University of Alberta

Iqbal's Urdu Political Poems: The Writer Against Colonialism

by

Uzma Qazi

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Comparative Literature

Spring 2013
Edmonton, Alberta

Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-92563-8

Our file Notre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-92563-8

To the memory of Zahoor Qazi and Khursheed Rizvi
Dwellers of the City of the Blessed

Abstract

Sir Allama Mohammad Iqbal's poetry and prose, despite their philosophical content and tone, are overtly political. This can be attributed to the political environment of British India in the late nineteenth and in the first half of the twentieth century; any intellectual of that period, whether Hindu or Muslim, could not help but join the struggle for freedom in their respective capacities. Iqbal's oeuvre has always been treated as the sacred document of the Muslims' demand for independence on both national and international levels. The field of Iqbal Studies is marked by unjustified political nuances imposed on his writings; each writer approaches Iqbal from his personal political agenda, and, as a result, we have Iqbal the sole originator of the Pakistan Plan, Iqbal the conservative, Iqbal the socialist, and Iqbal the liberal. I have found that this approach halts its search for meaning halfway through the hermeneutic circle. Scholars of Iqbal mostly make forays into his texts with political prejudices.

This dissertation is an attempt to read Iqbal's Urdu political poems closely to question the above-mentioned prejudices of most other Iqbal commentators. By completing the hermeneutic circle, I will be able to read Iqbal's poems with fresh insight and prove that he was an outspoken critic of colonialism, whether Western or Asian. His poems served no other agenda except his own vision of a free society comprised of morally and intellectually strong individuals.

The theoretical basis for this study comes from multiple sources such as colonial and postcolonial studies, subaltern studies, Orientalism, and revisionist historicism, to name a few. The combined use of these theoretical tools is most

pertinent to the case of Iqbal, whose entire literary and political output is a significant example of eclecticism.

This approach will enable me to engage in a genuine conversation with his poems, which successfully challenged the hegemony of the oppressor and furnished his people with a distinct identity.

The dissertation begins with the examination of Iqbal's challenge to commonly acclaimed authorities on both divine and human levels in his "Complaint" and "Answer." The discussion moves on to the challenger himself, now '*Mard-i-Khuda*,' who is the architect of the "Mosque of Cordoba." Fashioned with *Mard-i-Khuda*'s identity, Iqbal's man dismantles all prevailing political and social systems in "Satan's Parliament," the topic of my third chapter. The dissertation concludes with the socio-political will of Iqbal read in "Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts" to a youth who will inherit the wisdom of the speaker and will take control of his affairs in a free society after the departure of the British. To sum up, the poems and the eclectic approach adopted for this analysis will enable me to demonstrate that Iqbal made his cultural and religious identity as a site of resistance against the colonizers' imperialistic plan.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere thanks to my professors, friends, and family without whose support this project would have been impossible: my supervisor, Dr. Jonathan Hart, whose unwavering faith in my ability always filled me with great enthusiasm toward my research and writing; Dr. Earle Waugh, whose deep insight into the subject kept me on the right track; and Dr. Saleem Qureshi, with whom I enjoyed many readings in original languages and scholarly discussions.

I am also very grateful to my examination committee: Dr. Irene Sywenky, Dr. David Gay, Dr. Massimo Verdicchio, members of my supervisory committee, and the external examiner, Dr. Hafeez Malik.

I would also like to thank Janey Kennedy, Barb Heagle, and the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Alberta for taking care of all the official matters.

I am very thankful to FGSR and GSA for awarding me scholarships and grants for studies and research.

My thanks are also due to Dr. Javid Iqbal for explaining some important aspects of Allama Iqbal's work, and to Suheyl Umar for assisting me in my research at Iqbal Academy Lahore.

Last but not least, my friends and family: Cindy Chopoidalo, I highly appreciate your suggestions and corrections; Permjit Bhavra, thank you for taking care of BOBO whenever I needed you, and Jamal and Atiq Ghani for their moral support. I am also grateful to Qazi Nooruddin and Sadia, Shariq Khan and Hafsa, Qasim Bangash and Fouzia for being my hosts on my research trips to Pakistan. Special

thanks are also due to Khala Akhtar and Khala Munawar, whose prayers gave me strength.

I cannot thank my parents enough whose love and care enabled me to carve out my future. Ammi, you could not survive to see my achievement, but you are behind each and every word I wrote here; and Abbu Ji, your blessings made the journey easier.

And now special thanks to my husband, Wasiq, and my son, Avicenna: thank you for bearing with me; you both did a great job!

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INTRODUCTION

The political content of Muhammad Iqbal's poetry is one of the most fascinating and challenging aspects of Iqbal Studies: much has been written, and yet, much still needs to be explored. Except for a few poems, his entire poetic endeavour is tinged with the political concerns of his time; both domestic and international political events shaped his poetry. He not only responded to political events in his verse, but also inspired his fellow Indian Muslims, through his poetry, to find a way out of the political quandary in which the British colonial rule had put them. Perplexed and uncertain, the Indian Muslims definitely needed a leader who could help them aspire to a better future and guide them on the road to freedom; Iqbal performed this duty quite well.

This dissertation explores Iqbal's multi-nuanced response to British colonialism in India by concentrating on some of his Urdu political poems. The project is an attempt to liberate Iqbal's image from strict stereotypical categorizations by emphasizing his keen sense of adaptability to changing political scenarios and political expediency without compromising personal integrity. I have realized that, in the absence of such an approach, Iqbal is either dubbed as the 'Allama,' 'Architect of Pakistan,' and 'Hakeem-i-Ummat;' or as the 'nationalist,' 'British agent,' and 'apostate'. So, according to the first approach, Iqbal was the only Muslim leader in their struggle against British colonialism in India to present the concept of a free homeland for the Muslims. This is the most widely prevalent evaluation of Iqbal and the one endorsed by the official discourse of Pakistan since its inception in 1947. The second approach,

though again endorsed by institutionalized religiosity in the sub-continent, declares him the worst of the worst as he accepted a knighthood from the British when all of India was struggling against British supremacy. Both approaches, if observed closely, impose stereotypical images on Iqbal. On the one hand, the inquisitive mind stumbles upon certain positive or negative presuppositions such categories feed, and on the other, the presuppositions can spark a desire to evaluate Iqbal's contribution to the history of Indian Muslims on unbiased, fair, and more humane grounds. My research belongs to this buffer zone (if I may say so), which enables me to evaluate Iqbal's stature based on his poems and writings. This liberates me from the indoctrinating views of the extremists who used Iqbal as a poster child for their political gains, before and after the partition of India.

Politics and philosophy combine in Iqbal's poetry quite well; his vision is always poetic, even in some of his most famous political addresses. Hence, his poetry deserves a special attention to the multiple nuances which it acquires with the passage of time, with different people, and sometimes within the poem itself when reading one couplet after another. The inclusionary nationalists, to use Ayesha Jalal's term, always cited his poems he wrote in praise of his motherland, India. Their argument was that such a dedicated Indian nationalist should refrain from advocating the idea of partition. In addition to this, the situation interests us greatly when we see that the *Mullahs* (clergy), whom Iqbal strongly condemned in his poetry, recite his verses in their Friday prayers to arouse the sentiments of their brethren. Last but not least, some of his most popular poems, such as

"Complaint," "Answer," and "Satan's Parliament," constantly shift in meaning from verse to verse to add richness to their central theme.

To give Iqbal the credit he deserves as a politicized and institutionalized political poet, I have read my selection of his poems from the perspective of anti-colonial texts of indigenous resistance. The theoretical framework for my understanding comes from Ania Loomba's *Colonialism-Postcolonialism*, Ayesha Jalal's *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam Since 1850*, and Barbra Metcalf's "Too Little and Too Much: Reflections on Muslims in the History of India." I will refer further to a number of other critics and writers who focus on colonial texts as sites of resistance, including Chinua Achebe, Frantz Fanon, and Jonathan Hart, to name a few. My approach will be thoroughly eclectic because Iqbal himself was eclectic in his sources of inspiration and performance: Rumi and Goethe, Al Jilli and Nietzsche, *Asharites* and Bergson, one and all captured his imagination. As regards his performance, he is poet, prose writer, and philosopher, all in one; moreover, he writes in Urdu, Persian, and English with natural flair, not to mention German, which he learnt for his PhD in Munich. However, I will analyse only his Urdu political poems.

Iqbal's Urdu political poems offer an interesting study if looked at from the perspective of colonial studies. My research and findings prove that Iqbal's work is a part of the colonial discourse defined by Ania Loomba. She considers such discourse:

> a new way of thinking in which cultural, intellectual, economic or political processes are seen to work together in the formation, perpetuation and

> dismantling of colonialism. It seeks to widen the scope of studies of colonialism by examining the intersection of ideas and institutions, knowledge and power. Consequently, colonial violence is understood as including an 'epistemic' aspect, i.e. an attack on the culture, ideas and value systems of the colonised people. (*Colonialism/Postcolonialism* 54)

As to the first part of this definition, I will try to prove by analysis that the writings of Iqbal dismantle colonialism, as he challenges the coloniser's authority quite often. He prefers to cling to his past, which is both romantic and nostalgic. It is specifically here that the challenge is fully heard. But my findings also suggest that this challenge is multi-nuanced. Historians and critics have simplified it by calling it a combination of East and West, but I prefer to see it as the amplification of a struggling subject against the meta-narrative of the colonizer. In this struggle the intersection of ideas is inevitable. Colonized intellectuals consistently raised the question of their cultures both as the sites of colonial oppression, and as vital tools for their own resistance (Loomba 24). This is the paradigm in which I have found Iqbal's work. However, he goes further and makes not only his own culture a site of resistance, but also the coloniser's culture as a catalyst for the indigenous resistance.

I do not agree with those scholars, such as Hamilton Gibb and A.C. Smith, who consider Iqbal's work apologetic, keeping in the tradition of apologetic writing in India which culminated in Syed Amir Ali's *The Spirit of Islam*. The relationship between the colonizer and the colonized is built on a contested terrain of ideology. Instead of being apologetic, Iqbal challenges the colonizer's position.

Though his rhetoric combines the best of both the East and the West, it is fraught with the colonized subject's pride in his lost glory and his inevitable struggle to come to grips with the colonizer's world. Renan believes that of all the cults of a nation, which he considers a soul or spiritual principle, "that of the ancestors is the most legitimate, for the ancestors have made us what we are. A heroic past, great men, glory...this is the social capital upon which one bases a national idea" (19). However nostalgic, Iqbal never suggested a refuge in the past glories of presently defeated people; rather, he used the past therapeutically to enhance his fellows' self-esteem upon which they could win their future freedom.

Consequently, to modify the definition of Aschcroft et al., Iqbal had a dual function to perform. On the one hand, after equipping himself with linguistic ability, he incorporated the ideas of the colonizer into his culture; and on the other, instead of appropriating the colonizer's language, he invested it with his cultural inheritance. This is true of Iqbal's method of assimilation. He does not replace or displace the colonizer, but tries to stand on equal footing with him. This is, to some extent, what Chinua Achebe talks about in his article "Colonial Criticism." Under imperial rule, "a new situation was slowly developing as a handful of natives began to acquire European education and then to challenge Europe's presence and position in their native land with the intellectual weapons of Europe itself" (58). Iqbal uses such intellectual weapons very successfully.

Iqbal's Urdu political poems can be viewed as literary resistance to the hegemony of imperial power. It is a resistance, embedded in a text, to a "definable set of power relations" and "all literary writing which emerges from these cultural

locations will be understood as carrying a radical and contestatory content—and this gives away the rather important point that subjected peoples are sometimes capable of producing reactionary literary documents" (Slemon 104-06). This is true of almost all of Iqbal's writings.

Thus, the famous Foucauldian claim that knowledge is not innocent but profoundly connected with the operations of power can be applied very aptly to Iqbal's political poems. "The process" by which colonialism "refracted the production of knowledge and structured the conditions for its dissemination and reception" testifies "both to colonial power and to its complex interaction with 'other' epistemologies, ideologies and ways of seeing" (Loomba 69). Ironically, the discovery of the "other" leads an indigenous person to the deepest folds of his own culture and identity.

Looked at from the perspective of Comparative Literature, this dissertation is an attempt to add to the debate of shifting interest from Euro-American subjects and authors to the less patronized and oft-neglected peripheral spaces which cannot be ignored any more in our postcolonial world because "the strength of post-colonial theory may well lie in its inherently comparative methodology and the hybredized and syncretic view of the modern world which this implies" (Ashcroft, *The Empire Writes Back* 37). Despite this trend, it is sad to see that Iqbal has not yet been given an entry in the North American anthologies of World Literature such as Norton or Longman. Perhaps the imperial control over knowledge distribution is at work here.

A study of Iqbal's works, or Urdu political poems for that matter, fits neatly in the broader picture of Comparative Literature for many reasons. First, his eclectic ideology can be best understood if his sources of inspiration are juxtaposed with the end results. His encounter with the British colonialism takes place on two fronts: scholarly and political; he never hesitated to accept influences from Western philosophers and poets, and he welcomed all those British political moves that could benefit the Muslims. The most significant examples of his understanding of Western metaphysics and its political systems are his lectures, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, and his poems "Mosque of Cordoba" and "Satan's Parliament"—the primary texts of the second and third chapter of this dissertation. Second, Iqbal's work warrants an eclectic approach on part of the researcher too; Iqbal cannot be understood within the parameters of one discipline. The comparatist can understand, for example, Iqbal's view on socialism, democracy, and the Islamic republic only if he is well familiar with these political ideologies in theory and practice. Third, there is hardly any critique of Iqbal which does not offer a comparative analysis due to the fluidity of Iqbal's ideas which traffic in from various directions. My study is bound to be not an exception on this account; however, I have contextualized his four famous poems in great length to see the immediate and relational implications of comparative analysis.

This dissertation is divided into four chapters, each of which also has three to four subdivisions. My selection of the primary texts is based on their direct bearing on some famous major political events which changed the course of

history for the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent. I looked for those meanings which dominate the texts from the beginning to the end, but were intentionally not touched upon by the dominating institutionalized or official discourse for its vested interests. For example, the "singularity" of his poems is "universalizable," to borrow Spivak's terms, but the official discourse destroys this universal appeal by focusing too much on the obvious. As a result, "Complaint" and "Answer" are generally read as an address to defeated people whom Providence has punished for its misdeeds; "Mosque of Cordoba" would bring tears to the eyes of those pious souls who have been fed on the emotional accounts of Islam's demise in Spain; "Satan's Parliament" would condemn all political systems except "spiritual democracy;" and "Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts" are nothing more than a recap of a life of a seasoned man. In a reaction to this, my dissertation builds its arguments on certain questions instead of known facts. Is it worthwhile to cling to a romanticized past and learn nothing from it? How could his otherwise dejected people brook the idea of being co-workers with God who had apparently forsaken them? What social and political conditions might help the implementation of "spiritual democracy"? And last but not least, how Iqbal's will was treated by millions of Pakistanis once his dream turned into reality in the shape of Pakistan? All four chapters of my dissertation attempt to answer these questions one by one.

The first chapter on "Complaint" and "Answer" discusses how history furnishes Iqbal with much evidence to register his complaint about loss of power and Muslim depravity, on the human and divine levels simultaneously. My close reading of the poems has spotlighted the misplaced emphasis on war, which

ignores the more humane and appropriate focus on learning altogether. His apparent "paean on Islamic militarism" in "Complaint" and "Answer" problematizes his broader vision of freedom, equality, and happiness (Sadiq 467). In order to resolve an apparent contradiction in his arguments, there is a need to look for other meanings in his poems: he condemns Western imperialism as much as he condemns Muslim imperialism. He argues in *Reconstruction* that Islamic scholarship declined due to more emphasis on imperial expansion than on the expansion of mental horizons. The chapter shifts focus from war to knowledge in order to situate his individual poems in the broader framework of his entire oeuvre.

Though apparently motivated by the Balkan War and the disintegration of the Muslim Ottoman Empire, Iqbal's effort was directed towards making the international political situation into a warning against apathy among the Indian Muslims. He selected his stance very carefully as he did not want to put his people on the destructive road of agitation; nor did he allow them to close their eyes to that international event of great importance for them. He was shrewd enough to keep himself at a distance from the popular movements of Khilafat and Swaraj, which played with the sentiments of the people.

The three subdivisions of this chapter offer a comparative study of Iqbal's and other Indian leaders' response to the changing domestic and world politics. He thought that his task was to empower his people by clearing their vision and educating them. It was their lack of agency that led to their support of the Turks. They associated the Turkish struggle with their own fight against the Western

imperial forces that had captivated them for several centuries. Iqbal saw a problem with this vicarious wishfulness: it was more opiatic than activating, and dangerously temporary. The practical wisdom he gained through the Khilafat Movement was to accept change and adapt oneself to it. Ahmad Aziz has aptly remarked that he could not "reject his faith *in toto*, turn his back on the past and go over to the Western values in heart and soul. He accepted something, he made compromises, he picked and chose" (242). The chapter highlights these compromises, which are otherwise unheard of in most of Iqbal Studies.

In order to give agency to his fellows, Iqbal worked on two planes. First, he exhibited this agency through his defiance of God's scheme of things in which the Muslims had no status. When he succeeded in turning a few heads because of his apparent blasphemous utterances, he presented the same argument to his fellow Muslims: he reminded them that the problem was actually with them, not with God. Here again, Iqbal's method is different from some of his predecessor poets in this field. Unlike Hali and Shibli, he did not treat a sad chapter in Muslim history in the elegiac mode; rather, he went further and transformed elegy into a message of hope without changing the subject matter at all.

Iqbal selected another chapter from Muslim history for his "Mosque of Cordoba," the topic of my second chapter. He recorded the first Muslim encounter with the West in highly philosophical language. In fact, he set an example for his fellows to emulate: deeply impressed by Bergson's notion of *durée* and *élan vital*, and Nietzsche's *Übermensch*, he clothed their views in Islamic terminology and sought the validity of their arguments through Islamic mysticism. This approach

is a perfect example of his political acumen. The Muslims made Spain their colony in the twelfth century and added richness to the otherwise barren Western culture with their cultural heritage, leading to the famous oft-repeated argument among Muslim historians that the West was enlightened by the arrival of the Muslims. The Indian Muslims should, in the same manner, treat their present encounter with the West on their soil: the damage is done; now it is time to overcome nostalgia and build their future with full confidence in their capacity to adapt and change.

The chapter explains in detail Iqbal's concept of selfhood and *Mard-i-Khuda* and relates it to the underlying message for change. The Muslim will have to rethink the whole system of Islam without completely breaking with the past. The British imperial rule brought in its wake an opportunity to shed mental lethargy and challenge established norms as well as established authority. To this end the Muslims will have to fashion themselves as *Mard-i-Khuda,* whose grandeur still pulsates through the architecture of the Mosque of Cordoba: "Yet, in this frame of things, gleams of immortal life / Show where some servant of God wrought into some high shape" (Kiernan 9-10).

The Mosque of Cordoba is a witness to a history of invasion, both militant and cultural, whether Muslim or Christian. Its history is intertwined with the rise and fall of empires. Therefore, the use of the mosque as a trope for the transitoriness of time and fragility of the political status quo was very pertinent to the condition of Indian Muslims. They would have to come to terms with their reality, which was then a foreign occupation, but in future it could be their rule,

provided they transform themselves into *Mard-i-Khuda*.

The chapter offers insights into Iqbal's conscious effort to Islamicize certain Western ideologues because he was fully aware of the power of religion on his people. However, unlike some of his contemporaries, he did not abuse religion for political motives. His understanding of Islam was essentially different from some of his bigoted contemporaries, and it was far deeper than his understanding of the West.

How far Iqbal succeeded in understanding the Western political system is nowhere better expressed than his "Parliament of Satan," the topic of the third chapter of my dissertation. The poem was composed at a time when Iqbal's mission of enlightening his fellow Muslims had also entered a new phase. He had diligently inched his way to this stage from the reprimand of "Complaint" and Answer" and his acceptance of the clash of civilizations represented in "Mosque of Cordoba." There was a need to go back to one's roots for the final rebound once the external nurturing of their ideas was complete. Only Islam offered the solution, as the Western systems of thought, despite their current success, could not attain the wholesomeness Iqbal associated with Islam. This is what Masud Raja calls the third phase in the life of a struggling subject in Fanon's paradigm: "the fighting phase [in which] the native, after having tried to lose himself in the people and with the people, will on the contrary shake the people" (Raja 109). In order to test his people's awareness of their situation, Iqbal offered a kind of 'trial and error' approach to test different political systems. India was facing a constitutional deadlock and, like many other leaders, Iqbal was quick to offer his

solution.

The poem came in the wake of his Pakistan Plan embodied in his 1930 Allahabad Address. The criticism of Western polity in the address was given poetic vision in the poem. In order to "shake his people" he used Satan and his cronies as his spokespersons. The "good perverted" of the Scriptures criticizes severely prevalent Western political systems which cannot stand the test of time—his only fear is Islam. The chapter looks at the implications of Islam at the centre of a state which, according to Iqbal, would not be a theocracy. Further, it investigates the ambiguities surrounding his notion of the Islamic state. At times he sounds as if Socialism with God means Islam, or as if democracy with a focus on religion is Islam. This led to a common belief among his critics that Iqbal was a socialist. The chapter will look into that matter as well.

Due to the urgency of his message, Iqbal experimented with many established norms and truths in this poem. First, he reversed the roles of the creator and the destroyer: God becomes a destroyer, and Satan a preserver of the prevalent scheme of things. Beyond the apparent dichotomy, one can discern that this reversal goes very well with the thematic pattern of the poem. The setting of the poem is an age of colonial strife and class conflict which has unsettled age-old established truths. The proletariat can dream of a bourgeoisie-free society and the colonized can struggle for their political emancipation—something not even dreamed of a few decades ago. Moreover, "Satan's Parliament" discusses political issues in a democratic fashion, in a parliament. However, Iqbal warned his readers to be ready for a parliament of diabolic forces if one opted for western systems of

government without involving religion. No doubt, the need to turn to Muslim ideology was underlined by the parliament of diabolic forces—which means that only democracy can be used against an anti-democratic attitude—but Iqbal, personally, could not go that far to give his whole-hearted support to this system, if implemented without incorporating Islam into it. Whether the leading Muslim politicians, including Jinnah, paid heed to what Iqbal said, is yet another aspect the chapter will deal with.

In the fourth chapter of this dissertation, as I complete my hermeneutic circle of Iqbal's anti-colonial struggle, I find Iqbal's struggle also comes to a full circle: he started with denouncing the practices of his fellow Muslims in colonial rule ("Complaint" and "Answer"), urged them to assimilate the master's metanarrative on certain shared grounds as implied in "Mosque of Cordoba," and finally suggested to them to reject any slavish imitation to rely on one's time-tested principles inherited from one's collective consciousness, to put it in Jungian terms. Iqbal's sincerity is above board at each stage. He has successfully waged an intellectual war against the degrading inferiority complex which, according to Frantz Fanon, is created in the soul of the colonized people by the death and burial of their cultural originality (qtd. in Loomba 23-4). Iqbal triumphantly concludes his poetic career on a vision of pristine beauty arrived at after a long life of strife and struggle.

His vision in "Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts" involves a speaker whose identity is shrouded in mystery, and a silent youth whose silence speaks volumes as the speaker gets his clues for his philosophy from this silence. My fourth

chapter goes back and forth in the reiteration of Mehrab Gul's ideology, which is impossible to distinguish from Iqbal's. The speaker has found his identity in his religion and culture on his own terms. It was Mehrab Gul shown as a defeated mindset of "Complaint" and "Answer;" it was Mehrab Gul-turned-*Mard-i-Khuda* who built the Mosque of Cordoba as a meeting point between civilizations; it was Mehrab Gul who examined the established ideologues of world politics in "Satan's Parliament;" but it would *not* be Mehrab Gul who would build a dream land based on his newly-found identity—Pakistan. The chapter deals with the question of identity in detail to see Iqbal's contribution towards this concept. The identity would shape the future course of the Pakistan Movement; however, it was reshaped by different hands. The liberal camp tailored it to its political advantages and conservatives were too quick to jump on the bandwagon.

I will analyse the identity question in further detail in the conclusion of this dissertation by declaring it as the only answer to the four questions I have raised in this project. I will explain how my research and findings have successfully enabled me to see the identity of an Indian Muslim in being a co-worker with God, in his romanticized heroic past, in his desire for a "spiritual democracy," and in the presumably political will of Iqbal as he passed the torch to others to follow.

Chapter One:

"Complaint" and "Answer"

> Decolonization never takes place unnoticed, for it influences individuals and modifies them fundamentally. It transforms spectators crushed with their inessentiality into privileged actors, with the grandiose glare of history's floodlights upon them. It brings a natural rhythm into existence, introduced by new men, and with it a new language and a new humanity.
>
> (Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* 36)

"COMPLAINT" AND "ANSWER"

Iqbal was a significant voice in the traumatic history of colonized India. His sensitivity to the plight of his people was sharpened both by his understanding of his roots and his adaptability to the demands of the new colonized world: a Janus-like approach of looking back and forward at the same time. However, it was impossible to mobilize the Muslims of India unless he addressed their current needs. He did this quite artfully by invoking their glorious past and conjuring the images of a sovereign homeland while spotlighting their current deprivation. The most representative examples of this trend are his poems "Complaint" and "Answer," written in 1911 and 1913.

These poems stand as the most representative of Iqbal's Urdu poems. They have passed the test of time and both are as relevant to present socio-political upheavals in the Muslim world as they were in Iqbal's era. This chapter offers an in-depth study of "Complaint" and "Answer" and their political and literary context. It is an attempt to draw attention to the neglected aspect of the ascendancy of knowledge over brutal war**,** because the world has already entered into that phase of civilization where dialogue counts and should count more than the arsenal. Whether a Romantic ideology or pacifism, it worked well in the colonized India of the 20th century represented by Gandhi, Jinnah, and Iqbal.

"Complaint" and "Answer": Reading between the Lines

On the surface level, the tone of defiance can be clearly heard in the questions Iqbal asks God in "Complaint" 'شکوہ':

Why must I forever suffer loss, oblivious to gain,

Why think not upon the morrow, drowned in grief for yesterday?

Why must I attentive heed the nightingale's lament of pain?

Fellow-bard, am I a rose, condemned to silence all the way?

No; the burning power of song bids me be bold and not to faint;

Dust be in my mouth, but God—he is the theme of my complaint.

(Trans. Arberry 1-6)[1]

The grief of his yoked people has brought him to the point where he is quite openly questioning the Providence for the humiliation his people are suffering at the hands of the colonizers throughout the world. Why must he (representing the entire Muslim population of the world) always suffer loss and be oblivious to gain? Why is he expected to think about the past and be ignorant of the future? He is not a cruel flower to listen to the nightingale's lament of pain and remain indifferent—a traditional Urdu poetic image.[2] His poetic talent spurs him to articulate this complaint to God, which is otherwise forbidden.

The above-quoted verses set not only the theme of the poem but also its subsequent five sections: the suffering and acquiescence of his people, their

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[1] کیوں زیاں کار بنوں سود فراموش رہوں؟ فکرِ فردا نہ کروں، محوِ غمِ دوش رہوں
نالے بلبل کے سنوں اور ہمہ تن گوش رہوں ہم نوا میں بھی کوئی گل ہوں کی خاموش رہوں
جراَت آموز میری تابِ سخن ہے مجھ کو
شکوہ اللہ سے خاکم بد ہن ہے مجھ کو
(*Kuliyat-i-Iqbal* 1-6)

[2] The nightingale and flower (rose) are among the favourite tropes of classical Urdu poets. The pair symbolizes a lover (the nightingale) mostly pricked by the thorns (indifference) of the rose, its beloved.

tendency to rest on their past laurels without realizing new dreams, their complaint upon the realization of their loss and inactivity, and finally a prayer offered in the strong belief that God will change their condition. Iqbal offers a whole spectrum of mixed feelings, ranging from a conservative departure from tradition to open defiance of it. As he says:

> True, we are forever famous for our habit to submit;
>
> Yet we tell our tale of grief, as by our grief we are constrained.
>
> We are but a muted lyre; yet a lament inhabits it—
>
> If a sigh escapes our lips, no more can sorrow be contained.
>
> God, give ear to the complaint of us, Thy servants tried and true;
>
> Thou art used to songs of praise; now hear a note of protest too. (7-12)[3]

Otherwise known for their acquiescence, the Muslims are forced to register their complaint. However, this is not an easy task for them because they are not familiar with the conventions of such complaints—most of them are silent despite the urgency of their heart-felt desire. Having never done this before, the speaker of this complaint is naturally overwhelmed by hesitation and shyness**.** In between, he wavers from dejection to hope. The following sestet eases the tension the poet has been able to build so far. It provides a relief from the angst he experiences

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[3] ہے بجا شیوۂ تسلیم میں مشہور ہیں ہم قصۂ درد سناتے ہیں کہ مجبور ہیں ہم
سازِ خاموش ہیں، فریاد سے معمور ہیں ہم نالہ آتا ہے اگر لب پہ تو معذور ہیں ہم
اے خدا شکوۂ اربابِ وفا بھی سن لے
خوگرِ حمد سے تھوڑا سا گلا بھی سن لے
(*Kuliyat* 7-12)

when forced to keep his feelings to himself. Second, he rationalizes his existence as an independent agency which even God needed to disseminate His message: "Lord of universal favour, let impartial justice be— / Could the rose's perfume scatter with no breeze to waft aboard?" (15-16).[4] Since he is the product of Divine need, he expects Divine justice in respecting his needs as an independent human too. After this follows a record of Muslims' spiritual and martial achievements in the next six sestets to remind God of all the heroic deeds Muslims have performed.

The first evidence the speaker puts forth for his case is that, in the absence of the Muslim nation, there would have been no one to believe in God. People used to worship idols and trees before the advent of Islam. It is only Muslims who introduced the concept of an unseen God. Their prowess was an instrument to convey the right message to the world, drowned in idol-worshipping at that time. No nation in the world had enough courage to fight for a just cause despite the fact that Saljuks, Turanians, Sassanians, Chinese, Greeks, Jews, and Christians had their sway in their territories. Muslims alone were able to perform this task; therefore, it is legitimate to ask "Who upraised the sword of battle in Thy name's most sacred cause / Or who strove to right the ruined world by thy most hallowed laws?" (29-30).[5] He continues in the same vein:

It was we and we alone who marched, Thy soldiers to the fight,

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[4] شرطِ الطاف ہے اے صاحبِ الطافِ عمیم
بوُے گل پھیلتی کس طرح جو ہوتی نہ نسیم
(*Kuliyat* 15-16)

[5] پرترے نام پر تلوار اُٹھای کس نے
بات جو بگڑی ہوی تھی، وہ بنایَ کس نے
(*Kuliyat* 29-30)

Now upon the land engaging, now embattled on the sea,

The triumphant Call to Prayer in Europe's churches to recite,

Through the wastes of Africa to summon men to worship thee.

All the glittering splendor of great emperors we reckoned none;

In the shadow of our glinting swords we shouted, "God is One!" (31-36)[6]

It is interesting to see that the list of martial achievements intertwines preaching and holy war, which might be a disturbing factor to contemporary readers, but for Iqbal's colonized readers, it served a double purpose: it invigorates them with a burning desire to fight for their freedom the way their ancestors fought to spread Islam; second, it persuades them to see that the mooring for their right cause comes from knowledge based on religion. So it is not a blind war in which only fury can be a decisive factor, but an informed decision based on their history and the meaning of their religion. That is why the soldiers who were now "upon land engaging", and "embattled on the sea" could also recite the call for prayer in Europe's churches and in the wastes of Africa. He attributes wars to the desire for the promulgation of the Oneness of God rather than the aggrandizement of worldly splendor and wealth. A few other examples of juxtaposing war and preaching/knowledge are the following:

Into every heart we struck the impress of Thy Unity

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[6] تھے ہمیں ایک ترے معرکہ آراؤں میں خشکیوں میں کبھی لڑتے، کبھی دریاؤں میں
دیں اذانیں کبھی یورپ کے کلیساؤں میں کبھی افریقہ کے تپتے ہوئے صحراؤں میں
شان آنکھوں میں نہ جچتی تھی جہاداروں کی
کلمہ پڑھتے تھے ہم چھاؤں میں تلواروں کی
(*Kuliyat* 31-36)

And beneath the dagger's lightning preached the message, Lord, of Thee. (47-48)[7]

Or,

Who extinguished from the altars of Iran that sacred flame,

Who revived the dim remembrance of Yazdan's immortal Name? (53-54)[8]

Or,

Whose the dread that kept the idols cowering and terrified

So that, heads cast down and humbled, "He is God, the One," they cried? (59-60)[9]

This points to a complex issue in Islam: the interdependence of religion on a secure political structure and territorial boundaries. Unless the latter is achieved, the former cannot exert its influence on the life of individuals. However, Islam does not encourage war for political control only. War or the use of force is permissible only if the intention is to safeguard the otherwise threatened values or interests of Islam. Justification of the cause of war and not the war itself is a very difficult Islamic notion to grasp, especially when temporal and geographical distance keeps people ignorant of the other group's ethico-political situation. It

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[7] نقش توحید کا ہر دل پہ بٹھایا ھم نے زیرِ خنجر بھی یہ پیغام سنایا ھم نے
(*Kuliyat* 47-48)

[8] کس نے ٹھنڈا کیا آتشکدۂ ایراں کو؟
کس نے پھر زندہ کیا تذکرۂ یزداں کو؟
(*Kuliyat* 53-54)

[9] کس کی ہیبت سے صنم سہمے ہوئے رہتے تھے
منہ کے بل گر کے 'ھواللہُ احد' کہتے تھے
(*Kuliyat* 59-60)

involves a number of complex historical factors (*The Cambridge History of Islam* 56). Such factors involve the recognition of group identity based on its economic, social, and above all, political influence. Many critics have referred to Islam's desire for expansion as legitimate since the religion, from its very inception, has incorporated a set political ideology in its doctrine and practice.

Hamilton Gibb says, "The circumstance of its [Islam's] growth from the very first led…to the linking-up of religion and politics, nay even of theology and politics, and the subsequent working-out of Islamic law and social organization confirmed this inherent tendency" (*Whither Islam* 21). Edward Mortimer refers to the same fact while distinguishing Jesus Christ's mission from that of Mohammad (PBUH):

> Jesus of Nazareth was born into a community whose religion was an expression of its national independence, at a time when that national independence was in the process of being crushed. Given the overwhelming power of the Roman Empire, a revival of a Jewish religion in its nationalistic form was bound to lead to disaster.... Jesus offered a way out of this blind alley by expounding a non-political interpretation of Judaism… he offered salvation only in the world to come, and to be achieved by individuals through faith, hope and charity, rather than by the nation through organized revolt…. The community of believers founded by Muhammad was, virtually from the beginning, what we should call a state. (*Faith and Power* 32-3)

This tricky fusion of state and politics in Islam is what Iqbal terms as "a single unalysable reality" (*Reconstruction* 136). Another writer, Anthony Black, refers to this unique combination of faith and power in his book *The History of Islamic Political Thought: From the Prophet to the Present*. He states, "Judaism had preached an all-embracing (ethnic) law, while Christianity had preached spiritual (universal) brotherhood. But neither seriously addressed the problem of military and political authority; both had accepted life under alien, pagan rule. Muhammad preached spiritual brotherhood *plus* an all-embracing law, *and* universal political control to be achieved, if necessary, by military power" (10). This proves that political expansion was the aim of early Islam, but to consider it as Islam's sole purpose is debatable, and Iqbal debates this issue poetically in "Complaint" and "Answer".

However, Islam does not separate state affairs from religion. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the first four Caliphs of Islam were both spiritual and temporal leaders of their people. That is why we see in "Complaint" a sustained effort on the part of Iqbal to present martial and spiritual adventures as two sides of the same coin. Two note-worthy references in the poem are to the victory at Khyber during the life of Mohammad (PBUH) and the conquest of Roman empire by Omar (May God be Pleased with Him). *The Cambridge History of Islam* refers to the battle of Khyber as the starting point of Islamic empire as the subdued Jews agreed to pay *jaziyah*, a tax payable to Muslim collectors, which ensured the Jews' safety and religious freedom. This type of taxation actually laid the foundation of the Muslim state (Holt et al. 51). On the other hand, the conquest of

the Eastern Roman Empire had its own implications. It came into Muslim dominion during the reign of second Caliph, Omar bin al-Khattab. He took the idea of internal peace and external expansion to its extreme and annexed**,** at an unprecedented rate, the whole territory of the former Sassanid Persian Empire and more than two-thirds of the Eastern Roman Empire. Despite his rule over such a vast empire, according to Abu Mansher, the Qur'anic verse, 'let there be no compulsion in religion', was the cornerstone of Muslim relations with Christians in religious matters. There is not a single example of an incident in which a Christian was forced to embrace Islam (57). There was complete freedom of religion. The covenant with Dhimmis was given supreme respect. Had this expansion meant only capturing land and resources**,** history would have mentioned barbaric looting and plundering instead of Omar's just rule. However, religion always took precedence over war: the latter is for the promulgation of the former, but not vice versa.

That is why Iqbal says:

In the press of mortal combat if the hour of worship came

Then the people of Hejaz to Mecca turning, bowed in prayer;

King Mahmud, Ayaz the slave—their rank in service was the same,

Lord and servant—at devotion never difference was there.

Slave and master, rich and needy—all the old distinctions gone,

Unified in adoration of Thy Presence, they were one. (61-66)[10]

The Muslims, according to Iqbal, always preferred religion/enlightenment over martial expeditions. Even amid fierce fights, they turned their faces to Makkah to first offer prayer and then resume fighting. This is a clear evidence of their priorities in life. Prayer teaches them a lesson of equality and humility. There is a reference to the famous Mehmoud of Ghazna who stood parallel with his slave to offer prayers in various expeditions. Turning one's face to Makkah and turning one's back on war is very crucial to understand in order to eliminate all those misgivings that declare Islam a fascist religion. History serves Iqbal with a character who is apparently known for his expeditions and martial achievements, but was also an advocate of equality. If in some history books he is known as a great exploiter, in some others he is known as a defender of religion and equality; for example, *The Cambridge History of Islam* describes Mehmoud of Ghazna as "neither a robber nor a bloodthirsty tyrant" who "shed no blood except in the exigencies of war" (4). The series of attacks he inflicted on the Hindu confederacy, loyal to Anandapala, was a response to the latter's threat: "He did despoil and destroy many Hindu temples, but in his dealings with his own Hindu subjects he was tolerant, as is evident by his employment of Hindus, some of whom lived in Ghazna and rose to high posts" (*Cambridge History of Islam* 4). His remarkable sense of justice and equality is a testimony to the humane face of

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[10] آگیا عین لڑائ میں اگر وقتِ نماز قبلہ رو ہو کے زمیں بوس ہوئ قومِ حجاز
ایک ہی صف میں کھڑے ہوگے محمود و ایاز نہ کوی بندہ رہا نہ کوی بندہ نواز
بندہ و صاحب و محتاج و غنی ایک ہوَے
تیری سرکار میں پہنچے تو سبھی ایک ہوےَ
(*Kuliyat* 61-66)

Islam, a religion not primarily meant for imperial design, but rather a religion which emphasized the dignity and worth of any human being regardless of his class and status.

In the next twenty-seven couplets, Iqbal asks rhetorical questions to invoke God's sense of justice for Muslims. Given the fact that Muslim expeditions were not for expanding the territorial boundaries of the empire, but rather for ennobling minds and characters of the ruled, God seems to ignore their contribution. If after touching the zenith of their success, they are now in the abysmal depths of humiliation and deprivation, it is all because God has abandoned them. He has showered His blessings on non-believers and Muslims have become a laughing stock for their enemies. The last sestet of this section is the climax of this interrogation when he asks God:

> Did we ever shun Thee, or Arabia's Messenger forsake?
>
> Did we tire of idol-breaking, and to idol-making turn?
>
> Did we cry an end to passion, growing weary of love's ache?
>
> Did we quit the path of Salman, cease from Qarni to learn?
>
> Still the fire of "God is Greatest" in our hearts we keep ablaze.
>
> Still Bilal the Abyssinian guides us in our daily ways. (121-126)[11]

[11] تجھ کو چھوڑا کہ رسولؐ عربی کو چھوڑا؟ بت گری پیشہ کیا؟ بت شکنی کو چھوڑا؟
عشق کو، عشق کی آشفتہ سری کو چھوڑا؟ رسمِ سلمانؓ واویسؓ قرنی کوچھو ڑا
آگ تکبیر کی سینوں میں دبی رکھتے ھیں
زندگی مثلِ بلالِ حبشیؓ رکھتے ھیں

After this height of utter frustration in which Iqbal is asking God to present His charge sheet against the Muslims who are now condemned, Iqbal resumes a double role of both the plaintiff and a guilty-conscious defender in the next eleven couplets. The Muslims lack religious zeal and discipline. Their lack of zeal paved way for cowardice. Being isolated from the thick of things, they are waiting for some miracle to happen.

The final section of the poem is in form of a prayer. After the confession of his sin, now Iqbal beseeches God's help and implores Him to infuse a new spirit into a dead nation. Muslims are unknowingly waiting for divine intervention. If He facilitates their conversion, they will not be lacking in responding positively. Since others cannot use their talent to invoke God's blessings, Iqbal considers it incumbent upon himself to perform this task which might receive little or no recognition from his countrymen. In the last sestet, he sounds confident of his mission and hopes that he will be able to wake up his people from their slumber.

The tone of "Complaint" received severe condemnation from certain Muslim clerics. They mostly conform to ritual and conventions, and, at times, the true spirit of religion is sacrificed for mere conventions. This was true of all those clerics who criticized Iqbal's poem. The "Complaint" provided a platform for the clash of stale and unproductive acquiescence on the one hand, and liberal and humane creative impulse on the other. Despite its overtones of the grandeur of the

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(*Kuliyat* 121-126)

Muslim past, its every verse challenges their current stagnation and spurs them to take the affairs of their life in their own hands. Thus the advocates of the status quo could not stand its vibrant message of action.

However, the harsh criticism from the conservative quarters of Indian Muslims forced Iqbal to provide an answer to his "Complaint"—an artistic response to his opponents. The "Answer" or جوابِ شکوہ helped ease the tension between Iqbal and the opposition. At the time he wrote "Complaint", Iqbal was not in a position to stake his reputation. In the hue and cry of his opponents, there were many supporters who wanted him to use his gift of poetry to serve his colonized people. Maulana Shah Sulaiman Phulwari addressed the gathering at the presentation of "Complaint" and remarked:

> [Iqbal], God has not graced you with exemplary talents to please us with your poetry. This is not the time for singing [poems]. It is the time for action. The honour your nation wants to bestow upon you is nothing in comparison to the honour you will receive by dedicating yourself to the teaching of the Quran (*Zinda Rud* 185; my translation).

As a result, Iqbal, being fully aware of his responsibility, decided to calm the opposition who could otherwise sway the opinion of the general public and distort his image. He was a man of great acumen and used poetry for a purpose. He could not afford to dissipate his energies on a hopeless fight against the *mullahs* (clerics), who opposed him tooth and nail once again after the publication of *Secrets of Self* in 1920. He was accused of apostasy and disrespect towards the

great mystic poet, Hafiz. Iqbal's father persuaded him to expunge the controversial passage from his poem. This incident and, prior to it, the publication of "Answer," are testimony to the farsightedness of Iqbal, who wanted to preserve every bit of energy for a more compelling goal: the independence of the Muslims of India.

Whether it was a personal response to the criticism of "Complaint" or the global political situation of Muslims, to which I will come later, the net result was yet another masterpiece, "Answer." The poem was read in a fund-raising campaign for the Turk soldiers of the Balkan War. Each verse was auctioned and a handsome amount of money was collected.

The poem begins in a dramatic and self-reflexive tone:

Speech that issues from heart a magic influence exerts;

Wingless though the discourse be, yet it has power to soar on high;

Holy is its origin, and so its gaze to heaven converts.

And though from the dust it rises, it can overpass the sky.

Arrogant and cunning was my love, and on such mischief bent

That the very walls of heaven fell down before its wild lament.

(Trans. Arberry 1-6)[12]

[12] دل سے جو بات نکلتی ہے اثر رکھتی ہے پر نہیں، طاقت پرواز مگر رکھتی ہے
قدسی الاصل ہے، رفعت پہ نظر رکھتی ہے خاک سے اٹھتی ہے، گردوں پہ نظر رکھتی ہے
عشق تھا فتنہ گرو سرکش و چالاک مرا

Iqbal refers to "Complaint" and says that the poem exerted a profound effect due to the sincerity of its message. His lament reached the farthest heaven, and all the celestial creatures, including God, took notice of it. The moon, planets, galaxies, and angels first became perplexed over the originator of the lament. It was hard for them to believe that a human being, a pinch of dust, could soar so high that he disregards decorum and shows his annoyance with God. Amid their murmurs of disparagement, God responds to the plaintiff. He appreciates man's painful lament which enables him to get a response from Almighty God. In the next nineteen sestets, God offers an exhaustive summary of the causes that brought the downfall of the Muslims.

God blames Muslims for their current condition of depravity. The Muslims themselves are sitting idle and waiting for some divine intervention. This is not how things should be. They do not have an urge to transform themselves into zealous seekers**:** "Were there any to receive it, We would give a royal throne / A new world We have to offer, were one earnest seeker known" (35-6).[13] So it is not God Who has abandoned Muslims, but the Muslims who have abandoned the true path and forsaken God. Instead of finding faults with the Divine system of justice, they should rather examine their own character for any deficiencies.

Then comes a long charge sheet against the Muslims. At many points in this charge sheet, "Answer" establishes a dialogical relationship with

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آسماں چیر گیانالۂ بے باک مرا
(*Kuliyat* 1-6)

[13] کوئ قابل ہو تو ہم شان نئ دیتے ہیں
ڈھونڈنے والون کو تو دنیا بھی نَی دیتے ہیں
(*Kuliyat* 13-14)

"Complaint," especially when Iqbal tries to establish a contrast between the forefathers of Muslims and his contemporary Muslims:

> Who erased the smudge of falsehood from the parchment firmament?
>
> Who redeemed the human species from the chains of slavery?
>
> Who once filled the Holy Kaaba with their foreheads lowly bent,
>
> Clutching to their fervent bosoms the Quran in ecstasy?
>
> Who were they? They were your fathers; as for now, why, what are you,
>
> Squatting snug, serenely waiting for to-morrow to come true? (61-66)[14]

If Muslims are living in chains and deprivation, they are themselves responsible for their condition. It is true that their forefathers spread the word of God's unity and brought the staunch enemies of Islam to its benevolent folds. It is true that they were devout admirers of the Prophet (PBUH) and acted upon his preaching. Alas, those days are gone! Now they have forgotten the centrality of monotheism and the message of the Prophet (PBUH). Once the center is gone, things fall apart: Muslim nationhood is based on religion, and in the absence of religion they cannot aspire to be a nation.

Besides moral depravity, Muslims are also bereft of art and craft. Moral

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[14] صفحۂ دہر سے باطل کو مِٹایا کس نے؟ نوع انساں کو غلامی سے چھڑایا کس نے؟
میرے کعبے کو جبینوں سے بسایا کس نے؟ میرے قرآن کو سینوں سے لگایا کس نے ؟
تھے تو آبا وہ تمھارے ہی، مگر تم کیا ہو
ہاتھ پر ہاتھ دھرے منتظرِفردا ہو!
(*Kuliyat* 61-66)

sluggishness has paralyzed their creative faculties. On top of that, they are very keen to make cheap bargains for short-term benefits. Iqbal alludes to the Mughals' decision to help establish the East India Company in India. Since Muslims are divided into sects and schisms, they are unable to think collectively. Despite the fact that they have one God, one Prophet, one Book, one Ka'aba, they are not one unified whole. This failure to achieve unity has sapped their energy.

The main cause of the Muslims' division and scattered energy is their slavish imitation of non-believers: "Who are dazzled by strange customs, alien usages prefer? / For the manners of their fathers who a faint disgust profess?" (81-82).[15] The bane of colonization is that it makes the subjugated feel ashamed of their old traditions and customs, even if the traditions are not malignant. It erodes their belief system and makes them skeptical about their native achievements. The only truth in the colonized world is the official truth endorsed by the colonizers; the rest is mumbo jumbo.

Not only did the Muslims lose sight of the ennobling traditions of their forefathers**,** they also lost ingenuity and sincerity. Their prayers are empty words, their actions are mere shadows. They have abandoned themselves to greed and lust. Their forefathers relied on the strength of their sincere belief and accomplished many unbelievable tasks, but today's Muslims prefer personal comfort over everything:

You are intoxicated with the joy of fleshly ease;

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[15] کس کی آنکھوں میں سمایا ہے شعارِ اغیار؟
ہوگی کس کی نگاہ طرزِ سلف سے بیزار؟
(*Kuliyat* 81-82)

Are you Muslims?

What, is this the way Islam would have you treated?

Ali's poverty you will not, Uthman's wealth you dare not seize—

What relationship of spirit links you to your glorious dead?

For the fact that they were Muslims they were honoured in their day;

You, who have abandoned the Quran, are spurned and cast away. (114-120)[16]

The comparison between the contemporary Muslims and their forefathers continues at good length. Present-day Muslims are verbose and do not possess the qualities of their forefathers whose actions spoke louder than words. Everyone wants to reach the zenith of achievement, but for this, one has to acquire skill and ability. The Muslims of the past were benevolent, merciful, forgiving, and egoistic. In comparison to them, present-day Muslims are quarrelsome, divided, fault-finders, and escapists. For the sake of a sham civilization, they have abandoned their religion.

"Answer" takes a twist after the comparison between present and past. Had it not done so, it would have not served any purpose. Iqbal alludes to a famous incident from the history of all Abrahamic religions: the throwing of

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[16] ہر کوئ مستِ مۓ ذوقِ تن آسانی ہے تم مسلماں ہو! یہ اندازِ مسلمانی ہے!
حیدری فقر ہے نے دولتِ عثمانی ہے تم کو اسلاف سے کیا نسبتِ روحانی ہے؟
وہ زمانے میں معزز تھے مسلماں ہو کر
اور تم خوار ہو ۓ تارکِ قرآں ہو کر
(*Kulliyat* 114-120)

Abraham into a fiery pyre which turned into a flowery blossom. This allusion is very powerful as it incorporates both the hard situation the Muslims are in and the possibility of turning it to their benefit if they have strong belief in God and in their strength: "Ah, but if the faith of Abraham again would brightly show / Where the flames are at their fiercest, there a garden fair would grow!" (143-144).[17] But colonization has given a hard blow to their self-respect and they ignore their potential to snatch their freedom back on their own terms. However, Iqbal, being an enlightened man, knows that hopelessness cannot resolve their problems; instead, they should learn how to renew their strength and bounce back in the affairs of life. Apparently, it is a doom-and-gloom situation; nothing seems to ameliorate their condition. Nevertheless, resigning themselves to their gloomy situation will efface them from the face of the earth. They will have to rise up and actively respond to the changing world.

From the twenty-fifth sestet onwards, Iqbal tries to rejuvenate his fellows' spirits through many conventional metaphors. The oft-quoted metaphor in such a situation is a garden in autumn. Iqbal compares the present barrenness to a garden in autumn which is worrisome to the gardener who ignores the fact that this is a temporary phase. Another metaphor is about sunset, but Iqbal embeds a positive message in the metaphor: he consoles his countrymen and asks them to realize that the sunset and the sunrise are complementary to each other. In addition, without giving any specific examples, he refers to other nations who are also in

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[17] آج بھی ہو جو براہیمؑ کا ایماں پیدا
آگ کر سکتی ہے اندازِ گلستاں پیدا
(*Kuliyat* 143-144)

subjugation. They are also passing through the autumnal season of their political history, so Muslims are not alone in this situation. Since its inception, Islam has always bounced back in the affairs of the world, and this current phase of deprivation should be over: "After centuries of tending soars Islam, a mighty tree / Fruitful yet, a splendid symbol of immense vitality" (155-56).[18] In other words, it will take time and effort to achieve the splendour of their past.

Islam is not bound by any geographical boundaries, so the Muslims should not think that the loss of their former territories is the end of their story. Their procession will progress regardless of all ebbs and flows of time. At this point, Iqbal alludes to the famous saga of the Mongolian kings. On the one hand, Genghis Khan and Hulagu Khan brought on the downfall of Muslim dynastic rule in Central Asia and Iran in the thirteenth century; on the other hand, the latter's son, Ahmad Tekuder, who converted to Islam, helped establish a government on Islamic principles. The moral of the story is that Muslims should not be depressed by adverse circumstances. If they strive for their objectives sincerely, they can change the present into a favourable situation. Hardships often bring happiness in their wake, as it happened in the Mongolian saga: the destroyer became a preserver.

A second reason for not losing heart is that it is only Muslims who are a ray of hope for all of humanity because of the nobility of their task. They are supposed to spread the word of God as delivered by His last prophet, Muhammad

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[18] نخلِ اسلام نمونہ ہے برو مندی کا
پھل ہے یہ سینکڑوں صدیوں کی چمن بندی کا
(*Kuliyat* 155-156)

(PBUH). They should not be scared of the numerical strength of their opponents. Despite the fact that they are weak, they are still alive. Though the nations of the world ignore the hidden strength of Muslims, the latter are a crucial element in the scheme of the universe. According to Fazlur Rahman, "Iqbal was convinced that, in their role as 'witness on mankind' at least, the existence of Muslims was necessary for the world" ("Iqbal the Visionary" 422).

Finally, there is a direct address to Iqbal's audience. In very powerful and emotionally charged language, he implores them to take action on a gigantic scale. For example, he asks them to break their confinement to a flower and waft away on the wind as fragrance; instead of a particle of dust, become wilderness; instead of a wave, become a storm. Why do they need this colossal transformation? The answer is that it is the demand of their mission. The sole purpose of their life is to enlighten the world with the message of Muhammad (PBUH). It is a crucial article in the Muslim faith.

Despite the fact that Iqbal alludes to many historical events of war in which Muslims were triumphant, he does not seem to advocate the so-called 'holy war'. The final sestets of "Answer" overtly states the parallel of war and knowledge Iqbal presented so artfully throughout his both poems. "Answer" brings "Complaint" to a logical conclusion with the triumph of knowledge over martial power. As stated many times in the poem, the new era brings a new pattern of life. Today mental strength guarantees worldly power and not vice versa. He announces:

Thou hast Reason for thy buckler, and thy sword is love Divine;

So accoutred, my brave dervish, seize the world beneath thy sway.

'God is Greatest'—all but God consume with this bright flame of thine;

Thou a Muslim art, and Destiny thy edict must obey.

Be thou faithful to Muhammad, and We yield Ourself[-ves] to thee;

Not this world alone—the Tablet and the Pen thy prize shall be.

(205-210)[19]

The ascendency of knowledge over war was the political expediency of Iqbal's time. No doubt, "Complaint" and "Answer" can rightly be called the children of the political turmoil Muslims were facing both at national and international level. An account of the political situation of India and *Dar-al-Islam* is called for here to understand the political overtones of these two poems in their factual context.

The Decline of the Ottoman Empire and its Impact on Indian Muslims

In 1908 the personal rule of Sultan Abdul-Hamid came to an end when army officers in the remaining European provinces of the Ottoman Empire rebelled and forced him to reactivate the constitution. The minority Christians and those Muslims who had some contact with Western ideas greeted the revolution

[19] عقل ہے تری سپر، عشق ہے شمشیر تری مرے درویش!خلافت ہے جہاں گیر تری
ما سِوَی اللہ کے لیے آگ ہے تکبیر تری تو مسلماں ہو توتقدیر ہے تدبیر تری
کی محمد سے وفا تو نے تو ہم تیرے ہیں
یہ جہاں چیز ہے کیا، لوح و قلم تیرے ہیں
(*Kuliyat* 205-210)

with great enthusiasm because they found the Sultan incapable of resisting foreign encroachment and intolerant towards liberal ideas. The revolution had a reformatory zeal and the revolutionaries wanted to strengthen the empire by giving equal opportunities of freedom and justice to all Ottomans.

The Unionist agenda was refused fiercely by the Christians of the Balkans who were struggling for national independence as well as by Muslim counter-revolution in Istanbul, whose main motto was the defence of Shari'a. In the midst of all this political upheaval, a contradiction was involved: Unionists wanted to maintain the *Khilafat* by opposing the *Khalifa's*/Sultan's policies and imposing the unity of empire by force. They banned existing Greek, Bulgarian and other minority clubs; ethnic or national groups were suppressed because they marked division in the society. Above all, non-Muslims were conscripted into armed forces. The nationalist disease which had infected non-Turk Muslims of the empire too, including the Arabic-speaking Muslims of Albania, spread with unprecedented speed to the Unionists themselves. After the disastrous war of 1912 in which the Empire lost all its remaining European territory, the Unionists decided to play both the Islamic and the Turkish card (Mortimer 130).

The Ottomans entered the First World War on the German side not to recapture their lost territory in the Balkans and Africa, but to establish a Turco-Muslim Empire that would liberate their fellow Turks from the oppression of Russia and stretch into Central Asia. Unfortunately, they could not change the course of the historical process of colonization and nationalism. They had to pay a heavy toll when, after 1917, the Allied Forces captured Baghdad, Palestine and

expedited the further disintegration of the Empire. The Sultan had to sign an armistice with the Allied Force only a few days before the German surrender on the Western front.

The only ray of hope for the remaining Ottoman Empire, at that time, was Mustafa Kemal who led a successful revolt in Anatolia and who had already been declared their hero after his successful defence of the Dardanelles and the Gallipoli peninsula against British attack in the First World War. The founder of the Turkish Republic did not start his struggle as a guardian of the rights and freedom of only the Turkish population of the Empire. The nationalists under his command manifested to defend *Dar-al-Islam* (the house of Islam) against the Allied Forces and claimed to be preserving the Islamic Caliphate. Their struggle was understood as *jihad* by Muslims living under colonial regimes outside Turkey. They felt that their Turkish brethren were fighting for a cause they could associate themselves with; for example**,** the Indians under British rule sent money to Turkey and toyed with the idea of Pan-Islamicism for a while. However, all their hopes were dashed when in 1922, Mustafa Kemal abolished the temporal authority of the Caliph and declared that the Caliph would be chosen from the Ottoman house by the Grand Assembly on the basis of his learning and upright character. Thus came the end of the Sultanate with the end of the sovereignty of the *caliph*. Kemal's radical reforms and intention to make Turkey a modern state on the western model raised many eyebrows in the Muslim world. However, his popularity at home as the father of the Turks—Ataturk—made it easy for him to go ahead with his plans. He, as the defender of the Turkish people**,** successfully

defeated the Armenians and Greeks and defied the European powers. He refused to rebuild the Ottoman Empire and pulled back his nation from the devastating road of unnecessary wars. After declaring a complete divide between faith and politics, the Assembly deposed the Caliph in 1924, banished the members of the Ottoman house from Turkish territory, and affirmed the political structure of Turkey as a republic.

The Ottoman Empire was the last Muslim empire in the world. Muslims from all over the world had a spiritual bond with it. Its disintegration at the hands of European powers and the final demise at the hands of its own people was a hard pill to swallow, especially for the Muslims who lived outside the Empire. Far away from ground realities, they romanticized the *Caliphate*. The Muslims of India were not an exception. From donating money to pleading with Kemal to preserve the *Caliphate* as a symbol of Muslim unity and dignity, the Indian Muslims were actively responding to the changing political and demographical structure of Turkey.

According to M.L. Ferrar:

> So long as the Mughal ruled at Delhi or even existed as a pensioner in the old royal palace, the question of the Caliphate had little importance. The Moslems could point to their on Moslim ruler and affect at least to find him sufficient for their needs, but the final suppression of the Mughal dynasty in 1857 made the orthodox Sunnis who form the majority to reconsider their position. From that date they have regarded the Sultan of

> Turkey as Caliph. Their allegiance has been primarily and mainly religious, but the loss of their own temporal head has brought them back to a consideration of Islam as the Church-State of which every Moslem is really a citizen and in which all the citizen are brethren.
> (*Whither Islam* 219-20)

Ferrar has rightly pointed to the cause of Indian Muslims' affiliation with the *Caliph*, but ignored a historical fact that this affiliation did not involve just Sunnis: Shi'ites, who in theory oppose any *Caliph* other than from the house of Ali, also became involved in their nation's sympathy towards the *Caliphate*. Two prominent Shi'ites, the Agha Khan and Syed Amir Ali, wrote to the Turkish government about the repercussions of the uncertainty about the Caliphate in 1923 and sent copies of their letters to many Turkish newspapers. Kemal Ataturk not only rejected the Indian Muslims' plea, but also criticized them for meddling in the internal affairs of Turkey at the instigation of the British. Remember, both the Agha Khan and Amir Ali were very close to the British.

Whether or not Kemal Ataturk's suspicion was misplaced, the abolition of the *Caliphate* and the incidents prior to that were of great concern to the Muslims of India. A close examination of their reaction reveals that the society was clearly divided on this question and responded differently but actively. One segment of the society was clearly radical in its approach and launched a country wide campaign under the banner of the Khilafat Movement—a virile agitation which actually trained Muslims in practical politics. Maulana Mohammad Ali Johar and his brother Maulana Shaukat Ali Johar were founding leaders of the movement.

The second segment of the society consisted of moderate thinkers and writers who were, no doubt, perturbed by the situation, but let the time settle their unease. Their writings were nostalgic and satirical**,** such as Shibli's *Trouble in the Balkans*, Akbar's satires and epigrams, and Iqbal's "Ode to Sicily" and "Complaint." However, the third section of the society was totally impervious to the situation in the Ottoman Empire; in fact, Indian Muslim troops fought on the British side with the Turks. So from the radical and aggressive approach of the Ali Brothers to the sober and self-reflexive approach of writers like Iqbal to the loyalty of Muslims in the British army, almost every section of society was affected by the fate of the Ottoman Empire. I will discuss the implications of those international events for Indian Muslims in detail in order to put Iqbal's reaction in proper perspective.

As mentioned earlier, the Muslims of India saw a common interest in the Turks' fight against the British and Allied Forces. The acquisitive and aggressive European imperialism ran berserk. Its latest example for them was the role of Britain in the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. They held European powers responsible for intentionally destroying the remnants of Islam's grandeur and culture everywhere in the world. By associating themselves with the cause of the Turks they vicariously avenged themselves with their common oppressor, the British. This psychological impulse worked on many political fronts.

First, the Khilafat Movement rejuvenated the otherwise dormant people of India and gave them political awareness. Whether a frenzy or romantic ideology, the Indian Muslims protested strongly at national and international levels in a

Western fashion. There is no incident of their expressing themselves in unison prior to this occasion. They initially fought with pen and publications such as *al-Hilal*, *Comrade*, and *Hamdard*—three widely published periodicals. Abu-al Kalam Azad's *al-Hilal* was written forcefully and created a furor. His scathing criticism of the British government attracted wide, but highly educated, readers. However, Mohammad Ali Johar's *Comrade* and *Hamdard* were primarily used for propaganda. According to Cantwell Smith, "Their interest in and protests about Muslim politics were a gradual growth, but were soon robust and formidable" (227). Besides these periodicals, Johar played a key role in collecting donations for the victims of the Balkan Wars and sending the Red Crescent Mission to Turkey in 1912. The Ali Brothers were interned without trial for their audacity. Upon their conditional release, they organized the on-going unrest among the Muslims over British policies and channeled it in the form of the *Khilafat* Committee. The Committee had a religious weight behind it for its open support of the *Caliphate* in Turkey. Therefore, it represented more Muslims than the Muslim League in India. The Committee joined Congress in their non-cooperative movement and became an out and out anti-British organ of Indian Muslims' struggle against colonial suppression everywhere in the Muslim world.

However, the tide of time was against all the efforts the Khilafitists made on the international level. Their delegation to England captured no attention there as the fever of national interest was high everywhere, including England. The political situation in Turkey also took a new turn and the indigenous movement geared more towards abolishing the *Caliphate* than protecting it. This situation

forced the Khilafitists to pursue national goals rather than chanting pan-Islamic slogans. The *Khilafat* Committee and Congress became very close during this seething period as both were fighting with all their zeal against British imperialism. Smith comments, "Throughout 1921 India was seething with exuberant fervour. The country was virtually intoxicated with its new dreams, its new pride and dignity, its unity, determination, and strength" (232). 'Freedom for the Indians' was their ideology and the most vocal leaders were persuading their countrymen to achieve this instead of thinking about the Hindu-Muslim divide.

A man in the street was swept away by the passion of the movements, both *Khilafat* and *Swaraj* (non-cooperative movement), rather than by their ideology. Among common people, the political consciousness had not yet reached that maturity where it could question the logic of an already doomed ideology of maintaining the *Caliphate* in Turkey. Submission was their most prized virtue. The results were brutal for them: first, they became victims of an unsuccessful *Hijra* (migration) to Afghanistan instigated by Muslim theologians who had declared it irreligious to live under foreign control in India; second, the Moplah uprising in which the poor peasants along the Malabar coast, inflamed by current anti-establishment slogans, ferociously attacked police, military, their landlords, money-lenders—in sum, their oppressors. The Moplah uprising basically stemmed from economic misery, but was nurtured by the political unrest rampant in the society at that time. The result was bloodshed and even more unrest.

No matter how painful or shameful it is, the masses were mobilized in different directions without a clear goal. They were, in fact, guinea pigs for

political experiments. K.K. Aziz refers to this in his *The British in India*: "When the Indian said that foreign rule was opposed by Indian, they were mistaking a part for the whole and reading in the limited, urban, political protest the signs of a general, universal resentment" (220). Briefly, Aziz is denying the claims of most of the politicians of that time that the masses were ready for a massive change, either good or bad.

In the midst of these two extremes of agitation and acquiescence is the class of those intellectuals who felt that the time was not ripe enough for grass-root change. They took upon themselves, knowingly or unknowingly, the mission of giving a clear direction to their countrymen. This class had read the western mind from close quarters and was vigilant enough to use the weapon of their enemy against it. Braced with western education and natural talent, they devoted themselves to protest in the language and the forums most appealing to their oppressor and less disastrous to the common man; at least, they tried.

Iqbal was one of these enlightened Indian Muslims. His response to the West was eclectic, however. He could not, to rephrase Aziz's general definition, reject his faith *in toto*, turn his back on the past and go over to the Western values in heart and soul. He accepted something, he made compromises, he picked and chose (242). This deliberation and caution clearly reflects through his response to the demise of the Ottoman Empire and its dire implications for the Indian Muslims. As mentioned in the first section of this chapter, "Complaint" and "Answer," his two occasional poems, give priority to knowledge over war: understanding and advantageous political manoeuvres over blind agitation. Iqbal

took the occasion of the *Khilafat* Movement and the establishment of the Turkish Republic as the opportunity to reawaken his countrymen on modern lines.

Iqbal's encounter with the West during his study in Europe brought about a great change in his understanding of the demands of the time. All those critics and historians who dealt with this subject unanimously agree that first Iqbal was dazzled by Western progress in science and technology and later disillusioned with western materialism and its manifestation in the First World War. Having said this, they find an inherent contradiction in Iqbal's prolific writings. The problem with such critics is that they read Iqbal in a linear fashion and do not treat his work as a whole, rounded and deeply rooted in its context. For example, Anne Marie Schimmel, who wrote about the influence of the West on Iqbal, has treated him out and out as a mystic, and C.W. Smith, who referred to Iqbal's western education, has declared him a progressive and reactionary thinker. To the best of my understanding and knowledge, only Javid Iqbal's biography of his father titled *Zinda Rud*, and Hafeez Malik's collection of essays titled *Iqbal, Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan*, are the most comprehensive analyses of Iqbal's reactions to tough political and ethical questions.

After contextualizing Iqbal's feelings of nationalism in the rising tide of nationalism everywhere, Javid Iqbal notices that at the literary gatherings under the banner of *Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam*, a Lahore-based organization for the promotion of education and literature among Indian Muslims, Iqbal started reciting poems about the Muslims in general. He raises a question as to the influence of two other great poets, Hali and Shibli, on Iqbal in this respect (124).

Suffice is this to mention here that both poets were very active in the Pan-Islamic movement of the time that was spearheaded by Jamaluddin Afghani. Iqbal treated these literary and political figures with great veneration and was, to some extent, inspired by their ideology.

I will discuss Hali and Shibli in the third section of this chapter, which is exclusively devoted to their poetry, as a precursor to Iqbal's poems "Complaint" and "Answer." Here I can offer only a few glimpses of Afghani's role in shaping the Muslim world's destiny in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Afghani provided a meeting point between the extremist Wahhabi reconstruction of Islam and modernists' inclusion of secularism, nationalism and constitutional democracy. He was a political activist who travelled widely both European and Muslim countries including France, Germany, Russia, India, Iran, Egypt and Turkey. His influence on the Shah of Iran and Sultan of Turkey was enormous. Javid Iqbal pinpoints two important pillars of Afghani's Pan-Islamicism which, to a great extent, helped shape Iqbal's mature years' philosophy. One is Afghani's rejection of Muslim despotism and his efforts towards establishing a constitutional government; and second was his idea of bringing all Muslim countries under the constitutional *Caliphate* of the Ottoman *Caliph*. He died before he could turn his dream into reality, presumably as a result of poisoning by the Ottoman *Caliph*.

Afghani's Pan-Islamicism was severely condemned by the Western press as a weapon against Christianity and was considered an attempt to uproot Christian political supremacy (128). Whatever Afghani's objectives, his attempt

was, from a Muslim perspective, a response to the demands of the modern dynamic world. As with any other great thinker and activist, Afghani's message was also interpreted differently by different sets of minds. The leaders of the *Khilafat* Movement in India based their agitation on what they propagated were Afghani's anti-British and Pan-Islamic ideas, and thinkers like Iqbal treated it as a call for the revision and reconstruction of religio-political thought.

Iqbal knew the pulse of his time and deliberately kept himself away from the agitation of the Khilafat Movement. However, he was not blind to what was happening to his Muslim brethren both at home and abroad. The Muslims of India were depressed and frustrated to see that the British Government in India victimized Muslims exclusively. Its two manifestations were the abrogation of the division of Bengal in 1911, which was against Muslim interests in Eastern Bengal, and the firing of British soldiers on the Muslim protestors at Cawnpur, who tried to reconstruct the Cawnpur mosque that had been demolished on the order of the government. On an international level, their spiritual affiliation was damaged by the decline of the Ottoman Empire, the main culprits of which were, according to them, the British.

Iqbal's choice was neither acquiescence nor agitation: he proved his mettle rather on a tiring road of clearing the vision of his brethren, educating them and warning them against the tide of sentimentalism. His "Complaint" and "Answer" are the product of this awareness which reached its culmination in his famous lectures, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*. Conservative religious leaders were taken aback by both his "Complaint" (in 1911 when the Islamic

world experienced many blows on the political front) and an English lecture, precursor of his famous lecture series, "*Ijtihad* in Islam," delivered in 1924 soon after the Caliphate was abolished in Turkey. On both occasions Iqbal was declared a non-believer (*Kafir*). Iqbal became upset with the *fatwa* against him and held *Khilafat* Committee indirectly responsible for training *Maulwis* on these intolerant lines:

> Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's movement had decreased the influence of professional *maulwis*, but Khilafat Committee, for its personal political gains, gave them authority. It was a big mistake which no one has realised so far. I have recently experienced it. I wrote a paper on *Ijtihad* and it was read at a gathering here some time ago. It will, *Inshallah*, get published too, but some people declared me apostate. (*Zindarud* 411; my translation)

No doubt, Iqbal's full support of the establishment of a republican form of government in Turkey was a severe blow to the Pan-Islamic vision of the orthodox Muslim leaders. But he based his opinion on an acute observation of the inevitability of the events that were shaping international politics.

As a matter of fact, Iqbal welcomed the Turkish Nationalists' decision of constituting an assembly and abolishing the Caliphate in 1924. It at first seems a contradiction that a poet who always dreamed of a Muslim Ummah would finally give in to nationalism, which he always considered an evil. Muhammad Sadiq describes nationalism as Iqbal's *bête noire* and puts "Complaint" and "Answer"

into the category of those poems that bespoke his Pan-Islamism (450). The others in this group are *Sham-o-Shā 'ir*, *Khizr-i-Rāh*, and *Tulū '-i-Islam*; all were recited from the platform of *Anjuman-i-Himayāt-i-Islam*, then a very powerful platform to speak on the pressing issues of the Islamic world. In addition to this, *Anjuman* offered an opportunity for young and seasoned poets to communicate directly with the masses. It used to hold its meetings regularly in Lahore and a vast majority of common people attended its gatherings to enjoy poetry. *Anjuman* had been very successfully stirring people's patriotic feelings and turned it into cash when the Indian Muslims sent relief fund to Turkish soldiers of Balkan Wars.

Having said that, *Anjuman-i-Himayāt-i-Islam* connected aspiring poets with people, and Iqbal was one of them. This gave him a chance to understand the hopes and aspirations of his people: he cried with them when it was a sad occasion, and chanted with them the glories of their past, if the occasion demanded such outpouring. Hafeez and Linda Malik document: "His fame as a poet was also heightened by his recitation of his own poetry at the annual meetings of Anjuman-i-Himayāt-i-Islam (*Shikwah* or *Complaint* in 1911), and the specially called public meetings outside Mochi Gate (*Jawab Shikwah* or *Answer* in 1912), and the Shahi Mosque (*Fatimah binat 'Abdūllah* in 1912) in Lahore" (27). The aforementioned poems can be classified as occasional poetry. Hence it makes Iqbal a poet of the masses, who were ever ready to be swept away by the rhythmical modulation and passionate appeal of his poems.

The journalistic view of Iqbal classifies him as a poet of his age. Sadiq contests the idea that Iqbal was ahead of his time: "He does not think ahead of his

day; therefore, he thinks in terms of it, that is to say, to meet the challenge of the present" (489). That is why we see in his poems a timely readjustment of views: he began his career as an enthusiastic advocate of nationalism, but recanted it and became an exponent of Pan-Islamism, and eventually shifted his interest to nationalism back in its modified form to be rightly called by posterity as the "architect of Pakistan." He hailed socialism because it broke away from the oppressive "relics of the dead past," but did not deem it an appropriate system of government because of its agnosticism—Lenin appears in the court of God in one of his poems to recant his agnostic views.[20] He gave whole-hearted support to the adoption of Western knowledge, but condemned its civilization on different grounds. To put it more concisely, he shows an ambivalent attitude like "a large number of thinkers in Asia…and it is not so much a limitation as a sign of the width of his sympathies" (Sadiq 489).

Thus, as a demand of his immediate political situation, Iqbal does not discredit the Turkish Revolution; rather, he offers an Islamic justification for it:

> Let us now see how the Grand National assembly has excercised this power of *Ijtihad* in regard to the institution of Khilafat. According to Sunni Law, the appointment of an Imam or Khalifa is absolutely indispensable. The first question that arises in this

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[20] میں کیسے سمجھتا کہ تو ہے یا نہیں ہے
ہر دم متغیر تھے خرد کے نظریات---
آج آنکھ نے دیکھا تو وہ عالم ہوا ثابت
میں جس کو سمجھتا تھا کلیسا کے خرافات
How could I know that God was or was not,
Where Reason's reckonings shifted hour by hour…
To-day I witnessing acknowledge realms
That I once though the mummery of the Church (Kiernan, "Lenin Before God" 3-4, 7-8)

> connexion is this: Should the Caliphate be vested in a single person? Turkey's *Ijtihad* is that according to the spirit of Islam the Caliphate or Imamate can be vested in a body of persons, or an elected assembly…the Turkish view is perfectly sound….The republican form of government is not only thoroughly consistent with the spirit of Islam, but has also become a necessity in view of the new forces that are set free in the world of Islam.
>
> (*Reconstruction* 138)

Iqbal's distrust and discontent with the so-called professional *maulwis* was expressed in his aloofness from the *Khilafat* Movement. His clear-sightedness and adaptability make him support the declaration of a republic in Turkey. He endorsed the decision of the Grand National Assembly about establishing a republican form of government in his *Reconstruction*. He calls their decision *Ijtihad*—an independent reasoning of the Turkish Grand Assembly to vest a body of persons (an assembly) with temporal and moral powers. This view, though not consistent with the spirit of Islam, is permissible because of the new forces working in the Islamic world (138). Here he refers to independent political units that arose after the break-up of this Empire. Since the idea of a *Khalifa* or *Imam* as a living factor is dead in the society, the new change in the political arena must be embraced.

Such was the approach of a seasoned and mature politician-cum-thinker in the second and third decades of the twentieth century when the western ideas of

democracy and political liberty, of social freedom and equality, of religious tolerance and freedom of conscience had entered the Muslim world almost imperceptibly. In India, its credit goes to British imperialism which, as a historical process, dominated the life of indigenous people long enough to brace them with the western ideology of political freedom. Iqbal was fully aware of the fact that looking back to past glories would make his countrymen nostalgic and acquiescent in the decisions of political and moral authorities dormant. The only way to live with freedom and self-respect is to be aware of the situation they are in and then respond intelligently and creatively. That is why he calls *Ijtihad* a "principle of movement" in an Islamic society (*Reconstruction* 130). He laments the absence of this principle in India where conventional religious authorities are an instrument to lull the people into their current state of submission instead of promoting independent thought which could lead to their political freedom.

"Professional *Maulwis,*" as Iqbal calls them, were not engaged in shaping the political destiny of Muslim India as sagaciously as the liberal Muslim scholars, such as Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Maulana Shibli Nomani, and Altaf Mussain Hali, whose influence on Iqbal's "Complaint" and "Answer" was enormous. The last section of this chapter will examine the literary context of Iqbal's poems.

The Literary Context for "Complaint" and "Answer"

Iqbal began his poetic career very early in his life and referred his early poetry to the well-known classical poet Dagh (1835-1905). Dagh's guidance and correction inspired Iqbal to delve deep into classical Urdu poetry. He showed

respect for all classical forms of Urdu poetry throughout his poetic career. These forms include, but are not limited to, *masnavi*, *ghazal*, *rubai*, *qita*, and *musaddas*. "Complaint" and "Answer" are patterned on the *musaddas* genre in which each unit of the poem consists of six lines and it deals with serious subject matter. I will come to the similarities of form and message among Iqbal, Hali, and Shibli later in this section, but first a few words about another classical poet, Mir Taqi Mir (1723-1810).

Iqbal must have read Mir's *Wa Sokht* 'واسوخت' as a few passages in "Complaint" echo them with great fidelity. No English translation can convey that similarity as powerfully as the original. For example, in addressing his beloved who has been constantly treating Mir as a doormat, Mir says:

> It has been a long time that I'm infamous and live in public shame
> There is helplessness, dejection, aloofness, and loneliness
> (7-8; my translation)[21]

Iqbal's "Complaint" echoes this as:

> All we have is jeers from strangers, public shame, and poverty—
> Is disgrace our recompense for laying down our lives for Thee?
> (Trans. Arberry 101-102)[22]

Yet another interesting example can be seen when Mir says that it is impossible for him to remain silent while the people are constantly referring to his beloved's

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[21] ایک مدت ہوی بدنامی و رسوائ ہے
بیکسی بیدلی درویشی و تنہائ ہے

[22] طعن اغیار ہے، رسوائ ہے، ناداری ہے
کیا ترے نام پہ مرنے کا عوض خواری ہے؟
(*Kuliyat* 101-102)

indifference.[23] Iqbal corresponds to this feeling in the following passage:

> Why must I forever suffer loss, oblivious to gain,
>
> Why think not upon the morrow, drowned in grief for yesterday?
>
> Why must I attentive heed the nightingale's lament of pain?
>
> Fellow-bard, am I a rose, condemned to silence all the way?
>
> (Trans. Arberry 1-4)[24]

However, the only difference between Mir's *"Wa Sokht"* and Iqbal's "Complaint" is that Mir writes about his earthly beloved and his poem is a kind of cheeky elegy, while Iqbal's is impersonal and addressed to God. Sir Abdul Qadir, one of Iqbal's friends, comments that Iqbal's "Complaint" can be considered a *wa sokht*. However, Iqbal's addressee is the Divine and his plaintive plea remains within the parameters of propriety, but the overall appearance of the poem is close to *wa sokht* (qtd. in *Nazr-i-Iqbal* 149). Unfortunately, this similarity has always been ignored in Iqbal Studies. It is hard to believe that a well-read scholar like Iqbal did not have Mir's "*Wa Sokht*" as a kernel for his "Complaint."

If we move from literary influence to political and reformative, Hali and Shibli come to mind. Both are great names in the history of Muslim struggle against the British in India. Both were active members of the Aligarh Movement and close aides of Sir Sayed Ahmed Khan, but both contributed to the movement

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[23] خلق کیا کیا تری بیطوریوں سے کہتی نہیں
میں بھی نا چار ہوں اب منہ میں زباں رہتی نہیں

[24] فکرِ فردا نہ کروں، محوِ غمِ دوش رہوں
ہمنوا میں بھی کوئ گل ہوں کہ خاموش رہوں؟
کیوں زیاں کار بنوں سود فراموش رہوں؟
نالے بلبل کے سنوں، اور ہمہ تن گوش رہوں
(*Kuliyat* 1-4)

in their own distinctive manners. Sir Sayed's mission was to raise his community by "weaning it from its policy of opposition, to one of acquiescence and participation, and by weaning the government from its policy of suppression to one of paternalism" (Smith 7). Being aware of the Hindu majority and their hatred towards Muslims, their former masters, the Muslims were naturally inclined to the British and could trust the British system of justice and equality.

Though Sir Sayed's scholarly work presents a platform where English and Muslim values co-exist in harmony, Hali's hallmark was his pioneer work "The Rise and Ebb of Islam," in which he compares the current condition of Muslims with the glory they had in the past. This characteristic was a new beginning in Urdu literature. Instead of producing an apologetic literature and addressing an Anglicized bourgeoisie, he succeeded in general exhortation to the hitherto ignored section of the society—those affected by new bourgeois developments and expansions. Smith declares Hali's position a clear departure from that of Sir Sayed Ahmed Khan (35). No matter how much Hali wrote in a different style, he remained a loyal friend of Sir Sayed and a staunch supporter of the Aligarh Movement.

Hali's *musaddas*, "The Ebb and Tide of Islam," is a long exposition on the condition of world before the advent of Islam, the rise of Islam, its prosperity and glory, and finally its decline. In his preface he claims that he has fashioned a mirror for his nation to reflect upon their condition, past and present (6-7). He clearly professes that his poem does not have those literary embellishments which maestros of Urdu poetry demand. The Lacknow school of Urdu poetry will

downright reject it, but Hali's aim is not to win any literary applause; rather, it is to reform his nation, if she is willing.

It is not surprising that Iqbal's aim in writing his "Complaint" and "Answer" is similar to that of Hali. Their first public presentation brought tears to the eyes of his audience. The sincerity of his message and the intensity of his passion flow everywhere in these poems. Despite his exhortation, the pieces cannot be termed as provocative or propaganda. He wanted to stir the emotions of his people with his references to past and present, rather than to play with their emotions. Cheap sentimentalism and sensational details have no room in the poems: they are well-thought-out and excellently executed ventures of Urdu poetry.

Besides Mir's personal elegy and Hali's national dirge is Shibli Naumani's "The Trouble in the Balkans," an occasional poem referring to the Balkan Wars and their impact on Muslims. He feels an unmitigated sorrow over the disintegration of the Muslim Empire:

> Gone is Morocco, gone is Persia. We have now to see
>
> This helpless sick man of Turkey will live how long?
>
> This tide of woe which is advancing from the Balkans,
>
> The sighs of the oppressed will stem how long? (Trans. Abdul Latif 5-8)[25]

The entire poem[26] consists of rhetorical questions, one after another, to check

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[25] مراکش جا چکا فارس گیا، اب دیکھنا یہ ہے کہ جیتا ہے یہ ٹرکی کا مریضِ سخت جاں کب تک
یہ سیلابِ بلا بلقان سے جو بڑھتا آتا ہے اسے روکے گا مظلوموں کی آہوں کا دھواں کب تک
("Sheher-i-Ashob-i-Islam" 5-8)

whether or not his nation is ready to respond. Smith maintains that where Sir Syed approached Islam from the values of the modern West, Shibli approached Western values from the viewpoint of Islam: "His programme was not to reform Islam with some new criterion, but to revive it from within" (38). History was his most favourite medium of expression and he tried to create a compromise between past and present. Later in life, he passionately devoted his energies to the *Khilafat* Movement.

In sum, the works of the triumvirate of Hali, Shibli, and Iqbal interpenetrate. They use the same forms, techniques, and subject-matter in a convincingly original manner. History in Hali's work is a projection onto the present, in Shibli's the mooring of every belief or activity. Iqbal combines both trends in his "Complaint" and "Answer." However, his voice sounds more urgent because he is not only a poet but also a philosopher. He had sensed that Hali's lamentations over past glory and present decline could be more effective if combined with an inspirational vision of a bright future that could spur his nation into action—mere nostalgia could be of no use. Likewise, Shibli's poem, which deals with only one episode of the demise of the Muslim Empire, does not provide a blueprint for future struggle—the mere expression of frustration could further frustrate his nation. The Muslims of India were in dire need of a plan of action that balances their nostalgia and frustration with hope. Iqbal offers both through his poetry and metaphysics. How does Iqbal achieve this goal? This is a discussion which I will leave for the next chapter.

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[26] Latif refers to Shibli Nomani's poem under the title of "The Trouble in Balkans" in 1924, whereas the poem was originally titled "Sheher-i-Ashob-i-Islam."

Chapter Two:
"Mosque of Cordoba": From Politics to Metaphysics

> …the past is our country from which time has exiled us or from which we try to reassemble the disparate and fading and chipped fragments as we and the past move further apart. (Hart, *Literature, Theory, History* 61)

"Mosque of Cordoba": From Politics to Metaphysics

"Mosque of Cordoba" is celebrated as one of Iqbal's best Urdu poems. It is a unique artistic beauty rendered in consummate craftsmanship. Most often the poem elicits responses to its political and philosophical content and very rarely to its artistic craftsmanship (Metcalf, *Centenary Papers* 123). In this chapter, I will keep both aspects in the foreground and elaborate on the poem's political and literary context to examine how successful the poem was to conjure the images of a glorious past to rejuvenate hopeless subjugated people, but like all of Iqbal's other poems, the poem dwells upon nostalgia only to end with a message of hope.

The period from 1931 to 1938 marks a very busy period in Iqbal's political and literary life. His magnum opus *Javid Nama* (1932), his philosophical prose work *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (1930), and two Urdu poem collections, *Bal-i-Jibril* (1935) and *Zarb-i-Kalim* (1936), were published during this time. On the political front, he represented Muslims in two Round Table Conferences in London. "Mosque of Cordoba" came in the wake of the Second Round Table Conference. Therefore, I will first discuss the political situation of Indians in general and the Muslims in particular to contextualize Iqbal's artistic response to it in the form of this poem. Thereafter, I will contextualize the poem in the cluster of Spain Poems he wrote at that time to see their relation to this masterpiece.

Politics of the Round Table Conferences

First to the political situation in India: the 1930s mark the period in Indian history when the dream of the advocates of British imperialism, such as Lord

Curzon, seemed to be shattered by the rising tide of nationalism. The tea-party was about to be over and the demise of British rule, though still not deemed practical, was imminent. The colonizer's so-called duty of civilizing the unruly horde of Indians ironically paved the way for the colonizer's calling it a day. Once the chief exponent of imperialism declared, that wherever peoples were living in backwardness or barbarism, "wherever ignorance or superstition is rampant, wherever enlightenment or progress [is] possible, wherever duty and self-sacrifice call - there is, as there has been for hundreds of years, the true summons of the Anglo-Saxon race" (qtd. in Gilmour 37). But at that moment his successors realized that this "burden of honour" (Eldridge 116) could be borne no more. The indigenous resistance and the changing international political scenario put an incredible pressure on the British administration to part with their power and domain in India.

On October 29, 1929, Viceroy Lord Irwin announced that after the publication of the Simon Commission's Report,[27] the Indian politicians would be invited to round-table conferences in London to give recommendations for the future constitution of India. The communal rift between Hindus and Muslims was very deep and all attempts to bridge their differences had failed. Gandhi's non-cooperation movement spread widely and showcased Hindu solidarity and acumen, while on the other hand, Muslims remained divided: there were two Muslim Leagues—the Jinnah faction and the Shafi faction, the latter of whom supported the Simon Commission. Hindus responded with the Nehru Report,

[27]The Commission was appointed by the Secretary of State for India, Lord Birkenhead, to put forward suggestions for the future constitution of India. Both the Congress and the Jinnah faction of the All India Muslim League boycotted it.

which suggested some changes to the Simon Commission's recommendations; for example, instead of a federation of India, it suggested a dominion of India with a strong central government, and also opposed a separate electorate for minorities. Congress accepted the Nehru Report in its entirety, leaving both factions of the Muslim League disgruntled. Jinnah responded to this situation with his famous Fourteen Points to safeguard Muslim rights. These constitutional efforts resulted in the Government of India 1935 Act, which led to the 1937 election—a milestone towards self-governance.

Iqbal was not invited to the First Round Table Conference as a delegate because of his insignificant political stature on the national level. In the absence of most of the Muslim leadership at that time, he was called upon to deliver a presidential address to the All India Muslim League's annual session of 1930. Though the contemporary validity and applicability of the address went unnoticed until the end of the 1930s in the clamour of the Simon Commission and the Round Table Conference, the address won Iqbal a permanent status as a Muslim 'nationalist' who demanded a Muslim state in India. Iqbal's demand remains a debatable issue in the history of the Indian Independence Movement and I will discuss it in detail in the next chapter. Suffice it is to say here that Iqbal's political moves were taking a decisive shape during those years. According to one of Iqbal's biographers, Khurram Ali Shafique, Iqbal's letter, published in *The Statesman*, Calcutta, in July 1931 "must have jolted many readers" (*Iqbal* 153). His intended readers were the British, whom he called upon for readjustment in India and whose refusal to listen to this suggestion might drive Indian Muslims

into the lap of Russian communism. Iqbal declares, “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” (154). Iqbal knew that Russia was emerging as a menace to British hegemony all over the world, and the fear of losing Muslim India to Russia would definitely upset the balance of power in world politics. How far this wordplay was successful in drawing the British attention to Iqbal as a politician is hard to tell due to lack of historical evidence. However, he was invited to the Second Round Table conference, presumably at the recommendation of Sir Fazal Hussain (Javid Iqbal, *Zindarud* 501).

Iqbal participated in the Second Round Table Conference in London at the end of 1931 as a Muslim delegate of the Minorities Sub-Committee. The representative of the Indian National Congress, Gandhi, insisted that the Muslims should drop their demand of a separate electorate and should not support any other minority group, except Sikhs, with similar demands. The Muslims were not willing to compromise on the communal issue, so the meetings of the Sub-Committee kept adjourning during the conference. There were, however, some futile attempts behind the scenes to bring Muslims and Hindus together on the same platform. The British wanted to continue the Conference for further discussion, but Iqbal thought it would be better if the Muslim delegates disassociate themselves from any further discussion on constitutional reforms and central government if the communal issue were not given top priority. Jinnah and

Sir Muhammad Shafi agreed with Iqbal but did not want to walk out of the conference. In short, Iqbal's frustration was two-fold: the Congress' only delegate, Gandhi, was stubborn and did not show any sympathy toward Muslim demands; second, despite similar views, other Muslim delegates did not quit the Conference at the time Iqbal wanted them to do so. On November 16, 1931, Iqbal informed the head of the Muslim delegates, Sir Agha Khan, that he would not act as a Muslim delegate anymore. The British Secretary of State received a similar letter in the next few days and Iqbal left London for Rome on November 21, 1931 (Javid Iqbal, *Zindarud* 513). In this way, the Second Round Table Conference, from Iqbal's perspective, was a failure.

On his way home, Iqbal visited Rome, Egypt, and Palestine—each stop offered him an opportunity to participate in world politics on a larger scale. In Rome, Iqbal delivered a lecture at the Royal Academy (Rome, Italy), met with Mussolini,[28] who inspired him to write a poem on a powerful personality, and had a meeting with the exiled King of Afghanistan, Amanullah Khan, to whom he had dedicated *Payam-i-Mashriq* (Message of the East) in 1923. In Egypt, he met with members of liberation movements from both Egypt and the Middle East. He explained to them the condition of Muslims under the British in India. His next stop was Jerusalem, in Palestine, where he attended the World Muslim Congress. It was the third conference organized by the leaders of the resistance movement in Palestine. The conference agenda focused on the plans of Western imperial powers which wanted to found a Jewish state. These pressing issues and the

[28] Iqbal has been accused of promoting Fascist ideas on the basis of this meeting. However, my understanding is that at the time Iqbal met Mussolini, the latter was more of a heroic figure and symbol of national unity than a Fascist in the true sense of the word.

condition of Muslims world-wide inspired Iqbal to write his famous poem "Ecstasy"—his best spiritual poem.

The political unrest at home continued: Gandhi started another agitation movement and threatened a hunger strike to the death upon the Government's decision to give the untouchables a separate electorate. Gandhi's view was that India was one nation and the promulgation of separate electorates for respective communities was a British ploy of "divide and rule." Iqbal was also extremely perturbed by the atrocities Muslims were suffering in some Indian princely states at the hands of their Hindu rulers,[29] and the distribution of seats in the legislative assemblies of Punjab and Bengal.

Another British attempt to settle political disputes in India resulted in a third Round Table Conference. Since the British regime was not happy with Iqbal's attitude during the Second Round Table conference, they invited him to the third conference quite reluctantly. To ignore Iqbal was out of question due to the political stature he had achieved by then and the respect he had won from Indian Muslims over the years (Javid Iqbal, *Zindarud* 544). Iqbal went to attend the Third Round Table Conference in November-December 1932. Though this time he stayed beyond the date when the conference ended, he dissociated himself from the proceedings. Javid Iqbal validates his father's decision in his biography *Zindarud* by saying that since Iqbal was least interested in a strong central government in India, he kept himself aloof from any discussion on this issue. Iqbal was in favour of strong provincial governments which would be directly accountable to the British minister of India in London (547).

[29] For example, in Kashmir and the State of Alwar

On his way back home, Iqbal visited France and Spain—the former gave him the opportunity of meeting the famous French philosopher Bergson, whose concepts of élan vital and durée found expression in Iqbal's philosophy too; and the latter inspired his most notable poem, "Mosque of Cordoba"—the subject of the present chapter. Three weeks in Spain was a kind of journey back in time. Iqbal visited the monuments of Muslim rule in Spain which he now found absorbed and naturalized by non-Muslim culture and civilization.[30] Hence he felt pain and nostalgia.

The Mosque of Cordoba (785-c. 1000) is one of the earliest religio-political monuments in the history of Islam. Founded by Abd ar-Rahman I, it went through four phases of construction and amendments. Originally, it was a Christian Visigothic church which was divided between Muslims and Christans after the advent of Islam. Abd ar-Rahman, the first Umayyad emir of Andalusia, bought the Christian half and founded a mosque there. When Cordoba fell to Ferdinand III of Castile in the Reconquista in 1236, the mosque was turned into a cathedral. The subsequent Christian kings added Christian features to the building; for example, the minaret of the mosque was converted to the bell tower of the cathedral and a cathedral nave was built in the middle of its expansive structure.

Iqbal's decision to visit the Mosque of Cordoba seems to be informed by his wish to visit a historical place with Muslim connections, but it left a deep impression on his sensibility as a poet, which he recorded in his poem "Mosque of

[30] The Mosque of Cordoba was turned into a cathedral. Iqbal had to seek permission to offer an Islamic prayer there, perhaps the first prayer of its kind almost 700 years after the mosque was turned into a cathedral.

Cordoba." According to Javid Iqbal, there are many myths related to Iqbal's reaction to the mosque when he entered it and got permission to offer a Muslim prayer. Some say that Iqbal was so overwhelmed by the experience that he swooned. Upon his return to Lahore, he said:

> I visited Muslim historical sites in Spain. I sought permission from the authorities to offer prayer in the Mosque of Cordoba where no call of prayer has been performed for centuries. During my prayer, I asked God, 'This is the land where Muslims ruled for centuries; established universities; transmitted knowledge and learning to Europe. The mightiest trembled at the valorous Muslims, and the entire Europe owes its civilization to these Muslims. Alas, a Muslim from the same nation is offering prayer in the mosque they constructed only after taking permission from the clergy!' (*Zindarud* 556)

Such quotes are repeated in the literature surrounding Iqbal's visit to the Mosque of Cordoba, such as Yaseen Noorani's "The Lost Garden of al-Andalus: Islamic Spain and the Poetic Inversion of Colonialism" (1999), Riaz Latif's "Divergent Trajectories of "Masjid-e-Qurtuba": Iqbal's Imaginings and the Historical Life of the Monument" (2011), *Zikr-i-Iqbal*, *Sarguzasht Iqbal*, *Rozgar-i-Faqir*, *Yaad-i-Iqbal*, *Malfoozat-i-Iqbal*, *Iqbal Nama*, and others.

After reading the above-mentioned sources, I have reached the conclusion that Iqbal's reaction, though at times dramatized by his biographers, was a spontaneous response of a colonized Indian Muslim to whom religion and its history came through highly emotionally charged accounts. Religion has been a

mooring for Indian Muslims and a permanent part of their mental and emotional being. It is a defining marker of their identity—an identity which never existed before colonial experience, as Barbra Metcalf brilliantly alludes to in her analysis of Hindu-Muslim identities before and after British colonization of India. She says, "In colonial history, 'religion' in general is taken as central to defining the fundamental properties of non-European cultures—societies that are backward, irrational, and medieval" ("Reflections on Muslims" 956). I think it is with this mark of identity that Iqbal enters the Mosque of Cordoba; however, he beholds nothing "backward" or "irrational," but rather a pinnacle of Islamic architecture of the "medieval" age whose expansive grandeur is intensified by the absent agents who were once its guardians but are gone by a tragic stroke of fate. Iqbal came from a world in which all his Indian fellows were standing at a very decisive point in their struggle against the colonizer. One wrong decision could take them to the permanent loss of freedom, and by that implication, their identity, as N.P. Anikeyev observes: "Under the conditions of the Asian and African peoples' socio-economic and cultural backwardness, caused primarily by their long sojourn in the chains of colonial slavery, and in the face of trampling of their national cultures by foreign powers, the heritage of the past and the traditional religion stand forth almost inevitably as the symbol of national pride and distinction, and as a means of expressing patriotic emotions" (266). I will add here that religion also becomes a trope of defiance which an indigenous person will protect at all costs. It offers him a private sacred space in which he can comfort his otherwise traumatized soul and wounded ego resulting from his encounter with the

colonizer. In its splendid past, he searches for old happy days, and in its sad demise, a call for action.

Iqbal is struck by a close similarity of the fallen Cordoba to his fellow Indian Muslims' fallen state; if they do not mend their ways and unite to fight for their freedom, they will suffer a similar fate. The fall of Granada is the decline of a civilization that once enjoyed the zenith of achievements, but fell prey more to its people's apathy than to the vicissitude of time. Iqbal fears this type of future for the Indian Muslims. Despite the poignancy of the experience, the visit to the Mosque of Cordoba fills Iqbal's bosom with a desire to awaken his people by projecting Islam's earlier glory and kindling a desire for its renaissance. His poem "*Masjid-i-Qurtuba"* crystallizes both.

"Mosque of Cordoba" and Bergson

"Masjid-i-Qurtuba" or "Mosque of Cordoba" is a long poem first published in *Baal-i-Jibreel* (*Gabriel's Wings*) in 1935. It consists of eight stanzas, each of sixteen lines, of which the final two form a couplet. Each stanza elaborates on a separate subject closely knit with the central theme of *Mard-i-Khuda*'s, or the Perfect Man's, ability to conquer time and fate: stanza I refers to serial time and pure time in Bergsonian sense; stanza II manifests that eternity can be achieved by the Perfect Man who is the embodiment of Love; stanzas III and IV are a direct address to the mosque; stanza V further dwells upon Iqbal's concept of Perfect Man; stanza VI refers to the builders of that monument of art; stanza VII painfully records that the Muslims of the world are apathetic while the

rest of the world is stirring with revolutions; and stanza VIII nicely summarizes the subject and the leitmotifs of the poem.

A close reading of "Mosque of Cordoba" offers insights into its subtle message and artistic beauty. Iqbal begins the poem with the everyday concept of time in which the passage of day and night records events. It is serial time which has a beginning in life and an end in death:

> Day succeeding to night—moulder of all time's works!
>
> Day succeeding to night—fountain of life and of death! (Trans. Kiernan 1-2)[31]

Then he refers to pure duration by declaring the succession of day and night as God's garments or to put it more accurately, God's behaviour—time is God or God is time. It is actually that Hadith which, according to one version of his meeting with Bergson, he told him. Pure duration captures God's creativity which is ever fresh and forward-moving.

> Chain of the days and nights—two-coloured thread of silk
>
> Woven by Him that is, into His being's robe! (3-4)[32]

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[31] سلسلۂ روزو شب، نقشِ گرِ حادثات
سلسلۂ روز و شب، اصلِ حیات و ممات
(*Kuliyat* 1-2)

[32] سلسلہ روز و شب ، تار حریر دو رنگ
جس سے بناتی ھے ذات اپنی قباۓ صفات
(*Kuliyat* 3-4)

An examination of these verses offers parallels between Bergson's and Iqbal's concept of time. The poem itself was written on the heels of his meeting with Bergson in 1933. The meeting took place in Paris after the Third Round Table Conference, on his way back home from London. There are many anecdotes related to the meeting whose actual happening was not recorded accurately. Some of the versions appear in Javid Iqbal's *Zindarud*. According to Javid, Iqbal told Bergson about one of his writings from his Cambridge days, which had a similar notion of time to that of Bergson, but which, unfortunately, Iqbal destroyed after Professor MacTaggart's criticism. There was also a mention of Iqbal's lecture "Is Religion Possible," which Bergson had read and told Iqbal that his philosophy was also moving in the same direction. At that meeting Iqbal read a Hadith to Bergson which reads, لا تسبوالدهر ان الدهر هوالله 'Don't curse Time because Time is God.' Bergson repeatedly asked about its authenticity as he was greatly impressed by the Hadith's philosophical implications. Bergson's concept of *durée* is similar to what he heard from Iqbal.

Time, whether serial or non-serial, is mentioned twenty-one times in the entire poem, and fourteen out of these twenty-one mentions appear in the first section of the poem. I have not experienced a better presentation of Iqbal's philosophy in a poetic form than this section of the poem. Its rhythm, repetition, and rhyme all are manifestations of pure duration and they are conducive of it. Representations of pure duration actually help readers experience it. Its incantation reminds one of the arguments of Bergson in *Time and Free Will* which refer to the interpenetration of notes in a symphony. Similarly, the first part

of the poem organically develops the idea of pure duration with the repetition of words "day and night." Though repeated several times, the words acquire new vigour with every repetition. These descriptive words encapsulate pure time in the manner in which past flows into present and present into future. Besides philosophical interpretation, historical context of the presentation of these ideas help readers experience the flow of history into the colonial present and then into the anticipation of freedom. This all works from inward to outward, back and forth. Iqbal's visit to Cordoba Mosque is generally treated as his admiration for the Muslim past and his agony over its present degradation, but my interpretation is a bit different. The occasion provides him a chance to be reflective not only about his own culture and its decline, but it also offers him the moment to think about Bergson's concept of *durée* in retrospect and present it in poetic form. No doubt, he was extremely successful in his endeavour.

Consequently, Iqbal elaborates the theme of pure duration in the next few verses. He mentions that time exists from the very beginning and will last forever. Within its vast sweep, humanity can find ample scope for realizing its dreams. On the other hand, time also reveals man's strength and weakness to achieve his goals. Here Iqbal shifts the meaning of time from pure to serial. For example:

> Chain of the days and nights—sigh of eternity's harp,
>
> Height and depth of all things possible, God revealed. (Kerinan 13-14)[33]

[33] سلسلہ روز و شب ، ساز ازل کي فغاں
جس سے دکھاتی ھے ذات زیرو بم ممکنات

Or:

You are brought to their test; I am brought to their test—

Day revolving with night, touchstone of all this world (15-16)[34]

A few verses earlier, Iqbal refers to pure duration that has neither day nor night but a constant flow that does not depart from the past and, having its eyes firmly fixed on the future, lives in a permanent now:

What other sense have your nights, what have your days, but one

Long blank current of time empty of sunset or dawn? (5-6)[35]

In the next few verses he refers once again to serial time and mentions its transitoriness. Man's life and work are both for a measured period of time. Nothing is permanent in man's world:

All Art's wonders arise only to vanish once more;

All things built on this earth sink as if built on sand!

Inward and outward things, first things and last, must die;

Things from of old or new-born find their last goal in death. (7-10)[36]

(*Kuliyat* 13-14)

[34] تجھکو پرکھتا ہے یہ ، مجھکو پرکھتا ہے یہ
سلسلۂ روزوشب، صیرفیِ کائنات
(*Kuliyat* 15-16)

[35] تیرے شب وروز کي اور حقیقت ہے کیا
ایک زمانے کی رو جس میں نہ ھے دن نہ رات
(*Kuliyat* 5-6)

However, only that man can enjoy eternity who has acquired the attributes of God without losing himself into that infinite Ultimate Ego. Love in a purely Iqbalian sense prepares a man to touch those heights. Iqbal understands and exploits the mystical notion of Love, but with certain modifications. It is not self-annihilation, but rather its self-sustaining quality, that takes man to spiritual heights. However, it does maintain the difference between subject and object of desire in their I-Thou relationship. Since God is the most unique individual, an intimate contact with His individuality bestows uniqueness upon an individual. Once having drunk deeply of this kind of Love, the individual becomes fearless and translates into his action boldness and valour; he treats the universe as his domain to explore, and treats the perfection and preservation of his selfhood as his prime responsibility. This all happens in pure duration—time without succession.

A comparison between Bergson's and Iqbal's concept of time demands more detail here before going into further depths of the poem. Iqbal treats Bergson in great detail in his second lecture of *Reconstruction* when he tries to prove the cognitive aspect of religious experience. Bergson's philosophy incorporates movement, action, and process and gives supreme importance to experience in life. There are three important aspects of Bergson's philosophical system: first, time as a qualitative entity; second, intuition as creative and situated in the real world (rather than being about it); and third, the importance of the body

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[36] آنی و فانی تمام معجزہ ہاے ہنر
کارِ جہاں بے ثبات، کارِ جہاں بے ثبات
اول و آخر فنا ، باطن و ظاہر فنا
نقشِ کہن ہو کہ نو، منزلِ آخر فنا
(*Kuliyat* 7-10)

in sociobiological experience and the concrete dimensions of morality and religion as underpinnings of social life (Linstead & Mullarkey 4).

Iqbal is clearly indebted to Bergson in his attempt to tailor Bergson's concepts of time, creativity, and intuition or invention. What he tries hard to do in his lecture is to emphasize that Islam and modern science and philosophy are not at odds. By doing this, he achieves two goals. He not only reaffirms his religious doctrine, but also supports modern findings in science and philosophy as long as they support his religious views. It is a typical voice of a colonized person who is struggling hard to find his place in the new scheme of things. He clearly states: "Nor can the concepts of theological systems, draped in the terminology of a practically dead metaphysics, be of any help to those who happen to possess a different intellectual background. The task before the Modern Muslim is, therefore, immense. He has to rethink the whole system of Islam without completely breaking with the past" (*Reconstruction* 88-89).

Therefore, Iqbal presents three arguments for the existence of God in scholastic philosophy: cosmological, teleological, and ontological. The most appealing among these three, to a speculative mind, has always been the ontological argument. As supported by Descartes, the crux of this argument is that the human mind has a concept of a perfect being: the idea of the perfect being includes the idea of his existence. The argument would fail if it treats thought as an agency working on things from without—bifurcating the thinking subject and the object of thought. Thought is the formative of the very being of a thing. Hence, there is no bifurcation between the knowing subject and the known object.

This knowledge is necessary to make the ontological argument meaningful. The bifurcation of thought (subject) and being (object) of our contemporary life cannot resolve the issue. In order to reach the ultimate Being, one must treat thought as the very fabric of the Being or as the formative principle of the Being. Thought infuses itself in the being and makes its essence. Being and thought are ultimately one. Neither physics nor biology can prove this. The only science that can verify this is human psychology—it is man's direct connection with the Being that grants him this complete vision. Thus, religion is another name for this.

Human experience of the Being unfolds itself on three main levels: the level of matter, the level of life, and the level of mind and consciousness. These three levels clearly correspond, respectively, to physics, biology, and psychology. The most unique feature of life is its adaptability to a changing environment which no mechanism can explain or analyze. Life is not a fixed behaviour because it has a career from the very beginning, the origin of which "must be sought in a spiritual reality revealable in, but non-discoverable by, any analysis of spatial experience" (46). Bergson's *Time and Free Will* dwells in detail on the human capacity for adjustment, manifested not in serial but pure time, *durée*. It launches an attack on the quantitative perception of time which consists of homogeneous units. In Linstead's and Mullarkey's words, Bergson's *durée* is

> real time, it is the time of conscious experience. It is heterogeneous, qualitative, and dynamic. It is the difference between an hour spent by a condemned prisoner waiting to be executed, an hour spent by a child

> waiting for the start of their birthday party, an hour spent undergoing interrogation, an hour spent in a traffic jam, an hour walking in the forest, or an hour making love. (6)

As such, the components of duration (our memories, perceptions and affections) are all different, yet they also interpenetrate and cannot be sharply distinguished. Duration is history, experience and anticipation—past, present and future, real and virtual (6). It is in duration that we live, act and are free if we want to be so. Self creates by its free action alternatives instead of making a choice between pre-existing options. It is revealed only in retrospect that there were other options too, but it was determined not to explore them.

According to Iqbal, Bergson was the only contemporary thinker who carefully analysed the phenomenon of duration in time. Though the universe exists in time, it is external to us and we cannot reach the ultimate Reality by the study of the universe alone. But purely spiritual energy can be conceived only in association with sensible elements through which it reveals itself. Does this mean that spiritual life works in conjunction with the world of matter? Iqbal's answer would be a definite 'yes'. However, science treats life piecemeal, while spiritual experience takes it as a whole. Science does not take a single systematic view of Reality; it is very sectional in its treatment. No doubt, natural sciences deal with matter, mind, and life, but offer only a sectional view of them if asked to determine the mutual relation of the three.

Iqbal gives greater importance to life's natural tendency to heterogeneity and its adjustment to its ever-changing environment—all that happens in pure

duration and can be experienced by subliminal stages of consciousness. Iqbal puts forward man's existence as a case study to reach Reality. Man's conscious experience of himself is not static; rather, it is dynamic. Bergson says:

> I pass from state to state. I am warm or cold. I am merry or sad, I work or do nothing, I look at what is around me or think of something else. Sensations, feelings, volitions, ideas—such are the changes into which my existence is divided and which colour it in turns. I change, then, without ceasing.
>
> (qtd. in Iqbal, *Reconstruction* 48)

Man's life both in its external and internal manifestations is a constant move. The efficient side of man's self enters him into the world of space whose time is the clock time—time in space that can be inscribed. This existence is concrete but "spurious" (48). Man so absorbed in this spatialized time and its linear development that he can hardly get a chance to analyse the deeper side of his experience which Iqbal calls "appreciative self." The appreciative self lives in pure duration in which change and movement permeate indivisibly and invisibly. Iqbal argues, "It appears that the time of the appreciative-self is a single "now" which the efficient self, in its traffic with the world of space, pulverizes into a series of "nows" like pearl beads in a thread" (49). He explains this unique concept of time by drawing evidence from the Quran and the Bible. It is mentioned in the Quran that God created the heavens and earth in six days (25:58-59), but His "command was one, swift as the twinkling of an eye" (54: 49-50). Now according to the Old Testament, one divine day is equivalent to one

thousand years, and in that sense the creation would have taken thousands of years, but the Quranic view of "swift as the twinkling of an eye" clearly alludes to pure duration which is indivisible.

Pure duration exists and manifests itself in man's intuition, but it is impossible to express that inner experience in words because language has not yet reached that level to describe subliminal experiences in words. This is what Sheila McDonough refers to as "the edges of language" when she asserts, "On the edges of language, we cannot find words to convey in any systematic way information and insights that can be verified" ("Iqbal" 4). Man's appreciative self is responsible for giving acts an organic whole which "synthesizes all the 'heres' and 'nows'—the small changes of space and time, indispensable to the efficient self—into the coherent wholeness of personality" (Iqbal, *Reconstruction* 49). Thus pure time has no past, present, or future like a serial time; all three penetrate into each other, resulting in constant creativity. Hence nothing is predetermined and everything is already given, waiting to be stumbled upon one day as destiny may have it. Everything is in a single 'now', in present, where past becomes concrete only if realized in present moment in retrospect, and future is what the present moment embraces as numerous alternatives to reach a *telos*. All depends on man's free will to choose what he deems is the most appropriate to arrive at a desired goal. Existence in real time is independent of any mechanical interpretation. It is creativity from moment to moment and it is original.

Man's experience of pure duration on the human level prepares him to experience the Ultimate Reality. "A critical interpretation of the sequence of time as revealed in ourselves had led us to a notion of the Ultimate Reality as pure duration in which thought, life, and purpose interpenetrate to form an organic unity" (55). His *I-am*ness is independent, elemental, and absolute. Nature, being a systematic mode of behaviour, is organic to the Ultimate Self. As a result, like the Ultimate Self, it is boundless. If one acquires knowledge about Nature, one can acquire knowledge about the "immanent self which animates and sustains" Nature. Thus the knowledge of Nature is, in fact, the knowledge of God. The thought that man can apprehend the Ultimate Reality by interpreting sequence of time revealed in himself lead us to the central theme of "Mosque of Cordoba": *Mard-i-Khuda*, the Perfect Man and his free action.

Mard-i-Khuda

Mard-i-Khuda, or *Mard-i-Momin*, or *Insan-i-Kamil*, is the embodiment of that perfect selfhood that is embellished by the attributes of God—not an easy status to attain. Before elaborating on the connection between *Mard-i-Khuda* and the historical monument of the Mosque of Cordoba, a detailed analysis of this Iqbalian concept is necessary here. There has been much written on this concept, which is the main tenet of Iqbal's poems and philosophy. Not a single critic could help referring to it: directly or indirectly, literally or symbolically, in the common man's language or in highly sophisticated jargon. This discussion will not be an exception. Despite the bulk of literature on Iqbal's concept of *Mard-i-Khuda*, I

will focus mainly on those discussions which have approached the concept creatively and analytically.[37] This criterion, though entirely personal, helped me sift through hundreds of analyses that add nothing to the understanding of Iqbal's central concept, such as Ayesha Leghari Saeed's "The Creative and Directive Function of the Human Ego: Iqbal's Qur'anic Hermeneutics," Abdul Khaliq's "Iqbal's Concept of the Perfect Man," and A.H. Kamili's "Philosophy of Self and Nature of Social Experience", among others. Like many others, they have just documented what Iqbal wrote on this aspect of his philosophy and do not offer any convincingly modified interpretation.

The idea of a superman or Perfect Man is not a totally new concept in the history of thought. In the East, Ibn-i-Arabi,[38] Al-Jilli,[39] and Rumi[40] used this concept in their metaphysical writings, while on the other hand, in the West, there were many philosophers who propounded similar ideas to that, as Dr. H.N. Bilgrami says:

> This development of self, which starts from within so as to find an expression in the outer world, is not a new idea. Descartes, the father of modern philosophy, thought of it long before Iqbal. Even

[37] Some of these include Iqbal's letter to R.A. Nicholson, the translator of his *Secrets of Self* and *Secrets of Selflessness*; his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, a philosophical treatise; Javid Iqbal's *Fikr-i-Iqbal*; Malik's "Iqbal's Conception of Ego;" Nicholson's *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*; McDonough's "Iqbal and His Metaphysical Ideas;" Schimmel's "Muhammad Iqbal As Seen by a European Historian of Religion," and her "The Secrets of Creative Love: The Work of Muhammad Iqbal."

[38] Ibn-i-Arabi (1165-1240) was a famous Muslim mystic and philosopher who propounded the concept of *Wahdat ul Wujood* (Oneness of Being).

[39] Al Jilli (1366-1424) was a famous Muslim mystic who was known for his concept of *Insan-i-Kamil*, or 'Perfect Man.'

[40] Rumi (1207-1273) was a very famous mystic-poet. He mainly wrote in *Mathnavi* which is considered by some sufis as the Persian-language Quran.

> Iqbal's idea of an Ego is not peculiar to him…it is the same as Schopenhauer's 'Genus,' Carlyle's 'Hero' and Schiller's "Karl Moor.' Spinoza's 'Conatus Preservandi,' Fichte's 'Itch,' Schopenhauer's 'will to live,' Nietzsche's 'will to power,' Bergson's 'Elan Vital,' are all in the same line of thought. (86)

However, Iqbal's concept is a conscious effort to present this idea in Islamic garb with a subtle difference from his precursors. Absolute Truth (which Iqbal calls Ego) has created the whole of existence in order to manifest Itself through lesser forms of life (egos). Suheyl Umar refers to a famous tradition in this context: "I was a Hidden Treasure, and I loved to be known and so I created the world" (3). It means we can approach the Absolute Ego through self- knowledge. Iqbal's concept of *Mard-i-Khuda* is that of a lesser form of life who has attained the status of being God's co-worker on the basis of his *Khudi* or Self.

***Khudi* or Self**

Javid Iqbal interprets Iqbal's concept of *Khudi* in his *Afkar-i-Iqbal* (*Iqbal's Thoughts*) very convincingly. He argues that Muslim philosophy can be interpreted as the evolution and formation of the Quranic Truths by philosophical principles, and this is also the basis of Iqbal's philosophy, including his concept of *Khudi* or Self. Iqbal witnessed the decline of Muslim intellectual activities in his life, which left a deep impression on his mind. It was painful to see that his people at that time vehemently supported self-negation as propounded by Sufism without realizing its consequences. The result was a dormant nation that was totally oblivious of her condition. In this situation Iqbal puts forward his concept

of *Khudi* or self, which is in sharp contrast to this word's everyday usage. Sufi tradition rejects *Khudi* or Self because it involves selfishness and arrogance, but Iqbal gives it a new meaning—it is self-consciousness, subjectivity, ego and self. He declares it to be a "mystical thing which yokes together man's scattered energies. *Khudi* is the creator of phenomena around us. It is that point of consciousness which is potentially hidden but reveals itself through man's actions" (14). Though *Khudi* itself is infinite, it is a part of the finite human being. According to Iqbal, man's existence depends upon the revelation of his *Khudi*. He admonishes his colonized people when he says, "If you don't believe in God's Self, I don't believe in your Self. What is Self, but an outward show of self-consciousness. You should reform as your existence is without self-consciousness" (Iqbal, "Afrangzada" 5-8).[41]

In contrast to *Sufi* tradition, Iqbal's understanding of self/subject/*Khudi* is self-consciousness and self-recognition which acquaints its possessor with his true worth. He can realize that despite his weaknesses he also has some strength which, if channelled wisely, can ensure his happiness in this world and the world hereafter. Man has to cherish and nourish his self or ego in order to be an active agent in the Divine scheme of things.

Khudi is nourished only by the struggles in our life. So man acquires a creative self only by continuous effort, restlessness, and insatiable urge to know beyond

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[41] تری نگاہ میں ثابت نہیں خدا کا وجود
مری نگاہ میں ثابت نہیں وجود ترا
وجود کیا ہے؟ فقط جوہرِ خودی کی نمود
کر اپنی فکر کہ جوہر ہے بے نمود ترا
(*Kuliyat* 5-8)

known points. This bestows uniqueness upon man among all other creatures, as Iqbal says of ego and personality:

> In man the centre of life becomes an Ego or Person. Personality is a state of tension and can continue only if that state is maintained. If the state of tension is not maintained, relaxation will ensue. Since personality or the state of tension is the most valuable achievement of man, he should see that he does not revert to a state of relaxation. That which tends to maintain the state of tension tends to make us immortal. Thus the idea of personality gives us a standard of value; it settles the problem of good and evil. That which fortifies personality is good, that which weakens it is bad. Art, religion, and ethics must be judged from the standpoint of personality. (Nicholson, *Secrets of Self* xxi)

He considers an individual as a focal point of every deed and echoes this philosophy in his poetry very passionately:

> Life is preserved by purpose;
> Because of the goal its caravan-bell tinkles.
> Life is latent in seeking,
> Its origin is hidden in desire
> Keep desire alive in thy heart
> Lest thy little dust become a tomb (*Secrets of Self* 267-272)

Man remains unique as long as he creates high ideals. The higher one's aspirations and goals, the stronger will be his ego or *Khudi*. Eagerness and desire to achieve further and further is essential for the life of the self. Without this

eagerness man is nothing but a dead body. With the help of self-recognition, man can achieve his hidden potentialities and kinetic energy. His tempestuous soul makes him desire for higher aims. Once started on this road, he continuously strives for the never-ending evolutionary process. In a word, he becomes creator—creator of the world in which he lives, as Iqbal says:

> Exalt the self to the extent that before assigning Destiny
> God says to the individual, 'Come out with your desire' (*Gabriel's Wings*)[42]

It will be pertinent to say here that Iqbal gave consent to the theory of evolution with some reservations. His spiritual mentor, Rumi, "regarded the question of immortality as one of biological evolution and not a problem to be decided by arguments of a purely metaphysical nature, as some philosophers of Islam had thought." Rumi traces man's origin back to "the class of inorganic things" from which he passes to "that of plants." When he evolves from "the vegetative to the animal state," he remembers nothing of the past but has "the inclination he felt to the world of plants / Especially at the time of spring and sweet flowers." Then comes the human state:

> Again the great Creator, as you know,
> Drew man out of the animal into the human state.
> Thus man passed from one order of nature to another,
> Till he became wise and knowing and strong as he is now.
> Of his first souls he has now no remembrance.

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[42] خودی کو کر بلند اتنا کہ ہر تقدیر سے پہلے
خدا بندے سے خود پوچھے بتا تیری رضا کیا ھے
("33," *Bal-i-Jibreel* 3-4)

> And he will be again changed from his present soul (qtd. in *Reconstruction* 107-8)

The point here is constant change, as human life has always been in a flux. Given the fact that life unceasingly changes from one state to another, survival of the fittest, though harsh, is the most important governing rule of the universe. This brings us to the conclusion, which Iqbal draws from this argument of Rumi, that status quo is the negation of life: to be alive means to change. Of course, to Iqbal, change meant a complete transformation of the Muslim mindset that had given in to the idea of predestination—everything has been preordained by the Divine will, so there is no point in resisting. They accepted the colonial occupation as ordained by Allah; the learned retired to the fruitless grove of private speculation, and the common man was mainly concerned with his bread and butter. As a result, the Indian Muslims were breathing, though hardly alive, in a stupor of inaction and stagnation. It was in these depressing years that Iqbal brought forth his model of *Mard-i-Khuda,* the product of both Islamic traditions and modern metaphysics. This Perfect Man is the custodian of the most precious asset of the human, his *Khudi* or self which enables him to live like a true person. He is a link between the divine and the universe—the former is his spiritual mooring and the latter sustains his body. He can never be content with only one source of sustenance: a disjunct from the one will throw him exclusively in the lap of the other, depriving him of a well-rounded personality.

Now the question arises as to the nourishment of this precious asset of man, *Khudi* or self. There are four moral principles that strengthen *Khudi* or self:

love, humility, bravery, and freedom. As for the first moral principle, love, Iqbal uses it in an unconventional way. In a traditional *Sufi* sense, love means that the lover should annihilate himself by being absorbed into the beloved. But Iqbal sees it differently: love is not annihilation of self, but absorbing the beloved into oneself, and then finally the self departs from the beloved to keep its distinct personality/existence. This unique experience of love makes both the lover and the beloved unique. The reason behind this sort of interpretation, according to Javid Iqbal, is that annihilation in the other suggests the end of struggle, which for Iqbal is death. However, if the lover manages to return to his prior position after attaining the attributes of the beloved, the struggle continues (*Afkar-i-Iqbal* 20).

The second moral principle of the strength of *Khudi* is humility with an immaterialistic approach. This honours even a beggar beyond words. To be humble does not mean to be penniless; and on the other hand, to be penniless does not mean that such a person cannot have *Khudi*. Anyone who stops relying on others for sustenance is a man with strong *Khudi*. Islamic history is a witness to many great names who were apparently penniless, but their strong ego and *Khudi* made even the kings bow down before them.

The third crucial moral principle is bravery. By bravery Iqbal does not mean only physical bravery. It rather focuses on the strength of thought and practice; a man who thinks boldly, acts boldly. Iqbal is of the view that weak persons lose themselves in God, while bold persons find Him in themselves.

Freedom is the fourth moral principle for the nourishment of *Khudi*. By freedom, Iqbal does not mean only emancipation from economic pressure and

foreign occupation, but also emancipation from a slavish attitude. This idea is the linchpin of his philosophical and political ideals. Freedom of action is the product of freedom of thought and conscience.

Taken together, these four characteristics of *Khudi*—love, humility, valour, and freedom—were the qualities the Indian Muslims lacked. Hence they became an easy prey to imperialistic designs of the British. Iqbal's method of diagnosis was considerably different from most of his compatriots; instead of putting the blame on the British for their clever means of transferring power from the natives to their own hands, he considers the Muslims responsible for their sorry state. If they were not in the habit of hanging their weaknesses on someone else's peg, and if they were not unmindful of the purpose of their existence on the face of the earth, they would have never been subjugated and humiliated at the hands of the usurping British. Unfortunately, the Muslims took the loss of power as a divine plan and retired from active life, thinking that, no matter what, God did not want them to be in power. So by introducing the concept of *Khudi* he attempted to activate his otherwise dormant nation. Iqbal was convinced that "the main reason for India's backwardness…and humble position lies in its widespread and dominant systems of philosophy that preach passivity, self-denial, and indifference to the living conditions that surround man" (Anikeyev 269). Iqbal's *Mard-i-Khuda* breaks through these constructs. His *Khudi* manifests itself through perpetual creative activity. Human life is not an act of contemplation but an act of creating certain desires and then pursuing them. And such desires should be geared towards serving society, meaning that only a perfect individual can help

establish a perfect human society where the ideals of freedom, equality and justice rule supreme.

In his interpretation of *Khudi*, Iqbal had to resist not only British colonialists but also indigenous factions who opposed his work tooth and nail. Iqbal infused his message with the new ideas of constant struggle stemming from internal tensions and conflicts of the human being who has discovered his *Khudi* or ego. His ideas of ego, self-determination and self-realization were interpreted as sacrilegious attempts on the part of a Westernized mind in the garb of a liberal Muslim.

The way Iqbal interpreted ego or *Khudi* was a clear departure from the conventional interpretation of the term in Muslim mysticism. Iqbal believed that the contemporary sufistic practices in Islam had nothing to do with the plain teaching of Islam and its Arabic essence. Though only ego could take an individual to the heights of human perfection, contemporary sufistic trends could lull it into a deep slumber and make it inactive, hence paving way for the subjugation of the nation. Further, he draws attention towards the difference between the conventional and original meaning of the word *ego* (*khudi*). In a note dictated to Nazir Niazi, he explains:

> The word 'Khudi' was chosen with great difficulty and most reluctantly. From a literary point of view it has many shortcomings and ethically it is generally used in a bad sense, both in Urdu and Persian….Thus metaphysically the word 'Khudi' is used in the sense of that indescribable feeling of 'I' which forms the basis of the uniqueness of

> each individual. Metaphysically it does not convey an ethical significance for those who cannot get rid of its ethical significance.... When I condemn self-negation I do not mean self-denial in the moral sense; for self-denial in the moral sense is a source of strength to the ego. In condemning self-negation I am condemning those forms of conduct which lead to the extinction of 'I' as a metaphysical force, for its extinction would mean its dissolution, its incapacity for personal immortality. (*Discourses of Iqbal* 211-12)

Thus Iqbal's man becomes *Mard-i-Khuda* or Perfect Man only when he has nourished his *Khudi* or ego to the point where his will coincides with the will of God—single action emanating from two distinct personalities: human and divine.

Mard-i-Khuda **as the Architect of the Mosque of Cordoba**

Iqbal can see a clear connection between the majestic architecture of the Mosque of Cordoba and its architect, *Mard-i-Khuda*. The reason that the mosque has survived the vicissitudes of time is a testimony to the fact that *Mard-i-Khuda* and his actions are immortal; as he says:

> Yet, in this frame of things, gleams of immortal life
> Show where some servant of God wrought into some high shape"
> (Kiernan 9-10)[43]

He further elaborates on this theme and clearly pronounces that *Mard-i-Khuda* can achieve that quality only when he becomes the embodiment of عشق 'Love.' To Iqbal, love never means losing oneself in one's beloved, but rather it is

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[43] ہے مگر اس نقش میں رنگِ ثباتِ دوام
جس کو کیا ہو کسی مردِ خدا نے تمام
(*Kuliyat* 9-10)

assimilative: man should assimilate the qualities of the beloved and return to his previous condition with a new vigour. It is the ascension of man that culminates in his transformation. Change in personality or self ultimately leads to new perceptions and outlook. The higher one's object of love, the better is his transformation. Deep down, this thought rests on the ascension of the Prophet (PBUH); Gabriel took him to the heavens, as the tradition goes, and the Prophet (PBUH) had an audience with God Almighty. But he did not stay there for good. He came back with spiritual fulfillment and dedicated all his life to disseminate the message of God.

It will be illuminating to refer here to Iqbal's first lecture in *Reconstruction*, "Knowledge and Religious Experience," to explain his concept of Love in terms of religious experience. He says that religious experience of intimate association with the Unique Self (God) takes place in the human heart which is the dwelling place of inner intuition or insight. He cites the Quran on this issue, which describes the heart as "something which 'sees' and its reports, if properly interpreted, are never false". Iqbal strongly believes that this faculty of apprehending Reality is a mode "in which sensation, in the physiological sense of the word, does not play any part. Yet the vista of experience thus opened to us is as real and concrete as any other experience. To describe it as psychic, mystical, or supernatural does not detract from its value as experience" (21). Such experience has unique immediacy which is unanalysable, and in which the "ordinary distinction of subject and object does not exist." He further comments that "to a mystic, the mystic state is a moment of intimate association with a

Unique Other Self, transcending, encompassing, and momentarily suppressing the private personality of the subject of experience" (22). A mystic and a prophet, both can enjoy this other-worldly experience, but both have to come to "the normal level of experience" with a difference that "the return of the prophet...may be fraught with infinite meaning for mankind" (27). The discovery of new ideals as a result of mystical experience are meant for redirection and refashioning the forces of collective life.

Now arises the question of communicating the unanalysable mystic experience to mankind for their spiritual well-being. Iqbal takes a strange trajectory: the mystic experience, according to him, is directly experienced and is "more like feeling than thought;" it is conveyed to others "in the form of propositions" or symbols, and eventually, it engenders thought among its intended recipients (26). It has to be this way because the experience "leaves a deep sense of authority after it has passed away" (27). To put it simply, it is idea experienced as feeling, and conveyed as thought. Between the two extremes of the Divine and the common man lies the agency of a mediator who can be either a mystic or a prophet—one with a limited appeal and the other with infinite meaning for mankind, but appeal they must. Iqbal's *Mard-i-Khuda* has tasted such experience in order to fortify his will and soul.

Taken from this perspective of igniting thought with the intense experience of feeling the object of desire, both the architecture of the mosque of Cordoba and Iqbal's poem "Mosque of Cordoba" are fraught with meaning. The architect of the mosque must have had a vision of Divine Sublimity which he

translated into the structure of the mosque. Iqbal visited the mosque, had the immediate experience of Divine Presence, and created his masterpiece, "Mosque of Cordoba." It shows that only one vision of the Unique Self suffices to engender an infinite series of inspiration within different tempo-spatial contexts.

To return to the poem, Iqbal believes that only that man who has been transformed by his mystical experience can build or create monuments like the Mosque of Cordoba. In his first stage towards transformation, man assimilates all the attributes of his object of desire to the extent that there is no longer any distinction between him and his object. When man assimilates the attributes of God/the Creator on the basis of Love, there remains no distinction between him and his Creator: the will and action of human become the will and action of the Divine. Therefore, "Love is Gabriel's breath, Love is Muhammad's strong heart / Love is the envoy of God, Love the utterance of God" ("Mosque of Cordoba" 25-26).[44] In this segment of the poem, Iqbal seems to be intentionally intertwining Love with *Khudi* to practically show the power of assimilation—the means (Love) become an end (*Khudi*).

Love in the Bergsonian sense is *élan vital*—grasping infinity in a single moment. This experience can take place only in Pure Duration which cannot be spatialized. It is a constant flow without any interruption. Since this love is creative, it creates values and ideals, and the endeavours to realize them (Schimmel 39). When Man acquires this status, he becomes immortal, and by that implication, all his actions and deeds are immortal. The Mosque of Cordoba is, in

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[44] عشق دمِ جبرَیل، عشق دلِ مصطفیٰ
عشق خدا کا رسول، عشق خدا کا کلام
(*Kuliyat* 25-26)

this sense, a product of Love and hence immortal:

> Shrine of Cordoba! From Love all your existence is sprung,
>
> Love that can know no end, stranger to Then-and-Now.
>
> Colour or stone and brick, music and song or speech,
>
> Only the heart's warm blood feeds such marvels of craft (33-36)[45]

At another point in the poem, Iqbal again refers to the undeniable link between the monument of art, the Mosque of Cordoba, and its architect, *Mard-i-Khuda*:

> Outward and inward grace, witness in you for him,
>
> Prove your builder, like you, fair of shape and soul. (49-50)[46]

This connection points to the fact that the architecture reflects the architect's beauty of soul, which the latter has achieved by acquiring and then nurturing *khudi*/self. Latif Riyaz has done very interesting research on this aspect and documented it in his "Divergent Trajectories of 'Masjid-e Qurtuba': Iqbal's Imaginings and the Historical Life of the Monument." He says:

> Clearly then, Iqbal's responses to Islamic architecture draw their insights from an ideological space upholding masculine vigor and majestic bearing envisioned as prime constituents of Islamic cultural rejuvenation. They advocate verve, reflecting the selfhood of their executors; ultimately, it is the presence of the palpable exertions of the mard-e-khuda in an

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[45] اے حرم قرطبہ' عشق سے تیرا وجود
عشق سراپا دوام، جس میں نہیں رفت و بود
رنگ ہو یا خشت و سنگ، چنگ ہو یا حرف و صوت
معجزۂ فن کی ہے خونِ جگر سے نمود
(*Kuliyat* 33-36)

[46] تیرا جلال و جمال، مردِ خدا کی دلیل
وہ بھی جلیل و جمیل، تو بھی جلیل و جمیل
(*Kuliyat* 49-50)

architectural edifice that bestow upon it an enduring worth. (126)

Riyaz refers to certain reports documented by Amiq Hanafi, according to which the Taj Mahal, Shah Jahan's Jami Mosque in Delhi, and Alhambra Palace failed to elicit the same responses from Iqbal. Iqbal reportedly said, "I kept straying here and there in the halls and porticos of the Alhambra, but wherever I raised my eyes, I saw *hua ghalib* [He is victorious] inscribed on the walls. I said to myself that everywhere here, it is solely the Almighty whose triumph is proclaimed; if only the triumph of Man too was visible here, then it would be something" (126). It is evident from this statement that Iqbal's admiration for the Mosque of Cordoba was a response to the architecture's overwhelming majesty, which can be attributed to its creator, who managed to translate it into a sublime edifice of architecture.

As a result, Iqbal takes up this responsibility to rejuvenate his people by referring to that monument of their cultural heritage which reflects life-energy. This involves three different planes in this whole endeavour: first, the mosque itself is the product of life-energy; second, it regenerates this feeling in the beholder, who, working on the third plane of meaning, transmits this impulse to his readers through another artistic creation: his poem.

Yaseen Noorani equates rejuvenation with renaissance as he says, "the colonial situation is as responsible for inspiring the thematic formulations of the poem as the splendours of Islamic Spain. The poem's critical momentum derives from a vision of a cultural renaissance that negates the present political reality and elaborates a truer one that supersedes it. By locating the key to the transformation

of the colonial situation within the self, "Masjid-i Qurtubah" of Muhammad Iqbal turns cultural renaissance into an individual as well as a political imperative" ("The Lost Gardens of Andalus"). The reliance on the past for the future is a common human tendency. In his *Eros and Civilization: Philosophical Inquiry Into Freud*, Herbert Marcuse says that the past continues to claim the future as it generates the wish that the lost paradise be recreated…. Current regression assumes a progressive role (18,19). However, Iqbal does not want to emphasize the possession of the past, as "past history and its artificial resurrection constitute no remedy for a people's decay…The only effective power, therefore, that counteracts the forces of decay in a people' is the rearing of self-concentrated individuals;" the past can play a role of reformation provided a lesson is learnt from it (*Reconstruction* 50). He venerates the past as long as it (re)activates individuals; there is no room for nostalgia *per se* in his philosophy.

Iqbal's *Mard-i-Khuda* or "self-centered" individuals live in their present moment which they immortalize with their strong personalities for future generations. But, unfortunately, they are not being born anymore, and the extinction of the Muslims is imminent. It is only *Mard-i-Khuda* who can enjoy eternity because he has absorbed that quality from his Creator's attributes—a very shocking idea for traditional theologians. Despite the fact that such a concept could incur the wrath of the narrow-minded religious mentors of the Indian Muslims, Iqbal uses this trope to wake up his nation, then in deep slumber. Orthodox preaching from the pulpit had spread the notion among the Indian Muslims that they should accept colonial exploitation as the will of God; it was

presented as a punishment which the Muslims deserved because of their distance from Islam. This attitude of the *mullahs* was identical to the so-called learned scholars of Al-Azhar whose edict supported Napoleon's occupation of Egypt. They proclaimed that it was better to have a ruler, no matter who, than to have none. In other words, they preferred foreign rule over what they termed as internecine disputes and anarchy. Whether Egyptian or Indian, the orthodox clergy succeeded in inculcating self-hatred and self-negation as a means of salvation among the masses.

Sheila Macdonough describes the apathy of the Indian Muslims as alienation: "The Muslims of his generation are alienated, as he sees it, from a proper understanding of their own potentialities. They are exiled even from a knowledge of what they might be and do in history" (2). Iqbal tries to restore his people's self-respect and confidence. Iqbal's concept of *Mard-i-Khuda* is an act of defiance as much as the minaret of the Mosque of Cordoba was to the Abbasids across the shore.[47] He firmly believes that his people have the potential to regain their freedom, provided they strive to become *Mard-i-Khuda:*

> Never can a Muslim despair: he, reciting his creed,
> Stands before God where once Moses and Abraham stood.
> Limitless is his world, endless horizons are his,
> Tigris and Danube and Nile billow that roll in his sea (55-58)[48]

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[47] Abd al-Rahman was an Umayyad who escaped the Abbasids from Damascus when the Umayyad dynasty declined.

[48] مٹ نہیں سکتا کبھی مردِ مسلماں کہ ھے
اس کی اذانوں سے فاش سرّ ِکلیم و خلیل
اس کی زمیں بے حدود، اس کا افق بے ثغور
(*Kuliyat* 55-58)

Anne Marie Schimmel's "The Secrets of Creative Love: The Work of Muhammad Iqbal" elucidates the concept of *Mard-i-Khuda* and ties it neatly with true mystic traditions. She opines that "it is not a fading-away of the mystic in God, it is the development of the self which comes closer and closer to God. So united with God without losing its own identity it transcends the limits of time and space" (38). She comments on the paradox involved in this type of relationship with God:

> the Mard-i-Mu'min, the Al-Insan al-Mu'min [*Mard-i-Khuda*] is the one who in himself has realized the paradox of freedom and servant-ship, and thus he is the ideal person as manifested first by the Prophet, namely as Abduhu (God's servant), which means servant-ship in freedom. (36)

So no matter how much Iqbal revolutionized the idea, its mooring comes from the fundamentals of Islam. His *Mard-i-Khuda* works in complete harmony with God and his life is directed by His command. H.H. Bilgrami refers to the same notion in his lectures:

> A man has to keep this "single unanalyzable reality" in view, and, in developing his ego by constant conquest of his environment, has also to subordinate himself to the general discipline of an Absolute Ego. He has to place himself, body and mind, in line with the general character of the Ultimate and Absolute Ego called God. He has to seek guidance from this Directive force. (87)

As a result, Iqbal's *Mard-i-Khuda* emerges not as an Overman of Nietzsche who becomes god, but as a transformed human being who is aware of his earthly status

despite the fact that he has acquired God's attributes:

Warrior armed in this mail: *There is no god but God*,

Under the shadow of swords refuged by no god but God…

Fashioned of dust and of light, creature divine of soul,

Careless of both the worlds beats his not humble heart (63-4, 71-2)[49]

The difference between Iqbal's *Mard-i-Khuda* and the Superman of the West is what Schimmel refers to as the difference between negation and affirmation of God. Nietzsche and some Russian philosophers after the revolution reached only the first half of the Islamic credo, لاالہ (there is no God). On the other hand, Iqbal's *Mard-i-Khuda* reaches the complete credo, لا الہ الااللہ (there is no god, but God) (*Western Influence on Iqbal's Thought: A Critical Study* 140). Therefore, the rule of such a *Mard-i-Khuda* proclaims God's sovereignty rather than personal pomp and show:

Reveals a profound secret their ruling

Lovers of God don't rule for material gains (87-88; my translation).[50]

Rather, the purpose of their empire is to spread the word of God, which in other words means enlightenment. That is why:

Europe and Asia from them gathered instruction: the West

Lay in darkness, and their wisdom discovered the path (Kiernan 89-90)[51]

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[49] مردِ سپاہی ہے وہ ، اسکی زرہ 'لاالٰہ'
سایۂ شمشیر میں اس کی پنہٰ لا اِلٰہ---
خاکی و نوری نہاد، بندۂ مولا صفات
ہر دو جہاں سے غنی، اس کا دلِ بے نیاز
(*Kuliyat* 63-4, 71-72)

[50] جن کی حکومت سے ہے فا ش یہ رمزِ غریب
سلطنتِ اہلِ دل فقر ہے، شاہی نہیں
(*Kuliyat* 87-88)

In this verse, Iqbal not only clarifies the nature of Muslim rule, but also restores the confidence of his fellow Indian Muslims by referring to their past when they were the leaders of Europe.

The Mosque of Cordoba, both as a piece of architecture and as the ekphrastic poem of Iqbal ("Mosque of Cordoba"), has emblematic value for the Indian Muslims. Iqbal has succeeded in translating its sublimity in his poem along with the message it could convey. As a trope of defiance, it not only challenges all types of usurpation[52] in general and the colonizers' superiority[53] in particular, but also presents the philosophical principles so dear to Iqbal: namely, Pure Duration, Self, and *Mard-i-Khuda*. Like all other poems of Iqbal, it is didactic and ends on a hopeful note. In the last section of this chapter, I will treat "Mosque of Cordoba" as a message of hope and try to establish its link with Iqbal's other Spain poems that cluster around what I call his *magnum opus*.

The Spain Poems: A Message of Hope

One cannot help noticing that "Mosque of Cordoba" and the rest of the Spain Poems are poignant and give vent to despair tinged with nostalgia. Islam's past and present display a stark contrast: on the one hand, the monuments of its past show grandeur and sublimity; and on the other, the Muslims at present are everywhere colonized and live in deplorable situations. Once their forefathers energized the whole world with their martial and intellectual endeavours; and

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[51] جن کی نگاہوں نے کی تربیتِ شرق و غرب
ظلمتِ یورپ میں تھی جن کی خرد راہ بیں
(*Kuliyat* 89-90)

[52] The Abbasids dethroned Umayyad's autocrats and Abd al-Rahman had to flee to Andalusia to establish his empire.

[53] This is a reference to the British colonizers of India.

today, mental lethargy and inactivity reign supreme. They made forays into every field of knowledge, but today they are oblivious of even their own existence. This dismal situation saddens Iqbal deeply. However, on his return from Europe, he brought a gift of poems which are a wake-up call for his fellow Muslim Indians.

To the best of my knowledge, "Mosque of Cordoba" has never been contextualized in the cluster of the Spain Poems. Khurram Ali Shafique gives a passing reference to this aspect in *Iqbal: An Illustrated Biography* (171). The exact date of composition of all these Spain Poems is difficult to determine, except for "دعا" ("Prayer"), which according to almost all his biographers was composed while Iqbal was visiting the mosque. Moreover, the sequence of these poems in *Gabriel's Wings* is not well thought out, perhaps due to the editor's short-sightedness; for example, the poem "Written in Cordoba" has been senselessly placed apart from the rest of the poems. Yet another note-worthy point is anachronism in their sequence: "طارق کی دعا" "Tarique's Prayer" should have been placed before "عبدارحمان اوّل کا بویا ہوا کھجور کا پہلا درخت" "Abd al-Rahman's First Palm Tree." Tarique conquered Andalusia in 711 AD, while Abd al-Rahman reached Spain by the middle of the 8th century.

A close reading of the Spain Poems reveals a constellation around "The Mosque of Cordoba." Each poem is thematically and subject-wise closely akin to the centre of its gravitation. Though in each poem, the poet reflects different moods such as buoyancy and sensuousness, or pensiveness and gloom, his focus remains on the spiritual and mental rejuvenation of his fellow beings. To this end he artistically balances despair and hope against the backdrop of history.

The first in the constellation is "Written in Cordoba." It begins and ends on buoyancy, but within contains all those allusions and themes which dominate "Mosque of Cordoba." Iqbal's nostalgia overflows when he says:

> The prostration that once
> Shook the earth's soul
> Now leaves not a trace
> On the mosque's decadent walls
> I have not heard in the Arab world
> The thunderous call—
> The call to prayer that pierced
> The hearts of hills in the past (Trans. Siddiqui 13-20)[54]

It is evident that Iqbal's immediate response is to the conversion of the mosque into a cathedral, which tells the tale of Islam's decline in Spain. However, the Urdu pronoun ,'وہ' which is equivalent to English 'empty it,' serves a double purpose. First, it reveals the absence of the subject/agent who was the architect of the mosque, namely *Mard-i-Khuda*. Secondly, its emptiness in both grammatical and historical senses is an open invitation to whoever can fit that spot, in the sentence or in the life of the Muslims. There is no need to remind that one has to prove his mettle before acquiring the status of *Mard-i-Khuda*, who is absent but not vanished.

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[54] وہ سجدہ روحِ زمیں جس سے کانپ جاتی تھی
اسی کو آج ترستے ہیں منبرو محراب
سنی نہ مصرو فلسطیں میں وہ اذاں میں نے
دیا تھا جس نے پہاڑوں کو رعشۂ سیماب
(*Kuliyat* 9-12)

The second poem is titled "Prayer," which Iqbal is assumed to have written in the mosque during his visit. It begins with a clear and loud announcement that Iqbal's elegiac poems are his best method of worship. In my previous discussion on *Mard-i-Khuda,* I referred to the fact that creative love shapes the moral character of Iqbal's *Mard-i-Khuda*. This love forever grows and knows no limits; it is a perpetual flow from 'being' to 'becoming.' In this poem, the speaker represents the entire nation. He alludes to the spiritual union between *Mard-i-Khuda* and God as he says that all his actions emanate from God, with whom he has united through creative love:

Thou hast made my life
An ever burning flame;
It is Thee that I cherish;
It is Thee that I seek.
When Thou art not with me,
The world around me is dead;
And when Thou art,
Even ruins are filled with life (17-24)[55]

Mard-i-Khuda seeks sustenance from his creator without whom he is nothing, but paradoxically, this total submission to God bestows unlimited freedom on him. He asks God earnestly to send His benediction to his people who are waiting for

[55] تجھ سے میری زندگی سوزو تب و درد و داغ
تو ھی میری آرزو، تو ھی میری جستجو
پاس اگر تو نہیں، شہر ھے ویراں تمام
تو ھے تو آباد ہیں اجڑے ھوئے کاخ و کُو
(*Kuliyat* 11-14)

God's mercy.

In the third poem in the sequence, a Hispanic King laments his captivity. The king in prison stands for the Muslims controlled by Colonial powers; both are chained, one literally and the other metaphorically. Two couplets in the poem reveal Iqbal's vision for his people effectively. In the first one he says:

No lance or armour carries the Free Man in prison

I regret and my fate regrets too (3-4)[56]

In this state of complete despair, his chains remind him of his sword, as both are made of metal. Here, the sword represents a strategy for freedom. In other words it is a blessing in disguise. Hard-won freedom is very valuable, and can be respected and much-sought after once it is lost. So his fellows should struggle hard to achieve their freedom.

The fourth poem has apparently only a remote connection with "The Mosque of Cordoba", but ends in a typical Iqbalian sense of human infinity which only *Mard-i-Khuda* can taste. Abd al-Rahman, the originator of Muslim rule in Spain, addresses the first palm tree he has planted in Spain. He laments his permanent exile in Spain, though as a king, and projects his distance from his birth-place on the plant's distance from its natural clime. But then he realizes:

Mard-i-Khuda knows no boundaries

He can survive in any clime (19-20; my translation).[57]

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[56] مردِ حر زنداں میں ہے بے نیزہ و شمشیر آج
میں پشیماں ہوں پشیماں ہے میری تقدیر بھی
(*Kuliyat* 3-4)

[57] مومن کے جہاں کی حد نہیں ہے
مومن کا مقام ہر کہیں ہے
(*Kuliyat* 19-20)

This is a prophetic statement. Iqbal's fellow Muslims have not only won their freedom, but also created a new country on the map of the world.

The second-last poem in the sequence is titled "Hispania." It is a heart-piercing lamentation over the Muslim loss in Hispania (Spain). Their past which thundered with their achievements now lies dead, buried in the silence of oblivion. However, it would be foolish to assume that it cannot be restored. Although the Muslims have lost the luster of glory, they have the potential to organize their scattered energies, as the vicissitudes of time and failures in life can generate a reverse action, provided someone is willing to act. He aptly says:

The Muslim will not be crushed
Under the weight of straw,
Though the ebb of time has reduced
The force of his flaming fire (Trans. Siddiqui 9-10)[58]

The last in the Spain Poems is yet another supplication in its entirety. In this poem, Iqbal presents the prayer of Tarique, who was the first Muslim general to enter Spain in 711 AD. According to a tradition, he gave the order to burn his army's boats on his Gibraltar expedition, as he wanted to inspire in his men the courage to advance without even thinking about a retreat. The mountain on which he stood to order this command was named after him, Jabl-i-Tarique, and today's Gibraltar is a derivation from that early name.

Tarique's entire army translates the principles of *Mard-i-Khuda* into their actions and deeds. They conquered Andalusia, which was an impossible act, but it

[58] کیونکر خس و خاشاک سے دب جائے مسلماں
مانا وہ تب و تاب نہیں اس کے شرر میں
(*Kuliyat* 9-10)

is their strength of character that enabled them to realize that dream. Here a word of caution is demanded. Again Iqbal, as he does in his other characteristic poems, emphasizes strength of will and character over martial achievements. These troops are in direct communion with God who grants them courage to embrace all sorts of dangers. There is always a firm belief in God's help that kindles in their hearts and inspires their actions. Their expedition is neither personal glory nor booty in war, but martyrdom.

The poet realizes that the present Muslim world needs that dedication and unity which inspired Tarique's soldiers. As the advent of Islam changed everything for the better, its renaissance will once again have a positive impact on the world. However, this renaissance will come from within with the help of God:

O God, grant them the lightning
Which thundered with 'No other God'
Fill their hearts with aspiration
And sharpen their glance like a sword (17-20; my translation)[59]

It is evident that Iqbal does not advocate a martial expedition to help resolve his people's problems. He had to clothe his thoughts in those episodes of history which were awe-inspiring and could stimulate his fellows' dormant energies. Once this subtle point is understood, one cannot hesitate to declare Iqbal a writer against colonialism, rather than a supporter of a Muslim empire built on exclusive principles.

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[59] دلِ مردِ مومن میں پھر زندہ کردے
وہ بجلی کہ تھی نعر ۃ لا تذر میں
عزا ئم کو سینوں میں بیدار کر دے
نگاہِ مسلماں کو تلوار کردے
(*Kuliyat* 17-20)

This brief analysis of the Spain Poems brings me to the conclusion that "Mosque of Cordoba" becomes more meaningful if read in its literary context along with its companion poems. It balances the equilibrium of emotions of despair and courage if assigned a central place among the Spain Poems. The poem rationalizes Muslim decline but ends on a strong message of its renaissance, provided the Muslims realize their strength:

> Life is death if not impelled by the zeal of revolution;
> The essence of a nation's life is a passion for constant change.
> A nation defies death like a sword that flashes amain,
> When in every age it guards all its deeds.
> Unsuffused with life-blood, no craft is ever complete;
> Unsuffused with life-blood, a poet's song is mere conceit.
> (Trans. Siddiqui 123-28)[60]

Iqbal, unfortunately, did not live to see that his people paid heed to his message of change and won their independence in 1947. He inspired them to take action and live with self-respect. However, his task did not end there. He also laid down some principles that an ideal Muslim state should incorporate. His philosophical system, though beginning with the search for Ultimate Truth by an individual self, ends on a community of selves. This transition from an individual to a community within the colonial context is the topic of my next chapter.

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[60] جس میں نہ ہو انقلاب، موت ہے وہ زند گی
روحِ اُمم کی حیات کشمکشِ انقلاب
صورتِ شمشیر ہے دستِ قضا میں وہ قوم
کرتی ہے جو ہر زماں اپنے عمل کا حساب
نقش ہیں سب نا تمام خونِ جگر کے بغیر
نغمۂ سودائے خام خونِ جگر کے بغیر
(*Kulliyat* 123-128)

Chapter Three:

Before and Beyond "Satan's Parliament"

> …this passionate search for a national culture which existed before the colonial era finds its legitimate reason in the anxiety shared by native intellectuals to shrink away from that Western culture in which they all risk being swamped. Because they realize they are in danger of losing their lives and thus becoming lost to their people, these men…relentlessly determine to renew contact once more with the oldest and most pre-colonialist springs of life of their people.
>
> (Frantz Fanon, "National Culture" 153-154)

Before and Beyond "Satan's Parliament"

This chapter closely examines Iqbal's controversial poem "Satan's Parliament" from *Armughan-i-Hijaz* (*The Gift of Hijaz,* 1938) and contextualizes the poem's main argument—the Muslim state—in the texts preceding and following the poem. The study will duly focus on Iqbal's 1930 Allahabad Presidential Address to the Muslim League and his correspondence on this subject with Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the leading Muslim statesman. This will lead me to analyse the implications of the pronouncement of a separate Muslim State in India, and in the event of its realization, the system of government such a state should have to justify its secession from Hindu-dominated India. The analysis will focus mainly on the basic principles of his political thought which he continued to modify throughout his life. On the one hand, Iqbal is credited for presenting the idea of an independent state for the Indian Muslims; but on the other, he has been accused of contradictions in terms of his early love for his country, India, and later on, the dismemberment of the same country. In order to understand the political stance on this issue and its developing stages, I have divided this chapter into three parts: part one deals with Iqbal's 1930 Presidential Address which chronologically preceded "Satan's Parliament;" part two discusses his "Satan's Parliament," in which he juxtaposes communism with Western democracy, and finally rejects both in favour of the Islamic concept of an ideal state; and part three dwells upon his notion of an ideal political community as expressed in his letters.

The 1930 Allahabad Address

Commonly known as the 1930 Allahabad Address, Iqbal's address to the All India Muslim League in December 1930 became a foundation stone of a new country, Pakistan, in the region (Shafique, *Iqbal* 133). The Muslim League[61] had been unable to combat the rising popularity of Congress[62] and could not hold even a session in 1929. Even Mr. Jinnah had to publish his famous Fourteen Points[63] as a Muslim political agenda instead of presenting them at the League's platform due to the League's internal politics and disorganization. It was the mid-level administrators of the League who "took initiative to pull together some sort of show that could bring the organization back into the limelight. There could be none better than Iqbal to grace the occasion…[who was] a natural crowd-puller" (133). However, it was a poorly-attended event because most of the important Muslim leaders had left the country to attend the First Round Table Conference[64] in England in 1930. A group of college students were Iqbal's mainstay of support as the rest of the people were very disappointed to hear that he was going to deliver a speech instead of reciting his poems. No one in the audience could have anticipated at that time that the address would serve as one of the most important political documents of the Indian Muslims' struggle against British colonialism

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[61]The All-India Muslim League was organized on 30 December 1906 and was the most influential Muslim political party of pre-partition India.

[62] Founded in 1885 with the objective of obtaining a greater share in government for educated Indians, the Indian National Congress was initially not opposed to British rule, but later on it took a radical stance and struggled for the independence of India.

[63] Jinnah's Fourteen Points were the proposals to be incorporated in the future constitution of India.

[64] Three Round Table Conferences were hosted at St. James Palace, in London, by Prime Minister Ramsay Macdonald. These followed the setting up of the Statutory Commission under Sir John Simon in 1927. The Simon Commission had been boycotted and then overtaken by the Nehru Report and Fourteen Points. The atmosphere had become that of protest and dissent with Pandit Motilal Nehru insisting on full independence. In an attempt to break the political deadlock the Viceroy invited 58 delegates, all leaders of public opinion in India, to a Round Table Conference with the aim of formulating the future constitution of India.

and Hindu hegemony.

At the beginning of the address, Iqbal made clear that he would address the Muslim League in the capacity of a student of Islam, whose close contact with "the spirit of Islam," based on his long careful study, qualifies him for this task more than his political affiliations, of which he had none: "I lead no party; I follow no leader" (135). It is this part, I believe, that is often ignored by the critics who assume that the address veiled a lack of political insight and served personal grudges as he was not invited to the First Round Table Conference to represent the Indian Muslims.[65] He stated categorically that his intention was not to decide on a future for the Indian Muslims, but to acquaint them with the viable political philosophy of their religion which should inform their future decisions.

Iqbal says that Islam is not only an ethical ideal but also a kind of polity, a social structure. Islam is the sole defining feature of Indian Muslims because it unifies them and transforms them into a people of "a moral consciousness of their own" (135). However, encounters with the colonialists have brought the Muslims of India ideas which are foreign to their Islamic culture. This inevitable contact with Western ideas has largely affected the youth, who are willing to adopt these foreign ideas without understanding the impact of these ideas on the western countries themselves. Iqbal deplores this lack of foresightedness and surveys the

[65] The high command of the Muslim League was an elite class: landed gentry or successful professionals. See Ayesha Jalal's "Exploding Communalism" in *Nationalism, Democracy, & Development: Culture and Politics in India*. Moreover, the League was trying to strike a deal with the Hindus for a balance of power and Iqbal's views were not in line with this view. It was a time of "right political alignment." However, it is noteworthy that his address was in English. Unlike his famous Lectures which he delivered to educated Muslim youth, the audience of the Allahabad Address was a mixed gathering of both learned and common men. Though history is silent over this issue, my understanding of the situation is that Iqbal's real addressees were the participants of the Round Table Conference in London and the British colonizers.

history of Christianity about the time of Luther's revolution. According to Iqbal, since Christianity was understood as a monastic order rather than as a polity or culture of a people, Luther's rebellion was against the Church as an organization rather than against any polity, because there was no such polity in the first place. Unfortunately, Luther himself was not aware that his revolt would "replace universal ethics of Jesus by the growth of plurality of national and hence narrower systems of ethics" (135). Rousseau and Luther[66] both transformed a human outlook into a national one. Such an outlook found its concrete manifestation in a system of polity "which recognizes territory as the only principle of political solidarity" (136). Christianity became an individual's personal affair and the state became secular. He refers to this in *Gabriel's Wings* بالِ جبریل:

> Christianity was based on monasticism
>
> My mysticism had no room in it
>
> The moment religion divorced the world
>
> Rulers and their deputies became greedy. (My translation)[67]

This bifurcated man's unity into an irreconcilable duality of spirit and matter which is totally alien to a Muslim whose religious credo begins and ends on Unity, *Tawhid*. As "Luther in the world of Islam…is an impossible phenomenon," the Muslim world never needed a destroyer of traditional thought like him. Instead, in Islam, the fundamentals of universal polity have been revealed and the Muslim needs only to readjust them from time to time according to the demands

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[66] This jump from Luther to Rousseau is a characteristic of Iqbal's prose. He always betrayed his familiarity with Western philosophers, scholars, and prominent political figures to his audience.

[67] --- سماتی کہاں اس میں میری فقیری کلیسا کی بنیاد رہبانیت تھی
ہوئی دین و دنیا میں جس دم جدائی ہوس کی امیری ہوس کی وزیری
("Religion and Politics" 1-2, 7-8)

of the era.[68] Whether Islam assimilates nationalism and transforms it according to its spirit, or is transformed by it, is difficult to answer. Iqbal detected racialism behind the idea of nationalism and found it contrary to the spirit of Islam.

As a living force, Islam cannot be restricted to geographical boundaries. Moreover, it has the capacity to shape the life of both the individual and the state—spiritual and temporal. It can liberate Muslims from their geographical limitations because its concept of state is different from the Western concept of a political system as he says in *Bang-i-Dara*, "Fatherland in political parlance denotes one thing / In the Prophetic parlance, quite another."[69] Since religion is the very fabric of the Muslim's practical everyday life, decisions about the political status of the Muslims of India should be informed by it because "Islam is itself destiny and will not suffer a destiny!" (136).

Iqbal outright rejects the idea of a nation that is determined by physical boundaries. Likewise, he rejects the idea of compartmentalising life into religious and political affairs: one is the private business of an individual, and the other is the civic duty of all individuals of a country to prefer national interests over religious ones. Having clarified the distinction between Christianity, which turned into a monastic order, and Islam, which from its very inception is a polity of social order, Iqbal quotes Renan, for whom moral consciousness is the foundation of any nation: "Man is enslaved neither by his race nor by his religion, nor by the

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[68] This has been a moot point between progressive Muslims and the traditional guardians of the infallible code of Islam. The former were a product of Muslim encounter with the 'other,' while the latter were a product of Islamic seminaries—enclosed space and closed minds. See Iqbal's "The Spirit of Movement in the Structure of Islam" in his *Reconstruction* for the concept of *Ijtihad*.

[69] ارشادِ نبوت میں وطن اور ہی کچھ ہے
گفتارِ سیاست وطن اور ہی کچھ ہے
(*Kuliyat* 17-18)

course of rivers, nor by the direction of mountain ranges. A great aggregation of men, sane of mind and warm of heart, creates a moral consciousness which is called nation" (137). However, the stumbling block in achieving the moral consciousness that Renan talks about demands "the long and arduous process of practically re-making men and furnishing them with a fresh emotional equipment" (137). India has experienced that; all the attempts to unite the Indians by effacing their respective individuality had met no success, whether they were led by Akbar[70] or Kabir.[71] Not a single religious or communal unit is willing to sink its individual existence into a larger whole, so it is the demand of time that

> [the] unity of an Indian nation, therefore, must be sought, not in the negation, but in the mutual harmony and cooperation of many. True statesmanship cannot ignore facts, however unpleasant they may be. The only practical course is not to assume the existence of a state of things which does not exist, but to recognise facts as they are, and to exploit them to our greatest advantage. (137)

If India's unity is achieved by following this direction of giving recognition to each social entity, India will achieve peace, which will positively impact Asia as "India is an Asia in miniature" (137). If India resolves its political problems, there is a fair chance that all of Asia can resolve her problems by following the Indian model. But it is sad to see that no attempt to achieve internal harmony has succeeded so far. Its failure can be attributed to the ignoble desire of dominating

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[70] Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar (1542-1605) was the third Mughal emperor. He was the founder of 'Din-i-Ilahi' which he tried to promulgate as the state religion. It was to evolve a meeting point between different religious representatives.

[71] Kabir (1440-1518) was a Hindu saint who exerted great influence on Sikhism. He tried to find a meeting point between Islam and Hinduism.

the other under the garb of nationalism, to monopolize and exploit them. The situation will change "if the principle that the Indian Muslim is entitled to full and free development on the lines of his own culture and tradition in his own Indian homelands is recognized as the basis of a permanent communal settlement" (138). Communalism in this sense is not a malicious instinct. One can be loyal to one's own community and still respect religious, cultural, and social institutions of other communities. For a harmonious India, all communities should be given fullest cultural autonomy.

Now the question arises of how to achieve internal harmony by recognizing the rights of each community in India which is a "continent of human groups belonging to different races, speaking different languages and professing different religions" and "Their behaviour is not at all determined by common race consciousness" (138). European democracy will meet no success in India if it is imposed without recognizing communalism in its higher aspect, and therefore:

> The Muslim demand for the creation of a Muslim India within India is, therefore, perfectly justified…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,[72] the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim state appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-West India. (138-9)

Yet there is another question about the practicality of such a state. The Nehru

[72] This means after the departure of the British when the Hindu majority will control central government as envisaged by the Congress.

Report[73] had already rejected a similar proposal on the basis that it would create an unwieldy state in terms of its population, which would be less than some of the provinces of India. Another objection was that such a state could be a potent threat to India's existence as the Muslims could join with the enemies of India. Iqbal looks at it from another perspective. Once the Muslims are allowed to centralize their position in this part of India, their military and police force, which has a large proportion in Indian army and police, will consolidate India's defence against any foreign invasion instead of weakening India's sovereignty. Nor should they be afraid of a narrow-minded religious state which would deny the minority its civic rights. So the demand for autonomous Muslim state will serve a double purpose: on the one hand, it will guarantee internal peace to India, and on the other, it will give an opportunity to Indian Muslims to develop themselves on Islamic as well as modern lines.

Federal states were, according to Iqbal, the only solution to India's political dilemma. He announced his support of the Simon Commission[74] because the commission curtailed the authority of the Central Legislative Assembly by making it an assembly of the representatives of federal states. Moreover, the commission refers to the redistribution of territory as well: "Thus it is clear that in view of India's infinite variety in climates, races, languages, creeds and social systems, the creation of autonomous states, based on the unity of language, race,

[73] The Nehru Report (1928) was a memorandum outlining a proposed new Dominion constitution for India. It was prepared by a committee of the All Parties Conference chaired by Motilal Nehru with his son Jawaharlal acting as secretary. There were nine other members in this committee, including two Muslims.

[74] The Indian Statutory Commission was a group of seven British Members of Parliament that had been dispatched to India in 1927 to study constitutional reform in Britain's most important colonial dependency. It was commonly referred to as the Simon Commission after its chairman, Sir John Simon.

history, religion and identity of economic interests, is the only possible way to secure a stable constitutional structure in India" (140). The creation of such states would automatically resolve the problem of separate electorates which the Hindu majority considered to be against the spirit of nationalism.

However, the Simon Commission could not be approved without certain changes, Iqbal opines, because the principle of Western democracy goes against the interests of the Muslims. No doubt, the English-proposed Federation would make the provinces more powerful by shifting the nucleus of power from the centre to the provinces, but the proposal did not resolve the problem of communalism. So the Muslims should wade through not only the implications of the Nehru Report, which imposes a unitary form of government with all power vested in the Hindu majority, but also the Simon Commission, which, despite its positive tone, still maintained "British dominance behind the thin veneer of an unreal federation" (141). Its proposed federation could be achieved only by an inter-communal understanding in India which does not exist.

Iqbal interprets the measures taken by the British government at the First Round Table Conference as pernicious to the Muslim interests too. The Congress' change of heart and sudden acceptance of the Federation smelled foul. The British had cleverly invited Indian Princes, dynastic rulers of semi-autonomous Indian princely states, to persuade Congress to consent to a federation. The federation would be in place but the real power would again go to the Hindus, as in state decisions the Hindu Princes, who outnumbered Muslim Princes, would always support the Congress. It would be a win-win game for all

parties concerned except the Muslims:

> If therefore the British Imperial provinces are not transformed into really autonomous states, the Princes' participation in a scheme of Indian federation will be interpreted only as a dexterous move on the part of the British politicians to satisfy, without parting with any real power, all parties concerned—Muslims with the word federation, Hindus with a majority in the centre, and British Imperialists—whether Tory or Labourite—with the substance of real power. (142)

Besides the participation of the Indian Princes, the British Prime Minister's announcement that "joint electorate are much more in accordance with the British democratic sentiments" should be taken seriously. It was not viable to impose British democracy in a land of many nations. Iqbal warned the Muslim delegates that they should not be sensitive to the taunt that involves the propaganda word 'communalism.' Seventy million Muslims of India constituted the only homogeneous community in India and this homogeneity was due to their religion, Islam. Hindus, despite their numerical majority, could achieve homogeneity only by restructuring their social system.

Yet another thing that the Muslim delegates should be wary of was the fallacious idea that Indian Muslims should follow Turkey, Persia and other Muslim countries which were progressing on national territorial lines. The supporters of this argument failed to see that in the aforementioned countries the Muslims were in the majority, and moreover, they dealt with those minorities which the Quran had declared as "the people of the Book"—Christians, Jews, and

Zoroastrians—with whom intermarriages were permissible, and unlike Hindus, they shared with the Muslims almost the same ethical code.

If the Muslim delegates failed to convince their opponents on their safeguards embodied in the Delhi Resolution,[75] the Muslims should realise that the moment of a decisive action had arrived. Though Muslim leaders had contributed much to shape the thinking of Indian Muslims, the latter still faced two evils: first, the want of a personality that could lead the Muslims with his "keen perception of the spirit and destiny of Islam, along with an equally keen perception of modern history" (147); second, the loss of cohesiveness and a sense of belonging. Iqbal sensed that the loss of "herd-instinct" resulted from religious bickering and could be very dangerous at the moment when a singular line of action was the demand of the time. The only remedy for these evils was "an organized will fixed on a definite purpose" to which the march of times was drawing the Muslims of India (147).

This summary of Iqbal's address is important to understand the otherwise oft-quoted passage from the address which has been unanimously consecrated as the pointer to the direction the Indian Muslims would take for the realisation of self-determination. The passage reads, "I would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan into a single state. Self-government within the British Empire, or without the British Empire, the formation of a North-West Indian Muslim state appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims at least of North-West India" (138). No doubt, the prophetic words came true in 1947 with the creation of Pakistan, but this Muslim

[75] A resolution passed at the All India Muslim Conference, Delhi.

state was neither within nor without the British Empire. Pakistan came into existence after the partition of India into two separate and independent homelands—one dominated by Hindus, and the other by Muslims.

Hafeez Malik declares that although Iqbal clothed his socio-political doctrines in beautiful poetry, he "delivered his nationalistic testament before the annual session of the Moslem League at Allahabad in simple but majestic prose." He "was in the widest sense a political poet" who "expressed his views through poetry, speaking to the mind and heart of his Moslem audience." He distrusted nationalism in theory, but "he behaved like an ardent Moslem nationalist when facing the hard realities of political life in India" (*Muslim Nationalism* 239-40). On the one hand, Iqbal professed his allegiance to the Muslim nationality, the mark of his identity, because "it is the source of [his] life and behavior; and which has formed [him] what [he is] by giving [him] its religion, its literature, its thought, its culture, and thereby recreating its whole past, as a living operative factor, in [his] present consciousness." He rejected once and for all the notion that India is a social unity: "India is an Asia in miniature. India is a continent of human groups belonging to different races, speaking different languages and professing different religions." Iqbal reiterates, "Thus it is clear that in view of India's infinite variety in climates, races, languages, creeds, and social systems, the creation of states based on the unity of language, race, history, religion and identity of economic interests, is the only possible way to secure a constitutional structure in India" (240). Iqbal demanded a "consolidated North-West Indian Moslem State" because "the thought of the cultural preservation of the Moslem

nation was uppermost in his mind." He argued that the "life of Islam as a cultural force in the country very largely depends on its centralization in a specified territory." He believed firmly in the principle of one nation, one state: "We are seventy millions and far more homogenous than any other people in India. Indeed the Moslem of India are the only Indian people who can fitly be described as a nation in the modern sense of the word" (240). Indian Muslims like Iqbal reacted to the inclusionary nationalism which was "unable to shed its premises of religious majoritarianism" (Jalal xv). For them, nationhood was, by its very definition, exclusionary. Therefore, to lose one's much sought-after national identity under the influence of nationalist leaders of Congress and orthodox Ulema was a kind of collective suicide for which they were never ready. Their struggle for freedom was a conduit for shaping and promoting their nationhood, entitled to self-rule.

Now I will briefly discuss the reception of this announcement in pre-partition India by the British, the Hindus, and Iqbal's co-religionists, the Muslims, to determine the shock-waves he created in certain circles. Most of them considered his plan a figment of his imagination, not even worth discussing. Javid Iqbal, in his biography of Iqbal, *Zindarud*, documents in great detail the reaction of different scholars and politicians to Iqbal's proposal. Muslim delegates to the First Round Table Conference refrained from commenting on this address, except for Sir Muhammad Shafi, who referred to it in his answer to one of the Hindu delegates, Dr. Moonje's reminder to the Muslims that they were all Indians despite their religious difference. The British press reported that the Prime

Minister, Ramsay Macdonald, was very upset over the proposal. Some Muslim leaders, who were heavily influenced by the Congress, later on declared it to be sheer poetry—unreal and impractical (458-61). Surprisingly, Javid Iqbal does not present any comments by Iqbal himself on this proposal until 1937 when Iqbal wrote letters to Jinnah and advised him to concentrate his efforts to safeguard the rights of Muslims in North-West India.

In *Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since 1850,* Ayesha Jalal comments on the duality of Muslim identity in the context of Iqbal's vision:

> For Iqbal, Islam was the highest ideal humanity could hope to attain. With constitutional reforms on the anvil, and the suppositions of Congress's inclusionary nationalism before them, Muslims had to decide whether autonomy in religiously informed cultural practices, confined to the domestic sphere under the provisions of the sharia, was an adequate safeguard for their conception of identity, sovereignty and citizenship. Was it possible 'to retain Islam as an ethical ideal and…reject it as a polity' in order to embrace the idea of 'national polities' in which religion played no part? All Muslims knew that the religious life of the Prophet of Islam was an 'individual experience creative of a social order.' (326)

The Indian Muslims' identity was embedded in both Islam and India; they did not deny their Indian roots, but they did not want to sacrifice religious affiliations with Islam for a community which could at any time abandon its big-brotherly attitude and dismiss them to the periphery of political non-existence. That is why

Jalal very aptly refers to Iqbal's choice as political. It was not based on ethical consideration for the Muslims in Hindu-majority provinces, who would be heavily impacted by the partition of India on his proposed scheme (323).

Iqbal's scheme surfaced amid a welter of similar schemes with a great difference. While others proposed a Muslim state, Iqbal first laid the foundations of nationhood, woke his people up to national consciousnessnes, and then proposed state(s) to safeguard the nationhood. "Given the difficulties in equating 'nationhood' with 'statehood', Muslims and non-Muslims had to remain linked to a larger Indian whole, albeit radically rearticulated in form and substance by virtually independent self-governing parts" (396).

Consequently, Pakistan schemes were discussed in many forums by quite a few people around the same time. For example, in *The Indian Problem: Report on the Constitutional Problem of India,* R. Coupland refers to Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan's proposal of 1939, to *Census of India 1941* by M.W.M. Yeatts. Another writer, Rajendra Prasad, refers to other schemes for Pakistan in his *India Divided*; among them, a scheme by 'A Punjabi' in his *Confederacy of India*, another scheme by two Aligarh professors, Syed Zafrul Hasan and Mohamad Afzal Husain Qadri, and El Hamza's scheme in his *Pakistan—A Nation*, to name a few. Among the Muslims, it was Chaudry Rehmat Ali who actually proposed the name of Pakistan for any such scheme. All these schemes came after Iqbal's Allahabad Address; however, Javid Iqbal quotes Mohammad Ahmed Khan who mentions Sir Syed, Theodore Morrison, Blunt, Sharar, Bambuq, the Khairy Brothers, Sardar Gul Khan, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, Lajpat Roy, Murtaza Ahmad

Khan, Abdul Qadir Bilgarami, and Nadir Ali as Iqbal's predecessors in formulating a separate Muslim identity for the Muslims of India (*Zindarud* 455).

Despite the currency of the idea of a consolidated Muslim state in the political discourse of the time, Iqbal's address does become unique, not because he originated the plan, but because of the ideology he used to support it. Most of the above-mentioned predecessors or contemporaries of Iqbal were either vague or inconclusive in their presentation of a two-nation theory or Pakistan scheme. They were educationists or writers or politicians, but none of them was a philosopher. So none of them could go beyond the difference of religion or region; Muslims demanded a consolidated autonomous domain because their religion stands in sharp contrast to Hinduism, or they had a right of self-determination because their majority was clustered together in a certain regional belt of India. But Iqbal taps the deeper recesses of his people's consciousness and neutralizes highly racial and bigoted discourses of difference by placing Muslim cohesiveness in a uniform moral consciousness which transforms the meaning of their political struggle. Nationalism, in his opinion, is not limited to geographical boundaries—a people's sense of belonging to each other and shared destiny makes them a nation. It is in this sense that his utterance, "Islam is itself destiny and will not suffer a destiny!" should be interpreted (Shafique, *Iqbal* 136).

Viewed from another perspective, Iqbal's stance on invoking nationhood stands in sharp contrast to secular or liberal Muslim leaders like Jinnah, who intentionally refrained from bringing religion into politics. In her *The Sole Spokesman,* Ayesha Jalal very convincingly presents Iqbal's and Jinnah's

contrasting stance. After the election of 1937, Iqbal had advised Jinnah to ignore Muslim minority provinces and to look to the Muslims of North-West India and Bengal, "an irony not lost on the leader of a party whose only electoral success had been in the minority provinces which he was now being invited to spurn" (42-3). Iqbal wrote seven years after his famous speech in Allahabad:

> 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 are? Personally I think that the Muslims of North West India and Bengal ought at present [to] ignore Muslim minority provinces. This is the best course to adopt in the interests of both Muslim majority and minority provinces. (qtd. in Jalal 42)

This was the first clear message of the partition which Iqbal conveyed, and it was exclusively based on political considerations.

The Muslim Mass Contact Movement of Congress could be a final nail in the coffin of the All India Muslim League because the League's main support came from the wealthy and was somewhat indifferent to the common man's problems. The League had made no attempt to popularize it at a grass-roots level. Iqbal sensed the danger and acquainted Jinnah with his sincere wish of attracting the Muslim masses with the promise of a bold socio-economic agenda. Jalal comments that "Iqbal linked political issues with the social and economic problems of India's Muslims. The real issue, as Iqbal saw it, was…to solve the problem of Muslim poverty…was to enforce the 'Law of Islam'. A bold social and economic programme based on the 'Law of Islam' for the Muslim masses

would, according to Iqbal, do the trick; but what such a 'law' involved or how it could be implemented was not very clear, and in any case Jinnah was too shrewd and too secular to chase this particular hare" (*The Sole Spokesman* 42). It is a historical fact that Jinnah kept silent over this issue.

Malik refers to the absence of such a socio-economic plan and questions the application of any such plan. He argues that Iqbal failed to answer the question of how this plan could work without intensifying the communal hatred between Hindus and Muslims, though Malik defends Iqbal's ambivalence over the issue because Iqbal might intend his message to be vague so that Muslim politicians would have sufficient leeway to work out details for a Muslim homeland (*Muslim Nationalism* 241).

Whether Jinnah paid attention to Iqbal's request is a grey area which only a few historians have attempted to explore. Malik documents that sometimes Jinnah did not even answer Iqbal's letters. He might have thought it prudent to remain silent over this issue because any move in this direction could spark a debate between orthodox Muslims of India and the liberal elite, and Jinnah could lose the support of wealthy, landed-gentry if he were to move in the direction of economic reforms. Economic reforms as Iqbal envisioned them could be taken as an open attack on the interests of the wealthy class of the Muslim League, who happened to be its only support at the time. That is why Jalal records that, according to his old friend Raja of Mahmudabad, Jinnah did not approve of such "traditional remedies" and he advised Mahmudabad not to express them from the League's platform "since this might lead the people into thinking that Jinnah had

given them his endorsement" and this was clearly the last thing Jinnah wanted at this stage (*The Sole Spokesman* 43). However, Ayesha Jalal does not take into account that Iqbal's appeal to Islam was not a traditional appeal to Islam as such, but to an Islam which had the capacity to step down from the pulpit and strengthen the masses' real-life struggle against any kind of exploitation, no matter where it was coming from—from the colonizers; the colonizers' chief beneficiaries, the Hindus; or from the Muslim elite class that had taken the responsibility of leading the masses and usually used the League's platform to inform them about the elite's decision instead of involving them in those decisions.

Rafique traces the differences of opinion among the Muslims over the question of Indian Muslims' destiny back to the war of ideology between Deoband, which "became the citadel of this opposition to the League," and Aligarh, which "quite naturally, turned out to be the training centre of the 'mujahidin-i-Pakistan.'" He contends that these "two major centres of Muslim education in India represented two diametrically opposed trends in the politico-intellectual life of the Indian Muslims. Deoband never succeeded in shaking off the suspicion it entertained about the pronounced cooperation of Aligarh with the British regime in India" (105). He blames Aligarh for always being cautious in not taking any step which would antagonize the British. That is why his party, the Jamiyat, never appreciated the League politics which were believed to be the product of the interests of British imperialism (105).

The 1937 election in India, as mentioned earlier, was the turning point

in the life of the League when it realized that a mass contact movement was essential for them to be politically alive. So, what Iqbal presented as 'moral consciousness' in his 1930 Address was an open-ended phenomenon. His approach was unlike the ulema of Deoband who deemed self-determination for the Muslims an anti-Islamic act—division of the Muslim *Ummah* into autonomous states. No doubt, Iqbal could not be as pragmatic as Jinnah; his 1930 Address was not a utopian fantasy. It was a sincere attempt to bridge the ideological differences between the Muslim extremists like Deoband Ulema or scholars like Azad, and the professedly secular leaders like Jinnah and his cronies. This ideological difference was hitherto a main hindrance to the mobilization of the Muslim masses, who needed a clear sense of direction very desperately.

Who else except Iqbal could sound loud and clear? He was a multi-dimensional personality—an intellectual, a philosopher, a poet, and a politician. His vast knowledge of eastern and western traditions informed his career as a politician instead of isolating him from his people. He was an active agent in the colonial world of the early twentieth century and used his literary and scholarly agency to help the Muslim leaders and masses realize that their priorities should be shaped by the true spirit of Islam. Malik views Iqbal's great service to the spirit of Pakistan as being located in his poetry, which he used for the idealization of Islam not merely as a religion, but as a comprehensive political system. This exercised not only a far-reaching influence upon the Muslim intelligentsia, but also captured the aspirations of the masses. He credits Iqbal with "creating an intellectual climate in which the Pakistan idea could grow and come to fruition"

(*Muslim Nationalism* 241).

Similarly, Masood Raja acknowledges Iqbal's role as a mentor of the colonized Indian Muslims in his book *Constructing Pakistan: Foundational Texts and the Rise of Muslim National Identity, 1857-1947*. He, like many other observers, declares that Iqbal "is a poet who possesses a deeper knowledge of his own tradition and history along with a formidable knowledge of Western systems of thought, history and politics" (109). He uses Frantz Fanon's "paradigm of a colonial subject" to highlight Iqbal's concept of nationhood which stems from a deep understanding of his people's hopes and aspirations:

> In Frantz Fanon's terms, then, he is a poet who can compose 'the sentence which expresses the heart of the people'. This is what Fanon calls 'the third phase…the fighting phase [in which] the native, after having tried to lose himself in the people and with the people, will on the contrary shake the people'. Iqbal, thus, is the intellectual in the fighting phase of the nation… [who] in his political life…articulates a vision of a future Muslim nation-state. In Fanon's views, 'national consciousness, which is not nationalism, is the only thing that gives that will in an international dimension'…. For Iqbal, the Muslim identity is inherently transnational and trans-historical, and he returns to nation—in his prose work—only if the nation eventually promises to fulfil its pan-Islamic purpose. (109)

Raja further refers to Iqbal's contact with the masses which enabled him to associate with their hopes and frustrations. He notes that "Iqbal's literary

production was completely inspired by the immediate cultural and political milieu. He calls him "a superstar of Lahore mushairahs" regularly held inside Bhati Gate (cf. Malik & Malik). He also argues that the idea of "Muslim particularity" took its definite form from two points of reference: first, a Muslim self retrieved from Islamic past to counter the "overwhelming ideological onslaught of the West; and second, the "public imperative" to "articulate a peculiar view about the West and prompts a deep introspective of Islam itself" (111). Being a poet "constantly in conversation with his people," Iqbal was one of those rare intellectuals-cum-politicians who could use common parlance to convey to the masses their dual nationality or loyalty—their loyalty to their religion and their loyalty to their land. He did so superbly without having any shy feeling about the sincerity of his belief (111).

Religion as a defining marker of distinction is the boon of colonialization. "In colonial history", according to Barbra Metcalf, "religion in general is taken as central to defining the fundamental properties of non-European cultures-societies that are backward, irrational, and medieval….only the marginal or the reactionary would bring religion into public life" (956). The colonial practices in British India "systematically institutionalized a nation of communities based on their religion, communities of Hindus and Muslims" (954). These practices included modern methods of measurement known to the west, such as the census and ethnographic surveys, which highlighted religion as the mark of differentiation. She adds, "This arithmetic in turn provided grounds for claims to education, employment quotas in the army and in government services, and

electoral reservation" (954; cf. Anderson 163-86; Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty* xiv). Hence, communalism in its narrow sense is the product of colonialism. It came to India with the British and in a few centuries, religious demarcation of a people became a permanent part of the Indian psyche.

The progressive leaders who intentionally tried not to implicate themselves in religious debates shunned such discussions in public forums. They were more interested to present Indian problems on ethnographic and demographic lines. The religious extremists took a direct opposite course of thought, and practiced nothing except in the enclosed environs of religious bigotry. There was a dire need for a personality to combine both ideologies in a healthy proportion and rationally guide the people by working on their shared religious beliefs. It was this kind of leadership that Iqbal refers to in his Address of Allahabad. Interestingly, he himself passes this test with flying colours. He knew that western political theory could not resolve the issues of colonial India. Appeal to religious sentiments for a political cause seemed to him a natural choice. For his Indian Muslim identity, he did not hesitate to combine religious, modernist, and nationalist elements. This remarkable feature of Iqbal's poetry finds its full expression in his "Satan's Parliament."

"Satan's Parliament"

Written in 1936 and published posthumously in 1938, "Satan's Parliament" holds a unique position among Iqbal's political poems. Viewed in the context of Iqbal's 1930 Allahabad Address and his correspondence in the late 1930s with Jinnah and other Muslim leaders and intellectuals, the poem

establishes a dialogic relationship with what Iqbal said earlier or wrote later. The poem offers an excellent commentary on world politics and Muslims' resignation from the world scene due to the decadent influence of autocracy, sick Sufism, and fatalism. To the best of my knowledge, the poem has received considerable attention for its political content, but there has been no attempt to see the implications of presenting Satan as the poet's mouthpiece, and the structure of the poem itself.

The poem is presented in the form of a dialogue happening on the democratic platform of a parliament. If Iqbal is anti-democratic, as the poem's surface reading suggests, the selection of parliament as a setting of the poem is packed with meaning. Moreover, Iqbal assigns a central role to Satan in the poem. If Satan represents diabolic forces only, why does Iqbal put his characteristic dialogue into Satan's mouth? We see that, otherwise a negative character, Satan awakens Indian Muslims from their meek submissiveness to their fate instead of encouraging them to live in that stupor for good. Iqbal's poem presents a nice interplay of these two aspects of the central character and the structure of the poem against his immediate political situation. I will discuss these two aspects in detail to seek meaning from the hitherto neglected features of the poem.

First, I will trace the literary-cum-religious background for Iqbal's Satan. In "Iblis in Iqbal's Poetry," Annemarie Schimmel refers to A. Baussani, who has offered a good understanding of Iqbal's Satan and his "satanology." She comments:

> In Iqbal's work the various strands of the Christian and Islamic attitudes

> toward Satan are woven together into a highly interesting fabric. A. Bausani…discerns five different aspects of Iqbal's Satan: the Promethean side, which Iqbal may have taken over from Milton; the Judaeo-Islamic aspect according to which Satan is and remains a creature and instrument of God; the Gnostic Christian ideas, originating in Iran, that Satan is an independent power in the world; the idea common in some mystical trends that Satan is the manifestation of God's Jalal side, and eventually the aspect of Satan as the pragmatic politician. ("Iblis in Iqbal's Poetry" 119)

If we analyze those poems of Iqbal in which Satan plays a central role, we can find enough evidence to support Schimmel's reading. For example, in پیامِ‌مشرق '*The Message of the East*,' it is the Promethean side of Satan that Iqbal emphasizes: "I'm not (like) the naïve Light-Being, that / I prostrate before Adam" (qtd. in Baussani 69). In جاوید نامہ *The Message of Eternity*, we find an instrument of God who enlightens man:

> Hallaj: Say little of that Leader of those in separation,
> Throat athirst, and eternally blood-filled cup…
> We are ignorant, he knows being and not-being;
> his infidelity revealed to us that mystery,
> how that from falling comes the delight of rising (2411, 2413-15)

Similarly, we find a modern world statesman-in-the-making in "The Wail of Satan" from *The Message of Eternity* and "Satan's Petition" from *Gabriel's Wing*. In the first poem, Satan complains about modern man, whom he can tempt without any difficulty. He says, "This Adam's son is just a heap of hay

/ Whom my one spark can all consume… / O God! Confront me with a single faithful man / May I perchance gain bless in my defeat!" (20-21, 31-33). Satan considers it below his dignity to waste his talent of temptation on such a worthless creature; he longs for challenge and resistance. In "Satan's Petition," Satan maintains his dignity and refuses to change his roles, as now he is more powerful and he can change the course of events; he prefers commotion over the silence of submission. He cleverly proclaims himself to be a part of Divine plan or in a more mystic bent, a part of God:

> In the heart of the Almighty like a pricking thorn I lie
> You only cry for ever God, oh God, oh God most high! (28-29)[76]

Baussani considers these lines as Iqbal's greatest merit in his presentation of Satan because "in his reconstruction of an absolute prophetical theism he has perhaps unconsciously singled out the most genuine element from among the scripture traditions of the prophetical religions (interpreting them with not a little freedom), and that he has finally put a little bit of Satan also into God….Sooner or later the wayfarer on the path of religion feels the need for a criterion of the Satanic and the Divine which at times take on shapes of an extreme resemblance (91-92).[77]

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[76] میں کھٹکتا ہوں دلِ یزداں میں کانٹے کی طرح
تو فقط اللہ ہو، اللہ ہو، اللہ ہو
(*Kuliyat* 28-29)

[77] See Baussani's "Satan in Iqbal's Philosophical and Poetical Works" for more detailed interpretation of this side of Satan's character, especially in his endnotes no. 67 and 68, where he comments that the question of the dangerous resemblance between Divine and Diabolic, and that of practical means of distinguishing between them has occupied all mystics and religious minds. Rumi's solution consists of humble veneration for the Prophet-Saint, the Visible Master who preserves man from falling back into the undifferentiated Satanic. Man is earthly and God is

This brief analysis of some of the important aspects of Iqbal's satanology reveals that Iqbal assigned different roles to his Satan within the parameters of scriptural and mystical traditions of world religions. Rumi and Milton both receive equal treatment as regards their concepts of Satan. *Mathnavi* and *Paradise Lost* reveal yet another trait of Satan's personality: his argumentative reasoning. It is this feature which mainly occupies "Satan's Parliament" where we meet a sober politician whose political training is now successfully complete as he has evolved from the stages of rash Prometheus of "The Conquest of Nature," unwilling[78] instrument of the Divine Will of *The Message of Eternity*, and of mystic-mentor of undifferentiating *unio mystica* with God of *Gabriel's Wing*, to a seasoned politician who keeps a dash of all preceding stages in the rich flavour of worldly political wisdom. That is why Annemarie Schimmel says, "Iqbal had called the politicians of our age 'Satan's prophets' while he was still a student at Cambridge, and these blows are taken up once more in his last poetical works, where we find the Parliament of Iblis and many other poems against those Satanic powers which try to seduce the Muslim people by various means in order to establish their own rule instead of the rule of one God" (*Iqbal Centenary Papers* 122).

"Satan's Parliament" is a unique poem not only because of its central figure, Satan, but also because of its structure. Satan's two targets of attack are Western democracy and socialism. The structure of the poem is that of a democratic parliament in which Satan's counselors comment on his introduction

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divine. Both are unequal and cannot dissolve into each other. The Prophet helps keep this distinction.

[78] According to some traditions, Satan was caught between God's will and His order.

of two prevalent political systems—democracy and socialism—to keep the populace in eternal misery and colonial yoke. However, as in a socialist political set-up, despite being truly equal in all matters, they have to seek final opinion of their chief collaborator who seems to have the final say on the matter. This motif demonstrates the poem's artistic ingenuity.

The First Counselor endorses Satan's opening comments, in which Satan claims that he has perverted the Divine plan of the creation by putting mankind on the road that leads them to autocracy, to fatalism, to capitalism, and in a word, to every perversity but religion. With a special focus on Indian Muslims, the First Counselor elaborates on Satan's achievements. True, it is Satan's stratagem to make colonized Indian Muslims insensitive to their slavery. They accept their political plight as the will of God, and hence, they make no effort to shatter the fetters of colonialism. Keeping with the central theme of perversity, the counselor perverts the meaning of Islamic prayer. The prayer is supposed to be offered in both prostrating and standing positions, but the Indian Muslims have forgotten to stand up after prostration:

> From age to age to kneel, whose nature craves
> A prostrate worship, no prayer uttered erect (18-19)[79]

Their object of prostration has changed—from God to the British colonialist. The former desires strengthening of human personality by humbling man in prostration in front of none other than God, the Almighty and the most benevolent, and the latter deprives him of his dignity by submitting to a

[79] ہے ازل سے ان غریبوں کے مقدر میں سجود
انکی فطرت کا تقاضہ ہے نمازِ بے قیام
(*Kuliyat* 18-19)

colonialist, omnipresent capitalist and cruel exploiter. The religious practices have become rituals deprived of genuineness and zeal. The so-called Muslim religious leaders, whether *Mullas* or *Sufis,* have become an instrument in the hands of state machinery. They lull the masses into a deep slumber of unquestioning loyalty to their rulers. Their *fatwas* facilitate the rulers who thrive upon the masses' ignorance of the actual situation. They have given a new interpretation to any religious edict that could stimulate the masses into action and kindle a desire for their emancipation. This is a clear allusion to two important political compromises the Muslims were asked to make in Iqbal's day. One was on an international level: after Napoleon's invasion of Egypt, the scholars of Al-Azhar issued a fatwa of accepting the usurpers as their new rulers on the basis of the centuries-old doctrine that dictatorship is better than anarchy. The second, on a national level, is a reference to religious seminaries like Deoband and religious scholars like Abual Kalam Azad, who opposed tooth and nail the idea of a separate state for the Muslims of India, believing that it was an evil scheme of dividing the Indian Muslims across the border. Thus, the Indian Muslims in particular and the Muslims of the world in general have lost their sense of clear direction as those in the position of directing the masses are in the folds of the colonialists.

The Second Counselor reminds the First Counselor that the weaknesses of the Muslim world he referred to are stories of by-gone times. The latest threat to them is arrival of a new political ideology on the scene which he calls "democratic monarchy" 'سلطانیِ جمہور':

The many-headed beast bellows for power

Is this our bane or boon?

You have not learned

What new-hatched mischiefs are about the earth. (34-35)[80]

The First Counselor hushes his comrade's anxiety by arguing that democracy is a new name for power-hungry autocracy. The change in names will not change the outcomes of the political system, as

The true power

And purpose of dominion lie elsewhere,

And do not stand or fall by the existence

Of Prince or Sultan. Whether parliaments

Of nations meet, or Majesty holds court,

Whoever casts his eye on another's field

Is tyrant born. (41-44)[81]

According to him, the apparently bright face of western democracy hides the atrocious nature of Genghis.

Meanwhile, the Third Counselor joins the conversation. He refers to another equally important state apparatus that Karl Marx has introduced. His Marxism seems to be an antidote to the evils of the eastern and western political

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[80] خیر ہے سلطانی جمہور کا غوغہ کہ شر
تو جہاں کے تازہ فتنوں سے نہیں ہے باخبر
(*Kuliyat* 34-35)

[81] کاروبارِ شہریاری کی حقیقت اورہے
یہ وجودِ میرو سلطاں پر نہیں ہے منحصر
مجلسِ ملت ہو یا پرویز کا دربار ہو
ہے وہ سلطاں، غیر کی کھیتی پہ ہو جس کی نظر
(*Kuliyat* 41-44)

systems which encouraged class division.[82] Marxism will spur the labour class to loosen the bourgeoisie's strict control over profit earned by the labourers' sweat. The masses have listened to his call of putting a violent end to their masters' tyrannical hold. However, the Fourth Counselor interrupts the Third Counselor and draws his attention toward Mussolini's fascism, which might minimize the effect of Marx' message of a classless society with a sense of shared ownership.[83] Fascism, as implemented by Mussolini in Italy, erects a façade of social justice by strongly encouraging xenophobic and racist attitudes. The Third Counselor responds that he cannot see any improvement in Mussolini's plan, either because he believes that Mussolini's plan is only a naked picture of what European powers have been tacitly doing under the garb of colonialism—promoting racial differences and economic disparities.

The fifth counselor joins the discussion to first emphasize the achievements of Satan and second to reiterate the fears from the surge of communism resulting from Marx's ideology. He extols Satan and says:

> Oh you whose fiery breath fills up the sails
>
> Of the world! You, when it pleased you, brought to light

[82] Marx asserted that social and political relations depend ultimately upon relations of economic production. All value in the form of wealth is produced by labour, yet, in a capitalist system, workers' salaries do not represent the full value of their labour. Thus, the working class, proletariat, and the class that is in control of capital and production, bourgeoisie, have conflicting interests. Capitalism, it is asserted, is merely one stage in the progress of human institutions. As the forces of production (technology and capital stock) increase, the relations of production must change in order to accommodate them. Conflicting interests within capitalism would inevitably lead to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat and so the collapse of the system itself. This would be replaced, first by socialism and eventually by a communist society in which production and distribution would be democratically controlled, summarized in the slogan "From each according to their ability, to each according to their need."

[83] Basic to fascist ideas are glorification of the state and total subordination to its authority; suppression of all political opposition; preservation of a rigid class structure; stern enforcement of law and order; the supremacy of the leader as the embodiment of high ideals; and an aggressive militarism aimed at achieving national greatness.

All mysteries…

We, once heaven' simpletons, with you for teacher

Have come to knowledge… (68-70, 72-73)[84]

As mentioned earlier, in some mystical trends in East and West, Satan is the manifestation of God's *Jalal* [Might] side and can sometimes work independently. His intellectual capacity is such that he can discern the logic behind everything and can acquaint his followers with knowledge based on reason.[85] It is he who, in a Promethean manner, defied Divine order and set his ego upon a high pedestal, as compared to other angels who meekly accepted the Will of God.

However, the Fifth Counselor implores Satan's immediate help in the changing scenario of world politics. No doubt, all western political players have so far played to the tunes of Satan because they seem to have no remedy for the upheavals created by communism. As completely aligned with the already mentioned theme of perversity, he implores the Prince of Chaos, Satan, to restore order in the world after his heart's satanic desires. Satan arrogantly responds to this call and says:

Earth, sun, and moon, celestial spheres, all realms

Of matter, lie in the hollow of my hand.

Let me once fever the blood of Europe's races,

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[84] اے ترے سوزِنفس سے کارِ عالم استوار
تو نے جب چاہا، کیا ہر پردگی کو آشکار
و گل تیری حرارت سے جہانِ سوزوسازآب
ابلمِ جنت تری تعلیم سے داناے کار
(*Kuliyat* 53-56)

[85] Baussani refers to Satan's knowledge as based on reason and short-sighted because it is not informed by Love, the creative impulse behind everything.

And East and West shall see with their own eyes

A drama played out! With one incantation

I know how to drive mad their pillars of state

And princes of the church (96-102)[86]

He challenges Communism and its adherents, whom he paints in very derogatory terms: "When Nature's hand / Has rent the seam, no needleworking logic / Of communism will put the stitches back / I be afraid of socialists?—street-bawlers / Ragged things, tortured brains, tormented souls! (105-106).[87] The threat to Satan's supreme rule lies not in communism, but in Islam: "…the canker of to-morrow / Is not your communism: it is Islam" (117-118).[88] Satan anticipates in the Muslims' scattered energy that kind of volcanic eruption which, if channelled properly, can topple down his empire. He acknowledges that Muslims have gone far away from the teachings of their Prophet and joined the hands of capitalists, but still among them, though few and far between, are the ones who truly repent in the early hour prayers and purge themselves of their previous sins by the tears of contrition. Satan's only fear is that due to extreme depressing conditions, Muslims can rebound and adopt the faded path of their Prophet with more

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[86] ھے مرے دستِ تصرّف میں جہانِ رنگ و بو
کیا زمیں، کیا مہرو مہ، کیا آسمانِ تو بتو
دیکھ لیں گے اپنی آنکھوں سے تماشہ غرب و شرق
میں نے جب گرما دیااقوامِ یورپ کا لہو
کیا امامانِ سیاست، کیا کلیسا کے شیوخ
سب کو دیوانہ بنا سکتی ھے میری ایک ہو
(*Kuliyat* 73-78)

[87] دستِ فطرت نے کیاھے جن گریبانوں کو چاک
مزد کی منطق کی سوزن سے نہیں ہوتے رفو
کب ڈ را سکتے ہیں مجھ کو اشتراکی کوچہ گرد
یہ پریشاں روزگار، آشفتہ مغز، آشفتہ مو
(*Kuliyat* 76-79)

[88] مزدکیت فتنہ فردا نہیں، اسلام ھے
(*Kuliyat* 85)

powerful zeal. Once possessed of their lost religious fervor and energy, the Muslims can bring about a revolution of thought and practice:

> A hundred times beware,
> Beware, that Prophet's ordinance, that keeps safe
> The honour of women, that forges men and tries them,
> That bears a death-warrant to every shape
> Of servitude (127-131)[89]

Their code of life offers unique solution to the stratagems Satan has employed so far. As a response to capitalism, instead of shared ownership of socialism, it makes the bourgeoisie custodians of their riches; as a response to fascism and imperialism, it pronounces God's sovereignty instead of a crown.

Though Iqbal gave Islam, as a polity, a superior status, he seemed to have a soft corner for socialism, which has sparked a debate among scholars. Instead of understanding his ambiguous stance on this topic, some of his critics take no time in declaring him an out-and-out socialist. To a man of his sensibility, "the Western paradigm of capitalism" was as repulsive as "the feudal economy of India." Iqbal was sympathetic towards Socialism because "it stood for equality, and was against its rigidity of the social stratification" (Malik, "The New World Order" 460). He thinks that Islam and socialism agree on equality and social justice.

His poem "The Voice of Karl Marx" is an interesting example from

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[89] الحذ رآئین پیغمبر سے سو بار الحذ ر
حافظِ ناموسِ زن، مردِآزما، مردِ آفریں
(*Kuliyat* 91-92)

which to determine Iqbal's leftist orientation,[90] though he hailed even the destructive side of it when he mentioned setting ablaze those farms which cannot provide food to their farmers.[91] However, Iqbal totally rejects the atheistic trend of socialism. He believes that the socialist economy fulfills some of Islam's aims, but it is not as comprehensive as Islam because economy, though extremely important, is only one aspect of life. Not being all-inclusive, socialism does not promote the spiritual development of an individual; its emphasis is rather on a class, or classes, for that matter. Thus, despite the fact that Islam and Socialism share certain values, their approach to resolving societal issues is totally different: Islam starts from an individual and aims at an ideal society; Socialism at its outset starts from a regenerated society and aims, if it could see beyond classes, at individual—Socialism was a revolt against one class (the bourgeoisie) to help reduce the misery of another class (the proletariat).

As far as its social aspect was concerned, Iqbal was for Socialism, but when a choice between Socialism and Islam is presented, he prefers Islam. Hence, his attitude in some of his socialistic poems sounds quite ambivalent if read in isolation from the rest of his poetry. Anyone who reads "Lenin in the Presence of

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[90] Your chessmatch of research and erudition—
Your comedy of debate and disputation!
The world has no more patience left to watch
This comedy of threadbare speculation. What after all sapient economists,
Is to be found in your biblification? A comedy of nicely-flowing curves,
A sort of Barmicidal invitation.
In the idolatrous shrines of the Occident,
Its pulpits and its seats of education,
Greed and murderous crimes are marked under your
Knavish comedy of cerebration. (*Zarb-i-Kalim*)

[91] جس کھیت سے دہکان کو میسر نہ ہو روزی
اس کھیت کے ہر خوشۂ گندم کو جلا دو
("Farman-i-Khuda" *Bal-i-Jibreel* 7-8)

God" or only selected passages from "Satan's Parliament" cannot help but declare Iqbal a socialist.[92] On the contrary, the same poems can be interpreted quite differently if put in the broader picture of Iqbal's regard for Islam's superiority. Iqbal's Socialism is derived from God; it is God who orders the angels to annihilate every imprint of the past. Iqbal believes in the just and fair distribution of national income in the modern state of his vision.

"As a Muslim," Javid Iqbal contends, "[Iqbal] believes that "the Quran has provided the best solution to the economic problems of different classes of humanity. The objective of the Shariah is to stop one group from the exploitation of the other through the power of capital. Islam does not completely eliminate the power of capital from its economic system, but after a careful study of human nature, retains it as a structure based on the balance between capital and labour (Iqtesad)" (*Islam and Pakistan's Identity* 301). He sought in the Quran a panacea for all economic and social ills; and for this reason, he fully supported the taxation of Zakat and Ushr for the fair distribution of capital in a Muslim state.

That is why we find that Satan in "Satan's Parliament" wants the Islamic code of life to stay in oblivion because of its potential threat. The only comfort Satan can enjoy in the face of this strong social and political system is that the Muslims' faith has been punctured by religious debates. The result is desirable for Satan, as he discerns in those debates' intellectual twists of no

[92]Unsearchable God's edicts move; who knows
What thoughts are stirring deep in the world-mind!
Those are appointed to pull down, who lately
Held its salvation to protect, the priests;
On Godless Russia the command descends:
Smite all the Baals and Dragons of the church! (*Bal-i-Jibril*)

significance which have sucked the strength of pure, invigorating belief and instilled a habit of bickering over insignificant issues. That mighty "God-meditating" folk has turned all its energies to issues like

> Whether the Son of Mary perished once,
> Or knew no death: whether the Attributes
> Of God from God are separate or are God's
> True essence: whether 'He who is to come'
> Betokens the Messiah of Nazareth
> Some new Reformer clothed with Christ's own vesture:
> Whether the words of scripture are late-born
> Or from eternity, and which answer hold
> Salvation for the chosen People (149-157)[93]

These enigmatic debates have become new idols of worship for the Muslims. It is heartening to see that the impracticality of such debates has pushed Muslims out of public arena to monastic folds. Therefore, "Keep its wits bemused with dawn / Potations of its dregs of thought and prayer: / And tightens round its soul the monkish bonds (169-170).[94]

We can conclude from the close reading of "Satan's Parliament" that the poem is a poetic expression of Iqbal's contemporary political challenges. The

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[93] ابنِ مریم مرگیا یا زندہ جاوید ہے
ہیں صفاتِ ذاتِ حق، حق سے جدا یا عین ذات؟
آنے والے سے مسیحِ ناصری مقصود ہے
یا مجدد، جس میں ہوں فرزند مریم کے صفات؟
ہیں کلام اللہ کے الفاظ حادث یا قدیم
اُمتِ مرحوم کی ہے کس عقیدے میں نجات؟
(*Kuliyat* 111-116)

[94] مست رکھو ذکر و فکرِ صبح گاہی میں اسے
پختہ تر کر دو مزاجِ خانقاہی میں اسے
(*Kuliyat* 127-128)

salvation of his people, as he envisages it, lies neither in the continuation of British imperial design, which is another name for Western capitalism, nor in the western democracy that the British and the Congress leaders wanted to implement in India once the British depart; nor it is in the classless Utopia of Karl Marx' communism, nor it is in the national chauvinism of fascist ideology. It is rather the Islamic code of life in its pristine luster which can dazzle the so-called saviours of the world.

Due to the urgency of his message, Iqbal experimented with many established norms and truths in this poem. First, he reversed the roles of the creator and the destroyer—God becomes a destroyer, and Satan a preserver of the prevalent scheme of things. Beyond the apparent dichotomy, one can discern that this reversal goes very well with the thematic pattern of the poem. The setting of the poem is an age of colonial strife and class conflict which has unsettled age-old established truths. The proletariat can dream of a bourgeoisie-free society and the colonized can struggle for their political emancipation—something not even dreamed of a few decades ago. Moreover, "Satan's Parliament" discusses political issues in a democratic fashion—in a parliament. However, Iqbal warns his readers to be ready for a parliament of diabolic forces if one adopts western systems of government without involving religion. No doubt, the need to turn to Muslim ideology is underlined by the parliament of diabolic forces—which means only democracy can be used against an anti-democratic attitude—but Iqbal personally could not go that far to give his whole-hearted support to this system, if implemented without incorporating Islam into it. Had that been done, it would not

have been Satan's parliament.

According to Massod Raja, "Satan's Parliament" is a scathing criticism of the major socio-political and economic systems offered by the West. In the discussion that takes place between Satan and his advisors, "Iqbal brings up all the major challenges—mostly Western systems—to Satan's world system and it is in these challenges that Iqbal articulates the bankruptcy various Western systems of governance and socio-economic control" (*Constructing Pakistan* 121). He treats the immediate context of the poem very carefully because it is important to understand the important events happening around that time in order to understand the question this poem raises. The poem was written at a time when, in the Muslim world, Mustafa Kemal had established a secular/nationalist Turkey after abolishing the Muslim Caliphate; on an international level, the First World War had ended and the Russian Revolution succeeded; and, on a domestic level, Jinnah had revived the All India Muslim League, and Iqbal had already presented his solution to the constitutional problems in his famous Allahabad Address.

As the preceding discussion of "Satan's Parliament" and the 1930 Allahabad Address reveal, the Indian Muslims were quite confused about their demands for autonomy in the 1930s. They were clearly divided on the question of a Muslim state, let alone a separate Muslim state for the Muslims of India. They were vaguely aware of their distinction from the other communities in India, but had not articulated that distinction in clear terms. However, it will be a grave mistake to claim that any such distinction did not exist. According to Ayesha Jalal:

> During the remaining years of the 1930s various schemes by Muslim politicians and intellectuals tried resolving the question of how power was to be shared at the all-India level after the British withdrawal. No one explicitly advocated severing all links with the rest of India, even as they sought to consolidate Muslim power in regions where they were in the majority. What they all had in common was the apprehension that they would be swamped by a Hindu majority in the absence of adequate safeguards for Muslim interests, however defined. There was as yet no strategy of how divided and disorganized Muslims were to be brought under a single political banner. (*Self and Sovereignty* 383-4)

So it was in the 1940s, when the departure of the British became imminent and immediate, that the Muslims realized that they should demand a separate state to protect themselves from the ruthless Western democratic system which works by the basic rule of 'majority is authority.' Had they given up their demand for a separate existence, the democratic system would have reduced them to a cipher. Iqbal had already alluded to this in his "Satan's Parliament" when he condemned western democracy.

An important question arises as to Iqbal's rejection of western democracy: did he reject it only in the Indian subcontinent as a suitable form of government for all communities claiming to be Indians but professing different, and at times, antagonistic religions, or did he reject it altogether? The above commentary on "Satan's Parliament" reveals that he was against western democracy on principle and not because it originated in the West. An intellectual

of his caliber was always willing to absorb influences from the West as long as they do not clash with the spirit of his fundamental beliefs, which in Iqbal's case, is none other than his religion, Islam. His famous essay "Political Thought in Islam" is an illustrious example of his understanding of democracy in an Islamic context. He discusses the most debated issue in Islamic jurisprudence, the election or selection of the ruler, in great detail with utmost conviction of the sincerity of his belief. Tracing back to the death of the Prophet (PBUH) when the issue of the Muslim political and religious leader arose for the first time, he mentions that the Prophet left no hard and fast rules as to the election of the next leader. The subsequent election of the Four Rightly Guided Caliphs was done according to the political and social threats to Islam. That is why Abu Bakr was elected "rather hurriedly and irregularly" (57). Umar, the second Caliph, was universally elected by the people; before his death he nominated eleven electors to nominate the new caliph with the condition that they should decide unanimously and they should not present themselves as potential candidates; Uthman was nominated by this procedure and later on his nomination was confirmed by the people. The oath of allegiance to the fourth Caliph, Ali, was taken in the Medina mosque by the majority of the Muslims. So, according to Javid Iqbal, different modes were adopted for the appointment of the Head of the State and in all these cases, the appointment was confirmed by consent from the Muslim community, which was formally obtained by means of a public oath of allegiance, *bayah* ("The Concept of State in Islam—a Reassessment" 13). The Caliphs always consulted the more knowledgeable and influential companions of the Prophet (PBUH) in judicial and

executive matters. Highly inspired by the consultative aspect of a Muslim state, Iqbal supports a kind of democratic system that can fit into Islamic polity and does not contradict the fundamentals of Islam.

Based on his understanding of a prominent Islamic jurist, Al- Mawardi, Iqbal declares in his "Political Thought in Islam" that "state is not force, but free consent of individuals who unite to form a brotherhood, based upon legal equality, in order that each member of the brotherhood may work out the potentialities of his individuality under the law of Islam" (68). This statement clearly draws a line of demarcation between western democracy and the Islamic notion of democracy; the former has substituted religion with nationalism, while the latter cannot operate without the backing of religion. Iqbal calls his notion of democracy "spiritual democracy" that allows free interplay between religious and material domains of life because Islam does not accept the compartmentalization of life into religious and material.

Fazlur Rahman offers excellent insight into the above-mentioned interrelation between secular and spiritual in Iqbal's system of thought. There is "a basic principle involved in the unfoldment of the process of reality. This principle is, which is both synthetic and creative and is most like an organic unity…. All development and creativity must take place with reference to this unitive principle and, secondly, that take place it must. Thus, if there is no creativity and no multiplicity is taking place, this would be a complete denial of the first principle, for the basic principle cannot remain sterile and uncreative. But equally its creativity and multiplicity takes place without reference to the unity

principle, this is also tantamount to its denial and, in fact, constitutes *kufr*, i.e., rejection of the ultimate principle" (162). The West is very productive, but its productivity is not related to the "ultimate directive principle of life;" it is spiritually sterile, and essentially secular. He further elaborates: "In Iqbal, however, 'religious' and 'secular' are primarily attributes of life, not of a state and it is in these terms that he understands Muslims' attitude both to life and state….For a state is Islamic or secular accordingly as it is the political and executive organ of a community which is, in its life, either Islamic or secular. These attributes would, therefore, apply derivatively and in a secondary sense" (164). It is clear that by a religious state or "spiritual democracy," he never meant a theocracy. The concept of state, as Iqbal developed, was the "final aim of the realization of his philosophy, viz., the creation of a society of truly developed and emancipated individuals whose corporate presence would be the unity of such a society" (165). Such community embodies the Islamic ideals of creative and purposeful dynamism.

Hafeez Malik views Iqbal's career as the one "most concerned with strengthening the ideological framework for the proposed Moslem state" (*Moslem Nationalism* 241). Furthermore, "The state, according to Islam, is only an effort to realize the spiritual in a human organization" (*Reconstruction* 136). By considering Islam as a complete code of life, Iqbal does not separate ethics from politics; therefore, an ideal Islamic state is based on theology which determines its ethical values, but not a theocracy. Malik elaborates on this point when he refers to the fundamental principle of Islamic religion: Tawhid (Unity of God) (*Moslem*

Nationalism 242). Since the essence of Tawhid is equality, solidarity, and freedom, the state is an apparatus to turn these ideals into "a definite human organization" (Iqbal, *Reconstruction* 136). The most relevant question of Iqbal's age was whether or not the Muslims were in a position to achieve this goal. Iqbal had to fight against the sterility of ideas of his people. He had to wage an intellectual war against the degrading inferiority complex which, according to Frantz Fanon is created in the soul of the colonized people by the death and burial of their cultural originality (qtd. in Loomba 23-4). After Shah Waliullah and Jamaluddin Afghani, Iqbal was the only Muslim leader on the political scene of India who took the responsibility of reviving Muslim identity. He tried to transform "idle-looker-on" into a man "with restless impatience". His message was loud and clear as he says in *Secrets of Life*:

> Arise and pour pure wine into my cup
>
> Pour moonbeams into the dark night of my thought,
>
> That I may lead home the wanderer
>
> And imbue the looker-on with restless impatience;
>
> And advance hotly on a new quest
>
> And become known as the champion of a new spirit. (85-9)

The new spirit Iqbal advocates relies on action for the fulfillment of its desires.[95]

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[95] The pith of life is contained in action,
To delight in creation is the life of life.
Arise and create a new world;
Wrap thyself in flames, be an Abraham!
To comply with this world which does not favour
thy purposes
Is to fling away thy buckler on the field of battle.
The man of strong character who is master of himself
will find fortune complacent.

Malik credits Iqbal with bringing about a revolution in the thinking of his people. Iqbal, according to him, regarded passive resignation as sinful (*Moslem Nationalism* 243).

In another critique of Iqbal, Hafeez Malik suggests that it was British Imperialism which worked as a catalyst for a genius like Iqbal, who responded to it not only personally but also inspired like-minded people to take action. He observes that Iqbal's four Urdu works, *Bang-i-Dara, Bal-i-Jibril, Zarb-i-Kalim*, and *Armughan-i-Hijaz,* "contain a large number of verses, bemoaning the Western imperial domination over the Muslims". In several of his poems, he "postulated the view that in the modern age Western imperial domination has provided the catalytic impulse for Muslims to 'be true Muslims,' and to examine the causes for their internal decay and the conditions leading to their political subordination" ("World Order" 460). Malik cites 'West's typhoon turned a Muslim into a [true] Muslim / The way waves of the ocean nourish a pearl in the oyster' to round off this argument in Iqbal's own words.[96]

The above-mentioned discussion demonstrates that Iqbal's Allahabad Address and "Satan's Parliament" contain the germs of Muslims' demands in the 1940s. How effective these pieces were to create awareness among the Muslims is not clear to the scholars who examine the address and the poem on their own merits instead of the meanings the state apparatus of Pakistan has forced on them.

If the world does not comply with his humour,
He will try the hazard of war with Heavens;
He will dig up the foundations of the Universe
And cast its atoms into a new mould. (1019-30)

[96] مسلماں کو مسلماں کر دیا طوفاں مغرب نے
تلاطم ہائے دریا سے ہے گوہر کی سیرابی
("Tulu-i-Islam" *Kuliyat* 5-6)

My study shows that Iqbal was not alone with his theory of nationhood, as many other Muslim thinkers and politicians had already referred to it. According to Javid Iqbal, Muhammad Ali was probably the first Muslim politician to point out (in 1923) that "the vast continent of India" was a "geographical misnomer." It had no unity except "the misleading unity of opposition." The divide between the Hindus and the Muslims was essentially religious—a clash of two cultures and civilizations. Muhammad Ali observed in 1911: "We shall not make the mistake of gumming together pieces of broken glass, and then cry over the unsuccessful result, or blame the refractory material. In other words, we shall endeavour to face the situation boldly, and respect facts, howsoever ugly and ill-favoured" (qtd. in Javid Iqbal 248-9).

Additionally, the Hindu politicians and scholars also gave voice to their vision of a united India under the umbrella of a single nation. One authoritative voice on the question of Indian nationalism and nationhood was that of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. He starts his discussion of a separate Muslim state in India in his book *Pakistan, or The Partition of India* with the Muslim League's demand for it in its 1940 resolution. Iqbal makes no entry in Ambedkar's theory as he professed that before 1940 there was not any such mention of a Muslim state in India. Surprisingly, he quotes extensively from the same European authority (Renan), whom Iqbal quotes in his address in support of his idea of a distinguished nationhood, to make his case that Muslims are not a separate nation. Ambedkar comments on Renan's theory of nation and raises a question as to what is necessary to constitute a nation, if race, language, and country do not suffice to

create a nation.[97] He finds the answer in a long passage from Renan:

> A nation is a living soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute this soul, this spiritual principle. One is the common possession of a rich heritage of memories; the other is the actual consent, the desire to live together, the will to preserve worthily the undivided inheritance which has been handed down. Man does not improvise. The nation, like the individual, is the outcome of a long past of efforts, and sacrifices, and devotion. Ancestors-worship is therefore, all the more legitimate; for our ancestors have made us what we are. A heroic past, great men, glory—I mean glory of genuine kind—these form the social capital, upon which a national idea may be founded. To have common glories in the past, a common will in the present; to have done great things together, to will to do the like again—such are the essential conditions for the making of a people. We love in proportion to sacrifices we have consented to make, to the

[97] A) About race, Renan observes "that race must not be confounded with nation. The truth is that there is no pure race; and that making politics depend upon ethnographical analysis, is allowing it to be borne upon a chimera….Racial facts, important as they are in the beginning, have a constant tendency to lose their importance. Human history is essentially different from zoology. Race is not everything, as it is in the sense of rodents and felines."
B) Speaking about language, Renan points out, "Language invites re-union; it does not force it. The United States and England, Spanish America and Spain, speak the same languages and do not form single nations. On the contrary, Switzerland, which owes her stability to the fact that she was founded by the assent of her several parts counts three or four languages. In man there is something superior to language—will. The will of Switzerland to be united, in spite of the variety of her languages, is a much more important fact than a similarity of language, often obtained by persecution."
C) As to a common country, Renan argued, "It is no more the land than the race that makes a nation. The land provides a substratum, the field of battle and work; man provides the soul; man is everything in the formation of that sacred thing which is called a people. Nothing of material nature suffices for it."

> sufferings we have endured. We love the house that we have built, and will hand down to our descendant. (18)

Ambedkar finds that the Hindus and Muslims do not share common historical antecedents: "Their past is a past of mutual destruction—a past of mutual animosities, both in the political as well as in the religious fields….The prospects might be different if the past of the two communities can be forgotten by both" because Renan points out the importance of forgetfulness as a factor in building up a nation (18). However, Ambedkar discerns that both communities cannot forget their past because their past is deeply rooted in their religions: to forget the past would mean to forget one's religion. What can bind them together is a will to live as a single nation. He differentiates nationality from nationalism by saying that nationality means awareness of a tie of kinship, and nationalism means the desire for a national existence for those who are bound by this tie of kinship. Nationalism, according to Ambedkar, cannot come into existence without nationality but not vice versa. He refers to the French in Canada and the English in South Africa who maintain their separate nationality without demanding a separate state on national lines.

Seen from an Indian Muslim's point of view, Ambedkar betrays his opposition to a separate Muslim national state at many points. For example, he calls the Muslim League's demand for a separate state as a "rift in the lute" which came at a time when the Hindu politicians had succeeded to make a demand for an independent India on the basis of one nation in the every modern meaning of the word—the Hindus and the Muslims belong to one Indian nationality. He could

not help calling it a stab in the back (12). At one point, he sarcastically comments on the Muslims' demand: "It is only recently that they have styled themselves a nation" (19).

Dr. Ambedkar not only presents the other side of the coin, but also betrays that dominant discourse fashioned with Western logic and twisted for personal gains which Iqbal had long ago foreseen and anticipated in his "Satan's Parliament" and the Allahabad Address. Since the Hindus and the Muslims had failed to inculcate Ambedkar's will to live together, it was futile to desire it. However, on the other hand, each community had this consciousness among its respective member and hence each nationality was entitled for a collective existence.

If we compare Iqbal's arguments for a collective existence of the Indian Muslims imbued with a 'moral consciousness' with Ambedkar's elucidation of Muslim collective existence as a threat to Indian nationalism, we can conclude that Ambedkar supports the unity of the Muslims and the Hindus to claim as an Indian nation in their fight against the British colonialists. He weighs the pros and cons of the Muslim League's demand for separation in a very logical manner by selecting Western terminology and Western political concepts in order to make his opinion a part of dominant political discourse of 1940s' India. But unlike Ambedkar, Iqbal relies on European authorities such as Renan only to prove that the Muslims are a separate nation provided they rekindle their inner moral consciousness, which in other words, is the spirit of Islam. Ambedkar's tilt is clearly towards Western political ideology while Iqbal could not help bringing in

religion to resolve the political dispute.

It is appropriate here to refer to another work, Dr. Durrani Khan's *The Meaning of Pakistan*, which has been extensively quoted by Rajendra Prasad in his *India Divided*. Durrani refers to Renan and other political philosophers to point out that the time was ripe to demand a separate state, as the co-existence of the Hindus and the Muslims was impossible in the anticipated Western democratic system of government. According to Durrani, Hindu leaders had been propagating for two decades that religion should not be mixed with politics, and that a united nation should be formed on the basis of politics alone. He questions the validity of such a demand and quotes political philosophers such as Lord Bryce and Prof. Sidgwick to support his thesis. Sidgwick believes that obedience to the same government cannot form a nation. That is why:

> we recognize that it is desirable that the members of a state should be united by the further bonds vaguely implied in the term "Nation"….What is really essential to the modern conception of a state which is also a Nation is merely that the persons composing it should have, generally speaking, a consciousness of belonging to one another, of being members of one body, over and above what they derive from the fact of being under one government, so that if their governments were destroyed by war or revolution, they could still tend to hold firmly together. When they have this consciousness, we regard them as forming a 'Nation', whatever else they lack. (qtd in Prasad 8)

Likewise, Lord Bryce defines nationality as:

> an aggregate of men drawn together and linked together by certain sentiments…. The chief among these are Racial sentiments and Religious Sentiments, but there is also that sense of community which is created by the use of a common language, the possession of a common literature, the recollection of common achievements or sufferings in the past, the existence of common customs and habits of thought, common ideals and aspirations. Sometimes all these linking sentiments are present and hold the members of the aggregate together; sometimes one or more may be absent. The more of these links that exist in any given case, the stronger is the sentiment of unity. In each case, the test is not merely how many links there are, but how strong each particular link is. (8-9)

Dr. Durrani comes to the conclusion after his study of some European political philosophers that "nationality is in fact a matter of consciousness only, a mere psychological condition" as Iqbal and Dr. Ambedkar referred to, though for different political motives.

Durrani examines the root cause of the national consciousness thoroughly and bases his argument on historical evidence. According to him, the ancient Hindus were not a nation: "They were only a people, a mere herd". The same was true of the Muslims of India. The fruition of the Islamic state during the lifetime of its Founder, Mohammad (PBUH), did not last for long. The Rightly-guided Caliphs preserved the spirit of an ideal Muslim state, but the Omayyads and the Abbasids destroyed it and turned it into *mulk* or autocratic, despotic, hereditary monarchy. It was under these two autocracies that two more elements

entered into the Muslim society to corrupt its political life, namely theology and Sufism. They sapped the state's capacity to strive for an organized society. Their pernicious effect perverted "the Muslim's conscience and changed Islam from an ethico-political philosophy into a sort of 'religion', a something which the political slogan-mongers call private relation between the individual and his God" (15). The Muslim empire in India was an extension and manifestation of the same political ideology of keeping religion at its place when the actions of immediate political advantages were involved. Durrani further observes:

> At the time the Muslims conquered India the divorce of religion and politics had become the accepted creed of the Muslims throughout the world. The men who conquered India were not the national army of a Muslim state but paid mercenaries of an imperial despot. The State they established in India was not a national Muslim State, but held, maintained and exploited in the interests of an autocrat and his satellites. The Muslim Empire in India was Muslim only in the sense that the man who wore the crown professed to be a Muslim. Through the whole length of their rule in India Muslims never developed the sense of nationhood. So we had two peoples, Hindus and Muslims, living side by side in equal servitude to an imperial despotism, and both devoid of any national feeling or national ambition. (15)

So it is in the milieu of the 1930s and especially the 1940s in which the questions about Indian Muslims' identity were raised. Were the Muslims a separate nation, different from Hindus? If so, what provides a basis for their claim of being a

nation? If it is religion, why did they endure co-existence with the Hindus for centuries? The answers to all these questions were not simple. No doubt, Iqbal felt the urgency of these questions and tried to respond to them instead of giving us clear-cut answers as believed by many.

Though on the basis of his historic Allahabad Address, Iqbal is considered to be "the architect" of the state of Pakistan, the interpretation is, according to Malik, only partially correct. It is hard to believe that a statesman of Iqbal's stature could ignore the importance of the Muslims of Bengal who would be left behind and who outnumbered the Muslims of north-western India. In addition to this oversight, if one may call it, he also referred to "the continuation of separate electorate and the creation of a federal constitution to satisfy Moslem demands," which suggests that he did not propose a separate Muslim state, but the amalgamation of Muslims within the physical boundaries of India.

To summarize, Iqbal's greatness lies not in giving the Muslims a blueprint for their future homeland, but rather in the sincerity of his intent and acute perception. The Allahabad Address was delivered in English, not a lingua franca among the Muslims. His audience was definitely those who were absent from the gathering: his colleagues from the Muslim League who were attending the Round Table Conference and were clearly on a different track of reconciliation with the Hindus; and his audience was perhaps also the British on whose ears his words did not fall flat. They subsequently invited him to participate in the Second and Third Round Table Conferences to settle the constitutional deadlock of India. As for his "Satan's Parliament," it is a sequel to

the Address because the latter did not offer a system of government for the Muslims consolidated in a particular part of India. Iqbal's message is clear that Islam should be the basis of the collective existence of the Indian Muslims, but again clear constitutional lines were not drawn. In order to seek Iqbal's clarity of thought on the issues raised in the Allahabad Address and "Satan's Parliament", it would be wise to turn to his correspondence with the founder of Pakistan, Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

Iqbal's Correspondence

No doubt, the most important letters Iqbal wrote in the 1930s were those he wrote to Quaid-i-Azam, Mohammad Ali Jinnah.[98] No one else than Jinnah himself is in a better position to describe the extreme importance of those letters in the Muslim League's struggle for Muslim independence in India:

> The letters…were written to me by the sage philosopher and national poet of Islam, the late Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, during the period May 1936 to November 1937, a few months before his death. This period synchronises with a very eventful period in the history of Muslim India—between the establishment of the All India Muslim League Central Parliamentary Board in June 1936 and the great historic sessions at Lucknow in October 1937.
>
> (qtd. in Dar 237)

He further commented:

> His [Iqbal's] views were substantially in consonance with my own and

[98] The founding father of Pakistan (1876-1948).
See Malik & Gankovsky 129-130.

> 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 23rd March, 1940. (237-8)

The dates Jinnah mentioned are significant from the perspective of the present study too. The Allahabad Address in 1930 contains the seeds of the mature plant Jinnah calls the "Pakistan Resolution." However, in between comes "Satan's Parliament" in 1938, which the visionary in Iqbal produced to point to the system of government of the newly-founded independent state, if such a plant ever blossoms.

In the series of thirteen letters, I have selected only three for the present discussion due to their direct relevance to the points of collective Muslim existence "within or without the British empire," and the fundamental philosophy behind such a demand. It is interesting to note that in the span of six years or so, the term "without the British empire" had acquired significantly new meanings. At the time of the 1930 Allahabad Address, it meant Muslim sovereignty in an undivided India after the departure of the British, but in the politically tense atmosphere of 1936, it meant Muslim sovereignty after the cessation of Muslim majority areas from India once the British left—*partition.* The Nationalist Muslims always debated that Iqbal never meant partition in his Allahabad Address. Farqui reiterates their stance in his *The Deoband School and the*

Demand for Pakistan, when he condemns the Pakistan Resolution of 1940 which he finds totally opposed to Iqbal's idea in the Address. He opines that Iqbal proposed the amalgamation of those provinces into a single state forming a unit of the All-India federation (110). Even a liberal scholar like Hafeez Malik expresses the same view when he says the Iqbal's statements "indicate that the north-western Moslem state that he envisioned was to be part of an Indian Confederation" ("Moslem Identity" 240). But the letters tell a different story.

The letters were dated 20th March 1937, 28th May 1937, and 21st June 1937. The first selected letter was written as a response to the Congress' Muslim Mass Contact Movement after a decisive victory in the election of 1937. Jawaharlal Nehru told the newly elected Hindu members of parliament that Muslims were not a distinct community as this idea was a remnant of medievalism. There was no distinction of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, and Christian when the question was of poverty, unemployment, and national independence. In a word, the main problem was economic. That is why he announced the Muslim Mass Contact movement to win over the Muslim masses who had rejected the Muslim League's nominees for the election.[99] As a response to the imminent threat of Hindu domination, Iqbal wrote to Jinnah:

> I therefore suggest that an effective reply should be given to the All-India National Convention. You should immediately hold an All-India Muslim Convention in Delhi to which you should invite members of the new Provincial Assemblies as well as other

[99] The 1937 Election was a provincial election in British India under the 1935 Government of India Act.

> prominent Muslim leaders. To this convention you must restate as clearly and as strongly as possible the political objective of the Indian Muslims as a distinct political unit in the country. It is absolutely necessary to tell the world both inside and outside India that the economic problem is not the only problem in the country. From the Muslim point of view the cultural problem is of much greater consequence to most Indian Muslims. (249)

It must be remembered that Iqbal saw Islam as a cultural, social, and political system. So the above-mentioned cultural problems refer to religious differences between Hindus and Muslims which had triggered communal violence or, as commonly known, Hindu-Muslim riots, in the country.

As Iqbal views the threat to Muslim culture as a threat to Islam itself, he wrote to Jinnah in a letter, dated 28th May 1937, that the "enforcement and development of the *Shariat* of Islam is impossible in this country without 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 bread for Muslims as well as to secure a peaceful India" (254). The decisive moment had come in Iqbal's life with these words as, for the first time, he refers to a free Muslim state or states, independent of Hindu-majority India. Later on, in the letter dated 21st June 1937, he does refer to the redistribution of India on the lines of racial, religious, and linguistic differences. He wrote:

> …Lord Lothian told me before I left England that my scheme was the only possible solution of the troubles of India, but that it would

> take 25 years to come….To my mind, the new constitution, with its idea of a single Indian federation is completely hopeless. A separate federation of Muslim provinces…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? (260)

It was this goal of an independent Muslim state to which Jinnah geared the future course of the All-India Muslim League.

After this brief commentary on Iqbal's letters to Jinnah, the question arises as to changing his early position on the resolving the problem of India. The question draws attention to the duality, not contradiction, of Iqbal's stance on this issue. On the one hand, he asked for a separate state with clear geographical boundaries to settle the Indian communal problem; and on the other, if taking his entire work into consideration, he dreams of a Muslim *Ummat* without any boundaries. This double-bind brought him into conflict with the Indian *Ulema,* who were also extremely perturbed by the division of India on the basis of religion. Their argument was that if Muslims are not bound by any geographical boundaries, what was the need of a separate nation? This argument sought legitimacy from certain Quranic injunctions, Hadith, and from the prospect of abandoned Indian Muslims in Hindu-majority provinces. A comprehensive answer to the question would involve a discussion on an ideal Muslim state as

Iqbal saw it, but first we must examine Iqbal's own words in the justification of his changing stance:

> To reveal an ideal freed from its temporal limitations is one function: to show the way how ideals can be transformed into living actualities is quite another. If a man is temperamentally fit for the former function his task is comparatively easy, for it involves a clean jump over temporal limitations which waylay the practical politician at every step. The man who has got the courage to migrate from the former to the latter function has constantly to take stock of, and often yield to, the force of those very limitations which he has been in the habit of ignoring. Such a person has the misfortune of living in the midst of perpetual mental conflict and can be easily accused of self-contradiction.
>
> (qtd. in Sherwani 30)

Until the Allahabad Address, Iqbal was not a political figure on a national level. As mentioned earlier, the British ignored him to invite as a Muslim representative to First Round Table Conference, and the Muslim League leaders were working on different political manifestos than Iqbal. It was a time of Hindu-Muslim solidarity where Iqbal's voice was certainly a rift in the lute. Iqbal's second European tour as one of the Muslim representatives to the Second and then the Third Round Table Conferences, his visit to the Muslim relics in Spain, his keen interest in world politics, especially the conflict of Palestine, his acute sensitivity to the political rift among Indian Muslim politicians, and the imminent threat of Hindu domination were enough reasons to thrust him in the thick of Indian

political affairs. That is why Sir Hamilton Gibb says:

> Perhaps the right way to look at Iqbal is to see in him one who reflected and put into words the diverse currents of ideas that were agitating the minds of the Indian Muslims. His sensitive poetic temperament mirrored all that impinged upon it—the backward-looking romanticism of the liberals, the socialist leaning of the young intellectuals, the longing of the militant Muslim Leaguers for a strong leader to restore the political power of Islam. (qtd. in Aziz 427)

The restoration of political power of Islam became the foremost goal of Iqbal from 1930 onwards. In "Iqbal's Theory of Pakistan", Aziz Ahmad says that Iqbal "dissociated politics from nationalism and tried to correlate it with religion and culture. The central focus of the community of Islam can be found in the basic Islamic concept of the unity of God (*Tawhid*)[100]; its externalization as a social force is reflected in the brotherhood of Islam, which is based on the Quran and Sunna" (427). This interpretation of Islamic political ideology came into existence after the colonization of India. It was the contact with the West which forced the Muslims to revise their early political strategy (from the 10th century to the 17th century) of keeping religion and politics separate. In order to reassert himself as a modern Indian Muslim with rich cultural heritage, Iqbal attempts in his works to define an ideal state in terms of modern ideologies. He rejected modern Western democracy as essentially "plutocratic and based on racial inequality and the exploitation of the weak" (428). He saw similarity between the Islamic concept of

[100] Fazlur Rahman, Dr. Javid Iqbal, and Dr. Zeenat Kausar also attribute Iqbal's concept of centrality and oneness to *Tawhid*.

equality and the socialist theory of equal distribution of the fruit of labour. He found socialist elimination of monarchical institutions as parallel to Muslim iconoclasm. Despite these similarities, Iqbal finally rejects communism as the ideal form of world government in comparison with Islam. Aziz Ahmad notes:

> His [Iqbal's] argument is based on a speculative explanation of the Muslim *kalima* (the attestation of faith): "There is no God but God". He argues that in the dialectics of existence the law of a negative thesis and positive antithesis operates, in order to arrive at the synthesis of truth. 'No' (*la*), the negative particle in the Muslim attestation of faith is destructive; the conditional 'but' (*illa*), the positive one, is affirmative and constructive. The nature of life and the universe is a movement from *la* to *illa*, from negation to positivism, from denial to affirmation. Welded together in an order of experienced truth, *la* and *illa* constitute the means of stocktaking the universe and of its subjugation. The particle *la* in isolation denotes revolution, destruction of false gods, but not value-creating construction. Communism has got bogged down in the stage of *la*, in negativeness, in destruction of old injustices as well as of old values, but has failed to emerge so far into the creative stage of *illa*. The religion of that "God-ignoring Karl Marx" is based on the equality of all stomachs. Communism has therefore, much in common with western imperialism: "Both are dynamic and restless. Both ignore God and betray man. One does this by revolution, the other by exploitation. Between these two millstones humanity is ground to dust. (429)

The ideal state is therefore to be sought not in any other contemporary system but in Islam itself. It cannot be built upon any regional or racial or group loyalty. It would make the ruler answerable to any person from the society regardless of his social rank. The sovereignty would lie in God and not in the person of the ruler. The state would offer equal and fair opportunities to its citizens to acquire both worldly and spiritual happiness. As Ahmad points out, "While this ideal state was Iqbal's dream of the future, his immediate concern was the fate of Muslims in the slowly emerging pattern of self-government in India" (429).

Iqbal, according to Fazlur Rahman, came to formulate his orientation from "territorial nationalism to Islam after a thorough acquaintance with not only the thought-classics of the Muslim East and the West, but also with the actual state of affairs in the Muslim East and the West" (421). He held the intellectual giants of both spheres of the world in high esteem. But when he saw the actualites of life, he criticized both the East and the West for their antagonism to a higher spiritual order. Rahman observes:

> The criterion for these judgments was his principle of '*ishq*'. This term, which literally means "absorbing love" and which he took over from Sufism, appears to mean, in his usage, *a creative forward movement*, where *forward movement* rules out backward or stationary motion, while the term creative ensures that the movement is meaningful and purposeful and reaches higher planes of spiritual and moral being for men. Now, while Iqbal found the Muslim world as somnolent and stationary and hence devoid of '*ishq*', he found the West alive and moving, but this

> movement of the West was not only not meaningful and purposeful for man, it was positively harmful and, indeed, destructive. The West was inventive, but not creative in the sense of Iqbal's '*ishq*'. (422)

The Muslims' depravity was Iqbal's main target of criticism. It was painful to see that "they had become irrelevant to the current of history" (Rahman 422). His ideal Muslim creates history and is not plaything of historical forces. However, the imperial expansion of Islam and later its inevitable disintegration at the hands of other imperial powers had dulled a Muslim's energy to think for himself and struggle for the Quranic ideal man. Rahman further states, "As for the West, while Iqbal gave it credit for its West expansion of intellectual life and technology, he accused it of doing great violence to the ethical and spiritual being of man—to the extent, indeed, of virtually destroying it" (422). Iqbal's judgment was based on his experience of colonialism, capitalistic exploitation and a breakdown of moral life in Western societies. All these ills were basically rooted in Western secularism. To counter these evils, "perhaps the Muslim could be awakened from his sleep? And the Muslim had the right prescription (the Quran and the example of Muhammad) for the right orientation (Islam)" (Rahman 422). It was to realize this ideal that Iqbal dreamed of Muslim autonomy to be carried out in the Muslim majority areas of the Indian sub-continent. And it was for this reason that he explicitly rejected Indian territorialism as the basis for nationhood since nationhood, for him, was based on moral consciousness that only Islamic ideology can offer.

Ayesha Jalal finds Iqbal's reliance on religion legitimate in British

India, rife with communal differences. She says:

> However one might interpret Iqbal, there can be no denying the cultural defence inherent in his proposal. As a Muslim individual relegated to being a member of a minority community, he rejected the western liberal model of the 'nation' as a 'universal amalgamation'. It was the right of the 'communal entity' to 'retain its private individuality'. There was no room in the homogenizing claims of inclusionary nationalism for incorporating the assertion of cultural difference based on an imbrication of religious faith and political need. The insistence on keeping religion apart from politics may have been the logical corollary of such a conception of nationalism, but it was not one which tallied well with realities at the social base. (328)

Thus, this "Muslimness of Iqbal" was to seek deliverance from the yoke of colonialism in religious ideology could only mean a reassertion of one's cultural heritage. It is bound to happen in the life of colonized people when they acquire awareness of their right of self-determination. Was Iqbal's response to his political milieu a reassertion of his culture against the onslaught of foreign invasion? The answer would be yes; but it needs further elaboration, which the next chapter will offer because the next chapter deals with the socio-political inheritance Iqbal wants to pass on to the younger generation as he could foresee that the Indian Muslims could not be subjugated any more.

Chapter IV:

Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts: Iqbal's Socio-Political Will

د افغان په ننګ مي و تړله توره

ننګیالے د زماني خوشحال خټک یم

"I fastened my sword to the honour of the Afghan; I am the highest upholder of the honour of the era."

(Khushhal Khan Khattak, *The Poems of Khushhal Khan Khattak*)

Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts: Iqbal's Socio-Political Will

The period from 1936 to 1947 is very important in the life of the Indian Muslims; their defeat in the 1937 election forced them to change their political strategy. This culminated in their articulate expression of a desire for a separate homeland in 1940, commonly called the "Pakistan Resolution", and then their indefatigable struggle to turn the Resolution into a reality in 1947 in the form of Pakistan. Though Iqbal did not survive to see the budding of his wish into a flower, he had left behind a rich inheritance of political and social wisdom which only an understanding heart could inherit.[101] *Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts*[102] is a testimony to such an inheritance. A collection of twenty poems, the *Thoughts* is a true indicator of Iqbal's sense of his approaching death, which, instead of dampening his resolve, further ignites him with the immediacy of spreading his word.

Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts is a part of Iqbal's last Urdu poetry collection, ضربِ کلیم (*The Strike of the Rod of Moses*), which was subtitled "a declaration of war against the present age." The collection offers Iqbal's perspective on religion, education, art, women, and current affairs. *Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts* stands as the sum total of Iqbal's views expressed in the collection as it logically concludes the book. My research has proved that, to this day, almost no attention has been given to *Thoughts*. The reasons for the neglect

[101] کوَی قابل ہو تو ہم شان کئ دیتے ہیں
ڈھونڈنے والے کو تو دنیا بھی نَئ دیتے ہیں
(*Kulliyat* 35-36)

[102] I will deliberately avoid the English titles *Meditations of Mehrab Gul Afghan* and *Reflections of Mehrab Gul Afghan* as they appear in Syed Akbar Ali Shah's translation of *The Strike of the Rod of Moses* and Khurram Ali Shafiqu's biography of Iqbal. The reason is that neither 'meditations' nor 'reflections' capture the presence of a silent youth (audience), which my study highlights.

are beyond the scope of this study, as the current chapter is exclusively devoted to an in-depth analysis of the poems from *Thoughts* in order to see their relevance to the political life of the Indian Muslims (1936-1947) in general, and to the last two years of Iqbal's life in particular. I will discuss the significance of Iqbal's tour of Afghanistan in 1932 as a backdrop for the poems; the preference Iqbal gave to the surname "Afghani" for his main character; and how the plan of the *Thoughts* offers many points of resemblance and contrast to Iqbal's series of lectures, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*.

In a section on *The Strike of the Rod of Moses*, Shafique acknowledges the fact that Iqbal must have been aware of his fast approaching death while writing the book:

> Almost sixty and suffering from chronic illness, he [Iqbal] must have counted this book as possibly the last expression of his vision for a universal social reconstruction, and as such the sense of urgency is well-justified….if the Muslims were to carry forward his mission of a universal social reconstruction then they would be called upon to revise their positions on a lot of issues about life and religion, and to jolt them up into critical thinking was the combined purpose of all Islamic poems in this book, whether motivational or rational. (181-2)

Shafique aptly refers to two key issues of the book itself: universal social reconstruction, and the revision of the Muslims' position on religion and politics. However, my reading of the last part of *Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts* suggests that in order to realize these ideals of social reconstruction and different religious

and political orientation, Iqbal ends the book (*The Strike of the Rod of Moses*) with, presumably, a youth, Mehrab Gul's audience, who is capable of turning his forefathers' teachings and aspirations into actuality. The point is that the book, *The Strike of the Rod of Moses*, sums up Iqbal's most cherished idea that change in one's surroundings can be realized only if one is willing to change himself—societal change starts from within, an inward to outward approach. The significance of Iqbal's ideology of an ideal man in the quest of the reconstruction of universal social structure is expressed very eloquently and systematically nowhere else in the book than in the cycle of last twenty poems titled *Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts*.

Before going into the details of Iqbal's *Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts*, some observations about Mehrab Gul, the title character, are in place here. The character itself is shrouded in mystery, as there was no such man by this name in Iqbal's life or his other works. The question about the origin and the use of this fictitious character is quite valid and demands a logical answer. Like the Faerie Queene of Edmund Spenser,[103] the character is overtly historical but defies any attempt to identify him with any single personality. It would be wise to identify him with the head of a patriarchal society, who reads his will to the next generation with clear stipulations of do's and don'ts; hence, the character stands more for an idea of handing over moral property—a sound personality—rather than for a person.

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[103] Published in the 16th century, *The Faerie Queene* offers many layers of interpretations. One area of scholarship is on the title character. Sometimes, the Queene stands for Elizabeth I, and sometimes for any metaphysical idea, such as Truth, Beauty, Chastity, among others, that the Queen embodies.

Afghanistan

First, I will treat a possible connection of the locale of the cycle with its title character in order to elaborate on the leitmotif of the poems. On the basis of my reading and understanding of Iqbal's Urdu political poems, I can surmise that the title character is Iqbal himself in the guise of an Afghan—a dweller in the mountains. Iqbal must have selected this disguise after great deliberations. Iqbal, though born in Sialkot (plains in Punjab), was by origin from Kashmir, known for its beautiful mountains. As mentioned earlier, the end of Iqbal's life was drawing close, which might have resulted in a desire for a spiritual union with his place of origin. The first couplet insinuates such a desire when Mehrab Gul addresses the mountains:

میرے کہستاں تجھے چھوڑ کر جائوں کہاں
تیری چٹانوں میں ھے میرے اب و جد کی خاک

How can I quit this mountain land,
Where my sires are interred in rocks (1, 1-2)

But then the epithet 'Afghani' negates this argument, as Mehrab Gul is an Afghani, not a Kashmiri. One explanation seems to be quite plausible if Iqbal's vision is taken in its entirety. At the time of the composition of these poems, Kashmir was under dual subjugation: Raja Ranjit Singh was its constitutional head and he himself was under the command of the British. As a result, Kashmiri Muslims were victim of the tyranny of not only a Sikh raja but also of a colonial administration. Iqbal was intelligent enough to use the mountains of Afghanistan as the setting of his poems because Afghanistan, despite aggressive interference

from the British, maintained its sovereignty in most of its state affairs from the 17th century to the time of the British departure from India. Therefore, the mouthpiece of Iqbal is Afghani, not Kashmiri, as the former could freely exercise his will while the latter had no such freedom. Iqbal was born in British-occupied India and died in British-occupied India, but he always cherished a dream of a free country for his countrymen. Only a free man could transmit his ideology to succeeding generations and Afghani was, for that matter, a logical choice.

In September 1933, the king of Afghanistan, Nadir Shah,[104] invited Iqbal, Syed Ross Masud,[105] and Syed Suleiman Nadvi[106] to Afghanistan to give their suggestions for the education reforms. Before his departure to Afghanistan, Iqbal explained the purpose of his journey in a statement issued on October 19, 1933:

> An educated Afghanistan can be a good friend of India. The establishment of Kabul University and the upgrading of Islamia College Peshawar into a university on the western border of India can be very beneficial for the intelligent Afghan tribesmen. The King of Afghanistan has invited us to present our recommendation to his Minister of Education on the establishment

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[104] Mohammad Nadir Shah (1883-1933) was Afghanistan's King from 15 October 1929 until his assassination in 1933. Previously, he served as Minister of War, ambassador to France, and a general in Afghan army in the 3rd Anglo-Afghan War when he was serving King Amanullah Khan. A successful rebellion against the king forced Nadir Shah to go to India to seek British help to enter Kabul. He captured Kabul in 1929 and executed the rebels, including the chief rebel Habibullah Kalkani. As a king, he endeavoured to reconcile traditional values of Afghanistan with modernity. One of these attempts was the establishment of the first university in Kabul.

[105] Sir Ross Masud (1889-1937) was a distinguished educationist in India. He was the only grandson of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the father of the Muslim renaissance in India. Ross Masud introduced new syllabi at the Aligarh Muslim University, and as its Vice Chancellor appointed many distinguished scientists to the staff.

[106] Syed Suleiman Nadvi (1884-1953) was an eminent biographer, historian, and scholar. He had close affiliations with Shibli Nomani and served as an instructor of Modern Arabic and Dogmatic Theology at Dar-ul-Uloom Nadva, founded by Nomani.

> of Kabul University. We accepted the invitation as a duty. The recent publications from Kabul reveal that the new generation of Afghans is very keen to receive education and assimilate new modes of thought into their religion and culture. The Afghans are good fellows, and being Indians, it is our duty to help them in their progress. It is worth mentioning that there is a wave of awareness among the Afghans and we are hopeful that we can offer helpful advice on their education matters. I personally believe that only secular education cannot produce good results in an Islamic country; however, no education system can be perfect. Each country has its own requirements and the education system should be adopted accordingly. (*Zindarud* 576-7; my translation)

Though the topmost agenda was educational reform in Afghanistan, the travel itself opened an opportunity to examine Afghan life from close quarters. Javid Iqbal mentions the name of King Nadir Shah with great respect because this is how Iqbal treated him. Javid's account of Iqbal's travel to Afghanistan reveals that Nadir Shah was a just and dedicated ruler. That is why, on one occasion, Iqbal requested the king to preside over their prayer, as it had been an ardent wish of Iqbal to offer his prayers under a just Muslim ruler. At one point Iqbal calls the king 'ghazi', a Muslim soldier, and according to some traditions, Iqbal once offered him a donation of 10,000 rupees for his campaign in Kabul (*Zindarud* 576-7). For Iqbal, this admiration for the king was not as significant as the travel itself. Iqbal found himself in a Muslim state that was making great progress towards giving Islam a modern and liberal face by assimilating good qualities

from the West.

Iqbal was also fully aware of the strategic importance of Afghanistan for Asia. On his way back from Friday prayer with King Nadir Shah, he told Syed Suleiman Nadvi:

> Europe's advancement is totally dependent on the sea routes and they used this resource for all types of trade and expeditions; above all, the Europeans linked the East with the West through the sea routes too. But it seems now that the importance of the sea routes will disappear soon; now Central Asia will connect the East with the West through land, not through sea. Traders will use vehicles, planes, and railways to travel in the East and the West. Since the land routes will go pass through Muslim countries, this commercial revolution will bring about an economic and political revolution in those Muslim countries. Like before, Afghanistan will become an international gateway, and we should be ready for this. (*Zindarud* 578; my translation)

Iqbal thought that education would prepare the Muslims for that task. What seems to be more pertinent to my discussion of *Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts* is that Iqbal's and his colleagues' visit to Afghanistan was mainly because of educational reforms. The king picked them as the best Muslim educationists of the era and wanted to get benefit from their insight into the matter. The second important aspect of the visit, also pertinent to my discussion of the poems, is Iqbal's visit to the graves and mausoleums of renowned Muslims from Islamic history. This includes a visit to the grave of the first Mughal King, Zahiruddin

Babar; the relics of the imperial buildings of Sultan Mehmud Ghaznavi's era; the tomb of the first Persian mystic poet, Hakeem Sanai; the mausoleum of Ahmad Shah Abdali, and those of many other mystic, literary, or political figures. Iqbal also visited the highest point in Kandahar where Babar fixed a commemorative plaque of his victories in India.

No doubt, Iqbal's visit to the above-mentioned places must have inspired him to write *Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts* and to select an Afghani character as his protagonist. Afghanistan was the actual gateway to Islam's political ascendancy in India. In the sublime heights of the mountains in Afghanistan, Iqbal must have envisioned a natural academy for the grooming of Muslim youth. It must be noted here that at no point in his writings or conversation did he ever refer to the idea that the political emancipation of the Indian Muslims would come from Afghanistan. Rather, what inspired him there was the Phoenix-like emergence of Islam from its dead past and the willingness of the inhabitants of Afghanistan to assimilate modernity into its culture and tradition. Afghanistan presented that picture of the reconstruction of religious thought in Islam which Iqbal had preached under the selfsame title in his six lectures delivered in Madras, Aligarh, Hyderabad, and London—six in 1929 and one in 1932. King Nadir Shah of Afghanistan was interested in a reconstruction of Islamic thought on modern lines. In a response to Syed Suleiman Nadvi's suggestion of founding an educational institute on the lines of Dar-ul-Alum Nadwat-ul-Ulema[107], in Kabul, King Nadir Shah said:

It is my effort to combine religion and modernity in Afghanistan and

[107] The focus of education in the institute was more on religious studies than on secular.

> present this country to the world as a model state in which ancient Islam and modern values join hands….I'm a servant of both my religion and my nation and consider Afghanistan a homeland for not only the Afghanis but of all Muslims; I want the other Muslims to also think the same. Tell my brethren [in India] that the world is approaching a new revolution for which the Muslims should prepare themselves numerically, financially, and intellectually in advance.
>
> (*Zindarud* 580; my translation)

The King, no doubt, echoed what Iqbal had been preaching for a very long time.

Education in British India

A brief survey of the state of education in India after the British consolidated their rule will help understand the emergence of people like Iqbal, Sayed Suleiman Nadvi, and Sayed Ross Masud, who are known in history for their zeal to draw the unwilling Indian Muslim masses to improve their intellectual and financial conditions by acquiring a comprehensive education, comprising the best of the both worlds. This will also be relevant to my juxtaposition of Iqbal's *Reconstruction* with his *Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts,* as my study suggests a close resemblance between the speaker of the *Reconstruction* and that of the *Thoughts*, and the topics they discuss in these two pieces. Education, purely academic or acquired in close proximity to one's culture and heritage, looms large in both pieces.

Cunningham, a former Director of Public Instruction, offers insight into the state of education in India before and after the British *raj*. A connection of

learning and religion was maintained in the Muslim system of education before the arrival of the British. In addition to this, there were also institutions which imparted religious and secular education in combination, so the students could also "learn something of their vernacular and of Persian, the language of Islamic culture and of the administration" (139). But the order of the day was that education was not considered the state's responsibility; institutions were founded and maintained by wealthy and influential men, who sometimes happened to be inspirational. People were not taxed for education and education was not mandatory. The decline of the Mughal empire triggered a decline in education too because the internal political disputes and wars destroyed buildings which could be used as schools; moreover, the funds previously generously used as endowments for such causes were being spent elsewhere. As a result, the educational institutes and instructors shrank in number.

In the first fifty years of the East India Company's rule, the Company considered it its moral responsibility to improve the morals of those they ruled without attacking their religion.[108] The first instance where the British showed their patronage of education came to light when Warren Hastings[109] supported a *maulvi*, Majiduddin, to establish a *madrasa*, a Muslim religious school. After him, Cornwallis followed this lead and helped the Hindus to establish a Sanskrit college in the holy city of Benares. Neither institution met any success, as both of them were unwanted by the indigenous population who were skeptic about

[108] It is a moot point as to who will decide what is moral and what is immoral, the rulers or the ruled. The colonizers always thought that the subjects could not think for themselves. Kipling's famous saying, "the White man's burden," is always interpreted in this sense.
[109] Warren Hastings was the first Governor-General of India, from 1773 to 1785.

anything offered by the British. I believe they were still in a mode of denial and did not want to realize that the actual ruling authority had shifted from the Indians to the Company.

Thus the story continues, despite many disappointments in terms of the masses' lack of interest and the Company's cautious move of not disturbing the existing mode of instruction (religious) and medium of instruction (vernacular languages). The Company had so many other issues to deal with and could not afford to ignite discontent on this issue. In 1813, the British Parliament initiated its first regular education policy by allocating one lakh rupees "for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories of India" (142).[110] Even this offer could not create a desire for education, as

> …no progress could be effected by government without the consent of the governed, that both to Hindus and Muslims education…was a function of religion, and that European interference was suspect as infidel and as being in its influence hostile to the maintenance of religious authority. To the people of India the Company was an oligarchy of upstarts or interlopers, tolerable only on account of their strength and the peace which they enforced, intolerable in any aspect which might reveal them as the agents of an alien and proselytizing faith. (142-3)

That is why, according to Ellis, "This 1813 change began a trend away from accommodation of indigenous culture and beliefs, usually associated with the 'Orientalists,' and a more determined effort by some individuals to impose

[110] Cf. Ellis.

'progressive' Western education and corresponding social reform—the 'Anglicist' camp" (364). But, having no luck with the promotion of education in urban areas, Lord Moira's administration in 1815 proposed that village schools should be given priority in terms of improving the moral standards of the Indians. Though he still did not consider missionaries appropriate for the Indian political environment, he discreetly tried to implement their mission to "reject error and accept the truth" (Cunningham 143). Unfortunately, these proposals could not be implemented because the Court of Directors rejected them on the basis that the proposals were vague and confused.

Despite the irregular activity, 1818 marks the year in which the indigenous and foreign philanthropists focused their attention on education once again. Two outstanding examples are Mr. Fraser's opening of a number of schools at his own cost to teach Persian[111] to the children of the peasants, and the establishment of Vidyala or Hindu College at Calcutta. The latter chose English as a medium of instruction to "provide liberal education which might lead to the purification of the Hindu life" (144). This impulse for English education came from within and was further supported by the first Governor General of the united India, Lord William Bentinck, later in the 1830s. But up to this point, the policy was not to oust the Sanskrit system for the Hindus and the Arabic system for the Muslims. That happened with the arrival of Lord Macaulay as a member of the Governor-General's Council. Macaulay interfered with the previous plans of the Governor-General's administration and openly advocated an educational policy in 1835 which was meant for "the promotion of European literature and science

[111] Persian remained the official language of courts and administration until 1832 in India.

among the natives of India; and that the Education Fund should be employed on English education alone" (149). Thus, the education policy took a decisive turn from grafting "western learning on eastern stock" to a policy exclusively focusing resources on Western education in the English language.

Yet another significant step of Lord Macaulay's education reforms for India was to follow the infiltration theory, which meant that education should be imparted to the upper classes and the masses would, later on, take care of themselves. This aspect of the reforms reflected colonial design as to the education of leaders on two counts: first, education would determine who would be the leaders, and second, the policy would clearly divide the country between the 'haves and have-nots.' As to the first objection, the right to an education was exclusively reserved for the wealthy and influential, leaving the peasants and the priests aloof. The policy wedged between religious and secular education, which had been imparted as complementary to each other before the Macaulay Reforms. The second objection, though related to the first, broadened the implications of class divide in India: the masses were left at the mercy of their leaders to decide for them. That is why, according to Ellis, "Indian reactions are varied. Nationalist historians see education both as a means of dividing communities along the lines of English linguistic competency – thereby changing the social structure – and as enforcing social divisions along caste and communal lines with a rigidity not previously known through positive discrimination policies. It is also classically assumed that nationalist movements have been led by the newly educated elite" (365).

Both aforementioned objections were legitimate but, ironically, brought some good to India as well. The common people in India, who had always been suspicious of foreign rule, were disgruntled with the official measures to secularize Indian education, which had mostly hinged upon religion before the arrival of the British. When they got an opportunity to put their hands on a weapon, they seized it and the result was the 1857 mutiny, the first collaborative attempt by both the Hindu and Muslim sepoys in the Indian army to overthrow their oppressors. The appeal to religious sentiments played a key role in the Mutiny. Though the mutineers were defeated in their cause, they registered their discontent writ large with their blood.

The Mutiny brought an end to the government of the Company, as the Crown took India under its direct control. It also gave the common man a forced sense of respect for the power of the British. But during that period of hopelessness, the Hindu and the Muslim leaders, products of the educational system implemented by Macaulay's reforms of 1835, took the situation into their own hands. They knew that first they would have to mentally prepare the masses for independence instead of igniting a revolution like the Mutiny; they relied more on pen than on artillery to win their freedom.

The Muslims reacted to the situation in two ways: first, in an orthodox manner, emphasizing madrasa education; and second, in a progressive manner, offering modern syllabi, largely modified by religious zeal. The first approach was easy to recognize, but the latter was more difficult to recognize as the proportion of the combination of religious and modern syllabi largely depended

upon personal discretion. For example, Sir Syed's Anglo Oriental College (later Aligarh University) promoted both tendencies side by side. Sir Syed had much praise for British and modern learning, while some of his close associates, such as Hali, Shibli and Maulana Mohammad Ali, turned more to the Muslim past and tradition to avert the crisis. They were disappointed with the limited achievement of Aligarh. During the crisis of the Khalafat Movement, Shibli, then an instructor of Arabic at MAO College, helped with the foundation of another institution, Nadvat al Ulama, an antithesis of Aligarh; while Maulana Mohammad Ali established a second rival school, the Jamia Millia Islamiya (Aziz 65). These institutions mirrored the desire for self-identity. According to Krishna Kumar, the Jamia Millia presents an interesting example of the search for self-identity. The Jamia from 1920 onwards entered a phase far more complex than the previous era had been. It was born at the critical juncture where the politics of the freedom struggle was growing into a mass movement—Mahatma Gandhi's *Swadeshi,* the Non-cooperation Movement.[112] As a product of the popular movement, the Jamia Millia "epitomized the amalgamation of religious, nationalist and modernist elements in a new model of Indian identity" (Kumar 128).

Iqbal, who was, no doubt, the most distinguished leader, entered into politics and practical life around that time. Though he did not establish any institution, he started his career as an educationist and throughout his professional life was affiliated with educational institutions in one capacity or another. Unlike

[112] The word *Swadeshi* literally means *self-sufficiency*. It was a political movement triggered by the division of Bengal in 1905. It involved the boycott of British products and the revival of domestic products and production processes. The movement sympathized with the Muslims' loss of the Ottoman Caliphate and became a joint venture around 1920.

the zealots of the Non-cooperation Movement, especially Gandhi, he felt the need for Western education combined with indigenous taste. He helped build the character of the Muslim youth by emphasizing both hereditary knowledge and Western education. He opined that a healthy combination of both could guarantee the progress and eventual emancipation of Indian Muslims.

The *Reconstruction* and the *Thoughts*

Iqbal's *Reconstruction* and the *Thoughts* are two instructive examples of his efforts to achieve a synthesis of hereditary knowledge and modern learning. This aim is best displayed in the ideology of the speakers of the respective works. They share an intention to raise their young audience into a community to which they can transmit their vision, and which is ultimately capable of carrying the torch of their wisdom. In 1929, Iqbal delivered his lectures to gatherings of educated Muslim youth in Madras, Aligarh, and Hyderabad. He mentions in the preface to the published edition of these lectures that he tried to reconstruct Muslim religious philosophy with due regard to Islamic traditions and the latest developments in different domains of knowledge. He attempted to harmonize religion with modern science because to a concrete mind of a young man of his age, religion and science had been regarded as two separate spheres of life – the former dealt with idea and the latter with deed – and Iqbal tried to present these two spheres of life as concentric.

The titles of his lectures are very enlightening on the subject they deal with: "Knowledge and Religious Experience," The Philosophical Test of the Revelation of Religious Experience," "The Conception of God and the Meaning

of Prayer," "The Human Ego – His Freedom and Immortality," "The Spirit of Muslim Culture," and "The Principle of Movement in the Structure of Islam." The seventh lecture included in the book, "Is Religion Possible?", was delivered in London at the request of the Aristotelian Society of London in 1932. The lectures are a sum total of Iqbal's philosophy already expressed in his unmatchable verses. The language he selected for the lectures was English, and therefore, we must assume that the audience was educated enough to grasp both the philosophy and the language in which that philosophy was expressed. It was that class of liberal minds who, after acquiring the master's language and education, were eager to question their master's sheer hypocrisy of promulgating liberal ideas on the one hand, and depriving people of their liberty on the other. Iqbal had understood that open confrontation would serve no purpose, nor did he want to follow Sir Syed's policy of acquiescence. His vision was clear from the very beginning: he had no doubts that if the youth was acquainted with self-respect acquired through a mastery of both eastern and western ideology, the time would come when it would be impossible for foreign powers to subjugate them any longer.

I will summarize Iqbal's otherwise dense and opaque lectures in order to pinpoint how Mehrab Gul articulates this philosophy in simple language because, apparently, the speaker of the poems is not Iqbal and his audience is not the elite class of highly educated young Muslims.

Iqbal's first lecture was on knowledge and religious experience. He begins the lecture with questions just like Mehrab Gul who asks himself a crucial question in the very first two verses of Poem 1. A close examination of the actual

words can help illustrate the similarity I am trying to establish between the *Reconstruction* and the *Thoughts*. In his lecture, Iqbal asks, "What is the character and general structure of the universe in which we live? Is there a permanent element in the constitution of this universe? How are we related to it? What place do we occupy in it, and what is the kind of conduct that befits the place we occupy?" (9). These questions cover three basic objects of the metaphysical quest: Universe, God, and Man. Keeping in view the capacity in which Iqbal is addressing the audience—philosopher, poet, seer, politician—and the intellectual level of his audience, the answers to such questions unfold on a purely philosophical level, with few attempts to leave that high pedestal of philosophy and touching the very fabric of his audience's emotive side by citing from known and familiar sources, such as verses from the Quran. In comparison to this grand opening, the *Thoughts* opens with the same question without padding it with philosophical jargon. Mehrab Gul asks himself:

> How can I quit this mountain land,
>
> Where my sires are interred in rocks…
>
> Your paths that twist and turn on hills
>
> Give Eden's pleasure to my sight (1-2, 9-10)[113]

Though apparently these verses embody Mehrab Gul's love for his country, deep down they touch on the same philosophical question Iqbal asks in the first lecture of the *Reconstruction*. Mehrab Gul naively finds the entire universe shrunk to his

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[113] میرے کہستاں تجھے چھوڑ کر جاوں کہاں
تیری چٹانوں میں ھے میرے اب و جد کی خاک---
تیرے خم و پیچ میں میری بہشت بری
خاک تیری عنبریں، آب تیرا تاب ناک
(*Kuliyat* 1-2, 9-19)

birth-place. His location does not involve the entire universe—it consists of only his familiar mountains—but the immediacy these mountains acquire in the verse cannot be found in the grand sweep of the entire universe of the *Reconstruction*. However, the physical surroundings in both works offer the set upon which the drama of existence is presented: one on a small scale and the other on a large scale. The twists and turns of the paths are metaphors for the ever-changing universe that offers new challenges to man every day. How man copes with these challenges is the dominant theme of both the *Reconstruction* and the *Thoughts*. The lecture suggests that man can tap into his potential provided he combines thought and intuition to understand the vast expanse of the Universe, the Creative Force behind it, and Man's place in this whole scheme.

In the lecture, Iqbal says that religion stands in need of a rational foundation of its ultimate principles because of modern discoveries in the field of science; it is legitimate if a Muslim first questions his religious injunctions before following them. Islam, according to Iqbal, does not support blind following; rather, its main function is to transform its followers on ethical lines. It is sad to see that the complementary nature of thought and intuition has been misunderstood too frequently—a big mistake common to Ghazali and Kant is that they see ideas as static and finite:

> thought in the very act of knowledge, passes beyond its finitude….In the wide world beyond itself nothing is alien to it. It is in its progressive participation in the life of the apparently alien that thought demolishes the walls of its finitude and enjoys its potential infinitude. Its movement

> becomes possible only because of the implicit presence in its finite individuality of the infinite, which keeps alive within it the flame of aspiration and sustains it in its endless pursuit. (*Reconstruction* 14)

By giving thought or idea a progressive dimension and an infinite scope, in fact, Iqbal refers to the unlimited potential of man who possesses that thought, provided he learns that constant effort on the road of discovery is the law of Nature. The man Iqbal wants to fashion is "A 'restless' being engrossed in his ideals to the point of forgetting everything else, capable of inflicting pain on himself in his ceaseless quest after fresh scopes for self-expression" (18). Mehrab Gul puts the same idea of a ceaseless quest in simple language as follows:

> That glance cannot be termed as true
> Which draws a line 'twixt red and pale:
> That sight is true which does not like
> The light of Sun or Moon to 'vail
> The aim and goal of Muslim true
> Is far beyond the bounds of West:
> Take longer steps and walk space,
> As this site is not meant for rest (19, 1-4)[114]

He invokes his youth's curiosity and asks him to embark on a journey of ceaseless quest. If the youth thinks that the discoveries of the present age, mostly done by Western philosophers and scientists, are final, he is wrong; his destination is

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[114] نگاہ وہ نہیں جو سرخ و زرد پہچانے
نگاہ وہ ہے کہ محتاجِ مہرو ماہ نہیں
فرنگ سے بہت آگے ہے منزل مومن
قدم اٹھا یہ مقام انتہا ئے راہ نہیں
(*Kuliyat* 1-4)

beyond this point, or perhaps, there is no destination, only infinite quest:

To bring about a change in laws
Of park with ease one can engage:
And for the nightingale can make
The nest as irksome as the cage.
If someone is about to set
On journey that is hard and long,
He does not wait for herald's sound,
Like waves that flow without ding dong. (9, 3-6)[115]

By using the traditional Urdu poetic tropes of garden and bird, and caravan and traveler, Iqbal gives a wake-up call to the youth by selecting familiar symbols from their repertoire. They can change their fate only when they realize that life is another name for constant struggle; rather, they should have high aspirations and infinite longing for something they yet need to explore. No achievement should be considered a final goal; each achievement should spur them to strive for another accomplishment *ad infinitum*.

On the other hand, the heart (which is a kind of inner intuition or insight) is an equally important source of knowledge. It brings us into "contact with aspects of Reality other than those open to sense-perception….We must not…regard it as a mysterious special faculty" in which "the vista of experience

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[115] یوں بھی دستورِ گلستاں کو بدل سکتے ہیں
کہ نشیمن ہو عنادِل پہ گراں مثلِ قفس
سفر آمادہ نہیں منتظرِ بانگِ رحیل
ہے کہاں قافلۂ موج کو پروائے جرس
(*Kuliyat* 9, 3-6)

thus opened to us as real and concrete as any other experience" (*Reconstruction* 21). It does invade our consciousness and, if interpreted correctly, can play an important role in achieving a balanced personality. Iqbal puts religion under this category of mystical experience which is not an illusion, but an interpretation of Reality using other human faculties rather than brain alone. In sum, mind and heart can lead to Knowledge and Reality only if they work in collaboration. Each, independent of the other, can still be successful in gaining knowledge, but that knowledge will be piecemeal, not comprehensive. Science applies the mind to discover, and religion uses mystical experience to discover, and both can meet at one focal point: man. Hence, man is superior to all. While sense-perception makes indirect connection with the Ultimate Reality in the external world, the mystical experience establishes a direct association with that reality as it reveals itself within. If humans are meant to be co-workers with God in reshaping their destiny, and attain supremacy over their surroundings as indicated by the Quran, then we need thought as well as heart.

In the second lecture, "The Philosophical Test of the Revelation of Religious Experience," Iqbal refers to the three logical proofs of God's existence offered by scholars as insufficient. By analyzing the inefficiency of the Cosmological, Teleological, and Ontological arguments, Iqbal draws a conclusion that the human situation is not final and that thought and being are ultimately one. Iqbal proceeds to analyze a number of contemporary theories of physics and philosophy, including the works of Einstein, Whitehead, Bergson, and Bertrand Russell, to arrive at the conclusion that the Ultimate Reality is a rationally

directed creative life, and its nature is spiritual. It must be conceived as Ego, other than oneself but closely connected to us, in the words of the Quran, "as close as man's jugular vein."

Iqbal's lecture shows his acquaintance with modern Western thought, which he appreciates but finds deficient on some accounts when compared with the spirit of Islam as he understands it. It serves his purpose of rejuvenating the youth with a sense of self-respect as they can get rid of the feeling of defeat at the hands of Western powers and can struggle for their unrealized goals in all spheres of life, whether political or religious. Iqbal succeeds in presenting a synthesis of science and religion, or modernity and tradition, because Islam, according to him, permits it. He neither advocates following in the footsteps of the giants of Western knowledge nor does he allow the Muslim youth to accept religious dogma.

Mehrab Gul, on the other hand, translates the philosophical edifice of this part of the *Reconstruction* as:

> The Muslim's destination is far ahead of the West because present discoveries are not final. However, it is not a sin to seek guidance from Western advancement as the door of Western knowledge is open for all, but slavish imitation will be fatal if you ignore your faith in your blind following.
>
> (19, 3-8; my translation)[116]

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[116] فرنگ سے بہت آگے ھے منزلِ مومن
قدم اُٹھا یہ مقام انتہاےَ راہ نہیں
کھلے ہیں سب کےلیے غریبوں کے میخانے
علوم تازہ کی سرمستیاں گناہ نہیں

This does not mean that Mehrab Gul always maintains this balance in his reasoning with the youth. Iqbal betrays his preference of Islam over the West, but he beautifully hides it in his high-sounding arguments in the *Reconstruction* because prose demands balance and precision. As Mehrab Gul's medium is poetry, he sometimes freely indulges in harsh criticism of the West for its imperial designs. He finds it too oppressive and, at times, too baffling to decide for himself what to do: "O my Faqr, decide for me / Slavery or martyrdom? "(1, 9-10; my translation).[117] He exhorts the youth: "Don't copy slavishly. Guard the unique treasure of yourself" (6, 3-4).[118] This means, "Be yourself and do something to be proud of yourself." After setting a high pitch of emotions, Mehrab Gul gradually turns his criticism to the Muslims themselves. First he calls them 'unaware,' as in "اپنی خودی پہچان/ او غافل افغان" (Understand yourself / O Afghan unaware; 7, 3-4,) or as when he says, "Though apparently a youth in school looks alive, he is dead because he has borrowed life from the West" (9, 7-8).[119]

This type of scathing criticism is more glaring in the *Thoughts* than in the *Reconstruction*; the latter downplays it and subdues it to appeal an audience whose conversion from Western to Iqbal's Islamic vision could not be achieved by appealing to emotions only. Whether the *Thoughts* or the *Reconstruction*, both

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اسی سرور میں پوشیدہ موت بھی ہے تری
ترے بدن میں اگر سوزِ لاالٰہ نہیں
(*Kuliyat* 3-8)

[117] اے میرے فقرِ غیورفیصلہ تیرا ہے کیا
خلعتِ انگریز یا پیرہنِ چاک چاک
(*Kuliyat* 9-10)

[118] تقلید سے ناکارہ نہ کر اپنی خودی کو
کر اس کی حفاظت کہ یہ گوہر ہے یگانہ
(*Kuliyat* 3-4)

[119] گرچہ مکتب کا جواں زندہ نظر آتا ہے
مردہ ہے، مانگ کے لا یا ہے فرنگی سے نفس
(*Kuliyat* 7-8)

aim at inspiring their respective audience in different modes, but with similar points of references. The speaker of the *Reconstruction* (Iqbal) proceeds in his arguments from reason to emotions, while the speaker of the *Thoughts* (Mehrab Gul) shifts in his arguments from emotions to reason; but their points of reference, such as Freedom, Self, the West, and Islam's relative superiority are similar in the nature and application of their arguments.

A very significant point of reference in the lectures and the poems is the concept of *khudi*. Whether it is translated as *self, ego*, or *individuality*, *khudi* is the most significant attribute of God and Man. In "The Conception of God and the Meaning of Prayer," the third lecture, Iqbal says that God also has individuality, which incorporates His other attributes such as Creativity, Knowledge, Omnipotence, and Eternity. God is infinite and His infinity is not extensive but intensive, meaning He consists of infinite inner possibilities of creative activities.

Man is a co-worker with God and has the conscious possession of a free self on the basis of which he makes his choices. The Quranic version of the story of Adam and Eve gives man a choice of free acts of doubt and disobedience, and it makes the earth a source of profit for the humans. Thus man does not have a fallen nature, and this earth is not a punishment for his sin, as described in other scriptures. This version of the story of origin stimulates man to exercise his freedom in the right direction.

Mehrab Gul acknowledges the relative superiority of man's ego or self. He also sees his young man capable of exercising free will and carving out a future for himself. He says:

> You can determine your own destiny because God has not predestined anything for you[120]. If you have power to aspire high, you can soar beyond the sky. (17, 5-8; my translation)[121]

Man can come into close contact with the Ultimate Reality in the act of prayer. Whether the contact comes into existence during a scientific discovery or in search of knowledge, it becomes a kind of prayer. Hence Iqbal provides religious endorsement to science.

The fourth chapter, titled "The Human Ego—His Freedom and Immortality," focuses on the main principle of Iqbal's philosophy: ego, *khudi* or self-respect exclusively. He maintains that the Quran refers to three aspects of the human being: the human being is the chosen of God, meant to represent God on earth despite many faults, and the trustee of a free personality. The unity of human consciousness or ego, as Iqbal calls it, is mentioned in the Quran as one of the three sources of human knowledge along with History and Nature. Unfortunately, it never became the centre of Muslim thought; otherwise, it would have long been established that denying reality to the human ego is impossible. Hallaj's daring statement "I'm the creative truth" captures the essence of human ego. It does not mean to "deny the transcendence of God. The true interpretation of his experience is, therefore, is not a drop slipping into the sea, but the realization and bold affirmation in an undying phrase of the reality and

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[120] It is still a common belief among the inhabitants of India that man's destiny is hidden in the lines on his forehead.

[121] تو اپنی سرنوشت اب اپنے قلم سے لکھ
خالی رکھی ہے خامۂ حق نے تری جبیں
یہ نیلگوں فضا جسے کہتے ہیں آسماں
ہمت ہو پرکشا تو حقیقت میں کچھ نہیں
(*Kuliyat* 5-8)

permanence of the human ego in a profounder personality" (88). However, it is very difficult to explain this mystical level of consciousness. Ibn-i-Khaldun felt the necessity of an effective scientific method to investigate these levels; modern psychology has also felt such a need, but has not yet been quite successful, despite Bradley's remarkable work on this topic. Though his ruthless logic declares ego a mere illusion, it does not deny its existence. Therefore, the only course open to the Muslim youth is to "approach modern knowledge with a respectful but independent attitude and to appreciate the teachings of Islam in the light of that knowledge" (89). However, the reality of ego is too profound to be intellectualized, and is characterized by a unity of mental states and essential privacy because "God Himself cannot feel, judge, or choose for me" (91).

The soul, according to the Quran, is a directive of the Ultimate Ego, immanent in Nature, and thus personality is not a thing but an action. Iqbal refutes both Ghazali's perception of ego as a soul-substance, and William James' perception of ego as the appropriation of one pulse of thought from another within a "stream of thought". Emerging out of matter, or a colony of lower egos, the soul may rise to a level of complete independence.

Refuting the mechanistic interpretation of consciousness, Iqbal establishes the independence of ego, which is not restricted by the rules of Nature. Our "inner experience is the ego at work. We appreciate the ego itself in the act of perceiving, judging, and willing. The life of the ego is a kind of tension caused by the ego invading environment and environment invading ego. The ego does not stand outside this arena of mutual invasion. It is present in it as a directive

energy" (93). This directive energy determines a personality which is not a thing in space but an act: "you must interpret, understand and appreciate me in my judgments, in my will, attitudes, aims, and aspirations" (93).

It can be maintained that an ego, after having reached the highest point of intensity, will retain its individuality in the face of death, apocalypse or even in the case of a direct contact with the all-embracing Ego. These are the states through which the human ego marches always onward to receive fresh illuminations from an Infinite Reality. Thus a free ego creates a new situation in every act and acquires further opportunities of creative unfolding.

Iqbal, through his poetry and prose, always tried to present the view of an independent ego whose individuality is not affected by any experience, even its encounter with the ultimate Reality. In such an encounter, though experienced on a very personal level and hard to intellectualize, the ego assimilates the qualities of the ultimate Truth. The most significant of these qualities are freedom and creative or directive energy. Thus it continues its journey even after death. In this sense, Hallaj's words, "I'm the creative Truth," become absolute truth.

Endowed with such a remarkable personality or ego, man can accomplish anything on earth. Such an explanation of ego was the demand of Iqbal's time; it was a message of hope for his colonized countrymen who had accepted their present condition as a will of God, thus dormant and inactive. This definition blasts off all remnants of predestination which Muslim scholars of the Umayyad period devised to hide their political expediencies.[122] Mehrab Gul

[122] The beginning of the idea of predestination is mostly dated from the martyrdom of Hussain (May God be Pleased with him) at the hands of Umayyad forces. The anger and anxiety of the

Afghan warns his audience on many occasions against the hypocrite Muslim clerics who have joined the hands of the rulers to help continue their oppressive measures.[123] He declares:

> That *Dervesh* can build up a nation's Fate
>
> Who never tries to seek the royal gate (4, 13-14)[124]

And in a rather more indignant tone, Mehrab Gul asks Sheikh (a secular figure) to get the clerics out of the mosque as they have incurred the anger of even the *Mehrab*[125] of the mosque due to their hypocrisy and hair-splitting logic that is pernicious for the interests of the Muslims: 'اے شیخ امیروں کو مسجد سے نکلوادے/ ھے ان کی نمازوں سے محراب ُترش ابرو' (12, 9-10). Mehrab Gul blames the clerics for sedating the youth with the misinterpretation of religion and giving them the opium of religious rituals, bereft of meaning:

> The young need a direction in the face of prevailing upheavals. The
>
> *mullah* cannot spark a desire for action by his early morning prayers.
>
> Seminaries cannot fashion *khudi* (selfhood) because they themselves are
>
> dying embers, unable to kindle a desire for self-determination.

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people were silenced by saying that no individual could be held responsible for this as everything was preordained by the will of God.

[123] It is a historical fact that the Ulema from the seminary of Deoband opposed the creation of Pakistan on various grounds.

[124] قوموں کی تقدیر میں وہ مردِ درویش
جس نے نہ ڈھونڈی سلطاں کی درگاہ
(*Kulliyat* 4, 13-14)

[125] The interior of a mosque.

(13, 3-8)[126]

In order to respond to the changing surroundings, the youth must strengthen themselves or *khudi*. For this the youth must adopt the quality of *faqr* that will help it think beyond material gains and personal profits.

According to Yousuf Salim Chisti, Iqbal used the concept of *faqr* fervently from 1932 to the time of his death in 1938, though he had referred to the two important ideas underlying *faqr*, Knowledge and Love, since 1914 ("Iqbal's Philosophy of Faqr"). The meaning of *faqr* is *asceticism*, found in *faqir* (Arabic) or *darwesh* (Persian), which makes him poor in the sight of God, rather than in need of worldly assistance. Thomas Hughes' *The Dictionary of Islam* divides *faqirs* into two groups: *saliks*, who rule their lives according to the doctrines of their religion; and *azad* (free) or *majzub* (abstracted), who are totally absorbed in religious reverie and do not strictly follow religious rituals. It seems that Iqbal, in his definition of *faqr,* has combined both trends; he wants his *faqir* to be a devout follower without abandoning himself entirely to the dogma of religion. *Saliks* and *azad* or *majzub* often occur in his poetry even before 1932, the point at which he started using the concept of *faqr*. His philosophy is acclaimed to be eclectic; therefore, one needs to be fully aware of the almost all peripheral meanings of any concept that he uses in his writing, such as *khudi* or *faqr*.

Having said that *faqr* purges its owner from material contamination, its

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[126] ہر سینے میں اک صبح قیامت ہے نمودار
افکار جوانوں کے ہوَے زیروزبر کیا
کرسکتی ہے بے معرکہ جینے کی تلافی
اے پیرِحرم تیری مناجاتِ سحر کیا
ممکن نہیں تخلیق خودی خانقہوں سے
اس شعلۂ نم خوردہ سے ٹوٹے گا شرر کیا
(*Kulliyat* 13, 3-8)

possession will make one proud of what he has in terms of ethical and moral values, rather than running after worldly treasures. It is apparent that *khudi* and *faqr* both sustain the human soul and endow it with unlimited freedom. Iqbal uses both terms interchangeably in his *Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts* because both aim at spiritual emancipation whose concrete expression would be the emancipation of the Indian Muslims from the colonial rule of the British.

Yet another very interesting influence on Iqbal's concept of *khudi* at that time could have come from his reading of Khushhal Khan Khattak's Pashto and Persian verses translated into English. The poems were translated by Sir Henry George Raverty in 1862 in his collection of Afghan[127] poems. In his "Islamic Universalism and Territorial Nationalism in Iqbal's Thought," S. Qudratullah Fatimi refers to this connection in the context of the overall Muslim imperial design in the Indian sub-continent. He is of the view that Iqbal shifted his admiration from the Mughal King, Alamgir, to the freedom-fighter poet and scholar of Pashtun/Afghan territory sometime by the mid-1930s when his first poem expressing his admiration of Khushhal Khan appears in *Bal-i-Jibreel* (*Gabriel's Wing*) in 1935 (*Iqbal Review* 59). The last four lines of the poem have immortalized Khushhal Khan Khattak's hatred towards Alamgir, the Mughal emperor, otherwise known in Indian Muslim history for his piety. Khattak became Alamgir's staunch enemy when the emperor wounded the honour of the Pakhtun tribes by attaking them. In the beautiful short poem titled "Khushhal Khan's Will," Khushhal Khan asks to be buried in a place where even the dust of Mughal

[127] Despite the political debates surrounding 'Pashto' and 'Afghan' languages and cultures, these terms are often used interchangeably.

horses' hooves could not sully his tomb. Despite their full might and power, the Mughal army failed to defeat Khushhal Khan Khattak. He died in 1689, "still a rebel and still free" (Qadir 8).

Khushhal Khan Khattak's tumultuous but very productive life could have been an influence on Iqbal's conception of Mehrab Gul Afghan. He was a revolutionary character in the history of the Pathans. He tried to unite Pathan tribes in order to combat the Mughal King Alamgir's encroachment upon their freedom and rights. He successfully fought many wars against the Mughal forces of Alamgir. He was not only a renowned swordsman, but also a poet *par excellence*. His Pashto and Persian poems are still considered to be precious treasures of Pashtun literature. His poetry consists of, besides love poems and religious hymns, patriotic poems. He was deeply perturbed to see that the Pathans were divided among many tribes and lacked unity and cohesiveness to rout out the Mughal forces once and for all. Olaf Caroe notes in his *The Pathans: 550 B.C.-A.D. 1957*, "Khushhal's patriotic poems are inspired by two passions, the first his hatred and contempt for the Emperor Aurangzed, the second his pride in what he calls the nang, the honour of the Afghan or Pakhtun—he uses both designations without any attempt to discriminate between the names" (236). Khushhal Khan says in one of his poems, "The very name Pakhtun spells honour and glory / Lacking that honour what is the Afghan story?" (qtd. in Caroe 238).

His life span from 1633 to 1689 can be termed as the renaissance of Pakhtunwali, the Pathans' chivalric code. Rajwali Shah Khattak et al. define Pakhtunwali as "the culture and way of life of the Pakhtuns, in which all the laws

relating to social life are present in unwritten form. Though not a religion, but a very sacred code of conduct, Pakhtuns love their Pashto" ("The Pashtun Code of Honour"). It is the very fabric of their character and has almost acquired the status of a religion. The four central pillars of Pakhtunwali are *Sharam* (shame), *Nang* (honour), *Peghore* (taunt) and *Badal* (revenge). Khushhal defines himself with reference to *nang* when, in one of his most famous couplets, he says, "I fastened my sword to the honour of the Afghan; I am the highest upholder of the honour of the era."[128]

There is an affinity of ideas between Iqbal and Khushhal Khan Khattak. The latter uses the ideology of *nang*, which is a Pashto word for *khudi* or *faqr* with all those implications that we find in Iqbal. In *Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts* we see that Iqbal uses *khudi* and *faqr* interchangeably. *Faqr* simply means honour that a person feels for being himself regardless of any wealth or crown, and it is a very important element in Pashtun/Afghani code of chivalry. On the basis of Chishti's claim mentioned above that Iqbal first used *faqr* in the 1930s, and Fatmi's claim about the influence of Khushhal Khan Khattak on Iqbal in his later days, it can be surmised that Mehrab Gul's preaching about *faqr* involves in its sweep all mystical and political orientations of the Muslim world, near and far. Knowledge garnered from practical life and ancestors, accompanied by a desire for freedom make Khattak the most likely candidate for Mehrab Gul Afghan.

Mehrab Gul in Poem 10 enumerates those qualities in his young

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[128] د افغان په ننګ مي و تړله توره
ننګیالے د زماني خوشحال خټک یم

man/audience which Iqbal has always considered crucial for the character of a perfect man, *mard-i-momin*. Such a man is both tough and soft, depending upon the situation in which he finds himself: in war, he is lion-hearted, but when peace prevails, he is friendly and nice like a deer. God has bestowed upon him *faqr*, enabling him to be indifferent to worldly pomp and show; in his *faqr*, the qualities of valour and contentment of Hazrat Ali dominate.[129]

In Poem 15, Mehrab Gul reiterates the link between *khudi* and *faqr* as follows:

> If faqr possesses no self esteem
> It means God Mighty's ire and wrath:
> If respect for self, keeps in view,
> To riches great it paves the path (5-6)[130]

In sum, *faqr* makes a person indifferent to riches and material gains. Hence it braces a man with self-esteem which evaporates if sacrificed for worldly gains.

The type of culture Muslims possessed with *faqr* will constitute is the topic of the *Reconstruction's* next lecture and resonates in *Meharab Gul Afghan's Thoughts*. In Iqbal's philosophical system, the perfection of an individual is as important as the society composed of such individuals. "The Spirit of Muslim Culture" is the fifth lecture in which he presents the view that the examination of a culture can be a way of judging a prophet's religious experience, since culture

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[129] خدا نے اس کو دیا ہے شکوہِ سلطانی
کہ اس کے فقر میں ہے حیدری و کراری
(*Kuliyat* 7-8)

[130] خودار نہ ہو فقر تو ہے قہرِ الٰہی
ہو صاحبِ غیرت تو ہے تمہیدِ امیری
(*Kuliyat* 5-6)

springs out of the will of its prophet. By asserting the finality of the prophethood of Muhammad, Islam ushers in the era of intellectual independence of the human being. All lines of Muslim thought, therefore, converge in a dynamic conception of the universe (time and space), and even some idea of evolution was suggested by Islamic philosophers and scientists, for whom the highest stage in evolution was the transcending of time and space by a human soul. This concept of human evolution does not deny immortality to the human being, unlike the modern theory of evolution that has brought so much despair.

"The Principle of Movement in Islam," Iqbal's sixth lecture, is a direct appeal to the youth to use their brains to interpret the teachings of their religion in order to adapt to their changing circumstances. Iqbal views '*ijtihad*' (which literally means 'to exert') as the principle of movement in Islam, since the religion teaches a dynamic view of the universe and a unity of humans that is not rooted in blood relationship. The decline of *ijtihad* in the history of Islam can be attributed to three reasons: conservative reaction against rationalism; ascetic Sufism, which absorbed the best minds of the society and left the legal discussions in the hands of intellectual mediocrity and the unthinking masses; and the fall of Baghdad, which prompted a rigid organization in Muslim society out of fear of disintegration.

Two distinct movements to revive *ijtihad* can be traced in later Muslim history: Ibn-i-Taimiyyah's revolt against the finality of the earlier schools (resulting in the Wahhabi Movement in Arabia), and the Religious Reform Movement in Turkey led by Said Haleem Pasha, which upholds the transfer of the

caliphate from an individual to an assembly. The rest of the Muslim world must look at the Turkish reforms with an independent mind; for example, the ideas of the poet Zia Gokalp about regional sovereignty, replacement of Arabic with local languages for better understanding, and gender equality. Liberalism must be greeted with a careful protection against racism and disintegration that usually accompanies liberalism, as in the words of Mehrab Gul:

> Only that nation can boast of renewal of energies whose people know how to burn midnight oil. But I'm sceptic about the reformation as it sounds like aping the West (6, 5-8; my translation)[131]

The modern world needs a spiritual interpretation of the universe, the spiritual emancipation of the individual, and universal principles to guide the evolution of human society on a spiritual basis. The West alone cannot have a lasting impact, and the responsibility falls upon the Muslims, who must appreciate their position, reconstruct their social life, and evolve out of the hitherto partially revealed purpose of Islam, that spiritual democracy which is the ultimate aim of Islam.

The conservative public in modern India may not be prepared for a critical discussion on *Fiqh* (Islamic Law), but it must be remembered that there was no written Islamic law up to the rise of the Abbasids, and early theologians also passed from deductive to inductive methods in their efforts to answer the

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[131] اس قوم کو تجدید کا پیغام مبارک
ہے جس کے تصور میں فقط بزمِ شبانہ
لیکن مجھے ڈر ہے یہ آوازہِ تجد ید
مشرق میں ہے تقلیدِ فرنگی کا بہانہ

questions of their time. The possibility of further evolution of Islamic law becomes evident when we carefully look at its four sources: first, the Quran, which is not a legal code but rather aims to awaken in man the higher consciousness of his relation with God and the universe; second, Hadith, which mainly demonstrates examples of how the Prophet applied the broader principles to a specific socio-cultural context; third, *Ijma* (consensus), which may be imparted to a democratically elected assembly in a modern Muslim state; and finally, *Qiyas* (analogical reasoning), which is just another word for Ijtihad. Hence,

> the closing of the door of Ijtihad is pure fiction suggested partly by the crystallization of legal thought in Islam, and partly by that intellectual laziness which, especially in the period of spiritual decay, turns great thinkers into idols. If some of the later doctors have upheld this fiction, modern Islam is not bound by this voluntary surrender of intellectual independence. (155)

None of the founders of Islamic law claimed finality of their schools.

The seventh and final lecture of the book was delivered after the span of almost two years, in 1932 in London at the request of the Aristotelian Society. In this lecture, "Is Religion Possible?" Iqbal first draws attention to three phases of religious life: faith, thought, and discovery. Since the religious life develops an ambition to make direct contact with the ultimate Reality through which the ego discovers its uniqueness, the question whether religion is possible is legitimate. The question must also be raised because of its scientific interest and practical

importance. Both science and religion are purifiers of experience in different spheres of inquiry: while in science we deal with the 'behaviors' of reality, in religion we deal with its 'nature.' The end of the ego's quest, in a more precise definition of individuality, is a vital rather than an intellectual act.

Thus Iqbal ends his philosophical reasoning with the youth of his nation on the importance of religion as much as modern discoveries in different spheres of knowledge. Compared with his *Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts*, the *Reconstruction* bequeaths Iqbal's will to the youth in a logical manner, tempered by calm emotions. There is an urgency to make them realize that there was nothing to be ashamed of in their religion; rather, Islam fully conforms to the spirit of the new era. They must shake off the feelings of a defeated nation and activate their otherwise indolent energies to stand on the same footing with their masters in order to negotiate their freedom with the British. Keeping this view in mind, the *Reconstruction* is neither apologetic nor polemic; it is purely academic, meant for the applications of its principles to practical life once the youth imbibes its spirit in academia.

Compared to the *Reconstruction*, the *Thoughts* hand over Iqbal's, or, for that matter, Mehrab Gul Afghan's wisdom by acquiring it, in the first place, from the practical life of a man of mountains. As mentioned earlier, the difference between the two pieces is that of an academic and scholastic environment on the one hand, and the rugged and ever-challenging practical life on the other. Therefore, Mehrab Gul gladly tells the youth:

One who resides in desert waste,

Or person born on mountains steep:

Can keep a watch on aims and ends

That Nature in its view does keep. (20, 1-4)[132]

The vast expanse of nature offers many opportunities to seek inspiration. Lofty mountains help in character-building; that is why Mehrab Gul Afghan addresses the youth:, "O man of plains, don't think mountains a wasteland because their company gives man self-knowledge" (14, 5-6; my translation).[133]

Mountains and eagles are oft-repeated symbols in *Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts* for the obvious reason that both represent rising and loftiness, twin qualities Mehrab Gul wants his youth to embody. Colonization had put them in the abysmal depth of deprivation and privation; therefore, their morale was very low, and they had lost all hope. In such a mental state, Mehrab Gul teaches them to look up and recapture their lost dignity. Living on mountains means a life full of challenges. Since each challenge brings forth something positive in the person who accepts it, Mehrab Gul wants his youth to be ever alert and accept all challenges, including their subjugation, as a means of restructuring their personalities. Besides fostering agility of mind, the ever-emerging challenges will keep them active in a creative and forward moving march. Hence their status quo will end.

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[132] فطرت کے مقاصد کی کرتا ہے نگہبانی
یا بند ہ صحرایَ یا بند ۂ کہستانی
اے شیخ بہت اچھی مکتب کی فضا لیکن
بنتی ہے بیابان میں فاروقی و سلمانیَ
(*Kulliyat* 20, 1-2, 8-9)

[133] وحشت نہ سمجھ اسکو اے مردکِ میدانی
کہسار کی خلوت ہے تعلیمِ خود آگاہی
(Kulliyat 14, 5-6)

That is why the eagle is another very important symbol that Mehrab Gul uses to inspire the youth. According to Iqbal, an eagle makes its nest on mountain tops and never eats the prey of other animals; it inspires people to acquire loftiness of character and hatred for dependence on others for sustenance. Mehrab Gul presents an interesting comparison between the eagle and other birds in his Poem 8. Other birds make fun of the eagle's wings because of their enormity andthe eagle's indifference to others, but their criticism sounds very petty as they are unaware of the eagle's purview of the world below during its flight, and the farsightedness which accompanies such a purview. It is not a bird's eye view, but an eagle's eye view both literally and metaphorically. Other birds cannot have the perfection of an eagle's character because an eagle respects and maintains its dignity even in the worst circumstances and luring temptations. Therefore, a "pheasant or a dove can never become an eagle because an eagle treasures its soul more than its body" (1, 7-8; my translation).[134] Just like an eagle, the youth should maintain its dignity and never lose it just for earthly and mundane needs.

It will be a grave mistake if one assumes that Mehrab Gul teaches a nihilistic philosophy. No doubt, he treats the natural environ of mountains as the best place for the youth's meditation upon his life, but he does not want the youth to lose itself in meditation alone, nor does he want this type of meditation to be unproductive:

> Literature and philosophy, O fool, are meaningless. In order to be learned, one must struggle in practical life. A skillful craftsman can

[134] باز نہ ہوگا کبھی بندۂ کبک و حمام
حفظ بدن کے لیے روح کو کردوں ہلاک
(*Kuliyat* 7-8)

tame Nature and his enlightenment can light up the darkness of ignorance.

(5, 5-8; my translation)[135]

By a skillful man, Mehrab Gul means an inventor and scientist whose inventions and discoveries are more meaningful than the confusing arguments of dry logic only meant for the selected few. Mehrab Gul Afghan's age has witnessed that only that nation dominates in the world that has made advancement in science and technology: as he says, "The world pays tribute to an inventor in all times (6, 1-2; my translation).[136]

However, the type of knowledge Mehrab Gul wants his youth to acquire should not be confused with the secular education of the West in which the development of cognition is preferred over that of the spirit. This concept of education offers an interesting point of similarity between the approach of Mehrab Gul Afghan of the *Thoughts* and Iqbal of the *Reconstruction*. Both speakers want their listener(s) to be fully equipped with modern and religious education, but with one difference: Iqbal's listeners have already acquired western education and Iqbal wants them to adapt it to their religion, while Mehrab Gul Afghan's listener is like a *tabula rasa*, upon whom Mehrab Gul Afghan inscribes the lessons he himself has learnt in life. So the youth can learn from his wisdom.

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[135] ناداں ادب وفلسفہ کچھہ چیز نہیں ھے
اسباب ہنر کیلیے لازم ھے تگ و دو
فطرت کے نوامیس پہ غالب ھے ہنر مند
شام اسکی ھے مانندِ سحر صاحبِ پرتو
(*Kuliyat* 5-8)

[136] جو عالمِ ایجاد میں ھے صاحبِ ایجاد
ہر دور میں کرتا ھے طواف اسکا زمانہ
(*Kuliyat* 1-2)

Conclusion:

Iqbal's Poetics: Literature as Anti-Colonialist Inspiration

Conclusion

This thesis has not attempted to plumb the various forces that shaped Pakistan's political encounter with colonialism. Rather, as one schooled in Comparative Literature, I have sought to find a relation between the colonial struggle and the vision of a free society, such as that found in Iqbal's Urdu political poems. The aim has been to gauge, through research and analysis, an indigenous resistance to colonialism fought on the terrain of text with its attendant deeper implications for the practical world of colonial politics.

The arguments in this dissertation are based on the chronological development of Iqbal's views in his poems from 1912 to 1938, from the period of Indian nationalism to the period of Muslim nationalism: a particular moment in British India when a national consciousness was coming into being. Each chapter was intimately connected to the previous, and this pattern enabled me to do not only a comparative study of the world presented both in the poetic text and the world outside, but also a contextual study of Iqbal's main political and philosophical tenets that lay behind the poetic texts. Though it was often difficult to be apolitical as I made my way through the much-politicized political debates around Iqbal, I believe I have succeeded in presenting some original insights into the creative struggles of a great poet-philosopher as he confronted his situation.

This dissertation questioned the political appropriation of Iqbal's transformation and resistance of empire in his poetic texts in a colonized setting. Whether he could be identified as a socialist or a democrat, a conservative or a liberal were all critical perspectives to take into account. Thus a comparatist can

find meaning not only in Iqbal's texts but in the way actual political situations influenced and shaped those texts. As a result, this dissertation has highlighted the difference between *Iqbal* as presented in politicized political discourses and *Iqbal* as he appears in his original texts. This chapter will attempt to sum up the findings of my research and to indicate those areas where it may challenge accepted interpretations of his poetic oeuvre.

Poetics and Iqbal's Political Philosophy

The most important starting point of the present research was to problematize the grand philosophical vision with which every researcher on Iqbal has traditionally had to begin. The modus operandi here has been this: instead of philosophizing around his philosophy, the analysis has incorporated Iqbal's philosophy only as it is seen to be relevant to the political debates that occupied Iqbal during the colonial period and encapsulated in his poems. His philosophy was certainly his most efficient apparatus to cure his colonized people of their acquiescence, resignation, and what Sheila McDonough calls "alienation" (2). Indeed, the political scenario had drastically changed for the Indian Muslims after the Mutiny of 1857; their defeat by the British sidelined them from mainstream politics and the administration of India. The result was a confused Muslim nation, alienated from their immediate past because it was painful and oblivious of their present because it could offer them nothing better. Before that decisive point in Indian history, a Muslim could easily keep his distinct identities as an Indian and as a Muslim; following that event it was impossible.

It was during that time frame, from 1912 to 1930, that Iqbal composed "Complaint" and "Answer," along with other political poems. His poetry confronted the political strife and struggle for power-sharing in British India which was passing through very significant stages. These poems, viewed through their political context, became a voice of discontent, strengthened by a shared past and religious ideology. In them, Islam became a social activator, awakened by certain colonial practices and institutions.

Judging from these poems, that political context was present and must have been overpowering for Iqbal: census, maps, and museums divided the Indians among themselves; their Indianness was cut across by the state apparatus of bureaucracy which drew a line of demarcation around a people (whether Hindu or Muslim, or Sikh) to confine them into an enclosed circle of a community for administrative purposes. The introduction of Western political practices, such as political reforms imposed from the power corridors of London, and electorates on a community basis, divided Indians further. With this administrative expediency surfaced the question of identity. The Indians went through a long and complicated historical process to win back their lost identity, but at a heavy price. Cyril Radcliffe, who had never even visited South Asia, cut the map of India along religious lines, resulting in Hindustan, where Hindus would be the majority; and Pakistan, where Muslims would dominate. This numbers game was totally alien to an India only half a century ago; the Minto-Morley Reforms (1909) introduced separate electorates and paved the way for the division of India on the basis of religion and communities. Though the indigenous struggle for

independence saw a plethora of challenges, such as economic exploitation, social injustices, and political discrimination, there are frequent references to identity issues because the rest of the questions could be answered only with reference to identity.

As this thesis has shown, it was in this tense political situation that Iqbal connected with his people and to which he reacted through his poetry and action, each informed by his political and philosophical notions. His poems "Complaint," "Answer," "Mosque of Cordoba", "Satan's Parliament", and *Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts* document a native's struggle to find words to articulate the meaning of his Muslim existence and the Islamic place in the grand drama of British imperialism as played out on his soil.

It was a difficult legacy: the British not only supplanted the Muslim rulers, they also inverted their identity; once rulers, they became subjects. Hence, the Indian Muslims' political dilemma was more complicated than those of their countrymen, the Hindus. The latter were subject to an alien ruler even before the British arrived; the Muslims (Mughals) came to India as invaders (Qureshi 278). With no intentions to minimize the loss of the Hindus, this dissertation focuses mainly on how Iqbal sensed that loss, reflected upon it, and responded to it, personally or vicariously: first by his somewhat late but active participation in Indian politics, and later, by inspiring Indian Muslims to struggle against the usurpers. Thus, in retrospect his poetry was his most effective vehicle to motivate his people.

As to the identity of an Indian Muslim, it was never a fixed category: it had always been fluid. From invaders to rulers, from rulers to subject, from subject to resurgent voice, and then finally, as citizens of independent Pakistan and Hindustan, all tell a tale of this fluidity which shifts with every stroke of history. Iqbal responded to this fluidity creatively. His "Complaint," "Answer," and "Mosque of Cordoba" are his conscious attempts to acknowledge the change that had taken place in the Muslim world in general, and in India in particular. He used the bitter feelings over the loss of power to the Muslims' own advantage by relating their present downfall—first, to their glorious past to heighten their senses of loss; second, to their weaknesses which played major roles in bringing about that loss; and finally, to awaken a desire to be reborn from the ashes. Majeed Amjad calls it "the creativity of decline" because for Iqbal, "imperialism led to a renewed, self-conscious sense of being Muslim….This selfhood is not an escape from, or compensation for, a crisis identity, but continually keeps that crisis identity in productive play" (147, 149). Iqbal considered the inactivity of the Muslims a negation of selfhood. Even in the most unfavourable times, selfhood, according to Iqbal, can remain alive only when it sets one goal after another to achieve.

Poetics and the Development of a National Muslim Consciousness

Our analysis has noted that, until the 1930s in Iqbal's poems, there was a continuing attempt to build a Muslim nation on a non-territorial basis-- as it had always been. There was not a single reference to a separate state as is usually associated with Islam, in his entire poetical works. He speaks as an Indian

Muslim, still resisting—consciously or unconsciously—to bifurcate his identity between his Indianness and Muslimness. That is why there is no contradiction between his love for India as mentioned in his poems, such as "Tarana-i-Hindi" ('Indian Anthem') or "Hindustani Bachchon ka Quami Geet" ('Indian Children's National Song') and his "Hindi Musalman" ('Indian Muslim') or "Hindi Islam" ('Indian Islam'). On the one hand, he proclaimed in the poems of his early career that India was the homeland of the Indian Muslims and it was the best place in the world;[137] on the other, he expresses ambivalence over his Indian Muslims' Indian identity because Brahmans dub them as foes.[138]

This ambivalence emerges from the changing political scenario. Gone are the days of the 1920s when Muslims and Hindus raised their voice of resistance in unison from the platforms of the *Khilafat* Movement of the Ali Brothers and the Non-Cooperation Movement of Gandhi; suspicion and distrust had taken the place of their previous collaboration against a common enemy, the British. A person of Iqbal's acumen had sensed that the old collaborators would part ways sooner or later. Therefore, his early love for India and later ambivalence can be seen as a political expediency, not as a contradiction, which scholars like Hamilton Gibb are too quick to declare, and scholars like Fazlur Rahman are obliged to defend.[139]

Each political poem offers an opportunity to see how skillfully, though redundantly, Iqbal combined his philosophy with his political poems. The union is such that his political poems cannot be read in isolation without referring to his

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[137] "Tarana-i-Hindi"
[138] "Hindi Musalman"
[139] See Gibb's *Modern Trends in Islam* and Rahman's "Some Aspects of Iqbal's Political Thought".

philosophical system. Aesthetics, according to Majeed, was crucial to the articulation and formulation of politics in his work (xxiv). As this thesis has explored, the close reading of his political poems reveals that his poetry is built upon the philosophical notions of Self (*Khudi*), Perfect Man (*Mard-i-Khuda*), *Ishq* (*élan vital*), and Pure time or duration (*durée*); all borrowed from both eastern and western thinkers. Since the origin of these notions and their influence on him was beyond this study, the focus was mainly on how these notions provided philosophical foundation to his otherwise thoroughly political poems. A method is at work here: he Islamicized these sources[140] because he knew that religious appeal was more powerful and its impact immediate. The scholarly works of Aziz Ahmad, Fazlur Rehman, and Anne Marie Schimmel support this argument that Iqbal's poetic idiom is highly religious, and that the linchpin for his philosophical system comes from the Islamic notion of *Tawheed* or the "Islamic credo" of *la ilaha illullah* (There is no God, but God), in Schimmel's words. Whether a leap of faith or something else, the trajectory from negation of *la* to affirmation of *illaullah* worked very well in his political poems because in its negation one could find liberation from all forms of slavery, and in its affirmation one could realise one's strength to defy false gods. The present study examined Iqbal's use of the Islamic past in his political poems because, in the rise and fall of Muslim empires, his philosophical principle of "negation to affirmation" works quite intelligibly. He wanted his people to realize that their fallen state was

[140] Iqbal was quite good at altering his technique and method according to his audience. The poems under consideration present his philosophical notions from a purely Islamic point of view, whereas his lectures (*Reconstruction*) acknowledge Western influence, albeit with some reservations.

temporary and they would be able to win back their freedom and sovereignty, provided they paid heed to strengthening themselves morally and intellectually. Iqbal's notion of *Khudi* enables "self-divinization", which is a "relationship of ontological equality between God and the individual human self.…The human self is variously described as being God's 'co-worker', a free personal agent who 'shares in the life and freedom of the Ultimate Ego', and an entity that is 'consciously participating in the creative life of his Maker'….Perfect Man [the individual self] is necessary to God as the medium through which He is known and manifested" (Majeed 31). This self-divinization is crucial for creating fresh world of ideals which are "central to selfhood as a form of political agency". The "faith-based selfhood might 'control the forces of history', and restore Islam's power in the contemporary world" (35). The desire to restore Islam's lost power is reflected through almost all his political poems.

Iqbal's *Mard-i-Khuda* appears in almost all his political poems; he is omnipresent like God, all-pervasive, knowing, and performing. In a single phrase, he is God's co-worker. Shocking though it was for his people, it did the trick. However, this concept won him applause and condemnation simultaneously. On Islamic grounds, the clergy declared him apostate for corrupting God's unity (*Tawheed*) with the human agency he assigns to *Mard-i-Khuda*; and on literary grounds, he was awarded a knighthood.

The duality Iqbal achieved through his poetical presentation of philosophical-cum-political notions served him in good stead. He was the voice of the public when he recited his "Complaint" and other poems from the platform of

Anjuman-i-Hamayat-i-Islam, and he was involved in active politics on the national level, the most illustrious example of which was his Allahabad Address. As one of his most controversial political statements, the address offers interesting forays into Iqbal's equally controversial political poem "Satan's Parliament" to determine his vision of a political entity for the Indian Muslims.

The Poetical Foundations of "Satan's Parliament"

The Allahabad Address was a precursor to "Satan's Parliament;" it does consider different forms of government, but the address was in no way the blueprint of a new Muslim state which it is usually considered to be. One can see a clear difference between what Iqbal said in the address and how it was interpreted for political purposes. Iqbal did not refer to the partition of India up to his correspondence with Jinnah in 1937-1938. Rather, he strongly objected to a British author's attempt to give that meaning to the address.[141] There were dozens of other Pakistan schemes which were all attempts to resolve the political deadlock in India, and this address was one of them. It is interesting to note that even those who could not read a desire for separation in this address still refer to it as the first articulation of such desire. This can be attributed to the politicized meaning the address received in the late 1940s and the endorsement of such meaning by the state propaganda of Pakistan. The result is that Iqbal's address hardly received an independent reading. Ironically, on the both sides of the Line of Control, it has always been presented as a manifesto for the partition of India. These readers have failed to see that, compared to other schemes, the address is unique in the sense that in it Iqbal elaborates on nation-building, not state-

[141] See Jalal's *Self and Sovereignty*, 329 for Edward Thompson's letter to the London *Times*.

building, because the latter did not exist in 1930. He declared the Indian Muslims a nation *per se*, which needed to be consolidated in the North-West of India to safeguard its rights "within or without the British Empire." It was the time of the Round Table Conferences in London. Neither the British nor the Indians had lost hope of some sort of political agreement. Iqbal, as the later developments suggest, knew what he was saying and why. His audience was not the people sitting in the gathering, but the British and Muslim delegates who were attending the Round Table Conference in London. The All-India Muslim League's elite leadership ignored the address despite the fact that it was delivered in the annual session of the said party, and the British responded with an invitation to Iqbal to attend the Second Round Table Conference in 1931. The press debated the address, but to say that the address was the only one of its kind and that it clearly chalked out a plan for Muslim independence would be distorting the historical facts.

However, the address did a good service for the Indian Muslims in two other respects. First, it gave intellectual content to their independence movement, which gained momentum in the 1940s. In it, Iqbal referred to Renan, whose theory of nationhood greatly interested him. The French sociologist considers moral consciousness as the most important element to make a people a nation. However, Iqbal believes that moral consciousness is the *only* element in nation-building. According to him, Islam is a polity that rejects the bifurcation between State (politics) and Church (religion). Islam, moreover, as a living force, cannot be confined to geographical boundaries. As a result, Muslim identity is not defined by geography. But then he also informed his audience that time would

decide whether Islam assimilates the concept of western nationalism or is itself transformed by it. This statement is in consonance with another one in which he declares that in Islam, the fundamentals of universal polity have been revealed and the Muslim needs only to readjust them from time to time according to the demands of the era. Such statements as these in the address support the view that the Allahabad Address was an open-ended question rather than an answer to the political deadlock the Indian Muslims were facing. Despite the fact that one out-of-context paragraph from the address is often quoted to support the counter-argument that the Address charted out a future course for the Indian Muslims, the entire address was intended to educate the Indian Muslims before they decided anything about their future. There was no deliberate ambiguity in the address because in December 1930, the Indian Muslims—the educated elite class—was trying hard to come to terms with the political situation of a political deadlock. To aspire for a separate state was certainly not one of the options.

The Allahabad Address is interesting on another account which again is, unfortunately, ignored. Iqbal's delivering this address in the capacity of the president of the meeting indicated that the All-India Muslim League, for all its popularity among the masses, would have to come out of its elite's enclave and spread its base to the Muslim-majority provinces of India too, which it had been ignoring so far. Consequently, it was the Muslim-majority area of India which became Pakistan, so, coming back to the main point, to call it as a natural outcome of the political settlement which Iqbal clearly had in his mind, would be a grave mistake because the command of the Muslim League was in the hands of

those Muslim leaders who happened to be mostly landlords and belonged to Muslim-minority areas; Iqbal had none of these qualifications.

Most popular and liberal accounts of Indian history date Muslim nationalism to the Lahore Resolution of 1940 when, by just one stroke, Jinnah declared his people a nation. There is a marked difference in the address of Jinnah and that of Iqbal. The former dealt with the social expressions of the concept of a Muslim nation, such as religion, language, and culture, while the latter defined the essence of that nation, 'moral consciousness'. Jinnah kept the language of the Resolution intentionally ambiguous, so he could strike a deal with his opponents any time if it suited his plan; however, in Iqbal's case, the nature of events was such that it was premature to go to that extent. However, none of them declared that their plan was to achieve a separate state.

Both great Muslim leaders considered British rule an agent of change; it brought in its wake nationalism, which was a natural reaction to colonialism. Macaulay's educational reforms backfired almost after a century when the prevalent Western education system gave birth to an educated class which was fully versed in western liberal humanism, which it learnt in British universities. According to Ania Loomba, "In the colonies, the native intelligentsia played such a crucial role in forging nationalist consciousness because they were bilingual…. In other words, anti-colonial nationalism is itself made possible and shaped by European political and intellectual history. It is a 'derivative discourse', a Calibanistic model of revolt which is dependent upon the coloniser's gift of

language/ideas".[142] She based this argument on Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Looked at from this perspective, the baffling contrast between British education in London and British practices in India forced that class to reflect upon its national identity—Gandhi found it in Hinduism and Iqbal in Islam. Both played a significant role in linking "elite nationalism" to "mass nationalism," one through his *Satiyagraha* and the other through his poetry (Smith, *Theories of Nationalism* 68). However, it is an irony that the high command of the two main representative parties, the Congress and the Muslim League remained in secular hands: respectively, Nehru and Jinnah.

Towards the end of the 1930s, Iqbal clearly talks about a separate state for the Indian Muslims for the first time. This change in his stance can be validated by closely examining his "Satan's Parliament"[143] and his correspondence with Jinnah. Almost six years elapsed between the address and the composition of the poem: the Round Table Conferences met no substantial success, the resulting Communal Award of 1932 incurred Congress's anger, and India was heading towards the 1937 election in which the All-India Muslim League failed to appeal to the masses. This tense political situation forced Iqbal to pronounce his vision for a separate Muslim state categorically, which he did in his letters, explicitly, and in his poem, implicitly.

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[142] Caliban, as a colonized subject, tells his colonial master, Prospero, "You taught me language, and my profit on't / Is I know how to curse. The red plague rid you / For learning me your language" (*The Tempest* 1.2.364-66).

[143] "Satan's Parliament" was composed in 1936, but it was published posthumously in 1938. This makes the poem roughly contemporary to the 1937 election and Iqbal's correspondence with Jinnah.

Indeed we have found that there is a unique connection between the address, the poem, and the letters. The address gave Iqbal and his people sufficient time to think over their composite identity as Indians and as Muslims. Since no plan seemed to be working, Iqbal realized that it was time to part ways with their Indian identity. The irony is that he wrote on this issue to Jinnah about taking a bold decision; the latter kept ignoring it even beyond the Lahore Resolution of 1940; he finally acknowledged it—which was just a political tactic despite his honesty—in his "Foreword" to Iqbal's published letters that it was Iqbal who inspired him to adumbrate the Indian Muslims' will in the Lahore Resolution of 1940. This statement of Jinnah justifies the claim that the intellectual content for the independence of the Muslims was inspired by Iqbal.

The analysis of "Satan's Parliament" challenges some common beliefs and assumptions about Iqbal's political ideology. He has been often dubbed socialist and anti-democratic. This is again a view based on a partial understanding of Iqbal's work. "Satan's Parliament" is poetry, and poetry speaks through metaphorical language. Iqbal does not endorse the viewpoints of Karl Marx or those of the fascist, Mussolini. A careful examination of the poem suggests that Iqbal uses them as metaphors for change. The West had disillusioned him completely, more so towards the end of his life. Therefore, he welcomed any challenge to the hegemony of the West, whether in politics or in the domain of social values. He hailed Mussolini and Marx for creating different sets of values. No doubt, he leaves their treatment in a 'grey area,' but the time he wrote the poem, the revolutions based on Marxism and Mussolini's ideology were thriving.

Today, we can turn back and in a self-congratulatory mode call them culprits for many atrocities meted out in their names, but in their own moment, they were declared 'saviours;' hence in Iqbal's poem, Marx is "That Prophet of no Sinai, that Messiah / Without a cross—no messenger of God / Yet in his clasp a Book" (trans. Kiernan 53-55).[144] This should leave no ambiguity regarding Iqbal's treatment of Marx and, by implication, Marxism: Marx is close to prophethood but still not a prophet. Consequently his philosophy is not comprehensive.

As regards Iqbal's treatment of western democracy, the qualifier 'western' received harsh treatment by him, not democracy itself. One can contest his coinage of the phrase 'spiritual democracy' but it is hard to believe that he had antidemocratic views. He was not against democracy as such, but did not approve of Western democracy or the so-called Westminster model. He was fully aware of the optical illusion Western democracy created; apparently a liberating force, Western democracy concealed further suppression as it followed the rule of majority as authority. Iqbal questioned the intellectual level of the majority that would be entrusted with ruling over the masses and shaping their destiny.

This should not mean that Iqbal stood for autocracy as it is the only direct opposite of democracy. Such an outcome is frankly a baseless assumption because Iqbal's ideal was a 'spiritual democracy' which, according to his understanding of the religion, Islam guaranteed. Freedom, equality, and happiness are the aims that only spiritual democracy could proclaim. Since the modern nation-state did not

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[144] وہ کلیمِ بے تجلّی، وہ مسیحِ بے صلیب
نیست پیغمبر و لیکن دربغل دارد کتاب
(*Kuliyat* 41-42)

rely on religion, it was impractical for Iqbal. His notion of Islam was an all-encompassing law which was the expression of the divine in all human matters.

Again it would be a grave mistake to declare that Islamic polity cannot be democratic and by that implication, Iqbal's idea of 'spiritual democracy' does not stand up to rigorous analysis. Such understandings of Iqbal is relational: we are looking at his perception of Islam through our interpretations of the very same religion. If we find the religion deficient on some grounds, we believe that any association with that religion—whether of ideas or personalities—is bound to be deficient. Such critics always forget that we are not looking at Islam for its truth or falsehood, but we are looking at Iqbal's concept of Islam as he sees it in his historical context. Depressed by their backwardness in all walks of life, the Indian Muslims had accepted their lot as the will of God which only God could change. This belief had become a part of their psyche. Iqbal, instead of shifting agency from God to people, divides it equally between the two, and highlights the concentric spheres of each agent's independent activity. For him, it was not a one-sided affair—God sitting in the Heavens and sealing the fate of his people for good. If a human desires, he can exercise his agency to change the world around him. Iqbal successfully liberates his people from fatalism by giving them agency equivalent to that of God.

Contributions to his Poetics from *Reconstruction*

The person as an individual and as an agent of decisive change, in his and his community's life, is the most important philosophical construct of Iqbal. He propounded this idea, in mystical and religious idioms to purge it of its western

association. One can see the development of such a free individual only in a free society and he determines its constitution by continuous readjustments. This assertion does not come without a proof. There is a strong support of this argument in Iqbal's sixth lecture in *Reconstruction*. According to him, Islam rejected the "old static view of the universe" and "reached a dynamic view" in its search for fresh and creative response to the demands the universe imposes on man (129). He assigns man a central role in the entire scheme of existence, based on his idea of unity, '*Tawheed,*' which is another name for man's ideal union with God; he saw loyalty to God as loyalty to one's ideal nature. This kinship with God, if one may say so due to linguistic constraints, liberates man from all loyalties to those man-made institutions which have failed to deliver. However, the "ultimate spiritual basis of all life, as conceived by Islam, is eternal and reveals itself in variety and change" (130). This means that refusal to change is the negation of the basic spiritual reality. It is in this context that Iqbal welcomed and supported Kemal Ataturk's decision to abolish the *Khilafat* and establish an assembly of representatives. He found it as the latest example of Islamic principle of *Ijtihad,* which he defined as "to exert with a view to form an independent judgement on a legal question" (130). No doubt, "Satan's Parliament" offers an array of legal questions about the political shape a new Muslim state would have to take in order to justify its existence.

Iqbal defines the purpose of state in *Reconstruction* as "an endeavour to transform" the ideals of "equality, solidarity, and freedom" into "space-time forces" (136). In other words, the spiritual needs the actual for its manifestation;

that is, the spiritual principles of Islam need a geographical space to actualize themselves. However, Iqbal also documents that, from the earliest times to the rise of Abbasides, there was no written Islamic law except the Quran. From that point onwards until the codification of Muslim law in four schools, many schools of law and legal opinions appeared "to meet the necessities of a growing civilization" (145). This fact substantiates Iqbal's view that Islam should readjust itself to the demands of changing times as it used to do before a myth which declared that all doors of *Ijtihad* (personal judgement on a legal issue) were closed. That is why we see Iqbal welcoming the Turkish Republic:

> The truth is that among the Muslim nations of today, Turkey alone has shaken off its dogmatic slumber, and attained to self-consciousness. She alone has claimed her right of intellectual freedom; she alone has passed from the ideal to the real—a transition which entails keen intellectual and moral struggle. (142)

Iqbal did envisage that the orthodox would condemn the transition, but he endorsed the change because he found it as the exercise of the Islamic principle of *Ijtihad*. He did so to such an extent that he even approved of calling for prayer in Turkish and referred to such an example existing in Islamic history.

***Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts* and 'Colonial Resistance'**

When Iqbal sensed that India was heading towards statehood, he gave his full support to the struggle for a Muslim state in which the Muslims would be a nation based on their shared moral consciousness. Muslims' identities are compound identities because they have ethnic and local identities along with their

universal Muslim identity; and these identities are not mutually exclusive, though one trend could be more dominant than the other at a particular moment in history. This is what exactly happened in India. The partition, which is still debated and regretted on the ground that the Muslim-majority provinces jeopardised the future of the Muslim minorities in Hindu-majority provinces, was predicated on the multiple identities of an Indian Muslim. In the 1940s, it was the national identity of an Indian Muslim which obliterated all other identities and Iqbal's concept of nation was a whole world apart from the composite nationalism of Congress.[145] Loomba looks at this difference of opinion as the product of colonial resistance:

> Historically speaking, anti-colonial resistances have taken many forms, and they have drawn upon a wide variety of resources. They have inspired one another, but also debated with each other about the nature of colonial authority and how best it should be challenged. In each context, there have been sharp differences between the diverse groups within a 'colonised' population; even where they have managed to come together under the sweep of a particular movement, they have clashed at different points both before and after colonial rule has been formally dismantled. (185)

That is why we see that Iqbal refused composite nationalism and based his nationalism or political vision on religious ground as he understood religion.

In his *Mehrab Gul Afghan's Thoughts*, his religio-political vision is more accessible to the masses by making his language simple and easy to read by a

[145] See "Iqbal's Statement on Islam and Nationalism in Reply to a statement of Maulana Hussain Ahmad" in Sherwani's *Speeches, Writings and Statements of Iqbal*.

common man. Iqbal, no doubt, occupied a unique position in the Indian Muslims' struggle for freedom: he received a knighthood from the British for his literary accomplishments; he shared the podium with the top rank politicians of the All-India Muslim League; and he shared the sentiments of the masses. This unique position allowed him to speak on multiple levels in many languages to audiences of different calibres.

Iqbal's Poetics: Inspirational or Implementational in Pakistan?

Behind this analysis has been a persistent theme largely operative behind the scenes. It comes as the most crucial and pertinent question of Iqbal's vision---whether it was inspirational or implementational, and with it a whole new debate opens up. Based on our work, we are able to make some contribution to these discusions. If such debate is framed within the time span in which Iqbal lived and worked, it is not hard to find his vision's relevancy to the freedom fight of his people. But if we begin our scrutiny with the general assumption that 'universal poets' live beyond their age and their message is relevant to all the ages to come, we may well be mistaken because words remain unchanged but acquire new significance in different hands, at different times. From the perspective of this research, Iqbal's poetry and his vision arising out of that poetry has suffered considerably; this is a fact drawing attention from only a few scholars. The analysis presented here allows us to explore important relevant issues.

Iqbal's vision has always been used for political gains. As mentioned earlier, Jinnah used it to give intellectual thrust to his otherwise ambivalent Lahore Resolution of 1940. There is historical proof that prior to 1940 he

sometimes ignored Iqbal's letters in which Iqbal spoke of a separate state clearly. This political interpretation paved way for the state interpretation of Iqbal as the architect of Pakistan. There is no denying the fact that he inspired his people, but to locate that inspiration only in the Allahabad Address would be a mistake. The address was not even delivered in Urdu and its appeal was limited to only a selected audience. The same cannot be said for his poetry.

The alleged impracticality of Iqbal's vision cannot be considered a cause for Pakistan as being a failed state. His was an idea and its fulfillment was in the hands of his people. It is not the absence of a clear-cut administrative structure in his vision which caused Pakistan's muddling through various systems of government and arriving at no consensus. As a state Pakistan has experimented with different forms of governments ranging from secular to military authoritarian state with brief intervals of sham democracy. Iqbal stood for none of them, so to ascribe Pakistan's failure to a flaw in Iqbal's vision is a great injustice.

Based on a close reading of his poetry and its philosophical foundations, Iqbal's vision for a Muslim state was based on three interconnected principles: freedom, equality, and solidarity. By contrast, the eventual outcomes are revealing: Pakistan did achieve freedom from colonial suppression on August 14, 1947, but the state could not translate that freedom into the ongoing life of its people. In its history of sixty-five years, Pakistan has seen 31 years of dictatorship by military commanders, fourteen years of democracy, and eight years of various interim governments. The ratio of 31:14 explains that its people scarcely enjoyed freedom and justice. That is why they did not know how to deal with it in its brief

and sporadic appearances in democratic form. This would appear to be democracy nourished under the heavy boots of armies which willingly supplanted it at their whim.

As for equality and solidarity, instead of springing from within, an artificial cohesiveness was imposed on the people with its basis in three complicated areas: religion, fear of India, and nascent nationalism. First is religion because Pakistan is an Islamic Republic in which other religious communities also live. Religion was used as a political slogan during the active independence movement in the 1940s. That it would become an uncontrollable monster was not in the wildest imagination of Jinnah who is known in history for his secular views and his sensitivities to the various minorities in Pakistan. Since religious diversity always existed in Pakistan, all attempts to unite the nation in the name of one religion must be construed as contradictory.

Second, fear and hatred of India are the only sentiments that seem to have united the people against a common foe, but even then, fear and hatred cannot generate positive attitudes in a nation and cannot put it on the road to progress. These sentiments may have made Pakistan a nuclear power, but Pakistan has not been inspired to produce an IT hub, such as was done in Bangalore.

The third element is Pakistan's nascent nationalism. In fact, Pakistani nationalism is not vibrant, as its national stature has always been challenged by regional nationalisms or identities - for one thing, each region in Pakistan has a different culture and a different language. Indeed, the failure of Pakistani nationalism emerged on the map of the world as Bangladesh in 1971, following

the dismemberment of Pakistan. The current situation in one of its provinces, Baluchistan, is not much different; even public schools cannot sing the national anthem or hoist Pakistan's flag.

Does this all mean that there was a serious flaw in Iqbal's vision? The subsequent context does not support this view. Much criticized as a utopia, a poet's dream, the vision hardly affected the decision-making authorities, not because of some inherent flaw, but because of its clash with their political aspirations. The Muslim League remained in the hands of an elite landed gentry which equated the political party with the state. As a result, the state became an organ of a political party. Surveying the history of governments since then, one would have to say that the office- and power-seeking leaders of the early days of Pakistan have transmitted their genes of corruption to future generations up to this day. Surely this cannot be laid at the feet of Iqbal's vision. Thus we see in Jinnah's Pakistan, Ayub Khan enjoyed ten years' dictatorship and defeated Jinnah's sister, Fatima, in a rigged election. Yahya Khan, Pakistan's second dictator, was enjoying champagne when East Pakistan separated and emerged as Bangladesh. The third dictator, Zia-ul-Haq, enjoyed the title of *Mard-i-Momin* when the Taliban were created with the foreign aid of America. Pervez Musharaf was given the guard of honour despite having been sacked from his office by a democratic government. None of these military dictators along with their civil counterparts could ever pass the tough test of citizenship of the state envisioned by Iqbal. They were a complete negation of his concept of *Mard-i-Khuda* in spite of their conscious effort to be so called. The absolute power they enjoyed over

millions of Pakistanis corrupted them absolutely. However, they always saw Iqbal as the architect of Pakistan because the state he inspired to create was necessary ground for their deviations.

When we look at today's Pakistan, it is surrounded by insurmountable economic, political, and security issues. One can clearly see that Iqbal's vision clashes with the values of a powerful few individuals who hold complete control of Pakistan's institutions. At this point, Homi Bhabha's definition of nation with certain modifications will be pertinent to quote because he says that a nation is born or reborn in the mind of a poet or in the political discourse:

> Nations, like narratives, lose their origins in the myths of time and only fully realize their horizons in the mind's eye. Such an image of a nation…might seem impossibly romantic and excessively metaphorical, but it is from those traditions of political thought and literary language that the nation emerges as a powerful historical idea… (1)

Examined from this poststructuralist and postcolonial definition of a nation, Pakistan ostensibly offers a divide between its "literary language" and its "political thought." The cleavage between the two ideological streams has torn the society asunder. It was only Iqbal who, because of his breadth of vision and deep insight combined with passionate sincerity harnessed "literary language" and "political thought" into his vision of Pakistan; unfortunately, the vision died with him in 1938. After that we see only (mis)interpretations of his vision in one form or another.

The assertion that a state does not need an ideology, and if it does so, the ideology is used for certain personal objectives, is partly true. We can agree that the ideology is usually beyond the comprehension of the masses, especially in the Third World countries, but its existence cannot be negated on the ground that it remains meaningless to the majority. Masses do not bring about revolution; they become fuel of a revolution. History has always needed powerful personalities to mobilize the masses. Had it not been so, the recent Wall Street demonstrations would have turned our capitalistic world upside down. In the history of Pakistan, starting from its struggle for independence to this day, leadership failed to play its role to (re)construct a state on a clear ideological basis. Temporary victories and personal gains, rather, have perverted its ideological mooring.

One such short-term benefit was to include extremist religious factions into moderate secular folds of the All-India Muslim League to enhance the momentum of their struggle for freedom. Many Islamic religious scholars, including Maulana Abu Kalam Azad, Maulana Hussain Ahmad from Deoband, and Maulana Maududi, all opposed the creation of Pakistan on the basis of Muslims' extra-territorial identity. The left-over 'maulanas' were extremists in their views, religious as well as material. This inclusion paved way for their easy manipulation of the newly formed state and its leaders. The result was that Pakistan could neither become a moderate secular state nor a theocracy; if people support any popular political party they risk their religious identity because religious extremists are too quick to 'excommunicate' them; if the general sentiment sympathises with the existing religious leadership, they run the risk of

being exposed to a kind of monstrous Islam that celebrates its victory upon the skulls of dissidents. To sum up this ugly picture of today's Pakistan, one can claim that Iqbal's vision of a 'spiritual democracy' has been hijacked not only by the religious extremists but also by those secular leaders who let this extremism flourish.

Poetry's Potential Today

The question arises as to what options are out there to change the present sorry scheme of things in Iqbal's inspirational brain-child, Pakistan. Based on our work here, 'Back to Iqbal' is the answer without a slightest shade of doubt. Nations are born in the hearts of poets; they prosper and die in the hands of politicians. Iqbal became a messiah at a time when his people needed a vision desperately that could determine their destination and inspire them to take action to realize that vision. Does Pakistan not stand in such a need again after its all futile attempts to graft new versions onto Iqbal's original vision? If the answer is 'yes', then who will resurrect that poetic vision and how will it be implemented?

Iqbal's true legacy did not die for ever. His vision was carried on, not surprisingly, by poets like Faiz Ahmad Faiz and Habib Jalib. The resistance to any oppressive form of government or extremism still exists in small pockets everywhere in Pakistan. The scholars of Pakistan's colonial past and its present neo-colonial practices are disillusioned, but to say they are completely hopeless would be going too far. Its geo-political situation is strategically important for both American 'crusaders' and Saudi Arabian 'jihadis'. Thus Iqbal's Urdu political poems and their philosophical content, which is often glossed over by

political ideology, can enable one to look at the history of the Indian Muslims from a comparatist's angle and see the relation between literature and the influence of the people and their concerns which inspired that literature.

To be sure, surrounded by intractable problems, a Pakistani can turn back to Iqbal, the presumed official father of Pakistan, to interrogate the validity of his struggle for a piece of land where, according to him, liberty, equality, and happiness would reign supreme. However, the reading of Iqbal's Urdu political poems suggests that the problem lies not as much with Iqbal's vision as with his naive faith in the capacity of some Mehrab Gul Afghan, the human incarnation of his *Mard-i-Khuda*. Mehrab Gul Afghan fell short of Iqbal's ideal because, when his mutilated body and traumatized soul crossed the colonialists' divide between India and Pakistan, he found the new regime a continuation of old colonial practices of oppression and segregation of social classes.

This discussion has pointed to a lacuna in Iqbal Studies, which needs to be filled with further research and findings to defy a 'state' or 'official' meaning imposed on Iqbal's struggle for a free society, if not a country. Nothing was wrong with his political vision when he recanted his "Bilad-i-Islamia" with his "Watniyat;" in the former he declared India the basis of Muslim nationalism, and in the latter, he condemns nationalism. There was nothing wrong with Iqbal's social vision when he openly challenged God on the basis that He had made the life of the poor a living hell. Again, nothing was absolutely wrong when he sought a panacea for all ills in Islam because his understanding of Islam was not dictated by passionate involvement in it nor by his utter submission to it. Who can deny

his status as a modern Muslim thinker, who was highly qualified in both traditional and modern learning?

Iqbal deserves a unique universality, as claimed by Chinua Achebe in an African context. The time of finding universality in Iqbal through the combination of East and West is over. The scholars of Iqbal will have to bring themselves to terms with the postcolonial era in which universality is not acquired through a native's "travel[ling] out far enough in the direction of Europe or America" by putting good distance between himself and his home (*Colonial Criticism* 59). His final abode is with his people; as interpreted or misinterpreted, his final resting place is on the premises of a Mughal monument, the Badshahi Mosque. There lies a great soul whose work defies every category of official meaning, whether coming from the colonialists or their hirelings:

> Not East nor West my home, nor Samarkand,
> Nor Ispahan, nor Delhi; in ecstasy,
> God-filled, I roam, speaking what truth I see—
> No fool for priests, nor yet of this age's fry.
> My folk berate me, the stranger does not love me:
> Hemlock for sherbet I could never cry;
> How could a weigher of truth see Mount Damavand
>
> ("Ghazal 16," trans. Kiernan 17-22)[146]

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[146] درویش خدا مست نہ شرقی ہے، نہ غربی
گھر میرا نہ دلّی، نہ صفاہاں، نہ سمرقند
کہتا ہوں وہی بات سمجھتا ہوں جسے حق
نے ابلہِ مسجد ہوں، نہ تہذیب کا فرزند
اپنے بھی خفا مجھ سے ہیں، بیگانے بھی نہ خوش
میں زہرِ ہلاہل کو کبھی کہ نہ سکا قند
("Ghazal 16", trans. Kiernan 17-22)

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