

Understanding The Contribution Of Muhammad Iqbal To The Creation Of Pakistan By Analysing Ofhis Works

Pradhyumna Srivatsa H
School of Humanities and Social Sciences
JAIN (Deemed to be University)
E-mail: hspradhyumna@gmail.com

Abstract

Muhammad Iqbal was a poet, philosopher and politician, as well as an academic, barrister and scholar in British India who is widely regarded as having inspired the Pakistan Movement. He is adorned by a wide range of honorific names and titles, being called the “Spiritual Father of Pakistan” amongst other things. He is considered one of the most important figures in Urdu literature, with literary work in both Urdu and Persian.

He is popular in the modern-day, Republic of India, known as the writer of ‘Tarānah-e-Hindi’ (“Anthem of the People of Hindustan”), more commonly and popularly known as ‘Sare Jahan se Achchha’, a patriotic song written in the ghazal style of Urdu poetry. First published in the weekly journal *Ittehad*, on 16th August, 1904. It functions as an ode to Hindustan – the land comprising of present-day Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan.

He also wrote the lesser known ‘Tarana-e-Milli’ (“Anthem of the Community”), a few years after ‘Tarana-e-Hindi’, published in 1910. In this time, Iqbal's world view had changed dramatically, ‘Tarana-E-Hindi’ is a patriotic song that glorifies the land of Hindustan or Undivided India and the people who live in it; it also advocates that people should not be divided on the basis of religion and should instead be bonded by a common national identity. ‘Tarana-E-Milli’, on the other hand, argues that a global, Islamic community should come above all and even warns against a nationalistic world view. This reflects a dramatic change in Iqbal's views, renouncing much of the sentiment of the earlier song, and establishes his support for the Muslim League and the Pakistan Movement.

This paper aims to shed some light on the ways Iqbal's world views changed by analyzing specific excerpts from his writings and speeches as well as delving into its related aspects and impact on the politics of the time.

Keywords: Pan-Islamism, Two-nation theory, Partition of India, Pakistan Movement, Pakistani Nationalism.

Introduction- Nationalism is an ideology and movement that promotes the interests of a particular nation. A nation is a large body of people united by common descent, culture, or language, inhabiting a particular state or territory. Nationalism aims to gain and maintain the nation's sovereignty. Sovereignty is the full right and power of a governing body over itself, without any interference from outside forces. It advocates for self-governance or self-rule

over its homeland. Nationalism holds that each nation should govern itself, free from outside interference, that a nation is a natural and ideal basis for a polity – a state as a political entity, and that the nation is the only rightful source of political power.

Pan-Islamism is a political ideology advocating the unity of Muslims under one Islamic country or state – often a caliphate – or an international organization with Islamic principles.

The Two-nation theory is the basis of the creation of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. It states that Muslims and Hindus are two separate nations by every definition; the Muslims have their own customs, religion, and from every point of view like social, moral Muslims are different from Hindus therefore, Muslims should be able to have their own separate homeland in the Muslim majority areas of India, in which Islam can be practiced as the dominant religion. The two-nation theory was a founding principle of the Pakistan Movement (the ideology of Pakistan as a Muslim nation-state in South Asia), and the partition of India in 1947. Muhammad Iqbal's presidential address to the Muslim League on 29 December 1930 is considered as the first account of the two-nation theory in support of what would ultimately become Pakistan.

The Pakistan Movement was the religious political movement in the 1940s that aimed for and succeeded in the creation of Dominion of Pakistan from the Muslim-majority areas of the British Indian Empire. Iqbal used his literature, poetry and speech as an influential tool for political awareness and helped the movement gain exponential momentum.

Iqbal had also championed the notion of Pan-Islamic nationhood and strongly condemned the concept of a territory-based nation as anti-Islamic:

"In tāzahudā'ōⁿ mēⁿ, barā sab sē; waṭanhai: Jōpairahan is kāhai; wohmazhabkā, kafanhai..."

(Meaning: Of all these new false gods, the biggest; is the motherland: Its garment; is [actually] the death-shroud, of religion...)

He had stated the dissolution of ethnic nationalities into a unified Muslim society as the ultimate goal:

"Butān-e raṅg ō-xūⁿ kōtōrkarmillatmēⁿ gum hōjā; Nah Tūrānīrahēbāqī, nah Īrānī, nah Afgānī"

(Meaning: Destroy the idols of color and blood ties, and merge into the Muslim society; Let no Turanians remain, neither Iranians, nor Afghans).

Pakistani nationalism refers to the political, cultural, linguistic, historical, [commonly] religious and geographical expression of patriotism by the people of Pakistan, of pride in the history, heritage and identity of Pakistan, and visions for its future. Iqbal emphasized the spiritual richness of Islam and Islamic philosophy. Muhammad Iqbal, called the conceptual founder of Pakistan, is venerated by Pakistanis for implicitly endorsing the independence of a Muslim state in South Asia. Initially, Iqbal did not voice any such views. It was only in the late 1920s and early 1930s that he started proposing for autonomy for Muslim provinces

within India. Iqbal demanded a Muslim state, regardless of whether it would have self-government, or whether it would be within the British Empire.

Examination of his writings and speeches-‘Tarānah-e-Hindi’ or ‘Sare Jahan se Achchha’ became the anthem of opposition to British rule in India and came to be known as the ‘song of Hindustan’, after the popularization of these lines contained in the 6th stanza of the song:

“Mazhabnahīn sikhātāāpas meṅ bairrakhnā,

Hindīhaiṅ ham, waṭanhaiHindūstān hamārā”

(Meaning: Religion does not teach us to bear ill-will towards each other, we belong to Hind, our homeland is Hindustan).

This was indeed an epitome of principled sentiments written very well. And none can doubt their secular character. Truth is, the then 27-year-old Iqbal viewed Hindustan’s society as a pluralistic and composite Hindu-Muslim culture.

But the Iqbal of 1904 underwent a total transformation after he went to England to study law in 1905 and then to Germany to obtain a doctorate in philosophy and retuned sometime in 1909 as an Islamic philosopher with a narrow worldview and intolerant of Hindus.

In 1910, he wrote the ‘Tarana-e-Milli’ (song of the community) which was a total repudiation of the sentiments expressed in ‘Tarana-e-Hindi’. The first stanza of ‘Tarana-e-Milli’, composed in the same metre and rhyme scheme as ‘Sare Jahan Se Achchha’, reads:

“Cīn o-‘Arabhamārā, Hindūstān hamārā,

Muslim haiṅ ham, waṭanhaisārājahān hamārā”

(Meaning: Central Asia/China and Arabia are ours, Hindustan is ours, we are Muslims, the whole world is our homeland).

This can hardly be called secular; Iqbal's world view had now changed; it had become both global and Islamic. Instead of singing of Hindustan, "our homeland," the new song proclaimed that "our homeland is the whole world." In fact, Iqbal is lionized in Pakistan today for expressing precisely such hardline Islamic sentiments. Two decades later, in his presidential address to the Muslim League annual conference in Allahabad in 1930, he supported a separate nation-state in the Muslim majority areas of the sub-continent, an idea that inspired the creation of Pakistan.

Our history books mention only the ‘Tarana-e-Hind’ and conveniently ignore ‘Tarana-e-Milli’. What our history books also exclude is that Iqbal was the first advocate of the two-nation theory that ultimately led to the partition of India. He first articulated this demand at the Allahabad session of the Muslim League in December 1930. Iqbal was elected the president of the session and in his address on December 29, 1930, he said:

“I would like to see Punjab, the North Western Frontier Provinces (NWFP), Sind and Balochistan amalgamated into a single state. Self-government within the British empire, or

without the British empire, through the formation of a consolidated North Western Indian Muslim state, appears to be the final destiny of Muslims, at least of North West India”.

The articulation of this theory was born out of Iqbal’s firm conviction, ever since his travels to the West and his study of Islam and Islamic philosophy since then, that Hindus and Muslims are “two separate nations” and cannot live together. He says this in almost all his writings, whose primary focus was to remind Muslims of the sub-continent of the past glory of Islamic civilization and promoting pure Islam as a source of sociopolitical liberation and greatness.

Iqbal was hardly the secular liberal that he’s portrayed as in the modern times. In his six English lecture series first published from Lahore in 1930 and then by Oxford University Press in a book titled ‘The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam’ in 1934, Iqbal expressed deep fears of secularism weakening the spiritual foundations of Islam and Muslim society and of India’s Hindus crowding out Muslim heritage, culture and political influence.

In 1925, Jinnah speaking in the Central Legislative Assembly, had declared, “I am a nationalist first, a nationalist second, and a nationalist last.”, while negotiating for a united, pluralist India.

After Muhammad Ali Jinnah’s poor performance even in the Muslim seats in the 1936–37 elections which he had contested on a nationalist plank, Iqbal was instrumental in persuading Jinnah to not only assume leadership of the Muslims of the sub-continent, but also embrace the two-nation theory and voice the demand for partition of India.

One of his many letters to Jinnah reads:

“You are the only Muslim in India today to whom the community looks up to for safe guidance through the storm which is coming to North West India and, perhaps, the whole of India”.

Iqbal, commenting on the future of Muslims in India, wrote in *Tolu-e-Islam* (a historical, political, religious and cultural journal of the Muslims of British India):

“Muslims should strengthen Jinnah’s hands and join the Muslim League. The Indian question can be countered by our (Muslims’) united front against both the Hindus and the English”.

In his conversations with B. R. Ambedkar in the mid-1920s, Iqbal opposed one Indian Union with universal adult franchise and advocated the creation of autonomous Muslim provinces in the sub-continent. These provinces, he said, should be under the direct control of the British and not an Indian central government.

Iqbal wrote to Jinnah on June 21, 1937:

“A separate federation of Muslim provinces is the only course by which we can secure a peaceful India and save Muslims from domination by 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?”

Significantly, Jinnah's speech at the Lahore session of the Muslim League on 22 March, 1940 showed how much he was influenced by Iqbal.

“We maintain and hold that Muslims and Hindus are two major nations by any definition or test of a nation. We (the Muslims) are a nation of a hundred million and what is more, we are a nation with our distinct culture and civilization, language and literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclature...”

It has been argued that he used the demand for Pakistan as a negotiating tool, but it was too late to reverse the tide of events. The demand for Pakistan had become, as the historian Farzana Shaikh put it, “the consensus of the community.”

The partition of India was announced on June 3, 1947. Jinnah was a defeated man, although he was deemed to be the victor. Pakistan was born on August 14. Three days earlier (August 11), Jinnah had addressed a hastily summoned Constituent Assembly (comprising members of the parent body belonging to the seceding provinces), and urged his audience to “forget their past,” “bury the hatchet,” and “work together in the spirit that every one of you,” irrespective of differences of various kinds, “is first, second, and last a citizen of the state with equal rights, privileges and obligations.” Divisiveness had been, he said, “the biggest hindrance in the way of India to attain freedom and independence” as a single union.

Conclusion-Iqbal's premise that Hindus and Muslims cannot co-exist as one nation has been proved beyond erroneous by Republic of India's Muslims who co-exist peacefully with Hindus and other religious communities. The two-nation theory that he advocated was proved hollow once again in 1971 when Islam failed to bind East and West Pakistan together, and led to the creation of Bangladesh. Altaf Hussain of Pakistan's MuttahidaQuami Movement (MQM) puts this concisely:

“The idea of Pakistan (born out of Iqbal's two-nation theory) was dead at its inception when the majority of Muslims (in the Muslim-minority areas of India) chose to stay back in India after Partition, a truism reiterated in the creation of Bangladesh in 1971”.

Iqbal may have written a lovely poem in his young age of 27 in 1904, but for the majority of his adult life (from the age of 32 till he died at the age of 61) he was primarily a regressive, narrow-minded Islamist who was responsible, perhaps more than Jinnah, for the partition of India. Being influenced by Iqbal, Jinnah and by extension Hindustan couldn't escape the consequences.

Quoting Jinnah, the lesson to be learned here is this: “You may belong to any religion, caste or creed – that has nothing to do with the business of the state.” And it should be that way for the creation of a long-lasting and prosperous nation.

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