

Two Nation Theory

The ideology of Pakistan stems from the instinct of the Muslim community of South Asia to maintain their individuality by resisting all attempts by the Hindu society to absorb it. Muslims of South Asia believe that Islam and Hinduism are not only two religions, but also two social orders that have given birth to two distinct cultures with no similarities. A deep study of the history of this land proves that the differences between Hindus and Muslims were not confined to the struggle for political supremacy, but were also manifested in the clash of two social orders. Despite living together for more than a thousand years, they continued to develop different cultures and traditions. Their eating habits, music, architecture and script, are all poles apart. Even the language they speak and the dresses they wear are entirely different.

The ideology of Pakistan took shape through an evolutionary process. Historical experience provided the base; with Sir Syed Ahmad Khan began the period of Muslim self-awakening; Allama Iqbal provided the philosophical explanation; Quaid-i-Azam translated it into a political reality; and the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, by passing Objectives Resolution in March 1949, gave it legal sanction. It was due to the realization of Muslims of South Asia that they are different from the Hindus that they demanded separate electorates. When they realized that their future in a 'Democratic India' dominated by Hindu majority was not safe; they put forward their demand for a separate state.

The Muslims of South Asia believe that they are a nation in the modern sense of the word. The basis of their nationhood is neither territorial, racial, linguistic nor ethnic; rather they are a nation because they belong to the same faith, Islam. On this basis they consider it their fundamental right to be entitled to self-determination. They demanded that areas where they were in majority should be constituted into a sovereign state, wherein they would be enabled to order their lives in individual and collective spheres in accordance with the teachings of Holy Quran and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (S. A. W.). They further want their state to strengthen the bonds of unity among Muslim countries.

As early as in the beginning of the 11th century, Al-Biruni observed that Hindus differed from the Muslims in all matters and habits. He further elaborated his argument by writing that the Hindus considered Muslims "Mlachha", or impure. And they forbid having any connection with them, be it intermarriage or any other bond of relationship. They even avoid sitting, eating and drinking with them, because they feel "polluted". The speech made by Quaid-i-Azam at Minto Park, Lahore on March 22, 1940 was very similar to Al-Biruni's thesis in theme and tone. In this speech, he stated that Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, with different social customs and literature. They neither intermarry, nor eat together, and indeed belong to two different civilizations whose very foundations are based on conflicting ideas and concepts. Their outlook on life and of life is different. He emphasized that in spite of the passage of about 1,000 years the relations between the Hindus and Muslims could not attain the level of cordiality. The only difference between the writing of Al-Biruni and the speech of Quaid-i-Azam was that Al-Biruni made calculated predictions, while Quaid-i-Azam had history behind him to support his argument.

The Ideology of Pakistan has its roots deep in history. The history of South Asia is largely a history of rivalry and conflict between the Hindus and Muslims of the region.

Both communities have been living together in the same area since the early 8th century, since the advent of Islam in India. Yet, the two have failed to develop harmonious relations. In the beginning, one could find the Muslims and Hindus struggling for supremacy in the battlefield. Starting with the war between Muhammad bin Qasim and Raja Dahir in 712, armed conflicts between Hindus and Muslims ran in thousands. Clashes between Mahmud of Ghazni and Jaypal, Muhammad Ghuri and Prithvi Raj, Babur and Rana Sanga and Aurangzeb and Shivaji are cases in point.

When the Hindus of South Asia failed to establish Hindu Padshahi through force, they opted for back door conspiracies. The Bhakti Movement with the desire to merge Islam and Hinduism was one of the biggest attacks on the ideology of the Muslims of the region. Akbar's diversion from the mainstream Islamic ideology was one of the Hindus' greatest success stories. However, due to the immediate counterattack by Mujaddid Alf Sani and his pupils, this era proved to be a short one. Muslims once again proved their separate identity during the regimes of Jehangir, Shah Jehan and particularly Aurangzeb. The attempts to bring the two communities close could not succeed because the differences between the two are fundamental and have no meeting point. At the root of the problem lies the difference between the two religions. So long as the two people want to lead their lives according to their respective faith, they cannot be one.

a form of nationalism based on the belief that all inhabitants of a particular territory should share a common national identity, regardless of their ethnic, linguistic, religious, cultural and other differences.

With the advent of British rule in India in 1858, Hindu-Muslim relations entered a new phase. The British brought with them a new political philosophy commonly known as 'territorial nationalism'. Before the coming of the British, there was no concept of a 'nation' in South Asia and the region had never been a single political unit. The British attempt to weld the two communities into a 'nation' failed. The British concept of a nation did not fit the religious-social system of South Asia. Similarly, the British political system did not suit the political culture of South Asia. The British political system, commonly known as 'democracy', gave the majority the right to rule. But unlike Britain, the basis of majority and minority in South Asia was not political but religious and ethnic. The attempt to enforce the British political model in South Asia, instead of solving the political problems, only served to make the situation more complex. The Hindus supported the idea while it was strongly opposed by the Muslims. The Muslims knew that implementation of the new order would mean the end of their separate identity and endless rule of the Hindu majority in the name of nationalism and democracy. The Muslims refused to go the British way. They claimed that they were a separate nation and the basis of their nation was the common religion Islam. They refused to accept a political system that would reduce them to a permanent minority. They first demanded separate electorates and later a separate state. Religious and cultural differences between Hindus and Muslims increased due to political rivalry under British rule.

On March 24, 1940, the Muslims finally abandoned the idea of federalism and defined a separate homeland as their target. Quaid-i-Azam considered the creation of Pakistan a means to an end and not the end in itself. He wanted Pakistan to be an Islamic and democratic state. According to his wishes and in accordance with the inspirations of the people of Pakistan, the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan passed the Objectives Resolution. The adoption of Objectives Resolution removed all doubts, if there were any, about the ideology of Pakistan. The Muslims of Pakistan decided once and for all to make Pakistan a state wherein the Muslims shall be enabled to order their lives in their individual and collective spheres, in accordance with the teachings and requirements of Islam as set out in the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

Quaid-e-Azam and the demand of Pakistan

Initially Quaid-e-Azam was a Congressite, but when he saw the uncompromising attitude of the Hindus, he left the Congress, and joined Muslim League; finally, he became a staunch supporter of the Two Nation theory. His firm belief in the Two Nation theory, formed the basis of Pakistan Ideology.

During the 2nd World War efforts were made that the Muslims could agree to one united India, promising some safeguards to the Muslims; but the Quaid did not agree on the basis of his experiences. He explained,

“By a separate homeland I mean a country where the Muslims of the Sub-continent would be able to fashion their lives according to the dictates of the Holy Quran and Sunnah.”

The Muslims of the Sub-continent passed the Pakistan resolution at the historic session of All-India Muslim League held at Lahore in March 1940.

In his presidential address, he declared that the Muslims of India stood unequivocally for the freedom of India but it must be freedom for all India and not for one section only. The resolution provided that no constitutional plan would be workable and acceptable to the Muslims unless it was designed on the principle that geographically contiguous units were demarcated into regions; that the areas in which the Muslims were numerically in a majority, were grouped to constitute independent states.

The Quaid-e-Azam remarked in Ahmedabad in December 1940:

“India should be partitioned so that Hindus & Muslims may live as friends and good neighbours and develop according to their own genius.”

During the course of his presidential address to the Punjab Muslim Students Federation, on March 2, 1941, the Quaid-e-Azam said,

“If we lose in the struggle all is lost. Let our motto be as the Dutch proverb says:

Money is lost nothing is lost;

Courage is lost much is lost;

Honour is lost most is lost;

Soul is lost, all is lost.”

The Cabinet Mission in 1946 chalked out a plan to reconcile Hindus & Muslims and held general elections to set up an Interim Government. Muslim leaguers secured an overwhelming victory at polls. Mr. Bolitho, the celebrated English author writes:

“The victory of Muslim League at the polls (1946) was overwhelming, both in the provinces and in the Central Assembly, this was Jinnah’s glorious hour; his arduous political campaigns, his robust beliefs and claims were at last justified.”

In June, the Muslim League council agreed under Jinnah’s direction, that in as much as the basis and the foundation of Pakistan, were inherent in the Cabinet Mission Plan, they would accept the plan in the hope that it would ultimately result in the

establishment of complete sovereign Pakistan. The Congress however, put such a distorted interpretation of the scheme that Jinnah was forced to withdraw his acceptance: He said,

“We offered this unequivocal sacrifice at the altar of Congress; but the compromise has been treated defiance and contempt We have learned a bitter lesson, the bitterest I think so far. Now there is no room left for compromise. Let us march on.”

Thus, it was one of the great achievements of Quaid-e-Azam that he created the conception of Pakistan and worked passionately, until he carried it to a successful result.

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