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BOOK REVIEWS

Sikandar Hayat, *A Leadership Odyssey. Muslim Separatism and the Achievement of the Separate State of Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2021), 340 pp.

South Asia, home to nearly 2 billion people, has a rich history of political fragmentation. Scholars have debated in various ways how South Asia's apparently common culture and geographical proximity can promote socio-economic gains, but there is no certainty about how to achieve this. Built on a journey of learning and sharing about the Pakistan Movement for 40 years, Sikandar Hayat, a Distinguished Professor of History and Public Policy, provides a platform for close introspection of the past to learn lessons for the future. Historiographies of South Asia must be used to build consciousness for future solidarity and to develop pathways for stability, as the study of history and sociology of development are inseparable.

It is both a strength and limitation of this book that it focuses on six Muslim separatist leaders who were 'prominent, influential, and decisive' (p. 18) forerunners in creating Pakistan. Few past works have focused specifically on the function, impact and individual and collective role of leadership in this regard. The book mainly traces events and developments from 1857 to 1947, but also provides some background context on Muslims in the subcontinent from 711 to 1857. Hayat especially highlights the sacrifices and devotion of these eminent leaders, showing how they struggled for unity, but in the end believed that separatism would lead to more sustained progress in the region. Indirectly, this book strongly asks South Asians to consider which aspects bind them or not, irrespective of boundaries and differences.

Chapter 1 highlights the 'conscious and careful efforts of the Muslim rulers' (p. 24) to maintain solidarity in the Indian subcontinent prior to British rule. Examples discussed include the early coexistence of Sultanates with Hindu rulers (p. 25), allocation of civil, military and government responsibilities to Hindus during the rule of Muhammad bin Qasim, Mahmud of Ghazni and Islam Shah (p. 26), the absorption of Persian and Arabic in northern Indian languages (p. 26) and the inclusion of Hindus as top officials and the abolition of *jizya* (poll) tax during Mughal emperor Akbar's rule (p. 27). However, peaceful coexistence did not last. Revolt and uprising against the Mughal rule, across South India by Marathas and in North India by Jats, Rajputs and Sikhs, led to the battles of Panipat and Balakot, and also extremist demands that Muslims must either leave India or convert to Aryanism (p. 39). Opportunities for reassembling common ground were weakened by the advent of the

British, whose 'divide and rule' policy dispossessed Muslims from 'all positions of power and authority' (p. 40), relegating them to minority status.

Chapter 2 discusses the leading role of Syed Ahmad Khan (1817–98) during a time when Muslims were facing extreme marginalisation, coupled with loss of power and status in India. His efforts originated with endorsing Western education, which he believed would help Muslims gain a fair share in the new dispensation. He worked tirelessly to open the Aligarh College in 1875 and initiated publications to promote a Muslim academic culture. However, as Hayat claims, two incidents made him realise that Hindus and Muslims faced a 'clash of political interests' (p. 65): First, the Hindu demand for Urdu to be replaced with Hindi in the United Provinces and second, the insistence of the Indian National Congress that the majority Hindus would speak on behalf of the Indian nation. Syed Ahmad Khan decided to oppose Congress and made initial strides to develop a political base for Muslims through the United Indian Patriotic Association (1888) and later, the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental Defence Association (1893). These associations helped Muslims to develop political demands for equality, such as 'separate electorates with Muslims voting for Muslims' (p. 70), which founded what Hayat terms a Muslim separatist political movement.

Chapter 3 examines the role of the Aga Khan (1877–1957) in ensuring 'growth of the separatist political movement' (p. 82) through promoting political recognition for Muslims. As a founding member and first president of the All-India Muslim League, established at Dacca in 1906, he sealed his dedication for the development of a separate Muslim identity in colonial India. His proposal for a Federal Government in India hoped to create an amicable partnership between Hindus and Muslims for mutual progress, based on provincial and communal arrangements (p. 100).

Chapter 4 details the travails of Syed Ameer Ali (1849–1928), a loyal supporter of the All-India Muslim League and founder of its London Branch. Endorsing Syed Ahmad Khan's arguments that Muslims needed to compete in education, he contended that Muslims required political training and 'proper political organization' (p. 112). He formed the Central National Muhammadan Association in 1877 and one of his prominent efforts involved summarising the Muslim grievances to the British Viceroy in 1882. Like Syed Ahmad Khan, he believed that Muslims could advance under British rule. Like the Aga Khan, he was confident that separate electorates would protect them from exploitation and inequalities in a united India.

Chapter 5 covers the pivotal role of Maulana Mohamed Ali (1878–1931) in reviving the separatist movement after setbacks from the Khilafat-non-cooperative movement of the early 1920s and the Amritsar Massacre of 1919. He led the Khilafat movement in support of the Ottoman Empire. As his interest in the Khilafat movement was primarily religious (p. 157), the cooperation by Hindus did not last, yet it highlighted that Hindus and Muslims could unite when it served their political interests. The abolition of the Khilafat in Turkey in 1924 was a great shock to Maulana Mohamed Ali, motivating him to prioritise a 'Muslim separatist political movement' (p. 167) to protect India's Muslims.

Chapter 6 discusses the role of Allama Muhammad Iqbal (1877–1938) in formulating the idea of Pakistan as a separate state for Muslims. He made personal efforts to convince Jinnah that a separate state was the only means to secure equality and safety for Muslims. Ultimately, Iqbal argued that nationalism was going to be a problem when Muslims were a minority and religion was relegated to the private sphere (p. 182). He firmly contended that *ijtihad*, reflecting the consensus about sociopolitical affairs by orthodox schools of Islamic law, was only possible when Muslims had their own state. Hayat states that in Iqbal's opinion, '[a] Hindu-dominated body politic could not help achieve this objective. It was, therefore, necessary that the Muslims in the Muslim-majority areas of India established a separate state' (p. 196).

Chapter 7 describes the eight phases in the role of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah (1876–1948) in achieving Pakistan over four decades from 1906 to 1947. This is a detailed account of an emotional journey, despite all odds, including the fight for independence from British rule by both Muslims and Hindus. Though Jinnah's primary aim, like his predecessors, was to secure a 'share of power' (p. 206) for India's minority Muslim community, this dream was ultimately deemed impossible. Jinnah struggled primarily against the British, who held the reins of power, while Congress, like the Muslim League, sought freedom. However, 'Congress sought freedom from the British only; Jinnah sought freedom from both…. He wanted freedom for India but also wanted the Muslims to be free to live their lives separately with all the powers and security of a sovereign, separate state' (p. 250).

While this book, as the conclusion reiterates, is focused on the past, the 'long collective, cumulative effort on the part of all the aforementioned leaders' (p. 296), it offers lessons for present-day South Asia. We learn through Hayat's book that the problems and failures that the region faces today regarding the protection of minority rights are challenges inherited from the pre-partition era. Despite partition, South Asia remains inherently a plural, diverse region. Ignoring the needs and demands of minorities during the pre-partition era was the root cause of instability and distress and remains a complex problem today. In fact, contemporary South Asia's harshest critics are its minorities. Through this book, we also learn about the resilient perseverance of Muslim and Hindu leaders in the face of a tough opponent, the British *Raj*. Today, exemplified most dramatically in Afghanistan, South Asia still faces neocolonialist influences and latent threats from various enemies. Finally, this book also reminds us that the people of South Asia have many things in common, including historical traditions, religion, culture and language. This is why Muslim separatist leaders initially did not favour partition and tried to secure minority rights within a united India. Eventually, political differences, power imbalances and an indifferent hostile attitude of Congress, complicated by a system of government based on numbers, with Muslims never in power, led to demands for a separate nation.

By drawing attention to the personalities and political work of Muslim separatist leaders, this book suggests that the purpose of separatism was never to create neighbouring enemies but to secure respect and equal opportunities. This reminder can

become a catalyst for South Asian cooperation, cordiality and development. Stability and growth are common interests of all people of the region today, as it was for Muslim leaders in the past. Hayat argues that Jinnah remained committed to Hindu–Muslim unity in the service of so-called 'Indian nationalism' (p. 208). Only after his long, frustrating experience of inherent biases favouring the Hindu majority, he proceeded to secure a separate state to protect Muslim minority rights.

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Anjali Gera Roy, *Memories and Postmemories of the Partition of India* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2020), ix + 251 pp.

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The Partition of British India was not an event that ended in 1947; its aftermath is palpable even today. Large numbers of people who experienced partition-related horrors lived with tortuous memories. While many partition survivors shared their stories through memoirs, drama, short stories and poems, many others remained silent or were silenced by familial and other pressures. As the population of first-generation partition survivors is now thinning, engaged scholars like Butalia (2015) are examining the phenomenon of 'postmemory', a trajectory followed by Roy, too. Experienced through the eyes of the second or even third generation in partition migrant families, postmemories exist only on the basis of stories, images and behaviours among which younger people grew up, listening to Partition stories (p. 12).

While discussing how Partition survivors built their new life, Roy also examines the afterlife of the long Partition of 1947 (Zamindar, 2007), bringing out the silences, stutters and stammers that still interrupt narrations of this life-changing event. In the introduction (pp. 1–20), Roy identifies shame, trauma, patriarchy, inarticulateness and protective concerns as possible explanations for survivors' concealment of Partition traumas (p. 2).

Chapter 2, 'History, Memory, Forgetting' (pp. 21–41), uses official records, history, memoirs and memories to show how multiple interpretations of a single story make writing on the Partition a complicated and value-laden exercise. Differentiating history and memory, Roy finds that 'unlike history, memory is rambling, associative, corporeal, affective and intuitive; it includes both evocation and recall and may be declarative and non-declarative' (p. 22). History writing on partition is often accused of representing selective groups and regions. To address this void, some scholars produce stories of subaltern groups, such as minorities, Dalits and women. Roy feels that 'mnemonic accounts can be used to complement