

# Book Review

“Hafiz Aur Iqbal” by Dr Yusuf Husain Khan

Hāfiz Aur Iqbāl by Dr

Yūsuf Husain Khan is a scholarly treatise dealing with a comparative study of Hāfiz and Iqbāl. Khwājah Hafiz Shirāzī and Muhammad Iqbāl are two great lyricists of Persian. In so far as the diction of their poetry is concerned, there is a lot common in both. But Iqbāl’s adverse criticism of Khwājah Hāfiz in his mathnavī entitled *Asrār -i Khudī*, that appeared in 1914, led his readers including Akbar Allahābādī and Khwājah Hasan Nizāmī to misconstrue—and the impression still persists in some literary quarters in India and Pakistan —that the views of Khwājah Hāfiz on “Love” and “Ecstasy” are not acceptable to Iqbāl and Hāfiz’s poetry being on the whole a specimen of “art for art’s sake” does not come up to the purposeful standard which Iqbāl has set forth while pro-pounding his concept of literature. This was a myth that has been gaining ground in the Indo-Pak subcontinent since 1914. During the past three or four decades some writers on Iqbāl including Dr Sayyid ‘Abdullah, Professor Yūsuf Salim Chishtī and the present writer have made pointed references to this myth in their writings. It has, however, been vehemently and most successfully exploded by Dr. Yūsuf Husain Khan in his book under review.

Dr Yūsuf Husain Khan’s analytical study of the points of similarities and dissimilarities between Hāfiz and Iqbāl is thought provoking. He has undertaken this remarkable study under various heads including Knowledge, Faith, Intuition, Greatness of Man, Predestination and Free Will, Renunciation, Sermons, Asceticism, Mysticism, Theory of Action, Mortality and Immortality, Feeling of Loneliness, Tulip as a symbol, and Mansūr Hallāj. He has also dealt with at length the impact of the style of Khwājah

Haft's lyrics on Iqbāl's lyrics. That Iqbāl was impressed by the style of Hāfiz and has tried to imbibe his diction is clear from a statement which Iqbāl gave to Miss Attiya Fyzee in London in 1907 and, later, to Khalīfah Abdul Hakīm in Lahore saying: "When I am in the mood for Hāfiz, his spirit enters into my soul and my personality merges into the poet and I myself become Hāfiz." It is not difficult to understand and appreciate Iqbāl's approach to Hāfiz having two aspects which outwardly look contradictory to each other. Iqbāl who believes in Action lashed out at Hāfiz for inaction and the state of drunkenness "preached" through his poetry. In spite of this Iqbāl could not remain unimpressed and uninspired by the charm and bewitching influence of Khwājah's poetry and the magical impact it makes on his reader.

Iqbāl was impressed by Hāfiz both consciously and unconsciously, and this fact is clearly revealed by those of Iqbāl's Persian ghazals in which Iqbāl has followed the pattern set by Khwājah Hāfiz. Actually in a number of issues including "Love with all its sweep" both the poets have a common outlook in spite of their minor differences here and there. An in-depth study of both Iqbāl and Hāfiz divulges the secret that both differ on vital points only to agree. Love is the source of inspiration for both Hāfiz and Iqbāl with the only difference that in Hāfiz Love either relates to Reality or is a trope, while for Iqbāl Love has a set purpose before it. But, again, for both Love is a moving force to bring about a revolution with-in the Self and outside the Self.

Dr Yūsuf Husain, while dealing with Iqbāl's scathing criticism of Khwājah Haft's poetry and also Iqbāl's indebtedness to Khwājah Hāfiz, thoroughly discusses the two periods in which Hāfiz and Iqbāl lived, their approach towards politics of their periods, their concepts of love both individual and universal, art of symbolism as handled by each and their concepts of Self. In the course of this discussion the learned author has brought out for the first time the differences between the poetic imagination of Hāfiz and that of Iqbāl and the role their imagination has played in the

growth and development of the poetry of each which is, in both cases, a happy blend of thought-content and emotion.

Dr Yūsuf Husain Khān does not agree with 'Allāmah Shiblī Nu'mānī who says that wine in the poetry of Hāfiz cannot be interpreted as spiritual wine. The present writer is inclined to accept Yūsuf Husain Khān's view in spite of what Shiblī and Iqbāl have said about Hāfiz, for the obvious reason that the high spiritual status enjoyed by Hāfiz is a fact established by history. He was equally interested in what was happening in his country and the Middle East before his eyes and also in the restlessness of the human spirit for the search of something higher, subtler and more real.

In the realm of inner experiences the line of demarcation between transcendental-ism and objectivity almost disappears. But objectivity does not necessarily mean in-carnation of the Absolute in an individual being. It is quite plausible that in the case of a genuine mystic, experiences beyond his inner self can take the shape of objective reality. The author has scholarly discussed this issue in the light of the poetry of Hāfiz and made it a culminating point for a comparative study of the two poets.

Hāfiz Aur Iqbāl is a valuable addition to the literature already in existence on Hāfiz or Iqbāl. The present writer agrees with Professor Nazeer Ahmad of the Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, that, in view of its literary merit, the book deserves to be translated in English.

—Jagan Nath Azad

### **“Dana-i Raz” —Biography of Dr Muhammad Iqbal (Urdu)**

Compiled by Syed Nazir Niazi, Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan, 1979. 452 pp. Foreword by Dr Muhammad Baqir Rs. 56.00

The book under review is one of the publications selected and prepared under the auspices of the National Committee for Allama Iqbal Birth Centenary Celebrations. It was originally the first volume of a comprehensive project, initiated and sponsored by the Government of Pakistan, on the life of the great national poet-philosopher, Dr Muhammad Iqbal. The project was assigned to Nazir Niazi, one of the associates of Iqbal in his later life. The present volume covers the poet's life from his birth in 1877 to 1905, when he left for Europe for higher studies. The book is designed with a view to delineating Iqbal's early life, which is quite little known, in as much detail as may be available. The author has undertaken research and study in order to uncover the formative period of Iqbal life, which has hitherto been shrouded in mystery and guess-work, and has done it with some success.

The book is divided into two parts. Part One deals with Iqbal's life at Sialkot, his parentage and predecessors, his lineage, early education and schooling, and particularly his contact with his guide and teacher, Allamah Mir Hasan who, the biographer holds, was mainly responsible for setting the directions which his fertile mind was to take in later years. Iqbal's first teacher was his own father who embodied saintly qualities and had good knowledge of Islam but it was under the inspiring guidance of Mir Hasan that the latent potentialities of his genius flourished. The kind of Sufism, which Iqbal took from his father, had its origination in the teachings of Imam Ghazali (p. 26) ; it was, according to Iqbal himself, the only kind which was free of any Persian colouring and tinge ; it had a "reformative" character which he appreciated. Iqbal joined

the Qadarites under the impact of Qazi Sultan Mahmud, a renowned sufi of his time, though his respect for Khwajah Naqshband and Sh. Ahmad of Sirhand never diminished. He was very much impressed by his German contemporary Goethe who once advised the young people: "Have recourse to art when spiritually perturbed," though he replaced the word "religion" for

“art” and advised his younger compatriots to have recourse to religion in mental and spiritual perturbation (p. 32). It is re-ported that when Iqbal told his guide that his heart was in “grief” and restless, Mir Hasan told him that it was a great treasure which he should guard carefully and that he needed nothing else (p. 43). Iqbal’s love for Persian, Arabic, Islam, and literature again he owed to his revered father and to his illustrious teacher, Mir Hasan. However, his mind was divided into māny directions and had a tendency to scattering of attention, which is so common with the geniuses of the world. According to Syed Nazir Niazi, his early life at Sialkot was not only propaedeutic to his later development ; it was rather the very foundation for that (p. 104).

Iqbal started writing poetry quite early in life. His early poems are not available ; how-ever, his first poem was published in 1893 in an Urdu magazine Zubān, Delhi, and the second in 1894, i.e. before he came to Lahore for education (p. 83). He deified Dagh Dehlavi for his teacher in ghazal and Syed Niazi guesses that he might have met Dagh between 1904 and 1905, a little before his death. Iqbal became a mature poet before completing his education. He was very fond of music, and masters like Rafiq Ghaznavi and Sajjad Sarwar often sang the poet’s ghazals to him at his residence. On many occasions he expressed his opinion on the difference between local and Western music, and believed that the. Muslim musicians could have easily removed this difference and brought about a harmony between them (p. 81). He referred to George Sarton and H. Farmer that “Western music had accepted much impact from the Muslim

music” (p. 81). It is said that Iqbal once played sitar him-self, though not beyond a novice. He was particularly interested in instrumental music. As he grew in years, though a poet of the first order, poetry assumed a secondary role and the thinker and metaphysician started taking’ ascendancy in him.

Part Two of the book deals with the period of Iqbal’s maturity when he had shifted to Lahore for college education till his departure for Europe for

higher education, i.e. from 1895 to 1905. Iqbal joined Government College, Lahore, did his B.A. in 1897 and took Master's degree in 1899. During his studies he is said to have stayed in the Quadrangle (now Iqbal Hostel after his name) in present Room No. 1, where an inscription of his name has been put up. But, according to A History of Government College Lahore (1864-1964), ed. H.L.O. Garrett, and made up to date by Dr Abdul Hamid in 1964, the North Wing (lower storey) and "gating" of the Hostel were completed in 1899 (p. 108), which means that the present wing of the hostel on which Iqbal's name is inscribed was not yet built during his stay in the college. I pointed out this fact to the author in one of our informal talks, and I also wrote a letter to a local newspaper to that effect, Again, the author writes that Iqbal either failed to do his M.A. in 1898 or missed the examination ; and that he did it in 1899 (p. 112). He then writes that Iqbal took admission to the first examination of Law (F.E.L.) in 1899, and failed in Jurisprudence (pp. 133-34) ; though on the records of the High Court of Judicature at Lahore (File No. XIII A 284), Iqbal was a regular Law student in 1898 and took his Preliminary Examination in Law in December 1898 and failed in the said paper. This shows that Iqbal missed his M.A., or failed to pass it in 1898, because he was a full-time Law student. As already said, he had a tendency to scattering his attention and trying to do more than one thing at the same time, and apparently it caused his failure in Law. His tendency to scatter attention was also evident from his intermittently taking up teaching assignments, now in Arabic, then in English and Philosophy ; now at Government College, Lahore, later with the University Oriental College, and for a short while at Islamia College, Lahore. In fact, he was a man with varied interests and capacities.

Iqbal had a close association with Professor Arnold at Government College, Lahore. Arnold once said: "Though Iqbal is my student, I have learnt much from his writings" (p. 120). Arnold left for England in 1904, and Iqbal followed him in 1905. Iqbal loved Arnold because he was an impartial appreciator of Islam. Iqbal learnt much of the Western literature and

philosophy from him. In England, it appears that Iqbal's interest shifted mainly to philosophy, a fact which is amply endorsed by his association with Dr Mac Taggart and James Ward. However, his love for Eastern, especially Muslim, thought brought him into contact with Professor E.G. Browne and Professor W. S. Blunt (who wrote *Future of Islam* in collaboration with his wife). Iqbal's love for his teacher Arnold is evident from his remarks on the latter's death in 1930: "Iqbal has lost his friend and teacher" with tears in eyes (p.123) The author regrets that very scanty material is available on Iqbal-Arnold relationship. Perhaps Iqbal had lost his closer contact with Arnold due to his heavy academic assignments in England.

Again, a biographer should be depending less on guess-work and conjecture than Syed Nazir Niazi has done while dealing with some important aspects of Iqbal's early life. In his treatment of Iqbal's marital life, especially his first marriage which has been a source of some controversy, the author takes up an apologetic and obscurant attitude, which a biographer should avoid (see pp. 93-99). He calls it a personal affair of the poet and advises to shun writing on it, although such matters are of much psychological significance. I personally feel that had Iqbal been fully satisfied in his marital life, he wouldn't have bloomed into a genius for, in the words of J. S. Mill, "It is better to be a dissatisfied Socrates than to be a fully satisfied pig!" Iqbal agreed with his spiritual guide Rumi that our enemy was our best friend ; he believed in opposition and tension in life rather than .in a placid and insipid existence. He was a "restless" soul as he himself said in *Javid Namah*, which proved a great treasure as predicted by Mir Hasan.

Iqbal wrote *Ilm al-Iqtisad* in 1903, the first book on Economics in Urdu. He believed that an economic and social system spontaneously stems from interaction between an individual and society to which he belongs. However, only that system will survive which is in keeping with human psychology. He advised the economists to study forces and conditions which render the life of the individual and society dynamic. He should have sufficient knowledge of the basic principles of mental life of man and also those operative in the

social organisation. Any system which is not based on human psychology is bound to meet its doom and fail.

The book presents a detailed study of the early formative years of Iqbal's life, from his birth up to 1905, the year he left for Europe. Part One, which deals with the poet's early life at Sialkot, is partly conjectural and also scanty; while Part Two, which deals with his higher education at Lahore, is better founded in facts. However, this renders the book slightly imbalanced. As pointed out, there are some unassayed statements which needed much more care than Mr Niazi has employed. The book on the whole is a useful contribution to biographical literature on Iqbal, and I hope that some more volumes will be compiled to bring the account up to his death in 1938. In its present form, the book seems to have been done a bit hastily, most probably because it is a gigantic task which should have been assigned to a committee of scholars with Syed Nazir Niazi as its convenor.

—(Dr) Mohāmmmed Maruf