CHAPTER --I

INTRODUCTION

The quest of freedom for the British controlled India by the dependent people gained stupendous momentum in the first half of the twentieth century when two great leaders with their mesmerizing personalities and deep political insights arrived on the political stage of the enslaved homeland. In the beginning, although both were steered by the same motives and for the same goal, but ironically they got drifted during the last phase of the march for the struggle of the India’s freedom. It seemed that their ideologies started irking each other and this ultimately ended with the liberation of India at the cost of massive killings, exodus, destructions of properties and illegal capture of lands, buildings and religious institutions caused by the partition of British India.

While Mohammed Ali Jinnah kept intimate relations with Western life style and carried a deep influence of the western education and analysis, on the other hand Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi found solace with the Hindu life style, ideology with strong belief in Hinduism and differed with western ideologies in political thoughts.

In Gandhian thought we would certainly find reflections of all the religions and a synthesis par excellence of all the then existed philosophies dealing with both personal and public life. In the field of politics and his political experiments of Non cooperation and civil disobedience and Ahimsa, Gandhiji seemed to have been heavily charged and deeply moved and swayed by Tolstoy and Ruskin. His concept of Ram Rajya seems to have clear
impression of Ramayana and Bhagwat Gita. He was also an ardent advocate of the principle of non-violence in both theory and practice. The whole life of Gandhiji was directed, regulated and molded by the spirit of non-Violence. Infact, the principle of non-violence was the breath of his life. At a place Gandhiji writes, “for me non-violence is not a mere philosophical principle, it is the rule and breath of my life.”

Gandhi-Jinnah conflict which first began with simple political overtone finally rent the freedom movement and ultimately led to the widening of the divide between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League resulting in the partition of the British controlled country along with deadly communal violence. The Indian freedom struggle culminated into a powerful national movement and set a novel example of composite nationalism and patriotism among diverse groups and communities.

There is a general impression that Gandhiji played an important and crucial and pivotal role in the Indian freedom struggle with his unshaken nonviolent methods however it would be injustice to M.A. Jinnah if his contributions are simply ignored just because of his separatist approach after 1940 and more after the rejection of the Cabinet Mission Plan by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in 1946. While Europe tore itself apart, India advanced under Jinnah’s inspiring leadership toward a political horizon that seemed ablaze with the golden dawn of imminent freedom.

M.A. Jinnah was not alone responsible for the partition of India and was certainly not a virulent communalist. We will see that although a terrible loss to
India both in terms of geographical boundaries as well as loss of persons, migrations, displacements and in the form of M.A. Jinnah who was at one time reckoned as the most patriotic son of India much before M.K. Gandhi came to the forefront of the struggle for India’s Independence. M.A. Jinnah certainly did not receive impartial treatments by Indian historians and was demonized by most of them. On the other hand, Gandhiji is presented as angelic figure who otherwise proved not so impeccable and faultless.

Both these extreme views need to be closely examined and must be presented in balanced and justifiable manner. Both Gandhi and Jinnah had similar educational background of juridical matters but their views, concerns and commitments were starkly different. Their differences were clearly apparent over the role morality and political realism in the domain of power and governance. M.K. Gandhi was discovering the virtues of common truths in all religions with his firm commitment to Caste-oriented Hinduism. He was busy with raising objections over the wrongs of the British rulers without looking into the fears of the Muslim minority community. He is widely appreciated for holding fasts to prevent communal riots but he had no political framework to prevent the failures of the institutions to prevent such tragic incidents. In fact, Ghandhi’s main efforts were aimed at mass mobilization against the British in which the Muslim community had substantive participation. It also seems that he had left the option of creating the political frames and principles to the Western educated majority community leaders of
the Congress to deal with the issues of governance including the concerns of the Muslim community in the country.

M.A. Jinnah was moving towards other side of the fence. He was concerned with legal reforms, institutions of governance and policies of the colonial rulers along with his firm commitment to achieve independence. He was facing challenges at the two levels—first to get rid of the colonial masters and second, to seek a legitimate State safeguarding the interests of minorities particularly Muslims in the post-colonial era. The introduction of constitutional reforms by the British and increase in political institutions and opportunities as well as elections had already started political competition and rivalries among different subject communities. Therefore, minorities were worried about their legitimate political and legal space in the structures of power. M.A Jinnah who entered into mass mobilization politics after 1937, was basically interested in the constitutionalisation of the rights of the minorities in the newly republic. His faith in constitutionalism was getting strengthened. The stream of the destiny of India was flowing between the two shores—one was Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the future Mahatma of India and M.A. Jinnah the future Quaid-i-Azam of Pakistan.

Gandhiji in his stay in South Africa had already learned the profound idea of Ahimsa impact. He also developed the idea that modern city oriented civilization was an evil. He also suggested that only by going back to nature or village, violence could be eradicated from the world. His writing like Hind-
Swaraj was certainly indicator to the fact that Gandhiji had a bitter aversion to science and scientific development. In his words, he wrote:

Machinery is like a snake-hole which may contain from one to a hundred snakes. Where there is machinery there are large cities; and where these are large cities, there are tram-cars and railways; and there only does one see electric light. English Villages do not boast any of these things. Honest physicians will tell you that, where means of artificial locomotion have increased, the health of the people has suffered. I remember that, when in a European town there was a scarcity of money, the receipts of the tramway company, of the lawyers and of the doctors, went down, and the people were less unhealthy. I cannot recall a single good point in connection with machinery. Books can be written to demonstrate its evils.³

We find a critically hurt Gandhiji seeking an assertion of Eastern identity in the world when West had almost usurped every bit of eastern identity. Gandhiji seems to offer a stark contrast in western ideas both in public and private domain. He wrote:

Hospitals are institutions for propagating sin. Men take less care of their bodies, and immorality increases. European doctors are the worst of all. For the sake of a mistaken care of the human body, they kill annually thousand of animals. They practice vivisection. No religion sanctions this. All say that it is
not necessary to take so many lives for the sake of our bodies. To study European medicine is to deepen our slavery.\(^4\)

Gandhiji criticized the system of railways which are the wing of Modern civilization, he wrote:

The railways, too, have spread the bubonic plague without them, masses could not move from place to place. They are the carriers of plague germs. Formerly we had natural segregation. Railways have also increased the frequency of famines, because, owing to facility of means of locomotion, people sell out their grain, and it is sent to the dearest market. People become careless, and so the pressure of famine increases. They accentuate the evil nature of man. Bad men fulfill their evil designs with greater rapidity. The holy places of India have become unholy. Formerly, people went to these places with very great difficulty. Generally, therefore only the real devotees visited them in order to practice their roguery.\(^5\)

In the above thoughts, Gandhiji was pointing to the fact that root cause of all the evils lies in unrestrained desire but we will see this idea was certainly not new however its use as a weapon to get the freedom was quite tactically conceived by Gandhiji and surely it could strike the simple minds of the majority of Indians who were still adhering to the age old tradition and civilization.
Mohammad Ali Jinnah, on the other hand, had profound impact of English society and was always attired in the finest English clothes and remained a model of sartorial elegance. His manners and attire always assumed him entry into any of England stately homes, club and palaces. In the private life of Jinnah, religion did not have any important role except for its political significance. While most of the other Muslim leaders adhered to Islam and some of them were influenced by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and believed that Islamic orthodoxy is not completely infallible. Anglo Oriental College was established by Sir Syed to develop interests and knowledge in modern sciences and knowledge together with the guidance of Islamic principles. Sir Syed wanted the Muslims community to be educated enough to use the opportunities provided by the colonial government. He also asked the British treat Muslims in the manner they do with the majority community. In 1883 when Sir Syed was elected to Imperial legislative council he vehemently opposed the election in the body politic of India.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah, is generally described as a secular, liberal modernist. Barrister Jinnah of Bombay remained aloof from the thoughts of Aligarh and seemed to be out of time with general Muslim mindset. While Jinnah was in England, he came into intimate contact with Dadabhai Naoroji, one of the founders of the Indian National Congress, who was a liberal member of the British Parliament at the time. He had his political lessons at the feet of Dadabhai Naoroji with whom he frequented the House of Commons and various gatherings of the British Liberal politicians. In this way politics and
liberalism became part of his life. His ambition to become a great parliamentarian dates back from the days of his youth in England.

In March 1906, M.A. Jinnah had resigned from the Bombay Corporation and headed to Calcutta to join the Calcutta Congress of 1906 as a delegate of the Congress. From here, M.A. Jinnah began his career as a Congressman. Ironically, M.A. Jinnah who was destined to give a new and bold direction to the Indian National Congress, would later find the Congress as the platform of contentions and would seek its destruction.

In the same year, Indian Muslim League was founded in order to prevent Muslim from joining the Congress. The British policy makers was in search of a force that would contain the growing influence of the Indian National Congress where in the extremist thinking was growing to an alarming extent for the future Queid-i-Azam of the same Muslim League to join it mainly because M.A. Jinnah had a definite conviction and conceived the Congress as the national expression of the people of India. Although he joined the Muslim League in 1913, he remained as the Congressman till 1920. He began to maintain distance with the Congress mainly due to political and ideological disagreements with Gandhiji, in addition to the rejection of his suggestions for constitutional reforms. Examples are the Nehru Committee Report, 1928 and the Round Table Conference in early 1930s.

In 1907 when the Congress was split at Surat session as a result of friction between the moderates and the extremist, there came a high sounding declaration from the Congress as self government within the Empire as the goal
of the Congress. Soon with the arrival of the Liberal party on the seal of power at England, Lord Minto became the new Viceroy of India and Morley became Secretary of State while partition of Bengal by Minto’s predecessors Lord Curzon in 1905 had already exposed the British and was conceived by Indians as the act of Divide and Rule policy. Lord Minto took a step forward and decided to proceed with political reforms and allowed more political representation to Indians. But with this step also came surge of political communalism and separation Lord Minto also gave a new counterpoise as he encouraged the Muslims to press for something which would finally culminate into the partition of the country.

However, at this time Gandhi was not in political scene of India and M.A. Jinnah was gaining ground for fighting political battles against the British. Not only M.A. Jinnah condemned the partition of Bengal as cruel wrong, he also spoke in favour of Indians in South Africa. M.A. Jinnah was also conceded as a great ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity and in this case he was similar to Gandhi. But Jinnah’s Hindu-Muslim unity was more for the peaceful and prosperous co-existence of the two communities that would inherit the freedom for this great nation.

At the moment no one could have anticipated the creation of Pakistan and Jinnah was the most generous and liberal force of the Congress who always argued for united India. Jinnah when addressed the League session on 30 December 1916 at Lucknow he clearly encouraged the Muslims of India to
come forward and shore up the responsibility along with Hindu fellow Congressmen and appeal to the Muslims of League in the following words.

The decisions that you take in this historic hall and at this historic session of the league will go forth with all the force and weight that can legitimately be claimed by the chosen leaders and representatives of 70 million Indian Musalmans. On the nature of whose decision will depend, in a large measure, the fate of India’s future, of India’s aspirations for constitutional freedom.

The Lucknow Pact of 1916 brought the Congress and the League together it was historic event in the quest of freedom for India when the Congress and the Muslim League pledged to work together for India’s freedom. The Lucknow Pact was a great personal and collective triumph for Jinnah in his campaign for Hindu-Muslim unity and Congress–League cooperation. His contribution towards the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity was of such a high order that Ghokhale used to call him the best Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity.

This handiwork of Jinnah the Congress-League Lucknow Pact provide a blueprint for India’s future independent constitutional frame and principles of governance. Jinnah had clear understanding of the steps which must be taken next. He said:

After you have adopted the schemes of reforms you should see that the Congress and League take concerted
measures to have a bill drafted by constitutional lawyers as an amending bill to the Government of India Act which embodies the present constitution of our country. This bill when ready should be adopted by the Indian National Congress and the All India Muslim League and a deputation of leading representative men from both the sides should be appointed to see that bill is introduced in the British Parliament and adopted. For the purpose we should raise as large fund as possible to supply the sinews of war until our aim and objective are fulfilled.  

This was Jinnah’s constitutionalist par-excellence. In the founding of the Muslim League, and for a number of years, M.A. Jinnah took no interest in its deliberations. He confined himself to his duties as a member of Imperial Legislative Council to which he was elected in 1909. On the other hand, when prominent Muslim figures organized a meeting of Mohammedan Educational Conference in 1906 at Dhaka and founded the All India Muslim League.

M.A. Jinnah was nowhere present in the founding of the Muslim League. When in Imperial Legislative Council he showed his veracity and candidness while addressing the plight of Indians in South Africa. He quite frankly expressed his feelings and also the feelings of thousands of Indians who were given very harsh and cruel treatments in South Africa. It was for the first
time someone at least dared to speak in courageous manners in the face of Viceroy.

Following this he became the forceful voice and got huge press covering all over India. His speeches and political activities always made news in all the newspapers and from here onwards he was given a respectable political stature and from this time onwards when he started making impressions on the great intellectual minds from both the communities, M.A. Jinnah was finally roped into join the Muslim League in 1913 by the efforts of Mohammad Ali and Vazeer Hasan. As soon as he joined the League he made his impact felt there as he tried to bring its aims in line with the Congress ideas. Very soon the League declared its ideals as:

Attainment under the aegis of the British crown of a system of self government suitable to Indian through constitutional means, by bringing about among others, a steady reform of the existing system of administration by promoting national unity, by fostering public spirit among the people of India and by co-operation with other communities for the said purpose.  

After twenty years, Gandhiji returned home from South Africa in 1915 where he had earned huge popularity for the honor of his countrymen. Gandhiji had already established his novel experiment with passive resistance movement and got his name glaring in the Indian press. Quite strangely but true that then
Viceroy of India, Lord Hardinge had openly showed his sympathy with Indians in South Africa. It was indeed a great job done by any Indian on the foreign soil.

On his arrival in Bombay, Gandhji was given a very royal reception. It was here that M.A. Jinnah and M.K. Gandhi came across each other. Gandhiji came to India with certain dreams. His first speech in a Gujarati gathering made this clear that Gandhiji seems to have no apparent fascination for anything that is Western in Indians and spoke against use of English and Western dresses and boldly expressed his idea that one cannot be a leader of the mass who has no root in the heart of masses. It was his sort of first lesson to the Indian leaders where we would clearly see a dichotomy between leader like Jinnah immaculately dressed in English clothes and had a refined English tongue and on the contrary M.K. Gandhi who was dressed in local Gujarati clothes and preferred to talk in the language of motherland. Gandhiji felt that it was essential to indianise the Indians. Gandhiji writes in his autobiography:

Gokhale took from me a promise that I should travel in India for gaining experience, and express no opinion on public questions until I have finished the period of probation. Gokhale used to laugh at some of my ideas and say after you stayed a year in India, your views will correct themselves.⁹
Like M.A. Jinnah, Gandhi too had his political Guru as Gokhale. In fact he was Gokhale who induced and persuaded Gandhiji to return to India after doing the noble work in South Africa but as fate desired Gokhale died in February 1915 within a few weeks of his arrival in India. It was a great loss of Gandhiji. In his Autobiography he said: “I had approached India in the ardent hope of merging myself in Mr. Gokhale.”

Gandhiji wanted to join the Servantsof India Society which was founded by Gokhale but Gandhiji was not admitted despite the overwhelming affections he received from the members. They conceded Gandhiji as a misfit for the job. Gandhiji imbued with the revolutionary ideas contained in Tolstoy and John Ruskin writings, he decided to establish an Ashram for himself and thus he founded Sabermati Ashram near Ahmadabad. Gandhiji’s ideas--Sarvodaya, passive resistance and civil disobedience came from diverse sources. He could synthesize all these in his quest for his freedom struggle and he spoke through his own newspapers like Young India and Navjivan from the Sabermati Ashram. In those papers, he expressed his views about Satyagraha, Sarvodaya, Ahimsa and Swadesi.

His articles on Swadesi urging boycott of foreign clothes immensely benefited the Ahmadabad mill owners. Gandhiji led his first mass struggle in India in the Champaran district, Bihar, though on a small scale. Here for the first time Gandhiji came in contact with Dr. Rajendra Prasad who later on became the first President of India when India became a republic.
Again he resorted to a Satyagraha in conflict between the mill owners of Ahmadabad and their labourers. Ultimately, the mill owners yielded owing to their regard for Gandhiji. As soon as the Ahmadabad dispute was settled, Gandhiji plunged into another struggle. A condition approaching famine had arisen in Kheda district and the tenant prayed that the revenue assessment for year may be suspended. Government was very unsympathetic. In view of the attitude of the government, Gandhiji advised the tenants to resort to Satyagraha. During this struggle, Gandhiji came for the first time in contact with Vallabhbhai Patel, who left his lucrative legal practice to become a follower of Gandhiji.

As time went on and as people of India began to show their abounding respect, he became bolder. In February 1916, the foundation stone of the Banares Hindu University was to be laid by the then Viceroy, Lord Hardinge. Hindu princes from all over India were invited to the function by the illustrious Mrs. Besant, the founder of Central Hindu College, Banaras which formed the nucleus of the university. Gandhiji was also invited by her to speak on the occasion. A galaxy of Indian princes, bedecked with jewels, sat on the dais while the Maharajadhiraja of Dharbhanga occupied the chair. Before making his speech, which was delivered in English, Gandhiji began by saying:

It is a matter of deep humiliation and shame to us that I am compelled this evening under the shadow of this great college, and in this sacred city, to address my compatriots in a language that is foreign to me.
This was a terrible dig at our English educated leaders of the Congress. The audience heard the remarks in pin drop silence. Encouraged by the rapt attention with which his speech was so far heard, he crossed beyond the permissible limit which is allowed on such occasions. He ventured to give advice to the princes who sat on the dais bedecked with jewels. Princes go and sell your jewels. There is no salvation for India unless you strip yourselves of the jewelling and hold it on trust for the benefit of your poor countrymen.

He did not stop at that and he then referred to the excessive police precautions for the safety of the Viceroy and continued to say: “Why this distrust of the people? Is it not better that the Viceroy should take the risk of being stay rather than flooding the whole town with police harassing the people.” Mrs. Besant became restive and perturbed as she felt that this was not the place nor was it the occasion for giving out such expressions. The result of the speech was that there was a pandemonium: the princess left; the chairman left; the meeting ended in confusion. Late that night the police wrote out an order for the immediate externment of Gandhiji from Banaras. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya persuaded the police authorities to withdraw the order but Gandhiji left Banaras the next morning.

Mohd Ali Jinnah, on the other hand, once again got his upper hand over Gandhiji when he joined the Home Rule League as its President following the arrest of Mrs. Besant, she founded the Home Rule League in 1916 with a view to provide impetus to the political movement and also as an alternative to the
Congress for which she felt a bit disenchanted and had the impression that the Congress is not working upto the expectation and that it is too slow and tardy to achieve the objectives. However, after her arrest Jinnah addressed a meeting under the auspices of Bombay Association on the 30th July 1917, Jinnah spoke the following words:

We protest against the internment of Mrs. Besant and her co-workers not only on principle but also because it is an attempt to intern the Home Rule a self government scheme of reforms framed and adopted conjointly by the Indian National Congress and the Indian Muslim League at Lucknow. We declare that we stand by that scheme unswerving and unflinchingly, and we shall do all that lies in our power for its realization at the close of the war.¹⁵

At this time reputation of Gandhiji was also running high among Indians and that he was not only noticed but also appreciated for the great public work. Jinnah himself proposed the name of Gandhiji to lead the Home Rule League after his tenure despite opposition from members of the League. This clearly indicates that Mohammad Ali Jinnah had no aversion to Gandhiji and trusted him for his ability and statesmanship. After Gandhiji became the President, he brought a drastic change in the creed of the Home Rule League. He not only changed the name of the Home Rule League to Swaraj Sabha but also proposed to employ different methods of work and policies. This was seen as a departure
from the aim and objects of the League. It was here for the first time, we can see that M.A. Jinnah and Gandhi came at logger head against each other. Infact this was the starting point of differences over political and other considerations between Gandhi and Jinnah.

The year 1920 witnessed Gandhiji in a new religio-political form. Till 1919 he showed lukewarm response both towards the Congress and Jinnah. Even after the Jalianwala Bagh massacre of 14th April 1919 Gandhiji showed bizarre calmness and spoke of moderation and restraint but on the question on Khilafat we find a drastic change in Gandhiji’s line of action who started the Khilafat movement in 1920.

Thus the historic role of Gandhiji in India, or the Gandhian age of Indian history began. Infact with the plunge of Gandhiji into the Khilafat movement which not only brewed disagreements between Gandhi and Jinnah but also made the former and enigmatic personality, more complex and more un-understandable. Gandhiji made a complex somersault when he had categorically pronounced that he would lead a Non-cooperation movement if the Muslim demands on the Khilafat wrongs were not satisfied. The sudden change of tone and tactics of Gandhiji is perhaps due to the fact that he knew that this is the only way to win over Muslims and take over their leadership which was till now in the hand of M.A. Jinnah. Gandhiji perhaps had set his eyes on the moment because he knew that this would give him an opportunity to chain Muslims to his mission. Jinnah was an Indian patriot, his chief interest being the freedom of mother India whereas in the case of Gandhiji his interest
in the Indian freedom was only secondary, his primary interest being to demonstrate the inherent strength of the ideas he brought from south Africa and to make India a bastion of Gandhism and thereafter to propagate Gandhism to the world from India.  

From Gandhiji’s point of view, Jinnah was not only a mismatch but also a misfit to his ideological framework which he had thought of propagating as Gandhism and, therefore, he not only discarded M.A. Jinnah but also didn’t dither to be cynical of him. Gandhiji didn’t bother to discard Jinnah, a man who was fixing the destiny for the freedom of his people. Gandhiji with his aspirations and ambitions to become soul leader of Indian masses was, on one hand, had the appeasement of Muslims and, on the other hand, began speaking the language of common Hindu countryman by pampering their religious emotions and passions. Jinnah, on the other hand, was an ardent Congressman, the disciple of Dadabhai Naoroji the lieutenant of Gokhale, the Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity. However, Gandhiji tried to undermine the brave constitutional stalwart and chose to hug to his bosom men like Mohammad Ali, Shaukat Ali and others. The sponsoring of the Khilafat movement by Gandhiji destroyed the Lucknow Pact which was the handiwork of Jinnah. Lucknow Pact showed the way for the settlement of Hindu-Muslim political problems but on the other hand the Khilafat movement, by bringing religious fanaticism into political questions, prepared the path for future Hindu-Muslim antagonism in a fiercer form.
Gandhiji had learned from the experience at South Africa that masses are the ultimate source of power and anybody who can appeal to the passion and emotions of the masses will have the whip of leadership at his feet. Leadership through mass-movement was his master-plan. Whatever he said or did from the very first day of his arrival in India was done in a calculated manner to attain the undisputed leadership of India with his profound knowledge of human psychology, he came to the deliberate conclusion that to achieve his aim, he must secure for himself the status of a religio-political leader. His mode of living and his loin-cloth had a definite purpose behind them. For 4 or 5 years after his arrival in India he did not take much prominent part in the politics of India but kept himself busy in consolidating his position among the masses. The Indian National Congress was founded on Western ideology and on British liberal principles of political developments. Liberal ideas of Locke, Hume, Burke, John Stuart Mill, John Morley etc. were the Bible of the previous Congress politicians. Jinnah used to say that British liberalization was part of his life. Indian masses were out of touch with Indian politics with the Indian National Congress. Gandhiji definitely shunned the path shown by the previous Indian leaders who were too much anglicized. He was determined to indianise Indian politics. For this, Gandhiji fully deserves the admiration of every Indian. Indeed he was a great pioneer who showed a new way to the Indian politicians. He set an example before other leaders by associating himself whole heartedly with the masses, their lives, problems, sentiments and aspirations. In talking to the people, he scrupulously avoided
any reference to the Western ideas or ideology but talked on Ramayan, Mahabharta and Upanishads and on Ram-Rajya.

His deliberate merging of himself with the common people intensely strengthened his position and at the same time roused a mass-consciousness as had never been witnessed before. He was already raised to the position of a Mahatma. The result was that at Gandhiji’s call the masses responded with their full soul because they felt that here was a leader who was of their own flesh and blood and who spoke to them in their heart’s language. Love, respect and the devotion of the masses placed him at the pinnacle of power.

Gradually political leaders far above him in education and intellectual capacity came under his political influence and virtually placed themselves at his service to work under his guidance and even subordinated their judgments to him. In this group, the foremost man was Pandit Motilal Nehru who surrendered himself to Gandhiji as soon as the latter formulated his non-co-operation programme during the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress in September 1920. Another notable capture of Gandhiji was Vallabhbhai Patel. He was not yet Sardar Patel, a well-known criminal lawyer of Ahmadabad who became his follower. He took up the organizational side of Gandhiji’s plan. Gandhiji was fortunate in having him at the head of his organization, as his organizing ability had rarely been surpassed. Vallabhbhai Patel was not yet known outside the circle of Ahmadabad but Pandit Motilal Nehru was all-India figure. When he with his Harrow and Cambridge educated
son Jawaharlal Nehru came under his banner, Gandhism received its greatest impetus.

Hindu masses were already at the feet of the Mahatma and the Khilafat Movement brought the Muslim masses also under his banner. With the united Hindu-Muslim fanaticism behind him, he hoped to be invincible and the Gandhian hegemony in India to be complete. He had no use for Jinnah, but Mohammad Ali, Shaukat Ali and Maulana Azad were useful to him. He had no use for Mrs. Besant who led a dedicated life for India.

He had no use for the determined, highly principled, and sincere SubhasChandra Bose, but the pliant Jawaharlal was very useful to him. He employed every conceivable means to raise Jawaharlal to the pinnacles of power and at the same time did not hesitate to stop low for the purpose of political ruination of Subhas.

Some words must be said for Gandhiji’s Khaddar-cult together with his insistence on hand-spinning. This cult is not so innocent as it apparently looks. Gandhiji was not satisfied by merely directing that all Congressmen must wear Khaddar but he had also enjoined that none should be allowed to be a member of the Indian National Congress who did not spin regularly with his own hands. Rabindra Nath Tagore wrote to Gandhiji that he felt that hand-spinning was a very useful accessory occupation for a villager but why insist that everybody, whether a townsman or a villager, must do hand-spinning?

For one man it may be useful but for another a sheer waste of time. The poet said that he could not understand Gandhiji’s overall stress upon hand-
spinning by everybody and he particularly protested against the peremptory
direction of Gandhiji that no one could be a member of the Indian National
Congress unless he regularly spun with his own hands. The poet characterized
this direction as an interference with freedom of thought and action. In an
uncompromising reply to the poet, Gandhiji wrote: “I do indeed, ask the poet
and sage to spin the wheel as a sacrament”. Tagore’s first impression of
Gandhiji’s Sabermati Ashram was as follows:

…what a wildness of white colour; the walls of the
buildings are white, the river sands are white, the Khaddar
is white, everything is white at the Ashram. Mark you,
before long it will develop into a political cult as intolerant
and tyrannical as the civilization born of the sandy deserts
of Arabia. The white colour is a colour of intolerance.
Gandhi has adopted it; it will have its consequence. 18

Gandhi did not invent his white Khaddar cult merely for the altruistic
benefit of hungry millions but he had ulterior motives behind this cult and these
were to further the cause of Gandhian ambitions. It was to be the battle dress of
the Gandhian faithfuls, the Swiss Guards of the Gandhian papacy. Hand-
spinning of hours was meant to regulate and control the thoughts of the
spinners. It was a kind of brain washing exercise. Its result would be that the
spinners will unconsciously think in unison with the Gandhian thoughts and
will be converted into Gandhian automatons to do or die according to the
wishes of Gandhiji.\textsuperscript{19} Thousands of Gandhian workers, whom he called constructive workers asked strictly accordingly to Gandhian injunctions and constituted the nucleus of the non-violent fighters of Gandhism. In the early days of his career, Gandhiji was a democrat and called the Congress the mouthpiece of the nation where everyone was entitled to express his own views when he made his first attempt to convert the Congress to his non co-operation programme. He said:

I am told that I have been doing nothing but wrecking and that by bringing forward the resolution, I am breaking up the political life of the country. The Congress is not a party organization. It ought to provide a platform for all shades of opinion, and a minority need to leave this organization, but may look forward to translate into a majority, in course of time, if its opinion commended itself to the country.\textsuperscript{20}

With meteoric success, he became a changed man and tried to exclude everybody from the Congress who had not subscribed to Gandhian ways. It became a rule that before a man could have entry into the Congress he must prove, by hand-spinning and Khaddar-wearing that he is a Gandhian faithful.

The year 1920 saw the Indian National Congress surrendering its conviction and ideology to the will of Gandhiji and braced up to toe on the Gandhian line of action. When Gandhiji moved the resolution for the non-cooperation, Jinnah failed to prevent Gandhiji from adopting and implementing
of non-cooperation. Moreover it also earned Jinnah unpopularity among his religionist and finally the great ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity was given a deadend from where either would have embraced Gandhiji methods or would he have created a new secured platform to launch himself a leader for which he had the ability as well as creativity. Jinnah chose the other way and turned down the request of Gandhiji to rally under the banner of non-cooperation. In the reply to the request of Gandhiji he wrote:

I thank you for your kind suggestion offering me to take my share in the new life that has opened up before the country. If by ‘New life’ you mean your methods and your programme, I am afraid I can’t accept them: for I am fully convinced that it must lead to disaster. Your methods have already caused splits and division in almost every institution that you have approached hitherto, and in the public life of the Country and your extreme programme has for the moment struck the imagination mostly of the inexperienced youth and the ignorant and the illiterate. All this means complete disorganization and chaos. What the consequence of this may be, I shoulder to contemplate.  

After Jinnah seceded from the Congress in 1924 he was elected to be President of the Muslim League session at Lahore where he had taken up very careful step by not undermining the national interest at the same time
emphasizing at the interest of the Muslim community he said in the presidential speech: “I am almost inclined to say that India will get Dominion responsible Government, the day the Hindu and Muslims are united.”

Here we can clearly visualize that despite being overshadowed by Gandhiji and despite the fact that he left the Congress, Jinnah close to be still an advocate Hindu–Muslim unity. When the Simon Commission was sent to India in 1927, represented by all Whites to recommend and report about India’s preparedness and ability to go along with constitutional progress, the entire country and its leaders cutting across all the party lines chose to oppose the Commission. As Bipan Chandra writes: “It was however, from the latter part of 1927 that the curve of the mass anti-imperialist upsurge began to take a marked upward turn.”

This Commission had certainly aroused the emotions and anger of Indians and there were large scale protests all over the country. Indians were given a consequence a challenging task to produce an agreed constitution. The Indian nationalist leaders appointed Pandit Motilal Nehru to draft the constitution of India. This report is popularly known as Nehru Report. Bipan Chandra writes:

This report defined Dominion status as the form of government desired by India, it also rejected the principle of Separate Communal Electorates on which previous constitutional reforms had been based. Seats would be reserved for Muslims at the Centre and in Provinces in
which they were in a minority, but not in those where they had a numerical majority. The Report also recommended universal adult suffrage, equal rights for women, freedom to form union and dissociation of the state from religion in any form. A section of the Muslim League had in any case dissociated itself from these deliberations, but by the end of the year it became clear that even the section led by Jinnah would not give up the demand for reservation of seats for Muslims especially in Muslim majority provinces. The dilemma in which Motilal Nehru and other secular leaders found themselves was not one that was easy to resolve. If they conceded more to Muslim communal opinion, then Hindu communalists would withdraw support and if they satisfied the latter, then Muslim leaders would be estranged. In the event, no further concessions were forthcoming and Jinnah withdrew his support to the report and went ahead to propose his famous ‘Fourteen Points’ which were basically a reiteration of his objections to the Nehru Report.24

The Nehru Report had created ripple in the Hindu Mahasabha which thought it to be giving under concession to the Muslims. On the other hand, it also emboldened M.A. Jinnah to peruse for more concessions which was unfortunately resented by Hindu and Sikhs alike.25
Chaudhary Khaliquzzaman, author of *Pathway to Pakistan* who was also delegate to the convention of the Muslim League in Delhi in 1929 noted with great pain that the golden opportunity for negotiation with Jinnah was missed by the Congress and the Nehru Report drove the two faction of Muslim League to unite. He expressed his views as:

The short-sightedness of the Hindu politicians on this could not be surpassed. The Muslims had offered to deprive themselves of the most valuable right of separate electorates in favour of joint electorates, which far-sighted statesmanship would have tried to secure at any cost, but events were leading up to something else which fate had ordained. It is true that the Muslim opinion was divided but Congress by one stroke of genius could have brought cohesion among them and used in their struggle for independence.26

With the election of 1937 the Congress got the opportunity to form the government in eight provinces and the Muslim League led by Jinnah couldn’t score well in Muslim seats (out of 485 Muslim seats the League secured 108, the Congress contested 58 Muslim seats and won 26). In December 1934 at the annual session of the Congress at Bombay, Gandhiji formally announced his retirement from the Congress. The Congress passed a vote of confidence in him in following words:

The Congress reiterates its confidence in the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. It places on record its deep sense of
gratitude for the unique services rendered by him to the nation and notes with satisfaction his assurance that his advice and guidance will be available to the Congress wherever necessary.27

On the question of subordination to Governor, the Congress however refused to accept office. Nevertheless, the Congress after an assurance by Lord Linlithgow finally accepted to form the government. Pandit Jawahalal Nehru, who was the President of the Congress at the time, declared that on the political evolution of the country, there are only two parties—the British and the Congress—that counted. Cut to the quick at this contemptuous dismissal of the League, Jinnah retorted — there is a third party — the Muslim League whom the Congress, he warned, will ignore on its own risk and peril. He warned, cautioned and pleaded to the Congress:

We are not going to be dictated by anybody. We are willing to co-operate with any group of a progressive and independent character provided, its programme and policy corresponded to our own. We are not going to be camp followers of any party. We are ready to work as equal partners for the welfare of India.28

Besides the unscrupulous move of Pandit Nehru which couldn’t only bring Jinnah to complete despondency and shame his own indisputable patriotic actions so far, Jinnah was also given an opportunity or infact forced to
choose between a muddy road or dignified path by the overtones of manlike Savarkar whose words had clearly done harm to the so far united efforts by both Hindu–Muslim in the quest of freedom struggle. Noted scholar A.G. Noorani has quoted anti-Muslim sentiments of Savarkar:

I warn the Hindus that the Mohammedans are likely to prove dangerous to Hindu nation. India cannot be assumed today to be a Unitarian and homogenous nation, but on the contrary there are two nations in the main: the Hindu and the Muslims in India.\(^{29}\)

Although Gandhiji had taken retirement he had incomplete control over the Congress. However when Jinnah asked him his mediation on the question of settlement between Congress and League, Gandhiji showed his helplessness and expressed his hopelessness in quite pessimistic tone wrote to Jinnah:

Dear Mr. Jinnah, Kher has given me your message. I wish I could do something but I am utterly helpless. My faith in unity is as bright as ever. Only I see no daylight out of the impenetrable darkness and in such darkness and in such distress, I cry out to God for light.\(^{30}\)

M.A. Jinnah was so disillusioned at the attitude of Gandhiji and the Congress high command that he decided to leave the country and settled down in London.\(^{31}\) At the Lahore session of the Muslim League in 1940, there was, from here the unfortunate journey of the otherwise, nationalist Jinnah so far, towards a tragic ending that would make Jinnah the Quaid-i-Azam but would definitely
destroy the great and fabulous castle of the Hindu–Muslim unity. The 1940 Resolution of the Muslim League demanded independent states which should be autonomous and sovereign. Jinnah’s soul was now filled with intense hate for the Congress. He dubbed Gandhiji as the man responsible for turning the Congress into an instrument for the revival of Hinduism.\(^{32}\)

Meanwhile the British government came out with the popularly known August Offer which promised the establishment of the dominion status and formulation of a new constitution after the end of the war. However neither the Congress nor the Muslim League would accept.\(^{29}\) The government came harsh and decided to crush the Congress. Gandhiji aggrieved, started in individual civil disobedience but at the same time he was in favour of embracing the British government during the war time.\(^{34}\)

In 1942, the Cripps Mission was sent to India but the provisions of the Cripps Mission failed to meet the demands of both the Congress and the Muslim League and therefore both of them rejected the Mission. Gandhiji called it post dated cheque.\(^{35}\)

Gandhiji drafted ‘Quit India Resolution’ and the Congress Working Committee at Bombay endorsed the ‘Quit India Resolution’. Gandhi gave the famous slogan ‘Do or Die’.\(^{36}\) Gandhiji had thus created a situation where the British government was left with no alternative but to woo Jinnah. The Quit India Movement infact cleared the way for the birth of Pakistan.\(^{37}\)

After the call of the ‘Quit India Movement’ the government came up with repressive policies and decided to crush the movement in the beginning
and all the top leaders of the Congress were arrested including Gandhiji. However, this could not stop the movement instead draconian measure of the government could only flare up the anger and passion of the people and it could culminate into a major chaos. The movement attained the proportion of rebellion. Meanwhile owing to the bad health of Gandhiji the new Viceroy Lord Wavell ordered the release of Gandhiji. Soon after the release Gandhiji asked the Viceroy to establish the national government responsible to the General Assembly but the Viceroy rejected the request of Gandhiji and argued that unless a permanent solution to the problem of minority is addressed no constitutional progress is possible. Gandhiji now turned to M.A. Jinnah and tried to convert him to his fold but Jinnah remained adamant. Pyarelal in his book *Mahatma Gandhi* writes about the prevailing conditions under which Gandhiji agreed to the proposal of Pakistan to Jinnah:

How could Gandhiji give his approval to the Rajaji formula and how dared he concede the principle of Pakistan? Had he not called the partition proposal and untruth and India vivisection a sin? Some critics asked. Gandhiji explained that what he had agreed to wasn’t different from the self determination principle to which the Congress Working Committee was committed. It implied conceding the right to separate to such areas as might want it, after ascertaining the wishes of the inhabitants of that area through a properly
conducted plebiscite, consisting with the safety, integrity and economic progress of the country as a whole.\textsuperscript{38}

Gandhiji and Jinnah met in Bombay and the conversation between them continued for 18 days. Initially it was cordial but soon bitterness grew between them. The talk failed but Jinnah could have achieved what he wanted to his position and prestige. In the opinion of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Gandhiji had done great political blunder by approaching to Jinnah. Maulana Azad said:

Mr. Jinnah had lost much of his political importance after he left the Congress in twenties. It was largely due to Gandhiji’s acts of commission and omission that Mr. Jinnah regained his importance in Indian political life.\textsuperscript{39}

After the failure of Gandhiji-Jinnah talks, attempts were made to settle the issue between the Congress and the League and to make an interim government at the Centre. Bhulabhai Desai and Liyaqat Ali from the Congress and the League came to tentative plan for the formation of interim government. However, M.A. Jinnah didn’t approve Desai-Liyaqat talk and at the sametime Liyaqat Ali also issued press statement that there was no pact between him and Desai. This is may be because of the fact that Liyaqat Ali must have been admonished by Mr. Jinnah.\textsuperscript{40}

Bhulabhai Desai, on the other hand, was accused of entering into the conspiracy with the League, this was something unfortunate. Lord Wavell now took the initiative with the approval of the British Primier Winston Churchill convened a conference in Shimla on 25 June 1945. M.A. Jinnah in the
conference asserted his position and rejected the Viceroy’s proposal and demanded that the right to nominate Musalman for the Council must remain with only the Muslim League. Consequently the conference turned out to be a failure and it was a great triumph for Jinnah. On 8 May 1945 when the war in Europe was over, Lord Wavell announced the policy statement on the behalf of the British Government headed by Clement Attlee who gave statement on 3 September 1945 soon after the fall of Tokyo. Lord Wavell’s speech on 19 September 1945 indicated the desire of the His Majesty to do their utmost do their utmost to promote in conjunction with the leaders of India opinion the early realization of full self-government in India.

The British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee decided to send the Cabinet Mission to India. The Cabinet Mission arrived at Delhi on 24 March 1946. However before the Cabinet Mission arrival, election to the Central Legislative Assembly (CLA) and to the various provincial legislatures was bound to create a new politico-communal situation. The election gave stunting victory to Jinnah and now he was in the position to warn the Cabinet Mission not to impose a constitution contrary to Muslims’ demands. The Muslim League demanded a separate homeland as sovereign Pakistan. The Cabinet Mission Plan which was the last comprehensive efforts to create a united India with the partnership of the Hindus and the Muslims in the governance of the country was accepted by the Congress and the League and it was dubbed a glorious moment in the history of Freedom Movement of India.
Nevertheless the fate desired otherwise and one huge blunder was committed by Pandit Nehru as the new President of the Congress who seemed to differ from what has been agreed by both the League and the Congress. Nehru’s statement over rejecting the agreed principles under the Cabinet Mission Plan, resulted in a stalemate on the way settling the Hindu-Muslim problem for creating a united country. Jinnah got infused with ‘no return policy’ and thunder direct Action plan for the achieving the goal of a separate country—Pakistan:

Today we have said good-bye to constitutional methods.

Throughout the painful negotiations the two parties with whom we bargain held a pistol at us — one with power and machine-guns behind it and the other with non-co-operation and the threat to launch mass civil disobedience. The situation must be met. We also have a pistol and are in a position to use it.42

As a consequence to the Direct Action call the entire of the Calcutta city soon got engulf into communal frenzy. It was unrestrained civil war. Now in order to calmdown the unrest both the Congress and the League decided to form interim government. However after the formation of interim government crisis after crisis kept brewing up. On 28 February 1947 the British Prime Minister Attlee announced the definite intention to take the necessary steps to effect the transfer of power. At the same time Lord Mountbatten was appointed the Viceroy of India. Lord Mountbatten soon charmed Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel, Gandhi’s influence in India politics was nowhere to be mentioned.
Gandhiji in a conversation with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in fact had expressed his concern over the question of partition: “If the Congress wished to accept partition it will be over my dead body.”

But as politics is unpredictable human game, Gandhiji too got consumed by the political vicious cycle and after the meeting with Lord Mountbatten he too got converted though he didn’t speak in favour of partition but he was no longer against the partition. However, in a meeting with Mountbatten, Gandhiji proposed that Mr. Jinnah should be given the option of forming the cabinet. This offer of Gandhiji was rejected as unrealistic by Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel. Meanwhile communal riots broke out in Punjab and the North-west frontier. Mountbatten after number of meetings with both the sides came to the conclusion that Muslim League would resort to arms if Pakistan in some form were not considered. He, therefore, came up with his plan called Mountbatten Plan which would finally divide the country into Pakistan and India on 14 and 15 August 1947, while both the Congress and the League accepted the Plan, Gandhiji could only helplessly watch his nation and people being partitioned and sacrificed at the altar of freedom.

Gandhiji’s love, ahimsa and service of the humanity seemed no longer doing any good to the great leaders of both the Congress and the League. Gandhiji now was alone in his experiment while be remained busy in calming down the unscrupulous communal passion, it is interesting to see that M.A. Jinnah in the same time was busy in the celebration of his achievement and in the consolidation of his Pakistan. Gandhiji could indeed show to the world that
he deserved the word Mahatma ascribed to his name when he got the bullets in his chest Nathuram Godse for saving the community of which quite ironically Jinnah claimed to be the Quaid-i-Azam.
Endnotes


4. Ibid., p. 59.

5. Ibid., p. 45.


7. Ibid., pp. 54-55.


12. Ibid., p. 183.

13. Ibid., p. 184.

14. Ibid.

16. Ibid., p. 57.


22. Ibid., pp.309-301.


24. Ibid., p.263.


31. Ibid., p. 591.