

ALLAMA IQBAL AND HIS VIEWS ON
ISLAMIC NATIONALISM

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ABSTRACT

Contrary to the contemporary thought of nationalism Allama Iqbal ascended very high, gave mankind a practical philosophy of life based on the values and fundamentals of Islam. He wanted people of the east to return to early phase of Islam without losing some of the best features of it. He was both versifier of Islam and the poet of mankind and tried to get rid Muslim community from the hibernating mood of life. Being a recognized poet of east and the Wiseman of the Ummah on the grounds unchallengeable qualities, he believed that it was the narrow conception of patriotism that was responsible for all strife's and wars in the world and thought it was an insult to Divine Unity that humanity should be divided into so many sections or tribes or nations. Allama felt restless as he found humanity groaning under the burden of materialistic system of the west with their terrible features of colonialism, imperialism and a soulless) civilisation. To him it was nothing short of a crusade to breakdown all the barriers that unfortunately divided humanity even to this day. He condemns European materialistic and politico-economic theories and institutions for the reason that they had initiated and increased strife, degeneration and indigence in the Eastern hemisphere. Allama emphasised that Islamic community will achieve strength and perfect solidarity by adopting the universal code of conduct free from any biased approach. He vehemently opposed the western nationalistic concept of life because it provides unlimited powers to the powerful and corrupts the liberty of weak people.

Born in Sialkot, India, (1877-1938) Presently in Pakistan under British colonial rule, Allama Sir Muhammad Iqbal studied literature, law and philosophy at Government College at Lahore, Cambridge University, and then University of Munich.¹ He wrote originally in Urdu, then in Persian in order to reach a wider Muslim audience. Iqbal admired the role of Jamal-ud-din Afghani who was the first to harmonise his philosophy of Pan-Islamism. He further harmonised it and evolved what came to be known as (*Ummah*). He expressed his confidence that the new philosophy of the *Millat-e-Islam* he had propounded in his Rumuz would certainly prove an eye-opener to those whom he describes as Muslims belonging to the new school to the real nature of Islamic nationalism. This concept is totally in contradiction of which Europe was not proud. He rejected western thesis of nationalism as political ideology and did not concede its superiority over Islam. He told, acceptance of western nationalism as supreme value leads to fascism.

The existing Muslim states are no more than colonial encroachments on the ruins of an Islamic entity. These encroachments were erected only to make Muslims feel at home rather than to have them think about living as one Ummah. Presently, there are 57 Muslim countries, with 57 policies and 57 Shirk-infested national anthems, divided interests and unclear strategies. The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Arab League are useless for the same reason. Ummah, thus, is the most dreaded word for those who harbour hatred for Islam and consider followers of Islam as communal and terrorists.²

To the anti-Islam alliance of Christian-Zionists and capitalists, the ideology of Islam is the challenge to overcome it. According to the principles of Islam, there is no basis for division among Muslims with respect to place of birth, ethnicity, culture, language, national boundaries or nationality.

ان هذه امتكم امة واحدة وانا ربكم فاعبدون

Indeed this community of your is one community and I am your Lord: So worship Me alone. But the people(of their own accord) out asunder their own (One) creed into many religions: they have all to return Us.(Al-Anbiyaa: 91)

This ideology also quash the concept of nation-states as a major foundation for division among Muslims. These modes and systems of identification are invalid because not only they would force Muslims to worship their respective states and their secular laws, but

also because they would divide their interests. That is why the United States and its allies shiver to the core when Muslims refer to the concept of the Ummah and establishing an Islamic state or Khilafah.

In fact the concept of Ummah runs contrary to the Christain-zionists designs of the religiously motivated persons on the media, academia, political and military form of the war on Islam. Muslims from last one and half century are continuous to walk with difficulty along a treacherous path that has been constructed for them by others. The destination for this course is one that they have led us to believe is beneficial and worthy of striving for. The fuel for this journey is extracted from the false concepts put forth by imperialists implanted in the Muslim world. Among these concepts one of them stigmatizes the Prophet's Ummah is Nationalism. It is a dangerous concept that has become the emotional basis for the state of the Ummah today and one, which visibly fortifies the division among those who profess to believe in the same ideology. Allama Iqbal pointed his views in this way:

بتانِ رنگ و خوں کو توڑ کر ملت میں گم ہو جا
نہ تورانی رہے باقی نہ ایرانی نہ افغانی³

He Stessed upon the Muslims to shun down their difference and work under the banner of Ummah, because the faith did not depend upon the region, caste and colour.

The Muslim Ummah was never confronted with such a dilemma in the past during Islamic rule. They never suffered from disunity, widespread oppression, stagnation in earlier period. Nationalism has not developed its roots naturally, nor did it come about in response to any hardships faced by the people, nor due to the frustration they felt when Europe started to dominate the world after the industrial revolution. Rather nationalism was planted in the Muslim minds through a well planed thought-out scheme by the European powers, after their failure to destroy the Islamic State by force. Nationalism cannot unite the people because it is based on quest and creates a struggle between the people and leads to conflicts.

Allama Iqbal's conceptual goal was to analyze the reasons for the decay of Muslim culture and provide the tools by which Muslims may reclaim their faith and reorganise themselves under the banner of Ummah. He had greatly contributed to Islamic revivalism in order to build a nation state on the ground of Pan-Islamism. He must be considered most important Muslim thinker of the twentieth century, who strongly condemned Muslims for failing to live up to the ideals of Islam. He also condemned the various aspects of Western

thought, especially the secularism and Nationalism of the West and its materialistic ideology that lead to colonialism and racism. He rejected the culturally centered views of western thinkers such as George Friedrich Hegel and August Comte on the basis that they lead to a fatalistic and deterministic understanding of man's evolution, denying human freedom and creativity. He emphasized that unlike Christianity, Islam came with "legal concepts" with "civic significance," with its "religious ideals" considered as inseparable from social order, therefore the construction of a policy on national lines, if it means displacement of the Islamic principles of solidarity, is unthinkable to a Muslim.

ان کی جمعیت کا ہے ملک و نسب پر انحصار
قوت مذہب سے مستحکم ہے جمعیت تری⁴

Allama stressed not only the need for the political unity of Muslim community, but blending the Muslim population into a wider society based on the Islamic Principles in order to unify in to a single Ummah. He thus became the first political ideologue, and stressed that Muslims are a distinct nation and thus deserves Political independence on religious grounds. Being extremely sensitive, as a born poet he had diverse current of thought abroad. It is surprising that Allama during his poetic career, spanning some four decades had imbibed, approved, applauded and commanded a great many ideas. Ideas which occupied various positions along the spectrum on the philosophic, social and political plane. He denounced nationalism and propagated pan-Islamism. and exhorted for the building up of a single Ummah and his clarion call for neeling unity among Muslims. Being a charming personality he left unforgettable impression on the Muslim mind by thought and ideas, and radically modified by his study of the religious philosophy of Islam. He firmly believed that it was sure to lift the noblest of the creatures from the pitfall of mundane needs and get rid of every kind of bondage. For the attainment of self-realisation, he thought freedom of the soul as an unavoidable necessity. He expressed his feelings in this way:

پانی پانی کر گئی مجھ کو قلندر کی یہ بات
تو جھکا جب غیر کے آگے نہ من تیرا نہ تن⁵

According to him the advice of the Kalandar had melted me because whenever Muslim accepted the subjugation of others, they lost their self realisation, their idealism and consciousness.

In thought and idealism, Allama Iqbal ascended very high, gave mankind a practical philosophy of life based on the values and

fundamentals of Islam. He wanted people of the east to return to early phase of Islam without losing some of the best features of it. He was both versifier of Islam and the poet of mankind and tried to get rid Muslim community from the hibernating mood of life. Being a recognized poet of east and the Wiseman of the Ummah on the grounds unchallengeable qualities, he believed that it was the narrow conception of patriotism that was responsible for all strife's and wars in the world and thought it was an insult to Divine Unity that humanity should be divided into so many sections or tribes or nations. Allama felt restless as he found humanity groaning under the burden of materialistic system of the west with their terrible features of colonialism, imperialism and a soulless (soured) civilisation. To him it was nothing short of a crusade to breakdown all the barriers that unfortunately divided humanity even to this day. He condemns European materialistic and politico-economic theories and institutions for the reason that they had initiated and increased strife, degeneration and indigence in the Eastern hemisphere. Giving his explanation on hating the western system of political life, he once said:

I am opposed to nationalism, as it is understood in Europe, because I see in it the germs of atheistic materialism, which I look upon as the greatest danger to modern humanity. So long as this so-called modern democracy, this accuredsed nationalism, this dragged imperialism are not shattered, so long man will never be able to lead a happy life and the beautiful ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity.⁶

Allama reacted violently against imperialism and materialistic beast .He expressed his view that western life style have abandoned all the ideals dear to a religious-minded, humanity-loving people. Keeping in view this approach of his life, it was not surprising that after returning from Europe his poems contain such couplets. He expressed his thought in this way.

ہر ملک ملک ماست کہ ملک خدائے ماست⁷

(Every country is my country, because every country belongs to my Allah)

تفریقِ ملل حکمتِ افرنگ کا مقصود

اسلام کا مقصود فقط ملتِ آدم⁸

the aim of European wisdom division of nations while as the quest of Islam is universal brotherhood (Ummah).

He expressed his inner feelings on each of these as freely and fearlessly as he could. He had a remarkable knowledge of history and the institutions of the East and West. For instance, he verses

condemned every corrupt and violent thing in the western system and exclaimed these

تو نے کیا دیکھا نہیں مغرب کا جمہوری نظام
چہرا روشن اندرون چنگیز سے تاریک تر⁹

Have you not seen the democratic system of west its face illuminated but its inner consciousness is darker than Berbers who devastated the humanity.

The technological revolution of the Europe did not impressed the Allama at all. He eloquently expressed that European society lack cantonment, true human spirit and enlightenment:

یہ عیشِ فراواں، یہ حکومت، یہ تجارت
دل سینہ بے نور ہیں محروم تسلی!
تاریک ہے افرنگ مشینوں کے دھوئیں سے
یہ وادی ایمن نہیں شایانِ تجلی!¹⁰

Allama regretted that the Europeans, despite their scientific outlook and politico-economic theories, had miserably failed to find out a solution of their own problems

ڈھونڈنے والا ستاروں کی گزرگاہوں کا
اپنے افکار کی دنیا میں سفر کر نہ سکا
اپنی حکمت کے خم و پچ میں الجھا ایسا
آج تک فیصلہٴ نفع و ضرر کر نہ سکا¹¹
یہ علم، یہ حکمت، یہ تدبیر، یہ حکومت
پیتے ہیں لہو، دیتے ہیں تعلیم مساوات¹²

Although Europeans put forth theories to the effect that the souls of human beings could find their peace simply by filling their belly. He turn down the message of Karl Marx which is based on only physical needs of equality, because he was the harbinger of human freedom which indirectly leads to freedom from abject ideas, from slavery, corruption, imperialism and from ignorance and stagnation. He pointed out a free and self reliant man is superior to a passive slave in several respects. He made a difference between a bondman and a freeman in the following couplets:

آزاد کا ہر لفظ پیامِ ابدیت
مخکوم کا ہر لفظ نئی مرگِ مناجات¹³

Allama strongly condemned all those Muslims who left their countries and took rehabilitation in West. He pointed out that they sold their consciousness and they did not realise the significance of their Holy book.

ان غلاموں کا یہ مسلک ہے کہ ناقص ہے کتاب
کہ سکھاتا نہیں مؤمن کو غلامی کے طریق¹⁴

He passionately hope for an eventual Islamic Renaissance and was sure about the rejuvenation of the Muslim community. He firmly believe that the young generation of the Muslim community will prove himself instrumental of achieving the goals of the Muslim community.

He positively pointed out that Muslim soil is more fertile than any one else and expressed his view in the following couplets:

عطا مؤمن کو پھر درگاہِ حق سے ہونے والا ہے
شکوہ ترکمانی، ذہن ہندی، نطقِ اعرابی¹⁵
نہیں ہے نا امید اقبال اپنی کشتِ ویراں سے
ذرا نم ہو تو یہ مٹی بہت ذرخیز ہے ساقی
زندہ کر سکتی ہے، ایران و عرب کو کیونکر
یہ فرنگی مدنیت کہ جو خود ہے لبِ گور¹⁶

Allama Iqbal emphasised that one get true education when it will be liberated from the influence of West. He very emphatically declared that Church managed instructions were a pre-planned conspiracy against the teachings of Islam and against the character of Muslims.

اور یہ اہل کلیسا کا نظامِ تعلیم
ایک سازش ہے فقط دین و مرآت کے خلاف!

Allama very harshly opposed the materialistic way of life and considered it main obstacle in the development of faith. His idea of the perfect man is one who believes in revolution and develops perfect faith in the teachings of Lord. His concept of perfect man is

an idealist, a man of action, highly charactered and enlightened. He must have qualities of forbearance and perfection so that he changes the destiny of the people. He differentiates between the materialistic person and a real human although he considered both are performing their activities in this universe:

کوئی اندازہ کر سکتا ہے اس کے زور بازو کا
نگاہِ مردِ مومن سے بدل جاتی ہیں تقدیریں¹⁸
پرواز ہے دونوں کی اسی ایک فضا میں
کر گھس کا جہان اور ہے شاہیں کا جہاں اور¹⁹

Allama forced Muslims to think about their political greatness, forbearance, and the impact they had on others, but Oh! Muslim have lost your greatness.

تیری نگاہ سے دل سینوں میں کانپتے تھے
کھویا گیا ہے تیرا جذبِ قلندرانہ²⁰

His chief aim was to strengthen the reunification of Muslims as single community Mankind as per his views has reduced to insignificant beings on biased approach. He tried to awaken the Muslims in order to play the ambassadors role in propagating love, loyalty and affinity.

ہوس نے کر دیا ہے ٹکڑے ٹکڑے نوعِ انسان کو
اخوت کا بیاں ہو جا، محبت کی زباں ہو²¹

Allama very harshly opposed the growing thought of regionalism among Muslims and tried to persuade them to form a single community and believe on the concept of Ummah. He stressed upon Muslims to work against the imperialist forces and develop the faith on the Islamic law and depend on the concept of self realisation in order to protect the nerve centre of Muslims:

ایک ہوں مسلم حرم کی پاسبانی کے لیے
نیل کے ساحل سے لے کر تابخاک کا شجر
نسل اگر مسلم کی مذہب پر مقدم ہو گئی
اڑ گیا دنیا سے تو مانندِ خاک رہ گزر
پھر سیاست چھوڑ کر داخل حصار دین میں ہو

ملک و دولت ہے فقط حقیقہ حرم کا اک شمر²²

He stressed upon Muslims that you are a single unifying force and your thinking is universal and there is no division among the Muslims because they are joint by faith of Kabah (House of Allah).

According to Allama Mullah's and Sufi's has dominated on the fertile brains of Muslims and left the affairs to the second rate people unaware from the teachings of Islam. He stressed that society and state must be based on the true spirit of Islamic democracy established by the Muslims chosen people of Allah, the vicegerents on the earth. Because a true Muslim is personification of the good of the entire world. He emphasised that in modern democracy only heads are counted but not qualification of mind. He did not believe on the modern concept of existing socio-economic and political orders because there is no universality in these orders

آئین جوان مرداں، حق گوئی و بے باکی

اللہ کے شیروں کو آتی نہیں رُوہا ہی²³

Where there once were schools for lions and emperors. Those shrines are now the hunts of foxes alone.

اٹھا میں مدرسہ و خانقاہ سے غم ناک

نہ زندگی، نہ محبت، نہ معرفت، نہ نگاہ²⁴

I came out of Madrassa and Khanqah very dejected/disappointed, There's no life, no affection, no agenda and broadmindedness.

The philosophy of "self" according to Allama Iqbal is much significant from the political point of view based on three things "Self-affirmation, Self-expression and Self-development." According to him these three are the driving force for the Muslim up-liftment and freedom from medieval and modern political hegemony. He strongly opposed the western culture and civilization and considered the symbol of the values of the materialism. He vehemently said, "capitalism is responsible for the emergence of the nation-state". He outwardly rejected the modern concept of nationalism which provides base for the psychological and political justification for capitalism states. These capitalist states create rage among the nation states and results in the bifurcation of the world on the material gains. He strongly opposed materialism, the product of western ideology and considered it dangerous to the interests of humanity and sounded that nationalism is the creed of west which is based on materialism and exploitation. He exposed that the democratic rights given to the people rely on the economic power concentrated in the

hands of few. According to him, western democratic theory of equality is misleading and did not take into account the inherent capacities and the endowments of the individual. He viewed that western democracy is another form of imperialism and furthers the interests of the exploiters and has no spiritual content.

ای کہ میداری کتابش در بغل
تیز تر نه پا بیدان عمل
فکر انسان بت پرستی، بت گری
هر زمان در جستجوی پیکری
باز طرح آذری انداخته است
تازه تر پروردگاری ساخته است
کاید از خون ریختن اندر طرب
نام او رنگست و هم ملک و نسب²⁵

Thou who has Book under thine arms should step forward in the arena of action.

The human mind is always after carving a new idol;
Man's quest for a new image has not ceased in any age
Again he has rebuilt the temple of Adhar (the idol-maker)
And has moulded a god, newer than others,
whose joy lies in shedding the blood of his worshippers.
His are numerous names: colour, country and race.

He emphasised that, Government based on the concept of oneness of Allah will be more stable and better than democracy of the western philosophy. The living force and principles of Islamic democracy are obedience to Allah, equality, tolerance and universalism. In Islamic democracy every one is duty bound to follow the basic creed of shura and election must be held on the same line in order to provide world a universal code of conduct. In this form of individual not law maker and self is restricted for the welfare of human beings. He also pointed that modern concept of socialism whose roots lie deep into individualism makes government satanic and lead the social disunity. Allama Iqbal emphasized that Pan-Islam signifies the humanitarian ideal which means winding of politics to religion. It stands for the movement towards political unity of all the Muslims in the world. The establishment of Pan-Islamic society, constitutes on the principles of spirituality and faith. He stressed in the mean time that reveal of the society to bring about a rapprochement between knowledge and the vision is the fruit of

love and intuition. According to Allama, it is necessary because power without vision (divine guidance) tends to become destructive and inhuman therefore unity of both knowledge (rationality) and vision (divine guidance) is necessary for the spiritual expansion of humanity. Instead of the present day Muslims and non-Muslims enthusiastic promotion of different versions of Islam, the cardinal point of Allama Iqbal's political philosophy is millat/Ummah fraternity of belief, colour, region and matter. To Iqbal the core of the Ummah is Islam the Ka'bah and the person Prophet Muhammad(PBUH). He believes that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had not segregated Muslims into region based and so forth a loaf suffering or success of each other.



اپنی ملت پر قیاس اقوامِ مغرب سے نہ کر
خاص ہے ترکیب میں قومِ رسولِ ہاشمیؐ
دامنِ دین ہاتھ سے چھوٹا تو جمعیت کہاں
اور جمعیت ہوئی رخصت تو ملت بھی گئی
ملت کے ساتھ رابطہ اُستوار رکھ
پیوستہ رہ شجر سے، اُمید بہار رکھ!²⁶

Do not consider the Muslim Ummah like a Western nation. The Muslim nation that is founded by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is different in form and substance. Organisation of the nations from the west depends upon state and race. But power of religion is the main binding force in order to resolute rapport with Ummah. So it is necessary to be serried with ummah, in order to achieve the bright future.

Allama Iqbal had strongly opposed the western concept of nationalism. He emphasised that Muslim Nationalism was organised by Prophet Muhammad (PBHU) and considered it core of Muslim unity. He also realised that western concept of Nationalism is based on regionalism and race, but the Muslim Nationalism is fortified by the thought of religion. He stressed upon Muslim that if Muslim break-off their religious life, the concept of their universal nationalism (Ummah) itself vanishes and ultimately led to the decay of Millat.

قوموں کے لیے موت ہے مرکز سے جدائی
ہو صاحب مرکز تو خودی کیا ہے؟ خدائی²⁷

Islamic political order is not organized through human laws but is spiraled through the Quran and Hadith. According to Allama Iqbal, Unity of Man with Allah guides one's secret powers and derives wisdom, law unfailing vigour, power and authority. Allama Emphasised that Islamic community will achieve strength and perfect solidarity by adopting the universal code of conduct free from any biased approach. While analyzing Allama's views on nationalism his approach towards Islamic Ummah is dynamic. He advocated the universal political order which is possible only through the Islamic Ummah. His cry was not merely to go, "back to Quran" but to, "go ahead with Quran". He vehemently opposed the western nationalistic concept of life because it provides unlimited powers to the powerful and corrupts the liberty of weak people.

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