

# IQBAL IN POLITICS

HAFEEZ MALIK

Adopted from *Zinda Rud*  
Biography of Allama Iqbal by  
DR. JAVID IQBAL

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HAFEEZ MALIK

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## PREFACE

Iqbal died in 1938 in the sanctity of his glory, and in the full bloom of his international fame. Iqbal was a master poet in Urdu and Persian, and a philosopher of repute, who was universally acknowledged, and admired even in our contemporary times. However, much less is known about his political role, which was initiated in 1926, when he was elected from a constituency of Muslim voters in Lahore to the Legislative Council of the Punjab. In other words, his participation in the electoral politics to the year of his death spanned not quite twelve years. All of his contemporaries, including Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Qaide-i Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan, had dedicated nearly all of their lives to the political struggles of India under the British Raj.

### (I)

Iqbal's political leadership entailed a dual responsibility – one of struggle for the independence of India, and the other heavy responsibility to safeguard the Muslims' political rights through negotiations with the Hindu leadership, especially its vanguard in the All-India National Congress, then dominated by the secular Hindu nationalists. The latter believed that the joint electorate employing one man, one vote formula should satisfy the Muslims' aspirations as it would integrate them into the



mainstream of Indian politics. In addition, this formula ejected religion from the pantheon of politics, and made Islam strictly a personal commitment. Secularism thus became the national ideology of territorially united India.

To the Muslim nationalists, who functioned through the All-India Muslim League, the Congress' formula of one man, one vote would lead to the Muslim society's domination by the caste Hindus, and their eventual assimilation into the pervasive Hindu culture. This process, they feared would completely assimilate the Muslims into the Hindu society. Muslims constituted 24 percent of the populations of India, while they were the significant majority in the Northwest Frontier Province (92%), the Punjab (57%), Sindh (71%), Balochistan (88%), and Bengal (55%). Whether or not this social and political fear was justified or was simply overblown is now a moot point. To preserve the territorial unity of India good faith negotiations between the Muslim leaders and the Congress were urgently needed. The Congress leaders' recitation of the *mantra* that Hindu-Muslim cultures are the same, and that you scratch a Muslim and underneath you would find a Hindu, sounded to the Muslim leaders, including Iqbal, a self-satisfying dogma designed to assimilate the Muslims into the sea of Hindu population. The guarantee of secularism was just not adequate and not even desirable.

The joint electorate vs. the separate electorate became a fault line. One side stood with the Congress, and the other side was occupied by the League. However, within the ranks of the Muslim leaders political unity did not exist during the 1920s and 1930s. The founder of Pakistan Jinnah and the poet-philosopher Iqbal remained on opposite sides of the barricade. Finally, Jinnah adopted Iqbal's ideological position in the 1940s, and in this shift paid a tribute to Iqbal's wisdom, while Iqbal retained a firm faith in Jinnah's leadership and his personal charisma.

## (II)

Javid Iqbal, the son of the poet-philosopher, wrote a comprehensive biography of his father in Urdu – *Zinda Rud* (The Living Stream), which was published in 1979 in three volumes. The third volume described Iqbal's last twelve years of his life, which were devoted primarily to domestic and international politics. In domestic politics, as pointed out, his role started with his election to the Punjab Legislative Council (1926-1930). In 1929 Iqbal was invited by the Muslim Association of Madras in South India to deliver a series of lectures on Islamic philosophy. In 1930, he delivered his historic address in Allahabad, which eventually became the foundation of the Muslim League's resolution of Lahore in 1940, enunciating the establishment of Muslim state(s) in India.

The British government designated Iqbal a member of the delegation to the Second and Third Round Table Conferences (1931, 1932) in London. These conferences were designed to explore the avenues of constitutional advancement for India toward eventual self-determination. In 1932, Iqbal was elected the President of the Muslim Conference and Chairman of the Kashmir Committee (1931-1933). In 1933, King Nadir Shah invited him along with Sir Ross Mas`ud and Mawlana Sulaiman Nadvi to visit Afghanistan to make recommendations on Afghanistan's educational system. Iqbal's interest in the affairs of the Muslim world led him to visit Egypt and Jerusalem, when he attended the Muslim World Congress on the invitation of Mufti Amin al-Husseini of Palestine. Iqbal also visited Spain and Italy, where he visited with Mussolini, the ruler of Italy. In addition to these major political milestones, Iqbal remained engaged in local affairs of the Punjab and Kashmir.

Javid Iqbal's biography of his father not only discussed these big and small activities of his father, but also

interspersed them with his domestic engagements – the birth of his children, relations with Javid’s mother, and other relatives. When I read this book some years ago, the discussions of Iqbal’s political activities fascinated me. I thought Iqbal’s political role must be made accessible to the English knowing world of scholarship, and general readers who might be familiar with his poetry, but have really no knowledge of his contribution to the emergence of Pakistan. Javid and I discussed this issue some years ago, and he very kindly agreed to my translating the third volume, which deals with Iqbal’s political role.

In the process of translating this volume, I edited this volume extensively, shuffled paragraphs and chapters, and added materials which are part of my research on Iqbal. In addition, I eliminated all references to the domestic affairs, and frequent quotations of his poetry. I have turned this biography into strictly a political study. Despite these extensive changes, I have remained faithful to Javid’s language and thought, while the translation is free, and is by no means verbatim. Javid has read the manuscript, and made this comment, which I take as a compliment: “You have added a fourth volume to the three volume biography of Iqbal.”

I am confident that this volume would prove to be a valuable addition to the study of Iqbal’s contributions to the genesis of Pakistan.

### (III)

Some of Iqbal’s contemporary politicians called him the “idealist,” a “romantic political dreamer,” and whatever derogatory term they could invent. If politics can be defined as a struggle for power among competing groups, or as (in Harold Laswell’s words) “who gets what and how,” then Iqbal could not be considered an actor on the political scene of the Punjab or of India. In a Laswellian sense, the true politicians of the Punjab were Mian

Muhammad Shafi, Fazl-i Husain, Chaudhary-Shahab-ud-Din, and Sikander Hayat Khan. In practical politics, Iqbal played second fiddle to these professional politicians. But if politics is viewed as a milieu “in which the actor strives for the attainment of various values for which power is a necessary (and perhaps also sufficient) condition,” then Iqbal was a statesman par excellence and surpassed all of his contemporaries. For Iqbal the highest moral and political value was the preservation of Indic Muslims’ cultural entity and their eventual self-determination. The fact that the Muslims were a nation in their own right and not just a religious minority was realized and enunciated by him gradually. Javid Iqbal’s research (and my own) has highlighted this evolution in substantial detail in the volume.

A lively debate about Iqbal’s social class affiliation has persisted among scholars. Some have emphasized his modest family origins and his proletarian sympathies; others have identified him with the Muslim bourgeoisie and its aspirations; and those who failed to understand his philosophical system resolved the dilemma by explaining simultaneously what they called progressive and reactionary trends in Iqbal’s thought. Professor V.G. Kiernan’s assessment comes closest to the truth: “Iqbal, a man of the middle class, was close enough both to the landlords and princes above it, and to the laborers and peasants below it, to be able to look at life through the eyes of all of them, and his ideal of religious brotherhood derived from this fact.”

Against this background it would be an injustice to Iqbal if the impression were given that he was a parochial nationalist, whose mental horizon was not wider than the boundaries of a Muslim national state. Before Iqbal, Muslim political thought was primarily concerned with Muslims in India. For instance, to Sir Sayyid love was like a pyramid: at the top was the noblest form of love – love for the universe. “This kind of love,” he stated, “was

unattainable.” In the middle was love “for those who share human qualities with us.” Lofty though this sentiment is, for Sir Sayyid, it “was far too elusive a quality to comprehend.” He reasoned that “at the bottom of the pyramid is placed a sentiment which I call love of nation, which I understand and am capable of.”

On the other hand, Iqbal’s intellectual evolution was the reverse of Sir Sayyid’s. In his early works, Iqbal was absorbed in himself, lamenting his disappointments and personal sorrows. From himself his emotional horizons expanded to include India, particularly the Indian Muslims and the larger world of Islam. Then his love enveloped mankind, and at still a later stage it changed into a passionate involvement with the universe. Despite his commitment to the concept of a separate Muslim state, he remained a philosophic humanist, and humanism was truly his message.

It is precisely for this reason that the advent of Pakistan has not greatly tarnished his popularity in India. In India Iqbal day is still celebrated, his poems are sung on All-India Radio, and periodically literary journals publish special issues exclusively devoted to his life and thought. Although Pakistanis feel that by virtue of Iqbal’s support for the creation of Pakistan they have a better claim on the poet-philosopher, Indians, with considerable justification, call him their own. After all, it was Iqbal who wrote a truly nonsectarian national anthem for India, which India failed to adopt in the heat of political passions.

#### (IV)

In closing these introductory remarks it is my delightful obligation to express sincere appreciation of the supportive role of those individuals and institutions, who have been involved in my life. Villanova University has not only been an intellectual haven for me, but it has also generously supported over the last thirty years the *Journal of South*

*Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, the Pakistan-American Foundation, and the American Institute of Pakistan Studies, (which I had established in 1973 with the support of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto), has received generous support from the Ministry of Education of the Government of Pakistan. I am equally indebted to Fr. Peter Donohue (President), Fr. Edmund J. Dobbin (former President), Dr. John R. Johannes (Vice President of Academic Affairs), and Fr. Kail C. Ellis (Dean of Arts and Sciences, and Founder-Director of the Center for Contemporary Arab and Islamic Studies) of Villanova University. (Also, I am a member of this Center).

A colleague at Villanova University, my wife, Lynda P. Malik, a sociologist specializing on Islamic societies, was supportive and helpful in many ways. I have remained deeply appreciative of her endeavors in support of my scholarly activities. Among my friends, I single out Nadia Barsoum, who helped me in many ways to make this publication a successful enterprise. Some of my friends, both in the United States and abroad, have always been a source of encouragement and support: Muhammad Rafiq Tarar, my childhood friend, (who later became the President of Pakistan for three years), Yuri V. Gankovsky, Afaq Haydar, Jack Schrems, Zaheer Chaudhry, Kamran Khan, Stanley Wolpert, M. Imtiaz Ali, Igor V. Khalevinsky, Vyacheslav Ya. Belokrinitsky, Anwar Aziz Chaudhry, Ralph Braibanti, Sharif Faruq, Syed Jamil Shah, Sharif al-Mujahid, (Akhuna) Khalil Ilyas, Jawahirah and Rashid Makhdoomi, Aiyasha and Muhammad Latib, and Syed Abid Ali, and his devoted wife, Naznin Syed.

Special mention must be made of three very dear families—Sadaqat Gul and Waqar Asim Mansuri; Nasira and Javid Iqbal; and Nuria and Walid Iqbal, the latter graduated from the position of a “nephew” to a dear friend. I value their friendship and cherish their affection. Always a source of encouragement and help, Javid Iqbal was

available for consultation in translating this volume of his father's biography. Happily, he not only accepted my extensive editorial rearranging of this volume, but also accepted the insertion of my interpretations. A dynamic educator in her own time, Amina (Begum) Majeed Malik, my aunt, was a source of inspiration, and was always admiringly supportive of my endeavors.

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## INTRODUCTION

No other figure in the twentieth century influenced the hearts and minds of the Muslims of India more than Allama Muhammad Iqbal.

In the intimate circle of his friends and disciples he was exceptionally informal, witty, considerate and gentle. Handsome and well-spoken in private conversations, even his opponents and critics were fascinated by the charm of his personality, wealth of knowledge, respect for other faiths, and devotion to fair play.

(I)

One of his young admirers, Abdul Majeed Salik, who visited him fairly frequently, drew a remarkably interesting picture of Iqbal's associations with ordinary folks:

“From morning to evening...the influx of visitors continued. The political magnates of the Punjab, lawyers, scholars, college professors, editors of newspapers, poets, litterateurs, students, illiterate admirers – in short men from all walks of life, came to visit him. All kinds of subjects were discussed with him, from the trivialities of peoples' domestic to the most intricate questions in the domain of jurisprudence, philosophy, politics, religion and science. Iqbal shed light on all problems with his vast learning...The most modest citizens could enter his house without formalities or permission and could sit there as



long as they wished. The learned poet never displayed any symptom of boredom with anyone's presence.

To his court of learning and reflection came innumerable magnates of the world of scholarship and politics, including Sir Fazl-i Husain, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, Jawaharlal Nehru, Qaide-i Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Lord Lowthian, to benefit from his mature counsels. No doubt Iqbal had political differences with some of them, but since he was frank, selfless and transparently sincere, unpleasantness was banished from his presence."<sup>1</sup>

Early recitation of his poetry in public meetings, especially under the auspices of Anjuman Himayat-i Islam, had won him over a large number of admirers who had begun to adore him. However, unlike some of the well-known political leaders of his time, most notably Mawlana Muhammad Ali and M.A. Jinnah, Iqbal lacked the eloquent and spell-binding skills of an orator in both his public speeches and statements and the ones he delivered in the Punjab Legislative Council, to which he was elected after fighting a vigorous election campaign. His speeches much more resembled the lectures of a professor in a university than the rhetoric of a seasoned politician. Even though he devoted his life to the cause of the Muslims of India, by nature a thinker and philosopher, Iqbal instinctively avoided direct contact with masses.

In his election campaign of 1926 Iqbal announced the formation of the Corps of the Muslim Youth which would carry on a grassroots educational program among Muslims to eliminate sectarian and ethnic fault lines, which were generally called *baradris* (brotherhoods). He also announced that he would present the manifesto of a social program to the Muslim youth. None of these programs were implemented, because they called for a sustainable grassroots infrastructure, which probably a pragmatic politician could undertake.

Iqbal assimilated ideas from two different mentors: one represented the East and the other the West. Both

possessed the highest traditions of their cultures. Early in his childhood in Sialkot, Mawlvi Saiyad Mir Hasan took Iqbal under his care and instilled in him the literary traditions of Urdu and Persian literature, and taught him Arabic, which enabled him to study the Qur'an and other Islamic works in their original Arabic texts. At age 18 when he came to the Government College, Lahore in 1895 Iqbal had already begun to compose good poetry, which was steeped in the classical mold of Persian-Urdu style reflecting accurately the rules of composition established by the masters. This was Mawlavi Mir Hasan's contribution to Iqbal's intellectual nourishment. Iqbal acknowledged this debt of gratitude owed to Mir Hasan, when he recommended him to the British governor of the Punjab for the award of an honorific title of *Shams al-ulama* (shining star among scholars), when the governor informed him that the British government had decided to knight Iqbal.

The 1920s were the days of the Khilafat agitation and non-cooperation which had temporarily united the Hindus and the Muslims. Now that Iqbal was a Knight he was resented by the Khilafatists. It was probably Mawlana Zafar Ali Khan (one of the Khilafat leaders) who satirized the occasion with these caustic verses:

*Lo madressah-i `ilm hu` a qaser-i hakumat,  
Afsus kah Alamah say Sir ho gai`ay Iqbal.  
Pahlay to sir-i millat-i bayda kay thay sar taj,  
Ab awr suno taj kay Sir ho gai`ay Iqbal.  
Kahta tha yah kal thandi sarak per kowiy gustakh,  
Sarkar key dahliyz peh Sir ho gai`ay Iqbal.*

Lo and behold! The seat of learning has become the Government House;

Alas! Iqbal stooped to knighthood from an Alamah  
[scholar]

Formerly, he was the crown of the Muslim people

Hark another news! Iqbal had become a knight of the  
[British] crown,

An impertinent fellow said yesterday on the Mall:

Iqbal bowed his head low at the threshold of Sarkar [British Government]

At the Government College, which was considered to be the best institution of learning in India, Iqbal had the good fortune to meet his second mentor, Professor Thomas W. Arnold, a teacher of philosophy, and a devoted scholar of Islamic studies. His majestic study on the peaceful spread of Islam in the world remains a monument to his objectivity in scholarship. Professor Arnold trained Iqbal's mind in philosophic speculation of the modern age, and attuned his mind to intellectual curiosity. There developed between them a bond of mutual admiration and affection and a sense of reverence for the mentor in Iqbal.

Probably Professor Arnold kindled in Iqbal the ambition to acquire further education in philosophy and law in Europe. After he departed for his native England, Iqbal dedicated a poem – *Nala-i Firaq* (lament of separation) – to his mentor, and acknowledged what Arnold had meant to his intellectual blooming. He says: “my cherished aspirations were about to be fulfilled, and who knows what I would have become in [your guidance]. The atom of my heart would have acquired the solar brilliance, and this mirror would have absorbed all of the world's knowledge. Then Iqbal promised to join him in Europe:

*Khol dega dast-i wahshat uqda-i taqdir ko*

*Tor ker puhunchun ga mein Punjab ki zanjur ko*

My frantic hands will unwind the knots of my fate,

I'll break the bonds of Punjab, and then run straight to you.<sup>2</sup>

Finally in 1905 Iqbal came to England, where Professor Arnold had managed to have him admitted to Cambridge University, and recommended to Munich University to let Iqbal present his doctoral dissertation in English (instead of German) for the award of a Ph.D. degree in philosophy. Supported by Sir Abdul Qadir, Arnold also saved Iqbal from committing an egregious error of judgment, when he

decided to give up writing poetry. Poetry was his forte, and from then on he took it seriously as a gift of God Almighty. Poetry became a medium of communication, and took him to the pinnacle of glory, and people's adoration.

Impressed by Iqbal's exquisite poetry a litterateur of substantial renown, Sir Abdul Qadir wrote an introduction to *Bang-i Dara*, and called Iqbal another Ghalib, a master of Urdu poetry: "who could predict that after Ghalib another poet would emerge, who would infuse a new spirit in Urdu poetry, and exude Ghalib's style of verse with his rich imagination."<sup>3</sup> A respectable scholar of Urdu literature, Dr. Mohammad Sadiq, who didn't necessarily endorse Iqbal's, what he called Pan-Islamism, admired his "poetic talent and his remarkable capacity for thought."<sup>4</sup>

*Nugoosh-i-Iqbal*, first published in India in 1942 Dr. Yousaf Husain Khan described Iqbal's intellect – a synthesis of knowledge and philosophy of the East and the West, and called it the "mingling of the two oceans. Iqbal was a philosopher whose poetry beautifully portrayed the tensions between the intellect and emotion, where his message was for life." His poetry was inspired, according to Dr. Yousaf Husain Khan by limitless possibility of human intellect and man's preeminence in the universe. "Appealing to emotions, his poetry always wins as he explains the most complex and subtle ideas in poetry."<sup>5</sup>

A conventional scholar in the Uttar Pradesh, supposedly the homeland of Urdu poetry, Mawlana Abdussalam Islam Nadvi, published his study of Iqbal in 1964 and stated that "no Persian or Urdu poet can match Iqbal in the variety of thought and its subtlety...Iqbal was indeed a poet, and poetry was a part of his 'prophethood.'"<sup>6</sup>

Starting in Urdu, Iqbal switched over to Persian for composing his thoughts in verse. This change earned him international recognition and fame. One of his professors at Cambridge, Reynold A. Nicholson, a scholar of Persian

literature translated Iqbal's Persian *magnum opus*, *Asrar-i Khudi* into English, and had it published in England in 1920.

Nicholson stated that Iqbal "developed a philosophy of his own" in *Asrar-i Khudi* and, it "owes much to Nietzsche and Bergson, and his poetry often reminds us of Shelley." Politically, Nicholson believed Iqbal had rejected nationalism and imperialism. While Iqbal's philosophy rightly appeared to him to be religious, he did not "treat philosophy as the handmaid of religion." That is the hallmark of a modern philosopher. Also, Iqbal helped Nicholson in explaining rather concisely his philosophy of *Khudi*:

"All life is individual; there is no such thing as universal life. God himself is an individual, he is the most unique individual...the universe is not a completed act; it is still in the course of formation. The process of creation is still going on...The Qur'an indicates the possibility of other creators than God. ("Blessed is God the best of those who create," XXIII, v. 14). The Prophet said: "*Takhallaqu bi-akhlaq Allah*" (create in yourselves the attributes of God.)

Through this process, Iqbal reasoned, "man becomes unique by becoming more and more like the unique individual." The highest form of the individual is expressed in the *Khudi* (ego) "in which the individual becomes a self-contained exclusive center"; and the ego that "comes nearest to God is the most complete person. Not that he is finally absorbed in God; on the contrary he absorbs God into himself." In other words "life is an endeavor for freedom."

Iqbal also discussed briefly the role of ego and the formative process of personality, which is in "a state of tension and continues only if that state is maintained." Since tension is "the most valuable achievement of man," he should never let it relax. The continued tension, Iqbal asserted, "makes us immortal...what fortifies personality is good, that which weakens it is bad. Against this normative value Iqbal upheld the art for life orientation, and claimed

to judge the roles of religion and ethics. Lastly Iqbal added that “the ego is fortified by love (*Ishq*), a term which is used in a large sense, “and means the desire to assimilate, to absorb.” Love strengthens the ego, and all that “is achieved without personal efforts” weakens it.

Writing in *The New Era* (1916, p. 251) Iqbal described the democracy of Islam – not merely an extension of economic opportunity – but as a “spiritual principle based on the assumption that every human being is the center of latent power, the possibilities of which can be developed by cultivating a certain type of character. Out of the plebeian material, Islam has formed men of the noblest type of life and power.” The principles of Islam, projected as the ideal society, Iqbal added that “the individual who lost himself in the Islamic community, reflects both the past and the future as in a mirror, so that he transcends mortality and enters into the life of Islam, which is infinite and everlasting.” Among other topics Iqbal described in his second *mathnavi* – *Ramuz-i Bekhudi* – “the origin of society, the divine guidance of man through the Prophets, the formation of collective life-centers, and the value of history as a factor in maintaining the sense of personal entity in a people.”<sup>7</sup>

## (II)

However one might find faults with Iqbal’s system of philosophy, it cannot be maintained that Iqbal did not present a cohesive set of principles about individual or collective life. Nor can it be maintained that he was not really a poet of historic significance. Yet Javid Iqbal has taken Iqbal’s self-deprecating statements about his poetic excellence, which the French would call *faux modeste*, and the Muslims in South Asia would describe it as *kaser nafsi* (self-effacement), seriously. When a truly outstanding poet, artist, philosopher or even a political leader engages in self-denigrating statements, and repeats them in public or private, it only enhances his prestige in the Muslim cultural

milieu as a person of great achievement, and these statements are not taken literally.

Like Ghalib, Iqbal was a bilingual poet. Ghalib was proud to be known as a Persian poet; in verse he denigrated his Urdu poetry. He hoped to achieve immortality for the elegance of his Persian verse:

*Farsi been ta ba beeni naqsh-hay-i rang rang  
Bugzar anz majmu`a-Urdu keh be-rang-i-man ast*

Study my Persian poetry so that thou mayst find numerous many – colored pictures;

Pass over my collection of Urdu verses because they are insipid and colorless.<sup>8</sup>

Iqbal valued and loved his Urdu verses, as they reflected his deep emotions:

*Mayray ash`ar ay Iqbal kiyun piyaray no hun mujko  
Mayray tutay huay del kay yeh dard angez nalay hain*  
Why shouldn't my verses be dear to me, Iqbal,  
They are the laments of my broken heart.

As suggested earlier, the fact is that without the poetic talent, and the Islamic appeal of his poetry, Iqbal would not be an icon today in the national “temple” of South Asian Muslims.

Despite his disowning of the discipline of philosophy, Iqbal was a philosopher, although not a conventional philosopher, who was devoted to speculation with torrents of words like Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831). Hegel followed Kant<sup>9</sup> and stressed that we presuppose categories and concepts in all dealings with the world. Therefore different civilizations do have conceptual presuppositions. “A civilization that sees the heavens and human society as peopled by free individuals will be different from one that conceives of the world as governed by all-powerful natural and divine necessity.”<sup>10</sup> In Hegel’s eyes the way in which a civilization understands itself and its world gives that

civilization a distinctive historical character. This view is remarkably well represented in Iqbal's poetry.

However, it should be kept in mind that two tendencies of thought massively overlapped each other in Iqbal's intellectual formation: Islam was the primary ingredient, and western education gave it a lot of its solidity and innovative thinking. It is this combination that led him to believe in enlightenment, progress, and scientific development in the Islamic democratic state of his vision, for which he formulated some guiding principles:

1. democracy leads to the pristine purity of Islam, which stands for "spiritual democracy;"
- 2) the state is under the obligation to uphold the supremacy of law, and to guarantee the enforcement of human rights;
- 3) Parliament is not merely a *shura* (consultative assembly), but is fully endowed with the power to legislate while exercising its authority of *ijma*, and retains the right to engage in *Ijtihad*, the right of further interpreting the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* or of forming a new opinion by applying analogy;
- 4) In a Muslim state joint electorates can be applied;
- 5) separating the religious affairs department from the secular department does not amount to separating religion from politics;
- 6) the draconian application of the Islamic penal code is not necessary;
- 7) Parliament can legislate to restrict polygamy, and organize family planning.

In addition to these political reforms Iqbal also proposed economic and social changes: 1) the ownership of agricultural land should be limited to personal cultivation by the owner, and income tax should be applied to agricultural produce; and state owned land should be sold to landless tenants on easy installments. 2) In the light of the Qur'anic dictum – the poor have a share in the wealth of rich – the state should legislate minimum living wages, pensions, and medical care and children's elementary



education. 3) Islamic laws for *Zakat* (mandatory charity), and inheritance must be strictly enforced.<sup>11</sup>

What is baffling is the enunciation of these principles as a paradigm for a “spiritual democracy.” Indeed “democracy” is understandable, which appears in these guidelines as a system of welfare capitalism, but “spiritual” remains a mystery. Does capitalism with humane policy becomes *ipso facto* a spiritual democracy in a Muslim state along with other conditions?

### (III)

Finally, a question may be asked: what kind of leader was the poet-philosopher?

Two types of leaders emerged in India after 1857, and especially after 1885, when the All-India National Congress was organized with the blessings of the British government. They were (1) moderate leaders, and (2) radical activists. The latter often resorted to violence and terror, and included in their ranks Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and Subhas Chandra Bose. Among the Muslims were some *ulama* (religious scholars), who had a visceral dislike for the alien British rule. The moderates were the product of the 1909 Minto-Marley reform era, which was inaugurated by elections to the central and provincial legislative councils. Their numbers were augmented by the Montague-Chelmsford reforms of 1919, and the Government of India Act of 1935. The elections introduced a revolutionary concept in the Indian body-politic that only citizens’ votes legitimize political authority, and that ultimate sovereignty of the state resides with the citizens.

This revolutionary orientation was alien to the religious, cultural and historical traditions of Islam and Hinduism. That the citizens alone legitimize the state authority is the enduring value of the British Raj. Modern India has espoused this orientation as if it is its own homegrown

tradition. Pakistan has retained an ambivalent attitude, swinging between democracy and military autocracy.

Moderate Hindu and Muslim leaders were willing to cooperate with the British imperial system, and advance the democratic process in India, leading ultimately to complete freedom. Iqbal and the Qaide-i Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah belonged to the ranks of moderate leaders. Within the framework of the constitutional reforms they often vigorously criticized the British imperial system, but did not resort to agitation or violence to advance their political values.

Iqbal also recognized the bifurcation of western civilization (which is based on science, technology and democracy) and British imperialism.

Writing in 1915 his foreword to the first edition of *Asrar-i Khudi* (The Secrets of the Self), Iqbal repudiated Ibn al-Arabi, the master mystic thinker, and his doctrine of *Wahdat al-Wujud* (Ontological Monism in philosophical terms). Also, he advised his readers to look to the western nations of Europe in order to learn the meaning of life. “By virtue of their will to action, the western nations are preeminent among the nations of the world. For this reason, and in order to appreciate the secret of life, their literatures and ideas are the best guides for the nations of the east.”<sup>12</sup>

Among the western nations he singled out Britain.

The world is indebted to the British for their pragmatism. Their ability to comprehend situations is sharper and more developed than that of other nations. For this reason, no high-flown philosophic systems, which fail to stand up in the light of facts, have gained popularity in England. Therefore, the works of British thinkers have a place of their own in the world literature. After benefiting from them [that is, British ideas], the mind and the heart [philosophy and literature], of the East must revise their intellectual legacy.<sup>13</sup>

## (IV)

**The Struggle for Survival**

Iqbal also graduated from the *Wahdat al-Wujud* of Ibn al-Arabi to the concept of the ecological struggle. He was aided in this evolutionary thinking by the ideas of Ibn Taimiyya, Wahid Mahmud, and Majaddid Alf Thani, and also significantly by Darwin and the European ecologists, including Ernest Haeckel (the German biologist who, in *History of Creation* [1868] first used the term ecology) and their followers. In 1904, a year before he went to Europe, Iqbal demonstrated a sharp awareness of the ecological struggle even though he still subscribed to the theory of *Wahdat al-Wujud*. (It is, however, not suggested that Iqbal's system of philosophy was basically Darwinian; although he was influenced by the concept of the ecological struggle, it was only one of the strands of thought which helped him formulate his own philosophic system.)

The basis of modern ecology lies in the work of the biologists Darwin and Wallace. In particular, Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859) and *Descent of Man* (1871) set the stage for a new era in biological research. Attention shifted from a preoccupation with cosmological problems, such as the ultimate meaning of each form of life for every other which followed from the assumption of the inscrutability of species, to a search for specific causes for the existence of species, based upon accumulated evidence of change in the organic world. Final causes were forsaken in favor of necessary and sufficient conditions.

Darwin formulated the basic ideas which were later brought together to constitute the theoretical understructure, and the frame of reference, of modern ecology. All life was his province and he perceived it as a moving system of vital relationships in which were implicated very organism and species of life. (This general conception he described metaphorically as the *web of life*.) Organisms are related to one another in the web, Darwin

pointed out, on the basis of a struggle for existence. The phrase “struggle for existence” includes in its meaning the competition among forms of life as well as the cooperation and mutual aid that develop among organisms. Through the struggle for existence order develops and the web of life unfolds as organisms become adjusted to one another and to the physical environment.<sup>14</sup>

Writing in 1904 an article on the theme of national life, Iqbal adopted the ecological concept for the rise and fall of nations. “After observing the phenomena of nature, scholars have reached a conclusion,” maintained Iqbal, “that among all organic beings (including *homo sapiens*) and varieties of animal and plant life), constant war is waged...In this struggle for existence all forms of life are engaged, final victory being achieved by those who have the ability to survive and who can adjust themselves to the changed circumstances...The modern progeny of *homo sapiens* is a memorial to the long-gone national civilizations and cultures, which suffered death and destruction in their struggle for survival.”<sup>15</sup>

This law of natural selection, contended Iqbal, was equally applicable to religions and to national languages. “Hundreds of religions came into being in this world. They flourished and then eventually decayed. Why? The answer is obvious. The intellectual development of man gave rise to new needs and wants, which these religions could not satisfy.” Similar was the case with languages. “At one time Latin, Greek, and Sanskrit were living languages; they are now almost defunct. They lapsed into disuse because of the law of natural selection...”

Complimenting the Chinese, Hindus, Jews, and Zoroastrians for their ability to survive the ravages of time, Iqbal deplored what he thought was the critical situation of the Muslims in India. He feared that they were on the precipice of extinction and needed to reform their entire national life. The modern struggle, Iqbal believed, was

conditioned by trade and industry. "Among the Asian nations, the Japanese were the first to comprehend the secret of revolution. They dedicated themselves to industrializing their economy. Today, they are recognized as one of the civilized nations in the world. They have achieved this distinction because of their highly industrialized economy and not because of the contributions of any national philosopher, poet, or litterateur."

His advice was unequivocal: Muslims must take to industry and *craftsmanship*. "In my eyes," declared Iqbal, "the hands of a carpenter, rough and course due to the constant use of the saw, are far more attractive and useful compared to the soft and delicate hands of a scholar, which never carry more than the weight of a pen."<sup>16</sup>

Since the Muslims were outnumbered four to one in India, Iqbal came to believe that their culture did not have an even chance to survive. This realization became the motive force for the formulation of his doctrine of *Khudi* (ego), the main arch of his philosophic system. *Khudi*, or self-affirmation, became the frame of reference for the analysis of Indian history. Political forces or persons who strengthened Muslim *khudi* became heroes because they strengthened the Muslims' ability to survive in their ecological struggle.

Again in dealing with the West, Iqbal also maintained a subtle distinction between *westernization* and *modernization*; he opposed the uncritical following of the first, but remained committed to modernization in the sense of renovating or what the Vatican called *aggiornamento* (updating). He believed that by religious *aggiornamento* alone Muslim culture would not be modernized. He proposed that a new madrassah must be established, which would teach modern arts and sciences, technology and social sciences.

He repeatedly referred to Muslims' historical contributions during Caliph al-Mam'un's time, who had

established in 830 in Baghdad his famous *Bayt al-Hikmah* (house of wisdom), where hundreds of Greek books were translated into Arabic for more than 100 years. Through Avicenna (Ibn Sina) and Averroes (Ibn Rashd) Platonism and Aristotelianism found their way into Latin and exercised a determining influence upon medieval European scholasticism. Also, the complete curriculum of the medical school of Alexandria was translated and was thus made available to Arab students in their madrassahs.<sup>17</sup> All this took place while Europe was totally ignorant of Greek thought and science.<sup>18</sup>

The west acquired access to the Greek scientific heritage through the efforts of Muslim scholars, who not only translated Greek works for more than 100 years, but also conducted scientific investigations with the method of empirical verification, and thus advanced the flow of scientific knowledge in astronomy, alchemy, mathematics, medicine, and optics. A modern historian of science, Toby E. Huff, has stated that “the facts, theories and scientific speculations contained in their treatises were the most advanced to be had anywhere in the world, including China.”<sup>19</sup> Huff also presented the Islamic-Arab civilization as a multi-cultural and diversified society where individuals primarily using the Arabic language included Arabs, Iranians, Christians, Jews and many other ethnic backgrounds were in the forefront of scientific advance.

While the Islamic civilization achieved the scientific heights from the eighth to the fourteenth century, it went into decline and even retrogression as early as the twelfth century, and it has not reversed from this process of decline even today. Thereafter the lead passed to the west. Iqbal was acutely aware of this disastrous decline in the Islamic world, and attributed it to the dominance of religious orthodoxy.

Against this background Iqbal believed that Muslims laid down the foundations of modern science; it was

urgently needed today that they initiate research creativity and innovations in the Muslim world. He expected even mosque *imam* and preachers to acquire modern education. This is the road to progress, Iqbal urged his fellow Muslims to follow.

(V)

Iqbal's views in support of Muslim nationalism and a Muslim state have drawn divergent interpretations. Was Iqbal in favor of partitioning India, or did he only want a specified region, not a sovereign independent state, where Muslims' would be free to bloom culturally? Javid Iqbal has tackled these issues with considerable clarity. The genesis of Iqbal's ideas started in 1906-1908, when he was still a student in Britain, he had renounced the idea of secular Indian nationalism, which appealed to the concept of a modern nation determined by the commonly shared territory. Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's concept of religion and culture as the catalytic elements of nationalism appealed to him, and he accepted the fact that India was the home of two separate nations of Hindus and Muslims. In consequence, when the Muslim League was established in 1904 by Sir Sayyid's followers, Iqbal joined the London offshoot of it. Following Sir Sayyid's views, when in 1909 the separate electorates were proposed, he became an ardent supporter of this form of electoral representation and remained so until the end of his life.

While Jinnah remained in Britain from 1930-1934, Iqbal was President of the All-India Muslim Conference. From this position, Iqbal consistently articulated the concept of Muslim nationhood, and expressed it eloquently in his presidential address of the Muslim League in 1930 at Allahabad. When Jinnah finally returned home Iqbal supported him while he was confined to bed as a sick man. Finally Jinnah acknowledged Iqbal's contributions to the idea of Pakistan, when the Muslim League passed the

Lahore Resolution in 1940. Incidentally, the name Pakistan was not used; only a state(s) was proposed.

Writing a foreword to Iqbal's eight letters, which he wrote to him during 1936-37 Jinnah paid a compliment to Iqbal: "His views were substantially in consonance with my own and finally led me to the same conclusions..." In one of his messages on the celebration of the Iqbal Day Jinnah stated: "Iqbal was my friend and spiritual guide. He stood like a rock by my side in the darkest days of the Muslim League." Javid Iqbal's thesis recognized a consistent and persistent tide of Iqbal's thought leading toward the creation of a Muslim state.

After some research and reflection, I have concluded that Iqbal's views in 1933-34 favored autonomy not partition, but by 1936-38, he had swung to the position of a demand for a sovereign and independent state. This evolutionary process is discernable in his letters, which Iqbal wrote to Professor Edward J. Thompson of Oxford University, and Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Despite Thompson's pronounced sympathies for the All-India National Congress, and ideological support for its secular Indian nationalism, Iqbal had maintained fairly friendly relations with him. In a thank you note of March 4, 1934 for Thompson's favorable review of his book, Iqbal disowned the "Pakistan scheme." "The one that I suggested," wrote Iqbal, "is the creation of a Muslim province – a province having an overwhelming population of Muslims – in the northwest of India." He added: "This new province will be...a part of the proposed Indian Federation. The Pakistan scheme proposes a federation of Muslim provinces, a separate dominion, directly related to England. This scheme originated in Cambridge."

Iqbal was also aware that a group of young Muslim students at Cambridge, who were led by Chaudhary Rahmat Ali, were unhappy with the policy of the Muslim delegates to the Third Round Table Conference in London.



In Iqbal's description, they believed that these "Round Tablers [had] sacrificed the Muslim nation on the altar of Hindu or the so-called Indian nationalism."<sup>20</sup>

One should not lose sight of the fact that upon the collapse of Hindu-Muslim cooperation during the combined non-cooperation/Khilafat Movement of 1921-22, Hindu-Muslim conflicts erupted, which were described as riots. According to one scholarly study during 1923-27 more than 88 riots took place in the U.P. (the United Province) alone. Parenthetically, it may be mentioned that even after independence "Hindu-Muslim riots and anti-Muslim pogroms have been endemic in India."<sup>21</sup> In addition to his concern for the religio-cultural survival of the Muslims, Iqbal was appalled by this free for all bloodletting of Muslims. He described this situation in one of his letters to Jinnah as a virtual civil war in the northwest of India.

A variety of explanations for these "riots" have been offered. Indeed a hegemonic discourse exists in India, what Professor Paul R. Brass calls the communal discourse, including the technique of denial and blame displacement (by attributing violent practices to others). Historians tried to emphasize continuity of violent Hindu-Muslim relations between past and present, extending backward to early Muslim invasions of India; some observers blame the politicians, who engineer the riots, and economic competition between Hindus and Muslims. All left thinkers, including Jawaharlal Nehru, emphasized the economic disparity between the Hindus and the Muslims. Some scholars, subscribing to the social-psychological approach blame the "persecutory fantasies" of the Hindus, which are transmitted to the younger generation of the middle and upper caste Hindus in northern India.

Iqbal like Jinnah was torn apart by a dilemma: if partition was a "solution" for the Muslims of the northwestern provinces of India, it was bound to be

devastating to the interests and security of Muslims as a minority in the Hindu dominated provinces of India. They would be, in the eventuality of partition, at the mercy of the Hindu majority. Iqbal was mostly silent about East Bengal, and in his discourse never mentioned the name Pakistan. One can understand that by 1931 Iqbal proposed the redistributing of the northwest Muslim provinces into an autonomous entity, which might in the “dim future,” emerge as a state. In proposing this idea, he carried forward the ideas “advocated by the Nehru and the Simon Commission Reports.” Well-organized and satisfied Muslim provinces, he suggested, “would be the bulwark of India and the British Empire against the hungry generations of the Asiatic highlands.”<sup>22</sup>

By 1936-38 Iqbal had crossed the Rubicon. He moved ahead of Jinnah, when he wrote him eight letters. The last letter was written by Iqbal only a few months before his death. At this point in time he started visualizing the application of the *Shari`a*, developed in the light of modern ideas, “within a free Muslim state or states.” In a letter of June 21, 1937 to Jinnah, he referred to the frequent occurrence of inter-communal riots, which he thought was like “living in a state of civil war.” He called the “idea of a single Indian federation a completely hopeless idea. Then he asked Jinnah rhetorically the ultimate question: “why should not the Muslims of northwest India and Bengal be considered as nations entitled to self-determination just as other nations in India and outside India are?” Finally, he suggested that Jinnah “ignore Muslim minority provinces,” and move to create a Muslim state(s).

## (VI)

Now, the big question may be asked. Was the partitioning of India the only solution to the Muslims’ future in the Subcontinent?

Indian leaders have always blamed the Muslim separatists, which they believe were encouraged by the British. There may be something to it, but it is not the definitive explanation. Also, it is convenient in the sense that it absolves the leaders of the All-India National Congress of any responsibility in finding a negotiated settlement of political issues which were important to the Muslims.

The political policy of the Congress leaders was oversimplified: they wanted a one man, one vote democratic constitution without separate electorates in post-imperial India, when the British overlordship would not be available to the Muslims to protect their rights and would not be there to encourage their separatism. In other words, they wanted (especially leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru) to secularize the Indian system of governance where only economic interests would be the guiding light. They expected the Hindu leaders to protect the Muslim interests in order to win their votes. As India would progress economically the sectarian and “communal” issues would fade away. In their eyes religious and cultural identity issues of Muslims were overblown humbug. The Hindu leaders ridiculed the so-called “Muslim demands,” and belittled their religio-cultural identity. They intensified Muslims’ existential fears. This phenomenon was visible to any observer who lived through the period of 1938-47.

The Muslim League accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan of 1946, which had preserved the territorial unity of India, and provided for two Muslim zones of provinces, and the largest zone of Hindu majority provinces. Granted that it provided for a transitional period of ten years at the end of which the provinces were authorized to opt out of the Indian Union, and the central government was rather less than all powerful. Nehru declared that the Congress Party would disregard these provisions, and draft a constitution for the Indian Union in its own light. It was at this point in time when Jinnah rejected the Cabinet Mission Plan.

Sometimes allegations are vociferously made that Muslims are psychologically incapable of living with other ethnic and religious nationalities. This canard was invented after the 9/11 tragedy in the United States. This anti-Islamic orientation ignores the fact that none of the Central Asian republics, which are Muslim by faith and Turkic in ethnic origin, voted happily to dissolve the Soviet Union in 1991. After the Soviet collapse a large number of Central Asian Muslims continued to live in Russia, and refused to return to their republics. Similarly Tatars and Bashkorts, who are 99.9 percent Muslim, never expressed the desire for their republics to secede from the existing Russian Federation.

Certainly Hindus and Muslims can coexist peacefully even now, provided the governments of India and Pakistan embark upon the long and arduous journey of reconciliation, and resolve the interstate disputes which they inherited from the legacy of partition in 1947.

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## Chapter I

# PARTICIPATION IN THE POLITICS OF THE PUNJAB

**D**espite maintaining intellectually keen interest in the politics of India, Iqbal had not participated in the electoral process either at the all-India level, or in the politics of the Punjab, before 1926. According to his own written statement, he was probably one of the first Muslim leaders, who had aspired to achieve the ideal of a united nation in India.<sup>1</sup> However, even at this phase while he supported the Hindu-Muslim unity as a joint and common enterprise of mutually shared interests, he did not join the All-India National Congress. He continued to perceive the subcontinent as the homeland of different nationalities. By 1900 the concept of a Muslim nation was visibly embedded in his poetry. During his stay in England he went through an intellectual and emotional “revolution,” which directed his orientations entirely toward Islam. In London he was in touch with the Pan Islamic Society and the British Committee of the Muslim League. But this touch was not substantive.

When he returned from England in 1908 he established contact with the Provincial branch of the Muslim League more on an ideological basis than as a regular activist of the party. The Lucknow Pact of 1916 (or what might be called the Congress-League Agreement) was signed by Sir Fazl-i Husain for the Punjab. Iqbal was not in favor of this



agreement. Subsequently, the Caliphate Conference was created, and the Muslim leaders joined the Non-cooperation Movement, which was launched by Mahatma Gandhi to forge Hindu-Muslim cooperation and to pressure the British government for meaningful constitutional reforms in India. Iqbal also stayed away from this movement. In this period Iqbal was isolated intellectually, and emotionally, because the Muslim supporters of the Non-cooperation Movement, and those who wanted to cooperate with the British government, had failed to understand his point of view.

Iqbal viewed Muslim politics in the Indian subcontinent as an exercise in futility or as an avenue of self-promotion. Participation in active politics, in his view, amounted to personal aggrandizement, lust for high office and the ability to be disruptive. He expressed these views in his poetry. Against this background a rhetorical question may be raised: why did he decide in 1924 to participate in the electoral contest of 1926. Partially the answer is to be sought in his personal intellectual "revolution." Moreover, the British government had allowed the Muslims separate electorates. Iqbal followed Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's school of political thought, which enabled him psychologically and intellectually to support him wholeheartedly.

Sir Sayyid believed that Muslims were afraid of the Hindu majority's domination (and even oppression), and for this lurking fear had adopted a defensive posture. In a democratic polity a united nation of Hindus and Muslims could be created, if they could be equal partners in the control of the government of India. Because of communal alienation Hindus could not be expected to accept a role of equality for the Muslims. In India the ideal of a united nation, in his views, was no more than pious wishful thinking.<sup>2</sup> This view had become central to his separatist conviction. By 1909 he had come to a conclusion that

Hindus and Muslims should maintain separate national identities.<sup>3</sup> Reflecting this conviction, Iqbal highlighted Muslim nationalism.

During the Caliphate/Non-cooperation Movement he realized one more phenomenon that Muslim states were obsessively committed to the concept of territorial nationalism. In India Muslim leaders were either chasing the phantom of Hindu-Muslim unity or devoted their efforts to win the good will of the British government, as if it was the sole objective of their life. Iqbal's isolation from the Muslim leadership was complete. A geographic factor of his life should also be taken into consideration: Punjab was a Muslim majority province. Almost instinctively his political posture was self-assertive; he did not believe in a defensive policy. These factors explain adequately why he decided to participate in the rough and tumble of Punjabi electoral politics. His aim was to unite the Muslims in order to confront the British government and the Hindu majority to win in the demand for Muslim rights.

The Minto-Morley Act of 1909 conceded to the Muslim demand for the process of separate electorates. However, in the provincial legislatures directly elected representatives were limited in numbers. Subsequently, the internal political dynamics, and international politics adversely effected India's conditions. Internally, the British annulled the partition of Bengal (1905-1910), Hindu Muslim riots occurred in Kanpur over a mosque (1913), the British government adopted the repressive Rowlatt Acts (February 1919), Brigadier General Reginald Dyer killed 400 unarmed civilians who were "unlawfully" protesting the Rowlatt Acts in Jallianwalla Bagh (April 13, 1919), the Caliphate agitation, the Non-cooperation Movement, and last but not least, the Shudhi Movement launched by the Arya Samaj to convert Muslims to Hinduism that accentuated Hindu-Muslim alienation and led to the eruption of riots all over India. Externally, the Turkish

Caliphate's alliance with Germany and its war efforts against the British profoundly affected Muslim sentiments.

### **Iqbal in Electoral Politics**

Against the background of these turbulent political events the British government made concessions to Indian demands in the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919. Under this Act a system of diarchy was established. In the provincial legislatures the number of elected districts was increased. In this new political system Iqbal was urged by his friends and supporters to run for an election in a constituency of Lahore. In 1923 a lawyer friend, Mian Abdul Aziz, had declared his candidacy in the same constituency. Iqbal decided not to run against his friend.

By 1926 a wide gulf of alienation separated Muslims from Hindus. When the Non-cooperation Movement against the British government fizzled out, both the All-Indian National Congress and the Caliphate Conference had lost their popularity and credibility. Now the Hindu Maha Sabha and the Sawaraj Party dominated the political arena. Neither party was prepared to seriously discuss the Muslims' demand for political rights. Although the Muslims reorganized and repeated their demands, the political environment filled with the agony of Hindu-Muslim communal prejudices was not conducive to any form of amicable settlement of the political differences between the Hindus and Muslims.

The Punjab's demographic map was also very disheartening. The cities contained some educated and middle class people, but most of the population lived in the villages. An urban-rural cleavage developed. The province was also divided into brotherhoods, predominantly the Jats, Rajputs, Pathans, Awans, Ghakkars, Gujjars and Mughals. The cities reflected these ethnicities as well. In Lahore three ethnic groups dominated the demographic picture: 1) Arian, 2) Kashmiri and 3) Kakazai. No electoral candidate

could hope to win the election without the support of one of the three brotherhoods.

When Iqbal settled in Lahore he established a close working relationship with the Kashmiri Anjuman and started to participate in their activities devoted to the welfare of the Kashmiri community, which had migrated from Kashmir to Lahore. By 1918 he realized that these brotherhoods were vitiating and eroding Islamic solidarity among the Muslims. Iqbal disassociated himself from these ethnic groups. During this period there existed not a single active political organization capable of jettisoning tribal narrow mindedness and inter-communal prejudices.

Ashiq Hussain Batalvi has stated that Sir Michael O'Dwyer, the governor of the Punjab, was the first British administrator to break Muslim solidarity by encouraging urban/rural cleavage. This artificially contrived bifurcation gave birth to the Unionist Party founded by Sir Fazl-i Husain in the Punjab. Husain exercised enormous influence in the Punjab Legislative Assembly, which enabled the Unionist Party to gain rock solid strength. However, the Unionist Party's political manipulations strengthened the wall of separation between the urban and rural Muslims, and accentuated the tribal exclusive orientations.<sup>4</sup>

During the early months of 1926 Iqbal devoted his time to his law practice, and attended the High Court regularly. At this time he also composed his well-known work, *Zabur-i Ajam*. To supplement his income, he set and reviewed the final examination papers of university students. At his home in the evenings his friends and admirers visited for extensive discussions on all matters of provincial, All-India and global politics. At some of these meetings discussions also extended to poetry, literature and philosophy.

In 1926 his friend Chaudhary Muhammad Hussain was appointed to a minor job in the press branch of the Punjab government. After some promotions he was transferred to a fairly high level position in the Home Department, which

was responsible for internal security. Iqbal had implicit trust in Chaudhary, and considered him a sincere friend and a sincere Muslim. Chaudhary demonstrated his utter devotion and love for Iqbal through his actions and personal dedication. The British government of the Punjab created an awful dilemma for Chaudhary when it asked him to report on Iqbal's conversations with visitors. In order to not betray Iqbal, he made up his mind to resign from his post. When Iqbal detected Chaudhary's bewilderment, he asked him to explain the cause for his state of mind. Very forthrightly, Chaudhary explained the situation to Iqbal. Consequently, the two good friends worked out a plan to save Chaudhary's job and maintain the confidentiality of Iqbal's private conversations: regularly they prepared "secret reports" for the benefit of the colonial government, an arrangement they continued for several years.

### **Election Campaign**

In this year, 1926, Iqbal's supporters insisted that he run for election to the Punjab Legislative Assembly from the Muslim constituency in Lahore. The incumbent, Mian Abdul Aziz, assured Iqbal that he would not run for reelection and guaranteed Iqbal his full support in his bid for election to the Legislative Assembly. Aziz publicly declared his withdrawal from the election; his statement appeared in the daily *Zamindar* on July 15, 1926. In response Iqbal issued a statement of gratitude to Mian Aziz, which also appeared in the *Zamindar* on July 20, 1926. Iqbal stated:

"Muslims know it well that I refrained from electoral politics because other people were engaged in it. I had carved out another niche for my activities. At this point in time our national problems are calling on me to expand the circle of my activities. Perhaps, I might be able to render useful services to the cause of our nation – which consumes all of my daily efforts."<sup>5</sup>

The daily newspapers in Lahore owned by Muslims repeatedly stated in their editorials that a prominent personality like Iqbal should be unopposed in the election. Nevertheless, two candidates, Malik Muhammad Hussain, President of the Municipal Corporation of Lahore, and Malik Muhammad Din, an unknown lawyer, threw their hats in the ring in opposition to Iqbal. When Malik Muhammad Hussain decided to withdraw from the contest, Iqbal thanked him in a statement published in the *Zamindar* on October 5, 1926:

“I admire and compliment his sentiment and judgment that he did not allow the narrow exclusive prejudices of the brotherhood to determine his candidacy and that instead he has made a judgment for the unity of Muslims. May God infuse a similar spirit of devotion and sacrifice in all Muslims.”

Contrary to Malik Muhammad Hussain, Malik Muhammad Din fought Iqbal in the election to the bitter end. Iqbal had no choice but to campaign with equal vigor against Din to win the election. In Lahore Iqbal’s supporters organized at least 20 public campaign meetings – some were attended personally by Iqbal. In every neighborhood pro-Iqbal electoral processions paraded the streets and several brotherhoods placed posters on the walls of the city in support of Iqbal’s candidacy. Inundated with support, Iqbal actually used very little of his own money to finance his campaign.

During the campaign Malik Muhammad Din’s attacks on Iqbal were three dimensional. Religious attacks called Iqbal a man of Wahabi conviction, while his opponent was a “dedicated” *Sunni*. He, like others, described Iqbal as an enemy of Sufism who made unwarranted attacks on Persian poet Hafiz Shirazi in his poetical work *Asrar-i Khudi*. Moreover, Iqbal at one point in time had supported King Ibn al-Saud of Saudi Arabia and a section of the *ulama* had issued a *fatwa* declaring Iqbal a *Kafir* (an infidel). Din’s second line of attack focused on Iqbal’s brotherhood,

invoking the tribal loyalty of the Arian voters – if Arians want to protect their interests then they better support an Arian in the Legislative Assembly elections. The third line of attack was nothing short of character assassination. He circulated 14 posters against Iqbal, which contained personal attacks and baseless accusations.

Iqbal completely ignored the posters. In his electoral public meetings he urged Muslim voters to cultivate Islamic solidarity, and restore Islamic unity in their ranks. He described the “brotherhoods” un-Islamic in spirit and urged his Muslim voters to avoid conflicting religious convictions. He never made a personal attack. If any of his supporters ventured to use unbecoming language in describing Malik Muhammad Din, he stopped it forthwith.

The *Zamindar* published a supportive editorial for Iqbal that commented on the style and content of Malik Muhammad Din’s campaign:

Is this not an unfortunate and regrettable development among Muslims that they did not let an honorable personality [like Iqbal] be elected unopposed to the lowly position of a member of the Legislative Assembly of the Punjab? While Muslims are so insensitive and unmindful of their own personality, then how can they be justified in their lamentations that sincere savants of the nation are not available and that there is a dearth of real leaders? Mian Abdul Aziz, barrister-at-law, and Malik Muhammad Hussain demonstrated their wisdom and recognition of the national need in withdrawing from the electoral contest. Muslim people in general are truly grateful to them.

Now an unknown barrister, Malik Muhammad Din, is competing against Allama Iqbal, while an average Muslim does not even recognize this [lawyer’s] name. Malik Muhammad Din has issued a statement to support his candidacy in which he has stated repeatedly that he is one of the Sunnis, belonging to *Sunnat al-Jama`t*, and that he has visited the mausoleums of our revered ones, and that he only wants to have the votes of the Sunnis. May we ask him: In the future, will the membership in the denomination of the

Sunnis be the litmus test for eligibility as a member of the Legislative Assembly? Can a person, who is so blindly addicted to the ethos of one group, be a representative of all Muslims after his election? Does it not imply that the Shias and *Ahl al-Hadith* followers should seek separate representation, and demand seats of their own in the Legislative Assembly?

On one side stands Allama Iqbal who says loudly and clearly that he wants to be the representative of all Muslims. He wants to demolish the idols of exclusive groups and brotherhoods. On the other side stands a man who projects *hanafi* biases, but recognizes no need for Muslim unity. We understand it well that Malik Muhammad Din is pandering to the Arian brotherhood for votes, but this reliance on the votes of one particular community highlights his policy of promoting division among Muslims. He is not really interested in the average Muslim.

But we want him to know that the educated and enlightened members of his community are not so blind that they cannot see the distinction between [the qualities of] Allama Iqbal and Malik Muhammad Din. They will never sacrifice the Muslims' interests, and support the narrow brotherhood bias. Iqbal has stated loudly and repeatedly that anyone who wants to vote for him solely because he is a Kashmiri better cast his vote somewhere else. He appeals in the name of Islam. He says he only wants Muslims' votes.

[Compare the Muslims' situation with that of the Hindus']. Lala Lajpat Rai is so influential that he can have anyone elected unopposed. No one would have the courage to oppose his designated candidate. Despite their internal differences, Hindus have elected Pandit Moti Lal Nehru and Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya to the legislatures unopposed. The constituency of Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya contains hundreds of thousands of supporters and members of the All-India National Congress and Pandit Moti Lal Nehru's constituency is filled with supporters of the Sangathan Movement. Such is their national solidarity that no one would dare challenge these outstanding personalities. Look



at the Muslims – they cannot demonstrate their reverence to the magnificent personality of Allama Iqbal.”<sup>6</sup>

Haji Din Muhammad, who was a good calligraphist, was a great supporter of Iqbal in the electoral campaign. He was of the opinion that Sir Shadi Lal, Chief Justice of the High Court of the Punjab in Lahore, had instigated Malik Muhammad Din to compete against Iqbal. At one electoral meeting for Iqbal in Mozang, campaign workers printed a huge poster that contained derogatory comments about Malik Muhammad Din to counter the Din campaign’s negative posters regarding Iqbal. Iqbal was bemused by this war of the posters, but advised his campaign workers to tear down the posters that blasted Malik Muhammad Din.

Among the campaign supporters of Iqbal was a well-known Punjabi poet, Malik Lal Din Qaiser, and equally well-known Alim, Maulana Ghulam Murshid. In the public meetings Qaiser always recited his Punjabi poems to win over voters to Iqbal’s side. In his orations Murshid emphasized Islamic solidarity and Iqbals’ suitability as the candidate. Young campaign workers often recited in unison Qaiser’s semi-Urdu and Semi Punjabi verse:

*Aa gaiy Fauj Iqbali*

*Ker deo rasta Khali*

(Iqbal’s army of campaign workers has arrived;  
Move out and make way for their campaign)

In the electoral meetings held on the campus of Islamia College, the young students recited Iqbal’s well-known verse, which was probably inspired by the demographic peculiarities of the Punjab.

Youn to Saiyyid be ho, Mirza be ho, Afghan be ho,  
Tum Sabhi kuch ho, batao to Musalman be ho  
(You claim to be Saiyyad, or Mirza or an Afghan.  
You are all those men, but are you also a Muslim.)

In Chohata Mufti Baqir, another neighborhood inside the walled city, an electoral meeting for the support of Iqbal was attended by an estimated four thousand people. Qaiser brought to this meeting Maulvi Muharum Ali Chishti, who

was actually a known supporter of Malik Muhammad Din. Qaiser introduced Chishti to the audience and then recited three Punjabi verses of satire directed at him.<sup>7</sup>

*Habibi-pur ik pind suni da, Othoun da Patwari hai  
Asi us noun kuch nahiyin kahna ohday mountay dahri hai  
Kal jo Kissay yar nay ja kay aws noun boli mari hai  
Hazrat Tohadi taqat kithay oahder khalqat sari hai  
Kanlaga oi be-waqufa, mat tayri gaie mari hai  
Shaher Lahore Iqbal they wallay sada zoar Atari hai*

Habibi-pur is a town, where he is a village accountant.

What can we say to him, he supports a flowing [*shari*] beard.

Yesterday a friend went to see him, and informed him

Dear fellow, you have no [electoral] strength, all the people are on the other side

He added: don't be a fool; you have lost your sense

The city of Lahore supports Iqbal, your strength lies in Attari [another city]

The satire was particularly pointed at Maulvi Muharum Ali Chishti. It was well-known in the city that he had an ongoing retainer with a courtesan whose name was Zaibun-Nissa Habibi.

### **Prominent Supporters**

Among the supporters of Iqbal were some well-known public figures of Lahore –among them landowners, successful lawyers, businessmen, writers and journalists. Their names deserve to be mentioned: Mian Nizam-ud-Din, Mian Amir-ud-Din, Mian Hassam-ud-Din, Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Qizalbash, Sardar Habib Allah, Malik Miran Bakhsh, Mian M. Aslam, Muhammad Din Tasir, Khalifa Shuja-ud-Din, barrister-at-law, Mian Abdul Aziz, barrister-at-law, Maulavi Sayyid Mumtaz Ali, Ghulam Rasul Mehr, Abdul Majid Salik, Khwaja Firoz-ud-Din, barrister-at-law, Khwaja Dil Muhammad, Pehlwan Channan Din, Dr. Mirza Yaqub Beg, Maulavi Ahmad Din, advocate, Saiyyad Mohsin Shah, advocate, Saiyyad

Maratab Ali, Shaikh Azim Allah, advocate, Maulavi Ahmad Din, advocate, Hafeez Jallandhari, Abdur Rehman Chughtai, Abdullah Chughtai, Saiyyad Afzal Ali Hussni, Mirza Jalal-ud-Din, barrister-at-law, Shaikh Gulab Din, advocate, Mawlana Zafar-Ali Khan, Shaikh Muhammad Naqi, Maulavi Mahbub Alam, Mian Shah Nawaz and Hakim Muhammad Yousaf.

In addition to these very prominent personalities, Muhammad Hanif Shahid in his study, *Iqbal Awr Punjab Konsal*, has preserved hundreds of names of Iqbal's supporters. Several associations in Lahore's neighborhoods issued supportive statements in favor of Iqbal. In the city the Kashmiris were smaller in number, and their support could not be decisive. However, this deficiency was amply compensated for by the unanimous support the large ethnic associations of butchers, cattle ranchers and other artisans. The Pathans of the Kakazai tribe were most active in support of Iqbal. Among the religious groups, Iqbal's vocal supporters were the Shia leaders (like well-known leader Saiyyad Ali Hairy), the Khawajgan of Narowal and the Ahmadis of Qadian and Lahore, the Anjuman Islamia of Mian Mir and the Ahl al-Hadith.

Among the Muslim political parties who supported Iqbal, the most prominent was the Majlis-i Khilafat, which declared Iqbal the most suitable candidate. Actually, there was a convergence of views on several issues between Iqbal and the Majlis-i Khilafat. Iqbal had endorsed their manifesto, which contained the following items:

1. Always support the national interest by ignoring the goodwill of the British government, and personal interests.
2. In addition to protecting the Muslims' collective interest, the objective of India's freedom must be kept on the center stage. As long as the Majlis-i Caliphate pursues these twin objectives, the Majlis should not be opposed in the Legislative Assembly or outside of it.

3. Until such time when India's political dynamics are transformed, the struggle for separate electorates for Muslims must be maintained.

4. Within the legislative council any party that subscribes to the above mentioned principles must be supported.

Among the Kashmiri-owned newspapers, *Siyasat* and *Nishtar* opposed Iqbal during the election campaign. They labeled him with all sorts of derogatory titles – Wahabi, Najdi, enemy of Islam and even called him an outright liar. In general Lahore's Muslim owned newspapers wrote articles in Iqbal's favor.

Iqbal's campaign volunteers and supporters organized his election campaign rather well. Regular processions and electoral meetings got underway in 1926. In the meetings, held in different neighborhoods around Lahore, the city's prominent orators, sometimes fellow lawyers, addressed large audiences and urged them to get the voters out to the polling stations. Some of these speakers deserve to be identified: Maulana Muhammad Bakhsh Muslim, Hafeez Jallundhri, Dr. Saif-ud-Din Kitchlew, Mawlana Atta Allah Shah Bukhari, Mawlana Zafar Ali Khan, Mawlana Habib-ur-Rehman and Mawlana Mazher Ali Azhar. Iqbal fairly regularly attended these meetings and processions.

Oral communication with the voters was well planned. Small groups of Iqbal's volunteers waved identity symbols awarded by the Election Commission and invariably walked as the vanguard while they sang verses to praise Iqbal. The groups in the vanguard wore distinctive identity signs and turbans of different hues. Some groups sported red fezzes inscribed with Iqbal's name in bright colors. Behind these groups walked the city's notable personalities, including landowners, businessmen, college professors and other educated gentlemen. As they walked encircling Iqbal at almost every step they would be stopped as people in the

streets placed floral garlands around their necks. At every step his path was strewn with flowers.

Iqbal's volunteer election workers and other supporters sang Iqbal's poetry which contained soul stirring verses of Islamic solidarity. This was done very deliberately as Iqbal was committed to this Islamic ideal and was dedicated to eliminating the curse of ethnic prejudices of the brotherhoods. As his political processions moved through the streets of Lahore, they interrupted their march at prayer times. Quickly they moved into mosques to offer their congregational prayers and then they regrouped again to march forward to one of the twelve gates of Lahore, where finally Iqbal delivered his oration of Islamic unity and love.<sup>8</sup>

Some of Iqbal's speeches, delivered always in Urdu, were reported verbatim in the *Zamindar*. Addressing an election meeting on October 11, 1926, Iqbal offered an explanation of his dedicated commitment to composing poetry in Urdu (as well as in Persian) instead of practicing law full-time:

"I could have expressed my views in English, Urdu or Persian prose, but it is an acknowledged fact that people psychologically respond more willingly to poetry than prose. Precisely for this reason I used poetry as a medium of communication to offer Muslims an opportunity to understand the true meaning of life, and to urge them to follow in the footsteps of their ancestors, jettison hopelessness, cowardice and be dedicated to active life. I served my brethren intellectually to the best of my ability for 25 years. Now, I am offering them my service in a new style. In 1929 the British government will establish a Royal Commission to investigate the scope of reforms in our country, to determine whether or not India deserves additional constitutional reforms. It is appropriate that Muslims watch these developments and protect their interests.

A member of the Legislative Assembly must possess a spirit of dedication for the national interest so that he is able to sacrifice his own personal interests for the good of the nation.

I pledge to you that I will never place my personal interests above the national interest.

I pray to God that he gives me the fortitude to serve you. I consider it worse than death to serve my own personal interests at the expense of national objectives.”<sup>9</sup>

Two days after the delivery of this speech, Iqbal issued a supplementary statement in a meeting on October 13, 1926: “if the Muslim nation in a general and open decision orders me to resign my position as a member of the national Assembly, I would do it immediately. I consider it a damnable sin to build a ‘little mosque’ of my own to assert my leadership. In the near future I plan to activate a vanguard of Muslim youth to eradicate the curse of ‘group worship’ among Muslims.”

At a meeting on October 15, 1926 Iqbal stated that a sacred phenomenon like religion should never be made a divisive element and common unity should never be fractured. “We have to follow the Abrahamic tradition, and shatter the idols of caste and creed. In the near future I plan to present to our youth a social program.” Two days later Iqbal addressed another meeting and discussed the concept of Islamic democracy and the Punjab Legislative Council.

Iqbal’s address on October 19, 1926 in Katra Waliy Shah inside the walled city was the last speech of this election campaign. From the site of the meeting to outside in the bazaar so many people had showed up that not a needle could be placed in any vacant spot. When Iqbal entered the meeting site at 8:30 P.M. he was garlanded profusely. People started to shout: *Iqbal Zinda Bad* (long live Iqbal). To start the meeting some Punjabi poetry was recited. Qaiser, Aas and Thamer recited their poems to warm up the crowd. Then came the orators’ turn to talk about the current affairs and above all, deliver eulogies in Iqbal’s honor. Among the speakers were Shaikh Azim Allah, advocate, Shams-ud-Din Hassan, editor of the weekly magazine *Khawar*, Mawlana Muhammad Bakhsh

Muslim and Khawja Feroze-ud-Din, barrister-at-law. Finally Iqbal stood up and delivered his last speech:

The secret of Muslims' success lies in their unity. I spent many nights over the years trying to unveil the mystery of Saiyyad-Na Muhammad: what is it that he accomplished within the short period of 30 years that Arabs have followed and subsequently became the leaders of nations. The mystery is simply solidarity and national unity, which was on the lips of everyone. I wish this mystery would sink deep into the hearts of all Muslims.

“Racial and differences of convictions, biases of all kinds and narrow mindedness have destroyed the Muslims. Differences of opinion are natural, because every individual is endowed with a different psychology. Everyone sees differently, and has a different style of thinking. We should learn to keep this difference in balance, the way our forefathers did. In that manner difference becomes an act of divine grace. When people become narrow minded then the same difference becomes a curse.

My brethren Muslims! I tell you frankly if you want to survive, then unite. When you disagree with each other, do so the way our forefathers did. Give up narrow mindedness. All differences will vanish, if you give up your narrow mindedness.

The second most important imperative for Muslims is their obligation to cultivate deep interest in the political developments in India. Those who cannot read the newspapers should ask others to read the papers to them. Today most of the major world powers are arrayed against Islam. However, I believe in the divine enunciations presaging the ultimate success of Islamic forces.”<sup>10</sup>

During this election campaign some hilarious (some even dirty) jokes were told. A poet of very high repute, Hafeez Jallundhri told Javid Iqbal that one day walking down the streets of the walled city Iqbal asked a young man of the Arian fraternity, which did not support Iqbal, to vote for him. The uncouth youth snapped back with an obscene gesture, while he exposed his lower body parts. Iqbal was

mortified and remained depressed for a long while. Finally, he looked Hafeez in the eye, and in a very dejected spirit said to him: “Because of our Muslim nation I spend sleepless nights worrying about the future. Just look at this fellow. Why are some of our young men so devoid of courtesy and decent manners?” In a peculiar style of his own, Hafeez consoled Iqbal and said: “Doctor Sahib! Whatever the assets our nation possesses this young man has shown you as a sample. Why are you depressed about it?” Iqbal burst out laughing and the mood was lifted.

After Muhammad Hanif Shahid examined the files of the *Zamindar* of November 23-24, 1926, he compiled a very detailed account of activities at different polling stations which he reported in his study, *Iqbal and the Punjab Council* (Urdu). In Lahore’s Muslim constituency and the Lahore cantonment area, polling stations registered brisk voter attendance in the morning hours. Some clashes were reported at the Akbari Gate polling station, and voter activity in the evening was slack. At several polling stations Malik Muhammad Din’s supporters tried to cast fraudulent votes, but many of them were rejected. Ten “voters” were arrested for their attempts to cast bogus votes. Many educated members of the Arian fraternity, who paid no attention to the fraternity obligation voted for Iqbal. At the Mochi Gate polling stations supporters of the different candidates engaged in physical fights. At the end of polling, Iqbal showed up and his supporters “forced” him into a procession and shouted: *Allah Akbar, Iqbal Zinda Bad* (God is great; long live Iqbal). Finally the procession was led through the Kashmiri and Dabbi bazaars, and then dispersed.

During the polling activity four supporters of Malik Muhammad Din were arrested for their attempts to cast bogus ballots; among them was Din’s younger brother, Nazir Ahmad. Subsequently they were released on bail. One of these men had even attempted to vote for a man whom Iqbal



had designated as his supervisor to monitor the identity of valid voters. Very quickly he was arrested as he was determined to cast the bogus vote. A coach driver's coach was high jacked because he had identified one of the fake voters. After the election the police recovered the coach from the four culprits, working to rig the election for Din. The police succeeded in arresting two of them; the other two just disappeared. The whole election rigging episode was investigated by Chaudhary Ali Goher, an assistant sub-inspector of the police station of the Lahore cantonment.

Finally the government issued the final results of the election on December 26, 1926 at the District Court headquarters of Lahore. The constituency contained 12,000 registered voters; only 8,400 showed up to cast their ballots. Iqbal won 5,675 votes and his opponent won 2,698 votes. In other words, Iqbal won the election by an impressive margin of 3,177 more votes than Malik Muhammad Din.<sup>11</sup>

After the election result was announced, Iqbal's supporters marched from the District Court to the Tolinton Market on the Mall road, where Iqbal was probably waiting for them. A victory procession was almost instantly organized, and moved via the Anar Kali Bazaar to Lohari Gate, and by early evening reached the Bhatta Gate. Ahead of the procession young men, excited and enjoying vicariously Iqbal's victory, danced the Punjabi dance, bhangra. Mian Salah-ud-Din (who later married Iqbal's daughter) was perched on the shoulders of Dr. Muhammad Din Tasir, who was a poet of some merit, joined the bhangra dance.

Inside the Bhatta Gate the procession came close to the famous landmark, the *Onchiy Masjid* (elevated mosque), where the evening prayers were offered. From there the procession meandered through Hira Mandi and Saiyad Mitha Bazaar and stopped at Chowk Jhanda, where an admirer arranged a turban on Iqbal's head. At the Mori

Gate Iqbal got into a coach, called *phaeton*. Then the procession moved to the old *kotwali*, and then came to Chohata Mufti Baqir, where a well-known Punjabi poet, Ustad Gam recited a poem celebrating his victory. By 10:30 P.M. Iqbal delivered a brief message of gratitude to his supporters and then the procession was terminated.

In discussing this election, an editorial in the *Zamindar* stated that among Malik Muhammad Din's voters two thousand were the illiterate young men, who had no knowledge of Iqbal's scholarly achievements. The balance of the voters were those individuals who were addicted to "*Brailvi Hanafiat*," and had been carried away by the propaganda of a local newspaper, which followed the party line of those "Hanafis," who had sold out the interests of Islam.<sup>12</sup>

A "fraternity brother" of Malik Muhammad Din was Malik Zahur-ud-Din, who had defied the "fraternal rule" and voted for Iqbal. He was very roughly handled by some uncouth members of his fraternity. To explain his position, Malik Zahur-ud-Din wrote a letter to the *Zamindar*:

"I have been criticized for not supporting Malik Muhammad Din in the election for a seat in the Punjab Legislative Council. Some have asked me to explain the reasons for defying the fraternity and my relatives' wishes, who wanted me to vote for Malik Muhammad Din. Here are my reasons for not supporting him.

First, a prominent and able member of our fraternity, Mian Abdul Aziz, barrister-at-law, withdrew in favor of Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, and pledged to vote for him. This demonstrated to me that to fight against Dr. Iqbal, a man of outstanding merit, would be utterly wrong. We were under the obligation to support Mian Abdul Aziz's judgment, to honor "status" over our "fraternity."

Second, Our honorable fraternity member is perhaps not aware, that the person [Sir Shadi Lal, Chief Justice of the Lahore High Court] who instigated him to run against Dr. Iqbal is an old antagonist of the Arian fraternity [whose head was Sir Muhammad Shafi]. Taking advantage of this

situation, he took his revenge against the Arians, and degraded them in the eyes of everyone in this world. In the near future our fraternity will recognize this situation and be remorseful for its wrong judgment.

Third, Malik Muhammad Din exploited the uneducated members of our fraternity. Now, he has begun to realize this. Fifty percent of our educated members voted for Dr. Iqbal. The other 50 percent supported Malik Muhammad Din reluctantly out of fraternal obligation. Some of them voted for Dr. Iqbal in the privacy of the polling booth.”<sup>13</sup>

Iqbal’s success in the election occasioned voluminous telegrams of congratulations. In addition to Lahore, prominent Muslims in other cities of the Punjab invited him for dinners. In Lahore Iqbal attended a sumptuous dinner party which was arranged in his honor by Haji Din Muhammad, the renowned calligraphist, on December 12, 1926 in the Kashmiri Bazaar. In a similar fashion Lahore’s Kakezais gave him an impressive dinner on December 26, where Malik Barkak Ali, a prominent lawyer, offered thanks to fellow Muslims of Lahore for electing Iqbal as their representative. At the end Iqbal spoke and delivered a message of Islam’s solidarity as against the pernicious bifurcation of urban versus rural Muslims. Iqbal also traveled to Ferozepore in order to participate in a reception in his honor organized by Mian Tassadaq Hussain Khalid.

### **Iqbal in the Legislative Assembly**

The legislative session of the newly elected Punjab Assembly was inaugurated on January 23, 1927, when the oath taking ceremony was completed. The expectations were rife that some influential members of the Council were endeavoring to create an independent group, and that Iqbal would be invited to become its leader. It was expected that the independent group would not oppose any political party within the Assembly, but would endeavor to protect the rights of all classes of the Punjabi people, and would not recognize the distinction between urban and rural people,

and working and non-working classes. Unfortunately this umbrella independent group did not emerge.<sup>14</sup>

Within the Punjab Legislative Assembly, Sir Fazl-i-Husain was the leading figure, and his unionist Party was in the majority. Iqbal determined that it would be appropriate to join the Unionist Party. He had hoped that his membership in the majority party would enable him to be effective in rendering his services to the people. However, his participation gave him a window of opportunity to examine closely the machinations of this party. He was consequently alienated from the Unionist party and its leader, Sir Fazl-i-Husain.

In Sir Fazl-i-Husain's biography, his son, Azim Husain critically reviewed Iqbal's judgments:

As the criticism against Fazl-i-Husain largely arose on account of Dr. Iqbal the latter's career deserves special mention, because in fact Fazl-i-Husain repeatedly tried to help him, but Dr. Iqbal failed to utilize the opportunities offered to him. In 1924 Fazl-i-Husain urged Sir Malcolm Hailey to raise Dr. Iqbal to the bench, but while the case was under consideration Dr. Iqbal alienated the sympathies of officials by unrestrained criticism of Government. In 1927 it was proposed to send a Muslim Deputation to England to place before the Secretary of State the Muslim demands for the forthcoming Reforms. Fazl-i-Husain asked Dr. Iqbal to lead the Deputation, and collected Rs. 3,000 for the purpose. This would have assured a first class political career for Dr. Iqbal, but he refused to go as it would have involved an expenditure of an extra few thousand rupees. Instead Chaudhri Zafrulla Khan agreed to go, and assured a bright future for himself. This did not deter Fazl-i-Husain from making further efforts to help Dr. Iqbal and he proposed that on the termination of the term of Chaudhri Shahab-ud-Din as President of the Council, Dr. Iqbal should be elected President with the support of the Unionist Party. Dr.

Iqbal, however, alienated the sympathies of the Party by criticizing their policy and attacking them severely in the Press, with the result that the majority of the Unionists refused to accept him as a candidate and Chaudhri Shahab-ud-Din was re-elected as President.<sup>15</sup>

Azim Husain's criticism is not entirely inappropriate. But the political future that Sir Fazl-i-Husain envisioned for Iqbal would have made Iqbal another Sir Fazl-i-Husain, or turned Iqbal into another Sir Muhammad Zafarullah Khan – another uncritical supporter of the British Raj. Iqbal would never have been able to achieve the heights of his destiny which beckoned him, unbeknownst to either one of them. Iqbal couldn't have possibly lived up to the norms of Sir Fazl-i-Husain. That is why he was always disappointed with Iqbal. In reviewing the political landscape of the Punjab Legislature, Ashiq Hussain Batalvi has commented:

“Iqbal was a member of the Legislative Council from 1927-1930. In three years he critically examined the role of the Unionist Party from within. This party created the urban vs. rural conflict in the Council; then this conflict enveloped the whole province. This strategy of planned conflict was no longer concealed from Iqbal's critical view. Some people have objected to the poet-philosopher, Iqbal's joining the Legislative Council. This critical view is appropriate. But my humble opinion is that if Iqbal had not examined at such a close range the machinations of the Unionist Party, he wouldn't have been able to accomplish the grand objective during the last two years of his life, which destiny had determined for him.”<sup>16</sup>

Iqbal remained isolated in the Legislative Council for three years; he was not supported by any political party. Delivered eloquently, his speeches in the Council for the well-being of the common man remained collectively a cry in the wilderness.

In January 1927 Iqbal was appointed to the Finance and Education Committee of the Punjab Legislative Council. In February he proposed two resolutions to be debated in

the next session. The first proposal stated that the Punjab government should allocate agricultural land to educated young men, who are unable to find gainful employment, so that agriculture may flourish and provide income. The second proposal stated that since the government of India had completely remitted the annual support contribution of the Punjab, an Inquiring Commission should be established to develop a tax reduction schedule for the benefit of all tax payers.<sup>17</sup>

As a member of the Legislative Council's Finance Committee, Iqbal proposed the following in his speech of March 5, 1927: 1) since the Punjab's financial position was satisfactory and funds were available for development, some provisions should be made for rural sanitation and free medical care for women and 2) money should be allocated for the reduction of taxes and the "anomaly in the system of taxation" should be removed. The anomaly Iqbal was referring to is that the government did not apply "the principle of progression in the case of land revenue," while it did apply that principle in the case of income tax. He stated that the "government should apply the principle of progression to land revenue."

Iqbal's explained that the real reason for this anomaly was "the barbarous theory" that all land belonged to the crown. "Neither in ancient India nor even in the days of the Mughals did the sovereigns ever claim 'universal ownership.'" Then Iqbal delivered the punch line: "The people of Punjab owned and possessed the land of this country before the race of Babur entered into history."<sup>18</sup> A few days later on March 10, 1927 Iqbal spoke in the Legislative Council on the status of compulsory education. The government informed the Council that compulsory attendance was enforced in 42 municipalities and in 400 rural areas. How could it be that "a very large number of boys join the first-class," but they "fail to reach the higher

classes”? This dropout rate was unacceptable. He added: “Make them reach the higher classes by compulsion.”<sup>19</sup>

In the Legislative Council a perennial issue about the methods of appointments to various positions in the administration was raised by Sardar Ujjal Singh, who tabled a resolution on July 19, 1927, which moved that: 1) all posts – in all departments should be filled by open competition; 2) and where this cannot be done and selection has to be made, the most highly qualified candidate should be selected without regard to caste, creed or color.”<sup>20</sup> In principle, Iqbal was not opposed to the idea of appointment through competitive examinations. Keeping in mind Muslims’ educational lag, he wanted a system which would allow appointments through nomination as well so that minorities of all kinds would not be totally ejected from the administration. During the debate on Sardar Ujjal Singh’s proposal a member interjected a comment that appointments through competition would encourage the concept of a united nation in India. Iqbal said:

“My friend, Pandit Nanak Chand, is unfortunately not here at the present moment. He told us that Government had removed the colour distinction, so that the post which formerly went to British gentlemen now go to Hindus and Muslims; but I assure you my friend that Government had made a very great mistake and I would welcome if there were more British officers. [Voices: No, no.] I fully realize my responsibility when I say this and I also realize the meaning of this voice of “no, no.” I am not enamoured of that false and shallow nationalism which speaks like this.

[Dr. Sheikh Muhammad Alam: Everybody is not the same.] Well, it may be so, yet the talk of a united nationalism is futile and perhaps will remain so for a long time to come. The word has existed on the lips of the people of this country for the last fifty years and like a hen it has cackled a great deal without laying a single egg. However, I will tell you that the state of this country is such that it is not possible for us to introduce the

principle of competition pure and simple. The best method for the country is the one indicated by Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency in his speech, that is to say, the principle of competition tempered by selection and nomination.

Sir, I need not say anything more with regard to the principle of competition. In this country one community is always aiming at the destruction of the other community. Therefore, the power in whose hands lies the destiny of this country must adopt a line of action which is calculated equally to elevate all communities that form the population of this country. It has been argued that the present system tends to retard the progress of what my friend [Sardar Ujjal Singh] called nationality. Well, I do not know whether it is desirable to become a nation. It is a proposition which can be controverted but assuming that it is so, I would suggest that it is first desirable to develop mutual trust in the communities of this country. The present state of things is such that the communities do not trust each other; they have no faith in each other.

When we meet each other we talk of nationalism, we talk of philanthropy and love of mankind. Only a few days ago a friend of mine told me that he had overheard two Hindu gentlemen talking. One of them asked the other as to what should be our policy now. The other gentlemen said: "Let nationalism be on our lips, but fix your gaze always on your own community."

In the July 1927 session of the Legislative Council Iqbal proposed four bills: 1) That the Punjab government sold the capitalists 325,000 acres of land in the Montgomery (currently Sahiwal) district, half of this acreage of land should be reserved for the landless tenants. 2) A law should be enacted to eliminate the possibility of blasphemy against the Prophets and the founders of all religions (Incidentally, an ordinance was issued on this subject in 1927.) 3) Laws should be enacted to prohibit public drinking of alcohol. 4) Sword should be exempted from the list of forbidden weapons. Because of Iqbal's efforts



swords, which could be carried without a license by the Muslims was declared an exempt weapon in the districts of Mianwali, Dera Ghazi Khan, Muzaffar Garh, Jhang, Gurgooan, Hisar, Anbala, Shimla and Kangra.<sup>21</sup>

To promote the welfare of Muslims an Anjuman was created on September 4, 1927. In order to inaugurate its first session approximately 10,000 individuals congregated in Mohala Kothi Daran, near Kashmiri Bazaar. Iqbal presided over the session. In his presidential address Iqbal urged the audience to cultivate frugality in their family economy, abandon uncalled for spending and then referred to the life of the Prophet, which reflected a lesson: every Muslim must be engaged in economic activity, which generates steady income. To promote trade and manufacturing Muslims must establish companies for their enterprises.<sup>22</sup>

When the dust was settled in the Punjab after the Simon Commission's departure, Iqbal's attention was drawn once again to the Punjab Legislative Council. He delivered an interesting speech on February 22, 1928 on the proposed resolution for *Unani* (Tib)/ *Ayurvedic* systems of medicine:

“Sir, the impression is gaining ground amongst the people of this country that the Government has commercial interests in view and is, for this reason, encouraging Western system of medicine on the one side and discouraging indigenous system of medicine on the other. I do not know how far this impression has basis in truth but the fact remains that the *Unani* and *Ayurvedic* systems of medicine do not find favour with the Government.”

“In my opinion, in spite of all that the supporters of the Western system of medicine say, the latter has yet to learn much from the *Unani* system of medicine. Many of the books written on the *Unani* system and especially those written by Najib-ud-Din Samarqandi, have not been published. They are in the libraries of Europe many works which, if published, are sure to serve as eye-openers to those who boast of superiority of the Western system of medicine. Nor can we lose sight of the fact that ours is a poor country. Its people cannot afford an expensive system of medicine. It

is, therefore, essential to introduce and encourage a cheaper system. From this point of view, I think our *Unani* and *Vedic* systems very much suit the people. Of course the way in which our medicines are prepared, is defective and requires improvement. An institution is needed to teach pharmacy.”<sup>23</sup>

### **Ownership of Agricultural Land**

In the Legislative Council Iqbal raised a very complex issue of the ownership of agricultural land. He challenged the British presumption that as the sovereign power the British Raj owned the land, and was entitled to receive rent in the form of tax on the agricultural products. Speaking on the floor of the house, he challenged the British contention:

“The first European author to refute this theory was the Frenchman Perron in the 1777. Later in 1830, Briggs made a very extensive inquiry as to the law and practice in India and relating to the theory of state ownership of the land. He gives in his book an accurate description of the laws of Manu, of Muslim law and practices prevailing in the various parts of India – Bengal, Malwa, the Punjab, etc., and arrives at the conclusion that in no period in the history of India the State ever claimed the proprietorship of land. In the time of Lord Curzon, however, this theory was put forward, but the Taxation Committee’s report which was published sometime ago, has come to a very clear finding that this theory has no basis at all. That is, I believe, the reason why the Honourable Revenue Member, Sir Fazl-i-Husain, has not tried to defend the present system on the ground of that theory...but we have first to see whether it has justice on its side or not. My submission is that it is not at all just. The injustice of it is perfectly clear. If a man happens to be a landowner, big or small does not matter, he has to pay land revenue. But if a man earns from sources other than land, less than two thousand rupees a year, you don’t tax him at all. That is where the injustice comes in. Nobody can deny that the system is unjust...We must admit that there is injustice

and we ought to seek proper remedies in order to remove the injustice in so far as it is possible. I have no hesitation in admitting that there are serious difficulties in the way of the application of the principle of income-tax to land revenue.”

“But assuming that this argument has force, I submit that the deficiency caused in the revenue by the adoption of a different system of land revenue, may be met in other ways. For instance, we can reduce the expenditure on administration. We can lower the limit of taxable income under the Income-Tax Act. We can spend less on the so-called *development* which is a very dignified expression for something which has not brought us anything so far. We can further meet it from the remissions made by the government of India. In this country, there are petty landholders: there are proprietors with two *bighas*, two kanals. They are practically like tenants, yet are not willing to give up the right of private ownership. My submission, therefore, is that Government should give some consideration to the demand embodied in this resolution; they should give some relief to the small proprietor, the produce of whose land is obviously insufficient to maintain his family. I do not think it is demanding too much if the holdings to the extent of five *bighas* should be declared revenue-free. I hope that Government will give serious consideration to this point. Personally, I agree even if you make it less than five *bighas*. (Revenue Member: Five acres). An economic holding in this Province is about ten eleven *bighas*. At any rate, five *bighas* is half the economic holding. I do not think that remission of land revenue in the case of persons holding five *bighas* would cause a very great deficiency.”

“Reference was also made by one of the honourable members to sending a kind of commission of inquiry to Russia...My honorable friend is probably not aware of the causes that led to the Russian revolt. It is not necessary to detail those causes: a good deal of literature has sprung up since the Russian revolt concerning things that happened and the system that has been adopted there.”

## **Education**

To promote education in the northwestern provinces of India Iqbal served a notice on November 7, 1928 of two proposed resolutions dealing with education and agriculture. One proposed resolution drew the attention of the Central Government of India to the urgent need of establishing universities in Balochistan and the Northwest Frontier Province. The second motion urged the Punjab government to allot agricultural lands to those cultivators whose lands had been inundated by rivers and streams' erratic change of course, and to settle them in newly established agricultural colonies in the Montgomery district.<sup>24</sup> In this month, he also delivered a comprehensive lecture at the Oriental Conference of Lahore to highlight the scientific and philosophic contributions of the classical Muslim scientists and philosophers.

Iqbal's active participation, more in the form of critical opposition to the government's policies, continued. In the March 4, 1929 session, he set forth that the amount of funds allocated to education was grossly inadequate, especially the grants in aid to private Islamic schools. To increase the provincial government's revenue Iqbal proposed that "the government of India [should] provincialize income tax." In other words, the Punjab government should be in a position to determine the rate of tax, especially the income tax, which people would pay. Until then he proposed the "imposition of death duties as they have in England." Some limits, he proposed could extend to those "inheriting property to the value of Rs. 20,000 or 30,000." Addressing the British bureaucrats, Iqbal proposed the reduction of high salaries.

The British government always bought machinery from Britain, which was invariably expensive. Iqbal now proposed that the Punjab need not be treated as a captive market for the British machinery, and try for a change to

“reduce purchase of our machinery from the cheapest markets.”<sup>25</sup>

Speaking in the Legislative Council on March 4, 1929 Iqbal subjected the government to heavy criticism. He said: 1) The province was already in debt; 2) the problem of unemployment was becoming more and more acute every day; 3) trade was at a low ebb; 4) the system of administration, necessitated high salaries, and the peoples’ representative could offer no opinion on their scale; 5) the Punjab spent more than any other country in the world on the present system of administration; 6) the government spent “practically nothing on industry.” Iqbal then pointed out that only industrial development could eliminate or substantially reduce the rate of unemployment. He projected a good future for the textile and leather industries, and stated that the government should promote and protect these industries.<sup>26</sup>

In the Punjab Legislative Council Iqbal emerged as a skilled parliamentary member. Clearly, his speeches led to several conclusions: before speaking on several diverse issues, he invariably conducted research and gathered facts and figures to criticize the government’s policies. Occasionally he recited verses to make a telling point, and his sense of humor enlivened the legislature and diffused the tensions. As a philosopher he was accustomed to speculate and anticipate complex problems, and certainly thought of problems well ahead of his colleagues.

After his election Iqbal had joined the Unionist Party, but very soon after joining it dissociated himself from the Party. He differed with Sir Fazl-i Hussain on many important issues. Indeed as an independent member in the Punjab Council, he certainly paid a price for his independence. It is not wrong to say that his voice in the legislature remained a lone cry in the wilderness. Some of his proposals were not only useful, but were far-reaching in their implications.

In evaluating Iqbal's role as a legislator, Muhammad Ahmad Khan stated:

During his term as a legislator, Iqbal made significant proposals, which very much deserved to be implemented: 1) improvement in the economy of the Punjab; 2) grants-in-aid to the poor; 3) support for the improvement of *Unani* and Ayurvedic system of medical care; 4) grant-in-aid to Muslim educational institutions; 5) transfer of taxing authority to the provinces; 6) reduction in exceptionally high salaries for the upper crust of the bureaucracy; 7) support to industrial development in the province; 8) arrangement of better sanitation conditions in the rural areas; 9) medical care, especially for women; 10) compulsory elementary education; 11) ban on the use of alcoholic beverages; and 12) ban on defamatory statements against the founders of religions.

Iqbal presented some issues for the government's consideration with great emphasis and enthusiasm. They related to the reduction in taxes, and tax on agricultural products, and Muslims' lack of education, and absence of support to their educational institutions.<sup>27</sup>

However, his entrance into the rough and tumble of practical politics enabled him to become the Secretary of the Punjab Muslim League. This position opened up the door to participate in the Muslim national politics of India. This aspect of his life turned out to be the most significant achievement of his political career.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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- <sup>2</sup> Richard Symonds, *The Making of Pakistan*, (London: Faber & Faber, 1951), p. 31, gives Sir Sayyid's words.
- <sup>3</sup> Munshi Ghulam Qadir Farukh, *Safina-i Hayat*, pp. 22-23; see "Maktub-i Iqbal" of March 28, 1909.
- <sup>4</sup> Ashiq Hussain Batalvi, *Iqbal kay Akhariy Dow sal*, (Karachi: The Iqbal Academy, 1961), pp. 39, 46, 193.
- <sup>5</sup> Muhammad Rafiq Azad, ed., *Guftar-i Iqbal*, (Lahore: Adarah-i Tahqiqyat, Danish Gah-i Punjab, 1986), p. 15; *Zamindar*, July 20, 1926.
- <sup>6</sup> *Zamindar*, October 24, 1926.
- <sup>7</sup> Muhammad Hanif Shahid, *Iqbal Awr Punjab Council*, p. 18.
- <sup>8</sup> Shahid, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-59.
- <sup>9</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.
- <sup>10</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19.
- <sup>11</sup> Faqir Sayyid Wahid-ud-Din, *Ruzgar-i Faqir*, (Karachi: Line Act Press, 1966), pp. 103-104.
- <sup>12</sup> Shahid, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77-78.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.
- <sup>15</sup> Azim Husain, *Fazl-i-Husain: A Political Biography* (Bombay: Longmans, Green & Co., 1946), pp. 218-219.
- <sup>16</sup> Batalavi, *op. cit.*, p. 274.
- <sup>17</sup> Shahid, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-81.
- <sup>18</sup> A. R. Tariq, *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, (Lahore: Ghulam Ali and Sons, 1973), p. 57.
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.
- <sup>21</sup> *Inqalab*, July 25, 1927.
- <sup>22</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-49.
- <sup>23</sup> Tariq, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-71.
- <sup>24</sup> *Inqilab*, November 7, 1928.
- <sup>25</sup> Tariq, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-82.
- <sup>26</sup> Tariq, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-87.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151.

## Chapter II

# POLITICS OF ELECTORAL PRESENTATION AND THE BIFURCATION OF THE MUSLIM LEAGUE

During the 1920s, two Hindu movements, the *Shudhi* and *Sangathan*, engaged in very aggressive missionary activities, which were most offensive to Muslims' national sentiments. In Rajasthan Swami Sharadhanand was active in converting Muslims to Hinduism. Amidst these heightened tensions, a young Muslim in Delhi, Abdur Rashid, assassinated Sharadhanand in December of 1926. The next day a Hindu-Muslim riot erupted in Delhi where six Muslims were killed in retaliation.<sup>1</sup> Subsequently, in the Punjab Hindu-owned Arya Samaj oriented newspapers, including the daily *Partap* and *Milap*, lead an unrelenting anti-Muslim crusade. Also, Hindu leaders unleashed a vituperative campaign against Islam and Muslims, which was extremely provocative. To protest against this anti-Muslim campaign, the Muslims of Lahore organized two public meetings. The first meeting was held on January 22, 1927 in the public garden outside Mochi Gate. Iqbal addresses the crowd at the second meeting that took place a few days later on January 30 in the same location:

We are being maligned in India and outside of India. Our mutual conflicts are most regrettable. We do not stop to think



and evaluate the impact of these internal conflicts on the other Asian nations. In my perception the truthful reality is like a sparkling diamond, which radiates many dimensions, reflecting different colors. Everyone is entitled to select a radiance of color of his own choice, and then sees reality from his own perspective. The principle of fairness demands that in view of the above stated principle no one ever be told that he is utterly wrong.

Islam gave the same message of truth, which the [Hindu] *rishis* taught in ancient times.

I appeal to you in the name of truth to appreciate the realities, and don't fight with each other. There are people in India who encourage mutual conflicts in order to serve their own interests. The peace of the country will be seriously disrupted by your in-fighting. Everyone will suffer."<sup>2</sup>

To compete with the movements of the *Shudhi* and *Sangathan* the Muslims created the organizations of the *Tabligh-i Islam* and *Tanzim*. Ghulam Bhik Narang was the leader of *Anjuman Tabligh-i Islam*. He wanted to organize a conference, and invited European converts to Islam to join this movement. In a letter of January 24, 1927 Iqbal offered his help to raise funds for this conference and to participate in its preparation. In offering his services to Narang he wrote:

In my judgment the missionary endeavors for Islam take priority over any other activity. If the Muslims' objective in India is to attain political freedoms and economic well-being, and the defense of Islam has no place in it – as it is demonstrated in the policy of [Nationalist] Muslims – then Muslims will never succeed in achieving their goals. After having gained some insight, and experience in contemporary politics, I say to you that the trajectory of Indian politics, as far as Muslims are concerned, is an enormous danger to Islam itself.

In my view *Shudhi* is by no means as dangerous [as one might think] as this trajectory of Indian politics is or perhaps it is another understated danger *a la Shudhi*. You have carried on the mission of *Tabligh* with total self-sacrifice. God-

willing, whenever the occasion will arise I will be at your beck and call.”<sup>3</sup>

On March 4, 1927 in the Habibiya Hall of Islamia College Iqbal presided over a meeting where Mirza Bashir-ud-Din delivered a lecture on science and religion. After Mirza’s speech, Iqbal made a few comments on these subjects as well:

Religion, philosophy, metaphysics and other arts and sciences are different avenues, leading toward an ultimate terminal point. The possibility of a clash between science and religion is not an Islamic view because Muslims were in the vanguard of modern sciences and arts. Islam taught its students not to make preconceived notions or speculations the basis of knowledge but to utilize the scientific method of empirical verification. This approach paved the way for the development of modern sciences.

The concept of a clash between science and religion is un-Islamic. In almost every page of the Qur’an man has been advised to gain knowledge through personal observation and experimentation. The ultimate objective is to control the forces of nature. Clearly the Qur’an inculcates that if man is able to control the forces of nature, he will be able to reach beyond the limits of the stars.”<sup>4</sup>

The All-India National Congress elected S. Srinivasa Iyengar as its President in 1927. At this time Muhammad Ali Jinnah was the president of the All-India Muslim League. Both leaders were then members of the Central Legislative Assembly, and periodically exchanged ideas on the political issues of the Indian Sub-continent. Iyengar wanted to work out a plan, which would protect the Muslims’ rights and eliminate the Hindus’ conviction that separate electorates spawned communal riots. In line with this perspective, Jinnah called on some of the leaders of the Muslim League to meet in Delhi on March 2, 1927. Sir Muhammad Shafi, the president of the Punjab Muslim League, along with well-known leaders from other provinces, including Maulana Muhammad Ali, Dr. Ansari, and Sir Muhammad Yaqub, attended this meeting. Their

confabulations produced seven proposals, which came to be known as the Delhi Proposals:

1. Sindh should be split up from the Bombay province, and be designated a province in its own right.
2. In the Northwest Frontier Province and Balochistan, new constitutional reforms should be applied.
3. Muslim majority should be restored in the legislative assemblies of the Punjab and Bengal.
4. In the Central Legislative Assembly, Muslim representatives should constitute one third of the total number of legislators.
5. If the first four proposals are accepted, then Muslims will accept the joint electorates and renounce separate electorates.
6. The same special privileges granted to Muslims in the Hindu majority provinces will be granted to Hindus in the Muslim majority provinces of Sindh, the Northwest Frontier Province, Balochistan and the Punjab.
7. The proposals are indivisible and must be accepted in total. Their selective acceptance is unacceptable, and the insistence on the acceptance of only some will entitle the Muslims to continue the practice of separate electorates.

Jinnah issued a press statement on March 29, 1927 explaining these proposals: “Insofar as the method of elections is concerned, that is not our ultimate objective. It matters not if the elections are arranged under the joint or separate election method. The main goal is the achievement of Muslims’ confidence in the preservation of their national identity and survival. They must be satisfied with an assurance that the majority will not suppress their rights by its sheer numbers. While we wait for India’s complete self-determination, Muslims must be assured that the interim period will not be dominated by an excessive rise in power of the majority. In crafting these proposals, the central point was to find a way to provide security to minorities and protect their rights.”<sup>5</sup>

The basic philosophy of the Delhi proposals was that there should be a balance of power between the Hindus and the Muslims. Hindus' rights should be protected in the Muslim majority provinces, and Muslims' rights should be protected in the Hindu majority provinces. At this point in time, Balochistan and the Northwest Frontier Province (which had been separated from the Punjab province in 1901) were functioning without constitutional reforms. The British bureaucrats governed both provinces. Since 1842, Sindh province had been lumped together with Bombay province – in between the territory of the two provinces was the province of Gujarat and the territory of Kathiawar. Religiously, linguistically and racially the Sindhis had hardly anything in common with the people of Bombay. There was no functioning railroad between them and communication between the two areas was not easy.

In Bengal and the Punjab legislative councils functioned, and elections were held regularly. However, the Muslim majority was not reflected in terms of legislative seats due to the fact that its representation had been reduced to give “weightage” to the Muslim minorities in other provinces. Now, by articulating the Delhi Proposals the Muslim leaders attempted to create five Muslim majority provinces in place of the two existing ones. These five provinces were expected to create an approximate equilibrium with the seven Hindu majority provinces.

When Sir Muhammad Shafi returned to Lahore, he faced stiff opposition to the possibility of abandoning the separate electorates. This opposition had another fear: in the Punjab, Bengal and Sindh, Hindus were economically more prosperous than Muslims. In joint electorates, the opposition was apprehensive that Hindus would not let Muslims be elected, especially those who would be dedicated to protecting the Muslims interests. Iqbal remained steadfast in his support of separate electorates.

The Working Committee and the General Committee of the All-India National Congress accepted the Delhi Proposals in May of 1926 in Bombay. Subsequently the Congress accepted the proposals at the annual meeting in Madras. However, the Hindu Maha Sabha vociferously objected to the acceptance of the proposals. Its leaders feared that if the Punjab and Bengal acquired a Muslim majority representation in addition to Sindh (75 percent Muslim majority) and Balochistan and the Northwest Frontier Province (90 percent Muslim majority) then the possibility of a Muslim bloc would appear on the horizon.<sup>6</sup>

The Punjab Provincial Muslim League held a meeting in Barkat Ali Muhammadan Hall on May 1, 1927. Surprisingly, Sir Muhammad Shafi spoke comprehensively in opposition to the Delhi Proposals, and in refutation of the Hindu Maha Sabha's policy. Iqbal spoke after Sir Muhammad Shafi:

"I have the right to say that I am the first Indian who recognized the imperative of a Hindu-Muslim alliance, and its urgent need. From the beginning I had hoped that this alliance would become stable. But the circumstances do not favor the introduction of joint electorates. Our president, Sir Muhammad Shafi, has recited some of the extracts of Hindu leaders' speeches, reflecting the most deplorable aspects of their mentality.

I am puzzled to grasp their reasons: why did they develop this anti-Muslim orientation. Muslims are few in number compared to Hindus. Economically and educationally they are less developed. Generally, Muslims are [politically] naïve; the government and Hindus sweet-talk Muslims into accepting their policies. I ask again: why have Hindus cultivated this narrow-minded outlook. Sadly this is the mentality of their educated people. If there were no other reasons than the ones I have just enumerated, I would support the proposition that the electoral districts must be kept separate.

Last but not least I urge Muslims to be self-sufficient, and learn to stand on their own two feet. Hindus' efforts are directed against their interests and so is the government's

contemporary political system. In these difficult times, Muslims can protect themselves against the calamities by standing firmly on their feet, and then bravely confront them.<sup>7</sup>

It may be pointed out that Iqbal opposed only those items of the Delhi Proposals, which indicated that Muslims would be willing to abandon the separate electorates. Under no circumstances was Iqbal willing to give up the separate electorates for one very good reason: joint electorates were likely to lead to a united nation, which according to him ran contrary to the basic principle of Muslim national identity. Also, his views of “Hindu mentality” had left him no hope of ever forging a Hindu-Muslim understanding for the future. When Hakim Muhammad Hassan Qarshi asked him if he expected the Congress to accept the Delhi Proposals Iqbal expressed much the same views:

I am doubtful of Hindus would ever accept an agreement with the Muslims, even if the Muslim leaders accept all the conditions, which they might offer to the Muslims, and agree to work with them unconditionally. Even then the Hindus would create new situations, and back off from [such an ‘unconditional agreement’].<sup>8</sup>

In the Punjab Hindu-Muslim relations were extremely tense. Hindus and Sikhs organized a protest meeting on May 3, 1927 in the Bowli Sahib section of the Dabbi Bazaar, where very provocative speeches were delivered. It was stated that a Muslim youth had made a sexual assault on a Sikh girl. An outraged mob entered the neighborhood of Haveli Kabuli Mal and attacked Muslims with sticks and small swords. Consequently all the stores were closed, and businesses were suspended and the whole city was engulfed in one big riot. Hurriedly Iqbal visited Haveli Kabuli Mal and then visited other sections of the city and urged Muslims to be calm and patient. He offered help to those who had suffered in the riot, and attempted to bring about inter-communal reconciliation. Muslims wanted to carry the dead bodies of young men in a procession to the

cemetery, and it was feared that a procession of protest would incite more riots. But Iqbal and other Muslim notables of the city joined the procession, and did not let the Muslims' outraged feelings boil into another conflict.<sup>9</sup>

A correspondent of Lahore's English language newspaper, *Tribune*, asked Iqbal to comment on the volatile situation in the city, Iqbal said:

I was speaking to a group of people in Dabbi Bazaar on May 4 when someone interjected a comment, saying that Sikhs have short swords (*kirpans*), and we have no weapon. How are Muslims going to defend themselves? Muslim leaders should pay attention to this problem, and do something for Muslims. If Muslims are not allowed to own weapons, and cannot confront their enemies, then all Muslim members, and particularly I [Iqbal] should resign from the Punjab Legislative Council.<sup>10</sup>

Reacting to the Hindu-Sikh-Muslim riots in Lahore the leaders of the three communities issued a press statement in which they criticized local newspapers that caused communal tensions, and urged the Punjab government to take punitive legal action against them. Iqbal welcomed this suggestion and gave an interview to the correspondent of the daily *Muslim Outlook* on May 13, 1927. In the interview Iqbal urged the newspapers not to write sensational and provocative headlines. They should hire well trained reporters, who summarize the speeches and avoid the temptation to give minor incidents an appearance of communal conflict. Then the instructive value of the newspapers would greatly increase. Iqbal added that the statement was not designed to confiscate freedom of the press, but aimed at improving their style.

As part of this interview, Iqbal then gave a political analysis of the inter-communal riots, and the lessons that Muslims could learn from these incidents:

We must learn some lessons from the Lahore riots. Clearly a [social-political] reality makes it obvious that in order to protect ourselves from inter-communal violence we need the

protection of the British. This drift of relations tells us a great deal about where we stand. In reality these circumstances have compelled me to revisit my own political ideas and some convictions. The Muslims of the Punjab, especially those living in the rural areas, are like our backbone; yet they are uneducated and backward. They are not politicized and lack economic consciousness. Our nation is fragmented into factions, and fraternities. Consequently, we are an unorganized mass. Now I have come to this conclusion that we must organize ourselves internally, and improve ourselves through reforms.<sup>11</sup>

Iqbal's well-known poetic work, *Zabur-i Ajam*, was published in June 1927, while it had been caligraphed much earlier in the year. Because of his other preoccupations, he had been unable to have it published earlier than June. In a letter of January 31 to Abdul Qadir Giramy, Iqbal wrote:

My book *Zabur-i Ajam* is complete. It will be published in 15 days. It consists of four parts. In the first part man communicated intimately with God, and in the second Adam articulates his views about man. Both parts are composed like *ghazals* (couplets that share a rhyme and a refrain), but each one is separately composed like fragments of *ghazals*. The third part is a response to Mahmud Shabistri's, *mathnavi* (rhyming couplets), *Gulshan-i Raz* (The Rose Garden of the Secret), and the questions he raised in this work. I call my work *Gulshan-i Raz-i Jadid* (New Rose Garden of Mystery). The fourth part is a *mathnavi* which I have named *Bandagi Namah* (Book of Slavery). The main thesis of the *mathnavi* explores the impact of [political] slavery on fine arts, i.e., music and painting.<sup>12</sup>

In Lahore a Hindu writer, Rajpal, wrote a biography of the Prophet Muhammad with a very offensive title, *Rangila Rasul* (Merry Making Prophet). Muslims accused him of blasphemy. He was prosecuted for two and a half years. Eventually the Lahore high Court Justice Dalip Singh exonerated him and he was set free. Muslims reacted indignantly against this judgment. A delegation of prominent Muslims in Lahore, including Iqbal, visited the



British governor and urged him to issue an ordinance forbidding publications, which offended some communities. There was widespread fear in the city that inter-communal riots would break out. In view of this the government enforced section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code prohibiting the congregation of groups, exceeding four in number. To defy this decision of the government, the Caliphate Majlis planned to launch a civil disobedience movement against the government. To think through the consequences of this proposed movement leading Muslim personalities held a meeting in Barkat Ali Muhammadan Hall on July 8, 1927, which was presided over by Sir Abdul Qadir. Iqbal addressed the meeting and proposed that in view of the prevailing explosive dynamics in the city the movement for civil disobedience should be postponed. Nevertheless he condemned the objectionable book for its blasphemous contents. Two days later a meeting took place in the Shahi mosque, where Iqbal spoke once again condemning the book: "Muslims can hardly confront the painful dilemma, which they face now. Rajpal's book, whose title I hate to pronounce, has hit the softest spot of Muslims' hearts."<sup>13</sup>

Iqbal explained at great length why a civil disobedience movement would not serve the Muslims' national interests. He wanted to eliminate the possibility of future blasphemy attempts against the Prophets, and religion personalities. He proposed a resolution in the Punjab Legislative Council to achieve this objective. Ilm-ud-Din, a young carpenter boy, who had killed Rajpal, was prosecuted, and was condemned to death, which caused great unrest among the Muslims. The government was reluctant to hand over his dead body to the Muslims, fearing the re-eruption of riots in the city. A delegation, including Iqbal, visited the Governor and offered him assurances of public tranquility, and the Governor yielded to their demand. Almost 100,000 Muslims offered funeral prayers for Ilm-ud-Din, and

bestowed upon him the title of *Shahid* (martyr). Then this mammoth gathering dispersed peacefully.

A similar incident occurred in Karachi in 1932, when Nathu Ram published a book to blaspheme the Prophet of Islam. A young Muslim, Abdul Qayyum from Hazara (of the Northwest Frontier Province), killed Nathu Ram. Like Ilm-ud-Din, he was prosecuted and condemned to death. Some Muslims wanted to appeal on his behalf to the Viceroy of India. Boldly Qayyum told them to be concerned no more about his life, since he has deliberately endeavored to earn martyrdom. As expected, Qayyum was executed. Iqbal was deeply moved by this tragic episode, and composed a poem, *Lahore Awr Karachi*, which is included in one of his poetic collections, *Zarb-i Kalim*.

Very often Iqbal was critical of the Punjab administration. On one such occasion, he exposed the government officials' mendacity and cruelty toward the Muslim public, when he raised objections on July 18, 1927 in the Legislative Council to the government demands of additional funding for the police. In Lahore a well-known religious scholar, Mawlana Muhammad Irfan, was badly beaten by police during a routine investigation. To investigate this incident of police brutality, Iqbal visited the Deputy Commissioner of Lahore, who told him that his information of brutality was not correct. Subsequent to this interface with the Deputy Commissioner Iqbal visited Mawlana Muhammad Irfan, and examined the evidence of police brutality on body parts of this victim. Iqbal realized that the Deputy Commissioner had lied to him, and had refused to acknowledge the police brutality against the Mawlana.<sup>14</sup> The same day on the floor of the house, Iqbal expressed his very anguished feelings: "I wonder if the members have realized the fact that we are actually living in a state of civil war. If stringent measures are not taken to put this down, the atmosphere of the whole province will be poisoned...If this communal hatred permeates, the rest

of the country and the people living in villages will also come to logger heads. God only knows where eventually it will lead us.”<sup>15</sup>

### **Simon Commission**

The British government undertook a major step in 1927 to study constitutional reform in India. It dispatched the Indian Statutory Commission, which was generally known as the Simon Commission after its chairman, Sir John Simon. Ironically one of its seven members was young Clement Atlee, who after World War II became the British Prime Minister, and was destined to oversee the transfer of sovereignty to India and Pakistan in 1947.

The Government of India Act of 1919 had introduced the system of diarchy to govern the provinces of British India. The Indian public, led by their leaders, demanded the revision of the difficult diarchy state of government. Moreover the Act of 1919 itself stated that a commission would be appointed after 10 years to investigate the progress of the governance scheme, and suggest new reforms. In November 1927 Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin appointed seven members of the British Parliament, including Chairman Simon, to constitute the Commission that had been promised in 1919. The Commission did not include a single Indian member.

The people of the sub-continent, and their leaders were outraged, and insulted, because no Indian member was included in the Commission. The Indian National Congress at its December 1927 meeting in Madras (Chennai) resolved to boycott the Commission, and urged Lord Birkenhead, the Secretary of State for India, to draft a constitution that would be acceptable to the Indian populace. The Muslim League, led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, also decided to boycott the Commission. Iqbal had a different view on the policy of consultation with the Simon Commission. He issued a statement on November 9, 1927 saying that the exclusion of Indians from the

Commission was an affront to the dignity of India. However, it was the lack of confidence and trust that different Indian nationalities nourish toward each other that spawned this development.<sup>16</sup>

Clearly the Simon Commission's presence in India also split up the Muslim League leadership. One side of leadership was in favor of boycotting the Commission, and included eminent leaders like Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and Maulana Muhammad Ali. The other group of leaders favored the policy of cooperation with the Commission, and included in its ranks Sir Muhammad Shafi, Mawlana Hasrat Mohani and Iqbal. Influenced by Maulana Muhammad Ali the Caliphate Conference also declared its boycott of the Simon Commission.

In Lahore at Mian Muhammad Shafi's residence a meeting was called on November 13, 1927. A resolution was passed at this meeting clearly stating that the boycott of the Simon Commission would damage the Muslims' national interest. Iqbal also issued an explanatory statement to the press:

“After a detailed examination of all the dimensions of [the central issue] that the Punjab provincial Muslim League passed a resolution maintaining that the boycott of the Simon Commission would damage the country's interests in general and Muslims' interests in particular. In my view this resolution accurately reflects the Punjabi Muslims viewpoint. The small parties would have no other opportunity to express their aspirations, and objectives to the Royal Statutory Commission than the present occasion. My contention is that [all nationalities] should have [legal and political scope] to progress and develop evolutionally. This objective should be achieved, either through the constitutional principles of the west, or through another medium, which is in harmony with the modern times; it should satisfy the people's needs.”<sup>17</sup>

Mawlana Muhammad Ali did not like Iqbal's statement of cooperation with the Simon Commission. He wrote a critical comment in his newspaper, *Hamdard*:

“It is not possible for Sir Muhammad Shafi to express a view, which might be contrary to the expressed opinion of the [British] Viceroy. He has started to sing the familiar melody of fidelity [to the British] Raj. This is a misfortune of the Punjab that Sir Muhammad Iqbal could not persuade loyal Sir Muhammad Shafi to his level of independent thinking. On the contrary Iqbal lowered himself to the debased level of Sir Muhammad Shafi’s loyalty to the [British Raj]. The statement of the Punjab Muslim League’s Secretary is more sycophantic than the President’s statement. The Punjab is a land of good people; but sadly they do not find leaders to guide them properly.”<sup>18</sup>

Finally Jinnah weighed in, and issued a statement in December 1927, which was signed also by some other leaders. Jinnah’s statement was critical of Indians’ exclusion from the Statutory Commission, and urged Muslims and their leaders to boycott the Commission. Supported by some leaders of the Punjabi Muslims, Iqbal issued a rejoinder on December 8, 1927:

A few days ago Mr. Jinnah and his associates issued a statement, which reflected the lack of sensitivity to the contemporary political developments in the country. The statement overlooked the grand reality on the ground that indicated the fact that the Royal Commission is itself a product of sad political dynamics...

Very humbly, we submit especially to our countrymen, and our Muslim brethren that the policy of boycotting the Simon Commission, as Mr. Jinnah and his supporters have supported, would bring nothing to us except grief and embarrassment.

It is imperative that we defend our rights, which they have refused to concede to us. Muslim leaders, who have signed Mr. Jinnah’s statement, hail from Hindu majority provinces, and Muslim members in those provinces are no more than proverbial “salt in the floor.” The policy cannot possibly shape or articulate policy for Muslims, who live in the Punjab or Bengal.

Our unambiguous policy is based on the premise that we have been unsuccessful in winning our rights from the [Hindu]

majority, and for us to waste a good opportunity to press our viewpoint, is against our national interest. Hindus must realize that we are not prepared to postpone the issue of our rights to an indefinite future settlement.

The majority population in India must cultivate confidence in the Muslims' hearts through honest negotiation. Only concrete actions would convince the Muslims [that their rights] are protected. Loud and hollow promises would achieve nothing, because numerous political experiences have now enabled the Muslims to think realistically. With great courage we emphasize that we are not prepared to be hired as stooges. Mr. Jinnah and his associates have appropriated a catchy half sentence that 'our self-respect' does not allow us to parley with the Statutory Commission.' Our rejoinder is that inter-communal civil war and self-respect cannot co-exist in one space. Statesmanship demands that at this critical juncture we should not allow emotions to dominate our rational thinking."

### **The Split in the Muslim League**

The difference of policy in the Muslim leadership continued to grow, especially on the issue of non-cooperation with the Simon Commission. This was the second occasion when the Punjab Muslim League leadership under Sir Muhammad Shafi and Iqbal had disagreed with the president of the All-Indian Muslim League, Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The first public disagreement had surfaced on May 1, 1927, when the Delhi Proposals had stipulated Muslims' withdrawal of their demand for the separate electorates. The Delhi Proposals had not yet been accepted by the Muslim League according to its established procedure. An issue arose about the venue of the next annual meeting of the Muslim League. At this point in time Dr. Saif-ud-Din Kitchlew was Secretary General of the All-India Muslim League. Jinnah and Kitchlew agreed amongst themselves that at the forthcoming annual meeting the Muslim League should accept the Delhi Proposals so that in addition to the

Lucknow Pact another Hindu-Muslim agreement should come into existence.

Jinnah and Kitchlew were opposed to the idea of convening the Muslim League's session in Lahore; because the provincial Muslim League had opposed the proposal to abandon the separate electorates for Muslims. In order to avoid Lahore as the venue for the Muslim League's annual session, Jinnah and Kitchlew decided to hold the session in Calcutta, where Sir Muhammad Yaqub would preside over it. Iqbal rejected this decision, and called it unconstitutional. Supported by Sir Feroze Khan Noon, Iqbal issued a joint statement to the press on December 14, 1927:

“The decision to hold the League's annual session in Calcutta was taken for reasons, which remain invisible to the public eye, and remain unstated. The real reason is the fact that Calcutta's political environment is more congenial to the acceptance of the Delhi Proposals, which stipulated the Muslims' abandoning of the joint electorates, than in Lahore's. The Muslims of the Punjab are united in their support of the separate electorates.”<sup>19</sup>

In consequence of this widening cleavage between the prominent leaders of the Muslim League, the League was bifurcated into two leagues: the Jinnah League and the Shafi League. Supported by Nawab Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Iqbal issued a statement to the press on December 19, 1927, which was a critical review of Jinnah's policy:

We have stated it before that different nationalities are engaged in the most horrific actions of mutual bloodletting. They have degraded the integrity of India. Mr. Jinnah and his colleagues have developed an idyllic perception of national life, which does not exist in reality. Mr. Jinnah knows it very well that before the Statutory Commission was announced that Muslims had repeatedly requested the majority to resolve the mutual differences. Then before the Simla Conference for Unity, Muslims once again articulated their grievance, and now once again Muslims invite them to a rapprochement. In this “act” Mr. Jinnah was the chief actor. Can he enlighten

us if he ever received any positive response from the Hindus other than confronting their hard-line.

We recognize the fact that in terms of wealth, influence, political leadership and demographic superiority, Muslims cannot compete with Hindus. If we do not energetically and enthusiastically demand protection of our rights from the Hindus and the British government, we will die politically. Some Muslims tell us not to trust the illusory “generosity” of the majority. Now, emotions and wishful thinking have no room in our [policy making]. We need to advance our case with weighty arguments. Mr. Jinnah and his colleagues may subject us to all kinds of ridicule and condemnation. We leave this issue to the future, which will judge our fortitude with justice – a fortitude that we have demonstrated in achieving a stable base for communal interests.”<sup>20</sup>

To buttress these arguments against the Jinnah-Kitchlew policy, Iqbal addressed a public meeting in the garden outside of Mochi Gate in Lahore on December 29, 1921:

Muslims confront two major issues today. One issue pertains to the achievement of *sawaraj* (self-determination) for India. The other issue is that of separate electorates -- Unfortunately, the majority’s policy has greatly disenchanted Muslims towards the objective of *sawaraj*. Now [Muslims] are preoccupied with the protection of their national rights, and the future progress of Muslims hinges on this issue.”<sup>21</sup>

The difference between the two leagues could not be resolved. Consequently the Jinnah League held its annual sessions in Calcutta, where Sir Muhammad Yaqub presided over them. And the Delhi Proposals were accepted, as it was expected. Under the leadership of Sir Muhammad Shafi, the Shafi League convened its annual session in Lahore on December 31, 1927. In this league’s session the emphasis was on separate electorates for Muslims. Iqbal presented a resolution for passage which asked the British government to eliminate the practice of “weightage of representation,” which had reduced Muslims’ representation in the Bengal and Punjab legislatures in order to artificially increase the Muslim representation in



Hindu majority provinces. The resolution called “weightage principle” an injustice to Muslim, and protested its continuation.<sup>22</sup>

Mawlana Muhammad Ali, who had developed fairly close personal relations with Iqbal, visited Lahore in January 1928 to win over Iqbal to his point of view of protest against the Simon Commission. In Iqbal-Muhammad Ali parlays, Iqbal laid down a condition that if solid assurances could be obtained from Hindu leaders that they would accept the Muslim demands, and establish a stable rapprochement with the Muslims, Iqbal would boycott not only the Simon Commission, but would also persuade Sir Muhammad Shafi to boycott the Commission. This condition was beyond Maulana Muhammad Ali’s ability to fulfill, and his visit to Lahore did not convert Iqbal to his policy of non-cooperation with the Commission.<sup>23</sup>

The seven members of the Simon Commission came to Lahore in January, 1928 and the Shafi League presented the Muslims’ views to the Commission. Subsequently, when the British government introduced new constitutional reforms in India the principle of separate electorates, proposed by the Shafi League, was retained. With the exception of the Shafi League all other political parties in India had boycotted the Simon Commission,

About the Jinnah League’s policy of boycott of the Simon Commission and its efforts for a settlement with the Hindus on the basis of the Delhi Proposal a pointed issue may be raised: what did these policies achieve? A similar issue can be raised about the Shafi League’s policy of cooperation with the Simon Commission and standing firmly on the demand for the separate electorates: what did it gain?

It may be pointed out once again that the All-India National Congress had already accepted the Delhi Proposals at its Annual Session of 1927 at Madras (Chennai); but the Hindu Maha Sabha had opposed its

acceptance with vigor. In March 1928 the Congress convened an all parties conference in Delhi, where the Jinnah League's representatives had participated. The conference was called especially to settle the ratio of communal representation in the next constitutional reforms for India. But this conference was unable to find a definitive solution. A few more sessions were held, and then the enterprise was abandoned.

At this point in time Lord Birkenhead, the Secretary of State for India, challenged the Indian leaders to present a united plan for constitutional reforms. To meet this challenge a committee was created under the leadership of Pandit Motilal Nehru, which submitted a report (generally known as the Nehru report) in August 1928. The salient features of this report were:

1. Most of the powers had been transferred from the provinces to the central government of India. (This approach had transformed the federal structure of the government to a unitarian model).
2. The separation of Sindh from Bombay province was made contingent upon its achieving economic self-sufficiency.
3. Joint electorate system of undifferentiated elections without reservation of seats for different communities was emphasized and recommended.
4. In the Central Legislature the Muslim demand for 1/3 of the seats of the total was rejected. Their right to representation reflecting their demographic strength was accepted.
5. In Bengal and the Punjab Muslim numerical strength was ignored.
6. No mention was made of the demand that constitutional reforms should be introduced forthwith in Balochistan and the Northwest Frontier Province.

In other words the same old Delhi Proposals, which had been accepted with the enthusiastic support of Pandit

Motilal Nehru, were now terminated by the Motilal Nehru committee's report. Nevertheless, the Jinnah League still hoped that this report could be accepted with some suitable amendments. The amendments Jinnah articulated were:

1. All residual powers must be transferred to the provinces.
2. In the Central Legislature Muslim seats must be no less than 1/3 of the total.
3. In order to restore the Muslim majority representation in the legislatures of the Punjab and Bengal, Muslim seats should be fixed, reflecting their majority or elections for these legislatures should be held on the basis of adult franchise.

These proposals of Jinnah were rejected, and the Nehru report, as supported by the Hindu Maha Sabha, was accepted by the Congress. Clearly, Jinnah's efforts to incorporate the Delhi Proposals into the Nehru Report failed, and so did Jinnah's last endeavor to achieve a stable settlement with the Hindus. As Muhammad Ahmad Khan stated that Iqbal's prediction – "I do not believe that Hindus would ever agree to a settlement" – proved to be a line drawn deep into a slab of stone.<sup>24</sup> At its annual session in December 1928 in Calcutta, the All-India National Congress issued an ultimatum that if the British government did not accept the Nehru Report within one year the Congress would initiate the non-cooperation movement, and urge Indians not to pay taxes to the British government.

Meanwhile the Shafi League was also busy in creating a committee, which included Iqbal, to prepare a memorandum of its proposals for the consideration of the Simon Commission. In May 1928 the committee met to frame the major issues, and Iqbal emphasized the principle of self-determination and autonomy for the provinces. Unfortunately Iqbal was indisposed, and for the treatment of the pain in his liver, he went to Delhi to consult Hakim

Abdul Wahab. (Incidentally, he was generally known as blind Hakim). Consequently, he was unable to participate in the drafting of the Shafi League's memorandum when he returned from Delhi. He read the details of this memorandum, and it contained no mention of the principle of self-determination for the provinces. Outraged at the exclusion of this key proposal, Iqbal resigned in protest from the Shafi League on June 24, 1928, and issued a press statement to explain his decision:

I now find that the extract of the League memorandum as published in the press makes no demand for full autonomy and suggests a unitary form of provincial government in which law, order and justice should be placed under the direct charge of the government. It is hardly necessary for me to say that the suggestion is only a veiled form of diarchy and means no constitutional advance at all.

Since I still stick to my opinion, which I expressed at the first meeting of the Draft Committee, that the All-India Muslim League should demand full provincial autonomy (which, in my opinion, is the demand of the whole Punjab community), I ought not in the circumstances remain Secretary of the All-Indian Muslim League. Kindly accept my resignation.<sup>25</sup>

Iqbal's resignation persuaded Sir Muhammad Shafi to amend the memorandum, and include the provision of provincial autonomy, and self-determination. Iqbal then signed this memorandum. The Shafi League's delegation including Iqbal offered its testimony to the Simon Commission on November 5, 1928. The Commission assured the delegation of its recommending some of the Muslim demands to the British government. The Commission published its 17-volume report in 1930. It proposed the abolition of diarchy and the establishment of representative government in the provinces. It also recommended that the separate electorates be retained, but only until tensions between Hindus and Muslims had died down. However, Iqbal was dissatisfied with the Simon

Commission report, and issued a detailed critique of it in a press statement of June 24, 1930.

Seeing that a large number of Indians opposed the Commission, and also how Hindu-Muslim tensions had increased instead of decreased, the British government opted for another method of dealing with the constitutional issues of India. Before the publication of the Simon Commission's report the British government stated that Indian opinions would be taken into account, and the natural outcome of the constitutional process would be dominion status for India. This new process came to be known as the London Roundtable Conference. Thus the Simon Commission's dispatch was a useless exercise.

In August 1928, when some portions of the Nehru Report were published in the newspapers, Iqbal had expressed his views in his statement of August 10, 1928. His comments on Muslims' adult franchise indicated that the Muslim adult population was 54 percent of the total male population, whereas the Muslim population in the Punjab was 56 percent of the total population. The Nehru Report's method of election increased the Hindu and Sikh populations' percentage by an additional two percent. Also, the Muslim adult female population was 55 percent of the female population of the province, but it was generally very conservative and uneducated. This population would find it exceptionally difficult to go to the polling stations for an extended period of time. Non-Muslim women, comparatively speaking were more progressive, and were expected to go to the polling stations in large numbers. This situation would also decrease the Muslim seats in the legislatures. The determination of the new constituencies according to the 100,000=1 representative would operate to the disadvantage of Muslim representation, and convert their majority into an electoral minority.<sup>26</sup>

Keeping in view the Muslim perspective, Mawlana Shaukat Ali and Maulana Hasrat Mohani made one more

determined attempt to change the Nehru Report. Mohani repeated once more the suggestion that in the northwest of India, the Northwest Frontier Province, Balochistan, Sindh and the Punjab should be amalgamated into one province. The Nehru Committee had already rejected this proposal on the grounds that such a huge province would be impossible to manage.<sup>27</sup>

Mohani and Ali failed to achieve their objective, and issued very critical statements against the Nehru Report and the All Parties Conference. Impressed by their critique, Iqbal gave an interview to a correspondent of the Free Press on September 4, 1928:

“I am afraid that Mawlana Shaukat Ali’s horrific revelations, and the decisions of the All Parties Conference made in the Lucknow session are likely to aggravate Hindu-Muslim tensions from bad to worse...

Muslims of India would assess anew the sentiment of Hindu nationalism (*Hindi Qawmiyat*), and would be forced to determine its value. The moment they would engage in this process of reevaluation, they would act like Maulana Shaukat Ali, whose eyes are finally wide open. [Shaukat Ali], who is grief-stricken with a lot of pain in his heart, today his heart is not so deeply filled with enthusiasm and devotion to “freedom,” which had electrified his personality. These developments would deepen, and multiply Muslims’ mistrust.

Personally, I am committed to the principle of separate electorates for Muslims. My [conviction] is spawned by the economic deprivation of the Muslims of the Punjab, and more so by the lack of peaceful coexistence [with the Hindus], which I believe can be determined only by the separate electorates [for the legislatures].<sup>28</sup>

### **All Parties Muslim Conference**

The Nehru Report prompted a large number of Muslims to believe that even the most broad minded or moderate in politics of the Hindu majority was under the influence of

the Hindu Maha Sabha. To confront ostensibly united Hindu front the All Parties Muslim Conference came into being. Iqbal was one of its founders. He played an active role in the Conference to articulate the Muslims' political demands. In December 1928 the All Parties Muslim Conference's annual session was organized in Delhi, where Agha Khan presided over the meetings. The All Muslim Parties' delegates, except the Jinnah League, attended the Delhi session. At the end the annual session condemned the Nehru Report, and a 10-point resolution was adopted:

1. India's future constitution must be federal in structure, and the residual powers should be vested in the provinces.
2. In the Central Legislature Muslims' legislative representation should be no less than 1/3 of the total number of seats.
3. Under no circumstances should the Muslims be denied the right to the separate electorate system of representation in the legislatures.
4. The Muslim majority representation should be restored in these provinces [the Punjab and Bengal], where the Muslim population is the majority. In these provinces, where the Muslims are a minority, they should retain their existing legislative seats.
5. No law should be enacted relating to religious and cultural issues, if 3/4 of the minority members express their opposition.
6. Sindh should be made a separate province, after de-linking it from Bombay Province.
7. Constitutional reforms should be introduced in the provinces of Balochistan and the Northwest Frontier Province.
8. In the constitution of India Muslims' religion, personal laws, education and language [Urdu] must be safeguarded.

9. In the cabinets of the central and provincial governments Muslims must have a fair share of participation.

10. In the constitution of India no amendment should be made without the consent of the provinces and princely states.<sup>29</sup>

Very vigorously Iqbal supported the draft of the resolution:

Today I publicly acknowledge the reality that Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's articulated course of action for the Muslims nearly a half a century ago was correct. Very bitter experiences have led us to recognize the significance of his policy.

Today I say to you in a very crystal clear language that if Muslims are to survive in India as Muslims then they must endeavor rapidly to progress and achieve development, and adopt a separate political program. Today, every nation is engaged in a relentless struggle to protect its rights. There is no reason why Muslims should not endeavor to protect their rights. The resolution which is on the table is exceptionally sound in its objectives. Its authenticity, I am inclined to emphasize from the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad: 'My followers [*umma*] will never agree collectively on a misleading course of action''<sup>30</sup>

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

When the All Parties Muslim Conference ended on January 2, 1929, Iqbal, accompanied by Chaudhary Muhammad Hussain and Abdullah Chughtai, left for South India. During this visit he stopped over in Madras, Mysore, Bangalore and Hyderabad where he delivered his famous lectures on the reconstruction of religious thought in Islam. By January 1929 he had returned to Lahore.

### **The Nehru Report**

When no amendment was allowed to the Nehru Report, Jinnah learned a lesson from this bitter encounter with the All Indian National Congress: no viable rapprochement was possible with the Hindus. He then diverted his total



attention to the safeguarding of the Muslims' national rights. He discovered a new approach in recognizing that more proposals needed to be added to the demands of the All Partied Muslim Conference in order to protect their rights. He articulated the additional demands, and simultaneously he emphasized that Muslim leaders must end their in-fighting. As a start of this policy Jinnah and Sir Muhammad Shafi had a meeting in March 1929, and they agreed that the Jinnah League and the Shafi League would meet together in Delhi, where the Nehru Report would be condemned. Moreover, the two leagues would hammer out a comprehensive proposal of Muslims' demands, which would be acceptable to all Muslims. To seriously pursue this new project the Shafi League's prominent leaders, including Iqbal, went to Delhi. It was this memorable occasion, when for the first time Iqbal and Jinnah achieved a complete harmony of thinking on political issues, which lasted until the last days of Iqbal's life. Muhammad Ali Jinnah acknowledged this fact in his letter of May 16, 1944 to Inam Allah Khan: "In 1929 Sir Muhammad Iqbal and I had achieved a harmony in our ideological approach. Iqbal was that important and great man, who encouraged me at every step of the way, and till that last day of his life steadfastly stood by me.

This notable attempt to bridge the gap between the two leagues did not bring about a stable alliance. The Jinnah League's solidarity was disrupted because of the machinations of the nationalist Muslims, who toed the Congress line. Consequently, Jinnah was forced to adjourn the Leagues session for an indefinite period. Supported by Sir Abdul Qadir, and Sir Feroze Khan Noon, Iqbal issued a joint statement on April 7, 1929, which highlighted the facts that:

The Lahore League's members, including some members of the Legislative Council, went to Delhi with an understanding that the Jinnah League was prepared to accept the proposal,

which the All India Muslim Conference had passed in Delhi under the presidency of His Highness Agha Khan, as the collective demands of all Muslims. We were greatly discouraged to discover that while Mr. Jinnah, in his personal capacity, was prepared to accept the above-mentioned proposal (because it represented the viewpoint of the majority of the Muslims, which was evident in the draft of the proposal prepared by him), there was a faction in the League that was determined to support the Nehru Report. This faction also made inappropriate attempts to dominate the proceedings of the session of the League...

The behavior of this small faction (dedicated to supporting the Nehru Report) in the Delhi League session was most regrettable. Despite this negative development, we believe that the Muslim nation need not be bewildered, while the efforts of this group have led to it. We believe the postponement of the League session is in reality our covert victory. We had written a letter to Mr. Jinnah, which contained this advice. The letter has been published in the newspapers.

The Leagues session was held in March instead of May in order to reestablish unity between the two Leagues. Against the background of this grand objective, if the postponement of the League's session had occurred as a response to our letter of suggestion, it would have been most salutary. However, this postponement was decided, it at least demonstrated that Muslims public opinion was opposed to the Nehru Report.<sup>31</sup>

Disenchanted with the coterie of Muslim nationalists, Jinnah amended the ten proposals of the All India Muslim Conference. The major amendment was the insertion that in the central and provincial cabinets, Muslim participation would be no less than 1/3 of the total. Jinnah added four more constitutional demands, and thus published them as his 14-point Program:

1. Provinces would be autonomous, and all of them must exercise all provincial authority.

2. No boundary change would be undertaken, especially the changes that adversely effect the Muslim demographics in the Punjab and Bengal.
3. All nationalities would enjoy freedom of conscience, faith, forms of worship, education, religion and its propagation, assembly and organization.
4. Muslims, like other Indians, have the opportunity for gainful employment in the administration, and autonomous organizations in accordance with their ability and qualifications.

The publication of Jinnah's 14-Points eliminated all the differences between the Jinnah and Shafi Leagues. Actually real rapprochement between the two leagues occurred on February 28, 1930 when the Muslim nationalists, including Dr. Ansari, Asaf Ali, Dr. Kitchlew and Abul Kalam Azad terminated their collaboration with the Jinnah League. Kitchlew and Azad were then firmly embedded in the All India National Congress, but Ansari and Chaudhary Khaliq-uz-Zaman, and their supporters founded a small party of their own – the Nationalist Muslim Party. Jinnah's 14-point Program appeared as the united demand of all Muslim political parties. However, the Muslim League's splitting into two organizations, and the Muslim nationalists' adverse role, had weakened the Muslim League. In view of this situation it was deemed appropriate that the All Parties Muslim Conference must be maintained as an active political organization.

### **Problems of Palestine**

In Palestine the British policy was supportive of the Jewish cause; in 1929 this policy caused substantial emotional distress among the Muslims. During World War I the British and the French entered into the Sykes-Picot Agreement (January 3, 1916). While accepting the principle of Arab independence laid down in correspondence with the Sharif Hussein of Mecca, the agreement divided the area into zones of permanent

influence. The following year the British issued the Balfour Declaration (November 2, 1917), which stated that “the government viewed with favour the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine, provided this did not prejudice the civil and religious rights of other inhabitants of the country.”<sup>32</sup>

In support of this pro-Zionist policy, Jewish immigration was encouraged, and Jewish settlements began to grow in Palestine. The demographic structure of Palestine changed dramatically: in 1922 Jews comprised about 11 percent of the total population of three-quarters of a million, the rest being mainly Arabic speaking Muslims and Christians; by 1949 the Jews made up more than 30 percent of the population, which had doubled.<sup>33</sup> The acquisition of land for European/Jewish immigrants, which had actually begun during the late nineteenth century, continued during the 1920s, and provoked a chain of riots. More often than not Palestinians suffered disproportionately, as the British mandatory power invariably protected the Jewish settlers. In India Muslims’ sympathies for the Arabs encouraged them to criticize the policies of the British government both in India and Palestine. They organized large protest meetings in different cities. Presiding over a huge public protest meeting organized outside of the Delhi Gate of the Walled City, Iqbal delivered a speech on September 9, 1929:

It is absolutely wrong to think that Muslims are not patriotic. However, it is true that Muslims’ hearts are filled with the love of Islam and religion. This love is the catalytic force which unites the scattered and disorganized individuals of the Muslim community, and will continue to do so in the future. In Palestine Muslim men, women and children have been killed. The center of this horrific callousness is in the city of Jerusalem, where the al-Aqsa Mosque is located. This mosque is the centerpiece of the Prophet Muhammad’s ascension into heaven, which is a religious truth spawning Muslims’ deepest emotions.

The entire compound of the al-Aqsa Mosque is in an area of endowment, which the Jews want to control and own. From a legal and historical perspective, their claim is untenable...In 1914 English statesmen turned Jews into an instrument to be used in the promotion of their own political interests and objectives, and encouraged the Zionist Movement. All the means which have been used to achieve their interests clearly show at least one consequence – Jews are clamoring to establish their proprietary control over one section of the al-Aqsa compound...

They [Jews] have ignited the fires of riots, and Muslim men, women and children are being slaughtered like sacrificial lambs. The high command of the Arabs has issued a statement saying that the mandatory power has armed the Jews, which

is responsible for this bloodshed...The Zionist Movement would not create pleasant consequence for the Muslims; instead it would create extraordinary disruptions. Now the British has decided to send a Commission of Inquiry [to Palestine], but I declare that Muslims would have no confidence in its investigation.<sup>34</sup>

### **Social Reforms**

In the Central Legislature of India a social reform measure, the Child Marriage Restraint Act XIX was introduced in 1929. It was known as the Sarda Act, from the name of its sponsor, Har Bilas Sarda, an Arya Samaj stalwart. Since 1911 pressure in the Central Legislature had been building up for an act to raise the age of consent above that established in 1891. Finally the Sarda Act established a minimum age for marriage: 18 for males, and 14 for females. Despite the Act's educational value for the succeeding generations, it was at first ignored (as it is ignored even today in certain areas of India), and could be easily flouted by many parents wishing to marry their sons and daughters at earlier ages.<sup>35</sup>

Surprisingly *ulama* raised a storm of protest against the Sarda Act. They did not want the legislature interfering in

family matters, especially marriage, divorce and inheritance. Against their extreme position Iqbal adopted the *via media*, and issued a press statement on September 29, 1929 to explain his position. "Islam makes it possible for parents to arrange the early marriage of their children," stated Iqbal, "however, Islam forbids minor girls to become mothers at an early age. After the marriage a minor bride should not join her husband until she has grown into an adult age. Muslim parents, who flouted this rule and allowed their minor daughter to join her husband, must be punished under the law."<sup>36</sup>

### **London Round Table Conference**

Lord Irwin, the Viceroy of India, announced on October 31, 1929 that the British government had decided to hold a Round Table Conference in London, which would draw representatives from British India, and the princely states. The All India National Congress paid no serious attention to this statement, and started to make preparations for a grand non-cooperation movement against the British government now that the waiting period for the acceptance of the Nehru Report had just expired. Iqbal and his political colleagues welcomed the British government's decision for the conference. They issued a statement on November 3, 1929 advancing two practical suggestions: 1) it would be most appropriate for the leaders to settle Hindu-Muslim differences before they venture to attend the conference in London, and 2) the delegates (who would be invited) must be the true representatives of Indian nationalities.<sup>37</sup>

In order for the Round Table Conference to succeed, and positive results to emerge, Iqbal believed at first that Muslims of all shades of opinion must unite, and only then a Hindu-Muslim alliance could be made. A public meeting was held in the Barkat Ali Muhammadan Hall on December 19, 1929, where Iqbal spoke with an anguished heart:

For God's sake, let us unite to protect the rights of Muslims. Get rid of all the stages [where leaders stood to speak], except

the one of unity, and before participating in the next Round Table Conference arrange one of our own. Offer one more opportunity to the Hindus to strike an understanding, if that is at all possible. I am doubtful of this possibility. United Britain will confront India, we should also be united.<sup>38</sup>

In January 1930 the civil disobedience movement of the Congress was started, and continued for about the balance of the year. With the exception of the Delhi group of *ulama* affiliated with the Jami't al-Ulama and the nationalist Muslims, overwhelming numbers of Muslims refused to participate in the civil disobedience movement.

Jinnah took the initiative, and called a meeting of the Muslim League's Council to frame a policy for the Round Table Conference. His objective was to unite all Muslim delegates under the League's policy in order to press their joint demand in London. Instead the Council decided to hold a general meeting of the Muslim League on August 17, 1930 at Lucknow. Jinnah proposed that Iqbal preside over the sessions, and the Council unanimously accepted Jinnah's suggestion. Afterwards Jinnah contacted Iqbal to preside over the sessions, and Iqbal accepted the invitation.

Saiyyid Shams al-Hassan has stated that this session had to be postponed, because Sir Fazl-i Hussain wanted his hand-picked delegates for the Round Table Conference. Moreover, he wanted to formulate a policy for these delegates as well. For this reason Sir Fazl-i Hussain's supporters in the League were determined to postpone the general meeting. Most members of the Council were not in favor of the postponement. Also, they accused Sir Fazl-i Hussain of trying to block Iqbal's participation in the Round Table Conference. Clearly if Iqbal presided over this special session of the Council in Lucknow the British government would then be obligated to invite him to participate in the Round Table Conference.

For a variety of reasons (not known to us) Iqbal asked the Muslim League to postpone the general meeting. Then

again an unsuccessful attempt was made to reschedule the Council's meeting one week before the London Conference; then Benares and Ajmer were nominated as the venues of the Council's meeting. Finally the general meeting was held in Allahabad on December 29, 1930, where Iqbal delivered his historic address, now known to be the foundation of Pakistan.

In London the Round Table Conference was inaugurated on November 12, 1930 and ended on January 19, 1931. The All India National Congress decided not to participate in the Round Table Conference, and the Muslim League did not give Sir Fazl-i Hussain the opportunity to formulate a joint Muslim policy. Also, Iqbal was not invited; among the 16 Muslim delegates the outstanding leaders were: Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Maulana Muhammad Ali, Agha Khan, Sir Muhammad Shafi and A. K. Fazl-ul-Haq from Bengal. By no means were the Muslims delegates united on one agreed upon policy. The Round Table Conference remained inconclusive.

The British Prime Minister announced the convening of another Round Table Conference, and paved the way for the participation of the Congress. Unfortunately, Maulana Muhammad Ali died suddenly in London on January 4, 1931. Dejected and disgusted with the British policy and the machinations of the Muslim delegates, who promoted themselves or toed the Congress line, Jinnah retired from politics, at least for now, and settled in London, and started his law practice. Three years later Jinnah returned to India in December of 1931, and then a year later started to reorganize the listless League.

At the start of the Round Table Conference the Labor government of Britain attempted to persuade the representatives from the Punjab and Bengal to accept the principle of joint electorates for the legislatures. Sir Muhammad Shafi and Fazl-ul-Haq were subjected to great pressure. When this news reached India Iqbal was greatly



disturbed. Hurriedly he sent a telegram on November 16, 1930 to Agha Khan:

The latest news is raising our anxiety. Muslims of the Punjab remain steadfast in adhering to the proposals of the Delhi Muslim Conference, and will find any amendment in them utterly unacceptable. If any amendment is made the Muslim delegates will lose their confidence. If Hindus do not accept the demand of their rights, then Muslim delegates should withdraw from the conference and return home.<sup>39</sup>

When this telegram was published the Hindu press was indignant with Iqbal, and the daily *Tribune* of January 1, 1931 stated that "Iqbal is an obstacle in the way of Hindu-Muslim understanding." This propaganda did not faze Iqbal. Muslim newspapers of the Punjab not only supported his point of view, but were in fact inspired by his views, and were proposing that a conference of Muslim delegates from the Punjab, the Northwest Frontier Province, Sindh and Balochistan should be called as early as possible to support the proposals of the Delhi Conference. To highlight this proposal, Iqbal stated to the correspondent of the *Muslim Outlook* of November 23, 1930:

Muslims of the Punjab and of all other adjoining areas are firmly committed to the Principle of separate electorates. The President of the All India Muslim Conference's Lucknow Session, Nawab Muhammad Ismail Khan, sent a telegram to His Highness Agha Khan stating that Muslims are not prepared to abandon the method of separate electorates under any circumstance. His telegram reflected the view that the projected new understanding to resolve the communal issues would be detrimental to the interests of the Muslims.

Similar telegrams were sent by the Punjab Muslims, and Muslims of other provinces, to Agha Khan and other Muslim delegates. Very justifiably Muslims are fearful of [this new development]. A proposal has been advanced that the Muslims of the Punjab and the northwest India should send their delegates to a meeting in Lahore, where they would express very strongly their opposition to this projected 'understanding (*mufahmat*).' The provinces where Muslims

are the demographic majority must raise emphatic voice to achieve majority rights.<sup>40</sup>

To implement this proposal Iqbal called on November 23, 1930 a meeting of the prominent personalities of the Muslim community in Lahore, and emphasized the centerpiece of his proposal for an extraordinary conference: “In light of the current political dynamics a special conference of delegates from the Northwest Frontier Province, the Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan should meet urgently. At this conference practical steps, must be undertaken to organize and politicize the Muslims so that they can launch a struggle to achieve their Islamic rights.”<sup>41</sup> At this meeting a Reception Committee for the Upper India Muslim Conference was created, and Iqbal was elected the President of the Conference. The Reception Committee held a meeting on December 4, 1930 at Iqbal’s house at Macleod Road, and decided that since the Muslim League’s annual session, with Iqbal as its President was scheduled to be held in Allahabad in December 1930, The Upper India Muslim Conference’s inaugural session should be held in Lahore during the last week of January 1931.

On December 19, 1930 Iqbal and other members of the Reception Committee issued a statement to the outstanding Muslim personalities of the Northwest Frontier Province, Balochistan, Sindh and the Punjab, explaining to them the aims and objectives of the Upper India Muslim Conference, including almost a poetic statement about the destiny of Muslims:

The reason for convening this conference was to inform Muslims of these provinces about the current political dynamics, and the active political movements, which are very active today. Also the objective was to inform them about the policies of other nations, and the rulers of India today, which pose serious dangers to the Muslim nation.

We want to alert the majority of those Muslims, who demographically dominate these provinces, whom God in his infinite wisdom, knowledge and understanding, has destined

them to concentrate and settle in these provinces – the secret of this divine plan is now gradually dawning on those [Muslims] who can think, and comprehend – why they were led to settle in these [areas]...and last but not least the objective was to convey to them the plans for the protection of Islam and the Muslims' in India.<sup>42</sup>

But the urgent need to convene the Upper India Muslim Conference was dissipated, because Agha Khan responded to Iqbal's telegram by saying that all news pointing to a Hindu-Muslim understanding as a consequence of Muslims' accepting the joint electorates for the legislatures was completely baseless. Moreover, Iqbal's election to preside over the annual session of the Muslim League, scheduled to be held in December 1930, had enabled Iqbal to project his views at the national level. In addition to this development, the London Round Table Conferences were to continue until 1933, and the knowledge of their political outcome was essential. Subsequent political developments did not call for the convening of the Upper India Muslim Conference, but this conference as a model remained alive in Iqbal's political thinking until the last days of his life.<sup>43</sup>

To preside over the annual session of the Anjuman Himayat-i Islam on December 27, the Nizam (ruler) of Hyderabad state was expected to visit Lahore. But because of a variety of his personal reasons, he was unable to come. In his place the Nawab of Bahawalpur presided over the sessions, and Iqbal presented to him a vote of thanks. The next day Iqbal left for Allahabad to deliver his historic address.

In the 1920s several Hindu-Muslim riots erupted in Lahore. Whenever a riot broke out, Iqbal as a popular leader visited the effected neighborhoods, and attempted to calm the high tensions between Hindus and Muslims. He participated in public processions, and always controlled the roused Muslim youth. Iqbal wanted to unify the Muslims of India, and wanted them to take deep interest in national affairs, and understand their nuances. Also, Iqbal

wanted Muslims to be aware of the political complexities of various developments in the Islamic world. He was deeply interested in the internal political affairs of Afghanistan, and wanted them to be understood by the Muslims in India, just as they should understand the injustice to which the Palestinians are subjected to under the British mandatory policies.

### **Political Role**

During this period of five years, Iqbal's role at the All India level deserves special attention. Realistically, the evolution of his political thought started in this period. From the beginning he was committed to Muslim nationalism (Muslim *Qawmiyat*), and considered the preserving of separate electorates an essential guiding principle to protect the Muslims' national identity. He was not prepared to abandon it under any condition or circumstance. This point was central to his political thinking. Precisely for this reason he emphatically differed with the All India National Congress, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Maulana Muhammad Ali and Sir Muhammad Shafi. He stood like a rock on this principle. A rhetorical question may be asked: after Iqbal entered the rough and tumble of politics, precisely at what point in time did he visualize the outline of the Muslim state, consisting of the Muslim majority provinces of the northwest? His own statements deserve to be highlighted against historical incidents.

Iqbal delivered a forceful speech on May 1, 1927 at the annual session of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, against the Delhi Proposals, where an offer had been made to the Congress to abandon the Muslims' demand for separate electorates. Then on June 28, 1928 Iqbal issued a press statement containing his dissatisfaction about federalism, and demanded complete provincial autonomy for Muslim majority provinces. Again on December 29, 1928, Iqbal delivered an extensive speech at the All Parties Muslim Conference's session in Delhi and stated quite

realistically that in some provinces of India Muslims are in the majority, and in some provinces they are small minorities. Facing this demographic imbalance, it is appropriate for Muslims to devise different political strategies to protect their rights.

Abdus Salam Khurshid has pointed out that Maulana Murtaza Ahmad Khan Maikash published several articles in the daily *Inqalab*, where he proposed a vision of a separate homeland for the Muslims, consisting of the Punjab, the Northwest Frontier, Sindh and Balochistan provinces. Also, he advised Hindus and Muslims to liberate their homeland from the British, and stop thwarting each others' political programs. Commenting on this article a Hindu daily, *Pratap* stated sarcastically that "Muslims are now attempting to create an Islamistan in Kafiristan."

Khurshid further adds:

After the establishment of Pakistan, I asked my father, Maulana Abdul Majeed Salik if Maulana Maikash wrote these articles on his own, or that they were inspired by someone else?" Salik answered: "In those days we visited Iqbal practically every day, and political issues were discussed with him, especially in the 1920s when the Nehru Report and the Simon Commission were hotly debated topics. Even at that time Iqbal perceived the establishment of a separate Muslim state a solution to the Hindu-Muslim conflict. Since he was so closely attached to the Muslim League, he was not in a position to propose a solution of a separate Muslim state entirely on his own. If he had made this attempt, he would have severed his link with other Muslim leaders.

Since the editors of the *Inqalab*, Salik and Ghulam Rasul Mehr, were fighting a 'war' for Muslims' rights under Iqbal's guidance, we were not in a position to advance such a revolutionary proposal. Through our confabulation a solution was found that in order to test the Hindus' reaction this proposal should be advanced by Maikash, who was then the news editor of *Inqalab*, and was not responsible for the

editorial policy. Iqbal constantly guided Maikash, and this is how these articles were published.<sup>44</sup>

Another little incident gives a clue to Iqbal's thinking. A German cartographic specialist visited Iqbal, and he was asked to prepare a demographic map of India to denote Muslim majority provinces with green dots, and the Hindus in yellow, where they happen to be in the majority. Shaikh Mukhtar Ahmad, Iqbal's nephew, whose room this German cartographer shared, stated that he gave detailed information of Muslims' presence in the districts of the Punjab and Bengal. To reward and acknowledge his help to Iqbal this German cartographer was invited by the government of Pakistan to visit Pakistan in 1967. He visited Mukhtar and Javid Iqbal in Lahore as well.

Another incident, though not so menteous when it was presented in the Legislative Council, related to the transfer of authority to the provinces to levy income tax. Also Iqbal suggested that the central government should receive a fixed share of taxes from the provinces.

Nawab Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan was a very close friend of Iqbal. On December 30, 1929 the Nawab addressed a session of the Caliphate Conference in Lahore, while Iqbal was present in this meeting:

India's independence, and its development is dependent on the preposition that in North India an area consisting of two or three provinces (or amalgamated into one province) should be given to the Muslims, where their population should be no less than 80 percent. Similarly in the East, Bengal should be divided in such a manner that Muslim population remains no less than 80 percent. Muslims should demand a separate homeland to protect their rights.<sup>45</sup>

As a close friend of Iqbal Nawab Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan was attached to the Muslim League. It is entirely probable that he was (like Maikash) inspired by Iqbal, and encouraged to publicly demand separate Muslim land.

In November 1930, inspired by Iqbal, Muslim newspapers proposed that the Upper India Muslim

conference should be called to an urgent session. Abdus Salam Khurshid added:

Iqbal invited the editors of *Inqalab*, Salik and Mehr, and the editor of the *Muslim Outlook*, Majeed Malik, to exchange ideas with him. On Iqbal's suggestion, it was proposed that *Inqalab* would publish leading articles advancing the suggestion that Muslims of North India should convene a conference to discuss their special problems. This was the first occasion when Muslims proposed a regional conference instead of an All India conference, or a conference of all provinces, where Muslims were living.<sup>46</sup>

On November 23, 1930 the Upper India Muslim Conference came into existence, and Iqbal was elected president. Its second session was held on December 19, 1930, when Iqbal and other members of its Reception Committee jointly issued a statement which was published in the newspapers. Clearly this appeal was reflective of Iqbal's thinking. Also an unmistakable reference pointed at Iqbal's trend of thought: "*The concentration of Muslims in some provinces is not merely at random, but is part of the divine plan, which God Almighty in His ultimate wisdom had pre-ordained. The wisdom of His design is now gradually dawning upon men of wisdom and knowledge.*"

In the Second Session of this proposed conference objections were raised that the convening of the Upper India Conference implied that northern India Muslims really had no sympathy with the Muslims of India. Since Bengal was also a Muslim majority province, why was it then excluded from the conference. Commenting on this conundrum, Abdus Salam Khurshid wrote:

The daily *Inqalab* answered for Iqbal that the wind storm of opposition was directed against the Muslim majority provinces. For the Hindu majority provinces Hindus were prepared to offer weightage of representation, implying that Muslims could have more representation in the legislatures than was warranted by their demographic strength. Neither

Hindus, nor the British government or the Simon Commission opposed this view.

Because of these circumstances, it becomes the responsibility of the Muslim majority provinces' leaders to examine these issues. Insofar as Bengal was concerned, it was excluded from the conference because of the problems created by distance. If Bengali Muslims arranged for a similar conference, the Muslims of North West India would certainly stretch their helping hand.<sup>47</sup>

This detailed chronological analysis demonstrated that the concept of a Muslim majority state in the North West had surfaced in Iqbal's political planning soon after he became actively involved in the rough and tumble of politics. This evolving thought process was reflected in his speeches and the political proposal, which he made. Before formally projecting a "revolutionary" plan, Iqbal wanted to prepare the ground for its reception. Also Iqbal wanted to gauge the depth of the Hindus' reaction. Precisely for these reasons Iqbal utilized the Muslim press, or the Muslim League's forum to express his innermost thoughts. Last but not least Muslim public opinion also had to be prepared for the projected state in the North West. It also makes sense to speculate that Iqbal decided to participate in active politics to project his political vision. He often stated that he considered it worse than death to exclusively pursue one's own interest in public life. Then what else could be the reason for his plunging into the misery of practical politics?

Another related question may be asked: why did Jinnah propose Iqbal's name to preside over the annual session of the Muslim League on July 13, 1930 in Allahabad? One speculative answer has been provided by Muhammad Ahmad Khan, who stated that by 1930 Iqbal had achieved a preeminent position as a Muslim leader, and Hindus had labeled him a foremost "communalist."<sup>48</sup> In light of these developments his selection to deliver the presidential address was quite appropriate.



Javid Iqbal does not agree with this “logical” explanation. To him Jinnah’s decision owes its origin to the beginning of the meeting of the minds between the two leaders in March 1929, when the Muslims of India had settled on Jinnah’s 14-points for designing a federal constitution for India. However, the Hindu leaders were not prepared to seriously entertain the 14 points as a viable solution to a mutually agreed upon federal constitution. They had also rejected the amendments to the Nehru Report, which Jinnah had proposed. Moreover, Hasrat Mohani’s proposal to create an amalgamated grand province (including the Northwest Frontier Province, Balochistan, Sindh and the Punjab) within the framework of a unitary political system of India had been rejected as well.

Against this background the Muslim League’s demands could not be other than the plan, which Iqbal presented at Allahabad. Jinnah and his colleagues in the League Council anticipated an address, which would present Iqbal’s vision. Precisely for this reason Iqbal was selected to deliver the presidential address at Allahabad. The members of the League Council wanted Iqbal’s address to be delivered before the start of the London Round Table Conference so that a clearly formulated Muslim policy could be available, which the united Muslim delegates would present at the conference. In other words, if Jinnah’s 14-Points were set aside in the formation of a federal constitution for India, then Muslims would adopt a political course of action to which Iqbal had alluded in his address in Allahabad. This strategy was thwarted by Fazl-i Hussain. When Iqbal delivered his address in Allahabad most of the political leaders had departed for London to attend the Round Table Conference. Consequently, no resolution was adopted at the conference reflecting the central points of Iqbal’s vision.

In the post-1930 period, Muslim political dynamics were in great turmoil. Maulana Muhammad Ali died. Jinnah, at

least for three years, retired in London and started his law practice there. In 1931 Sir Muhammad Shafi became the President of the Muslim League, and very soon after he accepted a position as a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. However, he died on February 6, 1932. Saiyyad Shams al-Hussan has speculated that Sir Fazl-i Hussain wanted the Muslim League to become defunct. In line with this thinking he and his supporters managed to elect Sir Muhammad Zafarullah Khan as president of the Muslim League in December 1931. Sir Zafarullah Khan belonged to an unpopular sect, Ahmadiya, and his election provoked the Delhi Muslims to demonstrate against him. For fear of additional demonstrations the League's session was held in the private home of Saiyyid Nawab Ali instead of the designated venue of an auditorium in Fatih Puri School. At this session a plan was hatched to merge the Muslim League with the All Parties Muslim Conference, and to establish a new political organization. As a stroke of good luck, Sir Zafarullah was taken into the Viceroy's Executive Council in June 1932, and he resigned as the president of the Muslim League. Thus the Muslim League was snatched from the jaws of death. In his place Mian Abdul Aziz (from Peshawar) was elected as an acting president. He was not suitable for the democratic leader's role, as he started to treat the Muslim League like a personal clique – he unilaterally fired Sir Muhammad Yaqub from the position of secretary. In 1933 he stepped down as the president, and Hafiz Hedayat Hussain became the president of the Muslim League. Under him the league became an arena of mutual recrimination and endless disruption. In one session a free for all mini-riot broke out, and a council member threw a few blows at Osman Azad, editor of the daily Urdu newspaper, *Anjam*, and the poor journalist lost some teeth. This anarchy within the leadership ranks of the Muslim League continued until March 1934, when finally

Muhammad Ali Jinnah was elected the president, and the Muslim League began to function like a living organism.

To sum up Iqbal's role in politics from 1924-1933, it may be stated that he emerged an important statesman. As an elected president of the Muslim League he delivered the historic Allahabad Address. Twice he went to England to participate in the Second and Third Round Table Conferences. Also, he presided over the All Parties Muslim Conference' session in Lahore; and until the last days of his life he remained deeply involved in the future political prospects of the Muslims. But never again did he ever think of fighting in another provincial or central legislative election.

It may also be noted that the two monumental addresses that Iqbal delivered (the Allahabad address of 1930 and the All Parties Muslim Conference address at Lahore in March 1932), laid down the ideological foundations for Muslim political action, and pointed toward a destination. Two aspects of Iqbal's life, which reflected his service to the national destiny of the Muslims, rose to the surface: one was the practical politics, and second was the strictly philosophic, which he expressed in his inimitable style in prophetic poetry and prose works. During this period he also devoted his attention to the reconstruction of religious thought in Islam.

### **Intellectual Interaction between the West and the Islamic World**

Iqbal delivered a long lecture in English to the annual gathering of the Anjuman Himayat-i Islam on April 16, 1927. The basic points of his lecture are summarized:

The Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) was the last of the line of prophets. With his advent the human intelligence achieved the highest expression. Since the dawn of his prophecy, knowledge and understanding replaced blind following. God said: 'No one will appear again, whose word you should accept without subjecting them to critical

scrutiny.’ Europe started to march on the road to progress, when the west defied the premises of Greek philosophy. Roger Bacon (d. 1294) was the first thinker who ventured the first step in this direction. He emphasized the technique of empirical verification, but the first exponent of this method was Yaqub al-Kindi (d. 873), not Bacon. Well versed in Arabic, Bacon benefited from the knowledge of the Arab scholars of al-Andalusia, and then translated their thought to say that in the Indian and Greek scholars’ view the universe was complete. But Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 1111) and Ibn Taymiya (d. 1328) shredded this view to pieces, and in the Qur’anic light laid claim to the universe’s incomplete status, and then asserted that it was going through the evolutionary processes of development.

European scholars learned the intellectual discipline and approach to challenge the premises of Greek philosophy from Muslim scholars. Dhu Al-Nun Al Misri (d. 857) was not only a Sufi, he was also a chemist. He discovered the fact that water is a compound element. In his famous poem, Dante’s depiction of paradise is derived from Muhyi al-Din Ibn al-Arabi’s (1165-1240) *magnum opus*, *al-Futuhāt al-Makkiyya* (The Mecca Illuminations). Clearly, not only European philosophy, but also literature was heavily influenced by Muslim scholars.

Finally Iqbal summed up his views (in Urdu):

“Every thoughtful man has the intellectual urge to comprehend reality. There are only two ways in which reality can be comprehended: hearing and seeing or intuition. Essentially these two forms of observation must be utilized as the occasion warrants. Europe opted to utilize only visual observation and seeing and rejected intuition. Muslims on the other hand stopped using the techniques of visual observation and hearing, and depended entirely on intuition. Visual observation does not mean that one should loose oneself in this process. Islam’s emphasis is on visual observation, while one should preserve one’s

own personality and integrity. The Islamic view of visual observation is really a message of intellectual fortitude and dedication. In a eulogy to the Prophet, a poet expressed this philosophic thought quite eloquently:

*Musa za hosh raft ba yak jalwa-i sifat*

*Tu aiyin-i zat mi nigri der Tabbasumay*

(Moses lost consciousness at the glimpse of the Almighty;  
And you saw the Almighty with a smile on your lips)

This is the Islamic ideal; this is the significance of the Prophet's ascension to the divine abode, that a man sees the almighty, but retains his personality as the worshiper of God – not as a demonstration of defiance and individualism, but as a sign of God's worship and homage to Him. A Muslim must never annihilate (*fana*) himself, even if this self-annihilation (*fana fi al-haq*) is in the personality of the Almighty.

During the last week of November 1929 Iqbal visited Aligarh, where he delivered three lectures on the reconstruction of Islamic thought. Sir Ross Masud was the vice-chancellor of the university. The Students' Union presented to Iqbal a statement of admiration and compliment for his role in the Muslims' life. Also, they made him an Honorary Life Member of the Students' Union. In response, Iqbal said:

I will talk about a couple of matters, which are not described in any book, but are based upon my own personal observations. First, ever since our relations with Europe and more specifically with Britain have been established, many items have been imported from there. Best of all is English literature; second, is the mode of thought. The third item given to us by Britain is the form of democracy, which has been applied here, and is scheduled to be applied in several installments. It is of very doubtful value. Personally, I am not a believer in this form of democracy; while I do go along with it because no other alternative form is available...one more thing I would like to emphasize is the process of revealing our past. I am not one of those, who love their past,

because I pin my faith on the future; but we also need the past in order to understand the present...We want to understand the dynamics of the Islamic world. That is the reason why I want you to understand the past. We do not understand the modern civilization, and remain unaware of its rules of propriety and refinement. We are lagging behind other nations in acquiring modern arts and sciences.

I want you to fix your sight on those lost linkages, which unite the past with our future. One of those links is the method of modern sciences, which is based on empirical verification. The Qur'an bequeathed this blessing to the world. The achievements of the method of empirical verification are visible today.

I have been studying the Qur'an daily during the last 20 years. Even today, I cannot claim that I comprehend some parts of it. However, I do hope that the Aligarh Muslim University will encourage young scholars, who will dedicate their lives to the study of the Qur'an. I wish that you will become my collaborators. I control my mortal life only for a few years; but my soul will always remain available to serve you. While I am alive, it will be at your service as well."<sup>49</sup>

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Ahmad Khan, *Iqbal ka Siyasi Karnamah*, pp. 154-155.

<sup>2</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-22.

<sup>3</sup> Shaikh Ata Allah, *Iqbal Namah*, Vol. I, pp. 207-208.

<sup>4</sup> Shahid, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-81.

<sup>5</sup> Muhammad Ahmad Khan, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-104.

<sup>6</sup> Rushbrook Williams, *India: 1926-27*, pp. 16-19, 47.

<sup>7</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-28.

<sup>8</sup> Muhammad Ahmad Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

<sup>9</sup> Muhammad Ahmad Khan, *op. cit.*, pp. 155-6.

<sup>10</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

<sup>11</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-49.

<sup>12</sup> Muhammad Abdullah Qureshi, *Makatib-i Iqbal*, pp. 241-2.

<sup>13</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-46.

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- <sup>14</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-48.
- <sup>15</sup> Tariq, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-64.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 49-51.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 52-53.
- <sup>18</sup> Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 170.
- <sup>19</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-60.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 61-64.
- <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.
- <sup>23</sup> Abdul Majid Salik, *Zaker-i Iqbal* (Lahore: Bazm-i-Iqbal, 1955), p. 139.
- <sup>24</sup> Muhammad Ahmad Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 168.
- <sup>25</sup> Sherwani, *op. cit.*, pp. 163-64.
- <sup>26</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-69.
- <sup>27</sup> *The Nehru Report* (New Delhi: Michiko & Panjathan, 1975), Chapter III, pp. 37-38.
- <sup>28</sup> Rafique, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-71.
- <sup>29</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.
- <sup>31</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-91.
- <sup>32</sup> Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), p. 318.
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 323.
- <sup>34</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 91-94.
- <sup>35</sup> For details, see an excellent study on social reforms by Charles H. Heimsath, *Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reforms* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 174, 305.
- <sup>36</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-97.
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 100-102.
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 105-106.
- <sup>39</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, p. 109.
- <sup>40</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-111.
- <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 112.
- <sup>42</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-116.
- <sup>43</sup> Muhammad Ahmad Khan, *op. cit.*, pp. 212-214.
- <sup>44</sup> Abdus Salam Khurshid, *Sar Guzash-i Iqbal*, pp. 289-292.
- <sup>45</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 6.
- <sup>46</sup> *Inqalab*, November 21, 1930; Khurshid, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-299.
- <sup>47</sup> Khurshid, *op. cit.*, pp. 301-302.
- <sup>48</sup> Muhammad Ahmad Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 216.
- <sup>49</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-105.

## Chapter III

# RECONSTRUCTION OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT AND LECTURE TOUR OF SOUTH INDIA

Iqbal's visit to South India, now recognized as a great milestone, was essentially a scholarly voyage. During this visit he delivered six well-crafted and thoroughly researched lectures, which remain his major *oeuvres* in prose, shedding light on his innovative thinking on the creation of a new Islamic culture in the modern age.

Iqbal's vision of Islam is dynamic, not a frozen mass. Precisely for this conception, he had started to cultivate interest in the doctrine of *Ijtihad* (the right of interpreting the Qur'an and the *sunna* or of forming a new opinion by applying analogical deduction). Probably to test the waters, Iqbal presented an article to a general and student audience at the Habibia Hall of Islamia College in Lahore on December 13, 1924. As usual, some very conservative *ulama* objected to his views and began to look upon him as a radical. It was the first bitter lesson for Iqbal. One religious "scholar" of not particularly high stature, Maulvi Abu Muhammad Didar Ali issued a *fatwa*, declaring Iqbal an infidel (*kafir*). Deeply hurt by this unwarranted reaction of the religious class to his ideas, Iqbal wrote to Maulana Akbar Shah Khan of Najibabad:



You have described it right. These professional *moulavis* [religious leaders] had lost a substantial amount of influence under Sir Saiyad Ahmed Khan's movement. But their power was restored among the Indian Muslims by the Caliphate Committee's venture into issuing the political *fatwas*. This was a great error. Some while ago I wrote an article on *Ijtihad*, which I read before a public meeting. But some people called me a *kafir*.<sup>1</sup>

This article was not published, but its announcement had appeared in the press, which attracted the attention of Saith Jamal Muhammad in Southern India. He was a very prominent trader, and had earned millions of rupees. He spent a substantial part of his wealth in founding several charitable institutions, including the Madras Muslim Association. This association was devoted to the objective of inviting outstanding Muslim scholars to Madras to discuss different dimensions of Islam. Before Iqbal was invited Saith Jamal invited Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall, and Saiyad Sulaiman Nadvi. Early in 1925 Saith Jamal invited Iqbal to Madras, and as it was their standard practice, he paid for all of Iqbal's expenses, but the number of addresses and the determination of exact dates for the delivery of his lectures were left to Iqbal's choice.

Iqbal accepted this invitation for two reasons: he wanted to see Sultan Tipu's mausoleum, with a hope that it would inspire a great poem to celebrate Sultan Tipu, who died fighting against the British. Second, Iqbal wanted to reconstruct Muslim religious philosophy in the philosophic tradition of Islam in different areas of human knowledge, and to articulate them in the light of modern age. He wanted to publish them in a book for wider circulation in the world. Iqbal was deeply concerned about the younger generation of Muslims, which was intellectually drawn to the west. He feared their being overawed by the dazzle of European ideas may lead them to a blind alley. Expressing his anxieties, he wrote to Saiyad Sulaiman Nadvi:

In examining the contemporary conditions of Muslim states I am filled with great upheaval within myself. By God's grace I am content in my heart. This anguish that I reflect is caused by a feeling that Muslims' new generation may adopt an erroneous style.<sup>2</sup>

Philosophically he saw nothing harmful about the influence of western culture. He saw Europeans' modern civilization as an advanced and developed form of Islamic culture. Let us examine a few philosophic issues: Because of his articulated principle Descartes was considered to be the founder of modern philosophy; new sources of knowledge were structured on his principle. A comparison between Descartes' principle and al-Ghazali's *Revivication of the Sciences of Religion* would reveal that centuries before Descartes, al-Ghazali had explained the same principle at length. Dante's *Divine Comedy* is replete with Al-Arabi's imaginations. Long before Roger Bacon introduced and popularized the experimental method into European science, empirical studies of nature, namely studies based on observation and experimentation, were already widespread in the Muslim world. According to one scholar "these studies were certainly carried out by Muslims on a far more extensive scale than had been attempted in all previous civilizations."<sup>3</sup>

Aristotelian logics (first form) was first subjected to scrutiny by Yaqub al-Kindi, a philosopher-scientist, in the ninth century, and much the same criticism was expressed by Roger Bacon, and later on by John Stuart Mill. A modern American historian of science, Toby E. Huff, has forthrightly acknowledged the fact "that from the eighth century to the end of the fourteenth, Arabic science was probably the most advanced science in the world, greatly surpassing the west and China. In virtually every field of endeavor – in astronomy, alchemy, mathematics, medicine, optics and so forth – Arabic scientists – were in the forefront of scientific advance. The facts, theories and

scientific speculations contained in their treatises were the most advanced to be had anywhere in the world, including China.<sup>4</sup>

Even in speculative philosophy Muslim Sufi thinkers had established the concepts of time and space. They postulated the views that space could be three dimensional. Kant was the first European thinker who paid attention to this possibility, but Muslim Sufi thinkers were familiar with this concept 600 years earlier. European thinkers whether they knew Arabic or not were aware of the advances of Muslim philosophers. Iqbal wanted to update Islamic intellectual disciplines in the light of modern approach. He warned that if this endeavor was not undertaken, Europe's intellectual imperialism will hold sway.<sup>5</sup> About this danger Iqbal wrote to Saiyad Sulaiman Nadvi:

In the life of nations, in my view, *ancient* is as important as *modern*...But I do see that in Muslim countries the common man, and the educated classes are equally uninformed about Islamic *ulum* (knowledge). In this vacuum of knowledge, as you stated, there is the probability of European intellectual usurpation (*ma'navi Istaila*), which should be stopped.<sup>6</sup>

Iqbal was sensitive to the reality that the Muslims of India were unable to render any political support to other Muslims, but that they could help them intellectually. Also, he recognized the historical development of Europe that religious reformation was undertaken by Martin Luther. Comparably, however, in the Islamic world no institutionalized church existed, which might call for the role of another Luther. Nevertheless the revival of Islamic learning was unavoidable, because only through this revival the intellectual link between Islam and modern science and technology could be reestablished and revitalized. Only through this link Muslims could be persuaded to excel in science and technology.

Through this process, Iqbal believed, Muslims could be persuaded to realize that adopting the philosophic and

scientific aspects of European culture they would not be emulating un-Islamic knowledge. On the contrary, it would amount to developing and advancing scientific knowledge, which Muslims had developed in the most dynamic phase of “the culture of Islam.”<sup>7</sup>

Iqbal believed that if Muslim political leaders were dedicated to achieving for Muslims political or economic freedom only they would not succeed in their mission.<sup>8</sup> This mission had to move in tandem with the effort of updating Islamic thought in addition to other Islamic disciplines. In other words he wanted to make the religious disciplines of knowledge in tune with modern philosophy. In his opinion old Islamic dialectical theology (*ilm al-kalam*), which was mostly derived from Greek philosophy, had lost its relevance; it needed to be restructured. Europe learned from Muslim scholarship the method of harmonizing reason with revelation. Consequently they succeeded in excelling Muslim scholarship in restructuring their theology in the light of modern philosophy.

Iqbal further reasoned that by comparison Islam is far more simple and rational than Christian religion. Therefore, it should be easier to lay the foundation of modern *ilm al-kalam*.<sup>9</sup>

Similar attempts had been made by Sir Saiyad Ahmad Khan; but his efforts did not entirely succeed because he structured his views on the foundations of rationalism (*mu` tazila*), which had received inspiration from Greek philosophy and had lost contemporary relevance and became obsolete.<sup>10</sup> Iqbal was deeply conscious of a historical impulse, which had the potential to usher in an intellectual revolution in the Islamic world. Indeed Muslim nations were mired in political and economic bogs, but at the end of their difficulties, Iqbal hoped that personalities would emerge, who would direct the tide of this revolution in constructive directions. Iqbal perceived his mission to pave the way for the direction of this anticipated revolution.

The reconstruction of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) was another issue, which attracted Iqbal's attention. He believed that any scholar in the modern age, who would critically examine the modern jurisprudence from the Qur'anic perspective, and establish the eternal relevance of the Qur'anic injunctions, would be the great renovator of Islam (*mujadid*), and the benefactor of mankind. He wrote to Saiyad Sulaiman Nadvi:

My objective is to examine Islamic matters in the light of contemporary jurisprudence, not in a slavish style, but in a critical manner. Before the modern age Muslims had made this attempt. Greek philosophy was at one time considered to be the ultimate achievement of human knowledge. But, when Muslims developed their critical faculty, they used the same critical philosophical tools to confront it. In this age it is appropriate to do the same.<sup>11</sup>

Without the exercise of *Ijtihad*, this objective could not be achieved. But Iqbal realized that Muslims did not have at this time well developed faculty of innovative and creative thinking, while they lived under the intellectual and political domination of the west. Under these conditions, it was probably preferable to preserve the *fiqh* as it then existed, and continue to follow (*taqlid*) the established precedents. Despite this constraint, circumstances were subject to constant flux, and *taqlid* could not be practiced all the time. He realized the imperative of taking a positive step so that gradually persons would emerge, who might possess full control over their innovative and creative thinking, and provide guidance to Muslims during the onset of and anticipated revolution.<sup>12</sup>

This was indeed a very delicate issue in view of Indian *ulama* and other Muslims' traditional conservatism. For the expression of his views on this delicate issue, some people had already started calling him a *kafir*. This abuse notwithstanding, Iqbal planned to continue his research to cope with the demands of the modern age. Based on his

research, he was never reluctant or fearful in expressing his views.

The conduct of Muslim states, and the possibility of an inter-Islamic alliance, was another issue, which consumed Iqbal's attention. Atatürk had abolished the caliphate, and adopted the western style of democracy; but the traditional *ulama* wanted to resurrect the caliphate. Taking advantage of their simplistic or uninformed view of political developments, the British government was in quest of a person who would ostensibly play the role of a caliph of the Muslims, but would in reality be their factotum. In this manner the whole world of Islam could be a [British] surrogate. Iqbal understood the subtle aspects of this diplomacy and opposed the restructuring of the caliphate, which would damage the Muslims' interests. For an alliance between the Islamic states a new strategy was needed.

Iqbal was not enamored of democracy as such, but accepted it for want of a better political system.<sup>13</sup> His criticism of democracy was philosophic and ethical as democracy emphasized the rule of the majority, which reflected a one man, one vote system. This form of election, Iqbal objected, did not hold out any assurance that an elected leader was capable of providing leadership. In this electoral system a capable candidate could be defeated by a slim majority of one, which in the perspective of Islamic values was wrong and counterproductive. Moreover, Iqbal developed an antipathy toward western capitalism, because its spirit was exploitative, and he feared that it would continue to exploit underdeveloped nations. As a reaction to the capitalistic mode of production, a communist revolution had taken over Russia, which was ideologically based on materialism and religiously promoted atheism. He suspected that in emulating the western democratic-capitalistic system, the Muslim states would expose themselves to the ideological impact of Russia, and fall victim to its "socialist" exploitation.

In addition to these issues (discussed above), Iqbal had extended his research within the framework of Islam to formulate views of the universe, creation and God, and wanted to explain them for general understanding. His metaphysical views and the ultimate purpose of man's creation had been expressed in prose and poetry. However, it is also appropriate to discuss his views of love and reason, space and time and other metaphysical, ethical and cultural issues.

Another word of explanation is in order. While Iqbal was fully conversant with European culture, literature and philosophy, he was also well-read in Islamic philosophy, Arabic and Persian literature, and general Islamic culture, but he had not been trained in a traditional *dar al-ulum* (*madrassah*) to acquire disciplined training in the Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsir*), The Prophetic traditions (*hadith*) and Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). By conventional reckoning he could not be described a traditional religious scholar (*alim*). Iqbal was fully aware of his weakness in this dimension.<sup>14</sup>

### **Preparation for the Lectures**

Before he delivered his lectures in Madras, he studied numerous books, and consulted several traditional *ulama*, and engaged in extensive discussions of various issues with those *ulama*, who were personally known to him. But this exchange of ideas with *ulama* was an arduous exercise, and he probably gained very little knowledge, because the *ulama* while they were well versed in religious disciplines and Islamic philosophy had no knowledge of western culture, philosophy, law and modern liberal arts and sciences. Well, why blame the *ulama* of India; what Iqbal wanted and needed did not exist in the entire world of Islam.

In this exchange of ideas, the issues which surfaced in Iqbal's thought, he raised periodically with Saiyad Sulaiman Nadvi. An overview of these issues is not without interest:

1. The Qur'an is perfectly complete, and makes this claim for itself. In order to demonstrate the Qur'an's perfection, it is necessary in practical terms to criticize the principles of other nations' conduct, from the Qur'anic perspective. What are the applicable methods.
2. Some *kalamists* (dialectical theologians), applying their principles of refutation and affirmation, endeavored to establish the possibility of God's visibility. How can this discussion be obtained in various sources. The question about God's visibility was asked in order to shed more light on Einstein's "revolutionary" "doctrine of light" (*Nazriya-i Nur*).

Ibn Rushd had strengthened this view in his *Risalah*, where he had cited Abu al-Mu`ali's *Risalah*. Abu al-Mu`ali's view shared some degree of similarity with Einstein's views, which were buttressed by his mathematical calculations, while al-Mu`ali's were purely speculative.

3. Can consensus of opinion set aside explicit ordinance of the Qur'an? For example, a mother is called upon to nurse her baby for two years as determined by an explicit ordinance of the Qur'an? For example, a mother is called upon to nurse her baby for two years as determined by an explicit ordinance of the Qur'an. Can it [the nursing period] be reduced or increased? Can the Shari'a's determined shares of inheritance be increased or decreased? Some Hanafis and Mutazilites maintain that umma's consensus of opinion is competent to do so. Can a source [for this position] be cited from the *fiqh's* literature? You have stated that jurisconsults (*fuqha*) have considered the act of reduction permissible (*ja`iz*) in the explicit ordinance; is there any precedent available for reduction or amendment? Was such a reduction or amendment to be exercised only by the Prophet's associates (*Sahaba*) or the *ulama* (religious scholars) or *mujtahids* (high and



accomplished theologians) could do the same? In Islamic history, if there are such precedents, then please inform me. What is the meaning of reduction or amendment? If the Prophet's associates issued a judgment abrogating (*naskh*) the explicit ordinance [of the Qur'an], then should it be understood to imply that they were aware of the existence of an abrogated ordinance? Is there really an ordinance, [that was] issued by the Prophet's associates, which was opposed to the explicit ordinance of the Qur'an?

4. You have stated that the jurists (*Fuqaha*) have considered reduction of the Qur'anic dictum by *ijma` al-umma* allowable. Are there any examples of such reductions and amendments? Are these reductions and amendments accomplished only through the consensus of the community or can *ulama* and *mujtahids* (acknowledged reformers of law) also exercise this authority? If there are any examples of this type, especially in the post *Sahaba* (close associates of Prophet Muhammad) period, please inform me. What is the meaning of reduction and amendment? If *Sahaba* had issued an ordinance, which was against the clearly stated dictum of the Qur'an, then it would be understood that such a cancelled dictum of the Qur'an [which occurred in the past] was in their knowledge. Is there any order, which was given by the *Sahaba* against the clearly stated dictum of the Qur'an?

5. When the Prophet Muhammad was asked to explain an issue and he provided an explanation, which was based upon the divine revelation, then that explanation became binding upon the entire community of believers, and that explanation was incorporated into the Qur'an. However, if an explanation was based upon his personal sense of reasoning, and it was not influenced by the revelation – then should it also apply to the whole Muslim community? If the answer is yes, then it would

unavoidably follow that the Prophet's personal reasoning, and its products, are to be treated as part of the revelation. In other words, there remains no difference between the Qur'an and the *hadith* (personal statements of the Prophet).

6. The Prophet occupied two positions, that of *Nabuwwa* (messenger of God) and *Imama* (political head of the community). The Qur'anic dicta, and statements are revealed to him. *Ijtihad* is based upon human intellect, experience and observation. Can they be based upon a part of the revelation? If yes, then what are your explanations?

What is the definition of *wahi gher matlow* revelation, which is *not* divinely inspired; what is its psychological significance?

Was a distinction between *wahi matlow* (divinely inspired) and non-divinely inspired recognized in the Prophet's lifetime, or were these terms minted after him?

7. The Prophet consulted his associates about the form of *Adhan* (the call to prayers). Would this consultation fall under the category of *Nabuwwa* (Prophetic function) or *Imama* (head of state)?

8. In the Torah, allocation of inheritance by distribution is eternal. The principles that are enunciated are not subject to alteration and other portions can be determined according to the circumstances.

9. Is an *Imam* authorized to suspend the Qur'anic injunction (for instance punishment for stealing), and in its place apply another one? For this authority which Qur'anic *aya* (statements) can be cited.

10. By *Imam* do we mean one individual, or can a collectivity officiate in his place?

11. Should there be a separate *Imam* for each Muslim state, or should there be only one *Imam* for the entire Muslim World? In the latter situation, how can this be implemented?

12. Caliph Umar adopted a policy on divorce; did he have authority from the Shari`a, what was then the basis of this authority? To use the contemporary political idiom, did the constitution delegate this authority to him?

13. According to Fiqh (jurisprudence), the right of the husband to divorce his wife – can it be transferred to his wife or to her relative or any other person? Is this view based on *hadith* or the Qur’anic dicta?

14. According to Abu Hanifa when a husband divorces a wife or when a husband dies, the child born to his wife, even after two years, should not be considered illegitimate. What is the authority for this ruling? Is this principle merely an issue of witnessing or part of the law?

15. *Shams Bazigha* and *Sadra* contain many statements. One statement is: time is God. In *Bukhari* [a compilation of the Prophetic traditions], there is a similar statement. Did any of the Islamic Philosophers adopt this point of view? If so, where can we find this debate?

16. In medieval times, a Jewish scholar, Moses Maimondes, maintained there is no future for God, because he created time stage by stage. Maimondes was educated in the Muslim Universities of Cordoba. Therefore, can it be inferred that his philosophic view had its roots in a Muslim philosopher’s formulations?

17. Shibli has cited a sentence about customs and mores (*irtafaqat*)

Is this Shah Waliy Allah’s personal interpretation? In a similar manner all proposals of social nature, which are enforced, for example – marriage and divorce, are part of the *irtafaqat*. If Shah Waliy Allah’s interpretation is valid then society could disintegrate, and Muslims in different countries would follow their own mores and traditions. Please explain this issue.

18. In *al-Kalam*, that is *il al-Kalam Jadid* (modern dialectical theology) Shibli has cited p. 123 of *Hujjat Allah al-Baligha* and reproduced a sentence from the

original in Arabic. He has condensed the meaning of it in his own words. The translation of the last portion is this: “Based on this premise, there is no better method available to the *Imam* than that in the management of affairs, and the administration of penalties, he should take into consideration the habits [and customs] of the nation in which the *Imam* was born. Moreover these injunctions should not be applied rigorously on the future generations. In this sentence, what is the meaning of the term *sh`ar* (mores), and under this term how many customs, and traditions can be categorized?

19. Has Shah Waliy Allah explained the term *sh`ar* in any place in the *Hujjat Allah al-Baligha*?

20. Shah Waly Allah applied the term *irtafaqat*; Shibli translated it at one place as *intizamat* (management), and another place as *muslamat* (established principles). What is the real meaning?

21. Shah Waliy Allah enumerated four different kinds of *irtafaqat*; in these terms he has discussed cultural matters, i.e., marriage and divorce. According to him should no rigorous rules be applied?

22. Who were the well-known *Asha`ira* [the leading representatives of *Ash`arism*, a school of *Kalam*, established by Abdul Hassan al-Ashari, died in 935] in India? In addition to Mulla Jawnpuri, were there other Indian Muslim philosophers? Please indicate their names, and books which they authored.

23. What is the real and full name of Indian philosopher, Sakin Phulwari, who authored *Taswilat-i falsfa*? Where can we have the manuscript of this book?

24. There is Maulavi Nur al-Islam’s Arabic *Risalah* about *space*, which is deposited in the Rampur Library. What is the language of this particular manuscript; is it hand-written or a published copy? When did Maulavi Nur al-Islam live?

25. Many difficulties about the philosophic issues of *aan* (fleeting moment) remain. It seems that the objections which philosophers raised against the dialecticians regarding time can be similarly raised against them. Maulavi Saiyad Barkat Ahmad made an attempt to distinguish between *time* and *space*, but the issue remained difficult and unresolved. Please shed some light on this problem.

26. If the world is expanding and eternal, and God exists in a real sense, then what is the reality of space?

27. Just as time is the reflection of matter (world) then similarly space should be treated as the reflection of matter. In reality time and space truthfully exist in matter. Is this view correct in Ibn al-Arabi's thought? Has he discussed space, if so, then what is the relation between space and matter in his view?

I have studied the issue of time and space, which revealed to me that the Muslim philosophers of India have tackled these complex issues. A history of this thought can be written. I wish you would undertake this project.

28. You have written that the ruler of an Islamic state can temporarily suspend some legal situations, if their permission is likely to cause insurgency; also, he can cancel some mandated obligations. Where is the authority for this interpretation?

29. Is it true that *mut`a marriage* (limited, time specified contractual marriage) was commonly practiced among Muslims before the Caliphate of Umar ibn al-Khatab (d. 644), and he cancelled it? Can a contemporary ruler in the modern age make judgments of this kind?

30. Please send me a list of issues, which are given to the *Imam* for his judgment? There are some crimes for which the punishment is determined in the Qu'ran. How can an *Imam* give his personal opinion on these matters?

31. Continuity of a religious action, in your view is the performance of *salat* (prayer); how did divergences developed in the performance of *salat* among the Hanafis, Malikis and Shias?

32. For the delegated powers, what are the principles that guide their extension. If an *Imam* can increase his powers, then he can also decrease them. Please indicate if there are any historical precedents?

33. According to the Qur'an, who is the owner of land? What are the legal positions of the Islamic jurisprudents? Has *Qadi Mubarak* anything to say in the forms of *fatwa*?

34. Like Russia, if a Muslim state nationalizes the land, declaring that state owns it, would this policy be in agreement with the Shari'a, or would it be opposed? Or that this issue is to be settled by the Imam (head of state).

35. What are the different forms of *Sadaqa* in Islam? What is the difference between *Sadaqa* and *Khairat*?

36. The term *Nabi* has two meanings: 1) one who informs, 2) and one who stands on an elevated spot. The first has an associate the second one does not. The Prophet said that he had no associate. The Qur'an has mentioned some Prophets – who were with associates, and those who were not? Or that they were all without associates. If the Prophets mentioned in the Qur'an, and the Prophet Muhammad had no associates, then the term *Nabi*'s commonly accepted translation as "prophet" (one who informs) cannot be correct?

37. What is the Arabic root for *Nar* (fire)?

The 37 issues, articulated in the form of scholarly inquiries, reflected a very diversified range of problems which Iqbal wanted to discuss in his lectures. Iqbal took five years to complete them, which he was scheduled to deliver in Madras. He had committed himself to delivering six lectures. However, by January 1929 he could complete only three; in consequence he delivered only three lectures

at Madras, Benglore and Hyderabad-Deccan. The remaining three lectures were completed almost by the end of November, and he delivered them at Aligarh Muslim University. However, in the preparation of these lectures he researched the topics very thoroughly, and thirty seven issues of Islamic theology and philosophy which he raised in the form of interrogatory questions with various *ulama*, and especially with Saiyad Sulaiman Nadvi gives an idea of the scope of his scholarly concerns, and the amount of respect he had for Nadvi's traditional Islamic scholarship.

There is one more additional possibility, which sheds some light on his range of research, and the selection of topics. In the middle 1920s, he delivered three lectures in English at the annual meetings of Anjuman Himayat-i Islam, dealing with; 1) Islamic Culture's essence; 2) Islamic philosophy and 3) the study of Qur'an. These lectures were directly related to the subject matter of his lectures in South India, and called for exhaustive research.

The middle of the 1920s was an exceptionally busy period for Iqbal:

(1) 1926 was devoted to the electioneering for a seat in the Punjab Legislative Council, which entailed campaigning in the streets of Lahore, addressing public meetings, and participating in electoral processions. (2) After his victory in the election, the Legislative Council's activities consumed his efforts, including the research for data of his speeches in the Council, which demanded an enormous amount of time. (3) During the Hindu-Muslim riots in Lahore, he visited the affected neighborhoods to achieve amity between Hindus and Muslims, and addressed numerous gatherings to urge restraint. (4) From 1927-1929 Iqbal participated fully in the All-India Muslim politics, and frequently visited Delhi. In addition to these activities other political developments consumed his energy and time. These developments were significant, and had far-reaching implications including:

(5) the All-India Muslim League splitting up into two factions; (6) the visit of the Simon Commission, and preparation for the Shafi League's political position for submission to the Commission; (7) the Nehru Report, and articulating the reasons for opposition to this report's positions; (8) the convening of the All-Parties Muslim Conference, and leading position in its deliberations; (9) the political crisis in Afghanistan, and Iqbal's support to King Nadir Shah; (10) participation in the problems of Palestine; (11) the formulation of Jinnah's 14-points; (12) and the restoring of unity in the ranks and leadership of the All-India Muslim League. (13) Then came the first London Round Table Conference, and formulating critical views of its accomplishments.

Despite these enumerated time consuming activities, which must have caused him considerable intellectual anguish, he also published another collection of his poetry, *Zabur-i Ajam*. His basic source of income was his practice of law, which drew also his considerable attention. Not being a very busy lawyer, his income through this profession often remained inadequate, which he supplemented through work with the universities – he set their final examination papers, and then marked the students' exam papers to determine their success.

It is amazing nevertheless to speculate how he managed to tackle complex philosophic problems, while his schedule was so crowded with so many other issues. What was it that galvanize him to be so dynamically involved in these problems? It is not possible to psychologically analyze his state of mind, and it is equally difficult to determine the extent of his extraordinary creative impulse, which enabled him to express his views so lucidly on so many convoluted philosophic issues despite his never ending mental anguish, especially when he felt at times frustrated in his expression of complex ideas for want of suitable words. Iqbal expressed this difficulty in his own words: "Some views



are product of modern philosophy. To express them, and my own interpretations I cannot find suitable words.”<sup>15</sup>

### **Iqbal’s Activities in South India**

Accompanied by Chaudhary Muhammad Hussain, Abdullah Chughtai, and loyal aide Ali Bakhsh, Iqbal reached Bombay on January 3, 1929. Iqbal, and his entourage was received at the railway station by Seth Isma`il’s son, Saith Hashim Isma`il. They were his hosts in Bombay. Saith Hashim Isma`il’s wife was a highly educated modern young lady, who had been educated in Germany. After dinner she presented Iqbal, Goethe’s *Faust*, and asked him to inscribe it with his own verse:

*Kalam-o falsafa az Loh-i dil froshustam  
Zamir-i khawysh koshadam ba Nashter-i Tahqiq*

(I washed away the philosophic formulations from my heart,  
and I enlarged my heart with the certitude of faithful search.)

Iqbal added: “Faust should have reached this ultimate point, but he failed to do so.”

In Bombay his host Saith Hashim Isma`il gave high tea in honor of Iqbal at a very prestigious restaurant, where important Bombay personalities were also invited. That evening Iqbal was also a guest of honor at a dinner, which was arranged for him by Muslim Federation of Bombay. On January 5, 1929 Iqbal arrived at Madras railway station, where a large number of individuals had gathered to welcome him. A young girl of literary tastes, who belonged to a prominent Muslim family jumped into Iqbal’s compartment to enjoy his company for a few minutes. In anticipation of Iqbal’s visit she had already corresponded with Iqbal. Most of his Muslim admirers in the welcoming crowd wore *tarbush*, generally known as *Rumi topi*, after the Turkish style. In addition to the general public *ulama* of Madras were also present to welcome Iqbal. Saith Jamal, his son, and his secretary Abdul Hameed Hassan came into his compartment, and covered Iqbal with the garlands of flowers. At the station

platform Iqbal was introduced to the notable personalities of the city, who were also anxiously waiting to meet him. Iqbal was then driven to the hotel Bosoto, which was owned by Saith Jamal.

At 4:00 PM another high tea was given in honor of Iqbal at Madarasa Jamalia, which contained several buildings, and had been endowed in perpetuity by Saith Jamal for the education of poor and orphan Muslim students. Attached to the Madarassa was the Jamali hostel, where poor students received room and board free of cost. Every student received a stipend of Rs 71 to pay for his tuition fee. A big library containing books on Islamic studies was also part of the madarassa complex. Well qualified teachers from the Nadwah were hired to teach subjects of Islam. Also Hindu teachers were hired to teach English and mathematics. Iqbal was absolutely delighted to meet the students and their teachers.

Iqbal's first lecture – Religion of Islam, and modern philosophy – was delivered at the Gokhale Hall. A large number of Muslims, in addition to Hindus, attended the lecture. P. Subbaroyan, Chief Minister of Madras, presided over the proceedings. The session started with the recitation of a portion of the Qur'an. Iqbal took more than an hour to read the text of his lecture. At the end of Iqbal's presentation, Dr. Subbaroyan made some comments:

Nomination of a non-Muslim to preside over a meeting like this has come to me as a surprise. Nevertheless as an Indian and as a believer in the existence of a common God who has created the entire world, it has given me the greatest pleasure in getting an opportunity to learn the main principles of Islam. For this country to attain independence and for us to safeguard the independence once attained, it is very necessary that the two main communities, namely Hindus and Muslims, must live as brothers, like children born to the same parents.

It is with the object of learning the principles enunciated by Islam that I am here this evening. Be they Hindus or Muslims or Christians, it has been the conviction of literary sages that all religions lead to one and the same path of Truth. Whatever be the teachings of Islam it is an acknowledged fact that it has taught the concept of fraternity and brotherhood to the world.

There are among us, Hindus, very many caste and creed distinctions. I am not speaking here as a non-Brahmin. However, speaking frankly, the Brahmin-non-Brahmin rift is very unfortunate. Even among non-Brahmins, there are countless caste distinctions. Also, it is impossible to narrate the sorrows of the untouchables. There is no difference in human beings born in this world. That all persons are equal is the lesson that Islam taught to India. This truth was known to India even before Islam. Gotama, the Buddha, preached this but the Buddhist religion did not survive long. It is, therefore, necessary that we, Hindus, have to learn the principles of fraternity, brotherhood and equality from Islam. It is only if we, Hindus and Muslims, live as brothers that we could retain the independence that we may attain.<sup>16</sup>

At the end of the meeting the summary of Iqbal's lecture was distributed by the press.

Saith Jamal borrowed the text of Iqbal's lecture for reading overnight, and returned it to him the next day. However, they had lively exchange of ideas. Iqbal was greatly impressed by Saith Jamal's personality. He was not only a very successful international trader, but had also cultivated substantial amount of Islamic knowledge. Entirely simple in his dress, he also kept an "Islamic beard." Iqbal admired the fact that he could raise philosophic issues and make very knowledgeable comments on his lecture. Iqbal said: "Allah, Allah, this man conducts trade worth billions of rupees, dresses simply and discusses the reality of soul and matter in Urdu and English. He wants to see the synthesis of Muslims' old educational systems with the modern education. He wants

to see Islam in its true original grandeur. Muslims like him need to be produced in the Muslim society. Unless such men emerge among us, we wouldn't be able to achieve our grand objective.

Actually Jamal's entire efforts were focused on this point. Abdullah Chughtai added another dimension to Saith Jamal's personality; Saith Jamal's grand objective is:

To achieve a refined synthesis of old religious education, and the arts and sciences of the modern age so that a Mulla (religious student) becomes educated in modern terms, and an educated young man of modern times becomes – maybe not a Mulla – but a good Muslim. Not only that he can discuss scientific issues, he is also capable of extrapolating some of the Qur'anic verses to shed light on these issues. Also he complained that our *ulama* have ignored the imperatives of modern time in the last two centuries in their educational efforts, and in their missionary endeavors. Yet he thinks they need not be condemned, because the current situation was not spawned by one factor; in fact dozens of causes must be examined, which confronted the nation. Past is gone; no lamentation would yield any benefit. The past deficiency can be rectified if the *ulama* and the leading personalities arrange their affairs in a way, which would compensate for the past loss, and the world would see the Muslim in a role, which was determined and assigned for him by God, his Prophet, and the Qur'an."

Iqbal spent four days in Madras, and then departed for Bangalore on the evening of January 8, 1929. These hectic days were filled with his lectures and receptions in his honor. On January 6, he delivered a lecture – the Philosophic Test of the Revelations of Religious Experience – at the Gokhale Hall. Early in the morning before the lecture was delivered he gave a press interview to the correspondent of the daily *Sawarajia*; in which he stated that he preferred religion to *Sawaraj* (self-determination). The *Sawaraj* which completely ignored religious values was of no concern to Iqbal. Despite this personal conviction, Asians could not entirely ignore the

European impulse of materialism. Therefore the real issue confronting Iqbal was how to synthesize the spiritual with the material. Iqbal also believed that modern Turks had failed to achieve a mix of modernity with tradition. Nevertheless, he was not completely pessimistic of the prospects of Turkish future. But he believed that Indians could accomplish this grand project, and had the ability to build a new modern society for a modern man, structured on the foundations of the traditional past.

Iqbal believed that young men's fascination with secularism, segregating religion from politics, was very nearly the "slavish" emulation of Europe. Turks failed, because they started to ape the Europeans. If they had sought help for their social transformation through Islam, the results would have been different, because Islam is a paradigm *par excellence* of synthesis between spiritualism and materialism.

Iqbal also pointed out that Muslims of Asia and Africa must adapt to the modern world for their survival; but the adaptation can be useful only for those who would remain alert to the disruptive potential of the social forces of the west.

A correspondent asked him about Pan-Islam, which in the discourse of the first quarter of the twentieth century was recurrent topic of discussion, implying its threatening potential. Iqbal said the term had spawned in Europe and Asia deep misunderstanding about it. This term, according to Iqbal, was first used by a French journalist, and was designed to caution Europe about the possibility of an aggressive inter-Islamic alliance against the west. It was very similar to the invention of "yellow-peril," which had been trumpeted before Pan-Islam. In reality no Pan-Islamic movement existed. Professor Brown of Cambridge University had already exploded this myth. If the term has any literal meaning then it should be taken as another name for Islamic solidarity and fraternity. The word *pan* does not exist in the Islamic dictionary. Islam is that experiment

in social development, which rises above ethnic, linguistic, color, and national distinctions and unites mankind.

Iqbal delivered his third lecture in the Gokhale Hall on January 7, 1929. All the lectures were exceptionally well attended, and their abstracts were published in the English press of Madras. On this day Anjuman Khawatin-i Islam, Madras, had arranged a reception in Ta-Cross Garden, and a large number of women attended this reception. Begum Abdus Salam, wife of Madras' Postmaster General, was the moving spirit of the reception arrangements, and she read an address of welcome, while Iqbal and the ladies (according to Abdullah Chughtai) remained segregated. The welcome address, written in literary and flowery Urdu, described at length Iqbal's contributions to Islam, scholarship and literature. A portion of it, designed for his special attention was preserved:

Very respectfully we urge you to devote some attention to the condition of women, who have been confined in their homes (*asiran-i qafs*), and make your eloquent statements for their Islamic freedom, which is vouchsafed to them by Islamic laws. We the prisoners in a "cage," live in an indescribable condition. Please write a poem to rouse emotions of support for the elimination of those debilitating conditions. We are grateful to Mawlana Altaf Hussain Hali, who raised the status of women to a very high level in the initial years of the nineteenth century. His poem *Chup Key Dad* [Admiring Silence] raised our honor. His poetry radiated the light for the freedom of women in Muslim families. Still there are many Muslim families, where freedom for women does not exist even in name, while men and women indeed share equal responsibilities.

Islam stands for equality, and preaches it. We observe it in anguish that men are generally indifferent toward the rights of women. We request you to shed some light on the causes of this neglect. We do not mean to say that our brothers, who are given birth by the same mother, are cruel and aggressive. However, we grieve at the reality that parents in the family lay down the psychological foundations for the injustice and

the usurpation of girls' rights. Mothers and fathers adopt discriminatory attitudes in raising their children. Girls get less to eat, and are denied their rightful shares in inheritance. If unfortunately a girl becomes a widow, parents very unjustly deny the poor widow the right to remarry in order to protect the parents' honor. After the parents' death these widows become the ward of brothers and uncles, and their lives are destroyed.

In the modern age women are raising their loud voices for freedom. In consequence of new education and its light Muslim women deserve the restoration of their rights and equality, which are guaranteed by Islamic laws. The true spirit of Islam is alive in Muslim women, and Muslim women have demonstrated their dedication and sacrifice in silent suffering.

Finally, I apologize for taking up so much of your time, and I hope that in the near future you would write your wonderful poetry to sing for Muslim women's freedom, and general welfare. Women will be eternally grateful to you.<sup>17</sup>

Iqbal responded to this address of welcome:

I have believed that only women can protect the best traditions of a nation...Muslim men became indifferent to the protection of women's right during the period of their decline. Despite neglect of their rights, Muslim women remained steadfast in fulfilling their obligations. You would not find any man, who is free from the impact of his early training and nurturing or a man who does not find the imprint of his sister's love in his heart. Those fortunate men who found good wives know it well how a woman can be supportive of him during the evolution of his life. I do not need to emphasize the fact that Islam stands for an absolute equality between man and woman. This is exactly what I understood from the relevant verse of the Qur'an. Some *ulama* believe in preeminence of man over woman. The verse that leads to this controversial interpretation is well-known:

*al-rajul qawamen ala al nissa* (men are the bread-winners of women as God has given some edge over the others...) By the rules of Arabic grammar the translation should assign men the role of a protector. At another place the Qur'an says: "*han libas lakum wa antum lahan*" (men and women are the

clothing for each other). The term “clothing” means protecting. In many other matters there is no difference between man and woman. In the first phase of Islam women participated with men in *jihad*. In the Abbasid Caliphate a sister of one of the caliphs functioned as the chief jurist, and issued *fatwas* on many issues.

“Now women demand that they should have the right to vote. In the Islamic Caliphate not only men but women too had the right to express their opinion in the election of a caliph. In all matters Islam emphasizes the maintenance of balance. Indeed woman, and man in their gender roles have different obligations, and the nature of these obligations is indeed different, but the gender roles do not signify man’s superiority, and woman’s inferiority. Their roles and obligations are determined by different reasons. What is meant by this discussion is this: in Islam there is no difference of rank between man and woman; social roles indeed call for difference in obligations.

Islam has not assigned any inferior status to woman. Examine this issue in another way: mother like children has the right to inherit family assets. In Europe (even today i.e. 1929) woman does not have the right to own property entirely in her own name. Woman does not have the custody of the children in divorce; Islam always extended this right to woman. In all of these matters European nations either emulate Islam, or perhaps nature has diverted their attention to these principles. Also, in Europe getting divorce was an impossible enterprise; in Islamic societies this problem never arose. An objection is raised to make the point that in Islam woman cannot divorce the husband. Perhaps you are not aware that our *ulama* have never explained to our society that at marriage the right of divorce, which Islam has vested in her husband, can also be transferred to wife, or to a near relative of her.

You have in your address of welcome used the words – *asiyran-i qafs* – (prisoners in a cage). This term reminded me of “the emancipation movement,” which was launched in Turkey and other European countries. Let us examine that matters which are described as prisons are really prisons.



Islamic injunctions for *Purdah* (seclusion) are clearly stated: “lower your gaze,” especially on occasions when a woman has to have a one-on-one meeting with a non-relative strange man. Under other circumstances different injunctions are spelled out. Insofar as seclusion is concerned, woman is required not to display her adornments in public. Islam allows more than one wife, but it does not mandate it. This is true that Muslim men took advantage of this legal possibility, but this cannot be considered the laws’ foolishness.

When in a war men loose their lives there develops in society a gender imbalance. Keeping in view these contingencies men were allowed by the Qur’an to marry more than one wives. In Islamic jurisprudence a differentiation has been established between “obligation” (*fard*) and “permissible” (*rukhsat*). A permissible action can be discarded, but not an obligation. If at marriage woman demands of her future husband that he should renounce this permissible action, which the Qur’an has allowed him for marrying more than one wives then she is within the exercise of her own right. In matters of marriage I also find fault in the conduct of bride’s fathers; they do not pay adequate attention to their daughters’ rights. However, women also deserve to be criticized for not demanding legally the protection of their rights at marriage? Moreover, why don’t they ask their brothers to share their portion of inheritance?

In India Islamic courts do not exist so that these issues could be adjudicated in accordance with the Sharia laws. Also there is another dimension of this problem. The *Sharia* itself has remained frozen during the six hundred years. English law givers cannot understand the Islamic laws. The books on Islamic law and jurisprudence were written five or six hundred years ago, and the *fatwas*, which were issued in the light of these books reflected the circumstances of those times. Today our circumstances are entirely different. In view of these complex situations the problems of the Sharia need to be evaluated.

Today, if women were determined to protect their rights, which the Sharia has vested in them, and demand of men to concede these rights to them, I tell you sincerely the men’s

life would be hard-pressed, because woman can demand compensation for nursing the newly born children, and cooking food for the family; these compensations could be determined by the court. You blame the men, but do nothing for the protection of your own rights. You must relentlessly endeavor to protect your own rights. All those rights which women can demand according to justice and equity the Qur'an has already enumerated them. Yes, it is true the Sharia does not allow the footloose and fancy free "freedom" nor would a rational individual wish for such a "freedom." In this country we must cultivate a strong public opinion among Muslims to determine the exact range of women's rights, which they would exercise in the future. Until such time marriage contract should not be signed. This movement must be initiated with great enthusiasm. As I have said before, Muslim women can protect the best traditions of Muslim nation. But they must adopt a rational and balanced course of action, and not be swept away blindly in emulating Turkish and European women.

Please do not be fascinated by the alluring concept of "freedom," get to the core of it. We have seen closely the "freedom" of Europe; [unfortunately] most people see the "European freedom from the exterior, if they were to see it from the inside they would be stunned. Muslim must study the Qur'an in order to understand it. In the Punjab Muslims appear before the superior courts and openly declare that they follow their custom rather than the Sharia. This subterfuge is adopted to deprive their daughter their share of the landed property. We must endeavor to free ourselves from the shackles of tradition and custom.

At the end of this fairly extensive oration ladies in the audience insisted that Iqbal should recite his poetry, but Iqbal declined, expressing an excuse that he generally does not remember his poems, and that he has not brought any of his works with him. All of a sudden the ladies produced his famous book of Urdu poetry, *Bang-i Dara*, and asked him to recite some poems from it. He had no choice left to escape the recitation of his poetry; he selected a poem – *Fatima binat Abd Allah* – and regaled the audience.

Iqbal's schedule in Madras was hectic. He had been invited also by Anjuman Taraqqi-i Urdu, Hind Parchar Sabha, Urdu Society of the government Muhammadan College, and Anjuman-i Alimer, who presented to him addresses of welcome. Some prominent members of the local Muslim society had invited him for high tea or dinners. Not known to Iqbal, his host had accepted these invitations on his behalf. To be polite Iqbal honored all of these invitations; but this generosity left him really no time to see the city and its historic monuments. Nevertheless he was able to tour some temples, which had been built in the Dravidian style. The typical Dravidian architecture could be seen 1000 km away. He was particularly interested in the area of Adyak, beside the Adyan river. In this area many theosophists had settled, and their spiritual leader was Miss Annie Besant, the daughter of a British physician.

The Muslim Association of Madras arranged an impressive farewell dinner in Iqbal's honor on the night of January 7, 1929. This extensive dinner was attended by the city's elites and learned scholars. In toasts of appreciation some of his new admirers stated that Iqbal's presence in Madras had galvanized the Muslim public, and there was renewed determination among them to acquire Islamic education. A member of Iqbal's entourage, Abd Allah Chughtai stated afterward that Iqbal's response to his host's warm admiration was equally heart warming, especially when he graphically described the advance of scientific studies in the Muslim past, and then deplored their neglect of education. Finally he praised his host, Saith Jamal, saying that a man like him among Muslims in these days is a miracle of the day. Saith Jamal visited Iqbal the next day on January 8 at the Bosoto Hotel to pay his bills, and presented to Iqbal, Abd Allah Chughtai and Chaudhary Muhammad Hussain very refine Kashmir shawls.

### Visit to Bangalore

Iqbal and his companions traveled by train on January 9, 1929, and reached Bangalore station, where thousands of Muslims were present to welcome him. Today Bangalore is the capital of the Karnataka State, which used to be called Mysore State with Mysore city being the cultural heart of the state. The eminent personalities of Mysore State, including Haji Sir Isma`il Saith, Sir Mirza Isma`il (the Chief Minister of the State), Haji Saith Abd al-Ghafur, Saiyad Ghaus Mohy-ud-Din, Editor of the daily *al-Kalam*, and Mahmud Khan Bangalori, received Iqbal most warmly on behalf of the people of Mysore.<sup>18</sup> Actually Haji Sir Isma`il Saith had traveled to Madras to personally receive Iqbal at the station in Madras; now he was at the Bangalore station to welcome him. He had extended his hospitality to Iqbal, in consequence Iqbal became his house guest.

Haji Sir Isma`il was one of the richest men of Bangalore. A hospital for women, several mosques in the city stood as a testimony to his commitment to social service. He spent generously on the education of young Muslim students. He was a very successful international trader, and had extensive business relations with British companies. Fluent in spoken English, he had employed an English woman as a house-keeper. But he was unable to read or write English. At one point in time he said to Iqbal: "Dr. Sahib! I do not really know the English language." Promptly Iqbal said: "You may not know the English language, but you certainly know the English people." Eighty years old Sir Saith Isma`il was hard of hearing, but he loved horses and was fond of horse-racing. One room in his house was reserved for the trophies that his horses had won in racing. His young son, who probably lived in London, was visiting his father, and was indisposed. Iqbal visited him to extend his sympathy, and discovered that he was married to an English girl, who was of course with him.

In the evening Iqbal's lecture was scheduled at Mysore University Campus, and the Vice-Chancellor of the university presided over the function. Iqbal repeated one of three lectures, which he had delivered at Madras. His large audience consisted of the Brahaminic elite in addition to Muslim scholars and laymen.

### **Homage to Sultan Tipu**

Iqbal was looking forward to visiting the tomb of Haider Ali and his son Sultan Tipu. It is located at Sriranga-Patnam, which is 16 km north of Mysore. It was the capital of the Muslim Mysore Kingdom, which was at loggerheads with the British. East of the city is the Gumbad (tomb) of Haider Ali, who died fighting the British. The tomb was completed in 1799. Accompanied by his associates Iqbal traveled to the Gumbad. The Hindu Raja of Mysore had commissioned his court musicians, Ali Jan and his accompanists, to stay with Iqbal during his visit to the mausoleum. As a mark of respect and honor the Raja had ordered that drums should be beaten at appropriate intervals during the day at the Gumbad's steps. The mausoleum is built with black marble.

These three graves in the Gumbad: one grave wrapped in a black cover is that of Haider Ali, the second golden hued grave is that of Fatima, Haider Ali's wife and Tipu's mother; the third was covered with a red cover, symbolizing his martyrdom. The Gumbad was actually built by Sultan Tipu for his parents, and after his death he was buried next to them. The inside environment of the Gumbad is exceptionally awe inspiring, and its walls are inscribed with appropriate Persian verses. With his eyes closed Iqbal stood by the graves in rapture, and was the last one to leave. In 1213 A.H. which is 1799 A.D. Tipu was killed while fighting in the battle. The chronogram of his death, which was recorded by Muslim historians is: *Shamshir Gum Shud* (Sword was lost). Iqbal subsequently wrote an article for a

well-known literary magazine of Lahore – *Nairang-i khayal* – describing the impressions of his visit.

An impromptu concert followed in a mosque nearby, which was built by Sultan Tipu in 1787. Ali Jan and his accompanist sang Iqbal's Urdu and Persian verses. Inspired by historic memories, which were inspired by the environment, Iqbal was moved to tears. Seeing this intense emotional reaction of Iqbal the musicians stopped their performance. Making an appropriate gesture with his hand Iqbal asked them to continue their singing. Finally, when Iqbal left the site Saith Abbas, a well-known businessman of Mysore gently approached Iqbal, and asked him: "did the martyred Sultan inspire in Iqbal a message." Iqbal said: "in his company not a moment was wasted." Then recited a verse, which stood for his message:

*Der jahan na-twan ager mardana ziyast*

*Hamcho mardan jan saperdam zindigst*

This verse actually refers to a historical incident in Sultan Tipu's life. Sometime before the fatal engagement with the British one of his advisors suggested to have a truce with the British. Tipu promptly responded: "a jackal's life of 100 years is not worth a lion's life of one day."<sup>19</sup> Subsequently, on his way back from the Gumbad, Iqbal composed four more verses in Persian.

Iqbal and his party returned to Srirangapatnam, where a formal sumptuous luncheon had been arranged by Raja of Mysore's advisor, Sidique al-Malk Sadiq Zain al-Abidin Shah, at the Daulat Bagh (garden). River Kaveri flows by Srirangapatnam, on one side is the garden, and the fort, and the other is basically the city. Even after the death of Sultan Tipu the population of the city was no less than 300,000. Sultan Tipu was fond of the fort and the Daulat Bagh (garden). On one side of the garden river Kaveri flows; and the view just takes your breath away. After lunch Iqbal toured the city Srirangapatnam, and saw the Masjid-i Aala (great mosque) in the fort, near there Sultan

Tipu had died, and saw other sites dating back to the sultan's time. Iqbal met Masjid-i Aala's aged *imam* (leader of the congregation), whose great grandfather was the *imam* in Sultan Tipu's period. He informed Iqbal that according to his family tradition the Sultan used to enter the mosque through its back door. While Iqbal was gazing at the image of the Sultan's commander-in-chief (Saiyad Ghafar Shahid) on the wall, who had died in action a short while before the Sultan fell, someone pointed out to Iqbal that one of his traveling companions Saiyad Gaws Mohyud-Din, editor of the daily *al-kalam* was his great-grandson. To express his warm feelings for Saiyad Ghafar Shahid Iqbal spontaneously hugged his great grandson.

While returning from Srirangapatnam Iqbal also saw the Kaveri dam, where Tipu had laid down its foundation in order to provide irrigation facilities to the agriculturalists. But the dam was completed after his death, and now it is called Krishnaraj Sagar. The Raja of Mysore discovered the stone commemorating the laying of the foundation stone by Sultan Tipu, and it contained inscription in Persian. By the Raja of Mysore's order the stones containing the Persian inscription, and its English translation were installed above the dam, which is within an easy access to the visitors.

In the evening Iqbal made an appearance in the Town Hall, where an address of welcome was presented by Mysore's Muslims, thousands of people had awaited his arrival. Saith Abbas had made this arrangement, the evening was presided over by Nawab Ghulam Ahmad Kalami. After the recitation of the Qur'an Ali Jan and his accompanists sang Iqbal's poems, honoring the Prophet Muhammad. Saith Abbas delivered the address of welcome, which was full of admiration for Iqbal, and inspiring love of his poetry. Mysore University's Professor of Philosophy, Wadiya spoke to express admiration for Iqbal's scholarship and his lecture, and then said: "If

Muslims are proud of the fact that Iqbal is a Muslim, we Hindus are no less proud of him because he is an Indian.”

Iqbal visited on January 12, 1929 Mysore University’s Department of Psychology, where Dr. Gopala Sawami demonstrated for Iqbal a psychological experiment. He tied an instrument on Iqbal’s wrist, and asked him to determine one number in his mind from one to ten; Iqbal chose six. Dr. Sawami started to count the numbers, and when he came to six the needle of the instrument started to vibrate forcefully. Iqbal enjoyed this experiment, but then added a comment of his own: “In Rumi’s *Mathnavi*’s first anecdote a physician also determined the nature of the illness by the patient’s pulse. Similarly Ibn Sina determined the nature of Qabus bin Washingir’s sickness. Several centuries ago Muslim physicians followed the same principle.”<sup>20</sup>

### **A Brief Visit to Hyderabad**

Iqbal had accepted an invitation from Usmania University for a lecture. To honor this commitment Iqbal and his companions left by train on January 13, 1929 for Hyderabad, and reached the next day. At the train station hundreds of Muslim children stood in chorus line to sing Iqbal’s very popular anthem: *Chin-o Arab hamara, Hindustan hamara* (India is ours like China and Arabia). Usmania University’s administrators received Iqbal at the station and informed him that he and his companions would stay at the official guesthouse since they were guests of the Nizam of Hyderabad. Next Iqbal traveled to Sikanderabad, where Sir Akber Hyderi, Dr. Saiyad Khalifah Abdul Hakim, Mawlana Abd Allah Emadi, Saiyad Irahim, Dr. Muzafar-ud-Din Quereshi and other professors of Usmania University were there to cordially receive him. From January 14 – January 18, 1929 Iqbal stayed in Hyderabad for four days. The very first day Iqbal, accompanied by Dr. Hakim, registered his name for an audience with the Nizam. The next day on January 15 Iqbal delivered his



lecture in the Hall of Bagh-i Aama, where Maharaja Sir Kishan Prashad presided over the proceedings. In the same evening *musha`ira* (poetic symposium), and a dinner had been arranged at his residence. All invitees had been informed to dress formally as if they were to attend the Nizam's court. In consequence all well-known Urdu and Persian poets dressed in the formal style showed up at the dinner and poetry recitation. Among the poets the most notable were Haider Yar Jang Tabatabaiy, Nawab Zia Yar Jang, Nawab Aziz Yar Jang, Maulavi Mas`ud Ali Mahvi, Josh Malihabadi, Nizam Shah Labib Taimuri, Mir Kazim Ali Bagh, and some less known poets. Iqbal was not comfortable in *musha`ira (s)* where one had to participate as a traditional poet. In his known style he remained quiet, and offered neither compliments nor criticism. When Maulavi Masud Ali Mahvi recited this Persian verse, he asked him to recite it once again. This request from the master could mean either a compliment or the existence of a flaw in the verse. Iqbal had let be known to all participants that he would not recite his poetry. Yet, it was impossible for him to turn down Maharaja Sir Kishan Prashad's request for the gift of his poetry. Right in style, he recited two Persian verses instead of Urdu, and called it a day.

Iqbal was still at the *musha`ira* when Sir Amin Jang, Private Secretary of the Nizam sent a message that at 11:00 AM on January 18, 1929 the Nizam will receive him. Chaudhary Muhammad Hussain let Iqbal know that they would not be able to leave for Lahore before January 19, 1929. University professors, students and other prominent personalities of the city crowded Iqbal's appointment schedule in the guesthouse, and he remained confined to the guesthouse on January 16. The following day Iqbal's second lecture was a repeat performance (like the first) at the Bagh-i Aama Hall, where the Nizam's heir-apparent preside over the function. Lunch and dinner were served at Sir Akbar Hyderi's, and Sir Amin Jang's residences.

Finally Iqbal called upon the Nizam in the morning hours of January 18, 1929. The protocol required a formal dress with a turban, but Iqbal was exempted.<sup>21</sup> Some fantastic stories circulated about Iqbal's meeting with the Nizam that: 1) Iqbal recited to the Nizam his Persian verses, and then presented his well-known poetic collection, *Ramziz-i Bekhud*; 2) Iqbal asked the Nizam to show him his extraordinarily and highly expensive diamond, and the Nizam obliged his request. This information had been given to him by Hakim Ajmal Khan; 3) The Nizam complained to Iqbal that when he visited Delhi why didn't he come to see him since Lahore is not all that far from Delhi, and Iqbal stated that he traveled thousands of miles to Hyderabad to see him; 4) pleased with the answer the Nizam offered to appoint Iqbal his Minister of Law; but Iqbal asked to be excused.<sup>22</sup>

None of this amusing conversations took place; actually it was merely a conventional courtesy call in which Iqbal extended to the Nizam Anjuman Himayat-Islam of Lahore's invitation to visit the Punjab, and preside over the sessions of its annual meeting. The Nizam accepted the invitation, and to settle the details Iqbal and the Nizam exchanged some correspondence. In any case, the Nizam was unable to visit the Punjab.

Finally Iqbal left Hyderabad for Lahore on January 19, 1929, and his grand tour of the south ended.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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- <sup>1</sup> "Iqbal's Letter to Maulana Akbar Shah Khan of Najibabad," in *Anwar-i Iqbal*, ed. Bashir Ahmad Dar, (Karachi: Iqbal Academy, 1967), p. 317.
- <sup>2</sup> Shaikh Ata Allah, Ed., *Iqbal Namah*, Vol. I, p. 155.
- <sup>3</sup> Osman Bakar, *The History and Philosophy of Islamic Science* (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1999), p. 4.
- <sup>4</sup> Toby E. Huff, *The Rise of Early Modern Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 48.
- <sup>5</sup> Ata Allah, op. cit., p. 148.
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*,
- <sup>7</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, (Lahore: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1958), pp. 7-8.
- <sup>8</sup> Ata Allah, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 209.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 281.
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 216.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 50, 147.
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 144.
- <sup>13</sup> In several Urdu and Persian verses Iqbal had criticized different aspects of democracy.
- <sup>14</sup> See Iqbal's letter of December 8, 1919 to his sister, an abstract of this letter is reproduced in Javid Iqbal, *Zindah Rud* (Lahore: Shaikh Ghulam Ali, 1984), Vol. II, p. 265.
- <sup>15</sup> Shaikh Ata Allah, op. cit., vol. I, p. 145.
- <sup>16</sup> Dar, *Letters and Writings of Iqbal*, pp. 50-51.
- <sup>17</sup> Bashir Ahmad Dar, *Anwar-i Iqbal*, pp. 234-236.
- <sup>18</sup> Mir Mahmud Hussain, *Alama Iqbal Key Dastan-i Deccan*, (Mysore: n.d.), p. 7.
- <sup>19</sup>
- <sup>20</sup> Mir Mahmud Hussain, op. cit., pp. 13, 14.
- <sup>21</sup> Nizam, Haiderabadi, *Iqbal Awr Hyderabad*, p. 14.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 14-16; Abd al-Rau'f Urooj, *Iqbal Awr Bazm-i Iqbal Hyderabad*, pp. 40-44.

## Chapter IV

### SIGNIFICANCE OF IQBAL'S LECTURES

Iqbal's lectures which he delivered in South India were well circulated by the press, and other universities started to invite him for similar lectures. The Department of Philosophy of Aligarh Muslim University, which was then headed by Sir Ross Masud, invited Iqbal to present the same lectures at Aligarh. Iqbal indeed accepted the invitation. By this time Iqbal had written three additional lectures. Accompanied by Abd Allah Chughtai, Iqbal left for Aligarh on November 17, 1929; and stayed at Aligarh until November 30. During this period Iqbal delivered six lectures in the Strachey Hall. At the inaugural lecture Sir Ross Masud introduced Iqbal with reverential emotions, and revealed an interesting story about his ailment in Europe, where he was confined to a hospital; he said: "one thousand verses of Iqbal, which he had committed to memory, he often recited them for spiritual solace."<sup>1</sup>

Iqbal returned to Aligarh for another visit in December 1929. By this time he had developed friendly relations with Sir Ross Masud, Dr. Saiyad Zafar al-Hassan, Khawaja Ghulam Saiyadain, Dr. Zia-ud-Din, Bashir Hussain Zaidi, and Dr. Ata Allah Butt. Two prominent personalities – Sahibzada Aftab Khan, and Rashid Ahmad Siddiqi – were not well, and Iqbal visited them to boost their morale.

In addition to social and intellectual engagements, Iqbal's well-received lectures called for his editorial

touches. He made some revisions, and modified the titles of some lectures, and then had them published in 1930 in Lahore. After the first edition was published another chapter, - "Is Religion Possible?" was added, which was actually written at the request of Britain's Aristotelian Society, and then the second edition was reissued by Oxford University Press. A German orientalist, Professor Beale from one of the German universities, wrote to Iqbal that his book "reflected the finest intellectual mix of the modern age."<sup>2</sup>

Iqbal's personal assessment of the book was that an average reader would not benefit from its discussions; only scholars who have studied Western and Islamic philosophy would be able to grasp its significance. Yet Iqbal encouraged Saiyad Nazir Niazi to translate it in to Urdu. However, his friend, Chaudhary Muhammad Hussain opposed the Urdu translation project. He was apprehensive that Urdu translation may spawn a web of general misunderstanding. Since the subject matter was strictly philosophical Iqbal's ideas could be subjected to distortions and social disruptions might ensue. Chaudhary Muhammad Hussain's fear was not entirely misplaced. A scholar of Indian origin in Cairo stated that Iqbal's thought was dominated by the western philosophy, and if it were to appear in Urdu the *ulama* in India would be under the moral obligation to refute its contents the way they had extirpated Sir Saiyad's philosophy of naturism.<sup>3</sup> Contrary to Iqbal's expectations the philosophically educated Muslims didn't waste much energy in appreciating Iqbal's views. Here is the assessment of Saiyad Nazir Niazi:

In the lectures Iqbal had raised a fundamental issue urging [Muslims] to study Western philosophy and arts and sciences, along with Islam, Islamic culture, knowledge and philosophy. Only the study of philosophy, metaphysics, history or civilization, culture or religions, cosmology and knowledge of religion is not enough. In addition to this our critical thought must focus on those changes, which emerge in the

East and West, especially the West. These dynamics point toward the directions of cultural change in the future, indicating the aspirations of man and his urge to construct a new world.

These *Lectures* were never studied from this [Iqbalian] perspective; nor its publication fulfilled the hope that intellectuals would grasp the true objective of Iqbal. Consequently, the *Lectures* were read superficially, and often ignored.<sup>4</sup>

Surprisingly, a British orientalist, Professor Dickinson, a specialist of English literature, made a superficial comment on the *lectures*, saying Iqbal was deeply influenced by western philosophers, especially Nietzsche and Bergson. Islamic *ulama* by and large remained indifferent toward the *Lectures*' message, and those who finally expressed their opinion repeated the cliché that Iqbal's thought was structured on the foundations of Western philosophy. Consequently in their view Iqbal's ideas became a "pack of infidelities." Saiyad Nazir Niazi had accomplished the translation of the *Lectures*, while Iqbal was alive, and had in fact selected the Urdu title – *Tashkil-i Jahdid Ilahiyat-i Islamia*. However, the Urdu translation was published in 1958 – twenty years after Iqbal's death.

*The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* is not an easy reading. Containing more than 150 citations of ideas and theories of modern and ancient philosophers, scientists, scholars and jurists, Iqbal expected his reader to have background knowledge of these personalities, their intellectual environment, and thought processes. Some of these personalities are well-known, and some are obscure. The style of *Lectures* is very complicated; sometimes in a discussion he raises several issues. Sometimes in an ongoing discussion, he abruptly leaves it and picks up another issue; then he often goes back to the topic that he abandoned previously. In order to explain some doctrines, he invented new technical terms; these difficulties are further compounded by the

arrangement of words, and the meaning of some terms. In some places the expression of reasoning in the English language becomes unintelligible, and repeated readings leads to no lucid understanding.

In explaining the objectives of the *Lectures* Iqbal stated that “the Qur’an is a book which emphasizes ‘deed’ rather than idea.” In the early formative phase of their culture Muslims promoted this viewpoint. *Ulama* and Sufis relied upon internal intuition to build the foundations of their religion and faith. But the modern man influenced by modern education maintains a very skeptical attitude toward internal intuition. Since *ulama* and Sufi’s do not understand the psychology of the modern age they remain incapacitated in spiritual realm to guide the modern man. Their instruction was appropriate for the time long gone. Today’s man has developed an entirely different psychology, and the old style of thought retains no attraction for them. In light of this fundamental change a new *ilm al kalam* is needed, which would present religion with philosophic and scientific reasoning. But the style must be maintained which preserves the traditions of Islamic philosophy, and in the light of modern thought, establish their relevance and significance.

A mix of old and new in Islamic philosophy would acquire a new form, which would attract the attention of west-oriented Muslim, and help him to strengthen his faith, and enrich the satisfaction of his heart. The advance of scientific knowledge has undermined the old metaphysical foundations. Also “physics has learned to criticize its own foundations. As a result of this criticism the kind of materialism, which it originally necessitated, is rapidly disappearing and the day is not far off when religion and science may discover hitherto unsuspected mutual harmonies.” Finally Iqbal stated: “It must, however, be remembered that there is no such thing as finality in philosophic thinking. As knowledge advances and fresh

avenues of thought are opened, other views, and probably sounder views than those set forth in these *Lectures*, are possible. Our duty is carefully to watch the progress of human thought and to maintain an independent critical attitude towards it.”<sup>5</sup>

### First Lecture

“Knowledge and Religious Experience” is the topic of Iqbal’s first lecture. To understand fully the meaning of this subject, it would be helpful to comprehend three terms which he has used to explain the nature of instruments, which man can possibly use to gain knowledge: 1) *musha`hida* (observation or sense-perception), 2) *aql* (intellect), 3) *wajdan* (intuition). These terms are indeed limited in their application. In other words knowledge acquired through each one of them retains the possibility of error or faulty perception. In order to ascertain the validity (or correctness) of their application intellectual disciplines have devised techniques. Central to the thesis of this lecture is the point that if the validity of knowledge through sense-perception can be tested with intellect, and the logical reasoning’s insufficiency can be detected with empirical verification, then knowledge acquired through intuition or religious observations’ (called *ma`rifat*) authenticity can be established by two dependable norms. Iqbal has identified these two norms as intellectual and practical.

To him intellectual norm means critical interpretation, (free from any previous human assumptions), demonstrates that intuitive knowledge or religious experience lead in the same direction, where the critical human interpretation leads. But the empirical verification technique determines the validity of this knowledge only by the end product of this knowledge. Iqbal considers the first technique as the philosopher’s tool, and last one mentioned as the prophetic method. He points out that in each epoch of history in which religion was dominant the scholars attempted to



structure religion on the basis of rationality; they did so with a realization that if faith (*iman*) was structured on weak foundations man's conduct in life would be terribly insecure. In other words faith contained both elements of knowledge and rationality.

In addition to deriving knowledge through intuition, the Qur'an emphasizes rationality, and observation with human tools (seeing and hearing) in comprehending the manifestations of the universe leading to the recognition of the ultimate creator. Since religion envelopes human thought, emotions and actions, it is imperative that religious values and beliefs (*aqā'id*) should be structured on rationality in order to make them intelligible. For Iqbal no contradiction exists between rationality and intuition; in fact they are complementary to each other. Both spring from the same source. Velocity differentiates the two – rationality progresses step by step towards its destination, intuition reaches the destination in a spurt. Rationality is dynamic – like a tiny seed growing into a mighty tree with all of its potentials. In much the same style rationality is an internal unit, which contains the possibility of all kinds of knowledge, which emerge gradually. On this issue Iqbal tends to agree with Bergson, when he says that intuition is a higher and more developed form of rationality.

Iqbal was painfully aware of the fact that Islamic arts and sciences have remained frozen in a mold. There was a time when European thinking was overawed by Islamic World's advanced learning. However, in the medieval times religious learning of Islam reached its completion and Muslims intellectually "fell asleep." Europe picked up more or less the same threads of learning, which were the centerpiece of Muslim philosophy and science, and since those times have pushed the contours of philosophy and scientific experimentation to extraordinary high levels; the conquest of nature has infused a fresh excitement for learning and a new sense of superiority; new points of view

have been projected, and old issues are solved in the light of new methods of experimentation. This process has also spawned new scientific issues. The scientific progress has yielded new disciplines of learning and assumptions about man's origin are constantly changed. Against the background of these developments the new generations of Muslims in Asia and Africa are quite justified in demanding the new interpretations of their faith. Iqbal says:

With the awakening of Islam, therefore it is necessary to examine, in an independent spirit, what Europe has thought and how far the conclusions reached by her can help us in the revision and, if necessary, reconstruction of theological thought in Islam. Besides this is not possible to ignore the generally anti-religious and especially anti-Islamic propaganda in Central Asia which has already crossed the Indian frontier...<sup>6</sup>

In citing the Qur'anic verses Iqbal demonstrates that the universe came into existence not merely as an act of God for an entertainment. It had a purpose, and it can extend with accretion. The universe is not frozen nor is it an entity, which has been completed and is no longer subject to alteration or addition, and remains without motion. It is entirely probable that it retains the potential of new creation (s). In this environment man is capable (despite his weaknesses and imperfections) to mold the forces of nature, and direct them to directions of his own choice. Man is capable of creative activity. He can generate harmony in the environment's forces to fulfill his aspirations, and in this manner change the destiny of the universe. In this eternal system of change he can become a co-worker with God. This revolutionary initiative must begin with man.

Iqbal maintained that the Qur'an repeatedly exhorts man to the study of nature, and urges him to keenly observe the reality of existing phenomenon. Precisely for this reason early Muslims diverted their attention to nature and the forces of the universe. Eventually they laid down the

foundations of physics. Iqbal stated: “the Qur’an opens our eyes to the great fact of change, through the appreciation and control of which alone it is possible to build a durable civilization. The culture of Asia, and in fact, of the whole ancient world failed, because they approached reality exclusively within and moved from within outwards. This procedure gave them theory without power, and on mere theory no durable civilization can be based.”<sup>7</sup>

### Lecture

Iqbal’s second lecture dealt with the “Philosophical Test of Revelation of Religious Experience.” Central to this subject of discussion is Iqbal’s view that rationality is capable of supporting the religious phenomena up to a point – beyond that point it cannot step forward. The discussion is initiated to demonstrate the existence of God by employing three rational reasons or terms, which Christian theology has employed: (1) *Cosmological*, (a branch of metaphysics that deals with the universe as an orderly system, and an argument that the universe demands the admission of an adequate external cause, which is God); (2) *Teleological*, belief in or the perception of purposeful development toward an end, as in nature or history); (3) and *Ontological*, (the nature of being or relating to the argument for the existence of God).

Clearly, human intellect endeavored to determine the nature of the ultimate, but the logically based three approaches fell short... In other words rationality established a foundation, which was demolished by the tools of rationality. Some Qur’anic verses describe God the *first* and the *last*, *visible* and *invisible*. Iqbal reviewed the concepts of matter, life and consciousness as they have been examined by metaphysics, biology and psychology, and demonstrated that science has not developed holistic or comprehensive view of reality; each discipline has established a view of its own, and their views are not knitted together to comprehend the nature of reality. Since

religion, which demands the whole of reality and for this reason must occupy a central place in any synthesis of all the data of human experience, has no reason to be afraid of any sectional view of reality.”<sup>8</sup>

In the Qur’anic view, says Iqbal, God, universe and life are in motion. In consequence the issue of time assumes central importance. Einstein through the discipline of physics, applying mathematics, developed a physical theory of relativity based on the assumption that the speed of light in a vacuum is a constant and the assumption that the laws of physics are invariant in all inertial systems. With Einstein, Iqbal stated: “space is real, but relative to the observer. He rejects the Newtonian concept of an absolute space. The object observed is variable; it is relative to the observer; its mass, shape, and size change as the observer’s position and speed change. Movement and rest, too, are relative to the observer. There is, therefore, no such thing as a self-subsistent materiality of classical physics...In fact, the observer can be easily replaced by a recording apparatus.”<sup>9</sup> Here at this philosophic point, Iqbal confessed that “the ultimate character of reality is spiritual.”<sup>10</sup>

To Iqbal Einstein’s theory of relativity presents, as he points out one “great difficulty” i.e. “the unreality of time.” He adds: “a theory which takes time to be a kind of fourth dimension of space must, it seems, regard the future as something already given, as indubitably fixed as the past. Time as a free creative movement has no meaning for the theory. It does not pass, events do not happen; we simply meet them...Nor is it possible for us laymen to understand what is the real nature of Einstein’s time. It is obvious that Einstein’s time is not Bergson’s pure duration. Nor can we regard it as serial time. Serial time is the essence of causality as defined by Kant...It appears to me that time regarded as a fourth dimension of space really ceases to be time.”<sup>11</sup>

Finally Iqbal states that intuition enables us to gain the knowledge that life is centered on itself with ego as its central point. This type of knowledge may be considered incomplete; but it is a point to start, where a man is able to grasp the fact that ultimate reality has a significance of its own. Sense perception or rationality yield a variety of facts, which lead us to conclude that the ultimate reality is spiritual. This phenomenon can be perceived as only an ego.

To Iqbal the ultimate objectives of religion are higher in value than philosophy; it can only comprehend intellectually but it cannot transcend the imaginative faculty which can synthesize diversified information into a system. In other words philosophy observes reality at a distance, but religion aspires to achieve closeness, and merging with the ultimate reality. One approach is an assumption, the other is the living experience of closeness and assimilation. Rationality can achieve this closeness, if it is capable of transcending its limits and for the fulfillment of its aspirations adopts a posture which religion calls prayer.

### **Third Lecture**

The focus of this lecture is the conception of God and the meaning of prayer. Actually this lecture tackles several other related issues as well – problems of time and space; concept of nature; man's fall from the state of nature, and finally the significance of individual and collective prayer. Clearly, Iqbal appears to be considerably impressed by the Ash`arite school of *Kalam*, which takes its name from its founder Abdul Hasan al- Ashari, who died in 935. The leading thinkers of this school, after Al-Ashari were Baqilani (d. 1013), Abd al-Qadir al-Baghdadi (d. 1037), Shahrastani (d. 1153), and last but not least Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (d. 1210).

Ash`arite *Kalam* dealt with the problem of the relationship between revelation and reason; Ash`ari, however, succeeded in safeguarding the rights of

interpretation in intelligence without minimizing those of revelation. Similarly, he presented a reconciliation “between *tashbih* (comparison or analogy), and *tanzih* (abstraction or incompatibility) in the conception of divinity by giving anthropomorphic qualities to God, while maintaining that these qualities should be abstracted, and were not to be understood in their literal sense.”<sup>12</sup> About human nature, he safeguarded both “divine determinations and human responsibility.”<sup>13</sup>

However, the Ash`arite Kalam is known for its theory of atoms. The Ash`arties assumed the existence of indivisible particles, which they expressed in Arabic as *al-juz`alladhi lam yatajazza*, literally meaning “the part that cannot be divided.” The particles are the most fundamental units that could exist, and out of which the whole world is created. Subsequently, they have been called the Ash`arite atoms. The world is defined as everything other than God, consisting of two distinct elements, atoms and accidents (*a`rad*). The atom is the locus which gives substance to the accidents. An accident cannot exist in another accident but only in an atom or body composed of those atoms. Conversely, a body cannot be stripped of accidents, positive or negative, such as color, smell, life, or knowledge.

Iqbal ventures to define God philosophically as “a rationally directed creative will which we have found reasons to describe as an ego. In order to emphasize the individuality of the ultimate Ego the Qur’an gives him the proper name of Allah.”<sup>14</sup> However, Iqbal rejected the pantheistic nature of God, and suggested that the Qur’anic verses,

God is the light of the Heavens and of the earth.  
His light is like a niche in which is a lamp –  
The lamp encased in glass – the gloss, as it were, a star.  
(XXIV: 35)

Be interpreted differently. Modern physics, he argued postulates that “the velocity of light cannot be exceeded and is the same for all observers...Thus in the world of change, light is the nearest approach to the *Absolute*. The metaphor of light as applied to God, therefore must in view of modern knowledge, be taken to suggest the *Absoluteness* of God, and not his *omnipresence*, which easily lends itself to the pantheistic interpretation.” Then Iqbal adds that “the other important elements in the Qur’anic conception of God...are *Creativeness*, *Knowledge*, *Omnipotence* and *Eternity*.”

At this point in his discourse Iqbal tackles the Ash`arite philosophy of atom. The Ash`arites believed that “the creative method of Divine energy is atomic; and they appear to have based their doctrine on the following verse of the Qur’an: “And no one thing is here, but with us are its store-houses, and we send it not down but in fixed quantities.” (XV: 21) Iqbal conceived “the ultimate reality is an ego...from the ultimate ego only egos proceed.”<sup>15</sup> Iqbal believed that in the Ash`arite theory of creation the doctrine of atomic time is the weakest dimension. The problem of time actually attracted the attention of Muslim thinkers and mystics. The Qur’an identified the succession of day and night – as one of the signs of God, and the Prophet identified “God with *dahr* (time).” Muslim Sufis believed in the mystic properties of the word *dahr*. The Ash`arite theory of time tried to understand it philosophically. To Ash`arites time “is a succession of individual nows.” Newton, Iqbal believed, “described time as something which in itself and from its own nature flows equally.” Finally, Iqbal concluded that “the verdict of modern science is exactly the same as that of the Ash`arite; for recent discoveries in physics regarding the nature of time assume the discontinuity of matter.”<sup>16</sup>

This discussion is carried forward by Iqbal in the definitions of nature. In citing the Qur’an he points out that

it views “nature as a cosmos of mutually related forces...views Divine omnipotence as intimately related to Divine wisdom.” Iqbal then turns to the legend of the Fall of Man, and indicates the areas of differences between the ancient legends and the Islamic interpretation. He tackles the Semitic form of this myth, which emerged, he argued, from “the primitive man’s desire to explain to himself the infinite misery of his plight.” Since he had no control over the forces of nature “a pessimistic view of life was perfectly natural to him.” Iqbal cited an old Babylonian inscription, where “the serpent (phallic symbol), the tree and the woman offering an apple (symbol of virginity) to the man.” Clearly it demonstrates “the fall of man from a supposed state of bliss was due to the original sexual act of human pair.” The Qur’anic interpretation is different:

1. It omits the serpent and the rib story altogether, and uses “the words ‘*bashar*’ and ‘*insan*,’ not Adam, which is reserved for man in his capacity of God’s vice gerent on earth.
2. The Qur’an splits up the legend into two distinct episodes – “the one relating to what it describes simply as ‘the tree,’ and the other relating to the tree of eternity, and the kingdom that faileth not.”
3. The Old Testament “curses the earth for Adam’s act of disobedience,” Iqbal pointed out that “the Qur’an declares the earth to be the dwelling place of man and a source of profit to him.” He then defines the *Janna* (literally garden in the sense of paradise), “as the conception of a primitive state in which man is practically unrelated to his environment and consequently does not feel the sting of human wants, the birth of which are alone marks of the beginning of human culture.”<sup>17</sup>

Against this philosophic background of man’s relations with God, Iqbal laid out the meaning of prayer and its collective significance. Religion as against philosophy



“soars higher than the ambition of philosophy” through the act of prayer and seeks “spiritual illumination.” To Iqbal “all search for knowledge is essentially a form of prayer.” And here is a remarkably illuminating view of prayer. Iqbal says: “the scientific observer of nature is a kind of mystic seeker in an act of prayer.”<sup>18</sup>

Finally Iqbal highlighted the significance of collective prayer:

The choice of one particular direction in Islamic worship is meant to secure the unity of feeling in the congregation, and its form in general creates and fosters the sense of social equality inasmuch as it tends to destroy the feeling of rank or race-superiority in the worshippers. What a tremendous spiritual revolution will take place, practically in no time, if the proud aristocratic Brahman of South India is daily made to stand shoulder to shoulder with the untouchable! From the unity of the all-inclusive Ego who creates and sustains all egos follows essential unity of all mankind. The division of mankind into races, nations, and tribes, according to the Qur’an, is for purposes of identification only. The Islamic form of association in prayer, besides its cognitive value, is further indicative of the aspiration to realize this essential unity of mankind as a fact in life by demolishing all barriers which stand between man and man.<sup>19</sup>

### **The Fourth Lecture**

The fourth lecture is devoted to exploring the human ego, man’s freedom of action and thought, and the range of immortality. The Qur’an, according to Iqbal, “emphasizes the individuality and uniqueness of man”; and man has three unique dimensions:

1. Man is chosen of God;
2. Despite all of his faults, man “is meant to be representative of God on earth;
3. Man is “the trustee of a free personality.”

Yet Muslims never really examined “the unity of human consciousness, which constitutes the center of human consciousness.” The dialectical theologians saw

“the soul which dies with the body and is recreated on the Day of Judgment.” The philosophers of Islam “received inspiration from Greek thought,” and failed to go deeper into this subject. Sufism attempted to understand “the meaning of the unity of inner experience,” which is “one of the three sources of knowledge, the other two being history and nature.” Mansur Hallaj, Iqbal believed achieved this experience in his well-known statement: “I am the creative truth.”

Against this intellectual deadlock Iqbal singled out Shah Waly Allah and Jamal-ud-Din Afghani, who endeavored to discover new avenues of thought. Iqbal said:

The task before the modern Muslim is, therefore, immense. He has to rethink the whole system of Islam without completely breaking with the past. Perhaps the first Muslim who felt the urge of a new spirit in him was Shah Waly Allah of Delhi. The man, however, who fully realized the importance and immensity of the task, and whose deep insight into the inner meaning of the history of Muslim thought and life, combined with a broad vision engendered by his wide experience of men and manners, would have made him a living link between the past and the future, was Jamal-ud-Din Afghani. If his indefatigable but divided energy could have devoted itself entirely to Islam as a system of human belief and conduct, the world of Islam, intellectually speaking, would have been on a much more solid ground today. The only course open to us is to approach modern knowledge with a respectful but independent attitude and to appreciate the teachings of Islam in the light of that knowledge, even though we may be led to differ from those who have gone before us.<sup>20</sup>

Iqbal described “inner experience” as the “ego at work,” which is “a kind of tension caused by ego invading the environment, and environment invading the ego.” The Qur’an, argued Iqbal, is clear on this distinction:

And they ask thee of the Soul, say: the Soul proceedeth from my Lord’s *amr* [command]: but of knowledge, only a little to you is given. (XVII: 87)

The Qur'an recognizes the distinction between God's creative activity: 1) *amr* (direction) and 2) *khalq* (creation). Both faculties are in God. Soul's real significance is expressed through the term of *amr*. The ultimate objective of Islamic instruction is this that freedom of action, and the option to exercise judgment should become an inseparable blend in the ego, so that the life of ego becomes the free option to exercise judgment consequently, every action creates new possibilities of creation, discovery, innovation and creativity.

About life after death Iqbal believes that from the Qur'anic perspective it is entirely possible that some egos must become immortal in consequence of their activity in human affairs. But this possibility is available to those individuals who have strengthened their ego to a level that it remains safe from the incidents of death. But life after death is not a right, but man's ego has to earn this right to be able to exercise this privilege. Iqbal thinks that "heaven" and "hell" are not localities, but states of mind. Life is a continuous chain of struggle, and through unrelenting struggle, ego achieves enlightenment.

### **Fifth Lecture**

The fifth lecture discusses the spirit of Muslim culture. In the introductory comments Iqbal explained the distinction between mystic (Sufi) and prophetic consciousness, by repeating the statement of a Sufi: "Muhammad of Arabia ascended the highest heaven and returned...if I had reached that point, I should never have returned." Iqbal interpreted this anecdote in his own philosophical style. The mystic experience is an individual experience, which "does not mean much for mankind." The Prophetic return, on the other hand, is creative: "he returns to insert himself into the sweep of time with a view to controlling a fresh world of ideas." For the mystic the unitary is something final, for the Prophet it is the awakening

within him of world-shaking psychological forces, calculated to completely transform the human world.”

The value of the Prophetic consciousness can be determined by the consequences...i.e., if they brought fundamental changes, which brought into existence “new” civilization and culture. Within this conceptual framework Iqbal tackles the significance of the prophetic finality. The Qur’anic term “revelation” (*wahy*) indicates that the revelation is the significant aspect of life...as it reaches perfection through the process of evolution its continuation becomes unnecessary Iqbal says:

Looking at the matter from this point of view, then the Prophet of Islam seems to stand between the ancient and the modern world. In so far as the source of his revelation is concerned he belongs to the ancient world; in so far as the spirit of his revelation is concerned he belongs to the modern world. In him life discovers other sources of knowledge suitable to its new direction. The birth of Islam, as I hope to be able presently to prove to your satisfaction, is the birth of inductive intellect. In Islam prophecy reaches its perfection in discovering the need of its own abolition. This involves the keen perception that life cannot forever be kept in leading strings; that in order to achieve full self-consciousness man must finally be thrown back on his own resources. The abolition of priesthood and hereditary kingship in Islam, the constant appeal to reason and experience in the Qur’an, and the emphasis that it lays on Nature and History as sources of human knowledge, are all different aspects of the same idea of finality.<sup>21</sup>

Iqbal believes that the Qur’an recognized three sources of knowledge, including intuition, nature and history. The spirit of Islam manifested itself at the highest levels when it benefited from the observations of nature and history. When the Muslims realized that the universe was in motion they challenged the classical Greek philosophy. The Qur’an led them to focus on their scientific investigations on matter, and through the methods of empirical verification, experimentation, measurement, enriched

knowledge in mathematics, algebra, cosmology, chemistry and medicine. Iqbal demonstrated that Muslim scientists, mathematicians, and physicists were inspired by the Qur'anic instruction in achieving excellence in their disciplines. They laid down the foundations of modern sciences, which flourished in Europe in modern times. To Iqbal every dimension of Western civilization bears the unmistakable imprint of Islamic culture.

The development of history in Islam unquestionably reflects the impact of early Islamic culture. The narrators of *hadith* (traditions of the Prophet) gradually formulated the principles of historical criticism. Outstanding historians like Ibn Ishaq, Mas`udi and Tabari emerged in their times, who helped to found history as a disciplined subject. Finally, Ibn Khaldun articulated the philosophy of history in the light of the Qur'an, and formulated its two basic principles: unity of mankind, and the dynamic nature of society, which is in constant flux.

### **The Sixth Lecture**

The sixth lecture discusses the principle of movement in the structure of Islam. In reality he transcends the conventional meaning of *Ijtihad*, the endeavor exercised to form an opinion on a legal issue. He starts the lecture with a statement that as a cultural movement Islam rejected the static view of the universe, and established a dynamic view. Islam's advent rejected ethnic relationship as a basis of human unity, and established the principle that "human life is spiritual in its origin." Islam replaced the "culture of the throne," and created "the foundation of world-unity." Iqbal said:

It is only natural that Islam should have flashed across the consciousness of a simple people untouched by any of the ancient cultures, and occupying a geographical position where three continents meet together. The new culture finds the foundation of world-unity in the principle of 'Tauhid.' Islam, as a polity, is only a practical means of making this

principle a living factor in the intellectual and emotional life of mankind. It demands loyalty to God, not to thrones. And since God is the ultimate spiritual basis of all life, loyalty to God virtually amounts to man's loyalty to his own ideal nature. The ultimate spiritual basis of all life, as conceived by Islam, is eternal and reveals itself in variety and change. A society based on such a conception of Reality must reconcile, in its life, the categories of permanence and change. It must possess eternal principles to regulate its collective life, for the eternal gives us a foothold in the world of perpetual change. But eternal principles when they are understood to exclude all possibilities of change which, according to the Qur'an, is one of the greatest 'signs' of God, tend to immobilize what is essentially mobile in its nature. The failure of Europe in political and social science illustrates the former principle; the immobility of Islam during the last 500 years illustrates the latter.

What then is the principle of movement in the structure of Islam? This is known as 'Ijtihad.' The student of the history of Islam, however, is well aware that with the political expansion of Islam systematic legal thought became an absolute necessity, and our early doctors of law, both of Arabian and non-Arabian descent, worked ceaselessly until all the accumulated wealth of legal thought found a final expression in our recognized schools of Law. These schools of law recognize three degrees of Ijtihad: (1) complete authority in legislation which is practically confined to the founders of schools, (2) relative authority which is to be exercised within the limits of a particular school, and (3) special authority which relates to the determining of the law applicable to a particular case left undermined by the founders.<sup>22</sup>

The *ulama*, Iqbal pointed out never denied the need to exercise *Ijtihad*, but when the four schools of Islamic law were established, they never allowed anyone to exercise *Ijtihad*. They applied such prohibitive conditions for its exercise that it became practically impossible to take advantage of *Ijtihad*. In explaining this orientation of the *ulama*, Iqbal maintained that probably it was unavoidable

policy in the period of political decline, and was a defense mechanism to protect the integrity of the collective life in the world of Islam. At this point Iqbal's reasoning became protective of the *ulama's* orientation: the *ulama* in the past, and particularly the *ulama* of our contemporary times do not understand that the testing of nations is not determined by their organization, but by the qualities of the individuals in the society. To stop the national decline we must not excessively admire our history, or that we should invent completely new techniques to rejuvenate our culture. To prevent the cultural decline it is imperative that individuals should be allowed to function, who are completely absorbed and reshaped by their nature and ego. They develop the ability to understand the complex realities and create new paradigms of life. They enable us to understand that our cultural environment is subject to change, and needs revision and reform; and that misplaced respect and admiration for the past is out of place and vitiated the spirit of Islam.

If the renaissance of Islam is to be accomplished, which Iqbal believed was direly needed, then Muslims must evaluate the significance of their intellectual and cultural heritage. With the invigoration of Muslims' collective life the universal spirit of Islam, despite the jurists' innate conservatism, would infuse a new grace in their life. Unfortunately the conservative *ulama* of India could not bear the critical thought of Islamic jurisprudence. They are outraged over trivial issues, and open up the floodgates of sectarian strife.

Then Iqbal asked a rhetorical question: did the founders of the four schools of jurisprudence ever claim that their reasoning and changes on law were the last definitive word of judgment? No, they never made such claims. Against this intellectual background if some enlightened Muslim intellectuals make an assertion that they are entitled to engage in an interpretive enterprise to restructure the

principles of Islamic jurisprudence, in Iqbal's views, they were entitled to do so.

The Qur'anic view of life emphasizes that life is a constant creative struggle. This view demands that every new generation of Muslims must solve its problems in the light of what their forefathers accomplished. To say the gates of *Ijtihad* have been shut tight is a fanciful conviction.

Iqbal, at least hoped, that the Muslims in the modern age, would exercise the freedom of thought, and not surrender it. If Muslims have cultivated a large scope of intellectual exercise, and have developed the faculty to sort out complex problems as a consequence of their experiments in modern sciences, then they must undertake the reconstruction of Islamic thought. This project is not merely an endeavor to update their life to the requirements of the contemporary environment. Its significance goes beyond this goal. Referring to the World War I, Iqbal stated, that this war has generated new awakening among people; and a new social, economic and political experiment had been conducted in Muslim Eurasia. Both developments, Iqbal argued, should enable Muslims to grasp the real significance and mission of Islam.

Iqbal's views, paraphrased above, identified *Ijtihad* as the intellectual mechanism for the reconstruction of Islamic jurisprudence. In addition to Islamic jurisprudence's updating, Iqbal was fully sensitive to the enveloping onrush of the atheistic ideology of communism espoused by Soviet Russia, and the materialist capitalist democratic ideology of the West. To deal with the grand strategy of life, Iqbal does not transfer the right of *Ijtihad* to the *ulama*. He believed that this right should be vested in the constituent assemblies of the Muslim states. Only through this intellectual innovation, Iqbal believed, could the Islamic laws in general, and jurisprudence in particular could be restructured.



In this lecture Iqbal also presented his vision of an Islamic state. He believed that Islamic State stands on the eternal principles of *freedom*, *equality* and *solidarity*, and that modern paradigm of democracy was in harmony with the spirit of Islam, and was also acceptable to the political forces, which were then functioning in Muslim countries. He applauded the Turkish *Ijtihad*, which had transferred sovereignty to an elected National Assembly instead of reposing it in one individual, be he an *imam* or a caliph. In his opinion a universal caliphate or imamate was a viable institution, when the entire Islamic world was in one state. But in the contemporary political situation the Muslim world was divided among individual sovereign states, the caliphate was not a viable institution. Instead, he believed, it would be an obstacle in their unification.

Under the existing political conditions, Iqbal advised that the Muslim states must focus their creative energy and time on their own state building activities, until such point in time is reached when they have achieved strength and confidence to merge their states in the commonwealth of Islamic democracies. He said:

A true and living unity, according to the nationalist thinkers, is not so easy to be achieved by a merely symbolic overlordship. It is truly manifested in a multiplicity of free independent units whose racial rivalries are adjusted and harmonized by the unifying bond of a common spiritual aspiration. It seems to me that God is slowly bringing home to us the truth that Islam is neither Nationalism nor Imperialism but a League of Nations which recognizes artificial boundaries and racial distinctions for the facility of reference only, and not for restricting the social horizon of its members.<sup>23</sup>

Iqbal considered *ijma* (consensus of the community), the third source of law after the Qur'an and Sunna, most important. The Prophetic traditions have been cited to establish the validity of legal changes through the consensus of the community. Sharybani declared on the authority of the Prophet that "whatever the Muslims see as

good is good (*hasan*) in the eyes of God, and whatever they see as bad is bad in the eyes of God.”<sup>24</sup> Another tradition reports: “My community shall never agree on falsehood,” and “he who departs from the community ever so slightly would be considered to have abandoned Islam.”<sup>25</sup> Also the Qur’an (IV: 115), among other verses, stipulates: “And who so opposes the Messenger after the guidance had been manifested into him, and follows other than the believer’s way, we appoint for him that unto which he himself had turned, and expose him unto hell—hapless journey’s end.”

However, it may be noted that *ijma* failed to be established as an institution in the Muslim states. After the first four Caliphs (632-661) absolutist monarchies were established, and the acceptance of *ijma* as an institution in their political systems would have militated against their monarchical interests. As a matter of self-interest policy, the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphs preferred *Ijtihad* to be an individual privilege so that the state could subject the judges, who exercised *Ijtihad*, to pressure for the favorable judgments. They could not transfer the legislative authority to an autonomous and enduring legislature, which might acquire independence of legislative action. In his own time, Iqbal viewed *ijma* not in the institution of a consultative assembly, but stipulated completely autonomous parliament. In his discussions, he never mentioned any role for a consultative assembly (*Majlis-i Shura*). Iqbal says:

It is, however, extremely satisfactory to note that the pressure of new world forces and the political experience of European nations are impressing on the mind of modern Islam the value and possibilities of the ides of *Ijma*. The growth of republican spirit, and the gradual formation of legislative assemblies in Muslim lands constitutes a great step in advance. The transfer of the power of *Ijtihad* from individual representatives of schools to a Muslim legislative assembly which, in view of the growth of opposing sects, is the only possible form *Ijma* can take in modern times, will secure contributions to legal

discussion from laymen who happen to possess a keen insight into affairs. In this way alone we can stir into activity the dormant spirit of life in our legal system, and give it an evolutionary outlook. In India, however, difficulties are likely to arise; for it is doubtful whether a non-Muslim legislative assembly can exercise the power of *Ijtihad*.<sup>26</sup>

Iqbal raised another issue in regard to the present legislative dilemmas. Contemporary legislators are very likely to be uneducated in the subtleties of Islamic law, and are likely to make mistakes in their interpretations of the law--what to do about it. He cited the Iranian example of their Constitution of 1906, which created a separate committee of the *ulama* to supervise the Majlis' legislative functions. But this practice Iqbal realized is not without dangers:

But whatever may be the Persian constitutional theory, the arrangement is not free from danger, and may be tried, if at all, only as a temporary measure in Sunni countries. The *Ulema* should form a vital part of a Muslim legislative assembly helping and guiding free discussion on questions relating to law. The only effective remedy for the possibilities of erroneous interpretations is to reform the present system of legal education in Mohammedan countries, to extend its sphere, and to combine it with an intelligent study of modern jurisprudence.<sup>27</sup>

### **The Seventh Lecture**

The seventh and the last lecture tackled the most complex issue: is religion possible? Actually the lecture highlighted the comparative roles and the quest of reality of religion and science. Religious life, according to him, passed through three periods: 1) faith, 2) thought, and 3) discovery. In the first period the people must accept the religious command unconditionally without any rational understanding of the command. The second phase is noted for "the rational understanding of ...the ultimate source of its authority." Religious life seeks "a kind of metaphysics" – "a logically consistent view of the world with God as part

of that view.” In the third period, Iqbal asserted, “metaphysics is replaced” by “ambition to come into direct contact with the ultimate Reality.”

In referring to western science Iqbal pointed out that it is advancing in a direction which has made it possible to rationally structure cosmology. Despite this development, he believed the man in the west “finds himself in a strange predicament.” Despite acquiring “control over the forces of nature,” he has “robbed him of faith in his own future.” He has ceased to “live soulfully” that is from within. Then Iqbal made a telling point about the role of capitalism, which has promoted the culture of materialism. In the west he believed “man is living in an open conflict with himself; and in the domain of economic and political life he is living in open conflict with others.”

The condition of man in the East, according to Iqbal, was not better. The techniques of mysticism, which deeply influence the man in the Muslim countries, have placed him in a spiritual thralldom. No wonder that modern day Muslims in Turkey, Egypt and Persia are seeking new loyalties in “patriotism and nationalism.” This is indeed a desperate attempt “to unlock fresh sources of energy by narrowing down his thought and emotion.” Iqbal deplored the fact that “modern atheistic socialism,” which also developed an enthusiasm for a “new religion,” which had received inspiration from the “Hegelians of the left wing” was in conflict with its own spring. “Neither the techniques of medieval mysticism nor nationalism nor atheistic socialism,” Iqbal argued, could remove “the ills of a despairing humanity...And religion, which in its higher manifestations is neither dogma, nor priesthood, nor ritual, can alone ethically prepare the modern man for the burden of the great responsibility which the advancement of modern science necessarily involves, and restores to him that attitude of faith which makes him capable of winning a personality here and retaining it hereafter.”

Some of Iqbal's ideas matured through evolution of his thought; and some of them were subjected to criticism by the contemporary scholars. (They are discussed in the sequel). This brief survey of his ideas establish at least one salient point of his contribution: before stipulating the vision of an Islamic state Iqbal endeavored to lay down the religious, cultural, social and above all ideological foundations of an Islamic state paradigm.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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- <sup>2</sup> Saiyad Nazir Niazi, Ed., *Maktubat-i Iqbal*, pp. 45-46.
- <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43.
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.
- <sup>5</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, (Lahore: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1958), preface, p. VI.
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.
- <sup>8</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, (Lahore: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1958), p. 42.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.
- <sup>12</sup> Osman Bakar, *The History and Philosophy of Islamic Science* (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1999), pp. 82-83.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.
- <sup>14</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, (Lahore: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1958), p. 62.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 84-85.
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 91.
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 93-94.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.
- <sup>21</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1958), pp. 126.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 147-148.

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 159.

<sup>24</sup> Wael B. Hallaq, *A History of Islamic Legal Theories*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 20.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 173-174.

<sup>27</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1958), p. 176.



## Chapter V

### THE CONCEPT OF ISLAMIC STATE

The issue of Hindu-Muslim cultural identity became in the current political discourse the “communal” problem, and finally acquired in a more elevated political idiom the name of two-nation theory. This historical distinction in the Indian environment made its debut in the eighth century, when Islam first entered the sub-continent. Nearly 900 years ago Abu Rihan Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Biruni’s (973-1048) celebrated work, *Kitab al-Hind*, shed volumes of light on this central conflict. According to one estimate he remained in northwest India for 13 years, learned Sanskrit and developed profound understanding of almost all aspects of Indian life. Commenting on Hindu-Muslim relations, al-Biruni stated that any “connection with them [Hindus]” was quite impossible, and “constituted the widest gulf between us [Muslims], and them.”<sup>1</sup>

The study of history has also demonstrated that a bold attempt to resolve the Hindu-Muslim conflict or to lay down the foundations for a united nation was made by the Mughal Emperor Akbar, who used a syncretic movement of his own invention, the *Din-i Ilahi* (Divine religion) in the sixteenth century. His attempt failed to accomplish his objective because both Hindus and Muslims were opposed to their assimilative extinction. Among the Muslims Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi (known as Mujadid Alf Thani) led the opposition, and among the Hindus Akbar’s loyal Rajput



ally of prince Maan Singh told the Emperor in no uncertain terms that in India there existed only two religions – Islam and Hinduism. Their amalgamation was not a possibility.<sup>2</sup> [In the seventeenth century a similar attempt was made by Prince Dara Shikoh (killed in 1659) who emulating Akbar wanted a united nation in India.] His attempt was foiled by his younger brother Aurangzeb. Against the scene of these historical experiments, Iqbal viewed Aurangzeb and Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi the founders of a Muslim nation (*Muslim Qaomiyat*) in India.

In India Islamic renaissance got underway in the eighteenth century. After the Battle of Plassey in 1757, and Sultan Tipu's death in battle against the British in 1799 Muslim *ulama* issued *fatwas*, declaring that India was no longer *dar al-Islam*, but had become a *dar al-Harb* (a land of conflict and war), and Muslims were under the obligation to launch *jihad* (*bellum justum*) to retrieve their lost political power, or they must leave India and migrate to another Muslim country. Inspired by these *fatwas* Saiyad Ahmad Shahid, Shah Isma`il Shahid, Maulvi Shariat Allah, Dudu Mian, Mir Nisar Ali Shahid and Ghulam Ma`sum Shahid launched *jihadi* movements, which also invited people to Islam as a religion.

Saiyad Ahmad Shahid (1786-1831) and Shah Isma`il Shahid (1779-1831) made the Northwest Frontier areas the base of their military operations against the Sikhs in order to liberate the Muslims in the Punjab and Kashmir. In those days the Muslim majority areas of the Frontier Province, Sindh and Balochistan were ruled by local tribal chieftains. They initially rendered substantial assistance to Saiyad Ahmad Shahid, who aspired to establish an Islamic state in these areas. For much the same reason Saiyad Ahmad Shahid wanted the liberation of the Punjab and [Sindh.]

In East Bengal similar Islamic populist movements emerged under the leadership of Mir Nisar Ali Shahid and Ghulam Ma`sum Shahid, who wanted to organize the

Muslim landless tenants to overthrow the exploitative feudal hold of the Hindu landowners over these peasants. Moreover, they aspired to establish an Islamic state with *jihad*. However, the Muslim militant movements in the northwest, and the east failed to achieve their objectives, because their absolute modes of warfare could not compete with the British force's modernized army and its innovative tactics.

Clearly the Muslims' sense of Islamic solidarity inspired in them an urge for political freedom, and in the nineteenth century they initiated movements with a view to establishing Islamic states in the Northwest, and the East. This is an unmistakable lesson of the history of Islamic renaissance in the eighteenth century. These struggles did not succeed at that time, but the impulse for the revival of Islam continued to vibrate. The British political domination ushered in western modern views. Inspired by the west, and a sense of Islamic solidarity Sir Saiyyid Ahmad Khan rendered the Muslims exceptionally beneficial service in promoting modern education among them. In this period Hindu political awakening was initiated under the impact of modern western ideas, and they started to agitate for the establishment of democratic institutions. Among the Muslims credit goes first to Sir Saiyyid Ahmad Khan for recognizing the fact that the democratic institutions (especially the principle of one man one vote) would not necessarily safeguard the Muslims' interests and rights. For this reason he advised the Muslims to stay away from participation in the Indian National Congress. Under the influence of Sir Saiyyid's followers, Muslims succeeded in winning the separate electorates for the legislatures.

It has been stated before, but deserves to be repeated that Sir Saiyyid's political orientations to protect Muslims rights had won over Iqbal by 1907, and they had become in him matters of settled conviction. Inspired by Sir Saiyyid's

orientations, Iqbal continued to express them in his creative poetry and lucid prose; he not only highlighted the principle of Muslim nationality, but to strengthen and preserve this historical impulse laid down an ideological base, and a stable mode of thought. Acting on this philosophic basis he participated in All India politics, and finally presented the vision of an Islamic state.

### **The Visions of an Islamic State**

In India geopolitical and demographic realities were visible to the naked eye: They were perceived by interested foreign observers, as well as by indigenous participants. Even before Iqbal appeared on the political horizon of India some thinkers had speculated about (what was then the language of political discourse) the “communal issue,” and the possible partitioning of India between Hindus and Muslims. Some even offered fairly developed proposals. In his book, *Evolution of Pakistan*, Sharif-ud-Din Pirzada enumerated 20 individuals, whose views on these issues are not entirely without interest.

According to Pirzada’s research:

1. 1857 John Bright (1811-1889), a member of the House of Commons, stated in a speech that in India at least 20 nations exist, and they speak 20 different languages. He advised the British government to create five or six states in India before relinquishing control over the country.
2. 1881 Jamal-ud-Din Afghani had thought of a Muslim republic, consisting of India’s Northwest Muslim majority provinces, Afghanistan, and Central Asian states occupied by Russia.
3. 1883 Wilfred Scawan Blunt proposed a Muslim state in northern India, and a Hindu state in the south. However, he also suggested that in both states British Army units should be based.
4. 1905 Lord Curzon partitioned Bengal into two provinces so that east Bengal’s less developed Muslims

would have an opportunity to develop. Also, Bengali Muslims were not organized politically. Reacting to heavy and sustained Hindu agitation against the partition of Bengal, the British government annulled the partition.

5. 1911 Saiyad Amir Ali wrote a letter to Sir Muhammad Shafi positing the view that Hindus and Muslims are two separate nations in India. Only a practical constitutional system can be enforced, if it preserved their national identities, and guaranteed to protect their rights.

6. 1913 Wiliyat Ali Bambooque stated in a column of the *Hamdard* that Hindus and Muslims should be kept apart for peaceful co-existence so that northern India should be handed over to the Muslims, and the rest of India to Hindus.

7. 1917 Dr. Abdul Jabbar Khairy and Professor Abdus Sattar Khairy submitted a written statement to the Stockholm conference of the Socialist International in Europe, stating that in India every province should have the sovereign right of self-determination so that Hindu majority provinces and Muslim majority may be able to establish their own separate federations.

8. 1920 Muhammad Abdul Qadir Bilgrami published an open letter to Mahatma Gandhi in the Urdu newspaper *Zulqarnain* of Budaun. In this letter he proposed that India should be divided up between Hindus and Muslims. To strengthen his argument, he presented the demographic percentages of both Hindus and Muslims in different districts.

9. 1921, Nadir Ali, an admirer of Britain, who vigorously opposed the Caliphate agitation against the British, offered an unsolicited advice to the British government that to finally find a solution to the Hindu-Muslim conflict the partitioning of India would be unavoidable.

10. 1923 Sardar Gul Muhammad Khan, President of Anjuman-i Islamia of Dera Ismail Khan stated in a testimony to the Northwest Frontier Committee that territory stretching from Peshawar to Agra should be allotted to Muslim jurisdiction, and from Agra to Rass Kumari be given to Hindus. Under this arrangement both nations should exchange populations.

11. 1924 Maulana Hasrat Mohani proposed that Muslim majority provinces in the northwest should be amalgamated into one province, and this province as one unit should have an identity of its own as a federating unit. This proposal was rejected by the Nehru Committee Report.

12. 1924 Lala Lajpat Rai had expressed an idea that keeping in view the percentage of Hindu-Muslim populations, Bengal and Punjab provinces should be divided; and then West Punjab, Northwest Frontier Province, Sindh and Balochistan, and territory of East Bengal be handed over to the Muslims. For the rest of Indian provinces, Lala Rai proposed the establishment of Hindu governments. After stating this view Lala Lajpat Rai backtracked his views, and stated that he never expressed these views.

13. 1924 Stalin publicly stated that India had an appearance of a one untied country. However, if revolution engulfed this country many nationalities would emerge.

14. 1924 Maulana Muhammad Ali expressed an exceptionally idealistic view: Muslims are not a minority but a nation. India was an international issue. Muslims deserved to have a corridor from Delhi to Constantinople to unite them in a contiguous land-stretch.

15. 1925 a well-known Palmist Count Louis Cheiro predicted that the British would vacate India, and that its territory would be divided equally between Muslim, and the "Buddhists."

16. 1928 an “Indian Muslim” (concealing his real name) had expressed the idea that Hindu and Muslims are different nations like the Germans and the French. Since alliance between them is not possible, India should be partitioned between them.

17. 1928 Murtaza Ahmad Khan Maikash published series of four articles in the daily *Inqalab*, which strongly presented the proposition of a Muslim homeland (*watan*) consisting of the Muslim majority provinces in the northwest of India.

18. 1929 F.K. Durrani (the editor of *Muslim India*) published a book *The Future of India* to analyze the prospects of relations between Hindus and Muslims. Emphatically he presented the Hindus and Muslims as separate nations. They have options: 1) commit a national suicide and thus eliminate the Hindu-Muslim conflict, 2) convert to Hinduism. If neither option is attractive, then they must demand their share in the government.

19. Chaudhary Rahmat Ali (d. 1948) coined the name Pakistan in 1933. He started the Pakistan movement by issuing pamphlets, and other literature about the partitioning of India.

20. Altaf Hussain Hali (1837- ), who took it for granted “that Muslims were a separate *quam* a nation.”

21. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, went to England to participate in the London Round table Conference; there he “continued to preach about his scheme.”<sup>3</sup>

Sharif-ud-Din Pirzada considered all the writers (mentioned above) as the “helpers” or “makers” of a Muslim state, i.e., Pakistan. His reasoning gives an impression that Iqbal was one of these gentlemen, who propounded the concept of a Muslim state as a consequence of India’s division. It is imperative to highlight one particular dimension of Iqbal’s contribution. Before Iqbal projected the concept of a Muslim state, he articulated its

ideological base, and as long as he lived he struggled to bring it into reality. Against this basic difference it is appropriate to ask this question: what kind of services did Stalin, Lala Lajpat Rai, Lord Curzon, Wilfred Blunt, and John Bright render to the creation of Pakistan that Muslims cannot afford to ignore? Clearly several individuals proposed the partitioning of India to solve the Hindu-Muslim conflict, but how can they be considered the architects or the builders of Pakistan!

In his well-known book, *Struggle for Pakistan* Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi has alluded to Jamal-ud-Din Afghani, Chaudhary Rahmat Ali, Dr. Abdul Jabbar Khairy, Professor Abdul Sattar Khairy, Muhammad Abdul Qadir Bilgrami, Sawarkar, Lala Lajpat Rai, Sardar Muhammad Gul Khan, Maulana Muhammad Ali and Agha Khan as those leaders and political activists who projected the concept of a Muslim state. But Qureshi maintained a point of distinction between Iqbal and these gentlemen. And this distinction was Iqbal's position as an important political personality, who presented an elaborate and distinctive view of an Islamic state in his presidential address to the annual session (1930) of the Muslim League.<sup>4</sup>

Qureshi has also sidestepped Iqbal's life long struggle for the articulation of an ideological base of an Islamic state, and his active political struggle for the creation of an Islamic before even the plan for its creation was ever developed.

Sharif-ud-Din Pirzada and Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi have mentioned the fact in their books that Jamal-ud-Din Afghani had the vision of a Muslim republic consisting of India's Northwest Muslim majority provinces, Afghanistan and Central Asian states. In his argument Pirzada has relied on Qureshi's research, who used *History of the Freedom Movement* (Vol. I, pp. 48-49) as his source of information. The big problem is that the author of this *History of the Freedom Movement* cited no source of his own information. The *History of the Freedom Movement*

series remained incomplete, because the scholars found them to be undependable as the historical source of information.

Undoubtedly, Jamal-ud-Din Afghani championed the cause of alliance among the Muslim states, who would be governed democratically under a federal constitution to be headed by the Turkish-Caliph-Sultan. Iqbal admired Afghani's contributions to the Muslims' life, and considered him a renovator (*mujadid*) of the modern times. But for the Indian Muslims his views differed not from that of Shibli's, i.e., that the Muslims should cooperate with the Hindus for the commonly shared interests, and that Muslims should support the Turkish Caliphate movement. When Afghani stayed in India he made no attempts to establish any rapport with Sir Saiyad Ahmad Khan, or with those who believed in Sir Saiyad's school of thought. In fact Afghani engaged in a polemic with Sir Saiyad, when he published an article, "*Radd Nacheriya*" (rejecting Sir Saiyad's views) in his newspaper, *al-urwa al-Wathqiya*. In one of his articles he accused Sir Saiyad of jettisoning religion from his life and that he was spreading infidelity among Muslims. Afghani accused Sir Saiyad and his followers of being materialists, worse than the European variety, since after abandoning their religion they continue to be patriots, and defend their homeland with their own life against foreign invaders. But Sir Saiyad and his disciples have lost that noble sentiment.<sup>5</sup>

In this author's view Afghani's Muslim republic concept is a story, whose authenticity has not been established. Sharif-ud-Din Pirzada, Ishtiaq Qureshi and the author of the *History of the Freedom Movement*, and those who subsequently cited them on this point just repeated this "doubtful story."

At this point another book, *Pathway to Pakistan* by Chaudhary Khaliq-uz-Zaman deserves to be discussed. The author has added Sir Theodore Morrison among those who projected the concept of an Islamic state. In regard to



Iqbal the author has deliberately misstated facts. According to him Chaudhary Rahmat Ali visited in 1930 several Muslim leaders in London, and urged them to adopt his scheme for the division of India for which he had given it the name of Pakistan. Finally Iqbal presented the same views at Allahabad when he delivered his presidential address. Khaliq-uz-Zaman has created the impression that influenced by Chaudhary Rahmat Ali's ideas, Iqbal presented the concept of an Islamic state in Allahabad. In fact Chaudhary Khaliq-uz-Zaman did not attend the London Round Table Conference, nor was he present in London at the time of the conference. This incident of Chaudhary Rahmat Ali's canvassing the Pakistan project was not an eye witnessed incident.

In India and Pakistan no authentic study has yet been published, highlighting the Islamic perspectives of the Pakistan movement. Muslim and non-Muslim scholars, who have published their works in Urdu or English, have highlighted only the national aspects of this movement. They have accepted Islam's role as a nation-building dynamic, but not more than that. The impression then is inevitably derived that the concept of "two nations," which was acknowledged even by some British and Hindu observers, was a potent "weapon" in the hands of Muslims, who effectively used it while they were engaged in a political battle against the Hindus and the British. The Muslim leaders of the movement with repeated use of this weapon wanted to emphasize the fact that Muslims are a separate nation, and were unable to co-exist with the Hindus. In other words the creation of an independent and sovereign Muslim state was an ultimate objective, and with this realization the theory of two nations had served its definitive objective.

Looked at from this perspective John Bright, Blunt, Curzon, Theodore Morrison, Savarkar, Lala Lajpat Rai, Cheiro and even Stalin can be considered the visionaries of

the state of Pakistan. The Iqbal problem could then be easily resolved by hanging his picture in an art gallery amidst these gentlemen. Ironically some leaders of the Pakistan movement have attempted to isolate Iqbal from the vision of a Muslim state. An example of this attitude is the statement of M. A. H. Isphahani, who was considered to be the right hand man of Qaide-i Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Perhaps he was impressed by the works of Sharif-ud-Din Pirzada, Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi, or Chaudhary Khaliq-uz-Zaman. After mentioning Jamal-ud-Din Afghani, the Khairy brothers, Abdul Qadir Bilgrami, Sardar Gul Khan and Chaudhary Rahmat Ali, Isphahani stated: "It cannot be denied that Dr. Iqbal's philosophic thought, poetry and speeches pointed in the direction of the need to establish an Islamic state. But to say that he was the creator of the concept of an Islamic state is distortion of history."<sup>6</sup>

Ironically, Indian political leaders including Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajender Prasad and Dr. Ambedkar (as discussed in sequel) have expressed similar views about Iqbal's role. Each one has stated that Iqbal was not associated with the movement for the creation of Pakistan. Why did they make these statements? Hindu leaders were apprehensive of a possibility that Iqbal's association with the Pakistan movement would provide it a comprehensive ideological base, and the movement would be endowed with a grand objective. If Iqbal was projected as totally dissociated with the Pakistan movement, then it remained without an ideological base and a lofty objective. Also they might have speculated that without these two pillars of support the movement would collapse into extinction. Pakistan was established, but failed to be an Islamic state, and gradually regional loyalties gained momentum, instead of Islamic solidarity.

Muhammad Ahmad Khan has offered an assessment of the evolution of the vision of Pakistan:

All those individuals, who are projected as the visionaries of Pakistan, cannot be looked upon as the first “seers” of Pakistan.

Some of them (Sir Saiyad and Morrison) only projected the two nation view. Some (Blunt, Bambooque, Khairy brothers, Sardar Gul Khan, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, Lala Lajpat Rai, Murtaza Ahmad Khan) expressed their views about Muslim districts or Muslim provinces.

Some (Bilgrami and Nadir Ali) identified areas of interest or projected vague notion of partitioning India. Granted, these proposals were presented before 1930, when Iqbal presented his fully developed vision of Pakistan. None of their proposals even hinted at the possibility of a separate federation, or an independent sovereign state.

In favor of their proposals this much can be stated that when they are examined they reflect in our imagination a nebulous glimmer of Pakistan. Their proposals examined against the background of Iqbal’s political thought, and his struggle for political objectives, critical evaluation of his presidential address at the Annual Session of the Muslim League in 1930, and especially his two letters of May 28 and June 21, 1937 addressed to the Qaide-i Azam Jinnah, draws in front of our vision Pakistan’s clear and detailed – in fact a comprehensive picture of Pakistan. In reality the above mentioned numerous proposals share one value collectively – a political sensitivity of Muslims separatism, or a sense of estrangement from the Hindus. But Pakistan is not merely an expression of sensitivity or a superficial impression.

“Iqbal’s great achievement consists of his poetic charisma, which drew Muslims’ aspirations from their unconscious state of mind to mature political awareness, which he further strengthened with his prophetic vision, and finally through his own political maturity he presented a workable political paradigm.

This was his first and foremost achievement.<sup>7</sup>

### **Iqbal at Allahabad**

Early in the morning of December 29, 1930 Iqbal reached the Allahabad train station, where Sir Muhammad

Yousaf and other leaders of the Muslim League were present to give him a royal welcome. A large number of Muslim citizens had also gathered there to greet him. Saiyad Shams-ul-Hassan stated that this rousing reception was really an emotional response of common folks to his exceptional charismatic personality, and owed very little to the League's session. Iqbal was escorted to Sir Muhammad Yousaf's sumptuous house in the form of a procession.

The Muslim League's session was arranged in Shaikh Rahim Bakhsh's sprawling multi-storied house, which was located in the neighborhood of Yaqt Ganj, opposite to the Motilal Nehru Hospital, then known as the Calvin hospital. An exceptionally prosperous man, Shaikh Rahim Bakhsh was a merchant of tobacco products, and his family by virtue of their business in tobacco was generally known as "tambaku-wallas." The exceptionally spacious courtyard of the house led to twelve open doors of an equally spacious and graceful porch. Because of these twelve doors, the building was called the *dowazdaha manzil*. In this enclosed environment only a few members of the League Council participated in the proceedings, and quorum was barely sufficient; some notable personalities were indeed present, including Abdulla Haroon, Saiyad Hussain Imam, Maulavi Abdul Qadir Kasuri, Sir Muhammad Yaqub, Maulana Abdul Majid Budauni, and Saiyad Zakir Ali. A practicing attorney Mufti Fakher al-Islam who attended the sessions has stated that the total number of attendees was almost 500, perhaps even less. Some school boys also attended the sessions as a form of recreation. Accompanied by Sir Muhammad Yousaf, Iqbal arrived at the site of the public meeting.<sup>8</sup>

In hushed silence the meeting was inaugurated with the recitation of the Qur'an. Then Iqbal was invited to deliver his presidential address. Realizing that his oration would have an international audience, and the rulers of the British Raj, Iqbal had prepared his address in English. Slowly and

gradually he delivered it, knowing well in advance that very few individuals in the audience would be able to understand, let alone comprehend the political subtleties of his analysis. French thinker, Albert Camus has stated so well apropos of this situation in Allahabad: great thoughts penetrate the consciousness like the flight of innocent birds. If we attempt to hear them in the din of national politics, we would gather only the slight flutter of their wings, as if a message of hope is being delivered in the turbulence of daily life.

No comprehensive discussion followed at the completion of Iqbal's address, nor was a resolution passed in support of his proposals. Local newspapers ignored its coverage. Hardly anyone realized that thousands of individuals would sacrifice their lives in the struggle, and the life of millions would be affected in the process of establishing a new state. Iqbal stayed in Allahabad for only two days. Accompanied by Zahur Ahmad, Barrister-at Law, Iqbal walked through the streets of the city to "taste" the smell and sounds of Allahabad. Another lawyer, Mufti Fakher al- Islam took him to the Purana Kaladana cemetery, where Iqbal offered prayers at the grave of a well-known poet, Akbar Allahabadi. Iqbal returned to Lahore on December 31, 1930.

At the Allahabad Railway Station a delightful little episode occurred. Riaz Allahabadi, a school teacher, overawed by the presence of a great thinker and poet, approached Iqbal in humility, confessed his lack of knowledge, and told him that he was wracking his brain, but could not understand the meaning of one of his verses:

*Ajal hai lakhun sitarun key ik wiladat-i maher*

*Fana key neend may-i zindgi key hasti hai*

In a reassuring gesture Iqbal held Riaz's hand and took him, to the station's waiting room, and then explained to him: what I intend to say is that nations do not die, in their succeeding generations they renew themselves, and their

condition is improved. Look at the stars they do not die, but in fact present their substitute in the sun, which outshines the stars in its luminescent condition.”<sup>9</sup>

The Allahabad address indeed presented a grand vision of a Muslim state in the Northwest of India, but did not mention Bengal, a Muslim Majority province in the East. Why? One plausible explanation points up the concept of a Muslim state in the Northwest as an objective, and Iqbal had used the term “at least” while referring to the Muslim majority, which indicates that Bengal was not beyond the realm of his interest. In principle it stands to reason that if the establishment of a Muslim state in the Northwest was accepted, its logical extension to the east would be inescapable. He did not discuss minority provinces either, because Hindus were not opposed to extending the “principle of weightage,” meaning greater minority representation than the minority’s actual demographic strength in the population. With the appearance of a Muslim state in the Northwest the position of the Muslim minorities was substantially strengthened.

As stated before, no resolution of support for the Allahabad address was passed for a plausible reason. The acknowledged leader of the Muslim League, Muhammad Ali Jinnah was in London (along with other Muslim leaders). The accepted policy for Hindu-Muslim power-sharing formula was enshrined in the “Jinnah’s 14-Points,” which Jinnah had presented to the London Round Table Conference. In other words the 14-Points were on the table as the focal elements of negotiations; their definitive position – accepted or rejected – had not yet emerged. In view of this delicate diplomatic occasion a resolution in support of Iqbal’s proposals, as enumerated in the address, would have undercut Jinnah’s negotiating position.

In view of this diplomatic sensitivity Iqbal had adopted a nuanced position in the preliminary comments of his address. He took the position that he did not present the

conception of a Muslim state as the elected President of the Muslim League Session, or as a political leader, but expressed his personal views. If the 14-Points were rejected then his views would be the guiding lights. At the end of the address, Iqbal pointed to this view once again: “I am not hopeless of an inter-communal understanding, but I cannot conceal from you the feeling that in the near future our community may be called upon to adopt an independent line of action to cope with the present crisis. An independent line of political action, in such a crisis, is possible only to a determined people, possessing a will focalized on a single purpose. Is it possible for you to achieve the organic wholeness of a unified will? Yes, it is.”<sup>10</sup>

Iqbal presented in his address the vision of a grand alternative plan of action. The existing ground realities did not call for it!

### **Reactions to Iqbal’s Address**

The initial reaction to Iqbal’s address was negative – even hostile. Engaged in delicate and complicated negotiations over the exceptionally difficult aspects of the future constitution of India, the British leadership did not like Iqbal’s address. Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald was reported to be indignant as it was stated in the *Indian Daily Mail* of Bombay in a news item bylined by its London correspondent. The London correspondent of Allahabad’s daily the *Leader* reported that Iqbal’s attacks on the government’s conception of the federal structure of the Indian government, and the Indian leaders’ support of it had spawned in both Indian and British political circles deep anger and resentment. Emulating these publications India’s two Anglo-Indian newspapers – *Pioneer* and *Times of India* – in their editorials called Iqbal a “reactionary,” and his ideas unpracticable.

The conventional Hindu press stooped down to a very low level of journalism, and engaged in unparliamentarily

abusive diatribes, and made reckless allegations against Iqbal. Here are a few unpleasant, and ungentlemanly characterizations from Lahore's Hindu press. The well-known *Tribune* stated that since Iqbal was not invited to the London Round Table Conference, he took his "revenge" with these proposals. First, he sent a telegram to Agha Khan to protest against his "acceptance" of the joint electorates; second, by delivering his presidential address at Allahabad, he snuffed out the possibility of Hindu-Muslim understanding. A Hindu-owned Urdu daily *Pratap* published a leading article with this title: Some Views on North India's Fear Monger Muslim; Dr. Iqbal's Outrage. In this article the author characterized Iqbal as – *mentally disturbed, creator of disruptions, foolish, fearful, spreader of poison, narrow minded, with low vision, contemptible, mean, and incompetent.*<sup>11</sup>

There was one Hindu observer, according to Abdul Salam Khurshid, who as an anonymous writer assumed the persona of "An Enlightened Hindu," and pushed his views in *The Times of India*. He posited the view that when the princely states [overwhelming number of them were Hindu] were brought into the federal structure of India the accumulative position of the Hindus would be immeasurably strengthened. Even in Iqbal's proposals a Northwest Muslim state created with the amalgamation of Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan, would retain a substantial number of Hindus, and they would remain a strong minority. If the Sikhs were to join the Hindus they would then constitute a formidable force in the state. In view of this calculation, the "Enlightened Hindu" advised his community that there was really no need to be overly concerned about Iqbal's proposals.<sup>12</sup>

Now a few words about the Muslim press. In general Muslim press supported Iqbal's views. The *Muslim Outlook*, *Siyasat*, and *Humdam* of Lucknow welcomed Iqbal's proposals. Among the Muslim newspapers,



*Inqilab* was the most emphatic supporter of Iqbal. Translated into Urdu by Ghulam Rasul Mehr, *Inqilab* published in two installments the text of Iqbal's address. In January 1931 *Inqilab* published 12 editorials in support of Iqbal's ideas enshrined in the address. In one of the editorials *Inqilab* highlighted the fact that the proposal for the Northwest Muslim state, and the idea of exchange of populations, which at first had been advanced by Lala Lajpat Rai, and afterward by Bhai Parmanand expressed very similar views. A few days before Iqbal delivered his address the vision of partitioning India into three zones – Muslim Zone, Hindu Zone, and the Zone of India states – was presented by Professor G. R. Abhiankar.

These proposals envisioning partitioning of India had been advanced before Iqbal enunciated his view in his presidential address. Consequently, *Inqilab* reasoned in the editorial with a rhetorical question: why is Iqbal denied the right to articulate a similar vision. In a letter of January 11, 1931 to Saiyad Nazir Niazi Iqbal further clarified his views about the exchange of populations: "The proposed Islamic state is an ultimate objective. The exchange of population is not needed. Some years ago Lala Lajpat Rai had advanced the view of exchange of population. In the Muslim state or states, which might emerge in the Northwest India under this scheme, Hindu minority's rights would be fully protected."<sup>13</sup>

In another editorial *Inqilab* presented a fascinating view, suggesting that if Hindu majority was determined to overlook Muslims' rights, and want to struggle for self-determination (*sawaraj*), then Muslims are also entitled in their majority provinces to struggle for the establishment of a Muslim state. Even the League of Nations has conceded the Muslims, where they constitute 80 percent majority of the total population, to create a Muslim state; because the League of Nations is committed to the principle of self-determination. In another editorial, *Inqilab* suggested that

peace and security would prevail in India, if in light of Iqbal's proposals the Muslims of the Northwest of India are conceded the right to achieve sovereign freedom. If this did not come to pass the Hindus and Muslims would be entangled in an endless civil war. In the last part of this long editorial, *Inqilab* paid a tribute of gratitude to Iqbal, adding: "May God give a long life to this blessed personality, who for the first time at Allahabad lit up the route of national destiny of Muslims, who had lost their pathway by the misleading yet captivating ideas of fake nationalism and equally fake democratic promises. God willing this bright light would guide Muslims to their true destinations."<sup>14</sup>

*Humdam* of Lucknow stated in an editorial:

Iqbal's demand is justified in asking for the establishment of Muslim India within India. It can best be attained in amalgamating Northwest Frontier Province, Sindh, Punjab and Balochistan into one state. Truly this approach promises to be the best solution of Hindu-Muslim conflicts. This proposal deserves the supportive efforts of united Muslims of India, and they should stop only when the power of their actions has fully attained their objective.<sup>15</sup>

In addition to writing laudatory and supportive editorials, the Muslim press continued to rebut and reject Hindu press' scurrilous comments about Iqbal. Soon after the delivering of Iqbal's address the newspapers in London published portions of his speech, and the Round Table Conference was abuzzed with his ideas (It has already been mentioned Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald was annoyed). Speaking before the London Round Table Conference's sub-committee in the minorities, Dr. B.S. Moonje, Nagpur's President of Hindu Maha Sabha expressed his more than visible annoyance at Iqbal's oration. He said:

I cannot say at this juncture if any mention of Dr. Muhammad Iqbal's speech, which has appeared in yesterday's press, is appropriate or not...

He is the President of the Muslim League in India. It pains me to mention that since demands are being consistently pressed in the lines of his thought, I have to refer to them with very strained feelings...

I appeal to my Muslim friends not to be carried away by emotions. We are all Indian; there is no difference in our flesh and blood, and bones. We are descendents of a single nation. We are prepared to offer you all the protection that you demand to protect your religion, culture, and the progress of your future generations.

I appeal to you that do not lose courage, and with endurance merge yourself in the united nation of India. I am confident that if you experiment [with this united living] for a period of 10 years you would have no grievance.”<sup>16</sup>

Sir Muhammad Shafi responded to Moonje’s comments in the Minority Sub-Committee’s meeting on January 1, 1931:

Dr. Moonje has specifically mentioned Sir Muhammad Iqbal’s speech, which he delivered three days ago, as the President of the annual Session of the Muslim League. I wish that Dr. Moonje had not compelled me to discuss this issue, which I had planned to avoid. I assure the Sub-Committee that I had the same intention when I came here yesterday morning. First, unless I have the full text of the speech, I cannot express a definitive view...If Sir Muhammad Iqbal has stated that because of Hindus absolute demographic majority the central government of India would be dominated by Hindus, and as a consequence in six provinces out of eight governor’s ruled provinces Hindu states would be established, then [logically] in four provinces, where Muslims constitute the majority, why shouldn’t four Muslim states be established.

I do not see anything objectionable in this proposal. I am prepared to repeat this proposal before this committee. Every provincial unit should be made a state. If [Iqbal] has made this statement, then there is no room for any objection, and none should have been raised. If however, he has proposed the creation of an independent Muslim state to be outside of the British Commonwealth, then I reject this proposal on behalf of the Muslim delegation.

Mr. Prime Minister Sir! I can fully comprehend the reference to a Muslim losing his patience.

My Friend Dr. Moonje has continued to make contradictory statements in different parts of India.<sup>17</sup>

In London no other Muslim leader publicly supported the Allahabad address. The real reason for this silence was the fact that the first Round Table Conference had come to a dead-end. An announcement for the convening of the Second Round Table Conference had been made. Muslim leaders awaited the outcome of the 14-Point policy of Jinnah or a plausible agreement between Hindus and Muslims. The conferences continued well into 1933, and Iqbal participated in the second and third conferences. A definitive outcome was anticipated.

After the 1930 presidential address, Iqbal continued his silent efforts for the convening of the Upper India Muslim Conference. In a letter of April 19, 1931 to Saiyad Nazir Niazi, Iqbal assured him of its forthcoming session. In 1932 he wrote to Niazi again advising him to wait for it. Niazi has stated that Iqbal had started writing an address for the conference, which he finally delivered on March 31, 1932 before the All-Parties Muslim Conference in Lahore. However, the Upper India Muslim Conference was never held. Niazi has offered as an explanation:

Why was this conference never held? The major reason was the interruption caused by the London Round Table Conferences, which Iqbal attended. To speculate that some invisible hands caused the conference's failure is wrong. Iqbal was never trapped by individuals or parties, no matter what their aims might be. The waiting for the outcome of the London Round Table Conferences was unavoidable.

When he returned after the Third Round Table Conference, traveling had exhausted him. Moreover, he confronted some very delicate and complex circumstances, which persuaded him to postpone his plans. In 1934 he became sick, and the conference failed to be organized.<sup>18</sup>

In actuality the plan to organize the North-West Indian Muslim Conference remained alive in Iqbal's mind till the last days of his life. He mentioned it in his letter of June 21, 1937 to Jinnah, and then in another letter of August 11, 1937 he advised Jinnah that northwest India should become the pivotal region of the Muslim League's leadership and its vigorous activities.<sup>19</sup>

While Muslim leaders in general remained silent about the Allahabad proposals, Haji Saith Abdullah Harun, a well-known Muslim leader in Sindh, was attracted to the *Address*' guidelines. He initiated correspondence with Iqbal with a view to the possible inauguration of the Upper India Muslim Conference. Moreover, educated Muslims, and especially college students devoted considerable attention to the *Address*. The *Sufi*, a magazine published from Mandi Baha-ud-Din, persuaded Saiyad Nazir Niazi to translate the *Address* into Urdu as it had inspired political enthusiasm among the Muslims of the Punjab, Northwest Frontier Province, Sindh and Balochistan. The copies of Urdu translation in the thousands were indeed distributed without cost.

Consequently some inspired young men initiated the publication of series of articles in the newspapers. For instance, Abd al-Rab, a lawyer in Allahabad, and Khan Ghulam Mustafa Khan Tai`b of Lahore, wrote several articles in support of the *Address*. From Calcutta three Muslim students – Raghbir Ahsan, Fazl Rasul Khan Afridi, and S.M. Salim – issued a joint statement in support of the *Address*, and proposed that to advance the cause of Iqbal's proposed Muslim state its cultural aspects should also be highlighted, and a "Muslims' Objective Fund" should be established.

It may also be emphatically pointed out that Muslim supporters of the "ideology of secularism," and the "Indian composite culture" espoused by the All-Indian National Congress called the *Address* derisively a

“political lyric.” Saiyad Nazir Niazi further elaborated this point with an anecdote:

In 1931 some friends gathered together in Maulana Muhammad Ali’s house (located in the Karol Bagh section of Delhi) soon after his death. Among them were the individuals who had participated in the agitations organized for the Caliphate Movement, and against any possible cooperation with the British government. Despite the basic changes in the political dynamics of the time some remained adamant in their views. Some of them shared the political ideology of the Congress, and some were supporters of the Muslim League. In this motley congregation someone said: ‘Has anyone really read Iqbal’s *Address*? Then he added a comment. By God! What a beautiful poetry he has composed. [What do you expect]. After all he is a poet. What a lyric he sang.’ At the end of his comment the thunder of laughter was raised.<sup>20</sup>

### **Criticism of Iqbal’s Politics and Actions**

In the aftermath of the *Address* the ranks of Iqbal’s enemies swelled. Earlier in the days of the Caliphate agitation and the non-cooperation movement these enemies had initiated a campaign to “assassinate” his character, and attributed to him calumnious statements. It may be recalled that in the 1926 election campaign his rival had spared no effort in maligning Iqbal. The *Address* became a new weapon of Anti-Iqbal propaganda. A united front of the Hindu Maha Sabha press, ideologues of socialism, and Communist Party members, the so-called progressive Muslims, and the Congress ideologues piled up a huge catalog of accusations against Iqbal. Here are some samples: agent of the British, enemy of the homeland, supporter of the capitalists and the enemy of the poor working classes, bigoted “communalist,” reactionary, unpractical and pessimist.

In his well-known book, *Iqbal ka Siyasi Karnama*, Muhammad Ahmad Khan arranged anti-Iqbal accusations into three categories, and subjected them to scholarly

analysis to establish the norms of truth and justice. One cannot improve upon his scholarly accomplishment. Here is an extensive summary of Ahmad Khan's analysis:

(I) Collaboration with the British Government

To make an argument that Iqbal was a friend of the British, his critics accumulated ten indictments:

1. He wrote poems, lauded the British officials
2. He refused to participate in the Caliphate agitation, and in the non-cooperative movement of the All-India National Congress
3. He accepted the British title of Knighthood [Sir]
4. By his participation as an elected member in the Legislative Council he cooperated with the British political system
5. In the Legislative Council he proposed an increase in the number of British bureaucrats in the administration
6. He cooperated with the Simon Commission
7. He collaborated with Sir Muhammad Shafi, a well-known supporter of the British Raj
8. He presented the concept of the Muslim state in his address in Allahabad with the encouragement of the British government
9. The British government designated Iqbal to participate in the Round Table Conferences
10. Iqbal was encouraged by the British to bloc Hindu-Muslim agreement

(An explanation in regard to this accusation #10 has already been given in this chapter. Here the focus is on the balance of these accusations).

11. This is true that Iqbal did compose some poems, lauding some British officials. On some special occasions he was asked to do so, and sometimes he composed them as an act of convenience to earn their goodwill. None of them, he considered worth the final selection in his published works. It must be

remembered that Iqbal had accepted Sir Saiyad school of thought, while emphasized the fact that in view of Hindu demographic preponderant majority, and the preeminence of the British rule Muslims should avoid agitational politics. The history of Muslim India has demonstrated that whenever Muslims became confrontational in an open warfare against the British, Muslims sustained enormous loss, and Hindus escaped almost unscathed. Iqbal disapproved of agitational politics and confrontation. Temperamentally, he could not brook agitation or confrontational protest, which damaged Muslims' interests in unequal confrontations.

Against this intellectual landscape one can reasonably understand, why he composed an elegy at the death of Queen Victoria, Ghulam Rasul Mehr has offered a cogent explanation:

Iqbal composed this elegy to be in the style of times. Its subject matter needs no comment. In 1901 the country's political thinking and perceptions, the manner of style and discourse was entirely different. To evaluate it 15 years later by the standards of today is entirely inappropriate, just as it is inappropriate to exclude the adolescent years from the lives of Bu Ali Sina or Plato. In that age the style of thought, and standard of evaluation of nations and their different classes was entirely different than that of the later generations. In this regard let us not forget Altaf Hussain Hali's elegy which he composed on Queen Victoria's death. It was published in *Ma`arif* of January 1901.<sup>21</sup>

In 1902 Iqbal composed another poem which he read at the annual meeting of Anjuman Himayat-i Islam to welcome the dignitary guests of the occasion, Sir McKworth Young, Governor of the Punjab and the English Director of Education. During the early twentieth century the British officials were invited to the public functions of the Anjuman. The presence of the British officials was viewed as a very important event, and the governments' favorable attitude was expected in return.<sup>22</sup> In 1911 Iqbal



wrote some verses at King George V's coronation festivities, which he recited in Delhi. These verses were published in December 1911 in the *Darbar-i Shahi number* of Kawnpur.<sup>23</sup>

The start of World War I in 1914 ushered in a very difficult era for the Muslims: Ottoman Turkey, which was the epicenter of the Islamic Caliphate, became an ally of Germany and had declared war on Britain. These were crisis filled years and to earn the British antagonism on grand policy matters would have endangered personal well being. As a matter of political convenience, Iqbal temporarily became a silent recluse. When the war was winding down by 1918 the Viceroy organized a war conference in Delhi, and through Nawab Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan asked Iqbal to compose a suitable poem for this occasion. This invitation could not be turned down, and he composed a poem – *Punjab ka Jawab*, and recited it in a *Mushai`ra* in Delhi.<sup>24</sup> Toward the end of World War I, victory celebrations were organized on December 15, 1918 in Bradlaw Hall, where Michael O'Dwyer presided over the proceedings. Accompanied by Nawab Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Iqbal recited some Urdu and some Persian verses. Urdu verses were in no way related to the victory celebrations, and subsequently they were included in Iqbal's Urdu *magnum opus*, *Bang-i Dara*, and are titled, "Shu`a-i Aftab."<sup>25</sup>

These five poems were by no means inspired by the so-called friendship with the British, but reflected his political orientation, and circumstantial prudence.

In principle Iqbal was, as stated above, against agitational politics. Precisely for this reason he was opposed to participation in the agitational movement for the caliphate, and disapproved of the movement to boycott cooperation with the British government. Moreover, the Muslim leaders of these movements were suspect in his view; in reality they stood for "united nation" and

“composite culture” instead of being the stalwarts of Muslim nationalism (*Muslim Qawmiyat*). In addition to Iqbal there were several outstanding public figures in India who did not participate in these movements. Jinnah was opposed to these movements, and he severed his relationship with the National Congress because of their agitations. Among the Hindu leaders the most noticeable figure was Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, who was opposed to these movements of agitation, and he was able to shelter the Hindu university at Benaras from the harmful impact of these agitations.

The British government awarded Iqbal the title of Knighthood for his literary achievements. His *mathnavi*, *Asrar-i Khudi* was translated into English by Professor Reynold Nicholson of Cambridge University. Impressed by this accomplishment Sir Montague Butler, the Governor of the Punjab, recommended to the Viceroy that Iqbal should be awarded an honorific title in Persian reminiscent of the old Mughal style. The government of India wanted to perpetuate its own British style, and feared that a Mughal style honorific title might reestablish the discarded style. In consequence the title of Knighthood was considered most appropriate.<sup>26</sup> Iqbal was not enamored of titles or worldly acknowledgements. He made no deal with the British government. After the award of this title, his freedom of expression became more pronounced, and no one could stop him from expressing his views.

Yes, Iqbal was elected a member of the Punjab Legislative Council. If he wanted to, he could have maintained his membership in the Unionist Party as a stepping stone to a ministerial appointment. But he subjected Sir Fazl-i Hussain and the Unionist Party's policies to his intense scrutiny and critical evaluation. In the Legislative Council his voice remained an independent member's voice. If participation in the Legislative Council implies cooperation with the British political system, then

why did the leaders of the non-cooperation or civil disobedience movement fought legislative elections, and become legislators? In the 1936 elections the National Congress not only competed in the elections, but also established provincial governments.

Another aspect of this accusation is Iqbal's speech in which he had opposed the proposal of Sardar Ujjal Singh demanding that all appointments to high government positions should be made through open competitive examinations. Singh couched his proposals in the garb of a united nation of India, but in actual practice it would have denied Muslims the opportunity to achieve gainful employments. Iqbal wanted the procedure of competitive examinations to continue along with the possibility of affirmative appointments in Muslims' favor. On this occasion he made a sarcastic remark that let more British officials be inducted into the administrative services rather opening all appointments through the competitive examinations; because Iqbal perceived the British officials to be even handed in discharging their responsibilities. If Iqbal's objective was to strengthen the British imperial system by having more British officials, then why did he protest against their extravagantly high salaries, and demanded their substantial reduction. These salaries were a drain on the provincial budget.

Generally Sir Muhammad Shafi was supposed to be the "friend" of the British. The historical determination has yet to be made if his friendship was instrumental to protecting the Muslims' interest, or that of the British government. By operating through the separate electorates, he rendered services to the Muslims. These issues deserve to be explored by a judicious historian. Iqbal cooperated with Sir Shafi to the extent of protecting Muslims' national interests. Iqbal was not reluctant to take issue with Sir Shafi, if and when it became necessary. When Iqbal discovered that the Shafi League's memorandum, which

was designed for the Simon Commission, did not include the demand of provincial autonomy, Iqbal stood up to Shafi and resigned from his position of the Secretary of the Shafi League. Sir Shafi capitulated and inserted the demand for provincial autonomy in the memorandum. In the struggle for Muslims' rights, Iqbal could take on Maulana Muhammad Ali, M.A. Jinnah, the National Congress and of course Sir Shafi.

The accusation that Iqbal was encouraged by the British to present the concept of an Islamic state in his *Address* at Allahabad, then why was Ramsay MacDonald so annoyed with Iqbal's ideas? Why did the English newspapers in India, who were the watchdogs for the British imperial interests, condemn the *Address*. If Iqbal was the so-called agent of British imperialism, why was he not invited to participate in the first London Round Table Conference? Strangely enough Hindu-owned press in India had presented an equally "strange" thesis since Iqbal was not invited to the first Round Table Conference, he avenged his exclusion with the weapon of his *Address*. This contradictory accusation became much more glaring, when we realize that if Iqbal's *Address* was a vindictive attack on the British, then how could Iqbal be obliging them at the same time. Is this not an absurd argument?

Iqbal had come to a conclusion that no agreement between the Hindus and the Muslims could possibly be achieved, which would satisfy both. Despite this firm view, he supported those Muslim leader's efforts for negotiations, which protected the Muslims' rights and retain the separate electorates for legislative elections. Take a look at the record: Hindu leaders accepted the Delhi Proposals, which were presented by Jinnah to the National Congress; but they refused to incorporate them in the *Nehru Report*. When Jinnah offered some amendments to the *Nehru Report*, they were rejected. The All Parties Muslim Conference's proposals and Jinnah's 14-Points

were similarly discarded. Even after the issuance of the Communal Award of 1932, which was announced by the British governments, Maulana Shaukat Ali and other Muslim leaders' efforts for a negotiated settlement with the Hindus achieved no positive results. Clearly the Hindu leaders were not prepared to accept Muslim demands or compromise with the Muslims.

Against the background of these futile efforts by the Muslim leaders, can anyone with even a grain of fairness conclude that Iqbal was sabotaging these endeavors at the British instigation? He didn't participate in these negotiations, nor did he issue a word of discouragement about them. Iqbal was never opposed to the real understanding with the Hindu leaders, but he often objected to the mode of negotiations for an agreement, when he perceived the Muslims' interests differently. Dr. Rajendar Prashad stated in his well-known book *The Future of India* (pp. 274-275):

The President of All-Parties Muslim Conference's statement [Iqbal was the President] maintained that it would serve no useful purpose to raise once again the issue of joint vs. separate electorates because Muslims are not prepared to abandon this mode of protection.

However, they are prepared to examine the majority community's initiative, and its proposals, which might include all important issues.

If Iqbal were such a good friend to the British, he could have made his life comfortable economically. He was not interested in acquiring a position in the British Raj. After he returned from Britain after completing his advanced education in philosophy and law, he became a faculty member in philosophy at the Government College in Lahore. After a short period of time he resigned this position. Khalifah Abdul Hakim once asked him the reason for his resignation. This is what Iqbal told him:

I was a professor for a short while, but realized that in Indian Colleges no scholarly work is possible, while you have to put

up with indignations of employment. At one time I had an argument with the Principal of the College on the attendance of the students in the classes. The Principal conducted the conversation with me as if I was an ordinary clerk in his office. I was disillusioned, and made up my mind that in the future, I would avoid an employment opportunity in the government.<sup>27</sup>

Ali Bakhsh asked Iqbal the day he resigned, why he decided to quit his position.

Iqbal explained to him: "Ali Bakhsh, it is not easy to function in the British employment. The major problem is my determination to convey to our people a message. As a government employee I was not at liberty to express my views. Now I am a free man, I can say whatever I want to say."<sup>28</sup>

To protect the freedom of expression Iqbal refused to accept a position in the Indian Educational Service, a professional status to teach philosophy in Aligarh Muslim University and once again an appointment in the Government College at Lahore.<sup>29</sup> Iqbal stated in one of his letters: "Lt. Governor of the Punjab was willing to recommend my candidacy to Secretary of State for India for Professor at the Government College, but following my own inclinations I have decided not to be a candidate for this position."<sup>30</sup>

Under the pressure of some very delicate personal problems, his very strained relations with Sir Shadi Lal, the Chief Justice of the Lahore High Court, causing him enormous difficulties in his legal practice, and difficult economic conditions, Iqbal made one unsuccessful attempt to secure a position in the Administration of the Kashmir and Jammu Princely State. He wrote a letter on October 17, 1925 to Sir J.P. Thompson, who was a member of the Indian Council of States. Thompson was personally known to Iqbal. As a member of the Council of States he dealt directly with the Rulers of the Princely States. In 1925 Iqbal had been proposed as a Justice of the High Court, and

Sir Shadi Lal, known for his communal bias, used his position not to endorse Iqbal for this significant appointment. Outraged by Sir Shadi Lal's discriminatory treatment, the Muslim press in the Punjab loudly protested. Sir Shadi Lal wrongly came to believe that the public protest was inspired by Iqbal. Sir Shadi Lal and his supporters were determined to damage Iqbal's reputation and his interests. Disgusted with Lahore's increasingly hostile environment Iqbal sought, as it turned out, unsuccessful refuge in an employment in Kashmir. In view of this very agonizing situation, Iqbal wrote a fairly detailed letter to Thompson:

I am writing this letter about a personal matter. I hope that you would kindly help me in this difficult situation. You might have heard about the judgment of the government about my candidacy for the position of a Justice of the High Court. Unfortunately some people have attempted to involve me in the Muslim press' protest, which has been conducted or might be in the future. This would cause me a lot of damage. I was informed that Sir Shadi Lal believes that some individuals including me are encouraging and supporting the protest. While I believe that he should know that I have nothing to do with this so-called conspiracy, in which I am being included. In any case it would become exceptionally difficult for me to practice law; in the past lot of damage was done to me by different means. In addition to this problem there are several other problems, which are not appropriate to discuss here. I am disgusted with this environment. I want to leave everything and move to a distant place.

I believe that with one stroke of your pen you can free me from these difficulties. Trusting in your kindness and sympathy I seek your help. Is it not possible for you to have an appointment for me in Kashmir's State of Council? You might know that Kashmir is my ancestral homeland; and I have very special feelings for this state. It is entirely possible that the new Ruler [Hari Singh] might be contemplating some changes in his Administration. If this is so, then I believe it is the appropriate time to raise this issue with him.

If you give me some help at this juncture, it would be an act of spiritual and material blessing for me. I will always be grateful to you for your kindness.”<sup>31</sup>

Fortunately for Iqbal nothing much came out of this endeavor. The government policy at this point in time was not to recommend personnel for appointments to the Princely States unless they specifically asked for it. In view of this policy Thompson failed to do anything for Iqbal. He informed him that if the Ruler of Kashmir or any other state asked for a candidate, he would certainly keep him in mind. Iqbal remained in Lahore. Next year in 1926 he decided to participate in an election for the Punjab Legislative Council, which was the first step in Iqbal’s emergence as a dynamic public figure on the horizon of all India politics.

Actually law practice was not an adequate source of income for Iqbal and his family. To supplement his income he functioned as an examiner of the Punjab University; setting the questions for examinations and marking the student’s answer papers gave him reasonably sufficient compensation. The irregularity and insufficiency of income often led his wife to encourage him to find a decent position. With a disarming smile he always dodged her frequent suggestion.

Very few individuals realize that Iqbal was the scion of a working-class family. Senior to Iqbal by nearly twenty years, his elder brother Shaikh Ata Muhammad had very generously paid for his educational expenses; without this help he wouldn’t have been able to complete his education in India, let alone the possibility of advanced education in Britain and Germany. He was known to be the poorest “knight” – (with an honorific title Sir) – in India. Some of his friends once advised him to socialize with officials, and entertain them to formal dinners. One of his friends, Mirza Jalal-ud-Din’s testimony in this issue is very interesting: “We advised Dr. Sahib to invite officials occasionally for



dinner at his residence. English officials enjoy a few drinks before dinner. But our suggestions were never accepted. The possibility of cashing in favors with the British officials never entered into his social calculations. And he didn't want to waste money on consumptions of this type.”<sup>32</sup>

In the biography of his father, Azim Hussain has catalogued Iqbal's persistent criticism of the British government, while Sir Fazl-i Hussain (his father) repeatedly attempted to help Iqbal in attaining a prosperous career. Here is catalogue:

1. In 1924 Fazl-i Hussain urged Sir Malcolm Hailey” to appoint Iqbal Justice of the High Court, “but while the case was under consideration Dr. Iqbal alienated the sympathies of officials by unrestrained criticism of government.
2. In 1927 it was proposed to send a Muslim delegation to place before the Secretary of State the Muslim demands for the forthcoming reforms. Fazl-i Hussain asked Dr. Iqbal to lead the deputation, and collected Rs 3,000 for the purpose...but he refused to go as it would have involved an expenditure of an extra few thousand rupees.”
3. In 1931 at the insistence of Fazl-i Hussain, the Viceroy nominated Dr. Iqbal to the Second Round Table Conference, while attending the conference Dr. Iqbal quarreled with Sir Akbar Hydari, a prominent member of the Muslim delegation ...On his return he severely criticized the work of the Muslim delegation, a criticism greatly resented by he Secretary of State because it belittled the proceedings of the conference. The following year Fazl-i Hussain urged that Dr. Iqbal be sent again to the Round Table Conference, or alternatively should serve on the Federal Structure Committee or be sent as a member of the Indian delegation to the League of Nations...while [the London Round Table Conference] was in progress, he resigned

and returned to India, and denounced the British government in the strongest possible terms...

4. In 1933 Fazl-i Hussain again recommended Iqbal for appointment as an Agent to South Africa." Viceroy did not agree because of Iqbal's critical attitude.<sup>33</sup>

All of his life Iqbal was never financially comfortable. During the last years of his life he had stopped his legal practice. His wife had died, and he had to support two young children in addition to maintaining the house. Physically he was not well, and financial difficulties made his life very unpleasant. Sir Fazl-i Hussain, who according to his own words, had "been a great admirer of [Iqbal] since college days," continued to express a sympathetic expression about his health and financial well-being. Reflecting these sentiments Sir Fazl-i Hussain inquired about Iqbal in a letter to a mutual acquaintance, Mian Amir-ud-Din, who responded: "Dr. Iqbal had ceased to practice [law] in 1931. His health was poor, and so were his finances, and he was rapidly losing his voice."

Commenting on Iqbal's less than successful professional career, Azim Hussain delivered his personal judgment: "Dr. Iqbal was not a politician; he was a political philosopher. He was an idealist, and could not understand that politics was a game of compromise. He failed to get office or to become a leader because he was more of a poet, and a thinker than a man of affairs."<sup>34</sup>

This was indeed Azim Hussain's subjective evaluation, and he was entitled to his views. But accepting Iqbal's economic deprivations as facts Muhammad Ahmad Khan made a few telling points in his rhetorical question: "Were Britain's well-wishers and friends always so economically deprived like [Iqbal]? Despite this glaring contrasts between Iqbal's economic deprivation, and the prosperous life of British imperialism's friends, Iqbal's critics continued this refrain: Iqbal was Britain's well-wisher and supporter, and imperialist agent. What kind of friendship

was this that Iqbal had for Britain?" People who made calumnious statements of this base nature were several including well-known religious scholar from the madrasa of Deoband, who considered "Iqbal to be captivated by the glitter of Briatin."

Among the *ulama*, Maulana Abdul Ala Maududi had an entirely different view of Iqbal:

Iqbal abhorred British policies intellectually, and in actual practice. He stayed aloof from the citadel of power, and was deeply suspicious of the British government and those who supported it, and considered them road blocs in the attainment of his objectives. His ultimate objective was not just independence and restoration of sovereignty; he perceived the existence of *dar-al-Islam* within independent India. Politically, he very reluctantly cooperated with the leaders, who were opposed to the establishment of Hindu Raj under the British protectorate. In so far as their objective was concerned they were poles apart. But a grand strategy had attached him to this class; which awaited the following developments: the yearning for *dar-al-Islam* had yet to ignite a revolutionary zeal of volcanic intensity among young Muslims, who would be willing to sacrifice their lives for this objective. Until this development took place their revolutionary impulse must be diverted to another direction. Precisely for these considerations he inspired a new spirit through his poetry in young Muslims, which is now generally known and understood. On the other hand in practical politics he adopted a policy, which only a few individuals understood. The superficial aspects of this policy sometimes led even his most ardent admirers to criticize him, which he quietly tolerated.<sup>35</sup>

Another accusation is directed against his poetry, politics and his personality: that he was a "communalist," and bigoted. This accusation traced Iqbal's intellectual and psychological development, which assumed new dimensions during his stay in Europe, and made Islam the framework of his poetry. Thus a bigoted communalist he became, as if the cultivation of Islamic solidarity ushered in

anti-Hindu sentiments. “Solidarity” and “bigotry” are entirely two different bents of mind. In differentiating between the two sentiments Iqbal stated: “Solidarity and bigotry are qualitatively different. Solidarity springs from life’s roots, and bigotry is psychologically nurtured. Bigotry is a social sickness and can be cured with education and spiritual therapy. Social solidarity is an essential part of life and it should be nurtured and trained. In Islam individual and social solidarity’s boundaries are determined. These boundaries are also called *shari`a*. According to my belief and in fact of all Muslims remaining within the bounds of *shari`a* is for general welfare; infringement of its limits leads to [social] destruction.”<sup>36</sup>

In the *Address* Iqbal elaborated these points publicly: “The principle that each group is entitled to free development on its own lines, is not inspired by any feeling of narrow communalism. There are communalisms and communalisms. A community which is inspired by feelings of ill will towards other communities, is low and ignoble. I entertain the highest respect for the customs, laws, religions and social institutions of other communities. Nay, it is my duty according to the teaching of the Qur’an, even to defend their places of worship, if need be. Yet I love the communal group, which is the source of my life and my behavior, and which had formed me what I am by giving me its religion, its literature, its thought, its culture and thereby recreating its whole past as a living operative factor in my present consciousness.”<sup>37</sup>

Iqbal’s friends were Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs. With Maharaja Kishan Prashad he had a life long friendship. He even consulted Iqbal about the marriage possibilities of his daughters. Iqbal wrote to him in one of his letters: “I have very deep and sincere feelings for you. It is not difficult to understand their significance. Their secret is concealed in the heart that God has granted you. I rejoice your exalted position, but I view more than [your high position], I gaze

at the “secret” which is hidden under the exterior of your high position.”<sup>38</sup>

In much the same way Iqbal had sincere and friendly relations with Swami Ram Tirath, and at his death wrote a heart-rendering elegy. A good poet of Urdu in his own right, Pandit Shiv Nairayan Shamim often asked Iqbal to improve upon his poems. He admired Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, and retained very affectionate feelings with the Nehru family, and especially Jawaharlal Nehru, who was known to be an open-minded free thinker and politically a moderate leader. Perhaps Iqbal had some high hopes associated with young Jawaharlal. Could it be that Iqbal had a soft corner in his heart for the Nehrus, because like Iqbal’s their family at one time in the past had migrated from Kashmir for the flatlands of the Uttar Pradesh.

Among the Sikhs Iqbal had close relations with Sir Joginder Singh and Umrao Singh Sher Gill. He always treated Rajkumari Bamba with great courtesy since she was the granddaughter of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. For the early primary education of his son Javid Iqbal, Iqbal had engaged a Hindu teacher, whose instructive capability he greatly trusted. During the last five years of his life Iqbal retained the professional services of a Sikh doctor, Jami’t Singh, who continued to treat his family without any fee or other form of compensation. When Iqbal rented a run-down house on McLeod Road in Lahore, he paid Rs 130 per month. In those days Rs 130 was considered to be a substantial sum. Once a friend suggested to him that with this level of rent he could find a much better house in Lahore. Iqbal responded: “Yes, you are right, but I do not want to vacate this house for one very good reason. This house is owned by two young Hindu orphans, who inherited it. If I vacate this house no one will want to rent it for this amount, and they would suffer economic hardship.”<sup>39</sup>

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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- <sup>5</sup> M.S. Baljon, *Religious and Reformist Views of Sir Saiyad Ahmad Khan* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1949), pp. 75-76.
- <sup>6</sup> M. A. H. Isphahani, "Letter to the Editor," *The Pakistan Times*, May 7, 1967.
- <sup>7</sup> Muhammad Ahmad Khan, op. cit., pp. 913-914.
- <sup>8</sup> Iqbal Number, *Nuqush* (September 1977), pp. 499-504.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 503.
- <sup>10</sup> Iqbal, "Presidential Address at Allahabad, December 29, 1930" in A.R. Tariq, Ed., *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal* (Lahore: Sh. Ghulam Ali and Sons, 1973), pp. 31-32.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 324-325.
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 326-327.
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- <sup>14</sup> Khurshid, op. cit., p. 329.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 330.
- <sup>16</sup> "Proceedings of the Minority Sub-Committee of the First London Round Table Conference," pp. 43-44.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.
- <sup>18</sup> Niazi, op. cit., pp. 54, 64, 66, 67.
- <sup>19</sup> Hafeez Malik, ed., *Iqbal: Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1971), pp. 386-388.
- <sup>20</sup> Saiyad Nazir Niazi, Ed., *Maktubat-i Iqbal*, p. 55.
- <sup>21</sup> Ghulam Rasul Mehr, *Sarud-i Raftah*, pp. 181-191.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 176-177.
- <sup>23</sup> Muhammad Abdullah Qureshi, *Baqiyat-i Iqbal*, p. 206.
- <sup>24</sup> Mehr, op. cit., pp. 55-57.
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139, 200.
- <sup>26</sup> Saeed Akhtar Durrani, *Allama Iqbal Europe Mein Awr Diger*, Mudamin, Ms.

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- <sup>27</sup> Ghulam Dastgir Rashid, *Athar-i Iqbal*, (Hyderabad-Deccan: n.d.), pp. 22-23.
- <sup>28</sup> Chiragh Hasan Haslat, *Iqbal Namah*,. 29.
- <sup>29</sup> Shaikh Ata Allah, *Iqbal Namah*, Vol. II, pp. 126-127.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>31</sup> Salim-ud-Din Qureshi, “Allama Iqbal ka Ayk Gher Matbu`a Khat,” *Afkar* (November 1981).
- <sup>32</sup> Mahmud Nizami, Ed., *Malfuzat-i Iqbal*, p. 79.
- <sup>33</sup> Azim Hussain, *Fazl-i Hussian: A Political Biography* (Bombay: Longmans, Green and Co., 1946), pp. 319-320.
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## Chapter VI

### THE AFTERMATH OF THE ALLAHABAD ADDRESS OF 1930

In his own professional career Iqbal suffered a big setback, when Chief Justice, Sir Shadi Lal, refused to recommend his nomination for the position of a Justice at the Lahore High Court. Often damage was done to him, causing mental anguish, by narrow minded *ulama*, and some jealous Muslims. Not a single incidence can be cited to demonstrate Iqbal's bias, or discriminatory treatment of any Hindu or Sikh. He retained no animosity or bias toward Hindu nation. Often he expressed happiness at their progress and success. In a letter to Sir Francis Young husband, Iqbal stated: "Please do not think that I have any prejudice against the Hindus. In fact I have great admiration for the spirit of self-sacrifice and courage, which they have shown in recent years. In different professions they have produced men of eminence in every walk of life and are fast advancing along social and economic lines."<sup>1</sup>

Iqbal retained a genuine admiration for the founders of Hindu and Sikh religions. He wrote a eulogy in honor of Ram Chander, and called him *imam al-Hind* (preeminent religious leader of India), *Chirag-i Hidayat* (light of guidance), and *malik siresht* (of angelic nature). Similarly he addressed Guru Nanak as *payghamber-i Towhid wa Haq*



messenger preaching unity of God and truth), *Towhid prast* (lover of one God), and *Nur-i Ibrahim* (light of Abraham). He called Gotam Buddha preacher of divine message. For his poem honoring Ram Chander, the orthodox *ulama* issued a *fatwa* of infidelity against Iqbal. He had planned to translate *Ramaiyana* and *Gita* in Urdu verse. A study of his *magnum opus*, *Asrar-i Khudi's* preface provides convincing evidence to highlight the fact that Iqbal harbored no animus against Hinduism. He had studied Hindu literature and metaphysics in depth, and had warm and affectionate feeling of appreciation for Vishameter (Bhartari Hari), Sri Krishan and Ramanuja. Iqbal's Islam was free from every form of bigotry. A Hindu scholar and poet of international reputation, Jagan Nath Azad has illuminated this aspect of his Islamic conviction:

The renunciation of active life, which Iqbal denounced as un-Islamic mysticism led him to declare un-Islamic Ibn-al Arabi's Qur'anic exegesis, in a similar manner this brand of mysticism was unacceptable from Shri Shanker Acharya. This was by no means a discriminatory treatment along the Hindu-Muslim dichotomy, which we have imposed upon ourselves in the "progressive era" of modern age.

In Iqbal's philosophic discipline Islam is used in its true Islamic meaning, and so it was in terms of contemporary politics. In Iqbal's poetry Islam stands for peace, security, and pure zest for the struggle of life. Precisely for these perspectives, when he described Ibn-al Arabi and Shri Shanker, and the Persian poet's view as un-Islamic, he did not denounce Sri Krishan and Ramanuja's philosophic ideas. In fact he affirmed their ideas, and urged their preservation.<sup>2</sup>

Iqbal stated forthrightly that Islam and Muslim are special terms, which must be understood in order to grasp my views.<sup>3</sup>

Like Hindus, ancient Greeks and Egyptians, Iqbal's conception of religion is national (*qwami*), and not ethnic like the Jews, or personal like the Christians. His conception of Islam is purely human. In other words he

understood Islam to mean a principle, which structures the collective human life. Muslims were a collectivity, in Iqbal's thinking, who uphold this principle.

However, some of his critics employed far-fetched reasoning to call him "bigoted," and "communalist." Muhammad Ahmad has cited an example. Dr. Sacha Nanda, in his book, *Iqbal a Poet, and His Message*, has stated that Iqbal's poem, *Hindustan Hamara* (our India) is devoid of patriotic sentiments, because he used Persian vocabulary, and in his poem, *Naya Shawala*, he castigated the Brahmin's idol-worship and in reality expressed his own bias against them, while Iqbal did not see Persian as a religious language. Actually in *Naya Shawala* Iqbal expressed his dissatisfaction with the Brahmin's idols, and the Muslim preachers' God.

Iqbal was a multi-dimensional personality, but was not a riddle; in India he was turned into one. Hindus considered him "bigoted Muslim nationalist," and some Muslim orthodox circles labeled him an "infidel." Granted, Iqbal was committed to the sentiment of Islamic solidarity, and he loved his people, but harbored no ill will toward others. He had hoped that Hindus and Muslims would make progress, while they preserved their own distinct cultural identities. In alluding to this central thesis, which he expounded in *Asrar-i Khudi*, he explained it in a different language in his letter to Maharaja Kishan Prashad:

I have thoroughly studied Hindus and Muslims' intellectual history, and their contemporary affairs. Consequently, I am convinced now that leaders of both nations have failed to determine their social ills. I believe that they have been debilitated organically and in their urge to life. This weakness has been caused by a particular type of literature, which has unfortunately spread far and wide among the Asian nations...The contemporary conditions demand improvement in this point of thought.<sup>4</sup>

It was not because of any grudge or prejudice against the Hindus that Iqbal was inspired to present the vision of an

Islamic state. His study of Indian politics, and experience in electoral dynamics had persuaded him to conclude that both religious groups would not be able to achieve an acceptable agreement for power sharing. It is a matter of common sense that even two real brothers end up dividing their inheritance when their parents disappear. In social setting this is an unavoidable aspect of common life. Even before the concept of an Islamic state was articulated Hindu Maha Sabha's leaders had misguided Hindus in mistrusting Muslims, which culminated in their mutual alienation. They had spun a political yarn, which scared Hindus into thinking that the creation of a Muslim bloc in the Northwest of India would encourage these Muslims to ally themselves with the Muslims of the Middle East in order to subject India to political pressure, and in all probability would invite them to invade India as it had happened in the past history. Iqbal was convinced that this was an unwarranted apprehension of Hindu leaders.

On the other hand Iqbal thought that if India faced an ideological or military invasion it was more likely to emerge from the Soviet Union, because Russia since the czarist rule had been aspiring to have firm access to the warm water port(s). Muslim states were unlikely to undertake this hypothetical invasion. In recognition of Hindus' apprehension, Iqbal stated that the vision of an Islamic state stipulated internal balance of power, guaranteeing peace and security. In case of foreign invasion a united military alliance of Hindus and Muslims would confront the invaders at the boundaries. If Iqbal were a narrow-minded bigot, he wouldn't have thought of a joint defense structure of India.

Another criticism of Iqbal emphasized his "pessimistic and unpractical personality." This negative view was buttressed by the fact that he was a philosopher and a poet. These two facts combined to make an assertion that he was not a politician; and Iqbal's vision of an Islamic state was

spawned by his intellectual passion. Let us examine these assessments to determine the extent to which they were correct or just overblown denunciations.

In India politicians had created an image of a political leader, which was essentially that of a *political agitator*. This was in fact the popular view. In practical politics this “leader” had two dimensions: in political meetings he was expected to deliver endless orations and participate in defiant political demonstrations against the British Raj, and subject the administration to relentless criticism, and oppose the government’s policies in public meetings and the press. This “leader” was supposed to follow the movements, which Mahatma Gandhi initiated and led, including civil disobedience, and non-cooperation, and be available for police repression, detention or extended incarceration. The second dimension of this leader was that of a *collaborative moderate*, aspiring to achieve the British government’s good will and support for the attainment of an important office. He was also expected to be visible in public meetings, and be mildly critical of the government’s policies. He often spent his personal money to create a political party, and win a seat in the elections and then stake a claim to a high office.

Iqbal’s politics did not fit into the mold of either “leader.” Moreover, by temperament he was retiring and almost recluse. His critics scolded him for inactivity in politics, and then delivered their self-serving judgment that he was no politician. Some of his admirers even asked him to explain what they thought was his contradictory situation: his poetry inspired readers to climb difficult heights, but he himself took no part in any struggle. He gave an explanation: “when I am moved to write poetry I ascend to a celestial heaven, but I live in this mundane world. In consequence, my poetry and my actions can never abridge the gap.”<sup>5</sup> Sarcastically, Mawlana Muhammad Ali once said to him: “Mian Iqbal, inspired by

your poetry we happily move to action, get arrested and go to jail. You, on the other hand stay home and smoke your *hooka*, which makes a gurgling sound. What is this after all?" Iqbal offered an explanation citing the concert of *Qawwals* (Sufi singers) as an example. "A *Qawwal* as the lead singer sings beautifully and listeners get excited. They dance to the tunes of music, and some even lose consciousness. If the *Qawwal* were to act like this audience, the concert would cease."<sup>6</sup>

For Iqbal to step out of his house was always like a big calamity. Despite this he participated in the electoral politics in order to protect the Muslims' rights for the attainment of political equilibrium. For this venture into politics, he was inspired by the sentiment of Islamic solidarity which led him to overcome his reclusive bent of mind in the struggle for the protection of Muslims' rights. From 1926-1934 Iqbal struggled in the Muslim politics of India, and then during the next four years, when his health had broken down and he was confined to bed, he relentlessly urged the Muslim leaders to espouse the creation of an Islamic state. Whenever, an admirer complimented him for his efforts, he would always answer with humility, saying: "what did I do for Islam? My limited service to Islam is similar to the position of an individual, who out of love for a child kisses him, while he is sound asleep."<sup>7</sup>

Saiyad Nazir Niazi has also made an appropriate comment: "His own nation taunted him for being so inactive. His critics lost track of the fact that his ability to "think" was no less potent than "action." If action means to nurture certain types of personality and role for the attainment of a life's grand objective, despite the distractions, and allurements of personal life, then Iqbal's contributions to the nation were no less than that of a man of action."<sup>8</sup>

Another aspect of anti-Iqbal criticism is a psychological interpretation of Iqbal's role, which runs its gauntlet something like this: since Iqbal was completely despaired of Hindu-Muslim understanding, he proposed the vision of an Islamic state, sheerly out of his pessimism. In other words if an acceptable agreement between the Hindus and Muslims had emerged, the need to create an Islamic state would have disappeared. Finally a conclusion was reached – the vision of an Islamic state was not based on an ideological structure, but was spawned by a poet's sense of hopelessness and general pessimism.

Actually dialectical reasoning can always generate a negative aspect; it depends on a critic's mental capability how he accentuates the negative. Those who are familiar with Iqbal's thought process recognize that Iqbal was by no means a pessimist, but was progressive in his outlook, and did not believe that future or destiny were preordained. In other words – possibilities do exist, which may or may not occur. Iqbal had concluded that the northwest Indian Muslim majority provinces are contiguous to each other, and God in all his ultimate wisdom had designed them to be compact geographically; they were not thrown in together accidentally.

Before he articulated the vision of an Islamic state, in the first instance through his creative poetry and prose, Iqbal endeavored to awaken the sense of Islamic solidarity, and in the second stage he laid out the ideological foundations of the Muslim state. This thought process was initiated in 1907, and culminated when he died in 1938.

He visualized the possibility of an Islamic state. Should it come to exist, it should have an ideological base for its structure. Nearly in thirty years he gradually articulated the ideological framework of a state, which in his lifetime he perceived only as a possibility. Should this effort of 30 years, almost half of his life span, which he devoted to

constructive endeavors, be denigrated as the product of his hopelessness or pessimism?

There is another interesting aspect of this criticism. The Hindu press in the Punjab always alleged that Iqbal was a “dangerous Muslim” as he always thwarted the efforts for Hindu-Muslim agreement. For the sake of an argument, if we agree to accept the alleged accusation, then what is the logical deduction? Then an inescapable conclusion follows that since his grand objective was completely different, therefore he opposed any agreement, which was diametrically opposed to his objective. Moreover, Iqbal was committed to diverting the Muslims’ efforts to the ideal of a Muslim state. In either proposition Iqbal’s vision of a Muslim state does not reflect that his personality was of a pessimist or a hopeless leader.

In India and Britain comments on Iqbal’s Address of 1930 continued until 1931, while in the earlier months of this year they were frequent and emphatic. But by 1932 the critical noise almost dissipated. On April 21, 1938 Iqbal died. Just about two years after his death the Muslim League passed the resolution on March 23, 1940, which came to be known as the Pakistan Resolution, and Iqbal’s *Address* once again became the hot topic of discussion. In this new phase of the debate several institutions reprinted and circulated hundreds of thousands of its copies. Some old issues, which had been discussed in Iqbal’s lifetime, were raised again; some new questions were asked:

1. Did Iqbal visualize the establishing of a Muslim state within the framework of an Indian Federation or that he wanted to see it emerge as an independent and sovereign state.
2. Iqbal had indeed proposed the creation of a sovereign Muslim state, but soon after its proposal, he had recoiled from this “ridiculous concept.”
3. Iqbal was not the only creator of the vision of a Muslim state. Before him several Hindu, Muslim and

British public figures had proposed similar solutions to resolve the Hindu-Muslim deadlock over power-sharing. Iqbal was just one of them. Actually this issue was raised within Pakistan soon after its establishment. The issue was couched as the product of scholarly research, but behind this façade several political machinations lurked.

Let us examine these issues. The Pakistan Resolution (1940) demanding the establishment of an independent state in the Muslim majority contiguous provinces in the northwest of India, very substantially reflected Iqbal's *Address* (1930) of Allahabad, which he had delivered as the presidential speech. Dr. Rajender Prasad, one of the well-known leaders of India stated in his book, *Divided India* that Iqbal had proposed the establishment of a Muslim state within the framework of the Indian Federation. The same view was repeated by R. Coupland in his *Indian Politics: 1936-1942*. Hindu leaders, and their sympathizers in Britain adopted this view to ridicule the Muslim leaders, and their Pakistan Resolution. They wanted to demonstrate that in the first instance the Muslim League had demanded the emergence of a Muslim state(s) within the Indian Federation, and then without any rhyme or reason escalated its demand to create an independent and sovereign Pakistan. In other words the Muslim demands were full of contradictions, and the Muslim leaders were so confused about their aims that they really did not know what they wanted.

Hindu leaders and their British sympathizers attempted to spread another misinformation that soon after his *Address*, Iqbal had renounced the ideas of his *Address*. This canard was fabricated by Edward Thompson, who was Professor of Bengali language at Oxford University, and also functioned as a columnist of the daily *Manchester Guardian*. He was known as a supporter of the All-India



National Congress. In his book, *Prepare India for Freedom* (1940) published in London, he stated:

For some years there has been an agitation to split off from the rest of India a Moslem State – Pakistan...

There is some dispute as to who started the notion. It is often said to have been Sir Muhammad Iqbal, the poet. In *The Observer* I once said that he supported the Pakistan plan. Iqbal was a friend, and he set my misconception right. After speaking of his own despondency at the chaos he saw coming ‘on my vast undisciplined and starving land’ (what a magnificent English these Indians write!) he went on to say that he thought the Pakistan plan would be disastrous to the British Government, disastrous to the Hindu community, disastrous to the Moslem community. ‘But I am the President of the Moslem League and therefore it is my duty to support it.’<sup>9</sup>

Two years later Thompson published another book, *Ethical Views on Modern India*, in which he stated:

In a letter written to me when he knew he was a dying man, he wrote despairingly of his wretchedness at ‘the chaos I foresee as coming upon my vast undisciplined and starving country.’ And, like Tagore, he wanted India, Islamic no less than Hindu India, to move into the modern world and to effect for herself, not an escape, but a synthesis of the West with the East.”<sup>10</sup>

Thompson spun this canard nearly four years after Iqbal’s death, when Iqbal obviously could not contradict him. Here is a glaring contradiction in Thompson’s statements. At one place he asserted that Iqbal himself had made this statement to him in person about his *Address*, and the second time referred to a letter of Iqbal to him, which he did not reproduce in his book. In his first publication he stated that during that conversation toward the end Iqbal added: “*I am President of the Muslim League. It is my obligation to support this proposal.*” Iqbal was elected the President of the Muslim League once in December 1930, when he delivered the *Address* at the annual session of the Muslim League at Allahabad. At that point in time the Muslim League’s grand objective was

enshrined in Jinnah's 14-points, and the proposal for the creation of a Muslim state was entirely Iqbal's personal view. Then how could he be under any compulsion to support the proposal for the creation of Pakistan, especially if it was against his own conviction.

After the Allahabad *Address*, when Iqbal visited London in September 1931 to participate in the Second Round Table Conference the same Thompson published on October 3, 1931 an article in *The London Times*. The title of the article "Pan-Islamic Plotting" betrayed his bent of mind. In this article he commented on Iqbal's proposed Muslim state as it appeared in the *Address*:

Anyone who asks that the Hindu case (which has been shockingly mismanaged) be given fair consideration is branded as an anti-Muslim. So let me say that I admire the democracy which the Agha Khan finds in Islam as opposed to Hinduism, and I think he might have gone further (had not courtesy restrained him) and pointed out Islam's great superiority to Christianity in its practice of human brotherhood. And I am not arguing against the establishment of Muslim "communal provinces" in North-West India. But what Sir Muhammad Iqbal demands is a confederation "within or without" the Indian Federation. Look at the map and see what sort of defensible frontier would be left to the rest of India.<sup>11</sup>

Iqbal responded to Thompson's piece in his letter to *The Times* of October 12, 1931:

Writing in your issue of October 3 last, Dr. E. Thompson has torn the following passage from its context in my presidential address to the All-India Moslem League of last December, in order to serve as evidence of 'Pan Islamic Plotting':

I would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single State. Self-Government within the British Empire, or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Moslem State appears to me to be the final destiny of the Moslems, at least of North-West India.

May I tell Dr. Thompson, in this passage I did not put forward a ‘demand’ for a Moslem State outside the British Empire, but only a guess at the possible outcome in the dim future of the mighty forces now shaping the destiny of the Indian sub-continent. [No Indian Muslim with any pretence to sanity contemplates a Moslem State or series of States in North-West India outside the British Commonwealth of Nations as a plan of practical politics.]

Although I would oppose the creation of another cockpit of communal strife in the Central Punjab, as suggested by some enthusiasts, I am all for a redistribution of India into provinces with effective majorities of one community or another on lines advocated both by the Nehru and the Simon Reports. Indeed, my suggestion regarding Moslem provinces merely carries forward this idea. A series of contented and well-organized Moslem provinces on the North-West Frontier of India would be the bulwark of India and of the British Empire against the hungry generations of the Asiatic highlands.

Iqbal had contradicted Edward Thompson’s mendacious mischief, when he described Iqbal’s proposal for a Muslim state as “Pan-Islamic Plotting.” Despite this contradictory letter of Iqbal, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in his *Discovery of India* and Dr. Ambedkar in *Thoughts on Pakistan*, and other Hindu writers deliberately relied upon Thompson’s “scholarly integrity” repeated the same mendacity. All of these books were published after Iqbal’s death, when obviously he was in no position to contradict them.

Among Muslims Chaudhary Rahmat Ali exploited this mendacity to serve his own purpose. He is described to be the innovator of the name Pakistan, and its geopolitical scheme. He was the founder of the Pakistan National Movement in Cambridge. He stated in his, *Pakistan* (published in 1947) that when he founded Bazm-i Shibli in 1915 he had expressed his political views about North India being Muslim, and the determination to keep it Muslim. “Moreover, we will make it a Muslim State.” Commenting on Iqbal’s *Address*, he said: “Iqbal’s vision of a Muslims

State did not project a Muslim State as a sovereign and independent State. He wanted to see it as a big province or a unit within the Indian Federation. For all practical purposes, his proposal turned out to be useless. Muslim political leaders opposed it, and finally Iqbal renounced it.”<sup>12</sup>

At this point, it is appropriate to raise the basic issue: Did Iqbal want to see an independent and sovereign Muslim state? To definitively determine this issue an analysis of the *Address* is in order. Along with this analysis, all press comments, and other related statements, should be kept in mind. Iqbal lived for eight years after he delivered the *Address*. During this span of time Iqbal periodically issued interpretive statements of the *Address*; the light of these statements would establish the truth if he had renounced his own *Address*, and we would also know what was Iqbal’s definitive position, which emerged through the process of education.

Grounded in reason the *Address* contained a revolutionary idea, which could have far-reaching consequences. Four major phases of Muslim politics had elapsed before the *Address*. The Delhi Proposal had been rejected. Maulana Hasrat Mohani’s plan to amalgamate Muslim provinces in the northwest, and treat it as one province or unit in the Indian Federation had also been rejected at the earliest stage by the Nehru Committee. Jinnah had ventured to offer some amendments, and they met the same fate. Jinnah’s 14-Points were still on the table, but a Hindu-Muslim agreement based on these points had very scant chance. Against this very delicate political landscape Muslims were in a dire need of formulating their own separate political course of action, and a grand objective had to be chiseled out.

Hindu leaders were still sticking to their own policy, and adamantly reflected no spirit of compromise. In consequence Muslim leaders lost interest in the federal center, and had been struggling to win maximum autonomy

for the Muslim majority provinces. Against this intellectual and political deadlock, Iqbal in his *Address* exceeded the scope of the 14-Points, and for Punjab, Northwest Frontier Province, Sindh and Balochistan employed a significant term of "State." He said: "I would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single State. Self-Government within the British Empire, or without the British Empire...appears to me to be the final destiny of the Moslems, at least of North-West India."

Clearly when Iqbal made this proposal, Iqbal had lost a glimmer of hope that even in case of Hindu-Muslim agreement in the future, the proposed Muslim state would acquire sovereignty within the framework of the British Empire as the Indian Federation. A Muslim State could be situated within the Indian Con-Federation provided its sovereignty was not impaired. The *Address* had articulated the paradigm of a sovereign Muslim State, which could be placed within the framework of the Indian Federation as a consequence of Hindu-Muslim understanding, or in the absence of such an understanding, it could emerge as a sovereign and independent state as an acknowledged Muslim State. Initially, Iqbal's grand objective focused on the establishment of a totally independent state.

There was another dimension of this paradigm. If the demographic imperatives called for the removal of Anbala division, and some other districts, where Hindus were in the majority, those territories could be detached to guarantee the existence of Muslim majority population in the proposed Muslim State. There was no need, and no proposal was advanced for the exchange of populations. Within its boundaries the Muslim State was perfectly capable of protecting the non-Muslim citizens. From the Indian perspective it could be argued that the emergence of a Muslim State could establish equilibrium of power, which would promote Hindu-Muslim amity and mutual security.

For much the same reason a Muslim State would have agreed to creating the armed forces consisting of Hindu and Muslim personnel, devoted to the defense of India.

Unfortunately, in commenting on the Allahabad *Address*, which proposed the establishment of a Muslim State, the British and Hindu press found it “objectionable,” “reactionary” and “impractical.” British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald was annoyed; Dr. Monjay opposed it. The Minorities Sub-Committee of the First London Round Table Conference, and Edward Thompson derisively called it “Pan-Islamic Plotting.”

Explaining his proposal to Saiyad Nazir Niazi in a letter of January 11, 1931 Iqbal emphasized once again: The proposed Islamic State is the grand objective, and does not stipulate the transfer of populations. In this Islamic state(s), which would emerge, according to this scheme, Hindu community’s rights would be completely protected. Then Iqbal published a letter on October 12, 1931 in *The Times of London* saying: “No Indian Muslim with any pretence to sanity contemplates a Moslem State or series of States in North-West India outside the British Commonwealth of Nations as a plan of practical politics.” Then again Iqbal repeated his view in an address to the All Parties Muslim Conference’s session at Lahore: “In my address to the All India Muslim League, I raised my voice against the idea of an All Indian Federation.”<sup>13</sup>

S.V. Lilat, a representative of the Hindu Maha Sabha leaders – Pandit Madan Mohan Maivya and Dr. Monjay – wrote a letter of May 28, 1932 to Iqbal:

I want to inform you that I have obtained Dr. Monjay’s permission in private in support of your scheme for the amalgamation of four Muslim provinces on the borders of North-West India. We do not agree with your term, Muslim State; but the meaning of it can be expressed in the form of “Muslim province”...Please note that at present Dr. Monjay would not publicly support your proposal; this stage will arrive later. At present he has authorized me to privately

exchange ideas with you. Under this delegated authority I would also solicit the views of other Muslim and Hindu leaders of different parties, and then submit my report to him. Only then he would take an appropriate step. I would like you to know that Maulana Shaukat Ali has promised to help me. After receiving your reply indicating the extent of your support to an understanding, I will attempt to establish a liaison with Bhai Parmanand, Dr. Chet Ram and other significant leaders. The agreement of these leaders is urgently needed before I recommend to Dr. Monjay to publicly take an appropriate step. These matters have been reported to Mr. N.C. Kulkar, but not to Pandit Malviy. Please be assured that Panditji wants an understanding at any cost.<sup>14</sup>

What was Iqbal's response to S.V Lilat? This cannot be determined. But he did urge Mawlana Shaukat Ali to establish dialogue with Hindu Maha Sabha leaders. This much is clearly stated in Iqbal's letter of June 8, 1932 to Mawlana Muhammad Irfan Khan:

...Please check with [Mawlana Shaukat Ali], and then respond to my letter. A few days ago I wrote him a letter saying that a Hindu gentleman, Mr. Lilat had written me a letter, acknowledging that my scheme [of political settlement] explained in my presidential address [at Allahabad in 1930] was acceptable to Mr. Monjay [leader of the Hindu Maha Sabha]. He further stated that he was planning to have consultations with Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya. He was also expected to accept it to achieve Hindu-Muslim settlement. At this point in time it is not advisable to acknowledge it publicly. This letter was strictly confidential which also stated that he had consultation with Mawlana Shaukat Ali, and has inclined to accept it. The scheme, incidentally refers to the joining of Muslim provinces into one in Northern India.<sup>15</sup>

The leaders of the Hindu Maha Sabha, and Mawlana Shaukat Ali continued to hold secret parlays to achieve an understanding about the proposed concept of an autonomous Muslim State or a province within the scope of the Indian federal structure. While these negotiations were

in progress, he proceeded to London in order to participate in the Third London Round Table Conference. Iqbal delivered only one speech in this conference and proposed that “there should be no central government of India; all provinces should be autonomous, who should deal directly with the Secretary of State for India. Speaking before the National League of London, Iqbal stated:

Four or five years ago as President of the All-Indian Muslim League, I suggested as a possible solution the formation of a large West Indian Muslim State. While this suggestion of mine was not embodied in the demand of the Muslims of India, my personal opinion is still that this is the only possible solution. I wait until experience reveals the wisdom or unwisdom of this suggestion.<sup>16</sup>

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru subjected the Muslim delegates to the Third Round Table Conference to his severe criticism. Iqbal issued on December 6, 1933 a rejoinder, saying that “...the country will have to be redistributed on the basis of religious, historical and cultural affinities...”<sup>17</sup>

In those days Chaudhary Rahmat Ali published a pamphlet, *Now or Never* from Cambridge, in which he articulated a demand for the creation of a separate federation consisting of Kashmir and the Muslim majority provinces in the North-West of India. He called this federation, *Pakistan*. Also he founded the Pakistan National Movement to achieve the state of Pakistan. However, it should be pointed out that there were differences in Iqbal’s vision of a Muslim State, and Ali’s scheme. As a responsible political figure, Iqbal had presented the proposal from the platform of All-Indian Muslim League. Ali was a student at Cambridge University and published a pamphlet containing a proposal for the creation of a state, which would consist of Kashmir and the Muslim majority provinces.

Iqbal’s proposal for an autonomous state retained a subtle diplomatic possibility: It could exist within the Indian federal structure if Hindu-Muslim agreement could



be achieved; or it could be established as a member of the British Commonwealth. It was projected as an independent and sovereign state, if no hope was left for Hindu-Muslim negotiated agreement. In Iqbal's perception of a Muslim State the exchange of population was not necessary, but Chaudhary Rahmat Ali's Pakistan mandated an exchange of populations with India.

In 1932 the British government announced the Communal Award. Constitutional reforms were introduced in the North West Frontier Province. The Sindh province was detached from Bombay, and in a similar manner constitutional reforms were applied. Still there was some expectation that before the introduction of the constitutional reforms Hindu and Muslim leaders would come to a negotiated settlement. In consequence, the endeavors for this achievement continued until 1935.

During 1933-34 Iqbal wrote nine letters to Edward Thompson. He shed considerable light about his role in politics, and his proposal for the establishment of a Muslim State. In his letter of June 20, 1933, Iqbal explained:

Thank you so much for your letter which I received (by) last mail I am glad to hear that you found time to read my lectures and am very grateful to you for the high compliment you have paid me. You may rest assured that I am not interested in Politics as such. It was my interest in Islam as a moral polity that drove me to politics. I felt that Hindu Nationalism would eventually lead to Atheism. I further found that Muslims on account of sheer ignorance of Islamic ideals were being swept away before the forces of this so called Nationalism. In these circumstances it was my duty to step forward and to place before the younger generation the real meaning of our ideals. I am glad they have listened to me and the British have also recognized, though partially, that the Muslims of India are a distinct people and must have an opportunity of free development on their own lines, this is my reward though in achieving it I have done myself great harm and have practically ruined some little practice that I had at the bar on account of my continuous absence for two years

from India. I feel that I have done injustice to my children but then the duty of a Muslim towards Islam is greater than his duty towards himself or towards his children. There are troubles ahead both for Islam and England. It is a pity that Islam possesses no leader and British statesmen are slow to understand. However you will see that my interest in politics does not go beyond the limits. I have set myself. I have no intention to stand for any Council or Assembly under the new Constitution.”<sup>18</sup>

Then he explained further in his letter of March 4, 1934: I have just received your review of my book. It is excellent and I am grateful to you for the very kind things you have said of me. But you have made one mistake which I hasten to point out as I consider it rather serious. You call me a (a) protagonist of the scheme called ‘Pakistan.’ Now Pakistan is not my scheme. The one that I suggested in my address is the creation of a Muslim Province – i.e., a province having an overwhelming population of Muslims – in the Northwest of India. This new province will be, according to my scheme, a part of the proposed Indian Federation. Pakistan scheme possesses a separate federation of Muslim Provinces directly related to England as a separate dominion. This scheme originated in Cambridge. The authors of this scheme believe that we Muslim Round Tablers have sacrificed the Muslim nation on the altar of Hindu or the so called Indian Nationalism.”<sup>19</sup>

He shed additional light on the politics of India, and Britain:

As president of the Muslim Conference it was my duty to support the separation of Sindh; personally I have always believed that the amalgamation of the three provinces on the Northwest of India will be of infinite advantage to England, India and Islam.

But you know I am no believer in Democracy. The step towards democracy (fatal in my opinion) however, has already been taken. We must now prepare ourselves for the financial ruin, the political chaos and the dissolution of Hinduism which are likely to follow the introduction of democracy in this vast undisciplined and starving country. No White-Paper

can save us from the consequences of the conduct of the ambitious politician in India whose picture of things in India has misled many people both in and outside India.

Things in the west, you say, are volcanic. I can quite understand that. The Indian volcano, however, burnt out a short time ago. It has done no harm to anybody. The present state of things is this – the urban Hindus are fighting among themselves – the poor village folk do not understand what is happening in the country. The Muslims are comparatively better united; but their leaders are mostly perfect mediocrities who possess no rational conviction regarding the future relations of the East and West. Their attitudes are determined by personal considerations alone and their immediate object is only to exploit what they believe to be the present difficulties of England. If I were to record my impressions of the two Round Table Conferences, which I have attended I should have to say some very unpleasant things about my own countrymen and co-religionists as well as about your countrymen some of whom, with all their insight, have shown a singular lack of courage and imagination. I am firmly convinced that the present party in power in England has failed to cope with the Indian situation. But these are the thoughts of a mere poet and poets, as you know, are supposed to be unpractical dreamers, i.e., good-for-nothing fellows.”<sup>20</sup>

In the light of these letters Edward Thompson’s remarks in his books speak volumes about Thompson’s scholarship and his questionable integrity. Let us compare what Iqbal wrote, and what Thompson interpreted:

1. Iqbal said: “In a vast, disorganized, and impoverished country the introduction of democracy would lead to economic ruin, political instability, and disruptions of Hindu society.”

Thompson put the following words in Iqbal’s mouth: “In my vast, disorganized, and impoverished country faction rule would prevail.”

2. Iqbal stated that he always believed in the amalgamation of Muslim majority provinces in India’s

Northwest would be to the advantage of India, Britain and Islam.

But Thompson put the following words into Iqbal's mouth: "The Pakistan project would be ruinous for the British government, Hindus and Muslims."

3. Iqbal wrote to Thompson that as a president of the Muslim Conference it was my obligation to support the detachment of Sindh province from Bombay.

Thompson, instead wrote:

Since I am president of the Muslim League, it was my obligation to support the project of Pakistan."

Iqbal also wrote to Raghbir Ahsan on March 6, 1934 highlighting the point that this proposed scheme of Pakistan was different from the Pakistan scheme of others. "My proposal is to create a Muslim province within the Indian Federation, but the Pakistan scheme urges the creation of a separate federation of Muslim majority provinces of the Northwestern parts of India, which would have direct relations with Britain."<sup>21</sup>

Hindu leaders did not entertain Jinnah's 14-Points for serious negotiations, nor did any endeavors for a negotiated settlement with the Muslims on the basis of a Muslim province or a Muslim state yielded any positive results.

Jinnah meanwhile returned from Britain, and was elected President of the All-India Muslim League on March 4, 1934. Next year the Government of India Act of 1935 was enforced in India. Elections were held, and Hindu political parties fully participated in the electoral process. In the majority of the provinces the provincial governments were created in 1937 by the Elected Congressmen. In hubris of power the Congress leaders' treatment of the minorities caused further tensions in Hindu-Muslim relations, and all hopes for a negotiated settlement evaporated. For Muslims only an avenue of struggle was left open, and they decided to organize themselves politically once again for the attainment of a grand national

objective. It was against this psychological landscape that Muhammad Ali Jinnah began to infuse a new life in the Muslim League. This sea change in the political dynamics led Iqbal to present his viewpoint in different styles. In a letter of May 28, 1937 Iqbal said to Jinnah: "...But the enforcement and development of the Shariat of Islam is impossible in this country with a free Muslim State or states. This has been my honest conviction for many years and I still believe this to be the only way to solve the problem of treatment for Muslims as well as to secure a peaceful India... Don't you think that a time for such a demand has already arrived?"

Then again on June 12, 1937 Iqbal wrote to Jinnah: "...You are the only Muslim in India today to whom the community has a right to look up to for safe guidance through the storm which is coming to North-West India...A separate federation of Muslim provinces, reformed on the lines I have suggested above, is the only course by which we can secure a peaceful India and save Muslims from the domination of non-Muslims. Why should not the Muslims of North-West India and Bengal be considered as nations entitled to self-determination just as other nations in India and outside India are?"

Iqbal had moved substantially forward from his proposal of an autonomous Muslim state within the Indian Federation to a totally separate federation of Muslim majority provinces clustered together in the North-West, and East of India. Moreover, Iqbal proposed the introduction of Islamic reforms or the Islamic Sharia to turn this Muslim state into a truly Islamic state. Iqbal's letters were published by Jinnah before 1949, along with a foreword, in which Jinnah stated: "His views were substantially in consonance with my own, and had finally led me to the same conclusions as a result of careful examination and study of the constitutional problems facing India, and found expression in due course in the united will

of Muslim India as adumbrated in the Lahore Resolution of the All-India Muslim League, popularly known as the “Pakistan Resolution,” passed on March 23, 1940.”

Jinnah had not only great admiration for Iqbal as a poet and philosopher, but also respected him as a statesman. He said: As a great poet and philosopher, he was no less effective than any politician. As a firm believer in the principles of Islam, he was one of those personalities who seriously considered the possibility of creating an Islamic state in the North-West and Eastern zones of India, which are the historical homelands of the Muslims.”

No one can dispute the fact that Chaudhary Rahmat Ali developed his scheme of Pakistan after the *Address* had been delivered in 1930 at Allahabad. As Iqbal stated at one point that his proposal for the establishment of a Muslim state was substantially different than Ali’s Pakistan scheme. Many questions can be asked about Chaudhary Rahmat Ali; only a future biographer of him can tackle them. However, Javid Iqbal had examined more than 100 of his letters, which he wrote from Cambridge to Khawaja Abdur Rahim. These letters have remained unpublished, and are in the custody of his son Khawaja Tariq Rahim. These letters clearly demonstrated that in public he appeared to be an admirer of Iqbal, but inwardly he harbored negative feelings about Iqbal. Perhaps he anguished over the fact that Iqbal surpassed him in articulating a proposal for the establishment of a Muslim state. In one of those letters of October 4, 1935 Ali wrote:

Among us no one can refuse to acknowledge Iqbal’s services, which he has rendered in the cause of Islam. However, to describe the Pakistan Movement, especially by Rashid, a member of [Iqbal’s] close circle [of admirers], as Iqbal’s movement is not without significance. It seems that while Iqbal never owns up to it publicly, he never contradicts it either. After three years of relentless struggle, encountering many dangers, now the name of this Pakistan movement is gaining popularity, and people mention it by name, Iqbal does

not mind that we are detached from the movement and takes all the credit – good and bad – for himself. Perhaps you would remember my words that I would not accept him as a member of the Pakistan Movement unless the title – Sir – is renounced. It seems that with the loss of his voice he has lost all hopes and expectations. That is why he has started to aggress against us humble individuals...If I find him guilty of plagiarism then I would have to write in a book the gist of all the conversations, which are a long story of his painful weaknesses. I would request you that please keep this aspect confined only to your knowledge, or share them with very close friends and no one else.

Chaudhary Rahmat Ali's anti-Iqbal malice is reflected in several letters. In his letter of February 3, 1933 he called the gap between Iqbal's thought and action a "painful contradiction." In another letter of April 11, 1933 he complained to Khawaja Abdur Rahim that he had not received a single letter from Iqbal, and called him the intoxicated man of McLeod Road." In other words Iqbal did not extend to him importance, which he thought he deserved.

The letters also revealed another dimension of the Pakistan scheme; Chaudhary Rahmat Ali was by no means the only person, who articulated this scheme. Others like Khawaja Abdur Rahim were his equal partners in this exercise. He admitted this fact in another letter of November 1, 1933 from Cambridge: "In Cambridge and London Islamic spirit, which sparkles in different Islamic associations reflects that ideal, which you and I nurtured together like a sweet dream in Cambridge." Khawaja Abdur Rahim wrote a note in English about this letter: "It is an admission that he and I were jointly responsible for this vision." It may be pointed out that since Khawaja Abdur Rahim was a government employee he remained behind the scene. Actually in Cambridge there were other Muslim students as well, who shared Chaudhary Rahmat Ali's ideas. All of them worked together in the Pakistan National Movement, but it remained confined to

Cambridge. In Muslim India hardly anyone ever heard of it. Probably recognizing this lack of popular base, he wrote on September 15, 1933 to Khawaja Abdur Rahim that in the future this movement will function like the Nationalist Socialist Party (Nazi) of Germany.

The All India Muslim League launched the Pakistan Movement under the leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah after it had passed the Lahore Resolution in 1940. The movement succeeded in establishing the Pakistan State. A few months before the advent of Pakistan Chaudhary Rahmat Ali was alienated from Jinnah's leadership. This alienation occurred at a point in time when the Muslim League had accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan, which preserved the territorial unity of India. K.K. Aziz, in his edited volume, *Chaudhary Rahmat Ali and his Works* (Vol. I), stated in the preface that Chaudhary Rahmat Ali, indignant at Jinnah's policy, wrote a pamphlet against him and used an exceptionally unparliamentary language to attack Jinnah's personality. The language was so crude that one could not bear to read it. This pamphlet was republished in Lahore by Book Traders, and is also included in his book, *Pakistan*.

After the establishment of Pakistan in 1947 Chaudhary Rahmat Ali came to Pakistan, and rented a house in Lahore on the Jail Road. Much against his own expectations, no one bothered to call on him. It is stated that the local secret service kept an eye on his activities. In disappointment he went back to Cambridge. This brief review of his activities leads to the conclusion that he was completely disenchanted, and became very pessimistic, yet remained arrogant. As a founder of the Pakistan Movement he managed this movement from Cambridge, and never came to India to participate in the Muslim politics. All of his life he deluded himself into thinking that Iqbal "stole" this movement from him, and the establishment of Pakistan has been erroneously credited to Jinnah's leadership.



Another conundrum deserves to be resolved: granted that before Iqbal several British, Hindus and Muslim public figures had proposed the partitioning of India to create a Muslim state. After the establishment of Pakistan this subject was thoroughly researched to demonstrate that Iqbal was the only one of those personages, who had proposed the division of India. Were there some political considerations lurking behind this strenuous research? This question deserves to be explored.

This has been stated before that Iqbal finally concluded that Muslim majority provinces in the Northwest and east of India should be clustered together to create a federation of their own, where Islamic reforms or the Sharia laws would be applied. In Iqbal's vision the proposed state was supposed to be an Islamic state. Jinnah too came to the same conclusions, according to his own statement under the influence of Iqbal's views. Gradually these views found an expression as a united demand of the Muslims of India in the Lahore Resolution. Clearly Iqbal wanted to see this Muslim state as an Islamic state. Jinnah too was aware of this dimension. Unfortunately Jinnah died one year after the creation of Pakistan. Under Liaquat Ali Khan's leadership the National Assembly passed the Objectives Resolution, but the Muslim League's leadership, and other leaders, did not want Pakistan to become an Islamic state, while they had called it an Islamic republic. Under these circumstances, the scholarly researchers who enunciated Iqbal as one of those British, Hindu and Muslim protagonists of Pakistan quite appropriately and neatly fit into this political expedience. Precisely for this expedience M.A.H. Isfahani stated that to say that Iqbal was the only visionary of a Muslim state is to distort history.

This ideological twist has far reaching consequences for the nation building in Pakistan. Instead of cultivating Islamic solidarity in Pakistan regional loyalties started to flourish. When politicians proved to be incapable of

governing the new state, bureaucracy assumed power, and its incompetence encouraged the army to take over the state power. Whenever elections were held the candidates for legislative seats appealed to regional identities, and un-Islamic political tendencies were encouraged by leaders, who wanted to capture power. Finally Pakistan split up.

Iqbal had promoted the sentiments of Islamic unity, and pointed toward freedom. Actually he infused the spirit of Islamic revolution, which culminated in the achievement of Pakistan. In the modern age of Islam Pakistan was the first milestone of the Islamic revolution, but it remained incomplete. As regional loyalties and biases intensified in Pakistan, Iqbal who was a poet-philosopher of Islamic revolution was confined to the “cage” of Punjab as a Punjabi poet. Iqbal was thus “rewarded” by Pakistan, which failed to live up to Iqbal’s norms of an Islamic state. But Iqbal also has his roots in India, because this scion of the “Brahmins” (*Berhaman Zada*) or the “infidel Indian” (*kafir-i-Hindi*) was born of Indian soil. Ironically, in India they called him a “bigoted Muslim nationalist,” who had encouraged through his poetry and actions the bifurcation of Mother India. In India any reference to his name became a “criminal” offense.

By 1977 the intellectual climate in India changed to some degree. With the celebration of Iqbal’s 100<sup>th</sup> year of birth scholars in India initiated a new phase of research to understand Iqbal’s multidimensional personality. Similarly in Pakistan scholars were also inspired by a new Islamic spirit to free Iqbal from Punjab’s “cage,” and to place him on an elevated place. During this turbulent period Iran was overtaken by an Islamic revolution. Ali Shariati and other Iranian scholars’ works elevated Iqbal to the galaxy of Islamic revolutionary thinkers.

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## Chapter VII

### PREPARATIONS FOR THE LONDON ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

Iqbal was invited to attend the second and third Round Table Conferences. In order to fully appreciate his political role in these conferences it is important to grasp the fact that 1) the Muslim League was in disarray, 2) efforts to achieve an understanding with Mahatma Gandhi failed, 3) political demonstrations in Kashmir became widespread in which the Punjabi Muslims became involved because of their sympathy for the people of Kashmir, and 4) Hindu-Muslim riots erupted in India, which increased the Muslims' sense of insecurity in India.

These developments opened up a window to precisely view Iqbal's frame of mind at the London Round Table Conferences.

When the First Round Table Conference ended on January 19, 1931 the British Prime Minister announced the invitations for the Second Round Table Conference. This arrangement paved the way for the participation of the All-India National Congress. In the first conference eight subcommittees were established; but due to the Hindu-Muslim divergences no definite action was taken to protect the rights of Indian minorities. In principle, however, a basic decision was taken, which stipulated 1) a federal political structure for India; including its British ruled

provinces, and princely states; 2) and the federal and provincial governments would exercise all powers, except defense and foreign affairs.

As mentioned earlier sixteen Muslim leaders had participated in the first conference. Notable among them were Maulana Muhammad Ali, Sir Agha Khan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Sir Muhammad Shafi, and Mawlvi Fazl al-Haq. Iqbal was not invited; but in London Mawlana Muhammad Ali died, and Jinnah decided at least for the time being to settle down in London. These developments had the potential to spawn leadership crisis among the Muslims. Iqbal had his own opinion about Mawlana Muhammad Ali's leadership, which he stated in a letter:

Muhammad Ali died. I was never an admirer of his politics, but his Islamic sincerity, and especially in changing some of his views he demonstrated honesty and integrity, which won my admiration.<sup>1</sup>

Muhammad Ali's brother Shaukat Ali survived him, who was capable of conducting negotiations with the Hindus to strike an agreement. Iqbal had been pushed into the labyrinth of All-India politics against his will, and now found it difficult to extricate himself.

In March 1931 by virtue of the Gandhi-Irwin Agreement the British Raj agreed to release all detainees who had been arrested during the civil disobedience movement, and in *quid pro quo* Congress agreed to terminate the movement. In April a new viceroy, Lord Willington assumed power in New Delhi. A renewed effort was made to achieve a negotiated agreement between the Muslims and Hindus. The Muslim League was in disarray and had lost its importance; but the All India Muslim Conference had acquired a degree of significance in Muslim India. Its session was called in New Delhi on April 3, 1931 and Iqbal attended its session. In Delhi at 5 Karol Bagh residence of Shaikh Ghulam Ali Sabir, Iqbal stayed for five days as his guest. Mahatma Gandhi met the leaders of the Muslim

Conference, but refused to accept their political demands, as they were not unanimously proposed, that the Muslim leaders in the All India National Congress did not accept these demands.

Mawlana Shaukat Ali came up with an idea that the exchange of ideas should be initiated with the leaders of the Muslim National Party, and a formula should be discovered to settle the differences. The leaders of the All India Muslim Conference and the Muslim National Party had already agreed upon the thirteen points of Jinnah out of the total of the fourteen points. The basic disagreement with them was over the issue of joint vs. separate electorates. So the prospects for these proposed parleys looked quite promising. Maulana Shaukat Ali persuaded Nawab Hamid ullah Khan of Bhopal to invite the leaders of the two parties to the capital of his state. To support the Muslim demands a public meeting was held outside of the Mochi Gate in Lahore on May 3, 1931. Iqbal delivered the inaugural address, and emphasized the point that this meeting was the first link in the chain of several public meetings, which would be scheduled in the future to inspire new political life among Muslims; its objective was to make them self-reliant in the forthcoming political struggle. Iqbal said:

Gandhi has stated that the political demands advanced by the Muslim Conference in Delhi were not reflective of the unanimous views of the Muslims. He was justified in taking this position. I was present in this meeting, and I had stated that the Hindus were not unanimous in articulating their political positions: one faction among them stood for separate electorates, second one supported the joint electorates, yet a third one opted for social democracy. If the range of disagreement among the Hindus was so wide, then to exploit disagreement among the Muslims was nothing short of political hypocrisy!...Let us first define the meaning of nationalist sentiment. In Europe nationalism spawned irreligiosity, and alienation from religion. The same sentiments are likely to surface in India.

The Prophet of Islam declared: I trample under my feet the invidious distinctions of race, ethnicity, and caste stratifications. You are all Muslims, and this is your true designation. All nations in India want to preserve their traits, and characteristics. Muslims want no more than preserving their distinction and identity. Muslims do not want to rule over others, nor do they accept the rules of others over them; they do not want to be “slaves” of others. I urge the Muslim youth to grasp the meaning of true nationalism. They organize themselves, and our endeavors are directed to averting any possibility of anyone converting us to become debased like the “Gonds,” and “Bhils,” the backward tribals of [Assam and Orissa]. You have yet to sacrifice yourself to avoid the curse of capitalism. You delude yourself if you think that Englishmen or some other nation would come to help you. Stand up, and be counted; otherwise you have no right to survive.<sup>2</sup>

Seven days after this public meeting in Lahore Iqbal, accompanied by Ghulam Rasul Mehr, traveled to Bhopal to attend another meeting, which Nawab Hamid Ullah Khan had arranged. This fruitless meeting did not last for more than two days. Iqbal confabulated with the leaders of All India Muslim Conference, and Muslim Nationalist Party. Instead of meeting of the minds a wide gulf between their views had emerged. Consequently, an attempt to achieve Hindu-Muslim understanding before the Second London Round Table Conference proved to be an exercise in futility. To inform the public about this good faith effort a joint statement was issued on May 12, 1931 by Mawlana Shaukat Ali, Sir Muhammad Shafi, and T.H. Sherwani. The following day when Iqbal and Nawab Muhammad Isma`il Khan stopped at the Delhi railway station, he gave a statement in an interview with the correspondent of the *Statesman*. Then again on May 15, 1931 he publicly explained the disagreements between Muslim leaders:

If Dr. Ansari and Mr. Shu`ab have presented the ‘non-discussions’ of the Bhopal Conference as a provisional covenant between us, then they rendered disservice not only

to the participants of the conference, but also the entire Muslim nation. I want to make it completely crystal clear that no such thing as a provisional covenant ever entered our deliberations. This meeting was focused primarily on the need to bring the so-called nationalist Muslims closer to the decisions of All India Muslim Conference regarding the mode of elections, and some proposals were made for their consideration, which might enable them to rejoin the Muslim nation, which has as usual decided to enforce the separate electorates. There remained no room for any misunderstanding on this score...To carry these proposals to Gandhiji, which were hardly subjected to any discussion, and to interpret them as a provisional covenant gives rise to a suspicion that the Bhopal Conference was being exploited as an instrument of propaganda. Against this background to convene another conference in Simla or Bhopal would serve no useful purpose, but would be detrimental to the interests of Muslims in India.<sup>3</sup>

The widening chasm between Muslim leaders of the National Congress, and their opponents over the issue of joint vs. separate elections could not be bridged; and no formula for Hindu-Muslim agreement could be agreed upon. During this period of negotiations, especially in April 1931 wide-spread Hindu-Muslim riots erupted. Major cities like Benaras, Agra, Mirza Pur and Kawnpur were the centers of large scale bloodletting. Muslims, as usual suffered the most, their houses were burned and their mosques were destroyed. The riots in Kawnpur were most ghastly, where large numbers of Muslims were killed. To help the victims of Kawnpur riots, Iqbal and other Muslim leaders issued a statement of appeal on July 14, 1931 for generous donations. This statement appeared in the newspapers of the Punjab, Northwest Frontier Province, and Sindh:

After the riots that occurred in Benaras, Agra, and Mirza Pur, the free for all slaughter of Muslims in Kawnpur was a challenge to the survival of Muslims in India, as if they would be annihilated one after another, and that no one would



come to their rescue. Hindus had not done to the British in the rebellion of 1857, what they did to the Muslims in Kawnpur. The way sportsmen with their rifles on the ready pounce upon the wild animals in no less a manner and style the Hindus hunted down the Muslims in Kawnpur. Thousands of Muslims houses were burned; craftsmen's tools were made useless. Helpless Muslims were not only slaughtered, but were burned alive. Blood has not dried in the houses and mosques, where Muslims took shelter. These heart wrenching incidents remind us of the tragedy of their agony. [In addition to the loss of life], 30 mosques totally or partially destroyed and the Qur'an was desecrated."<sup>4</sup>

The tragedy of Kawnpur deeply touched Iqbal's soul, and once again he lost hope for any reconciliation with the Hindus. So much so that he began to think that if in the forthcoming London Round Table Conference the British government attempted to appease the Hindus at the expense of the Muslims, they would then be fully justified to side with the Soviet Union, and espouse socialism. This despondent frame of mind was reflected in his letter of July 30, 1931 to Sir Francis Younghusband:

Any attempt on the part of Great Britain at the next Round Table Conference to take an undue advantage of communal split will ultimately prove disastrous to both countries. If you transfer political authority to the Hindu and keep him in power for any material benefit to Great Britain, you will drive the India Muslim to use the same weapon against the Swaraj or Anglo-Swaraj Government as Gandhi did against the British government.

Moreover, it may result in the whole of Muslim Asia being driven into the lap of Russian Communism which would serve as a *coup de grace* to the British supremacy in the East. I do not myself believe that the Russians are by nature an irreligious people. On the contrary, I think that they are men and women of strong religious tendencies and the present negative state of Russian mind will not last indefinitely, for no system of society can rest on an atheistic basis. As soon as things settle down in that country and its people have time

to think calmly, they will be forced to find a positive foundation for their system.

Since Bolshevism plus God is almost identical with Islam, I should not be surprised if, in the course of time, either Islam would devour Russia or Russia Islam. The result will depend, I think, to a considerable extent on the position which is given to the Indian Muslims under the new constitution.

Please do not think that I have any prejudice against the Hindus. In fact, I have great admiration for the spirit of self-sacrifice and courage which they have shown in recent years. They have produced men of eminence in every walk of life and are fast advancing along social and economic lines.<sup>5</sup>

### **Demonstrations in the Engineering College**

Muslim students in the Engineering College of Lahore started to demonstrate against the British Principal, who had earned the notoriety of being anti-Islamic. It was reported Muslim students had an appointment with him to air their grievances. Instead of dealing with their problems the Principal made some comments, which incited the Muslim students. They then contacted the local newspapers, political leaders and approached Iqbal for help. Also, they organized protest meetings and took to the streets. Several Muslim organizations, and newspapers protested against the Principal's behavior, and organized a public meeting outside Mochi Gate in Lahore, which Iqbal addressed:

Muslims are disorganized, and splintered. Every other nation in this country is antagonistic toward them. This is most regrettable. You Muslims have resorted to all kinds of panaceas for you afflictions, but in vain. Now try a simple strategy that the Prophet Muhammad had proposed...unity of the *umma* (followers) cuts through all the knots; be united and then see the results. All of your strategies have proved to be unsuccessful, but the prescribed recipe of the Prophet Muhammad will never fail.<sup>6</sup>

To investigate this problem the Punjab government created an Investigation Commission, but the Muslims of Lahore found its personnel not creditable, and continued

their protests. Finally the government instituted a new commission. At this point a public meeting was organized in Lahore's traditional venue just outside of Mochi Gate Garden, and was presided over by Mawlana Daud Ghaznavi, who finally proposed a resolution. Iqbal supported it with these words:

In the first meeting I had stated that according to our Prophet the unity among Muslims always cuts across the complicated issues. You acted with the sincerity of intent and purpose, and now you have seen the results. Very significant issues are about to confront the Muslims which deal with their collective existence. Those issues demand that Muslims should remain steadfast. I pray for you to God All-Mighty that he inspire you to preserve your unity the way the Muslims preserved theirs in the earliest phase of Islam.

Finally, with the advice of Mawlana Daud Ghaznavi and Iqbal the protest marches of the students were terminated, and it was proposed that the Commission should start recording the testimony of the witnesses. Impressed by this wide spread protest the Principal apologized for his statements and conduct, and the matter was settled.

### **Political Unrest in Kashmir**

At this juncture the political cauldron, which had been simmering for some years, boiled over so strongly that it became eventually the movement of self-determination for Kashmir. The Dogra Hindu rule was visibly repressive of the Muslims. However, two events in 1931 triggered off their overt opposition to the Hindu rulers' administration. One incident was reported to have occurred in a place, where Muslims had congregated for prayers, and the *imam*, the leader of the congregational prayers wanted to deliver a *khutba*, (sermon). A Hindu police officer who happened to be on the spot forbade him to do so. The second incident took place in the Jammu Central Jail, where a Hindu guard, as a mark of disrespect for the Qur'an, threw its copy on the floor.

In Srinagar, the summer capital of the state, Abdul Qadeer Khan, a Pashtun from the Northwest Frontier Province, delivered an inciting speech to the Kashmiri audience, protesting the incident in the Jammu jail. He was arrested on July 13, 1931 and presented in a court room, where thousand of Muslims gathered to lend moral support to Khan. To disperse this large crowd the police openly fired on them and killed 21 Muslim protesters. In support of these protesters Muslims in other cities of Kashmir started to organize protest demonstrations, which were ruthlessly suppressed. Finally these demonstrations degenerated into Hindu-Muslim riots. Hari Singh, the Ruler of Kashmir, found himself isolated, and unable to cope with these deteriorating conditions sought the military help of the paramount imperial government of British India.

Muslims' national development had been very badly thwarted by the oppressive Dogra rule. The general mass of Muslim population had remained without education. Lower level jobs in the State's administration were denied to them, and Muslims believed that they had been denied religious freedoms. Most of the mosques in Kashmir were under the custody of the State. Newspapers were censored before publication, and protests in the form of public meetings and processions were banned. Muslim political activists and their leaders were arrested and confined to jails without trials. Two well-known leaders of Kashmiri Muslims – Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah, and Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas – had been arrested. Martial law had been imposed throughout the State, and on roads, and in different neighborhoods platforms had been erected to flog protesters.<sup>7</sup>

Contiguous to the Kashmir state, the Muslims in the Punjab were bound to be roused in support of Kashmiri Muslims. A religiously oriented political party, Majlis-i Ahrar organized thousands of young political workers, who were sent in small batches to cross over to the Kashmir

territory, who filled up all the jails in the state. To support the Kashmiri Muslims an All-India Kashmir Committee was established, which was headed by Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud, head of the Ahmadiya Movement of Qadian. Iqbal remained a very active member and the guiding light of the Kashmir Committee. This committee was committed to:

1. Mobilizing the public opinion in support of the people of Kashmir;
2. Initiating of constitutional reforms;
3. Awarding of monetary compensation to the dead and wounded;
4. Providing legal aid to the arrested protesters, and those, who were in jails without trials.

To protest against the repressive policy in Kashmir, and the injustices committed by the ruler of Kashmir, Kashmir Day was celebrated on August 14, 1931. Iqbal and some other leaders issued an appeal from Lahore:

After attacking repeatedly the enemy has deluded itself into believing that Muslims are a dead nation. To refute this misbelief it is your obligation to make the Kashmir Day a resounding success. By actions Muslims must demonstrate that they were not going to be the willing victims of their enemies' injustice and repression.<sup>8</sup>

August 14, 1931 was celebrated as the Kashmir Day and Muslims of Lahore took out a huge protest procession in the streets. At the end of the procession a general meeting was arranged where Iqbal delivered the presidential address:

There was a time when Muslims in India and the Punjab were not deeply interested in the affairs of Kashmir. Even those Punjabis whose ancestors had migrated from Kashmir were not fully informed of the history of Kashmir. Now the Punjabi Muslims are fully awake due to the oppression of Kashmiri Muslims...Muslims had endeavored for a long time to gain their well-deserved rights; now that they are more organized in pressing the demands for their rights; the ruler of Kashmir and the Hindu newspapers have circulated

mischievous new items, calling the Muslims' endeavors leading to Hindu-Muslim riots...

Actually the political movement [against the British rule] was bound to rouse the people of Kashmir. Consequently they became like their neighbors. The modern time is politicizing the people; and the people of Kashmir were going to rise in protest and demand the grant of their rights. This was the net political consequence of the oppression, which the people of Kashmir had endured...

History bears witness to the fact that people who conquer a country with their sharp swords cannot rule over that country without the support of its population. In light of this lesson of history rulers of all the countries must seek the good will of their subjects.<sup>9</sup>

In this meeting, Saiyad Mohsin Shah, a lawyer and a well-known leader in the Kashmiri movement, stated that the Hindu newspapers were circulating all kinds of canards about supporters of the Kashmiris' movement for their rights. He cited the Hindu newspaper *Kaysri*, which had stated that Iqbal wanted to be the Prime Minister of Kashmir, and Saiyad Mohsin Shah aspired to be a judge of the high court in Kashmir. At this point Iqbal interjected a comment for the audience: "I damned the prime ministership under this ruler." *Tribune*, an English newspaper, owned by the Hindus, circulated mischievous comments of this kind. A Raguhwan published an article that some personalities betray their true intentions behind the scenes; when the Kashmir agitations were underway a distinguished leader had applied for a cabinet position in the Kashmir government. The editor of the daily *Inqilab* asked Iqbal to speculate who might be this "distinguished leader." Iqbal replied:

I am in no position to identify this leader. A Hindu newspaper has already mentioned my name, and Mr. Raguhwan's sentence is also likely to mislead others. I categorically refute this assertion. I had stated forthrightly during the Kashmir Day meeting that I damn a ministership of this kind. I have never applied for other positions which are superior to this

position. I am a member of the All-India Kashmiri Committee, which wants to have constitutional reforms introduced in Kashmir. As a member of this committee it would be unethical for me to seek a job of this nature.<sup>10</sup>

Iqbal endeavored to raise donations for the victims of Kashmir, and sent them to the Kashmiri leaders. Also, he persuaded some well-known lawyers to visit Kashmir with a view to provide legal aid to Kashmiris, who were incarcerated in Kashmir. Unfortunately the Kashmir state authorities expelled those lawyers, who had entered the state without permission, or simply banned the entrance of those who had planned to visit Kashmir. Iqbal was also not allowed to cross the borders in to the state, and this ban on his entrance into Kashmir lasted till the last days of his life. He never could satisfy his desire to see his ancestral land. It is noteworthy that due to Iqbal's efforts the Glancy Commission was instituted by the British government, which recommended a variety of constitutional reforms in the state after conducting a thorough investigation.

### **Iqbal on His Way to London: New Delhi, Bombay, Aden, Suez Canal, Port Said, London, Rome, Spain, Egypt, Palestine**

The period of September 1931 – February 1933 was exceptionally busy in Iqbal's life. The highlights of this period were indeed the Second London Round Table Conference of October 1, 1931, November 30, 1931 and the third one of November 17, 1932 – December 24, 1932. En route Iqbal visited Aden, Suez Canal zone, Port Said, Rome, Spain, and then on the way back to Lahore he stopped over in Egypt, and participated in the deliberations of the World Muslim Congress in Jerusalem.

After the absence of 32 years from Europe these visits enabled him to establish contacts not only with the British political personalities, but also with European philosophers, scholars and political leaders, and modern Muslims educated in western universities. Iqbal by this time was an

acknowledged Muslim leader and thinker, who could parley in the west with linguistic and scholarly confidence, which few Muslim leaders could manage. Iqbal's vision was also broadened by the knowledge of latest political and philosophic developments in the west. In Egypt, where "secular" nationalism was in vogue, he had to contend with this dilemma as in India he had repudiated this ideology, and he discovered in Egypt that Egyptians considered the Muslims' orientation a hindrance in the freedom of India. In Palestine his support to the Arab cause was most welcome, and Iqbal was able to generate sympathy and help for the Palestinians in India.

### **Preparations for the Second Round Table Conference**

The British government in India issued invitations to the proposed participants, including Iqbal, on August 4, 1931, and they were supposed to reach London by September 26 so that the conference could be inaugurated on October 1. Clearly, Iqbal had accepted the invitation. Who proposed Iqbal's name as a creditable participant in the conference? Azim Hussain stated that his father, Sir Fazl-i Hussain, an old college mate of Iqbal, was responsible for proposing his name to the Viceroy in New Delhi. This was creditable enough, but let us not ignore the fact that Iqbal was by this time a popular and representative political personality of All-India stature, who could not be ignored. On his way to London, Iqbal stopped over in New Delhi and Bombay and received national hero's welcome from the Muslims of these two cities. Moreover, Iqbal had received invitations from Mufti Amin al- Husseini of Jerusalem to attend the World Muslim Congress' session in Palestine, and Professor Marconi, President of the Intellectuals Association of Rome had invited him to deliver a lecture in Rome. Sir Francis Younghusband, President of the Literary League of the Indian Society in London had written a letter of invitation to accept the position of Vice-



President of the Indian Society. No other Muslim leader could claim to enjoy this international admiration.

Iqbal departed from Lahore by train on September 8. A large number of his admirers had congregated at the station to bid him bon voyage. A very prominent business leader from Karachi also happened to be at the station, and they found this occasion a suitable opportunity to exchange ideas on the contemporary political developments in India. With the London Round Table Conference in mind, Iqbal issued a statement to the daily *Inqalab*:

Any proposed constitution, which would be detrimental to the Muslims' collective political life would be unacceptable. The freedom of India is to be achieved by the nations of India. No agreement between the nations of India could be achieved in the Indian environment. The fact is that the Muslims of India during the last ten years endeavored to achieve this agreement even at the expense of their economic and collective political interests. Nevertheless I venture to think that in the British environment the British statesmen's genius would resolve this deadlock, which the Indian statesmen might have failed to do. At last, I urge the Hindu journalists, and our Hindu brethren in general that:

*Sukhan-i drusht mago der tareeq-i yari kosh*

*Ka suhbat man-o tu der Jahan khuda saz ast*

(Do not use the harsh language in discourse, cultivate friendship, because the association between you and us has been ordained by God Almighty.)

At the Delhi train station thousands of Muslims, including their religious and political leaders, including Mawlana Saiyad Ahmad (leader of congregational prayers at the grand mosque), Mawlana Mazhar-ud-Din (Editor of the tri-weekly publication, *al-Amman*), Haji Muhammad Yousaf (Secretary of the Caliphate Committee), Nawab Abul Hassan Khan, and Saiyad Nazir Niazi, were present to extend their affectionate welcome. Moreover political activists of the provincial Muslim Conference of Delhi, Central Muslim Youth League, Anjuman Rafiq al-

Muslimin, Anjuman, Itihad Traqi and Anjuman-i Taimuriya were conspicuously visible in this enthusiastic crowd. Last but not least teachers and young students of Muhammad Ali High School were present to extend their cordial welcome. These organizations had prepared addresses of reception and admiration for Iqbal, which could not be read in a short period of waiting for the train. Only one was read by the *imam* of the Grand Mosque of Delhi, which had been signed by the leaders of the organization.

As at the Lahore farewell ceremony, again on this occasion Iqbal had the London Conference in mind, when he responded to the Delhi citizens' address:

I want to let you know that I do not have a private secretary who would assist me to collect data for the conference, nor do I have political literature readily available, which might enable me to structure my discourse. I do possess true and comprehensive book of God [the Qur'an]; its illuminating rays of light would guide me to protect the rights of Indian Muslims. During the last ten years we have been endeavoring to seek an alliance with the Hindus, and we relegated our economic and political interests to the background. But consistently and steadily we encountered failures.

Now in the forthcoming meeting in London if no satisfactory form of communal alliance emerged, and complete provincial autonomy was not granted to the provinces, and in the federal governmental structure no room was provided for the Muslims, then the Muslims of India would have no choice but to sacrifice their individual lives to protect the integrity of their collective life.

I believe that if Muslim majority in the Punjab and Bengal was not recognized, and Muslims' other demands were not accepted, then whatever the form of the constitution of India there might be, it would be repudiated by the Muslims of India. The old generation of Muslims has not prepared the youth for eventual succession. I give this advice to the Muslim youth: keep the Qur'anic instructions, and the admirable conduct of the Prophet Muhammad in mind as

your guide. If you want to survive, then be prepared for the sacrifices, which you would have to make in the future.<sup>11</sup>

Iqbal reached Bombay on September 10, and stayed at the Caliphate House. The same evening he attended a reception at the residence of Atiya Faizee, an old close friend of Iqbal from his student days in Europe. Now she was married to a Jewish artist, who had converted to Islam. As usual Iqbal enjoyed her wit and literary style. People asked him to recite some verses of his poetry. Iqbal stood up, looked intently at his hostess and made a few comments, and finally recited a Persian verse: *Chuna ba-zi keh agar merg-i ma ast merg-i dawam, Khuda zay kardah-i khud sharmsar ter garded*. Interestingly enough whenever people insisted upon him to recite his poetry he avoided it, but when he obliged the audience he recited more often than not Persian verses of his poetry to his only Urdu-knowing audience. This probably was a social technique that he used to discourage the requests for the recitation of poetry in non-literary gatherings. As people insisted, Iqbal dictated the translation of this verse, and it was then read for the benefit of the guests:

(Spend your life so beautifully, -- that if death is the unavoidable end – God should be embarrassed to terminate it.)

Atiya had arranged a dance and musical soiree inside her house, where they watched the performance and exchanged witticisms. Iqbal was also entertained the same evening at the residence of Afghanistan's Consul, Sardar Salah-ud-Din Saljuqi, who had invited another well-known poet., Mirza Talat Yazdi, for Iqbal's company. In a letter of September 21, 1931 Iqbal described this reception at Consul Saljuqi's residence:

The reception was entirely delightful. Sardar Saljuqi is a good scholar of Arabic and Persian literature. , and is also knowledgeable about the contemporary Arabic poetry, he ranks Khaqani very high. Also he has knowledge of Islamic studies, as he was a Qadi (judge) in Herat at one time. Resident in Bombay for the last ten years Mirza Talat Yazdi

was also present and he recited his own verses in Iranian accent. You might have read these verses. The same evening in the musical soiree Atiya Begum was delightful.<sup>12</sup>

Before his departure for England, Iqbal gave an extensive interview to a correspondent of the *Bombay Chronicle*, which shed considerable light on Iqbal's political views. (It is reproduced with minor editorial changes.)

As a preliminary to the formal interview Iqbal stated that he retains "no prejudice" against "any community" or "nation" in the world, and wanted to "see Islam returned to its pristine simplicity." Iqbal then emphasized multiculturalism for India, where every community could retain "its culture and individuality."

### **PAN-ISLAMISM**

Q: What is your perception of Pan-Islamism?

A: The term Pan-Islamism has been used in two senses. As far as I know, it was coined by a French journalist and in the sense in which he used that term, Pan-Islamism existed nowhere except in his own imagination. I think the French journalist meant to give shape to a danger which he fancied was existing in the world of Islam. The phrase was invented after the fashion of the expression "Yellow Peril," in order to justify European aggression in Islamic countries.

Later on, I think the expression Pan-Islamism was taken to mean a kind of intrigue, the center of which was in Constantinople. The Muslims of the world were understood to be planning a kind of Union of all the Muslim States against the European States. The late Professor Brown of the Cambridge University has, I think, conclusively proved that Pan-Islamism in that sense never existed in Constantinople or anywhere else.

There is, however, a sense in which Jamaluddin Afghani used it. I do not know if he used the same expression, but he actually advised Afghanistan, Persia and Turkey to unite against the aggression of Europe. This was purely a

defensive measure, and I personally think that Jamaluddin was perfectly right in his view.

But there is another sense in which the word should be used and it does contain the teaching of the Qur'an. In that sense it is not a political project but a social experiment. Islam does not recognize caste or race or color. In fact Islam is the only outlook on life which has really solved the color question, at least in the Muslim world, a question which modern European civilization with all its achievements in science and philosophy, has not been able to solve. Pan-Islamism, thus interpreted, was taught by the Prophet and will live forever. In this sense Pan-Islamism is only Pan-Humanism. In this sense every Muslim is a Pan-Islamist and ought to be so. Indeed the word Pan ought to be dropped from the phrase Pan-Islamism, for Islamism is an expression which completely covers the meaning I have mentioned above.

### **IMPERIALISM**

Q: Do you consider British Imperialism to be Godly?

A: All States engaged in exploitation are un-Godly.

### **BOLSHEVISM**

Q: Do you subscribe to the view once expressed by you in a letter to Sir Francis Younghusband that "Islam is Bolshevism plus God"?

A: Islam is a socialistic religion. The Qur'an teaches a kind of *via media* between absolute Socialism and private property. Russia has recognized the promotion of skilled labor.

Personally, I think that modern conscience will bring about fundamental changes in what you call Imperialism and Bolshevism. The days of territorial Empires are over and Bolshevism, in the sense of absolute socialism, is already being modified. Russia and Britain may come to blows, because of the fundamental difference in their economic outlook; in which case it is obvious that the

sympathies of all right-thinking men would be on the side of justice.

[A few more questions on the point elicited the information that the poet held radical views on the subject which vitally differed from the present conception of private property as preached and practiced by the Muslims. He was very clear and emphatic on one point and it was that Qur'anic teaching was opposed to holding of land as private property.]

As far as I have been able to see from the papers the Russians are reported to have rejected the idea of God as a basis of human society. Even if this state does exist in Russia today, I doubt whether it will continue to exist. Materialism pure and simple cannot serve as a basis for human society; and the Russians as far as I know are really a religious people.

### **CRITICISM OF IQBAL AS A POLITICIAN**

The correspondent asked the poet what he had to say to those of his well-meaning critics who felt embarrassed at his present attitude, as it was not in keeping with the teachings of his poetry. He was informed that some people believed that Iqbal the poet had been superseded by Iqbal the politician.

He replied: "It is for my critics to judge me. But they ought to do so from my writings, which I am afraid few of them care to read or understand. But there is no doubt that my ideas about Nationalism have undergone a definite change. In my college days I was a zealous Nationalist which I am not now. The change is due to maturer thinking. It is unfortunate that my later writings were all in Persian which is little understood in this country."

Q: Are you for the continuance of the Princely order?

A: I am not for the continuance of the Princely order. But I am neither at heart a believer in Democracy. I tolerate Democracy because there is no other substitute.

Q: Don't you think that you would have been more useful to the country as a poet than a politician?

A: The poet replied that he had not ceased taking interest in literary pursuits. In fact that was his main occupation even now. He referred to his latest publication *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* and said that on his return from England he intended to write more on allied subjects.

Q: You have done more than any one else to expose the sham of Conferences and the League of Nations and yet you seem to be pinning your faith on the Round Table Conference. Will you kindly explain this paradox?

A: When this question was asked, the poet blinked and abruptly turned to his constant companion – the *Hooka*.

Q: Why are you opposed to Nationalism?

A: I consider it against the higher ideal of Islam. Islam is not a creed. It is a social code. It has solved the color problem. It wants to turn the minds of the people into a single channel. It originally conceived the unity and the spiritual resemblance among the members of the human race. Nationalism as at present understood and practiced comes in the way of the realization of that ideal and that is my argument against Nationalism.

Q: What is the possibility of a Federation of the Arabian countries?

A: I believe in the Federation of the Arabian States, though there are some very great difficulties in the way. I have great faith in the Arabic language which in my opinion is the only Eastern language which has a future before it as a living language. I look upon it as a great bond of union among the Arabian nations next to their faith. The present condition of Hejaz is not, however, very satisfactory. It is difficult for me to forecast the future of the Arabian Federation.

If the Muslim countries keep true to the ideals of Islam they are likely to do the greatest service to humanity. Islam,

in my opinion, is the only positive system that the world possesses today provided the Muslims apply themselves to it and rethink the whole thing in the light of modern ideas. The Indian Muslim in my opinion is likely to play a very important role in the future of Islam. New Islam relies more on the younger generation which has received more education with necessary grounding in Islam.

The Ulama, if they properly apply themselves to understand the real meaning of problems, political and economic, which confront Islam today, with their knowledge of the past would be of immense use in the future reconstruction of Islam. I have myself made my humble contribution and I hope to write more. I have tried to see the religious philosophy of Islam in the light of modern knowledge and I hope I shall find time to do the same thing with the system of *fiqh* which in my opinion is much more important today than the purely theological aspect of it. I have however begun with the philosophical aspect of it. It was, as a matter of fact, necessary as a prelude to the work of reconstruction.

I am concentrating on *fiqh* which the Ulama have neglected for several centuries. The Qur'an must now be read as a book which throws light on the birth, growth and death of nations or rather peoples. In the history of revealed literature, the Qur'an is probably the first book which spoke of people as a living organism. The Qur'an conceives people as obeying certain definite laws, of which the moral aspect the Qur'an has emphasized more than the other aspects.

Q: Are you going to visit any Islamic country on your way back to India after finishing the work at the Round Table Conference?

A: The poet said that his desire was to visit all or at least as many of the Islamic countries as possible. But paucity of funds would not allow him to visit many of them. He would however visit Egypt while returning



from England. He wanted to write a book on *The Modern World of Islam*. But it again depended on the funds that would be available.<sup>13</sup>

### **Impressions of Aden, Suez Canal Zone and Fellow Travelers**

Iqbal wrote extensively in his letters to his friends, describing in considerable detail his contacts with Arab and non-Arabs, and the cultural and political orientations of his fellow travelers, who were scheduled to attend the Round Table Conference. At the Aden port a young lawyer of Lahore, Shaikh Abdullah, came over to see Iqbal in the boat. He took Iqbal to his house in the Aden city, where he entertained him to a sumptuous dinner with Indian dishes, to be followed by the bitter Yemenite coffee, which looks black. Iqbal met there Agha Fikri, an Iranian merchant. Alert and talkative Fikri appeared to Iqbal as a successful merchant, who presented Iqbal a precious stone.

Iqbal had visited Aden, according to his account, 22 years ago, when it was not much of a city, but now it appeared to him populous and progressive. Iqbal noticed that Arabs of Hadramaut were engaged in money-lending, while Punjabis and Sindhis were mostly shopkeepers. Muslim Somalis appeared to him very industrious and alert in their lives. Shaikh Abdullah informed Iqbal that some of these Somalis could easily converse in several languages. In Aden there was also a literary club of young Arabs, but he was unable to meet anyone of them. By late evening around 10:30 P.M. Iqbal departed from Shaikh Abdullah's house, and was brought back up to the ship.

Iqbal's ship docked at Port Said on September 30 at 3:00 P.M. Evidently the news of Iqbal's arrival had already spread in Port Said. An Egyptian Doctor Sulaiman came aboard and woke up Iqbal in his cabin. Not before too long young Egyptians, who belonged to the Shabab al Musalamin organization called on Iqbal, who was delighted to meet them.

Iqbal was particularly delighted to meet a young Egyptian girl, daughter of a colonel, who became a fellow traveler to England, where she was a graduate student of Botany. She had already spent four years of study in England. Fluent in English, Iqbal noticed that she spoke English with British accent and intonations, while he noticed that Egyptians generally conversed in English with French accent.

A well-known Egyptian Barrister-at-Law, Lufti Bey sent invitation to Iqbal, which was orally conveyed by Dr. Sulaiman, inviting him to visit Cairo on his way back. Ranpura, the ship that he was originally scheduled to travel back to India, was visited again by Lufti Bey, but unfortunately for a variety of reasons Iqbal had cancelled that reservation. Consequently, Iqbal and Lufti Bey failed to meet each other, and his trip to Cairo did not materialize.

### **Misinterpretations of Egyptians about Indian Muslims' Politics**

This may come as a shock to us, but the fact is that Egyptian Muslims perceived Indian Muslims as an obstacle to India's freedom. This propaganda was extended successfully to other Arab countries as well. Iqbal pointed out that he delivered an extensive lecture on the political role of Indian Muslims with a high hope that he succeeded in removing misperceptions. Some in this audience, he noted, took notes during Iqbal's lecture, and felt relieved. All night long these young Egyptians stayed with him in his cabin, and then departed at 6:00 A.M. as the ship was about to sail out of the harbor.

### **Impressions of the Suez Canal**

These impressions were especially interesting as they reflected Iqbal's geopolitical thinking.

He noted that his ship had sailed through the Mediterranean and waters were calm, and storms were nowhere to be raging. The Red Sea area was hot.

Referring to Moses' parting of the sea with a stroke of his rod, Iqbal noted that the ocean's water was rather warm. Wherever you see you see only the ocean as God Almighty turned upside down the blues of the sky and spread them over the land. "We entered the Suez canal on September 19. Egyptian Pharaohs, ancient Iranians, Muslims and Europeans excavated the old channels and created the canal," Iqbal observed and then added, "this marvelous canal's commercial significance was about to unfold. Ships of all nations are politically guaranteed free passage. Majority of the canal's shores are now owned by the British government, which were sold to them by Khadiv of Egypt, Isma'il Pasha. This liquid highway linking Europe and Asia cost 2 ½ cror pounds sterling. But its significance would decline because of progress in civilian and commercial aviation. The network of railroads in central Asia, and central Europe would usher in a 'dry canal,' which would revolutionize the world of trade and commerce during the next 25 years. Then powerful would become weak, and weak would be transformed into powerful."

Iqbal then described his daily routine of life in this ship. Before sunrise he got up and studied the Qur'an. After essential toiletries routine he ate his breakfast in his cabin. He appeared on the deck and chatted with fellow-travelers or listened to the news broadcast followed by discussions and exchange of ideas and the study of reports about the Round Table Conference. Sometimes the recitation of poetry was also arranged. Iqbal admired particularly Saiyad Ali Imam's prodigious memory that he could recite in an admirable style large numbers of Urdu, Persian and Arabic verses. His father Nawab Imdad Imam Asar was also a noted scholar of Urdu literature.

Iqbal lost appetite for meat, and simply gave up eating it, and lived on vegetables, fish and eggs. He lost his appetites for meat because whatever was available was not slaughtered

according to Islamic rite. Whenever he could find *halal* meat (prepared according to Islamic rite) he relished it. He particularly admired Lady Ali Imam, a cultured and refined lady, who accompanied her husband and made sure that their cook prepared huge dishes of *halal* meat, and made sure that generous quantity of it was presented to Iqbal almost everyday. Nevertheless Iqbal continued to eat vegetables with rice. In addition to food Iqbal made interesting observations about his fellow travelers:

In our ship seven or eight Hindu and Muslim delegates are traveling; among them four are Muslim delegates, and they are westernized (*maghrab-zada*). The term *maghrab-zada musulman* (westernized Muslim) was invented by the journal *Ma`rif*. It is quite an entertaining term. But strangely enough in this modernized crew two have memorized the Qur'an. They are Nawab of Chatari, Khan Bahadur Hafiz Hidayat Hussain; the last one, I have heard recite the sacred words daily, and every year during the month of Ramadan offers regularly sixth optional prayer (*taravih*). Listening to Sayad Ali Imam's condition of modernity: one day in the morning he was standing next to me on the deck of the ship. He calculated the distance in miles in his head, and said: 'brother Iqbal! Our ship is now moving exactly in front of Medina's shores.' He could barely complete this sentence and tears rolled down his cheeks. He said: 'there is the mausoleum of our Prophet.' His emotional reaction greatly impressed me. Insofar as I am concerned, I am neither a man impressed with the West, nor by the East; but the impact of the East indeed left an enduring imprint on my personality. Other fellow travelers are: Mr. Justice Suhrawardy, Shaikh Mushir Hussain Kidwai, and two young landowners from the Awadh province. Kidwai is an enthusiastic pan-Islamist, and preaches his message energetically. Among the two landowners one is fluent in conversational Arabic, the other can understand Arabic, but cannot converse in it. They lived with their father in Karbala for many years, and learned to speak fluently in Arabic. So this is the story of the westernized crew.

During a brief stopover of a few hours at Port Said Iqbal was also interviewed by Hakim Muhammad Sadique Nadau, a correspondent of Reuters news agency. In the company of young Egyptian visitors, Iqbal stated: "Hindus are constantly worried about the possibility of Indian Muslims, supported by the Afghan and Baluch Muslims, invading India and keeping it under their domination. But, is it really plausible? If Egypt becomes free completely, would the Egyptians hand over their country to the Turks, because the Turks are Muslim. The non-violence policy of the National Congress is designed to face the British bayonets. The riots in Kawnpur and Srinagar demonstrate that violence is applied in their dealings with the Muslims."<sup>14</sup>

Then Iqbal issued another statement to clarify the positions of the Indian Muslims: "Egyptians suspect that Muslims are painful obstacle in the attaining of freedom for India. There is not a grain of truth in this view. If our Egyptian friends have accepted this view, it is because of the fact that they never attempted to fully understand the politics of India. I urge Egyptian journalists to visit India and thoroughly examine the conditions. In India Egyptian Muslims are subjected to this propaganda that they have bid farewell to Allah, the Qur'an and Islam, while we know that it is a great mischief."<sup>15</sup>

After 23 years of absence, Iqbal reached London on September 27, 1931. He stayed at Saint James Court, Buckingham Gate SW, which was within walking distance of Saint James Palace, where the Round Table Conference was held. During this prolonged absence from England the political developments in Europe had undergone a sea change. Two rising new powers – Italy and Germany – were determined to change the existing distribution of power. In the Far East China, was galvanized by new revolutionary ideological intoxicants; but the League of Nations had become totally an ineffectual institution.

### **Threats to Internal Peace: Political Developments in Europe**

At the end of World War I the League of Nations, the very first international experiment in conflict resolution, was established to create a system of collective security, had held its inaugural session in 1920 in Switzerland. Since the U.S. Senate failed to endorse the Treaty of Versailles, which included the covenant of the League of Nations, the United States did not become a member of the League. Ironically, American President Woodrow Wilson, had played a leading role in giving shape and content to the concept of the League of Nations.

The League of Nations' system of collective security was designed to preserve the status quo as it had emerged as the consequence of World War I. The League's covenant in its article 16 (paragraphs I, II and III) established the system of collective security, and from the outset confined it to one type of violation of international law, that is "resort to war in violation of the provisions for the peaceful settlement of international disputes laid down in the Articles 12, 13, and 15 of the covenant. In 1931, the League's Assembly found unanimously that part of Chinese territory [Manchuria] has been forcibly occupied by the Japanese troops," yet the Assembly found also that Japan had not resorted to war in violation of the covenant that therefore Article 16 did not apply. When Japan invaded China in 1937 (and by then Japan had resigned from the League) the Assembly declared that Japan had violated the Nine Power Treaty of 1922, and the Kellogg-Briand Pact, the Article 16 was applicable. Yet no action was taken. In 1935 Italy occupied Ethiopia, and the League applied economic sanctions on Italy, but did nothing to force Italian withdrawal from Ethiopia. Finally, Germany and Japan started military actions, which led to World War II. Even before the outbreak of World War II, the League of Nations had become completely dysfunctional.

After World War I Mussolini in Italy and Hitler in Germany created authoritarian political systems, and attempted to bring about new distributions of power in their areas of interest. Hitler took over the Rhineland in 1936 with approval of Great Britain, two years later annexed Austria. In October 1938 Hitler grabbed the Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia, and in September 1939 invaded Poland. As Britain had given a guarantee of territorial security to Poland, Britain declared war against Hitler, and the World War II was started.

In the Far East the Communist Party of China under Mao's leadership was engaged in the struggle for power with the Kuomintang, the Chinese Nationalist Party. Iqbal was deeply influenced by the political developments of Europe, and expressed his reactions in poetry. He realized that the new distributions of power would be global in nature. However, what would be the role of the world of Islam in post-conflict settlement, which would give birth to a new world order. In confabulating these issues, Iqbal wrote a letter of January 15, 1934 to Saiyad Sulaiman Nadvi:

The world is in the throws of a very strange political struggle. Democracy is dying, and dictatorship is taking over it. In Germany the worship of material power is being inculcated. A grand war is on the way against capitalism. Civilization, especially in Europe, is about to expire. In other words the world order is crying for a new birth. Under these conditions, what is your view of the role of Islam in the new reconstruction? How Islam can help?<sup>16</sup>

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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- <sup>1</sup> "Iqbal's Letter to Abbas Ali Khan of February 1, 1931," also Shaikh Ata Allah, Ed., *Iqbal Nama*, Vol. I.
- <sup>2</sup> Muhammad Rafiq Afzal, *Guftar-i Iqbal*, pp. 116-118.
- <sup>3</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-121.
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125-129.
- <sup>5</sup> Shamloo, *op. cit.*, pp. 166-167.
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 122.
- <sup>7</sup> Sabir Afaqi, *Iqbal Awr Kashmir*, pp. 78-79; Muhammad Abdullah Qureshi, *Ai`na Iqbal*, pp. 225-226.
- <sup>8</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, p. 29; Qureshi, *op. cit.*, pp. 224-226; Afaqi, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80.
- <sup>9</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-132.
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 133.
- <sup>11</sup> Faruqi, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14; Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-137.
- <sup>12</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-139.
- <sup>13</sup> Dar, *Letters & Writings of Iqbal*, pp. 55-62.
- <sup>14</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-144.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 137-138.
- <sup>16</sup> Shaikh Ata Allah, *op. cit.*, p. 181.





## Chapter VIII

# PARLEYS AT THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE VISITS TO ROME, EGYPT AND PALESTINE

### (I)

Iqbal reached London to participate in the Second Round Table Conference; however, he was most active in projecting his views to other non-governmental organizations, which were dedicated to literary and cultural activities, while some indeed were interested in the proceedings of the conference. His activities, in consequence can be divided into two categories: 1) parleys at the conference, 2) and interactions with other associations.

Since Iqbal was known to support the separate electorates, he was assigned to the Sub-Committee for Minorities. This Sub-Committee held its first meeting on September 28, 1931. At the meeting Mahatma Gandhi insisted that Muslim Nationalist Party's leader, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari should be invited to participate in the deliberations. He also attached another condition: if Ansari did not support the constitutional demands of the Muslim leaders, he would also oppose their position and side with Ansari. Muslim delegates, however, proposed that Mahatma Gandhi was indeed free to invite Ansari on

his own, but that they would be opposed to his presence as an official member of the Committee. He was opposed to their stand on this issue.

The first session remained inconclusive, and the meeting was postponed for the next two days. The objective of this postponement was to enable the delegates of different orientations to engage in private exchange of ideas to evolve a solution. Consequently, the Committee's second session was arranged on September 30, when Mahatma Gandhi proposed to adjourn the meeting for eight days to continue private consultations. But these exchanges yielded no beneficial results. When the Committee met again on October 8, Mahatma Gandhi announced his regrets that no agreement was reached, and that the session should be postponed sine die. Iqbal summed up these proceedings in his letter of November 3, 1931 to Abdallah Chughtai:

Our days were filled with numerous activities. Private parlays were held frequently, and the Minority Committee met three times, but nothing came out of those deliberations. Hindus and Sikhs were adamantly opposed to the Muslims' demands. I am a member of the Minority Committee, which might meet on November 11; nothing is likely to be achieved in this meeting. In reality the Minority Committee's endeavors were devoted to achieve an agreement [with Hindus]; this was indeed attempted, but no results followed.<sup>1</sup>

### **Fractured Muslim Position**

There was a general understanding among the Muslim delegates that no Hindu-Muslim constitutional consensus had emerged despite several public and private exchange of views, and that they should not participate in the deliberations of the Federal Structure Committee, which was scheduled to be held on November 3, 1931. Their anticipation was that the British government would eventually pronounce its policy on this delicate issue. However, they also gathered an impression that the British

wanted to prolong discussions. In the light of this development a crucial question was raised whether or not Muslim delegates should participate in the work of this committee. On this pivotal issue the Muslim delegates split up among themselves. Iqbal believed that the Muslim delegates should retain no contact with the Federal Structure Committee and publicly announce its dissociation from its sessions. In principle Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Sir Muhammad Shafi were in agreement with Iqbal's position, but they did not want to be blamed for curtailing the conference.

They adopted a face saving diplomatic policy maintaining that: 1) the Muslim delegation should announce its agreement with the British position that the issue of the federal government's responsibility should continue to be a subject of discussion, 2) but that Muslims would not accept any constitution, which did not include the provisions for their constitutional demands. Iqbal remained steadfastly opposed to this two point policy statement. In the Muslim delegation no one stood by Iqbal. Extremely disappointed in this political isolation, he fired a letter to Sir Agha Khan, who was the head of the delegation that he had decided to dissociate himself from the delegation. A few days later Iqbal informed the Secretary of State of India that his additional stay in London would serve no useful purpose, and he would depart from London on November 21, 1931.

To sum up Iqbal's performance in the Second Round Table Conference one might say that Iqbal was not a very active participant in discussions. Even in the proceedings of the Minority Sub-Committee Iqbal remained silent by and large. What could he have done? The Minority Committee continued to be postponed; he could not read in the committee even the text of his well prepared statement. He did participate in private parleys to achieve Hindu-Muslim agreement, but this endeavor also proved to be an

exercise in futility, and no agreement was ever achieved. Interestingly enough he proposed informally to the British leaders the possibility of dominion status for the Hyderabad state. But Sir Akber Hyderi, who came from Hyderabad, opposed the idea. On this issue Iqbal was annoyed with Hyderi, and it became a public item.

Toward the end of the conference, Iqbal had a serious disagreement of policy with his fellow delegates, who had expressed their agreement in principle with Iqbal, but in the session remained silent; instead of announcing their dissociation from the proceedings. Iqbal was very discouraged with their “accomplishments” in the round Table Conference and was disgusted with the conduct of some delegates. Sir Fazl-i Hussain, who had sponsored Iqbal as a delegate to the viceroy, was very disappointed with Iqbal’s performance. He was planning to nominate Iqbal for the position of a member in the Indian Public Service Commission, but gave up on him. On November 25, 1935 Sir Fazl-i Hussain made a notation in his personal diary: “I would have continued to struggle for Iqbal’s appointment to this position; had this silly fellow not announced telegraphically that he had resigned from the Round Table Conference. No other member did that.”<sup>2</sup>

Thus ended Iqbal’s fruitless participation in the proceedings of the London Round Table Conference! But his popularity in the general public, literary and cultural organizations, and political circles was most impressive. The British elite recognized, largely through Iqbal’s efforts that Muslim aspirations in India could not be brushed aside. A review of these activities is in order.

1. On October 1, 1931 Sir Samuel Hoare, Secretary of State for India visited Iqbal at his residence, and they discussed the constitutional problems of India, and focused on Muslims’ position.
2. On October 7, 1931 former Prime Minister of Iran, Saiyad Zia-ud-Din Tabatabaie invited Iqbal to a

reception. Saiyad Tabatabaie was the Prime Minister of Iran in 1921 during the rule of Ahmad Shah Qajar, while Reza Khan (subsequently Reza Shah Pahlavi) was the Minister of War. Serious disagreements developed between them and Saiyad Tabatabaie resigned as the Prime Minister, and then settled in Switzerland as a political refugee. Fluent in nine languages, he was a firm supporter of Jamal-ud-Din Afghani, and believed in the ideal of Islamic unity of states.

Iqbal had met him in Jerusalem at the World Islamic Congress, and now they got together at this reception. Iqbal recited to him some of his Persian verses from *Javid Nama*. Tabatabaie complimented Iqbal with a comment: “never have I heard such verses before.”

3. The same day Iqbal was invited to a tea at the office of *Saturday Review*, where Iqbal discussed Muslims’ position, and his own perspective, on the constitutional problems of India with its Editor. Dealing with the problem of Palestine, Iqbal stated: “The British should deal with the Palestinians from an ethical perspective, and disregard its interests in the material resources of the Dead Sea. The first step the British government must take is to cancel the Balfour Declaration.”

4. Sir Muhammad Zafarullah Khan, a member of the Indian delegation, invited Iqbal and fellow delegates to a dinner at Shafi Restaurant, which was owned by Muhammad Shafi of Amristar.

5. The next day Iqbal and his colleagues were invited to visit the al-Fazal Mosque, where they were introduced to a few British converts to Islam.

6. Sir Dennison Ross called on Iqbal at his residence to seek his briefings on the revivalist movements in the Islamic world, especially the Bahai Movement in Iran. The next day he visited Iqbal again to continue discussions on the Islamic movements. He sought these meetings with Iqbal in order to better prepare himself for

a series of lectures, which Sir Dennison was scheduled to deliver in the United States.

7. A British Baronet, who had converted to Islam, and adopted the name Fatima al-Abid invited Iqbal on October 14, 1931 to a formal dinner at the Ritz Hotel.

8. On October 16, 1931 Ghazi Rauf Bey called on Iqbal and exchanged ideas with him for three hours. Rauf Bey had fought in the Turkish war for freedom, but subsequently developed serious disagreements with Ataturk, who exiled him from Turkey in 1924. He lived in Britain as a political refugee.

9. The same day Sardar Ahmad Ali Khan, minister extraordinaire and plenipotentiary of Afghanistan invited Iqbal to a reception in the Consulate General to celebrate the Afghan King Muhammad Nadir Shah's anniversary of his coronation.

10. A Muslim student delegation from Cambridge University, consisting of Chaudhary Rahmat Ali, Khawaja Abdur Rahim, and a few others, came to visit Iqbal, and briefed him on the nature of the Pakistan Movement. They informed Iqbal that they had proposed the name of *Pakistan* for their envisaged Muslim state in the northwest of India, and that the name is derived from the first letters of the names of three Muslim majority provinces and Kashmir, and the ending "tan" is taken from the end of Balochistan.

Iqbal was indisposed, and he remained in his bed, when these students briefed him on their activities for the creation of Pakistan. Iqbal suggested to them that they should leave around his bed the separate letters of the name Pakistan inscribed on card boards for him to look at them, and absorb their significance. These students followed Iqbal's instructions, and then left. Years later, one of the participants Khawaja Abdur Rahim personally described this episode to Javid Iqbal.

11. On October 20, 1931 Rosetta Farbenz, who had visited several Muslim countries, invited Iqbal through

Sarojani Naidu's benign intervention to a reception in her house, and exchanged views about Islam, and asked questions regarding the basic Qur'anic instructions.

12. After attending this reception Iqbal attended another reception arranged by Lady Hatogue.

13. On October 21, 1931 Colonel Freer came to see Iqbal to exchange ideas with him about the developments in India.

14. Two days later Sir Hamilton Gibb, the preeminent British scholar of Islamic studies called on Iqbal to invite him for a lecture to be delivered at London University. Iqbal was unable to prepare a lecture, but he exchanged his views with Sir Hamilton on Islamic movements in India and Africa.

15. On October 23, 1931 Said Shamil called on Iqbal. Under the leadership of Imam Shamil, Said Shamil had fought against the Russians for liberation of Chechnya in the North Caucasus. He described at length the stories of Russian oppression of the Muslims in the Caucasus and was opposed to the Communists' rule in the Muslim areas of the Soviet Union. While Iqbal in principle was a supporter of the Muslim causes his views sharply differed from that of Said Shamil.

Actually their conflicting perceptions reflected their differences in geography, political history, and their evaluations of two different forms of imperialism. Each was desirous of "his" imperialist rulers' decay and fall, yet each considered his historical experience of imperialism worse than the other's. Their wishes eventually came true, but considerable time had to elapse for the new distribution of power to emerge at the global level.

Iqbal argued with Said Shamil that Russian Communism could be instrumental in the destruction of West European imperialism. He advised Muslims to adopt a strategy of "not opposing" Russian Communism. Shamil did not agree with Iqbal and stated that Russian Communism appeared to be



better than European imperialism, but in reality was a worse imperialism.

Iqbal kept telling Said Shamil that Muslims' opposition to Russian Communism would be exploited to its advantage by European imperialism. To balance and control European economic superiority and other malaise Russian Communism was essential. They just talked at each other, and achieved no meeting of the mind. How could they? Both were correct in their assessments; geopolitics was a great barrier between the styles of their orientations.

16. Iqbal had been introduced to Margaret Farquharson, President of the National League, which was established in 1914 to help the British war efforts. After the war the National League started to oppose the Soviet Union. However, the League maintained a friendly policy toward the Muslims of the Middle East and South Asia in order to develop "Muslim-British friendship." She invited Iqbal on October 27, 1931 to meet influential individuals in London. Subsequently, Iqbal wrote Farquharson a letter, admiring her efforts: "we very much appreciate the great service that you and members of the League have rendered to us...The problem before England is not one of India only. It involves the whole question of cooperation between the East and West. I am glad England has seen the real issue."<sup>3</sup>

17. On October 17, 1931 Iqbal visited the Quakers Hall, and observed the mode of prayers of the pacifist Christians, and exchanged views with them.

18. In London the India Society was considered to be an influential organization. Its president Sir Francis Younghusband invited Iqbal to address the Society, which Iqbal did on November 4, 1931. Iqbal at length dwelled upon various aspects of his poetry. He started with a disclaimer, saying that his poetry contained some philosophic thoughts, but it contains no organized philosophic system. He believed in a bright future for man; and that man is capable of attaining the position of

a stable element in the system of universe. Then he explained in detail some of his verses, and the style of his poetry. Then he referred to his Persian works, and finally discussed *Javid Nama*, his latest poetic collection, which was still under production. At the end of his lecture he answered a few questions relating to the meaning and significance of *Khudi* (ego), which occupied a pivotal place in the scheme of thought.

19. The same evening Iqbal had dinner with Lord and Lady Irwin. Lord Irwin was the British Viceroy in India from 1926-1931, and dinner at his house gave Iqbal another opportunity to sell his ideas to the members of the British establishment.

20. On November 18, 1931 Iqbal visited Cambridge, where he was received at the train station by Chaudhary Rahmat Ali, Khawaja Abdur Rahim, and other prominent individuals. In the evening a reception for him had been arranged in a local hotel, where Iqbal was expected to give a lecture under the auspices of International Muslim Association. Its president, Dr. Sulaiman, an Egyptian, introduced Iqbal most cordially to the audience. To this meeting three other scholars – Professors Sarlay, Reynold Nicholson (who had translated Iqbal's *magnum opus*, *Asrar-i Khudi*), E.G. Browne and McTaggart were also invited; but the last two were unable to attend this meeting, and Iqbal missed them. Iqbal said:

My participation in the Round Table Conference was indirect. Here the fate of different nations of India is being settled. I thought I better help my colleagues in their endeavors. All of you know that our mutual consultations did not enable us to reach a decision, and failed to achieve an agreement.

I want to address the Cambridge students, and offer them a few counsels. Cambridge University is the fountain of knowledge, which has made major contributions in the shaping of western civilized culture.

I advise the young men to protect themselves against materialism and atheism. In separating religion from politics Europeans committed a blunder. This separation caused the loss of spiritual refinement (*ruh-i Akhlaq*) for the western civilization, and its orientation became materialistic atheism. I believe then human ego is the central point of the universe. This is the basic viewpoint, majority of philosophers came to this ultimate unity. The true direction is to move from unity to plurality.

Twenty-five years ago, I was able to detect the weaknesses of western civilization, and had made some predictions about its ultimate end; although to be frank with you I did not completely understand its true meaning. This was the condition in 1907.

Six years later my predictions proved to be true to their content. The war of 1914 was caused by the blunder, which I have already alluded to, that is the separation of state from religion, and the advent of materialistic atheism. Bolshevism is spawned by the separation of religion from state. I advise young men to protect themselves against materialism.

A few days ago I addressed a meeting of English women. I was asked to offer a wise counsel and I said to them that their first and foremost responsibility is to protect their next generation from the ravages of atheistic materialism. Religion is absolutely essential; religion is another name for intuitive knowledge, and divine grace.”<sup>4</sup>

Before Iqbal’s departure from London the Iqbal Literary Society organized a well attended reception in his honor; according to one estimate almost 400 people attended this reception. All the delegates to the Second Round Table Conference were present, notably Mahatma Gandhi, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sarojini Naidu, Agha Khan, Sir Umar Hayat Tiwana, Sir Muhammad Shafi, Sir Zafarullah Khan, Mawlana Shaukat Ali, Sir Akbar Hayderi, Sir Mirza Muhammad Isma’il, and Sardar Ujjal Singh.

In addition to Iqbal’s British admirers Hindu and Muslim students from London, Cambridge and Oxford Universities, especially Chaudhary Rahmat Ali, the founder

of the Pakistan National Movement, and his colleague Khawaja Abdur Rahim came to London to attend this reception. The reception was arranged in a large hall, where Sir Umar Hayat Tiwana stood at the entrance to introduce the participants to the guest of honor.

After the tea the meeting to honor Iqbal started, and Sir Abdul Qadir presided over the proceedings. Professor Reynold Nicholson, who had translated Iqbal's *Asrar-i Khudi* from Persian to English, spoke briefly on Iqbal's philosophical and poetic ideas and suggested that he had a message to convey – a message which stood for spiritualism, and opposed atheistic materialism. He added that at first Iqbal was perceived to be transmitting Nietzsche's philosophy in Persian diction, but upon deeper reflection it becomes obvious that Iqbal has developed his own philosophic ideas, which are quite different from the German thinker's views.

These comments were followed by Niaz Muhammad Khan's reading of an address of appreciation. Finally, Iqbal thanked the audience for their participation in the reception, and then informed them that when he came to England as a student he had different ideas than the ones he developed during his stay in Europe. He developed the urge to infuse a new spirit in eastern literature in order to carve out an entirely new destiny; and then he started writing poetry in Persian. He added: "When I expressed my views, they were subjected to several objections. It was said about me that I preach atheism, and this critical comment was made by a member of the Christian clergy. I had a feeling that European literature compared to sciences, was weak and declining, and presented this view in some of my verses."

Finally, Iqbal thanked his audience and said: "I do not have any 'army' of coworkers, but I am happy to see a substantial number of friends who are sitting in front of me." After Iqbal ended his comments, Shaikh Nur Muhammad and Abdullah Yousaf Ali spoke to highlight

different aspects of Iqbal's poetry. Then spoke Sarojini Naidu, who had earned a substantial reputation as a poet of the English language. Then Agha Khan wound up the meeting.

Incidentally, Jinnah was already in London, but the British government had not invited him to participate in the Third Round Table Conference, as it thought that Jinnah was out of touch with the Indian public, especially the Muslims. However, Jinnah's presence in London gave Iqbal an opportunity to visit with him several times. In the meetings, Iqbal urged Jinnah to terminate his self-imposed exile in London, and return home.

Aware of his own inability to engage in the rough and tumble of party politics and that Jinnah so eminently possessed the required organizational skills for the task, Iqbal attempted to persuade Jinnah to adopt for the Muslim League a new national objective for the emergence of a separate Muslim state in northwest India.

## (II)

### **To Rome and Visit with Mussolini**

Iqbal left London for Paris on November 21, 1931 where Umrao Singh Sher Gill, an old friend welcomed him. In the evening of November 22, Iqbal arrived in Rome after spending almost 24 hours on the train which he took in Paris. At the train station in Rome, Iqbal was received by Professor Airastco, professor of philosophy at Rome University who also represented the Italian royal academy. Italy's consul-general in Bombay, Dr. Sakarpa, who happened to be in Italy at this time was present at the station to welcome Iqbal. The next morning on November 23, Dr. Sakarpa accompanied Iqbal to visit some scholars at the Rome University. When Iqbal returned to his hotel, he received Dr. Falmiki, Vice-President of the Royal Academy, who was anxious to exchange views with Iqbal. In the afternoon, a lady scholar and the wife of an Italian

banker, who had traveled in central Asia called on Iqbal to listen to his views.

November 24, 1931 morning had been reserved for visits to the historical sites of Rome. An officer of the department of archaeology, and a German lady tour guide who was fluent in English, escorted Iqbal, and Ghulam Rasul Mehr, (an Urdu language journalist who had been Iqbal's companion on this trip), to the Colosseum, which Emperor Vespasian had commissioned in 72 A.D. as an entertainment center for his subjects. His son, Emperor Titus, opened the nearly-completed Colosseum in 80 A.D. It was designed to hold 50,000 spectators around a central, elliptical arena. Behind the wooden arena floor there was a complex set of rooms and passageways for wild beasts, humans and other provisions for staging the duels between the humans and the beasts. Romans, for centuries, cold-bloodedly killed thousands of people whom they saw as criminals as well as professional fighters and animals.

Like most people, Iqbal was deeply impressed by the history of this decayed monument to Roman imperial power. Addressing Mehr in a philosophic mood, Iqbal observed comparatively: "Look at the Roman emperors, who built a magnificent theater so that 50,000 people could enjoy the combat unto death between human beings and wild animals and compare it with the Shahi Mosque of Lahore, which can accommodate 100,000 so that they could congregate to express true sentiments of love, sincerity and fraternal solidarity. This one, comparative study lights up the fact that Islam is the well-spring of divine grace.

Iqbal also visited the catacombs, which were underground cemeteries, used by the Christian and Jewish communities. There are more than sixty catacombs in Rome. The Christian catacombs, which are the most numerous, began in the second century and the excavating continued until the first half of the fifth. The catacombs are

made up of underground tunnels in the form of a labyrinth. They can reach the total number of many miles. In the tufaceous walls of this intricate system of galleries were cut out rows of rectangular niches, called *loculi*, of various dimensions, which could contain only one body, but not infrequently the remains of more than one person. The structure of the tombs, arranged in rows superimposed one person upon another at different levels, gave one the idea of a vast dormitory, called a cemetery (a Greek term for resting place). In this way Christians wanted to affirm their faith in the resurrection of the bodies. The early Christians lived in a pagan and hostile society. During Nero's persecution (64 A.D.) their religion was considered "a strange and illegal superstition."

Once again these historical sites inspired in Iqbal a comparative perspective of religions. He observed:

Religion is a marvelous phenomenon; no other power can compete with the force of faith or belief. Whatever happened was inspired by the force of faith. In principle a faith may be erroneous, but once it takes hold of your heart, it energizes human beings to no end.

Before Islam the general religious trend of thought was toward secrecy, concealment, and darkness. Islam is the first religion which worships God Almighty in the light of the bright sun, and peeled religion out of concealment. They can recognize this factual distinction by comparing the architectural designs of Islamic mosques, and the pre-Islamic places of worship."

When Iqbal returned to his hotel, he received a well-known Italian scholar, Professor Gentelee, who discussed with Iqbal the role of poetry and music in the nation building activities, his impression of Rome's antiquities, and the future of the European civilization. A native of Sicily, Professor Gentelee received from Dr. Sakarpa the copies of Iqbal's poem, "Sicily," which he had translated into Italian, and had written an article on Iqbal's poetry for their publication in Italian newspapers and periodicals. Also,

Iqbal visited Professor Gentilee's office, where he was supervising the preparation for the *Encyclopedia of Italy*.

On November 25, 1931 Iqbal, accompanied by Mehr, called on the ill-fated former King of Afghanistan – Aman Allah Khan, who had settled in Rome as a political refugee. The King talked about the circumstances, which compelled him to abdicate his throne, and the future prospects of his country's national development. The following day the King returned Iqbal's call on him, and came to visit Iqbal at his hotel. They basically discussed the same topics. When the King was about to leave, Iqbal whispered in his ear his Persian verse, which the Pashtun King easily understood:

*Pir-i ma guft jahan ber rawashay mohkum nist  
as khush-o na-khush uo qata nazer bayed kerd*

(My guide said to me: the world does not follow one way permanently; one should eschew its happiness as well as unhappiness.)

The poor King was already resigned to his fate!

### **Meeting with Mussolini**

Mussolini had invited Iqbal to visit with him in his office on November 27, 1931. About this visit many stories have since then circulated. One statement is attributed to Mehr, who was with Iqbal in Rome, but did not accompany Iqbal to the meeting. Instead of Mehr, it was Dr. Sakarpa, Italy's Consul General in Bombay, who sat in the meeting as an interpreter. Iqbal was received cordially, but the meeting was rather brief. They talked about Iqbal's works, and then in the course of discussion on political issues Mussolini suggested to Iqbal to visit Libya at his expense, and examine whatever was being accomplished for the welfare of the Libyan people. Mussolini wanted from Iqbal a memorandum of his observations, as well as his recommendations for the future development of Libya. Iqbal, however, expressed his inability to undertake this assignment since he was



exceptionally busy back home. According to Mehr: that was all that was to it.

The second version of this visit is given by Sir Malcolm Darling, who had a meeting with Iqbal in Lahore in 1934. According to Darling, Iqbal talked about his meeting with Mussolini and said: "The meeting took place in a very large hall, which was his office. At the one end of the hall on a raised platform was a large desk, and behind was an ornate extensive chair, which Mussolini occupied. Naturally Iqbal had to walk a considerable distance to get close to Mussolini's desk. While Iqbal was walking he paid no attention to Iqbal with his gaze fixed upon his papers. When Iqbal came close to his desk, Mussolini stood up and cordially shook him by the hand. The meeting lasted for about forty minutes.

Mussolini was curious to know Iqbal's impressions of the Italian people. Iqbal was reluctant to offer any comments, but then said: "Italians are very much like the Iranians. They are attractive, good looking, lovers of art and very sensitive and intelligent. The magnificent part of their civilization and culture includes many centuries, but they lack blood." Mussolini was surprised to hear the last assessment, and asked Iqbal to explain further. Iqbal said Iranians have one advantage, which is not available to the Italians. Surrounded by healthy and strong nations like Turks, Afghans and the Kurdish Iranian blood is constantly replenished; but Italians have no such possibility."

Mussolini asked: "what should Italians do?" Iqbal said: "turn away from Europe; and look toward the East. European culture is declining, while the air of the East is fresh, in which you should learn to breathe." Subsequently, Mussolini wrote a letter to Iqbal and asked him what could he do to win over the good will of the Muslim population, which was settled in Italy. Iqbal replied: "a mosque should be built in Rome, and arrange a conference of the *ulama* in

Salerno, because Muslims view Salerno as an ancient Muslim city.”

After this appointment Iqbal was surrounded by the media representatives. One of them asked Iqbal: “What do you think of Il Duce?” Iqbal stated: “I am reluctant to express my views because they may not be liked by the Pope.” But the journalists persisted in this question. Finally Iqbal gave in and said: “Your Il Duce is another Luther, but is without a Bible.”

The third version of Iqbal’s visit to Mussolini is stated by Faqir Saiyad Wahid-ud-Din: “Iqbal met Mussolini, and I have heard the story of what transpired straight from Iqbal’s mouth. Iqbal did not express any desire to visit Mussolini. When Iqbal was staying in Rome Mussolini sent an aide to Iqbal to convey his invitation to Iqbal. Dr. Sahib, accepted the invitation, and went to meet him in his office. Sitting behind a desk in a large hall of an office, he stood up to receive Dr. Iqbal. He was not a man of tall stature, but was barrel-chested and his arms were thick and heavy. Like the eyes of an eagle his eyes radiated a sparkle.”

After the exchange of preliminary courtesies, he asked Iqbal: ‘what do you think of our Fascist Movement?’ Iqbal said: ‘you have adopted for the national life a dimension of discipline, which is very essential in the Islamic perspective. If you were to adopt all of Islam you would be able to subdue all of Europe.’ Iqbal also advised Mussolini to divert his attention from Europe, implying that you should avoid the cultural values of Europe.

Mussolini asked Iqbal: ‘how could I win the moral support of the Muslim world?’ Iqbal replied: ‘Invite young Muslim students in large number to study in Italy, and give them free education with free room and board.’ Mussolini then asked for a wise council. Iqbal stated: ‘Do not let your cities’ population exceed the specified limit.’ Perplexed by this comment, Mussolini called for an explanation. Iqbal added: ‘As the city population increases

its cultural and economic vitality declines, and then the cultural vitality is replaced by evil of all kinds.’ Iqbal paused for a moment, and then added: ‘This is not my personal view. Thirteen hundred of years ago our Prophet had given this wise council about the city of Medina that when its population exceeded a certain limit the excessive population should be settled in a new city.’ The moment Mussolini heard the Prophet Muhammad’s policy statement, he jumped to his feet, stood erect and thumped the desk with his two hands, and exclaimed: ‘This is indeed an extraordinary thought!’”<sup>5</sup>

It is exceptionally difficult to determine which version is accurate. However, it cannot be denied that Iqbal was impressed with Mussolini’s personality. In a letter of March 12, 1937 Iqbal described his impressions of Mussolini:

Whatever I have written about Mussolini, in your assessment it is filled with contradictions. You are right in your judgment. If this God’s creature contains the qualities of a saint and a devil, then how can I deal with it? If you were ever to meet Mussolini you would corroborate my statement that his eyes are so bright that they are beyond description. You can compare their sparkle only with the rays of the sun. At least that is how I felt about them.”<sup>6</sup>

According to one assessment of Mussolini’s exceptionally bright eyes, this quality of brightness can only be found in mentally sick criminals or potential murderers. Be that as it may, when Iqbal met Mussolini he was at the peak of his power, and was considered to be a national messiah, who had infused a new spirit in the collective life of the Italian nation. Inspired by his oratorical magic young Italians were determined to accomplish great objectives, and Italy was progressing rapidly to the peaks of national development. Iqbal attributed Italians’ national commitment, and dedication to hard work to Mussolini’s charismatic personality.

However, when Mussolini invaded Ethiopia and quickly conquered this impoverished underdeveloped country, Iqbal was completely disenchanted, and started to perceive him as a wild beast. Anyone who ever saw his dead body hanging upside down from a pole in the city of Milano could never imagine that Mussolini was the cause of Italy's destruction, and was worshiped as a national messiah. Much the same way Iqbal had erred in other instances in making judgments of character, and was then greatly disappointed. He had expected King Aman Allah Khan to infuse new life in Afghanistan, but the poor king had to flee his country. After him Iqbal had high hopes for his successor, King Nadir Shah, who was expected to turn Afghanistan into an ideal Islamic state. This ill-fated king was murdered in Kabul. Similarly Iqbal was fascinated with Mustafa Kamal Pasha Ataturk of Turkey, and Reza Shah Pahlavi of Iran. Eventually Iqbal was disappointed with both, and said so beautifully in his Urdu verses:

*Na Mustafa no Reza Shah mein namud uski*

*Keh ruh-i sharq badan key talash mei hai abi*

(Neither Mustafa nor Reza Shah contain in their bosom the inspiring spirit; actually the soul of the East is still in search of a true body)

On November 27, 1931 several daily newspapers of Rome published Iqbal's pictures, along with articles on his poetry and philosophy. Iqbal's poem *Sicily's* some portions were prominently published in the newspaper and so were excerpts of his lectures, which he had delivered under the auspices of the royal Academy. Iqbal became a favorite personality of some Italian ladies – one rich lady from Sicily repeatedly visited him, and invited Iqbal to stay at her sumptuous villa for at least one month, but he declined the invitation for want of time; another one Countess Carnevale visited him repeatedly, and arranged a large reception in his honor. Iqbal accepted this invitation with a condition that the Countess would invite the most

beautiful women of Rome. This dazzling reception took place in her villa in Rome on November 27, 1931. A member of Italy's National Assembly, Baron Roberto Recardi called on Iqbal for exchange of ideas, and invited him to visit Pompeii. Iqbal accepted the invitation, and on November 28, 1931, accompanied by good old Mehr, reached Naples and spent the day site-seeing the Mount Vesuvius, and the ruins of ancient Italy.

### (III)

#### **Iqbal in the Land of Pharaohs**

From Venice Iqbal traveled by a ship, Victoria, on November 29, 1931 and reached Alexandria (Egypt) on December 1. At the harbor, Iqbal was accorded a most cordial welcome by *Shabab al-Musalmin* of Egypt, Sidique Muhammad Nadu and Mawlana Shaukat Ali, and Egyptian prince Umar Tawsoon's representatives. All day long Iqbal met members of the press, visited the offices of *Shabab al-Musalmin*, signed the visitor's register of King Fawad at his palace and site-see Alexnadria. In the afternoon Iqbal and his party took a train for Cairo, and reached in three hours. Here in Cairo Iqbal received a hero's welcome. Some members of Egyptian Parliament, leading figures of *Shabab al-Musalmin*, Indian Muslim students of Al-Azhar University, and Indian Muslims who had settled in Egypt for their own reasons, and the members of the Egyptian press received Iqbal at the train station. Iqbal stayed at the Metropole Hotel, but he was constantly invited out; especially at Dr. Abdul Hameed Saeed Bey's house, where he had the opportunity to meet the Sheikh al-Azhar and Muhammad Ali Pasha, the former Minister of Endowments. Iqbal left a message for the Muslim youth: "remain committed to the Prophet of Islam."

Many Egyptian intellectuals were eager to meet Iqbal, among them most notable was Lufti Bey Jumma, a lawyer and scholar of philosophy, who spent substantial amounts

of time in Iqbal's company. Even in the company of these learned admirers Iqbal gathered the feeling that Egyptians viewed Indian Muslims as serious obstacles in the struggle for India's freedom. Iqbal did his best to remove this impression, and convince his Egyptian admirers that Muslims have their own separate political identity, and explained to them the Muslims' political aspirations. December 2, 1931 was set aside for visits to historical sites in and around Cairo. Accompanied by his friends Iqbal went to see the pyramids, the sphinx, and other pyramids. On both sides of the Nile Iqbal walked through the gardens, and then the unavoidable Khan Khalili Bazaar. Also he stopped over to see Qaser al-Aini, a huge modern hospital, which is named after Allama Badr-ud-Din Aini. He ate the big meal of the day at the residence of Mohy-ud-Din al-Hadi, who had also invited a Syrian revolutionary freedom fighter, Dr. Abdur Rahman Shehbander. Iqbal paid considerable attention to him, explaining political conditions of India from Muslims' perspective. Shehbander also discussed with Iqbal the problems of the Arab states, and their development potential.

Egypt's well-recognized Sufi, Saiyad Muhammad Madi Abu al-A`zam, accompanied by his two sons, came to visit Iqbal at his hotel. Iqbal was taken aback at his presence, and said to him: "Why did you take the trouble of coming here? I would have loved to visit you at your residence." He replied: "The Prophet of Islam Sayyid-na Muhammad has stated that go to visit a man, who is devoted to Islam, that would please me. I have followed his instructions in coming to see you, because I wanted to please my Lord and Master." Iqbal was stunned to hear this statement, and fell silent. Al-A`zam stayed with Iqbal for a considerable length of time, and hung onto his words of wisdom. Finally, when he left Iqbal could not contain his emotions, and tears rolled down his cheeks, and he said: "My God time has come that

people look upon so ‘sinful’ man like me, and want to meet me as a man, who is devoted to Islam.”

A well-known Egyptian scholar Ali Bey Abdur Razaq visited Iqbal. In one of his books he had discussed the possibility of separating religion from politics. Iqbal was not in agreement with his thesis, and explained to him negative developments that would ensue from the proposed split. Iqbal received an invitation from Prime Minister Mustafa al-Nahas Pasha to visit him. Iqbal was received at Bait al-Imama by al-Nahas Pasha most cordially, who then introduced Iqbal to some of his cabinet colleagues. Their discussions centered on the political conditions in India, and Iqbal indeed explained to him Muslims’ point of view. After this meeting Iqbal visited Ahmad Zaki Pasha Sheikh al-Aruba, whose house was built on the bank of the river Nile, and looked impressive. At dinner they discussed the problems of Palestine, and the prospects of the World Muslim Conference.

Similarly the next three days Iqbal spent socializing with the Egyptian elites. Mirza Mahdi Bey Irani invited Iqbal on December 3, 1931 to a well attended lunch, where in addition to Sheikh al-Azher other Indian leaders including Mawlana Shaukat Ali and Mawlana Shafi Daudi were also present. In the evening Iqbal visited Mahmud Pasha Abdur Razaq at his house, and met there Mahmud Pasha (President of Hizb al-Ahrar), Muhammad Ali Pasha, Dr. Muhammad Hussein Haikal, Editor of the newspaper, *al-siyasa*, and other scholars. Again in discussion with these luminaries of Cairo, Iqbal explained the Muslim point of view in the Indian political developments. While Iqbal was busy in conversations the son of Saiyad Abu al-Al`azam appeared on the scene to announce that his father was looking forward to seeing him again. Iqbal took his leave from his host and went to al-Al`azam’s house, where a large number of his disciples had gathered to meet Iqbal.

Saiyad al-A`azam, as usual, spoke like a sermon and said: “when Muslims existed only in hundreds of thousands the world’s great powers licked their shoes, now that they are in the millions the non-believers rule over them everywhere. The explanation of this situation is the fact that Muslims jettisoned Islam, and became alienated from its spirit.” Then he turned toward Iqbal and said: “There in his heart lurks the love of Islam, and devotion to Sayyid-Na Muhammad.” With his statement, he gestured to one of his followers, who started to chant sura Fatah in his delightful Egyptian accent. Finally, when Iqbal stood up to leave, Saiyad Al-A`azam and his followers loudly expressed their admiration for Iqbal, and repeated the well-known phrases: *shukran, shukran, jazilan, ma aslama* (Thank you very much; be protected in peace).

Iqbal spent the morning of December 4, 1931 visiting the Cairo Museum, where he was particularly interested in the Phaeronic period. The mummy of the Pharaoh, who chased Moses out of Egypt, attracted his attention. Several items of the Arab period – Imam Ghazali’s pen pot, and the swords of the Ottoman caliphs Muhammad the Conqueror, Sulaiman the Magnificent, and Salim Yaldram, were visible. In the afternoon Jami`at al-Rabita al-Hindiya entertained him to a high tea, where Sidique Mahammad Nadu and Mahmud Ahmad Irfani presented to Iqbal an address of welcome and appreciation to him. The occasion was also addressed by Lufti Bey Jumma and Munir al-Hudi. In response Iqbal thanked the hosts, and hoped that relations between Egypt and India would be strong. Iqbal spent the evening in the office of Shabab al-Muslamin, where he addressed the young Muslims. Iqbal had dinner at Muhammad Ali Pasha’s house, where Iqbal talked at length about the early Islamic victories and Muslims’ achievements in sciences, and their decline. Again Muslims’ position in the Indian politics remained at the center stage of discussions.



December 5, 1931 was Iqbal's last day in Egypt; from there he left for Palestine. A substantial part of the day he spent visiting Fustat, the first Islamic capital of Egypt. Accompanied by Mehr and Sheikh Mahmud Ahmad Irfani, Iqbal first stopped at the mosque of Amr bin al-Aas. Iqbal was told that at one place in the mosque a great Muslim had prayed. Considering a sacred spot ordinary Muslims started to kiss it as a mark of blessings of the great man. That spot had now been dented. A few superstitious people had spread the word that the two fallen minarets of the mosque had not embraced Islam. So simple minded believers started to beat these minarets with their shoes. In order to preserve these minarets, the government of Egypt had cages of steel around these two minarets.

To the north of the mosque were palaces and churches of the Christian kings, and to the south was located the city of Fustat; only their ruins remained. A short distance away were the cemeteries of Mamluk Sultans, and the families of the Khadivs of Egypt. Iqbal prayed at the graves for the dead kings' souls.

Then Iqbal moved over to Imam Shafi' mausoleum, which was built in a cubicle with a sarcophagus. The walls were ornate, and the grave itself was raised six feet high from the ground, and was covered with a green spread. Iqbal sat near the grave, and recited the Qur'an. After seeing the fort and some historic mosques Iqbal went to meet Muhammad Khalid Hussain, the President of al-Azhar. At al-Azhar Iqbal sat down with the students in a classroom, while they listened to the lectures on logic, *tasfir* and the Prophet's traditions. Iqbal also saw the new section of al-Azhar, whose students received education in modern sciences of chemistry and biology. Surprisingly, one of the teachers of al-Azhar had composed a *Qasida* (panegyric) in honor of Iqbal, which he recited to the audience. When it was over students shouted: *Ma Aslama, ya sha'ir al-Hind Ma Aslama*. Iqbal then visited Sheikh

Mustafa al-Maraghi at al-Azhar, who was anxiously awaiting Iqbal in his office. In this meeting Iqbal described his impressions of al-Azhar University to al-Maraghi and then wound up his discussion with a prediction: "If we do not adapt to the needs of the modern times, we will not be able to accomplish our grand objectives."

After his visit with the President of al-Azhar University Iqbal visited with several Egyptian admirers and, especially Dr. Shabandar, where at his residence he found Ahmad Zaki Pasha, Ali Bey al-Razaq, Lufti Bey Jumma, Dr. Mansur Fahmi, Munir al-Hudiy, Ahmad Jamal Pasha al-Ghuziy waiting for him.

#### (IV)

### **Iqbal in Palestine**

Here it may be stated that after his visit to Egypt, Iqbal was on his way to Palestine, where world famous Mufti Amin al-Husseini had invited him to attend the annual session of the Muslim World Congress. Accompanied by Mehr, Iqbal took a train from Cairo, which traveled through Isma`ilia and Qantara, when another train rolled to Khan Younas, Gaza Strip to Ludh, where they took another train to the city of Jerusalem. As was expected, Iqbal was received at the station by Mufti Amin al-Husseini and Mawlana Shaukat Ali, who had arrived in Jerusalem ahead of Iqbal on December 6, 1931. Muslim World Congress sessions were scheduled to be held in a building Road at al-Ma`rif, which was very close to the harem. Consequently the delegates had to be divided among different hotels, which were in the same neighborhood. Iqbal and Mehr stayed in the Grand Hotel; Mawlana Shaukat Ali, Mawlana Shafi Daudi and Rauf Pasha stayed at Road at al-Ma`rif and the other delegates were accommodated at the Palace Hotel.

This conference was called especially by Mufti Amir al-Husseini to strengthen Islamic solidarity the world over. He did not invite any official delegates from the Islamic

states. This meeting was truly international in its composition, including prominent private delegates from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Nigeria, Sudan, Egypt, Libya, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Iran, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Caucasus Mountains, Yugoslavia, India, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia. Among the delegates were scholars, statesmen, and *ulama*, and the dedicated freedom fighters.

The inaugural session started on December 6, 1931 in the early evening at Road at al-Ma`rif, and it continued for only one hour. The objective was to introduce the delegates to each other so that the veil of strangeness is lifted, and the delegates learn to address each other as brothers. At the end of this inaugural session the delegates moved to the al-Aqsa Mosque, while the volunteers in the vanguard sang national songs. Somewhere on the way Iqbal spotted the grave of Mawlana Muhammad Ali, who according to his wishes had been buried in Jerusalem near the al-Aqsa Mosque. After the *salat* the Prophet Muhammad's ascension (*Isra*) to the Heavens from these precincts was celebrated. Some learned scholars explained the significance of *Isra*, and how Jerusalem became one of the three sacred cities in Islam. After the last evening prayer Mufti Amin al-Husseini delivered his inaugural address. "We organized this session of the Congress, because we want the Muslims the world over to act like one soul in one body. We do not want to commit any aggression against the religion and culture of others, no, no, we do not want to spawn hatred against others."

Then he enunciated four major objectives of the Congress; the struggle to generate: 1) alliance between Muslims, and mutual cooperation; 2) true Islamic solidarity and its strengthening; 3) awareness among Muslims to fulfill their Islamic obligations, and finally 4) protect the Islamic religious rites, protect Muslims from the movements, which encourage them to renounce their

religious convictions, and finally to spread the values of Islamic culture.<sup>7</sup>

After Mufti al-Husseini's address the delegates, including Iqbal, addressed the gathering. However, an Egyptian Dr. Abdul Hameed Saeed Bey galvanized the audience, when he asked them to rise to make pledge to God Almighty that in order to protect the sacred Islamic sites in Palestine they would sacrifice their own lives. All stood up and shouted *Allah Akbar* (God is great). Then the meeting ended. The following day on December 7, 1931 new officers and new committee members were chosen; by unanimous oral vote Mufti Amin al-Husseini was elected the permanent President of the Congress; secretaries were designated and members of seven committees were chosen. Iqbal regularly attended the meetings of the Congress from December 7 to December 14, 1931 and commented on the committee reports. The Hejaz Railway Committee had recommended that the railway was an Islamic endowment, and it should be freed from the control of Muslim states, and be transferred to a Muslim International Administrative Company. The committee on Masjid al-Aqsa recommended that a university of excellence be established in Jerusalem so that Muslim students could acquire higher education and not be dependent on the universities of other countries.

Iqbal, however, was opposed to the idea of creating the traditional Muslim university, which would offer only religious education. This university according to Iqbal, must give modern and traditional education should be given in the light of contemporary requirements. Second, Iqbal found this proposal unworkable because it could not be realistically expected that Muslim students from all over the Islamic world would seek admission only at this proposed university in Jerusalem. Third, Iqbal reasoned that educationally Jerusalem did not enjoy the same academic prestige that universities in Medina, Cairo, Tehran and Damascus' did. Moreover, Jerusalem is under

the threat of Zionist occupation, which would destroy the peaceful environment of the city.

The Committee on the Holy Land made several proposals, including: 1) boycott of Jewish goods, 2) the incorporating of an Agricultural Bank, which would enable the Arab cultivators to borrow money without being beholden to Jewish money-lenders, 3) warn the Muslim world of impending dangers for Palestinian Muslims, 4) inform all Muslims of the policy of increasing Jewish immigration, and the establishment of their settlements in different parts of Palestine.

In addition to the Palestine specific issues, the problems of Muslims in the Soviet Union, French rule in Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco were also discussed. Iqbal also attended an educational orphanage, which also catered to the needs of handicapped orphans. There he very attentively listened to the Arab national songs sung by the students, who presented a dramatic performance about the conquest of Andalusia. Iqbal was delighted with their performance. Some students insisted that Sha`ir al-Hind must recite his spell binding verses. As always, Iqbal instead of Urdu, recited his Persian verses about Tariq's conquest of the shores of Spain. An Iraqi Arab scholar, who new Farsi quite well translated Iqbal's verses into Arabic.

In Jerusalem the relations between the Arabs and Jews were highly strained. The British government, the mandatory power in Palestine since 1921, was supporting the Zionists, who had at their disposal substantial financial resources, and economically deprived Palestinians were unable to compete with them and check the tide of their immigration. The Zionists had established their stronghold on the coastal regions, and were on the way to establishing their control over trade and agriculture. The Zionists had opposed the holding of this annual session of the Congress in Jerusalem, but Mufti Amin Al-Husseini's determination prevailed.

Iqbal also visited the Christian holy sites, including the Mount of Olives, where Jesus Christ often preached and conversed with his followers, and from where he was arrested by the Romans, and the sepulcher was laid down after he was crucified and from where he had risen. Also he visited the graves of Hebrew Prophets, particularly Zechariah and David. On December 14, 1931 Iqbal delivered his last address in English, which was translated into Arabic by Professor Abdur Rahman Azzam:

I regret the fact that I would not be able to stay till the end of the Congress. Also I regret my inability to use the Arabic language for full participation in our discussions. I wish I would have another opportunity to visit the land of the Prophets to see once again the sacred sites of Islamic Palestine. I want to congratulate you for the repeated display of fraternal solidarity and affection. It is our responsibility to guide our youth to the highway of security, because Islam is under siege from two directions: one is the attack of materialistic renunciation of faith, and the other one is the onslaught of 'territorial nationalism.' It is our responsibility to confront both dangers.

I believe that the spirit of Islam can defeat both enemies. 'Territorial nationalism' or 'patriotism' are not bad phenomena; but if moderation in their pursuit is ignored, and extremism takes hold then atheism and materialism can easily flourish.

I advise you to be Muslims to the core of your hearts. I do not worry much about the enemies of Islam as much as I worry about Muslims themselves. I recall a delightful statement of the Prophet Muhammad, who said: 'I speak from the line of the Prophets, and you are in the line of *ulama*.'

Whenever I recall these words I hang my head in shame. Are we Muslims today in a condition that the Prophet Muhammad would be proud of us? Yes, it is possible, if only we rekindle in our hearts the light that he had inspired in us. Yes, in that situation he would be proud of us.

The Congress has assumed many responsibilities, and it confronts very important objectives, especially the return of Hejaz Railways to private hands, and the creation of an

Islamic University. If we are truly inspired by Islamic solidarity then we would achieve our objectives.

So, I say to you that when you return to your homeland dedicate yourselves to generating the spirit of Islamic solidarity among the youth. Our future is secure by their endeavors. Thank God, I have seen that special spirit among the Arab youth, which is not visible anywhere except in the Italian youth. Truly the Arab youth are enlightened by the lofty view of their objectives. I believe that the future of Islam is secured by the future prospects of Arabia, and the future of the Arabs depends on the stability of the Arab alliance. When Arabs are united, then Islam would be successful. All of us need to concentrate our efforts to achieve this goal. May God grant us success!

This was the last statement of Iqbal in Palestine. Accompanied by Mehr, Iqbal departed from Jerusalem on December 15, 1931, and came to Port Saeed, where he boarded a ship for Bombay on December 18. Among the passengers were some notable personalities of India; Mahatma Gandhi being one of the most prominent. Others were the members of the royal family of Hyderabad state – princes Azam Jah, Mu`azzam Jah and their Turkish wives, Durr-i Shahwar and Nilofer, and their mother (the former wife of Sultan/Caliph Abdul Majeed Khan of the Ottoman Empire) and Sir Akbar Haydri and his wife. Iqbal reached Bombay on December 28, 1931. In Bombay he was once again invited to a dinner party which his friend from student days in Europe, Attiya Faizi, had arranged. He departed from Bombay and finally arrived by train to Lahore on December 30, 1931. A large number of his friends and admirers formally received him at the station.

On January 1, 1932 a correspondent of the daily *Civil and Military Gazette* interviewed Iqbal at his home, and they discussed issues of Palestine, and Muslims' roles in the future constitutional arrangements for India. First, Palestine:

My visit to Palestine proved to be the most fascinating experience of my life. I met delegates from several Islamic states. I was particularly impressed by the Syrian youth. These young men of Islam reflected sincerity and honesty in

their character like the one I saw in the Fascist Youth of Italy. Also, I visited the sacred sites of Judaism, Christianity and Islam; especially I was greatly impressed by the Church of the Nativity, where Jesus Christ was born.

I believe the plan to turn Palestine into a Jewish state would not succeed. The Congress drew delegates from most of the Muslim states, and they had exhaustive discussions about the political freedom of the Muslim states, and the promotion of Islamic solidarity. I was made a member of several subcommittees, which had been created to tackle specific proposals.

In one subcommittee I opposed the proposal for the creation of an Islamic university in Jerusalem, styled after the traditional educational system of al-Azhar in Cairo. I preferred that the proposed university should be a modern university.

I cannot understand why this misunderstanding was circulated that I do not want to see any university established in Jerusalem. Probably the telegram issued by the Reuter news agency was responsible for this erroneous perception.

I ardently desire that Arabs should establish not just one, but many more universities and that they should, without delay, translate modern knowledge into the Arabic language.

Also, Iqbal shed some light on the reasons for his skimpy role in the Second Round Table Conference. Indeed he had developed some differences of opinion with other members of the Muslim delegation, especially Sir Akbar Haydri. He stated that he did not resign from the conference, but merely disassociated from the Muslim delegation. The action was taken, Iqbal pointed out, in line with the policy of the All India Muslim Conference. Moreover, issues relating to separate electorates for Muslims, the institution of constitutional reforms in the Northwest Frontier province, and the separation of Sindh from the Bombay province had been settled. Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald, Sir Samuel Hoare, the Secretary of State for India, had made definitive statements. Only one issue remained constitutionally unsettled: the Muslims' decisive majority in Bengal and the Punjab.



## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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- <sup>1</sup> Shaikh Ata Allah, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 338-339.
- <sup>2</sup> Wahid Ahmad, Ed., *Mian Fazl-i Hussain's Diary* (Lahore Research Society of Pakistan, 1977), pp. 69-70.
- <sup>3</sup> Dar, *Letters and Writings of Iqbal*, p. 69.
- <sup>4</sup> Muhammad Hamza Faruqi, *Safar Nama-i Iqbal*, pp. 50-52.
- <sup>5</sup> Faqir Sayid Wahid-ud-Din, *Ruzqar-i Faqir*, Vol. I, pp. 48-49.
- <sup>6</sup> Shaikh Ata Allah, *Iqbal Nama*, Vol. II, p. 314.
- <sup>7</sup> Muhammad Hamza Faruqi, *Safar Nama-Iqbal*, pp. 132-155.

## Chapter IX

### THE MAELSTROM OF INDIAN POLITICS

The Maelstrom of politics awaited Iqbal in India, no longer was he treated as one of the leaders of the Punjab; he was now identified as a statesman who was concerned with the future of the Muslim community as a whole. Unfortunately, the simmering Hindu-Muslim grievances erupted as riots started to break out. An additional contributory factor for these riots was the general impression that the first and the second round table conferences in London had failed to achieve a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim representation in the provincial legislatures. Under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, all-India National Congress also flexed its muscles to gain full autonomy for India as Canada. Also, the Punjab, Iqbal's home base, was in the grip of the Kashmir Movement which demanded autonomy for the state. The Maharaja of Kashmir whose ancestor had bought the state of Kashmir in 1846 for 75 lakhs (7,500,000 rupees), tolerated no "autonomy," which would relax his "God-given" rule. Moreover, Alwar, a small, princely state in Rajasthan, became the center of Muslims' agitation against the Ruler's discriminating policies against the Muslims, including the Alwar State's take-over of mosques, eliminating the possibility of Islamic education of children and banning the teaching of Urdu and Persian. Also, Muslims complained

that they were not getting the proportionate share of jobs in the state's administration.

In order to redress these grievances, the Muslim's created an organization Anjuman Khadim al-Islam, which was almost instantly banned by the Ruler. Muslims started to initiate street demonstrations with well-organized political processions. The Alwar police responded with open-firing on the demonstrators with a large number of casualties. The relations between the state's Hindu Ruler and the Muslim community deteriorated to a point that the Muslim population started to migrate out of the state in large numbers. The Ruler retaliated by confiscating the property of the migrants. The issue was taken up by the Muslim Conference in its session of March 22, 1931, where it was decided that a Muslim delegation under the leadership of Mawlana Shafi Daudi be sent to Alwar to seek the redressing of Muslims' grievances. Arrogantly, the Ruler refused to see the delegation. To keep this issue alive the Muslim Conference demanded in June, 1932, the creation of a neutral committee, which would investigate the whole range of Muslims' problems in the Alwar state, but the Ruler brushed aside this proposal. Subsequently, the Muslim Conference proposed the preparation of a documented dossier detailing the Ruler's oppressive actions against the Muslims. Finally, the British government decided to depose the Ruler from his chiefdom.

In the early 1930s all matters related to the Muslims' rights, and all movements designed to achieve them were ultimately transferred to the Muslim Conference. All of these matters were handled by its Executive Committee, which met fairly frequently in Delhi or Shimla. As a member of the Executive Committee, Iqbal was called upon to attend these meetings. In 1932, Iqbal was elected president of the all-India Muslim Conference, which had originally been spawned by the All-Parties Muslim Conference in 1928, and Iqbal was one of the founding

fathers of this organization. Initially, Muslim leaders of all types of organizations attended the conference. With the passage of time, the conference remained no longer an ad hoc political movement, but became an organized political forum, and until 1934 played a dynamic role in the Indian politics. During this period, the All-India Muslim League was in disarray, and the agitational Khilafat Committee had run out of steam. Other Muslim organizations existed in abundance, but individually they were exceptionally ineffectual. Among them Muslim Nationalist Party and Jamiat Ulama-i Hind had become the shadows of the All-India National Congress, and echoed its politics. The Muslim Conference had an identity of its own and maintained an Executive Committee and an Executive Board with branches spread all over different provinces of India.

The activities of the Conference now consumed a lot of Iqbal's time and energy. He traveled to Delhi on January 8, 1932 to attend the meeting of the Executive Committee and the same evening he returned to Lahore. Again on January 30, he prepared himself to undertake the voyage to Dehli, but the painful gout in his foot made him to cancel this plan and sent his apology via Ghulam Rasul Mehr to the Executive Committee and especially to Saith Abdullah Haroon. Clearly Iqbal started having health problems. Despite these handicaps, Iqbal had to pay attention to his political role while simultaneously he devoted time to complete his well-known work, *Javid Nama*, which he composed in Persian, and published it in February 1932. In the same month of February, political developments in Turkey and Kashmir drew his attention.

In Turkey, Mustafa Kemal was engaged in radical reforms of Islam. He issued a decree that all Turks should recite the Qur'an and the five daily prayers in Turkish instead of the original Arabic. The news generated a tremendous amount of intellectual commotion among the Muslims in India. A correspondent of the weekly *Light*

asked Iqbal if Muslims could recite the prayers in other languages instead of Arabic. Moreover, he asked if Mustafa Kemal's decree is based upon any precedent in the history of Islam. Iqbal stated: "at one time Imam Abu Hanifa (d. 767) had stated that every Muslim can use his language for *salat* (prayer); but when he was on his deathbed he cancelled his own *fatwa* (judgment). Ibn Tumart, a Berber who assumed the title of *mahdi* (messiah), established the Muwahid Dynasty in Morocco, once promulgated a fatwa of this kind. When his followers gained power in Andalusia they started to chant *Adhan* (call to prayers) in the Berber language." Iqbal believed that Mustafa Kemal's decree was not a progressive act, but was reactionary in content. In the ancient time, all religions were national. To recite prayers in the Turkish language meant to lower Islam from the level of humanity and to place it on the level of pre-Islamic epoch, which is described as *jahiliya*. Iqbal believed that since Arabic is the language of divine revelation, the mandatory *salat* must be performed in Arabic. However, any prayer which is not mandatory is subject to the *ulema*'s interpretation. They can decide if their own national language, instead of Arabic, can be used.<sup>1</sup>

Iqbal's relations with the Nawab of Bhopal had graduated to a level of trust and confidence, and he had started to seek Iqbal's help and advice on political issues, related to Kashmir. In February, 1932, the Nawab of Bhopal invited Iqbal to visit him in Bhopal in order to find a solution for the Maharaja of Kashmir's discriminatory policies towards the Muslims. Some sources have maintained that Iqbal had visited Bhopal in 1931 specifically for this mission, and that Iqbal's efforts and counsels succeeded in the instituting of the Glancy Commission which investigated the problems in Kashmir. However, this author has never found evidence that Iqbal visited Bhopal in July, 1931, or that his efforts were successful in the establishment of the Glancy Commission.

This much is correct, that Iqbal had decided to visit Bhopal in July of 1931. This is obvious from the contents of the letters, which Iqbal wrote to Ghulam Rasul Mahr from Lahore on July 10, 1931, and from Simla on July 23, 1931. These letters established the fact that some consultations, probably with the government of India, were to take place about the Kashmir problem on July 26, 1931. After this meeting Iqbal was scheduled to return to Lahore on July 27, and afterward traveled to Bhopal with Mehr. Did he actually travel to Bhopal? Nothing can be stated conclusively. If he visited the Nawab of Bhopal, even then the Kashmir issue remained tangled. Iqbal's letter of February 29, 1932 to Mehr sheds a great deal of light on this issue:

Today I was all prepared to leave for Delhi, but Javid is suffering from fever. Last night his temperature shot up to 105 degrees. This morning a physician examined him and expressed the fear that it might be typhoid. Tomorrow we will know about it conclusively after a thorough examination period. With these anxieties, it is difficult for me to travel. The physician has advised me not to travel. Please convey my regrets to His Highness the Nawab, informing him that I was all set to travel, but this unfortunate development, which has enveloped us so unexpectedly has aborted my plans. What else can I say? I am filled with a great deal of anxiety.<sup>2</sup>

It may be added to clarify this point that by the time the Glancy Commission was appointed, Iqbal had been elected the president of the Muslim Conference, and the Conference had been opposed to the instituting of the Glancy Commission. It is not inappropriate to remark that by 1930 Iqbal had become a national celebrity and a leader of international stature. In recognition of this fact, the Islamic research society in Lahore announced that to honor Iqbal, the society would celebrate the Iqbal Day on March 6. Many well-known personalities of Lahore paid homage to Iqbal; also well-crafted articles about his contributions were published. One evening, a high tea was arranged in

his honor in a well-known restaurant, the Lorange, which was attended by a large number of Lahore's intellectuals.

### **The Leadership of the All-India Muslim Conference**

Clearly Muslims now expected Iqbal to lead them through the labyrinth of Indian politics. In 1932, he was elected president of the All-India Muslim Conference, and on March 21, he delivered an address to the public in a general meeting, which was organized on the vast grounds of the Delhi Gate in Lahore. Along with his presidential address of 1930 which he delivered in Allahabad, this address is justly reputed to be the second major milestone on the Muslim's march to self-determination.

Iqbal initiated his address with a remarkable degree of self-confidence in his ability to be a discerning idealistic statesman when he said: "I am grateful to you for placing your confidence in me at this critical moment. But I cannot congratulate you in your election of a man who is nothing more than a discerning idealist; perhaps you thought that a discerning [statesman] is needed; because without vision, nations are utterly destroyed." Then Iqbal added: "As far as the guiding principles of our policy are concerned, I have already expressed them in my address [of 1930] to the annual session of the Muslim League."

Iqbal then proceeded to describe in detail the proceedings of the Second Round Table Conference, which he had attended. Then he criticized the political policy of the British government, and the National Congress's confrontational policy toward the Muslims, especially the structuring of the central government, and expressed his disapproval of its approach. Iqbal subjected the British government's repressive actions in the Northwest Frontier Province to critical examination, and then exposed the Maharaja of Kashmir's suppression of the Muslims for their democratic demands. Then he outlined, what may be called, his paradigm of an Islamic polity, which he hoped could be applied to Muslims in the future.

All the manifest signs of political development actually are predicting the onrush of a political typhoon which is very likely to envelope India, perhaps all of Asia. This is spawned by a political culture which has reduced 'man' into a commodity, which is fit to be exploited, and as a 'personality' has been denied the opportunity to flourish. The nations of Asia would rise up one day against the exploitive economic system of the West, which has been imposed upon them. Asia is unable to tolerate the modern western capitalism, and is incapable of appreciating undifferentiated individualism.

But the religion that you profess recognizes the validity of the individual, and attempts to keep it under a discipline, which demands that the individual should expend his resources, in the service of fellow man, and his God. Its potentialities are almost limitless, and even now he can structure a new world, where an individual's social life is determined not by his caste, color or ethnic origin; nor by the wealth which he creates, but by his way of life. A new world is created where the poor can impose tax on the rich and society is not structured on economic equality but is based on spiritual equality – where an 'untouchable' can marry a princess, where personal property is considered to be trust and capital cannot be allowed to be invested in those opportunities, which would establish its domination over the real producers of wealth.

But your religion's lofty idealism has been changed by the stultifying constraints of your *ulama* and jurists' obsolete style of thinking; and it demands freedom. Spiritually, we are living in a prison which we structured ourselves during the past centuries.

For old men like us, it is a matter of shame; we have not been able to equip our younger generations to cope with the political and religious challenges, which they are to confront in the modern age. Very urgently we need to change the present mentality of our nation so that once new aspirations and ambitions surge through her being... The lessons learned in the past must not be forgotten. They must always remain in our memory. Do not attach yourselves to a particular faction. If you want to achieve your objectives, then concentrate on



the vitality of your ego (*khudi*) in your own person, and then let it guide you.

Mussolini has said: ‘Whoever has iron at his disposal has an abundance of bread.’ I say to you, whoever has become steel has acquired everything. Be firm and work hard...this real secret of real individual and collective life.

Our transparent objective is simply this. In the forthcoming constitutional reforms, we want to carve out a space for Islam, which would enable it to fulfill its destiny in this country. To achieve this objective, it is imperative that our nation’s progressive forces are awakened, and its hidden potentialities must be harnessed. The spark of life cannot be borrowed from others; it can be ignited only in the fireplace of our own soul.

After presenting this idealized view of spiritual democracy, Iqbal presented a five-point pragmatic program for Muslims to follow: (1) *One Political Organization*. The title of the first point suggested that Muslims must be united in one political organization, which should establish its branches in the districts of all the provinces. He suggested no name for this organization, implying that a name does not matter, but the substance did. However he proposed that its constitution should be flexible enough to accommodate individuals belonging to divergent schools of thought, and that members of any school of thought should have the opportunity to gain power within the movement to provide leadership in the light of these ideological views, and established course of action for accountability to the public.

(2) *Voluntary organizations*. In the second point, Iqbal emphasized the need to create youth leagues and batches of national volunteers, who should be devoted to promoting public welfare, social reforms and be catalysts to generating economic activities in the villages and small towns. (3) *National fund*. The central organization must raise 500,000 rupees as an endowment for political expenditures. (4) *Cultural institutions*. In the large cities of India, separate cultural institutions for men and women should be

established. These institutions should be non-political; their main concern should be to inculcate in the next generation of Muslims the urge to let the world know the extent of Islam's contribution's to the world's religious and cultural history; and that Islam had a mission for the future.

(5) *Advisory council of the Ulama.* The fifth point had a far-reaching consequence, which was probably not fully appreciated at the time. It called for the creation of an ulama's advisory council, which should include modern attorneys who have acquired knowledge and training in interpreting the modern jurisprudence. Clearly this point was envisaged with a view to protecting Islamic laws, their extension, and their new interpretations in the light of modern needs. This council was expected to be a constitutional entity so that no legislative statutory provision related to the Muslim personal law could be considered by any legislature without the approval of this council.

Explaining the fifth point at some length, Iqbal added: "In addition to the practical value of this proposal, we must keep in mind that the modern Muslim World, and the non-Muslim world, have yet to discover the infinite value of the Islamic legal literature. The capitalistic system, whose ethical norms have abandoned its concern for the man's way of earning a living, has yet to discover its usefulness"

In addition to Iqbal's proposals the All India Muslim Conference under his presidency adopted five resolutions, which were directly related to the policies of the British government. It was resolved that the Indian Central (Federal) government should: 1) reserve one third jobs in the administration, and 50 percent of the positions in the British Indian Army for Muslims; 2) Muslims were dissatisfied with the outcome of the first and second London Round Table Conferences; 3) The British must announce without delay its award for the communal settlement. If the British government did not announce the Communal Award by the end of June, 1932, then the

Executive Board of the Muslim Conference, in its scheduled meeting of July 3, 1932, must work out a program of "direct action." 4) Provincial autonomy must be enforced without delay in all the provinces of direct British rule. 5) In order to resolve the political conflict in Kashmir, the Muslim members of the Glancy Commission must be appointed in consultation with the leaders of the Muslim parties. <sup>3</sup>

Iqbal was in favor of establishing Muslim majority rule in the Punjab and Bengal. To use this demand on the British government and the National Congress, the All-India Muslim League had adapted several resolutions. Iqbal reiterated this demand in this presidential address to the Muslim Conference in Lahore, and in fact held out the possibility of direct action, if the demand was rejected. In the Punjab, Hindus and Sikhs opposed the Muslim majority rule. After Iqbal's address they accentuated their negative public relations in the Punjab. To blunt their sharp verbal attacks, Iqbal and his colleagues in the Muslim Conference issued a press statement on April 20, 1932:

We have observed during the last several weeks a lethal propaganda campaign, which has been conducted against the Muslim majority rule in the Punjab and Bengal... we leave it to the judgment of a [neutral] world to decide: if Hindus and Sikhs want to establish a Hindu majority rule in the six [British ruled] provinces, and in the center they also want to deprive Muslims their majority rule in the Punjab and Bengal... then how do they plan to convince Muslims of their sincerity and good will? Then how do they plan to win the hearts and minds of the Muslims and establish a relationship of mutual trust?

However, during 1931-1932, relations between the Hindus and Sikhs, (who remained in alliance until at least 1947) and Muslims were very tense. This phenomenon reflected very intensely in the leadership of the Muslim conference. Its Executive Committee met in a session on June 8, 1932 in Shimla, where Iqbal was in the chair and it

passed two major resolutions about the 1) relations between the Muslims and the Ruler of the Alwar State and 2) the limits of provincial autonomy, which the Muslim Conference preferred for the provinces. While three hot issues of high politics were being debated educational and cultural problems also attracted Iqbal's attention.

In June 1932 the Senate of the Punjab University became the cockpit of a controversy between the Hindus and Muslims about the place of Muslims in Indian history. Actually, this perennial controversy shifted its focus after 1947. The American academy, where scholars specializing on India tended to view Muslim historical presence in South Asia as an unwarranted intrusion, while treating the Indian history as strictly a legitimate Hindu experience. However, in June, an English professor Bruce moved a resolution in the university senate proposing to eliminate the course of Islamic history as a pass/fail course from the curriculum of the baccalaureate degree. Despite the stiff opposition of the Muslim senate members, Professor Bruce's resolution was passed by majority of one vote. The perceived academic high-handedness greatly troubled the Muslims, who condemned this resolution.

The condemnation of this English professor soon became a public affair; he was subjected to Muslims' indignation in general meetings, which were organized in different neighborhoods of Lahore. The Islamic Research Institute arranged a public meeting outside the Mochi Gate on June 11, 1932, which was presided over by Iqbal. In criticizing Professor Bruce's proposal, he stated:

I had thought until today that the Muslim youth are completely indifferent, and that they are uninformed about Islamic culture and history like non-Muslims. However, the reality is different.

A few months ago, I visited Egypt and Palestine. The events in these countries lead me to believe that the attitude of indifference has vanished.

I saw the workers of the Muslim World Congress in Palestine, who were smartly dressed in western clothes and their speakers were clean-shaven. By virtue of this dedication to political action, and their general knowledge, they appeared preeminent than the traditional ulema...

Professor Bruce has proposed the elimination of Islamic history from the pass/fail course at the B.A. level. This pass/fail course generally attracted a large member of students. For this reason, the Islamic history course has been proposed to be ejected. When the human mind is inclined to mischief-making, it stimulates inner emotions which spawn actions to achieve these objectives.

Professor Bruce argued that Indians should learn Indian history. To me this is a false premise of this argument. In truth, history is the movement of human spirit the world over. The human spirit is not confined to an environment, but the entire universe is its environment. To view it only as an object of ownership by a particular nation is nothing but an intellectual narrow-mindedness.

When I visited Italy, I met Prince Leone Caetani (1869-1935), who is devoted to Islamic history. He has written several books on Islamic history, and spent a substantial sum of money on his research; so much so that I don't think any Islamic government can afford to pay for the translation of his books.

When I asked him why he took so much interest in Islamic history, he stated: Islamic history inspires the weaker sex, women; to an extent that they can surpass men.

### **Tempest in the Teapot of the Muslim Conference**

The Muslim Conference in its session of March 21, 1932 had adopted a resolution of a proposed policy indicating that if the British government did not announce the Communal Award soon, then the Conference's Executive Board must meet on July 3, 1932, to adopt a program of direct action. After consulting some members of the Executive Committee, Iqbal as the president of the conference announced the postponement of the Executive Committee's meeting to the end of July. A small hell broke

loose: Iqbal was accused of being dictatorial, and that he postponed the meeting as was desired by the British government. A faction containing some prominent members of the conference organized a general meeting in Allahabad on July 4, and loudly protested against Iqbal's decision. In addition to this protest, Mawlana Hasrat Mohani and his prominent associates advanced a proposition that a new party should be structured to function with the All India Muslim Conference.

Iqbal's reaction to these developments was skillfully diplomatic. Instead of taking offense at the factional politics of the Allahabad group, he issued a statement of July 6, 1932 stating that he welcomed Mohani's idea of a new organization, which was in harmony with his own views, which he had expressed in his presidential address, suggesting that the Muslim' sole political organization must be flexible structurally to allow every school of thought to gain power in this organization. Iqbal defended his decision as democratic because the decision was taken by the Executive Committee without his presence. Mawlana Shafi Daudi, the Secretary General, was authorized to postpone the Executive Committee's meeting if the Communal Award was not announced by the British government by July 3, 1932. Iqbal added:

If the Communal Award is not approved by the Muslims, then the Muslims are under the obligation to defy the British government. But I will not advise them to take direct action just because the government is "guilty" of not announcing its award within a specified period of time when [political] developments would become transparent the Muslims would be in a position to determine for themselves the extent to which my suggestion to postpone the Executive Board meeting was inspired by Shimla [the British government]. In my personal life, like my public life, I have never followed the wishes of other people. At a time when our [nation's] vital interests are at stake, I consider any man who follows other people's wishes a traitor to Islam and humanity.

I want to make it crystal clear that people who preferred postponement [of the meeting] their attitude should not be interpreted to mean that they would lag behind those who wanted to implement the Lahore Resolution. However, we should do so when it becomes unavoidable; meanwhile the party should preserve its strength. It is certainly not wise to squander our energies on unimportant issues. They should be applied to those matters, which are factually significant.<sup>4</sup>

At this stage Mawlana Shafi Daudi resigned his position. A few days later, some leaders called upon Iqbal and supported his views, saying that the postponement of the meeting was appropriate. Commenting on this episode, Abdul Majid Salik summed up his assessment.

This flood was contained... since the British government had assumed the responsibility to solve the communal issue, it was proper that he should have awaited the declaration of the government's verdict. In any case Iqbal's sincerity, and the impact of his personality, did not let the Conference's divisive views create the deadlock. Finally everyone agreed with him.<sup>5</sup>

### **Public Relations and Negotiations with the Sikhs**

Simultaneously Iqbal continued to participate in public relations activities, which were ostensibly religious but could be split apart from political implications. He traveled to Jalandhar in the East Punjab on July 16, 1932 to celebrate the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, where Iqbal addressed a large public meeting to highlight both religious and political features of his life. The citizens of Jalandhar arranged a high tea for him, where in a formal address of appreciation his services to the nation were admired. The same evening Iqbal returned to Lahore. However, the proceedings of the Second London Round Table Conference reverberated in the Punjab, where Sikh leaders were greatly agitated. Their leaders had opposed a proposed covenant which was crafted by other minority leaders. They were apprehensive of a possibility that their interests would not be protected in the forthcoming

Communal Award. They had initiated a campaign in the Lahore press, and were preparing to launch several public protests and demonstrations at the issuance of the Communal Award. Their hectic activities were perceived by Muslims to be directed against their national interests. Iqbal issued a statement on July 25, 1932 in which he explained the Muslims' viewpoint.

The Muslims of India are anxious to protect their communal interests, and to secure the constitutional advancement of the country. The safeguards which they demand are essential for their protection as an All-India minority. They accept the principle of majority rule in the center and in the provinces where they happen to be in a hopeless minority provided they are not deprived of the countervailing and legitimate advantage of being in a majority in certain other provinces. They have explained their position time and again to the sister communities and, with the sole exception of the Sikhs, all Indian minorities have agreed to their demands.”<sup>6</sup>

At the publication of Iqbal's statement attempts were initiated to achieve a Sikh-Muslim agreement. His old friend Sardar Jogendra Singh sent him a memorandum conceding to the Muslim legislators in the Punjab Legislative Assembly a majority of one seat. Iqbal responded by rejecting his proposal, and demanded no less than 51 percent of the legislative seats. Subsequently, Sardar Jogendra Singh, sent Iqbal an entirely different scheme which was rejected by Iqbal with an explanation that in the Punjab Legislative Assembly Muslims must have a majority, and any plan which disregards the majority rule cannot warrant serious consideration, and any negotiations in such a situation would be an exercise in futility. Sardar Jogendra Singh had claimed that his correspondence with Iqbal was private and confidential, yet he had published it in the press, according to his own statement of August 4, 1932. Simultaneously, parleys continued between Sikhs and Muslims in Shimla. However, the Muslim perception was that the real mission of these



negotiations was the Sikh desire to cause delay in the British government's verdict on the communal settlement. In consequence, the Executive Committee of the Muslim Conference met in Delhi on August 7<sup>th</sup> with Iqbal in the chair, and decided that Muslim leaders should suspend their negotiations with the Sikh leaders until the British government announced the Communal Award.

The same decision urged the British government to issue its verdict without further delay. Another resolution of the conference stipulated that if the Muslims' minimal demands were not accepted, then the Executive Committee should create a subcommittee including Iqbal (chairman) and Mawlana Muzhar-ud-Din, Mawlana Hasrat Mohani, Saiyad Habib, Ghulam Rasul Mehr, Hassan Riaz, and Zakir Ali. In accordance with the resolution of the Muslim Conference, Iqbal refused to continue the dialogue with the Sikhs and explained his course of action in the light of the Conference's Executive Committee's judgment. Consequently, the dialogue to create a political agreement with the Sikhs remained inconclusive.<sup>7</sup>

### **British Government's Communal Award**

Finally, the British government issued the Communal Award on August 17, 1932; and an unbroken chorus of condemnation came from the All Indian National Congress, but the Muslim leadership registered a measured dissatisfaction. With Iqbal in the chair, the Muslim Conference's Executive Committee met on August 17, and then again in Delhi on August 23, and dealt with two significant issues: 1) Kashmir and 2) the Communal Award. A resolution of protest was adopted against the policy of the Kashmir government for the incarceration of the Majlis-i Ahrar's leaders, and urged the government to free them. The following day, Iqbal issued a press statement which reflected and upheld the Executive's Resolution on the Communal Award. This statement raised three objections to the provisions of the award, and made

two substantive suggestions to improve upon it from the Muslims' perspective.

The first objection: In the Punjab Muslims constituted 56 percent of the total population of the Punjab, and they received only 86 out of 175 seats in the Legislative Assembly, and they were reduced to a minority, and the Sikhs acquired heavy weightage in the legislative seats. Moreover, some seats reserved for the Muslims were subjected to the joint electorates. Second objection: Despite their decisive majority in Bengal, Muslims were awarded reduced representation, while European settlers benefited at the expense of Muslims. Third objection: In Bengal, the Punjab and the Northwest Frontier Province, where Muslims were in the majority, non-Muslims received weightage, much more than their proportional representation in the legislatures, whereas Muslim weightage in Hindu majority provinces was reduced considerably.

Now Iqbal's proposals – the first suggested that Bengal's legislature should be bi-cameral, and in the upper house Muslims should have representation in proportion to their total population. Moreover, the provincial cabinet should be responsible to both houses of the legislature. This proposal, Iqbal believed ensured Muslim majority in the Legislative Assembly. Second, the provinces should be able to exercise substantial autonomy, and the central government should retain limited and specific powers.<sup>8</sup>

To the Untouchables the award had also granted separate electorates, and the number of seats in the Central Legislature. Mahatma Gandhi, who had objected to this act of British generosity even in the proceedings of the Second Round Table Conference, now called the award "the disruption of Hinduism."<sup>9</sup> He declared "a perpetual fast until death" on September 20, 1932. However, before he took the decision to starve himself to death he had fairly extensive correspondence with the British Prime Minister, and the Secretary of State of India. These letters appeared

in the newspapers. Iqbal issued his reviews of these letters to the press on September 13, which stated:

These letters reflect personal psychology, that I have not read composition of this kind. The most distinguished element of these letters is Mr. Gandhi's view that Hinduism's authenticity is determined by its religious and ethical aspects. Personally I admire these views. Despite this fact Hindu newspapers have done their best to disseminate all kinds of misunderstandings about me. I have always had this view that political issues in India, when compared to the religious and ethical matters cease to have any significance. It does not surprise me that the exponent of a United Indian nation, and the opponent of communal awakening among minorities has always very courageously stood for the protection of the Hindu nation.

This situation is an eye opener for the Muslims; the Mahatma, who wants all collectivities of India to be absorbed in the United Indian nation, today sees the disruption of the Hindu nation as the untouchables, who have been oppressed by the upper caste Hindus for centuries (as Mahatma states), have acquired the opportunity to have limited representation in the Constituent Assembly. If the separate electorates for the untouchables amounts to the fear of the nation's destruction then logically it follows that the minorities, if they adopt similar separate electorates, paved the way for their own annihilation.

I venture to think that Mahatma Gandhi's policy makes it crystal clear that a minority which wants to preserve its separate entity must not abandon the separate electorates. In so far as Gandhi's threat to self-killing is concerned, I want to point out that Islam does not approve of suicide under any conditions.

God forgive me for saying this: if the Muslims of India had followed the caste system, and had developed in their society, a large number of untouchables, and like the upper caste Hindus, Muslims had oppressed them like the caste Hindus had done for centuries, and I had to adopt Mahatma Gandhi's course of action, I would have threatened my own nation (instead of the British government), to adopt a policy of

social and religious equality within a specified period of time and not expended my energy to deprive the untouchables to forgo their acquired rights. If Hindus really want to improve the condition of the untouchables, they must see Gandhi's commitment in this light.<sup>10</sup>

The untouchables' leader B. R. Ambedker, and caste Hindu leaders with Mahatma Gandhi's approval, signed a pact in Poona, on September 25, 1932, when the untouchables agreed to forgo the right of separate electorates, and agreed to throw their lot in with the caste Hindus. In return they received a guarantee of 148 seats in the Indian provincial legislatures – twice as many as the British government's award gave them. A specific pledge was given that the caste Hindus would try to obtain "a fair share of representation" for them in the public services. Faint and emaciated without food after 108 hours, Mahatma Gandhi approved the settlement, while he was in Yerovda jail in Poona. About this happy ending in the form of the Poona Pact, Iqbal issued a press statement on September 28, 1932: "This has brought about no change in the separate representation of the untouchables, nor have they been brought any closer to the Hindu Dharma."

Hindus and Muslims were in reality dissatisfied with the British government's Communal Award. At this juncture Mawlana Shaukat Ali initiated an effort to achieve an understanding with the Hindu leaders. Supported by Abdul Majeed Sindhi, he started talks with Pandit Madan Mohan Malivya and Abul Kalam Azad in Bombay. The news of these parlays appeared in the press. In association with some of his political colleagues Iqbal, as the president of the Muslim Conference issued a press statement on October 6:

Muslims of India have always been anxious to have an agreement with the majority Hindus. Anyone who has studied this situation for the last ten years is fully aware of their efforts, which were made to achieve communal harmony and understanding structured on strong foundations. We feel that it is inappropriate to raise the issues of joint and separate

electorates. We believe that our nation is not prepared to give up this safeguard [of separate electorates].

However, we are not opposed to considering clearly defined proposals, which the leaders of the other nations are willing to propose for consideration. But let it be clearly understood that these well defined proposals must be presented by the nation, which is in the majority.<sup>11</sup>

While these preliminary talks were still underway, Mawlana Shaukat Ali and Abdul Majeed Sindhi jumped their guns, and announced the convening of a Muslim leaders' conference to be scheduled to meet in Lucknow on October 15, and sent an invitation to Iqbal to attend this conference. Promptly, Iqbal responded with a telegram on October 18 saying: "The effort to achieve mutual understanding is laudable; but in the absence of well-defined proposals from the Hindus, a conference of the Muslim leaders would be counterproductive, and may cause actual damage. I request you to reconsider the proposal for the conference."

Also, Iqbal received a similarly worded telegram from Abdul Majeed Sindhi, and Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari, a well-known leader in the National Congress. Ansari explained to Iqbal that the manner in which the untouchable's grievances were addressed can be applied to the Muslims' demands. Consequently, to untangle the problem of Hindu-Muslim and Sikh representation in the political structure of India a joint conference at this stage would be most helpful. In a telegram of October 10 Iqbal repeated his objections, and emphasized that well-defined proposals from the Hindus must be made in the first instance. Another Bombay Muslim Leader, Sardar Sulaiman Mitha in his telegram of October 11 described Iqbal's reluctance to attend the Conference harmful. Again Iqbal very politely refuted his objections.

In addition to the exchange of private telegrams, Iqbal had issued a press statement on October 8 in which he reiterated his objections:

In the absence of definitive proposals from the Hindu leaders, I fail to see what we are asked to discuss in this Conference. Muslims of India have always shown readiness for mutual settlement with other communities, but the policy which is now being adopted is not the way to a settlement with the Hindus, but to disunity in our ranks, which we have consolidated with great difficulty. To treat the question of electorates lightly and reopen it in spite of the community's clear verdict as embodied in the resolution of the Muslim League and the All India Muslim Conference is the most inadvisable course, which would have far-reaching consequences for the Muslims.

I believe the proposed conference is harmful to the interests of India and Islam and an absolute waste of time. I hope that the sponsors of the conference will reconsider their position.<sup>12</sup>

Despite Iqbal's absence the proposed conference was held in Lucknow on October 16, but the adopted resolutions vindicated Iqbal's policy. A resolution was adopted to say that Muslims could reconsider their position on the issue of joint versus separate electorates if the Hindu majority accepted the thirteen demands of the All-India Muslim Conference, and a committee was appointed to negotiate with the Sikhs and Hindus. This committee had talks with the Hindu and Sikh leaders, but this attempt at a negotiated settlement remained deadlocked. Iqbal commented on these efforts in his statement of October 17, 1932:

The resolution practically repeats the position which I took in regard to communal negotiations – that definite proposals should first come from the side of the majority community ... It is now for the Hindus to say whether they are prepared to open negotiations.<sup>13</sup>

To explain his position in more detail, Iqbal wrote a letter to the editor of *Humdam* in Lucknow:

*Humdam* has always given unselfish advice to the Muslims. For this service the whole country is grateful to you. I remember it well. The proposal for the second attempt at Hindu-Muslim settlement was advanced by you. I had

submitted it to you that perhaps the opportunity for such an agreement would emerge after the Poona Pact. I had thought at that point in time that the majority community would present some proposals to the Muslims; but unfortunately this did not happen.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malivya had adopted the same course of action, which Mahatma Gandhi had in Delhi. In any case you might have read Muhammad Ali Jinnah's telegram. He also agrees that proposals for a settlement must be proposed by the Hindus, even if they are based on the principle of joint electorates.

I believe that the Lucknow Conference's covert objective was to lead the Muslims to amend these demands on their own, which they had repeated several times. To amend the principle of [separate] electorate, under the existing circumstances, would amount to exceptional political weakness. Moreover, it would open up the flood gates of Muslims' internal dissention and divisions. The consensus of opinion, which they have achieved with great difficulty, would be squandered. Regardless of the government's settlement, no one can deny the fact that in the Punjab [legislature] Muslims gained majority by 5-7 seats. The Northwest Frontier Provinces would attain status of parity with other provinces in the forthcoming system, and the possibility of Sindh's separation [from Bombay] is at hand, and the principle of separate electorates has been maintained, which is the foundation of the Muslims' total demands. By the unconditional provision of separate electorates the government has given the Muslims an opportunity to determine their own future: they may absorb themselves with the majority, if they so desire or establish their separate identity in certain parts of the country, and stand on their own feet.

If the Muslims abandoned prematurely the separate electorates, then a historian in the future would not condemn the British Government for the Muslims' political self-destruction, but would hold the Muslims guilty of a "crime" that in a democratic system, they as a minority guaranteed their own destruction.

It is a matter of regret that some of our leaders including *Ulama* of Islam, consider the issue of [separate electorates] merely as a mode of [legislative] representation. After examining the history of the Muslims of India, Asian nations' contemporary problems, and the western nations' political machinations, I have come to a firm conclusion that for an indefinite period of time, Indian Muslims' future is tied to their separate electorates. Also, I believe that separate electorates do not contradict the western concept of a nation (although I consider nationalism as a spiritual sickness of western imagination). Despite the separate electorates, unity and alliance can be forged among the nations of India.

It is, however, entirely possible that Asian nations may step into the garments of Europe, and confront the same problems, which the Europeans encounter. I would have liked to dwell upon these issues with more detail, but I have to depart for Europe tomorrow, and I have yet to do many more chores. For this reason, I terminate the lines of this letter. Briefly stated, to urge Muslims to advance their proposals [for Hindus' consideration], especially when their demands are well-known, is not an evidence of sincerity and patriotism, but is a political gimmick, especially when the majority is by no means ready [for their consideration]. It is the majority's obligation to win the confidence of the minorities. Under the existing conditions the raising of the communal issues does not serve the Muslims' or country's interests.

In addition to politics, Iqbal remained dedicated to the reconstruction of religion and culture. He founded *Adarah Ma'rif-i Islamia* on October 17, 1932. The preliminary comments about its mission deserve to be seriously considered:

In the modern age, in near and far off lands, Islam and Islamic culture confront a great revolutionary condition. There is a movement of *ijtihad* in Turkey, Iran is in a phase of modernity, Egypt is enthusiastic about reforms, and Afghanistan is stirred up with western ideas. No matter how you look at the centers of Islamic culture you see the social life is in convulsion. The overt and covert transformations in the Islamic world herald the advent of a new life for Indian



Muslims. They also give a message of awakening, and what is the content of this message? Examined in the light of knowledge the impact of these developments enables us to confront two or three consequences: one is the protection of Islamic traditions of ethics and culture; second is the protection of Indian Muslims' history. It is imperative that to engage in these activities our best efforts are committed. To extricate the Muslims from their current frozen mold, and to infuse in them a spiritual awakening no other effort can be more effective.<sup>14</sup>

### **Preparation for the Third Round Table Conference**

The British Government had scheduled the Third Round Table Conference to meet in October 1932. As indicated before, Iqbal had not been a vigorous participant in the Second Round Table Conference. Should he be invited to the third? Evidently the British Government was not particularly happy with Iqbal's performance, especially as he delivered critical comments about the conference after he returned to India. Azim Husain (son of Sir Fazl-i Husain) has stated: "In view of the previous year's experience [the British Government] reluctantly agreed [with Sir Fazl-i Husain] to send Dr. Iqbal to the Round Table Conference"<sup>15</sup> Sir Muhammad Zafarullah Khan asserted that he nominated Iqbal as a delegate to the Round Table Conference as he was an acting member of the Viceroy's Executive Council during Sir Fazl-i's leave of absence, and the Viceroy accepted his nomination.<sup>16</sup>

The fact of the matter is that Iqbal had acquired by this time an all-India political importance, and the British government had really little choice but to accept Iqbal as a delegate to the Third Round Table Conference. Sir Fazle and Sir Zafarullah's contention that Iqbal continued to be critical of the proceedings of the conference in London, and then subjected the British government to his unrelenting criticism is not wide off the mark. Iqbal was not a committed radical, nor was he an uncritical supporter of the

British administration. Throughout his political career he remained in between these two political positions.

While the Third Round Table Conference was scheduled to meet on November 17, 1932 in London, Iqbal departed one month earlier on October 17. His departure date and time were not announced in advance; consequently only his close associates and relatives came to the Lahore railway station to see him off. As an honorary secretary of the Muslim delegation, young Saiyad Amjad Ali traveled with Iqbal in the same compartment of the train. Before the train steamed out of the station, Iqbal issued a brief public statement saying that he expected the Muslims to strictly follow the policy, which is spelled out in the resolutions of the All India Muslim League, and the All India Muslim Conference. "I cannot improve upon the suggestion that Muslims should remember the Qur'anic principle: when you have adopted a course of actions, then act upon it without delay, and then trust in Allah."<sup>17</sup>

At Bombay, Iqbal was welcomed by Salah-ud-Din Saljuqi, the Afghan consul; Iqbal was also entertained by his old student day's friend, Atiya Faizi, and her husband, Faizi Rahamim. Accompanied by Saiyad Amjad Ali, Iqbal traveled to Venice in Italy, where he took a train for Paris. At the train station, Iqbal was received by his Sikh friends, Sardar Umrao Singh, his Hungarian wife, and their two daughters, Amrita and Indra. His stay in Paris was an intellectual treat; he visited with the world famous orientalist scholar Louis Massignon. Also, he visited Les Invalides. This visit to Napoleon's tomb brought forth a poetic expression of Iqbal's concept of activism and the role of sustained effort in the rise to power.

A few days later Iqbal arrived in London. At the train station, he was received by Khalid Sheldrake, an English convert to Islam, who presented to Iqbal the British statesman John Bright's book containing his speeches. He advised Iqbal to read these speeches before he participated

in the conference. Remarkably, Bright had advised the British government in one of his speeches, which he had delivered in 1857, that before its withdrawal from India, Britain should establish five states (instead of eventually two) in the Indian sub-continent. Iqbal stayed up one night to finish reading this book.<sup>18</sup>

The lackluster Third Round Table Conference was not a place of political excitement for Iqbal. The All India National Congress had decided not to participate. Muhammad Ali Jinnah was not there, because he had not been invited. However, he had for the time being settled in London and Iqbal visited him several times. Iqbal's participation, like the one at the Second Round Table Conference, remained perfunctory. He was made a member of the education committee for the Anglo-Indians, but he never participated in this committee's proceedings even one time. Actually the third conference was primarily devoted to the federal issues of the Indian government, and Iqbal ceased to have any interest in the structure of the central government. He believed very firmly in the complete autonomy of the provinces, who should deal directly with the secretary of state for India in the British cabinet. He delivered one speech on this subject, and cited John Bright's views to buttress his own contentions. He relied on Bright in order not to offend the British sensitivity since Iqbal's ideas echoed Bright's formulations. During the proceedings of the conference Chaudhary Rahmat Ali and the Cambridge students distributed a pamphlet – Now or Never – to the delegates, and Iqbal was indeed fully informed of their views.

Indian untouchables' leader Dr. Ambedkar had participated in the Third Round Table Conference. In his book, *Pakistan or Partition of India*, this is what he had to say about Iqbal's speech:

If opposition to a joint central government is a fundamental aspect of the Pakistan scheme, there was only one member of

the Round Table Conference, who did not mention the name of this scheme, but supported it, but that was Sir Muhammad Iqbal, who expressed this view in the conference that India need not have a central government and provinces should be completely autonomous and independent dominions and have direct contact with the secretary of state for India.<sup>19</sup>

This statement, for the most part, sums up Iqbal's major contributions to the Conference.

If Iqbal was not very vocal in the Conference, he was most active in public activities. The National League of England arranged a reception in his honor, which was attended by Hindu and Muslim delegates and some public figures of Britain. Ms. Farqharson introduced Iqbal with these comments: "He is a man of extraordinary abilities. His poetic vision is able to see things in the future, and with his critical, and far-reaching philosophic approach, he can reveal the concealed principles of humanity problems. In addition to these qualities, he has the ability of a practical man, and that is the reason why he was made a delegate to the Round Table Conference."<sup>20</sup>

After Ms. Farqharson's laudatory comments, Lord Lemington paid compliments to Iqbal for his poetic works and dwelled at some length on the general political awakening in the Islamic world and Iqbal's catalytic role in this awakening. Iqbal gave a brief talk and described the fact that delegates like him were in the Round Table Conference with the cooperation of the British government to draft a constitution for India, which Iqbal hoped would be stable and successful. Iqbal highlighted the fact that India was a vast sub-continent where, for thousands of years, different people possessing a variety of religions and languages have settled. The conference's objectives needed to be made clear and mutual trust must exist, as trust begets trust, and goodwill prevails. Muslims are courageous, and they have always maintained sincere and loyal relations with the British government. In light of this record, Iqbal hoped that in giving its verdict on the Communal Award,

the Muslims' aspiration would be respected and their rights safeguarded. To follow up on these themes, Iqbal addressed on September 15, 1932, a session of the National League of England, where members of the British Parliament of both houses were present, and so were the foreign ambassadors, and Muslims members of the delegation:

A very simple principle underlines the Indian Muslims' demands. The British people are very likely to be positively impressed by them. You know it well, that more than 70 million Muslims live in India; half of them are settled all over India but the balance of the population is concentrated in the provinces of northwest India. In Bengal, they are 57 percent of the population, in Sindh, about 73 percent, and in the Northwest Frontier Province about 95 percent. Muslims maintain that as a people with their distinct historical traditions and unity, they are very distinct from the other collectivities of India, and these traits are not to be found in other peoples of India. They want to develop in the light of their cultural traditions, and live their own collective life autonomously. Their demands have been presented in the resolutions of the All India Muslim Conference, and the All India Muslim League.

Iqbal then elaborated the Muslims' demands in the light of Jinnah's 14-Points, and then stated:

Nearly three years ago, as the president of the All India Muslim League, I had proposed as a possible solution to the communal issue, the establishment of a fairly large, Muslim state in the northwest of India, while this proposal was not actually included in the general roster of Muslim demands. I still believe that this proposed plan is the viable solution to this problem. I am willing to wait until such time that experience would prove or disprove the rational character of this solution.

It is true that Iqbal's proposal was not particularly admired. Noting this development, Koteman stated in 1932:

Increasingly, it is becoming pretty nearly impossible to preserve a stable and united India. It seems that in this space, a powerful Muslim state would be established in the east and

northwest, which would not be oriented toward India, but would look up to the Islamic world, and would be located on the periphery of it.

Impressed by Iqbal's ideas, Lord Lothian stated that while Iqbal's plans seem like the only viable solution of the Indian problem, that it would take at least another 25 years to realize.<sup>21</sup> Interestingly enough, instead of 25 years, it took only 15 years for Pakistan to emerge in 1947. While Iqbal's formal participation in the Round Table Conference, as pointed out earlier, was minimal, but his lectures to various associations in London indicate that Iqbal fully took advantage to influence the upper strata of the British society in favor of the Muslims' demands. Islam was another issue which he presented in his modern and liberal mold. "Is religion possible" was a thought-provoking lecture, which he delivered before the Aristotelian Society of London. Subsequently, it became a chapter of his book, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (1934). Also, Iqbal gave an interview to a correspondent of the *Liverpool Post*, which was published in 1932 when he discussed at length the status of women in Islam: on polygamy, Iqbal stated that Islam only *allowed* more than one wife; it is not mandatory by any means. The Islamic ideal, he reasoned, was a monogamous marriage. The government of a Muslim state can cancel an optional law, especially if it is likely to adversely affect the social fabric of society.

On property rights, Iqbal stated that under the Islamic law, every woman – married, divorced, widowed or unmarried – can manage or administer her own property and business in order to protect or promote her own interest. She can have recourse to the courts for litigation. According to some jurists, a woman can be elected as the head of state. Let it be noted, at this time (1932) in England, women were legally categorized as handicapped like minors (or even mentally incompetent). They could not

supervise their property, nor could they run any business, nor could they engage in litigation to seek legal redress, because in the eyes of the law their personal capacity was no better than that of non-adults or the mentally retarded.

Iqbal explained that in Islamic law, a husband was under the obligation to pay her dowry, and maintenance allowance; and in order to protect her rights, the wife can have control over the husband's total property. On divorce, Iqbal stated, "As a Muslim has the right to divorce his wife, his wife has the right to have her marriage annulled. Also, she can be granted the "right to divorce by husband or such right could be delegated to her brother, father, or a third person, who could exercise her right to divorce on her behalf."

The Third Round Table conference ended on December 24, 1932, but Iqbal remained in London until December 30, and then left for France and Spain.

### **Iqbal in Paris: Visit with Massignon and Bergson**

Central to Iqbal's visit in Paris were these two personalities. His visit with Massignon renewed his admiration for the French orientalist's proficient scholarship in Sufism. Massignon had made a significant contribution to the understanding of Mansur Hallaj, a 9<sup>th</sup> Century Sufi. In 1914, he had edited and published Hallaj's *Kitab al-Tawasin*. Eight years later, he published his monumental treatise on Hallaj – *La Passion d'al-Hosayn ibn Mansour al Hallaj* (1922). Iqbal was introduced to Massignon by his phenomenal study. Iqbal, in his letter on February 18, 1932 to Massignon, asked to see him in Paris. This visit took place on November 1, 1932. The centerpiece of their conversation was Hallaj. Accompanied by Saiyad Amjad Ali, and Sardar Umara Singh, Iqbal exchanged philosophical ideas with Massignon in his book-filled study. Massignon recorded his impressions of this visit: "Several centuries before Iqbal some Muslim thinkers in India had reacted against Ibn al-Arabi's doctrine of pantheistic monism. This view of the Sufis encompassing

the annihilation unto Him is structured on the Hindu philosophy; however, the exponents of *Wahdat al-Shahud* (Unitarian monism) started with Ali Hamdani and extended to Sarhindi and Shah Waliy Allah of Delhi. “Iqbal confessed to me in Paris that he did not adhere to the philosophy of *Wahdat al-Wujud* (pantheistic monism), but that of *Wahdat al-Shahud*.”

Massignon, however, had succeeded in demonstrating that in the theology of Hallaj the pure transcendence of God is maintained at the same time as His presence by His grace in the heart of the believer – when it has been purified by observance of spiritual discipline and rites. Man is created in order that the love of God may be apparent in the world. He is an image of God Himself, and God has chosen him from eternity to eternity by looking at him in love. In one word it may be stated that Massignon had changed Iqbal’s attitude toward Hallaj.

Iqbal’s interest in Bergson was related to the concept of time, which was very similar to Iqbal’s views, which he had developed during his student days in Cambridge and had argued for them rather forcefully in his thesis. Subsequently, he destroyed this thesis after he received critical evaluation of it from his mentor, Professor McTaggart. Iqbal visited Bergson in Paris probably in the first week of January 1933. Weak and old and confined to a wheelchair, Bergson had stopped receiving visitors at his residence, but he made an exception in Iqbal’s case, and chatted with him for nearly two hours. They discussed Bergson’s thesis that reality in its fundamental nature is a creative evolution. To Bergson the flow of life is continuously moving forward, growing and developing; it is this ever-changing continuously developing aspect of life, which Bergson called “duration.” Everything in the universe manifested the durational aspect of life in principle.



In their dialogue, Iqbal cited the Prophet Muhammad's Tradition saying: "Do not abuse time; God says, I am time." Bergson was pleasantly surprised and repeatedly asked Iqbal if that was an authentic tradition. Sardar Umrao Singh was the interpreter of their dialogue, and he had arranged Iqbal's visit with Bergson. He took notes of their conversation, but he had inscribed their words so hurriedly that they could not be transcribed lucidly. Unfortunately the record of this dialogue remained incomplete.

Subsequently Iqbal mentioned his visit with Bergson in his letter to several personalities, among them, he once wrote to Sir William Rothstein in 1933:

I met Bergson in Paris, and we had very interesting conversation on philosophical issues. Bergson stated that Berkley's philosophy can be summed up: that in intellect matter is completely revealed, but not in mind. This is a style of Berkley to present his thoughts. Our conversation lasted for two hours. Bergson is now quite old and sick. He has stopped socializing with people; but he was kind enough to spare some time for me. Unfortunately, the friend who was with us recorded the conversation, but afterwards could not read his own handwriting.<sup>22</sup>

In his letter of March 17, 1933 Iqbal described his visit with Bergson to Lord Lothian: "I met Bergson in Paris, and discussed with him for two hours issues of modern philosophy and culture. For some time we exchanged ideas about Berkley, whose philosophy has elicited some very interesting observations from the French philosophers." Again in his letter of July 29, 1933 Iqbal wrote to Professor Edward Thompson: "...In my lecture on 'is Religion Possible' I have tried to explain in the language of modern psychology what our mysticism is. Professor Bergson whom I met after he had read this lecture admitted before me that his own philosophy was moving in that direction."<sup>23</sup>

### **Iqbal in Spain**

Spain followed France on Iqbal's itinerary. He arrived in Madrid on January 5 or 6, 1933, and stayed in Spain until January 26, 1933. He spent altogether three weeks in Spain. Accompanied by a slim and trim young girl, who functioned as a secretary and interpreter for Iqbal, he visited Spain. The Spanish press described her as his daughter. In a letter of May 29, 1933 to Atiya Faizy Iqbal wrote: "In Spain my private secretary, who was an English girl, all of a sudden changed her behavior. Instead of acting as a private secretary, she began to serve me as a devotee. I asked her the reason for this sudden change in her behavior. She explained to me that she had an epiphany about my divine personality. Now it is not possible for me to explain my impression in a positive manner, but I can say negatively that I am not a fool."<sup>24</sup>

When and where was this English girl engaged by Iqbal as his personal secretary? Well, some well-meaning writers have turned this event into a juicy fictional story. Chaudhary Khakan Hussain stated:

One day Iqbal told an exceptional story about his travel in Spain, which is probably not known to any individual. Iqbal said that during his stay in London he visited with Nawab of Bhopal at his residence. In conversation the Nawab said: 'Iqbal, why don't you visit Spain?' Iqbal said: 'If I were the Nawab of Bhopal, I certainly would have done so.' The next day Iqbal received a check from the Nawab in the amount of Rs. 6,000.00. 'I understood that the money was sent for my travels to Spain. The next day I advertised in a newspaper the need for a secretary, and finally a suitable young lady was selected, and I gave her the details of my itinerary, and instructed her during the travels she would not attempt to engage in a conversation with me. I gave her the full amount of the check, and we started the journey. She proved to be exceptionally competent. I had no inconvenience in my travels as she arranged appropriate accommodations at all places of stay.' Another remarkable quality of this girl might be mentioned. After knowing Allama Iqbal's habits and

temperament, she completely changed her behavior. Instead of acting as a secretary she started to serve him as a devotee. When Allama Iqbal asked her the reason for this sudden change in her conduct she answered: 'you look like a divine personality.'<sup>25</sup>

About the Khakan Hussain testimony a question may be asked: what special relationship did Iqbal have with Hussain that Iqbal narrated this episode only to him and no other person? Iqbal's letters clearly reflected his determination to visit Spain, while he was still in Lahore. So, why would he be inclined to visit Spain just because the Nawab of Bhopal encouraged him to do so with a check of gift for Rs. 6,000. For his travels he hardly needed a lady secretary. In any case, it is difficult to determine if this English girl became his fellow traveler in London or perhaps he found her in Paris or Madrid. I believe that this English girl belonged to the British Intelligence Service and joined Iqbal in London on this odyssey. Saiyad Amjad Ali, who had traveled with Iqbal from London to Paris, never mentioned her existence. It is entirely possible that she might have met Iqbal in Madrid. Since Iqbal did not know the Spanish language she offered to help him as an interpreter. In those days an international tourist in Europe was very likely to run into all kinds of people; and indeed Iqbal was just a tourist.

Iqbal described an interesting episode to his friends: when he took the train from Paris to London the compartment that Iqbal occupied two of his fellow travelers were professional card shufflers, who could play a card game to win money handsomely. Very soon they won twenty pounds from one or two simple minded travelers, who were enticed to play the card games. Iqbal continued to observe minutely their tricks of the trade. When he was invited to play cards with them, Iqbal readily accepted their invitation. By the time the train reached London Iqbal had won twenty pounds of their money. At the London station

the card shufflers started to sweet talk with Iqbal to “win” back their lost twenty pounds, and vociferously complimented the large heartedness of the Indians. Iqbal told them that they had continuously cheated in the card games, and that he would report their conduct to the police. Discouraged and frightened these “professional cheaters” vanished in the crowd of the train station.<sup>26</sup>

In Madrid, Professor Asin Palacios, who had earned a wide reputation for his *La Escatologia Muslimana en la Divina Comedia* demonstrated the impact of Islamic legends on Dante, had invited Iqbal to deliver a lecture at the university. In Madrid Iqbal was received by Spain’s Minister of Education, and then he proceeded to the South to visit al-Andalusia, intimately associated with Muslim rule. On his return he met in Madrid professors and intellectuals, who had specialized in Islamic culture and Arab studies. Also he met Arab scholar Mahmud Khadairy, who was researching in Spain to write a dissertation on Islamic jurisprudence, and on Nasir-ud-Din Tusi. Iqbal suggested to him to pay special attention to Tusi’s mathematics, and the studies of his contemporaries.

As it was arranged on January 24, 1933 Iqbal delivered a lecture on the university campus, where Professor Palacios presided over the function. Appropriately Iqbal highlighted the role of medieval Spain in the intellectual development of the Muslim world. Spanish traditions had more than intellectual interest for him. Iqbal was emotionally drawn to the culture and history of Spain. The fact that Spain had once been Muslim led Iqbal to call it “the treasure-house of Muslims’ blood, and the sacred land of Islam.” Like a pilgrim he visited the Muslim monuments in Cordoba, Granada, Seville and Toledo. Also, he visited the ruins of al-Zahira, a huge secretariat that Umayyad Caliph Abd al-Rahman had built and named after his favorite wife.

The manner in which some writers had embellished Iqbal’s visit with Massignon was put to service this time

about Iqbal's offering *salat* (prayers) at the legendary mosque of Cordova. Truly Iqbal was inspired to new heights of emotional ecstasy when he visited this exquisitely beautiful mosque. Explaining this experience on the backside of its picture card, which he sent to his son, Javid, Iqbal inscribed: "I am grateful to God that he let me live long enough to see this mosque, which is better than all the mosques in the world. May God enlighten your eyes with splendor of this mosque." Iqbal's prayerful wish came true 42 years later, when his son visited Spain in 1975. "I not only saw the mosque, but also touched with reverence the site, where Iqbal stood to pray as mark of thanksgiving," Javid stated.

The mosque had been converted to a church for centuries; Iqbal was probably the first Muslim who offered there Islamic prayers in January 1933. Dwelling upon this event Abdul Majeed Salik stated: "Iqbal was so dazzled by the grandeur and elegance of the mosque that he longed to pray within its precincts. He asked the guide if he could do it, who responded that he would seek the authorization from the priest. The guide left to see the priest, and Iqbal took advantage of his absence. He kneeled down and offered the brief *salat* of thanks-giving, and completed before the guide returned."<sup>27</sup> Saiyad Amjad Ali has asserted that Iqbal had written him a letter saying that before he offered *salat*, he chanted *Adhan*, (a call for prayers). Following him Faqir Saiyad Wahid-ud-Din repeated the same story. However, Sir Malcolm Darling has given a fairly detailed description of the event, claiming that Iqbal had described it to him:

Iqbal recounted an interesting story of his visit to Spain. He visited the magnificent mosque of Cordova, which has been converted into a church. I asked the guide for his permission to pray in there. The guide asserted that the priests of the church would be displeased. Ignoring his statement Iqbal spread out his prayer mat. To oppose this

performance the priests appeared on the scene. Iqbal advised the guide to tell them that at one time in Medina a delegation of Christians visited the Prophet Muhammad to press upon him their demands. The Prophet Muhammad received them in his mosque. When the time for prayers approached the Christians expressed an anxiety if they would be able to pray according to their rites. Very happily the Prophet allowed the Christians to perform their Christian service. Iqbal then asked a rhetorical question: "If our Prophet had allowed the Christians to pray in his mosque, why couldn't a Muslim pray in a church which once was a mosque." The priests were speechless, and Iqbal started to offer his *salat*. When Iqbal was finished he looked around to see all the priests of the church had congregated around him to observe this scene. One of them even took a picture. Finally Iqbal stated that "I am the first Muslim in 400 years, who offered his *salat* there for the first time."<sup>28</sup>

Another embellished article containing fictional elements appeared in the daily *Jang* of April 21, 1974 in which the author Mahmud-ur-Rahman stated: "while Iqbal was in London he had made up his mind to see the Cordova mosque, and to offer *salat* within its precinct; but mosque had been converted into a church and the *adhan* (call to prayer), and *salat* (Islamic prayer) were not allowed. He contacted his former Professor T.W. Arnold for help. (Please keep in mind that Arnold had died two years earlier). Arnold's efforts succeeded in getting Iqbal the needed permission with a condition that when he entered the mosque the door would be locked." After this fanciful recounting Mahmud-ur-Rahman added: "According to this understanding when Iqbal entered the mosque he loudly chanted the *adhan*. Iqbal stated that I cannot forget the emotion and spiritual satisfaction which came upon me. For the first in many centuries the *adhan* echoed through the hall and pillars of the mosque. After the *adhan* Iqbal

unrolled his small prayer mat, and offered his *salat*. While in prayer he was so deeply moved that he lost his consciousness. In this state he had a dream for a fleeting moment: a dignified old man appeared in front of him, and stated that Iqbal you have not studied my *Mathnavi* (long poem) very carefully. Please do study it thoroughly, and spread my message to others. When Iqbal regained his consciousness completely he realized that he acquired an exceptional joy and satisfaction of his heart.”<sup>29</sup>

The stories are filled with facts and fiction. The blending of the two elements can be determined in the light of Iqbal’s personal statements. When Iqbal landed at the Lahore Railway Station his friends received him warmly and accompanied him to his house. That evening the centerpiece of conversation was Spain particularly the mosque of Cordova. This is exactly what Iqbal stated: “In my view no mosque more beautiful than the mosque of Cordova was ever built anywhere. After their conquest of Cordova the Christians not only converted this mosque into a church, but also created within it several chapels. Now proposals are underway to remove these chapels to restore the mosque to its original shape. I prayed in this mosque with the permission of the Director of Archaeology of Spain, while he was present there. Christians established their control over the mosque 450 years ago. In this Islamic place of worship mine was the first prayer.”<sup>30</sup>

In the course of a conversation with Abdur Rashid Tariq, Iqbal described at some length the condition of Muslim movements, and then added: “The mosque of Cordova which had remained silent without the echoes of *adhan*, I prayed there with the permission of the Spanish authorities. On my knees I prayed to God in tears – Ya Allah, Ya Allah! This land where Muslims ruled for hundreds of years, established universities, and transmitted the arts and sciences to Europe, and their reputation for power was acknowledged by the powerful states of Europe,

today a Muslim like me has to ask permission of others to pray in a mosque which was built by the Muslims.”<sup>31</sup>

Obviously, Iqbal prayed in the mosque, with the permission of the Spanish government, and he was accompanied by the Director of Archaeology. He carried his prayer mat with him. A photographer was also there, who took Iqbal's pictures, while he prayed, and then walked through the enormous hall of the mosque. These pictures were published in the newspapers, and became very popular. Probably these arrangements were made through the resources of Professor Miguel Asin Palacios, who had arranged Iqbal's appointment with the Minister of Education. The government of Spain gave permission to Iqbal to visit and pray to promote its “liberal image.”

Anyone who has seen the mosque of Cordova in recent years would have noticed that several small chapels which were constructed on the spaces between mosque's numerous columns still stand, and have not been removed. Considered a wonder of the medieval Islamic world by both Muslims and European Christians, the construction of the mosque was started by Abdur Rahman I during 784-786, and took its final shape under Abdur Rahman II (833-85), and al-Hakam II (961-976), and Wazir al-Mansur from 987. The basic formula of arcades with alternating vousoirs was maintained in each of the additions. The resulting vistas of columns and arcades that stretch into the recesses of the prayer hall create a mysterious space that is often called a garden of stone. The most lavish interior ornament is concentrated in the *maqsura*, the prayer space reserved for the ruler, which was commissioned by the Caliph al-Hakam II. The *maqsura* is visually separated from the rest of the prayer hall by screens formed of elaborate intersecting polylobed arcades. These screens emphasize the special status of the space, which is composed of three domed bays in the front of the *Mihrab*.



After conquering Cordova in 1236 Ferdinand III King of Castile converted the Great Mosque as the city's Cathedral, and it remained popular church for the next 300 years. In the sixteenth century the Bishop of the Cathedral proposed to demolish the mosque in order to build a new cathedral. The strong opposition of the people of Cordova led to a unique decision, which was endorsed by Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, "to insert an entire gothic chapel into the very heart of the former Great Mosque."<sup>32</sup>

When I visited the site in 1974 I observed that outside of the mosque on its lonely minaret (which was once used for chanting the *adhan*) now bells are installed, which are pulled according to the Catholic rites several times a day. Once the mosque was brightly lit with tons of candles, and sparkled twenty-four hours a day, now looked silent and dark, and the heavy organ music filled a visitor's heart with fright, and it felt as if a haunted house would envelope your body and soul. The Great Mosque's grandeur and captivating beauty now presented the scene of a dark and dingy structure – and the contrast can never be removed from the memory. From Spain this author traveled to Madina to pray in the Prophet's Mosque. I found it brightly lit, open and filled with the faithfuls. The scene of the dark filled mosque of Cordova was impossible to remove from the screen of my memory.

Impressed by the Muslim architecture of al-Andalus Iqbal expressed his views to several individuals: in a letter of March 27, 1933 he wrote to Shaikh Muhammad Ikram: "I thoroughly enjoyed my tour of al-Andalus. In addition to some other poems I wrote about the Mosque of Cordova, which will be published. Al-Hamra did not leave much of an impression on me, but seeing the mosque uplifted me to such emotional heights which I had never experienced before."<sup>33</sup>

Professor Hameed Ahmad Khan has described Iqbal's reactions in more detail: "the monuments of the al-Andalus

reflected a particular status of Islamic architecture. As the national élan waned and national life began to lose vitality the buildings began to reflect decadence. These buildings reflected a certain difference: al-Zahira palace was built by 'giants' of men, and the Mosque of Cordova was structured by civilized giants, and al-Hamra was the creation of ordinary mortals...I walked through the corridors of al-Hamra, and everywhere the eye could see on the arches it was inscribed *Huwa al-Ghalib*. I said to myself: here God dominates everything, if man were to do it, then it amounts to something."<sup>34</sup>

Iqbal completed his visit to al-Andalus, and then departed for Paris on January 26, 1933. Nearly two weeks later Iqbal traveled by ship to Venice, and from there to Bombay, arriving in India on February 22, 1933. At Bombay he gave an interview to a correspondent of *The Khilafat* about Spain: "Words are inadequate to express my impression; it is enough for you to understand that if Palestine is a promised land for the Jews, Spain is likewise a promised land for the Arabs. What a beautiful country and so picturesque..."<sup>35</sup> Then at another occasion, he stated: "I saw Cordova, Granada, Toledo, and Seville. I saw the monuments of the Mosque of Cordova, Granada's Palace of al-Hamra, and the ruins of al-Zahira, which Abdur Rahman I had built on top of a mountain for his favorite wife. This site is being excavated. In the twelfth century a Muslim inventor demonstrated the flight of an aircraft at this spot."<sup>36</sup>

Finally Iqbal arrived at the Lahore Railway Station, where a large number of his admirers had congregated to welcome him. Khawja Feroze-ud-Din, a local attorney, read a statement of appreciation for his services to the Muslims, especially at the London Round Table Conferences, and urged him to continue his leadership because Muslims' political condition badly needed it. Iqbal said in response: "You have known my past life, which was

devoted to uplifting the Muslims from their present backward position to elevating them to higher levels, and to eliminating the weaknesses, which have crept in our culture. I did my best to protest the interests of and rights of Muslims at the Round Table Conference, and I said not a single word which could hurt the Muslims' rights...For God's sake, unite, and get rid of mutual political or denominational differences."<sup>37</sup>

Accompanied by his friends and admirers Iqbal went to his house, but he could not stop talking about the Great Mosque of Cordova, which had occupied a very soft corner in his heart.

After his arrival in Lahore the next seven months for Iqbal were very crowded with activities and statements. In this period, until he visited Afghanistan in October 1933, central ideas of his pronouncements were related to: 1) Muslim participation in the political system of India, which were to be ushered in the aftermath of the London Round Table Conferences; 2) Muslim politicization in the Xinkiang Province of China, known to Muslims as Chinese Turkistan, and 3) the politics of Kashmir.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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- <sup>3</sup> Muhammad Ahmad Khan, *Iqbal Ka Siyasi Karnama*, pp. 334, 342, 418.
- <sup>4</sup> Muhammad Ahmad Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 361.
- <sup>5</sup> Salik, *op. cit.*, pp. 166-67.
- <sup>6</sup> Shamloo, *op. cit.*, pp. 177-178.
- <sup>7</sup> Salik, *op. cit.*, pp. 168-169; Muhammad Ahmad Khan, *op. cit.*, pp. 355-356.
- <sup>8</sup> Shamloo, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-185.
- <sup>9</sup> "Hindus Sign Accord: Gandhi Gives Assent," *The New York Times*, September 25, 1932.
- <sup>10</sup> Muhammad Rafiq Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 155.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 155-157; 157-158.
- <sup>12</sup> Shamloo, *op. cit.*, pp 186-187.
- <sup>13</sup> Shamloo, *op. cit.*, pp 187-188.
- <sup>14</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-172.
- <sup>15</sup> Azim Husain, *op. cit.* pp. 319.
- <sup>16</sup> Sir Muhammad Zafarullah Khan, *Tahdith-i Ni`amat* (Lahore, 1971), p. 314.
- <sup>17</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, p. 162.
- <sup>18</sup> Rahim Bukhsh Shahim, "Third Round Table Conference by Iqbal," *Iqbal Review*, (July-October, 1977) pp. 87-93.
- <sup>19</sup> B. R. Ambadkar, *Pakistan or Partition of India* (Bombay: 1945), p. 329.
- <sup>20</sup> Dar, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-76.
- <sup>21</sup> Jinnah, *Iqbal's Letters to Jinnah* (Lahore: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1943), p. 21.
- <sup>22</sup> Dar, *op. cit.*, p. 103.
- <sup>23</sup> S. Hasan Ahmad, *Iqbal: His political Ideas at a Crossroads* (Aligarh: Printwell Publications, 1979), p. 75.
- <sup>24</sup> Dar, *op. cit.*, pp. 10,11, 78.
- <sup>25</sup> Saber Kalwariy, *Yad-i Iqbal*, pp. 18-19.
- <sup>26</sup> Abul al-Layaith Siddiqi, *Malfuzat-i Iqbal*, pp. 269-270.
- <sup>27</sup> Salik, *op. cit.*, p. 182.
- <sup>28</sup> "London Main Yurn-i Iqbal," *Nawa-i Waqt*, May 10, 1959.

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- <sup>29</sup> Rahim Bakhsh Shahim, *Awraq-i Gum-Gasha*, pp. 332-334; *Iqbal Review*, (July-October, 1977), pp. 110-111.
- <sup>30</sup> Siddiqi, *op. cit.*, p. 274.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 274.
- <sup>32</sup> Dodds, Jerrilynn, "The Great Mosque of Cordova," *Al-Andalus: The Art of Islamic Spain* (New York: Abrams Publisher, 1992), pp. 11-26.
- <sup>33</sup> Shaikh Ata Allah, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 321, 322.
- <sup>34</sup> Siddiqi, *Malfuzat-i Iqbal*, pp. 157-158.
- <sup>35</sup> Muhammad Abdullah Qureshi, Ed., *Aina-i Iqbal*, p. 15.
- <sup>36</sup> "Harf-i Iqbal," *Iqbal Review* (July-October, 1977), p. 123.
- <sup>37</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 166-167.

## Chapter X

### PROBLEMS OF JOINT ELECTORATES, XINKIANG, PALESTINE AND KASHMIR

To be effective and representative in the forthcoming political order Iqbal repeatedly emphasized unity among Muslims. A day after his arrival in Lahore, he issued a press statement in which he discussed the London Round Table Conferences, and highlighted the importance of solidarity among Muslims: “Muslims are under the obligation to organize themselves for the forthcoming elections, and eliminate all the factions which spawn divisive forces among them. The proposed constitution clearly accepts the principle of protection for the minorities.” A week later a big reception was organized in his honor by the Islamic Research Institute on March 1, 1933. Iqbal thanked his admirers and supporters, and now added another thought of building bridges between the Muslims, and western civilization. He emphasized his own role in this endeavor: “I have spent thirty-five years of my life in contemplating the process of integrating Islam with contemporary culture and civilization. This was the principal objective of my life during this span of time...In my view this issue can also be presented in this manner: how can modern civilization be brought closer to Islam.”<sup>1</sup>

Again Iqbal reiterated these themes of Islamic solidarity, Islamic renaissance including the issue of

*Ijtihad* the Khilafat and the Kamalist revolution in Turkey in Delhi on March 18, 1933, when he was invited to preside over the lectures of Rauf Bey as part of the extension lectures arranged at the campus of Jamia Millia. Rauf Bey was a Turkish politician, who was highly regarded as a grand leader in the Islamic world. He had traveled from Paris for the lectures. Escorted by Dr. Ansari, Iqbal arrived in the auditorium, and presided over Rauf Bey's lecture, and then made extensive concluding comments. Iqbal referred to his recently composed poem, *The Mosque of Cordova*, which he had published, and recited the last four verses of this emotive poem, highlighting Muslim awakening, and then speculated on the potential impact of this awakening in the world.

Two days later Iqbal presided over the second portion of Rauf Bey's lecture on March 20, 1933, but did not make any of his own comments, but delivered a satire on the British diplomacy, which evoked a huge laughter from the audience. He said: "someone saw Satan stretched out on a reclining chair with a foot-long cigar in his mouth, as if he had no concerns with the affairs of the world. The observer said to him: 'My good fellow! Without you, who is going to disrupt the political developments of the world?' Promptly Satan answered: 'Don't you worry, I have delegated this enterprise to the wise men of the British Cabinet.'" <sup>2</sup>

At this happy note the lecture ended.

In a more serious vein Iqbal addressed the white paper of the British government, which spelled out the new constitutional provisions. Iqbal's criticism was issue specific; which he made public on March 20, 1933. He said: "Muslims would be greatly disappointed by the proposed composition of the Federal Legislature," because

1. In the Lower House the Muslims have been guaranteed only 82 seats out of the proposed total of

375.” In other words Muslims’ representation has been reduced to “21.8 percent of the total House.”

2. Indian states which on a population basis are entitled only to 25 percent seats in the Federal Legislature have been given 33.3 percent, which means a weightage of 8 percent.” “Such weightage,” Iqbal argued, “should in fairness have gone to Muslims as an important minority community, and not to states which are in no sense a minority, and whose interests are in no danger of encroachment.”

3. The allocation of 9 seats to women as a special interest” is another undesirable feature of the Federal Legislature. The electorate for these seats will be predominantly non-Muslim, and it will be impossible for Muslim women to be elected.”

4. In the Upper House the system of a single transferable vote to be exercised by members of provincial legislatures introduced the principle of Joint Electorate, and would fail to secure a due proportion of seats for Muslims.”

5. Ministers in the provinces will be as little responsible to the Legislature and as much responsible to governor as they are now. The special responsibilities of the governor cover a very wide field.”

6. The scheme for Balochistan will never satisfy the Baluchis or the Muslims in general.”

7. There is no “adequate safeguard” for the personal law of the Muslims.<sup>3</sup>

Iqbal returned to Lahore on March 21, but two weeks later he went to Delhi again on April 5, 1933, because the British Viceroy invited him to attend a meeting of the Anglo-Indians’ Committee, which had been structured in London during the Third Round Table Conference, and Iqbal was made a member of its Educational Sub-Committee. At Jamia Millia Iqbal delivered another lecture on his travel from London to Granada. A well-known



religious scholar, Mawlana Aslam Jairajpuri welcomed Iqbal, and publicly stated that Iqbal was an object of love for all Muslims, and especially his own. However, Iqbal hurried back to Lahore to confront political issues, which Sir Fazl-i Husain's policies had raised in the politics of the Punjab. While negotiations between Muslims and the National Congress for the Hindu-Muslim settlement over the Muslims' representation in the legislatures had remained inconclusive, yet Sir Fazl-i Husain had succeeded in working out an alternative plan for the Punjab with the cooperation of Sir Jogendra Singh and Raja Narendra Nath. This plan, according to Sir Fazl-i Husain was designed "to remove the disparity between the percentage of the population, and the percentage of the electorate by adjusting the franchise of the three communities [Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs]." With this adjustment Sir Fazl-i Husain was prepared "to accept joint electorate," provided:

- a. The franchise reflects the population of the three communities in the voting register;
- b. The reservation of seats as prescribed in the Award is confined to general constituencies and not to special constituencies which have joint electorates;
- c. There would be no time limit for the reservation of seats as the hands of the future legislatures cannot be tied;
- d. That arrangements will be made whereby areas having the largest population of any community will return most of the members of that community under the reserved seats system.<sup>4</sup>

While Sir Jogendra Singh and Raja Narendra Nath accepted "the conditions prescribed" in the plan, they failed to persuade other prominent Hindu and Sikh leaders to accept it. When Iqbal and his associates learned that Sir Fazl-i Husain had agreed to accept the joint electorates they strongly opposed it. Iqbal held a joint meeting of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, and the Punjab Muslim Conference, and "condemned the Punjab formula." At this

stage a rumor also circulated that Iqbal was trying to raise Rs. 75,000 to purchase the English newspaper *Eastern Times* in order to launch a political campaign against Sir Fazl-i Husain's plan of joint electorates. Sir Shahab-ud-Din in a personal letter of May 4, 1933 to Sir Fazl-i Husain discussed this issue, and shed a great deal of light on Iqbal's popularity as a leader:

I understand that Dr. Iqbal is conducting negotiations with Maulavi Firoz-ud-Din, the owner of *Eastern Times*, for the purchase of the newspaper...A few days ago Sardar Habib Allah came to see me, and proposed that if somehow we could raise Rs. 25,000 to invest in the purchase of this newspaper we can gain control over it instead of letting it fall in Iqbal's lap...Yesterday a retired Muslim Sub-Judge came to see me. In the course of our conversation he told me that only Dr. Iqbal was the popular and reliable leader of the Muslim nation. No one will be prepared to hear anything negative about him. Also, he said that with the exception of Dr. Iqbal all so-called Muslim leaders are selfish, and they have no influence over the Muslims of the Punjab. If Dr. Iqbal is against the joint electorates, then no one is going to accept it."<sup>5</sup>

Commenting on these developments Azim Husain stated in his father's biography that the Agha Khan and other Muslim leaders received telegrams from Dr. Iqbal subjecting Fazl-i Husain's Punjab Formula to his scathing criticism. In consequence Sir Agha Khan criticized Sir Fazl-i Husain's formula. To clarify his position Sir Fazl-i Husain wrote a letter of June 5, 1933 to the Agha Khan:

...You may well ask: if the thing is so simple and so clear, why should there be this anxiety in certain quarters in Lahore, and why has Iqbal been sending telegrams to London and to the Press? Well, this is because politics in India are run in imitation of politics in England, and political parties without intrigue of some sort or other cannot exist. In view of the forthcoming elections, few people in Lahore have got hold of the idea that under the Reforms, men with large landed interests, or men high up in professions, or men of families of

note, have done themselves very well, and that the city people in some cases feel that they have been left out. They want to form a group of urban people, so as to obtain a majority in the new Council. They consider that in picking up a man like Zafrullah Khan, so to speak, from the unknown I have not acted rightly, and their protest is taking this form. I have no doubt whatsoever that these people are misguided and that before very long they will discover that they are not serving the interests that they have at heart, and towards Iqbal they are acting like foolish friends who are bound to prove worse than wise enemies.<sup>6</sup>

Sir Fazl-i Husain also wrote a letter to Iqbal, thinking that "Muslims who opposed the formula did not understand it." Then he asserted that in consequence "Dr. Iqbal and his supporters agreed to support the proposals." This assertion is grossly overstated, because Iqbal never abandoned his opposition to the joint electorates. To clarify his position Iqbal issued a press statement on July 14, 1933:

I should like to express my general opinion that the formula can be no solution of the Punjab problem...It is likely to become a source of a series of unforeseen disputes among the communities...The scheme will be open to serious objection from the point of view of the urban as well as the rural population. When worked out the scheme is calculated to deprive even those rural sections of the proper representation, who are in the majority in their constituencies.

After having considered all its various aspects and all the possible disputes which it may create, I am firmly of the opinion that the scheme is harmful to the best interest of every community, and not nearly as good from the point of view of any community as the Premier's Award.<sup>7</sup>

Iqbal did not ever appreciate Sir Fazl-i Husain's political policies. Having emerged at an early stage, these political differences continued to widen the gulf between them. Another issue of Muslims' extra-territorial loyalty surfaced, when Iqbal and Sir Fazl-i Husain stood on the opposite side of the barricade. In September 1933, Sir Fazl-i Husain spoke in the Council of State on the Hedjaz Pilgrims' Bill

of 1933, while there raged a debate about “the revival of Pan-Islamism to enforce Muslim demands. He emphatically stated: “...Pan-Islamism of which young Muslim Indians dreamt of years ago was never more than a myth, and today there are not even the ashes left of that myth. Therefore, these honorable members who imagine that there is a bogey of Pan-Islamism of which Europe is frightened I am afraid are suffering from some hallucination or delusion. I assure the House that if a few members are still dreaming of Pan-Islamism I say that they had better make up their mind to stand on their own legs in India as Indians.”<sup>8</sup>

Also, Sir Fazl-i Husain endeavored to encourage the government “to adopt policies which would prevent the development of such movements,” which would lead the Muslims to foster extra-territorial solidarity with non-Indian Muslims.

Iqbal understood the political orientation of Sir Fazl-i Husain. In order to “contradict” him, he actually issued a statement which ostensibly supported Sir Fazl-i Husain’s views:

Sir Fazl-i Hussain is perfectly correct when he says that political Pan-Islamism never existed. It has existed, if at all, only in the imagination of those who invented the phrase or possibly as a diplomatic weapon in the hands of Sultan Abdul Hameed Khan of Turkey. Even Jamal-ud-Din Afghani, whose name is closely associated with what is called Pan-Islamic movement, never dreamed of a unification of Muslims into one political State.

It is significant that in no Islamic language – Arabic, Persian or Turkish does there exist a phrase corresponding to Pan-Islamism.

It is, however, true that Islam as a society or as a practical scheme for the combination not only of races and nations but also of all religions does not recognize the barriers of race and nationality or geographical frontiers. In the sense of this humanitarian ideal Pan-Islamism – if one prefers to use this

unnecessarily long phrase to the simple expression of “Islam” – does and will always exist.

Sir Fazl-i Husain’s advice to Indian Muslims to stand on their own legs as an Indian nation is perfectly sound and I have no doubt that Muslims fully understand and appreciate it. Indian Muslims, who happen to be a more numerous people than the Muslims of all other Asiatic countries put together, ought to consider themselves the greatest asset of Islam and should sink in their own deeper self like other Muslim nations of Asia, in order to gather up their scattered sources of life and, according to Sir Fazl’s advice, stand on their own legs.<sup>9</sup>

A week later Iqbal issued on September 28, 1933 another statement to explain the meaning of Pan-Islamism,” because he felt many people still nursed a degree of misunderstanding about this politically-loaded term. Iqbal highlighted the fact that the term “Pan-Islamism” was invented by the French journalists, and it was exploited to connote the existence of an international conspiracy of Muslim states against the European states. In reality it camouflaged the European states’ machinations to dismember the Islamic states, and exploit their natural resources. Iqbal stated:

When Sir Fazl-i Husain states that if ever any Pan-Islamism existed ‘today there are not even the ashes left of that myth,’ [he was correct in making that statement]. During the last two weeks Indian newspapers have attached a variety of meanings to this term. Therefore it is imperative to point out that Islamic universal state is entirely different from Pan-Islamism.

Islam awaits the emergence of universal sultanate, which would transcend ethnic differentiations, and would have no room for personal totalitarian monarchy and capitalism. The experience of the world would lead to this sultanate.

Non-Muslims probably view it as a Muslims’ mirage, but it is an article of faith for Muslims. A local Hindu newspaper gave the name of Pan-Islamism to the Muslims’

urge of Islamic solidarity. This is a misplaced use of this term. But Muslims are not reluctant to declare that they look upon themselves as a separate nation like the other Indian nations, and indeed are determined to exist as a nation. They want to preserve themselves as a separate cultured entity, and as a minority want to protect their rights.

Even nationalist Muslims have never stated that Muslims should abandon their separate cultural identity, and leave their fate to the mercy and compassion of the powerful force, which would eliminate their separate identity. If a Muslim leader thinks contrary to this view, then he has not assessed the true feelings of his own nation.<sup>10</sup>

### **Interest in Chinese Turkistan (Xinkiang)**

Iqbal was very sensitive to political and cultural developments of Muslims all over the world. In 1933 political upheavals in Chinese Turkistan began to appear in the Indian press. Now Iqbal's attention was focused on this Chinese province of Sinkiang (now called Xinjiang), which China had conquered in the early eighteenth century, while the area was brought fully under the Chinese control in 1758. Over the next half century the region was shaken by four major and numerous minor Muslim revolts culminating in the mid-nineteenth century rebellion of Muhammad Ya`qub Beg, who proclaimed himself Khan of Eastern Turkistan in 1867. He won some degree of British and Turkish recognition of his position as an independent ruler during 1873-4. By 1879 Ya`qub Beg was dead and his emirate was absorbed into the Chinese Empire. Seven years later in 1884 the three regions of Uighuristan (also called Turkistan) – named after the major Muslim nationality of Uighurs – were declared for the first time, a province of China with the name Sinkiang (meaning new territory). The communist government of China changed the name to Xinjiang. Today Xinjiang is linked to Pakistan through the Karakoram Highway from Islamabad to Khunjab, the terminal point of the highway.

Sinkiang was in chaos between the fall of the Ching Dynasty in 1911 and the emergence of the Peoples' Republic of China in 1949. Obviously Iqbal dealt with the affairs of Sinkiang during the early 1930s, when Ma Chung-Ying a young Chinese Tungan Muslim military officer from Kansu earned some international reputation in the endless conflicts between the warlords in Sinkiang. Ma was born c.1910 in Ho-Chou in southeastern Kansu, a province adjoining Sinkiang. Almost nothing is known of his father, but Ma Chung-Ying shared the same paternal grandfather as the Kansu warlords – Ma Pu-Ch`ing, and Ma Pu-Fang, and was thus a scion of the powerful Ma family of Pich-ts`ang , a small village about 30 km southwest of Ho-Chou. He was distantly related to the Kansu warlords – Ma Hung-K`uei and Ma Hung-pin. Altogether these warlords came to be known as Five Ma warlord clique.

At the age of 14, Ma Chung Ying entered the local Muslim militia. One year later the Kuomintang forces of Fen Yu-hsiang, the so-called Christian general invaded eastern Kansu. Ma Chung-Ying, who had become an officer in the forces of his uncle Ma ku-Chung, is said to have laid siege to and captured the city of Ho-Chou (where he was born). He did this entirely on his own initiative, which made him famous. He was then about seventeen years old. In the mid-1930s he was reported to be living in the Soviet Union as an “honored guest.” In January 1935 the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* of London reported that Ma had “traveled to Moscow, but he had died on arrival.” Ma was again reported to have been seen in Moscow at the beginning of 1936. Ma Chung-Ying's fate remained unknown; according to one report he was executed by Stalin's orders.<sup>11</sup>

Iqbal extensively commented on these episodes, and then drew several philosophic conclusions. However, it must be pointed out that Iqbal had not done any independent research of his own, but had relied upon the

lecture of “Mr. Petro of the Citroen Haardt Expedition, who met this ‘infant’ Muslim general,” as Iqbal revealed. This lecture was delivered to the Central Asian Society of England in 1932. Probably Iqbal attended this lecture when he was in London attending the Second London Round Table Conference.

This is how Iqbal interpreted these events:

Turkestan is a vast country divided into three parts, one of which is ruled by Russia, the other by Afghanistan and the third by China. In 1914 there was a great deal of discontent in Chinese Turkestan owing to the appointment of Chinese magistrates in that country and an attempt made by the Chinese Government to impose the Chinese language on the population which is almost wholly Muslim. But matters did not come to a head then. As far as I know the present revolution in that country began in 1930 under the leadership of a 17-year-old Muslim boy named Chong Ying.

Mr. Petro of the Citroen Haardt expedition who met this ‘infant’ Muslim general in Turkestan related his experience during a lecture to the Central Asian Society in England in 1932. During that year, Ma Chong Ying was besieging the city of Hami and the services of Mr. Petro were availed of for purposes of peace negotiations with the besieged Chinese forces. Mr. Petro who was received by the Chinese general and the Chinese Defence Consul in the city, was expecting to be questioned regarding the strength and plans of the army of besiegers. Much to his surprise, however, the first and only question put to him by the Chinese general was: ‘Is it true that Ma Chong Ying is only 20 years old?’ On being told that Ma Chong was less than that age the Chinese general turned to the Defence Consul who was in favour of surrendering the city and said, “I am 81 years old and my hair has been white for a long time. My great-grandson is older than this suckling. How do you think I can surrender this city to an infant?”

The old general acted up to his words and resolutely faced hunger and other privations until he received help from the Chinese Government. During a hard struggle Ma was badly wounded and fled to Kansu and hostilities came to an end only



to be resumed shortly afterwards. Whether Ma is leading the rebellion at its present stage I cannot say; but his career which, according to Mr. Petro, may well form the subject of a modern *Odyssey* shows that the home of Changez, Taimur and Babar has not ceased to produce military geniuses of the highest order. I do not think that the cause of this rebellion is religious fanaticism, though in a movement like this all sorts of human sentiments are liable to be exploited by leaders. The causes, I believe, are mainly economic. The world is also thinking today in terms of race an attitude of mind which I consider the greatest blot on modern civilization. I apprehend the birth of a race problem in Asia will lead to most disastrous results. The main endeavor of Islam as a religion has been to solve this very problem and if modern Asia wishes to avoid the fate of Europe there is no other remedy but to assimilate the ideals of Islam and to think not in terms of race but in terms of mankind.

My apprehension that the revolution in Chinese Turkestan may develop into a Pan-Turanian movement is borne out of the trend of thought in central Asia. Only the other day, the well-edited monthly of Afghanistan, *Kabul*, published an article from the pen of Dr. Afshaar of Iran calling upon Afghanistan, which was described by the writer as forming part of 'the Greater Iran,' to join hands with Iran in order to meet the growing menace of Turanism. In any case, the revolution, if it succeeds, is bound to produce repercussion in Afghan and Russian Turkestan particularly in the latter which is already seething with discontent owing to religious persecution and owing to serious food problems created in that country by the Russian Government's policy of turning it into a huge cotton farm. Insofar as Afghan Turkestan is concerned, the people of Asia may rely, I hope, on the far-sighted idealism of King Nadir Shah.

The success of the revolution will also mean the birth of a prosperous and strong Muslim state in 99 per cent of the population will be freed from the age-old Chinese oppression. Chinese Turkestan is an extremely fertile country, but owing to Chinese oppression and misrule, only five per cent of its land is at present under cultivation. The establishment of

another Muslim state between India and Russia will push the menace of the atheistic materialism of Bolshevism farther away from the borders of our country, even if it does not drive this menace away from central Asia as a whole.

The Government of Lord Willingdon, who has the gift of rare political vision, has taken up a wise attitude towards happenings in Chinese Turkestan. This attitude explains and justifies the government of India's policy regarding the frontiers of Kashmir state.

### **Problems of Palestine**

In expressing this sentiment of Islamic solidarity, Iqbal sent a letter of invitation in mid-October, 1933, to Mufti Amin al-Husseini of Palestine; with whom Iqbal had established personal relations when he attended the sessions of the World Islamic Congress in Jerusalem. Mufti Husseini visited India in 1933 and Iqbal helped him to raise funds for Palestinian national objectives.

The Palestinian national aspirations were very greatly thwarted by the British policies. An Anglo-French agreement of 1916, while accepting the principle of Arab independence, laid down in the correspondence with the Sharif Husain of Mecca, divided the area into zones of permanent influence by virtue of a secret agreement (known Sykes-Picot agreement of May, 1916). The British government issued another statement, the Balfour Declaration, stating that the government viewed with favor the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine, provided this did not "prejudice the civil and religious rights of other inhabitants of Palestine." Under the terms of the mandates formerly granted by the League of Nations, Britain became responsible for Iraq and Palestine, and France for Syria and Lebanon. Because of the obligations undertaken in the Balfour Declaration and repeated in the mandate, to facilitate the creation of a national home, the British ruled Palestine directly. Britain's presence in the

Middle East helped to maintain her position as a Mediterranean power and a world power.

Because of the British policy, the demographic structure of Palestine changed dramatically in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1922, Jews had formed about 11 per cent of a total population of three-quarters of a million, the rest was mainly Muslim and Christian Arabs; by 1949 the Jews formed more than 30 per cent of a population which had doubled. By the early 1940s, Jews owned perhaps 20 per cent of the cultivatable land in Palestine, and a large part of this was possessed by the Jewish National Fund, which held it as the inalienable property of the Jewish people on which no non-Jew could be employed.<sup>12</sup>

Early in its administration, the British government realized that a viable balance of interest between the Arabs and the Zionists in Palestine could not be maintained. The Zionists wanted to keep the immigration of European Jews to Palestine open so that the Jewish community would become large enough to protect its political interests by force of arms if necessary. For Arabs it was essential to prevent Jewish immigration on a scale that would endanger their own national self-determination in a unified Palestine. Caught between these two irreconcilable aspirations, the British government attempted to resolve this problem. In 1937, a plan to divide Palestine into Jewish and Arab states was put forward by the Peel Commission. This was acceptable to the Zionists in principle but the Arabs rejected it.

Alluding to the British duplicitous policies for Palestine, Iqbal sent a telegram of protest to the British viceroy on November 6, 1933 stating:

The circumstances prevailing in Palestine have spawned deep anxieties among the Muslims of India. The minister of state for colonies' statement has further accentuated the Muslims suspicions about the British policy that it's evidently designed to establish the Jewish government in Palestine at the cost of the Arabs national interest. The minister of state's

policy is clearly antagonistic toward the Palestinian Arabs. The recent developments in Palestine urgently call for an impartial investigation, and Jewish immigration into Palestine must be stopped. It is in the best interest of the British that it should withdraw the Balfour Declaration. The Muslims hope that the viceroy will call the attention of His Majesty's Government to this urgent matter and to protect the Muslim-British relations from further deterioration.<sup>13</sup>

To follow up on this telegram of protest Iqbal sent another one on November 22, 1933 to the National League in London to generate public support for the Palestinian Arabs: "Muslims are very much agitated over the issue of Palestine, and unpleasant consequences are likely to follow. It is hoped that you would be able to stop further movements in Palestine, and prevent any possible deterioration of relations between England and the Muslims." Iqbal sent another letter to Miss Farquharson, President of the National League in London, to encourage her interest in the problems of Palestine, and to let her know that a very large number of Muslims in India were protesting against the British policy:

...I have been more or less in touch with Egypt, Syria and Iraq. I also received letters from Najaf. You must have read that the Shias of Kerbala and Najaf have also made a strong protest against the partition of Palestine. The Persian Prime Minister and the President of Turkish Republic have also spoken and protested. In India too the feeling is rapidly growing more and more intense.

The other day 50,000 Muslims met at Delhi and protested against the Palestine Commission. It is further reported in the Press that some Muslims have been arrested in Cawnpore in connection with Palestine question. It is now perfectly clear that the entire Muslim world is united on this question...I have every reason to believe that the National League will save England from a grave political blunder and in so doing it will serve both England and the Muslim world."<sup>14</sup>

When the Peel Commission's detailed recommendations were made public, Iqbal issued a statement on July 27, 1937 in which he described them "as injustice done to the Arabs," and "contrary to the pledges given to the Arabs in the name of England." He urged the Muslim world to declare emphatically that "the problem which the British statesmen are tackling is not one of Palestine only, but seriously affects the entire Muslim world." He added:

The problem is a purely Muslim problem. The problem, studied in its historical perspective, is purely a Muslim problem. In the light of the history of Israel, Palestine ceased to be a Jewish problem long before the entry of Caliph `Umar into Jerusalem more than 1300 years ago. Their dispersion, as Professor Hockings has pointed out, was perfectly voluntary and their scriptures were for the most part written outside Palestine. Nor was it ever a Christian problem. Modern historical research has doubted even the existence of Peter the Hermit. Even if we assume that the Crusades were an attempt to make Palestine a Christian problem, this attempt was defeated by the victories of Salah-ud-Din. I, therefore, regard Palestine as a purely Muslim problem.

In this statement Iqbal projected another view of British imperialism's own requirements of domination in the Middle East:

The idea of a national home for the Jews in Palestine was only a device. In fact British imperialism sought a home for itself in the form of a permanent mandate in the religious home of the Muslims. This is indeed a dangerous experiment, as a member of British Parliament has rightly described it and can never lead to a solution of the British problem in the Mediterranean. Far from being a solution of the British problem in the Mediterranean it is really the beginning of the future difficulties of British imperialism. The sale of the Holy Land including the Mosque of `Umar, inflicted on the Arabs with the threat of martial law and softened by an appeal to their generosity, reveals bankruptcy of statesmanship rather than its achievement. The offer of a piece of rich land to the Jews and the rocky desert plus cash

to the Arabs is no political wisdom. It is a low transaction unworthy and damaging to the honour of a great people in whose name definite promises of liberty and confederation were given to the Arabs.

Iqbal also criticized the Arabs for betraying the Turkish forces in their war against the allied forces of Britain and France in World War I. It was “the Arab betrayal of the Turks” which was supposed to be rewarded by the British in the form of a unified Arab state, which was fragmented into several states under the British and French mandates. From this historical experience, Iqbal emphasized the Muslims of Asia must learn some lesson:

...Experience has made it abundantly clear that the political integrity of the peoples of the Near East lies in the immediate reunion of the Turks and the Arabs. The policy of isolating the Turks from the rest of the Muslim world is still in action. We hear now and then that the Turks are repudiating Islam. A greater lie was never told. Only those who have no idea of the history of the concepts of Islamic jurisprudence fall an easy prey to this sort of mischievous propaganda.

The Arabs, whose religious consciousness gave birth to Islam (which united the various races of Asia with remarkable success), must never forget the consequences arising out of their deserting the Turks in their hour of trial.

Secondly, the Arab people must further remember that they cannot afford to rely on the advice of those Arab kings who are not in a position to arrive at an independent judgment in the matter of Palestine with an independent conscience. Whatever they decide they should decide on their own initiative after a full understanding of the problem before them.

Finally Iqbal stated that since the abolition of the Khilafat the issue of Palestine has emerged as a “problem of both a religious and political nature,” which Muslims confront to deal with. Iqbal advised Muslims to examine the true imperial nature of the “Anglo-French institution,” which in common parlance “was called the League of Nations,” and advised them to explore the possibility of

creating “an Eastern League of Nations.” In the aftermath of these Palestinian developments, Iqbal composed the well-known verse:

*Tehran ho ager Alam-I Mashriq ka Geneva,  
Sha'id Kurra-i ard ki taqdir badel ja'i.*

(If Tehran were to be the Geneva of the Eastern world,  
perhaps the fate of the world would change.)

### **The Affairs of Kashmir**

In the early 1930s the problems of Kashmir not only multiplied, but reverberated in the Punjab as well. Within Kashmir the Muslims were divided into three political parties; the Kashmir government assisted the leaders of all three. In consequence the people started to protest in the streets against the Maharaja's government, which had resorted to using the violent techniques to suppress the demonstrations. Within the Punjab the All-India Kashmir Committee was in convulsion. Its first president was Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud, the Amir of the Ahmadi movement at Qadian. The general assumption was that once the demands of the Kashmiri Muslims were accepted, and peace was restored in Kashmir, the Kashmir Committee would no longer be needed. The transitory nature of the committee did not encourage any of its members to formulate its constitution and by-laws. In their absence the president could exercise discretionary authority at will.

The Kashmir Committee had Ahmadi and non-Ahmadi members. The Ahmadis were accused of exploiting the Kashmir committee's structure to propagate their own religious convictions and that their real objective was to convert Kashmiri Muslims to the Ahmadi faith. Unsettled political conditions in Kashmir made it obvious that the Kashmir Committee's organization would be needed for an extended period of time. Some members of the committee proposed that an appropriate constitution for the committee should be drafted to regulate its affairs. Considering this

proposal an affront to the dignity of their Amir, the Ahmadi members viewed it as an attempt to curtail the discretionary powers of Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud, who resigned as president in an unstated protest. However, his followers continued to function as the committee members.

The Kashmir Committee elected Iqbal as president to succeed Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud. In contemplating the Kashmir problem, Iqbal issued a statement on June 7, 1933 in which he advised the Kashmiri Muslims to remain united and devoted to one political organization. He deplored the arrest of Kashmiri leaders and “subsequent flogging of people and firing and lathi [baton] charges on women and children.”<sup>15</sup>

Under Iqbal’s guidance, a constitutional draft of the Kashmir Committee was completed and presented before a general meeting. Vociferously, the Ahmadi members of the committee opposed it, which encouraged Iqbal to believe that the Ahmadis in reality attached no importance to the Kashmir Committee, but demonstrated only their loyalty to the Ahmadi Amir as it was mandated by an article of their faith. Also, he developed a strong impression that Ahmadis wanted to create two factions within the Kashmir Committee, which was unacceptable to Iqbal.

Consequently, Iqbal resigned from the presidency of the committee and explained his reasons in a press statement of June 20, 1933: “Unfortunately there are members in the committee who recognize no loyalty except to the head of a particular religious sect. This was made clear by a public statement recently made by one of the Ahmadi pleaders [attorney] who had been conducting the Mirpur cases. He plainly admitted that he recognized the Kashmir Committee and that whatever he or his colleagues did was done in obedience to the command of their religious leader. I confess that I interpreted this statement as a general indication of the Ahmadi attitude of mind, and felt doubts about the future working of the Kashmir Committee.”<sup>16</sup>



Iqbal also recommended that if Muslims of India wanted to help “their Kashmiri brethren” they could reconstitute the Kashmir Committee.

Iqbal’s followers got the hint and promptly created a new All-India Kashmir Committee, and invited Iqbal to become its president, which he did. A well-known attorney of Lahore, Malik Barkat Ali became its secretary. To help the people of Kashmir an appeal was issued on June 30, 1933 over the signatures of Iqbal and Ali to raise funds:

In recent times in India the Kashmir movement (after the Khilafat movement of the 1920s) reflected the Islamic impulse in practical terms. It rejuvenated new impulse of life in the lifeless body of the Muslim nation...Kashmiris are an inseparable part of the Muslim nation; and to separate their fate from our national destiny amounts to consign the entire nation to self-destruction. If Muslims want to emerge as a strong and integrated nation, then they must keep the following points in their vision.

First, religiously, culturally and within the geographic limits of India (with the exception of the Northwest Frontier Province) Kashmir is purely Islamic in the sense that no force whatsoever was applied to create an Islamic home in Kashmir. This fully developed plant was planted into the soil of Kashmir by the greats of Islam, like Shah Hamdan, whose preaching of Islam yielded this result. These great [Muslim saints] abandoned their homes, and motherlands in order to spread the Prophet Muhammad’s message in the far flung lands like Kashmir. Thank God that they succeeded so well.

The second point that Muslims of India cannot afford to ignore is this: Of all the Muslim nationalities of India, Kashmiris excel in trade, handicrafts and in inventive skills. Regrettably the suppression of the Kashmiris thwarts their aspirations to become a contributing element of the Muslim nation, and the nations of the world lose their services in these categories. If Kashmiris were alive, and enjoyed the life of energized nations their innovative skills could help in improving the economic condition of India.

It may be stated that people of Kashmir are the best part of the Muslims in India, and if that part is in pain and in

anguish then it is impossible for other members of the nation to sleep in peace.<sup>17</sup>

In November 1931 the Maharaja of Kashmir's government had agreed to the formation of a commission headed by B. J. Glancy, an official of the foreign and political department of the British government of India. The Glancy Commission suggested in April 1932 reforms in the administration, including changes in education, land tenure and taxation. In July 1933 the Maharaja's government announced that it would undertake some action on the proposed reforms. Iqbal welcomed this announcement, and issued a statement on August 3, 1933 proposing that in order to win the confidence of the Muslims all cases filed against the political workers of Mirpur and Bara Mula should be unconditionally withdrawn.

The Ahmadi's, who were politically activated on the Kashmir issue created a new political entity, the Kashmir Movement, and invited Iqbal to become its president. Before he would accept this invitation, he informed them he would have to consult the members of the All-India Kashmir Committee. They thought that Iqbal had in principle accepted their invitation. To set the record straight, Iqbal publicly rejected their offer on October 2, 1933 and stated that the factors which led to the dissolution of the old All-India Kashmir Committee had continued to exist: "no definite declaration has yet emanated from the Qadiani [Ahmadi] headquarters that in the event of the Qadianis joining a Muslim organization, their allegiance will not be divided. On the other hand events have revealed that what the Qadiani press describes as "Tehrik-i Kashmir," and in which, according to the Qadiani newspaper *Al-Fazal*, Muslims were only courteously allowed to participate, has entirely different aims and objects from those of the All-India Kashmir Committee."<sup>18</sup>

However, within Kashmir the United Alliance of the Muslims could not be maintained as they eventually split

up into two political organizations. To eliminate their mutual differences Shaikh Abdullah organized a conference in Srinagar of all political activists, and he also invited Iqbal to attend this conference. Iqbal was unable to attend this congregation, but in a letter of October 12, 1933 he offered this assessment to Shaikh Abdullah: "I have heard that different organizations have sprung up, and their mutual differences would be a great obstacle in the fulfillment of your objectives. Unity of thought is a tool which can surmount cultural and political problems. Muslims of India's objectives remained negatively oriented because this nation could not achieve unity of thought and objective. Some of its members, especially the *ulama* became puppets in the hands of others, some in fact remain so even now."<sup>19</sup>

Despite Iqbal's transparent commitment to the cause of Kashmiri Muslims some critics, notably Sir Fazl-i Husain, accused him of splitting Muslim solidarity in order to advance his own political interests. This accusation was not only grossly unfair, but contrary to known facts of Iqbal's devotion to the uplifting of Kashmir's political status. Iqbal continued to support the cause of Kashmir, however, it must be pointed out that political differences in the Kashmir Committee between him and the Ahmadi Amir eventually ended up in the widening cleavage of religious interpretations.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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- <sup>1</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 168-169.
  - <sup>2</sup> Niazi, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-101.
  - <sup>3</sup> Tariq, *op. cit.*, pp. 191-193.
  - <sup>4</sup> Husain, *op. cit.*, p. 280.
  - <sup>5</sup> Wahid Ahmad, ed., *Letters of Mian Fazl-i Husain*, (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1976), pp. 280-28, 365.
  - <sup>6</sup> Azim Husain, *op. cit.*, p. 285.
  - <sup>7</sup> Tariq, *op. cit.*, pp. 205-206.
  - <sup>8</sup> Proceedings of the Council of State, Husain, *op. cit.*, p. 261.
  - <sup>9</sup> Tariq, *op. cit.*,
  - <sup>10</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 177-179.
  - <sup>11</sup> Andrew D. W. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 52-53.
  - <sup>12</sup> Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Speaking Peoples*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), pp. 318-323.
  - <sup>13</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-180.
  - <sup>14</sup> Tariq, *op. cit.*, p. 223.
  - <sup>15</sup> Shamloo, *op. cit.*, p. 196.
  - <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 198-199.
  - <sup>17</sup> Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 173-177.
  - <sup>18</sup> Shamloo, *op. cit.*, p. 201.
  - <sup>19</sup> Khurshid, *op. cit.*, pp. 233-234.



## Chapter XI

### THE MUSLIM LEAGUE IN THE PUNJAB, AND DISCOURSE OF NATIONALISM

In this chapter an attempt is made to focus on Iqbal's physically less active, but pivotal political guidance role (1934-1938), which very substantially shaped the emergence of Pakistan under Jinnah's dynamic leadership. Also, his articulation of Islamic inter-nationalism is discussed as against the concepts of territorial nationalism within the framework of secularism, which was espoused by the *ulama* of the Deoband Madrassa, and was championed by the National Congress. This discourse spawned the concept of Muslim nationalism, which was repudiated by the Jama't-i Islami during the 1940s. Initially supported by Iqbal in 1937 the founder of the Jama't-i Islami, Abdul Ala-Maududi described the Indian National Congress' brand of secular nationalism the twin phenomenon of the League's variety of secular Muslim nationalism. Lastly, Iqbal's personal problems are described very briefly, including his wife's terminal sickness and death in 1936, and how shortage of income made his life uncomfortable. Indeed, the last four years were the saddest part of his life.

(I)

In contemplating the Muslim political scene in India, Iqbal was greatly disheartened by the dysfunctional nature

of Muslim political organizations. There were no less than 20 political parties, claiming Muslim loyalty, sometimes with diametrically opposed political programs. The strictly religious political parties included Jamiat ulama-i Hind, which was affiliated with the All India National Congress. In the Punjab Majlis-i Ahrar was an extended arm of the Jamiat ulama-i Hind, and generally followed the Congress line. The Khilafat Committee had split up into two factions, and functioned under the shades of the Congress. In the U.P., especially in Lucknow, the Shias had established the Shia Political Conference, which demanded separate political safeguards for the Shia in India. The Shia-Sunni riots erupted in Lucknow in the 1930s, and the Majlis-i Ahrar was held partially responsible for the blood-letting.

In Balochistan Muslims had created regional and ethnic parties with exceptionally narrow programs of interests. In Kashmir, Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah and his colleagues had established the All-Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, which established a firm alliance with the Congress. In Bengal, Fazl ul Haq surfaced as the champion of land workers, and drew them into the Praja Party. In order to protect the rights of landowners Sir Fazl-i Husain had created the fairly broadly based non-sectarian Unionist Party in the Punjab, which had bifurcated the Muslims into urban and rural segments. Similarly a non-sectarian semi-martialized party, the Khaksars, established by Inayat Allah Khan Mashriqi, drew inspiration from the fascist movements of Germany and Italy. The All India Muslim League was almost dead.

There is no need to list all 20 organizations here to highlight Muslim fragmentation. Against this chaotic scene of disorganization, Iqbal had poured his anguished analysis into his presidential address of March 21, 1932, which he had delivered at the Muslim Conference in Lahore:

...we must frankly admit that there is a sort of chaos in the political thought of those who are supposed to guide the

activities of the Indian Muslims in the present-day political struggle. The community, however, is not to be blamed for this state of things. The Muslim masses are not at all lacking in the spirit of self-sacrifice when the question of their ultimate destiny in the country is involved. Recent history bears ample testimony to what I say. The fault is ours, not theirs. The guidance offered to the community is not always independently conceived, and the result is ruptures, sometimes at critical moments, within our political organizations.”<sup>1</sup>

To deal with this situation Iqbal made several suggestions, emphasizing primarily the need for “one political organization with provincial and district branches all over the country.” Then he added: “call it whatever you like.” However, its constitution should be flexible enough to accommodate “any school of political thought to come into power and to guide the community according to its own ideas and methods.”

Iqbal thought that an organization of this kind would function to forestall ideological ruptures, and to “reintegrate and discipline our scattered forces to the interest of Islam in India.”<sup>2</sup>

This gigantic task was beyond the capacity of Iqbal, and he was acutely aware of it. Precisely for this reason when he was in London, attending the Third Round Table Conference he sought out Jinnah, who had settled in London to practice law. The British government had not invited Jinnah to participate in the Third Round Table Conference, because in its view Jinnah had no significant influence on the political dynamics of India, nor did he have any impact on any segment of the Indian population. Hector Bolitho, Jinnah’s official biographer, stated: “[Jinnah] was not thought to represent any considerable school of opinion in India.”<sup>3</sup>

Sir Muhammad Zafar Allah Khan, who was at the time of the Third Round Table Conference an acting member of the Viceroy’s Executive Council has stated in his memoirs,



*Tahdith-i Niamet*, that he had proposed Jinnah as a delegate to the Third Conference, but that the Secretary of State for India rejected his recommendation, saying:

He is critical of everything, but offers no positive proposal.

Now he has settled down in London permanently, and has lost contact with the political developments in India.<sup>4</sup>

Iqbal urged upon Jinnah the need of his therapeutic touch in rejuvenating the Muslim League, and in framing the Muslims' political mission in India. When Liaquat Ali Khan visited Jinnah at Hampstead in 1933, he expressed to Jinnah the same view: "You must come back. The people need you. You can put new life into the [Muslim] League and save it."<sup>5</sup>

In October 1934 to demonstrate how urgently Jinnah was needed, the Muslims in Bombay nominated him an independent member to the Central Legislature of India. They didn't even seek his consent. Jinnah won the election hands down, and returned to India in January 1935 to attend the inaugural session of the legislature. In April he went back to Britain, where he stayed until October. Bolitho has speculated that even at this stage Jinnah was reluctant to rejoin the Hindu-Muslim battles over the power-sharing.<sup>6</sup> Jinnah sought conciliation with the Congress during the 1930s until 1946 when the Cabinet Mission's plan was presented to the Indian leaders.

Under the constitutional reforms of the 1935 Act, the responsible governments were provided in the provinces and nearly in all matters the governors were bound to act on the advice of the elected ministers. The federation of India was also stipulated, if the princely states joined the federation, which they refused to do. In the provinces elections were to be held in early 1937. To prepare the Muslim League for these elections, Jinnah called the annual meeting of the League in Bombay on April 10, 1936, and created the Central Election Board with Jinnah as President. Iqbal was made a member of this Board.

Provincial Boards, an extension of the Central Board, were also provided. Jinnah toured different provinces, and finally came to Lahore on April 29, 1936.

The Punjab politics were dominated by Sir Fazl-i Husain, and his non-denominational Unionist Party, which was supported by the Hindus and Sikhs.

True to his background of parliamentary leadership, Jinnah first turned to Fazl-i Husain, urging him to accept the discipline of the League's Parliamentary Board, which Jinnah was to constitute. Fazl-i Husain balked, advancing the arguments of a provincial politician: (1) provincial autonomy means decentralization; therefore, it is wrong to centralize provincial elections; (2) conditions in each province vary; it is impossible to have a uniform principle; (3) in the Punjab it is impossible to secure a Muslim majority through separate control of elections; (4) in many provinces Muslims may find it necessary to have non-communal organizations, and in that case a central Muslim agency would obviously be out of the question.

To clinch this argument, Fazl-i Husain pleaded the need for "elasticity and initiative," and then said rather bluntly that it "should not be sacrificed for the sake of an All-India leader's aspirations."<sup>7</sup> Like a patient lawyer, Jinnah suggested that Fazl-i Hussain could enter into alliances with other political parties and politicians within the Assembly, but that his party should contest elections in the name of the League. As to the non-communal character of the Unionists, Jinnah's subtle retort was biting: "Why, the Congress is more progressive and non-communal than the Unionist Party. Why not join the Congress?" This dialogue between Jinnah and Fazl-i Husain was futile and led to nothing.

Fazl-i Husain did not have a very high opinion of Jinnah as it can be gathered from the following comment which he recorded in his personal diary on March 2, 1936:

Jinnah is letting himself go – against Aga Khan, and against me, and against the Conference. This is unfortunate. He has been like that all his life – hence he could not get on with anybody in the Congress, or the League or the Conference or the Round Table. Never could form a Party. In Bombay had no influence, and even now is not recognized as a leader. I am afraid, I will not now go out of my way to be nice to him.

Rebuffed by Fazl-i, Jinnah then turned to Iqbal and offered him membership in the Central Parliamentary Board of the Muslim League. Despite his own and his wife's very serious illnesses, Iqbal accepted Jinnah's invitation. Almost three months later Iqbal resigned from this position because it became impossible for him to attend the meetings. In May 1936 the Punjab Muslim League held a special meeting electing Iqbal president, Malik Barkat Ali and Khalifa Shuja-ud-Din vice-presidents, Ghulam Rasul Khan secretary, Mian Abdul Majid and Ashaq Husain Batalvi joint secretaries. The meeting also pledged that the Punjab Muslim League would support the Central Parliamentary Board and its policies. Unexpectedly, Jinnah also won over the leaders of the local militant Muslim parties, Majlis-i Ahrar and Ittihad-i Millat, although both parties had been at loggerheads with each other over the Shahidganj mosque.

When on May 21 Jinnah announced the names of the members of the Central Parliamentary Board, he included Iqbal at the top of the list, but out of the eleven seats reserved for the Punjab he allocated three to Ittihad-i Millat, and four to the Ahrar and the League. The Ahrar joined Jinnah hoping to receive handsome subsidies for their election campaigns. However, they discovered before long that their hopes had been misplaced, and they consequently severed relations with the League. In a few weeks, Mawlana Zafar Ali Khan, the president of Ittihad-i Millat, defected because his group had failed to achieve parity with the Ahrar. Subsequently both of these erstwhile allies of the League fought against her in the elections.

On July 9, Fazl-i Husain died. His place was occupied by Sir Sikander Hayat Khan, who resigned his position as the deputy governor of the Reserve Bank of India after winning the leadership of the Unionist Party. The death of Fazl-i Husain, however, occasioned the significant defection of Malik Zaman Mahdi Khan to the League. Iqbal had a high regard for Malik Zaman's organizational ability and soon had him co-opted as one of the vice-presidents of the League and a member of the Parliamentary Board.

In order to popularize the League in the Punjab, Iqbal constituted two subcommittees: The Draft Committee for the Election Platform and the Propaganda Committee. The first committee consisted of such notable individuals as Khalifa Shuja-ud-Din, Sayyid Tasaddaq Husain, Shaikh Muhammad Hasan, Muhammad Azim Khan, Malik Barkat Ali, Malik Zaman Mahdi, Ghulam Rasul Khan, Ashaq Husain Batalvi, and Muzaffar Ali Khan Qizilbash, who was later to defect the League (and after the creation of Pakistan to become a minister in the cabinet of the Republican Party). The Propaganda Committee was staffed by relatively younger men including Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Pir Taj-ud-Din, and Mian Muhammad Shafi, who was also the secretary of Inter-Collegiate Muslim Brotherhood of Lahore.<sup>8</sup>

Before the election campaign started, Iqbal invited Jinnah to visit Lahore in order to inaugurate the League's campaign. Jinnah arrived there on October 9, 1936; the Punjab League had considerable difficulty in arranging an enthusiastic welcome since, unlike the other parties, the League had no uniformed volunteers. Finally, the volunteers of Anjuman-i Islamia were mustered to appear at the station to welcome the leader. Jinnah stayed in Lahore for two weeks, politiking in the province.

On October 11, the League's campaign was scheduled to start with a public meeting outside Delhi Gate of walled

Lahore. Iqbal was to preside, and Jinnah was scheduled to be a main speaker. To the dismay of the party, Iqbal became ill and could not attend. Instead, Malik Zaman Mahdi Khan presided and Jinnah declared the League's war against the Unionists. Calling the Unionist Party an organization of vested interests and fortune-seekers, Jinnah challenged Sir Sikander Hayat Khan: "If you were so anxious to serve the Punjab on a non-communal basis, then where were you 'yesterday'?" The implications of this rhetorical question were obvious: Until July 22, 1936 Sir Sikander was the governor of the Reserve Bank of India.

But what about Jinnah's audience, did they grasp his message? Jinnah's campaign speeches had practically no impact on the election fortunes of the League, since his refined English was completely unintelligible to the unlettered citizens of Lahore. In fact, not many of them had bothered to come when the news of Iqbal's sickness circulated in the bazaars. The meeting was brief and colorless; not more than fifteen hundred Lahoris attended it. However, during these weeks Jinnah acquired a wide personal exposure which subsequently helped him to build his image in the Punjab.

During the first week of November only eight individuals applied for the League's nomination. One of the candidates, Muzaffar Ali Khan Qizilbash, when denied the League's nomination, managed to secure the nomination of the Unionist Party and then defeated the League's nominee. When the election results were tabulated only two candidates of the League had been elected: Malik Barkat Ali, who defeated his Unionist rival by ninety votes, Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, who defected to the Unionist Party on the day of his victory.

After forging a tripartite coalition between the Unionists, the Khalsa Nationalist Party, and the Hindu Election Board Party, Sir Sikander Hayat Khan formed the Punjab Ministry. Among the Hindu landlords ten

legislators, led by Sir Chhotu Ram, were members of the Unionist Party. However, the backbone of the alliance was constituted by the Muslim landlords of the Unionist Party. This coalition remained in power until 1945 when the legislature was dissolved in order to hold new elections. In addition to protecting their landed interests, these parties were determined to stunt the growth of the Muslim League in the Punjab. They were very forceful and might have succeeded had it not been for the policy of the All India National Congress.

To the National Congress the election of 1936 gave a great victory, greater than its leaders had expected. Of the 1,585 seats in all the provincial lower houses the Congress won 711 seats. However, six of the seven provinces (Madras, Uttar Pradesh, the Central Province, Bihar, Orissa, Bombay) in which the Congress achieved a clear majority or proved the strongest party were the Hindu-majority provinces. In the three Muslim-majority provinces, the Congress fared badly. In Bengal it secured 60 seats out of 250, in the Punjab 18 out of 175, in Sindh 8 out of 60. Almost all of these seats were Hindu constituencies. In the 482 Muslim constituencies in British India Congress Muslims contested 58 seats and won 26.

As the result of this victory the Congress adopted a two-pronged policy: (1) to form exclusively Congress ministries in the provinces; (2) and to wean the masses away from Muslim parties. The latter policy came to be known as the Muslim mass-contact campaign. Nehru offered a revealing interpretation for this campaign. Power was bipolarized, according to Nehru, in “two opposing ranks and we have in India today two dominating powers – Congress India, representing Indian nationalism, and British imperialism.” Discussing the place of the Muslims in Congress, he admitted: “It is true that Muslim masses have been largely neglected by us in recent years.” He wanted “to repair that omission,” and to bring the Muslim

masses to the fold of the Congress.<sup>9</sup> In view of this policy the provincial Congress committees were advised to establish branch offices to foster mass contact with the Muslims and to carry the campaign to the villages.

In the Punjab the Muslim mass-contact campaign threatened the power structure which the Unionist Party had carefully constructed. Sir Sikander Hayat was worried about the impact of the campaign: if the Hindu and Sikh members joined with the Congress, the Unionist Party would crumble; and if the Muslims deserted them for the Congress, that would be equally disastrous for the Unionist party. The League had nothing to lose by the extinction of the Unionists; on the other hand, an alliance with the League could save the Unionist party from the political deluge of the Congress. The Unionist leaders adopted a shrewd policy. To Jinnah they dangled the prospect of cooperation for "All-India problems," if he would not disturb the Punjab's power structure. Within the province they would ally with the League and appoint their trusted men to key positions. In this way they would remain the Unionists as well as members of the Muslim League. The implementation of this policy was very largely thwarted by Iqbal.

Iqbal did not believe that Jinnah could profitably enter into a covenant with Sir Sikander which would benefit the League in the Punjab. He wanted Jinnah to concentrate the League's energy to win over the common man. The wooing of the Muslims in the minority provinces appeared to Iqbal a futile attempt, which would make the League in the eyes of her opponents a party of scared Muslims. As the president of the Punjab League, Iqbal invited (August 11, 1937) Jinnah to hold the League's annual session "in Lahore in the middle or end of October."<sup>10</sup> Iqbal assured Jinnah that "the enthusiasm for the League is rapidly increasing in the Punjab, and I have no doubt that the holding of the session in Lahore will be a turning point in

the history of the League and an important step towards mass contact.”<sup>11</sup>

Disregarding Iqbal’s advice, Jinnah held the League’s session at Lucknow on October 15, 1937, and especially invited Sir Sikander. Iqbal could not travel because of ill-health, but on October 7 he wrote to Jinnah, advising him to expel twenty-eight Punjabi members of the League’s Council, who were actually staunch Unionists. To the chagrin of the Punjab League and its president, Jinnah retained these twenty-eight members in the new Council.<sup>12</sup> He was anxious to strike a bargain with the Unionist chief, Sir Sikander.

On the evening of October 16, while the League session was being presided over by Nawab Isma`il Khan, negotiations proceeded between Sir Sikander and Jinnah in the latter’s suite. Ashaq Husain Batalvi, an eyewitness, has described the scene:

Malik Barkat Ali drafted a declaration and then handed it over to Sir Sikander.” The declaration averred: “The Unionist Party, which had been reorganized by Sir Fazl-i Husain in April, 1936, and which subsequently contested the election of 1937, had ceased to exist. And the Muslim members of this Party, after pledging the membership, have become the members of the Muslim League.

Indignantly, Sir Sikander answered: “Malik Sahib is determined to wreck our ministry.” After some amendments a draft declaration was agreed upon. Then Jinnah and Sir Sikander joined the League’s session, where Jinnah welcomed the Punjab premier to the League and the latter, after acknowledging Jinnah as his leader, stated that he would join the Muslim League.

Sir Sikander’s declaration of intention has been erroneously described as the Sikander-Jinnah Pact; in reality, it contained obligations which were unilaterally assumed by the Unionist chief. The four point declaration contained the following:



a. That on his return to the Punjab, Sir Sikander Hayat Khan will convene a special meeting of his party and advise all the members of the party who are not members of the Muslim League already to sign its creed and join it. As such they will be subject to the rules and regulations of the Central and Provincial Boards of the All-India Muslim League. This will not affect the continuance of the present coalition of the Unionist Party.

b. That in the future elections and by-elections for the Legislature after the adoption of this arrangement, the groups constituting the present Unionist Party will jointly support candidates put up by their respective groups.

c. That the Muslim members of the Legislature, who are elected on or accept the League Ticket [nomination], will constitute the Muslim League Party within the Legislature. It shall be open to the Muslim League Party in order to maintain or enter into coalition or alliance with any other party, which should be consistent with the fundamental principles of the policy and Program of the League. Such alliances may be formed before or after the elections. The existing combination shall maintain its present name, the Unionist Party.

d. In view of the aforesaid arrangement, the Provincial League Parliamentary Board shall be reconstituted.

Similar declarations of support were made by Fazl-ul-Haq, premier of Bengal, and Sir Sa`adullah, premier of Assam.

This declaration was ambiguous, and was probably deliberately so designed, allowing both parties temporary advantages. But subsequent developments in the Punjab proved to be disastrous for the growth of the League. Iqbal and his colleagues in the Punjab Muslim League construed the declaration as terminating the independent existence of the Unionist party. The Unionist Party, in their eyes, was the name of the parliamentary coalition, and nothing more. They expected Sir Sikander and his Muslim colleagues to

accept the discipline of the provincial League, headed by Iqbal. The Unionists, on the other hand, viewed their chief's role at Lucknow as a theatrical performance, which made no fundamental change in their power structure. For them the Unionist party continued to exist; the Muslim League simply became its handmaiden. Jinnah adopted a laissez-faire policy toward these developments in the Punjab and thus failed to make the League a truly mass party throughout the 1930s and early 1940s.

From the end of October 1937 to April 21, 1938 when Iqbal died, struggle for survival was waged between Iqbal and Sir Sikander. First the latter temporized, then defiantly refused to sign the pledge of membership in the League.<sup>13</sup> Whereas Iqbal demanded full compliance with the Lucknow declaration, Sir Sikander contended that in addition to the written "pact" between him and Jinnah, there was also a certain verbal understanding, which gave him considerable flexibility of action. Consequently, Sir Sikander insisted that his party should have a majority on the League's Provincial Parliamentary Board. Frustrated by these developments, Iqbal wrote to Jinnah on November 1, saying: "Sir Sikander Hayat Khan with some of the members of his party saw me yesterday and we had a long talk about the differences between the League and the Unionist Party...I further want to ask you whether you agreed to the Provincial Parliamentary Board being controlled by the Unionist Party. Sir Sikander tells me that you agreed to this and therefore he claims that the Unionist Party must have their majority in the Board. This as far as I know does not appear in the Jinnah-Sikander agreement."<sup>14</sup> (The record shows that Jinnah did not answer Iqbal's letter.)

Simultaneously Iqbal intensified the League's mass-contact movement in the Punjab. He sent political workers to the rural areas, who in a short period of time established thirty-four branch offices. In order to bolster his position in

the rural Punjab, Sir Sikander launched a new political party of his own, the Punjab Zamindara League. Despite its claim to be the protector of the Punjabi peasant proprietors, the Zamindara League was conceived for the purpose of minimizing the influence of the Muslim League in the rural areas. Although officially the Unionists claimed to be League members, in their actions they continued to undermine the League, saying that “the Sikander-Jinnah Pact” had absorbed the Punjab’s Muslim League into the Unionist party.

Sir Sikander also increased his political demands on Iqbal. Not only did he want a Unionist majority on the Parliamentary Board, but he also demanded, Iqbal informed Jinnah in his letter of November 10, “that the finances of the League should be controlled by his men.” Iqbal indicated that he might be inclined to give the Unionists a majority on the Parliamentary Board, but he could not agree to “a complete change in the office-holders of the League, especially the Secretary [Ghulam Rasul Khan], who has done so much for the League.” Finally, Iqbal warned Jinnah: “All this to my mind amounts to capturing of the League and then killing it. Knowing the opinion of the province as I do I cannot take the responsibility of handing over the League to Sir Sikander and his friends...In these circumstances please let me know what we should do.” Despite Iqbal’s solicitations, Jinnah remained silent.

To Iqbal the national poet and philosopher, Sir Sikander held out an olive branch. On December 4, he sent a message to the Inter-Collegiate Muslim Brotherhood of Lahore regarding their plans for Iqbal Day celebrations, which were scheduled to be held on December 26. “Today, after years of deep slumber, Muslims are awake; this is largely due to the message of Iqbal...It is an obligation of every Indian to participate in the Iqbal Day celebrations. I would propose that in the cities where Iqbal Day is

celebrated, the citizens should collect money and present it to the great poet. The Iqbal committee should immediately open an Iqbal account at the Imperial Bank of India, and his followers and admirers should directly make contributions to this fund.”<sup>15</sup>

Although Iqbal was in dire financial straits, he was not lacking in self-respect. Commenting on Sir Sikander’s proposal, Iqbal replied: “I feel that the needs of the people as a whole are far more pressing than the needs of a private individual even though his work may have been a source of inspiration to most people. The individual and his needs pass away: the people and their needs remain.” If people wanted to honor him, they should, Iqbal suggested, establish “a chair for Islamic research on modern lines in the local Islamia College.” This was the real need of the people. Referring to the exploitation of the Unionist landlords, some of whom masqueraded as *pirs* (spiritual mentors) Iqbal said: “Nowhere in India has the ignorance of Islamic history, theology, jurisprudence and Sufism been so successfully exploited as in the Punjab.” Then, addressing Sir Sikander, Iqbal remarked that he hoped that his proposal “will meet the Premier’s approval and his influence will make this proposal a success. I offer a humble contribution of 100 rupees to this fund.”<sup>16</sup>

Sir Sikander (d. December 1942) survived Iqbal for three years and eight months. He could have implemented Iqbal’s proposal, if he had wanted to. That was not to be, because Sir Sikander’s statement was no more than a propaganda gimmick.

The year 1937 ended in a stalemate between the Unionist chief and Iqbal. During the remaining four months of Iqbal’s life Sir Sikander managed to infiltrate the Punjab Muslim League and finally succeeded in smothering it. The League’s basic weakness was its lack of funds; Iqbal made several attempts to persuade well-to-do Muslims to make generous donations. Initially they agreed

out of respect for Iqbal, but then backed down, saying that they could not afford to antagonize Sir Sikander.

Finally, Malik Barkat Ali persuaded Iqbal to accept the rich Nawab of Mamdot (Shah Nawaz Khan) as his successor, since the former was physically unable to cope with the duties of presidency. Nawab Mamdot was known to be a trusted confidant of Sir Sikander. Why the Punjab League voluntarily installed this Trojan horse in its organization is inexplicable. The matter is completely shrouded in mystery upon which the available sources shed no ray of light. Probably, Iqbal and Ali hoped that the lure of leadership might drive a wedge between Nawab Mamdot and Sir Sikander, and that Nawab Mamdot would then spend money on the League in order to bolster his position. On the contrary, however, Iqbal and Ali's serious error in judgment created sharp dissension in their own ranks.

For instance, on the instructions of Iqbal, the Provincial League's secretary (Ghulam Rasul Khan) wrote on March 2, 1938 a letter to Jinnah, inviting him to hold the All-India League's annual session in Lahore during Easter Holidays. Almost on the same day Nawab Mamdot wrote to Jinnah: "Probably you know that I have been elected the President of the Punjab Muslim League. In deference to the wishes of Sir Muhammad Iqbal, I have accepted this office. In a meeting, where I was not present, the decision was made to invite you to hold the special session of the All-India Muslim League at Lahore. It is my duty to inform you that in order to protect the League's interest and that of Shahidganj mosque, the League's session should not be held in Lahore..."<sup>17</sup> To the utter mortification of Malik Barkat Ali, Malik Zaman Mahdi, `Ashaq Husain Batalvi, and Ghulam Rasul Khan, Jinnah read them Mamdot's letter, at which time they verbally renewed the Punjab League's invitation to Jinnah on March 19 at Delhi. In order to strengthen the Zamindara League and also to protect it from the competing propaganda of the Muslim

League, Sir Sikander wanted to keep the national leaders of the League out of the Punjab. The League leaders then realized that their divided house would fall in time, since their president was playing the game of their opponent – Sir Sikander.

Sir Sikander made one final bid to capture the Punjab League. This was done in a very subtle manner when the Provincial Leagues applied in 1938 for affiliation to the central office of the Muslim League. In a session on March 2, the All-India Muslim League Council had appointed a five-man committee, consisting of Nawab Isma'il Khan (president), Liaquat Ali Khan (secretary), and three other members to examine the credentials of the Provincial Leagues. On March 11, the Punjab League applied for affiliation, and on the same day elected ninety members of the Provincial Council. Since the Unionists had not signed the membership blanks, they were excluded from the council.

On April 5, Liaquat Ali Khan informed the Punjab League that its application for affiliation had been rejected for the following reasons: First, the Punjab League's rules contravened the constitution of the All-India Muslim League. For instance, Liaquat pointed out, article 33 of the Punjab League's constitution permitted this body's alliance with other Muslim parties. According to the old constitution of the All-India Muslim League this was permitted, but it was not permitted by the new one. Now the All-India Muslim League was a comprehensive and representative body of all Muslims, and it could not allow its affiliates to ally with other organizations.

The second reason, according to Liaquat Ali Khan, was the membership clauses (5, 6, 7) of the Punjab League's constitution. They envisaged membership of the League at the provincial level, whereas the All-India Muslim League's constitution decreed membership at the primary level, that is, district or city leagues.

These explanations for their rejection outraged the leaders of the Punjab Muslim League, especially when they knew that numerous provincial leagues, which existed only on paper, had been affiliated. Iqbal advised them to carry the fight for their organization to the special session of the League, which was scheduled to be held on April 17, 18, and 19, 1938 at Calcutta. Consequently, Malik Barkat Ali, Khalifah Shuja-ud-Din, Pir Taj-ud-Din, Malik Zaman Mahdi, and Ashaq Husain Batalvi departed for Calcutta on April 14. At Saharanpur railroad station, Nawab Isma'il Khan, president of the Affiliation Committee, boarded the train. The Punjab leaders won him over to their cause and succeeded in obtaining his unqualified recommendation for their affiliation.

On April 17, the session of the All-India Muslim League Council started, and Liaquat Ali Khan explained the actions of his committee. Rising instantly from the front rows, Batalvi demanded an explanation for the rejection of their application. Malik Barkat Ali was invited to present the case. Noted for his forensic talent Ali won over the council. Jinnah asked the council to postpone the decision for another twenty-four hours to await the arrival of Sir Sikander. Completely disregarding the issue of the Punjab League's affiliation, Jinnah gave his verdict the following day in the presence of Sir Sikander, his ministers, and Parliamentary secretaries, including Nawab Mamdot. In order to reorganize the Punjab League, Jinnah said, a thirty-five-man organizing committee would be nominated, of which 50 percent would be Unionists. The same evening, in clear disregard of this public commitment, Liaquat announced the membership list of the committee in which Iqbal and his followers in the Punjab League numbered twenty-six to thirty-five. Twenty-five seats had been given to the Unionists, and Sir Sikander had been made the president of the committee, his name heading the list.<sup>18</sup> On April 21, two days after the Calcutta session, Iqbal died;

with his departure the domination of the League by Unionists was ensured.

An assessment of Iqbal's and Jinnah's policies might be in order. Stung by the criticism that the League represented a minority view, Jinnah was anxious to demonstrate, particularly in the Punjab, that the Congress' Muslim mass-contact movement had failed. That impression could be created by quick and dramatic political shifts. The idea of the Unionists joining the Muslim League en masse was too tempting and intriguing to be forsaken for Iqbal's strategy of patiently building the League at the grassroots level. Jinnah paid a price for his policy. Under Sir Sikander, and since 1942 under his successor, Khizer Hayat Khan, the Muslim League existed in the Punjab only on paper, at least until 1946.

In 1940, "the Pakistan Resolution" was passed in Lahore. Supporting the resolution, Jinnah reiterated Iqbal's two-nation theory, and coined the slogan of "unity, discipline, and faith." When, in early 1946, elections were held to ascertain the relative strength of Indian political parties, the Unionists forged an alliance with the Congress, and harassed the League in the Punjab. Reciting Iqbal's verses in the streets, and repeating almost verbatim the language of Iqbal, the League workers galvanized the masses and defeated the Unionists.<sup>19</sup> The League's landslide of 1946 was very much the victory of Iqbal's strategy, which he had urged on Jinnah ten years earlier.

## (II)

In 1938, the last year of Iqbal's life, an unexpected debate erupted on the issue of nationalism: does the land or the territory determine the modern concept of nationalism or other factors including religious affiliation, culture, language, and historical experience formulate nationalism? Addressing these issues Mawlana Husain Ahmad Madni delivered a lecture in Delhi on January 8, 1938 and stated



that lands determine the nations. As an example he pointed out the case of Britain, where different kinds of people, including the Jews, live together while professing different religions and denominations like Protestantism, Catholicism and Judaism. Conditions are in this regard, he pointed out very similar in the United States, France and even Japan. His lecture was repeated in the press of Delhi and Lahore. Iqbal also read it and was outraged as he thought that Madni's orientation was un-Islamic. Reacting to these ideas Iqbal dictated the three following verses to a young admirer, Sayyid Nazir Niazi.

*Ajam Hanuz na danand ramuz-i din warna  
z-Deoband Husain Ahmad ayn cheh bul-ajabi ast  
Sarud bar Sir-i member keh millat az watan ast  
Cheh be-Khaber z-maqam-i Muhammad-i Arabi ast  
Ba-Mustafa berresan khawish ra keh din hamma  
hu-st  
Agar ba u na-residi tamam bu-lahibi ast*

The Muslim world still does not comprehend the meaning of religion

[I ask] Husain Ahmad: What is this ignorance you spouted?

You stated from the pulpit that nation is determined by the homeland

You are so ignorant of Muhammad's orientation

Bring yourself closer to Muhammad, because he is the source of all religion

If you don't get close to him, then you grope in ignorance

This episode highlights a perennial political problem that Muslims have faced, while living in the Indian environment. Have Muslims been amalgamated culturally into the Hindu population? Also, after 1857 when the All Indian National Congress was created, the major issue emerged about the Muslims' role in it. Should they join it and accept the thesis of – nations are formed by the land –

or let their religion, cultural and historical experience guide them about their nationality and destiny. Clearly, some Muslims who lived in the Hindu majority provinces, like the Uttar Pradesh, where Dar al-Ulum Deoband is located, could see no future for themselves, except a joint one with the Hindu majority. Hailing from a Muslim majority province like the Punjab, Iqbal and his followers could see the Muslims destiny even in a separate state.

In commenting on Iqbal's verses Sayyid Nazir Niazi has stated:

When Iqbal's verses were published in the newspapers, an intense debate raged. Iqbal's critics published their rejoinders in verses, and pamphlets and articles in the newspapers. But today all the polemics have been forgotten. Those pamphlets and poetic rejoinders had no intellectual life in them, and they have been confined to oblivion. Iqbal had made a truthful statement, and truth still persists.

Iqbal's critics complained that he was rude to an *alim*, who followed the Qur'an and Islam, and benefited the students of the Deoband madrassa with his learned lectures. Precisely for these reasons Iqbal criticized him, saying that the concept of nation determined by land was imported from the west, and was loaded with materialism; and strangely enough he found a supporter in a learned scholar of Islam like Madni. Iqbal was amazed that Madni made a statement of this kind which negated the collective life of Muslims, and their social existence.<sup>20</sup>

Throughout February 1938 this controversy continued. Madni's friends alleged -that Iqbal was so blatantly rude to a religious scholar because of his political interests and that of the Muslim League to which he belonged. Meanwhile a well-meaning individual – Talut – attempted a mediation between them. Iqbal wrote to him a detailed letter on February 18, 1938, explaining his views on nationalism.

The excerpts of Madni's letter which you cited in your letter clearly indicate that he believes that nations are determined by their homelands [*watan*]. If his objective is simply to make a factual statement, then there is no reason to object,

because this viewpoint of the west is becoming popular in Asia as well. If on the other hand he wanted the Indian Muslims to accept this orientation then there exists a wide possibility of disagreement; because before an orientation is adopted it must be examined in the light of Islam. Before this discussion degenerates into an extensive polemic, it is important to understand Madni's real meanings. Whatever the response you may receive from him, please convey it to me.

Please assure Madni on my behalf that I do not respect him less than any other Muslim [in this country]. However, if his views are what I have described them in the light of my conviction and integrity I find his views to be contrary to the spirit of Islam, and its fundamental principles. In any [judgment] his views can mislead the Muslims and they do not conform to the dignity of [his learning]. If Madni ever took the trouble of reading my works he would have realized that I have spent half of my life in explaining the concepts of Islamic nationality [*Qawmiyat*] and *millat* (international nationality). This concept [of nationalism] is a great danger to Asia, especially Islam, let loose by the western politics. I am not doing any propaganda for a political party, neither today nor was this my objective in the past. In my eyes any individual who clocks propaganda with religion is the damnest person.<sup>21</sup>

Before this debate could be terminated Madni issued another statement in a newspaper, *Ansari*. In explaining the contents of his lecture he reiterated his contention that in the modern age nations are determined by the homelands (*watan*), "not by race or religion. He denied that he ever said that religion and *millat* are dependent on land." In other words Madni transformed the debate to revolve around the terms of *qawm* (nation) and *millat* (community of believers), and stated emphatically that "nations are determined by land, but that *millat* is not defined by land. Consequently his statement that nations are determined by land was not objectionable."<sup>22</sup>

Iqbal had a critical response drafted by Chaudhary Muhammad Husain, his old friend. He explained his ideas

to Husain, and asked him to read it back to him. A comprehensive statement thus emerged, which was published in the daily *Ahsan* of March 19, 1938 – that is almost one month before Iqbal died.

Iqbal's statement explained that in Arabic, Persian and Turkish languages the term *millat* (community of believers) is used for *qawm* (nation), and in his writings he has used them interchangeably. Madni can be criticized when he urges Muslims of India to adopt the western concept of nation. Europe's imperial interests mandated the splintering of Islamic unity, and they propagated the idea of nationalism. This European strategy was successful during World War I. In Iqbal's perception Islam is not merely corrective of individual ethics; but also wants to bring into an evolutionary change, which would amount to a fundamental revolution. This was expected to eradicate racial and national frame of mind, and replace it with pure humanism. Consequently, Islam's grand design is to unite the family of man despite its innate distinctions.

The statement added that "Mawlana Husain Ahmad Madni is a religious scholar, and the political orientation which he has presented to the nation, he could not possibly be unaware of its dangerous consequences. In using the term nation (*qawm*) or *millat* he identified the Prophet Muhammad's community of believers, and described the land as the determinant of their nationality. This was most unfortunate and regrettable...He did not stop to think that with his interpretations, he was presenting two wrong and dangerous viewpoints to the Muslims: he visualized Muslims as a nation a different entity as against Muslims as *millat*, that is a community of believers. The second view he spawned implied that since he was an Indian [by his definition] religion could be set aside, and [Muslims] should like other nations be absorbed into the Indianism or [India] nation...In other words he stipulated that religion and politics are two separate phenomenon, that implies if

you want to live in this country then consider religion as a personal and private commitment, and keep religion just confined to personal life. Do not perceive Muslims as a separate nation, just be assimilated into the majority population:

Mawlana Madni has taunted me of not knowing the Arabic language as I failed to distinguish and appreciate the meanings of *qawm* (nation), and *millat* (community of believers). Since I did not conduct thorough research into the text of his speech I failed just as well in consulting an Arabic dictionary. His taunt is well-taken. However, it would have been better if he had consulted the Qur'an not for my sake, but for the common man among Muslims before he presented a dangerous and un-Islamic viewpoint. He would have benefited from the divinely inspired revelation. I confess I am not a religious scholar or an Arabic literateur [like him].

*Qalander juz dow harfi La-Ilaha kuch bhi nahiyin Rakhta*

*Faqih-i Shaher qarun haiy lughat haiy Hijazi ka*

(A dedicated mystic possesses nothing but faith in *La-Ilaha* [there is only one God], but a jurist in the city is rich in the Arabic vocabulary.)

What did impel you to consult only an Arabic dictionary? Hasn't the Qur'an used the terms of *qawn* and *millat* repeatedly. What did the Qur'an mean by these terms? Has the term *umma* been used for the followers of Muhammad or not? Do these terms have radically different meanings that a nation in light of their divergent meanings can possess different personalities that for religious and legal purposes it can follow the divine dictates, but as a citizen of a country is bound by its constitution, which can be diametrically opposed to its *milli* personality...For Muslims the Qur'an has used only the term *umma*...

*Qawn* is the term applied to a people joined together in a group; and it can be created in tribes, transcending ethnic origins, color, language and country. In other words, it can be created in any place, and in any shape and form. However, *millat* (community of believers) absorbs nations, but cannot be absorbed in different nations.

Muslim *umma* lives by the natural religion, which has been called *din-i Qayyum* (eternal religion). This term carries a subtle Qur'anic meaning implying that religion is eternal, and the followers are expected to transfer their economic and political affairs to it. In other words, *qawm* derives vitality and strength from Islam. Precisely for this reason the Qur'an declares in unmistakable language that any constitution which is un-Islamic is unacceptable.

One more subtle issue deserves serious consideration by Muslims. If patriotic sentiment (*wataniyat*) was so important, then why did the Prophet's countrymen turn against him? Why didn't the Prophet Muhammad present Islam as an enduring movement of patriotism for the nation, which would have lured to the fold men like Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab. Why did he not in political affairs maintain the relationship of patriotic solidarity with them? If Islam stood for freedom and self-determination only, then there could be no divergent views with the Quraish, because they stood for these objectives. Unfortunately, Mawlana Madni does not pay attention to this aspect that for the Prophet what was significant was the freedom of eternal religion and the freedom of the Muslim *umma*. To abandon these objectives, and to subordinate them to another collective system for the sake of freedom, would have meant nothing.

Prophet Muhammad's nation (*qawm*) was free and independent before the advent of his prophetic mission. With the advent of his religious and political leadership (*imamate*) the nation's position became secondary. Those who followed him (including the members and non-members of his nation) became part of the Muslim *umma* or *millat-i Muhammadiya*. Before this action they were ensnared by the country and ethnicity, now these two sentiments assumed the secondary positions...

It was very easy for the Prophet to tell Abu Lahab or Abu Jahl or the unbelievers of Mecca that you continue your idol-worshipping rites, but let us forge an Arabic unity and solidarity on account of their common race, and country. If the Prophet had adopted this policy, it certainly would have

been the line of reasoning of a patriot and a nationalist, but not that of the last of the prophets.

As Muslims it is our duty to terminate the British domination and rule. Our objective in this struggle for freedom is not only political freedom, but first and foremost ideal is that Islam should survive, and Muslims should be powerful. Against this grand objective the Muslims cannot be helpful in establishing a system of government, which would be similar to that of the British political system. To demolish a structure of falsehood in order to create a similar edifice has no meaning.

We want that India should become *dar al-Islam*, if not entirely then at least partially. If, however, the freedom of India created a *dar al-Kufar* or something worse than that then the Muslims damned such a freedom.

At this point in time Taluth (known only by this name) asked Mawlana Madni: What did he mean by this descriptive phrase – nations are determined by the homelands – was he merely describing a factual condition or urging Muslims to adopt this orientation? Madni responded that this phrase reflected the current orientation in vogue; it is not a point in any particular direction. It would be a great mistake to consider this description an advice. A copy of Madni's letter was sent by Taluth to Iqbal. After reading this statement Iqbal issued a statement to an Urdu newspaper, *Ahsan* of March 28, 1938:

Mawlana Madni has obviously denied that he urged upon the Muslims a new vision of nationality. Therefore I declare that after Madni's admission I no longer have any right to criticize him. I admire Mawlana Madni's followers' devotion to him, and their enthusiasm as they sheltered behind the cloak of a religious issue and even used abusive language in private letters and public statements. May God enable them to benefit more from Madni's guidance. Also I want to assure them that in deference to Madni's religious learning I respect him no less than his followers."<sup>23</sup>

By this statement Iqbal had terminated this debate with Mawlana Madni. However, when Iqbal's poetic collection *Armaghan-i Hijaz* was posthumously published it contained

critical verses about Madni. However, a few months after Iqbal's death Madni published a pamphlet, *Muthida Qawmiyat Awr Islam* (united nationality and Islam), in which he repeated his old arguments, and called Iqbal *Kodak-i Na-dan* (a child lacking in judgment), and ensnared in the magic of "British magicians." A scholar of Iqbal's works Muhammad Ahmad Khan has given an appropriate verdict:

It was not an error of Iqbal's judgment if he did not eliminate critical verses about Madni's ideas, because he continued to preach the ideal of a united nationality of [Hindus and Muslims]. In orders to back up his ideas he wrote the pamphlet *Muthida Qawmiyat*...If Iqbal had survived, and studied further Madni's ideas which he expounded also in his autobiography then one can say with confidence Iqbal would have repudiated his views in much tougher language than the one used in his verses.<sup>24</sup>

Out of rage Najam-ud-Din Islahi (one of Madni's admirers) stated something very intriguing about Iqbal: "we do not consider Iqbal more than a poet and philosopher. To elevate him more than this status of [poet –philosopher] is a criminal act from Shari'a's viewpoint. We have studied his works very carefully. There is no exaggeration in this assessment that while hundreds of his verses are useful, there are some which are critical of Islam and Islamic philosophy...In Pakistan lawmaking can be done in the light of Iqbal's fundamental ideas, because it emerged in the name of Islam, which is another name for Iqbal's philosophy."<sup>25</sup>

### (III)

At this stage a question may be asked: what was Iqbal's vision of Islam?

Briefly it might be stated that Iqbal visualized the emergence of a modern Islamic culture, which would be equipped to resolve its internal problems in light of the modern times. Yet this *Ijtihad* (interpreting the Qur'an and *Sunna* or forming a new opinion by applying analogy) process should be executed strictly in the light of the



Qur'an and *Sunna*. The *ulama* in India and Pakistan always distrusted the freedom of Ijtihad. Strangely the *ulama*, who were willing to accept the secular government of united India, were also willing to present interpretations from Islamic perspective for Muslims to be absorbed in a common Indian nationality and culture. But in Pakistan the *ulama* of the same ilk are determined to enforce traditional Islam, which cannot be done in the milieu of modern age. Perhaps they want to demonstrate that Mawlana Madni's views were correct and Iqbal's were wrong!

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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<sup>1</sup> Tariq, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> Hector Bolitho, *Jinnah: Creator of Pakistan* (London: John Murray, 1954), p. 99.

<sup>4</sup> Muhammad Zafarullah Khan, *Tadith-i Niamet* (Lahore: 1971), p. 314.

<sup>5</sup> Bolitho, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.

<sup>7</sup> *Civil and Military Gazette* (Lahore), June 7, 1936; also, Azim Husain, *Fazl-i Husain* (Bombay: Longmans, Green, 1946), p. 308.

<sup>8</sup> Ashaq Husain Batalvi, *Iqbal Kay Akhari Do Sal* (Karachi: Iqbal Academy, 1961), pp. 343-44.

<sup>9</sup> *Civil and Military Gazette*, April 28, 1937.

<sup>10</sup> Iqbal to Jinnah, August 11, 1937; *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah* (1956), p. 25.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>12</sup> Batalvi, *op. cit.*, p. 483; also Iqbal to Jinnah, October 7, 1937 in *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah* (1937), p. 28.

<sup>13</sup> On the instruction of Iqbal, the secretary of the Provincial League Ghulam Rasul Khan, sent on October 22, 1937 ninety membership blanks to the Unionists, but Sir Sikander advised them not to sign them. Batalvi, *Iqbal Kay Akhari Dow Sal*, pp. 515-16.

<sup>14</sup> Iqbal to Jinnah, November 1, 1937 in *Letters Iqbal to Jinnah*, p. 30.

<sup>15</sup> *Civil and Military Gazette*, December 5, 1937.

<sup>16</sup> Shamloo, *op. cit.*, pp. 219-20.

<sup>17</sup> Batalvi, *op. cit.*, p. 613.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 641-44.

<sup>19</sup> In the general elections of 1946, the Muslim League won 75 out of 86 Muslim seats. The Unionists were reduced to a small group of 20.

<sup>20</sup> Sayyid Nazir Niazi, *Iqbal Kay Hadur Mein*, p. 122.

<sup>21</sup> Bashir Ahmad Dar, *Anwar-i Iqbal* (Karachi: Iqbal Academy, 1967), pp. 167-68.

<sup>22</sup> Najam-ud-Din Ilahi, *Maktubat Sheikh al-Islam*, Vol. III, pp. 124-125.

<sup>23</sup> Dar, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

<sup>24</sup> Muhammad Ahmad Khan, *Iqbal ka Syasi Karna*, pp. 602-03.

<sup>25</sup> Najam-ud-Din Islahi, Ed., *Maktubat Shaikh al-Islam: Mawlana Husain Ahmad Madni*, (Deoband: Maktaba Dinya, 1966), p. 141.

## Chapter XII

### ISLAMIC PARADIGMS

Since 1857 three different approaches toward Islam have emerged: 1) traditional, 2) reformative, and 3) conventional or what might be called popular or folk Islam. The great Indian Muslim thinker, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-1883) was the leading exponent of reformative Islam. Iqbal was very profoundly influenced by Sir Sayyid and belonged to the reformative school of Islam. Most Indian *ulama* adhered to the traditional Islam. To them any reformative approach was an intolerable act of *bid'a* (impious innovation). Mostly uneducated and often impoverished common Muslim people are deprived of Islamic knowledge and Arabic, and are given to superstitions. They look upon dead or alive religious guides (*pir*) as their source of salvation. They worship their graves, visit them as frequently as possible, and make the offerings of decorated sheets over them, while begging them for worldly favors.

As a Muslim nationalist with a reformative agenda Iqbal repeatedly satirized in prose and poetry the shibboleths of Islam, and ridiculed the *pirs*. The followers of traditional and folk Islam retaliated, pouring out all kinds of abuses against Iqbal. This continues even today. In the Iqbal papers there are two anonymous letters, which reflected their venom. When you encounter a so-called ideological opponent of Iqbal, you would discover under his skin a

“congressite” – stubborn religious “scholar,” who could be easily a secular nationalist Muslim, an atheist, a socialist or a communist, a regionalist or sectarian madman.

Iqbal believed in the sanctity of life, and his intellectual evolution continued throughout his life. What did Iqbal think of himself? He never thought of himself a “real poet,” because he never had the leisure time to devote to the subtleties of the poetic craft. Poetry was to him a mere medium of expression of his views. He stated that “the objective is to bring about a revolutionary change in the style of thought, and that is the end of it. Keeping this aspect in mind I express those thoughts which I deem useful. It should not be surprising, if the future generation would not look upon me as a poet.”<sup>1</sup>

In the conventional sense Iqbal was not a philosopher either. He did not leave behind an organized and well-structured philosophic system. Instead he used philosophy to study life’s material and spiritual dimensions. He says: “I do not have a philosophic ideology [or instruction] to disseminate. Actually, I contemptuously look down upon the philosophic systems. Nor do I have any confidence in philosophic principles, and their end products. No one has condemned more than I the human intellect, especially when it endeavors to grasp the spiritual realities. Undoubtedly I discuss issues which generally interest philosophers; but my concern with them is related to observation and experiment, and is not involved in the thought process, and philosophic reasoning.”<sup>2</sup>

In a similar vein Iqbal did not claim to be a religious scholar, as he admitted in statements about Madni’s ideological and religious views.

Finally an ultimate question may be asked: If Iqbal was neither a poet, philosopher nor a religious scholar, then what was he after all. If looked at from his own personal observations he appeared to be a committed devotee of Prophet Muhammad, who devoted all life to the

renaissance of Islamic *umma*, and its survival. Poetry, philosophy and religious studies are the medium he employed to achieve this grand objective. Despite these limitations Iqbal was a unique phenomenon of God, and an exceptional genius, endowed with a multidimensional personality, who appear rarely among nations. One cannot have them made to order in any generation.

### **Iqbal's Islamic Paradigm**

Against this background, in contemplating Iqbal's Islamic paradigm one can outline its salient features to a great degree.

In analyzing the evolution of religion in the world Iqbal concluded that in its primitive stage religion was a tribal or national vocation – as was the case with the ancient Greeks and Egyptians. Subsequently religion was associated with a nationality as was the case with Judaism. Christianity made religion a matter of personal conviction. Finally, Islam asserted the view that religion is neither national, racial nor personal, but was a truly universal phenomenon. Iqbal says: “As a term of religion Islam is not merely a religion. It is a way of life in freedom, which encourages relentless struggle against the universe. In fact it is a grand protest against the antiquated viewpoints of the ancient world. Briefly Islam reveals man's [potential] in a real manner.”<sup>3</sup>

One might add that Islam was a movement designed to present a paradigm of man's unity in a collective social entity. To him Muslim stood for a man, who was guided by this Qur'anic *dictum* – *la ikraha fi al-Din* (there is no compelling in religion). In the glow of this eternal light he creates an exemplary personality, reflecting his high moral character, which would impress the whole mankind, and lures it to his faith. Iqbal had dreamed of the emergence of unique individuals, who would be the bedrocks of a new Islamic culture. All of his poetical works or prose were in a sense practical suggestions to spawn this new ideal culture.

On different aspects of Iqbal's thought volumes can be written. Here an abbreviated outline of his thoughts is presented. In Iqbal's paradigm the religion of Islam cannot be separated from the Islamic culture. To him updating of religion could not be accomplished without a cultural renaissance. He perceived the corpus of traditional religion to be based upon the dialectical theology (*ilm al-kalam*) derived from the Greek philosophy. Now it was entirely obsolete, and could serve no useful intellectual purpose for the modern Muslim world. It was urgently needed that a new dialectical theology is fashioned which is based upon the foundations of modern scientific research. Iqbal believed that modern scientific methods' principles were in harmony with the Qur'anic verses. Consequently a modern *ilm al-kalam* would strengthen the sinews of faith in the Muslims' new generations.

On this critical issue Iqbal reviewed Sir Saiyyid's attempts in evoking a new *ilm al-kalam*, and asserted that they failed because he adopted the Mu'tazilite intellectual framework, which maintained that religious texts should agree with the judgments of reason. Despite this critical view of Sir Saiyyid's intellectual efforts, Iqbal remained profoundly impressed by Sir Saiyyid's personality. In a letter of February 27, 1936 to Dr. Zafar al-Hasan, Iqbal stated: "Despite the fact that our great poet Hali wrote in great detail Sir Saiyyid Ahmad Khan's biography, Muslims of Asia have yet to appreciate his intellectual accomplishments. I have discovered this reality that Sir Saiyyid's vision was focused on very wide and deeply rooted issues which was intimately related to the Asian Muslims' religion and politics. Certainly, the Muslim Asia has yet to grasp the greatness of his personality."<sup>4</sup>

No Muslim state so far has initiated any serious effort to recognize the religious studies according to the new school of interpretation, especially the way Iqbal visualized it.

While Muslims were in a state of political subjugation, Iqbal was hesitant to engage in *Ijtihad*. However, in the post-subjugation period, when the Muslims in South Asia might be free, Iqbal was cognizant of the need of updating the Islamic jurisprudence. Consequently from 1934 to his death *Ijtihad* was the centerpiece of his intellectual concerns. While reasoning within the framework of the Qur'an and *Sunna*, his *Ijtihad* interpretations were truly revolutionary, which would be unacceptable today to any traditional religious scholar, or to the Muslim public. Three examples would suffice:

1. Personal options for women

A Muslim woman, adhering to a particular Islamic denomination, cannot be compelled to follow her husband's denomination. This amounts to absorbing and subordinating her individuality into her husband's dominating personality. This process would be contrary to the Qur'anic diction of *la ikrah fi al-din* (there is no compelling in religion)

2. A Jewish or a Christian married to a Muslim husband cannot be submitted to Islamic laws.

Among South Asian intellectuals he was the first to make a distinction between *westernization* and *modernization*; he opposed the blind following of the first, but remained committed to modernization, in the sense of renovating or updating. He believed that by updating only religious learning Muslim culture could not be modernized. Precisely for this reason he visualized the establishment of a madrassah, which would teach modern arts and sciences, technology and social sciences. In his view the Muslims laid down the foundations of modern science, and it was urgently needed that they should initiate research, creativity and innovation in the Muslim world. He expected even mosque *imam(s)* and preachers to acquire modern education. Also, he established an Islamic standard of criticism for poetry and literature, determined by the

quality of inspiration of the poets and artists...As far as the history of Islamic culture is concerned with the exception of architecture the arts of music, painting and poetry have yet to emerge.<sup>5</sup>

3. In recognizing Islamic marriage as a contract, Iqbal personally engaged rearranging the issue of delegating the option of divorce to women, regardless of her religious convictions.

In October 1936 Iqbal personally drafted a marriage contract between Dr. Muhammad Din Taseer, and his wife Christabel George, who was Christian by faith and English by ethnic origin. In the contract (*Nikah Nama*) Iqbal included two articles, which had not been included in the contracts before:

- (i) By agreement I Muhammad Din pledge that as long as I remain married to Christabel George, will not marry another woman regardless of her religion.” (In other words this marriage would remain monogamous.)
- (ii) By mutual agreement I Muhammad Din Taseer transfer my right to divorce to Christabel George under the provisions of the *Sharia* (Islamic law).

Also Iqbal had developed economic viewpoints, which he expressed in poetry and prose. He rejected Marx’s materialistic interpretation of history, and its byproducts in the form of socialism and communism, which he thought were beyond the pale of Islam. Along with it he rejected monarchy, theocracy, and feudalism. In his Islamic democracy no particular class or group could be allowed to dominate the society – be it the landowners, capitalists, laborers or farmers. Achieving an Islamic economic system was the real grand objective of Islam so that classes do not exploit each other.

Land, in Iqbal’s views, belongs to God, and man derives sustenance from it only as a trustee. Land can also be acquired as an “owner,” if the tiller himself is engaged in agriculture. The “government-owned” land can be “sold”



to farmers, who could pay its price by installments. Small land-owners could be exempted from the tax payment, but from more productive farmers income tax can be charged. He was opposed to capitalism and socialism, but firmly supported a mixed economy, which he visualized to be an Islamic economic democracy. In other words a public sector economy, where governments would invest capital in the establishment of specified industries as against a policy of confiscation or nationalization. In order to generate confidence and reduce the level of risk in private investment, Iqbal supported the establishment of insurance companies. In order to popularize this industry he remained associated with the Muslim Insurance Company in Lahore.<sup>6</sup>

For the political structure of the government Iqbal opposed heredity form of government (call it monarchy or any other name), and authoritarianism. Precisely for this reason he describes the Umayyad Caliphate (661-750) an Arab imperialism. He was critical of democracy because it elected leaders by numbers, which made it possible for incompetent or morally corrupt individuals to be elected, especially in a country where the majority of people are uneducated, and live below the line of poverty. Since no better political model could be identified, Iqbal considered the democratic form of government most appropriate. He demonstrated this view by his own political participation in the provincial elections, his role as the Secretary and then the President of the Punjab Muslim League, All-India Muslim League in 1930, and two years later as the President of All-Parties Muslim Conference. However, one can conclude that Iqbal neither wholeheartedly supported the secular western democratic system nor did he attach any significance to the conventional Islamic concept of state (caliphate).

For Sunni Muslim states Iqbal did not visualize their democratic constitutions to include the provision for *Vilayat-i-Faqih*, the rule of the jurist consult. The

constitution making assemblies or conventions could be authorized to consult the *Ulama's* Council or Board which should be constituted outside of the legislatures. This consultation of the *ulama* should be temporary. He preferred that the constitution making assemblies, (whom he elevated to the status of *ijma-i umma* (general agreement of the Muslims) should have as its elected members competent lawyers, who should have the ability to utilize the principles of modern jurisprudence in harmony with Islamic principles. They should therefore be able to make laws in the light of modern times and the changing structure of the Muslim society.

Iqbal could not think of Islam without political power. For this reason he wanted to see Muslims of South Asia as free and sovereign. He presented to the splintered Muslims the principle of Muslim nationhood, and proposed the establishment of a separate Muslim state in the North-west of India. This state was to be a bridge to *Islamization* or a commonwealth of independent Muslim states. To him Islam was neither a form of nationalism nor an imperialism; it was just a league of Islamic states, which might be knitted together in a federation or a confederation by cultural, economic and military arrangements.

Finally Iqbal's intellectual horizon widened to include mankind, especially the underdeveloped and dominated humanity. His philosophic conception of *khudi* (ego) actually stood for self-realization individually and self-determination nationally. One of his poetic works, *Pas Chah Baiyad Kard Ay Aqwam-i Sharq* (what should be done O! Nations of the East) is a landmark message of awakening for the dominated states regardless of their race, religion or creed. He proposed that they could create a league of nations of their own, and make Tehran their Geneva.

*Tehran ho agar Alam-i Mashriq ka Geneva  
Sha'id kura-i Ard ki Taqdir badel Jaiy*

(If Tehran becomes the Geneva of the nations of the East  
It might change the fate of the world.)

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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<sup>1</sup> Ata Allah, *Iqbal Nama*, Vol. I, p. 108

<sup>2</sup> *Maqalat-i Iqbal Congress*, 1963 Vol. II English, "Philosophy of Life" by Jagan Nath Azad, p. 98.

<sup>3</sup> *Tabsrah*, October 1965.

<sup>4</sup> A personal photocopy of Iqbal's letter in the author's file.

<sup>5</sup> Salik, op. cit., p. 210.

<sup>6</sup> For details on Iqbal's economic view, see Javid Iqbal, "Iqbal Kay Ma'ashi Conceptions," *Mayia-Lala Fam* (Lahore: 1972), pp. 300-360.



## Chapter XIII

### THE LAST DAYS

By 1938 Iqbal had reached a respectably advance age of sixty-two. If he was not really old, he was nevertheless clearly no longer young. Yet he had not been fortunate in economic well-being, and good health. As a lawyer, he was moderately successful, but as he became engaged in politics his modest legal practice suffered, and his monthly income dwindled to a trickle. His health problems multiplied, but the most devastating handicap developed, as he lost his voice, and cataract in his eyes made it exceptionally difficult for him to read and write. By 1935 his income from the legal practice was zero. Only income available to him was royalty from the sale of his poetic works, and the fee amount he received for examining the final examination papers of undergraduate and graduate students of the Punjab University. Detailed information of his annual income from 1925-1938 is given in the second volume of his biography, *Zinda Rud*, Vol. II, p. 26. During the last four years of life his income was no more than proverbial pittance.

Fiscal Year	Annual Income rupees)	Tax Paid (rupees)
1934-35	4,609	168.00
1935-36	7,860	399.00

1936-37	16,065	1,450.00
1937-38	8,062	409.00

Enduring these very difficult conditions, Iqbal prepared a research project relating to a new dialectical theology (*ilm al-kalam*). He asked his friend Sir Saiyyad Ross Mas`ud (grandson of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan) to request the Nawab of Bhopal for a monthly grant of Rs. 500/- for life. Mas`ud was then the Minister of Education in Bhopal state, and he effectively intervened with the Nawab in Iqbal's favor. In May 1935 the Nawab's government officially informed Iqbal of this grant. This news brought a degree of relief to Iqbal, but his woes continued to multiply. His wife Sardar Begum, who had not been in good health for several years deteriorated further. She had a lifelong wish to own a house for the family as Iqbal had lived most of his life in Lahore in rented houses. She had pinched pennies from the family's modest budget, and had saved some money in the bank for Javid. These funds were put together with the cash which she received with the sale of her bridal jewelry. With this money a plot of land on Mayo Road (now called Iqbal Road) was purchased in auction, and the construction of the house was started, which was completed in 1935.

The house was jointly owned by Iqbal and Sardar Begum, but two days before her death the ownership was transferred to their son, Javid Iqbal. After this transaction both husband and wife became the tenants, especially Iqbal, who reserved for his exclusive use two rooms. Iqbal regularly paid the monthly rent to Javid's account in the bank. In September 1934 Iqbal's well-known work, *Musafer*, was published and its royalty along with the royalty of other works were transferred to Javid's name, and necessary documents were filed with the Registrar.

The Iqbal family moved to the new house, now called *Javid Manzil*, on May 20, 1935, but Sardar Begum, who

was confined to bed, was transferred there in an ambulance. At a young age of 40 she died three days later, and left behind a young daughter Munnirah Bano age 4 ½ and a son Javid age 10½ years. In addition to Iqbal's national concerns now he had to confront the responsibility of raising two young children. Not known to be an emotionally demonstrative father Iqbal started paying attention to them. Both were told to see him every morning before they departed for their schools, and each received a paternal kiss on their forehead. After a while these kisses just became perfunctory.

Raising these two children became a serious chore. Some relative ladies came in to look after them, but the lack of a stable arrangement was disruptive of the household life. Sibling infighting often unnerved the father. Finally in 1937 Iqbal engaged the services of a German governess, Doris Landweer, who created order in the house: children were looked after properly, house was cleaned and well-appointed, and meals were served on time in the dining room, and Iqbal made it a point to eat lunch with them. A semblance of family life returned with laughter. Doris had a badminton court installed in the spacious courtyard of the house, where Javid, Munnirah and Doris played together.

During these years Iqbal also traveled to Bhopal as Sir Ross Mas`ud's guest, and invariably took Javid with him to lessen the possibility of sibling quarrels. In Bhopal electric therapy was available for Iqbal's throat troubles. While Iqbal enjoyed social gatherings at the Nawab's residence, and his almost daily dinners with Sir Ross and his wife Ummat al-Mas`ud the treatment of his throat did not show any improvement.

Vienna in those days excelled in medical science, and it was proposed to Iqbal that he should visit that city for the treatment of his several ailments. Aware of his insufficient income, Iqbal refused to travel to Austria saying that the

heavy expense involved would deprive his young children the economic support they would need after his demise. In anticipation of this eventuality he completed a will on August 13, 1935 designating four individuals as the trustees of his estate, and to function as the guardians of his minor children: Khawaja Abdul Ghani (his brother-in-law), Shaikh Ijaz Ahmad (his nephew), Munshi Tahir-ud-Din (his former law clerk), and Chaudhary Muhammad Hussain (his trusted friend). Located in Lahore Hussain looked after Javid and Munirah with dedication and “paternal” affection.

In January 1938 throughout Muslim India Iqbal Day celebrations were organized by the Inter-collegiate Muslim Brotherhood. Newspapers, magazines and journals published the Iqbal number issues, as Lahore was most conspicuous in its devotion to Iqbal. A large public meeting was held in the city, where a large number of political leaders, scholars and student activists paid tributes to Iqbal’s leadership, poetic excellence, and devotion to the Muslims’ causes. These celebrations convinced Iqbal that his views had gained popularity in the Muslim public; he said: “these Iqbal Day celebrations have given me profound satisfaction to realize that the land where I sowed my seeds [*ideas*] is not a barren land.”<sup>1</sup>

Impressed by the outpouring of Muslims’ affection for Iqbal, and Sir Sikander Hayat Khan’s appeal to raise funds for Iqbal, Hyderabad-Deccan state’s Prime Minister Sir Akbar Hydery sent Iqbal a check in the amount of Rs. 1,000.00 from the Ruler’s special state fund with a note that this fund was administered by him, and was in the form of personal entertainment for use at Iqbal’s discretion. Outraged by Sir Akbar Hydery’s insolent note Iqbal rejected this grant, and returned his check with the following four verses, reflecting his profound indignation.

*Tha yeh Allah ka farman kah Shikoh-i Pervaiz  
Dow Qalander ko kah hain us mein malukanah sefat  
Mujh say firmaya kah lay awr Shahinshahi ker*



*Hussan-i tadbir say dey ani wa fani koh Sabat  
 Mein to iss bar-i amanat ko utatha sir-i dowsh  
 Kam-i derweish mein her talkh hai manind-i nibat  
 Ghairat-i faqr mager ker na aky us ko qabul  
 Jab kaha uss nay yeh hai meiry khudaiy ky zakat*

Allah commanded that give to this Sufi the Emperor's power

Because he displays in his character all the royal qualities

I undertook this weighty assignment, but  
 in a Sufi's mouth every statement becomes sweet  
 The personal dignity of this mystic could not accept  
 this which appeared to be the *zakat* (mandatory charity) of his majesty

Naturally this elegant satire embittered Iqbal's relations with Sir Akhar Hydery, which had actually soured during the London Round table Conferences, just as his personal relations had become less than cordial with Sir Abdul Qadir and Sir Fazl-i Hussain. Fellow Lahorees the last two were his close friends, and Iqbal had dedicated beautiful poems to them.

In January 1938 Lord Lothian called on Iqbal at the *Javid Manzil*. An admirer of Iqbal, he was greatly impressed by Iqbal's proposed solution to the Hindu-Muslim conflict, which centered on the concept of the territorial distribution of India. Lord Lothian was instrumental in obtaining an invitation for Iqbal to deliver the Rhodes lecture at Oxford University. Iqbal had selected the topic of time and space. He also had Iqbal's seven lectures published by Oxford University Press. The book was published, but Iqbal did not survive long enough to deliver the lecture.

Another significant visitor to Iqbal in this month was Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who was then visiting Lahore as a witness of Dr. Muhammad Alam, a local barrister, who had sued the daily *Civil and Military Gazette* for defamation of

his character. Nehru stayed with Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, the President of the Punjab National Congress. By this time a wide ideological and political chasm separated Hindu and Muslim leaders. Even this visit became a centerpiece of polemic between the two. The first contentious issue was how was Nehru's visit to Iqbal arranged: did Nehru call upon the ailing statesman or the statesman invited the Congress leader?

In commenting on Nehru's visit Sayyad Nazir Niazi stated: "I asked Iqbal, how was Nehru's visit with you, and [how was it arranged]? He said that one day Dr. Chakraverty had visited me, and said that whenever there was any reference to you [Iqbal] Nehru spoke of you with great fondness. He is arriving in Lahore today. I wish the two of you would meet, and I hope you would not object [to his visit] with you. Not at all, I replied. Whenever, you feel like it, bring him [Nehru] over. However, these two issues are [worth discussing]: independent India, and Muslims' share in this struggle for independence. Panditji Nehru and Muslims should be prepared to discuss them [with me]...In the evening of that day of Dr. Chakraverty's visit, he returned to see me in the early evening, and stated that Nehru was free today, and would like to call on you at 8:00 PM I said to him: welcome."<sup>2</sup>

Nehru came to visit Iqbal at the *Javid Manzil*, and was accompanied by his hosts, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din and his wife. Iqbal had deputed Javid and Mian Muhammad Shafi to receive Nehru, and his entourage at the entrance of the house. Nehru was affectionate with Javid, and put his arm around him, and they entered Iqbal's room, where he was stretched out on his bed almost half asleep. Right in the Indian tradition, Nehru and the members of his entourage insisted on sitting on the floor as a mark of respect for the ailing and elderly poet-philosopher.

What did they talk about?

In those days Nehru was known to be the leader of the leftwing in the Indian National Congress. He viewed India's problems, like a good Marxist socialist in poverty and general economic deprivation. Iqbal asked Nehru how many Congress leaders shared Nehru's convictions in socialism. Nehru's answer was about six. With so few supporters how could he then invite Muslims to join the Congress!

Then their topic of discussion shifted to Hindu-Muslim conflict. Iqbal predicted the rise in the strategic importance of West Asia, which was the core of the Asian continent. If in the Indian Sub-Continent Hindus did not treat Muslims with equity, and managed to alienate them India would spoil its relations with the Muslim states of the Middle East. Iqbal added it was to the [political] advantage of Hindus to maintain friendly relations with the Muslim population.

Ashiq Hussain Batalvi narrated another dialogue: "While Nehru-Iqbal parley was in progress Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din interrupted to say: Dr. Sahib, why don't you become the Muslims' leader? Muslims respect you much more than Jinnah. If you negotiate with Congress on Muslims' behalf much better results would ensue."

Angered by this comment, Iqbal rose from his sleeping posture, and sat upright, and looked him in the eye, and stated: "your stratagem is to flatter me to compete against Jinnah. I want you to know that Jinnah is the real leader of the Muslims, and I am one of his foot soldiers."

Then Iqbal went silent, and the room was filled with palpable tension. Nehru realized that Iftikhar-ud-Din's uncalled for intervention in the Nehru-Iqbal dialogue had spoiled Iqbal's mood. Any additional conversation would be counterproductive. Nehru rose from the floor, and bid farewell to Iqbal."<sup>3</sup>

Really no recorded minutes of this meeting exist. What does exist are the testimonies of Nehru and Saiyyad Nazir Niazi, who as a responsible scholar, preserved what Iqbal

orally conveyed to him. Based upon his one on one conversation with Iqbal, Niazi recorded his dialogue with Iqbal on January 24, 1938:

Nehru insisted that if Muslims joined the Congress unconditionally the struggle for freedom would be shortened. Iqbal emphatically stated the struggle for freedom of India could be successfully conducted if the minorities trusted the majority [Hindus], and the issue of minority's rights could be settled in advance, and the Congress struck a deal with the Muslims.

Nehru remained silent, and offered no comments on Iqbal's formulations. Iqbal believed that Nehru was convinced that eventually a settlement with the British government would be reached, and the Muslims could be ignored. Iqbal attempted to convince Nehru that no viable alternative to Hindu-Muslim settlement existed, and that Muslims were more deeply opposed to British imperialism than even the Hindus. At this point in time Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din jumped into the discourse saying, 'whatever you [Iqbal] say is factually true that Muslims aspire to achieve the freedom of the homeland like the Hindus, and are like the Hindus enemies of British imperialism. So why don't you [Iqbal] say publicly the truth: Muslims listen to you, who bothers about Jinnah's views.

According to Niazi, Iqbal then stated: 'Mian Sahib! Probably you would agree that Muslim unity is urgently needed...A semblance of unity has been created under Jinnah's leadership. Since Hindus do not like the process of Muslim unity as a nation, then should it be shattered to please them. Please forgive me, I am not prepared to accept it.'

At this point in the discussion the meeting was terminated, and Nehru and company departed.

In Lahore this meeting became the talk of the town: who said what, and why? Nehru claimed that Iqbal complimented him by saying that Jinnah was a politician, and that he was a patriot.

Nehru recorded his version:

A few months before his [Iqbal's] death, as he lay on his sick bed, he sent for me and I gladly obeyed the summons. As I

talked to him about many things, I felt, in spite of differences, how much we had in common and how easy it would be to get on with him. He was in reminiscent mood and he wandered from one subject to another, and I listened to him, talking little myself. I admired him and his poetry, and it pleased me greatly to feel that he liked me and had a good opinion of me. A little before I left him he said to me: 'What is there in common between Jinnah and you? He is a politician, you are a patriot.' I hope there is still much in common between Mr. Jinnah and me. As for my being a patriot, I do not know that this is a particular qualification in these days, at least in the limited sense of the word. Greatly attached as I am to India, I have long felt that something more than national attachment is necessary for us in order to understand and solve even our own problems...But Iqbal was certainly right in holding that I was not much of a politician, although politics had seized me and made me its victim."<sup>4</sup>

According to Niazi, Mian Bashir Ahmad (who later became the very first ambassador of Pakistan to Turkey)) raised this issue with Iqbal, who offered the following explanation:

I made a simple statement that Jinnah was a statesman (*siyasat-dan*, i.e., statesman or political leader) and Nehru was a patriot (*mohibbe watan*, lover of homeland). How does it follow that Jinnah was less of a patriot or that Nehru was a statesman? I meant to say that Nehru was often swayed by his patriotic emotions, and ignored concrete facts which a statesman must take into account. As a man of legal intellectual disposition Jinnah conducted himself as a statesman. He understood the core problems of India, as the ongoing struggle between the Hindus and the British government. I did not suggest that in the patriotic zeal if one shuts his eyes tight, and refused to recognize the facts then he was a true patriot."<sup>5</sup>

Nehru did not visit Iqbal to negotiate the political problems with Iqbal. The meeting was designed for an exchange of ideas, and to generate mutual good will. Despite the political gulf between them, Iqbal always liked Nehru. Indeed, Dr. Chakraverty was the one who arranged

this meeting. Insofar as statements attributed to Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din are concerned, they were disowned by his wife (who was present in this meeting).

By March 1938 Iqbal's health critically deteriorated. He disliked modern medicines, now he had discontinued them. He started to have excruciating pain in his back and shoulders. His heart and kidney did not function, and asthmatic attacks overwhelmed him. He steadily grew weaker. In this weakened physical condition he fell off his bed when he was overpowered by asthmatic fits. In his mind's eye he perceived the "physical presence" of two master poets – Jala-ud-Din Rumi (1207-1273), and Asad Allah Khan Ghalib (1797-1869) – in his room. He engaged them in an animated conversation. Javid saw him in this dialogue on two separate occasions. On another similar occasion, he asked his attendant Ali Bakhsh to step out and bring back to his room Mawlana Rumi, who was with him only a few minutes before.

On April 20, only a few hours before his death, he recited a Persian quatrain to Hasan Akhtar, a young admirer. Probably it had been composed a few months earlier. The quatrain is indicative of his own significance in history:

The departed melody may or may not come,  
 The breeze from Hadjaz may or may not come.  
 The days of this *Faqir* have come to an end,  
 Another wise one may or may not come!

When the news of Iqbal's death was broadcast from the Lahore Radio Station government offices and private stores were closed as a mark of respect. The leading Muslim citizens of Lahore (including Khalifa Shuja`-ud-Din, Mian Nizam-ud-Din, Mian Amir-ud-Din, and Ghulam Rasul Mehr) successfully sought the permission of the Punjab governor to bury Iqbal on a spot to the left of the steps leading to the Badshahi mosque in Lahore. On the evening of April 21, 1938 Iqbal was lowered into the grave.

The construction of the current mausoleum on the grave was started in 1946, when the Mausoleum Committee accepted a plan of Nawab Zin Yar Jung, a noted Muslim architect of Hyderabad. As a token of its admiration for Iqbal, the government of Afghanistan donated the lapis lazuli marble for the structure. On the front of the mausoleum one of Iqbal's quatrains is inscribed, reflecting the poet's sentiments about the unity of the Indic Muslims:

Neither are we Afghans nor Turks,  
Nor yet from the lands of Central Asia  
We belong to the garden, and descend from the same  
ancestors.  
Forbidden unto us are the distinctions of color or race,  
Yes! We are the harvest of a new spring.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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<sup>1</sup> Shaikh Ata Allah, Ed., *Iqbal Nama*, Vol. I, pp. 313-4.

<sup>2</sup> Niazi, *Iqbal kay Hadur Mein*, p. 103.

<sup>3</sup> Batalvi, op. cit., pp. 548-555.

<sup>4</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India* (New York: The John Day Company, 1945), p. 355.

<sup>5</sup> Niazi, op. cit., p. 103.

