, we will drive as fast as we can to Tasweer Mahal to catch the night show at 9 PM.

I spent few more years in AMU after Minto Circle but Minto Circle has a special place in my heart and will always retain that special place. It is only here I learned not only the worldly education, but also the respect, the fairness and equality and the ability to respect and love each other irrespective of our background, our culture or mother tongue. Only one thing was true – Seniors were respected and treated like elder bothers while Juniors were to be treated with love and affection reserved for younger brothers. Aligarh to an outsider is one of the several universities, but to an Alig., AMU is a place where the meaning of life itself is learned and understood.



Main Entrance to Minto Circle (STS High School)



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Mohammad Inamullah

Multi-Talented, Community Gem, Gluer, Deliverer

A name without which Atlanta's south Asian cultural and literary landscape will never be complete, a manager whose skills have no parallel, a resource one always desires to leverage, a personality which radiates magnetism and steadiness, an artist to whom God has bestowed boundless talents, an advisor whose sincerity and judgement never falter….. he is among Atlanta's most respected personalities, Mohammad Inamullah. He is known to us as Inam. He was born in Karachi, Pakistan in 1961 to parents Dr. Mohammad Valiullah and Qamar Valiullah. His father was a distinguished academician and researcher. He was a 1945 graduate of Osmania University and earned a master's degree from University of Milwaukee in 1948. He earned his Ph.D. degree from the University of Melbourne, Australia. Dr. Valiullah was the Head of the Geology Department at University of Karachi.

Inam is the youngest of five brothers, all of whom are well-educated and distinguished in the career world. Inam completed his matric education from Karachi's St. Paul's High School and college education from the National College, University of Karachi. He came to the USA in 1984 for higher education and obtained his MBA degree from the University of California, Los Angles. He started his career as a financial analyst working for Warner Brothers in Hollywood, CA. Then, he moved to the telecom industry in 1989 and since 1994, has been an entrepreneur. He is married to Zahra (commonly known as Zari) and has three sons.

Inam moved to Atlanta in 1998 to pursue business opportunities. His love of Urdu and literature brought him to the local Aligarh association fold even though he never attended Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) or visited Aligarh. Dr. Khalid Siddique, a senior Atlanta community leader, introduced Inam to Siraj Karatela who was the then President of Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta in 1999. Inam justifiably takes a lot of pride in becoming President of the association in 2002. He was able to transform the relatively "non-functional" organization into something much more vibrant and dynamic. He established a team of new and old members to revive the organization through personal gatherings and meetings. By the time he left the office in 2003, he had established a solid foundation for many cabinets. He and Fazal Khan, the then treasurer of the association, first published a souvenir magazine which generated funds through sponsorship and marketing.

AAAA held two high-profile events in the 2000s': the three-day annual convention of the Federation of Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (FAAA) in 2006 and the two-day silver-jubilee program in 2009 celebrating the inception of AAAA. Both these landmark events attracted guests and attendees from the US and abroad. From planning to execution, with Inam being on the team, success was all assured. During the 2009 silver-jubilee event, Inam introduced the concept of instituting the Haneef Akhgar Award in honor of the Urdu poet who was very well-known for his *Lucknawi* Urdu and *tarranum*. This award is given to an individual who has made extraordinary contributions to the cause of Urdu literature in USA. Inam also emceed AAAA's annual international mushaira for several years where his style and skills left an indelible mark on the audience.

Inam is a born artist and he recalls his journey. "When I was 10 years old my polio-affected right leg was operated on. I was not able to run like other kids in school for 6 months. My art teacher, Ms. Nasreen who had a very kind heart, used to stay with me in the class and we both did art projects together - while other boys played outside. This is how my interest in art began. I started my career as a professional artist in 2004 on a part time basis. Now this has become my full-time profession." With his enormous talent and resources, he could have easily become a commercial promoter and personal beneficiary of art and literature programs. But he chose a higher purpose. Because to him "Art makes us think more deeply, strive more intently, and feel joy more profoundly. An essential part of our society. Art is a way of bringing people together."

He has also brought people together through his philanthropic work. His organization, Glitter of Hope, provides education, health care, mentoring, and monetary assistance for orphans, immigrants, and the poor.

Like his personal talents, Inam's business acumen has made him a very accomplished entrepreneur. Not only has he built his own business venture but he has also mentored others to become successful entrepreneur by providing forums like OPEN Atlanta for business leadership and networking.

Atlanta will always be in debt to Inam for organizing many memorable programs through his personal efforts and sponsorship. He made it a point to also include AAAA in all possible collaborations. He spearheaded bringing many famous and renowned artists like Zia Mohydeen, Anwer Maqsood, Suhail Rana, Munni Begum, Javed Akhter and many others to Atlanta. Along with Dr. Shahid Rafique and the patronage of Masarrat Hussain, Inam's active participation in *Bazm-e-Adab* consistently produced exceptional programs. They have promoted local talents as well as provided a literary platform for people to engage in.

The respectful ambience of the Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta has always made Inam feel at home. However, he still has some words of advice for the AAAA: "In general for community, AAAA's name is just attached to the annual Mushaira. I strongly suggest regular get together of people with literary interests to facilitate the *Aligarh Tehreek*."

Sir Ziauudin Ahmad, former AMU vice-chancellor and great mathematician, quoted that an Aligarian always rises to the occasion. Being an Aligarian is also a state of mind. You don't need to attend a particular university. Inam fully embodies every and all aspects of these definitions. Likes of Inam and many of similar credentials, who joined AAAA, have also propelled a new structure for organizations where people of various background can work harmoniously for a common cause. Although this model surprised many at first, it was later adopted in other Aligarh associations.

Comfortable both in progressive and conservative settings, Inam is always at ease with himself. He is an accomplished writer, performer, orator, poet, painter and above all a great human being. He is approachable and always willing to help. He and his family have been on the forefront of volunteering and service. His kids have been involved in Aligarh youth events and his wife, Zari, housed and hosted innumerous receptions for visiting and local poets/artists at their residence and club house.

Because of Inam's patronage and leadership, the Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA) has transformed into a more polished, prestigious, and exceptional organization. Inam was able to provide much needed guidance to AAAA at critical times as well as putting immense effort into developing a cohesive team for the future. Although he is no longer as involved as he used to be, Inam's opinion,



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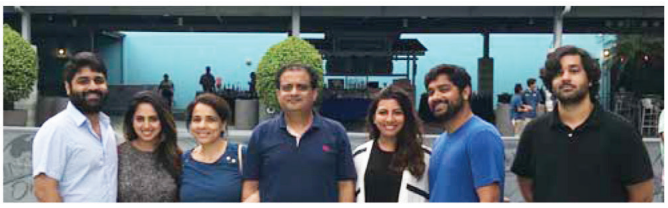
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advice, and support will always be respected and sought out. Inam will be recognized in a different league of Aligarians who "came, saw and conquered."

-Rasheed Ahmad

Inamullah in Aligarh Events and Activities

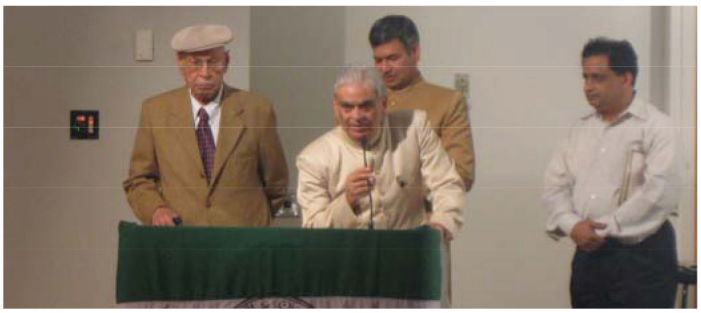




Above: Inam with his family; **Below:** With Poets, Rashid Fazli, Nida Fazli, Khalid Irfan, Dr. Sabiha Saba along with AAAA board members in 2012

Above: With Popular Merruthi, Dr. Shahid Rafique, Dr. Himayet Ali Shair in 2008; **Below:** With Zakir Ali Khan along AAAA members in 2009 Silver-Jubilee









Above: Speaking at 2006 Federation of AAA national convention in Atlanta **Below:** As Nazim-e-Mushaira at 2013 International Mushaira with Dr. Peerzada Qasim, Zahid Fakhri, Dr. Nikhat Iftikhar

Above: At 2011 International Mushaira with Hon'ble Ajit Kumar, Consul-General India; **Below:** In the planning committee of 2009 Silver-Jubilee Event







Has Sir Syed Ahmed Khan influenced us?

Dr. Mohammad Ahmad Badshah, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia*

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan – the most read about, heard about, researched about, talked about, celebrated about, discussed about and admired about personality of the 19th century – the like of whom is rarest of rare. Till to date he still rules as the iconic symbol of education for the neglected, backward and underestimated communities in general and for muslims in particular.

Let me remind the readers that when we talk about the efforts and achievements of Sir Syed, we should not forget that it was the most difficult period when the entire community was suppressed and was suffering from limitations, demarcations, poverty, ignorance and racial disparity at the social and legal levels. Furthermore, the factor of religious stigma towards modern education played a catalytic role in destroying the mental and spiritual willingness of those who wanted to gain education. Despite hindrances of such a colossus level, this great legendary person succeeded in sowing the seeds of educational willingness amongst the backward communities and lead them out of the dark night of despair to a dawn of hope. He pursued all his efforts and energies on the future building of the nation in general and the muslims in particular. He not only succeeded in establishing schools in different cities in general, but also he founded the Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College in particular in the year 1875 at Aligarh, which later evolved into Aligarh Muslim University in 1920.

Sir Syed, through his dedication to infuse modern education amongst muslims, influenced plenty of Nawabs, Rajas and Maharajas of that time. The influence was of such intensity that all these landlords not only donated with cash, they transferred their huge properties in the form of land and buildings for the cause of building the educational institutions for the community. Later on, these properties helped in developing the college into University. These assets are even today an important link for the progress of Aligarh Muslim University.

Although the Indian Muslim community has made some good progress in the educational arena, still they have to go a long way to achieve the goal that Sir Syed visualized. One of the most important and undefeatable vision of Sir Syed might have been the students of AMU – who after completing their education would grow into AMU Alumni. Perhaps, it is this vision of Sir Syed that led all Aligarians to establish AMU Old Boys Associations or AMU Alumni Associations throughout the world in every nook and corner of the globe.

Today, these alumni associations of our alma mater have grown into powerful entities that can make a gigantic difference to improve our educational and economic conditions further. It is just a matter of realization and interrogating our conscience to know as to if Sir Syed has influenced us in any ways?

Certainly, if Sir Syed succeeded in influencing the people of his time, his movement can influence the AMU alumni of today as well. Let us realize that today there is no hindrance of that level which Sir Syed has faced in those days. Today, things have changed drastically. Technological advancement and development has influenced our lifestyle and made things easier and accessible for our comfort and benefits.

Let these modern technologies help us to sustain the vision of Sir Syed and let us all be influenced by his ideologies in one way or the other. It is not that none of us in the modern time, has been influenced by Sir Syed. However, the percentage of such influenced personalities in today's scenario is comparatively low in ratio. Let us keep celebrating Sir Syed Days with all fervor and keep having luxurious dinner and organizing mushairas etc. Such annual gatherings at least compel us to introspect ourselves and ask ourselves as to how much are we influenced by Sir Syed. Thus, it is therefore, incumbent upon us not only to gather and revive the Aligarh movement, but also to update and make the people understand the value of modern education fully. This will definitely help us in achieving our ultimate goal – fulfill the vision of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and make our alma mater (AMU) one of the finest institutions in the world.

In the context of such "Milna-Milana" (get to gathers), I do not hesitate to mention here about my recent memorable and fruitful visit to USA in the month of July 2018. This visit was a double gift for me. Firstly, I visited Houston on the invitation of the President of The Federation of Aligarh Alumni Associations, Dr. Nausha Asrar, to attend his 17th Annual Convention. That was my first gift, meeting my Alig brothers, classmates and friends in Houston. It was also a memorable for me in the sense that Engr. Rasheed Ahmad from Atlanta (in absentia), was elected as the President elect of this Federation in my presence and in presence of my senior Alig brothers Mr. Hasan Kamal Bhai and Mr. Umar Farooq Bhai, (both from Atlanta, and who fortunately had invited me earlier to visit Atlanta also). Thus, my visit to Atlanta from Houston was the second memorable gift for me. I was indeed overwhelmed by the love of all Atlanta Aligs who gave me a very warm and affectionate welcome. I felt highly elated meeting the President elect of the FAAA, Engr. Rasheed Ahmad Sb. so soon. I have a splendid memory for my Atlanta Alig friends. Rasheed et al. have already extended me a warm invitation to attend the 18th Annual Convention of FAAA at Atlanta in 2019. Such "Milna –Milana" proves in itself that we all are greatly influenced with each other carrying the educational flame and spirit of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.

**Professor at King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia*

سعود عثمانی

عجب ڈھنگ سے میں نے یہاں گزارا کیا
کہ دل کو برف کیا ذہن کو شرارہ کیا
مزاج درد کو سب لفظ بھی قبول نہ تھے
کسی کسی کو ترے غم کا استعارہ کیا
پھر اس کے اشک بھی اس کو ادا نہ کرپائے
وہ دکھ جو اس کے تبسم نے آشکارا کیا
کہ جیسے آنکھ کے لگتے ہی کھل گئیں آنکھیں
نگاہ جاں نے بہت دور تک نظارہ کیا
ہمیں بھی دیکھ کہ تجسیم نو سے گزرے ہیں
بدن کو شیشہ کیا دل کو سنگ پارہ کیا
عجب مزاج تھا تنہائی آشنا کہ سعود
خود اپنا ساتھ بھی مشکل سے ہی گوارا کیا

نکہت افتخار

شوق کو عازم سفر رکھیئے
بے خبر بن کے سب خبر رکھیے
چاہے نظریں ہو آسمانوں پر
پاؤں لیکن زمین پر رکھیے
بات ہے کیا یہ کون پرکھے گا
آپ لہجے کو پر اثر رکھیے
جانے کس وقت کوچ کرنا ہو
اپنا سامان مختصر رکھیے
ایک ٹک مجھ کو دیکھے جاتی ہیں
اپنی نظروں پہ کچھ نظر رکھیے

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مصور سوچ میں ہے رنگ بھرنے سے ذرا پہلے

سنا ہے وقت کچھ خوش رنگ لمحے لے کے گزرا ہے
مجھے بھی شادؔ کر جاتا ہے گزرنے سے ذرا پہلے

رحمان فارسؔ

صدائیں دیتے ہوئے اور خاک اڑاتے ہوئے
میں اپنے آپ سے گزرا ہوں تجھ تک آتے ہوئے

پھر اس کے بعد زمانے نے مجھ کو روند دیا
میں گر پڑا تھا کسی اور کو اٹھاتے ہوئے

کہانی ختم ہوئی اور ایسی ختم ہوئی
کہ لوگ رونے لگے تالیاں بجاتے ہوئے

پھر اس کے بعد عطا ہو گئی مجھے تاثیر
میں رو پڑا تھا کسی کو غزل سناتے ہوئے

خریدنا ہے تو دل کو خرید لے فوراً
کھلونے ٹوٹ بھی جاتے ہیں آزماتے ہوئے

تمہارا غم بھی کسی طفل شیر خوار سا ہے
کہ اونگھ جاتا ہوں میں خود اسے سلاتے ہوئے

اگر ملے بھی تو ملتا ہے راہ میں فارسؔ
کہیں سے آتے ہوئے یا کہیں کو جاتے ہوئے

۳۰ر مارچ جمعہ کی صبح محترم حسن کمال صاحب نے مجھے پھر ہوٹل سے پک اپ کیا، ایئرپوٹ کے راستے میں ہم دونوں نے ایک ہوٹل میں ناشتہ کیا اور پھر میٹھی میٹھی یادوں اور جذبہ احسان مندی کے ساتھ مَیں ایئرپوٹ پر اُن سے رخصت ہوا اور دوپہر قبل از جمعہ بالٹیمور ICNA کے سالانہ کنونشن میں شرکت کے لئے پہنچ گیا۔ کنونشن ہال میں ہزاروں فرزندانِ توحید کی موجودگی میں نماز جمعہ ادا کی۔ مختلف اجلاس میں شریک رہا، شب میں مشاعرہ منعقد ہوا، کچھ مقامی شعراء کے علاوہ منظر بھوپالی اور پاپولر میرٹھی نے بھی سماں باندھ دیا۔ نظامت کا شرف مجھے ہی حاصل ہوا۔ بڑے بڑے سخن فہم سامعین موجود تھے، جن میں عالم اسلام کی مشہور شخصیت اور مبلغ اسلام مولانا یوسف اصلاحی بھی موجود تھے۔ اگلے روز ۳۱ر مارچ کو ہمارے دوست جناب افضال عثمانی صاحب تشریف لے آئے اور اپنے ساتھ لے گئے۔ انھوں نے بڑی محبت سے وہائٹ ہاؤس، Pentagon، امریکی کانگریس اور نہ معلوم کن کن خوبصورت مقامات کی سیر کرائی۔

مادرِ علمی کے ابنائے قدیم نے امریکہ میں اہل امریکہ کے لئے بھی، اور اپنی مادرِ وطن کے لئے بھی جو سماجی اور تعلیمی خدمات پیش کی ہیں وہ لائق صد احترام ہیں، رمضان ہو، عید ہو، قومی تہوار ہو، یا قومی دن ہوں، ان سب کی مناسبت سے ہر ہر موقع پر افراد کو جمع کیا اور مثبت سوچ کے ساتھ ہر موقع کا بھرپور فائدہ اٹھایا اور سات سمندر پار کے ملکوں میں علی گڑھ مسلم یونیورسٹی کی زبردست چھاپ چھوڑی ہے، بہت عمدہ تعارف کرایا ہے اور یقیناً حق شاگردی ادا کیا ہے۔ مختلف اسکالرشپ کے پروگرام، کوچنگ اور کاؤنسلنگ سینٹرس، اسکول اور مدارس کی جدید کاری MUSA، Aligarh Educational Endowment Fund (AEEF) فاؤنڈیشن اور اسی طرح کی دوسری بے شمار خدمات، اِس کا جیتا جاگتا ثبوت ہیں۔ نئے آنے والوں کی مسلسل تربیت، اُن کے جُملہ مسائل کے حل کی کوششیں، اُن پر پدرانہ شفقت اور پھر اُنھیں وہاں کی زندگی میں فعال اور متحرک بنانے کی مسلسل جدوجہد، یہ ہمارے ان موجودہ بزرگوں کا وہ وِرثہ اور امانت ہے جسے ہمیں آنے والی نسلوں تک کماحقہٗ منتقل کرنا ہے۔ AAAA نے میرے دل و دماغ پر گہرے نقوش چھوڑے ہیں۔ دعا گو ہوں کہ اللہ پاک ہمارے سینئر حضرات کی ان مخلصانہ خدمات کو شرف قبولیت بخشے اور اِس کے انوار اور تجلیات سے اِن حضرات کی زندگیوں کو خوشیوں کے ہر رنگ سے بھر دے اور پھر اپنے شایانِ شان اُنھیں توشۂ آخرت بنا دے۔ آمین ثم آمین۔ آخر میں تمام مجلان علی گڑھ، اپنے سینئرس، اپنے ساتھیوں اور اپنے جونیئرس کا تہہ دل سے ممنون و مشکور ہوں کہ انھوں نے اس ناچیز کی اس قدر پذیرائی کی۔ آپ تمام حضرات کی یہ محبت اور اس درجہ خلوص میرے لئے کسی سرمایہ حیات سے کم نہیں۔ اپنی دلی کیفیت اپنے ہی ایک شعر سے بیان کر کے اجازت چاہتا ہوں۔

میں اُن سے مِل کے جو لَوٹا تو یہ ہوا محسوس
میں اپنا دل تو وہیں چھوڑ کر چلا آیا

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والے شعراء نے بھی کلام پیش کیا اور محسن اور فرقت کاکوروی کی سرزمین کی نمائندگی بھی جناب ذکی کاکوروی کی شکل میں ہوئی، راشد فاضلی صاحب نے بھی عمدہ کلام پیش کیا۔ بلاشبہ یہ ایک تاریخی محفل تھی کیونکہ اس میں اٹلانٹا کی علیگ برادری اپنے دلوں کی دھڑکن، اپنے جگر گوشوں، بہت ہی ہر دل عزیز، بہت متحرک اور قابل رشک Couple، **ہما اسی اور زبیر اسی کو رسمی الوداعیہ** بھی دے رہی تھی۔ یہ دونوں حضرات علی گڑھ تحریک کے جسم و جان ہیں۔ تقریباً ۱۵ رسال اٹلانٹا میں رہ کر یہ لوگ ہر علیگ کے دل میں بس چکے ہیں، علی گڑھ کے ہر پروگرام کو انھوں نے اپنا ذاتی پروگرام سمجھ کر اس کے نوک پلک سنوارے ہیں۔ علی گڑھ سے تعلیمی رشتہ نہ ہونے کے باوجود بھی ان کی مجموعی خدمات کسی علیگرین سے زیادہ ہی ہیں۔ ان کو وداع کرنا اپنے جسم سے اپنے دل کو الگ کرنے کا مشکل عمل تھا مگر جس نیک، پاکیزہ اور قابل رشک جذبے سے یہ دونوں انگلستان منتقل ہو رہے تھے، اس کے تقدس کے سامنے سبھی بھرے ہوئے دل اور غمگین آنکھیں بے بس تھیں۔ یہ حضرات اپنے والدین کی قربت اور ان کی خدمت کی غرض سے وہاں منتقل ہو رہے تھے۔ **اِس جذبے کو سلام ہے،** اس موقع پر علیگ برادری اور پوری محفل نے ان کے تعلق سے جن خیالات، جذبات اور قلبی لگاؤ کا والہانہ اظہار کیا اِس پر ہر کسی کو رشک ہی آ سکتا ہے۔ میں بھی حیرت میں ڈوبا تھا کہ قریب ترین خون کے رشتوں کے لئے بھی آج کل یہ باتیں نہیں کہی جا سکتیں جو اہل محفل نے ان دونوں حضرات کے تعلق سے کہیں۔ ایسا لگتا تھا کہ ہر شخص اپنے دل پر پتھر رکھ کر اس جوڑے کو خدا حافظ کہہ رہا ہے۔ شاعر مشاعرہ لُوٹ کر جا رہے تھے تو زبیر بھائی اور ہما بھی تمام اہل محفل کا دل لُوٹ کر رخصت ہو رہے تھے۔

رخصت کے واقعات کا بس اتنا ہوش ہے
دیکھا کیے ہم ان کو جہاں تک نظر گئی

اٹلانٹا کی اس محفل کے انعقاد میں **حسن کمال صاحب، عمر فاروق صاحب، ڈاکٹر آصف توفیق** اور ان کے رفقاء بالخصوص **ڈاکٹر رشید احمد** کی کاوشوں کا بڑا دخل تھا۔ ڈاکٹر رشید صاحب گذشتہ دس سالوں سے علیگ اٹلانٹا میگزین کی ادارت اور اشاعت کی ذمہ داریاں انتہائی خوش اسلوبی سے انجام دے رہے ہیں۔ اس میگزین نے اٹلانٹا اور اس کے اطراف میں علی گڑھ تحریک کو بڑے پیمانے پر متعارف کرا کر تقویت بخشی ہے اور امریکہ بھر میں پھیلی ہوئی علیگ برادری کو ایک لڑی میں پرونے کا مشکل کام بھی کیا ہے۔ نئے لکھنے والوں کو ایک پلیٹ فارم مہیا کر کے، لکھنے کا حوصلہ بخشا ہے، پرانے علیگ حضرات کے تجربات سے سیکھنے کا موقع بھی فراہم کیا ہے اور اپنی تاریخ کو بڑے سلیقے کے ساتھ جمع کرنے کا اہم ترین کام بھی انجام دیا ہے۔ مجھے امید ہے کہ یہ میگزین انشاء اللہ مستقبل میں علی گڑھ تحریک سے دلچسپی رکھنے والوں کے لئے ایک حوالہ جاتی کتاب (Reference Book) کا کام بھی انجام دے گی۔ یہ دیکھ کر اور خوشی اور اطمینان ہوا کہ اٹلانٹا کے سینئر علیگ حضرات نے AAAA کے مستقبل کو روشن اور تابناک بنانے کی غرض سے، دوسری اور تیسری صف بھی تیار کر لی ہے۔ نئی نسل کے افراد کو ذمہ داریاں دی ہیں اور ان کی مسلسل تربیت اور سرپرستی کی جا رہی ہے۔ یہ انتہائی قابل اطمینان بات ہے ورنہ عموماً ہم مسلمانوں میں اجتماعی اور انفرادی دونوں سطحوں پر اس کا اہتمام بہت ہی کم ہوتا ہے۔

علی گڑھ کے ابنائے قدیم نے ہر جگہ اپنے آپ کو منظم کرنے کی کوشش کی، مگر امریکہ میں یہ کوششیں غالباً 1975ء کے آس پاس بار آور ہوئیں جب واشنگٹن DC میں علی گڑھ ایلمو منائی ایسوسی ایشن AAA کا قیام عمل میں آیا اور یہ اہم کام بھی حسن کمال صاحب اور ان کے احباب کی جہدِ مسلسل سے ہی ممکن ہو سکا۔ پھر اس کے بعد 1984ء کے آخری دنوں میں جناب وصی صدیقی، سید خورشید احمد، سید وسیم، امان اللہ خاں، ڈاکٹر عبداللہ اور حسن کمال کی بھاگ دوڑ رنگ لائی اور بالآخر اٹلانٹا میں AAA کا قیام ممکن ہو سکا، ان تمام کوششوں میں اِن مندرجہ بالا حضرات کی بیگمات اور اہل خانہ کی انتھک کوششوں اور قربانیوں کو نظر انداز نہیں کیا جا سکتا۔ دامے، درمے، قدمے، سخنے ان خواتین نے اس تحریک کو جلا بخشی اور اپنا خون جگر پیش کر دیا۔ اس سے پہلے اٹلانٹا کی انجمن، واشنگٹن DC کا چیپٹر ہوا کرتی تھی۔ پھر صدی کے کروٹ بدلتے بدلتے سنہ 2000 میں FAAA یعنی فیڈریشن آف علی گڑھ ایلمنائی ایسوسی ایشن آف نارتھ امریکہ وجود میں آ گئی۔ ان کوششوں میں محترم عابداللہ غازی صاحب، احمداللہ صدیقی صاحب اور ان کے رفقاء کی جانفشانی کو بھی بڑا دخل رہا۔ محترم حسن کمال صاحب AAAA کے بانی صدر بھی رہے اور پھر 2007-2006 میں وہ FAAA کے چوتھے صدر منتخب ہوئے اور اس طرح اٹلانٹا کی انجمن ابنائے قدیم کی بین الاقوامی شناخت قائم ہو گئی۔ مجھے حیرت ہوتی ہے کہ کس تواتر کے ساتھ AAAA نے اپنی دیگر تعلیمی، تہذیبی اور سماجی خدمات اور سرگرمیوں کے ساتھ ہر سال عالمی مشاعرے منعقد کر کے اپنی ادبی اور لسانی ذمہ داریوں کو بھی کمال حُسنِ انتظام سے ادا کیا۔

یہ بات کسی عجوبے سے کم نہیں کہ گزشتہ ۳۳ رسالوں میں برصغیر کا کوئی اہم شاعر ایسا نہیں جسے آپ نے مدعو نہ کیا ہو۔ اردو ادب کی تمام بلند و بالا شخصیات نے اٹلانٹا میں حاضر ہو کر آپ کی ادب نوازی کو سلام پیش کیا ہے، ان مشاعروں میں احمد فراز، قتیل شفائی، حمایت علی شاعر، راغب مرادابادی، جون ایلیا، ریحانہ روحی، ذکیہ غزل، پیرزادہ قاسم، افتخار عارف، زاہد فاخری، نصیر طرابی، طارق سبزواری اور عباس تابش کی پاکستان سے شرکت اور جگن ناتھ آزاد، گلزار دہلوی، علی سردار جعفری، کیفی اعظمی، راہی معصوم رضا، جاوید اختر، ندا فاضلی، خمار بارہ بنکوی، شمیم جے پوری، شہریار، بشیر بدر، والی آسی، راحت اندوری، کرشن بہاری، نور لکھنوی، زبیر رضوی، ساغر خیامی، پاپولر میرٹھی، خواہ مخواہ حیدرآبادی، وسیم بریلوی، معراج فیض آبادی، موج رامپوری، اظہر عنایتی رامپوری، انجم رہبر، طاہر فراز، نواز دیوبندی، منصور عثمانی، صلاح الدین پرویز، حبیب ہاشمی، منظر بھوپالی اور لتا حیا کی ہندوستان سے شرکت اپنے آپ میں ضرور ایک عالمی ریکارڈ ہوگا۔ کسی ایک شہر کے مشاعرے میں اتنی عظیم ادبی شخصیات کا وقتاً فوقتاً پہنچا بھی جوئے شیر لانے سے کم نہیں ہے، جن انتظامی دشواریوں اور قانونی بندشوں سے گزر کر اہل اٹلانٹا نے یہ کارنامہ انجام دیا ہے، یہ ان کے ہمالیائی عزم و حوصلے کا ہی ثبوت ہے۔

سابق طالبات نے محفل میں چار چاند لگا دیئے تھے۔ اتنے قد آور حضرات ایک ہی محفل میں جمع ہو سکتے ہیں؟ میں خود حیران تھا، **حسن کمال، عمر فاروق، ڈاکٹر رشید احمد، ڈاکٹر وصی صدیقی، ڈاکٹر آصف توفیق، ایم اے قیوم، سید وسیم، رُخسانہ وسیم، سلطان خاں، ناصر فاروقی، ڈاکٹر فرزانہ بھرمل، یاسر نعمانی، ڈاکٹر شعیب احمد** سب کے سب اپنی ذات میں انجمن، سینئر حضرات نے تو AAAA کو اپنے خون جگر سے سینچا ہے، کتنی راتیں جاگ کر منصوبہ بندی کی ہے، کتنوں کی خوش آمد کی، کتنے پاپڑ بیلے ہیں، کس قدر زحمتیں اٹھائی ہیں، خون پسینہ ایک کیا ہے، تب جا کر AAAA پر یہ شباب آیا ہے۔ ان تمام سینئرس کے لئے تو میں بس یہی کہہ سکتا ہوں ۔

سینچا ہے اسے خون سے ہم تشنہ لبوں نے
تب جا کے اس انداز کا میخانہ بنا ہے

اِن میں ایسے بھی بہت سے حضرات شامل ہیں جنھوں نے نہ تو علی گڑھ کا نمک کھایا ہے، نہ وہاں تعلیم حاصل کی ہے مگر سرسید تحریک کو سینے سے لگایا ہے، سرسید کے ہر قول پر لبیک کہا ہے اور AAAA کی شکل میں اس تعلیمی و تہذیبی اجتماعیت کی جدوجہد میں اپنا سب کچھ قربان کر دیا ہے، اپنے روز و شب، اپنا اثاثہ اور اپنی جوانیوں کو سرسید تحریک کی راہوں میں رکھ دیا۔ ایسے حضرات میں جناب انعام اللہ صاحب، ڈاکٹر فرزانہ بھرمل، محمد قیوم، ڈاکٹر شاہد رفیق، سراج کاراتلا، شاہد علی، صدف فاروقی، زبیر اسی و ہما اسی کے علاوہ نمایاں نام ہمارے ہر دلعزیز، انتہائی باصلاحیت اور پیکر اخلاص صدر AAAA ڈاکٹر آصف توفیق صاحب کا ہے جو اپنی بے پناہ مصروفیات کے باوجود علی گڑھ کے نام پر سب کچھ قربان کرنے کو تیار رہتے ہیں، ان تمام حضرات کے لئے مجھے صرف یہ کہہ کر خراج تحسین پیش کرنا ہے ۔

مٹی کی محبت میں ہم آشفتہ سروں نے
وہ قرض اتارے ہیں، جو واجب بھی نہیں تھے

ڈاکٹر آصف توفیق صاحب کا ذکر ہوا اور ان کی والدہ **نعیم فاطمہ توفیق صاحبہ** کی بات نہ ہو یہ ممکن نہیں ہے، وہ ایک انتہائی باصلاحیت مصنفہ اور شاعرہ ہونے کے ساتھ ساتھ ایک انتہائی غمگسار، غمخوار اور دیندار خاتون ہیں جو انسانی اقدار میں یقین رکھتی ہیں اور روتی بلکتی انسانیت کے لئے ہمہ وقت مضطرب اور دردمند رہتی ہیں۔ انھوں نے علی گڑھ میں تعلیم حاصل کی، پاکستان ہجرت کی، اپنے مرحوم شوہر کے ساتھ تقریباً آدھی دنیا دیکھی، اپنے دونوں بیٹوں اور بیٹیوں کی زبردست تربیت کر کے ایک کامیاب ماں ہونے کا فریضہ بھی بحسن و خوبی پورا کیا۔ قرآن اور قرآنیات سے انھیں بڑا عشق ہے، علامہ اقبال، مولانا تھانویؒ اور مولانا مودودیؒ کا ان کی شخصیت پر گہرا اثر ہے، جو اُن کے مضامین اور شاعری میں بھی بہت نمایاں ہے۔ اللہ پاک ان کے سایۂ عاطفت کو تادیر قائم و دائم رکھے اور انھیں صحت و سکون عطا فرمائے۔ آمین

ڈاکٹر فرزانہ بھرمل کے ذکر کے بغیر اٹلانٹا میں علی گڑھ تحریک کے فروغ کی داستان ادھوری سمجھی جائے گی کیونکہ انھوں نے اس تحریک کو داؤدی بوہرا اور آغا خانی حلقوں میں وسیع پیمانے پر متعارف کرایا اور ان اہل علم اور صاحب ثروت حضرات کو علی گڑھ تحریک کا حصہ بنا دیا۔ انھوں نے یہ ثابت کر دکھایا کہ کس طرح علی گڑھ سے فارغ التحصیل حضرات اور علی گڑھ تحریک کے وہ دیوانے، جنھوں نے وہاں تعلیم بھی حاصل نہیں کی، ایک دوسرے کے معاون بن کر اس تحریک کو کامیابی کی بلندیوں تک لے جا سکتے ہیں۔ ڈاکٹر فرزانہ اور ان کے شوہر محسن بھرمل بلاشبہ اس کے لئے قابل مبارک باد ہیں۔ ڈاکٹر فرزانہ مسلسل تین سال AAAA کی صدر رہیں۔ انھوں نے ۲۰۰۶ء کے سالانہ کنونشن میں اُس وقت کے چانسلر جسٹس احمدی کی اٹلانٹا تشریف آوری میں کلیدی کردار ادا کیا، جس کی وجہ سے علیگ برادری اور بوہرا و آغا خانی حلقے ایک دوسرے کے قریب آئے اور علی گڑھ تحریک کو زبردست تقویت حاصل ہوئی ویسے بھی تاریخی طور پر علی گڑھ کالج کے قیام کی جدوجہد میں سر آغا خاں اور داؤدی بوہرا فرقے کی بے پناہ حمایت اور مالی معاونت کو کون نظر انداز کر سکتا ہے۔ سرسید کے انتقال کے بعد ایم اے او کالج کو یونیورسٹی بنانے کی بھاگ دوڑ میں سر آغا خاں سب سے آگے تھے، انھوں نے ۱۹۰۶ء میں علی گڑھ تحریک کے دیوانوں کے ایک وفد کی سربراہی کرتے ہوئے شملہ میں وائے سرائے سے ملاقات کی اور تیس لاکھ کے Endowment Fund کی فراہمی میں گرانقدر خدمات انجام دیں۔ خود بھی انھوں نے ایک خطیر رقم پیش کی اور اپنے دیرینہ دوست آدم جی پیر بھائی (Ex-Sheriff of Bombay) سے ایک لاکھ دس ہزار کا مالی تعاون حاصل کیا۔ ۱۹۲۰ء میں جب بیگم سلطان جہاں یونیورسٹی کی پہلی چانسلر بنائی گئیں تو سر آغا خاں کی خدمات کی اعتراف میں انھیں یونیورسٹی کی تاریخ کا پہلا پرو چانسلر منتخب کیا گیا۔ اس تحریک میں بوہرا سماج کا تعاون بھی بے مثال رہا، مسلسل تین نسلوں یعنی **سیّدنا طاہر سیف الدین، سیّدنا برہان الدین اور سیّدنا مُفضّل سیف الدین** نے بحیثیتِ چانسلر یونیورسٹی کی سربراہی کی۔ STS High School یعنی سیدنا طاہر سیف الدین اسکول جسے عرفِ عام میں مِنھوسر کل کہا جاتا ہے، وہ اس علمی و مذہبی خانوادہ کے تعاون کی زندہ مثال ہے۔ ان حضرات کے قربانیوں کے اعتراف میں یونیورسٹی نے ۱۹۴۶ء میں سیدنا طاہر سیف الدین کو اور ۱۹۶۶ء میں سیدنا برہان الدین کو DTh (ڈاکٹر آف تھیولوجی) کی اعزازی ڈگری سے سرفراز کیا۔ بات نکلے گی تو پھر دور تلک جائے گی.....

خیر

اٹلانٹا کا مشاعرہ بھی شاندار رہا، بحیثیت ناظم مشاعرہ، مَیں بڑی ذمہ داری اور دیانت داری سے یہ اعتراف کرتا ہوں کہ جو پذیرائی اچھی شاعری کی یہاں دیکھنے کو ملی وہ اب بہت کمیاب ہے، سامعین بھی سخن فہم، سخن شناس اور مشاعروں کے آداب سے واقف، خوشی اس امر کی بھی تھی اس مشاعرے میں مولوی اسماعیل میرٹھی مرحوم اور جاں نثار اختر کے خانوادے سے تعلق رکھنے

امریکہ کا سفر نامہ

ڈاکٹر شارق عقیل

سی ایم او، اے ایم یو، علی گڑھ

مارچ 2018 میں جب امریکہ کی مشہور این-جی-او HHRD کی دعوت پر وہاں کے سفر کا ارادہ کیا تو سب سے زیادہ خوشی مجھے وہاں کے مختلف شہروں میں رہنے والے ہزاروں علیگ حضرات سے شرف ملاقات کی تھی۔ یہ جاننے کی جستجو بھی تھی کہ سات سمندر پار بسنے والے سرسید کے عاشقوں نے کس طرح مشکل حالات میں بھی سرسید تحریک اور اُن کی علمی مشعل کو روشنی کیا ہوا ہے۔ مجھے اس کے براہِ راست مشاہدے کا اشتیاق بھی تھا۔ ۱۴/ مارچ کی صبح سَرد برفیلی ہواؤں کے درمیان نیویارک کے JFK ایئرپورٹ پر اترا۔ یہاں میرے ایک سال سینئر علیگ ڈاکٹر انتظام الدین (جو وہاں بہت مشہور Neurologist ہیں) نے زبردست میزبانی کی اور ہلکی ہلکی برفباری کے درمیان شہر کی سیر کرائی۔ اگلے دن راچسٹر پہنچے، احباب نے مجھے پاپولر میرٹھی اور منظر بھوپالی (جو میرے ہم سفر تھے) کو نیاگرا فال کی تفریح کرائی، دونوں جانب برف سے ڈھکی زمینیں اور شاہراہیں ۳/ گھنٹے کے سفر میں خوب لطف اندوز کرتی رہیں۔ ۱۶/ کی شب میں راچسٹر میں مشاعرے میں شرکت ہوئی جس میں کینڈا کے شہروں سے بھی اردو کے علیگ دیوانے چلے آئے تھے۔ ۱۷/ میں ہم لوگ ہارٹ فورٹ Connecticut پہنچے، ایسا لگتا تھا کہ برف کی چادروں سے پورا شہر ڈھکا ہوا ہے، یہاں رات میں مشاعرے کی نظامت کی۔ اگلے دن صبح یہاں کے بریڈلی ایئرپورٹ سے روانہ ہوکر دوپہر تک کیلیفورنیا کے مشہور شہر Sanfrancisco پہنچے۔ یہاں شب کے ۱۱/ بجے تک مشاعرے کی نظامت کی۔ ہر جگہ علیگ برادری نے خلوص ومحبت کی ایسی بارشیں کی کہ سوچنے لگا آخر اس رشتے کو کیا نام دوں؟ بار بار ربانی درسگاہ سرسیدؒ کے لئے دعائیں نکلتی تھیں کہ کس اخلاص سے اس بندہ خدا نے علم کا ایک پودا لگایا تھا اور آج اس تناور درخت کے سائے پوری دنیا کو مہکا رہے ہیں۔ یہاں پرانے علیگ شہیر حسن صاحب بھی بمعہ احباب موجود تھے اور انھوں نے بھی اپنی محبتوں اور دعاؤں سے نوازا۔ ہمارے میزبانوں نے یہاں خوب مدارات کیں اور اسٹینڈفورڈ یونیورسٹی، گوگل، فیس بک، Apple اور ناسا کے مراکز کی سیر کرائی، یہ کسی خواب سے کم نہ تھا۔ مشہور پاکستانی Dentist ڈاکٹر علاءالدین صاحب نے ہم سب کو اپنے گھر پر ایک پرتکلف ڈنر پر مدعو کیا۔ یہیں پر ایک باوقار شعری نشست کی نظامت کی، ابھی فارغ بھی نہیں ہوئے تھے کہ حیدرآباد کے سخن شناس احباب نے ہم سب کو بالکل یرغمال بنا کر انتہائی محبت سے ہوٹل گلزار میں ایک اور شعری محفل سجادی جو ۱۱/ بجے شب کے بعد شروع ہوکر نصف شب کے کافی دیر بعد ختم ہوسکی، بڑی بے تکلف شاعری ہوئی۔ اردو شاعری کے ایسے دیوانے دیکھنے کو ملیں گے، اس کا اندازہ ہی نہ تھا، داغ کا شعر یاد آ گیا۔

اردو ہے جس کا نام ہمیں جانتے ہیں داغؔ
سارے جہاں میں دھوم ہماری زباں کی ہے

فرخ رضا، ڈاکٹر سعید الرحمٰن، سسٹر شیرین، ڈاکٹر علاءالدین اور ان کے اہل خانہ اور اہلیان حیدرآباد کا خلوص دیکھتے ہی بنتا تھا۔ ۲۲/ مارچ کی شام میں ہم لوگ شکاگو پہنچے، مادرِ علمی کے فلسفے کے سینئر استاد ڈاکٹر مقیم الدین (جو اپنی بیٹی کے پاس شکاگو آئے ہوئے تھے) نے زبردست میزبانی کی۔ مشہور سرجن ڈاکٹر خورشید ملک نے اپنے دولت کدے پر ڈنر پر مدعو کیا۔ اگلی شب مشاعرہ پڑھا مگر دن بھر مقیم صاحب نے Millenium park, Sears towers اور نہ جانے کہاں کہاں کی سیر کرائی۔ کم وقت میں کشتی، بس اور مقامی ریل سبھی کا سفر کرا کر پورا شکاگو دکھلا دیا۔ محبت کا یہ انداز علی گڑھ والوں کے علاوہ اور کہاں مل سکتا ہے؟ ۲۴/ کی شب ہم لوگوں نے Detroit میں مشاعرہ پڑھا بلکہ یہاں بھی علی گڑھ کے ساتھیوں نے نظامت کے لئے مجھے پھر مجبور کر دیا۔ مقصدالہ ہادی صاحب کو سننے کا شرف حاصل ہوا۔ ۲۵/ مارچ سہ پہر تک ہم بوسٹن پہنچ چکے تھے۔ یہاں بڑی علیگ برادری نے بڑا والہانہ استقبال کیا، شب میں مشاعرہ پڑھا۔ اگلے دن میزبانوں نے ہارورڈ یونیورسٹی، MIT، بوسٹن ہاربر اور چائنا ٹاؤن کی سیر کرائی اور انتہائی پرتکلف اور پرخلوص ڈنر ڈاکٹر سید شجاعت علی اور ڈاکٹر سعدیہ شجاعت (شوہر اور بیوی دونوں علیگ اور ماہر ڈاکٹر ہیں) کے دولت کدے پر کیا جس میں دوسرے علیگ احباب بالخصوص ڈاکٹر راشد اور ان کی اہلیہ ڈاکٹر نجمہ بھی شریک ہوئیں۔

۲۷/ اور ۲۸/ مارچ، دونوں دن میں اپنے بھانجے انس عالم اور ان کی اہلیہ کوکب (علیگ) کے ساتھ Austin میں ان کے گھر پر ٹھہرا اور آسٹن کے مناظر دیکھے۔ ۲۹/ مارچ کی صبح اٹلانٹا کے لئے روانہ ہوا اور سہ پہر جب اٹلانٹا کے ایئرپورٹ سے باہر آیا تو محترم حسن کمال صاحب کو بہ نفس نفیس موجود پا کر ان کی عظمت کا قائل ہوگیا۔ موصوف ایک دن پہلے ہی ہندوستان میں اپنے وطن گورکھپور، دہلی اور مادرِ علمی علی گڑھ کے طویل دورے سے واپس آئے تھے، سفر کی تکان ان کے چہرے سے عیاں تھی مگر انھوں نے کمال درجے کی بشاشت اور مسکراہٹ سے استقبال کیا، اور میں دوسری طرف پانی پانی ہو رہا تھا، یہ انہی کی شفقت وعنایت اور چھوٹے علیگ بھائیوں سے حد درجہ خلوص ومحبت کا نتیجہ تھا کہ موصوف نے ہندوستان میں رہ کر ہی میرے اٹلانٹا کے سفر کا نہ صرف انتظام کیا بلکہ ایک انتہائی باوقار محفل کی تمام تر ذمہ داریاں خود سنبھالیں اور اپنے احباب کے ذریعہ اس کا شاندار انعقاد بھی کرایا۔ حسن صاحب ایئرپورٹ سے براہ راست مجھے کسی ریسٹورانٹ میں لے گئے، کھایا پیا، کچھ دیر آرام کے لئے ہوٹل میں ڈراپ کیا اور بعد مغرب مجھے پک اَپ کرنے خود تشریف لے آئے۔ میں اس پیکر خلوص ومحبت اور سراپا شفقت کو کیسے بھول سکتا ہوں؟ اٹلانٹا کی وہ شام بھی کتنی باوقار، سہانی اور پرلطف تھی، ہلکی ہلکی بوندا باندی نے موسم کے مزاج کو اور خوشنما بنا دیا تھا۔ خوش لباس، بذلہ سنج اور شیریں گفتار علی گڑھ کے فرزندوں اور شیریں بیاں اور شگفتہ مزاج علی گڑھ کی

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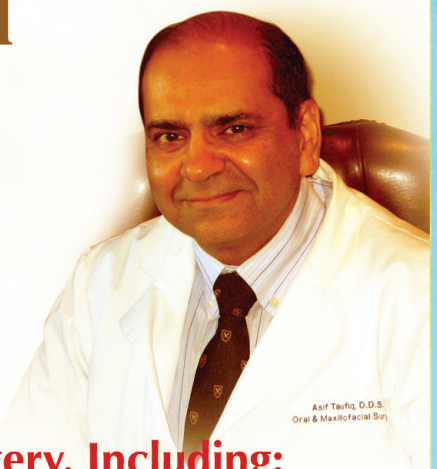
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