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## Iqbal's Political Ideology and Electoral Involvement: The Quest for Muslim Unity and Right

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### Abstract

*Allama Muhammad Iqbal's early political career reveals his deep engagement with the socio-political challenges faced by Indian Muslims during British colonial rule. Iqbal's political journey began during his stay in England, where his involvement with the British Committee of the All-India Muslim League and the Pan-Islamic Society marked his entry into practical politics. Upon his return to India in 1908, Iqbal joined the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, actively participating in political debates and initiatives. His early political contributions, including his role in the Punjab Muslim League's address to Lord Minto in 1909 and his criticisms of colonial decisions like the annulment of the Bengal partition, reflect his evolving political philosophy, emphasizing Muslim unity and identity. In 1926, Iqbal's participation in the Punjab Legislative Council elections marked a turning point in his political career. Contesting as a unifying candidate for Lahore's Muslims, he faced opposition driven by sectarianism and ethnic biases. However, Iqbal's campaign, supported by diverse communities and intellectuals, emphasized Islamic unity, political awareness, and collective progress. His victory, achieved by a significant margin, underscored his ability to transcend societal divisions and inspire mass support. As a legislator, Iqbal advocated for land reforms, fair taxation, and religious harmony while rejecting caste and sectarian politics. His electoral journey not only mobilized Muslim political thought but also laid the foundation for the demand for separate Muslim representation, a precursor to the eventual creation of Pakistan. This study explores Iqbal's political evolution, his role in shaping Muslim identity, and the broader implications of his electoral politics for the subcontinent's history. By bridging poetry, philosophy, and political*



*activism, Iqbal's legacy exemplifies the transformative power of intellectual leadership in navigating political challenges.*

**Key Words:** Iqbal, Electoral Politics, Legislative Council, Punjab, Muslim Rights

## Introduction

Allama Muhammad Iqbal is often celebrated as one of the greatest poets in the history of the Muslim world, a visionary whose words inspired generations. Yet his influence extended far beyond the realm of poetry, as his intellectual and political engagement laid the foundation for significant changes in the political landscape of colonial India. Iqbal's journey into the complex world of electoral politics was not only a testament to his commitment to the welfare of Muslims but also a powerful assertion of his belief in unity, self-determination, and justice. This transformation from a philosopher who championed spiritual enlightenment to a politician who advocated for tangible political rights underscores the multifaceted legacy of a man whose work continues to resonate in the corridors of power, intellectual discourse, and the political movements that shaped the future of South Asia. Through his electoral politics, Iqbal sought to reframe the narrative of Muslim identity in India, championing a vision of political autonomy that would eventually contribute to the creation of Pakistan.

## Literature Review

Allama Muhammad Iqbal's political philosophy and his role in the socio-political development of Indian Muslims have been widely discussed in various academic works. Scholars have extensively analyzed his intellectual contributions, including his poetry and philosophical writings, but his political engagements, particularly during his early career, remain an area requiring further exploration. V. S. Naipaul (1990) in *Beyond Belief* discusses Iqbal's impact on the intellectual awakening of Muslims in the subcontinent, emphasizing his call for self-awareness and unity. Similarly, Annemarie Schimmel (1989) in *Gabriel's Wing* elaborates on Iqbal's philosophical underpinnings, particularly his concept of Khudi (selfhood), and its implications for political thought. While Schimmel provides valuable insights into Iqbal's intellectual framework, her work leaves room for deeper investigation into the practical applications of his ideas in the political domain. Muhammad Munawwar (1985) in *Iqbal and Quranic Wisdom* connects Iqbal's early political engagement to his interpretations of Quranic principles, highlighting his advocacy for justice, equality, and social reform. This work aligns Iqbal's political activism with his broader vision of Islamic renewal but does not delve into his legislative contributions or election campaigns.

K. K. Aziz (1977) in *Iqbal: The Poet and the Politician* sheds light on Iqbal's dual role as a poet-philosopher and a political figure. Aziz provides a detailed account of Iqbal's legislative activities and speeches, particularly his focus on land reforms and Muslim representation. However, his emphasis on Iqbal's later years often overshadows the significance of his early political career. Iqbal's participation in the Punjab Legislative Council elections has been discussed by Hafeez Malik (1971) in *Iqbal and Modern Muslim Thought*, which analyzes the

sociopolitical context of his campaign. Malik highlights the challenges Iqbal faced, including sectarian and ethnic divisions, but offers a limited discussion of how these experiences shaped his later demand for Muslim autonomy. While these works contribute significantly to Iqbal studies, they often compartmentalize his intellectual and political roles. This study aims to fill this gap by integrating Iqbal's early political engagements with his broader intellectual vision, particularly focusing on his election campaign and legislative contributions in the context of colonial India. Such an approach underscores the interplay between Iqbal's philosophy, activism, and the evolving Muslim identity in the subcontinent.

### **Iqbal in Practical Politics**

The exact timeline of Allama Iqbal's entry into politics remains debated. His first involvement is often attributed to his membership in the British Committee of the All-India Muslim League during his stay in England, which marked his introduction to practical politics. Initially a social organization for Indian Muslims in England, the British Committee later adopted the political stance of the All-India Muslim League. (Azim Hussain, 1946).

Iqbal underwent a significant intellectual transformation during this time, shifting from materialism to spirituality, emphasizing spiritual unity over material nationalism. This evolution shaped his political philosophy, promoting unity and harmony beyond material divides. (Aziz, 1972).

Iqbal's political engagement deepened when he joined the "Pan Islamic Society" in London, a semi-political organization advocating for Muslim unity. On returning to India in 1908, Iqbal joined the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, established in his absence in 1906. He became an active participant, contributing to key political debates and initiatives. (Fateh Muhammad Malik, 2003).

In 1909, Iqbal's signature appeared on an address to Lord Minto from the Punjab Muslim League. By October of the same year, Iqbal was appointed Assistant Secretary and delivered speeches on important political issues during the League's annual session.

These early political activities laid the foundation for Iqbal's later influential role in advocating for the rights and identity of Indian Muslims, disproving claims that he was merely a poet with no political impact. (Khurshid, 1996).

In 1911, Allama Iqbal, as Assistant Secretary of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, participated in welcoming Lord Charles Hardinge, the Viceroy of India, during his visit to Lahore. A delegation of prominent leaders, including Iqbal, presented an address on behalf of the League at Punjab University Hall.

That year, the annulment of the Bengal partition stirred discontent among Muslims. In a letter to Attiya Faizi, Iqbal criticized the decision, noting its negative implications for Muslim Bengal. (Qalb-i-Abid, 1992).

Global events like the Tripoli War, Russian oppression in northern Iran, and the Balkan Wars deeply influenced Iqbal, shaping his poetry and thought. During this period, he wrote influential poems such as "*Shikwa*," "*Jawab-e-Shikwa*," and "*Shama Aur Shaayar*," reflecting on Muslim suffering and unity. (Iqbal, 1983)

In 1922, during the Khilafat Movement, Iqbal served as General Secretary of the Anjuman-e-Himayat-e-Islam. He addressed the contentious issue of non-cooperation sparked by anti-Islam remarks from Islamia College's principal. Iqbal advocated for adherence to Sharia and emphasized the need for Muslims to protect their religious and cultural identity, delivering a powerful speech at the Anjuman's General Council meeting. (Nizami, 2011).

### **Iqbal's Role in Electoral Politics (1923–1926)**

After World War I, Iqbal remained detached from active politics, focusing on his literary work, including *Payaam-e-Mashriq*. However, in 1923, upon his friends' insistence, he considered contesting the Punjab Legislative Council elections but refrained from running against his friend Mian Abdul Aziz in Lahore. Eventually, in 1926, Iqbal contested and won the election with a significant majority. (Shahid, 1998).

By this time, Hindu-Muslim relations had worsened, and political divisions, fueled by communal prejudices, hindered any resolution of Muslim demands for political rights. The Unionist Party, under Sir Fazl-i Husain, deepened the urban-rural divide among Muslims in Punjab, further fragmenting their political cohesion.

Iqbal distanced himself from ethnic-based brotherhoods, such as the Kashmiris and Arians, which dominated Lahore politics. He believed these divisions weakened Muslim unity. (Munawwar, 1982)

In 1926, alongside his legal practice and literary pursuits, Iqbal engaged in intellectual discussions with friends on politics, philosophy, and poetry. One of his close friends, Chaudhary Muhammad Hussain, who worked in Punjab's internal security division, demonstrated loyalty by secretly protecting Iqbal's privacy from colonial authorities. Together, they devised a strategy to safeguard Chaudhary's position while maintaining the confidentiality of Iqbal's interactions. (Sherwani, 1997)

### **Allama Iqbal and the Support of the Muslim Masses**

When Allama Iqbal decided to contest the Punjab Assembly elections at his friends' insistence, *Roznama Zameendar* warmly welcomed the decision, highlighting his unmatched intellect, popularity, and vision. The editorial urged other candidates to withdraw in his favor, emphasizing that Iqbal's election would be an honor for the nation and the Council.

Mian Abdul Aziz, a prominent candidate from the Lahore constituency and a close friend of Iqbal, announced his withdrawal to support Iqbal. In a public statement, he explained his

decision, emphasizing the need to avoid division among Muslims and praising Iqbal's capabilities and leadership. (Moizuddin, 1981)

Following this, *Roznama Zameendar* commended Mian Abdul Aziz's sacrifice and appealed to other candidates to follow his example, urging the unopposed election of Iqbal to the Punjab Assembly. The paper celebrated Iqbal's readiness to represent Lahore's Muslims, calling it a source of pride for the entire Muslim community. (Mahmood, 2010).

### **Election Campaign**

In 1926, Allama Iqbal was urged by his supporters to contest the Lahore Muslim seat for the Punjab Legislative Assembly. The incumbent, Mian Abdul Aziz, pledged his support and withdrew his candidacy, publicly announcing this in *Zamindar* on July 15. Iqbal, in a letter published on July 20, expressed gratitude, stating, "Our current national issues require me to broaden my work scope. Maybe I can contribute something to the cause of our country." (Zaidi, 1993)

Despite calls from Lahore's Muslim press for Iqbal to run unopposed, he faced competition from two candidates: Malik Muhammad Hussain and Malik Muhammad Din. However, Hussain later withdrew his candidacy, and Iqbal, in a letter published on October 5, praised his decision to prioritize Muslim unity over narrow interests, praying for similar dedication among all Muslims. (Sevea, 2012)

### **The Contest Between Iqbal and Malik Muhammad Din**

In the 1926 Punjab Legislative Assembly elections, Allama Iqbal faced stiff opposition from Malik Muhammad Din, who ran a divisive campaign. To counter this, Iqbal's supporters organized at least twenty public gatherings in Lahore, with processions, posters, and banners promoting his candidacy. Despite this support, Iqbal faced personal and religious attacks. Malik Muhammad Din accused Iqbal of being a Wahabi, an opponent of Sufism, and a critic of the Persian poet Hafiz Shirazi. Din also leveraged sectarian biases, appealing to the Arian Brotherhood and promoting Sunni exclusivity, even distributing defamatory posters against Iqbal. (Tariq, 1973)

The *Zamindar* newspaper criticized Din's campaign, condemning his divisive tactics and emphasizing Iqbal's commitment to Muslim unity over sectarianism or tribal loyalties. It highlighted how Hindus, unlike Muslims, united behind their leaders like Pandit Moti Lal Nehru and Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, ensuring their unopposed election. (Zamindar, 1926).

Iqbal maintained dignity throughout the campaign, urging his supporters to remove anti-Din posters despite the smear tactics. Prominent figures, including poets, scholars, landowners, and businessmen, rallied behind Iqbal, with many advocating for his message of Islamic unity. Organizations like the Pathans of the Kakazai tribe, Shia leaders, the Ahmadis, and others also

publicly endorsed him. Iqbal's broad base of support reflected his vision of unity and progress for Muslims, in stark contrast to Din's divisive approach. (Zamindar, 1926).

### **Rallies and Support for Iqbal's Election Campaign**

In October 1926, Lahore witnessed a series of election rallies in support of Allama Iqbal's candidacy for the Punjab Legislative Council. Prominent figures such as Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, Hafiz Jalandhari, Maulana Ataullah Shah Bukhari, and others delivered powerful speeches extolling Iqbal's leadership and vision. These gatherings highlighted his poetic message of Islamic unity and his stand against sectarianism and fraternity politics. (Inquilab, 1926)

The rallies began in local neighborhoods, including Bhatti Gate, Anarkali, Mozang, and Sultanpura, with influential community members and businessmen pledging support. Voters and intellectuals, including college professors and traders, joined colorful processions adorned with banners quoting Iqbal's poetry. Supporters wore distinctive turbans, with youth donning red turbans inscribed with the word "Khudi." (Shahid, 1998)

One major gathering, led by Sir Muhammad Hussain, President of the Lahore Municipality, drew nearly 10,000 participants. Speeches and poetic recitations energized the crowd, emphasizing Iqbal's unmatched intellectual contributions and his role as a unifying figure for Muslims.

Speakers like Dr. Saif-ud-Din Kitchlew lamented the necessity of Iqbal campaigning, asserting he should have been unanimously elected without opposition. Iqbal himself addressed sectarian issues, urging unity and cooperation while proposing youth-led initiatives to dismantle caste and sectarian barriers. (Ahmed, 1997)

The campaign was widely covered in newspapers like *Zamindar* and *Inquilab*, reporting the overwhelming support Iqbal garnered across Lahore. Despite opposition, these rallies underscored his status as a leader committed to guiding Muslims toward collective progress and harmony. (Shahid, 1998).

### **Iqbal's Advocacy for Unity and Democracy in Lahore (October 1926)**

On October 17, 1926, Allama Iqbal delivered a powerful speech emphasizing democracy in Islam and urging racial harmony. He called for Muslims to avoid politicizing religion and work together for unity. Sheikh Ghulam Mustafa expressed gratitude on behalf of his neighborhood for Iqbal's leadership, highlighting his patience and exemplary conduct, even in the face of criticism. (Niazi, 1971)

A gathering on October 13, 1926, at Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Qizilbash's residence convened to confirm Iqbal's candidacy for the Municipal Council. Dignitaries and residents from various wards attended poetry sessions and speeches to encourage support for Iqbal. (Husain, 1946)

On October 15, a session chaired by Malik Muhammad Hussain saw Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew advocate for Iqbal, and Iqbal expressed his thanks to Haji Shamsuddin, who stood by him despite pressure to withdraw. Iqbal stressed the importance of consensus in choosing a Muslim representative. (Ahmad Khan, 1977)

Later gatherings, including one at Karra Wali Shah on November 18, drew thousands. Speakers like Sheikh Azeemullah criticized opposition figures and exposed connections to controversial cases, rallying further support for Iqbal. The event climaxed with Iqbal's speech, where he passionately called for Muslim unity, stressing that the survival of the community lay in overcoming sectarian divisions and embracing political engagement. (Faqeer Syed Waheed-ud-Din, 1961).

Iqbal's campaign for unity and leadership gained momentum as large crowds rallied behind his message of Islamic solidarity and political awareness.

In *Iqbal aur Punjab Council*, Hanif Shahid highlights the scholarly stature of Allama Iqbal and criticizes the Arain community for challenging Iqbal's candidacy. Shahid urges the community to reconsider, warning that continuing this opposition could tarnish their reputation. He calls for Malik Muhammad Din to withdraw gracefully and stresses that Iqbal, despite being a poet and philosopher, has been sought after for political advice by both Muslim and Hindu leaders alike. (Shahid, 1998)

Shahid also recounts a humorous incident from the election campaign. After a speech, Iqbal was walking with Hafeez Jalandhari when a man, possibly a supporter of Malik Muhammad Din, rudely responded to Iqbal's greeting by exposing himself. Distressed, Iqbal lamented the lack of morality among the people. Hafeez lightheartedly reassured Iqbal, saying, "He showed you what he has." Iqbal laughed, and the moment's tension was relieved. (Iqbal, 2014)

### **Iqbal's 1926 Election Campaign and Vision for Muslim Unity**

Allama Iqbal received strong support from the Majlis-i Khilafat during his 1926 election campaign, as their goals aligned with his vision of Islamic unity and independence for India. Despite facing opposition from Kashmiri-owned newspapers like *Siyasat* and *Nishtar*, which labeled him as a Wahabi and an enemy of Islam, Iqbal's supporters organized a well-structured campaign across Lahore. Processions, public gatherings, and speeches attracted large crowds, with prominent scholars, poets, and lawyers rallying for his cause. (Burke & Salimuddin, 1997)

Iqbal's campaign emphasized unity, rejecting racial or sectarian biases. His supporters chanted verses from his poetry and adorned the streets with floral tributes. Iqbal frequently addressed the gatherings, urging Muslims to abandon despair and pursue an active, united existence. He saw poetry as a powerful medium to inspire hope and revival among Muslims, explaining his choice to write in Urdu and Persian rather than practicing law. (Hussain Zulfiqar, 1997)

In his speeches, Iqbal stressed that religion should unite, not divide, Muslims. He condemned sectarianism and vowed to mobilize youth to combat "group worship" and caste divisions. At

the campaign's peak, Iqbal delivered an impassioned final speech on October 19, 1926, in Katra Waliy Shah, where he highlighted the secret of Muslim success: unity. Reflecting on the life of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), he called for solidarity and national cohesion as the path to progress. (Iqbal Centenary Papers, 1982)

### **Iqbal's 1926 Election Day: Challenges and Triumphs**

During Iqbal's election campaign, he called for unity among Muslims, emphasizing the need to overcome racial, religious, and ideological prejudices. He encouraged tolerance of differing opinions, urging Muslims to follow the example of their ancestors by resolving conflicts with open-mindedness. Iqbal also highlighted the importance of staying informed about political developments, stressing that ignorance weakened the Muslim community. Despite opposition, Iqbal remained optimistic, believing in the eventual triumph of Islamic unity. (Zamindaar, 1926).

On polling day, voter turnout in Lahore's Muslim constituency was high in the morning but slowed by evening. Some conflicts occurred, particularly at the Akbari Gate and Mochi Gate polling stations, where supporters of opposing candidates clashed. Efforts to cast fraudulent votes, primarily by Malik Muhammad Din's supporters, were thwarted. Ten individuals, including Din's younger brother, were arrested for attempted voter fraud but later released on bond. (Inqilab, 1926).

Iqbal's supporters celebrated his appearance at polling stations with chants of "*Allahu Akbar*" and "*Iqbal Zindabad*." However, the day was marred by incidents of election rigging, including a coach driver being attacked for identifying fraudulent voters. Police intervened, recovering the coach and arresting some perpetrators. (Inqilab, 1926)

The election also exposed internal divisions within the Arian brotherhood, a group largely opposing Iqbal. Malik Zahur-ud-Din, a member who broke ranks to vote for Iqbal, faced backlash from his fraternity but defended his decision in a letter to *Zamindar*. Despite these challenges, Iqbal's campaign was a testament to his commitment to Islamic unity and political reform.

### **Iqbal's Election Triumph and Legislative Impact**

Malik Zahur-ud-Din, a member of the Arian brotherhood, defended his decision to support Dr. Muhammad Iqbal over Malik Muhammad Din in the Punjab Legislative Council elections, citing key reasons. First, a prominent fraternity member, Mian Abdul Aziz endorsed Iqbal, signaling that merit should take precedence over kinship. Second, Malik Muhammad Din's campaign was allegedly influenced by Sir Shadi Lal, a known opponent of the Arian fraternity, aiming to exploit the situation. Third, the educated members of the Arian fraternity overwhelmingly supported Iqbal despite attempts to sway less-educated voters. (Rafique Afzal, 1998).



The official results, announced on December 26, 1926, declared Iqbal victorious with 5,675 votes, surpassing Malik Muhammad Din's 2,698 votes by a margin of 3,177. Celebrations erupted in Lahore, with jubilant processions through the city, bhangra dances, and poetry recitals honoring Iqbal's victory.

Once elected, Iqbal became an active voice for Muslims and the underprivileged in the council. He advocated for farmers, proposed fairer land distribution, and highlighted disparities in taxation. He pushed for legislation to ban provocative attacks on religious figures, sought reforms to curb alcohol consumption, and proposed exempting swords from the Arms Act. Iqbal's legislative efforts reflected his commitment to justice, unity, and the welfare of the oppressed. (Rafique Afzal, 1998)

The electoral politics of Allama Muhammad Iqbal had a profound and lasting impact on the future political landscape and legislation of the Indian subcontinent, particularly in shaping the direction of Muslim political thought, the demand for separate Muslim representation, and the eventual formation of Pakistan. Here's a detailed analysis of Iqbal's electoral politics and its consequences:

### 1. Muslim Political Mobilization

Iqbal's election campaign in 1926 as a candidate for the Punjab Legislative Council marked a pivotal moment in Muslim political mobilization. His candidacy served to rally Muslims around a vision of political unity and representation. His speeches and activities encouraged Muslims to think beyond regional, sectarian, and caste divisions, uniting them under a common cause for political empowerment. This vision resonated with the broader Muslim community and laid the groundwork for future political activism.

- **Unity in Diversity:** Iqbal's call for Muslim unity, irrespective of their sects and regions, had a significant influence on the consolidation of Muslim political identity, which would later influence the formation of Pakistan. His message of Islamic unity and the rejection of caste-based politics became foundational for Muslim leaders and intellectuals in the years to come. (Chand, 2005).

### 2. Advocacy for Separate Muslim Representation

One of the key issues during Iqbal's electoral campaign was the push for separate representation for Muslims in the legislative bodies. While other political leaders, such as those from the Indian National Congress, advocated for a united Indian nationalism, Iqbal and many Muslim leaders felt that the political and cultural rights of Muslims would be undermined in a united India where they would be a minority.

- **Two-Nation Theory:** Iqbal's electoral politics reinforced the Two-Nation Theory, which argued that Hindus and Muslims were two distinct nations with separate identities, cultures, and needs. Iqbal's views, expressed particularly through his speeches and political actions, would later form the basis of the Pakistan Movement.

- **Muslim League and Political Representation:** Iqbal's vision played a key role in strengthening the Muslim League's position as the primary political party advocating for Muslim rights. His efforts culminated in the 1930s, especially with his famous Allahabad Address, in which he articulated the idea of an independent Muslim state. This speech directly influenced the demand for Pakistan, which was formally presented by Muhammad Ali Jinnah in 1940. (Archives, 1927)

### 3. Inspiration for Political and Legislative Reform

Iqbal's electoral engagement also contributed to the broader intellectual climate for political and legislative reforms. His emphasis on education, economic development, and social welfare informed later political agendas. His advocacy for Muslim participation in governance ensured that subsequent political leaders would continue to push for constitutional changes that would safeguard Muslim interests.

- **Legal and Constitutional Impact:** Iqbal's emphasis on political representation and legislative power for Muslims influenced the constitutional framework of Pakistan after its creation in 1947. The demand for a system where Muslims could have a significant say in legislative affairs became central to the future Pakistani state. The introduction of separate electorates for Muslims, which began to take shape in British India during Iqbal's time, was later institutionalized in Pakistan's constitution. (Archives, 1927)

### 4. Legacy in Pakistan's Formation

Although Iqbal did not live to see the formation of Pakistan, his electoral politics directly shaped the political direction of the subcontinent. His vision for a separate Muslim state in South Asia encapsulated in his speeches and writings, became a guiding principle for those working toward the creation of Pakistan.

- **Philosophical Influence:** Iqbal's philosophy of selfhood (Khudi) and his focus on the empowerment of individuals and communities helped shape the political culture of Pakistan. His idea of a vibrant, self-reliant Muslim state informed Pakistan's early political ideologies, as leaders like Muhammad Ali Jinnah adopted many of Iqbal's principles in their demand for an independent Muslim-majority state.
1. **Role of Education and Intellectualism:** Iqbal's call for intellectual and educational reform became a key part of Pakistan's early development agenda. His emphasis on a modern education system that balanced tradition and modernity helped lay the foundation for Pakistan's educational and social policies in the decades following independence. (Riaz Hussain, 1977)

### 5. Legislative Influence on Post-Colonial India

While Iqbal's direct influence on the Indian political system post-independence was limited due to his untimely death in 1938, his ideas continued to influence Indian politics, especially about Muslim communities.

2. **Muslim Representation in Indian Politics:** Even after the formation of Pakistan, Iqbal's idea of Muslim representation continued to shape political debates within India, particularly within the Indian National Congress and, later, the Indian Muslim League (which had split from the original Muslim League). His call for political and legislative autonomy for Muslims remained relevant in the context of India's complex demographic and political landscape. (Jaffery, 1981)

## Conclusion

Iqbal's engagement in electoral politics was not merely about securing a legislative seat; rather, it symbolized the broader struggle for Muslim political identity, representation, and rights in British India. His decision to enter the Punjab Legislative Council was driven by his deep concern for the socio-political and economic conditions of Muslims, who were grappling with marginalization under colonial rule. By actively participating in legislative affairs, Iqbal sought to advocate for policies that would uplift the Muslim community, particularly in areas of education, economic development, and political representation.

His tenure in the Punjab Legislative Council reflected his vision of Muslim unity and self-empowerment. He used his platform to challenge discriminatory taxation policies, demand separate electorates for Muslims, and push for the advancement of Muslim educational institutions. His speeches and proposals consistently emphasized the need for Muslims to develop a distinct political consciousness, one that would enable them to secure their rights in a predominantly Hindu-majority India.

Beyond his legislative role, Iqbal's ideas on self-determination and political unity played a significant part in shaping the ideological foundations of the Pakistan Movement. His call for a separate homeland for Muslims, articulated in his 1930 Allahabad Address, was rooted in his understanding of history, politics, and Islamic philosophy. Though he did not live to see the creation of Pakistan, his political thought laid the groundwork for the Muslim League's eventual demand for an independent state.

Iqbal's intellectual and political legacy continues to influence contemporary debates on democracy, nationhood, and the rights of minorities in South Asia. His emphasis on self-governance, social justice, and cultural identity remains relevant in discussions about the role of religion in politics and the challenges faced by Muslim communities in modern nation-states. His contributions as a legislator and political thinker highlight the enduring impact of his ideas on the political landscape of the subcontinent.

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