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The Weberian Theory of Charismatic Leadership: A Historical Analysis of Jinnah's Mainstay at Indian National Congress

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Abstract
Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876-1948), leader of the leaders as popularly called by his Muslim following, appeared on the political scenario in the first decade of 20th Century. The political circles soon realized his 'presence' as a visionary and shrewd politician, an eminent constitutionalist and lawmaker. He polished his natural charisma in the due course of time. He was not one of typical ashraaf (the intelligentsia of the subcontinent), but soon he assumed his status among them. He can be termed as true manifestation of Max Weber's Theory of Charismatic Leadership along with all its major ingredients and postulates. His start of the political career, under the 'challenge and response' binary, from the platform of the Indian National Congress (the INC; est. 1885) proved real testimony of his mettle, vision and bravery. He adroitly established his position and responded to the political circumstances in an eloquent manner. His firm stand in principle at critical occasion proved his worth. Although his due role in politics is still not fully explored, especially by the Western Scholars that has categorically been discussed in the research paper in hand.

Keywords: Weberian Theory; Charismatic Leadership; Indian Nation Congress; Jinnah; Gandhi; Constitutional Reforms; Law-making

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Background:

The position of Jinnah and the part he played as leader of political movements in South Asia have not come under full examination yet. The few works published in the last few decades, it has been observed, are those written, allegedly by his fan following which have been viewed with skepticism by the western scholarship. It refuses to recognize these works as proof of the evaluation and objective study of Jinnah's achievements. Some of these scholars have gone even to the extent of making prophecies that "History beyond that written by his own people would never accord Mohammad Ali Jinnah the high place his achievements merited". (Bolitho, 1954, 23) But the merit of the statement and the truth in it can be placed at the anvil of questioning. That's why Jinnah, the founder and creator of Pakistan, stands outside of the arena of Western Scholarship unlike Gandhi and Nehru, the leaders of free India. To this day he is perhaps the only leader among the top-ranking politicians of South Asia of the twentieth century who has failed to attract the attention of or create any interest among them. It can therefore safely be assumed that this lack of interest had been one of the main reasons for the lack of appreciation and understanding of Jinnah's contributions to the politics of the region.

The critics of Jinnah would tell us and the world at large that he was an "evil genius'' and "the most enigmatic" and same time "the most important'' in the last act of the great drama of "India's rebirth to independence". (Collins & Lapierre, 1975, 31) In more general terms, the Jinnah- critics would prefer to remember him as no more than "a progressive- turned-communalist," a "damaged archangel," a "fuehrer," a "dictator," and an "agent of British Imperialism." The last chief agent of British Imperial Rule in South Asia, Mountbatten described Jinnah as "cold" after his first meeting with him. It took all his interview time, he recollected, "unfreezing him". (Johnson, 1951, p.67, also Singh, 2009, 211)

Are these the correct estimates of Jinnah who, to his grateful nation of more than seventy million, (now 220 million), is the Quaid-e- Azam or the Great Leader? At the personal level it can be said, Jinnah did not aspire to any title or honor. He was straightforward and often blunt about his position. In 1927, he was approached by a young Muslim with

the request to do something for his educationally backward people. Jinnah rebuked his young visitor who had managed to see him with a letter of recommendation by Sarojani Naidu. Jinnah, in his typical style and tone replied to that young man that he was the leader of Muslims alone rather he was the national leader of India. This view was also acclaimed by the Indian Press which termed him as "the most courageous Nationalist among Mohammedans." (Hodson, 1969, 37)

Jinnah probably disliked titles to the extent of abhorrence. Twice he refused to receive the Honorary Degree from the Muslim University, Aligarh. When approached by Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, the Vice- Chancellor, Jinnah thanked him and appreciated "the spirit which has actuated the Court [of the Muslim University] to take this decision." (Hasan, 1942, 352) His reply was astonishing but commendable when he called himself 'plain' and wanted to remain so throughout his life span. When pressed for the second time, he told the Vice- Chancellor that he had reconsidered the matter, but he could not accept the proposed honour. (Hasan, 1943, 418)

Once Gandhi, his political rival, asked him which prefix he would prefer with his name. Jinnah replied to him with a blend of frankness and poetic humor that he appreciated his anxiety regarding 'prefix' and added that 'a rose could be called by any name, but it would smell sweet'. He left it entirely to Gandhi as he had no "particular wish in the matter." (Brown, 1972, 40) If this could be taken as true that Jinnah aspired to no honorific title how would then his emergence as a "great leader" is explained. (Wolpert, 1984, 63) A convincing answer to this question would not be easy. But it necessitates a careful and close study of his career which is still awaiting a serious and more objective examination of his life-long struggle for the "leadership" in South Asia. Such a study should be able to consider and encompass his accomplishments and failures alike. (Zakariya, 1971, 103)

Jinnah and the Weberian Theory of Leadership:

The subject of leadership is a highly complex phenomenon to explain. There may not always be consistencies in the actions and behavior of an individual. Despite the fact it would still be possible to accord him the position of the leader of a society or his society.

Max Weber (1864-1920), a renowned German scholar and sociologist has explained the role of the individual in terms of his society's *beau ideal*. (Wilkins, 1970, 17-19) He has emphasized the factor which relates to charisma. As per notions of Weberian Theory, charisma is a manifestation of leader's 'exceptional persona' or the result of 'extraordinary stimulation' derived from outer world or gifted divinely or from diabolic sources.

Two elements are of prime importance by Weber in his concept of charismatic leadership. These are "challenge" and "emotion." By challenge, Weber means, the ability and the power of initiative in an individual to be used by him as a weapon "to challenge" the legitimacy of the established system. The element of emotionalism which surrounds the charismatic leader concerns not so much the individual as the focal point in comparison with the dedication he shows while facing prevailing circumstances or new ideas emerged in due course of time.

In his study of charismatic leadership Weber is, strictly speaking concerned with the leadership of a religiously dominated society. By coincidence, Jinnah ultimately emerged head of an exclusively Muslim society. But how did it happen? Was it the result of his charisma that despite his self- professed dogma of a "nationalist leader, he was accepted by the Muslim as their leader, as he finally emerged. Seen in the light of the Weberian theory of leadership, it could only be accepted if Jinnah was himself a religiously zealous person. But it can hardly be argued in favour of Jinnah that he ever was interested in the practices of Islam. He was largely known to be a Muslim who knew no restrictions and placed none on his practices and habits. Unlike Gandhi and Nehru, who appeared as true symbols of Hindu culture and were representatives of Indian society in terms of their language, dress and food and in many other respects, Jinnah had none of these pretensions to make. Nor did he ever try to impose one upon himself. There was hardly anything traditional or oriental in the character of Jinnah which would attract the attention of the common man. Even if he was to dress and speak like typical countrymen, would this be considered enough to make him acceptable as a leader? For a long time, Gandhi's rise to power was considered due mainly to his Vishnu-like profile which

would appeal and attract Hindus from all castes. Indeed, he was accepted by them as the Mahatma since he was the best embodiment of the true Hindu life. But recently such theories as an exclusive basis for the rise of Gandhi to political power come have under scrutiny. It has been asserted now, in the light of new evidence, which the main factors responsible for the rise of Gandhi into power lay not in his charisma alone but in a "reservoir of latent political material." (Hamied, 1972, 64) It was these "latent" forces which played for Gandhi the role of his "subcontractors." The circumstances which might have helped Jinnah to rise and shape his leadership ultimately as an exclusive leader of the Muslim in south Asia need also to be examined not because of the charisma of his person but somewhere else.

Testimony of Weberian Concept of Leadership: A Look into Jinnah's Interaction Pattern with the Indian National Congress:

Jinnah's presence in the Indian '(so called) National' Congress was a real test case of his mettle and spirit. He, for a brief period, worked as Secretary to the Congress leader, Dadabhai Naoroji, in 1906, and traveled with him to Calcutta where Jinnah attended the Congress sessions chaired by his employer. At this occasion Jinnah delivered his first political speech on the question of 'reserved seats' for the 'minority groups' in various constitutional bodies and services of India. He spoke against the very idea with the plea that all the communities should be taken on the equal footing in true sense of the term 'national' used for Indian, and same intent worked inside the 'national' stance of INC so any reservation for a class or community was meaningless. (Bolitho, 1954, 69)

By 1914 Mr. Jinnah was considered as one of the most brilliant and chief advocates of congress policies, both in India and England. Among the four members of the Congress Delegation who went to England to meet the Lord Crewe (R. O. Ashburton), the Secretary of State for India to submit a memorandum on the 'reconstitution of Indian Council. Jinnah's position was foremost among them. Sir William Wedderburn (1838-1918), the INC President introduced Jinnah as their 'Spokesman'. (Jinnah, 1914, 613) At the end of their discussion, Lord Crewe, Secretary of State for India, found Jinnah as he subsequently informed Lord Hardinge, Viceroy of India, "the best talker of the pack."

(Hardinge, 1914, 334) During his stay in London Jinnah contributed his views to the Press in England. He reiterated his disappointment regarding India, being the only part of the British Empire with no system of 'representative government'. (Ibid, 338) The Government which had been contemplating the introduction of a representative system in its enlarged form in the country had not gone beyond mere suggestions and proposals for a long time. Jinnah felt bitter about this attitude of the Government and called this approach a "blush on paper" which he thought was "for all practical purposes illusory." (Times, 1914) Following his disillusionment with the Government on the question of Indian Reforms Jinnah declared in yet another article:

What is wanted is an arrangement which shall carry out that policy to its logical conclusion and provide means by which Indian Councilors, who shall be accredited representative of independent public opinion, may be secured. (Jinnah, 1914, 613-15)

On his return from England to India before the end of 1914, Jinnah devoted himself to the task of bringing the Congress closer to its rival, the Muslim League, which followed a policy of demanding separate representation for the Muslims in India and which Congress looked with a great distaste.

In 1915 Jinnah achieved his great victory when he was able to convince the leaders from two sides- Congress and Muslim League –to agree to hold their political deliberations at Bombay one and the same time. This was the first time that the two rival political organizations in the country which were thoroughly representative of the Hindus and Muslims respectively had agree to meet simultaneously, of course with Jinnah's untiring efforts, with a view to create cohesion and co-ordination in their policies. In the following year the efforts of Jinnah proved even more fruitful. Not only the Muslim League and Congress maintained their year-old tradition to meet in annual session at the same time and same place, but with the efforts of Jinnah the two rival organizations entered a pact of greater understanding and reconciliation on the Muslim League demand for separate Muslim Representation, a fact hitherto not conceded by the Congress. The year 1916 is to be remembered as the year of Congress-League Pact also known as Lucknow Pact. Jinnah no doubt worked hard to achieve this aim, and for this reason he earned, which

he rightly deserved, the honorific title of the 'Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity. (Hansard, 1914, 1357)

Following the Lucknow Pact between Congress and Muslim League, Jinnah spent nearly two more years to convince the Government in India that liberal political concessions were inevitable and necessary for creating a better atmosphere of cooperation and understanding with Indian Subjects. (Montagu, 1930, 58) Edwin Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, on 20 August 1917, announced in the Parliament that British policy on increasing relationship in the administration, leading towards the notion of 'self-government' was the call of the time. (Ibid, 67) He also announced his intention to visit India and meet the accredited representative of the country to have firsthand knowledge of their views. This would be the first time for any senior member of the British administration in London holding the position of the Secretary of State to have ever decided to visit India in the last sixty years, since the transfer of power to British crown in 1858. (Ibid, 144)

Montagu spent the last few months of 1917 and the early months of 1918 touring India, meeting political leaders of all shades of opinion. He met Jinnah, too, and found him no different from what his predecessor, Lord Crewe, had described him. Montagu felt it outrageous that Jinnah by no means to be the part of government due to his die hard stand on the question of reforms in India. (Ibid, 168)

Apparently sympathetic and understanding, Montagu found it hard for him to make any liberal concessions to Jinnah. "He then begged me" Montague wrote later, "that, in order to make the thing [Reform Scheme] more acceptable something should be done with the outstanding Indian grievances [like the removal of Arms Act, Fiscal liberty, abolition of racial distinctions etc]; their existence was a reason for asking for constitutional reforms which, if they were swept away, would not be so eagerly demanded…". (Ahmad, 1972, 8) Montagu was unable to promise Jinnah anything despite his pleading.

During the time Montagu was visiting India, a representative of the *Manchester Guardian* met Jinnah in Bombay who noticed something extraordinary in the man. Without delay he informed Montagu of his observations of Jinnah. "At the root of

Jinnah's activities" wrote *Manchester Guardian*'s representative "is ambition. (Bolitho, 1954, 89)

When Mrs. Besant and Tilak had disappeared, he would be the leader, and he was collecting around him a group of young men, who he said he had been keeping away from revolutionary movements and professed a great influence over them. The observation was most interesting particularly it brought Jinnah in the ranks of extremists like Tilak and Mrs. Benant to whom Jinnah had been wished to replace after their death. The observation for the first time reveals, as it bespeaks itself, the ambitions of Jinnah within the Congress fold. Did Jinnah really wish to replace B. G. Tilak and Mrs. Besant of the Congress and supplant his leadership in the Congress? If it was true, then Jinnah and no one else must have been greatly surprised and even disappointed; for not long after Jinnah said "good-by" to the Congress. (Ibid, 93) It would appear from a study of his political activities that besides the leadership of the Congress, Jinnah centered his eyes on the leadership of the Muslim for which he was found seriously working from about the same time as his membership of the Congress. Jinnah's membership of and activities within the Congress were only of a temporary phase and he used these opportunities to make himself acquainted with the congress on the one hand and to popularize himself among the Muslims, whose leadership he would eventually assume, on the other.

Jinnah's Charisma, Sportsmanship, His "Failure" in the Congress:

Jinnah never used below-the-belt tactics for gaining political designs. So, his response to political rivals never crossed the limits of respect and politeness. It was Gandhi whose stubbornness Jinnah to declare parting of the way with Gandhi, and later with the INC. Once decided he never saw back. As a matter of fact, by 1919-20 Jinnah's position in the Congress went into an eclipse. The Nagpur Session of Congress held in December 1920 proved a watershed in his career. The change was the result of Gandhi's insistence on abandoning the policy of compromise with the Government and demanding 'absolute freedom' for the Subcontinent. As per Hector Bolitho in INC, almost every member surrendered to the 'will' of Congress except Jinnah. (Ahmad, 1952, 140-141) It was for

the first time Jinnah opposed Gandhi's stand so boldly and openly, amidst strong hue and cry of the audience. (Philips, 1965, 264)

In this annual gathering, it has been said, "the Congress surrendered to Gandhi Ji [who] particularly became the dictator of the congress. Jinnah left… in disgust disagreeing with Gandhi's policy of non- cooperation." (Bolitho, 113) About eight years after Jinnah certified his final and ultimate acquittal from the Congress. He gave his own reason why he had left Congress. He said "he had always maintained that India's policy could only be for the establishment of Dominion Responsible Government. That was one of the reasons why he had left the Congress and at Nagpur it was one of his objections to the decision taken there in 1919 [1920]." (Maujamdar, 1966, xi) None of these explanations is analogous to one another. In fact, all three are different versions of the same situation. Most irreconcilable of them is Jinnah's own explanation. Is one to accept all or any one of them or strive to find more convincing factors which would more appropriately explain the reasons why Jinnah left Congress? Obviously, this would entail exploration and examining of Gandhi and his relations with Jinnah up to this point; Gandhi is the key figure in the drama of Jinnah's rift with the Congress leading ultimately to his exit from it. (Saiyid, 1962, 132-133)

Gandhi appeared on the Indian political scene just after the outbreak of the War in 1914.Unlike Jinnah he entered Indian politics through the back door. Till before his arrival in India Gandhi spent his time in South Africa. G. K. Gokhale, one of echelons of the party, felt that Gandhi's presence in India would be a liability in Indian public life, and to soften the impact of his ideals and his passion for service, he imposed on Gandhi a year's silence on political matters. But he died soon, almost within few months after Gandhi's arrival, in India. His guru's death left Gandhi free from all restrictions upon his ambitions. (Brown, 1972, 2)

Gandhi's first appearance in public was at a reception organized for him by the Gurjar Sabha, and which was presided over by Jinnah. This was the first time Gandhi spoke under the headship of Jinnah. Gandhi made full use of the religious distinctions standing between Him and Jinnah, Soon after Gandhi found another opportunity to pass Judgment

on Jinnah's faith. Pointing in the direction of Jinnah "the Muslim" who this time presided the Bombay Provincial Conference, Gandhi spoke mainly in defense of cow. (Gandhi, 2008, 9) Although not yet elected President of the Muslim League Session of Lucknow, Gandhi also declared and accepted Jinnah as the head of 'the biggest Islamic Association' of India. (Ibid, 304) It was clear that Gandhi tried to convey Jinnah the message that he belonged to the Muslim League. The declaration by Gandhi at this time was no insignificant statement; but the purport of it went perhaps unnoticed by all including Jinnah. No one appeared to realize the importance of Gandhi's announcement. But it is true Gandhi's anticipation proved right. Subsequently, Jinnah rose to the highest position under the Muslim League. To begin with he was elected, for the first time, in December 1916 the President of League's Annual Session at Lucknow. (Ibid, 305-306)

Besides always trying to remind Jinnah of his religious identity Gandhi did a great deal more for him. He told Jinnah to learn Gujarati. On the Gujarat Political Conference in November 1917 Jinnah surprised his audience by reading a resolution, of which he was himself, the proposer, in Gujarati. The conference was presided over by Gandhi. He commanded Jinnah to read out his resolution in Gujarati; an advice which Jinnah followed. Gandhi felt elated at "Mr. Jinnah … [was] agreeing to my suggestion." (Gujarat Politics Conference, CWMG, Vol.XIV, 68) As if it was not enough to satisfy him, Gandhi told Jinnah before his exuberated audience that "He should … learn Gujarati if he does not know it."(CWMG, Vol.XV.pp.398-99) In his desire to further dictate Jinnah Gandhi haunted him as far away from India as England on this subject while Jinnah was there to present the Indian case for Reforms. (India, Daily, 14 August 1914) Gandhi wrote him not to forget to learn Gujarati. This time he also added Hindi to his list of languages to be learnt by Jinnah and asked him to make himself proficient in them. (*CWMG,* Vol. XIV, 1918, 70)

The question of language and religion aside, Gandhi started to act as Jinnah's political guru, too. On the eve of the outbreak of War Gandhi was in England. He had organized a Field Ambulance Corps in support of England's war efforts and asked resident Indians in England to "Think Imperially." (Maujamdar, 38) On reaching India Gandhi engaged

himself in a recruiting campaign for the Government. But he met with little success in his venture.

He asked Jinnah to "make an emphatic declaration regarding recruitment." (Ibid, 39) In a prophetic manner, of which Gandhi regarded himself a master, advised Jinnah time and again to seek a recruitment office for the purpose. Gandhi was still not satisfied with his dictates to Jinnah. Perhaps there was something more he would need to compel Jinnah to follow his lead. May be a drastic action on his part would bring Jinnah under his arm of leadership. The Home Rule League (Bombay Chapter) established under Mrs. Besant in 1916, offered an opportunity to Gandhi to try his tricks in the best manner possible. (Saiyid, 91)

Jinnah became the President of the Bombay Home Rule League after the internment of Annie Besant. A meeting of the Home Rule League was decided to be held on 3rd October 1920. (Maujamdar, 41) Reluctantly Gandhi was invited to preside over. But the invitation was extended to him on the firm understanding given by him to the Secretary, M.R. Jayakar, that Gandhi would not introduce, since he was much less trusted for his utterances, any of his "fantastic fads" or demand change of its objects. Gandhi assured categorically to the Secretary that the Home Rule League was not bound to concede to his 'ideology'. (Ahmad, 2005, 330-336) Once installed in the position of the President of the meeting, in spite of his promise and assurance, Gandhi felt free, at the first step, to rename the League as *Swarajia Sabha*. (Ibid, 337) In protest, Jinnah resigned from his membership through a letter of 27 October 1916. (Ibid, 242-243) Along with him left another eighteen members also in protest Gandhi's action. Gandhi issued an ultimatum, overruling the objections against his decision.

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, for the first time, appeared on the INC platform and by 1920 he was able to capture Congress throwing Jinnah out of support within the Congress organization. (Ahmad, 1972, 8) Already, before he decided to leave the Congress, it seemed Jinnah was feeling too tired of Gandhi and his tactics, he must have thought him unscrupulous. When Nagpur Gandhi carried the day on the question of non-cooperation, leaving Jinnah high and dry, it must have proved the proverbial last straw for Jinnah. He

felt he had already gone to an extent in conceding to Gandhi, and that Gandhi was constantly being demanding of him. The decision of Jinnah to quit the Congress in 1920 should be seen in the light of these circumstances and not merely his dispute over the question of accepting the non- cooperation resolution by the Congress. It was after that that Jinnah had very little to do with the congress. Nor would he have anything to do with Gandhi except to deal with him as his political rival. Gandhi invited him once again to join hands with him in a common struggle, Jinnah only "shuddered to contemplate" the consequences of this union with him.

Conclusion:

M.A. Jinnah not only broke with the Home Rule League but also with the Congress. This was also the last he dealt with Gandhi. It was Jinnah's parting away from everything that would have the hand, association or even the shadow of Gandhi. His refusal to recognize Gandhi in later years as an important leader of the Congress and refusal to recognize the Congress as the only political organization must be viewed in the context of Gandhi's handling of the affairs since after his admission into India political scene, and his constant references to Jinnah's religion and many other dictates to him from time to time.

The emergence of Jinnah on 20th Century South Asian political scene as a leader with Weberian Charisma is the unprecedented episodes of Indian political history which has willfully been ignored by Western Scholarship. His leadership pattern, however, remained matchless and his dealing and rising-to-the-time was appreciated by fellows and contemporaries. His standing on the reservation of seats, *Muslim Waqf,* Khilafat-cum -Non-cooperation Issue proved valid in due course of time. Later his stand on 'parting of ways' with Congress, and advocacy of Muslim political rights was termed as 'communal stance', separatist endeavor and 'unpardonable crime'.

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