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# Islam as a Social and Political Ideal:

## The Role of Mohammad Iqbal in Muslim Reawakening

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**M**OHAMMAD Iqbal (1877-1938), the spiritual father of Pakistan, dominates Islamic thought in the twentieth century. He sang for the spiritual regeneration of the whole mankind. He was a poet-philosopher with a universal message to "lay the foundation of a new world by wedding intellect with love."<sup>1</sup> But in spite of his abiding universal outlook and his compelling international concern, he was intensely preoccupied with the future of his own people and with the spirit of his own times. He was educated in the Punjab, Cambridge and Munich. He composed poems of rare vitality and sustained emotional power in Urdu and Persian and attempted to reinterpret Islam in modern philosophical terms in his English work entitled: *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*. He was born in a slave country. During his lifetime almost all the nations of the East were either groaning under the mighty sway of British imperialism or under the yoke of Arabian imperialism. He perceived imperialism as a world-wide system getting its strength from old and new vested interests within the nations of the East. He declared war on this order and called upon Muslim masses to rise against their oppressors, both local and foreign. He used his poetry as a powerful weapon to combat political tyranny, social injustice and economic exploitation. Using *Afrang* as the metaphor for Western imperialism and 'Bū Lahab'<sup>2</sup> as the symbol of Arabian imperialism, he wrote poem after poem in Urdu and Persian to expose the inner mechanics of this exploitative order. His was the first voice in the East to be raised against the "acquisitive economy which the West has developed and imposed on the

nations of the East" and "which has looked upon man as a thing to be exploited and not a personality to be developed and enlarged by purely cultural forces."<sup>3</sup>

Economic exploitation, both at the local and the global level, is one of the recurring themes of his poetry. His political activity is motivated by the desire to translate his dream of building a universal community free of fear and want, into reality. During his term of office as a legislator (1926-30) in the Punjab Legislative Council he subjected the unjust revenue system and the more royalist than the king-landed aristocracy—to relentless criticism. He termed the British theory of the Crown's ownership of land as "barbarous." While rejecting the concept of individual ownership of land as a means of production during his speech in the Legislative Council on 5 March 1927, he retorted:

We are told that the Mughals claimed such rights; but the people of the Punjab owned and possessed the land of this country long before the race of Babar entered into history—the unmistakable lesson of which is that crowns come and go; the people alone are immortal.<sup>4</sup>

The idea of collective ownership of land is the theme of one of his most fascinating poems in *Bal-i-Jibril* (Gabriel's Wing) where he bluntly challenged the landlords:

Landlord! this earth is not thine, is not thine,  
Nor yet thy father's; no, not thine, nor mine.<sup>5</sup>

Economic plight of the common man figured prominently in his mind. The Presidential Address he delivered at the annual session of the All-India Muslim Conference at Lahore, on 21 March 1932, gives a glimpse of the economic dimension of his vitalist philosophy of *Khwudi*



(the self). In order to rouse and organize the dormant energies of the "progressive forces of the community", Iqbal suggested, among other things, formation of youth leagues and volunteer corps for social service and economic propaganda throughout the country. Referring to the egalitarian spirit of Islam, he asserted:

I want the proposed youth leagues to specialize in propaganda work in this connection, and thus to help the peasantry in escaping from its present bondage. The future of Islam in India largely depends, in my opinion, on the freedom of Muslim peasants in Punjab. Let then the fire of youth mingle with the fire of faith in order to enhance the glow of life and to create a new world of actions for our future generations.<sup>6</sup>

Iqbal, thus, linked the future of Islam with economic and social emancipation of the toiling masses. "He was very clear and emphatic on one point and it was that the Quranic teaching was opposed to holding of land as private property."<sup>7</sup> He passionately argued to his audience to see the guiding principle of economic justice in the Quranic message of *Qul al-afw*, i.e. "They ask thee how much they are to spend; say: what is beyond your needs" (Quran, II:219). He was confident that the Russian revolution in the neighbourhood of Muslim Asia was bound to open the eyes of the Muslim world to the inner meanings and destiny of Islam. Raising the inspiring cry of *Inqilab*, *Ay Inqilab* (Revolution, O, Revolution), Iqbal devoted himself to the task of resurrecting the Muslim world from intellectual stagnation, cultural decay and political slavery. His Persian *masnawi*—*Pas Chih Bayad kard Ay Aqwam-i Sharq* (What then shall we do, O Nations of the East!) is acknowledged as "one of the most elaborate formulations of the revolutionary anti-imperialist programme of the colonised nations."<sup>8</sup>

In the title poem of the *masnawi* he remarks:

Mankind is in bitter lament because of Afrang . . . .  
Alas for us with the stream of our blood and our expectation of the dressing of the wound by him! You know that Empire is tyranny. And this tyranny in our age has assumed the form of mercantilism. The floor board of the shop is a partner of the floor board of the throne and the crown. From trade is gathered profit and from Empire the tribute. The Emperor who is at

the same time the trader has good words on his tongue and evil in his heart. . . .

Pass by his workshop indifferent to what it contains....

It is his way to kill without warfare and without striking a blow. There are deaths hidden in the turning of his machines. While bargaining he is all smiles and peaceable. We are like little children and he the seller of sweets. He enters into the eye and the heart of the customer. O Lord! is this trade or is this sorcery?<sup>9</sup>

Having shown that capturing of new markets and plundering of the resources of the colonies was at the root of imperialist expansionism, he forecast the end of direct imperialist subjugation in these words:

What then shall we do, O Nations of the East? Once again the days of the East are being lit up. In the inwardness (of the East) a revolution has appeared. The night has passed and the sun has arisen.<sup>10</sup>

While breaking the good news of the approaching independence to the East, in the year 1936, he sounded a note of warning, too. He foresaw the rise of the monster of neo-colonialism from the very ashes of colonialism and advised the nations of the East to sink deeper into their own selves and develop their own strategy of revival and reform, without the assistance of capitalism or communism. Emphasizing the need of national self-reliance, he exhorted them to prefer poverty to a life-style of borrowed luxury, leading to debt, slavery and extinction of real sovereignty:

Whatever grows in the soil, O man of freedom! Sell that, and wear that, and eat that alone. Those wise ones who have known themselves have woven for themselves their own blanket....Alas for that river whose waves have little tumult it had to buy its own pearl from the divers.<sup>11</sup>

It is worthwhile to note that this outright rejection of Western imperialism is tempered by a passionate recognition of the Islamic origin of Western scientific and technological as well as intellectual and philosophical accomplishments. Iqbal regarded democracy as the most significant ideal in Islam. The ideal, according to him, remained unrealized in the Muslim world because of the historical circumstances that led to the establishment of Arabian imperialism in the very first century of Islam. Such ideals could only be realized by a return to the original purity of Islam.



In order to achieve this objective, Iqbal initiated a process of rediscovery of the original principles and pristine values of Islam through an imaginative reinterpretation and a dynamic reconstruction of Islamic thought. He took up the challenge of emancipating the "superb idealism" of Islam "from the medieval fancies of theologians and legists"<sup>12</sup> with a rare insight. Explaining the socio-political implications of the central concept of *Tauhid* in Islam, Iqbal argued:

It demands loyalty to God, not to thrones. And since God is the ultimate spiritual basis of all life, loyalty to God virtually amounts to man's loyalty to his own ideal nature.<sup>13</sup>

Consequently, Iqbal could perceive in the breakup of the classical Caliphate the birth of a new political ideal within Islam. Rejecting the notion of Arabian imperialism, he asserted that the only form the political expression of Muslim unity could take was that of Muslim multinationalism realizing itself in a Muslim league of nations:

For the present every Muslim nation must sink into her own deeper self, temporarily focus her vision on herself alone, until all are strong and powerful to form a living family of republics. A true and living unity, according to the nationalist thinkers, is not so easy as to be achieved by a merely symbolical overlordship. It is truly manifested in a multiplicity of free independent units whose racial rivalries are adjusted and harmonized by the unifying bond of a common spiritual aspiration. It seems to me that God is slowly bringing home to us the truth that Islam is neither Nationalism nor Imperialism but a League of Nations which recognizes artificial boundaries and racial distinctions for facility of reference only, and not for restricting the social horizon of its members.<sup>14</sup>

Responding to the questions raised by Jawaharlal Nehru, he made the categorical assertion:

In its essence Islam is not imperialism. In the abolition of the Caliphate which, since the days of Omayyads, has practically become a kind of Empire. It is only the spirit of Islam that had worked out through the Ataturk.<sup>15</sup>

The republican spirit of Islam could only be suppressed by negation of the principle of movement in the structure of Islam. Appreciating the Turkish attempts to widen the scope and

authority of 'Ijma' (consensus of the classical schools of law) and to transfer the power of 'Ijtihad' (to form an independent opinion on a legal question) from individuals to a representative legislative assembly, Iqbal pointed out that the most important legal notion is of 'Ijma' which

remained practically a mere idea possibly its transformation into a permanent legislative institution was contrary to the political interests of the kind of absolute monarchy that grew up in Islam immediately after the fourth Caliph. It was, I think, favourable to the interest of the Omayyad and the Abbasid caliphs to leave the power of Ijtihad to individual Mujtahids rather than encourage the formation of a permanent assembly which might become too powerful for them. It is, however, extremely satisfactory to note that the pressure of new world forces and the political experience of European nations are impressing on the mind of modern Islam the value and possibilities of the idea of Ijma. The growth of republican spirit, and the gradual formation of legislative assemblies in Muslim lands constitutes a great step in advance. The transfer of the power of Ijtihad for individual representatives of schools to a Muslim legislative assembly which, in view of the growth of opposing sects, is the only possible form Ijma can take in modern times, will secure contributions from laymen who happen to possess a keen insight into affairs. In this way alone we can stir into activity the dormant spirit of Islam in our legal system and give it an evolutionary outlook.<sup>16</sup>

While the representatives of the traditionalist as well as populist Islam moaned the abolition of the Caliphate by Kemal Ataturk in the second decade of the present century, Iqbal saw the birth of a new dawn of Islam in the breakup of the Caliphate. It was but natural. Institutionalization of the original republican spirit of Islam and the growth of the liberal, democratic and egalitarian concepts of Kemalist Turkey proved the soundness of Iqbal's dynamic speculation on the nature of social and political ideals of Islam. Making a strong plea to rebuild the existing institutions by tearing off from Islam the hard crust which had immobilized an essentially dynamic outlook on life, Iqbal observed:

The essence of 'Tauhid' as a working idea is equality,



solidarity and freedom. The state, from the Islamic standpoint is an endeavour to transform these ideal principles into space-time forces, an aspiration to realize them in a definite human organization.<sup>17</sup>

In order to transform these principles of equality, solidarity and freedom into living actualities, Iqbal articulated and unfolded the ideology of a separate Muslim nationalism as opposed to the idea of a composite Indian nationalism. Since "all that is secular is sacred in the roots of its being and all this immensity of matter constitutes a scope for the self-realization of the spirit"<sup>18</sup> there is no question of bifurcation of spirit and matter in Islam. Hence the rejection of the modern western concept of the duality of church and state. This unapologetic rejection showed the way to Muslim India of the creation of separate Muslim homelands in the Indian subcontinent. He argued, in 1930, that:

the nature of the Prophet's religious experience, as disclosed in the Quran however is wholly different. . . .

It is individual experience creative of a social order. Its immediate outcome is the fundamentals of a polity with implicit legal concepts whose civic significance cannot be belittled merely because their origin is revelational. The religious ideal of Islam, therefore is organically related to the social order which it has created. The rejections of the one will eventually involve the rejection of the other. Therefore, the construction of a polity on national lines, if it means a displacement of the Islamic principle of solidarity, is simply unthinkable to a Muslim.<sup>19</sup>

Iqbal pinned his hopes for the regeneration and self-realization of Islam on the proposed Muslim homelands which were to be finally assimilated in an independent and powerful family of sovereign Muslim republics. He was confident that the Muslim state of his aspiration would provide an opportunity for Islam

to rid itself of the stamp that Arabian imperialism was forced to give it, to mobilize its law, its education, its culture and bring them into closer contact with its original spirit and with the spirit of modern times.<sup>20</sup>

But there were, and still are, many in the world of Islam who, with their static and stagnant outlook, could not differentiate between the original spirit of Islam and the stamp of Arabian imperialism. To them Arabian imperialism is an

integral and sacred part of Islam and any attempt to emancipate Islam from it amounts to heresy. When the ideology of a separate Muslim nationalism was rejected by the leading religious divines on the basis of Islam, Iqbal placed his whole emphasis on the person of the Prophet of Islam and said:

It was a very easy course for Muhammad to tell Abu Lahab, Bu Jahl, or the unbelievers of Mecca that they could stick to their idol-worship while he himself would hold fast to worship of God and that they could together form an Arabian unity by virtue of factors of race and land common to them both. God forbid, but if he had adopted this course, it would certainly have done him credit as a patriot but not as the last Prophet. The ultimate purpose of the prophetic mission of Muhammad is to create a form of society, the constitution of which follows that divine law which the Prophet Muhammad received from God.<sup>21</sup>

By highlighting the socio-political dimension of the prophetic mission, Iqbal advocated a return to the life and conduct of the Holy Prophet in order to preserve and promote the distinct cultural identity of Muslim India. He combined strong conservatism with uncompromising progressivism in his prophetology. In his poetic as well as philosophic writings the figure of Muhammad shines as a symbol of permanence in perpetual change:

نتیزہ کار رہا ہے ازل سے تا امروز چرخ مصطفویٰ سے شرارِ بولہبی

There has been a constant strife since  
eternity between Mustafa's light and Bu Lahab's fire.

دعیم گردیم و ہم در عرب مصطفیٰ نایاب ارزاں بولہب

I have wandered through lands, Arab and non-Arab,  
Bu Lahab is everywhere, Mustafa nowhere.

کشودم پردہ را از روی تقدیر مشونمیسد و راو مصطفیٰ گیسر

I have lifted veil from the face of Destiny. Don't be  
hopeless, follow the way of Mustafa.

Iqbal prefers to use the metaphor Mustafa (the Elect one) instead of the real name of the Prophet of Islam. He presents Mustafa as not only the fountainhead but also the destiny of the



Muslim world. In *Asrar-i-Khwudi*, first published in 1915, Iqbal speaks of the role of Muhammad in the life of the community in these words:

He chose the nightly solitude of Mount Hira and (then) founded a state and laws and government.<sup>22</sup>

In *Rumuz-i-Bikhwudi*, first published in 1918, he is more emphatic:

In God the Individual, in him (i.e. Muhammad) lives the Community, in his sun's rays resplendent ever: his Apostleship brought concord to our purpose and our goal.<sup>23</sup>

Through the inspiring medium of his poetry, Iqbal time and again made passionate appeals to the Muslims to reject the political creed of Bu Lahab (Muhammad's uncle) which sprang from the barbarous ideals of racial superiority, geographical affinity and the distinction of colour and to turn once again, with total commitment, to the universal ethics and the humanitarian politics of Mustafa. Transmitting his message through the metaphors of Bu Lahab and Mustafa was a brilliant strategy. Even the illiterate masses knew well what Bu Lahab stood for and what was the meaning and significance of the word Mustafa. Iqbal's poetry fired the imagination of the Muslims. They rallied round the banner of the movement for Pakistan which they created by a purely democratic process in 1947.

Muslim India was not the only realm of Iqbal's thought and action. Another realm was the wider Muslim world. He was equally concerned with the fate of each and every member of the Muslim family of republics which he had visualized. He was an emotionally involved observer of the political and intellectual developments in Turkey since 1912, the year in which he had recited one of his most famous poems, namely *Jawab-i Shikwah* (Answer to the Complaint) in the Badshahi Mosque of Lahore in order to raise funds in aid of wounded Turks in the Balkan war. Perhaps he was the only Muslim intellectual who welcomed with a keen sense of appreciation the establishment of a new order in Turkey under the dynamic leadership of Kemal Ataturk. He was deeply influenced by the growth of democratic institutions and progressive constitutional developments in Turkey. Realizing that similar situations are bound to arise in other Muslim countries, he

initiated a process of reinterpretation of Islamic thought in the light of Turkish experience. Being an ardent supporter of Ataturk's policies, Iqbal defended him with the full emphasis at his command. When in the late thirties Jawaharlal Nehru cited the example of Turkish secularism in one of his articles, maintaining that Turkey had ceased to be Muslim, Iqbal's response was sharp and immediate. He proved conclusively that the reforms promulgated in Turkey were not at all contrary to the spirit of Islam. He was exceptionally bold on the ticklish question of Ataturk's treatment of the religious divines:

As to the licentiate *ulama* I would certainly introduce it in Muslim India if I had the power to do so. To the inventions of the myth-making *mulla* is largely due the stupidity of the average Muslim. In excluding him from the religious life of the people the Ataturk has done what would have delighted the heart of an Ibn Taimiyya or a Shah Wali Ullah.<sup>24</sup>

The cultural significance of this wholehearted support to Ataturk can be understood with a reference to the reactionary atmosphere prevailing in the Muslim world. It was a time when the decadence itself had become a source of inspiration and the religious orthodoxy had identified Ataturk as a rebel against Islam. Iqbal's delightful response was hailed in Turkish intellectual circles, so much so that his contemporary Turkish poet Mehmed Akif (1873-1936), the composer of Turkish national anthem, dedicated his seven volume book of poetry entitled *Safahat* to Iqbal. Writing to a friend, Akif acknowledged that "Iqbal is really a genius poet. His knowledge, culture and poetical efficiency is above mine."<sup>25</sup>

Iqbal was bitterly critical of Arab kings who had deserted the Turks in their hour of trial and whose gaze was solely fixed on their own dynastic interest for the protection of which they even went to the extent of selling their own countries. In his poetic as well political formulations Iqbal tried to prepare the masses for a revolt against the kings. During his last days he was preoccupied with the question of Palestine. Commenting from his death bed on the report recommending partition of Palestine, he advised the Arab people not to rely on their kings who were incapable of independent



judgement. Showing to them the path of self-reliance, he observed:

Experience has made it abundantly clear that the political integrity of the peoples of the Near East lies in the immediate reunion of the Turks and the Arabs. The policy of isolating the Turks from the rest of the Muslim world is still in action. We hear now and then that the Turks are repudiating Islam. A greater lie was never told. Only those who have no idea of the history of the concepts of Islamic jurisprudence fall an easy prey to this sort of mischievous propaganda.<sup>26</sup>

Arab kings became the easiest prey to British imperialism. First they broke away from the rest of the Muslim world and then disintegrated themselves into tiny nationalities. Inspiring the Arab people to create the soul of 'Umar the Great in their bodies Iqbal wrote in his last great Persian work, *masnawi-i Pas Chih Bayad Kard Ay Aquam-i-Sharq*:

You were a single nation, you have become now several nations.

You have broken up your society yourself.

He who loosened himself from the bonds of *Khawdi*

and merged himself in others, met certain death.

Nobody else ever did what you have done to yourself.

The soul of Mustafa was grieved by it.

O you who are unaware of the Frankish magic, see the mischief hidden in its sleeves.

If you wish to escape its deceits, turn away his camels from your ponds.

His diplomacy has weakened every nation and broken the unity of the Arabs.

Ever since the Arabs fell into its snares, not for one moment have they enjoyed peace.<sup>27</sup>

While the Arab rulers were busy playing the game of the British imperialists in the Middle East, king Amanullah Khan, of Afghanistan, was engaged in the third Anglo-Afghan war of 1919, whence he emerged victorious and succeeded in procuring a real sovereign status for his country. This not only gave him fresh enthusiasm for introducing revolutionary socio-economic reforms in Afghanistan, but also encouraged him to support Muslim freedom movements elsewhere, i.e. in Turkey, Central Asia and India. His strong

nationalist tendencies and abiding commitment to Islamic unity made Amanullah a favourite of Iqbal. Addressing him in the dedicatory poem of *Payam-i Mashriq*, Iqbal bemoaned that the Muslims' sun had been dimmed by the darkening clouds of imperialism; the Arab in his desert had gone astray; the Turk was a victim of the ancient feud between the East and the West; the creed of love had become alien to Iran; the Indian Muslim was concerned only with his stomach and the heroes had departed from the scene. He pinned his hopes on Amanullah's reforms aimed at nation building and socio-economic reconstruction and observed:

All Muslim rulers who were truly great  
led hermit's lives despite their royal state.

Asceticism was their way of life:

To cultivate it was their constant strife.

They lived as Salman lived in Ctesiphon.

A ruler he who did not care to don

The robes of Royalty and who abhorred

All outfit save the Qur'an and the sword.

Armed with love of Muhammad, one commands

Complete dominion over seas and lands.

Ask God to grant you some small part

of that love of Muhammad which the heart

of Siddiq and of Ali bore, because

the life of the Islamic ruler draws

its sustenance from it and it, in fact

Is that which keeps the universe intact.

It was Muhammad whose epiphany

Laid bare the essence of Reality.

My soul has no peace but in love of him.

A light in me that never can get dim.

Arise and make the cup of Love go round,

and in your hills make songs of love resound.<sup>28</sup>

The spiritual decadence and tribal prejudices, coupled with British chicanery, however, did not allow Amanullah to implement his reforms and to pursue his pan-Islamic ideals to the full. He was ousted in 1929 by the Bacha-i-Saqao, i.e. the son of a water carrier.

It is ironic to note that the most widely believed allegation against Amanullah was that he was a *Kafir*, an unbeliever and anti-Muslim, whereas the fact was that he was not only a pious Muslim, but was also looked on as a possible successor to the deposed Turkish Caliph.<sup>29</sup> During



the brief interregnum of Bacha-i-Saqao's rule, chaotic conditions prevailed in Afghanistan. This caused distress to Iqbal who entertained a special fascination for this country because of its geopolitical importance and some pristine qualities of its people. To him Afghanistan was the heart of Asia and a vital commercial and cultural link between Central Asia and Central Europe:

A world of clay and water  
Is Asia with the Afghans as her heart;  
Their weal, their woe, is Asia's weal and woe;  
So long as the heart is free, the flesh is free,  
Or else it is a straw placed in wind's path.<sup>30</sup>

The troubles of Afghanistan distressed Iqbal so much that he went to the extent of approaching Nadir Shah, with a token sum of Rs. 10,000/- to wage war against Bacha-i-Saqao in order to put Afghanistan once again, on the path of stability and progress.<sup>31</sup> Nadir Shah eventually succeeded in restoring peace and order in the country and sought guidance from Iqbal in matters relating to Afghanistan during this period and recorded the impressions of his journey in his *Masnawi-i-Musafir*, in Persian. Before he could give some tangible form to Iqbal's ideas, Nadir Shah was, however assassinated.

Among Iqbal's Afghan themes is a series of twenty illuminating Urdu poems entitled *Mihrab Gul Afghan Ke Afkar* (the ideas of Mihrab Gul Afghan). Mihrab Gul was an imaginary poetic personality combining Afghan racial and historical traits with passionate pan-Islamic aspirations. His message to Afghans was to rise above racial distinctions and tribal affiliations and weld themselves into a strong and formidable nation, never forgetting their link with the wider Islamic world.

It is a strange coincidence that Iqbal—greatest Persian poet of twentieth century—was, at first, mistaken by Iranians as an Afghan poet. This might be due to the fact that the name and fame of Iqbal first reached Iran through his poetry published in Afghan journals. Iqbal's prestige was enhanced in Iran with the creation of Pakistan. Muhammad Taqi Bahar, the poet-laureate of Iran, composed a long poem as a tribute to him, in which he declared that:

Iqbal has made this century his own  
A hundred thousand he surpassed alone.<sup>32</sup>

A number of books on Iqbal have been written in Persian and countless poems in his veneration have been composed by the Iranian poets since 1947. But in imperial Iran only his poetic craft remained a centre of attraction until 1970 when Husayniyyah-yi Irshad<sup>33</sup> organized an international conference in Tehran. This was the first time when Iqbal's revolutionary ideas came into sharp focus in Iranian society. It may be pointed out that some sectarian voices were raised against holding of a conference in honour of a Sunni poet-philosopher but were silenced by Ali Shari'ati, who subsequently emerged as the ideologue of the Iranian revolution. Shari'ati delivered a series of lectures highlighting Iqbal's role in reawakening Muslims to Islam's revolutionary destiny. These lectures were brought together in a book entitled *Ma-o-Iqbal* (Iqbal's relevance to us) and were widely circulated. The highest tribute that Shari'ati paid to Iqbal was that Iqbal's role in our age was similar to the intellectual role played by Ali, the fourth righteous Caliph, in the first century of Islam. Shari'ati's main contribution was his linking of Iqbal's thought to the revolutionary upsurge in Iranian society. Today we find the roof of the Husayniyyah-yi Irshad in Tehran decorated with Iqbal's verses; his poetry is being taught at all levels of education; his pictures are conspicuous in the streets along with the pictures of Jamal al-Din Afghani and Imam Khumeini and no less a person than the *Wilayat-i Faqih*, then President of Iran, Sayyid Ali Khamene'i asserting that:

Iqbal belongs to this nation and this country . . . .  
Today the major part of Iqbal's teachings directly concerns us, and some part of it is also relevant to the world that has gone our way so far and has to understand it in the same manner as we did. Our people have translated into action his doctrine of the selfhood. They have invigorated it and have brought it into action in the world of actuality. The Muslim peoples are anyhow in need of comprehending the meaning of selfhood; especially eminent Muslims, whether they are politically active or culturally creative, need to embrace Iqbal's message.<sup>34</sup>

More than fifty years after his death Iqbal continues to be a living phenomenon. His popularity and prestige is continuously growing, but at the same time, powerful lobbies in the Mus-



lim world are at work to deny him his rightful place in society and are never tired of detracting from his importance. His dynamic influence in the contemporary affairs of the Muslims is an anathema to the vested interests opposed to the rediscovery of the original spirit of Islam.

After identifying a democratic and egalitarian political ideal within Islam, Iqbal concentrated all his energies to show how this ideal could be transformed into an actuality. Starting from his Allahabad Address in 1930 to his controversy with Husayn Ahmad Madani on the question of Muslim Nationalism, in 1938, the year he breathed his last, most of Iqbal's time was occupied in unfolding the political, economic and cultural dynamics of the Quranic state. In 1932, appeared his *Jawid Namah*. In this poetic drama, Iqbal described his spiritual journey from the earth to the presence of God. In the sphere of Mercury he came across the spirits of Jamal al-Din Afghani and Sa'id Halim Pasha, and laid before them the concept of the Quranic state, an ideal hitherto unrealized in Islamic history and dormant in the mind and conscience of man. According to Iqbal, the Quranic state could not be built upon regional or racial or group loyalties. In sharp contrast to personal rule, it would equate the concept of the caliphate with the service of humanity. In this ideal state man's viceregency of God would fulfil itself and honour its trust, by acknowledging that the ownership of all land (i.e. means of production) vests in God, and by accepting that man's duty is to produce wealth for the benefit of all humanity.<sup>35</sup>

During the same year (1932) in the course of his Presidential Address to the annual session of the All-India Muslim Conference, Iqbal impressed upon the Muslims the need of opening the doors of Ijtihad in these words:

The faith which you represent . . . can still create a new world where the social rank of man is not determined by his caste or colour or the amount of dividend he earns, but by the kind of life he lives; where the poor tax the rich, where human society is founded not on the equality of stomachs but on the equality of spirits, where an Untouchable can marry the daughter of a king, where private ownership is a trust and where capital cannot be allowed to accumulate so

as to dominate the real producer of wealth. This superb idealism of your Faith, however, needs emancipation from the medieval fancies of theologians and legists. Spiritually we are living in a prison-house of thoughts and emotions which during the course of centuries we have woven round ourselves . . . The whole community needs a complete overhauling of its present mentality in order that it may again become capable of feeling the urge of fresh desires and ideals.<sup>36</sup>

The realization of such an ideal state and society, in which there is neither theocracy nor aristocracy, demands renunciation of privileges and monopolies that circumstances have placed in the hands of exploiters. Those who are not willing to part with their privileges seek an escape in Arabian imperialism. Hence their denial of Iqbal. In his polemics with the advocates of imperialism Iqbal's central point of reference and chief source of inspiration was always Muhammad al-Mustafa, who was, and remains to be, the rallying point and the principal source of unity for the Muslim world for all times to come.

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14. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction*, p. 159.
15. *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, p. 132.
16. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction*, pp. 173-174.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 154.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 155.
19. Latif Ahmed Sherwani, ed., *Speeches, Writings and Statements of Iqbal*, Lahore, 1977.

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20. *Ibid.* p. 13.
21. Latif Ahmed Sherwani, *op. cit.*, p.261.
22. R.A. Nicholson, *The Secrets of the Self*, verses 325-326.
23. A.J. Arberry, *Mysteries of Selflessness*, Lahore, 1943, pp. 19-20.
24. S.A. Vahid, ed., *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, Lahore, 1964, p.282.
25. Erkan Tirkmen, "Muhammad Iqbal and Mehmad Akif's Concept of Freedom," *Iqbal Review*, Lahore, Vol-28, No. 3, pp. 17-18.
26. *Thoughts and Reflections*, p.371.
27. B. A. Dar, (trans.), *What Should be Done, O Peoples of the East*, Lahore, 1977, p.113.
28. Translation by M. Hadi Hussain, *A Message from the East*, Lahore, 1971, p. 7.
29. For a detailed study, see Leon B. Poullada, *Reform and Rebellion in Afghanistan 1919-1929*, Ithaca and London, 1973.
30. Iqbal, *Javed Nama* (Persian), Eng. translation by S.A. Vahid, in *Glimpses of Iqbal*, p. 131.
31. *Ibid.*, p.133.
32. Translation by S.A. Vahid in Riffat Hassan, ed., *The Sword and the Sceptre*, Lahore, 1977, p.359.
33. Established in 1965. "In Iranian religious life husayniya (in Shia Islam, centre for religious education) has been a common feature of all large and small Iranian cities, where they have existed besides mosques for public commemoration of the martyrdom of Imam Husayn, the grandson of the Prophet, and the third Imam of the Twelver Shiite at Karbala (680 A.D.). It is essential to note that husayniyas in Shiite Islam had supplemented the religious observances provided by mosques, where mostly formal religious practice such as congregational prayers were held. In husayniyas popular preachers were called upon to inform the masses didactically about the events that led to the tragedy of Karbala". — Abdul Aziz Sachedina in John L. Esposito, *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, New York, 1983, pp. 195-196.
34. *Al-Tawhid*, Tehran, Vol. III, No.4, pp. 129-153.
35. *Javed Nama*, pp. 74-83, summarized by Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan*, Oxford, 1967, p. 159.
36. *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, pp. 48-49.

# THE PUNJAB AND THE SIMON COMMISSION

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94. F.K. Noon also proposed the same in his pamphlet, 'Dominion Status on Autonomous Provinces' Lahore, 1928, pp. 14-15.
95. *Indian Statutory Commission (I.S.C.)*, Vol. III (Cmd.3572), pp. 391,450; *I.S.C.*, Vol. X, pp. 49-62.)
96. Note of dissent, *I.S.C.*, Vol. III, p. 456.
97. Nath-Gokal joint note, *ibid.*, pp. 455-56.
98. Note of dissent, *ibid.*, pp. 466-67.
99. *Ibid.*, pp. 456-57.
100. Jogendra Singh's note, *I.S.C.*, Vol. X, part-II, pp. 71-75; Joint note, pp. 457,459, Ujjal Singh's note, pp. 469,473.
101. Joint note, pp. 459-60; Ujjal Singh, p. 472; Nath, p. 502.
102. The boycotters held demonstrations and protests, burning copies of the Report, (See Fortnightly Report of Governor Punjab L/P 25/5/7 IOR.
103. Shafi Daudi to Fazli: 12 May 1930; Fazli to Daudi, 19 May 1930, *Letters of Fazli Husain*, pp.67,74.
104. Nawab Bhopal and Fazli expressed dissatisfaction (Bhopal to Irwin, 31 May 1930, Halifax Collection, 152/24; Fazli's notes, July 1930, Halifax Collection, 152/6.).
105. *I.S.C.*, Vol.II, (Cmd.3569), pp.61-63.
106. *Ibid.*, pp. 63, 71-72.
107. *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.
108. *Ibid.*, pp. 88-92.
109. *Ibid.*, p. 296.
110. *Ibid.*, p. 300.
111. *Ibid.*, pp. 34-39.
112. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-20.
113. F.N.R., 15 July 1930.
114. Allama Iqbal's address to the League in 1930, A.R. Tariq, *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, Lahore, 1973, pp. 16,24.
115. *M.M.P.C.*, 1930-31, London, 1932, pp. 82-83.
116. Fazli's notes on the Report, July 1930, Halifax Collection, 152/6, JOR.

# SAYYID JAMAL AL-DIN AFGHANI'S

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54. C. Smith, *The Embassy of Sir William White at Constantinople*, Oxford, 1957, p. 9.
55. al-Afghani, *al-Urwat al-Wuthqa*, *op. cit.*, No. VIII, 15 May 1884.