CHAPTER -V

CONCLUSION

Iqbal is one of the greatest contemporary Indian thinkers in the twentieth century. He is the author of India’s National Song. At the same time, as a politician, along with Muhamadali Jinnah, he is considered as one of the prominent founding fathers of Pakistan. He was not only a champion of his nation’s freedom, but a crusader for the emancipation of the peoples of the world. He was an epoch making poet philosopher who can rightly be described as one of the greatest thinkers of modern India. His contributions to the thought and sensibility of his period was monumental and remains relevant today. He rose as a reformer of his community and ended as a leader of mankind.

The attention, he has received from, numerous writers and critics in western as well as Islamic countries testifies to his stature as a world literary figure. In Fazlur Rahman’s words, “he has been called the most serious Muslim philosopher thinker of modern times. There is no doubt that Iqbal is the most versatile genius that the Muslim world has produced”.¹

He became a moral and spiritual guide to the humanity. He emerged as an international figure belonging to all times and claims. He was Indian as well as Muslim. He was conservative as well as progressive in his ideas. He was a humanitarian as well as an idealist. He has pondered deeply about the highest and most fundamental problems of life as a true believer, as a philosopher and as a poet.

Iqbal's popularity and influence are due to his contributions in the field of philosophy, poetry, political works, economic ideas and mainly his new religious ideas. He is one of the few life-affirming poets of the world. As a great poet, we can say that neither in Urdu, nor in Persian, is there a poet who compares with Iqbal in variety of thought and wealth of imaginary. What made him immortal was his Urdu and Persian poetry through which he tried to give his best to his fellowmen.

As a politician, he did immense service to society. Iqbal deplored the lack of political wisdom in the minds of political leaders and proposed the formation of one political organization over the country.

Then as a great admirer of democracy, he regarded the absolute equality of all the members of the community as a basic principle of a
Muslim constitution. And he also made the remarks that in a democracy men are counted but not weighed.

His vision of a homogeneous Muslim state could commence a global brotherhood. He saw the Muslim state as only a means to achieve Universal brotherhood of man with love. He was also willing to be seen as a believer in a communalism of a higher kind.

He was a great feminist too. He tries to give all freedom to women. As a great educationalist, he argues for an education which could keep alive the social and historical traditions of Islam. In his view, Islam’s duty is to civilize and elevate life towards the achievement of a society of free and equal individuals. Undoubtedly here it is clear that the greatest figure of the Muslim renaissance in India was Iqbal.

Then he has a unique position in the eastern and western philosophical systems. His philosophy is a composite fruit of the east and west. In all his philosophical systems, he includes the philosophers from the east like Farabi, Ghazzali, Rumi and the non-Islamic thinkers from the west like Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Nietzsche, Bergson, Newton, Russell, Whitehead etc. His influence on the west is cleared, when he says, “the western nations are pre-eminent among the nations of the world. For this
reason, and in order to appreciate the secret of life, their literature and ideas are the best guides for the nations of the east". He adopts certain western ideas wholly and reject them partially. While studying the eastern and western philosophical theologians and mystics, he constructed his own system of thought by assimilating different elements of their various philosophies through a process of synthesis. Here one can say that the importance and greatness of Iqbal lies in his synthesis of western and the eastern thought systems in the light of modern scientific knowledge in a truly Islamic Spirit.

As a great religious reformer, he was truly cosmopolitan in his outlook. His cosmopolitanism grew out of the Islamic world view. If there is one consistent theme throughout his life's work, it is passionate propagation of Islam.

In his view, a religious outlook alone can save humanity but this outlook requires re-examination and reconstruction. So he struggled for the problem of making changes in religion acceptable. He understood the message of Islam through asking the question of ultimate goals and values and the means to achieve these goals in terms of his early ideas.

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2 Iqbal, Reconstruction of Religious thought in Islam, P. 278
So through all his works, he tried to re-interpret Islamic religion. His philosophical ideas were summed up in his book, 'Reconstruction of Religious thought in Islam', which was published in 1930. Through this work, he tried to reconstruct Islamic religion which was sometimes interpreted as pantheistic because of the Sufi influence.

Pure-Islam is theistic. It is theistic because Islamic God is personal and the relation of man and God is that of the creator and the created. The world is real. And Self realization or God realization can be achieved through the affirmation of the self and the service to the society and the world as a whole. In pantheism the God is impersonal, they negate the world and self.

It is recommended that for salvation a complete surrender to the Divine will is necessary. So here, like the other Indian contemporary Indian thinkers, he tries to interpret some of the basic ideas of the Quran. That is, here he fearlessly shows that there is a great metaphysical gulf between man and God. For Iqbal, Sufism was contrary to the purity of arabic faith in its original vision. Here he shows that his conceptions of world, God and Man are like the Islamic view and its emphasis on Monism is like the theistic emphasis on the oneness of God.
His conception of God is immanent and transcendent, personal and infinite and as such He is peerless and unique, the Perfect Individuality. Here he avoids the extreme stress either on immanence or transcendence like the Sufis and makes personal relationship possible between the creator and the created.

Iqbal attributes personality and ascribes individuality to God. According to him, personality does not imply external relations and finitude, in this sense it becomes in applicable to God. World is real and it is the creation of God. Material Universe or physical nature is not an illusion, but the veritable manifestation of reality. Men are the creatures of God. And men and universe are related to God as the created to the creator. They have meaning, significance and existence only in relation to God. Man draws his being, his content from God and as such he is not self-existent and independent. He does not exist as a solitary unit strong in solid singleness. His being is relative.

Man who proceeds from God is to work out the creative possibilities in his being, thus becoming co-creator in the foreword movement of life, regeneration and ultimacy. Salvation for mankind, lies in the uncompromising adherence to the to the belief in the Oneness of God and the consequent ceaseless activity to shape one’s own destiny and
the destiny of the world in the attempt to be like God. So the aim of human being should therefore be the realization of Khudi or Self, which is the Absolute Self that is God. It is the development of one’s self hood. It can be achieved by doing good things. Iqbal’s Khudi, remained closer to the Hindu concept of Nishkama Karma, doing one’s duty without expectation of reward. Man is free to choose the good and bad. Proper choice is the mark of fully developed self-hood. It raises the individual to the divine level making him capable of vicegerency on earth and nearer to God.

After explaining his views about world, Man and God, he shows that his view is theistic which is the same as Islam. Islam believes in one and only God, called *Allah*. It is a monotheistic religion. God is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the universe. The world is entirely dependent on God. God is Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent. Divine Will is regarded as absolute and perfect arbitrary. God is absolutely immanent and transcendent. God appears in Islam as an all powerful master and ruler to whom man is simply to submit with a sense of absolute devotion and service. That is, God in Islam is painted as an Absolute master maintaining a distance from men.
World is also the creation of God. Everything in it has been created by God. The world is entirely dependent on God. The world is real and not illusory. It is finite and temporal. It is not co-eternal with God. It has been created in time. But again, time did not pre-exist. Both space and time have been created by God himself.

Man is also the creation of God. Man is the real unit of existence. He has been created by God and is absolutely dependent upon him. Man exists as a separate reality. The relation between God and man is the creator and created and the master and his worker. Man’s duty is to serve God and attain perfection, that is God realization is achieved through submission to God. The word, ‘Islam’ is derived from the Arabic word “SALEMA’, which means submission.

From all these, Iqbal clearly shows that man’s highest achievement does not lie in seeking self negation or detachment from the material world and in annihilation of his ego-hood in the Ultimate Reality, that is God. Against the Sufistic view, Islamic view is essentially rooted in self-affirmation. Unlike the Sufis, Iqbal does not teach renunciation of the world. He does not believe that union between the creator and creature is possible. That is, he wanted man to be a pearl not a drop of water, a servant of God, not merged with God. He sought conquest for man not
effacement. Prayer could enable the individual personality to discover its situation in relation to God, but union (Wisal) with God was neither possible, nor desirable, said Iqbal. So in his reconstruction, he adds,

"'Tasawwuf', is always the sign of decline of a nation. Greek mysticism, Indian mysticism, all are signs of decline of these nations, the same is true of Islamic mysticism. Any religious philosophy or religious teaching that prevents the blossoming of the human personality is worthless".\(^3\)

On the contrary, he endeavors to make both religious life and material world harmonious in the light of the teachings of Islam.

At the same time, one can say that, regarding the conception of the unity of being, as Sufi’s proclaimed, Iqbal agrees with Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi, the Sufi thinker, who refuted the whole other Sufi’s conception of the identity of man with God, by emphasizing the separateness of human personality and stressing the need for retaining man’s individuality. Here Iqbal, maintains that even after man’s highest spiritual attainment, he remains man and does not become one with God, and encourages this goal as the ideal of life.

\(^3\) ibid. p.245
From all these, Iqbal concludes that Islam is originally theistic in nature and his conceptions of world, God and man are like the Islamic view that is theistic in nature.

Again, one can say that, Iqbal conceives of Islam as a universal religion which envisaged all humanity as a unity. It was the pure Islam that Iqbal had seen as the final answer, not the corrupted Islam that so many Muslims, had been practising. In pure Islam there is no room for venerating tombs of Sufi saints. His research for his Munich dissertation on Persian metaphysics seemed to tell Iqbal that Tasawwuf or Sufism has no solid, historical foundation in original Islam. Thus Iqbal, the 19th century, philosopher, rose in revolt against this mysticism and called Muslim to the broad day light of the modern world. His mission was to open the eyes of the Muslims to the spirit of Islam. So here we can remember that it was indeed, admirable how, Iqbal, to quote a French theologian, "had the courage to reconstruct the old practical religion of the desert in terms of psychic view of laboratory".  

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