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Jinnah's First Political Phase: from Nationalism Idealism to Communal Realism (1906-1920)

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ABSTRACT

This paper traces the first phase of Muhammad Ali Jinnah's political career, highlighting his evolution from a committed Indian nationalist to a disappointed realist disillusioned by Congress politics. It explores his early education, legal and political influences in England, and his initial involvement with the Indian National Congress in 1906. Jinnah emerged as a strong advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity, earning the title "Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity," and played a crucial role in achieving the Lucknow Pact of 1916. However, from 1917 to 1920, a series of political setbacks, including the Rowlatt Act, the rise of communalism, and Gandhi's use of religion in politics, gradually alienated Jinnah. His resignation from the Congress in 1920 marked the end of this phase and the beginning of his transformation. The paper underscores the shift in Jinnah's political ideology, shaped by constitutional method and moderate nationalism, ultimately paving the way for his later leadership of the Muslim League.

Key words: Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Hindu-Muslim Unity, Communal Politics, Indian National Congress, Gandhi-Jinnah Divide.

Introduction

Jinnah was a great politician. He worked for Muslim rights and the safeguard of Muslim interests. He was a fearless and truthful person. He started his political career properly when he joined the Indian National Congress in 1906. He worked for the communal settlement between the Muslims and the Hindus. He came to know that the basic problem was a communal issue between Hindus and Muslims. He wanted to know the Muslim point of view, so he joined the Muslim League in 1913. He wanted Hindu-Muslim unity. He worked a lot, and he succeeded when the Muslim League and Congress signed the Lucknow Pact in 1916. But later on, he came to know Hindu mentality and left the Congress in 1920. At that time Jinnah realized that Hindus were not in favor of Muslims's interests; they were seeking how to destroy them. From 1917 to 1920 were the years of disappointment for Jinnah. It was the first stage of his political career.

The first phase of Jinnah's political career started with great ambitions, but this period ended with great disappointment. Jinnah wanted to create harmony between Hindus and Muslims. He succeeded in his mission when Congress and the Muslim League came together on one point (Lucknow Pact). But with the passage of time, Jinnah came to know about the narrow-mindedness of the Hindus and the mood of Congress, which was working only for Hindu interests and pushing the Muslims back and trying to get rule over India. He was disappointed by Hindu's approach, and he left the Congress.

Jinnah was a secular liberal modernist. He had a legal bent of mind. He did work according to law. The first chapter of his political career was well organized. In this period he got the name of "Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity." He was a nationalist and

worked for Indian nationalism. Moreover, he changed his mind, and he started working for the Muslims, and he wanted to safeguard Muslim rights, and in the later period he did so.

His Early Life

Muhammad Ali Jinnah was born on 25 December, 1876, in Karachi. He was the son of a merchant named Poonjah Jinnah. He got his early education in Karachi. Mr. Poonjah came to know Sir Fredric Croft, the General Manager of Douglas Graham and the Company, who offered the young Jinnah an apprenticeship at the company's London office near Threadneedle Street. So in the year 1893, he was sent to England. There he got admission to Lincoln's Inn and studied law. He worked in theater. He visited Hyde Park, where he heard the tumultuous and disjointed remarks of these reckless orators, who criticized their own government in the worst terms while recognizing the significance and necessity of freedom of expression (Hayat, 2008). In 1895 he was called to the Bar. In 1896, he returned to India. He worked as a lawyer. He was inspired by few Indians. He entered into politics and spent his whole life for the safeguard of Muslim rights and interests. s.

As a Law Student

In January 1893, Jinnah was sent to England. He soon developed and pursued an interest in law; he left the apprenticeship for a legal career and joined Lincoln's Inn to study law, and this course called to the bar (Naidu, 1989).

Jinnah met Dadabhai Naoroji in London. At that time Dadabhai was the president of the London Indian Association. Under the direction of Dadabhai, Jinnah cultivated a robust understanding of political ideas and an authentic zeal for equity, which were the hallmark characteristics of Dadabhai's patriotism. In other words, Jinnah learned the doctrine of moderate Indian nationalism (Metz, 2010).

Jinnah used his final two years in London to pursue his education and prepare for his intended political career. Jinnah added, "I was fortunate to meet a number of influential English liberals who helped me comprehend the principles of liberalism." At that time, Lord Morley's liberalism was firmly established. I realized that liberalism was something that greatly excited me and became a part of my life (Burk, 2011).

Young Jinnah was enthralled with the glittering world of politics, which he frequently observed from the Westminster House of Commons' visitor's gallery. Jinnah was elected as one of Bombay's representatives to the Central Legislative Council in Calcutta, and he later spent decades serving on the expanded assembly in New Delhi, where he played a significant parliamentary role (Wolpert, 1984).

A Young Advocate

In the fall of 1896, Muhammad Ali Jinnah made his way back to India. On August 24, 1896, he was admitted to the Bombay High Court as a lawyer. His focus was on the law. Jinnah rented a decent

room at the Apollo Railway Hotel on Charni Road, which was close to the High Court. He spent most of his days waiting for his first client and examining other people's arguments. The young barrister's first three years of practice are essentially unknown. However, by 1900, a very powerful "friend" held his professional potential "in high esteem" and introduced him to John Molesworth Macpherson, the acting advocate-general of Bombay (Wolpert, 1984). The latter liked young Jinnah right away and asked him to work in his office. Macpherson was the first to extend such an invitation. Macpherson's assurance and encouragement arrived "as a beacon of hope" during a dark moment in Jinnah's early self-struggle. However, Sir Charles, a member of the Bombay province government's judiciary, was so impressed by his ambitious and attractive young assistant (Jinnah) that he appointed him as a "temporary" third presidency magistrate.

For six months, Jinnah sat on the municipal bench, hearing all kinds of minor criminal cases. These included accusations against two Muslim "opium eaters" from Basra who were accused of hiding their drugs under their turbans, complaints from the Great Indian Peninsula Railway against riders who were accused of not paying their fares, and accusations against regular Chinese sailors who refused to work on their ships while they were in port. Even though Jinnah demonstrated his fairness and courage as a judge, he preferred the Bar as a career path. Did he find advocacy more intriguing because of the pugnacity of youth? Or the promise of greater financial gain? Great barristers naturally want both fame and riches, and Jinnah yearned for both. Jinnah said, "I will soon be able to earn that much in a single day," when Sir Charles offered him a permanent position on the bench in 1901 at a very reasonable beginning salary of 1,500 rupees per month (Wolpert, 1984).

As soon as he did. After Jinnah established himself as a front-rank lawyer in Bombay, he also made a mark in the public affairs of the city. His fearless and incomparable advocacy and his sense of honor and integrity had won him a place in the distinguished circle of Bombay (Khan, 1976).

At that time the lawmaking body at the Centre was called the Imperial Legislative Council. Jinnah won the seat assigned to the Muslims of Bombay in 1909. Thus, he entered the field of legislation, which was best suited to his constitutional temper and legal bent of mind. "The first and foremost quality that characterized his mind and spirit was his stand for justice and fair play in every matter, for everybody. This was the ingrained principle of his nature, and it found full expression in his character and conduct throughout the entire gamut of his career as a lawyer, legislator, politician, and statesman." (Khan 1976).

Jinnah's activities as a practicing lawyer are overshadowed by the beginning of his career by the importance of his activities in the national movement, and Jinnah counted himself close to the

moderate nationalist (Metz, 2010).

Early Political Influence

At the age of almost twenty, he was a trained barrister who was committed to liberalism, which he had learned from Dadabhai Naorji, Gladstone, and Morley (Bolitho, 1954). Dadabhai Naorji, Sir Pherozshah Mehta, and Gopal Krishna Gokhale continued to be Jinnah's political heroes. But Gokhale was without a doubt the guy who contributed most to Jinnah's political growth (Metz, 2010). As he previously stated, "Being a Muslim Gokhale is my goal" (Naidu, 1989).

The renowned Dadabhai Naorji, the guardian angel of young Indians in England and the president of the London Indian Society at the time, is closely associated with Jinnah (Naidu, 1989).

In his book "Jinnah: India-Partition-Independence," Jaswant Singh said that after returning from Britain, Jinnah started practicing law and his political career. In 1897, he then became a member of the Anjuman-i-Islam, a well-known Muslim representative organization. As the chairman of the Anjuman and a judge of the Bombay High Court since 1895, Badruddin Tyabji was a logical choice to be Jinnah's Muslim mentor (Singh, 2009).

The Bombay Muslim constituency returned Jinnah to the Imperial Legislative Council in 1909, the year of the first elections held under the Morley-Minto Reforms. Jinnah was seated with some of India's most distinguished individuals in the Viceroy's Council. Many of them, including Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mazhar ul Haq, Dinshaw Wacha, Bhupendra Nath Basu, and Srinivas Sastri, were Congressmen like him (Kazmi 2005).

Undoubtedly, Jinnah's early legal education influenced his perspective on the relationship between the government and the Muslim community. He was adamantly against giving individuals who had lagged behind in the battle for educational achievement preferential treatment of any kind. Jinnah's support for a single competitive exam was uncompromising. These types of opinions were what first led him to join the Indian National Congress (Kazmi 2005).

Join the Indian National Congress (1906)

Jinnah started his political career solidly within the tradition of moderate nationalist politics, according to Ayesha Jalal's book "The Sole Spokesman (Jalal, 1992).

The twentieth annual Congress session, which was held in December 1904 beneath canvas on Bombay's Oval, was the first that Jinnah attended. Jinnah met Gokhale for the first time in the 1904 Congress, and he later grew to respect his knowledge, justice, and moderation (Wolpert, 1984).

When Jinnah attended the Congress session in Calcutta in December 1906 as a delegate and honorary personal secretary to President Dadabhai Naorji—often referred to as "the Grand Old Man of India," whom he had known from his time in London—he formally entered active politics (Hayat, 2008).

He gave his first speech from a political platform during this session. In less than ten years, he had established himself as a prominent figure in the Indian nationalist movement's leadership (Mujahid, 1981).

He was committed to the goal of Indian independence rather than the liberation of Muslims alone, and he was more interested in the regeneration of Indians overall than that of Muslims specifically. Above all, he was a devoted "nationalist" (Naidu, 1989), and Jinnah believed that the Congress might set the example by making concessions and adjusting to one another. He said, "This shows one thing, gentlemen, that we Muhammadans can equally stand on this common platform and pray for grievances being remedied through the program of the National Congress," in support of the 1906 Congress decision on Waqf-alal-Aulad. Jinnah was aware that the party was fantasizing about the Hindu Raj (Hayat, 2008).

Towards Communal Settlements

Jinnah's participation in the Conference of Hindu and Muslim leaders in Allahabad in 1910 was his first notable display of leadership in the cause of Hindu-Muslim unification. "Jinnah served as a cross-bencher during this conference in order to reach a compromise on areas of disagreement between the two communities." Chronic issues including cow sacrifice, music played in front of mosques, the Urdu-Hindi debate, national education, and the Arya Samaj were among the topics discussed (Metz, 2010).

The main hurdle was the settlement of basic issues of a communal nature. In 1913, the Congress agreed in principle to have an amicable settlement of communal disputes in order to chalk out a program for further political and constitutional advance (Abid, 2007).

The Muslims of the Bombay Presidency elected him to represent them in the supreme Legislative Council in the fall of 1910. While it is naturally unclear how this was consistent with the declared values of such a fervent nationalist to represent a purely sectarian interest, the fact remains that Jinnah consistently offered his willing support to every liberal measure involving the larger national issues, such as Mr. Basu's Special Marriage Bill and Gokhale's Elementary Education Bill, to which conservative India as a whole was so vehemently opposed. However, his sole unique effort at this time was related to the Wakf Validating Bill, which he introduced after being specifically nominated for an additional term by then-Viceroy Lord Hardinge in 1913. His remarkable ability and tact in guiding through such a complex and contentious measure, the first time a bill was passed into law on a private member's motion, won him not only the respect of his peers but also his first measure of widespread recognition from his fellow Muslims throughout India, who, although still considering him to be somewhat outside the orthodox spectrum of Islam, were eager to seek his opinion in their political affairs (Naidu, 1989).

At that time no one was in a better position than Jinnah to convince

the Congress that the Muslims valued communal electorates more highly than they valued self-government for India (Metz, 2010).

Join the Muslim League in 1913

In the early period Jinnah showed no sign of adopting a more compromising attitude towards Muslim demands for special treatment (Kazmi, 2005). Later, he changed his attitude, and he bent towards the Muslims. In December 1912, at Bankipur, Jinnah attended his first Muslim League Council meeting and from that time forward used his influence within both organizations to push them along the road to political union. It seems to have become clear to him by this stage that the government's use of Hindu-Muslim divisions as an argument against political devolution could only be countered effectively if the two organizations were brought together (Kazmi, 2005).

In 1913 Jinnah joined the Muslim League. With his enrollment as a member of the Muslim League, Jinnah began a period of double membership in both Congress and the League, which was to last seven years and which he was to devote chiefly to the task of bringing and keeping the two organizations and thereby the two communities together in close cooperation in the nationalist cause (Metz, 2010).

Since 1913 Jinnah played an increasingly active role in Muslim politics. By 1914, Jinnah's reputation as an all-India leader had been fully established (Singh, 2009).

He proposed that the Muslim League have its annual session at the same location and time as the Congress two years later in 1915, after learning that the Congress was having its session in Bombay. Some pro-British groups who oppose the Congress League entente started frenzied rumors that the League will combine with the Congress, but Jinnah quickly put an end to them (Mujahid, 1981).

He said that the success of the League session in Bombay in 1915 would "show the power of organization, the solidarity of Muslims' opinion, their worth" (Mujahid, 1981).

Jinnah made significant contributions to the protection of Muslim rights. He stated in 1916 that the Mohammedans needed to be woken from the stupor and coma they had fallen into; therefore, the demand for a distinct electorate was not a question of policy but rather of necessity. Therefore, I would urge my fellow Hindus to endeavor to gain the faith and confidence of the Mohammedans, who are, after all, a minority in the nation, given the current situation (Chanan, 2006).

As an Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity

"Barrister Mohammad Ali Jinnah was not only known as an Indian nationalist, but he was also proud to be an Indian nationalist" between 1912 and 1917. He focused his efforts at the time on promoting Hindu-Muslim harmony and unity (Naidu, 1989).

For Jinnah, 1916 was a year of prosperity and national recognition. He was chosen to guide the Muslim League to new heights of

optimism in Lucknow after he helped prevent its collapse in Bombay. "Under Jinnah's inspiring leadership towards a political horizon that seemed burning with the golden dawn of imminent freedom" (Wolpert, 1984).

His mentality was constitutional. "If we look to the past, we find that only such people have been declared fit for freedom in the past who fought for it and attained it," he said during the All India Muslim League's Ninth Session in Lucknow in 1916. The times we live in are different. There are benefits to peace. We are engaged in combat and are limited to waging constitutional conflicts. An individual did not necessarily wish to overthrow the government just because he participated in agitation (Burk, 2011).

"Our joint conference in Lucknow was marked by honest efforts on both sides to find a lasting solution to our differences, and I rejoice to think that a final settlement has at last been reached which sets the seal on Hindu-Muslim cooperation and opens a new era in the history of our country," Jinnah said at the signing of the Lucknow Pact between the Congress and the Muslim League in 1916. There may still be occasional instances of fresh irreconcilable spirits in either group, but overall the threat of sectarian strife has been eliminated, and the future looks bright with the promise that happiness, the heart of India's loyal son, will prevail.

"We should have goodwill and a fraternal attitude toward Hindus," he said as he wrapped up his remarks. Our guiding concept should be cooperation in the interest of our Motherland. The two big sister communities must truly understand one another and have cordial relations if India is to make any meaningful progress. We eliminate the underlying causes and negative consequences of the disintegration process. We ought to continue to be loyal to and cooperative with one another. The welfare of the community should take precedence above individual conflicts and goals. We must acknowledge that petty arguments and part-compartment formation serve no beneficial purpose.

We must demonstrate our real and earnest desire for a strong sense of national togetherness via both our words and our actions. The remaining 70 million Muslims don't have to be afraid (Chanan, 2006).

Jinnah noted that another obstacle to the two groups' union was the demands of the Muslim and Hindu electorates. He stated, "As far as I can tell, the call for a separate electorate is not a question of policy but rather a cry of necessity for the Muslims, who need to be awakened from the stupor and coma they have been in for so long." Therefore, I would urge my Hindu brothers and sisters to attempt to gain the faith and confidence of the Muslims, who are, after all, the nation's minority under the current situation. There should be no opposition to their requests if they are choosing to have distinct electorates (Bolitho, 1954).

Looking back, the Lucknow Pact appears to have marked a deep

change in Jinnah's political growth (Nanda, 2010). "Jinnah's early political affiliations and the moment he entered the history of Indian nationalism naturally led to his role as the Ambassador of Unity" (Metz, 2010).

"Jinnah believed that Hindu-Muslim unity was a prerequisite for Indian freedom; in fact, his advocacy of Hindu-Muslim unity rather than Indian unity as a whole implied his conviction that Muslims were the main players in Indian body politics (Mujahid, 1981).

When Jinnah left the Congress, he continued to serve as an envoy for Hindu-Muslim reconciliation (Metz, 2010).

The Year of Great Disappointment

Many of the political changes in India between 1917 and 1920 ran counter to Jinnah's beliefs (Jalal, 1992).

In 1917, Montagu traveled to India. He set up interviews with Gandhi, Jinnah, and a few other notable figures. "...perfectly mannered, impressive-looking, armed to the teeth with dialectics, and insistent upon the whole of his scheme (the Lucknow pact)" was how he described Jinnah. I flunked him since I was a little weary. Chelmsford was bound in knots as he attempted to dispute with him. Jinnah is a very clever guy, and it is therefore unacceptable that he should be unable to manage his own nation's affairs (Burk and Din, 1997).

Jinnah became a member of the Home Rule League in 1917. This league's goal was to provide India self-government. The governor had questioned the Home Rule League's devotion and sincerity. According to Jinnah, the Indian populace preferred a citizen army over a strictly mercenary one. Jinnah's daring scandalized the British officialdom. In a letter to Secretary of State Montagu, Willingdon compared Jinnah to radical Congressmen Annie Besant and Tilak, who lacked empathy for their responsibilities to the Empire at its time of distress. When the pro-government elements in Bombay held a gathering at the town hall to adopt a memorial plan for Willingdon, who was set to retire, the animosity between Jinnah and Willingdon reached a dramatic peak. Jinnah added, "Gentlemen, you are the Bombay citizens," at this point. You have achieved a significant victory for democracy today. Even the united might of bureaucracy and autocracy could not defeat you, as seen by your victory today.

In appreciation of Jinnah's pivotal involvement in the anti-Willingdon march, his supporters gathered a substantial sum of **Rs65,000 in one-rupee contributions** in less than a month to construct the Jinnah People's Memorial Hall on the grounds of the Indian National Congress headquarters. Annie Besant opened the hall after coming down from Adyar. The British mistrusted Jinnah much more as a result of this episode. High officials at all levels began to view him as their worst enemy. He had "a root of bitterness... which cannot be eradicated," according to Lord Chelmsford (Nanda, 2010).

The Rowlatt Act was approved by the government in 1919. This legislation gave the government the authority to imprison and try active and rebellious opponents of its policies without a jury. In the Legislative Council, Jinnah expressed this concern by listing his objections on his fingers and concluding, "It is my duty to tell you that, if these measures are passed, you will create in this country from one end to the other a discontent and agitation the like of which you have believed me, a most disastrous effect upon the good relations that have existed between the Government and the people." (Bolitho, 1954).

Jinnah's manner of protest was founded on persuasive arguments and constitutional resistance, yet he was just as irritated by the Rowlatt law as Gandhi was. He opposed the Rowlatt Bill during the legislative council discussion, arguing that it violated the fundamental legal and justice principle that no individual should be deprived of his freedom without first being given a chance to defend himself. On March 28, 1919, Jinnah submitted a letter to the viceroy resigning from the Imperial Legislative Council following the passage of the law. He wrote: "Their faith in British justice has been profoundly undermined by the passage of the Rowlatt Bill. The Imperial Legislative Council's constitution, which is legislative but is actually a machine run by a foreign executive, was also well shown. Both the general public's view and sentiment outside as well as the unified opinion of the non-official Indian members have received the least regard. However, the Government of India and Your Excellency have opted to replace the judiciary with the executive branch by adding a provision that is acknowledged to be offensive and blatantly coercive during a period of peace to the Status Book.

Furthermore, by enacting this measure, Your Excellency's Government has brutally violated the ideals for which Great Britain promised to fight the war and has actively refuted every case they made for assistance at the War Conference in India.

Therefore, I submit my resignation as a member of the Imperial Council in protest of the bill's passage and the way it was approved. A government that enacts or approves such legislation during times of peace, in my opinion, loses the right to be referred to as a civilized government (Burk and Din, 1997).

He added, "I still hope that His Majesty will advise Mr. Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, to signify his disallowance of this Black Act."

Despite the rhetoric of Hindu-Muslim unity, the Khilafat movement overtook the League after 1919 and ultimately destroyed the tenuous constitutional pact between the Congress and the League that Jinnah had laboriously attempted to establish. Jinnah repeatedly attempted in vain to regain the unity that, for a brief period following 1916, had appeared to hold great promise for the nationalist movement. Jinnah lived in considerable political isolation during most of the 1920s (Jalal, 1992).

Gandhi's 1920 takeover of the Congress with the assistance of Muslims who supported Khilafat. Gandhi gained the backing of a wide range of Muslim political figures and ulema for his nonviolent non-cooperation strategy by announcing his support for Khilafat. "Jinnah had lost support as a result of this combination of politics and religion (Jalal, 1992).

Gandhi's non-cooperation policy began on August 1, 1920. Jinnah stated, "Mr. Gandhi presented the nation with his non-cooperation proposal, which was backed by the Khilafat Conference. Since his program will target each of you individually, it is up to you to assess your strengths and consider the advantages and disadvantages of the issue before making a choice. However, once you've made the decision to march, don't back down under any circumstances. Jinnah went on to say, "The noncooperation movement is the only sign and manifestation of widespread discontent, because public opinion and unresolved grievances are completely disregarded." Chanan, 2006).

Jinnah's disenchantment reached its climax at the December 1920 Congress session in Nagpur. Under Gandhi's influence, 14,000 delegates gathered and decided to back the Home Rule League's -- determination to reject all forms of compromise and demand complete independence for India. Nearly as Jinnah had anticipated, they decided to use Gandhi's non-cooperation and boycott tactics in order to get freedom (Bolitho, 1954).

Only Jinnah had the guts to approach the rostrum and object to the decision about the change in creed and non-cooperation, out of the thousands of people that attended the Nagpur session. He clarified that he did not oppose the new credo because it was unclear whether Swarajya wanted to cut all ties to the British. Regarding non-cooperation, he stated, "I want to reiterate that the weapon will not destroy the British Empire. It is not logical, politically sound, wise, or practically feasible to implement."

Jinnah had been repeatedly interrupted by obnoxious yelling from the crowd. At one point, the crowd erupted in "Mahatma" when he addressed Gandhi as "Mister." On another occasion, he elicited a yell of "Maulana" when he addressed Muhammad Ali Jinnah as "Mister." This time, he protested, saying, "I say you are denying me the liberty which you are asking for if you will not allow me to address you to speak of a man in the language which I think is right." He protested by leaving the meeting after he had had his say (Burk, 2011).

After Besant resigned as the party's president and Gandhi took over, Jinnah quit the Congress in 1920 and withdrew from the Home Rule League (Bolitho, 1954).

Conclusion

Jinnah referred to himself as an Indian rather than a Muslim throughout the early years of his political career, which included his intense engagement in the Congress. His commitment to the cause of Indian freedom was unwavering. Jinnah's political career

experienced several highs and lows throughout its early years. Jinnah made significant contributions to Hindu-Muslim cooperation during this time, although he subsequently learned of the Congress leaders' hypocrisy. Jinnah's political career began with vigorous political activity and ended with a great deal of disappointment.

Jinnah had the capacity to bravely confront the full issue. He had read about the Hindu mentality that wished to create Hindu raj across the subcontinent and was aware of Hindu policies as a result of his foresight. He departed from the Congress. This marked the end of Jinnah's relationship with Gandhi's Congress. Jinnah lived a life of near political seclusion after 1920.

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