

IQBAL' S CONCEPT OF CULTURE

While defining the ingredients of Muslim culture, Iqbal emphasized that the spirit of Muslim culture was essentially but as classical not so much as a breaking point initiating a process of intellectual revolution abolition of priesthood and inductive reasoning. He stated that reason hereditary kingship in Islam, the constant emphasis that is laid on Nature experience in the Qur'an and History formed the basis of this new intellectual frame work. Iqbal's emphasis- on the recognition and development its of collective (ego) is nothing but creativity of individuals transformation into a system of intellectual power which controls subjaugates the various phenomena of direction again on history. of self-knowledge, development and hi story In i based d again on other words it is the highest development of cultural human consciounes. visualized as the ultimate Explaining the various aspects of the spirit of Muslim culture of the method Iqbal identifies method of f observation and experience and experiment in Islam which led to its anti-classical manifestations. Knowledge of the concrete the conceived as "the intellectual the power of man to pass concrete that makes it possible in the sense beyond the concrete". This knowledge is evolutionary that time is seen as an active agent of change. The culture that lags behind the intellectual framework Muslim culture is viewed as decay dynamic ultimate extinction. Thus Muslim process of human concept of the universe. This evolutionary process historical relationship with matter receives transformation within the parameters of criticism to maintain its the inductive intellect which is constantly shaped by the understanding of the historical facts. However even the knowledge of history is visualized as playing a two-fold role: as an art of firm the reader's imagination and as a development into a genuine science. The matter in further conceived as a wider experience it which life is perceived as an organic unity. This idea of human unity is the hallmark of Iqbal's interpretation of culture and Iqbal visualizes Islam as a social movement to make this idea a living factor.

Because of these dynamic features, Muslim culture is presente as opposed to "magian cultures". While defending the intellectual: legacy of Muslim culture as antimagian, Iqbal confesses that because of host of factors "a magian crust has grown over Islam" and t crust is none other than substitution of religious formalism with Muslim thought,. blind following

with freedom of choices and denial of the human ego as a free power. Concluding his statement on the spirit of Muslim culture, Iqbal asks Muslims “to appreciate, the cultural value of the idea of the finality of Prophethood Islam”.

The Finality of the Prophethood in Islam forms the basis Iqbal’s “principle of movement in the structure of Islam”. This view provides him with a foundation to study the various culture transformations that were going on in Turkey, South Asia and other Muslim areas. It is here that human creativity, unshackled and unrestricted, is seen as a psychological cure for the magi attitude of constant expectation which invites fatalism and divine intervention. These aspects of Muslim culture were criticised by Iqbal as anti-historical and opposed to the intellectual implication of the ideas of finality of Prophethood. Subsequent development of Muslim thought and culture are seen as nothing more than individual interpretations which could not possibly claim any finality but they assumed a permanent feature of Muslim culture. These unfortunate developments were perpetuated because of colonial rule in the sub-continent. The British attempted to preserve those aspects of Muslim culture which were not retrogressive but also antithetical to the spirit of Islam, and this was where Iqbal had to emphasize that the re-interpretation of Muslim culture by some Muslim liberals was perfectly justified. He says “the teaching of the Qur’an that life is a process of progressive creation necessitates that each generation guided but unhampered by the work of its predecessors should be prompted to solve its own problems”.

It was on the basis of these ideas of movement, liberalism and progressive evolution that Iqbal pleaded for the emancipation of Muslim culture in South Asia from alien influences. As a matter of fact what is stressed in his Allahabad address of December 1930, is the fulfillment of his philosophy of Muslim culture of Pakistan which had a potential to develop into a unique and distinct system for others to emulate and for the future, Pakistani nation to achieve a higher social consciousness which could enable it to develop material as well as intellectual aspects of its culture. It is indeed relevant to point out that when he spoke of a future Muslim independent state in South Asia, he laid a particular emphasis on the areas that constitute Pakistan today.

We have been told by some historians and political scientists that Pakistan was made possible because of a process of negotiations, round table

conferences and constitutional framework introduced by the British without any reference to the fact that what made Pakistan possible was the cultural and historical identity of the people of this country. It is not a coincidence that demographically, Muslims were in an overwhelming majority in the areas of today's Pakistan, whereas the political power base was mostly away from these territories. It was both the territorial contiguity of Pakistani territory with the Middle East and Central Asia as well as its unique cultural identity that made the existence of independent Pakistan possible.

Extracts from the Cultural Policy of Pakistan, National Commission on History and Culture, Islamabad, 1995.