

OBITUARY**M. RAFIQUE AFZAL
(1941-2020)**

I recall vividly, how during the All-India Muslim League Centenary, Islamabad, 2006, both Professor Sharif Al Mujahid and Dr. M. Rafique Afzal had come together in my room and how I could partake of their feast of reason. It is with great sadness that I reflect that I am left alone, academically, with only a few to guide me.. I first came to know Dr. Muhammad Rafique Afzal through his edited volume *Speeches and Statements of Quaid-i-Millat Liaquat Ali Khan 1941-1951*, Lahore, Research Society of Pakistan /University of the Punjab, 1967. The topic of my doctoral dissertation had been the role of Liaquat Ali Khan in the freedom movement and I had stated that the information he had gathered in his Introduction to this volume, exceeded the knowledge I had been able to gather through many volumes of Urdu language works.

Dr M. Rafique Afzal was born at Jhang, Sadar in September 1941, educated in such elite institutions like Government College, Chakwal, Gordon College, Rawalpindi and the University of Toronto in Canada. From 1964 to 1970 M. Rafique Afzal was Research Supervisor at the Research Society of Pakistan at Lahore. Thereafter he was Principal Research Fellow at the National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, the Centre of Excellence at the Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad (1975-1977) He finally retired as Professor of History, Quaid-i-Azam University in 2001. His death on 6 March 2020 came as a great shock

His retirement meant actually more work, more supervision, more writing. All his life he had enriched the world of learning by writing and editing. Apart from editing the volume of Liaquat Ali Khan's speeches and statements I referred to above, he edited two volumes of Mohammad Ali Jinnah's speeches (1) *Selected Speeches and Statements of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah 1911-1934*

and 1947-1948, Lahore, Research Society of Pakistan, 1966 and (2) *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah: Speeches in the Legislative Assembly 1924-1930*, Lahore, Research Society of Pakistan, 1976. A most valuable monograph was *Malik Barkat Ali His Life and Writings*, Lahore, Research Society of Pakistan, 1969. He also edited an Urdu language work *Guftar-i-Iqbal*, in 1969. It is clear from the above bibliographical details that his edited works were part of his official duties. It is in his written works that his genius flourished. While at the National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, he wrote first *The Case for Pakistan*, 1979 then came the monumental 3 volume *Political Parties in Pakistan 1947-1958*, the first edition was published in June 1976 and the fourth edition was published in April 2002, the edition that I consult, and there may have been later editions too.

In *Pakistan: History and Politics 1947-1971* Karachi, Oxford University Press, 2001 he displayed not only his vast learning but also the courage of his convictions, with very deep research he contradicted many myths that had been spread by many influential circles. He needed some persuasion to undertake another monumental and definitive work *A History of the All-India Muslim League 1905-1947*, Karachi, Oxford University Press, 2013. In doing so he superseded many works on the A-IML and has left us a veritable book of reference with high interpretational value.

The last time I could meet him was at Islamabad, at the "Leaders of the Pakistan Movement Conference" in 2008. I was ill, he knew, but to provide me the moral support that I had very badly needed, he had invited a number of his friends to listen to me. He passed over the fact that my illness was apparent while I was presenting my paper. Lately I had sent a PhD candidate to him, so that he could provide better guidance than I ever could, but he demurred, and by the fact of his sad demise at Jhang, we can not complain about his reluctance. May the Almighty rest his soul in peace, for he had helped many in accord with his most generous nature.

Dr. Muhammad Reza Kazimi