

IQBAL—EPOCH-MAKING POET- PHILOSOPHER

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There are human beings who are born so that they may die just that. They do not live. They only exist. And then are simply extinct. Their birth is of no sequence. Their death also is without consequence. They, during their existence make no mark. They are not felt. And when they depart they do not leave behind "foot-prints on the sands of Time." They are persons only, having no personality. Their being is similar to what Abu Said Abul Khair conveys in the following verse:

"A bird sat on the top of a mountain and then flew away. Look as to what the bird added to the mountain and what it curtailed".

But there are others who mean and matter. They perform something, positive be it or negative. Their lives create a commotion in their circle or society. That commotion expands commensurate with the life-force of such meaningful individuals. And when they die they leave the world richer or poorer than that they had found.

Yes, there are men and men. They live differently. They die differently. There are who remain folded. There are who unfold themselves and thus expand their being i.e. they begin to live in others. Hence, we see a certain person whose death is just one death. And we see another person whose death is the death of many, according to and proportionate with the expansion of personality the affected circle of the departing is to be small or large. Sometimes, one death means the death of a family, sometimes, it is the death of a clan and sometimes it is the death of a whole society. Such a death

causes a sort of crisis in a society. There still is a kind of death that may shake the whole world of man.

Looking at these different phenomena we find that human societies are obliged to progress on account of individuals who possess individuality. Similarly it were individuals who retarded the onward march of a society on account of their overbearing negative influence. In short what essentially matters is the person blessed with a personality. William James in his article "Great Men And Their Environment" has dealt with this subject elaborately. It is a tight article, every sentence tied to the other, making it difficult to extract a portion to quote. Yet a few lines are penned down here. And thus says William James:

"There can be no doubt that the reform movement would make more progress in one year with an adequate personal leader than as now in ten without one. Were there a great citizen, splendid with every civic gift to be its candidate, who can doubt that he would lead us to victory? But at present, we, his environment, who sigh for him and would so gladly preserve and adopt him, if he came, can neither move without him, nor yet do anything to bring him forth. The lesson of the analyst that we have made (even on the completely deterministic hypothesis with which we started) forms an appeal of the most stimulating worth to the energy of the individual. Even the dogged resistance of the reactionary conservative to changes which he cannot hope entirely to defeat is justified and shown to be effective. He retards the movement, deflects it a little by the concessions he extracts; gives it a result and momentum, compounded of his inertia and his adversaries' speed and keeps up, in short a lateral pressure, which, to be sure, never heads it round about, but brings it up at last at a goal far to the right or left of that to which it would have drifted had he allowed to drift alone".¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ Selected Papers on Philosophy, J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd. New York, p. 189.

Thus in William James' opinion it is energetic individuals who push a society on to the path of progress. Society, no doubt, strengthens them by supporting and following them.

Similarly it is the powerful individuals who mislead a society or retard the pace of its progress. But William James' view is deterministic, for he believes that such promoters or demoters of societal cause are persons made like that. They, according to him, just serve a purpose assigned to them from above.

Hegel too is almost of the same opinion in respect of persons who bring about a revolution or transformation in human societies. Hegel gives away that such extra-ordinary persons serve the World-Spirit like ready tools. According to Hegel these persons usually meet a - pathetic end. This is how he lays down:

"If we go on to cast a look at the fate of these World-Historical persons whose vocation it was to be agents of the World-Spirit—we shall find it has been no happy one. They attained no calm enjoyment; their whole life was labour and trouble; their whole nature was naught else but master passion. When their object is attained they fall off like empty hulls from the kernel. They die early like Alexander; they are murdered, like Caesar; transported to St. Helena like Napoleon".¹⁰⁹

For Hegel, as we have seen, the World-Historical persons are fighters or rulers whereas William James' view is much vaster and "accommodating". According to him a tumultuous Hero could emerge from any department and stratum of a society. He can be a political leader, a social reformer, a religious preacher, a poet etc. It is obvious that a Hero's stature as an epoch-making individual can always be commensurate with the scope of change brought about by him. Anyway one thing is clear that it is not societies or communities which are historically consequential, it is rather the individuals

¹⁰⁹ Philosophy of History, Dover Publications Inc. New York, (1956) p.31.

who by transforming communities become mile-stones on the highways of human expedition.

But here we are addressed by an intriguing question. Were persons so momentous in the annals of history who reform, transform and revolutionize communities designed and moulded according to what they were to perform or were they willful persons, self-conscious, determined aspirants and hopeful of achieving something great? Similarly, were the individuals who hindered the onward march of these people or led them astray, just agents to their fate or World-Spirit (as Hegel believed)? Did they serve the Divine purpose only in a state of will-less rather unconscious docility?

The study of the Quran shows that human beings were born with unlimited potentialities which needed guidance from Allah, Almighty, the Creator of man. It is Allah who knows what the nature of man is in need of. Man's nature is energy compressed. If properly guided it can do a lot of good and if misguided it is capable of bringing about a lot of havoc upon himself as well as upon his fellow human beings. Therefore, Allah sent down Messengers for the guidance of human beings who preached to them revealed lessons. This shows that Man was not cast in a hard and frigid mould. He could form, reform and build himself into a good individual if he so desired. Allah's guidance was not clamped upon humanity. They were not compelled to follow the personal examples of Allah's Prophets whose personality set before them the model of a fully realised human self. Human beings were free to accept the Message or to reject it. They were free even to kill Allah's Messengers. And they did kill several from amongst them, as is stated by the Quran. This shows that human beings were cast neither as believers nor as unbelievers. They were not machine-made. Theirs was not a mass-production. Every individual was born as an individual. Hence, he or she had individual personality as their potential—which it was he or she who had to unfold through conscious efforts.

This makes manifest the fact that persons who became historically momentous had become so on account of their self-conscious and willful momentum. By dint of hard but positive labour, human beings could rise to solar heights and because of their negative efforts could stoop to the abyss of darkness. They look extraordinary because they trampled on "ordinary".--The extraordinary are individuals who really matter. Poor "mediocrities" matter not. Mediocrity is of no consequence. It makes no difference whether a mediocrity is positive or negative. But the deplorable fact is that human societies are replete with, or rather composed of altogether mediocrities. They float helplessly along with the ordinary flow of life around like straws because they do not exert their will-power and do not assert themselves. Such societies as do not produce extra-ordinary entities, in a way, maintain status quo and live in "peace". Mirza Ghalib expresses this idea in his peculiar ironical manner and subtle style!

"مرغے سر کو ہے
یہ نشست و
برخاست
بنگر کہ دران کوہ
چہ افزود و چہ
کاست"

"The world of man remains populous due to the absence of determined aspirants. A tavern becomes empty in proportion to the number of cups and jars filled with wine" (If there are no wine-biblers the flagons remain full).

Prolonged status quo leads to stagnation and deterioration. Determined aspirants who uphold positive values are thus imperative need of every society. Such persons are real figures. Others are zeros. It is obvious that

zeros become valuable on account of figures otherwise they are nothing even if they be one hundred million.

No doubt, it were figures like Sir Sayyed, Hali, Akbar, Zafar Ali Khan, Ali Brothers, Allama Iqbal, Quaid-e-Azam M. A. Jinnah and several other stalwarts who folded the Muslims of the Sub-continent into awareness and then gradually to self-awareness. Thus they transformed one hundred million zeros into a nation of as many individuals possessing will and might, alive, up-and-doing, ready to fight for the defence of their rights.

Allama Iqbal was a late-developer. He developed into a poet and a thinker of great consequence by dint of hard labour. He did not mind calling himself a thinker or even a seer. But he avoided calling himself a poet although the poet in him had got the better of that of the philosopher. No doubt, Allama Iqbal was a poet first and a philosopher afterwards. He entered the inner chambers of the souls of his devotees through poetry and not philosophy. It was his poetry that inflamed the spirit of the Muslim nation in South Asia. It was not the Six Lectures that brought about a change in the psyche of his enslaved people. "The Reconstruction" was essentially meant for the elite of learning. It addressed only a small circle of scholars and intellectuals. But his poetry impressed the elite as well as the ordinary students in the sphere of learning.

Anyway, Allama Iqbal was a rare example of a great poet avoiding to be known as a poet. The cause of his avoidance was the fact that his contemporary poets, barring exceptions, were just professionals. They were not serious about anything. Their poetry was a medium for the manifestation of an assumed and so-called artistic skill. And their art was only for the sake of art. They had no ideology to preach, no message to disseminate, no moral to communicate and no cause to support. They just versified the modes of their flitting moods or simply recorded their fleeting reflection in flimsy phrases. Allama Iqbal stood apart. He had to teach and guide the Muslims of the Sub-continent and through them had to transmit his hortatory tidings to

the Muslim Ummah, which for him, was neither a racial nor a territorial and linguistic entity. Muslim Ummah stood for spiritual brotherhood of mankind. Thus Allama Iqbal's message was, like Islam, extra-territorial and non-racial. Only a genius, well-versed in poetic art, could make theological, philosophic, social, economic, political, ethical and instructional contents sing like love-lyrics. His lyrics worked as swords. His verses were a clarion call against slavery, blind following, languor, aimlessness both in thought as well as in action. He waged war on despondency, defeatism and faithlessness. He was a voice of Hope. He conquered and is still conquering. He was a hero among poets.

Still it cannot be maintained that poetry was the sole or main occupation of his life. He was a very busy man. He was a practicing lawyer, hence had to devote lot of time to the preparation of cases. He was deeply involved in various matters concerning Muslims of the Sub-continent as well as the Muslim Ummah. He worked as examiner and paper-setter in different subjects and for different universities. He took practical part in his country's politics. He delivered dozens of lectures, presided over several functions, issued hundreds of statements of political, historical, educational and religious nature. He wrote thousands of letters, the great majority of which dealt with serious topics. He contributed many articles to so many papers. He met people freely from morn till late in the night. Every-body, from an ordinary college student to a scholar of high calibre and a politician of high standing, could come to meet and talk with him at leisure. He did not keep aloof from the hub of life. He was not a hermit-thinker. He remained in the battle-field of life. He led the leaders of Muslim India towards the pathway to Pakistan. Studied thus, he emerges as a great hero. There is hardly any other poet-philosopher in the world who developed his thought and art so steadily and tangibly and who left such a deep and transforming impact on the minds of his people. Allama Iqbal's circle of popularity is widening day by day, especially among the people who have to fight against slavery, despotism, despondency, demagoguery, injustice, high-handedness and lethargy. His is a

stirring message. Sincere recipient of that message cannot but be the master of his fate and the captain of his soul.

But Allama Iqbal's progress was not sudden. It was slow, and gradual but continuous and sustained. The conflict between the surroundings and the revolutionizing stalwart is always stern and unrelenting. For a determined person, a sustained state of tension is a source of unmitigating stimulant. To fight to conquer is an invigorating and rejuvenating enterprise. A thinker and a poet with no firm belief in some high ideology is always at much ease than the one who finds the surroundings absolutely different from what he liked or wanted them to be. An ordinary poet is seldom involved in some harsh conflict based on principles. An ordinary poet does feel the itch of conflicting circumstances but he does not go beyond expressing what he felt at a certain moment. Such expressions may be very impressive even without the fibre of a doctrine or belief or aim. But all these expressions remain scattered elements of emotions. They cannot make an integrated whole hence cannot create compact impression. Poets without a philosophy may also gain popularity. There have been innumerable poets who possessed artistic skill and enticing style. Yet it goes without saying that the great majority of poets left the works which can be characterized as accumulation of stray thoughts, scattered and contradicting sentiments. It is not something concentric. Hence, there is no unity of effect. Here is a quotation from an essay by David Daiches:

"Out of our quarrel with others we make rhetoric. Yeates once remarked: "Out of our quarrel with ourselves, poetry". Instead of the two poles being personality and tradition, they become opposing aspects of personality. A self-made tradition can only be of value to the literary artist when it contains self-contradiction. My thesis has been, as will, I hope, be clear by now that a religious tradition is of value to the literary artist as providing a challenge to individual experience out of which art may result. When that tradition disintegrates, the poet can take refuge in elegiac introspection or he can create or discover a tradition of his own. The former

practice may produce much that is valuable, but in the nature of things it cannot be maintained for long, its potentialities being limited and its possibilities soon exhausted. The latter can only work when the created or discovered tradition is complex enough to contain within itself the tensions which the great artist needs ; if it does not contain those tensions, then the artist is merely shadow boxing, being the product of his own imagination, it cannot at the same time be a challenge to his imagination"¹¹⁰.

When a person yields to obstacles and reconciles not to subjugate the opposition, his state of tension comes to an end. He begins to relax. Compromise means dying down of the spirit of confrontation. It is sustained state of tension which makes Heroes of uncompromising individuals. It is a sustained state of tension that sublimates resolute seekers into artists--poets included. The stronger the conflict, the higher the art. Allama Iqbal's personality had nourished upon a concrete and well-integrated religious, historic and cultural tradition. For him Islam, Islamic history and culture was never some ordinary object of learning. For him it was his life-blood. He lived it.

He lived on it. But surroundings were completely antagonistic to whatever Islam stood for. Islam stood for freedom whereas Allama Iqbal found the Muslim Ummah in a state of abject servitude all the world over, his own home-land included.

There was thus a harsh conflict between what he believed and what prevailed around. Allama Iqbal held Islamic moral values very dear whereas Western lax modes of culture had taken them by storm. Contribution of Muslim communities to the evolution of scientific research and enquiry had been laudable over the centuries whereas Allama Iqbal saw his contemporary Muslim societies given to all sorts of languor. They had become oblivious of the fact that theirs was a glorious past and what their forebears

¹¹⁰ Perspectives in Contemporary Criticism, Harper and Row Publishers, New York. Evanston and London (1968) p. 58.

did, could be done by themselves as well—and certainly more than that. But the Muslims, as it looked, had struck a compromise with their existing ignoble circumstances. As such future could offer no hope to them. ' Hope had not to come from outside, it had to surge out from within. That prevailing state of insensate noin-chalance could be called a state of death in life. In other words the Muslim societies were composed of individuals who were, in fact, breathing dead bodies. Muslims who were ordained by Allah to learn, study, search, research and ponder over the principles of nature at work and the natural phenomena all around, had lost interest in all this. The great majority of them consisted of illiterate persons, whereas they were directed by the Holy Prophet (SAWW) to keep on learning from the very infancy to the last breath. They were, as believers in one Almighty, Lord, told not to fear anything and anyone except Allah. But Muslims had lost faith in Allah and hence were afraid of everything and everyone except Allah. Allama Iqbal could hardly withstand such a deplorable sight. In short it was for Allama Iqbal all challenge, all around, his surroundings rather milieu invaded him from all sides but he did not give way. He stood his ground. He had to guide his people. He had to resuscitate their dying spirits. In spite of all what he stood confronted with, he never lost hope. He was sure it was not impossible. War could be waged and had to be fought till victory, howsoever' far away, the goal might look. And till the last breath he could not relax. He did not like to. This unbroken tension strengthened his self i.e. ego. This state of constant challenge added to the power of his determination and resolute-ness. It boosted his philosophy of Self.

Allama Iqbal generalised the meanings of tension and eulogised all kinds of challenges focussed on self-conscious, resolute and soul-ful persons. He relates the story of a youth from Merv who had come to Sayyed Ali Hujwairi and had complained of the high-handedness of his enemies. In Sheikh Hujwairi's reply lies the point Allama Iqbal wished to make

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"I tell you the truth, your enemy too, is your friend. His existence adds to your glory".

"Whosoever knows the stations of the self, considers a powerful enemy to be a blessing from Allah". "The sword of resolution is whetted by the stones that block the path".

"Traversing stage after stage is the test of the sword of resolution".

"What is death—it is be oblivious to the self

Do you imagine it is parting of soul and body ?".

Thus the significance of tension created by various challenges of life is explained by Allama Iqbal while writing to Professor

R.A. Nicholson on the meaning of the self and his philosophy aimed at it:

"In man the centre of life becomes an Ego or Person. Personality is a state of tension and can continue only if that state is maintained. If the state of tension is not maintained relaxation will ensue. Since personality or the state of tension, is the most valuable achievement of man, he should see that

he does not revert to a state of relaxation. That which tends to maintain the state of tension tends to make us immortal. Thus the idea of personality gives us a standard of value: it settles the problem of good and evil. That which fortifies personality is good, that which weakens it is bad. Art, religion, and ethics must be judged from the stand-point of personality--Personal immortality is an aspiration: you can have it if you make an effort to achieve it. It depends on our adopting in this life modes of thought and activity which tend to maintain the state of tension---Thus, if our activity is directed towards the maintenance of a state of tension, the shock of death is not likely to affect it. After death there may be an interval of relaxation, as the Quran speaks of barzakh, or intermediate state which lasts until the Day of Resurrection".²

Does tension exist and is available for everybody ? Is it felt by everybody ? Obviously, tension is only for those who confront

1. Kulliyat-i-Farsi. Sh. Ghulam Ali & Sons, Lahore p. 53.

2. Secrets of the Self: Sh. M. Ashraf, Lahore 1964 pp. xi, xii, xiii (Introduction).

it. It is not for those who yield to it ,,,. Here again the question raises its head. Are the great men moulded to become not less than 'heroes ? Or: Are men made great by certain circumstances amidst which they are thrown ? If they are born as and are destined to be great men then credit will go to the Maker who made them as such. To eulogize them for their great performance would be only a miscredit because in that case they were nothing more than puppets in the iron-band of Fate, greatness being thrust upon them. On the contrary if they earned greatness through their untiring endeavours and relentless resolution then and only then they are genuinely great. As for the circumstances it is thousands into thousands of persons who apparently are in the similar situation. Then why is it that only a few

emerge as conquerors or atleast as laudable fighters. The world of man is a vast, rather limitlessly vast, war-ground and a perpetual war of existence is on. Innumerable battles and skirmishes are taking place, here and there in every part of the ground. Here is the gun-battle and there the pen-battle. Here is the battle of stone, brick, metal and wood, while there is that of colour, sound and rhythm. All fighters do not emerge as heroes although there may have been among them persons much more valiant than the emergent hero or heroes—Life's battle is always on and is a challenge to everybody. The question is as to who takes part in it will-lessly and who is there to fight willfully rather aggressively. That makes all the difference. It discriminates between one who exists and the other who lives.

Carlyle in "On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History" deals with this subject and has his own particular angle to look at it. He states thus, "Hero, Prophet, Poet—many different names, in different times and places, do we give to Great Men ; according to varieties we note in them, according to the sphere in which they have displayed themselves We might give many more names, on this same principle. I will remark again, however, as a fact not unimportant to be understood, that the different sphere constitutes the grand origin of such distinction ; that the Hero can be Poet, Prophet, King, Priest, or what you will, according to the kind of world he finds himself born into. I confess, I have no notion of a truly great man that could not be all sorts of men—True there are aptitudes of nature too. Nature does not make all great men, more than all other. Men

in the self-same mould. Varieties of aptitude doubtless: but infinitely more of circumstances ; and for oftenest it is the latter only that are looked to. But it is as with common men in the learning of trades. You take any man, as yet a vague capability of a man, who could be any kind of crafts-man ; and make him into a smith, a carpenter, a mason: he is then and thenceforth that and nothing else.—The Great Man also to what shall be bound apprentice ? Given your Hero, is he to become Conqueror, King, Philosopher, Poet ? It is an inexplicably complex controversial calculation

between the world and him. He will read the world and its laws; the world and its laws will be there to be. What the world, on this matter shall permit and bid it, as we said, the most important fact about the world."1

All persons born at Sialkot between 1870 and 1980 did not become Heroes of Allama Iqbal's stature. All Muslims who got education in Lahore or Cambridge did not progress into "Seer".

All, poets born in India of yore around those years did not become harbingers of Islamic Renaissance. All educated Muslims of the Sub-continent belonging to Allama's contemporary era did

not react to the slavish plight of his society in such a fascinating and encouraging manner. All Muslim Barristers were not as conscious and worried about the rights of Muslims as Allama Iqbal, barring a few honourable exceptions. All students of Maulana Sayyad Mir Hassan did not rise to become historic personalities. All circumstances are not equal for all but mainly or on the average may be equal. Some may be better in some respects than others. A certain mean might be detected. But Allama Iqbal and Quaid-a-Azam rose exceptionally and disproportionably higher than their compatriots who educationally were equally qualified and had almost equal or better opportunities. Intellectually too, perhaps there did not exist much essential difference. Then why had such a great distance transpired in the long run ? Perhaps these two leaders were more sincere, more steadfast, more truthful, more reliable and more well-meaning than others. Hence, they proved to be more deserving recipients of Allah's Grace than others. They expanded into Great Personalities for others to look up to them with respect, love and

1. Sartor Resartus, Everyman's Library-London, New York

pp. 312.13.

awe. Such straightforward and reliable individuals grow into rallying point for the will and determination of their people who follow such worthies faithfully and thus undergo an imperceptible transformation. The Divine Message is being broadcast every moment but it is received only by those who keep their apparatus on the receiving end. Forbearance and sustained struggle with sincerity of purpose makes one rise above other in life's categorical competition ; a trader making more money than others in the same trade ; a lawyer amassing more wealth and fame than his numerous colleagues ; an administrator earning more respect than many of his fellow administrators ; a soldier winning more medals than his mates. But such examples of progress, rise and reward seldom build the persons concerned into great men of history or heroes of all times. Such persons will be called successful ones in their respective spheres of struggle. Their ambitions were personal and similarly their achievements. That too is commendable. That too in a limited circle sets a good example to follow, for those who are at a comparatively much lower level of affluence and influence. Such persons may earn millions of rupees, may rise as administrators to the highest rank in their country, yet they may not be lauded as great men. Greatness has its own measures and standards. Magnitude of greatness can be judged in proportion to the realization of high impersonal ideals.

High ideals are not personal or familiar goals. One wedded to high ideals, for example, strives to become beneficial for the society at large with no axe of his own to grind. He strives to set personal example of sacrifice for opening the pathway to progress for millions. He strives to teach mankind that the gist of morality lies in man's respect for man. He strives to infuse sense of confidence and self-respect in weaker elements of his society or in weaker societies of the world and exhorts them to fight for their legitimate rights.

A fighter who fights for the sake of conquering territories may retain his name in the annals of history as a great conqueror but not as a Great man. Superior killing skill is one thing but fighting to do away with high-handedness, to mitigate miseries of the down-trodden and enslaved peoples is quite another. Nietzsche's superman may be a killer, a despot, a conqueror and a ruthless mighty ruler. For A llama Iqbal, he may not perhaps be more than a big pirate, a robber or a murderer as we see in the following dialogue between a pirate and Alexander the Great—great as a conqueror.

سکندر

صلہ تیرا تری

زنجیر یا شمشیر

ہے میری!

کہ تیری ریزنی

سے تنگ ہے

دریا کی پہنائی

فراق

سکندر! حیف تو

اس کو

جو انمردی

سمجھتا ہے

گوارا اس طرح

کرتے ہیں ۵

مجشموں کی
رسوائی؟
ترا پیشہ بھی سفا
کی، میرا پیشہ
بھی سفا کی
کہ ہم قزاق ہیں
دونوں تو میدانی
میں دریائی؟¹¹¹

Alexander: Your reward is your chains or my sword. Your piracy has straitened the spaciousness of ocean.

Pirate: Alexander! I am sorry do you think your treatment of me is chivalrous? Equals do not tolerate dishonour of their equals in this manner.

My profession is spilling blood. Your profession also, is spilling blood. We both, are pirates, your field of action is earth and that of mine water.

Allama Iqbal's hero, on the contrary, is the best man, perfect man, a genuine human being, a fully realized self—an incarnation of all that is positive and good, an embodiment of Allah's Commandments and Injunctions. Allama Iqbal fondly awaited the emergence of such a benign person, every inch a man, hence fit to rule the world and capable of bringing to light the hidden potentialities of human beings. Mankind, according to Allama Iqbal, were ever in need of such heroes who give the message of love,

¹¹¹ Zarb-i-Kalim, Kulliyat-i-Iqbal (Urdu) p. 156—617.

peace, progress, fraternity, equality and add to the beauty, vitality and grandeur of the world of man. Of that Hero, Allama

Iqbal spoke thus:

1.

اے
سوار
اشہب
دوران بیا
اے فروغ
دیدہ
امکان
بیا!
رونق
ہنگامہ
ایجاد
شو!
شورش
اقوام را
خاموش
کن

نعمه

خود را

بهشت

گوش

کن

خیز و

قانون

اخوت

ساز ده!

جام

صہبائے

محبت

باز ده!

باز در

عالم بیار

ایام

صلح!

جنگجو

یار را

بدہ پیغام
صلح!
نوع
انسان
مزرع و
تو
حاصلی!
کاروان
زندگی
را
منزلی!

112

"Appear O! The ruler of the world.

Appear O! The light of the eyes of all that is to be". "Illumine the ever-creating scene of world's activity. Dwell in the pupils of our eyes (you are so fondly awaited)".

"Silence the tumultuous noise of nations. Imparadise our ears with your music".

¹¹² Asrar-i-Khudi, Kulliyat-l-Iqbal (Persian) p. 46.

"Arise and tune the harp of Fraternity. Give us back the cup of the wine of love".

"Bring once more days of peace to the world. Give the message of peace to war-mongers".

"Mankin i are the corn-field and you are the harvest. You are destination of the caravan of life".

This Hero, is not greedy of gold and rubies He is not thirsty of blood. He does not side with the powerful. He does not hate the poor. He suffers from no prejudice, He is the human model for mankind to get at. In Dr. Yusuf Hassain Khan's opinion the Perfect Man or the genuine and real man "resuscitates life by his miraculous actions. He gives fresh and new interpretation to the confused and vague life-philosophy. He bestows new significance on ancient terms and gives new direction to the facts. He changes the course of the creative current of history as he wills. Through him the best human qualities appear in the form of best characters in history. Although he is beyond the possibilities and activities of history yet his struggle harmonizes with it. He is the soul of the world and quintessence of all that exists.¹¹³

We will never dare call A llama Iqbal a Superman. He never was but we can make bold to say that to some extent, some qualities of the Best Man or the Real Man did reflect in him. He saw life around him with a critical eye. He did not agree to the prevalent materialist mode of behaviour. He was never over-awed by the shoddy culture of the western nations who then ruled the world. As a true believer in the truth of human values of Islam he could never suffer from even a slightest feeling of inferiority. All around him threw a challenge to him. He accepted the challenge and tried to mould the surrounding mode of fashion-able ideas according to what he believed to be right. He could not be taken in by the glamour of the west. He was sure the

¹¹³ Ruh i-Iqbal, Aina-i-Adab, Lahore p. 206.

glittering diamonds of western civilization were gone. It was not Allama Iqbal's blind prejudice, for according to him whatever was good for mankind was "the lost property" of the Muslims and hence had to be obtained. Everything pro-human according to him, belonged to Islam. Similarly everything anti-human was anti Islam. His likes and dislikes had no territorial or ethnic basis, they pertained only to what was good and what was evil. He had studied the European way of life from close quarters. He was sure that a culture bereft of human values could not last long. Advanced technology could equip Europe with superior killing devices and enable her to subjugate the unadvanced nations and societies but could never furnish them with the prestigious attributes enabling them to be known as upholders of human values. He was sure, the materialistic attitude of the conquering nations was about to bring about their tragic doom. He was certain that nothing was wrong with Islam. Islam was the eternal Truth. Islam, hence could never become obsolete. It was ever fresh. That eternal Truth was revealed to the last Prophet of Allah and was contained in the Quran. It was Allama Iqbal's firm belief that the best practical model of best human qualities for all human beings till the Resurrection was the Prophet (S.A.S.) who was the best embodiment of Quranic Commandments and Injunctions and all other direct and indirect teachings of the Quran. European culture at its zenith, supported by all that the most advanced scientific discoveries could offer in the field of knowledge, in the form of decorous inventions, glamorous outfit, pompous banks, imposing buildings, fascinating clubs and dancing halls alongwith a general phenomenon of prosperity and mirth all around, could not even for a moment dazzle the penetrating eyes of Allama Iqbal. For him all that looked like a spreading and flourishing tree with rotten roots. A deplorable glory he made a declaration to this effect in March, 1907 when he was in London. He warned the West that the edifice of their culture was about to fall to the ground like a nest on a frail bough. It was the materialist, racist and territorial outlook of European societies which was about to array one society against the other and thus cause mutual devastation which Allama Iqbal called Europe's attempt at cultural suicide. He, simultaneously,

told the Muslims that 'Renaissance of Islam was just round the corner,'¹¹⁴ And said so in unequivocal terms thirty one years before his death. This was his firm belief and not a kind of poetic trance or momentary fits of optimism or a reflection of wishful-thinking. He did not budge even in apparently the darkest moments of defeat in November, 1918 when the last Flag of Muslim rule went down. That was the Flag of Ottoman Turks. Allama Iqbal termed that disaster as last twinkling of stars and explained that when the stars become dim it shows the morn is about to dawn. This he had told in 1923 in his famous 'Tulu-e-Islam'¹¹⁵—And that year was the turning point. in the contemporary history of Muslim nations. It was not easy to awake Muslims from their deep slumbers. But Allama Iqbal went on issuing his clarion call. Slowly and slowly, Muslims of the Sub-continent began to react to the surrounding circumstances. Allama Iqbal left the trodden path of Urdu poetry when he was in England. It was a sudden jump upwards. He turned a new leaf as a poet, and a thinker. He was not a limelight-monger as generally the poets are. His poetry had turned into a mission and that too an august mission. He had to look to the pace of the success of the Mission and not to the pace of personal popularity won. This is why he shunned calling himself a poet. He did a great job and became great on account of it. Professor Muhammad Mujib states "Dr. Iqbal could not get absorbed in petty matters. People may admit it or may not but the fact is that he completed his great mission. Between the man' he dreamt of and himself, there existed the difference of situation only. A deed he thought good, was, if we ponder over it, an aspect of his own performance. He had infused within himself such a strong conviction as generates all the burden of life—He had come to know of many secrets which are the soul of faith and honour for humanity. He had qualities which denote true faith, genuine humanity and authentic knowledge. In other words, the sincere future-building and life-forming sentiments of a nation had become concentrated in his heart. This had built him into a model or example about which history proclaims. Yet it is genuine and upto the

¹¹⁴ Bang-i-Dara, Kulliyat-e-Iqbal (Urdu) pp. 140-141-142.

¹¹⁵ Bang-i-Dara, Kulliyat-i-Iqbai (Urdu) Poem Tulu-e-Islam, first verse.

mark. Religion gives its verdict by declaring that it ought to be as it is. People belonging to every age desire to become like him."¹¹⁶

Allama Iqbal knew that the foresight and insight with which he had been endowed, was not for his personal benefit alone it was for the good of humanity, for the good of Muslim Ummah and particularly for the good of the Muslims of the Sub-continent.¹¹⁷ His was, as Professor Muhammad Mujib has observed, an encompassing personality. An Arab poet epitomized this wide subject in the following verse:

ليس من الله بمستنكر ان يجمع العالم في واحد

"It would not be unbecoming of Allah if He deposits the world in the person of one man".

No person can grow into a useful individual of his society unless he gains experience pertaining to social problems by throwing himself into the turmoil of life's trials. A person is truthful only theoretically unless proved practically as such. And he cannot do it without living in a society and without dealing with its people in different concerns. A person puts up with others if he lives in and with others. He is tolerant only when he tolerates vagaries of others with grace. He has a spirit of sacrifice but this spirit cannot be put into practice by a hermit who dwells in a cave. The spirit of sacrifice has to be demonstrated in a society. An individual can be accepted as a man of integrity with reference to his deeds and dealings with other individuals or groups— Then and then only it transpires that a particular person led a useful life—life of truthfulness, forbearance, tolerance, integrity and selflessness. All these traits strengthen self—a man becoming man genuinely, a self realized veritably. Hermits cannot concretize morals, cannot set good models of it. Morals deal with actions. Morals are not preserves of

¹¹⁶ Perfect Man or Spirit of the Era.

¹¹⁷ Iqbal-Jamiah Ke Musannifin Ki Nazar Mein corn. Dr. GoGnpichand Narang Maktaba-i-Jamia Ltd., Delhi pp. 30-31.

philosophy and hence are not kept at a respectable distance, high and dry like philosophy itself. Dr. Yusuf Hussain Khan observes:

"Even collective efforts of a society are essentially individual enterprise, strength and courage. Originality and inventiveness are purely individual tracts. Generally the outcome of individual creativity takes the form of collective one. It is always one who makes scientific discovery, but afterwards on account of its impact and results, it assumes the shape of something collective. Cultural values too, are created by individuals which then spread in a society. Abstract and analogical society which in fact, is a cumulation of individuals has till today neither created or caused a scientific discovery, nor has given birth to a cultural value. In the opinion of individualists, the measure of all things is the "individual". A society takes shape according to the way its individuals arrange and integrate mutual relations. Individuals are tangible centres around which collective perceptions and emotions get together").

Muslims of the Sub-continent sustained an all-embracing defeat around the middle of the 19th century. Sir Sayyed Ahmed Khan deserves our homage on account of his determination, faith, sincerity, steadfastness, courage, statesmanship and firm belief in the truth of Islam. He struggled hard and performed alone, what perhaps a huge army could not have done. He resuscitated the dying spirits of the Muslims-one individual fashioning many others who in turn became rallying points for thousands of their coreligionists. Among these pillars were Maulana Hali, Akbar Allahabadi, Allama Shibli, Waqar-ul-Mulk, Mohsin-ul-Mulk etc. Then as a younger contemporary Allama Iqbal accepted the challenge. He also tread the path of his Godly predecessors who followed the foot-prints of the Prophets of Allah. The traits of such wayfarers are perseverance, hopefulness, purity of

heart, love for all—good of others, being the supreme ambition. Such persons do not measure their success in material.¹¹⁸ Ruh-i-Iqbal pp. 216-17.

terms. They feel successful if they are sure they did their duty faithfully according to the best of their capabilities. Hardships do not discourage them. Applauded, they do not become proud. Applaud adds to their humility and they are more thankful to Allah who enabled them to perform something laudable. Great Men on account of their lofty aims face hardest challenges, rather deserve it. Small challenges are meant for the small people. Life amplifies itself through conquering hardships and surmounting difficulties. Says Allama Iqbal:

"To live means to conquer, that is all. To desire is to dissipate the spell of victory and nothing else".

Allama Iqbal refers to a saying of Hazrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi and then offers his own observations relating to that saying. It is as under "Muhammad (S.A.S.) of Arabia, ascended the highest Heaven and returned. I swear by God that if I had reached that point, I should never have returned".

These are the words of a great Muslim saint. Abdul Quddus of Gangoh. In the whole range of Sufi literature it will be probably difficult to find words which in a single sentence disclose such an acute perception of the psychological difference between the prophetic and mystic types of consciousness. The mystic does not wish to return from the repose of "unitary experience" and even when he does return, as he must, his return does not mean much for mankind at large. The Prophet's return is creative. He returns to insert himself into the sweep of time with a view to control the forces of history and thereby to create a fresh world of ideals'.¹¹⁹

Allama Iqbal too, took the path the prophets of Allah had taken. He had to bring about a change in his society by injecting into the spirits of its

¹¹⁸ Asrar-i-Khudi p. 34-35.

¹¹⁹ The Reconstruction : M. Ashrat, Lahore (1944)"p. 124.

individuals fresh ideals and an ever strong hope to achieve them. He was sure of his success. He knew his sincere efforts relating to the good for the Muslim Ummah and for human beings at large will attract the attention of people who would appreciate the revolution brought about by him, although the revolution was not brought about for the sake of winning applaud:

پس از من شعر من
خوانند و دریا بند و
می گویند!
جهانے را دگرگون
کرد یک مرد خود
آگا ہے!

'When I am dead, this my lay man will recite and say: One man, who was self-aware transformed a world everywhere'.