



RESEARCH PAPER

The Critique of Democracy by Dr. Mohammad Iqbal in the Light of Quran and Hadith

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to analyze Iqbal's criticism of modern secular democracy, focusing on its limitations and exploitative nature. Western political philosophers acknowledge the failure of secular democracy, with sovereignty often dominated by elected rulers. Economic philosophers like Bertrand de Juouvenel and Daya Krishna argue that democracy is a myth rather than reality. Karl Marx's concept of Communism counters capitalism by arguing for a sound sovereign, complete code of life, and ethical standards. Iqbal criticizes Western democracy, emphasizing its Islamic approach. Research is undertaken to find out a rationale for analyzing Iqbal's critique of Secular Democracy by reviewing his writings, the Quran, and Hadiths. After undertaking a qualitative study given the data available, the findings are that Islam offers guidance for solving human problems, fostering brotherhood, and establishing peace. Its comprehensive system ensures democracy's success, with equal opportunities and fair distribution.

Introduction

Islam is a religion for everyone, and the Quran serves as a *Hidaya* for everyone (Hudal Lin Nas). Its audience is all of humanity. It is (Ya Aiyyu Han Nas). Islam does not recognize territorial boundaries. Instead, it establishes the League of Nations (Iqbal, 1976).

Not only was Allama Iqbal the greatest poet-philosopher of Islam, but he was also a brilliant thinker of the Century who had widespread influence. His approach, therefore, included all of humanity. He used to respond angrily to any violation of human dignity, justice, or equity, no matter where it occurred in the globe. He made

a forceful and well-reasoned protest. His criticism was profoundly pragmatist and philosophical.

Perspectives of Iqbal on Western Democracy

In Zarb-e-Kalim, Allama Iqbal made the following observation after critically analyzing the idea of modern secular democracy as it is taught and implemented in the West: Democracy counts the heads but does not weigh the brain. He believes that Payam-e-Mashriq should shun Western democracy. He asserts that a single person's brain cannot be produced by the brains of 200 asses. Iqbal was unable to accept Western democracy because it uses popularity as a criterion, even though a man can be popular without talent or wisdom. Through his *Gulshan-e-Raz*, Iqbal conveyed to the West the message that Satan had been set free by Western democracy, which is a bare sword in the hands of political factions. Iqbal was able to hear imperialism's voice playing on the Western democracy's flute (*Khizr-e-Rah*). Iqbal criticized Western democracy in *Bang-i-Dara* (*The Sound of the Caravan Bell*) and claimed that, except for imperialism, it contains nothing. A so-called beautiful fairy of independence has been misinterpreted as an oppressive ghost dancing in the mask of democracy. He noted, among other things, that the main purpose of Western democracy is to exploit the underprivileged in the service of the wealthy. He contends that a society and institution based on secular democracy will never be sound or ideal. Iqbal emphasized the flaws of the limited idea of capitalistic Western democracy and dialectical materialism, and he claimed that Islamic democracy produces justice and unanimity whereas Western democracy produces class warfare. (Wahid, 1973) Islam forbids both treating others unfairly and treating others unfairly. (Quran: Al-Baqara,185) He issued a warning, saying that, despite its possible poor fit, democracy was a coat that other European nations had tried on before discarding.

Secularism - Democracy

In reality, Allama Iqbal was right about Western (Secular) democracy, which in practice fell short of expectations despite its theoretically sound and ostensibly lucrative promise of "government of the People, by the People, and for the People." Famous Western political theorists were forced to acknowledge the fallacy of secular democracy. Although it is theoretically believed that the people have sovereignty in Western democracies, as soon as the elections are done, the people are effectively subordinate to the elected authorities.

Western perspectives

After studying the results of secular democracy, Western political theorists came to agree with Iqbal that democracy cannot accomplish the theoretically expected goal. The parliamentary system in Great Britain cannot be understood unless one is aware that, underlying the façade of democracy, this is the economic and social structure it is intended to defend, according to Professor Harold J. Laski, who believes that England is the birthplace of contemporary democracy. It was created by the proprietors of the producing equipment for their benefit: and the preservation of the

idea of their rights is implicit in every rule by which it operates; it was forced to grant the right to vote to the whole public; it took care to preserve the essence of effective authority for property. (Laski, 1938)

Professor Laski added that these traits are not unique to Great Britain but apply to all capitalist democracies. Republicans and Democrats in the United States are being forced to unite as a party of property to thwart certain forces' invasion of their formerly unchecked dominion. (Laski, 1938) Professor Harold J. Laski notes that factors that defy scientific explanations impact voters' judgments when selecting their governors in his book *Democracy in Crisis*, which analyses the behavior of voters and democratic leaders. (Laski, 1931) Rousseau's taunt that the electorate is only free at the election and that freedom is merely the prelude to new domination contains a crucial truth, according to Laski, who also notes that the electorate cannot choose the representative it wants and can only strike blindly against those who have offended it momentarily. Every political dispute is a struggle between two engaged minorities for control of the unresponsive majority. (Laski, 1931) According to Bertrand Russell, in a democracy, the average citizen has very little sense of political power, has little interest in issues that are far removed from his daily life and are almost entirely outside of his experiences, and his or her vote has a negligible impact on the overall outcome. (Russel, 1953)

In his book *Democracy Up to Date*, British statesman Sir Stafford Cripps holds the view that Western European nations continue to exist as democracies only in name. He also believes that democracy does not exist in any country to achieve a Government of the People, by the People, and for the People. (Cripps, 2005). He makes the argument that the democratic system is quite expensive and that a candidate's ability to pay plays a big role in whether or not they are successful in winning the election. "The British democracy is today accepting the dictatorship of the Prime Minister as a substitute for its actions," argues Stafford Cripps after analyzing modern democracy as a form of government. (Cripps, 2005)

According to George Barnard Shaw (1856–1955), democracy is made up of the votes of the many incompetent people who elect the dishonest few to administer a lousy government under the pretext of serving the public good.

The political need for Superman is something Shaw explicitly acknowledges in *Man and Superman* under the heading "The Political Need for the Superman": "We have been forced to Proletarian Democracy by the failure of all the alternative systems. Democracy is limited by the human components that make up its constituents. When a Great Political movement occurs, it is not deliberately organized or directed; humanity's unconscious self works through the issue like an elephant through a jungle. He also holds other intriguing and wise opinions about the Western version of democracy. Without researching Islam as a way of life and its type of government, a secular world concluded that all governments are unsatisfactory. (Cripps, 2005)

Let's focus on India. In the essay "Between the Lines," Mr. Kuldip Nayar makes the following comment about Indian democracy: "Despite being democratically elected, Parliament does not inspire confidence; it is seen as a component of a corrupt and outmoded system." Even when a member of parliament expresses himself honestly, there is a propensity to see some sort of hand behind him because many of its members are seen to be employed by industrialist lobbying groups. The image of democracy has been damaged by the fact that many representatives are chosen through force and money. (Nayyar, 1989) The Punjab High Court's Mr. Justice Tek Chand makes the following observation in the article "Law: Ally and Corrective of Democracy" The next question which waits for examination is: Has democracy, as an ideal worthy of pursuit, become antiquated because of its failure due to inherent weaknesses? The once-dominant confidence in democratic institutions is now in disarray. Recently, it appears as though the democratic institutions have utterly capitulated to the rise of absolutism. Supporters of democracy are becoming less steadfast. Some claim that it is retreating. Others claim that it is at a turning point. It is stated that democracy's future is gloomy and dim. (Air, 1959)

Both Bertrand de Juouvenel of France and Daya Krishna of India read significant papers at a conference sponsored by the Congress for Cultural Freedom held in Rhodes in October 1958. Both of them agreed that democracy is more of a myth than a reality.

Karl Marx proposed his idea of Communism as a counterblast to capitalism, the offspring of Western democracy, and its other flaws, which had to vanish owing to its intrinsic flaws. The idea is that the New World Order is the final bet made by Western politicians, who repeatedly make the same mistakes. It's a brand-new bottle of stale, aged wine.

The main causes of Secular democracy's failure include the lack of a good, wise, and impartial ruler, the absence of a comprehensive code of conduct with an ideal sense of direction to address fundamental human problems, the diversity of Western society, disregard for any ethical standards of conduct, and a lack of belief in accountability to the Supreme Power.

The Western Political Philosophers attempted to graft democracy as a form of government onto the Western secular society that was split along racial, racial, and racial, class, and exploitation lines, with the inevitable result that the values of democracy proved to be alien to the said society. The synthetic transplant had to meet a certain demise.

Basic Reasons Why Western Democracy Fails

The fundamental reasons for failure have been identified by Western political philosophers. According to Edward Benes, the success of democracy needs a cohesive community built on equality, but he observes that this is not the case in European society. (Benes, 1940) In his paper "The Internal Conditions of Democracy," Professor Laski noted that democracy may persist as long as individuals believed they shared

lofty aspirations and similar ideals. (Laski, 2014) In his piece "Democracy," John Dewey notes that the concept of democracy is under more threat than ever. He claimed that the major reason secular democracy failed was because it was not ingrained in the people's bones and blood and everyday activities. Political democracy is unstable until democratic habits of thinking and behavior are ingrained in a people. Historically, democratic forms have only included contests between political parties and elections for the parliament. It cannot be the only thing. It has to be supported by the inclusion of democratic practices in all social interactions. (Dewey, 2005) After recognizing the shortcomings of American democracy, Walt Whitman wrote *Democratic Vistas*, which suggests that to address the situation in the future, the majority of American mentality, taste, and belief should be changed and a new spirit introduced into national life. This new spirit should affect politics for reasons beyond popular suffrage, achieving a religious and moral character beneath the political productive and intellectual bases of the State. (Whitman, 1987)

The aforementioned prerequisites for democracy's success, as proposed by Edward Bens, Laski, John Dewey, and Walt Whitman, are entirely present in Islamic civilization even if they are noticeably lacking in Western society. Let's look at Islam's social, political, and economic democracies.

Social Democracy and Islam

The idea of the unity of God (Tauhid) and humanity as members of a single Brotherhood serves as the cornerstone of social democracy. Islam established human equality and fraternity, which are the cornerstones of democracy. According to the Al-Quran, mankind was born from a pair, and from that pair, innumerable men and women were dispersed. (Quran, Nissa, 4:1) Furthermore, it is stated that God created mankind from a single male and female and that He divided people into Nations and Tribes just for the sake of knowing one another (and not so that they can hate one another). The most honorable person in God's eyes is undoubtedly the most righteous person. (Quran, Hujjrat, 49:13) Prophet (PBUH) also stated in his Farewell speech. "O you people, Allah says that you were made into tribes and countries so that you may be recognized. He claims that you were created from one male and one female. Undoubtedly, the one who reveres God the greatest is the one who is most honored in Allah's eyes. Except in matters of piety, there is no superiority between an Arab and a non-Arab, a non-Arab and a white person, or a black person and a white person. Muslim Brotherhood is likened to the human body as well. According to Al-Hadith, when one component hurts, the whole likewise feels it. Each person's social standing and the irrational purpose of existence are the same, just as they were in the teachings and practices of Islam. Not only did the Prophet (Peace be upon Him) take the initiative to free the slaves, but he also worked to establish them with respect and dignity in society. Even during the Meccan era, Hazrat Khadijatul Qubra (RA) invested her fortune in this initiative. After Zaid was liberated, he was accepted into their family and wed Zainab, the Prophet's (Peace be upon Him) cousin. After being set free, Belal was given a very honorable position among the Muadhlin. Even Umar

the Tremendous used to regard Belal with tremendous reverence when he saw him approaching because he knew the leader was coming. Iqbal said that Sultan Mahmud and his servant Aiyaz may stand next to one another in the same queue without distinction.

The modern world longs for an appropriate and useful set of rules to resolve human issues and to promote brotherhood and tolerance to bring about peace in the background of the failure of previous religious and man-made isms. Only Islam can lead efforts to realize global expectations and preserve humanity. According to Orientalists and Western non-Muslim scholars, Islamic teachings alone can provide the right direction in this area. One of Islam's most notable moral accomplishments, according to A.J. Toynbee in *Civilization on Trial*, is the eradication of racial consciousness among Muslims. In the modern world, it is conceivable that the spirit of Islam could be the timely catalyst that would settle this dispute in favor of peace and tolerance. (Toynbee, 1949) After considering Islam's potential for resuming her historic role in resolving global issues, Toynbee evoked Islam in the following manner: "If the current state of humanity were to precipitate for peace." In his research of Islam, he was astounded by the Brotherhood inside it and observed that when the Brotherhood of Men's ideology was discharged from the cannon mouth of Islam, it ignited the entire globe. He also had a strong conviction that Islam is the only system capable of realizing humankind's ambitions and dreams. (Toynbee, 1949) Islamic society alone is a democratic one, making it a suitable and fruitful environment for the creation and development of political and economic democracies.

Political Democracy and Islam

In the Islamic way of life, democracy is an essential political goal in line with the Quranic Way of Life as a global governance system. Al-Quran offers a comprehensive rule of living to address all of humanity's issues, both material and spiritual. Every aspect of life is combined into one legal system called Shariah, which is the sole way of life that places moral values above government, law, and justice. Iqbal harshly criticized politics that lack a moral foundation: If Deen and politics are divorced or somehow separated, Chengizi is what is left. In his *Outline of History*, H.G. Wells praised the Islamic System of Life, claiming that it was the world's largest, freshest, and purest political ideal that had not yet been put into practice and that it provided the majority of humanity with better terms than any other. (Wells, 1920) The Al-Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunnah, with all of its components and prerequisites, lay the foundation for Islamic democracy. Islam places a responsibility on men to individually and collectively carry out the Islamic Scheme of Life to establish God's Kingdom on earth. Men are the vicegerents of God on earth. on Islam, consultation on administrative matters had been made mandatory, as had their consultation on current affairs. Once you've made your choice, put your confidence in God because He likes those who do just that. (Quran, Al Imran, 3:186) Conducting business requires mutual consultation. (Quran, Shura :38 n.d.) Prophet and Khulafa-e-Rashedeen strictly adhered to the consultation idea. Umar had two shuras; the first was distinguished and the second was inclusive of knowledgeable Muhajreen and Ansars.

Without the Majlis-e-Shura, in his opinion, Khilafat was not feasible. The activities of Majlis-e-Shura can be likened to those of modern Parliaments, with the distinction being that the former operates under Divine direction, the Prophet's (PBUH) Sunnah, and by shared ideologies, whilst the latter lacks both a divine code and an ethical foundation. Preliminary selection for the position of Khulaf-e-Rashedeen used to be made by a small group of the aged and wise after mutual deliberation. Each time, community permission was necessary. The elected Caliphs in their usual speeches after the election, had to address the people ensuring them that the Caliph would act according to the dictates of Al-Quran and Sunnah which ensured people's rights and prescribed obligations of the Caliphs. The people have all the freedom to criticize the activities of the Caliph. Deviation from the fundamentals of Islam would even entail removal from office. Umar was warned by a man "I swear that If thou commit errors, we shall not hesitate to punish thee with our swords". To these frank words, Umar replied: "I thank God that there may be found among the Muslims the one to correct Umar's errors with a sword. "While Umar was amid his *Khutba*, one of the persons from the congregation rose and asked: "Where from you have got the cloth for the long dress?" Abdullah Bin-Umar, his son, said that he had handed his half of the fabric to his father while standing up in an old, short garment. In Islam's view, the greatest Jihad is the declaration of justice in front of an oppressive ruler. (Sahih Muslim, 887)

There is no room for the rulers and the ruled to stray from the pathways of equality, justice, and fairness to everyone since the Al-Quran and Sunnah provide the fundamental guidelines for a homogenous, indivisible, and integrated way of life. As a result, the fundamental components and tenets of democracy are inextricably linked to the Islamic way of life. In Islam, there is no room for any monarch to abuse their authority in an autocratic or dictatorial manner as long as they live according to the Quran. In contrast to the secular West, Islam develops a society that is founded on liberty, equality, and brotherhood, the fundamental tenets of democracy, as opposed to viewing democracy as an isolated and casual endeavor during elections at regular intervals. For Islam's social, cultural, political, and economic institutions to succeed, they must all be unified under a single code of conduct. Non-Muslim intellectuals were forced to concede Islam's supremacy in terms of democracy. The religion given to the Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon Him) guaranteed the fundamentals of democratic social, political, and economic systems in addition to teaching the highest ideals of liberty, equality, and brotherhood. Before the concept of Islam's successful promotion and practice of democracy was understood in Europe, it took over 12 centuries. Charis Waddy finds it surprising that democracy dates from the French Revolution (1789 A.D.), even though Islam espoused and upheld the democratic values of liberty, fraternity, and equality a thousand years earlier. However, democracy cannot develop or flourish even if it is imposed from above unless a community is intellectually prepared with core ideals of Equality, Brotherhood, and Common Ideology. It is a historical truth that Napoleon became a king and was crowned Emperor within 15 years of the French Revolution. As a result of Napoleonic hegemony, the ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity vanished from not just France but also the whole European continent. When speaking about the Prophet

Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) in one of her speeches in London, Sarojini Naidu called attention to the fact that what the West dreamed of today was not just a dream but realized fourteen hundred years ago by the lone desert dreamer who communed with the stars and first understood the brotherhood of man and the right of every person to freedom and equality.

Economic Democracy and Islam

In reality, democracy cannot be ensured without the distribution of money through the distribution of political power. Without economic democracy, political democracy is essentially a misnomer. The first political philosopher to explicitly state that the significance of economics is a prerequisite for the success of politics was Ibn Khaldun, the father of sociology, in his *Muqaddima* (prolegomena) to his *Kitab al Iber*. The same idea is held by Western thinkers as well. Old-fashioned democracy and new-style Marxism both failed, according to Bertrand Russell, since the former was only political and the latter was simply economic. The only rule of conduct that addresses all aspects of life – personal, social, political, economic, national, and international – is Islam. Within its framework, Islam's economic system is a crucial component. The political, judicial, legal, cultural, and social systems of Islam are inextricably linked to its economic systems. And the moral basis of Islam serves as the basis for all of these areas. Therefore, its economic system works in cooperation with other schools of Islam, a comprehensive code of conduct, to achieve the greatest good for humanity in a balanced manner. Islam bans capitalism and exploitation and assures the fair distribution of money via its belief in God's ownership and particular economic system. According to Islam, God is the exclusive owner of all property, and He also holds all political and legal authority. He is the rightful owner of all that exists above, below, and inside the earth (Quran, Baqarah, 2:284-286) The principles of God's ownership, Khilafat, fraternity, and the trusteeship of men – His vicegerents on earth – form the foundation of the Islamic economic system.

The assertion of the poor's right to share in the wealth of the affluent somewhere in the first part of the seventh century A.D. was unthinkable in the world at the time. However, the impoverished have a claim to the riches and properties of the wealthy, as recognized and affirmed by Islam. (Quran, Al-mai'dah(5:32)

According to the Al-Quran, men will be evaluated by God on how well they handled their responsibilities for their possessions and private selves.(Quran, Al-Imran, 186) Zakat payment has been mandated as an obligation alongside Salat (prayer). The award has been announced for charitable giving both during the day and at night, both in private and in public. Spending for family, orphans, the poor, travelers, those who ask, and for ransom to release slaves has been mandated out of love for Him. (Quran, Al-Imran,3:92)

Usury and Monopoly

Usury and monopolies, which foster capitalism, are both prohibited in the Islamic Economic System. Because exploitation is carried out through usury, Islam

opposes it and promotes trade. (Quran, Al-Baqarah, 2:275-279) God and the Apostle declare war against interest rates. (Quran, Al-Baqarah, 2:279) He who monopolizes is a sinner, the Prophet said (Al-Hadith). Wealth is distributed among the few wealthy people in the West's capitalist economy. Islamic law forbids hoarding as a major sin because it promotes sharing riches in the community. (Quran, Al-Tawbah, 9:34-35). It's rotating amongst the rich alone is prohibited to maintain wealth circulation. (Quran, Al-Mai'dah, 5:32) Islam forbids both scrounging and excess, striking a balance between the two. (Quran, Al-Hashr, 59:7) When the Al-Quran commands that wealth is more than what the wealthy require to be handed to the poor, Islam adopts yet another revolutionary stance.³⁸ It makes sure that money is distributed equally. Islam's economic system was so effective that no one was willing to receive Zakat under Umar Ibn Abdul Aziz's Khilafat.

Because democracy is practiced in the social, political, and economic spheres of life, it is safe to say that, in contrast to other religions and man-made isms, Islam guaranteed the success of democracy due to its merit as an integrated system of life encompassing all of its spheres.

After praising the Islamic system, Charis Waddy notes: "These concepts have more than just moral worth. They bring a legal structure and are legally implemented for Islam. According to a legal concept established by Caliph Umar, if a person dies from famine, the town's residents would all be held accountable for his unlawful death as if they had all killed him. (Quran, Al-Mai'dah, 5:32) also points out that Islam introduced an economic doctrine of fair distribution and equal opportunity for the first time. Islam holds that God is interested in social liberation, economic stability, and moral and ethical advancements as well.

She continued by praising the Prophet for his remarkable contributions to democracy and human issues in general to world civilization. She asks, admiring Islam's virtues as a full way of life and the magnificence of the Prophet of Islam: "What does the Prophet's life imply to us? At the time of his death, at the age of sixty-three, his native land had been entirely changed by his life's work. Not only did a new, pure faith take hold, but the rights of women and children were also given new foundations, politics, and the economy were restructured, and democracy was introduced into public life in a way that was extraordinarily ambitious for the time.

Islamic law, or Shariah, is based on divine wisdom, and both in this life and the next, it seeks to promote human happiness. The All-Wise Creator is the only one who truly understands the needs of humans, His creation, and vicegerent on this planet; in contrast, so-called secular political leaders are unable to even adequately conceive of, let alone prescribe, any genuine solutions to issues.

Iqbal's critique of Western democracy is in line with the warning in the Al-Quran: "Wert thou to follow the common run of those on earth, they will lead thee away from the Way of God, they follow nothing but conjecture, they do nothing but

lie." The Islamic version of democracy is the only way to ensure that people may participate, and it is only appropriate when done so by the rules and regulations described in the Qur'an.

Conclusion

Iqbal's dedication to religion, without any signs of extremism or emotionalism, enabled him to approach life's problems, especially democracy, with objectivity. The democratic spirit must permeate all facets of life, literature, and culture to unite and discipline the country as a whole. It cannot be perpetuated by being restricted to the casual election. Iqbal emphasized and urged the Ummah to return to the pristine purity of Islam since the cause of the current debacle of the Muslim world is a departure from the teachings of the Al-Quran. Democracy is inextricably linked with the entire code of life (Islam), so to correct any of the items, entire Islam as a complete code is to be accepted and put into simultaneous operation.

He reminded the Muslim Ummah:

وہ زمانے میں معزز تھے مسلمان ہو کر

اور تم خوار ہوئے تارک قرآن ہو کر

To win the election and replace the different types of tyranny, the Western World cunningly used the cover-table slogan of democracy. Fascism and Nazism both came to power using the same strategy, in Italy and Germany, respectively. Even Marxism, represented by the Russian USSR, rose to power under the banner of democracy.

Human Dignity, Civil Liberties, and Human Rights were denied and in danger. Iqbal had every reason to believe that Western democracy was a Tamasha (Fun). In his opinion, if politics and Deen are divorced or separated, all that is left is Chengizi. Iqbal claims that nobody is certain of what will occur after the election. Iqbal's harsh critique of Western democracy was motivated, among other things, by the desire to halt its current course. According to Iqbal, Islam is the sole answer to the issue with Western political systems.

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