

IQBAL-MAN OF FAITH AND VISION

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The Qur'an directs the attention of its readers to the following phenomenon :

ومن الناس من يعبد الله على حرف ج فان اصابه خير ن اطمان به ج وان
اصابته فتنة القلب على وجهه ج خسر الدنيا والاخرة ط ذالك هو الخسران
المبين-¹

["There are among men some who serve Allah, as it were, on the verge : if good befalls them they are, therewith, well con-tent; but if a trial comes to them, they, turn their faces; they lose both this world and the Hereafter; that is loss for all to see."]

People do have affection for their ideologies. They love their religion But the fact remains that all are not firm. There are many who, though not hypocrites, are not men of courage. They lack steadfastness Face to face with a trying situation, they give way and thus lose face before their society as well as Allah. Feeble-minded people are believers as long as all goes well. They are believers in Allah as long as they are not called upon to make genuine sacrifice in His cause. They are easygoing persons. Their ideologies are oral. They recite the name of Allah only mechanically. They exhibit devotion. But they never defend the object of their devotion if defence entails some risk. Comfort is. not to be imperilled. Wealth is not to be parted with. Their own

¹ xxii. 11. English traslation by A. Yusuf Aii.

lives and the lives of their kith and kin look too valuable to be sacrificed for the sake of faith. Quite obvious. Their belief is not even skin-deep. Says Allamah Muhammad Iqbal:

زباں سے کہہ بھی دیا لا الہ
تو کیا حاصل!
دل و نگاہ مسلمان نہیں
تو کچھ بھی نہیں²

['Recitation of 'There is no god but Allah' is of no avail ; if both vision and heart do not surrender before Allah, faith has no meaning at all."]

Loving an ideology should mean living it. If ideology goes, life should go alongwith it. Faith is not a detachable article. True and genuine faith is much more valuable than all valuables, be they even blood-relations. Faith is a love above all other loves. And that one love can be demonstrated in obeying the commandments and injunctions of the One Who, in all respects, is above all else in the universe.

The Qur'an has expressly laid down the difference between embracing Islam and believing in what Islam stands for :

قالت الا غراب انا ط ق ل لم تو منوا ولكن

² Darb-i Kalim/Kulliyat, p. 35/497.

قولوا اَسَلْمنا ولما يدخل الايمان في قلوبكم

ط³

["The desert Arabs say, 'We believe.' Say' (unto them) (O Muhammad !): You believe not, but rather say, 'We submit' (accept Islam), for the faith has not yet entered into your hearts."]

This shows that, according to the Qur'an, Islam and 'man are two different degrees of faith, as is maintained by Imam Ahmad

ان الايمان غير الاسلام⁴

["Imān (belief) is something other than Islam."]

To accept Islam orally is one thing, but to have faith in Islam is quite another. It is obvious that a certain principle which becomes faith enters into one's soul. The believer begins to live his faith. Before that it can have no reforming impact on the thinking and behaviour of the individual concerned. A belief not bringing about any change in the personality of the believer means that it has served no more than a piece of information. Iqbal elucidates this point thus:

تو عرب هو يا عجم هو ترا لا اله

³ albs. 14.

⁴ Al-Ghunyat li Talib al-Hagq (Mustafa al-Bābī, Egypt), I, 83.

الہ!

لغت عربیہ، جب تک ترا دل نہ
دے گواہی!⁵

["Whether you be an Arab or a non-Arab, your reciting 'no god but God'

is simply a foreign vocabulary unless your heart stands
a witness to what your tongue offers."]

It is the sincerity of heart that matters and not lip-service. Faith has to be heartfelt. Leaving aside the non-Arabs, even the Arabs cannot understand the connotation of *لا اله الا الله* 'If though the words are Arabic, their mother tongue. The significance of these words is that, after bowing before God, one has to discard all other gods from the sanctuary of one's conscience. The world of man is replete with false gods in the form of human beings as well who, with gestures of pride, go on drumming their godly authority into the ears of those who happen to be inferior to them as subordinates, dependants, aid-seekers, or servants. These false gods, commensurate with the extent of their authority, behave as if power has infused in them a sort of intoxication. They suppose they are the sustainers, protectors, preservers and masters of the souls of individuals, tribes, societies and even of nations. At all these levels these false gods have to be discarded. But this is more than an uphill task. Iqbal says :

⁵ Bdl-i Jibrfi/Kulliyat, p. 45/337.

چومی گویم مسلمانم ،
بلرزم
که دانم مشکلات لا اله
6
را

["When I say I am a Muslim, i.e. a believer, in God, I shiver, for I understand the magnitude of hardships hidden in the words 'no god but God.' "]

But a firm belief in one God is an eternal happiness. It is not a passing shadow. It strengthens the determination of the believer. It makes him steadfast and enables him to stand against the forces of evil, manfully. It is unfaltering faith in God which integrates the personality of the person concerned. It is this strength which transforms the outlook and the behaviour of the believer. It is not worshipping God and yet remaining right on the fence, ready to flee, if called upon to face some trying situation. Such an individual, even though he may claim to be a believer in God, is not so in His eyes. God addresses all those who belong to this category of "believers" thus :

ياايها الذين آمنوا بالله
ورسوله⁷

⁶ Armughān-i Hijāz/Kulliyāt, p. 59/941.

⁷ he 136.

["O you who believe, do believe in Allah and His Apostle."]

God, through this verse, has ordained the pretenders to be-lief to become believers in all earnest. This is a call to caution all those who 'deceive themselves and others by their profession of faith in God. They cannot deceive God. Their infirmity is found out very easily. This verse, moreover, directs all believers to be always on the alert and in a state of stock-taking. Are they really men of faith ? Has their faith evolved into conviction ? Have they begun to live their conviction ? The fact is that it is always a long way from accepting some principle as one's faith to a point where faith becomes a distinct entity and identity hard to dismantle. Conviction is a state when an individual begins to be treated as faith personified.

It is obvious that the state of certitude is not something out there, ready-made, which can be picked up, swallowed and digested. This state is ;to be achieved by dint of constant effort. Shaikh `Abd al-Qādir Jilānī of Baghdad, quoting Hadrat Ibn Abbās, Abū Hurairah and Abū Dardā', states الايمان ⁸يزداد وينقص["Faith increases and decreases"].

And these ups and downs continue in the mind of the believer. Sometimes he feels satisfied with what he believes in and sometimes he finds himself confused. Then he, again, as many times before, struggles hard to regain faith and get away from were dark shadows of doubt and fear hover, over his head. There are innumerable things which confuse the mind of a believer and cause his return to uncertainty. But a person who goes on striving untiringly to keep to the path of belief may, at some stage in his life, find that the state of certainty stays much longer in his mind than that of uncertainty. His firmness begins to get the better of his infirmities. Then, by and by, it is possible that the state of certitude becomes stable to a great extent and therefore immune from frequent disturbances. A person who gets

⁸ Al-Fath al-Rabbānī (Mustafā al-Babī, Egypt), p. 156.

at stable certitude finds for himself goals different from others, because the vision of such a person undergoes a definite change. Things do not seem to him exactly as they do to others.

Yet the intriguing question remains: How many are there who consciously strive to conquer doubts, suspicions and fears? We may even ask: How many are there who bother about the need to understand what increase and decrease in faith signifies? For an analysis of this kind faith is a prerequisite, because it is the strength of faith which is sought after.

And we know Rome was not built in a day. Iqbal also became what he came to be, gradually. His vision widened, by and by. His faith grew in strength slowly and slowly. He rose from an ordinary plane of poetry. He was not as one would say "head and shoulders above others" as a young poet. He could end up as a middle-class poet, whose poetry could smack of philosophy. He could have become a good lawyer leading an easy life. As a beginner he was just one of them. But by dint of his hard work and devotion to the cause of his religion and society, he progressed visibly, though gradually. This progress he made in the province of thought and poetic art. He made a mark in the sphere of politics also. He was active in the field of education as well. His conduct as a lawyer was just an "aside" in the activities of his life. God Almighty says in His last Book revealed to His last Prophet (peace be on him):

والذين جاهدوا

فينا لنهد ينهم

سبلنا ط⁹

("And those who strive in Our (Cause),—We will certainly guide them to Our Paths.")

⁹ xxix. 69.

As a responsible human being Iqbal had tried to know his vocation. He sought after God's Grace. And God led him to the path of his duty. He rose to what he rose, not only as a poet and a philosopher in the usual sense, for there have been poets as well as philosophers like Lucretius, Goethe, John Dewey and others. None of them changed the political course of his nation. None of them assumed the distinction of a religious revivalist. None of them rejuvenated his nation's dormant vitalities as Iqbal did. And, moreover, none of them visualised a homeland and an independent State for his enslaved nation and guided the will of his nation to that goal. Iqbal's responsibilities were manifold. He was differently placed. He was born in a country enslaved by the British. He belonged to the Muslim Ummah of the Pak-India subcontinent who had ruled the subcontinent magnificently and gracefully for centuries and then, like other Muslim dynasties and societies elsewhere, had fallen on bad days. His nation's decline had begun with the beginning of the eighteenth century, like the decline of the Muslim peoples all over the world. But Iqbal believed in the mighty truth of Islam; hence according to him Islam could not remain subjugated for long. This penetrating vision and unfaltering conviction was the reward of his firm belief in God and his Godward endeavours which nothing could enfeeble to the last moment of his life.

Reverting to his start. He, as a conscious human being who possessed an agitated soul, tried to know his own self. He found this was not easy. Who he was and what he had to perform, was a state too elusive for his grasp. This is how he felt about it :

اقبال بھی اقبال سے
اگاہ نہیں ہے
کچھ اس میں تمسخر

["Iqbal himself does not know Iqbal. I am not joking, by God! not."]

And then there came a stage when he began to understand his stance but could not communicate clearly to others what he felt. He in this regard stated:

نالہ ہے بلبل شوریدہ
ترا خام ابھی
اپنے سینے میں اسے
اور ذرا تھام ابھی¹¹

["O restless nightingale! your lamentations are still not up to the mark.

Keep them to your breast for a while more."]

Iqbal was sure good days were not far off. Yet in his poetry, he felt, he could not paint such a clear picture of the shape of "things to come" as would be vividly visualised by his listeners. Trust in the truth of what he saw was gaining ground within him day by day. He had been breaking good news since March 1907, as will be elaborated in the pages to follow. In spite of it

¹⁰ Bāng-i- Darā/Kulliyāt, p. 60.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 278.

his own confidence in the certitude of his pre-vision grew gradually. It is but natural with every responsible believer. He has to accept critically whatever is revealed to his mind Iqbal's rational eye was always wide awake. And he judged that he saw what others did not. He felt what others could not.

His confidence in the accuracy of his vision continued gaining strength. There came a time when he became perfectly certain of the correctness of what he visualised and prayed to God Almighty in the following manner:

جوانوں کو مری اَہ
سحر دے
پھر ان شاہیں بچوں
کو بال و پر دے
خدایا اَرزو میری
یہی بے
مرا نور بصیرت عام
کر دے¹²

["Grant the youth my complaints of the early morn.

Furnish again these eaglets with strong wings.

My only prayer to you, my Lord, is that

¹² Bāl-i Jibrīl/Kulliyāt, p. 86/378

The light of my vision be diffused amongst all.”]

He repeated the same theme in his celebrated poem "Sāqī Nāmāh"

جوانوں کو سوزِ جگر
بخش دے
مرا عشقِ میری نظر
بخش دے¹³

["(O God) bestow on the youth the warmth of my feeling.

My unbounded love, and my vision."]

His insight was the reward of his unfaltering faith in God. Howsoever depressing the circumstances might have been, he, with his penetrating and far-reaching vision, remained hopeful. He was sure, Islam, the last of the revealed religions, had to remain operative as long as human societies should last in the universe. For Iqbal Islam was not only the epitome of all that had been I revealed to all the prophets before Muhammad (may peace be on him), it rather contained much more than all that. And it had to be so because it had to provide guidance to all coming generations through all circumstances. With the passage of time Iqbal's faith in the profound truth contained in the Islamic tenets continued illuminating his spirit to his last breath. His health dwindled. His physique, by and by, became frail. He, for years, suffered from a number of ailments. But his soul always remained stout. A believer in God can never lose hope.

¹³ Ibid., p. 124/416

He was in England studying law when he saw some phenomena with the eye of his intuition. The ghazal containing those divinations is the only one whose year and month of composition is expressly mentioned. It is March 1907. No other ghazal, before or after it, has been given such an importance. Here are some verses of the said ghazal :

سنا دیا گوش منتظر کو حجاز کی خامشی نے اَخر
جو عہد صحراء یوں سے باندھا گیا تھا پھر استوار
ہوگا

نکل کے ص حرا سے جس نے روما کی سلطنت کو
الٹ دیا تھا
سنا ہے یہ قدسیوں سے میں نے وہ شیر پھر ہوشیار
ہوگا

دیار مغرب کے رہنے والو! خدا کی بستی دکان نہیں
ہے!
کھرا جسے تم سمجھ رہے ہو، وہ اب زر کم عیار ہو
گا!

تمہاری تہذیب اپنے خنجر سے اَپ ہی خودکشی
کرے گی
جو شاخ نازک پہ اَشیانہ بنے گا، ناپائیدار ہوگا

سفینہ برگ گل بنا لے گا قافلہ مور ناتواں کا
ہزار موجوں کی ہوکشا کش، مگر یہ دریا سے پار ہو
گا

میں ظلمت شب میں لے کرے نکلوں گا انپے درماندہ
کارواں کو
شرر فشاں ہوگی اہ میری، نفس مرا شغلہ بار
ہوگا¹⁴

[At last the silent tongue of Hijāz has announced to the ardent ear the tidings that the covenant which had been given to the desert-dwellers is going to be renewed in strong terms.

The lien who had emerged from the desert and had top: led the Roman Empire,

Is, as I am told by the angels, about to get up again (from his slumbers)...

You, the dwellers of the West, should know that the world of God is not a shop (of yours) :

Your imagined pure gold is about to lose its standard value (as fixed by you).

¹⁴ Bring-i Dara/Kulliyat, pp. 43-42.

Your civilization will commit suicide with its on dagger. A nest built on a frail bough cannot be (durable.

The caravan of feeble ants will take the rose petal for a boat And, in spite of all blasts of waves, it shall cross the river...

I will take out my worn-out caravan in the pitch darkness of night. My sighs will emit sparks and my breath will produce flames."]

Iqbal in this ghazal, as is obvious, prophesied that European civilization was not going to live long. And he said so when European imperialism had already conquered almost the whole world and its power was seemingly still enhancing day by day. The other important declaration which he made was that the resurgence of Islam was about to take place. Muslims who had once established their rule over a sizeable part of Europe as well were going to regain their past glory. And this he said when the world of Islam lay subjugated by Western Powers. Only Turkey was still holding out as an independent State. But Turkey's strength was fast dwindling. The European Powers called Turkey the "Sick Man of Europe". God knows how Iqbal could sing such hopeful songs in those days of utter misery and despondency obtaining in almost all Muslim societies. Besides this, Iqbal made manifest that he had taken a decision about himself too. That decision was a very bold one and high sounding, keeping in view the contemporary circumstances. He had determined upon giving a lead to the Muslim Ummah and bringing it out of the dark dungeons of slavery to the sunny vistas of independence. It was a big decision and he declared it boldly. How odd it all might have looked during those days!

To Iqbal it was something he received from Above. He was sure of the truth of these tidings, yet he remained a bit baffled how it all happened to be revealed to him. This he disclosed to his listeners in December 1921 in London when he was invited to Cambridge to address students. The Urdu words, as laid down by Mr Rafiq Afzal, can be translated as under :

"I would like to offer a few pieces of advice to the young men who are at present studying at Cambridge. Cambridge is a fountainhead of knowledge which has contributed more to the shaping of European culture than all other institutions. I advise you to guard against atheism and materialism. The biggest blunder made by Europe was the separation of Religion and Government. This deprived their culture of moral soul, and diverted it to atheistic materialism.

"I had, twenty-five years ago, seen through the drawbacks of this civilisation and had, therefore, made some prophesies. They had been delivered by my tongue although I did not quite understand them. This happened in 1907 After six or seven years, my prophesies came true word by word. The European War of 1914 was an outcome of the aforesaid mistake made by the Europeans, i.e. the separation of the Church and the State and the emergence of atheistic materialism. Bolshevism is a natural result of the separation of the Church and the State."¹⁵

The point I wanted to stress was that Iqbal felt he had received something as a message from Above in 1907 which even to himself was, at that juncture, not clearly understandable. He came to know its implications afterwards.

He composed his famous poems Sham'-o Shā'ir in 1912, and Jawāb-i Shikwah in 1913. During this period the Muslims suffered severe setbacks in Tripoli (Libya) and Bulgaria in the Balkans. Turkey, the only independent Muslim State, appeared to be dwindling. Any moment it could fall to the ground. Apparently this was a season of utter helplessness. Yet Iqbal had the courage to say, at the end of Sham's- o Shā'ir

اَسْمَانِ هُوَ گَا س حَرِ كِے نَوْر سے

¹⁵ Guftar-i Iqbal (Lahore : Research Society of Pakistan, Univ. of the Punjab), p. 254.

اَءَينہ پوش

اور ظلمت رات کی سیاب پا ہو جائے
گی

اس قدر ہوگی ترنم اَفریں یاد بہار
نکمت خوابیدہ عنچے کی نوا ہو
جائے گی

اَملیں گے سینہ چاکان چمن سے سینہ
چاک

بزم گل کی ہم نفس باد صبا ہو جائے
گی

دیکھ لو گے سطوت رفتار دریا کا مَال
موج مضطر ہی اسے زنجیر پا ہو جائے
گی!

اَنکھ جو کچھ دیکھتی ہے لب پہ
اَسکتا نہیں۔

محو حیرت ہوں کہ دنیا کیا سے کیا ہو
جائے گی!

شب گریزاں ہوگی اَخر جلوہ
خورشید سے!
یہ چمن مغمور ہوگا نعمہ توحید
سے!!¹⁶

["The firmament shall glitter with the light of morn,

The darkness of night shall vanish.

The spring breeze shall sing so luxuriantly

that the dormant scent will turn into the song of the bud.

With bleeding breasts the roses of the garden shall embrace
one another.

The zephyr shall again become the intimate companion
of the company of roses... .

You will see the consequence of the grandiose flow of the river :

How the distressed eddy turns into the fetters for the feet of the river. I
cannot express what I visualise

I stand wonder-struck on seeing the shape of things to come. Night shall
be vanquished by the rising sun :

And this garden shall resound with the song of T'auhīd (God is One)."]

¹⁶ Bāng-i Darā/Kulliyāt, pp. 194-95.

It can be presumed by some readers that such rosy pronouncements made by Iqbal were like the usual fits experienced by poets at large. Sometimes the poets are happy and they issue forth good news. Sometimes they are in a gloomy mood, hence paint gloomy pictures of everything. Even a shining sun looks dusky to their eyes. But Iqbal was not a poet in the ordinary sense carried by the word poet. His optimism was of permanent nature, at least since 1907, when he heard a Voice from Above, as stated in the foregoing pages. He was different from the general fraternity of poets who follow not their ideology, because they have none ; instead, they follow their wild imaginings.

The Qur'ān paints poets in general and their blind followers as under :

والشعراء يتبعهم الغاؤون • الم تر انهم في كل واد يهييمون • وانهم يقولون ما لا يفعلون • الا الذين وعملوا الصلحت وذكروا الله كثيرا و انتصروا من يغد ما ظلموا ط وسيعلم الذين ظلموا اى منقلب ينقلبون •¹⁷

("As for the poets, they are followed by those who stagger in evil. Do you not see that they wander distractedly in every valley (of aimless imagination) and that they say what they do not practise?—Except those who believe, work righteousness and engage much in the remembrance of God And they vindicate them-selves (or prepare for victory) after they were wronged. And soon will the unjust assailants know what vicissitudes their affairs will take.")

And, as already mentioned, Iqbal wrote his renowned poem *Jawāb-i Shikwah* in 1913. The world of Islam looked steadily drifting towards

¹⁷ xxvi. 224-27.

ruination and defeat Black clouds of dismay had spread over the horizon for the Muslims. Turks stood defeated at the battle-front of Bulgaria. The combined Christian forces of Balkan territories and those belonging to the adjoining States were continuing their attacks on Turkish forces. But Iqbal said that it all meant to wake Muslims up from their slumber. It all meant to see how much sacrifice the Muslims could offer for the sake of their religion and honour. It was to test their faith in Islam. Could they remain faithful to Islam even in apparently most horrible and depressing circumstances ? Iqbal speaks, as is his wont, encouragingly.

دیکھ کر رنگ چمن ہو نہ
 پریشاں مالی
 کوکب غنچہ سے شاخیں ہیں
 چمکنے والی
 خس و خاشاک سے ہوتا ہے
 گلستاں خالی
 گل بر انداز ہے خون شہدا کی
 لالی
 رنگ گردوں کا ذرا دیکھ تو
 غناہی ہے
 یہ نکلتے ہوئے سورج کی اُفق
 تابلی ہے !

ہے جو ہنگامہ بپا شورش بلعاری
 کا
 غافلوں کے لیے پیغام ہے بیداری
 کا !!
 تو سمجھتا ہے یہ ساماں ہے دل
 کا اَزّاری
 کیوں ہراساں ہے صہیل فرس
 اغداد سے
 اور حق بچھ نہ سکے گا نفس
 اغداد سے¹⁸

("The gardener should not feel disgusted over the lamentable condition of the garden.

Boughs are about to sprout from the bud-star.

The area of the garden is about to be cleared of the rubbish.

The flush of the blood of martyrs is spreading roses (all around). Look at the sky. It has turned red.

It shows the horizon has become ruddy on account of the rising sun...

¹⁸ Bang-i Darā/Kulliyāt, pp. 205-06.

All this consternation created by the Bulgarian invasions

is but a message to the forgetful people so that they may (ready) come to their senses.

Do you think it is meant only to torture you?

This is rather to test your capacity to make sacrifice and defend your honour.

Why are you flabbergasted over the neighing of enemy's stallions? Divine light cannot be put off by the blows of unbelievers."]

On this point the Qur'ān directs thus:

احسب الناس ان يتركوا ان
يقولوا اٰمنا وهم لا يفتنون¹⁹

("Do men imagine that they will be left (at ease) because they say ; `We believe, and will not be tested with affliction?' ")

And here is a saying of the Holy Prophet on the same subject:

الصبر من الايمان
كالراس من

¹⁹ nix. 2.

["Certitude has the same relation with belief as head has with body."]

This shows that according to Iqbal the fortitude of the Muslim Ummah was being put to test. Could they believe only as long as they ruled or were they firm as true Muslims even in slavery and under most miserable circumstances? Were they easygoing people only or could they prove they were also capable of facing vicissitudes boldly? A believer must always be hopeful and happy. He knows he is not going to be asked to show to God Almighty the map of territories conquered. He is not going to be asked to relate to God accounts of his victories against the forces of evil and unbelief. A believer will have to be accountable to God for his deeds only and that too commensurate with his worth. How much was a person capable of doing and how much did he actually perform? A Muslim conqueror may not necessarily be a very sincere believer in God. Hence his victories may not inspire other Muslims as much as the defeat and martyrdom of a true believer who tries his best according to his worth and sacrifices his all including life. God Almighty is the best judge of intents and purposes. It is He Who knows the quantum of sincerity with which a believer acts and it is He Who rewards accordingly. If that be the case, then a believer in God can never feel despaired. He is always on duty. He may succeed. He may fail. But he is sure he has done his duty according to what he could possibly do. This internal assurance becomes a sort of satisfaction—a satisfaction which does not slow down his urge to be always up and doing. This satisfaction is rather a state of hopefulness that some way out of all difficulties is about to open upon him. His attitude conforms to the following words of the Qur'an

²⁰ Al-Fath al-Rabbani, p. 125.

لا تدرى لعل الله
يحدث بغد ذلك
امرا²¹

["You know not it may be that Allah will afterward bring some new thing to pass."]

Similarly, the mental stance of a true believer in God is de-scribed by the Qur'an in these words :

الا ان اولياء الله لا خوف
عليهم ولا هم يحزنون²²

["Hearken! the friends of God certainly neither fear nor are they aggrieved."]

They fear God only and none else. Circumstances cannot aggrieve them. And this is how Iqbal characterises the significance of a believer's conviction :

يقين افراد كا سرمايه تغمير

²¹ lxv. 1.

²² x. 62.

ملت
ہے
یہی قوت ہے جو صورت گر
تقدیر
ملت²³

["The conviction of individuals is the material which builds society. This is the only force which shapes its destiny."]

ولایت ، پادشاہی ، غلم اشیا
کی جہاں گیری
یہ سب کیا ہیں ؟ فقط اک
نقطہ ایمان کی تفسیریں²⁴

["Sovereignty, government, and the world encompassing knowledge of (the essence of) things is nothing but the, elucidation of one single point, that is belief."]

And now we come to a celebrated poem by Iqbal, i.e. *Khidr-i Rāh*, which had been written after World War I. With the end of this War the independence of Turkey had also come to an end. This meant Muslims had lost their last sovereign State. With the end of Turkey, apparently all fronts of the Muslims be-came silent. All flags had bowed down. Iraq and Palestine

²³ Bāng-i Darā/Kulliyāt, p. 273.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 271.

now went to the British, and Syria was taken over by the French. Iran already had lost its independence. Northern Iran was under the Russian sway and its southern regions were virtually being ruled over by the British. The Moghal Empire in India had long ago gone to the winds. The British had succeeded the Moghals in India. Indonesia was under the Dutch. Malaya, Nigeria, Egypt, Sudan, Aden, Yemen were British colonies and protectorates. Libya had become an Italian territory and so was Somalia. Tunis, Algeria, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, etc., were French colonies. Morocco was partly under France and partly under Spain. Afghanistan's foreign policy was governed by the British.

In short, the independent Muslim countries that we find to-day on the map of the world and which are so many that their names cannot be committed easily to memory were all colonies of Western imperialism around the end of World War I. That was the lowest ebb of the political decline of Muslims. Iqbal, like all other poets and thinkers who were alive to the critical situation of the Muslim Ummah all over the world, felt immensely aggrieved. Yet he could see that something was about to take place for the good of the Ummah. He felt that the circle of decline had become complete, hence the new round was about to start. He bewailed like all other sincere and emotional interpreters of Muslim sentiment, but he behaved differently. He wielded a bleeding pen but with it he painted the word-picture of a rosy day which was about to dawn. Thus his laments did not carry the feelings of defeat. He was capable of singing his grief in en-livening tunes. This is how he does it in *Khiir-i Rah* written in 1922:

لے گئے تثلیب کے فرزند میراث خلیلؑ

خشت بنیاد کلیسا بن گئی خاک

حج ————— از!

حکمتِ معرب سے ملت کی یہ کیفیت
 ہے—————وئی
 ٹکڑے ٹکڑے جس طرح سونے کو کر
 دیتے ہیں گے از
 ہو گیا مانند اَبِ ارزاں مسلمان کا لہو
 مضطرب ہے تو کہ تیرا دل نہیں دانائے
 راز²⁵

["The Trinitarians took away the heritage of Prophet Ibrahim and the clay of Hijāz has served as foundation bricks of the Church...]

Western diplomacy has done to the Muslim Ummah

what Gāz does to (a lump of) gold. It cuts gold into pieces. Muslim blood has become cheap as water.

You are fretful over it because you do not know the secret."]

The mental prospective of these verses is not difficult to understand. Iqbal has alluded to Sharif Husain of Mecca and his followers who played into the hands of the British and rebelled against the Turks—their Muslim brothers. For a Muslim there is no distinction of race and colour, but the Christian West injected into the body politic of the Arabs poisonous germs of narrow nationalism. Hence Turks were defeated.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 264.

And now Iqbal's discourse takes a turn and tries to soothe Muslims all over the world using words of Maulānā Rūmī :

گفت رومی ہر بناءے کہنہ
کا باداں کنند
می ندانی اول اّں بنیاد را
ویراں کنند ؟²⁶

["Says Rumi that to make an old abode habitable again, the former structure has to be demolished?."]

For Iqbal, then, the_ whole political structure of Muslim Ummah had been razed to the ground to build it anew. And what he visualised was his conviction. It was not just a "poetic truth," nor was it a state of wishful thinking. In the same poem, the last paragraph contains the following verses :

عشق کو فریاد لازم تھی سو وہ بھی ہو چکی
اب ذرا دل تھام کر فریاد کی تاثیر دیکھا!
تونے دیکھا سطوت رفتار دریا کا غروج
موج مضطر کس طرح بنتی ہے اب زنجیر
دیکھ

²⁶ Ibid.

عام حریت کا جو دیکھا تھا خواب اسلام
 نے
 اے مسلمان اَج تو اس خواب کی تغیر
 دیکھ
 اپنی خاکستر سمندر کو ہے سامان وجود
 سر کے پھر ہوتا ہے پیدا یہ جہاں پیر
 دیکھا!²⁷

["Love had to lament and it has done so.

Now take heart and see what effect this lamentation makes. You have seen the pompous flow of the river at its best.

And now discern how a restive eddy is about to fetter its feet. Islam had dreamt of universal freedom.

Now, O Muslim ! see, that dream is about to be interpreted.

For a salamander its own ashes serve as a material to regain existence. Similarly you can see the worn-out world is about to resuscitate "]

As already explained, and not once, Iqbal's message of hope was not just a vain hope. This was his strong conviction. He was immensely sure that the revival of Islam was about to begin. One can imagine that during those days of seemingly dismal des-pair, his readers and listeners, in general, with all their devotion to him, would not have taken his words as they were and what

²⁷ Ibid., p. 266.

they connoted. For a great majority of them, I am sure, his glad tidings could not but be a far cry. He lived as an ordinary citizen among the individuals of his society. Apparently quite a normal person. He was just one of them. But inwardly he belonged to some other sphere. In other words, we can say he was a blend of ordinary and extraordinary. He, as an ordinary individual, shared the general feelings of those among whom he lived. But his "extra-ordinariness" had always the upper hand. Therefore he, had his way. It does not mean that the Muslim Ummah had compromised with their lot. Not the least. They abhorred slavery from the core of their heart. But they could find no way out. Imperialist Powers looked formidable. Muslims had lost the courage to stand to them. And Iqbal told them that the Westerners could not maintain their sway for long because they had their own inherent weaknesses which they could not overcome. Iqbal had studied Western civilisation with a penetrating eye. He saw what those who go by the appearances could not see. It does not mean that he had never experienced the onslaught of doubts. He had such experiences, but his hope was too strong for doubts. The following two verses from Sāqī Nāmāh show how he stood and what he withstood :

مَری فطرت اَئینہ

روزگار!

غزالان افکار کا

مرعزار

مرا دل، مری رزم

گاہ حیات!

گمانوں کے لشکر،

["My nature is the mirror of the Age.

It is like an orchard for the gazelles of ideas and thoughts. My mind is the battlefield of my life

where there are armies of doubts but where conviction is steadfast."]

Iqbal encountered armies of doubts because he belonged to an age when lofty castles of belief stood demolished. But his vision surveyed much above and beyond his age. Therefore his stance was different from that of others. And he was tremendously sure of the truth of what he saw with the eyes of his intuition. So much so that he prayed to God Almighty to infuse in every Muslim individual the same warmth of faith and fidelity. His prayer was as under :

یہی کچھ ہے ساقی متاغ فقیرا

اسی سے فقیری میں ہوں میں

امیر!

مرے قافلے میں لٹا دے اسے

لٹا دے! ٹھکانے لگا دے اسے!²⁹

²⁸ XI-t Jibril/Kulliyat, p. 125/417.

²⁹ Ibid.

["O the Cup-Bearer (God) ! this is all what I a poor man possess. And on account of only this, I am rich in poverty.

Distribute it gratis among the people of my caravan,

Distribute it lavishly, to the last drop."]

To be so sure of one's authenticity of vision and conviction is really an extraordinary phenomenon. And now for awhile we go back to Tulū-i Islām, a very important poem written after Khidr-i Rāh, already mentioned. This I am doing to show how things went on changing gradually, for the better. Tulū-i Islam was written in 1923. The opening verse is :

دلیل صبح روشن ہے
ستاروں کی تنک تابے
افق سے اَفْتاب اُبھرا ،
گیا دور گراں خوابی!³⁰

["When the glow of stars becomes dim it indicates a brilliant morn. The sun rose from the horizon. And the era of sound sleep vanished."]

Here the first line refers to the dark days when all outward omens were disheartening. Even the stars had lost their lustre. Iqbal says with vehemence that the moment the stars become dim is proof that the shining morn is approaching fast. The second line of the verse refers to the changed conditions then prevalent. The sun of hope and success had risen and it had

³⁰ Banged Darā/Kulliyāt, p. 267.

put the night of despair to rout. The next verse is more illustrative than the first :

عروق مردءه مشرق ميں خون
زندگى دوڑا
سمجھ سكتے نہيں اس راز
كو سينا و فارابى!³¹

("Now the life-blood has begun to run (again) in the dead veins of the East.

This is a mystery beyond the ken of Abū `Alī Shiā and al-Fārābī."

We know in Iqbal's poetry, East, on occasions, stands for the world of Islam. In the verse just quoted Iqbal wants to explain that the world of Islam, about which he was imparting good news over so many years, had now, in 1923, begun to regain her independence. Tables now looked turned upon the Western imperialists. Reawakening of Muslims had begun. Once begun it could not be stopped. But this was a fact which had nothing to do with philo. sophical arguments. Therefore Abū `Alī Sīnā and al-Fārābī could not be taken for proper guides in this regard. In respect of pre-vision philosophy is much slower than intuition. Philosophy can say something about what is obvious in Nature but can see no-thing of what is hidden.

During this very period the movement against Husain, the Sharīf of Mecca. began to gain momentum. Husain, the British agent, found himself

³¹ Ibid.

occupying a shaky chair of authority. In short, Tulū-i Islam presents the concrete picture of the beginnings of a revolution in the world of Islam. Iqbal had already indicated clearly to that effect. Such indications can be characterized as prophecies of a man of vision. This is how Iqbal made a happy declaration with full confidence:

سر شک چشم مسلم میں ہے
 نیساں کا اثر پیدا
 خلیل اللہ کے دریا میں ہوں گے
 پھر گہر پیدا
 کتا بملت بیضا کی پھر شیرازہ
 بندی ہے
 یہ شاخ ہاشمی کرنے کو ہے پھر
 برگ و بر پیدا!³²

["The tears of Muslims are about to create the effect of spring clouds. The river of Ibrāhīm (may peace be on him) wilj again give birth to pearls.

The Muslim Ummah is reuniting, as if scattered leaves of a book are being arranged for binding.

The twig of Hāshim is about to produce flowers and fruit again (twig of Hāshim standing for Muslim Ummah.)"]

³² Ibid., p. 268.

The fact is that Iqbal had full faith in the Truth and Righteousness of Islam. Addressing the Muslims of Lahore who had convened a meeting to think over the future of Turkish Caliphate, he maintained:

"Why should we present our complaint to human beings. We should, rather, present our complaint to God. Supplications, flattery, and begging will not move the persons concerned. Obedience of none save God is binding on Muslims. Be sure that a community born to fulfil a high purpose cannot die just for nothing."³³

His hopes were high contrary to the circumstances which looked tremendously depressing. What he believed in was that the "Word of God must predominate". To him it was the religion of God that was destined to prevail. He would never despair. This is why he said :

نہ ہو نومید ، نومیدی زوال
غلم و عرفان ہے
امید مرد مومن ہے خدا کے
راز دانوں میں!³⁴

Do not lose hope ; losing hope causes decay of knowledge
and vision.

Hopes of a believer are amongst the co-sharers in Divine secrets."]

³³ Bashir Ahmad Dar, Anwar-; Iqbāl (Lahore Iqbal Academy Pakistan, 1977). p. 44.

³⁴ Bāl-i jibril/Kulliyāt, p. 1201412.

Writes Professor Rashid Ahmad Siddiqi :

"I have read books. I have listened to discourses. I have enjoyed conversations. I have seen He. I have reflected and de-liberated. The essence of all this which I characterise as a long and varied experience is the simple fact that the Muslim, in whatever circumstances he may be, would never feel small. He would not cow down It may be knowledge and scholarship, wealth and majesty, devotion and courage, but he knows and is confident that as a Muslim he had been the master of all this and can becomes so again."³⁵

Believers, according to Iqbal, cannot bow before the passing shadows of failures. They know they have to succeed in the long run. Iqbal maintains :

وہ چنگاری خس و خاشاک
سے کس طرح دب جائے
جسے حق نے کیا ہو نیستان
کے واسطے پیدا ³⁶!

["A spark created by God for burning the whole forest (of falsehood) cannot be overwhelmed by straws and grass sweepings."]

The Holy Qur'ān declares

³⁵ Iqbal: Shakhshyat our Shā'irī, p. 4.

³⁶ Bāl-i Jibrīl/Kuiliyāt, 25/317.

هُوَ الَّذِي ۸ أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ
المُشْرِكُونَ³⁷

["He it is Who has sent His messenger with guidance and the religion of Truth, that He may cause it to prevail over all Religion, however much the idolaters may be averse."]

And says Iqbal:

مقام شوق بے صدق و یقین نیست
یقین بے صحبت روح الامیں نیست
گر از صدق و یقین داری نصیبی
قدم بے باک نه ، کمس درکمیں
نیست!³⁸

["The desired status cannot be achieved without truthfulness and faith, And faith we cannot have without becoming a companion of Gabriel. If you have relished even a little bit of faith

then plant your foot fearlessly. None is in ambush."]

Becoming a companion of Gabriel means possessing thorough knowledge of the Qur'an which Allah revealed to Muhammad (S.A.S.)

³⁷ ix. 33.

³⁸ Armughān-i Hijāz/Kulliyāt, p. 143/1025.

through Gabriel. It was God Who taught Gabriel the Qur'ān word by word. And Gabriel taught Muhammad (S.A,S.) the same, word by word.

In another verse Iqbal says:

ترے ضمیر پہ جب
تک نہ ہو نزول کتاب
گرہ کشا ہے نہ رازی ،
نہ صاحب کشف³⁹

["As long as the Qur'an is not revealed upon your souj,

Neither Rāzī nor the author of Kashshāf (al-Zamakhsharī) can solve the riddles.""]

According to Iqbal, it is obvious, then, that the Qur'an can-not be followed unless faith in the truth of the Qur'an becomes soul deep. Iqbal's undaunted and hopeful stance all his life shows the depth of his faith in the truth of the Qur'ān. Even the darkest moments when the Muslim Ummah suffered total defeat and underwent complete subjugation could not shake him.

His confidence in the ultimate victory of Islam never wavered.

He believed that the tide that had turned against the Muslims was not to remain like that for long. It was soon to turn in the favour of Muslim Ummah. We know every person does have, at times, fits of optimism. But

³⁹ Bāl-i Jibrīl/Kulliyāt, p. 78/370.

fits are always afloat. Such a fitful person, off and on, returns to despondency which, in actual fact, becomes a dominant feature of his nature. Fits of hope are passing shadows for a common man, whereas Iqbal's hopeful utterances are a message which is flavoured with a steadfast and unmitigating faith. In fact, there is a world of difference between being fitful and faithful.

Here is an anecdote:

"A man came to Mu'ādh b. Jabal (R.A.) and said: 'Please inform me about two persons. One of them is very particular about saying prayers. He always performs good deeds. He does wrong rarely but he suffers from lack of conviction and is never free from doubts.' Mu'ādh (R.A.) answered: 'His doubts will ruin all that he performs.' Then the man said : 'Now, inform me about a person whose good deeds are not very many but his belief is strong, occasionally he may sin as well. Mu'ādh (R.A.) kept silence. On seeing this the man stated : 'if the doubts of the former certainly ruined all his good deeds, then the conviction of the latter must do away with his sins.' On hearing this Mu'ādh (R.A.) caught hold of the man's hand and said : 'I have not seen a jurist better than myself save this man.'"⁴⁰

Keeping the above anecdote in mind our understanding of the following verse of Iqbal, already quoted in the foregoing pages, becomes clearer still:

مرا دل مری رزم گاه
حیات!

⁴⁰ 'Abd al-Qāhir b. 'Abd Allāh, 'Awārif al-Ma'ārif (Beirut : Dar al-Kitāb), p. 42.

گمانوں کے لشکر
یقین کا ثبات⁴¹

["My mind is the battlefield of my life

where there are armies of doubts but where conviction is steadfast."]

Lothrop Stoddard, in his book *The New World of Islam*,⁴² dealt exhaustively with the process of subjugation of the Muslim territories by Western Powers. But the main theme of the book, according to what the author had observed and felt, was that the spirit of Muslims had not accepted defeat. He threw light on their inner restlessness He depicted even what the Muslims of Bukhara and Samarqand had in their minds. The book can inspire Muslim youth even today. The author laid down clearly that the dominion of Western Powers was not going to last long. He expected a strong reaction on the part of the world of Islam in the near future.

Iqbal who, as a seer, could peep into the innermost recesses of Muslim's conscience, could more surely and with more confidence know what was up there. It was Iqbal's conviction in the truth of what he foresaw that made him announce in 1923 with full force :

مسلمان کو مسلمان کر دیا طوفان
مغرب نے
تلاطم ہائے دریا ہی سے ہے گوہر کی

⁴¹ Bāi-i Jibrīl/Kulliyāt. p. 125/417.

⁴² London : Chapman & Hajl Ltd.. 1922.

سیرابی
 غطا مومن کو پھر درگاہ حق سے
 ہونے والا ہے
 شکوہ تر کمائی، ذہنِ ہندی، نطق
 اعرابی⁴³

["The Muslims were obliged to feel like real Muslims on account of Western storms.

It is surely the slappings of waves which nourish a jewej. What the believer is about to be granted again by Providence Is the majesty of Turks, the intellect of Indians, and the fluence of the Arabs."]

Iqbal's reference to Turks, Indians, and Arabs connotes the grandeur of Muslim conquerors and rulers, the loftiness and depth of their thought, and their convincing manner of saying things.

The onslaught of Western imperialism continued for more than two centuries. The West had mustered material might. New inventions had equipped the West with much superior killing devices. Asia and Africa lagged behind in this respect and thus were beaten down. The imperialists under the umbrella of their sway tried to spread their religion, culture and language. Every European nation imposed its own language as the medium of instruction and learning along with its own syllabi. They spread books containing what could engender doubts in the minds of subjugated peoples regarding their own history, religion and cultural traditions on the one hand and make them feel ignobly inferior and thus kill their souls on the other.

⁴³ Bāng-i Darā/Kulliyāt, p. 267.

The result was as could be expected. The subjugated peoples, barring the honourable exception of the men of faith, began to hate whatever was theirs and eulogise whatever was Western. In fact, everything Western was neither good nor bad only because it came from the West. Similarly, everything Eastern was neither good nor bad only because it belonged to the East. Islam enjoins upon the believers to pick up whatever is good from wheresoever it comes and is to be made use of. Good and bad do not belong to the East or the West.

But the eyes of the enslaved peoples, in general, lose the sense of correct evaluation. Normally they accept whatever rulers bring and offer because all that relates to emperors looks imperial, hence superior. Especially so is the language of the rulers. Their dress also becomes attractive. Likes and dislikes of the masters are accepted almost unquestioningly and with a grain of pride. The needy and lower strata of subjugated societies are exploited much more than others. Morsels do affect morals. King's prize kills pride. Therefore iron chains look no more like a bond of servitude. Iqbal explains this phenomenon thus :

جادوئے محمود کی تاثیر سے
چشم ایاز
دیکھتی ہے حلقہ گردن میں
ساز دلیری⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 261.

["Under Mahmūd's spellj the ring around the neck of Ayāz Looks to his eyes like a beautifying device."]

We still remember some big-wigs from amongst us who pronounced Urdu words as the English rulers did. By doing so they thought they became English and hence belonged to the aliens and not to their own countrymen. There were many who were more anglophile than the English themselves. They got good jobs but lost honour. They got high-flown titles, but were looked down upon by those who possessed sense of self-respect and appreciated the same in others. This conflict between the conquering West and the conquered East, according to 'Azīz Ahmad, did the greatest harm to the East in turning the peoples of the East into sheer emulators of those of the West. The East started begging even for values at the door of the West. Yet it was not the zest to work untiringly and not the will to conquer Nature which was emulated fondly. The enslaved communities copied their masters in respect of phoney glitter only.⁴⁵

Iqbal had no sword to wield. He had a pen. He wielded his pen. And the pen of a believing poet is a mighty weapon of war. Iqbal warned the Eastern nations, especially the Muslims, that the West had no values to live by or offer to others. Europe, in his opinion, had become powerful on account of advanced technology and material affluence. No dominion, according to him, could last long if it was not buttressed up with values. A society, though apparently strong, is inwardly weak without morals. It can be characterized as a "delicate bough" on which "no nest can rest". This Iqbal had declared in 1907 when European imperialism was at its highest.

Sir Agha Khan has mentioned how arrogantly the English people were proud of their political strength:

"I recall the breakfast party which I gave in Bombay for some senior British officials. Another guest was a cousin of mine—a devoted and loyal

⁴⁵ Iqbāl, Na'ī Tashkūī (Karachi : Kutub Khanah Taj Office), p. 464.

subject of the Queen and profoundly pro_ British. But he was a student of history. He discoursed on, the fact that an Asiatic race, the Arabs, had ruled Spain for .five hundred years and after their departure had left indelible .and splendid marks of their civilization all over Southern Spain and on the fact that another Asiatic race, the Turks, had established a major empire in the Balkans and around the Eastern Mediterranean and were still ruling it after several centuries. My British guests took this as an affront.

"We will not have such comparisons made,' they said. 'Our rule is permanent, not something that lasts a few centuries and then disappears. Even to think as you think is disloyal.'

"Ideas like these seem strange indeed now in the 1950's, when we have seen British rule in India dissolve and pass away like early morning mist before strong sunlight. But this was the atmosphere in which my later boyhood was spent, with its unhappy, brooding awareness of deepening difference and of growing misunderstanding and hostility."⁴⁶

Iqbal never tired of mentioning the magnitude of Europe's moral bankruptcy. He with vehemence expressed his belief that the power and majesty of the West was nothing more than a passing shadow. He could not be taken in by its outer glitterings He looked to the moral foundations of the modern civilisation emanating from the West. For Iqbal European way of life was basically inimical to moral values. And in his opinion, without morals no society could stand firm for long.

Arthur Jones ends his articles "Science and Moral Responsibility" with these words :

"Humanity without God is bound to succumb to the spirit of the age, and to seek its highest ideals in purely mundane objectives, of which the various fashionable ideologies are the latest example. Humanity without God

⁴⁶ Memoirs of Agha Khan, Foreword by Somerset Maugham (London : Cassel & Co., Ltd.), p. 467.

is destined to overwhelm the world with suffering and disaster. No doubt there have always been those who tried to live without God, but never had it been more ruinous, more suicidal to live without God than at the present."⁴⁷

Iqbal exhorted the Muslim East to imbibe the spirit of hard work and taste for scientific discovery in which lay the real strength of Europe. Iqbal praised the Europeans for their efficiency and labour. Enslaved peoples could learn a lot of beneficial things from their masters in various fields of learning. But as is the rule, the subjugated societies are easily hoodwinked by appearances. In slavery, human potentialities slacken. To follow easy morals suit their lethargic outlook. The good is what the rulers declare to be good. Faculty of discrimination between good and evil becomes dormant in declining societies or societies under foreign domination. Slaves take to apparent manners of their masters. This is why in the eye of a realist, slaves do not live. They are breathing dead bodies. Their spiritual death is made manifest by blind imitation of their rulers. European domination brought dancing-halls, taverns and free mixing of genders. The colonists themselves always attended Church service but propagated secularism amongst the lovers of learning coming up from the subjugated society. The Western authorities spread their own flashing fashions in countries under their dominion. And the "uppish" groups of enthralled intellectuals become liberals, thinking they had been liberated from uncalled-for restrictions, not knowing that they had fallen victims to their animal lusts blindfolded. Right choice is rarely the lot of the vassals. Enthralled eyes look without seeing. Iqbal shook his coreligionists as well as others, with whom he shared fate, to keep the discerning eye open. He urged them to observe things critically telling them to accept and reject judiciously. He explained thus :

قوتِ مغربِ نہ از چنگِ و

⁴⁷ Science and Freedom (London : Martine Seeker and Warbugh Ltd.), p. 254.

رباب

نے زرقصِ دختران بے حجاب

نے ز سحر ساحرانِ لاله

روست

نے زغریاں ساق ولے از قطع

موست!

محکمی او را نہ از لا دینی

است

نے فروغش از خطر لا طنی

است!

قوتِ افرنگ از غلم و فن

است

از ہمیں اَتش چراغش

روشن است⁴⁸

["West is powerful neither on account of its musical instruments (or musicaj concerts)

nor because of the dances by immodest (naked) girls.

⁴⁸ Jāvīd Nāmāh/Kulliyāt, p. 173/766.

Its power depends neither on the magic of beauties with glowing faces nor does it come from naked shins and cut-out tresses.

Its might does not lie in secularism.

Its prosperity is not the outcome of Latin alphabet.

Strength of Europe rests on Sciences and Arts.

This is the fire that keeps its jump burning."]

Iqbal exhorted his coreligionists to look at things with critical eyes. All that glitters is not gold. Sometimes even dross may glitter Iqbal urges upon his Muslim brethren, all the world over, to penetrate into the secret alloys of the ascendancy of Europe.

He pinpoints the reason behind it. According to him, European strength grew from the hard work done by its people in the fields of knowledge and discovery. It was their unremitting toil in all spheres of study and research. In respect of industrial know-how Western societies were far advanced than the Eastern who had fallen into the cosy lap of lethargy. Moreover, the ruling societies neither provide nor allow enslaved communities opportunities for progress. The masters, instead, lead their slaves towards the orchards of ease. They are fed on literature and thought meant to confuse their thinking and render them inert.

They are taught the culture patterns suitable to slaves. The result is as it has always been. The ruled fall into the trap of their rulers. The ruled emulate what the rulers seem to do. The ruled go by appearances. They do not try to look behind the wall. As is well known, what the Europeans showed to the subjugated communities was the obvious glamour and pomp. They built dancing-halls, taverns, theatres and clubs. They drank, they danced and they demonstrated how freely the opposite genders mixed. They exhibited fascinating fashions of costumes and haircut. But they did not try to train their "wards" to inculcate in them active habits and enterprising spirit. Iqbal

could see the trees in spite of the forest. And he went on drumming this fact into the ears of the East, especially the Muslim East. He declared that whatever was good had to be picked up and appropriated. This, according to his belief, had been enjoined upon the Muslims as is given in the following verse of his :

گفت حکمت را
خدا خیرِ کثیر
ہر کجا ایس خیر را
بینی بگیری⁴⁹

["God has stated that Wisdom is enormous good. Whosoever you find wisdom get at it.")

Yet the fact remains that to choose judiciously is an uncommon phenomenon. First, a person should really understand relevance and reference. What is good, in what respect and to whom? One has to learn a lot of history, philosophy, ethics and what not to be able to choose correctly. One has to plunge into the recesses of one's own self to know what one ought and what one ought not to learn and unlearn. Iqbal did so the whole of this life:

اس کشمکش میں گزریں مری

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 74/602.

زندگی کی راتیں
کبھی سوز و ساز رومی، کبھی پیچ و
تاب رازی!⁵⁰

["The nights of my life were spent in a state of constant conflict, now fervent like Rūmī and then agitated like Rāzī."]

After long and toilsome pondering over the surrounding circumstances and observing the laws of Nature, he got at the satisfying conviction, as has been elaborated in the beginning of this article. He was right and convinced when he said:

الفاظ کے پیچوں میں الجھتے
نہیں دانا
غواص کو مطلب ہے صدف
کہ گہر سے؟
پیدا ہے فقط حلقہ ارباب جنوں
میں
وہ غفل کہ پا جاتی ہے شغلے
کو شرر سے⁵¹

⁵⁰ Bāl-i Jibrīl/Kulliyāt, p. 17/309.

⁵¹ Darb-i Kalim/Kulliyāt, p. 42/504.

["The wise do not get entangled in the intricacies of words, The diver minds the pearl and not the shell.

The intellect that discerns the flame in spark can be found in the circle of mad folk only (those who are generally deemed as unreasonable persons).”]

Iqbal had come to know that he was an abnormal person who saw what others could not. Such abnormal persons are called "unreasonable" by those who take themselves for reasonable individuals. There is an old Persian saying, *ہنر ور در بے ہنراں خر* which means that an experienced person among the coterie of inexperienced ones is equal to a donkey. A folly agreed upon among the foolish majority becomes the standard wisdom, and whosoever would not conform to it should be called a fool. The wise, the thoughtful and the seers have always been ridiculed and tortured by the haughty majority of the self-styled Aesops.

Iqbal also looked strange to his contemporaries. What he said sounded improbable during those days. But he was sure of the authenticity of what he said. As against other poets and philosophers, he saw with an eye possessing a spectrum of things quite different from that of the eyes of his co-visionaries. As has been expressed in a verse just quoted above he did not much bother about words and phrases. He had his eye on meanings. This is what, in all humility, he has laid down about his verses, Yet all who can read his poetry know that, as a master artist, he has chosen words, phrases and rhymes which make his thought sing. His philosophy sometimes descends upon souls directly, bypassing intellect. He had declared around the year 1926 in the following words :

خضر وقت از خلوتِ دشتِ حجاز آید

برو

کاروانِ زینِ وادیِ دور و دراز آید

برو

من به سیماءِ علامان فر سلطان دیده

ام

شغله محمود از خاکِ ایاز آید برو!

عمر با در کعبه و بت خانه می نالد

حیات

تازبزمِ غشقی یک داناءِ راز آید

برو !

طرح نو می افکند اندر ضمیرِ کائنات

ناله با گر سینه اهل نیاز آید برو !

چنگ را گیرید از دستم که کار از

دست رفت

نغمه ام خون گشت و از رگِ باءِ ساز

آید برو⁵²

⁵² Zabūr-i 'Ajam/kulliyāt, p. 73/465. English trans. by A.J. Arberry : Persian Psalms (Lahore : Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1968), p. 64.

["Out of Hejaz and the lonely plain
The Guide of the Time is come.
Back from the far, far vale again
The Caravan hastens home.
Lo, on the brow of the slaves I see
The Sultan's splendour bright.
The dust of Ayaz shines radiantly
With Mahmud's torch alight.
In Kaaba and Temple long, long years
The deep lament arose,
Till from Love's banquet now appears.
One Man who the Secret knows.
The sighs that out of the bosom break
Of a people at earnest prayer
A brave and new foundation make
In Life's mind everywhere.
O take the trembling lute from me,
For my hand can play no more ;
In streams of blood my melody
From the heart of the harp cloth pour."]

These five couplets are immensely prophetic.

In the first couplet Iqbal indicated clearly that the appearance of the Guide of the Time was just round the corner. And the Caravan was about to start and emerge from this valley. Iqbal did not say that the awaited Guide had to emerge from the centre of Hijāz. He said he was going to appear from a far-flung valley. For Iqbal the desert of Hijāz, at times, serves as a symbol for the Muslim Ummah. This meant that Muslims of the Pak-Indian sub-continent were about to have a man who was destined to guide them to the goal of victory and that victory was to become the starting point of the resurgence of Islam.

In the second couplet, he breaks the news of the dawn which was near at hand. The slaves were turning into magnificent masters.

In the third couplet he stresses the point that Seers come to the world of man after centuries. He was one of those Seers.

In the fourth couplet he refers to some ideology or principle quite new to the world which would affect the conscience of all humanity. And what else could it be, if it was not the right of self-determination which the Muslims of the subcontinent were about to exert ? After the emergence of Pakistan this right became a powerful reference, It served as the advent of a new principle. The Muslims of the Philippines, perhaps, would not have striven for the achievement of their "Pakistan" in their Muslim majority islands. Muslims of Thailand's sea-shore areas with Muslim majority, perhaps, would not have demanded a separate State for themselves, had Pakistan not come to be.

Then in the fifth couplet Iqbal clearly indicated that he would die before the coming of Freedom. He was sure that his verses which epitomised his

most earnest sentiments would stand in good stead in respect of exhorting the Muslims of the subcontinent on to the goal of Freedom.

And it was Iqbal who at the Allahabad session of the All-India Muslim League, in his Presidential Address, put forward the idea of a Muslim State in the North-Western majority regions of India. It was in December 1930. In the beginning, as was but natural, this idea was vague. That State could be a big autonomous Muslim province within Indian Federation. It could be out of India but within British Commonwealth. And so on. It went on evolving until it assumed the shape of Muslim State or States in the North-Western and Eastern Muslim majority zones as is obvious from the following lines occurring in Iqbal's letter of 21 June 1937 to the Quaid-i Azam, only ten months before his death :

"A separate federation of Muslim provinces, reformed on the lines I have suggested above, is the only course by which we can secure a peaceful India and save Muslims from the domination of non-Muslims. Why should not the Muslims of North-West India and Bengal be considered as nations entitled to self-determination just as other nations in India and outside India are ?"⁵³

Some vested interests of blurred vision state that Iqbal's proposed Muslim State comprised only the regions which make the present Pakistan. On the contrary, as is shown in the above extract from Iqbal's letter, Iqbal's Pakistan was what we had before the War of December 1971.

One thing more. It was Iqbal who called upon the Quaid-i Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah to lead the Muslims of India to their cherished goal. He preferred Quaid-i Azam to all other Muslim leaders. Amongst them were giants of politics who had lots of political experience and vision, for example Sir Agha Khan, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, Nawwab Muhammad Ismail Khan, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Nawwab Hamidullah Khan of Bhopal, Sir Ali Imam,

⁵³ Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah (Lahore : Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1974), p. 24.

Maulvi Tameezudin Khan, Maulana Abut Kalam, Allamah al-Mashriqi and others. But Iqbal's vision had its own reasons. He had found his Khidr-i Rāh, the "awaited Guide," in Quaid-i Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah who was destined to lead the Indian branch of Muslim Ummah to their goal of Freedom. Iqbal's words in this regard were as follows :

"I know you are a busy man ; but I do hope you won't mind my writing to you so often, as you are the only Muslim in India today to whom the community has a right to look up for safe guidance through the storm which is coming to North-West India, and perhaps to the whole of India. "⁵⁴

Similar sentiments were expressed by Iqbal, about three months before his death, regarding Quaid-i Azam Jinnah. Sayid Nazir Niyazi, in his book *Iqbāl Ke Hadūr*, has stated on pages 297 and 298 (first ed.) that the future of Indian Muslims was being discussed and a tenor of pessimism was visible from what his friends said. At this Iqbal observed.:

"There is only one way out. Muslims should strengthen Jinnah's hands. They should join the Muslim League. Indian question, as is now being solved, can be countered by our (Muslim) united front against both the Hindus and the English. Without it our demands are not going to be accepted. People say our demands smack of communalism This is sheer propaganda. These demands relate to the defence of our national existence... .

"The united front can be formed under the leadership of the Muslim League. And the Muslim League can succeed only on account of Jinnah. Now none but Jinnah is capable of leading the Muslims."

And as is stated by Matlubul Hasan Saiyid the Quaid-i-Azam, after the Lahore Resolution (subsequently called the Pakistan Resolution) was passed on 23 March 1940, talking to him said :

⁵⁴ Ibid:, pp. 20-21. Italics ours.

"Iqbal is no more amongst us. But had he been alive he would have been happy to know that we did exactly what he wanted us to do."⁵⁵

But the matter does not end here. Iqbal in his letter of 20 March 1937 had expressed as under :

"While we are ready to cooperate with other Progressive Parties in the country, we must not ignore the fact that the whole future of Islam as a moral and political force in Asia rests very largely on a complete organisation of Indian Muslims."⁵⁶

It means that, according to Iqbal, the future of Islam as a moral and political force not only in India but in the whole of Asia rested on the organisation of the Muslims of India.

Iqbal had believed in the emergence of the Guide of the Time and had declared accordingly in about 1926. He found that guide in the person of Muhammad Ali Jinnah as elucidated above. The Guide organised the Muslims of India under the banner of the Muslim League. He then put up a strong opposition to both the Hindus and the English who wanted a United India where Hindus had an overwhelming overall majority, i.e. seventy-five per cent of the total population of the subcontinent. Muslims, through their united efforts under the able guidance of Quaid-i Azam, succeeded in getting India divided into Pakistan and Bharat. The Muslims achieved their independent homeland. But, as has been laid down above, in Iqbal's view, the organisation of Indian Muslims who achieved Pakistan has also to defend other Muslim societies in Asia. The caravan of the resurgence of Islam has to start and come out of this Valley, far off from the centre of the Ummah. Let us see if, how and when Pakistan prepares itself to shoulder that august responsibility. We are sure it has to be like that. It is Iqbal's pre-vision. The

⁵⁵ M.A. Jinnah : A Political Study (Lahore : Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1962), p. 329.

⁵⁶ Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah, p. 13.

Holy Prophet has said : "Beware of the foresight of a Believer, for he sees with the Light Divine."