

South Asian Studies

A Research Journal of South Asian Studies

Vol. 28, No. 1, January – June 2013, pp.261-263

BOOK REVIEW

The Charismatic Leader: Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah and the Creation of Pakistan

Sikandar Hayat

Oxford University Press, Karachi

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Introduction

The figure and personality of the Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah is a fertile area for researchers, for he played a key role in the creation of Pakistan which altered the political map of South Asia and ushered in a new era of freedom struggle in the Muslim world particularly and the world at large. Professor Dr. Sikandar Hayat, an eminent researcher and scholar has written extensively, in national and international research journals, on the Muslim struggle for Independence and especially on the role of Jinnah in the making of Pakistan. The book under review is his recent discourse on the Quaid worth reading and fills the gap in the existing historical research material.

The author has applied Max Weber's theory of the 'Charismatic leader' to Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah's leadership of the struggle for the creation of Pakistan. He has tried to prove that Jinnah's personality was comprised of all the main characteristics of a charismatic leader, particularly the 'personality and situation factor', which thereby enabled him to achieve his goal. The author answers several questions concerning the process through which Mr. Jinnah was able to get the popular support of an overwhelming majority of the Muslims of India in a very short period of time for his cause.

The author, while dealing with the early and the middle phase of Jinnah's political career, has tried to prove that Jinnah on his part used all available resources to achieve the goal of Hindu-Muslim unity, and in his early career he was very successful in this and was, thereafter, referred to by the honorific title, 'Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity'. However, the Hindu mindset, as reflected in the Nehru Report (1928), and in the workings of the Congress ministries (1937-1939), convinced him that the partition of India on the basis of the two-nation theory was the only solution to the constitutional problem of Indian religious

groups. Here the author focuses on the personality related factors to build his fabric of theory of Jinnah's charisma.

Dr. Sikandar makes a comprehensive analysis of the Muslim leadership at length. The Indian Muslim leadership at that time consisted of the nobility, titled gentry, and the big landholders, the *Ulema*, and the *Mushaikh*s. However, nearly all of them were either provincial or local leaders and lacked the grasp of national problems and the drive which could have enabled them to play a key role in the politics at the national level. Thus a huge political vacuum existed in the political fabric of Indian Muslim politics, and Jinnah, as a charismatic leader, filled this gap admirably and played the sheet-anchor's role in the Muslim politics. He alone among the Muslim leaders had the vision and the ability to translate his ideas into action.

The Lahore Resolution in 1940 was the high point, till then, in Mr Jinnah's political career. If the promised creation of a separate homeland for the Indian Muslims, was to ensure peace, prosperity, power and a sense of purpose for the Indian Muslims, it was vivisection of the mother-land for its opponents, particularly the Hindus and the Sikhs. Since then the Lahore Resolution has been a fertile ground for debate and discussions for the historians as some of them claim to have discovered ambiguities in the resolution but have also labeled it as a British inspired product.

Dr Sikandar has tried to help the reader in understanding the rationale of the Lahore Resolution and has tried to clarify the ambiguities entailed in the Resolution. He maintains that it was a tactical move on Mr Jinnah's part to let the opponents speculate about the content and substance of the resolution. But the crux of the resolution was crystal clear, and that was the demand for the partition of India into two sovereign and independent states, one Hindu and another Muslim. Though other authors have attempted to clarify the answer to these objections but Dr. Sikandar's arguments are more scholarly and convincing.

Describing Jinnah's strategy for the attainment of the demand for Pakistan by confronting the Congress and deft dealing with the British, by first creating, and then strengthening, the base of the Muslim League amongst the Muslim masses, the author has tried to prove that the Quaid was not only a visionary but was a master of grand strategy and planning at the all-India level, to achieve his goal.

Mr Jinnah had to deal with the traditional Muslim leadership in India which mostly consisted of the old and politically static, landed aristocracy, religious scholars, *Pirs* and *Mushaikh*s, etc. He was successful either in bringing them to his side or in winning their favour or by successfully creating an alternate leadership thus bypassing them, and all these elements he then combined in his movement which worked for the creation of Pakistan. Slowly but surely, Mr Jinnah's Pakistan Plan swept away the theory of composite nationalism held by Muslim nationalists. The Quaid's charisma had worked and it was best manifested in the general elections of 1945-1946, when the Indian Muslims overwhelmingly voted for the Muslim League programme which called for the establishment of Pakistan.

Several scholars, before Sikandar Hayat, had acknowledged Jinnah as a charismatic leader but they did not develop their thesis on the conceptual framework. Neither had they answered satisfactorily Jinnah's strategy to get poise and popular support from the Indian Muslims for the creation of Pakistan. But Sikandar Hayat has done it in much better way. He after having presented the conceptual framework of the concept of 'charisma', has chalked out a detailed description of the politics of India with Mr. Jinnah as the centerpiece of the Indian political scene from 1939-45. During this period he often, very successfully, stole the limelight away from the much bigger and highly-organized Congress, and was able to rebuff the British as well, because he knew that they needed his support to successfully pursue their war aims. In this way he was able to strengthen his position regarding the demand for Pakistan.

However, I feel that instead of narrating in detail with the Pakistan Movement, the author should have stuck to his main thesis of trying to prove Mr Jinnah's charismatic leadership as enunciated by Max Webber. The trick was to glean the most important parts of Jinnah's strategy from 1939-47, the reactions to it and weave them together in a fitting manner, a capability the learned author possesses in no small measure and his thesis could have been proved without any difficulty and in a highly satisfactory manner.

In the end I can only say that Dr. Hayat is always incisive and takes an approach which presents Mr. Jinnah as a perennially brilliant political fighter capable of confronting, and besting, his opposition on many fronts, the hallmark of true charismatic leader with only a moribund twenty-five per cent constituency which he aroused with his relentless efforts and political acumen. And in that lies the true strength of the book which should be an essential read for all the passionate devotees of Mr. Jinnah in particular and all students, whether academics or students of the Pakistan Movement in general.