

IQBAL'S JOURNEY TO PAKISTAN*

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Iqbal's journey to Pakistan was a tumultuous journey and the road was long and rough. In fact, when Iqbal set out on his historic mission which was to end in the creation of Pakistan, not even the most sanguine amongst his band of faithful admirers could have thought in their wildest imagination that his journey would be anything more than an exercise in futility. Yet, Iqbal persevered and his sense of a mission sustained him when the response was unbearably chilly and in desperation he would cry out:

خیر تو ساقی سہی، لیکن پلائے گا کسے؟
اب نہ وہ میکش رہے باقی، نہ میخانے رہے!
وائے ناکامی متاع کارواں جاتا رہا
کارواں کے دل سے احساس زباں جاتا رہا¹³

Iqbal wanted the Muslims of India to realise that they were not a hopelessly out-numbered Indian minority but part of a glorious Islamic Millat. After a decade of persistent reiteration of his central theme in verses of unsurpassable beauty he began to collect an enthusiastic audience around himself and he celebrated the concourse of comrade-in-arms and an enthusiastic following in jubilant and glowing tones:

گئے دن کہ تنہا تنہا تھا میں انجمن میں
یہاں اب مرے راز داں اور بھی ہیں¹⁴

* Read in a meeting held under the auspices of Iqbal Academy Karachi on the occasion of 36th Death Anniversary of Allama Iqbal on 21st April, 1974.

¹³ بانگ درا، ۲۰۶

¹⁴ بال جبریل، ۹۰

نہیں ہے نا امید اقبال اپنی کشت ویراں سے
ذرا نہ ہو تو یہ مٹی بہت زرخیز ہے ساقی!¹⁵

A study of the evolution of Iqbal's thought on the vexed subject of nationality is a most enthralling study and, in fact, indispensable for those who want to understand the genesis of Pakistan. It is a fascinating study for it is not only the study of a great poet's spiritual and intellectual odyssey towards his final destination but it is at the same time a chronicle of the changing attitudes of the Muslims of India to the problem of their identity--a problem which had baffled them and haunted them mercilessly in the period following the great Revolt of 1858 till its final solution by Iqbal. Thus the spiritual and intellectual travail of Iqbal mirrors the mental confusion, puzzled incomprehension of the Muslims of India about their national identity, for he embodied, as no one else did, the frustrations, yearnings and longings of his people within himself. It was in these circumstances when the present was dark and the future bleak that Iqbal embarked on his seemingly hopeless mission of making the Muslims realize that they were not an Indian minority but a significant part of the glorious Muslims-Millat. Iqbal, of course, succeeded magnificently in rescuing his people through the vehicle of his inspired poetry from uncertainty and confusion about their identity. He first brought about a revolution in their antiquated and stylized thinking and having once accomplished that almost impossible task he made it possible for them to enter the promised lands. Today when the victory of Iqbal is complete, the overwhelming nature of his victory obscures from our view the nature of heart-breaking hurdles in his way. We take for granted the miracle that Iqbal has wrought but it was not roses, roses all the way. It was an uphill task and he had to swim against the current all along. Recognition and response from his people came after a long and persistent hammering at his central theme. The very fact that Iqbal set out to achieve a total revolution in the thinking of his people reveals the formidable nature of his undertaking. He wanted to wean away Muslims from the acceptance of the deeply and securely entrenched concept of the sanctity of the national state and it is a truism that nothing is more difficult than to shake people out of deep and

۱۶، بال جبریل،¹⁵

established grooves.

Before the French Revolution, the national state as we know it today did not exist. The modern national state is an everlasting legacy of the French Revolution to the modern world. It is the French Revolution which defied the national state. No doubt, the sanctity of the national state was challenged by Karl Marx and Engels in their "Communist Manifesto" which made its appearance in the middle of the last century but the challenge was not yet serious. Karl Marx and Engels placed loyalty to class above loyalty to the state but the unreality of the Marxist challenge was amply demonstrated on the out-break of the first world war, when all Marxist parties in the combatant countries of Europe rallied to the national Flag and turned their backs on the theory of a class-warfare. Iqbal had drunk deep at the fountain of Western learning and in the process of learning at European and English Universities he had imbibed all those established doctrines and values of the time which were an indispensable intellectual paraphernalia of an educated European scholar. Thus when Iqbal returned from his European education he came back as a devotee of the national state and he gave free expression to his love for his nation in his early creative phase. His first poem which caught the fancy of the public was addressed to the Himalayas. His early themes are things Indian whether it is the Himalayas or a supplication to the river Ganges to drown him.

جل رہا ہوں کل نہیں پڑتی کسی پہلو مجھے
ہاں ڈبو دے اے محیط آب گنگا تو مجھے¹⁶

In Urdu again it is the concern with the pligh of India that has robbed him of his peace of mind when he sings:

رلاتا ہے ترا نظارہ اے ہندوستان! مجھ کو
کہ عبرت خیز ہی تیرا فسانہ سب فسانوں میں
دیا رونا مجھے ایسا کہ سب کچھ دے دیا گویا

لکھا کلک ازل نے مجھ کو تیرے نوحہ خوانوں نے
 وطن کی فکر کر ناداں! مصیبت آنے والی ہے
 تری بربادیوں کے مشورے ہیں آسمانوں میں
 نہ سمجھو گے تو مٹ جاؤ گے اے ہندوستان والو
 تمہاری داستان تک بھی نہ ہوگی داستانوں میں
 اُجاڑا ہے تمیز ملت و آئیں نے قوموں کو
 مرے اہل وطن کے دل میں کچھ فکر وطن بھی ہے؟¹⁷

This was the time when Iqbal was singing

سارے جہاں سے اچھا ہندوستان ہمارا
 ہم بلبلیں ہیں اس کی یہ گلستاں ہمارا
 غربت م میں ہوں اگر ہم رہتا ہے دل وطن میں
 سمجھو وہیں ہمیں بھی دل ہو جہاں ہمارا
 مذہب نہیں سکھاتا آپس میں بیر رکھنا
 ہندی ہیں ہم، وطن ہے ہندوستان ہمارا¹⁸

Then again he is composing a national anthem for Indian children. It was a far cry from ترانہ ملی which was to come a decade later but soaked as Iqbal was in the current western political, social and philosophic thought he naturally worshipped at the altar of the Nation and ecstatically sang in نیا

شوالہ

پتھر کی مورتوں میں سمجھا ہے تو خدا ہے

¹⁷ بانگ درا، ۶۵

The rest of his life Iqbal was to wage a furious crusade against this worship of the national state. In the period ending with 1908, there are faint stirrings of the pull of Islam and in the piece about Sicily there is a definite glimpse of the emergence of a new Iqbal. The Islamic heritage is now the dominant pull and in a language charged with deep emotion in which he addresses Sicily, there is ample evidence of this transformation:

درد اپنا مجھ سے کہہ، میں بھی سراپا درد ہوں
جس کی تو منزل تھا، میں اسی کارواں کی گرد ہوں
رنگ تصویر کہن میں بھر کے دکھلا دے مجھے
قصہ ایام سلف کا کہہ کے تڑپا دے مجھے
میں ترا تحفہ سوئے ہندوستان لے جاؤں گا
خود یہاں روتا ہوں، اوروں کو وہاں رلواؤں گا²⁰

The period starting with 1908 makes a clear break with the earlier Iqbal. He has now returned and owned up his Islamic heritage. The transformation is complete. He has realised that he is not a member of a minority community in India. He has solved the problem of his national identity. He is a member of the indivisible Islamic Millat which in its fraternity does not recognize distinction of colour, race or geographical boundaries. The Muslims are all brothers irrespective of the fact that they are residing in different states. The reassessment of his attitude towards nationalism is complete. He has now openly and definitely turned his back on the western concept of the Nation. His loyalty is now towards Islamic Millat. His object of love and worship is no longer the Ganges and the Himalayas but Cordova,

¹⁹ بانگ درا، ۸۸

²⁰ بانگ درا، ۱۴۲

Constantinople, Granada and Muslim Delhi. In *بلاد اسلامیہ*, a dirge for Muslim metropolis, he proclaims his national identity. He rejects defiantly territorial nationality and denounces it as the negation of the concept of indivisible Islamic Millat. In defiant tone, he declares:

ہے اگر قومیت اسلام پابند مقام
 ہند ہی بنیاد اسکی ہے، نہ فارس ہے، نہ شام
 آہ یثرب! دیس ہے مسلم کا تو، ماویٰ ہے تو
 نقطہ جاذب تاثر کی شعاعوں کا ہے تو
 جب تلک باقی ہے تو دنیا میں باقی ہم بھی ہیں
 صبح ہے تو اس چمن میں گوہر شبنم بھی ہیں²¹

It is a new Iqbal — the break with the Indian nationalist Iqbal is complete and irrevocable. He has solved his problem of national identity and in this tortuous travail and profound reassessment he has solved the problem of the national identity of Indian Muslims also. From now on he reiterates this central theme again and again in poetry of unsurpassable beauty till the message goes home. He released the Muslims from a problem which had haunted them and baffled them from 1858 onwards. They could not reconcile themselves to the status of a minority with a miserable and persecuted present and an utterly bleak future. If at some future date the British were to leave India it would only enthrone the Hindus in the place of the British rulers. Thus for the Indian Muslims the present was a nightmare and the future a disaster. They did not belong anywhere. The Hindus would not accept them because of two-fold historical reason. The first was that the Hindus could not forgive them for conquering India and subjugating them and secondly the rigid caste system prevented any fusion between the two peoples. The iron-curtain of caste system effectively prevented integration of any sort between them. Now the Muslims in India were on the horns of a

dilemma: if they were not Indians then who were they? What was their national identity? There was no solution of this problem till Iqbal had solved the problem of his own national identity and in the solution of his own problem he delivered the entire Muslims of India out of their quandry. He explained to them the basis of their identity; he coaxed them and goaded them till he won them over completely to their Islamic identity.

Now that he had turned his back on his Indian nationality he composed a new ترانہ ملی to supersede (ترانہ ہندی). In exultant tones he declares:

چین و عرب ہمارا، ہندوستان ہمارا
 مسلم ہیں ہم، وطن ہے سارا جہاں ہمارا
 سالارا کارواں ہے میر حجاز اپنا
 اس نام سے ہے باقی آرام جہاں ہمارا²²

He now ridicules and condemns in vitriolic terms the concept of national state in وطنیت،

اس دور میں ہے اور ہے جام اور ہے جم اور
 ساقی نے بنا کی روش لطف و ستم اور
 مسلم نے بھی تعمیر کیا اپنا حرم اور
 تہذیب کے آذر نے ترشوائے صنم اور
 ان تازہ خداؤں میں بڑا سب سے وطن ہے²³

This was now his life mission to dethrone the concept of the national state in the mind of the Muslims and replace it by the concept of the indivisibility of Islamic Millat. The road to Pakistan was being assiduously

²² بانگ درا، ۱۷۲

²³ بانگ درا، ۱۷۳

prepared through this glorious realization. He again reiterates his message in
مذہب

اپنی ملت پر قیاس اقوام مغرب سے نہ کر
خاص ہے ترکیب میں قوم رسول ہاشمی
ان کی جمعیت کا ہے ملک و نسب پر انحصار
قوت مذہب سے مستحکم ہے جمعیت تری
دامن دیں ہاتھ سے چھوٹا تو جمعیت کہاں
اور جمعیت ہوئی رخصت تو ملت بھی گئی!²⁴

Again he recapitulates the central theme of his inspired mission in lines
of indescribable beauty:

پھر سیاست چھوڑ کر داخل حصار دیں میں ہو
ملک و دولت ہے فقط حفظ حرم کا اک ثمر
ایک ہوں مسلم حرم کی پاسبانی کے لئے
نیل کے ساحل سے لے کر تا بخاک کاشغرا!
جو کرے گا امتیاز رنگ و خوں سٹ جائے گا
ترک خرگاہی ہو یا اعرابی والا گہرا
نسل اگر مسلم کی مذہب پر مقدم ہو گئی
اڑ گیا دنیا سے تو مانند کاک رہگذرا!²⁵

The triumph of Iqbal was overwhelming. He had succeeded in winning
over to his point of view the entire Muslim nation in India. He had

²⁴ بانگ درا، ۲۷۹

²⁵ بانگ درا، ۳۰۱-۳۰۲

succeeded in changing their entire thinking, basic concepts, formal attitudes and finally deeply entrenched assumptions. He brought about a spiritual and intellectual revolution the like of which has never been witnessed in the course of human history. No other poet has ever had such a terrific impact on his people and on the history of his times as Iqbal.

Iqbal had to contend against the hostility of the British rulers, as well as Hindu fellow citizens. Both the British Govt. and the Hindus were violently opposed to the message of Iqbal for reasons of their own. There was a tacit conspiracy between them against the Muslims. The scales were heavily tipped against the Muslims even when the British were the rulers of India and it did not require any particular perspicacity to imagine their plight in an India where Hindu majority would preside over the deserty of India in place of the British rulers. It was in such a bleak situation that Iqbal with a prophetic vision saw the establishment of a Muslim state through the partition of India as the only solution of the problem of the Muslims of India. It was a brave solution but an unorthodox solution which ran counter to the political realities reigning in India. Iqbal proposed the establishment of a Muslim state in the North in his Presidential address to the session of All-India Muslim League at Allahabad in 1930: Quote:

"I would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single state. Self-government within the British Empire or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West India Muslim state appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-West India".

It was, indeed, a prophetic vision for it was a blueprint of Pakistan as it is today. The road to Pakistan was wide open. Iqbal had now given a clear direction for the emergence of Pakistan.

The British were up in arms against this solution of Hindu Muslim problem for the partitioning of India would have destroyed the unity of India which they claimed as their priceless gift to the Indians; moreover, it did not suit their Imperial interests. For the Hindus it was a sacrilege and a disaster of unimaginable proportions — it was the vivisection of Mother India. The tacit British-Hindu Conspiracy ridiculed this mad dream of an academic philosopher poet. It was dismissed as the poetic fantasy of a dreamer. Yet this poet's fantasy became a reality in 1947. Iqbal died in 1938 and alas ! he

was not alive when Pakistan Resolution was passed in 1940 at Lahore at the session of All-India Muslim League, presided by Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Though Iqbal was not alive on that historic day but can anyone doubt even his physical presence on that sacred day standing next to Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah to whom he himself had entrusted the formidable task of fighting the battle for Pakistan? The triumph of Iqbal was complete when Pakistan Resolution was passed in 1940.

While paying tributes to Iqbal, the man who made the emergence of Pakistan possible and Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah who translated Iqbal's message into a concrete reality, it would be an act of gross and unpardonable ingratitude and what is more it would be tantamount to the falsification of history, if we were not to acknowledge with deep gratitude the glorious role of the Muslims of the Hindu majority Provinces of India in the establishment of Pakistan. They sacrificed themselves — they sacrificed even their coming generations for the establishment of Pakistan. They knew only well that when Pakistan would be born they would be still the persecuted and tortured citizens of Hindu-India, yet they flinched not even for a moment from the supreme sacrifice. History has no other instance of such an act of self-immolation of an entire people for an Idea. Though, today we are basking in the safety of Pakistan, yet those who made Pakistan are suffering unbearable persecution at the hands of Hindus who cannot forgive them for the creation of Pakistan. Our heads shall always remain bowed before them in loving and ever-lasting gratitude for their unparalleled sacrifice for our freedom. They paid the supreme price for the glory of Islam.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, I cannot do better than to end this humble tribute to Iqbal, Quaid-i-Azam and our Muslim brothers in India by reciting a line of Iqbal once again:

غریب و سادہ و رنگین ہے داستاں حرم
نہایت اس کی حسین ابتدا ہے اسماعیل!²⁶