



## *Quaid-i-Azam as a Visionary Futurist*

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### **The Futures Field**

According to the World Future Society USA Futuristics, Futurism, Futurology and a host of other interrelated terms, are used interchangeably to refer to the study of the future: preparing, planning and programming for it in a holistic and interdisciplinary manner.<sup>1</sup> As such, the Futurist is one who studies or plans the future, foresightedly. The basic Futuristic philosophy is that life is constant change. Its innate interest in Social Change integrates it with Sociology and Social Psychology.<sup>2</sup> Both religion and philosophy have always invited humanity to prepare for the future, down the ages.<sup>3</sup> But it is only since the Second World War that Futuristics has become an increasingly academic discipline, a well-grounded social science, a scientific skill and a practised art. That – thanks both to science and technology impacting social change in alternative futures, and the evolution of research methodologies that work successfully, delivering the goods and showing startling results.<sup>4</sup> Adequate coping skills have been devoted to deal with future-oriented change.

### **Futuristics and History<sup>5</sup>**

Futuristics distinguishes between the makers of history (– leaders, people and operant causes) and writers



of history. The former make contemporary history and influence future history. The latter very often recollect past history, though they also record current history. Futuristically, the relevance of history lies either in its inspiration or its lessons as a mentor, otherwise it becomes an uninteresting narrative fit for archives and museums. If no lessons are learnt from it, history tends to repeat itself, oft tragically. Futuristics is history in retrospect and prospect: history tomorrow. Futurism invites the historian to join the Futurist in analysing, interpreting and understanding history for the future to be used as an active agent of change.

The basic features of Islamic Futurism are:

- (i) *Pragmatism* based in earthy realism – and not utopian escapism or escapist utopianism. It is related with the correct exercise of the freedom of will and action. Thus, it is action, issues and cause oriented and result related.
- (ii) *Planning* emanating from deliberate, conscious and conscientious choices of values and life styles from among the available possible, probable and preferable alternatives, leading to a desirable future.
- (iii) *Engineered Social Change* based on universal and unifying ethical precepts, principles and practices.
- (iv) The *Ideological Objective* is *General Human Welfare* through the institutionality of an Islamic Democratic Welfare State and Society.<sup>6</sup>
- (v) *Strategic Futurization* is effected through the change coping skills of 'Ijma' and 'Ijtihad' for an Islamic Welfare State and Society in which the whole society itself is the self-regulatory and reformative/ transformational *Change Agent*.



### **Pakistani Futurism<sup>7</sup>**

As this paper will attempt to show, Pakistani Futurism shares the foregoing characteristics, both of Islamic Futurism as well as general universal Futurism, *per se*. There are three popular contemporary Futuristic Schools of Thought, viz.<sup>8</sup>

- (i) *The Extrapolists*: They base their forecasts and projections (—not predictions) on science and technology. While the *Positive Extrapolists* are optimistic about the results, the *Negative Extrapolists* are sceptical, if not pessimistic, about the role of science and technology in shaping the human future.
- (ii) *The Visionaries* believe in transforming life, effecting social change and influencing the future through values and principles. They are idealists guided by ideologies and creeds. The Environmentalists are, for instance, visionary activists.
- (iii) *Client Centred Futurists*, who may be amoral professionals producing feasibility studies and assessment reports, evaluations and plans.

*The Alternative Futures* that interest Futurists can be optimistic, pessimistic or realistic, idealistic or pragmatic. Likewise, they may be possible, probable or preferable. Also, immediate, short term, medium term and long range futures.

### **Key Concepts**

According to Geoffrey H. Fletcher,<sup>9</sup> there are Five Key Futurist Concepts, i.e. :

- (i) Alternatives and choices.
- (ii) Purposeful action.
- (iii) Holism and stakeholders.
- (iv) Extended time frames.
- (v) Guiding Images.





Judged by the foregoing criteria, it can be clearly concluded that *Pak Futurism* is both Islamic and Universal/Humanitarian/International.

The advent of Futuristic Islam in the Indo-Pak. Subcontinent with Muhammad Bin Qasim's conquest of Sind in 712 A.D. – or even earlier with the settlement of Arab traders on the Indian coast in the Holy Prophet Muhammad's times (m.e.p.b.u.h!) – marks the beginning of Islamic Futurism in India. Thereafter, Islam spread and settled Futuristically in the Subcontinent, as a religion, as a culture, as a polity and as a society. Islam was the integrative and peacefully transformational change agent. The Muslim rule prospered as long as it remained futuristically self-regenerative through "Ijma" and "Ijtehad". But when it regressed inwards and started pining escapistically for an illusiory past, it produced the last Decadent Mughals, who were no match for the modernizing British and the contriving Hindu. Reaction came in the form of the 1857 War of Independence. Visionary Futurists like Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) began to realise that the very survival of Islam and the Muslims lay in Islamic Futurism – in boldly venturing into a promising future instead of self-deceptively languishing in the past. Thereafter, they started devising adequate coping skills and strategies to plan their collective future. The result was the twinsome Freedom Movement and the Pakistan Movement. There was many an illustrious leader in this change process organized, systematized and sustained over the decades through the Congress and the Muslim League. Their precursor was, of course, Sir Syed's Aligarh Education Movement of Enlightenment dating back to the 1860's, when his Scientific Society was established. Pakistan's four main Founding Fathers and ideologues are the pillars of Pakistani Futurism.<sup>10</sup> They are:

- (i) Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898). He was the first strategist, organizer, pacifist and modernizer.





- (ii) Allama Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938). He was Pakistan's inspirational and visionary poet-philosopher.
- (iii) The Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876-1948). The Quaid was Pakistan's singular pragmatic creator.
- (iv) Chaudhry Rahmat Ali (1897-1951). He not only acronymed the name 'Pakistan', he was also its foremost theoretician and geopolitician. The influence of his writings is evident in the speeches and statements of his contemporaries.

But in this paper, henceforth we are going to concentrate on the Quaid-i-Azam, alone – who, along with the others, was a western educated Islamist modernizer. His influence on history can best be understood in the light of his personality; and his political culture, ideology, motivation, policy and strategy.

### **The Quaid's Futuristics**

Thus, it is clear from the foregoing introductory background that the Quaid's emergence on the subcontinental political scenario was no accident. In fact, it was a natural and necessary development in the emancipatory, modernization change process that was building up as a continuum since 1857. Let us now try to evaluate the Quaid-i-Azam as a Visionary Futurist in the light of the well-known Futuristic criteria mentioned earlier.

### **Roy Amara's Schools of Futuristic Thought**

Going by Roy Amara's definition/classification, the Quaid can best be described as a *Positive Visionary* whose entire political philosophy was positive and optimistic. He Visualised Pakistan long before its existence, and made it a reality by means of constitutionally engineered socio-political change. But he was also a realistic *Pragmatist* who adapted his strategy according to the





objective conditions and the needs and requirements of the situation, as serving the larger objective of independence. He was constantly scanning and monitoring the political horizon for continuities, trigger points, break-offs and emergent trends in his search for viable future alternatives, from the possible through the probable to the preferable/desirable. Thus, while a peaceful Hindu-Muslim-British modus vivendi was often considered to be possible, it was not always probable or likely, because of vitiating operants. The ultimate goal or objective of freedom was the most preferable and desirable, no matter how distant or disillusioning, apparently impossible or improbable, at times.

#### **G.H. Fletcher's Key Concepts**

- (i) *Alternatives and Choices* : The most fundamental alternative and basic choice was between the Freedom Movement and the Pakistan Movement. The Quaid opted for the latter, when he decided to shed the dual membership of the Congress and the Muslim League, quitting the former and emerging as the sole spokesman of the latter in December, 1920. Thereafter, at every stage and step of the twin movements, Jinnah's strategic alternatives and choices were guided by this definitive trigger point. His evolution from "the Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity" to the Quaid-i-Azam of the Indian Muslims, was the result of that basic decision. He kept on examining the alternatives and deliberating choices right till the end. That included his rejected proposal of joint electorates, his reaction to the Hindu majority role, his Fourteen Points, his voluntary self-exile and return home, his politics of the Round Table Conferences, his handling of the Khilafat and Hijrat Movement and later, the Quit-India call





by the Congress, his stance on provincial autonomy and gradual Home Rule, his stand on the federal issue, his interaction and correspondence with the various leaders, parties and power brokers/elite, including the British, his political pacifism vis-a-vis Gandhi's non-violent non-cooperation, and his attitude towards the different Pakistan Schemes.

(ii) *Purposeful Action* : The Pakistan Movement was nothing if not a purposeful, activist change process and programme. The Chief Change Agent was the Quaid himself, who inspired the Muslim masses through the Muslim League, which emerged from an allegedly elitist to a popular action-oriented motivator. He moulded his tactics, strategy and even policy, on the basis of intelligence feedback through the mass media and by other means.

(iii) *Holism and Stakeholders*: The stakeholders or interest groups in the Pakistan Movement were the Muslim masses, themselves, who were then called a separate 'nationality', and later, a *nation* when the demand for Pakistan was articulated. The Quaid's 'Holism' was many-dimensional and multi-directional. It unified the Muslim masses and classes in the Muslim Ummah, whose inspirational Islamic Ideology holistically covered every aspect of (personal and) social life as a past-present-future continuum, from education and culture to religion, domestic affairs to foreign policy, administration to legislation, the executive to the judiciary, politics to the economy, and from the home to the society. This is evident from the sayings,





speeches and statements of the Quaid and other Founders of Pakistan.

(iv) *Extended Time Frames*: The Quaid's strategy was of flexible, rolling and adaptive planning that was modified according to the challenges of the reality on the ground. His crises management and conflict resolution required variable time-frames which could be extended as the situation demanded. They spanned the period from the creation of the Muslim League (1906) to the birth of Pakistan on 14 August 1947. But the most critical period was between the passing of the Lahore Resolution on 23 - 24 March 1940 to Independence Day (14 August 1947). In between, he had his annual and periodic programmes marked by the All India Muslim League Meetings on a time-tuned basis or as the emergent situation stated.

(v) *Guiding Images* : The Quaid's guiding image was Pakistan's creative Islamic Ideology which envisioned sovereign Pakistan as an Islamic Welfare State and Society<sup>10</sup> as the legitimate homeland of the subcontinental Muslims. It was to be a modern-futuristic, democratic-progressive, free, fraternal and egalitarian system, divest of all exogenous, endogenous or indigenized exploitation, colonial or neo-colonial, imperial or new imperial. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (m.e.p.b.u.h.) was the Quaid's sole spiritual strength, solace and sustenance. His view of Pakistan's Ideology was gradually unfolded in his Strategic Futurization summarized below:

### **The Quaid's Strategic Futurization**

The following are the hallmarks of the Quaid's strategy in futurizing Pakistan :





- (i) *Planned Incrementalism* : The living reality called Pakistan was gradually visualized in phases from the germinal nucleus of an idea through an evolving ideal to an ideology. This was both in response to historical necessity and pragmatized idealism.
- (ii) *The Two Nation Theory* : The theoretical base of Pakistan was the universal democratic human right of national self-determination, as applied to the subcontinental Muslims as a distinct national identity and entity. Sovereign statehood was also argued as a basic need for their very survival. The Muslims were presented as the Third Force to the Indian Problem/Question.
- (iii) *Constitutionalism* : Despite all the riotous disturbance of peace, the avowed approach to the issue was of principled constitutionality and practised pacification. Even his sworn critics and arch-enemies conceded that Jinnah was a constitutionalist and a democrat.
- (iv) *Democratic Pragmatism* : The Quaid was open-minded and large hearted right from the start. He joined the Muslim League in 1913, and the Congress in 1906, when it was in the Indian and Muslim interest, and left it when it became necessary to part company with it, in the Muslim national interest. His pragmatism was dictated by necessity as well as opportunity to serve the national ideology and cause. The acceptance of a 'truncated and moth-eaten Pakistan' – a far cry from its ideal – is a measure of the Quaid's sense of realism.
- (v) *Ideological Activism* : The Quaid's ideology was issues oriented and problem solving, the main issue and problem being the rights of the subcontinental Muslims. It was no airy-fairy, mythical ideology but the practical politics of





a realistic idealist who strove to realise his people's ideal in the fruition of Pakistan.

- (vi) *Crises Management and Conflict Resolution* : The Quaid foresaw the looming crisis of a civil war in the riotous conflicts that were becoming routine in India during its Freedom and Pakistan Movements. His remedy lay in two sovereign states that could coexist peacefully as friendly neighbours, given the requisite will and goodwill—like the USA and Canada. With that in mind, he tried to manage the minor and major crises and resolve similar conflicts, to the best of his ability. They were primarily generated by the conflicting political views of the three contending forces on the Indian scene (—the British, Hindu and Muslim).
- (vii) *Interpretation and Implementation* : Not only did the Quaid spell out the Pakistan Ideology, as he conceived of it, he also strove to implement it. Like the Islamic History, the Indian History also proved it that Muslims could only be rulers, not third rate subjects and citizens. Realizing that the days of Islamic Empire were over, and having suffered the humiliation of British Hindu hegemony, they decided on an independent homeland of their own, no matter how hamstrung and handicapped. Through soulful Strategic Futurization, the Quaid interpreted and implemented his ideal and ideology of Pakistan.

### **The Quaid's Vision of Pakistan**

Immediately on the creation of Pakistan, the Quaid set about implementing his vision of Pakistan in the year of life that was left to him. He did that in many ways which have been documented historically. The Quaid



toured the two wings of the country, despite his failing health, inspiring the nation to integration by his example and exhortations in public rallies. His speeches during that period bear telling testimony to this fact.<sup>11</sup> Setting the shambled house in order, rehabilitating the refugees, emphasising national integration, restoring peace, reassuring the minorities, securing cease-fire in Kashmir, replenishing the treasury, activating the legislature/ constituent assembly, toning up the administration, pacifying the frontier tribals, laying the foundations of foreign policy, liberating the women, motivating the youth, disciplining the civil and military services and straightening out the politicians – were no meagre objectives and achievements.

What is the vision of Pakistan that emerges in all this idealism and reality called the Quaid-i-Azam?

According to the late Dr. Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad:<sup>12</sup>

He envisaged Pakistan as the poor man's state... to ensure equitable distribution...(through) a people's government...in order that it may develop into a truly Muslim democracy... The Quaid-i-Azam envisaged Pakistan as a Welfare State in the right Islamic spirit. The Quaid...was a great champion of ...peace and international amity.

As for the Quaid's view of the economic pattern of Pakistan, Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad has referred to his emphasis on the free play of the principles of Islamic Social Justice in Pakistan – or 'Islamic Socialism based on brotherhood and equality'.<sup>13</sup>

The foregoing views are also borne out by Latif Ahmad Sherwani<sup>14</sup> and Dr. Waheed-uz-Zaman.<sup>15</sup> Saleem M.M. Qureshi sums up Jinnah's view of Pakistan, as follows:<sup>16</sup>

Pakistan, to Jinnah, symbolized the emancipation of the Muslim community from Hindu domination, so that it could develop and practise its values and its distinctive way of life.





### On the Threshold of the 21st Century

The Quaid's sayings and statements on every vital national issue are available for Pakistan's guidance into a safe and secure future. But even his basic national motto of 'unity, faith and discipline' was ignored – or his Pakistan would not have been tragically dismembered in December 1971. Today Pakistan is a fragmented society, a fragile polity and a fumbling system. It badly needs another Visionary Futurist like the Quaid, the Allama or Afghani to steer it clearly through self-revolutionary transformation into the coming century. But if none is available, Pakistan at least has their precepts, principles, thought and visionary example to guide it. And the clarion call of their collective vision is not parochialism but Pan-Islamism and Islamic Regionalization.<sup>17</sup> Glasnost and Perestroika, Islam and Democracy are the keys to Pan-Islamic Futurism. Pakistan has the keys. But they are lost in the trash can of petty personalism, partisanism and provincialism. Taking the cue from the Quaid's Pakistan Movement, the nation itself must rise to revive a futuristic collective leadership that becomes its democratic change agent into the 21st century. Let the Quaid not be consigned to the rare rituals of history or archaeology. Let him remain our living heritage and life force – past, present and future, integrating us into a perennial oneness. Such a Pakistan would be its own Justification, and not just the pitiable plight of Kashmiri, Sikh, Harijan and other Indian minorities' diaspora, Muslim and non-Muslim, even since independence.

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