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The Role of Muhammad Iqbal and Ali Bey Huseynzade in the Formation of National Identity Among Indian and Azerbaijani Muslims

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the common peculiarities of two eastern thinkers Ali bey Huseynzade (1864-1940) and Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1936). The main aim of the article is the investigation of the role of Ali Bey Huseynzade and Muhammad Iqbal in the formation of national identity among Indian and Azerbaijani muslims. The article argues that the political thoughts, speeches, and literary works of both thinkers served to form their nations and establish the independent national states. The first part of the article dedicated to achieving the formation of national identity through an Islamic revival. Both thinkers consider that it is possible to create conditions for a bright future for Muslims by restoring the former power of Islam. The second part devoted to the views of thinkers on the formation of a strong society through the application of Western science. The struggle to end colonial dependence and to benefit from scientific achievements of Europe at the same time were their main missions. Their contribution to the establishment of national independent states has been strongly studied in the third part of the article. As a result of the influence of Ali Bey and Iqbal, two independent states were formed in the East. Islamic values played an important role in the establishment of both states. In conclusion, the article once again emphasizes the contributions of both Eastern thinkers.

Keywords: Muhammad Iqbal, Ali bey Huseynzade, Muslims, Self-Consciousness, National Identity, Independent State.

The article is dedicated to a comparative analysis of the struggle of the intellectuals of Islamic world – Ali Bey Huseynzade (1864 – 1940) and Muhammad Iqbal (1877 – 1938) – for the formation of national identity and the establishment of an independent state. It is no coincidence that both are referred to as the ideological founders of their states in modern times. This factor makes investigating their activities necessary. The comparative analysis of their views includes several key facts about nation formation processes in Azerbaijan and Indian Muslims.

A comparative study of their work shows that in the 19th and 20th centuries, Muslims living in both India and Azerbaijan had much in common in the process of forming a national identity. This period is characterized by the political awakening and national self-consciousness of muslims in Russian colony of Azerbaijan and the British colony of India. Being under the colonial rule alienated these peoples from all the systems of government in the socio-political sphere of the state and innovations in science and technology. This factor, in turn, created

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conditions for their cultural weakening, moving away from their historically formed national identities, and assimilation of their cultural values gradually.

Ali Bey Huseynzade and Muhammad Iqbal came to the aid of the people of Azerbaijan and India during this difficult period of time. Both reformists instilled a love of freedom in the hearts and minds of their nations. Thus, they stimulated a political awakening and led to the formation of national identity.

Azerbaijani reformist scholar Ali Bey Huseynzade determined the direction of the freedom struggle of the Caucasian Turks in the XIX-XX centuries. He dedicated his life to the awakening and national self-consciousness of his people. Some prominent scholars of his time, presented him as "the most perfect leader of the race" (Huseynzade 2008: 8), "mujahideen of the whole Turkic world" (Huseynzade 1994: 3), "father of Caucasian Muslims" (Huseynzade 2008: 8). He was also considered "the man behind the scenes of the events in the Turkish world in the twentieth century" (Turan 2008: 4) by his friend and encyclopedic thinker of Azerbaijan Ahmed Bey Agaoglu. Turkish writer and politician Kchura writes about him, "Ali Bey served more than his professors at Istanbul Medical Faculty in introducing Western thought, Western literature, Western knowledge and culture, briefly the West." (Akcura 2008: 184)

His idea of creating national unity is based on three important aspects that can be categorized as Turkish ancestry, Islamic values and European science. For this purpose, it is advisable to study his activity in these three directions: "Turkification, Islamization and Europeanization" (Ahmadli 2019: 24). In his works, comparing East and West Ali Bey tries to identify the reasons why the East is lagging and staying away from this progress at a time when the West is making progress.

Muhammad Iqbal stimulated the awakening of political consciousness among Indian Muslims. At the center of Iqbal's work was the idea of reviving Islam and creating a society of individuals with a European scientific point of view. He was considered as a thinker who reinterpreted the message of the Qur'an to mankind by Annemarie Schimmel (Schimmel 1978: 367). She regarded him as an Islamic thinker who was deeply acquainted with the spirit, science, and culture of both the East and the West, and who was visually acquainted with the socio-political life of the West. Education in Europe led to the further development of the scientific worldview of the poet-philosopher. For this purpose, the mainline of Iqbal's work can be grouped in the following three ways:

1. Application of European science to the East.
2. The revival of Islam and the creation of a society based on Islamic values.
3. Achieve national self-awareness and independent governance.

Along with Iqbal's services as a poet, lawyer, and philosopher, his political views are also important. Today he is still regarded as the first person among Indian Muslims to demand the establishment of an independent state: "philosopher, raised the possibility that peace would be impossible between Muslims and Hindus unless Muslims were given the status of a separate nation. He stated that the predominantly Muslim northwest region of the subcontinent was destined to form a self-governing unit. This was the first public call for statehood for the subcontinent's Muslims." (Wynbrandt 2008: 146) He claimed that without creation of an independent muslim state Indian muslims can not experience their religious and traditional life.

The sense of responsibility to society made them a well-known scientist, politician and reformist of their time. Education in Europe led to the further development of the scientific worldview of them. Thus, they stimulated the political awakening of Muslims and called them for the struggle against colonial policies.

Achieving the Formation of National Identity Through an Islamic Revival

In Western thought, there was a dominant idea that Islam is a reason why the Muslim East lagged behind the development of science and technology. Iqbal and Huseynzade, who are closely acquainted with the religion and culture of Islam, categorically reject this idea, arguing that Islam is not an obstacle to the development of society, but rather an important role in the socio-political

life of society. Iqbal said "One lesson I have learnt from the history of Muslims. At the critical moments in their history it is Islam that has saved Muslims and not vice versa." (Sherwani 2015: 29) and he tried to reconstruct the true religious life that existed during the time of the Prophet and to adapt it to the requirements of modern times. He presented Islam as a system that could provide solutions to problems in all areas of human life.

As the main demand of the time, Muslims need to return to "themselves" and achieve development by adhering to their Islamic culture. It is possible to create conditions for a bright future for Muslims by restoring the former power of Islam. Schimmel notes that for Iqbal, Islam is the foundation of an ideal state. Only Islam represents true monotheism and applies the true brotherhood of all believers (Schimmel 1992: 136). In his views, based on Islam and the Qur'an, Muhammad Iqbal argued that factors such as territory and race were not a universal bond that could unite people and he defended that Islam was a value that ensures equal rights for all people.

He calls the society formed by the Islamic community an ideal society because it is based on human values: "The law of Islam does not recognize the apparently natural differences of race, nor the historical differences of nationality. The political ideal of Islam consists in the creation of a people born of a free fusion of all races and nationalities. Nationality with Islam is not the highest limit of political development; for the general principles of the law of Islam rest on human nature, not on the peculiarities of a particular people. The inner cohesion of such a nation would consist not in ethnic or geographic unity, not in the unity of language or social tradition, but in the unity of the religious and political ideal... The ideal territory of such a nation would be the whole earth." (Sherwani 2015: 141)

Explaining the form of true unity between people from a spiritual point of view, Iqbal denies the factors that create discrimination between people, such as race, language and territory. He claims that true unity among human beings must be determined by their own will, based on spiritual principles. Everyone, regardless of race, language, or area of residence, can identify himself. He advocates Islamic unity because Islam is also based on universal values and does not discriminate between people based on race, language or territory, and promotes the truthfulness of their association with their will. And thus, Iqbal contradicts the concept of nation, which is widespread in Europe. By referring to Islam, he argues that unity between people is possible by will.

Paying special attention to the role of Islam in the life of society, Huseynzade's idea of the nation was based on humanism and human values. What makes a nation superior over other nations are their services to the interests of all humanity. The thinker, who appreciated the value of nations for his contributions to humanity, accepted that human values were also the basis of the Islamic Ummah. Huseynzade considers that the goal of Islam is to achieve human freedom. Because Islam is a religion that does not recognize the difference between nation and nationality. Those who believe in God are admitted as a community (Huseynzade 2007: 114-115). Like Iqbal, Ali Bey considers that Islam is based on universal values and does not differentiate between people due to factors such as territory and language. The basis of this solidarity is the Islamic faith, which is also based on will. Claiming that the differences between Muslims stem from sectarianism, Ali Bey emphasizes the importance of relying on the Qur'an to strengthen unity among Muslims: "There is no salvation for us outside of Islam. Our forefathers, who were pagans or fire-worshippers in the past, perceived this and accepted Islam." (Huseynzade 2007: 37)

Emphasizing the importance of the role of Islam religion and values in the formation of the identity of the Caucasian Turks, the scientist claims that there will be no development outside of Islam. Because our national identity is already formed under the influence of these factors, there is a danger of alienation from identity by moving away from it.

Application of Western Science to Form a Strong Society

According to both Huseynzade and Iqbal, in order to form a strong personality and society, it is necessary to apply the achievements of the West in science and technology in the East, in addition to having Islamic values. Iqbal claims that the West has some indisputable advantages. Muslims must develop their societies by adopting qualities such as science, technology and cultural

methods that dominate the West (Celik 2004: 174). As education is the process of passing the knowledge on to future generations that a nation and humanity have historically acquired, Muslims must pay special attention to education in order to ensure the sustainability of Islamic culture. He considers that Western scientific achievements are not alien to Islam and claims Europe was once inspired by Islam. There is nothing wrong with the Islamic world's tendency towards the West. Because European culture is the further development of some of the most important stages of Islamic culture in its intellectual aspect (Iqbal 2014: 38).

But he also said that the sudden blind application of Western science is a threat to society: "A purely Western ideal of education will be dangerous to the life of our community...It is therefore absolutely necessary to construct a fresh educational ideal in which the elements of Muslim culture must find a prominent place, and past and the present commingle in a happy union. The construction of such an ideal is not an easy task; it requires a large imagination, a keen perception of the tendencies of modern times, and a complete grasp of the meaning of Muslim history and religion." (Shafique 2018: 71-72) On the one hand, Iqbal protests against the application of Western socio-political concepts in the East, but on the other hand, he argues that the scientific knowledge gained here is not alien to Islamic values. The East must use the scientific and technological achievements of the West in order not to lag behind the development process in the world but must not lose its cultural values within the Western culture. He sought to secure the future of Muslims by creating an education system that combined the past and the future through a synthesis of East and West.

At the center of Ali Bey Huseynzade's system of thought, who chose to serve the people and achieve their progress as a profession, was the idea of achieving national unity and national development. To achieve national self-consciousness among the Caucasian peoples, especially the Turks living in such a complex historical environment, Ali Bey Huseynzade put forward a systematic concept, which was based on the idea of Turkism, Islamism, and Europeanism. His contribution was self-knowledge and understanding national identity of the Turkic peoples. This determined the direction of the struggle. A prominent researcher of Ali Bey's work, Ofelia Bayramova estimated him as a scientist who fought for freedom in the entire Muslim and Turkic world: "A.Huseynzade's greatest service was that he not only exposed and denied the colonial powers as the cruelest enemy of humanity, but also called on the Muslim and Turkish peoples to unite around a common idea, who began to fight for independence and freedom." (Huseynzade 1994: 3)

Ali bey Huseynzade knew that the Turkic peoples were naturally proudful and free-spirited, and one day they would make a revolution and get rid of this slavery: "Caucasian people cannot be forced into slavery! If we look through the three or four-thousand-year history of the Caucasus, we see that they are always fighting for their freedom and liberty. They will either die or emigrate, but they will not be slaves." (Huseynzade 2007: 141) In this sense, he claimed that: "No force in this country can destroy the passion for freedom! No oppression and pressure, no suffering and sadness, no torment and tyranny can extinguish the fire of freedom." (Huseynzade 2007: 142)

However, reformist scholar also knew that these people, who had been deliberately kept away from education for a long time could be defeated if they suddenly began to fight against colonial rule. First of all, it is necessary to achieve a revolution in people's thoughts. In this complex historical period, in order for them to acquire scientific knowledge and realize their identity, Huseynzade developed a systematic concept to achieve the formation of national consciousness and national identity.

Azerbaijani critical scholar Yashar Garayev also claims that the idea of national unity in Azerbaijan is connected with the name of Ali Bey: "Until recently, we divided not only the whole of Azerbaijan, but also Northern Azerbaijan itself into two opposite "national (class) poles" and analyzed them separately. The author of "Politics-Opportunity" (Siyasəti-fürusət"- The name of Ali Bey Huseynzadeh's work dedicated to the national liberation movement) takes them together! Ali Bey expressed and affirmed the ideal of national unity of the 20th century before Shahriyar." (Huseynzade 2007: 11)

He claimed conservatism and imitation as the main reasons for backwardness. According to him, both factors create a dangerous path for the development of a society. While the representatives of the first party prevented development by not being open to innovation, the second party tried to eliminate the existing values (Huseynzade 2007: 37). Against the idea of "In Islam, there is nothing that can serve culture, progress and evolution." (Huseynzade 2007: 34) Ali bey claims: "There is no salvation for us outside of Islam." (Huseynzade 2007: 34) Because no nation appears suddenly. Common values that they have formed as a result of coexistence in their history created the people. Such values include religious identity, ethnic identity, language, customs, traditions, etc., which define the people, and when lost, the people may disappear among other nations. At the center of his idea of unity is the idea of progress through the preservation and development of a common past. In this way, as he claimed, he set as his main goal the struggle against the two factions that hindered progress from the right and the left: "Those on our right are conservative sects who want to keep people in a safe place by avoiding all kinds of new things and activities. They are always an obstacle to the progress of the people." (Huseynzade 2007: 34)

Of course, a society that closes the doors of its consciousness to every innovation that comes from abroad neither can be free, nor achieve any development. The second party that he aimed to fight was the imitators: "Those who stood on our left, blindly imitating our rivals, suddenly want to jump and throw themselves into scary vortices and cliffs." (Huseynzade 2007: 34) On the one hand, the scientist considered it important to take advantage of the progress made in Europe. On the other hand, he wanted to achieve this progress over its own national values, not by imitating this development: "We want their brains and minds to enter the Islamic country. We do not want their throat, stomach to enter our country." (Huseynzade 2007: 34)

At the same time, as he struggled with both conservatism and imitation, it created the impression that Ali Bey was calling his nation to remain neutral. As if Ali Bey offers to be neutral and not to develop in any direction to his nation. In his article entitled "Left, Left, Left!", he emphasizes that this idea is not true: "Who said you have to be neutral? No, never be neutral! What will neutrality cause other than being trampled underfoot? Even the water is afraid of standing still and calm, because it can break, stink, mold, and bind algae!" (Huseynzade 2007: 136)

Concerned about Muslims' careless attitude to the universal sciences, Husseinzade also stressed the need to look at the sustainable development of the West at a time when the Islamic world is declining. "Enlightenment, unity, freedom! What wonderful blessings! Let's not forget that. Because the real salvation is in these three forces." (Huseynzade 2007: 201), Husseinzadeh put forward the idea "We must achieve European science, education, literature, art and industry, and try to instill it in the minds of our nation." (Huseynzade 2007: 37) He added: "The assimilation of Muslims into Western and French culture means the victory of French culture. Therefore, Muslims must accept only the universal values of Europe without moving away from their identities. (Huseynzade 2007: 35) Imitation is such a dangerous element that it can lead to the loss of national values and ultimately the loss of national identity.

Opposing both imitation and conservatism, how did the scholar wish to apply Western innovations to the East? He suggested sending young people to study in Europe. When they return to their homeland, in their countries they will apply the knowledge they gained. Thus, European science will penetrate the East: "Let some of them become engineers, machinists, architects, and agronomists. After studying at a European school, they will apply the knowledge in their home countries. The life of the nation can be ensured only by this means." (Huseynzade 2007: 100)

The fear of being unable to escape the external attraction of Western culture and melting inside of it was at the center of Iqbal's perspective. He opposes the fact that Muslims are blindly influenced by Western culture and imitate it: "If imitation were a good thing, the Prophets would follow in the footsteps of their forefathers." (Celik 2004: 189)

While some people argue that "loving the country is part of the faith" is a tradition inherited from the Prophet, Iqbal points out that the Prophet of Islam left his hometown of Mecca to live a religious life and build a strong bond between people (Sherwani 2015: 302). Pointing to this factor in *The Mysteries of Selflessness*, Iqbal poetically emphasizes that Prophet (PBUH) left his homeland for the future of the nation and religion:

Our Master, fleeing from his fatherland,
Resolved the knot of Muslim nationhood.
(Iqbal 2001: 114)

Thus, Iqbal admits that the preservation of religious identity is the most important issue for Muslims.

The two great reformists, who wanted to achieve a national identity and independent governance, saw imitation as a threat in this way. It is better understood by looking at history. While many nations in the history of mankind have been able to create an independent state, dozens of nations and human communities have not been able to do so. They have been assimilated and erased from the stage of history because they have not been able to preserve their historical values.

Both thinkers, who wanted to save their peoples from colonial slavery and achieve independence, believed that a new independent state should be built on the bases of own identities. The blind imitation of the West can lead to alienation and even assimilation. It is possible to build a new society and an independent state by relying on historically achieved values, not at the cost of losing them.

Contributions to the Establishment of National Identity and a National Independent State

As a successful result of the struggle of two reformists of the East for national identity and state, an independent state was established in both Azerbaijan and India. It is no coincidence that today Huseynzade and Iqbal are considered the ideological founders of their nations for their services in the formation of the nation and state.

Polish-american historian Tadeusz Swietochowski notes that Ali Bey was the person who stimulated political awakening and formation of national identity in Azerbaijan: "One man who believed that with the 1905 Revolution the time had come for Azerbaijanis to define their national identity — and who had no doubt what that identity should be - was Huseynzade." (Swietochowski 1985: 58-59) And he added that, in his article "What kind of learning do we need?", Huseynzade asked the question which later became a popular slogan: "Turkification, Islamization, Europeanization." This slogan was later changed to Ziya Gökalp and became a battle cry in the Ottoman Empire. In Azerbaijan, these three words would one day be symbolized in three colors of an independent state (Huseynzade 2007: 59).

Mammad Amin Rasulzadeh one of the founders of the Republic of Azerbaijan, also confirms that this idea which is the basis of the formation of national identity and played an important role in the establishment of the Republic, was proposed by Huseynzade Ali Bey in 1907 in the journal of Fuyuzat in the form of "Turkish-blooded, Islamic believer and French dressed" (Resulzade 1993: 34). This formula saved the nation from the influence of Russian and European culture and revolutionized their thinking in order to form their own national system of government. In this regard, Ali Bey was especially appreciated by Turkish writer Sadaddin Nuzhet Ergun: "Huseynzade's liberation of the Caucasus from the influence of the Russians and the Persians is the greatest achievement for a patriot" (Turan 2008: 132). Ali Bey wanted to form a society in Azerbaijan that consist of people who believed in Islam and mastered European science.

Iqbal, based on the fact that the peoples of the East and the West have different worldviews and cultures, thought that the spontaneous application of the state system of the West to the East would serve the colonial policy. This factor may distance the East from its historical and cultural heritage. He admits that historically, Islamic culture has had very strong state systems and traditions.

Iqbal, who wants Pakistan to be a great experience in the Islamic world of the twentieth century (Seriati 2013: 100), expressed his demands for the fate of Indian Muslims in his speech at the annual session of the All India Muslim League: "The units of Indian society are not territorial as in European countries, India is a continent of human groups belonging to different races, speaking different languages and professing different religions. Their behavior is not at all

determined by a common race-consciousness... The Muslim demand for the creation of a Muslim India within India is, therefore, perfectly justified" (Sherwani 2015: 10). Only the establishment of a united union of Muslims can protect the nations living here. With this demand, he emphasizes that, Indian Muslims can be protected from the threat of colonization from the West: "I would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single state. Self-government within the British Empire, or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim state appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-West India." (Sherwani 2015: 11) His idea was initially ignored and was seen as a "student's dream" (Sirdar Iqbal 1945: 14). that would not resonate. Although Iqbal himself could not see this important historical event, only nine years after his death, his "dream" came true and Pakistan, an independent state of Indian Muslims, was established.

In conclusion, we would like to point out some important aspects. First of all, in the process of formation of national identity in both places, special attention was paid to Islamic values. They attempted to create a national identity based on Islamic values. They intended to form a Muslim society through the application of scientific knowledge acquired in Europe. The common characteristics of these thinkers are advisable grouping as following:

1. While Huseynzade fought against the Russian Empire, Iqbal fought against British colonial policy.
2. Both intellectuals struggled to benefit from the European scientific and technological advances through enlightenment;
3. They wanted to ensure that Muslims returned to true, pure Islam by reviving Islam;
4. Both thinkers developed the ideological basis for the struggle for the establishment of an independent state.

Ideologists, who saw the way of freedom in power, suggested that the East should be adapted to the West in order to gain power. At the same time, they tried to prevent Muslims from moving away from their national identities, under the influence of Western culture. They considered that as Islam did not hinder human development, Muslims should acquire Western scientific knowledge without deviating from Islam. Deviation from national values is considered as a threat to the formation of free and ideal society in the East. Therefore, an ideal society must be formed on the basis of values that were historically formed and handed down from generation to generation. It was also considered as a threat to the East because the dominant social ideologies in Europe eventually could be led to the complete alienation of society from religion.

As a result of this long struggle of both intellectuals, who defended human unity based on moral and human values, there was a political awakening among Muslims. Ensuring the awakening of thought, in turn, created the conditions for the emergence of two independent states in the East – The Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan and the State of Pakistan.

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