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Muḥammad Iqbāl and the Turks. A Handful of Reflections on a Selection of Poems

ABSTRACT

This article explores the relationship between the prominent Pakistani philosopher-poet Muḥammad Iqbāl and the Turkish people, particularly through the lens of his poetry. Iqbāl, known for his advocacy for Muslim unity and self-realization, drew heavily on the works of Jalāluddīn Rūmī and was deeply influenced by the spiritual and intellectual legacy of the Ottoman Empire, which he admired for its role in preserving Islamic values. He saw the defence of Turkish sovereignty as a symbol of Islamic resilience against external domination. Iqbāl's support for the Khilafat Movement and his respect for Turkey's struggle for independence under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk are highlighted in his poetic works, which reflect both praise and criticism. While he initially admired Atatürk's efforts to protect Turkish independence and modernize the country, Iqbāl later expressed concerns over the Westernization of Turkey and the potential erosion of its Islamic identity. Through his poetry, Iqbāl conveyed his belief in the importance of maintaining cultural and spiritual identity while embracing progress. The text also underscores Iqbāl's broader vision of Islamic revival, urging Muslims to reclaim their independence and cultural identity in the face of colonial and imperial pressures. Although Iqbāl never visited Turkey, his writings had a significant impact on the political and intellectual discourse of the Muslim world in the early 20th century.

KEYWORDS: Muḥammad Iqbāl, Ottoman Empire, Khilafat Movement, Cultural identity, Westernization

STRESZCZENIE

Muḥammad Iqbāl i Turcy. Garść refleksji na podstawie subiektywnego wyboru wierszy

Tekst pt. *Muḥammad Iqbāl i Turcy* bada przez pryzmat wybranych utworów poetyckich Muḥammada Iqbāla związku tego wybitnego pakistańskiego myśliciela i poety z narodem tureckim. Iqbāl, znany orędownik muzułmańskiej

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jedności i samorealizacji, czerpał obficie z dzieł Jalāluddīna Rūmiego i pozostał pod silnym wpływem duchowego i intelektualnego dziedzictwa Imperium Osmańskiego. Podziwiał Turcję za jej rolę w zachowaniu wartości islamskich, a obronę suwerenności Imperium Osmańskiego postrzegał jako ucieleśnienie odporności islamu na zewnętrzną dominację. Poparcie Iqbāl dla ruchu na rzecz kalifatu i szacunek, jakim darzył walczących o niepodległość Turków i ich przywódcę Mustafę Kemala Atatürka, można odnaleźć w wielu jego dziełach poetyckich, choć obok pochwał zawierają one również jasno wyrażoną krytykę. Iqbāl początkowo podziwiał wysiłki Atatürka na rzecz ochrony niepodległości Turcji i modernizacji kraju, później sformułował jednak obawy związane z jej westernizacją i potencjalną erozją islamskiej tożsamości. W swoich wierszach i poematach Iqbāl wyrażał przekonanie o znaczeniu, jakie ma zachowanie tożsamości kulturowej i duchowej przy jednoczesnej akceptacji nieuchronnego postępu. Tekst naświetla również szerszą wizję odrodzenia islamu sformułowaną przez Iqbāl, wzywającego muzułmanów do utrzymania suwerenności i tożsamości kulturowej w obliczu nacisków kolonialnych i imperialnych. Chociaż Iqbāl nigdy nie odwiedził Turcji, jego pisma wywarły znaczący wpływ na dyskurs polityczny i intelektualny w świecie muzułmańskim w pierwszych dekadach XX w.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: Muḥammad Iqbāl, Imperium Osmańskie, Ruch na rzecz kalifatu, tożsamość kulturowa, westernizacja

Introduction

Muḥammad Iqbāl¹, also known as ‘Allāma Iqbāl, was a highly respected philosopher, poet, and politician born on November 9, 1877, in Sialkot, now in Pakistan. He is widely regarded as one of the most prominent figures in Urdu and Persian literature, particularly for his poetry. Iqbāl’s work was influential in advocating for the revitalization of the Muslim world, promoting individual self-realization, and emphasizing the importance of self-respect, self-awareness, and self-development among Muslims. He encouraged the idea of selfhood and self-awareness to bring about positive change in society.

Apart from being a poet, Iqbāl was also a prominent philosopher and thinker who addressed a wide range of topics in his poetry, essays, and speeches, offering perspectives on politics, society, culture, and spirituality. His writings reflected a visionary approach to addressing the challenges faced by Muslims and humanity at large. He not only advocated for Muslim unity and empowerment as crucial elements for the revival and progress of the Muslim world but also emphasized the importance of spiritual awakening and self-awareness

1 In this text, I follow the Library of Congress Urdu romanization standard, cf. [online:] <https://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsa/romanization/urdu.pdf> (access: 30.09.2023).

among individuals and communities. He was vocal about the importance of social justice, equality, and fair treatment for all individuals within society, regardless of their backgrounds or beliefs. He stressed the need for just governance and the eradication of social injustices. Iqbāl criticized colonialism and imperialism, highlighting their negative impact on the Muslim world and other colonized nations. He urged Muslims to strive for independence and self-rule, as well as to resist external domination, envisioning a world where different civilizations and cultures could coexist peacefully, advocating for mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation among nations.

In his writings and speeches, Iqbāl frequently referenced historical events and figures to convey his philosophical, social, and political messages. His use of historical references served as a means to draw parallels, impart lessons, and inspire his audience. Among others, Iqbāl often referred to the history of the Ottoman Empire, recognizing its contribution to Islamic civilization. He lamented the decline of this once-great empire and urged Muslims to learn from its history in order to revive their past glory, emphasizing its significance not only as the seat of the Caliphate but also as the only Muslim country to maintain independence amidst European colonialism. He also responded keenly to the turbulent events of the early 20th century – many of which involved the Turks – commenting on them through the prism of his philosophical views.

In this article, I attempt to outline Iqbāl's attitude towards Turkey and the Turks, based on a selection of his poetic texts containing both historical and contemporary references. It is not my goal to conduct an in-depth and detailed analysis of the topic, as this would require examining the poet's entire written legacy, including his books, letters, and newspaper articles. Although this text does not encompass all facets of Iqbāl's writings, it aims to provide a nuanced understanding of his perspectives on Turkey and its people through a focused examination of his poetic expressions.

Rūmī's disciple

Iqbāl had a deep admiration for the works of Jalāluddīn Rūmī,² a 13th-century poet, jurist, Islamic scholar, theologian, and Sufi mystic, born in Khwarazm and writing in Persian. Iqbāl was greatly influenced by Rūmī's poetry and philosophy, and he often referenced Rūmī's ideas and concepts in his own works. He saw in Rūmī a source of inspiration for his own philosophical and spiritual

2 Rūmī means "from Rūm," the pre-Islamic name for Anatolia and also the name of the later Muslim state (Pers. *Saljūqiyyān-i Rūm*, Sultanate of Rum), established over conquered Byzantine territories of Anatolia by the Seljuk Turks after 1071.

journey. Rūmī's emphasis on love, mysticism, and the union of the self with the divine resonated with Iqbāl's own thoughts on self-realization, individuality, and the spiritual development of the self. Iqbāl drew from Rūmī's ideas and integrated them into his own writings and lectures, blending them with his own distinctive perspective and vision for the revival of Islamic thought and the empowerment of the individual.

One of the most notable ways in which Iqbāl was influenced by Rūmī is through his concept of *khūdī* (selfhood or individuality). Iqbāl drew upon Rūmī's ideas of self-awareness and spiritual awakening to develop his concept of *khūdī*, which he considered essential for the regeneration of the Muslim world. He believed that by understanding and nurturing their individuality, Muslims could achieve spiritual and intellectual enlightenment. Iqbāl gave the fullest explanation of this concept in his first poetical work, *Asrār-i khūdī* (*The Secrets of the Self*), published in Persian in 1915. The poem, composed in the meter and modeled on the style of the famous Rūmī's *Maṣnavī*, is a kind of tribute to the great master not only in its form. Reynold A. Nicholson, who was the first translator of this work into English, writes in the preface that Rūmī is for Iqbāl "almost what Virgil was to Dante, appeared in a vision and bade him arise and sing ..." (Nicholson, 1920, p. xiv). And indeed, like Dante takes Virgil as his guide, Iqbāl too chooses Rūmī to accompany him during his spiritual journey "from earth through the 'spheres' of the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, to beyond the 'spheres' and to the Presence of God," described in another long poem, *Jāvid-nāmah* (*The Song of Eternity*), acclaimed as his *magnum opus* and a masterpiece regarded by many as one of the finest classical works of Persian poetry (Iqbal, 1966, p. 10).

Iqbāl's verses often reflect his admiration for Rūmī and Sufi thought in general. He incorporated Sufi themes and imagery into his work, and his appreciation for Rūmī's poetry can be seen in various references and allusions throughout his verses. One of these is the famous poem *Pīr-o-murīd* (*The Mentor and the Disciple*), composed in a form of a dialogue between two persons: *murīd-i hindī* (the Indian disciple) personifying Iqbāl himself and *pīr-i Rūmī* who embodies his spiritual mentor Maulānā Jalāluddīn Rūmī. In this poem, Iqbāl portrays the relationship between the spiritual guide (*pīr*) and the seeker (*murīd*) as a profound and transformative connection. The poem illustrates the quest for enlightenment and guidance that a disciple seeks from the mentor. The *pīr* symbolizes wisdom, guidance, and spiritual authority, while the *murīd* represents the seeking soul aspiring to higher knowledge and spiritual elevation.

The Indian Disciple

Discerning eyes bleed in pain,
For faith is ruined by knowledge in this age.

Rumi

Fling it on the body, and knowledge becomes a serpent;
Fling it on the heart, and it becomes a friend.

...

The Indian Disciple

The East lives on through your words!
Of what disease nations die?

Rumi

Every nation that perished in the past,
Perished for mistaking stone for incense.

The Indian Disciple

Muslims have now lost their vigour and force;
Wherefore are they so timid and tame?

Rumi

No nation meets its doom,
Until it angers a man of God.

...

The Indian Disciple

What is the secret of knowledge and wisdom?
And how to be blessed with passion and pain?

Rumi

Knowledge and wisdom are born of honest living;
Love and ecstasy are born of honest living.

...

The Indian Disciple

India now has no light of vision or yearning;
Men of illumined hearts have fallen on evil days.

Rumi

Imparting heat and light is the task of the brave;
Cunning and shamelessness are the refuge of the mean.³

Iqbal emphasizes here the importance of the *pīr-murīd* relationship, highlighting the essential role of the mentor in guiding the disciple through the complexities of spiritual growth. The *pīr* provides insight, assistance, and support to the *murīd*, helping him navigate the spiritual path, overcome obstacles, and attain a deeper understanding of himself and the divine.

The poem's essence lies in the idea that the relationship between the two transcends mere mentorship; it is a sacred bond based on trust, devotion, and

3 *Pīr-o-Murīd (The Mentor and the Disciple)*, from Iqbal's poetry book *Bāl-i Jibrīl (Gabriel's Wing, 1935)*, transl. by V.G. Kiernan. All fragments of Iqbal's poems used in this text, unless otherwise noted, come from the Official Website of Iqbal Academy Pakistan (http://www.allamaIqbal.com/index.php?lang_code=en), where they are available both in Urdu and in an English translation.

mutual respect. The *murīd* seeks spiritual enlightenment, while the *pīr* selflessly imparts wisdom and spiritual guidance, leading his disciple towards self-discovery and illumination. The poem encapsulates the spiritual journey and the significance of a sincere and profound connection between a spiritual guide and a seeker, emphasizing the transformative power of such a relationship in the pursuit of higher truths and spiritual fulfilment.⁴

Supporter and defender of the Ottoman Empire

Iqbāl actively supported the Khilafat Movement (1919–1922), a pan-Islamic political campaign launched by Indian Muslims in the aftermath of World War I, which aimed to protest the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire by the Allied powers and the subsequent abolition of the Islamic caliphate. On many occasions, he expressed his solidarity with the cause through his poetry and writings. He believed that Muslims should unite to protect the institution of the caliphate, viewing it as a symbol of Muslim unity and strength. Iqbāl saw the caliphate as crucial for safeguarding the interests of Muslims globally and preserving their religious and cultural identity.⁵

More than once, Iqbāl expressed admiration for the Ottoman Empire's ability to preserve the unity of the Muslim world and its efforts to defend Islamic values and territories against external threats. He emphasized the importance of the Ottoman caliphate as a symbol of unity for Muslims across diverse regions. Constantinople, the empire's capital, Iqbāl regarded not only as a city of immense historical significance but also as a symbol of the former glory and power of the Islamic civilization:

The tract of Constantinople, that is the Caesar's city
The perpetual banner of the grandeur of the Ummah's Mahdi
Like the Haram's dust this region is also holy
It is the shrine of descendants of Shah-i-Lawlak
Its breeze is holy like the fragrance of rose
A voice is calling from the tomb of Ayyub Ansari

4 In Konya, Turkey, there is the symbolic tombstone of 'Allāma Iqbāl outside the mausoleum of Maulānā Jalāluddīn Rūmī, to commemorate this unique metaphysical bond between *murīd-i hindī* and his *pīr*. The epitaph in Turkish reads: "Pakistan'ın millî şair ve düşünürü Muhammed İkbāl'e aziz müşşidi Hazret-i Mevlānā'nın huzurunda bu makam verildi. 1965" ("This honorary site has been granted to Muhammad Iqbal, Pakistan's national poet, by his spiritual master, Mevlana Rumi"). Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/GovtofPakistan/status/1060879682902638593> (access: 30.09.2023).

5 Wider discussion concerning Iqbāl's political ideas on Islamic universalism and the caliphate as an institution see Baloch (2010).

“O Muslim! this city is the heart of the Nation of Islam!
This city is the reward for millenniums of blood sacrifices!”⁶

In this fragment, Iqbāl refers to Constantinople as the “Caesar’s city,” highlighting its historical importance as the center of the Byzantine Empire, while also linking it to the grandeur of the Islamic community, by portraying it as a perpetual symbol associated with the awaited spiritual leader, Mahdī. The reference to the city being akin to the Ḥaram (or holy sanctuary) underscores its sanctity in Islamic thought, while its role as the resting place of the Prophet’s descendants further emphasizes its sacred and symbolic significance. The mention of Ayyūb Anṣārī’s tomb adds a layer of historical and spiritual depth. Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī, a close companion of the Prophet Muḥammad is deeply revered in Islamic tradition. The imagined voice from his tomb calls upon Muslims, proclaiming Constantinople as the heart of the Islamic nation, and a reward earned through centuries of sacrifices.

Iqbāl closely followed the struggle between Ottoman Turkey and the forces of the West. He commented on the events of the Italo-Turkish War (1911–1912),⁷ the Balkan Wars (1912–1913), and Turkey’s fight to preserve its independence after World War I. In his eyes, the dying empire embodied the finest qualities of Islam – and of humanity as a whole: truth, mercy, courage, and nobility. Reflecting on the siege of Adrianople,⁸ he pictured it as a symbolic clash between truth and falsehood, representing a broader ideological and moral struggle between Muslim and European civilizations:

When the struggle between Truth and falsehood began in Europe
The Truth was compelled on wielding the dagger
The dust of the Cross circled round the Crescent
Shakree became besieged in the fortress of Adrianople
Provisions of Muslim soldiers became exhausted
The face of hope from the eye became concealed
At last, by the Turkish army commander’s orders
“Martial Law” was proclaimed the law of the city
Everything was transferred to the army camp’s store

6 *Bilād-e islāmiya (The Islamic Cities)*, from Iqbāl’s poetry book *Bang-i Dara (The Call of the Caravan Bell)*, 1924), transl. by: M.A.K. Khalil.

7 Known also as Tripolitanian or Tripoli War. For more about Iqbāl’s reaction, see a recently published article by Hatice Görgün (2023).

8 The Siege of Adrianople (modern-day Edirne, Turkey) in 1912–1913 was a significant event during the First Balkan War. It began in November 1912, when Bulgarian forces besieged the city, which was under Ottoman control. The Ottomans fiercely defended the city, but ultimately surrendered Adrianople to the Bulgarian forces on March 26, 1913. The fall of Adrianople was a critical moment in the First Balkan War and contributed to the eventual defeat of the Ottoman Empire.

The eagle became beggar for the grain of the sparrow
But when the Faqih⁹ of the city heard this news
He exploded with anger like the thunderbolt of Tur
“Dhimmi’s”¹⁰ wealth is forbidden for the Muslim army”
This edict was published throughout the whole city
The army would not touch the Jews’ and Christians’ wealth
The Muslim became compelled by the Command of God!¹¹

In the poem, Iqbāl underscores the adherence to moral and ethical values even in times of conflict and scarcity. When the commander of the Turkish army, faced with a shortage of supplies, declares martial law, signaling a shift in the control and management of resources to the camp, the religious scholar or *faqih* of the city vehemently objects to this decision. He insists that, according to Islamic law, the Muslim army is forbidden to seize the property of non-Muslims, referred to as *ẓimmī*-s (Jews and Christians). This ruling is proclaimed throughout the city, emphasizing the importance of upholding ethical and religious principles even in times of hardship.

Iqbāl used his poetic verses to stir emotions, invoke a sense of unity, and inspire individuals to contribute to the Turkish efforts. In 1913, at a political rally in Lahore held to raise money for the Turkish struggle against the Bulgarian uprising, he delivered a long poem *Javāb-e Shikvah* (*Answer to the Complaint*), which was a sequel to his earlier, widely recognized poetic work *Shikvah* (*Complaint*), announced in 1909 (Khan, 2012, p. 65). While in *Shikvah* the author expressed the grievances and complaints of the Muslim community, lamenting their apparent decline and the hardships they faced, his *Javāb-e Shikvah* serves as a response to these complaints, providing insight and a philosophical perspective on the issues raised in the first poem. Here, Iqbāl presents the perspective of God responding to the complaints made by the Muslim community.

The poem serves as a reflective and thought-provoking piece, encouraging Muslims to re-evaluate their actions, rekindle their faith, and strive for positive change through self-improvement and a deeper understanding of their spiritual purpose. It carries a message of hope, urging individuals to rise above their challenges and actively participate in their own upliftment and societal progress. Iqbāl’s recitation of *Javāb-e Shikvah* during the gathering was a powerful

9 Ar. *faqih* ‘jurist,’ an expert in *fiqh*, or Islamic jurisprudence and Islamic law, whose role according to Twelver Shia Islamic law is to administer the religious and social affairs of the Muslim community.

10 Ar. *ḍimmī* ‘disbeliever’ – historical term for non-Muslims living in an Islamic state who are granted protection and certain rights in exchange for paying a tax called *jizya*.

11 *Maḥāẓira-e Adarna* (*The Siege of Adrianople*), from Iqbāl’s poetry book *Bang-i Dara* (*The Call of the Caravan Bell*, 1924), transl. by M.A.K. Khalil.

expression of solidarity with the broader Muslim world and a call for support for the Turkish cause. The event served as a foreshadowing of the emerging sentiments and unity among Muslims that would later culminate in the Khilafat movement.¹²

Supporting Turkish efforts during the War of Independence (1919–1923), Iqbāl urged Muslims to be cautious about embracing Western democratic systems and British rule. Instead, he encouraged the formation of an association or unity among Muslim nations against Western influence (Nix, 2015, p. 222). He believed that blindly adopting Western democratic ideals without considering their compatibility with Islamic principles could potentially weaken the fabric of Islamic society and cautioned against imitating Western systems without evaluating their impact on Islamic values, culture, and governance. He was deeply convinced that the restoration of the caliphate could be achieved only through the genuine efforts of Muslims themselves, even at the cost of great sacrifice, and he expressed a sense of shame in appealing for external aid or intervention:

If the territory is being lost let it be lost
 You should not be disloyal to God's commands
 Do you not have knowledge of history?
 You have started begging for the Khilafah!
 If we do not purchase with our own blood
 Such sovereignty is a disgrace to the Muslim!
 "I do not feel as much ashamed of being broken down
 As in asking others for *mumiya*"¹³ for my treatment."¹⁴

In this short poem, Iqbāl criticizes the notion of relying on others to regain lost territories or sovereignty, suggesting that such dependence tarnishes the honor of Muslims. Instead, he advocates for self-sufficiency and resilience within the Muslim community. His lines underscore the significance of preserving dignity and principle even in times of adversity or territorial loss, implying that seeking assistance from others without making one's own effort is more humiliating than facing defeat.

12 There were, apart from Iqbāl, also other Urdu poets engaged in supporting the Khilafat movement and using their poetical works to deliver their political message. See Minault, 1974.

13 Pers. *mūmiyā'i* 'remedy, panacea' – a legendary medicine believed to be a cure for all ills.

14 *Daryūza-e khilāfat* (*Begging for the Caliphate*), from Iqbāl's poetry book *Bang-i Dara* (*The Call of the Caravan Bell*, 1924), transl. by: M.A.K. Khalil.

Praising and criticizing Atatürk¹⁵

As already mentioned, Iqbāl admired and supported Turkey's struggle for independence and viewed it as a beacon of hope for the broader Muslim world. He recognized and deeply valued Atatürk's pivotal role in safeguarding Turkey from the harsh terms of the Treaty of Sèvres (1920), which would have led to the partitioning and further disintegration of the already weakened Ottoman Empire after World War I. Iqbāl appreciated Atatürk's efforts, as they aligned with his broader vision of Muslim unity, freedom, and revival, a vision in which a sovereign and strong Turkey would be a leading force and example to follow. Initially, Atatürk's determination to maintain Turkey's independence from external interference and his initiatives to modernize the country without compromising its Muslim identity resonated with Iqbāl's own ideas regarding the importance of preserving Islamic heritage while embracing progress and independence.

However, after abolition of the caliphate in 1924 and with Atatürk's reforms aiming at secularizing state institutions and modernizing Turkey through the adoption of Western practices and laws, Iqbāl began to question the impact of these changes on Turkey's Islamic heritage and the broader Muslim world. In his verses, he openly expressed deep concern about the potential erosion of Islamic values and cultural identity in the pursuit of Western-style secularism:

Since the West viewed body and soul as separate,
It also regarded State and Religion as two.
The churchman only tells his beads,
For he has no work of the State to perform.
See deceit and artifice in state craft:
It is a body without a soul, or a soul without a body.
Make intellect a companion of your heart;
Behold, for instance, the Turkish nation.
By imitation of the West, the Turks lost their individuality;
They did not see any link between State and Religion (Iqbal, 1996, pp. 24–25).

In *Jāwīd-nāmāh*, published in 1932, Iqbāl's disillusionment with the Turks' fascination and imitation of European culture, which he characterizes as "honeyed poison," becomes even clearer:

The Turks have departed from their own selves, drunk with Europe,
having quaffed honeyed poison from the hand of Europe;
of those who have abandoned the antidote of Iraq

15 Iqbal's contradictory statements about Atatürk and his reforms have been discussed in more detail in Rahman, 1984.

what shall I say, except ‘God help them’?
The slave of Europe, eager to show off,
borrows from the Westerners their music and dances;
he gambles away his precious soul for frivolity –
science is a hard quest, so he makes do with fun.
Being slothful, he takes the easy way;
his nature readily accepts the easy alternative.
To seek for ease in this ancient convent
proves that the soul has gone out of the body (Iqbal, 1966, pp. 129–130).

According to the poet, by turning away from their own cultural and intellectual roots, the Turks have neglected valuable traditions and wisdom – symbolized here by “the antidote of Iraq,” a drug famed as a remedy against poisons (Iqbal, 1966, p. 150) – that could have safeguarded them against the negative influences of Western culture. It is not without significance that Iqbal places these words of criticism in the mouth of Said Halim Pasha, the Ottoman statesman and Grand Vizier from 1913 to 1917, whose character he meets during the allegorical journey depicted in *Jāwīd-nāmāh*.

Bitter words of criticism, uttered again by Said Halim Pasha, are also proclaimed in the fragment of the poem addressed to Atatürk himself.

Mustafa Kemal, who sang of a great renewal,
said the old image must be cleansed and polished;
yet the vitality of the Kaaba cannot be made new
if a new Lat and Manat¹⁶ from Europe enter its shrine.
No, the Turks have no new melody in their lute,
what they call new is only the old tune of Europe;
no fresh breath has entered into their breast,
no design of a new world is in their mind.
Turkey perforce goes along with the existing world,
melted like wax in the flame of the world we know (Iqbal, 1966, p. 58).

The author expresses doubts about the true depth of the transformation taking place. He implies that the attempts at renewal and modernization are merely surface-level changes that imitate European culture, rather than a genuine revitalization rooted in Turkish heritage and unique identity. Iqbal again cautions against wholesale adoption of European values and norms, believing that such imitation would dilute or replace the intrinsic essence of Turkish culture and character. He argues that real progress should involve a deeper renaissance grounded in the Turks’ own traditions, values, and aspirations.

16 Al-Lat and Manat – pre-Islamic Arabian goddesses worshipped in the Arabian Peninsula before the rise of Islam.

Conclusion

The above comprehensive overview of Muḥammad Iqbāl's multifaceted views on the Turks, the Ottoman Empire, and – through this prism – the wider Islamic world outlines several aspects: Iqbāl's admiration for Jalāluddīn Rūmī, his advocacy for spiritual self-realization, and his support for the Ottoman Empire and the Khilafat movement. It also portrays Iqbāl's evolving attitude toward Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, which oscillated between praise for his efforts to safeguard Turkey's independence and criticism of what Iqbāl perceived as a dilution of Turkish identity through Westernization.

Although Iqbāl never visited Turkey or had no direct political involvement in her affairs, he viewed Turkey's successful defense of her independence as a catalyst for reviving the spiritual and cultural essence of Islam, inspiring other Muslim nations to strive for freedom, self-awareness, and progress. He perceived Turkey's defense of its sovereignty as more than a mere political struggle; he saw it as a symbol of resilience against external dominance, a resurgence of Islamic values, and a call to action for Muslim nations to reclaim their independence and assert their cultural and spiritual identity. His admiration for Turkey and his support for her cause were rooted in his broader philosophy of Islamic revival and his desire to see Muslims come together to address the challenges facing their communities. His ideas and writings played a significant role in shaping the political and intellectual discourse of the Muslim world during the early 20th century, and he is still celebrated for his substantial contribution to Islamic thought.

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