CHAPTER – 6

Conclusion

This is quite ironical that a man who left a momentous legacy behind him and adorned and honoured as the Quaid-e-Azam of Pakistan and who fought and won his Pakistan on the single plea of ‘Muslim under siege’ by Hindu majoritism; could himself never show up as a poster boy of the then practised traditional Islam. This is also difficult to understand the enigmatic Jinnah by just looking at him and that is why he undertook his journey from Karachi to Bombay and then back to Karachi, forsaking his intense and emotional relationship with the Congress unless we solve the riddle of being Jinnah under the circumstances which brought him virtually at the crossroad and which forced him to seek refuge under the pretence of an insecure, unprotected and threatened Muslim and whose greed and hunger for the power and whose egoistic creed which he would inherit by belittling and by compromising the interests and aspiration of his so called Muslim brethren. This is also strange that a man who loved delicacies in taste, style and action and who loved to put on the most fashionable suits of the time and loved to speak in the accent of an educated Englishman and yet his steps are seen quite paradoxically coming out from the steps of Sind Madrassat ul-Islam. This being quite opposite to what Jinnah stood for in his political career. A man who was secular to the hilt and not even Gandhiji was a match. Jinnah’s personality, his guts and gumption, his dedication and honesty, his accomplishments and the indomitable courage had all without match in any of the arena he stepped
in. He crossed swords with atleast as many great British born as Indian barristers defeating them all in his single minded plea for Pakistan. He was never easily thwarted or defeated.

All the historians of the world over do pass laudatory remarks for M. A. Jinnah when it comes to his forthcoming nature and unswerving personality, his awesome style of conversation and penetrating logic and more over his unbending nature and his stubbornness on the question of Pakistan, yet we hardly know how M.A. Jinnah could admit himself that his Pakistan was the biggest blunder of his career. His acceptance entails his agony he suffered during the birth of Pakistan. It cannot be dismissed altogether that it was like a predicament from where return to his long cherished goal of Hindu-Muslim unity, secularism and patriotism was just impossible.

In its essence Jinnah approach was sober, cautious and constructive. Undoubtedly Jinnah abhorred and detested violence of any form and he always believed that any form of movement whether civil disobedience a non-cooperation which was opted by his political counterpart Mahatma Gandhi, could always turn into uncontrollable violence which subsequently would give the government a pleato resort to ruthless repression. Not surprising that Gandhi’s methods were always questioned by Jinnah and though he was shouted down when he called upon Gandhiji to retract and had said that the constitutional way is the only right way. If constituted authority is to be overthrown what will happen to the country, was the question Jinnah posed repeatedly. It was his blatant disregard to M.K. Gandhi’s principles and
methods perhaps which made him repugnant to the Congress leadership undoubtedly his aversion to the Congress and M.K. Gandhi was not a sudden phenomena but it was a gradual process. The first phase of his political career from 1906-20 was certainly without any communal colour and we find Jinnah preaching and safeguarding Muslim rights under the superstructure of Indian nationalism. Jinnah stood out and worked for national freedom through Hindu-Muslim unity in the first phase. He believed firmly that the two communities would be co-sharer in power when freedom comes.

In 1913 his association with the Muslim League can in no way be dubbed as communal politics as he remained loyal to the Congress and to the national struggle, however his approach was now being screened with suspicious minds and presented with communal colour. This gave a new direction to his political philosophy and albeit haltingly he started pressing for greater share and power for Muslims in order to coexist with equal dignity. His message to Hindus and Muslims was more impactful when he asked Hindus to lift Muslims and Muslims to join hands with Hindus. The Lucknow pact of 1916 was a great historical achievement of M.A. Jinnah. It showed that the Hindus and Muslims could unite to make a common political demand.

In 1915 when M.K. Gandhi arrived on the political scene and when he forced the Congress to own up his line of actions, it was indeed the most critical time when Jinnah felt void in his political reasoning and judgement and resorted to new political game. From 1920-37 when he left the Congress and came in direct confrontation with the Congress. In 1920 when Gandhiji made
his mind to launch non cooperation on the question of Khilafat, Jinnah was quick to see the consequence and warn Gandhiji. In fact no historian can deny the fact that Jinnah of 1920 had nothing to do with the communal frenzy and fantacism and that he was still in the best of his secular garb. He was neither even opposed to the Khilafat but for him the question was more relevant, what is the surety that spirit of non cooperation shall not be routed and marginalised by the illiterate and ignorant masses and shall take up an ugly look and that would only dampen the movement and kill the spirit of non violence.

Incidentally his warning vindicated his points and not only non cooperation government was suspended but then if could propel communal passion to an extent that while Mopalah uprising and hate speeches of the ‘hot headed’ Muslim leaders made the matter much more worse. The Suddhi (purification) and Sangathan (Organization) movement on the other hand completely paralysed the Hindu-Muslim unity.

Till early 1937, Jinnah believed, even as most other Muslim leaders did, that Muslim rights and interests would be, and could be, made safe in a truly federal constitution; so he worked for a federation and for Hindu-Muslim unity. But by the late thirties, chiefly as a result of the Congress policy and posture in the provinces under its rule, he was to become convinced that the Congress would turn even a federal constitution into a machinery for oppression of the Muslims and other minorities, so by 1937-38 he began to oppose it tooth and nail. Increasingly and inexorably was he to direct all his energies hence forth towards building up Muslim unity, a single political platform, and a uniformall-
India policy to be followed loyally by Muslims throughout the subcontinent. He was thus to establish himself, with the passage of time, as the unquestioned leader of Indian Muslims.

By 1924, in view of a new spurt of Hindu communalism in the wake of the failure of the Khilafat and civil disobedience movement (1920-22), his position on separate electorates seems to have further crystallized. The Muslim opinion was so strong on this question that would make it as a settled fact for the time being. On that basis the Muslims should have adequate representation. The percentage, the ratio on the population, can only be fixed by mutual goodwill and consent, in order to secure the success of any scheme that may come force for representation to the municipalities and legislatures. The same seems to have been the case with Jinnah till 1910. His election to the Imperial Legislative Council the previous year brought him closer to Muslim problems and to the main body of Muslim opinion in northern India from Nadwa to Aligarh and to the Muslim League. From then on his perception of Muslim problems seems to have undergone a gradual change, he came to realise and recognise that the Muslims, after all, had certain special interest and certain particular needs which must be catered to if they weren’t to be left behind.

On the more important of these particular needs was, of course, the retention of separate electorates, conceded earlier by the British in the 1909 Act. Interestingly, his stance at the Agra League session, December 1913, on a resolution demanding extension of communal representation to local bodies
represents a gradual shift from the position he had proposed at the Allahabad Congress session three years earlier. Here, at Agra, he didn’t oppose the resolution outrightly, but merely called for its postponement for a year. If the Muslims were to press the question, he cautioned, they would get the shadow and not the substance. In the historical perspective, then this Agra stance indicated a thawing of his erstwhile opposition, if not outright conversion, to the principle of separate electorates.

However, by 1916, he shows an increasing recognition of the validity of the Muslim demand, when he counsels his “Hindu Brethren” that rightly or wrongly the Muslim community is determined for the present to insist upon separate electorates. To most of us, the question is no more open to further discussion or argument, as it has beena mandate of the community. The demand for separate electorates is not a matter of policy but a matter of necessity to the Muslims. Jinnah, therefore, appealed to Hindu brethren that, in the present state of position, they should try to win the confidence and trust of the Muslims who are, after all, in the minority in the country. If they are determined to have separate electorates, no resistance should be shown to their demand.

However, it is worth analysing that why M.A. Jinnah had to go back and forth on many occasions, one of the major reasons which might be ascribed to this to and fro movement was perhaps his gradual building up of experiences with time and that maturity of political wisdom only got strengthened. This is not to say that M.A. Jinnah was infallible and that all his actions were immaculate and impeccable yet his actions were governed by the time which he
duly and emphatically answered. There are many instances where he changed his minds for instance-

(i) Jinnah’s initial opposition and later support to communal electorates.

(ii) His earlier support and subsequent opposition to the Congress.

(iii) His earlier dedication to the goal of Hindu-Muslim unity and his later espousal of the doctrine of Hindu-Muslim exclusivism.

(iv) His initial acceptance and subsequent rejection of the Cabinet Mission Plan.

(v) His aversion to direct-action politics as a means to ‘hasten’ Indian independence in the 1920s and his advocacy of direct action to achieve Pakistan in 1946 and;

(vi) His repeated stress on the ideological basis of the Pakistan demand during 1940-47 and his seeming volte face in his presidential address to the newly created Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on 11 August 1947.

No one can describe Gandhiji as beautiful as Tagore did. Although Tagore himself was harshly critical of Gandhiji methods and principles. On the question of non cooperation Gandhiji had chosen an extreme radical view. He considered it a sin to cooperate with the satanic British Government and hence he commanded non cooperation but on the other hand M.A. Jinnah bitterly contested this view point by maintaining that in the present situation where majority of Indians are steeped into ignorance there will be hardly any taker of Gandhiji view point in its essence and this movement Shall finally be taken
over by the “hot heads” and shall aggravate the gospel of hatred against the British.

Gandhiji in contrast to Jinnah was nowhere even near to be the “arch political rival” of M.A. Jinnah. He had nothing in common with Jinnah excepting the fact he belonged to the district Rajkot and apart from this Gandhiji was a unique blend of diverse attributes that could possibly enabled him to reach on the highest rung of leadership with which be successfully ruled over minds and hearts of people so much so that he had become iconicfigure and nation and people still find his words and actions relevant.

Indeed this man lived the life he wanted to be but the life he chose for others didn’t meet his desire even half way. His spiritual practices did earn him the epithet like Mahatma yet this could neither block the passage to Pakistan nor did it eliminate the virulence of communalism nor even he could even impact his own people like Patel and Jawaharlal Nehru on the question of Jinnah and Pakistan. In general however hisgradual presence could keep the pulse of Indianization going although at berserk pace. In the words of S.K. Majumdar, Gandhiji definitely shunned the path shown by the previous Indian leaders who were too much anglicised. He was determined to Indianize the Indian politics. For this Gandhiji fully deserves the admiration of every Indian love, respect and the devotion of the masses placed him at the pinnacle of power.

Gandhiji was a Mahatma, a political mystic or a mystic-politician, but his mystic nature had a greater influence on him and his political visibility
largely over shadowed by his mystic nature and so we find that Gandhiji in his political wisdom could make numerous blunders and continued to disenchant not only M.A. Jinnah but also his close friends, be it the question of giving support to the British in the first world war or be it the Khilafat movement or be it the changing of the Home Rule constitution or be it the question of Swaraj or be it the non cooperation and Civil disobedience, or be it the question of Hindu-Muslim unity.

In any case, Gandhiji suffered from several “inherent limitations” in his role as the arbiter of the Hindu-Muslim conflict. In many respects, Gandhiji was a rather conservative Hindu. In his philosophy and methods, in his daily rituals, in prayer and preachings, in his attempt to rouse the masses through Hindu religious songs like the Ramdhun, in his constant reference to Ram Raj as the ideal form of state and society that was expected to emerge after Swaraj, in his life long struggle for the cause of the untouchables which he regarded more as a cause of Hinduism than a secular and humanitarian cause, in his practically life-long support of the caste system and his opposition to cow-slaughter, and in many other respects, he was a thoroughly orthodox Hindu and proudly declared himself to be so. Indeed, no historian worth his salt can deny the fact that in many ways Mahatma Gandhi was one of the greatest architects of Hindu revivalism in modern India.

Gandhiji as a person, his philosophy and methods were, therefore, particularly unsuited to the resolution of the Hindu-Muslim conflict. A party to a dispute cannot hope to assume successfully the role of the Judge or the
arbiter. In order to bring about a harmony between contending forces, one has
to rise above and beyond these forces. This Gandhiji failed to do. The fact of
the matter is that to regard the communal problem in India as an essentially
religious problem, as Gandhiji apparently did, is a gross oversimplification. It
requires only a casual understanding of the problem to know that deep-rooted
historical, political, economic and social factors are involved. Any attempt to
solve this problem, if there is to be even partial success, must be based on an
essentially secular approach. But this was obviously beyond Mahatma Gandhi.
The Muslims of India never accepted him as a supra communal and non-
partisan socio-political leader. This may be one of the soul reason why M.A.
Jinnah had an edge over Gandhiji. This is not to say that Gandhiji had ever
wished anything else except the love and Ahimsa but unfortunately he gave this
message with ambiguous words that could win him neither the Muslims nor the
Hindus of the cult whom Gandhiji failed to make follow his command. This
cannot be dismissed therefore that Ganhiji himself failed to achieve what he
intended and he could only make things worst when he spoke hard and harsh
for the community (Muslims) in 1924 through his young India when he was
expected of the utmost cautious and screened words. His open support to
Shuddhi and Sangathan and at the same time plunging into Khilafat movement
speak a lot about the confused, unrestrained and politically unlettered Gandhi.
And this could finally burden him with his self inflicting fastings. On the
question of non cooperation and Satyagarh, Gandhi believed in mass agitation,
revolutionary propaganda and fascinating slogans, the otherwise good intention
of Gandhiji was bound to be bloody which it did. It undoubtedly hastened the freedom but not the way Gandhiji wanted it to be.