

Muhammad Iqbal's Legacy in Russia-Pakistan Socio-Cultural Relations

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Muhammad Iqbal's Legacy has a planetary dimensions, as it belongs not only to the Pakistanis and Muslims but also to all humanity round the world. His philosophy and poetry has become an integral part of the world culture. Filled with peace, love and human brotherhood it has succeeded in building a bridge between East and West. To add it more, we may consider Muhammad Iqbal not only as a spiritual founder of Pakistan, but also as a promoter of the socio-cultural links between today's Russia (the principal successor of the former Soviet Union) and Pakistan. Both countries will celebrate next year the 70 years of interstate relations, marked historically by many ups and downs, but currently on a steady rise and enhancement.

When 70 years ago in 1947, Allama Iqbal's cherished desire became true due to appearance of Pakistan on the political world map, his great personality and legacy began gradually associated with this newly-born independent state. His philosophical and poetical world has been under the study of the Soviet scholars from Moscow, Dushanbe, Samarkand and other centers of Oriental studies in the Soviet Union since the late fifties of the 20th century. Though the first mentioning of Muhammad Iqbal in Russia is connected with the name of famous scholar-orientalist A. Krymsky (1871-1942): who in 1912 highly appreciated the work "The Development of Metaphysics in Persia", the author of which was "European-educated Muslim, Doctor of Philosophy of the Munich University".

After that, during the 1930's the Soviet academician A. Barannikov (1890-1952), the Head of the Institute of Oriental Studies (IOS), USSR Academy of Sciences (1938-1941), an expert in eastern philology, the initiator of Urdu and Hindi learning courses at the Oriental departments of our universities, mentioned Iqbal's name in the context of the modern Indian literature.

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Later on, prominent Soviet and Russian scholars as N. Anikeyev, L. Gordon-Polonskaya, Y. Gankovsky, N. Glebov, N. Prigarina, Y. Chelyshev, F. Rozovsky, A. Ionova, M. Stepaniants, L. Vasilyeva, S. Shukurov, A. Suvorova, A. Sukhotchev, A. Gafarov and others have written extensively on Pakistan's National Poet and Philosopher. Reflecting the true sense of Iqbal's legacy, they tried to convey his greatness to the numerous Russian reading audience and thus bringing people of both states closer through the process of intercultural and intellectual dialogue. Special attention was paid to the translation of Iqbal's works from Urdu, Persian and English into the Russian language, first starting from his 43 poems published in Moscow "The Poetry of Indian poets" (1956), as well as "The Sound of Caravan's Bell" (1964) to the latest translation of Iqbal's famous lectures "The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam" (2002). All of these works are of great interest to the literary and philosophical fraternity in Russia where over 20 million citizens are Muslims.

You can find all these books and publications dedicated to Iqbal in our rich research library at the Institute of Oriental Studies Russian Academy of Sciences (IOS RAS) with its funds exceeding 600,000 books and 300,000 oriental publications in different Western and Oriental languages, including Arabic, Bengali, Gujarati, Dari, Kashmiri, Punjabi, Persian, Pashto, Sindhi, Urdu, Farsi, Hindi and others. Here more than 1,000 regular readers, including about 500 students from the Moscow Institutes of Eastern Countries (ISAA) and Practical Oriental Studies, State Lomonosov University and over 100 post-graduate students as well as 150 non-resident readers from other Russian scientific and educational institutions working on Oriental topics can order books for long-term usage.

Moreover, we have a Memorial Library of Professor Yuri V. Gankovsky, who was the founder of Pakistan studies in USSR. He was Vice-President and later - President of the USSR-Pakistan Society founded in 1966. It was period of a thaw between USSR and Pakistan (1960-1970) when, according to the well-known American scholar Hafeez Malik (Pakistani by origin), both countries enjoyed "emergence of realistic relationship". Hafeez Malik, Villanova University Professor,

was a close friend of Professor Y. Gankovsky. As it goes from Hafeez Malik's memoir, they "started first as academic colleagues; gradually we became friends, and then ended as 'brothers'". The main result of their lifelong collaboration became the publication of the jointly edited book "The Encyclopaedia of Pakistan" (2006), planning for which they started in 1981. In the preparation of this first ever English edition nearly twenty Pakistani (M.I. Ali, N. Farruck, A. Farruckhi, R. Husain, M.R. Kazimi, S.T. Kureshi, K.K. Mumtaz, T.K. Naim, I. Piracha, etc.) and seventy Russian scholars (V.Y. Belokrenitsky, S.N. Kamenev, M.Y. Morozova, V.N. Moskalenko, R.M. Mukimjanova, O.V. Pleshov, I.V. Jhmuida, etc.) made their contribution.

There is of course a detailed information about Muhammad Iqbal and his family members, including his son Dr. Javid Iqbal – a mutual friend of both editors-in-chief. It should also be mentioned, that the name of this great poet and thinker of the East is included in different editions of "The Big Soviet Encyclopaedia", "The Big Russian Encyclopaedia", "The Philosophical Encyclopaedia", "The New Philosophical Encyclopaedia", "The Concise Literary Encyclopaedia" as well as in University courses of "The World Urdu and Persian Literature", "The World Philosophy", "The Social Sciences" and some Urdu text-books worked out by our Russian experts.

Hafeez Malik is also an editor of another unique collective monography "Iqbal: Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan" (1971) where seventeen scholars from the Soviet Union, Pakistan, Czechoslovakia, Germany, India and USA showed different aspects of this foremost Muslim thinker's notable career. Hafeez Malik presented it to his friend Yuri on December 1, 1971 "with warm personal regards".

It is highly understandable, that among all the articles submitted in this book the most impressive and tender stands Dr. Javid Iqbal's memories about his father. Especially touching to the heart is enclosed at the end "Father's Prayer" with Muhammad Iqbal's appeal as if not only to his son but to the whole mankind to follow the path of Humanity:

Humanity involves respect for man;

Learn well what is man's place in Nature's plan.

Humanity binds men together in fraternity;
 So keep your feet fixed on the path of amity.

One can find this and a large set of other works on Iqbal as well as his own literary and philosophical masterpieces in the above-mentioned Professor Y. Gankovsky's unique, over the years personally collected library with rare books, mostly donated or presented to him by his Pakistani friends and colleges with the author's dedications and autographs. It presents us not only a lively, extensive biography and scientific achievements of the library owner, but also visualizes retrospectively our two countries intercultural, intellectual dialogue and their aspirations for further mutual cooperation.

Iqbal's rich legacy even nowadays continues to serve for the promotion of Russia-Pakistan socio-cultural ties through joint activities of different government and public organizations of our countries. Thus, the Russian-Pakistani cultural society "Urdu in Moscow" (Moscow Men Farogh-e-Urdu) has been established in 2008 as literary branch of the "Pakistan Society in Moscow" (2005) by the Pakistani diaspora and the Russian experts on South Asian Studies including scholars from the IOS RAS, first of all L.A. Vasilyeva and N. I. Prigarina. It aims at revitalizing the Soviet-Pakistani Cultural Society traditions, popularization of the subcontinent literature and culture in Russia, including Iqbal's legacy, rendering assistance in the translation of the Russian literature into Urdu and Pakistani authors into Russian.

Iqbal Day was jointly celebrated in Moscow on November 13, 2016 by the Pakistani Embassy in Russia, Interregional public organization "Community of Pakistanis", Pakistan-Russia Business Counsel, Association of Pakistani Graduates of Russia and CIS, Cultural Department of Moscow Government, Non-government organisation "Union of Russian Writers" (URW), IOS RAS, Moscow State Institute of International Relations/MGIMO University Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia and some other official and public organisations from both sides. The International Forum was covered by Pakistani channel SUCH TV. The information about this bright socio-cultural event was also posted on the website of IOS RAS.

This year, marked by the 140th birth anniversary of Muhammad Iqbal, will also be celebrated in Russia with a presentation of a new book "The Poet – A Pure Sighted Eye" authored by Lyudmila Avdeeva. She is a Soviet and Russian poet, a member of URW, who for a long period of time had been working together with her husband Gennady Avdeev in Karachi Russian Cultural Center (1993-1997). She was a teacher of Russian for the Pakistani students at that time. The author devoted her new book to "the spiritual father of Pakistan", a poet and humanist Muhammad Iqbal. It is for the first time in the literally world she made an attempt to tell us in a poetic form about Iqbal's life, legacy and personality. The author also paid tribute to the great poets-enlighteners, such as Mirza Ghalib (1797-1869), Hali (1837-1914) as well as Faiz (1911-1984) and other writers of the East. She invites the readers to the poetic journey through the cities, which were closely connected with the life of Iqbal. The book includes such poems, for example, as "Poet Star", "Conversations with Iqbal", "Constellation of Poets", "Kashmiri Land glorified by Iqbal", "Universe and a Man", "Our Century is no Better Old Once", "Call of New Songs", etc. In her extraordinary section of the book under the title "Springs of Poetry" the author uses Iqbal's poetry as epigraphs for her own lyrical, philosophical and spiritual poetry ("Drowning Heart in the Sea of Love", "Looking into the Mirror of Soul", "Poet Verse - the Path to the Reflection", etc.). Her main idea about Muhammad Iqbal is formulated in the following verse:

Your destiny as if the light of sun itself, the road to the future.

Iqbal, you are a real, true Poet. The messenger of God and Muses (A.S).

(Translated into English by I. N. Serenko).

The Russian version of it sounds like follows:

Твоя судьба, как солнца свет, в грядущее дорога.

Икбал, ты - истинный Поэт. Посланник Муз и Бога.

Undoubtedly, this book will make a significant contribution not only in enhancing the Russia-Pakistan socio-cultural dialogue, but in strengthening our interstate relations. The official presentation of Lyudmila Avdeeva's new book has been planned on November 9, 2017

in Moscow with participants from both the Russian and Pakistani sides. With the joint efforts of the Russian academics, writers, students, Embassy of Pakistan and the growing Pakistani community in Russia, Iqbal Day is being celebrated every year. The activities of all these official and public organizations serve for the promotion of mutual understanding and friendship, enhancing multidimensional cooperation and trust between our two countries through people to people contacts, their acknowledgment with the history, culture and life style of each other.

In Moscow on 5-6 October, 2017, an International Scientific Conference “Revolution and Evolution in Islamic Thought and History” was organized jointly by the Institute of Philosophy, Russian Academy of Sciences and the Fund of the Islamic Culture Research where Iqbal’s views on these issues were presented by prominent Russian scholars such as M. T. Stepanyants (“Revolution, Traditionalism, Reformism in Creative Work of Muhammad Iqbal”), L. A. Vasilyeva and N. I. Prigarina (“Revolution in Philosophy and Poetry of Muhammad Iqbal: Experience of Cognitive Discursive Analysis”). To add to it, all of them are good friends of Iqbal’s family.

Fortunately for me, I’ve got acquainted with Muhammad Iqbal’s son Dr. Javid Iqbal who regrettably passed away in 2015, as well as with his grandson Waleed Iqbal during their visits to Russia for the participation in some of the international conferences and meetings held at our Institute of Oriental Studies. Since then, we have been good friends. It gave me a unique opportunity to understand more vividly and thoroughly the great personality of Muhammad Iqbal - an outstanding poet-philosopher, an active political leader, “the spiritual godfather of Pakistan”. And at the same time, I knew more about Muhammad Iqbal as a head of a big family, as a father and a grandfather, the descendants of whom tried and continue to try their best in fulfilling Iqbal’s dream on the creation of a just and peaceful world for all people. To add it more, thanks to the rendered assistance of Waleed Iqbal, acknowledged with my research on the education system in Pakistan, I came to know more about Muhammad Iqbal as an educator through the book “Iqbal’s Educational Philosophy” (1987) presented to me by his grandson,

devoted to the educational legacy of Iqbal, previously practically unknown for the Russian scholars and general readers. This rich material, as well as Muhammad Iqbal's masterpiece "The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam" helped me a lot in writing down my two last books on educational system in Pakistan. His vision of the Muslim world and the European culture, promoted an opportunity for their interaction and integration in the field of education.

Thus, without fear of contradiction, we may say that his progressive educational views as well as of the Muslim reformer Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) whose 200th birth anniversary we observed this year, inspired the Father of the Nation Mohammad Ali Jinnah (1876-1948) to modernize the educational system in the newly-born Pakistan. According to Quaid-i- Azam's statement, "On the lines suited to the genius of our people, consonant with our history and culture, and having regard to the modern conditions and vast developments that have taken place all over the world." Moreover, we may say that Muhammad Iqbal's vision of brotherhood, humanism and peace are in consonance with the modern educational concept of the planetary citizenship "essential for peace, tolerance, human fulfilment and sustainable development", as it is underlined in the Incheon Declaration and Education Framework for Action 2030, adopted by 184 UNESCO Member States, including Pakistan, on November 4, 2015 in Paris.

This Global Strategy of Education is based on the main humanistic principles of social justice and equality, cultural diversity and tolerance, shared human responsibility and accountability. It seems to reflect the main approaches of Iqbal's profound educational philosophy and experience which need to be further studied and applied in practice. Suffice is to recall his assistance in Afghanistan educational reform on the request of King Muhammad Nadir Shah. In his statement issued on October 10, 1933 Muhammad Iqbal underlined, "Educated Afghanistan will be the best friend of India" which was colonized at that time by the British Empire with the national-liberation movement in the South Asian Subcontinent on the rise.

He considered Afghanistan as the "Heart of Asia", the stability of which was important for the whole Asian region. Thus, paying more

attention here to the formation of tolerance, shared responsibility and accountability among the local actors on the platform of regional citizenship is a must of nowadays for the promotion of peace, stability and prosperity in the Central and South Asia and in all neighbouring countries including Russia. And Iqbal's educational legacy may be rather helpful in it.

In the light of all said, there is no need to separate Iqbal's philosophical works from his poetry which represent unity of his great intellectual legacy "clothed in the brilliant forms of highly artistic, poetic images" with their "extraordinary force of emotional influence" on people round the world and relevant to our modern globalized planet by his impassioned fight for freedom, peace, social justice and humanism.

No wonder, that Iqbal's legacy, turned to be an effective instrument in building the foundation of Russia-Pakistan socio-cultural interaction which undermines nowadays the architecture of our mutual multidimensional cooperation in the paradigm of the regional- planetary citizenship. With all evidence it was demonstrated during the 19th World Festival of Youth and Students 2017 (WFYS2017) in Sochi, Russia (15-22 October, 2017) where around 30,000 participants from over 180 countries including the Pakistani delegation came together for this mega-event, shared aspiration to achieve peace, freedom and harmony in the entire world. It looks to be rather symbolic that Pakistan and World Festival of Youth and Students hosted by Russia both marked this year the 70th anniversary. It was held under the slogan: "For peace, solidarity, and social justice, we struggle against imperialism. Honoring our past, we build the future." You can hear that it sounds in unison with Iqbal's appeal for the young generation and humanity to keep "the path of amity." It also unites all of us gathered here at this International Conference devoted to Allama Muhammad Iqbal as one more mega-event on the platform of planetary citizenship. Therefore, for further enhancement of our interstate relations it is advisable to encourage academic, scientific, educational, cultural exchanges and joint projects, fed by rich resources of human capital and people diplomacy, capable to overcome negative perceptions and prejudice of the past so as to move

together to the brighter future for all of us enlightened by Iqbal`s humanistic legacy.