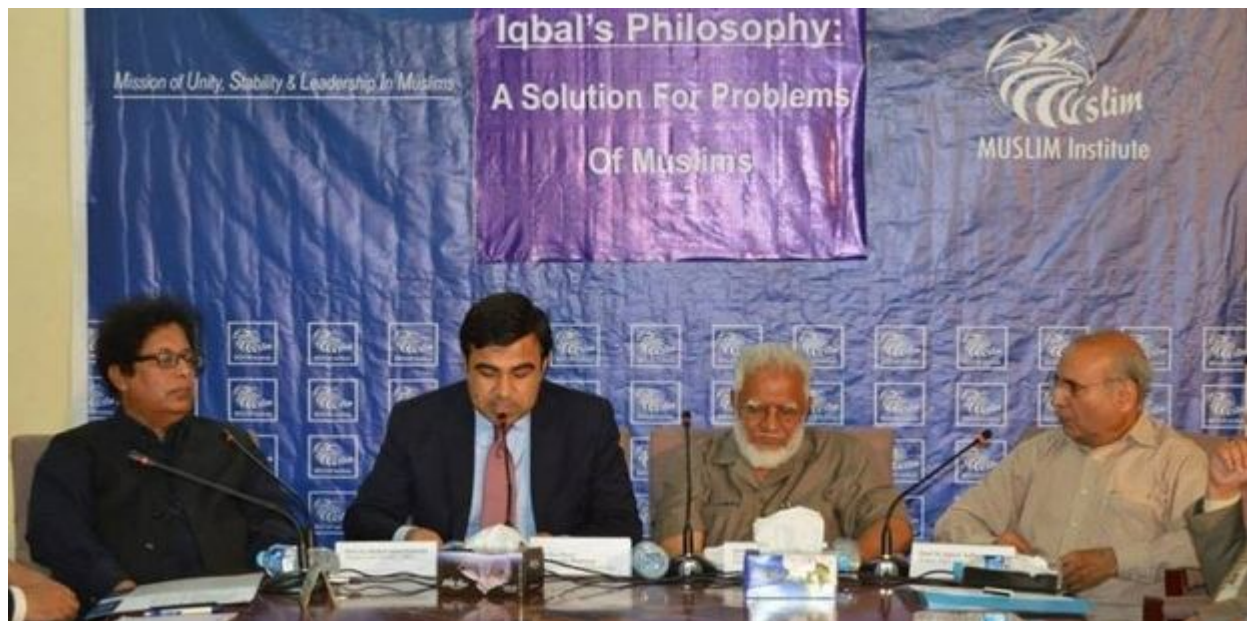


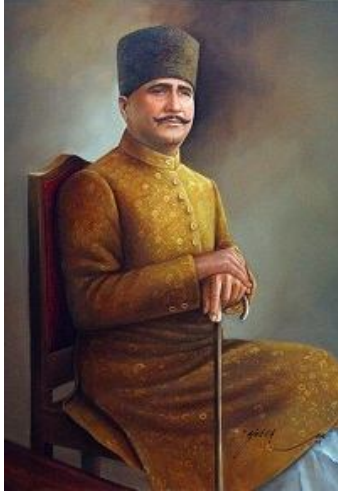
Round Table Discussion on
**Iqbal's Philosophy:
A Solution for Problems of Muslims**

Organized by
MUSLIM Institute

In connection with the death anniversary of Allama Muhammad Iqbal, MUSLIM Institute organized a round table discussion on "Iqbal's Philosophy: A Solution for Problems of Muslims" on Wednesday April 22, 2015 at National Library, Islamabad. Ambassador of Afghanistan to Pakistan His Excellency Mr. Janan Mosazai was chief guest on the occasion whereas Former Chairman of Council of Islamic Ideology, Justice Dr. Khalid Masood presided over the session. Head of Iqbal Studies Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad, Prof. Dr. Shahid Iqbal Kamran, Writer, Poet & Expert on Iqbal, Prof. Muhammad Jaleel Aali and Head of Peace & Conflict Studies Department of National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad, Dr. Zulfiqar Ahmad Qureshi participated in the discussion. Public Relations Coordinator of MUSLIM Institute, Mr. Tahir Mehmood moderated the proceedings of discussion. Various research scholars, diplomats, journalists, professors, students and representatives of civil society participated in the seminar.



Salient points of the addresses of speakers are as under:-



Today Muslim World is facing challenges of different kinds like weak economy, illiteracy, extremism, sectarianism, ideological confusions etc. which need to be addressed and solutions of same be explored. In such scenario the message of Iqbal becomes much more relevant to cure these problems as in the era of Iqbal almost similar situation was being faced by the Muslim world. Iqbal's teachings are being read in almost all parts of world especially in the Muslim world.

Allama Muhammad Iqbal, the poet of East, was a great thinker not only for the Muslim world but for humanity at large. His message is global and goes beyond the limits of geography or a particular school of thought. Iqbal talked about the role of Muslims in the changing world. He simulated all the ideas of that time and based on teachings of Holy Quran, never get biased against any tradition or society as he says:

مشرق سے سپو بیزار نہ مغرب سے حذر کر
فطرت کا اشارہ ہے کہ ہر شب کو سحر کرنا

*Don't shun the East, nor look on West with scorn,
Since Nature yearns for change of night to morn.*



Based on Islamic teachings, people discarded the biases against other traditions or religions and spreading such ideas was a big contribution of Iqbal. He found the universal standard that can bring humanity out of deterioration. Iqbal says the one who is denying creativity is actually a non-believer. Without knowledge, even truth cannot be proved as truth. Muslims should be advance in science and technology as the same has been repeatedly emphasized in Holy Quran that the universe is subdued for human being. Islam teaches one to use dialogue to start any aspect of life and tolerate ideas of others. We have to start our conversations by 'Assalam o Alaikum' which means 'peace be upon you'.

Differences in narrative and history have given rise to pessimism and then to extremism. We have to eliminate the fabricated ideas that are present in our society. We Muslims have to analyse ourselves that how much contribution we have in modern world in terms of knowledge. We can progress in the world only by making progress in science and technology. Today unfortunately we are consumers of modern inventions and not the inventors of new technologies or inventions. We should seek knowledge instead of limiting ourselves only to information.

Today although it is an era of information technology but there are many questions and confusions in the mind of people especially youth regarding religion and ideology. Even on Iqbal's appreciation we are divided because we don't have time and events to discuss and properly analyze it. Public discourse and public discussion is needed. Iqbal addressed the youth in his message as youth is the future of a nation. For our social reforms Iqbal asked to free our intellect from all kinds of fear, barriers and slavery and by doing so, youngsters can become leaders of the nation. Iqbal wanted revolution in one's character because Holy Prophet (PBUH) presented his life first and showed the character before preaching Islam.



Pakistan movement was sub-Continent's first Ijtihadi political movement in order to form a separate sovereign state for Muslims of India. For this movement, Iqbal supported Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah who was a moderate and educated personality. Thus Quaid's personality gives the idea of what was the concept of Pakistan in mind of Iqbal. Iqbal talked about ideological states especially when one nation has its own culture, society and history. In this perspective, Iqbal described two nation theory. Iqbal was against feudalism but unfortunately we are still engulfed in it. Spiritual democracy described by Iqbal aside, we are even far away from western democracy. In a Muslim society, even western democracy can bring a lot of change. We have to act upon teachings of Iqbal otherwise we cannot face the modern world with success. According to Iqbalian vision, parliament should have responsibility of Ijtihad because by doing so, experts of different fields and general public would be engaged whereas the supreme sovereignty belongs to Allah Almighty. Iqbal discussed the link between Allah, man and universe and described the role of human in the dynamic world which is changing with every moment.

Iqbal had special affiliation with Afghanistan and he paid visits there. He presented the idea of Afghanistan as 'heart of Asia' and that the peace and prosperity of Asia is dependent on that of Afghanistan. Today this idea has been proven right and its practical form is in the process to promote understanding and cooperation in the region and upcoming meeting of heart of Asia ministerial conference in this regard would be held in Islamabad in this year hosted by Pakistan government. Afghan nation also has great admiration and affiliation with Iqbal. His message remains an important link between people of the whole region. As per Iqbal's concept, the economic prosperity and land bridge between Eurasia, Central Asia, South Asia, China and in West Asia Iran and Middle East are under focus. Iqbal also predicted about rise of China and the current era is witnessing that his predictions are coming to be true. Iqbal was not against Arabs as they have great contributions in past. Iqbal talked about getting rid of imperialism. We need reforms in our educational institutions to teach the true spirit of Iqbal and motivate

youth to play their role in society. Continuous discourse and discussions on the teachings of Iqbal is needed.

Interactive Session

During the interactive session speakers, panelists discussed and replied different questions asked by the participants. The speakers discussed that:-

When Pakistan came into being we were having opportunities to progress but unfortunately Quaid died in 1948 and we moved away from our track. Today in our society, people want to educate their children up to the extent whatever they can afford but the opportunities are limited and language barrier is one of big obstacles in their way.

We need to utilize our brain and play our role for betterment of society. Iqbal said to create one's own world by using the creativity. Wrong quotations in the name of Iqbal on social media and negative propaganda against him can be dealt by propagating his real message. We should teach our youth about our literature and heritage including Iqbal's poetry, lectures and letters. True inspirational poetry of Iqbal should be taught in our institutions instead of few traditional poems.

In Pakistan people don't vote to extremists and it is a big impact of Iqbal's philosophy. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan was a creativity of Pakistani society and it is Iqbal's ideology that youth of classical families in Pakistan is singing Sufi poetry even in the presence of modern music. These things indicate the potential of our youth as well as effect of Iqbal's message. Allam Iqbal is exceptional today as he was exceptional in his lifetime. We need to apply Iqbal's message on ourselves to deal with the problems of Muslims.

