

**A non-Arab Poet whose Song always remained Arabian.  
(Iqbal studies, Urdu and Lebanon)**

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***ABSTRACT:*** *This article discusses the Poet-philosopher Allama Iqbal's thought in which he claims to be an Arab poet as he says: no doubt my voice is non-Arabic, but my tone and message is purely Arabic. He declares in very clear terms — "I have used non-Arabic languages like Persian and Urdu for disseminating my message. However, the source of my love and the basis of my tone has always been Arabic. " This article deals with Iqbal studies and Urdu in Lebanon and provides firsthand information about the works done in Lebanon in these areas of knowledge. The author has discovered many new books and researches about Urdu language and Iqbal studies in Lebanon. Weaknesses and shortcomings of these works have also been critically evaluated in an enlightening manner.*

**Key words:** message, non-arabic, persian, urdu, poet, arab, lebanon

**Iqbal** has categorically stated that he is speaking to the Arabs. His tone is also Arabic. He says: no doubt my voice is non-Arabic, but my tone and message is purely Arabic. He states in very clear terms \_\_\_\_ “I have used non-Arabic languages like Persian and Urdu for disseminating my message. However, the source of my love and the basis of my tone has always been Arabic.” he believes that a non-Arabic tone is not proper for the nations which have weakened their selfhood in slavery. He advises the non-Arabs to turn to the deserts of Arabia. He, very proudly, presents the wine of Arabia to the non-Arabs.

مرا ساز اگرچہ ستم رسیدہ نغمہ ہائے عجم رہا  
وہ شہید ذوق وفا ہوں میں کہ نوا مری عربی رہی<sup>i</sup>

.....  
بادہ گردان عجم وہ عربی میری شراب  
میرے ساغر سے جھجکتے ہیں مے آشام ابھی<sup>ii</sup>

“Though my orchestra remained oppressed by `Ajam’s plectrum  
I am that martyr in fidelity’s cause whose song ever Arabic remained!”

.....  
“They are accustomed to `Ajam’s wine (Non Arab civilization) I have  
the `Arab wine  
My cup makes wine-drinkers startled still”

As I was a resident of Cairo, a time tested hub of the Muslim culture, therefore, I was looking for the spread of Iqbal message in this part of the World. The same motive took me to Beirut which is, undoubtedly, an important literary and educational centre of Arabia. Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, is situated on the banks of the Mediterranean Sea. In this beautiful city, I sought opportunities to convey Iqbal’s message and to know the trends towards Urdu and Iqbal studies in the literary circles and institutions.

During the stay in Beirut, I spoke at the Shouf International School, Embassy of Algeria and the Embassy of Pakistan on Iqbal’s concepts of passionate love, nationalism, and life, respectively. Here I learnt about some books which were previously not in my knowledge. This would be good news for my countrymen that Urdu is not a strange language in Lebanon. A Lebanese political organization has developed its anthem in Urdu. Another institution intends to start Urdu education. The spade work, in this regard, is in progress. Books for the teaching of Urdu

are being published from Beirut.

The first Lebanese published book for learning Urdu which I got was *T'a'llum Al Lughat Al Urdia Bidon Mu'allim*. Compiler's name is Hassan Lolo. The book, in the beginning, contains a brief note on introduction and history of Urdu language. The book, containing 120 pages of small size.<sup>iii</sup> The book begins with alphabets, numbers and Urdu substitutes for the names of months, colours etc. it contains topic-wise sentences according to the needs of a tourist. The approach of the book can be ascertained by looking at a few topics:

At the customs; At the air port; During road, air and sea travel; For getting accommodation at a hotel; For shopping; At the post office; At the money changer; During recreation; For getting a ticket; At the cinema; At a banquet, etc, etc.

The sentences and the topics given in the book are also reflective of the liberal way of the social life of Beirut. For example the sentence given under the heading of *Hayat al Lail, (Night Life)* is : "would you like to dance with me?" "I invite you for the night club." In the same way the heading *Dawat Al Sahra* carries the sentence: "would you allow me to dance with you?" These sentences throw light on the general social life in Lebanon.

The second book is *Daleel Lughat Al Alam*. This book teaches Urdu, Sri Lankan, Filipino and the Indonesian languages. The complete title of the book is *Daleel Lughat Al Alam T'allum al urdiya Wal Filbinia Wal Sri Lankia Min Ghair Muallim*. The book has been compiled by Abi Adaila. The first part of this four language book is on Urdu. The pages specified for each language carry distinctive colours. Yellow, green and pink pages have been used for the Filipino, the Sri Lankan and the Indonesian languages respectively. The 64 pages allocated to the Urdu language are in white colour. This portion of the book has been compiled by Muhammad Ahmad Naeem.<sup>iv</sup> The style of the book is the same as that of other books written for tourists. Therefore, it contains vocabulary and sentences relevant to the needs of the tourists. There is an identical list of contents for all the four languages. In other words guidance has been provided in all the four languages on similar topics. Description of one item has been provided in four columns specified for

each language. In this way one can also make a comparative study of the four languages. Comprehensive Arabic texts have been given in front of the words and sentences of Urdu. This Arabic, however, is slightly different from the Egyptian Arabic. In Egypt, For example, plate is called *Tabaq*, knife is called *Sikkena* , and tissue paper is called *Mandeel*. In this book, these words have been described as *Sahan*, *Sakeen*, and *Maharam*, respectively. Receipt, in Egypt, is commonly called *Fatoora*. However, in this book the word *Aesaal* has been used to denote this expression. In the same way, a barber's shop is called *Kawafier* in Egypt (Though this word is for beauty parlor but commonly used for barber shop sometimes specified as *Kawafier lil rijal* or *Kawafier lil nisa* stands for Man's beauty Parlor and ladies beauty Parlor respectively). In this book, however, the word *Muzin* has been used for a barber's shop.

The third such book is "*Al Urdiya Min Ghair Muallam*". This book has been written by Muhammad Abdul Raheem<sup>v</sup> This book contains 176 pages and it is part of the series "*Allam Nafask Al Lughat Al A'lamiya*". The title page carries a beautiful picture of '*Taj Mahal*'. The format of the book divides it into three columns. The first column contains Arabic text, the second column contains the Urdu phonetic form in Arabic accent and words, while the third column contains the Urdu translation. It is a commendable work. However, while converting the Arabic style of expression into Urdu, the social expression of the language has not been taken care of.

The fourth book is entitled "*Taleem Al Lughat al Urdia lil Arab*". The Editor or the writer is Muhammad Abdul Raheem.<sup>vi</sup> This book is part of a series '*Silsilat al Lughat Al A'lamiya Bidon Almuallim*'. The beautiful title of this first print of the book carries world map and pictures of some wonders of the world. The book contains dialogues along with pictures. This book contains 110 pages of small size. It offers dialogues and vocabulary on 61 small and big subjects of life. Format is the same as that of the book *Al Urdiya Min Ghair Muallam*. However, this book too, has some drawbacks.

The fifth book published from Lebanon in connection with teaching of Urdu is also entitled '*Al Urdia Min Ghair Muallim*'. However, there is no mention of the writer or the editor of the book. This is a pocket

size book of 128 pages. It claims to introduce a new method for learning Urdu in short time.<sup>vii</sup> This first edition of the book contains Urdu substitutes for Arabic words and expression on 64 different subjects. This book also, has been developed in three column format. It is, in general, a shortened form of the first two books.

However, publication of these books from Lebanon is an important news which would delight students of oriental languages and Urdu readers. This is not all. Some people are also interested in the teaching of Urdu. Details in this regard have been given in my travelogue “*Shaam Ki Subah, Lebanon Ki Shaam*”(Morning in Syria and Evening in Lebanon)<sup>viii</sup>

Besides books on Urdu, I was also able to obtain some books on “*Iqbal Studies*”. One of these books is “*Muhammad Iqbal Fikr-ohu Al Deni wal Falsafi*”. The book has been authored by Muhammad Al Arabi Bu Azizi. This is a voluminous book which was published by *Dar al Fikr*.<sup>ix</sup> The centers of *Dar al Fikr* are situated in Beirut and Damascus. This book runs into 550 pages and covers most aspects of Iqbal’s thought. His biographic details upbringing, poetic experience, legal and teaching careers, and his travels to France, Italy, Spain, Palestine, Egypt and Afghanistan have been described in the book. His character, literary position, prose, poetry and letters have also been discussed. Iqbal’s reformist thought, religious political, cultural and social concepts and views about God and prophet hood have also been analyzed. Greek, Western and Islamic points of view about the creation of universe have been discussed. Other concepts such as man, the purpose of his creation, success, failure, reality of soul, and freedom of man have been studied in the light of the Qur’anic and the Holy prophet’s PBUH teachings. The concept of selfhood, *Ummah*, and the basis of Muhammadan *Ummah* have been discussed in the light of religion, philosophy and skepticism.

Another book is entitled ‘*Muhammad Iqbal: Shair wa Felsof Al Islam*’. The book has been edited by Al Sheikh Kamil Muhammad Muhammad Awaiza.<sup>x</sup> The book is part of the publisher’s series of ‘*Falasfat al Islam*’. The book begins with the chapter captioned as, *Al Shora Wal She’r Fi Lughat Al Urdia Al Pakistania*’. Discussion on the evolution of Urdu poetry has been started from *Ghalib*. Then, translation of selections from the poetry of *Ghalib*, *Zauq*, *Aatish*, *Bahadur Shah*

*Zafar*, and *Dagh* have been included. Translation of some miscellaneous verses of *Amjad Hayderabi*, *Anees*, *Dabeer Hali*, *Akbar* and *Josh* have also been given. This is followed by some biographical sketches of Iqbal and translations of his selected poetry. Introduction and translation of selections from the following poems of Iqbal is found in the book: *Masjed-e-Qartuba*, *Sultan Murad-o-Maimar*, *Al Shabaab*, *Fatima al Zahra*, *Al Nasheez Al Islami*, *Al Arz lillah*, *Asrar ul Huriya*, *Khalod Al Hayat Majlis Shura Iblees*, *Al Murshid wal Mureed* and *Shakwa-wa-Jawab--Shakwa*. This is followed by a review of Dr. Anne Marry Shimel's book '*Gabriel's Wing*' and preface by Dr. Muhammad Yahya Al Hashim. There also is a short note on Iqbal by a Syrian intellectual Dr. Ahsaan Haqqi which is entitled as 'A glimpse of Iqbal's life'. The note also contains, in the end, a letter of 17 April 1933 for Dr. Haqqi from Allama Iqbal.

Dr. Ahsaan Haqqi has also authored '*Pakistan: Past and Present*' (Arabic),<sup>xi</sup> Then there is translation of "*Shakwa*" which was sung by famous Egyptian singer *Umme Kulthom*. This translation is an effort of *Hassan Al A'zmi* and *Sheikh Sawi Sha'alaan*. The book also contains some brief notes on other philosophical debates. These are mostly about Iqbal's Philosophy of power. Moreover, concepts of love and man have also been touched.

Another important book '*Dewan Muhammad Iqbal, Al Amaal Al Kaila*' has been published by *Dar Ibn-Kathir*. This institution has branches in Beirut and Damascus. This book consists of 2 voluminous volumes. The book has been compiled by Syed Abdul Majid Ghauri. The first volume<sup>xii</sup> containing 556 pages The second volume also contains almost the same 554 pages.<sup>xiii</sup> After the preface, it carries views of the oriental scholars about Iqbal. Then there is an essay on Iqbal's personality. 'The factors which formulated Iqbal's personality' — Under this heading 5 formulating factors of Iqbal's life have been analyzed. This analysis is a speech by *Syed Abul Hassan Ali Nadvi* (December 5 1913.....Dec 31, 1999) which he made in Cairo on 28 March 1951. The book has been dedicated to *Syed Abul Hassan Ali Nadvi*. In this book Iqbal's way of thought, his philosophy and historical concepts have been introduced. The translations start from page 87. This book is in fact collection of translations from Iqbal's poetry which have been conducted at different

times by different translators and published separately. These translations include *Salsalat al Jaras (Bang-e-Dara)* by *Sawi Shalan Al Misri*, *Al Asrar wal Ramooz Asrar A Sbaat Al Zaat wa Ramooz Nafi Al Zaat*, *Asrar-e-Khudi wa Ramooz-e-Be khudi* (Translated in to Arabic by Dr *Abdul Wahab Azzam*), *Risalat al Sharq, Payaam-e-Mashriq* by Dr. *Abdul Wahab Azzam*, *Zaboora Al Ajam* by Dr. *Hussain Mujeeb Al Misri*, *Jannah Jibreel* by *Ustaaz Zuhair Zaza*, translated from French translation of *Bal-e-Jibreel*. The second volume includes translation of *Zarb-e-kaleem* by Dr. *Abdul Wahab Azzam*, *Javed Nama* by *Hussain Mujeeb Al Misri*, and *Pass Che Bayad Kard* by *Sheik Sawi Shalan*. This is the same translation which was done by *Sheikh Sawi Shalan* with the help of Dr. *Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi's* prose translation. The Persian portion of *Armaghan-e-Hijaz* has been translated by Dr. *Hussain Mujeeb Al Misri*. The Urdu portion includes the prose translation by Dr. *Samir Abdul Hameed Ibraheem Nooh*. These are different translations and every translator has his own style. Most of the translators do not understand Urdu. Their translations are based on secondary or tertiary sources. *Bal-e-Jibreel's* Arabi translation has been done with the help of its French translation. The French translation of *Bal-e-Jibreel* was done by *Mirza Saeed Zafar Shaghti* and *Syeda Sozan Bosak*. The same translation was adapted in Arabic by *Al Ustaaz Abdul Moeen Al Mallohi*. *Zuhair Zaza's* translation is in fact the poetic form of the prose translation of *Abdul Moeen Mallohi*. The book was published under the title of *Dewan Janah Jibreel*.<sup>xiv</sup> In the same manner, the people who were unfamiliar with Urdu or Persian, received help from the scholars of the respective languages. *Hussain Mujeeb Al Misri* was helped by Dr. *Hazim Muhammad Mahfooz Al Misri*. (This was told to me by Dr. *Hazim* himself). However, in most cases the outcome has not been satisfactory.

*Sheikh Sawi Shalan's* translation, However, is an exception, which has been conducted with the help of Dr. *Mahmood Ghazi's* prose translation. Dr. *Abdul Wahab Azzam* knew Iqbal as well as Urdu. This translation, therefore, is reliable.

The Urdu portion of *Armghan-e-Hijaz* has been translated in prose form by Dr. *Samir Abdul Hameed Ibraheem Nooh*. Dr. *Sumair* is presently in Doshisha University Kyoto, Japan. His knowledge of Urdu is very good. This translation is a part of his Master's research thesis. The

complete thesis has been published from Pakistan, entitled “*Iqbal Wa Dewan Armghan-e-Hijaz*’.<sup>xv</sup> Dr. Samir has also translated *Asrar-o-Ramoz* into Arabic.<sup>xvi</sup> Some translations of Iqbal’s poetical works by Dr Galal Al Hafnawi (A professor of Cairo University Presently working in Madina Munawara KSA) are also revised by Dr Samir. For example *Diwan Dharb Al Kaleem*,<sup>xvii</sup> *Diwan Salsalt al Jaras*<sup>xviii</sup> etc. In the translation included in *Al-A’maal Al Kamila*, at some places, the political compromises of the Arab World have hampered the process of clear translation. For example the title of the 6<sup>th</sup> part of the Chapter *Huzoor-e-Millat* is “*Pyam-e-Farooq*”. It means that this part contains verses on Hazrat Umar Farooq’s RA message to the King farooq of Egypt.

تو ای باد بیابان از عرب خیز  
زنیل مصریان موجی بر انگیز  
بگو فاروق را پیغام فاروق  
که خود در فقر و سلطانی بیامیز<sup>xix</sup>

#### The Message of Farooq

‘O desert’s breeze rise from ‘Arab’s sky,  
From Egypt’s Nile raise a new wave high.  
Give Farooq’s message to King Farooq’s race,  
How content is mixed with the kingship’s face.

However, the translator, perhaps due to the political conditions, have changed the title into ‘*Ila Misr*’. The second verse of the first Stanza of this part is translated as:

وادی القول عن عمر فقولى  
’کن السلطان یعرف بالفقیر<sup>xx</sup>

Here, Farooq’s name has been ejected from the verse and a general translation made instead. However, it has been explained in the footnotes that the verse contained name of a King. This explanation, nevertheless, is not sufficient to understand the poetic beauty and real message of the poem. King Farooq (February 11, 1920.....

March 18, 1965) ruled over Egypt from April 28, 1936 to July 26, 1952.

Although this book has been published under the title of “*Al A’maal Al Kamila*”(Complete Works) however, in real terms, it cannot be called ‘complete works. The reason is that most of the translations are, in fact, selections. Nevertheless, this collection, despite all the drawbacks, is a



good effort. It has combined, at one place, a number of translations, which are presently not available. Thus the compiler of the work *Syed Abdul Majid Al Ghauri* deserves appreciation. *Syed Majid* belongs to Hyderabad, Daccan(India).

The most important book on Iqbal published from Lebanon, is Dr. *M. Hassan Hanafi's 'Muhammad Iqbal Felfel Al Zatiya'*. This book has been published recently.<sup>xxi</sup> It can be said that I intended to obtain this book from the time when I planned to visit Lebanon. It is a voluminous and valuable book comprising 584 pages of large size. I was waiting for this book for one year. Now, upon coming to Lebanon, I enthusiastically searched the book and finally succeeded in locating the address of its publisher. Al-Sanae, located at Beirut's Jostanian road. Fifth floor of Aresco Centre. I congratulated them on behalf of the Pakistanis and they were very happy. This is a beautiful book with very excellent printing quality. The book, however, written on Iqbal's concept of self hood was carrying Pakistan's founder *Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's* picture on its title page. When I pointed out the mistake, they called the designer who insisted that it was Iqbal's picture. When I showed them Iqbal's picture with name from Iqbal Academy's website, they became very upset. Then I suggested to the Marketing Manager, to print a new dust cover for the book. The author of the book was also, later, informed about this mistake. Apart from this single printing error, the book is excellent. In addition to Iqbal's concept of selfhood, concept of nation, concept of education, West and Westernization, East and West, Islamic legacy, formation of Islamic thought, Muslim Ummah and unity of Ummah have also been discussed in the book.

The writer of the book tells that he first heard Iqbal's name in 1947 when Pakistan was established. At that time he was in Secondary School. Afterwards, he remained associated with Iqbal or his thought one way or the other. This long association resulted in the form of this book. He did his PhD in Philosophy from Sorbonne University Paris. He taught Philosophy in Egypt, America, Japan and Europe. This is why the book is on philosophy. He has explained in the preface that the book is about the philosopher Iqbal, not the poet Iqbal. The book contains 7 chapters, each having two parts.

Apart from these, translation of Iqbal's English lectures, '*The Reconstruction of Religious thought in Islam*' have also been published from Beirut.<sup>xxii</sup> It is a new and revised edition of Abbas Mahmood's translation. Abbas's translation was also published from Cairo, afterwards. I also obtained its third edition.<sup>xxiii</sup> The revision of its preface and the first chapter was made by Abdul Aziz Al Maraghi. The rest of the book has been revised by Dr. Mehdi Allam.

## End Notes

### I.

<sup>i</sup> Muhammad Iqbal *Kulliyat e Iqbal* Urdu Lahore: Sh Ghulam Ali & Sons 1984 p 282

<sup>ii</sup> *Ibid* P 279

<sup>iii</sup> Beirut: *Dar al Jil*.1994

<sup>iv</sup> Beirut: *Dar Al Arbia Lil Uloom*, 1999.

<sup>v</sup> Beirut: *Muassasat Al Ma'arif lil Taba'a wa al nashr* 2001.

<sup>vi</sup> Beirut: *Dar al Kutab Al A'lmia*, 2004

<sup>vii</sup> Beirut *Dar al Shimal*, Lebanon 2005

<sup>viii</sup> Lahore: *Tanazur Matbooaat Pakistan* 2009

<sup>ix</sup> Beirut: *Dar al Fikr* 1999

<sup>x</sup> Beirut: *Dar al Kutab Al Ilmiyah* 1994

<sup>xi</sup> *Pakistan Mazeha wa Hazirha* Beirut: 1973.

<sup>xii</sup> *Dar Ibn-Kathir* 2003

<sup>xiii</sup> *Dar Ibn-Kathir* 2003

<sup>xiv</sup> Damascus: *Tala Al Darasat wal Tarjama wal Nashr*, 1987

<sup>xv</sup> Lahore: *Iqbal Academy Pakistan* 2004 ((Fourth edition)

<sup>xvi</sup> Cairo: *Al Majlis al Ala Al Thaqafa* 2005

<sup>xvii</sup> Translated by Dr Galal Al Hafnawi Cairo: *Al Majlis al Ala Al Thaqafa* 2004

<sup>xviii</sup> Translated by Dr Galal Al Hafnawi Cairo: *Al Majlis al Ala Al Thaqafa* 2003 Dr Galal Al Hafnawi 's another translation *Janah Jibreel* was published by the same publisher and revised by Dr M Ilauddin Mansoor published in 2003

<sup>xix</sup> Muhammad Iqbal: *Kulliyat e Iqbal* Persian Lahore: Sh Ghulam Ali & Sons 1990 p 960

<sup>xx</sup> *Al A'mal Al Kamila* Beirut/Damascus: *Dar Ibn-Kathir* 2003 Vol. 2 P 466

<sup>xxi</sup> Beirut: *Dar Al Madar Al Islami* June 2009.

<sup>xxii</sup> Beirut : *Dar Aasya*, 1985.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Cairo: *Dar al Hidayat Al Taba'at wal Nashr-o-Tauzih* 2006