IQBAL AS A SEER

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IQBAL symbolizes the renaissance of Islam in the twentieth century, a regeneration of its intellectual movement and the spirit of its culture. His life forms an interesting study for us from more than one point of view. In the first place, he represents a process of mental and spiritual development starting from modern nationalism, but moving away from it as its incompatibility with the broad human outlook of Islam unfolded itself to him, and as he studied the political and cultural limitations of modern nationalism at close quarters in Europe and in the sub-continent. This process of development is, in certain respects, shared by the other two leaders of the Pakistan movement, Syed Ahmad Khan and Jinnah, both of whom started with the idea of Indian nationalism but had to renounce it later in the light of experience.

Secondly, Iqbal defined and identified the fundamental values of Islam in the context of modern thought. Where does Islam stand in the currents and cross-currents of modern scientific and philosophical concepts? How do we find our bearings in these new surroundings and what path are we to take to reach our goal? What part can Islam play in the modern world with its national and racial strife and its social, economic and cultural antagonisms? These were some of the important questions that presented themselves to Iqbal, on which he spent a life-time of study. For him, Islam was not a mere device for Muslims to adjust themselves to the changing conditions around them; it was a

living force for freeing the outlook of man from its geographical and racial limitations and for fashioning a new world out of the old. It had its own course to pursue in the future as in the past. Iqbal believed that "Islam is itself destiny and will not suffer a destiny."

Iqbal's contribution towards the education of the Muslim consciousness in our times is vast and versatile. He was an outstanding scholar of Arabic and Persian and knew Sanskrit. He also knew German. In English, he has a style of his own—a clear, concise, compact style. He was acknowledged as an outstanding Islamist by the world of scholar-ship, and a number of European scholars and Orientalists were in correspondence with him on matters of academic and historical interest. His poetic genius found spontaneous expression in his philosophical poems, *Asrar-i Khudi* and *Rumuz-i Bekhudi*—The Secrets of the Self and The Mysteries of Selflessness—which convey, in words of rare beauty, the vital meaning and message of Islam. Above all, he focused his attention on the political conflict and intellectual crisis of the world of the early twentieth century and, in that context, made a serious study of the social and cultural foundations of Islam and of the principle of movement inherent in its structure. In his Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, he put forward an ordered philosophy and pointed the way to the revitalization of Muslim society. He has written some of the greatest poetry ever produced in Urdu or Persian, or, indeed, in any of the other languages we know. As a Muslim, he regarded humanity as one and was deeply interested in all aspects of human activity. He

reached out in all directions to gather knowledge and inspiration and has conveyed it to us in lines of immortal beauty. Iqbal for us is the gateway to world culture. His work gives us a view of the whole panorama of human civilization and, as we read him, we find ourselves on terms of intimacy with the great minds of all ages, with whom he encourages us to agree or disagree. His broad and unbiased attitude towards all systems of thought and belief, and his universal outlook on cultures and civilizations make him undoubtedly one of the great humanists of all time.

Above all, Iqbal is the father of the Pakistan idea. He dreamt the great dream, although he did not live to see it come true. Or was it a vision that he saw, a vision of the shape of things to come, the kind of vision that comes only to the seeing eye? For Iqbal was a seer. Just as Nietzsche foretold the rise of Russia in the twentieth century and Tennyson, the development of civil aviation and of aerial warfare and the United Nations, Iqbal had foreseen the establishment of Pakistan. As early as 1909, he had, in a letter to Ghulam Qadir Farrukh of Amritsar, rejected the idea of the so-called Hindu-Muslim unity, which he described as romantic but impracticable. In his Presidential Address to the All-India Muslim League at Allahabad on the 29th of December, 1930, he stated clearly that "self-government within the British Empire or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State" appeared to him to be "the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-West India."[6]

[6] Shamloo (ed.), Speeches and Statements of Iqbal, Lahore, 1948, p. 12.

Subsequently, he included Bengal in his scheme, and reaffirmed his idea in a letter to Jinnah in 1937.[7]

Iqbal's demand for a consolidated Muslim State was met by bitter criticism some of which was aimed at him personally. He defended his views and stuck to them without entering into any personal controversy, which he never did any time in his life. It may be interesting to recall that when Iqbal was facing these acrimonious criticisms, there was no one in the sub-continent at the time to share his idea, or the blame for it, even though a number of claimants have sprung up later.

Speaking of the 1930 Address, I am reminded of a personal anecdote. When Iqbal returned to Lahore from Allahabad I went to see him. I was still a student at college and felt greatly perturbed at his reference to self-government for the new Muslim State "within the British Empire." "Why did you say that, sir," said I; "why must our Muslim State remain within the British Empire?" His first response was a smile. "You will notice," said he, "that I have said 'self-government within or without the British Empire.' You are worried about 'within,' but there are so many others who have told me they are worried about 'without'." "But why did you have to say that at all, sir?" I insisted. "Because," said he, "while I see the establishment of a Muslim State as inevitable in the process of history, I cannot see clearly, at

[7] Letter dated 21 June 1937 in Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah, Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1956, p. 24.

least at pre-sent, whether it will be within or without the British Empire." I had to keep quiet. Here was a man who was utterly loyal to his vision, who told you what he saw clearly, and what he did not.

Iqbal not only foresaw Pakistan, but also the difficulties it was going to have to face from the he ginning of its career. He saw the conflict and the bloodshed that was coming, and he also saw where it would mainly take place. In 1936, in a letter to Maulvi Abdul Haq of the Anjuman-i Tarraqi-i Urdu he wrote:

"مسلمانوں کو اپنے تحفظ کے لیے جو لڑائیاں لڑنی پڑیں گی ان کا میدان پنجاب ہوگا۔ پنجابیوں کو اس میں بڑی بڑی دقتیں پیش آئیں گی کیونکہ اسلامی زمانے میں یہاں کے مسلمانوں کی مناسب تربیت نہیں کی گئی۔ مگر اس کا کیا علاج کہ آئندہ رزمگاہ یہی سرزمین معلوم ہوتی ہے۔"[8]

[The battles that the Muslims will have to fight for their self-preservation will have the Punjab as their battlefield. In this the Punjabi Muslims will have to face considerable difficulties, for during the days of Muslim rule they were not educated properly in their responsibilities. This, however, cannot be helped, for it is quite clear that this is the land where the fighting will be.]

[8] Iqbal Namah, Vol. II, Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, Lahore, 1959, p. 79.

This amazing prophecy found its initial fulfillment in the mass killings and migration of population in 1947 at the time of Independence.

It has been more than fulfilled in the recent Indo-Pakistan conflict. Whether or not the prophecy has exhausted itself, we do not know. Earlier in 1912, he had said:

آنکھ جو کچھ دیکھتی ہے لب پہ آسکتا نہیں

محو حیرت ہوں کہ دنیا کیا سے کیا ہو جائے گی[9]

[The lips dare not disclose what the eye doth see;

I am amazed at the way the world is going to change.]

He has not given us any details of what he saw, but in the very next verse he has told us which way he saw the world would go:

شب گریزاں ہو گی آخر جلوۂ خورشید سے

یہ چمن معمور ہو گا نغمۂ توحید سے[10]

[The darkness of night will flee before the light of the morning sun;

This Garden will be filled with the song of the glory of God.]

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[9] Bang-i-Dara, p. 215.
[10] Ibid., p. 216.

A few years later he had his greatest vision:

آنچه بود است و نباید زمیان خواهد رفت

آنچه بالیست و بنود است همان خواهد بود

[What should not be shall cease to be—all that ever was.

What hath not been but ought to be, the same shall come to pass.]

Iqbal similarly had a clear vision of the Kashmir struggle. Before there was any sign of agitation in Kashmir, he saw the gathering storm on the horizon. In a poem, "The Message of the East" written in Nishat Bagh in Kashmir, which is included in the *Payam-i Mashriq*, he referred to the plight of the common Kashmiri:

بریشم قبا خواجه از محنت او نصیب تنش جامۂ تارتاری[11]

[While his master wears the silken robe woven by his labour,

He himself is condemned to be in tatters.]

Iqbal goes on to call on the cup-bearer to arouse the Kashmiri's courage and inspire him to action:

سرت گردم اے ساقی ماہ سیما بیار از نیاگان ما یادگاری

[11] Payam-i-Mashriq, p. 314

ازان جرعه برفشان بر کشیری که خاکسترش آفریند شراری[12]

[O moon-faced Saqi! may I be thy sacrifice!

Bring me the heady wine of our ancestors.

And sprinkle some of it on the Kashmiri,

That sparks of fire may arise from his humble dust!]

Some time after this poem was written, the Kashmir agitation began. To Iqbal's own surprise, it started with a labour revolt in the silk factory to which he had referred.

Iqbal's own family came from Kashmir and lie was devoted to the welfare of the downtrodden people of that land, that beautiful land which the East India Company sold away to Maharaja Gulab Singh for a mere seventy-five lacs of rupees. Early in his career, Iqbal was for years Secretary of the Kashmiri Association. He was conscious of his Kashmir origin. In a couplet which sums up his whole personality he says:

تنم گلی ز خیابان جنت کشمیر

دل از حریم حجاز و نوا ز شیراز است[13]

[I am a rose from the Paradise of Kashmir,

[12] Ibid., p. 134.
[13] Ibid., p. 214.

My heart comes from the sacred land of the Hijaz, and my voice from Shiraz.]

When he recalled the East India Company's deal over Kashmir, he could not help exclaiming:

دهقان و کشت و جوی و خیابان فروختند

قومی فروختند و چه ارزان فروختند[14]

[Fields, streams and gardens, and peasants too, they sold away,

They sold away a whole people and how cheaply did they sell!]

When he thought of the misfortunes of the people of Kashmir, the unlimited potentialities they possessed and the tyranny that warped and destroyed their lives, he felt infinitely sad:

آج وہ کشمیر ہے محکوم و مجبور و فقیر

کل جسے اہل نظر کہتے تھے ایران صغیر

سینہء افلاک سے اٹھتی ہے آہ سوز ناک

مرد حق ہوتا ہے جب مرعوب سلطان و امیر

[14] Javid Namah, p. 189. 10.

کہہ رہا ہے داستاں بیدردی ایام کی

کوہ کے دامن میں وہ غم خانہء دہقان پیر

آہ! یہ قوم نجیب و چرب دست و تر دماغ

ہے کہاں روز مکافات اے خدائے دیر گیر؟[15]

[That Kashmir which till yesterday the discerning ones called "Little Iran,"

Is destitute and helpless and bound in utter subjugation to-day.

A sigh of grief goes up from the bosom of the Heavens themselves,

When the simple and honest man is browbeaten by kings and prince lings,

Behold the old peasant's house of woe at the foot of the hill;

It tells the story of the ruthlessness of the times.

Alas! for this people, so noble, artistic and full of invention!

[Where is Thy Judgment Day, O God!

O Thou who art so slow to punish!]

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[15] Armaghan-i Hijaz, pp. 258-59.

But Iqbal has faith that Kashmir will not die:

جس خاک کے خمیر میں ہو آتش چنار

ممکن نہیں کہ سرد ہو وہ خاک ارجمند

[That honoured land which has the Chinar's fire in the essence of its being,

Never will that land grow cold and lifeless.]

"What about the future?" asks Iqbal. The answer is given in the Javid Namah—"The Book of Eternity"—and is conveyed by Syed Ali Hamdani, the great saint of Kashmir, whose spirit meets Iqbal in the transcendental regions beyond the Heavens:

در نگاهش جان چو باد ارزان شود

پیش او زندان او لرزان شود

تیشۂ او خاره را برمی درد

تا نصیب خود زگیتی می برد[16]

[When he (the Kashmiri) comes to hold his life cheap as the wind.

[16] Javid Namah, p. 191.

The very walls of his prison-house will shake before him;

Then his axe will split granite asunder

And he will grab his rightful share from Destiny itself!]

Here, as everywhere else, Iqbal leaves us with a message of hope.

To-day Iqbal and Pakistan are synonymous. It is significant that the recent Indian attack on Pakistan was concentrated mainly on two cities, Sialkot and Lahore, the former being the birthplace of Iqbal, and the latter the city where he lived and died. It is no less significant that during this war the people of Pakistan turned instinctively to Iqbal for inspiration and sustenance. The battle that Pakistan has had to fight for its survival has brought to the fore the whole background of its existence, Before Independence, when the Muslims were struggling for Pakistan, a number of European and American voices were heard against the Pakistan movement. The British Government were officially opposed to it and it was a refreshing exception to find a man like Beverly Nichols supporting it. Since Independence, the same kind of attitude has persisted even in well-informed and well-meaning quarters. The argument is that most of the Muslims in the sub-continent are local converts and are of the same race as the non-Muslims. The outsiders have been comparatively few, and form no more than a fraction of the total Muslim population. Thus, the race being largely the same, why should there be two countries instead of one? I have always found it difficult to under-stand this

argument, particularly when it emanates from European and American quarters. Let us take the Europe of to-day. According to the experts, there is a basic racial unity in the European sub-continent. "The racial characteristic of the Europe of today," says Professor Dixon of Harvard, "is the dominance of the Alpine and Palae-Alpine types. Except for portions of Southern Scandinavia, the Western Baltic lands and shores of the North Sea, the British Isles and the Iberian Peninsula, Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily and Southern Itlay, together with small areas in West Central France and South-Eastern Russia, the whole continent is dominated by brachycephalic types, which are themselves central, whereas the dolichocephalic types are mainly marginal." Let us add to this the fact that the civilization and culture of Europe as a whole has a Graeco-Roman foundation. There is also a common background of historical experience in the shape of the Roman Empire, the spread of Christianity, the Crusades, the Renaissance and the Reformation. The development of the Fine Arts also has an all-European basis. For example, even now the Russian ballet and the Russian theatre, in spite of their Communist environment, are a part of European culture. So are Goethe, Shakespeare, Dante, Voltaire, Victor Hugo, Ibsen, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Pasternak and even Sholokov. So too are the musicians, men like Beethoven, Mozart and Leopardi; the artists, such as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Rubens and Titian; the philosophers, such as Socrates, Plato, Kant, Rousseau, Schopenhaucr, Nietzsche and Bergson; and the scientists, like Newton, Einstein, Max Planck, Madame Curie, Pavlov and Heisenberg. The Europeans have the

same classics, the same Greek and Latin sources of inspiration, the same scientific outlook, the same way of living and the same approach to the basic problems of life. And yet there are more than twenty countries in Europe, which are most of the time uneasy in each other's company. Similarly, in South America, we have practically the same race and yet there are so many different countries in the area with their own political ambitions and aspirations. Even in the United States, which is pre-eminently a melting-pot of nationalities, where populations have migrated from all parts of Europe and the rest of the world and where a new world outlook is developing, there are still a number of different cultural groups which are likely to continue for some time before they are assimilated into the American system.

The explanation for the existing multiplicity and diversity of States in the Western world may partly lie in the existence of separate linguistic groups (we may even say perhaps, in this context, that American English is different from English English, Canadian French from French French, and Swiss German from German German) even though there are, on the other hand, also some conspicuously multi-lingual States like Canada, Switzerland and the U.S.S.R. The more important reason seems to be the geographical divisions introduced by mountains and rivers and the impact of historical accident on the group consciousness of various units of population which now receive inspiration mainly from the highly emotional idea of "the glory of the Fatherland" and their military and economic superiority over other national

groups which helps them to establish political hegemony over them.

We have seen how, in spite of a large measure of racial and cultural unity, the Western world is divided into so many independent States whose friendliness towards each other cannot always be taken for granted. Is there anything very strange, then, in the existence of two independent States in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent? Let us look into the matter a little more closely.

In the first place, is it a fact, let us ask, that Pakistan and India are racially of the same stock? Let us also ask whether the sub-continent is inhabited by one race. I am afraid that answer to both questions is in the negative. Even as far back as the Indus Valley civilization, the answer was in the negative. The human remains discovered during the excavations at Mohenjodaro, as Sewell and Guha tell us in Mohenjodaro and the Indus Civilisation, edited by Sir John Marshall, disclose the existence of at least four racial types, the Proto-Austroloid race, the Mediterranean race, the Mongolian branch of the Alpine stock and the Alpine race. This was the position in prehistoric times. As we all know, in course of time, many ethnic groups, such as the Aryans, the Scythians, the Kushans, the Huns and the Semitics migrated to this sub-continent, peacefully or otherwise. This racial diversity, according to Professor Dixon, lies at the root of the Caste System in India. His analysis of the data available led him to the conclusion that "Caste groups do differ from each other racially, and that the

social status of the caste usually bears a direct relation to the racial composition of its members."

So much for racial unity. As regards language, according to Mario Pei, author of The Story of Language, "India has thirty-three major tongues along with a host of minor tongues and dialects." At present there is hardly any language common to India and Pakistan except English which has been inherited from the British administration and which both countries regard as a temporary expedient. Urdu, which developed as a result of Hindu-Muslim contact in the days of Muslim rule and which was the lingua franca of the larger part of the sub-continent before Independence, has been replaced in India by the highly Sanskritised Hindi, which cannot be understood by people in Pakistan. Pakistani Urdu has, on the other hand, shown a tendency to become more Persianised and Arabicised than before. Similarly, the Bengali language in East Pakistan has shown a different trend from the Bengali of West Bengal and Calcutta both in form and content. In the circumstances, if there was at any time a common linguistic factor between India and Pakistan, it is virtually no more.

The next question to consider is whether the sub-continent was at any time a political unit in the true sense of the word. Starting from about 500 B.C. which represents more or less the dawn of history in the sub-continent, we find that before the advent of the Muslims, the sub-continent, as a whole, was hardly ever consolidated into a single political and administrative unit

except, perhaps, for a few years under Asoka. With the Muslim conquest, the larger part of the sub-continent was brought under centralised control and during the reign of Alauddin Khalji in the fourteenth century, Malik Kafur, the famous general, also subdued almost the entire region of South India. Subsequently disintegration set in and it was not till the Mughals came to power that India was again ruled by a strong hand at the centre. After the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, the Provincial Governors gradually became independent, even though some semblance of allegiance to the Mughal throne was maintained for some time in certain cases. In any case, the sub-continent was far from being politically united when the British took over. Indeed, the lack of political unity was one of the main reasons for the success of the new rulers. The British, who ruled the larger part of the sub-continent for two hundred years and the whole of it for a century, consolidated the administration of the sub-continent with the help of roads, railways, posts and telegraphs and improved inland water transport. Towards the end, air communications were also established within the country. Incidentally, Burma was also a part of British India until it was separated from India in 1937, ten years before the sub-continent itself was partitioned. Burma had never been part of India, and its inclusion in the British Indian dominions gave the whole British administration an artificial complexion. Moreover, the British were always regarded as foreign rulers and their consolidation of the sub-continent was based on considerations of their own administrative convenience rather than any process of inner political evolution, The

consolidation did not grow from within; it was imposed from without. Nevertheless, when in the latter half of the nineteenth century the British Government began to think of devolution of political power to the people of the country and constitutional reforms began by installments, the Hindu intellectuals of the time were quick to take advantage of the British consolidation of the sub-continent. Having come into contact with European ideas of nationalism and democracy, these politically conscious intellectuals who were the main force behind the newly-formed Indian National Congress, which the British Indian Government under Lord Dufferin had themselves promoted and fostered, saw a rare opportunity before them, and in the name of democratic freedom began to claim India for the majority community, which was no other than themselves. What they overlooked was the fact that the terms "majority" and "minority" can legitimately be applied to political groups under the democratic system only when the population is otherwise homogeneous. The Muslims, who regarded them-selves as a distinct and separate people, therefore, did not take kindly to this orthodox but impracticable view of the future Indian democracy. As the British Government desired to associate the people with the ad-ministration in increasing measure, particularly in the shape of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 and the establishment of Provincial Autonomy in 1937, the scramble for power and position in the political and administrative set-up of the country became more bitter and the relations between the Hindus and the Muslims deteriorated progressively. Communal riots became so common that the

period from 1913 onwards, with a brief interval for the Lucknow Pact and the Non-Co-operation Movement of 1921, can best be described as one of continued civil war. The Simon Commission counted 112 major communal riots in the sub-continent in the five years 1923-1927 only. The subsequent period was, if anything, worse than this. Under these conditions the Muslim politicians, who had been active since the foundation of the All-India Muslim League at Dacca in 1906, concentrated their attention on devising safeguards for their people against the dominance of the Hindu majority in a democratic India. The Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909 had conceded separate electorates to Muslims but this was only the beginning of the solution.

Subsequent events were, however, not encouraging. The Partition of Bengal in 1905, which Lord Curzon undertook as an administrative measure, and the consequent establishment of a new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam, which incidentally was a province with a Muslim majority, was violently opposed by the Hindus. Its annulment, which was announced by King George V at the Delhi Durbar of 1911, was an occasion for deep frustration for the Muslims and great jubilation for the Hindus. Notwithstanding these adverse developments, Muhammad

Ali Jinnah, who at the time was President of the All-India Muslim League though still an ardent Indian nationalist, negotiated the Lucknow pact with the Indian National Congress. The Pact confirmed and extended the principle of separate electorates for the Muslims in the Central and Provincial

Legislatures with reservation of seats, but this could be achieved only at the expense of their majority in the crucial provinces of the Punjab and Bengal. The Muslims regarded this as too high a price to pay as the Pact gave them no effective voice either in the minority provinces or in the Punjab and Bengal where they were in a majority. The atmosphere of goodwill built up by the Pact was shortlived and there was a renewal of communal tension after the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 transferred power to the elected representatives of the people. The Non-Co-operation Movement, which brought the Hindus and the Muslims nearer each other than at any time before and as a result of which the Hindus, under the leadership of Gandhiji, all but succeeded in destroying the Muslims as a political entity, was followed by the severely communal movements of Shuddhi and Sanghtan, which aimed at the wholesale conversion of the Muslims or their expulsion from the sub-continent, and the Muslim reaction in the form of the Tabligh and Tanzim movements which sought to promote Muslim missionary activity and the political solidarity of the Muslim community. It is significant that the leaders of both these movements were some of the former leaders of Hindu-Muslim unity, namely, Mr. Shardhanand, Dr. Moonje and Pandit Malaviya on the one hand and Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew on the other. The foundation of the aggressive anti-Muslim Rashtriya Sewak Sangh in 1925 and the increase in the activities of the militant All-India Hindu Mahasabha increased the fears of the Muslims still further. There were numerous attempts by Muslim leaders, including Jinnah's famous "Fourteen Points," to arrive at

some solution which may provide satisfactory safeguards to the Muslim community. No such solution was forthcoming, as none was acceptable to the Hindus.

The Nehru Report, which represented the thinking of the Hindu-dominated Nehru Committee about the future constitution of the sub-continent, recommended a unitary form of Government and repudiated the principles of separate electorates and weightage for the Muslims in the provinces in which they were in a minority. This Report was followed by the publication of the Report of the Simon Commission which represented British thinking about future Constitutional Reforms. From the Muslim point of view, this Report also went against them, particularly on the issues of their adequate representation in the Punjab and Bengal Assemblies, and raising the status of the Frontier and Baluchistan Provinces. The Report was followed by two Round Table Conferences in London, to which political leaders from the sub-continent were invited and asked to agree on a scheme for the future, particularly on the issue of representation for various communities. No settlement, however, was reached at these conferences, with the result that the British Prime Minister, Ramsay Macdonald, had to give his own Award on the issue. The Award, while conceding the continuance of separate electorates, maintained the previous position in regard to the majority provinces of the Punjab and Bengal where the Muslim majority was not allowed to be reflected in the legislature. All this added to the disappointment of the Muslims.

In the rapidly changing world around them, the Muslims, who were poorer and less educated than the Hindus and had little influence in the administration, were preoccupied with the idea of preserving themselves as a political and social entity in the sub-continent. They could not, however, think of anything except the somewhat negative approach implied in the demand for safeguards. This led them nowhere, and their frustration increased. It was left to Iqbal to realise that the Muslims needed a State of their own in order to be able to live their life as a people in their own way. This now seems to us to have been the obvious solution, but, strange as it may seem, it appeared as a revolutionary idea at the time.

It is hardly possible to understand the political struggle without taking note of two factors which are of basic importance—the economic position of the Muslims and their status as a distinct and separate cultural entity. I have dealt with the subject at length elsewhere, and would content myself with a brief resume of the position on the present occasion. Let us take up the economic factor first. The Muslims ruled the sub-continent for more than a thousand years and while their administration was moderate and considerate (had it been otherwise, it could not have continued for a thousand years), their own position as rulers was one of undisputed advantage. They had hardly any economic problem to worry about. When, however, their political power declined and the East India Company supplanted them as rulers, they suffered loss of wealth and social status along with their political position. The British, who had taken power from them

had no particular reason to trust them. On the contrary, they began to take early steps to make sure that the Muslims were reduced to a position of helplessness. In Bengal, for instance, after Lord Clive took the Diwani from Emperor Shah Alam in 1765, the Muslims, who held a majority of posts in the Revenue and Judicial Departments and in the Military, lost these avenues of employment. Again, their educational system suffered from the resumption by the East India Company of the grants given by Muslim kings and nobles to Muslim educational institutions. In 1793, Lord Cornwallis, the Governor-General of India, introduced the Permanent Settlement of Bengal which, in the words of James O' Kinealy, "elevated the Hindu Collectors, who up to that time had but unimportant posts, to the position of landlords, gave them a proprietary right in the soil, and allowed them to accumulate wealth which would have gone to the Muslims under their own rule." On the other hand, the old Muslim Zamindars, formerly the lords of all they surveyed, were reduced to poverty and destitution. Sir William Hunter has given us a picture of the misfortune that had overtaken the once powerful Muslim community in India. In 1837, when Persian was replaced by English in the Company's offices, the prospects of employment for Muslims diminished still further. The British policy was to cultivate and trust the Hindu and to leave the Muslim to his fate. Lord Ellenborough as Governor-General wrote to the Duke of Wellington in 1842, urging patronage of the Hindus who, according to him, were nine-tenths of the population, rather than trying to appease the Muslims, who were

only one-tenth and could not be reconciled to the British power. "It seems to me most unwise," said he, "when we are sure of the hostility of one-tenth, not to secure the enthusiastic support of the nine-tenths which are faithful." The events of 1857 made the Muslim position still worse. Notwithstanding the fact that the Hindus and the Muslims were jointly responsible for the rebellion and the first mutineer, Mangal Panday, whose name be-came a generic appellation for all mutineers, was a Hindu, the British thought the Muslims were at the root of the trouble. "Tell these rascally Musalmans," said Lieutenant Roberts (later Field Marshal Lord Roberts), "that by the grace of God we shall still be masters of India." This kind of feeling led to further persecution of these Muslims. In 1871, after the Crown had taken over the administration, a survey of employment conducted by E. C. Bailey, a Secretary to the Government, was summed up by him by saying that there was scarcely a Government office in Calcutta at that time in which a Muslim could hope for "any post above the rank of porter, messenger, filler of ink-pots and mender of pens." The educational movement of Syed Ahmad Khan aroused the Muslims to a sense of their degradation as a community and helped them to some extent to participate in Government administration and economic activity. The Hindus, however, were so far ahead in the race that there was no hope of catching up with them in the ordinary way. On the other hand, the Muslims were growing in population and poverty. From about 18 million in 1850 or thereabouts, they had grown to about 50 million by the turn of the century. In a famous speech in 1907, Iqbal has

described the abject poverty of the Muslim people. As time went on there was some improvement in the position, particularly after the British Government had agreed to a reservation of posts in the services for Muslims. The relative position of the Hindus and the Muslims, however, continued to be that of "haves" and "have-nots" down to the Partition. The economic disparity between the two peoples, the almost complete absence of industries in the Pakistan areas (which was hardly noted by any European observer except Professor Coupland) and the lack of any prospects of economic well-being among the Muslims in the face of the Hindu monopoly of the economy was one of the major contributory factors in the demand for Partition. On the 23rd of March, 1940, the Muslim League adopted the Pakistan Resolution at its Lahore Session, and thenceforward Pakistan became the accepted goal of the Muslims of the sub-continent. Nevertheless, in 1946, the Muslims, in the interest of peaceful political evolution, agreed, under Jinnah's leadership, to accept the Cabinet Mission Plan which envisaged an undivided India with a Group System which would have allowed some freedom for economic development for the Pakistan areas in the Indus and the Ganges-Brahmaputra basins. It was, however, precisely this feature of the Plan which provoked Hindu opposition. The Plan, therefore, did not go forward. It was the last of an innumerable series of attempts to find a solution to the Hindu-Muslim problem in an undivided India. It failed because the Hindus failed to inspire any confidence among the Muslims and, indeed, succeeded only in giving the impression that they wanted to

damage, if not altogether destroy, the political, cultural and economic position of the Muslim community. The outbreaks of communal violence against the Muslims culminating in the Bihar tragedy of 1946 did nothing to allay these fears. There was no question any more of the Hindus and the Muslims living together; they had to part and part they did.

More important than the economic aspect of the Hindu-Muslim relationship is the cultural aspect. Indeed, it is the most fundamental line of cleavage between the Hindus and the Muslims. In order to understand the significance of this cleavage, it is necessary to bear in mind the revolutionary impact of the Islamic movement on men and peoples. Those who accept Islam have their whole personality transformed, with a clear break with the past and a complete change of direction. Islam, with its distinct moral values and approach to the problems of life, binds its adherents into a compact ideological community. History gives us more than one example of a people who started their career by a campaign of destruction against Muslim countries and Muslim culture and ended up by becoming devout adherents of Islam. The Saljuqs and the Mongols are two such examples. "Just as in the case of the Saljuqs," says professor Hitti, speaking of the Il-Khans, "the religion of the Moslems had conquered where their arms had failed. Less than half a century of Hulagu's merciless attempt at the destruction of Islamic culture, his great-grandson Ghazan, as a devout Moslem, was consecrating much time and energy to the revivification of that same culture."

The fact that a large number of Muslims in Pakistan and the rest of the sub-continent are descendants of Hindu converts to Islam is irrelevant, for once a man becomes a Muslim, his whole outlook on life be-comes different. His loyalty and allegiance and his whole attitude to life and the universe—in a word, his Weltanschauung—is completely changed. As an example of the dynamic impact of Islam, we may mention Iqbal himself, who was a Kashmiri Brahmin of the Sapru caste by origin and who has become the greatest exponent of Muslim thought in modern times.

The problem of culture in the sub-continent is not as simple as it is sometimes made out to be. In the course of a thousand years of Muslim rule contacts developed between the ruler and the ruled, particularly after the first five centuries of Turkish sway, and a semblance of a common culture emerged. This culture, which was shared by the upper strata of Hindu and Muslim society, had inevitably a Muslim bias. It was based on Persian language and literature, in which both Hindus and Muslims acquired proficiency and produced poets, writers and scholars of eminence. We have, for example, Tekchand Bahar, the great lexicographer of the Persian language, and Chandar Bhan Brahman, the famous poet, and a whole host of Hindu scholars of Persian. The Mughal school of painting produced some outstanding Hindu artists like Manohar and Bachitter, while the old classical Hindu music was supplemented and improved by eminent Muslims like Amir Khusro, Sultan Husain Sharqi and Mian Tan Sen. Again, the Bhakti movement with it emphasis on

monotheism was a product of Islam's impact on Hinduism, and produced such great men as Guru Nanak, Kabir and Chaitanya. Social contacts in the upper layers of Hindu and Muslim society were frequent and intimate, culminating in Akbar's marriages with a number of Hindu princesses and similar other matrimonial alliances. The Hindus filled a large number of civil and military offices, including some of the highest. Todar Mal Khatri, who was the Revenue Minister of Sher Shah Suri be-fore he become Imperial Chancellor under Akbar, Hemu the grocer, the commander-in-chief of the Suri forces at the Second Battle of Panipat, and Man Singh, one of the highest ranking generals of the Mughal Army, are three out of many examples. The judicial system aimed at even-, handed justice to the Hindus and the Muslims alike. Kings and Emperors were personally accessible to anyone who cared to knock at their door for justice. Trade and industry was largely in the hands of the Hindus, who were free to exercise their religion. In the lower strata of society, they were free even to maintain, as they did, a social boycott of the Muslims throughout the period of Muslim rule. The Muslim rulers had settled down in the country and had severed their connections with their ancestral territories of origin, but the Hindus never really accepted them as their own. They were still Malechas, the low and the impure, or Jabans, the hateful foreigners, as Bankim Chatterjee calls them.

The Muslim rulers generally maintained an atmosphere of peace and tranquility which encouraged friendly relations between the Hindus and the Muslims. It must be admitted, however, that,

as was inevitable, the relationship between the ruler and the ruled was not always a balanced one. Moreover, there is no doubt that with all the concessions they enjoyed, the Hindus were a subject people. The relationship between a ruling people and a ruled population can never be a healthy one and is bound to leave a trail of bitterness behind it. You cannot expect gratitude from the people you rule. It was hardly surprising, therefore, to find that as soon as the Muslim power declined and the British established their authority over the sub-continent, the Hindus lost no time in turning their back on their former rulers and in ingratiating themselves with the new power in the land. Soon the last vestiges of the old Hindu-Muslim-culture disappeared. The Urdu language, which has a foundation of Sanskrit and a super-structure of Persian and which developed as a result of Hindu-Muslim contact under Muslim rule, is a particular case in point. Some of the great poets and writers of this language have been Hindus like Daya Shankar Nasim, author of the classic poem Gulzar-i Nasim or Gul Bakavali; Rattan Nath Sarshar, author of another classic, the prose romance of the Fasana-i Azad, and a number of other well-known works; Prem Chand, the greatest short-story writer of the language; Ufaq Lakhnavi; Barq Dehlavi; and Naubat Rai Nazar Lakhnavi, all front-rank poets and writers; Brij Narain Chakbast Lakhnavi, an outstanding poet, writer and critic; Lala Sri Ram, author of the monumental Khumkhana-i Javid, the best known biographical dictionary of Urdu poets and writers; Pyare Lal Ashob, a pioneer of the Urdu language in the Punjab; Ram Babu Saksena, author of the best known history of Urdu literature;

Daya Narain Nigam, editor of one of the foremost Urdu literary magzines, the Zamanah; Suraj Narain Mihr, one of the best known writers of children's poems; Talok Chand Mahrum and Labhu Ram Josh Malsiani, both poets of high rank (the latter an authority on the Urdu language); Durga Sahai Sarur, a leader of the transition from the neo-classical to the modern Urdu school of poetry; Professor Firaq Gorakhpuri, an outstanding exponent of the new ghazal; Anand Narain Mulla, a polished and versatile poet and writer; Pandit Brij Mohan Dattatrya Kaifi, a famous scholar, poet and writer; and a number of others. Even in our own generation, we have had men of the stature of Hari Chand Akhtar, a master of the Urdu ghazal, Rajinder Singh Bedi and Balwant Singh, two of the best short-story writers of Urdu, Arsh Malsiani, Jagan Nath Azad, Dwarka Dass Shula and Munawwar Lakhnavi, who rank with the best poets of their generation, Malik Ram, a scholar of great eminence and an authority on Ghalib, and a great many others. Indeed, no account of Urdu language and literature would be worth the paper it is written on if the Hindu contributions were to be omitted from it. And yet Urdu became an early victim of the Hindu hostility towards the Muslims. The Hindus began to promote Hindi as against Urdu and some of the most acrimonious controversies of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries centered round the Urdu-Hindi problem. Indeed, the French scholar, Garcin de Tassey, was moved by these controversies to remark that the Hindu wanted to do away with everything that reminded them of Muslim rule.

In the new environment in which the two communities found them-selves under the British Raj, with the old common culture disappearing, both the Hindus and the Muslims were thrown back on themselves, and there was a revival of culture on both sides. When they were not concentrating on their own culture, the Hindus and the Muslims could live together in an atmosphere of social and cultural amity, but with the revival of Hindu and Muslim culture which took place in the latter half of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century, the differences were seen to be obvious and fundamental. Let us take the Hindu and Muslim views on some of the important problems of life. The Hindu view of Ultimate Reality is flexible, while the Muslim view is not. You may believe in one God or in a million gods or no god at all and yet you can be a Hindu. A Muslim, however, can remain a Muslim only if he believes in one God and one alone. Let us take the influence of the incidence of birth on the social status of the human individual. A Hindu is expected to be loyal to the caste in which he is born. If he is a Shudra, he has to be a good Shudra. He should perform all the duties of a Shudra and not aspire any higher. As Ambedkar tells us, a Shudra is not expected to aspire even to listening to the sacred Vedas; if he does, he may have molten lead poured into his ears. Good conduct may enable him to be born in a higher caste in the next life. On the other hand, a bad Shudra may descend to the body of a lower animal when born again. Islam, on the other hand, recognises no caste system. A man may be born in any station in life; he is entitled to rise to the highest rung of the social ladder on

his merits. The Slave Kings of India and the Mamlukes of Egypt are remarkable examples of men born in slavery or descended from slaves rising to the highest positions of power. Again, coming to habits of eating and drinking, the Hindus and the Muslims do not eat or drink together, except when they have been Europeanized beyond redemption. A good Hindu would not let a Muslim touch his glass or his eating untensils. Again, rightly or wrongly, the Muslim is fond of eating the cow and, rightly or wrongly, the Hindu regards it as a sacred animal entitled to protection. The Hindu loves music, which forms an integral part of his devotional activities. The Muslim may like music, but would not like to mix it with prayers. That is why we have had so much bloodshed over cow-slaughter and music before mosques. In the field of literature, the Hindu sources of inspiration lie largely in Sanskrit and its dialects, while the Muslim turns to Persian and Arabic. Mario Pei makes an acute observation when he points out that Gandhi, the Hindu leader, derived his title of "Mahatma" from Sanskrit, while Jinnah, the leader of the Muslims, had his popular name of "Quaid-i-Azam" from Arabic. Before Independence, the Indian National Congress adopted "Bande Mataram" as the national song of India, without regard to the fact that this song, which occurs in Bankim Chandler Chatterjee's Anando Moth, is written as a battle-cry against the foreigners, including the Muslims. Added t all this is the fact that the process of history which forms the main explanation of the separate existence of so many States in the Western world, has produced persons in the sub-continent in the course of a thousand years or

so of Muslim rule who have come to be regarded as heroes by the Muslims and villains by the Hindus and vice versa. Shivaji and Aurangzeb are two well-known examples. Their quarrel was political, but in the nineteenth century, the Hindu nationalists gave it a deeply communal colour and made Shivaji a national hero of the Hindus. To this the Muslims reacted by making Aurangzeb a hero of Islam.

The relationship between the Hindus and the Muslims at the be-ginning of the twentieth century is illustrated by an anecdote related by Sir Walter Lawrence in his book The India We Served. "Sir Partab (the Maharaja of Idar)," says Sir Walter, "had come up to Simla to be present at a farewell dinner Lord Curzon gave to my wife and myself the night before we left, and after the dinner Sir Partab and I sat up till two o'clock in the morning talking of his hopes and ambitions. One of his ambitions was to annihilate the Muslim people in India. I deprecated this prejudice and mentioned Muslim friends common to both of us. 'Yes,' he said, 'I like them too, but very much like them dead.'"

It is sometimes suggested that the sub-continent forms one geographical unit. While it is true that the sea and the Himalayas pro-vide a geographical boundary, the inherent geographical unity of the sub-continent is far from obvious. Indeed, it would appear that the area 'south of the Vindhiachals which is technically a peninsula, with its separate physiography, terrain and climate, has hardly any connection with the rest of the sub-continent. In the same way, the Indus basin and the Ganges-Brahmaputra basin,

which broadly represent West and East Pakistan respectively, are self-contained geographical (and economic) units, distinct from all others. Similarly, Rajputana is a separate arid zone. The diversity in natural geography in the sub-continent has resulted in a variety of climate, with a variety of related features, such as fauna and flora. As a matter of interest, the sub-continent has areas of the heaviest and the lowest rainfalls in the world, namely Cherapunji and the desert areas around Khairpur, respectively. Similarly, we have in the sub-continent what has so far been regarded as the hottest place on earth, namely Jacobabad, while, at the same time, we have some extremely cold places in the Himalayan regions. In the circumstances, it must take a great deal of courage on the part of anyone to assert the geographical unity of the sub-continent. Speaking of geographical units, would it not be correct to say that North Ireland and Eire are one unit, and Canada and U.S.A., excluding certain extremely situated areas, another unit?

Again, it has been said that the separation of East and West Pakistan by a thousand miles of Indian Territory makes Pakistan an unusual geographical phenomenon. At first sight this may appear to be so, but a little reflection would place this phenomenon at least on the same footing as the U.S.A. and Alaska, not to mention Hawaii.

Let us try to sum up. We have seen that there is no racial or linguistic unity between India and Pakistan. We have also seen that the revival of Muslim culture on the one hand and of Hindu culture on the other has disclosed the existence of an

unbridgeable gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims. With cultural outlooks so divergent, it is impossible to think that the two peoples would be prepared to live together and devote their combined efforts to a joint purpose. We have also seen the growth of economic disparity between the Hindus and the Muslims under British rule, a disparity which could not have been remedied in an undivided India with the Hindus holding a monopoly of economic power.

We have also had a glimpse of the political process which caused ceaseless controversy and growing bitterness between the two peoples. We have also seen that the sub-continent was never really a political unit (nor is it a geographical unit). Whatever political unity was achieved from time to time was imposed from without by strong and alien rulers.

Our study of the past makes it clear that history charted different courses for the Hindus and the Muslims in the sub-continent. It could not have been otherwise. There was hardly anything in common between them. The question before the Muslims was whether they should live as a free and independent people, preserving their religion and their culture for themselves, or should they let themselves be merged into the Caste System of Hindu India, with its inhuman limitations. But Islam is too vital a force to suffer such a fate. The result, therefore, was the partition of the sub-continent. This was inevitable. There were historical forces working themselves to their logical conclusion. The Hindus, with rare exceptions like G. K. Gokhale and C. R. Das,

did not understand these forces, and were, therefore, not amenable to the obvious solution until it was wrested from their hands. The Muslims, on the other hand, were fortunate enough to produce a seer—call him a visionary if you will—who could discern the inner process of history behind the outward events, and give voice to the latent aspirations of the Muslims in clear and unambiguous terms. Pakistan represents the struggle of Muslim culture to survive in this part of the world. "The construction of a polity on national lines," said he, "if it means the displacement of the Islamic principle of solidarity is simply unthinkable to a Muslim."[17] He demanded the formation of a consolidated Muslim State in the best interests of Islam and India. That, for him, was the only way to peace in the sub-continent, provided, of course, that the Hindus showed understanding of the position. Let us hope that, in spite of all that has happened, a proper understanding of the meaning of Pakistan will dawn on those who are still somewhat confused about it. It is only through such an understanding on the part of the Indian rulers and the world at large that a permanent solution can be found of the problems of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent.

[17] Shamloo (ed.), op. cit., p. 9.