

ALLAMA IQBAL AND FREEDOM
STRUGGLE OF KASHMIR

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ABSTRACT

Iqbal's ancestors belonged to Kashmir who subsequently settled in Sialkot. He was a great philosopher, thinker, writer, poet and a true leader. He awakened the nation and encouraged them to get rid of slavery and struggle for a separate independent country. He worked a lot for the Muslims of subcontinent to motivate and reinforce them against injustice and anti-Muslim circumstances in British ruled Indian subcontinent. Being a Kashmiri he has tremendous emotional interlinkages and interconnectivity with Kashmir and Kashmiris. His first effort was seen during the establishment of *Anjman Kashmiri Nojwanan-e-Lahore*, but a significant contribution was made after the incidents of 1931, when Kashmiries stood up against the blasphemous incidents. His contribution can also be seen on the platform of All India Kashmir Committee which was established for the justice and relief for the Muslims of Kashmir by providing them religious, moral, ethical, diplomatic, legal, financial and communicative support. This diplomatic, and communicative assistance made educational and political environment, conducive and productive for the socio-economic development of Kashmir.

The political resistance and its rationalization mostly refer to the resistance literature which canvases the specific political feelings, emotions and thoughts. It is a fact that literature plays a vital role in revolutions deemed to be in roots of literature. In this context, the movement of Pakistan is also based upon the ideology of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and the revolutionary movement initiated through the literature of Iqbal, who was widely known as poet of the east and national poet of Pakistan. He constructed political thoughts not only in subcontinent but also in Kashmir which is still alive in Kashmir as politically as a rebellion against aristocracy in past and for the right of self-determination today. It constitutes a textual fuel for the ongoing insurrection in the disputed Himalayan valley.

Allama Iqbal was born in Sialkot but ethnically he was Kashmiri originated. His ancestors migrated from Kashmir and settled in Punjab. In accordance with Muhammad Din Foaq's *Kashmiri Magazine*, Justice Javed Iqbal, son of Sir Iqbal rejected as Iqbal's ancestors embraced Islam in 15th century¹ and a famous spiritual personality in his family Baba Lohlhaj was considered first Muslim in his family and Jamaluddin or Sheikh Akbar (Iqbal forefathers) migrated from Kashmir in the last decades of eighteenth century² due to the cruelty and injustice of Afghan rulers over Kashmir. While epidemics, religious riots, unseasonal snowfalls, floods, famines, economic woes and political turmoil are just some of the factors that have been forcing people to migrate from Kashmir.³ According to Muhammad Din Foaq:

Dr. Sir Sheikh Muhammad Iqbal belongs to an ancient family of Kashmiri Pandits who embraced Islam nearly two hundred and twenty-five years ago and his ethnic subcaste (goath) is Sipru.⁴

The diction of the poetry of Iqbal may be often referred as extensive critic because of juxtaposition as he used the words like, *Dast-e-Jafa Kaish, pamaal, roob-e-azadi, mehkoom, majbur*,⁵

The insight is filled with philosophy, socio-economic and politico-spiritual ailments are very deeply associated with Kashmiri society. The slavery of a heartless slave dynasty had degenerated the average Kashmiri into passive sufferer of dehumanizing poverty and indignity.⁶ This is not only Iqbal voice for Kashmir, but some factors are also pointed out by a British Settlement Commissioner Walter R. Lawrence during his work in the State of Jammu & Kashmir in 1895

which presented the miseries of Muslims in Kashmir and considered as historical evidence in his book, *The Valley of Kashmir*, in such sort of words:

A man who can be beaten and robbed by anyone with a vestige of authority soon ceases to respect himself and his fellowmen and it is useless to look for the virtues of a free people among the Kashmiris. The Kashmiri is what his rulers have made him.⁷

Today it may sound incredible that during the rule of Maharaja Pratap Singh, the penalty of killing a cow was death by burning; an old Muslim and seventeen members of his family, including children, were burnt alive in the presence of the Governor for being suspected of cow killing. In 1924 in a village in Tehsil Pulwama a child broke one branch from a mulberry tree and thus became the cause of his father's death by severe beating and head injuries.⁸ So Iqbal had been keeping regard of being Kashmiri originated looking the revokes and revolutions from the banks of Vatesta and his mystical foresight deeply indicated the freedom struggle because the symptoms and symbols which had observed Iqbal are the clear indication of pre stormy environment. His poetic work was laid back in February 1896 when he wrote his masterpiece on the foundation of Anjman Kashmiri Nojwanan-e-Lahore in such appreciative and ironic description:

ہزار شکر کہ اک انجمن ہوئی قائم
یقین ہے راہ پر آئے گا طالع واژوں
ملے گا منزل مقصود کا پتہ ہم کو
خدا کا شکر کہ جس نے دیئے یہ راہ نمود
جو تیری قوم کا دشمن ہو اس زمانے میں
اسے بھی باندھ لے اقبال! صورت مضمون⁹

This poem is entitled by Iqbal as *Falah-e-Qoam* on the foundation of Anjman Kashmiri Musalmanan-e-Lahore. Iqbal was selected its Secretary General in 1909 whereas, another association was formed as *Anjman Kashmiryan-e-Jammu* which dissolved after few months due to mutual mistrusts and differences. Iqbal also indicated this Anjman as, *Anjman-e- Kashmiryan Jammu ka hasbar* in such words in *Kashmiri Magazine*.

ایک وہ ہیں کہ نیا رنگ جما لیتے ہیں
ایک ہم ہیں کہ بنا کر بھی مٹا لیتے ہیں¹⁰

It is a clear indication in early childhood of Iqbal's curiosity and passion for Kashmir was highly rooted on the platform of Anjman. In given subject, Iqbal's favourite book, *Payam-e-Mashriq* which includes the most relevant poem, *Saaqi Naama* written in Srinagar during Iqbal visit of Kashmir in 1921.¹¹ Few verses of this poem are:

کشیری کہ با بندگی خو گرفتہ
بتے می تراشد ز سنگ مزارے
ضمیرش تہی از خیال بلندے
خودی ناشناسے 'ز خود شرمسارے
بریشم قبا خواجہ از محنت او
نصیب تنش جامہ تار تارے
نہ در دیدہ او فروغ نگاہے
نہ در سینہ او دل بیقرارے
ازاں مئے فشاں قطرہ بر کشیری
کہ خاکسترش آفریند شرارے"¹²

Dr. Mumtaz Hussain has an opinion that Iqbal was a founder in initiatives of freedom struggle in Kashmir by arguing his own meeting with Iqbal. The discussion of the meeting was transmitted in his book entitled *Maqalaat-e-Iqbal*:

One day I am busy in debate about the politics of Kashmir with Allama Iqbal, Allama Sahib said that I wrote the SaaqiNaama poem while I was sitting in Nishat Bagh which comprised upon Silk Factory Revolt. It is very strange that political movement was launched very later but it was rooted with Silk Factory Revolt.¹³

Another statement which is written by Jagan Nath Azad on the one hundred (100) years anniversary of Iqbal, in his book, *Iqbal and Kashmir* with the reference of *Malfoozat-e-Iqbal* by Saadat Ali Manto. Jagan Nath Azad narrates:

Hazrat Iqbal was discussing the Kashmir politics, simultaneously he described the Silk Factory Revolt with these words, 'the circumstances made delay in the printing and publishing of Javed Nama otherwise I had been observing this hysteria in Kashmir.'¹⁴

The incidents of Jammu and Kashmir polluted the environment of Punjab and a wave of uneasiness and depression flew in the political and religious system which forced the general council of *All India Kashmiri Conference* to take a deep look into the worse ever worst

dynamics of Kashmiris and they established a committee to find out breakthrough in this regard. Mohsin Shah was proposed as secretary of this committee. General council announced that the newly established committee will be sent to Jammu and will investigate the issue of blasphemy of the Holy Quran in Srinagar and report to the conference. For that purpose, Syed Mohsin Shah was advised by Allama Iqbal to write a letter to the prime Minister of State of Jammu and Kashmir Mr. Wickfield to seek permission to allow the committee for investigation on 4th June 1931. Mr. Wickfield replied that the inquiry held under my supervision is satisfactory to the Muslims of Kashmir and Mohsin Shah insisted that the blasphemy is the issue of entire Ummah of Islam will never be compromised on your inquiry.¹⁵

The struggle for the political awareness and provision of fundamental rights is mainly centralized towards Kashmir Committee in which a proper diplomatic war was fought from that specific platform. An essay was written in a magazine *the Inqalab, Lahore* which deemed to organize a specific Kashmiri conference to investigate the miseries and hardships of Kashmiri Muslims which will avizandum under proposals. One of which is to organize a meeting of eminent Muslim leadership of subcontinent in any city of Punjab to decide a unanimous discourse of action to overcome current crisis. Soon meeting was held on 5th July, 1931, in which Molvi Muhammad Yaqoob was selected as president and Professor Alamuddin Salik as Secretary with an announcement of observing Kashmir Day on 24 July 1931.

From this platform under the leadership of Movlana Allah Bakhsh Yousafi initially announced to observe Kashmir Day to show solidarity on 10th July while Movlana Abdul Majid Kanpuri decided on 28th of same month. Soon the main incident took place in Srinagar when a Muslim of Subcontinent arrested under the section of provoke and anti-State speeches in the crowd who was protesting upon the blasphemy of the Holy Quran in Srinagar. This movement still not meaningfully activated but an initiative was taken on 17th July 1931 in Lahore. Another meeting which held in Shimla at the residence of Sir Zulfiqar Ali in which Sir Dr. Muhmmad Iqbal, Nawab Zulfiqar Khan, Khawaja Hassan Nizami, Nawab Kunjpura, Syed Mohsin Shah, Khan Bahadar Sheikh Rahim Bakhsh, Ahmedia imam, Molana Ismaeel Ghaznavi, Molana Abdul Rahim Dard, MolanaNoorulHaq from *Newspaper Outlook*, Syed Habib Shah from *Daily Siasat*, Molvi Abdul Rahim from Kashmir Province and Allah RakhaSaghar from Jammu along with Sahibzada Abdul Latif from Sarhad Province also participated.¹⁶

The chaos and clutter situation inside of the State of Kashmir was deeply discussed and a declaration was made to formulate a committee in the name of *All India Kashmir Committee* which fully mandated to supervise and responsible in all the decisions about the issues inside Kashmir and will start a movement until the Kashmiris will be awarded their primary and fundamental rights. Mirza Bashir Uddin was nominated as president and Molvi Abdul Rahim Dard as Secretary General.¹⁷ It is further decided that the president of committee has authority to induct the representatives from all other provinces of British India as committee representatives. The British government is further demanded to interpret and decode the Amritsar treaty and viceroy will conduct independent investigation through Maharaja of Kashmir. A solidarity notion also introduced and announced that on 14th August 1931 *Kashmir Day* will be observed throughout the subcontinent if the British government did not respond positively then *All India Kashmir Conference* will be arranged on 3rd and 4th October 1931 in Sialkot.¹⁸ Mirza Bashir started the work with full enthusiasm after the foundation of committee and met Viceroy and demanded the reliable procedures to protect the Kashmiri Muslims in Kashmir. He also sent a telegram to conduct a meeting with Maharaja on 3rd August, 1931 and Maharaja did not reply to Mirza Bashir. This Committee rapidly extended in far and wide of Punjab and surrounded whole British India. In the meeting of 9th August, 1931 of Muslim conference Executive board in Allahabad under the presidency of Nawab Sir Muhammad Ismaeel and they declared All India Kashmir Committee as their branch.

On the appeal of *All India Kashmir Committee*, first time in the history of subcontinent, *Kashmir Day* was observed on 14th August 1931. This day was observed under the supervision of Hazrat Allama Iqbal in Lahore, Hussain Shaheed Suharwardi in Kolkata, Movlana Shaukat Ali in Bombay, MovlanaShafeeDaudi in Patna, Movli Muhammad Tayyab in Deoband, Saith Abdullah Haroon in Karachi, Haji Muhammad Saleh Sheerwani in Aligarh, Agha Ghulam Haider in Sialkot, Sheikh Abdullah in Srinagar, Allah RakhSaghar in Jammu and dozens of other spots in Birtish India by the Muslim community to show their solidarity, moral, financial, legal, diplomatic and logistic support for the Kashmiris. The Lahore gathering was the biggest one, in which about one hundred thousand people participated. It was organized in the collaboration of *All India Kashmir Committee*, *All India Muslim Kashmiri Conference and Majlas-e-Abrar*.¹⁹ It is also a coincidence that after sixteen years this day was heavenly selected for the Muslims in Subcontinent as their *Freedom Day* from Hindu and British slavery and aristocracy.²⁰

After taking the charge of interim president of Kashmir Committee, the initial task was the constitutional framework for this committee to set SoPs and ToRs because initially it was a gathering of elites and now it was mandatory to make its setup in public. A script was proposed by the legal and constitutional subcommittee for the constitution of *All India Kashmir Committee*. A wave of difference of opinion was turned into strong opposition on very fast track which can be concluded into three main points which were written by Sarwar Abbasi in his book:

This meeting was headed by Iqbal comprised upon the quorum of twenty members. The constitutional script was differentiated on three main points which are; (a) the induction of new member can be determined on paying a specific amount of money or on the approval of committee? (b) is there only one vice president or more than one? (c) is there a Secretary and Assistant Secretaries or two secretaries in Committee and functions are determined for each one? On these three points which were obviously looked very light but the debate, conversations soon turned into mutual misunderstandings and mistrusts and Iqbal, at last, declared to dissolve All India Kashmir Committee.²¹

In short, although it was a forum of association or local organization, it was the leadership of Iqbal and his political, personal, diplomatic, and literary vision that he emerged this limited movement into regional accident and at last British had to take intervention and forced Maharaja to establish an independent and fair commission which was formed after the denial of Mr. Wickfield investigation and Delal Commission which was supervised by Chief Justice Barjor Delal. The appointment of Glancy Commission and its recommendations made the thing very explicit and produced a new life and hope in Kashmir and Kashmiris, at last, became able to resist and struggle for their own interests and fundamental rights.

The letters of Iqbal were a strong reference in terms of politics of Kashmir which found in books but very interestingly a chapter was arranged by three writers who wrote books on the one hundred year's celebration of Iqbal during 9th November, 1977 entitled, *Iqbal and Kashmir* by Jagan Nath Azad,²² Dr. Sabir Afaqi²³ and Saleem Khan Gimmi.²⁴ In all three books, the main theme and content is Iqbal and politics in Kashmir which somehow refers that Iqbal was the founder of freedom agitation in Kashmir. It is not a new vision, but it was practiced in early phase of 1932 when Kouhsar Pandit Gasha Laal Koul alleged Iqbal that he provoked the innocent Kashmiris on rebellion which was very early well encountered by Abdul Majid Salik, the editor of *the Inqalab Newspaper*, in his editorial.²⁵ Iqbal, was also president of *All India Muslim League* and legendary leader who was first time announced the two nation theory

and proposal of foundation of Muslims State on the western and north western sides of subcontinent in the 25th annual summit of *All India Muslim League* at Allahabad on 29th December 1930.²⁶

On the ground of some reasonable reasons like famous poet, lawyer, Scholar, writer, former president of All India Muslim League, General Secretary Anjuman Kashmiri Musalmanan-e-Lahore etc. Iqbal played commendable role in the society of subcontinent and deeply interlinked and interconnected with Nawab and other officials of British government and Indian leadership along with Maharajas and Kings. He had great relationship with Nawab of Bhopal and Waliay Bhopal tried to make expedience and detente between Iqbal and Maharaja of Kashmir Hari Singh but in vain. During the crisis in Srinagar, Iqbal also met Nawab of Bhopal which was written in a transcript in the name of Ghulam Rasool Mehr, indicated the Shimla meeting about Kashmir on 26th July, 1931. The three main letters are the real commentary of crisis in Srinagar and agitations in Kashmir and documented by Bashir Ahmed Daar.²⁷ Bashir Ahmed Daar described that these three letters are in context of 13th July, 1931 incidents in Kashmir and Iqbal's letters are the true pictures of those incidents. The indigenous movement of Iqbal was turned into defamation as described early with the arguments of Gasha Laal Koul Statement before the Sir Barjor Delal during the investigation on the platform of Delal Commission and Mr. Ragoon also wrote an essay in *Tribune Edition* of August 1931 that during the insurgency in Kashmir, a distinguish leader from Subcontinent was drafted an application to Maharaja Hari Singh for appointment as Prime Minister in Kashmir. Iqbal wrote a letter to the editor of *Daily Inqalab*, Lahore with following categorical manner:

I deliberately, clearly and explicitly declared on the summit of Kashmir Day observation that I anathematized on such ministry. I am a member of Kashmir Committee and during my membership such activity is against the morality and my honesty.²⁸

Another letter of Iqbal about insurgency and agitation in Srinagar which is written to the Bhadar Yar Jang on 14th September, 1933 for the financial support for the Muslims in Kashmir, when Sheikh Abdullah and Mirwaiz groups rivalry was on peak. Dr. Iqbal could not stop himself and wrote a letter to the most religiously influential personality of Kashmir Mirwaiz on 21st October 1933 and appealed for mutual harmony and unity in such golden words:

Accordance to my hearing that few parties which were emerged it would be great hurdle in accomplishment of your goals and success due to mutual opposition and enmity. So, harmony or unity is only a key which is the pure treatment of political and social issues and crisis.²⁹

A letter was also drafted through Naeem-ul-Haq to Abdul Aziz, requested him for the assistance of the Muslims in Kashmir in which he requested him:

I am really thankful to you for your consent to litigate the Naeem-ul-Haq cases, hence I am forwarding the decision of this case and other papers and hearing will be on 13th February 1932. It will be better that you should reach Jammu on 12 February 1932.³⁰

Another letter also found which was written to Naeem-ul-Haq as well which describes the worst financial position of Kashmir Committee and appealing for free cost litigation services:

Kashmir Committee has no funds otherwise I will present the honorable Syed Sahib. So, please make a request to him that kindly pursue our case فی سبیل اللہ (in the way/name of Allah) without any fee and travel expenses and then will be highly rewarded by Almighty Allah.³¹

Allama Iqbal, a great leader, and son of soil paid back full to the land of his forefathers in such a tremendous service by making awareness amongst the Kashmiris. Being a thinker, philosopher and a poet he contributed a lot, but the unfair circumstances could not produce the better environment for Kashmir. A great contribution could be observed in the collection of poems in *Kuhyat-e-Iqbal* Urdu version, in *Armaghan-e-Hijaz* that entitled *Mullaḡada Zaigham Kashmiri ka bayaz* ملازادہ ضیغ کشمیری کا بیاض. These few verses are the true manifestation of the Iqbal view about Kashmir and Kashmiris, his services, contribution and aims and purposes behind his work to awake the Kashmiris from miseries to prosperous life and from slavery to provision of the attainment of fundamental rights is such a metaphorical style:

پانی ترے چشموں کا تڑپتا ہوا سیماب
مرغان سحر تیری فضاؤں میں ہیں بیتاب
اے وادی لولاب
گر صاحب ہنگامہ نہ ہو منبر و محراب
دیں بندۂ مومن کے لیے موت ہے یا خواب
اے وادی لولاب
ہیں ساز پہ موقوف نوا ہائے جگر سوز
ڈھیلے ہوں اگر تار تو بے کار ہے مضراب

اے وادی لولاب
ملا کی نظر نور فراست سے ہے خالی
بے سوز ہے میخانہ صوفی کی مے ناب
اے وادی لولاب^{۳۲}

In another poem of this bayaz, he describes the worthless situation of Kashmiris in such a pessimistic situation and heavy clouds of misery, poverty and cruelty in these words:

آج وہ کشمیر ہے محکوم و مجبور و فقیر
کل جسے اہل نظر کہتے تھے ایران صغیر
سینہ افلاک سے اٹھتی ہے آہ سوز ناک
مرد حق ہوتا ہے جب مرعوب سلطان و امیر
کہہ رہا ہے داستاں بیدردی ایام کی
کوہ کے دامن میں وہ غم خانہء دہقان پیر
آہ! یہ قوم نجیب و چرب دست و تر دماغ
ہے کہاں روز مکافات اے خدائے دیرگیر؟^{۳۳}

First phase has been successfully achieved as awareness and resistance against the slavery and fight for the freedom was launched from last Ninety (90) years, but the second phase is still alive as in the struggle of attainment of fundamental rights of Kashmiris which are internationally and globally accepted by the United Nations and international community under their resolutions as right of self determination in the prospects of Iqbal's Philosophy of *Khudi and Bekhudi*.

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