

# IQBAL'S THOUGHT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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The function of art is to transmute ideas into sentiments so that they can be infected to other people without rigour. Art and poetry are therefore media of complete and unhindered communication which are used as cultural tools to create and sustain a social mood for establishing a community of experience. This is why art and poetry are often employed for the inculcation of cultural values as through them the values are easily assimilated and become part of personality immediately. In view of the formative influences of art and poetry on the spirit of a people, their role in a nation-building, and programmes of economic development cannot be ignored. It is not well realized that a psychological climate must be created before any drama of development is staged. Iqbal is keenly aware of the constructive role of art and poetry in the overall development of a nation. "The spiritual' health of a people," says he, "largely depends on the kind of inspiration which their artists and poets receive.

He, therefore, attaches great importance to the poets and the life-quality of the inspiration received by them. In his view spiritual health enables a people to conquer nature and muster material power." From the view point of art he regards only that type of inspiration as genuine, which synthesizes Beauty with Power. "To seek what is scientifically called adjustment with nature is to recognize her mastery over the spirit of man. Power comes from resisting her stimuli and not from exposing ourselves to their action. Resistance of 'What is' with a view to create 'what ought to be' is health and life. All else is decay and death. Both God and man live by perpetual

creation." Life is thus an idealistic enterprise and an creative activity. Elucidating his concept of a true artist he says:

The artist who is blessing to mankind defies life. He is an associate of God and feels the contact of Time and Eternity in his soul. In the words of Fichte, he sees all Nature full, large and abundant as opposed to him who sees all things thinner, smaller and emptier than they actually are."<sup>66</sup>

### **Philosophy of Change and Power**

Iqbal idealizes power; so much so that he visualizes God as Power and eulogizes the 'powerful man'. Defining his concept of the powerful man he says:

"The powerful man creates environment, the feeble have to adjust themselves to it."<sup>67</sup> Through the human assimilation of Divine attributes the powerful man is infused with infinite aspiration and through the realization of his aspirations he attains the status of God's representative on earth. To win such a position under the Heaven he must create a new physical and social environment, or, in other words he should strive to bring the 'God's kingdom on earth.

Iqbal is the prophet of change and his yearning for change assumes almost a passionate fervour Change is a key-word in his philosophic system and poetic flourishes. In his world-view, change is a permanent phenomenon in the Universe.

سکوں محال ہے قدرت کے کارخانے میں  
ثبات ایک تغیر کو ہے زمانے میں<sup>68</sup>

Nothing is at rest in Nature Permanence is only for change

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<sup>66</sup> Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal; S.A. Vahid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal; S.A. Vahid.

And speaking of the human individual he says:

ملا مزاج تغیر پسند  
کچھ ایسا  
کیا قرار نہ زیر فلک  
کہیں میں نے<sup>69</sup>

So change-loving a nature was bestowed on me

That I could not be at rest under the heaven

In the-life of society, too, it is the change and the capacity for incessant struggle which bestows on it life and virility:

جس میں نہ ہو انقلاب موت ہے وہ زندگی  
روح امم کی حیات کشمش انقلاب<sup>70</sup>

A life bereft of revolution is nothing short of death, For in revolutionary struggle lies the life of nations.

نشان یہی ہے زمانے میں زندہ قوموں کا  
کہ صبح و شام بدلتی ہیں ان کی  
تقدیریں<sup>71</sup>

The cardinal sign of living nations Lies in their ever-changing destinies

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<sup>69</sup> Bang-i-Dara / Kulliyat-i-Iqbal, p. 148/148.

<sup>70</sup> Bal-i-Jibreel /K/Kulliyat-i-Iqbal. p. 100/392.

<sup>71</sup> Armaghan-i-Hijaz/Kulliyat-i-Iqbal, p. 42/684.

## Cultural Approach to the Problem of Poverty

One of the very basic changes which Iqbal yearned to bring in the Muslim society was the eradication of poverty from the masses. He had a great repugnance for poverty and economic backwardness, and loathed it.

کیا یہ ممکن نہیں کہ ہر فرد مفلسی کے دکھ سے آزاد ہو؟ کیا ایسا نہیں ہو  
سکتا کہ گلی کوچوں میں چپکے چپکے کراہنے والوں کی دل خراش صدائیں  
ہمیشہ کے لیے حرف غلط کی طرح مٹ جائیں۔<sup>72</sup>

Were it possible that every individual is rid of the bane of poverty?

Can't it be that the harrowing sobs and groans of those who rot unnoticed in the lanes could be silenced from the world for good.

However, his approach in dealing with the problem of poverty was determined by the Islamic cultural pattern according to which life must be regarded as a unity. In contradistinction to Sensate and Ideational cultures, the Islamic culture insists on reciprocal relationship between economy and morality. In Sensate culture the supreme object of life is pleasant thrill whereas in Ideational culture passive contemplation is the highest ideal. In the idealistic culture of Islam, however, the highest ideal is the creation of a society free from fear and want and in this perspective the eradication of poverty from the society becomes the highest virtue of man prompted by love of God. "While the early Christians glorified in poverty and unworldliness", says Iqbal, "Islam looks on poverty as a vice". A society steeped in abject poverty cannot participate in higher cultural activities which

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<sup>72</sup> Ilmui Iqtisad.

are so essential for the development of the transcendental aspects of human personality. Says Iqbal:

مفلسی کا آزار انسان کے روحانی قوی کا دشمن ہے۔<sup>73</sup>

The malady of poverty is inimical to man's spiritual faculties.

غریبی قوائے انسانی پر بہت برا اثر ڈالتی ہے بلکہ بسا اوقات انسانی روح کے مجلی آئیہ کو اس قدر زنگ آلود کر دیتی ہے کہ اخلاق اور تمدنی اعتبار سے وجود و عدم برابر ہو جاتا ہے۔<sup>74</sup>

Poverty stunts human potentialities. Sometimes, it tarnishes his soul to the extent of completely eliminating the difference between his existence and extinction as a moral and cultural entity.

تم جانتے ہو کہ مفلسی تمام جرائم کا منبع ہے۔ اگر ایسی بلائے بے درماں کا قلع قمع ہو جائے تو دنیا جنت کا نمونہ نظر آئے۔<sup>75</sup>

You know full well that poverty is the source of all crimes. If this persists evil could be eradicated, the world would become a model of Paradise.

Taking moral-cum-economic view of the problem of poverty he emphasizes the vital relationship between the economy and morality.

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<sup>73</sup> Ilmui Iqtisad.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

علم الاخلاق کا موضوع وہ افعال ہیں جو زندگی کے اعلیٰ ترین مقصد کے حصول کی شرائط ہیں اور علم الاقتصاد وہ اشیاء ہیں جو انسان کے معمولی مقاصد کے حصول کے لیے ضروری ہیں۔ اس سے یہ نتیجہ نکلتا ہے کہ انسان کے معمولی مقاصد کی پوری قدر سمجھنے کے لیے ان پر اخلاقی مقاصد کے لحاظ سے نظر ڈالنی چاہیے۔ مثلاً خوراک، لباس اور مکان ہماری زندگی کے لیے ضروری ہیں اور ان کی قدر ان مقاصد کی قدر پر منحصر ہے جن کو یہ پورا کرتے ہیں مگر زندگی کے ان معمولی مقاصد کی اصل وقعت صرف اسی صورت میں معلوم ہو سکتی ہے جو ہم ان پر زندگی کے اعلیٰ مقاصد کے لحاظ سے غور کریں۔ اس لیے علم الاقتصاد کو وضاحت سے سمجھنے کے لیے کسی قدر مطالعہ علم الاخلاق بھی ضروری ہے۔ اکثر مصنفین نے اس صداقت کو محسوس نہیں کیا۔ جس کا نتیجہ یہ ہوا کہ دولت بلا لحاظ زندگی کے افضل ترین مقاصد کی بجائے خود ایک مقصد تصور کی گئی جس سے بعض تمدنی اصلاحوں کے ظہور پذیر ہونے میں بے جا تعویق ہوئی اور دولت سے پیار کرنے والوں کی حرص و آز پہلے سے زیادہ تیز ہو گئی۔

کسی شے کی حقیقی قدر و منزلت اس پر منحصر ہے کہ وہ کہاں تک ہماری زندگی کے اعلیٰ ترین مقصد کے حصول میں ہم کو مدد دیتی ہے یا یوں کہیے کہ

ہر شے کی اصل وقعت کا فیصلہ تمدنی لحاظ سے ہوتا ہے۔ دولت کو ہی لے لیں۔  
اگر یہ شے ہمارے افضل ترین مقاصد کے حصول میں ہمیں مدد نہیں دیتی تو  
پھر اس کا فائدہ؟

Ethics discusses those subjects which are connected with the achievement of highest human ideals; while economics takes into account only those activities which lead to the attainment of ordinary goals of life. It can be inferred that in order to understand man's ordinary goals properly these should be looked in the perspective of moral values. For example, food, clothing and shelter are essential for our life. Their value depends upon the value of those objectives which are achieved through them. But the importance of the ordinary goals of life can only be understood if we consider them in the light of the highest ideals of life. Study of Ethics is, thus, necessary for full comprehension of economics. But most of the authors have not realized this fact with the result that wealth in itself became the highest objective, irrespective of highest values of life. This caused inordinate delay in the realization of cultural values and love and lust for money became rampant.

The real worth of a thing depends upon its efficacy in the realization of the highest ideals of life. Stated otherwise, the real value of a thing can only be adjudged in cultural perspective. Take the example of wealth. If it does not help achieve our highest ideals of life it is nothing but useless."<sup>76</sup>

He strongly believed in the reciprocally of morality and economics. In his view both had a symbiotic relationship in which the ethical factor plays a vital role in economic motivations. Says he, "If we want to turn out good

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<sup>76</sup> Bond Iqtisad.

working men, good shop-keepers, good artisans and above all good citizens, we must first make them good Muslims."<sup>77</sup>

Iqbal regards the world of matter as subservient to man in the realisation of his social goals

مقام بندہ مومن کا ہے ورائے

سپہر

زمین سے تا بہ ثریا تمام لات

و منات<sup>78</sup>

The destination of Momin is beyond Heavens,

From the Earth to the highest galaxy are the idols of Lat-O-Manat.

یہ نیلگوں فضا جسے کتے

ہیں آسماں

ہمت ہ وپر کشا تو حقیقت

میں کچھ نہیں

بالائے سر رہا ہے تو نام اس

کا آسماں

زیر پر آگیا تو یہی آسماں

زمین<sup>79</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Tasanif-i-Iqbal, (Fahqiqi Aur Tauzihi Mutala), Dr. Raeuddin Hashmi.

<sup>78</sup> Armaghan-i-Hijaz/Kulliyat-i-Iqbal, p. 26/668.

<sup>79</sup> Bal-i-Jibreel/Kulliyat-i-Iqbal, p. 132/424.



This blue vault, named as the sky,  
Is nothing before the determination of man  
Above your head it is known as the sky,  
Underneath the wings this very sky is named as Earth.

ہیں تیرے تصوف میں یہ  
بادل یہ گھٹائیں  
یہ گنبد افلاک، یہ خاموش  
فضائیں  
یہ کوہ یہ صحرا یہ سمندر  
یہ ہوائیں  
تھیں پیش نظر کل تو  
فرشتوں کی ادائیں  
آئینہ ایام میں آج اپنی اپنی  
ادا دیکھ<sup>80</sup>

Subjugated to you are these clouds,  
This cupola of the skies, this silent void.  
These mountains, these deserts, these oceans, these winds.

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<sup>80</sup> Bat-i-Jibreel/Kulliyat-i-Iqbal, p. 132/424.

Heretofore thou looked on them as if these are manipulated by the angels.

Henceforth thou art to manipulate them according to thine own designs.

The obstruction of the world of matter in the realization of human ideals in fact an incentive for struggle and a favourable circumstance for the development of his self. According to the teachings of the Holy Quran, the universe that confronts us is not 'Batil' (Jbt); it has its uses and the most important use of it is that in our efforts to overcome the obstructions offered by it we "sharpen our insight and prepare ourselves for an insertion into what lies below the surface of phenomenon coming closer to God" for, "it is the power and capture over the concrete which enables us to go beyond the concrete."<sup>81</sup> Iqbal therefore suggests:

"The world of matter which confronts the self as its 'other' is an indispensable obstruction which forces our being into fresh formation."<sup>82</sup>

### **Men of Action of Practical Attitude**

Practical attitude therefore, gets an extremely important place in the philosophic system of Iqbal because it is through the con-quest of natural environment that the human self grows to attain its higher spiritual positions. In this context, Iqbal regards action as the "highest form of contemplation" which produces its results every moment.

یہی آئین فطرت ہے یہی  
اسلوب فطرت ہے  
جو ہے راہ عمل میں گامزن

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<sup>81</sup> The Reconstruction

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

Such is the law of Nature; such is the style of Nature, The man of action is the beloved of Nature.

یہ گھڑی محشر کی ہے تو عرصہ  
محشر میں ہے  
پیش کر غافل عمل کوئی اگر  
دفتر میں ہے<sup>84</sup>

Thou stand right in the midst of the Day of Judgement. Bring forth record of good actions, if thou has Lany.

ہزار کام ہیں مردان حر کو دنیا میں  
انہیں کے ذوق عمل سے ہیں امتوں کے نظام<sup>85</sup>

The free men have a thousand errands to perform in this world,  
Through their love for action the nations are organized.

Iqbal deplores and laments a human specimen who does not act for the realization of ideals:

ناپید ہے بندہ عمل مست  
باقی ہے فقط نفس درازی<sup>86</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Bang-i-Dara/Kuliyat-i-Iqbal, p. 71/71.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 260/260.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 159/621.

<sup>86</sup> Zarb-i-Kalim/Kuliyat-i-Iqbal, p. 88/550.

The man of action is non-existent, merely breathing creatures exist.

He strongly denounces such knowledge which does not invoke action. He therefore condemns all such literature and philosophy which do not lead to action:

نادار! ادب و فلسفہ  
کوئی چیز نہیں ہے  
اسباب ہنر کے لیے لازم  
ہے تگ و دو<sup>87</sup>

O Ignorant! Literature and Philosophy are naught,

Struggle is essential for the acquisition of skills.

افکار کے نغمہ ہائے بے  
صوت  
ہیں ذوق عمل کے  
واسطے موت<sup>88</sup>

The voiceless melodies of Polemics, Spell death for motivation and action.

For him firm conviction is the elixer of life and only such philosophies which are inspired by strong convictions and emanate into action are worthy of note:

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 167/629.

<sup>88</sup> Zarb-i-Kalim/Kulliyat-i-Iqbal, p. 18/480.

حرف اس قوم کا بے سوز  
عمل زار و زبوں  
ہو گیا پختہ عقائد سے تمہی  
جن کا ضمیر<sup>89</sup>

Letters become uninspiring and action a medley of confusion, When a nation is devoid of firm convictions.

جہاں تازہ کی افکار تازہ سے ہے  
نمود  
کہ سنگ و خشت سے ہوتے  
ہیں جہاں پیدا<sup>90</sup>

New worlds are born-of new ideas. Bricks and stones do not create new worlds.

But both conviction and action emanate from high ideals and lofty objectives which are held supreme in life.

دے ولولہ شوق جسے لذت  
پرواز  
کر سکتا ہے وہ ذرہ مہ و مہر

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 100/562.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p. 17/479,

Enthused and inspired to soar high,

Even a tiny particle can conquer the moon and the sun.

A nation inspired by high ideals cannot rest contented with the prevailing situation and must therefore work incessantly to change and mould its environment according to its needs. Motivated by the urge to bring into being an ideal social order with a view to seek the pleasure of God, a momin is never at rest. He has to conquer the whole world. He has to manipulate the physical environment in order to make it more productive and create a social environment free from fear and want. A continuing revolution is thus a life mission:

میسر آتی ہے فرصت فقط  
 غلاموں کو  
 نہیں ہے بندہ حر کے لیے  
 جہاں فراغ<sup>92</sup>

Idleness is the pastime of the slaves

The free have not a moment of leisure in the world.

He therefore exhorts man to wage a continuous struggle against an imperfect universe which has to be perfected through his own efforts. He must create his own environment.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., p. 85/547.

<sup>92</sup> Zarb-i-Kalim\kulliyat-I-Iqbal, p. 85/547.

بڑھے جا یہ کوہ گراں توڑ  
کر

طلسم زمان و مکان توڑ  
کر

جہاں اور بھی ہیں ابھی بے  
نمود

کہ خالی نہیں ہے ضمیر  
وجود

ہر اک منتظر تری یلغار  
کا

تری شوخی فکر و کردار  
کا

تو ہے فاتح عالم خوب و  
زشت

تجھے کیا بتاؤں تری

Excelsior Overcome Himalayan obstacles

Mitigate the magic of Time and Space

Many a world are yet to be born

The essence of belong is not barren

Everything awaits thine invasion, and

Thine dashing ideas and action

Thou are the conquerer of the worlds of the beautiful and the ugly What a glorious life has been bestowed on thou.

Iqbal's poetry is thus a message of hope and confidence, will and determination aroused by high ideals. In one sentence his entire philosophy can be summed up as under:

"The higher the ideal the more strenuous the effort, the more strenuous the effort the more sedulous the action, the more sedulous the action the more positive the results."

ہے آب حیات اسی جہاں

میں

شرط اس کے لیے ہے تشنہ

کامی<sup>94</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Bali-Jibreel/Kulliyat-i-Iqbal, pp. 128-29/420-21.

<sup>94</sup> Zarb-i-Kaiim/Kulliyat-i-Iqbai, p. 88/550.



The elixir of life is available in this very world,

The only condition is that thou developeth a crave for it.

ہمت کو  
شناوری  
مبارک  
پیدا نہیں  
بحر کا  
کنارا<sup>95</sup>

Hail determination to swim, The ocean is boundless

چاہے تو بدل ڈالے ہمیت  
چمنستان کی  
یہ ہستی دانا ہے، بینا ہے،  
توان ہے<sup>96</sup>

If he willeth, he can refashion this worldly garden, Man hath been blessed with wisdom, vision and-power.

It will thus be seen that the intellectual and emotional climate created by Iqbal's poetry is highly conducive to the popularization of the ideology of

<sup>95</sup> Bal-i-Jibreel/Kulliyat-i-Iqbal, p. 103/395.

<sup>96</sup> Bang-i-Dara/Kulliyat-i-Iqbal, p. 179/179.

economic progress. His philosophic visions and poetic flourishes have a special appeal for our masses. These characteristics of Iqbal's art and thought make his message exceedingly relevant to economic development. It can be used to spearhead all developmental efforts as it enables us to grasp the cultural rationale of economic achievement and creates a social mood in people without which no economic progress can be made.