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The Approach of Allama Iqbal towards Kashmir

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Abstract

Known by different titles as Shair e Mashriq “Poet of the East”, Allama Iqbal is also called by Mufakkir e Pakistan “the thinker of Pakistan”, Musawar e Pakistan “Artist of Pakistan” & Hakeem-ul-Ummat, “The Sage of the Ummah”. Dr. Allama Iqbal was a poet, philosopher, politician, scholar, and an important figure in the literature. Allama Iqbal is appreciated as a conspicuous poet by Pakistanis, Indians, Bangladeshis, Iranians and other countries and scholars throughout the world.

Key words- *Religion, Philosopher, Terrorism, Human Values*

Introduction

Sir Muhammad Iqbal was born on 9th November 1877 in Sialkot now in Pakistan. He was an eminent poet, outstanding philosopher & a great politician. His ancestors were Kashmiri Pandits who converted to Islam. They migrated to Punjab when the Sikh empire invaded Kashmir in 9th century. Iqbal’s father Sheikh Noor Muhammad as tailor by profession was not formally educated but was a truly religious person. Iqbal’s mother Imam Bibi was a very humble & generous person.

At a very young age of five, Iqbal went to a Madrasa run by Syed Mir Hassan a famous religious scholar. Iqbal also studied in Sialkot’s Scottish Mission College, while he got his faculty of Arts diploma. Sialkot is the place which shaped the future life of Iqbal. It is here where Iqbal learned Qur’an & religious literary heritage. In 1923 Iqbal was knighted by the British Government granting him the title “Sir”.

Iqbal married a girl, Karim Bibi a rich physician’s daughter. But the marriage was not a happy one and it culminated in their separation. In 1895 Iqbal migrated to Lahore, a seat of

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learning in Punjab, & joined the Government College. He received B.A degree in 1879 & M.A in 1899.

Iqbal got admission in Cambridge Trinity College a renowned centre of Arabic & Persian studies in 1905 with the financial assistance by the brother Atta Muhammad. Meanwhile Iqbal enlisted himself as a student of Law at Lincoln's Inn London. In 1907 Iqbal was awarded B.A from Cambridge & a Ph. D from Munich University in 1908. Iqbal was admitted to the Bar in London. Europe transformed Iqbal's personality in myriad ways he could observe Western civilization closely he admired some of its aspects but he was very critical of its secular character & its materialism. After much reflection Iqbal revised his views regarding the role of a poet viz-a viz society. Before leaving for Europe he championed the cause of Indian Nationalism. However, after returning India in 1908 from Europe he changed his views in favour of universalism of Islam.

In his first book of poetry namely "The Secrets of The Self", in Persian, Iqbal wrote poetry in Urdu & Persian, *Asrar e Khuddi* in Persian appeared in 1915. It was translated into English by Prof. Nicholson of Cambridge University as *Secrets of the self* in 1920. This book was followed by several other volumes, *Rumuz e Bekhuddi* in 1918, *Payam I Mashriq* (the message of the East) 1923, *Zabur- I -Ajam* (Persian Psalms) 1927, *Javid - Nama* (The Poem of the eternity) 1932., *Bal e Jibril* (Wings of Jibril) 1935, Iqbal's first book published in Urdu *Bang I Dara* (The sound of the Caravan Bell) 1924, *Zarb I Kalim* 1937, *Musafir* 1936 & *Armugan I Hijaz* 1938 which was his last book. Many of his poetic words have been translated into different languages like English, Kashmiri, German, Turkish, Russian, Arabic & Italian. Iqbal died in 1938. He is the national poet of Pakistan.

As mentioned earlier, Kashmir has been the ancestral abode of Allama Sir Muhammad Iqbal. Although long back his grandfather had migrated to Sialkot in Punjab, yet Iqbal had a special place for Kashmir in his heart. Kashmir always finds a special mention in almost all of Iqbal's Urdu and Persian anthologies.

The people of Kashmir too have a special place for Iqbal in their hearts and a great many Kashmiri poets like Mehjoor, Azad, Nazki and Fazil Kashmiri to name a few have been greatly influenced by Iqbal's Creative genius. They have almost successfully tried to employ the similes and metaphors of Iqbal. Further the revolutionary ideas expressed by Iqbal find an apt. manifestation in the works of these literary figures of Kashmiri language.

Apart from reflecting the influence of Iqbal upon their respective thought processes, many poets from Kashmir have made a successful tryst with the Kashmiri translation of some of the poetic masterpieces of Allama Iqbal. The translation of Iqbal's Poetry into Kashmiri dialect began in 1969 A.D with Naaz Kashmiri's rendering of Iqbal's Persian Mathnawi 'Asra-i-Khudi' into Kashmiri verse. The J & K state Academy of Art, Culture and languages has also been effective in publishing two edited books namely 'Partaw' and 'Zich Halm'

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where in selected poems from Iqbal's works have been rendered into Kashmiri verse by many famous poets from Kashmir. This translation activity is still in Vogue and recently a well known Kashmiri poet Sultan-ul-Haq Shahidi has rendered two poetic anthologies of Iqbal namely *Payam-i-Mashriq* and *Armughan-i-Hijaz* from Persian into Kashmiri verse.

Although much work has been done as regards the influence of Iqbal's thought upon the socio-political and religious life of Kashmiris; a sustained and serious research work is yet to be undertaken to fully appreciate the impact of this literary genius upon the creative consciousness of Kashmiri writers. As a matter of fact, Kashmiri poetry has been through and through mystical and much of its thrust has been to delve deeper into the abstract realms of being and existence. Although Iqbal's poetry too is replete with mystical themes, yet he has kept an open eye towards the burning issues of day to day life. Apart from being a mystic, he is a thorough going revolutionary who has always vehemently opposed the subjugation of masses, particularly the Muslim Ummah by the imperial powers. Kashmir during Iqbal's life time was under the political subjugation of 'Dogra' autocrats. Their atrocities and wrong policies had bruised the inner conscience of Kashmiris. The majority of masses were brought to the brink of destitution and bounded labour was the order of the day. Iqbal was grieved by this state of affairs of his ancestral abode and as a repercussion; he has expressed his pangs of pain in many of his poetic anthologies.

In one of his Poetic masterpieces, 'Javaid Namah' Iqbal tries to apprise the League of Nations about the wretched condition of Kashmiri natives under the Dogra rule. He tells them that how a nation alongwith its masses and geographical entities were sold by imperial British to the Dogra Rulers:

“Badaye Sabha Ghar Bo Janveewa Guzar Kuni,
Harfay Zima Ba Majlisay Aqwam Baz Goye,
Dhakan-w-Kashti W- Khoh-W Bayaban Farokhtan,
Qumay Farokhtan Wachee Ar zan Farokhtan”

“O morn breeze if are willing to pass by Geneva
Here is word from us addressed to the League of Nations
(Tell them) that farmers, fields, hillocks and deserts have been sold,
A nation has been sold, and how cheaply its has been sold” (*Iqbal Nama Sheeraza*)

Iqbal was moved by the pathetic condition of working class in Kashmir, particularly the skilled artisams whose skill was exploited by the middle men under the nose of rulers:

“Barashm Qubha Khujja Aaz mehnat-e ow
Naseeb-e tansh Jamia-e Tar taray”

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“The silken robes donned by a feudal lord is the consequence of the long toil of an artisan, but the artisan himself is destined to wear out rags” (*Iqbal Nama Sheeraza*)

Iqbal was aware of the fact that the Kashmiri masses were very skilled and their minds were pregnant with fertile ideas, yet he laments their inaction and their inability to move in wake of the centuries old oppression endured by them:

“Zameerash tahi Az Khayaalay Buland
Khudi Na Shenasy Zi Khud Sharam saray”

“His (Kashmiri’s) conscience (Because of age old repression) has become devoid of high thinking. He has lost his own identity and is apologetic vis a vis his own self” (*Iqbal Nama Sheeraza*)

Allama Iqbal, as is evident from his works, was always restless while thinking about Kashmir and its natives. He has thereupon, tried to instigate a feeling of self respect and pristine glory among the Kashmiri nation through his works. Although some work has been done to highlight the various dimensions of Iqbal’s relationship to Kashmir, yet a sustained and serious research work needs to be undertaken to fully appreciate the impact of Iqbal’s thought upon socio-political religious and more so upon the creative consciousness of Kashmiris

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