

Some Quotes from Allama Iqbal: (Part of Q-3)

*** “The Spirit of Muslim Culture” (Reconstruction, 1930, Madras)**

- 1) *“The prophet of Islam seems to stand between the ancient & the modern world. In so far as the source of his revelation is concerned he belongs to the ancient world; in so far as the spirit of his revelation is concerned, he belongs to the modern world... In Islam prophecy reaches its perfection in discovering the need of its own abolition.”*
- 2) *“The abolition of priesthood & hereditary kingship in Islam, the constant appeal to reason & experience in the Qur’an, & the emphasis it lays on Nature & History as sources of human knowledge, are all different aspects of the same idea of finality.”*
- 3) *“As a social movement, the aim of Islam was to make the idea (idea of humanity as a single organism) a living factor in the Muslim’s daily life, & thus silently & imperceptibly to carry it towards fuller fruition.”*

*** “The Principle of Movement in the Structure of Islam” (Reconstruction, 1930, Madras)**

- 4) *“The new culture (of Islam) finds the foundation of world unity in the principle of Tauhid. Islam, as a polity, is only a practical means of making this principle a living factor in the intellectual and emotional life of mankind.”*
- 5) *“The essence of Tauhid, as a working idea, is equality, solidarity & freedom. The State, from Islamic standpoint, is an endeavour to transform these ideal principles into space-time forces, an aspiration to realise them in a definite human organisation.”*
- 6) *“The State, according to Islam, is only an effort to realize the Spiritual in a human organisation.”*
- 7) *“Islam, from the very beginning, was a civil society; having received from the Qur’an a set of simple legal principles... which carried great potentialities of expansion*

(2)

and development by interpretation. The Nationalist theory of State, therefore, is misleading inasmuch as it suggests a dualism which does not exist in Islam.”

- 8) *“The pure brow of the principle of Tauhid has received an impress of heathenism, & the universal & impersonal character of the ethical ideas of Islam has been lost through a process of localisation. The only alternative open to us is to tear off from Islam the hard crust which has immobilised an essentially dynamic outlook on life, & to rediscover the original verities of freedom, equality and solidarity with a view to rebuild our moral, social & political ideals out of their original simplicity & universality”*

9) *"The republican form of government is not only thoroughly consistent with Islam, but has also become a necessity in view of the new forces that are set free in the world of Islam"*

10) *"The idea of universal imamate has failed in practice. It was a workable idea when the Empire of Islam was intact... The idea has ceased to be operative & cannot work as a living factor in the organisation of modern Islam. Far from serving any useful purpose, it has really stood in the way of a reunion of independent Muslim states."*

11) *"For the present, every Muslim nation must sink into her own deeper self, temporarily focus her vision on herself alone, until all are strong & powerful to form a living family of republics."*

12) *"It seems to me that God is slowly bringing home to us the truth that Islam is neither Nationalism nor Imperialism but a league of nations which recognises artificial boundaries & racial distinctions for facility of reference only & not for restricting the social horizon of its members."*

(3)

13) *"The Qur'an, however, is not a legal code. Its main purpose is to awaken in man the higher consciousness of his relation with God, and the universe."*

14) *"Islam is non-territorial in its character, and its aim is to furnish a model for the final combination of humanity by drawing its adherents from a variety of mutually repellant races & then transforming this atomic aggregate into a people possessing a self consciousness of their own."*

15) *"The critic of these institutions must ... look at their structure, not from the standpoint of social advantage or disadvantage of this or that country, but from the point of view of the larger purpose which is being gradually worked out in the life of mankind as a whole."*

16) *"The claim of present generation of Muslim liberals to reinterpret the foundational legal principles, in the light of their own experience & the altered conditions of modern life is, in my opinion, perfectly justified."*

17) *"Humanity needs three things today — a spiritual interpretation of the universe, spiritual emancipation of the individual, and basic principles of a universal import directing the evolution of human society on a spiritual basis."*

18) *"With him (the Muslim) the spiritual basis of life is a matter of conviction for which even the least enlightened among us can easily lay down his life... Early Muslims emerging out of spiritual slavery of pre-Islamic Asia were not in position to realize the true significance of this basic idea. Let the Muslim of today appreciate his position, reconstruct his social life in the light of ultimate principles and evolve*

(4)

out of the hitherto partially revealed purpose of Islam, that spiritual democracy which is the ultimate aim of Islam.”

From → “Speeches & Statements of Sir Iqbal”, published 1977

*** “Islam as a Moral and Political Ideal”; 1909, Lahore**

19) *“The interest of the individual as a unit are subordinate to the interests of the Community as an eternal symbol of the Islamic principle. This is the only principle which limits the liberty of the individual, who is otherwise absolutely free. The best form of govt for such a community would be democracy; the ideal of which is to let man develop all the possibilities of his nature by allowing him as much freedom as practicable.”*

20) *“Democracy, then, is the most important aspect of Islam regarded as a political ideal.”*

21) *“Surely we have out-Hindued the Hindu himself— we are suffering from a double caste system — the religious caste system i.e. sectarianism, & the social caste system which we have either learned or inherited from the Hindus.”*

22) *“I condemn this accursed religious and social sectarianism (casteism), I condemn it in the name of God, in the name of humanity, in the name of Moses, in the name of Jesus Christ, and in the name of [Prophet Muhammad]... let the idols of class distinction & sectarianism be smashed forever.”*

23) *“The work of freeing humanity from superstition — the ultimate ideal of Islam, as a community, for the realisation of which we have done so little in this great land of myth & superstition, will ever remain undone if the emancipators themselves are becoming gradually enchained in the very fetters from which it is their mission to set others free.”*

(5)

*** “The Muslim Community — A Sociological Study” — 1910, Aligarh**

24) *“The essential difference between the Muslim Community & other communities of the world consists in our peculiar conception of nationality. It is not unity of language or country or the identity of economic interest ... but because we all believe in a certain view of universe & participate in the same historical tradition that we are members of the society formed by the Prophet of Islam.”*

25) *“The religious idea, then, without any theological centralisation which would unnecessarily limit the liberty of the individual, determines the ultimate structure of the Muslim Community.”*

26) *“The Nadva, the Aligarh College, the theological Seminary of Deoband and other institutions of a similar type, working independently of one another, cannot meet this pressing demand. All*

these scattered educational forces should be organised into a central institution of a large purpose...”

27) *“How much of this (economic) situation (of masses of Muslim Community) is due to the larger economic forces, that are working in the modern world, how much to the historical antecedents, customs, prejudices & ethical shortcomings of the people of this land, how much if at all to the policy of the govt?”*

(6)

*** “Statement explaining the attitude of Muslim delegates at Round Table Conference.” 6 Dec, 1933**

28) *“Mr. Gandhi’s second and most unrighteous condition was that Muslims should not support the special claims of Untouchables, particularly their claim to special representation. It was pointed out to him that it did not lie in the mouth of Muslims to oppose those very claims on the part of the Untouchables which they were advancing for themselves.... Mr Gandhi, however, insisted on this condition. I should like to know how far Pandit Jawaharlal with his well known socialist views would sympathise with such an inhuman condition.”*

29) *“Another accusation which Pandit Jawaharlal brings against Muslims is that some of them are definitely ‘anti-national’. If by (nationalism) he means a fusion of the communities in a biological sense, I should personally plead guilty to the charge of anti-nationalism.... In this sense, perhaps the greatest anti-national leader in India of today is Mr. Gandhi who has made it a life mission to prevent the fusion of untouchables with other communities, & to retain them in the fold of Hinduism without any real fusion even between them & the caste Hindus.... His message to Untouchables amounts to this: ‘Do not leave Hinduism, remain in it without being part of it.’”*

30) *“It is obvious that there are interests common to various communities of India, in so far as these interests are concerned. an understanding among the communities is possible; according to my belief it is bound to come.... A united India will have to be built on the foundation of concrete facts i.e. the distinct existence of more than one people*

(7)

in the country. The sooner Indian leaders of political thought get rid of the idea of a unitary Indian nation based on something like a biological fusion of the communities, the better for all concerned.”

31) *“Pandit Jawaharlal seems to think that Muslims while believing in democracy as a religious institution, are afraid of democracy in practice.... The Muslim wants safeguards not because he is afraid of democracy but because he has reason to be afraid of Communal oligarchy in the garb of democracy in India. He wants to ensure the substance of democracy even at the expense of its conventional form.”*

32) *"In conclusion I must put a straight question to Pandit Jawaharlal: How is India's problem to be solved if the majority community neither concedes the minimum safeguards necessary for the protection of a minority of 80 million people, nor accept the award of a third party, but continue to talk of a kind of nationalism which works out only to its own benefit?"*

*** "Statement on the Congress attitude towards Communal Award" — 19th June, 1934.**

33) *"The CWC has tried by this resolution to hide its inner communalism, but in the very act of doing so has unveiled its designs to such an extent that no Muslim will fail to see through the game."*

(8)

*** Statement explaining Sir Fazl-i-Hasan's observations in the Council of State — 19 Sept, 1933**

34) *"Sir Fazl-i-Hasan is perfectly correct when he says that political pan-Islamism never existed. It has existed, if at all, only in the imagination of those who invented the phrase possibly as a diplomatic weapon in the hands of Sultan Abdul Hamid Khan of Turkey. Even Jamal-ud-din Afghani, whose name is closely associated with what is called Pan-Islamic movement, never dreamt of a unification of Muslims into a political state."*

35) *"It is however true that Islam as a society or as a political scheme for the combination not only of races but also of all religions does not recognise the barriers of race & nationality or geographical frontiers. In this sense of this humanitarian ideal Pan-Islamism — if one prefers to use this unnecessarily long phrase to the simple expression "Islam" — does & will always exist."*

36) *"Sir Fazl-i-Hasan's advice to Indian Muslims to stand on their own leg as an Indian nation is perfectly sound & I have no doubt that Muslims fully understand and appreciate it."*

*** Extract from a letter to Sir Francis Young-Husband, published 30 July 1931**

37) *"India's internal strife & disunion have been a great disturbing factor in the peace of the world; Grave as the situation may seem,... I have not lost faith in the possibility of achieving communal agreement in India."*

38) *"... in the course of time, either Islam would devour Russia or Russia Islam. The result, I think, will depend to a considerable extent on the position which is given to the Indian Muslims under the new constitution."*

(9)

*** “Presidential Address Delivered at the Annual Sessions of All India Muslim League” 29 Dec, 1930**

39) *“It cannot be denied that Islam, regarded as an ethical ideal plus a certain kind of polity — ...i.e. a social structure regulated by a legal system & animated by a specific ethical ideal — has been the chief formative factor in the life-history of Muslims of India.”*

40) *“Islam [is] a living force for freeing the outlook of man from its geographical limitations, ... religion is a power of utmost importance in the life of individuals as well as states,.... Islam is itself Destiny & will not suffer a destiny.”*

41) *“The unity of an Indian nation ... must be sought, not in negation, but in mutual harmony & cooperation of the many.”*

42) *“Communalism in its higher aspect, then, is indispensable to the formation of a harmonious whole in a country like India... India is a continent of human groups belonging to different races, speaking different languages, & professing different religions. Their behaviour is not at all determined by a common race-consciousness.”*

43) *“The Muslim demand for the creation of a Muslim India within India is, therefore, perfectly justified.”*

44) *“Muslim demand ... is actuated by a genuine desire for free development which is practically impossible under the type of unitary government contemplated by the nationalist Hindu politicians with a view to secure permanent communal dominance in whole of India.”*

(10)

45) *“In such a country and in such circumstances, territorial electorates cannot secure adequate representation of all interests & must inevitably lead to the creation of an oligarchy.”*

46) *“The Muslims demand federation because it is pre-eminently a solution of India’s most difficult problem i.e. the communal problem.”*

47) *“No Muslim politician should be sensitive to the taunt embodied in that propaganda word — communalism.... Great interests are at stake here. We are 70 millions and far more homogeneous than any other people in India. Indeed, the Muslims of India are the only people who can fitly be described as a nation in the modern sense of the word.”*

48) *“Nor should the Muslim leaders and politicians allow themselves to be carried away by the subtle but fallacious argument that Turkey & Persia & other Muslim countries are progressing on national i.e. territorial lines. The Muslims of India are differently situated [as a minority].The countries of Islam outside India are practically wholly Muslim in population. The minorities belong there in the language of the Qur’an to the “people of the book.” There are no social barriers between Muslims and the “people of the book”. A Jew or a Christian or a Zoroastrian*

does not pollute the food of a Muslim by touching it [as many Hindus would consider their food polluted], and the law of Islam allows intermarriage with the “people of the book.” Indeed, the first practical step that Islam took towards the realisation of a final combination of humanity was to call upon peoples possessing practically the same ethical ideal to come forward and combine.”

(11)

49) *“We have a duty towards India where we are destined to live & die. We have a duty towards Asia, especially Muslim Asia. And since 70 million of Muslims in a single country constitute a far more valuable asset to Islam than all the countries of Muslim Asia put together, we must look at the Indian problem not only from the Muslim point of view but also from the standpoint of the Indian Muslims as such. Our duty towards Asia and India cannot be loyally performed without an organised will fixed on a definite purpose.”*

50) *“I am not hopeless of an intercommunal understanding, but I cannot conceal from you the feeling that in near future our community may be called upon to adopt an independent line of action to cope with the present crisis.”*

51) *“At critical moments in their history, it is Islam that has saved Muslims and not vice-versa.”*

*** Presidential Address, Annual Session of All-India Muslim Conference; 21st March, 1932, Lahore**

52) *“... We have to solve it [i.e. the problem of our political life] i.e. how the ‘many’ can become ‘One’ without sacrificing its plural character.”*

53) *“The continuance of separate electorates and the status of the Frontier province are no doubt assured, but complete provincial autonomy; transfer of power from Parliament to Indian provinces; equality of federal units; classification of subjects not into federal, central and provincial, but only federal & provincial; majority rights in Punjab & Bengal; unconditional separation of Sind; and one-third share in Centre — constitute no less essential elements of our demands.”*

(12)

54) *“To my mind this movement [civil disobedience] has its roots in fear & resentment. The Congress leaders claim that they are the sole representatives of the people of India. The last Round Table Conference made it abundantly clear that they were not. This they naturally resent.”*

55) *“They (the Congress) have therefore started the present campaign to bolster up a claim which has no foundation in fact, to defeat a pact which they fear may find a place in the coming Constitution & to force the Govt to settle the matter of minorities with the Congress alone. The Congress resolution in pursuance of which the Civil disobedience campaign was launched, made it perfectly clear that since govt has refused to regard Mahatma Gandhi as the sole representative*

of the country, the Congress decided on civil disobedience. How can then a minority join a campaign which is directed as much against itself as against the Govt?"

56) *"The faith which you represent recognises the worth of the individual, and disciplines him to give away his all to service of God & man. Its possibilities are not yet exhausted. It can still create a new world where the social rank of man is not determined by his caste or colour, or the amount of dividend he earns, but by the kind of life he lives; where the poor tax the rich, where human society is founded not on the equality of stomachs but on the equality of spirits, where an Untouchable can marry the daughter of a king, where private ownership is trust & where capital cannot be allowed to accumulate so as to dominate real producer of wealth. This superb idealism of your faith, needs emancipation from the medieval fancies of theologians & legists. Spiritually, we are living in a prison-house of thoughts and emotions which during the course of centuries we have woven around us."*