



A Tapestry Of Freedom And Serenity: An Analysis Of Iqbal's Selected Poems

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Abstract

Allamah Muhammad Iqbal is the National poet of Pakistan and his work “has variously been translated into English by different British translators” (Asghar: 2014). He plays a fundamental and vital role in the awakening of youth because “once upon a time, there was a war that involved the slaughter of millions of people” (Gaddis: 1986) and that is why Iqbal evoked the youth to struggle for stability, longevity and peace. Iqbal’s poetry has a great impact on the people who were gripped by the British manacles of segregation, oppression, and discrimination. Iqbal focuses on the awakening of Indian Muslims toward freedom and peaceful life. After dethronement of Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Muslim ruler of the Sub-continent by the British, the government was changed and the current study examines nationalism, physical, spiritual and emotional awareness of the people during the turmoil on the land of Sub-continent under the British government and its policies.

Keywords: Colonized; freedom; Inspiration; Iqbal’s Poetry; Peace.

Introduction

It is known that wonderful, amazing, everlasting and great poetry is always the product and outcome of a serious and unrelenting conflict between a poet’s personality and their surrounding circumstances. A great, genuine and sublime poet is like a great teacher and leader; they are the ones who can change society by changing the thinking and outlook of the people around. A great poet arises the people emotionally, physically, and mentally through their heart-touching verses, which surpass their minds and appeal to them to get the rights

what they deserve. The challenge of meeting the requirements of art is made all the more challenging for a poet who is also a philosopher. It takes a tremendous amount of effort to make philosophy sing. In doing so, Iqbal has been successful. Like ordinary politicians, ordinary poets strive for instant success. To do this, they make an effort to reflect the general public's demands.

Iqbal was a great spiritual catalyst and a pre-eminent poet and philosopher of South Asia, to general readers in the English-speaking world (Mustansir: 2006) as well as for the people on the land of the Sub-continent. He greatly touched the people through his poetry for getting their rights peacefully and lead a meaningful life. He inspired people with utmost sincerity and love. He spoke for the peace, rights, prosperity, and happiness of the Muslim Ummah that he felt through the eyes of his mind what was happening in his surroundings.

Iqbal was deeply aware of the world law and the then situation that how beauty was overtaken by the worms and the bloody people. He often said that unity is the only way to get rid of the gilded cage of history, as he observed the Muslims of the Sub-continent under British colonization and Hindus. His main job was to let the people know and see what he himself saw and felt. For him, to live was to conquer. He awakes the people to rise higher than the level of the animals for which he asked the people to subjugate the animal within yourselves. It is not easy to overcome common, selfish wants. Another challenge according to him, was to bring one's abilities in line with one's thoughts and goals. Being really human means living by the rules of reason and religion and putting impulses under one's control. It is like taking control of one's own home. Such a master embodies the real self. It is such a self in which the soul rules the body.

Iqbal focuses on 'self', to be fought with, and wants his reader to fight this to take greatness in life. He makes the reader to discard what they drag downwards and attain what they pull upward for bringing success, peace, and prosperity. It is difficult to get over typical, selfish desires. Aligning one's abilities with one's views and aims is another problem. Being truly human entails abiding by moral and religious principles and controlling one's inclinations.

Literature Review

Iqbal's elegies on the passing of national leaders are where his patriotic zeal is most captured. Today, it is difficult to conceive an Urdu poet writing with such fervor about a leader from another region of India. However, the Indian population at that time was fiercely felt to be united as a result of the independence movement. One of the many themes in Iqbal's poetry was nationalism. He spent the majority of his time working in India, and he proudly remembered his own country with passionate pride. It equally took inspiration from human sensibility. The history of patriotism in the Subcontinent, which is the topic of this paper's study, dates back to the time when an aggressive nation started occupying India. A nation that values peace was seen denouncing this invasion and illegal occupation. Because of their cutting-edge military strategies and despotic aggression, this

hostile nation was able to carry out its imperialistic plans over all of India. The Indians briefly went into shock after they were successful in bringing Lucknow and Delhi under their rule in 1857. However, poetry took the initiative to help the Indian community to recover from this shock and launch a coordinated defense against the assailants (Yahya, 2013).

Shahar Ashoob, a type of Urdu poetry written to lament the destruction of a city, was at the forefront of reviving the nation's sense of patriotism during this time. This type of poetry was written after the massacre and destruction in Delhi in 1857 by pioneering poets like Bahishti, Shakirnaji, Sauda, Mir, and Nazir. The term Shahar Ashoob has been defined by Urdu poetry critics, who claim that the actual Shahar Ashoob is one that portrays political disputes as well as their causes, effects, and outcomes (Yahya, 2013).

There is no exaggeration to say that there is a strong and intimate relationship between nature and a healthy society. Literature not only makes us happy and cultivates our imaginative mind, but it also gives the power to feel and understand the emotions, feelings, and thoughts of other people. Literature opens gates and provides information concerning our environment and our situation, as well as the weapons and the shield. "There was 5 Exabytes of information created between the birth of civilization and 2003, but that much information is now created every two days, and the pace is accelerating" (Eric Schmidt cited in Griffiths, 2012). He draws on Longinus, Dante, Sydney, and Eliot among others to reach his first conclusion about the importance of poetry: "Poetry extends the boundaries of thought by extending the boundaries of expression itself ... At its best, poetry is a language adequate to our experience" (Ron Slate, 2008).

Unveiling the Marvel: Iqbal's Captivating Journey of Inspiring the Masses

Iqbal emphasized the importance of self-realization and self-empowerment. He believed that individuals should strive to understand their own potential and work towards actualizing it. His poetry and philosophical works encourage people to explore their inner selves, recognize their unique abilities, and unleash their full potential. He advocated for unity and brotherhood among people, regardless of their backgrounds. He believed that a sense of unity was essential for societal progress and harmony. His writings emphasize the idea of humanity as a collective entity, transcending barriers of race, religion, and nationality. This message of unity resonates with people who aspire for a more inclusive and harmonious world. Iqbal's works delve into the realm of spirituality, emphasizing the importance of a deep connection with the Divine. He believed that spiritual awakening is crucial for personal growth and societal transformation. His poetry often explores the themes of love, devotion, and mysticism, providing individuals with a spiritual perspective that can inspire them to seek a higher purpose in life.

The condition of Muslims during the British colonization on the land of the Sub-continent made him restless to inspire the people spiritually, physically and emotionally through fiery verses. During Iqbal's lifetime, India was going through an upsurge in revolutions of British

colonization. The British took advantage of this chance to launch an attack against Islam, which they had been planning for 70 or 80 years, with the intention of uprooting it from Indian soil.

They put to an end to the Muslim rule, and dethroned the last Mughal emperor. With the passage of time, they wanted to uproot Islam from the land of the Sub-continent and wanted to make India a part of the British Empire. After Britain formally seized India and renamed their nation the Empire of British India. They, therefore, took every effort to put an end to any revivalist, nationalist, or religious movement in that nation. Since they were fully aware that Muslims were the ones who resisted them in India, their goal was to entirely eradicate the Muslim people. This had already undergone testing. The English and their mercenaries, the Sikhs, who have been fighting alongside them since the early nineteenth century, engaged in combat with the Muslims. The British suppressed the Muslims and subjected them to economic pressure and cultural, political and social discrimination. They endured the most humiliating treatment as a group. Their stated policy in regard to job conditions was to only hire non-Muslims. A huge proportion of the 'Awqaf' (endowments) that supported Islamic institutions and mosques were confiscated. Lending money to the Muslims served as a means for the Hindu merchants to confiscate their property as payment for their debts. It was decided to uproot their sense of connection to the land and break off their contact with it. The Muslims were arbitrarily slain and detained for no reason at all. All those who were allegedly involved in actions against the English were brutally suppressed and executed. These conditions prevailed for several years. No colonized country can be seen to have undergone such a severe, cruel and barbarous situation as the Indian Muslims under British colonization. These were the very factors that made the people to struggle against the British and Hindus as well to get freedom. So, Iqbal was one of those figures who actively participated the physical, spiritual, and emotional freedom for Indian Muslims to lead a happy, peaceful, and successful life.

Critical Analysis

Iqbal is so severe to youth regarding their struggle for a brilliant future with never-ending success. He uses various figures of speech such as personification, metaphor and illustration to make his thoughts impressive, attractive, effective, and beautiful to achieve his purpose in a far better way to motivate his countrymen for acquiring a piece of land to lead a life full of freedom and far away from oppression.

The Himalayas

O Himalah! O rampart of the realm of India!

Bowing down, the sky kisses your forehead

Your condition does not show any signs of old age

You are young in the midst of day and night's alternation

The Kaleem of Tur Sina witnessed but one Effulgence

For the discerning eye you are an embodiment of Effulgence. (Azzad, 2017)

The opening line, 'O Himalah! O rampart of the realm of India!' sets the tone for the poem. The Himalayas are metaphorically portrayed as a protective wall or barrier, symbolizing their importance and significance in the geographical and cultural context of India.

The second line, 'Bowing down, the sky kisses your forehead', creates a vivid image of the mountains reaching up so high that they seem to touch the sky. This image emphasizes the Himalayas' majestic stature and their proximity to the heavens.

The third line, 'Your condition does not show any signs of old age', suggests that despite the passage of time, the Himalayas remain resilient and seemingly unaffected by the wear and tear of aging. This could be interpreted metaphorically, implying that the mountains stand strong and enduring, representing the timeless nature of their presence.

The fourth line, 'You are young in the midst of day and night's alternation', implies that the Himalayas are eternally vibrant and full of life. The reference to day and night symbolizes the continuous cycle of time, and amidst this cyclical nature, the mountains retain their youthfulness and energy.

The fifth and sixth lines, 'The Kaleem of Tur Sina witnessed but one Effulgence' and 'For the discerning eye you are an embodiment of Effulgence', introduce a reference to the Kaleem of Tur Sina and Effulgence. These lines somewhat seem to suggest that the Himalayas radiate a unique and brilliant light or aura that can only be fully appreciated by those with discerning eyes, symbolizing their extraordinary beauty and magnificence.

Iqbal gives his burning idea such as comparing persons to the very power and steadfastness of Himalaya and bringing back energy and will to them for having an illuminating future that avoid them from lazy, idle, and an anonymous life.

Mirza Ghalib

Through you the secret was revealed to the human intellect

Those innumerable enigmas are solved by human intellect

You were the complete soul; literary assembly was your body

You adorned as well as remained veiled from the assembly

Your eye is longing to witness that veiled Beauty

Which is veiled in everything as the pathos of life?
The assemblage of existence is rich with your harp
As mountain's silence by the brook's melodious harp
The garden of your imagination bestows glory on the universe
From the field of your thought worlds grow like meadows
Life is concealed in the humour of your verse. (Azzad, 2017)

Mirza Ghalib a well-known poet was born in Agra, at the time when the British were strengthening their power and hold over Northern India. Ghalib moved to Delhi at the age of 13 and became the court poet in the court of the last Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, till 1857. Ghalib was the eye witness of the incidents that took place during the war of independence and observed everything with the eye of the mind, recorded the ongoing events in his personal diary and later on reflected in his mainstream poetry. Therefore, Iqbal recalls the efforts of Ghalib for the people to use his shining star (of poetry) to utilize the idle and useless moments of his life for his generation's independence and brilliance that would have no ending and that its fragrance could be smelled far away in the deserts and farthest mountains with a great impression. Symbolically, Iqbal uses the metaphors of war/peace, construction/destruction, innocent/cruel, good/bad, and right/wrong through different objects.

A Spider and a Fly

One day a spider said to a fly,
"Though you pass this way daily
You have never honored my hut
By making a chance visit inside by you
Though depriving strangers of a visit does not matter
Evading the near and dear ones does not look good
My house will be honored by a visit by you
A ladder is before you if you decide to step in"
Hearing this fly said to the spider,
"Sire, you should entice some simpleton thus
This fly would never be pulled into your net

Whoever climbed your net could never step down"
The spider said, "How strange, you consider me a cheat
I have never seen a simpleton like you in the world
I only wanted to entertain you
I had no personal gain in view
You have come flying from some unknown distant place
Resting for a while in my house would not harm you
Many things in this house are worth your seeing
Though apparently a humble hut you are seeing
Dainty drapes are hanging from the doors
Moreover, I have decorated the walls with mirrors
Beddings are available for guests' comforts
Not to everyone's lot do fall these comforts".
The fly said, "All this may very well be
But do not expect me to enter your house
May God protect me from these soft beds
Once asleep in them getting up again is impossible"
The spider spoke to itself on hearing this talk,
"How to trap it? This wretched fellow is clever
Many desires are fulfilled with flattery in the world
All in the world are enslaved with flattery"
Thinking this the spider spoke to the fly thus!
"Madam, God has bestowed great honors on you!
Everyone loves your beautiful face
Even if someone sees you for the first time
Your eyes look like clusters of glittering diamonds
God has adorned your beautiful head with a plume

This beauty, this dress, this elegance, this neatness!
And all this is very much enhanced by singing in flight".
The fly was touched by this flattery
And spoke, "I do not fear you any more
I hate the habit of declining requests
Disappointing somebody is bad indeed"
Saying this it flew from its place
When it got close the spider snapped it
The spider had been starving for many days
The fly provided a good leisurely meal. (Azzad, 2017)

The above verses by Iqbal refer to the East India Company and the cunningness with which they entered Indian Sub-continent and dethroned the government of Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Mughal Emperor. It was Jahangir's decree, by which the East India Company was granted some trade concessions and Surat was established its trading capital. It was the most significant turning point in the development of the European colonial system on Indian land. We must not overlook the reality that the Mughals had no or very little naval power, whereas, the East India Company arrived in Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay with its powerful naval force. The British constructed Fort William in Calcutta with Nawab of Bengal's approval. The English used it as a political hub and seat of authority. All this resulted in the ending of the Mughal Empire on the land of the Sub-continent; a huge destruction took place after East India Company was given a chance to enter the Subcontinent. Bahadur Shah Zafar was India's final Mughal emperor. He was a renowned poet and literary personality of classical Urdu literature. He was 82 years old when all of his children were slaughtered and given to him as gift. The four sons of Mirza Ghulam, Mirza Khidr Sultan, Mirza Abu Bakr, and Mirza Abdullah were all incarcerated by Major Hudson. The above poem is related to the same cunningness and tricks of the English. They pretended development for the Indian Sub-continent like the spider but actually, engulfed everything once they entered the Indian Sub-continent.

Conclusion

Poetry is as a weaponized response to history as (Stout, 2016) and wonderful poet, like Wordsworth who praises poet as a star that will make heaven shining even after his death. Poetry has the power to bring a revolutionary change in society through a sublime and heart-touching message. In order to get rid of the cruel hold and power, Iqbal urges the people

through his verses to become a name and lead a peaceful happy life in the light of humanism, freedom and serenity. It was his poetic message that proved a tapestry and provided a colorful impulse to the Muslim youth in the then Indian Sub-continent.

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