The Historical and Symbolic Dimensions of the Emphasis on Caliphate in Iqbal's Poetry in the 20th Century

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Abstract

In the 20th century, Muhammad Iqbal, one of the most influential figures in the intellectual world of the Indian subcontinent, used his pen not only for literary concerns but also as a declaration aimed at the awakening of the colonised Islamic societies. This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the concept of caliphate, which occupies a central position in Iqbal's verse works, in the light of historical events, spiritual symbols and political perspectives. During the years of the poet's lifetime, the Islamic world was on the brink of a twofold dilemma. On the one hand, the Indian Muslims under British domination, and on the other, the Ottoman Turks struggling for survival as the protector of the caliphate. Iqbal did not see the caliphate as a simple political power or a state structure with definite borders in this crisis; on the contrary, he conceived it as a global super-identity representing the unity, strength and spiritual cohesion of the ummah. In this study, which followed a qualitative research method, it was determined that Iqbal described the struggle of the Turks in the Tripoli and Balkan Wars as a manifestation of the spiritual purpose of the caliphate in flesh and blood. In his poem, Hudhur-i Risalat, Iqbal states that the most valuable gift to be presented to the Prophet when he enters his spiritual presence is a bottle containing the blood of the martyrs of Tripoli. But through the consciousness of martyrdom. This is seen as the Islamic nation's honour. In his poems he mentioned Fatma Bint Abdullah, a fourteen-year-old girl who was martyred for distributing water to Ottoman soldiers during the War. Iqbal demonstrated her as a defending the caliphate required self-sacrifice that transcended gender boundaries, and that women also played a foundational role in this spiritual construction. Another important dimension of the study is Iqbal's determinations on the moral side of the caliphate and its legal basis. In his poem about the siege of Edirne, the poet, who wrote about the Muslim soldiers not touching the property of non-Muslims and remaining loyal to the law of war despite the fact that they were on the verge of starvation, argued that the caliphate was the guarantee of justice and trust for non-Muslims as well. In this respect, for Iqbal, the caliphate represents a moral superiority against the colonialist understanding of the West and the atrocities committed against societies. The article also analyses Iqbal's unique stance on the political future of the caliphate. Iqbal harshly criticised

the attitude of the Khilafat Movement in the Indian subcontinent demanding help from the British, describing it as Khilafat Begging. He argued that independence and the caliphate could only be won through determination and resistance. He interpreted and supported the decision of the Turkish Grand National Assembly to abolish the caliphate not as a destruction, but as the abandonment of the institution's dysfunctional monarchical form and the resurrection of its republican and democratic spirit in a modern state structure. In conclusion, this study reveals in detail how the caliphate was positioned in Iqbal's world of thought as a symbol of liberation from dependence on the West, a revival based on the Qur'an and the ideal of universal justice.

Keywords

Urdu Language and Literature, Muhammad Iqbal, Poetry, Caliphate, Turks.

Atıf Bilgisi

İşsever, Muhsin. "The Historical and Symbolic Dimensions of the Emphasis on Caliphate in Iqbal's Poetry in the 20th Century". *Yakın Doğu Üniversitesi İslam Tetkikleri Merkezi Dergisi* 12/1 (Haziran 2026), 1-19. https://doi.org/10.32955/neu.istem.2026.12.1.01

Geliş Tarihi	30.01.2026
Kabul Tarihi	04.03.2025
Yayım Tarihi	30.06.2025
Değerlendirme	İki Dış Hakem / Çift Taraflı Körleme
Etik Beyan	Bu araştırma için Etik Kurul İzni gerekmemektedir. Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur.
Benzerlik Taraması	Yapıldı – Turnitin
Çıkar Çatışması	Çıkar çatışması beyan edilmemiştir.
Finansman	Bu araştırmayı desteklemek için dış fon kullanılmamıştır.
Telif Hakkı & Lisans	Yazarlar dergide yayınlanan çalışmalarının telif hakkına sahiptirler ve çalışmaları CC BY-NC 4.0 lisansı altında yayımlanmaktadır.

20. Yüzyılda İkbal'in Şiirlerindeki Hilafet Vurgusunun Tarihsel ve Sembolik Boyutları

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Öz

20. yüzyıl Hint alt kıtasının düşünce dünyasına yön veren güçlü isimlerden biri olan Muhammed İkbal, kalemini sadece edebi kaygılarla değil, sömürge altındaki İslam toplumlarının uyanışını hedefleyen bir bildiri niteliğinde kullanmıştır. Bu makalede İkbal'in manzum eserlerinde merkezi bir konumda bulunan hilafet mefhumunu; tarihi olaylar, manevi semboller ve siyasi perspektifler ışığında kapsamlı bir analize tabi tutmaktadır. Şairin hayatta olduğu yıllarda İslam dünyası iki yönlü bir çıkmazın eşiğinde bulunmaktaydı. Bir tarafta İngiliz tahakkümü altındaki Hint Müslümanları, diğer tarafta ise hilafetin hamisi sıfatıyla hayatta kalma mücadelesi veren Osmanlı Türkleri. İkbal, bu buhranlı süreçte hilafeti basit bir siyasi güç ya da sınırları belli bir devlet yapısından ibaret görmemiş; onu bilakis ümmetin vahdetini, mukavemetini ve manevi kenetlenmesini temsil eden küresel bir üst kimlik olarak tasavvur etmiştir. Nitel araştırma yöntemi izlenen bu çalışmada, İkbal'in Trablusgarp ve Balkan Savaşları özelinde Türklerin sergilediği mücadeleyi, gösterdikleri azim ve çabayı hilafetin ruhani gayesinin ete kemiğe bürünmüş bir tezahürü olarak betimlediği saptanmıştır. *Huzûr-i Risâlet* adlı şiirinde İkbal, Hz. Peygamber'in manevi huzuruna çıktığında ona sunulacak en değerli hediyenin, içinde Trablusgarp şehitlerinin kanının bulunduğu bir şişe olduğunu belirmiştir. Şiirde ifade edilen bu metafor, hilafetin korunmasının askeri güçten ziyade, ümmetin onuru olarak görülen şehadet bilinciyle mümkün olduğunu vurgulamak istemiştir. Benzer bir şekilde, Trablusgarp Savaşı sırasında Osmanlı askerlerine su dağıtırken şehit düşen on dört yaşındaki *Fâtıma bint Abdullah*'ı şiirlerine taşıyan İkbal, hilafet savunmasının cinsiyet sınırlarını aşan bir fedakârlık gerektirdiğini ve kadınların da bu manevi inşada kurucu bir rol üstlendiğini ortaya koymuştur. Çalışmanın bir diğer önemli boyutu, İkbal'in hilafetin ahlaki tarafına ve hukuki zeminine dair tespitleri olmuştur. Edirne Kuşatmasını konu alan şiirinde, Müslüman askerlerin açlık sınırında olmalarına rağmen gayrimüslimlerin malına el sürmeyişini ve savaş hukukuna sadık kalmaları işleyen şair, hilafetin gayrimüslimler için de adalet ve güvenin teminatı olduğunu savunmuştur. Bu minvalde hilafet, İkbal için Batı'nın sömürgeci anlayışına ve toplumlar nezdinde işlediği vahşetlere karşı ahlaki bir üstünlüğü temsil etmektedir. Aynı zamanda makale, İkbal'in hilafetin siyasi geleceğine dair kendine özgü duruşunu analiz etmektedir. İkbal, Hint alt kıtasındaki Hilafet Hareketi'nin

İngilizlerden yardım talep eden tavrını *Hilafet Dilenciliği* olarak niteleyerek sert bir dille eleştirmiştir. Bağımsızlığın ve hilafetin ancak mücadele azmi ve direnişle kazanılabileceğini savunmuştur. Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi'nin hilafeti kaldırma kararını bir yıkım olarak değil, kurumun işlevsizleşmiş monarşik formunun terk edilerek, özündeki cumhuriyetçi ve demokratik ruhun modern bir devlet yapısında yeniden diriltilmesi (içtihat) olarak yorumlamış ve desteklemiştir. Sonuç olarak bu çalışma, İkbal'in düşünce dünyasında hilafetin; Batı'ya bağımlılıktan kurtuluşun, Kuran temelli bir dirilişin ve evrensel adalet idealinin sembolü olarak nasıl konumlandığını detaylı bir şekilde ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Urdu Dili ve Edebiyatı, Muhammed İkbal, Şiir, Hilafet, Türkler.

Citation

İşsever, Muhsin. "The Historical and Symbolic Dimensions of the Emphasis on Caliphate in Iqbal's Poetry in the 20th Century". *The Journal of Near East University Islamic Research Center* 12/1 (June 2026), 1-19. https://doi.org/10.32955/neu.istem.2026.12.1.01

Date of Submission	30.01.2025
Date of Acceptance	04.03.2025
Date of Publication	30.06.2025
Peer-Review	Double anonymized - Two External
Ethical Statement	Ethics Committee Permission is not required for this research. is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited.
Plagiarism Checks	Yes - Turnitin
Article Information	A statement must be made regarding the articles produced from postgraduate theses and symposium proceedings.
Conflicts of Interest	The author has no conflict of interest to declare.
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Introduction

Lexically, the Caliph denotes the individual charged with the Imamate of the Muslims and the protection of the faith, serving as the deputy of the Prophet Muhammad [1]. Caliph: The individuals who served as the heads of the Islamic state as successors to Prophet Muhammad, the last prophet of the Islamic religion [2] Following the campaigns launched by Yavuz Sultan Selim against Egypt in the 16th century, Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem came under the sovereignty of the Ottoman Sultanate, and the office of the Caliphate was transferred from the Abbasids to the Ottoman Sultanate. Following the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye, the office of the Caliphate was abolished by a law enacted by the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye on March 3, 1924. Muhammad Iqbal summarized his views regarding its abolition in his book titled The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam as follows:

> It is this author's personal opinion that the Turkish perspective on this matter is entirely accurate. It is not necessary to engage in superfluous debate at this juncture. It is evident that the Republican form of government is in complete alignment with the fundamental principles of Islam. It appears that modern Türkiye has adopted the Mu'tazilite perspective, which conceptualises the universal Imamate as a matter of expediency, i.e. a necessity of the time. The Turks posit that they must undoubtedly benefit from their past political experiences, which clearly demonstrate that the idea of a universal Caliphate has failed in practice. The viability of this concept was contingent upon the Islamic State's status as a singular entity. However, with the disintegration of the Ottoman Sultanate, numerous independent political units emerged. By this point in time, the concept had lost its universal efficacy and ceased to be a living factor in the structure of modern Islam. Furthermore, it had become counterproductive in terms of facilitating the reunification of independent Muslim states. The Turks may counter by proffering additional justifications: "Why should we not learn from our past political experiences? [3]

It is evident that Muhammad Iqbal (d. 1938), a preeminent philosopher and poet of Modern Islamic Thought, assigned a distinctive status to the institution of the Caliphate within both historical and political contexts. It was asserted that the Caliphate constituted an institution that, in addition to representing religious leadership, ensured the unity, morality, revival, and political integrity of the Islamic ummah. Iqbal linked the decline of the Caliphate's function during his era with the loss of self-consciousness within Muslim societies. Iqbal's theory posits that this office is imbued with a spiritual dimension that wields the ability to influence the destiny of Muslims. Muhammad Iqbal, who closely followed the process of the abolition of the Caliphate in Turkish society, linked this

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1 *Türk Dil Kurumu Sözlükleri*, "Halife" (Erişim 8 Aralık 2025).

2 Süleyman Karagülle, "Hilâfet-Halîfelik", *Bilgi ve Hikmet* 3 (1993), 53.

3 Muhammed İkbal, *İslam'da Dini Düşüncenin Yeniden Yapılandırılması*, çev. Celal Soydan (Ankara: Hece Yayınları, 2015), 154-155.

development to the necessity of a political restructuring in the Islamic world. He advanced the notion that the Caliphate should undergo a reinterpretation, deviating from its conventional structure and adopting a form that would align with contemporary social realities, thereby reflecting its fundamental principles. Consequently, Iqbal did not fully accept or support the Khilafat Movement, which was established in the Indian subcontinent to support the Caliphate held by the Ottoman Sultanate. Despite his involvement as a member of the movement's Punjab provincial committee and attendance at several of its conferences, he did not engage in active participation due to the divergence in his ideological perspectives with those of the other members. Moreover, he did not give his approval to the request by the Khilafat Movement committee for Britain to provide aid in favour of the Ottoman Sultanate[4].

The first quarter of the 20th century was a period of great political, cultural and social transformation in the Islamic world. Among the important poets of this period was Muhammad Iqbal, a poet, philosopher and political leader who blended the riches of East and West in his poetry and called for the awakening of humanity in his works.[5] Through his poetry, Muhammad Iqbal viewed the institution of the caliphate not merely as a political authority but also as a symbol of the spiritual unity, revival, struggle, and social solidarity of the Islamic ummah. Iqbal viewed the caliphate as a position of faith, heroism, and struggle based on the spirit of the Qur'an, and he also addressed the spiritual struggle against Western colonialism in this context. Historical events such as the Tripolitania and Balkan Wars are seen to be among the elements that shaped Muhammad Iqbal's understanding of the caliphate. He particularly emphasised the Ottoman State's and society's commitment to law and justice. Iqbal linked the loss of the caliphate to a focus on spirituality, heroism and the spirit of struggle, stating that salvation could only be achieved through unity, revival and jihad. He also sought to establish a philosophy of life that would pave the way for Muslim nations to rebuild themselves in accordance with the essence of Islam and to lay the foundations for a new way of thinking in Islam [6]. Particularly influenced by the struggle, solidarity, and sense of community of the Turks, who held the caliphate, the poet wanted the people of the Indian subcontinent to show the same effort and endeavour to free themselves from colonialism and slavery in the face of the West. Iqbal believed that Muslims could progress both materially and spiritually. He tried to explain to them that they needed to use their own potential for Islam to regain its powerful position.[7]

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4 Celal Soydan, *İkbal'e Dair* (Ankara: Hece Yayınları, 2016), 44.

5 Mehmet Kemal Çakmakçı, "Muhammed İkbal'in 'Hareket Zili' Eserinde Edebi Şahsiyetler", *Söylem Filoloji Dergisi* 10/1 (2025), 206.

6 Celal Soydan, "İkbal Felsefesinde Kadının Yeri", *Nüsha: Şarkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi* 3/9 (2003), 56.

7 Hakan Kuyumcu, "Çocuk ve Genç İkbal'in Şiir Dünyasında", *Tarihin Peşinde Uluslararası Tarih ve Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi* 5 (2011), 75.

Indeed, the resistance and struggle displayed by the Turks, who faced material hardship, transcended political struggle and became a manifestation of the spiritual mission that strengthened the caliphate. In his poems, the poet emphasised that the entire Islamic world should share the same consciousness and effort as the Turks in their struggle. Reflecting in his poems that the caliphate, without straying from the essence of Islam's fundamental principles, also regarded the safety of life and property of non-Muslims as a trust, Iqbal sought to revive the historical legacy by reminding Muslims of their past power, splendour, and courage. A rational and reformist writer, Iqbal was aware of the importance of the caliphate, but he placed greater emphasis on the independence of nations.[8]

This study examines how Iqbal conveyed the concept of caliphate in his poetry, how it intertwined with historical events, and how he portrayed the caliphate as a historical, political, and mystical office in his poems. It concludes that in Iqbal's ideology, the caliphate was not only a political authority but also the source of the moral and spiritual revival of the ummah. It was also observed that Iqbal's caliphate contained the ideal of independence for the ummah and self-sacrifice that transcended social gender boundaries. This article aims to examine the spiritual and symbolic meanings that the concept of caliphate carries in Muhammad Iqbal's poetry.

Using a qualitative approach based on textual analysis, this study will analyse Iqbal's poems that reflect his perception and concept of the caliphate and its implications for Muslims in the Indian subcontinent.

1. The Emphasis on Caliphate in the Poetry of Muhammad Iqbal

The poem In the Presence of the Prophet was composed by Muhammad Iqbal on October 26, 1911. At that time, due to the ongoing Balkan War, a meeting was convened at the Badshahi Mosque in Lahore under the auspices of Maulana Zafar Ali Khan. Maulana Zafar Ali Khan was the editor of the *Zamindar* newspaper, a writer, a poet, and a figure who played an active role on political platforms to ensure unity between Hindus and Muslims.[9] This poem was sent to the medical mission that had been assembled to help the wounded.[10] In this poem, Muhammad Iqbal refers to the period when the whole world was in turmoil, based on the difficulties experienced by the Turks, who held the caliphate, in the political and military spheres. The Turks, who held the caliphate, entered the Tripoli War with Italy between 1911 and 1912. Referring to the Turks as the honour of the ummah in the Tripoli War, Muhammad Iqbal emphasised that the caliphate was not merely a political institution but represented the ideal of unity in the Islamic world. He supported the mission of the

[8] Muhsin Ramazan İşsever, "Muhammad Iqbal and the Turks", *Akademik Platform İslami Araştırmalar Dergisi* 8/2 (2024), 250.

[9] Hatice Görgün, "Balkan Savaşları ve Mevlana Zafer Ali Han", *Şarkiyat Mecmuası - Journal of Oriental Studies* 35 (2019), 5.

[10] Khwaja Hameed Yazdani, *Sharh-e-Bang-e-Dara* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2006), 343.

caliphate through the martyrs who displayed great heroism in this war. The metaphor of the vial presented by the poet to the Prophet is a symbolic representation of the notion that the survival of the office of the Caliphate is contingent upon the presence of a profound sense of devotion, as opposed to being reliant upon military might. The blood contained within the vial is a metaphorical representation of the honour of the Muslims. He proposes a reinterpretation of the Caliphate, conceptualising it as a spiritual centre protected by the consciousness of martyrdom, rather than a state structure confined within geographical boundaries:

You emerged from the world's garden in the form of fragrance.	نکل کے باغ جہاں سے برنگ بو آیا
What gift did you bring us from the world?	ہمارے واسطے کیا تحفہ لے کے تو آیا؟
O Messenger! There is no comfort in the world,	حضور! دہر میں آسودگی نہیں ملتی
The sought-after life is not here.	تلاش جس کی ہے وہ زندگی نہیں ملتی
There are thousands of tulips and roses in the garden of life;	ہزاروں لالہ و گل ہیں ریاض ہستی میں
But none of them carry the scent of loyalty.	وفا کی جس میں ہو بو' وہ کلی نہیں ملتی
But I have brought you a crystal vial to offer you	مگر میں نذر کو اک آبگینہ لایا ہوں
And what is within it does not even exist in paradise:	جو چیز اس میں ہے ' جنت میں بھی نہیں ملتی
The honour of your ummah shines within it,	جھلکتی ہے تری امت کی آبرو اس میں
The blood of the martyrs of Tripoli is in it![11]	طرابلس کے شہیدوں کا ہے لہو اس میں[12]

In September 1911, the Italians attacked Tripoli, located within the territories of the Ottoman Sultanate. However, during this war, the Turks faced several difficulties in terms of military, financial, food and health. With the support of the as-Sanusi[13], who were extremely loyal to the Caliph, the Ottoman Sultanate achieved partial success in the

11 Muhammed İkbal, *Hareket Zili*, çev. Celal Soydan (Ankara: Hece Publications, 2019), 168.

12 Allama Iqbal, *Bang-e-Dara*, ed. Basheer Ahmed (Delhi: Duniya Publications, 2024), 230.

13 A Sufi order attributed to Muhammad ibn Ali as-Sanusi (d. 1859).

struggle against the Italians [14]. During the war, Fatima bint Abdullah, a girl who was only fourteen years old at the time, took on the task of distributing water to the wounded with religious fervour. Iqbal, who read about Fatima's self-sacrifice on the battlefield in Arab newspapers, was deeply moved. Upon this, Iqbal immortalised Fatima's story and guided future generations.[15] Written in the context of the Tripoli War, this poem is a powerful example reflecting the importance of the Caliphate for the Islamic world. Conveying the Ottoman Caliphate's struggle against Western colonialism, this poem has been passed down as a source of dignity and honour for the martyrs of Tripoli. This poem shows that the martyrdom of a woman embodies a spirit of faith and self-sacrifice that transcends the social gender boundaries of the caliphate ideology. Muhammad Iqbal expressed his thoughts on women in some of his poems written in Urdu. In Bang-e Dara, Iqbal wrote a poem titled Fatima binti Abdullah.[16] The poem calls all members of the ummah to struggle through the female hero, exalting the concept of caliphate with an emphasis on martyrdom. The character of Fatima in this poem stands not only as an individual heroine but also as a symbol that the Caliphate will not perish:

Fatima! You are the pride of the ummah,	فاطمہ! تو آبروئے امت مرحوم ہے
Every particle of your earthly body is pure.	ذرہ ذرہ تیری مشت خاک کا معصوم ہے
O desert-born houri! This happiness is your destiny,	یہ سعادت ، حور صحرائی! تری قسمت میں تھی
To serve the warriors of the faith was your destiny.	غازیان دیں کی سقائی تری قسمت میں تھی
You fought jihad without sword or shield in the way of Allah,	یہ جہاد اللہ کے رستے میں بے تیغ و سپر
What great courage the martyr's devotion has given you.	ہے جسارت آفریں شوق شہادت کس قدر
Was there such a bud in that autumn garden?	یہ کلی بھی اس گلستان خزاں منظر میں تھی
Such a spark, O Lord, was there in our ashes?	ایسی چنگاری بھی یارب، اپنی خاکستر میں تھی!
In our desert, there are still many hidden gazelles.	اپنے صحرا میں بہت آہو ابھی پوشیدہ ہیں

[14] Arzu Çiftsüren, "Trablusgarp Savaşı'nın Urdu Şiirine Yansıması", *Şarkiyat Mecmuası* 41 (2022), 43.

[15] Yazdani, *Sharh-e-Bang-e-Dara*, 376.

[16] Recep Durgun, "Merhume Validem Anısına İsimli Şiir Işığında Allame Muhammed İkbal'de Anne Sevgisi", *Doğu Dilleri Dergisi* 10/1 (2025), 58.

And in the rain-spent cloud, the lightning sleeps.	بجلیاں برسے ہوئے بادل میں بھی خوابیدہ ہیں!
Fatima! Though our eyes shed tears of mourning for you,	فاطمہ! گو شبنم افشاں آنکھ تیرے غم میں ہے
Yet the melody of joy is also present in our mourning.	نغمہ عشرت بھی اپنے نالہ ماتم میں ہے
How joyful is the dance of your soil	رقص تیری خاک کا کتنا نشاط انگیز ہے
Every particle is filled with the essence of life.	ذرہ ذرہ زندگی کے سوز سے لبریز ہے
There is a commotion in your silent grave.	ہے کوئی ہنگامہ تیری تربت خاموش میں
A new nation is rising in its embrace.	پل رہی ہے ایک قوم تازہ اس آغوش میں
Though I do not know how vast its aims may be,	بے خبر ہوں گرچہ ان کی وسعت مقصد سے میں
I see it being born from your grave.	آفرینش دیکھتا ہوں ان کی اس مرقد سے میں
New stars are appearing in the sky.	تازہ انجم کا فضائے آسماں میں ہے ظہور
The human eye is unaware of their light waves.	دیدۂ انساں سے نامحرم ہے جن کی موج نور
They have only just emerged from the dark chamber of days.	جو ابھی ابھرے ہیں ظلمت خانۂ ایام سے
Their light is still unaware of the morning and evening's confinement.	جن کی ضو ناآشنا ہے قید صبح و شام سے
There is an old style in their glow, and a new style too.	جن کی تابانی میں انداز کہن بھی، نو بھی ہے
And also the reflection of your destiny star.[17]	اور تیرے کوکب تقدیر کا پرتو بھی ہے[18]

Another poem by Muhammad Iqbal When evaluated in the context of the Caliphate, the Siege of Edirne is an important work reflecting the religious and political leadership assumed by the Ottoman Sultanate in the Islamic world. In this poem, the poet defends the

[17] İkbal, *Hareket Zili*, 184.

[18] Iqbal, *Bang-e-Dara*, 241-242.

existence of the ummah and the legitimacy of the Caliphate in the struggle between the West and the Turks. The poem reflects that although Ottoman State soldiers faced material difficulties throughout the war, they remained true to the core principles of Islam, viewing the caliphate as a trust that guaranteed the safety of life and property even for non-Muslims. The poem emphasises the Ottoman army's and society's commitment to law and religious values in the context of the caliphate. It was also asserted that the most significant difference distinguishing this army from the Western army is its adherence to morality and justice. Iqbal further elaborated on the concept of the Caliphate, emphasising its role as a symbol representing not only the Muslim community but also universal justice:

When the battle between right and wrong began in Europe	یورپ میں جس گھڑی حق و باطل کی چھڑ گئی
Truth was forced to take up the sword.	حق خنجر آزمائی پہ مجبور ہو گیا
The cloud of the cross encircled the crescent	گرد صلیب گرد قمر حلقہ زن ہوئی
Shukru Pasha was besieged in the castle of Edirne.	شکری حصار درنہ میں محصور ہو گیا
The provisions of the Muslim soldiers ran out	مسلم سپاہیوں کے ذخیرے ہوئے تمام
Hope hid its face from view.	روئے امید آنکھ سے مستور ہو گیا
Finally, by order of the Turkish army commander,	آخر امیر عسکر ترکی کے حکم سے
the 'Law of War' was made the city's law.	'آئین جنگ' شہر کا دستور ہوگیا
Everything was transferred to the army's provisions.	ہر شے ہوئی ذخیرہ لشکر میں منتقل
Shahin was left in need of even a sparrow's grain.	شاہیں گدائے دانہء عصفور ہو گیا
However, as soon as the city's mufti heard this,	لیکن فقیہ شہر نے جس دم سنی یہ بات
He blazed with anger like Mount Tur.	گرما کے مثل صاعقہ طور ہو گیا
The property of a non-Muslim is forbidden to a Muslim soldier.	ذمی کا مال لشکر مسلم پہ ہے حرام
This fatwa spread throughout the city.	فتوی تمام شہر میں مشہور ہو گیا

The soldier did not touch the property of Jews and Christians.	چھوتی نہ تھی یہود و نصاری کا مال فوج
Muslims were compelled to obey Allah's command.[19]	مسلم ، خدا کے حکم سے مجبور ہوگیا[20]

Muhammad Iqbal's poem Daryuza-e Khilafat (The Beggar of the Caliphate) is also among the important poems that inspired the people [21]. In this poem, Muhammad Iqbal argues that the caliphate is not just a political office, but an office that Muslims must claim for the sake of independence, honour and religious responsibility. Muhammad Iqbal heavily criticises Muslims for losing their will to determine their own destiny, losing the caliphate, and waiting for it to come from elsewhere, viewing this situation as contrary to the historical and deep-rooted tradition of the ummah. In this vein, Iqbal states that the caliphate can only be achieved through struggle, sacrifice and jihad, adding that a caliphate gained without struggle will not bring dignity and will have no meaning from an Islamic perspective. The occupation of Anatolia by imperialist powers in the aftermath of World War I engendered a climate of profound disquiet among the Muslim populace of the Indian subcontinent. The occupation of the Turks, who held the Caliphate, effectively deprived the region of Anatolia -regarded as the centre of the Islamic world- of its independence. The Khilafat Movement was initiated by Indian Muslims with the objective of liberating the centre of the Caliphate from this occupation. Concurrently, the leaders of the Khilafat Movement established contacts with the British Government to secure independence for the Turks, whilst simultaneously mounting a major mobilisation to provide financial aid to them. However, Iqbal did not approve of the Khilafat Movement for certain reasons; in his view, this entity had not chosen the most appropriate method to achieve its goal. This was due to the fact that the Khilafat Movement lacked the capacity to impede the actions of the British government. Furthermore, a subordinate mindset prevailed over the practical and intellectual methodologies employed by this movement. It is his contention that the Khilafat Movement was predicated on the principle of begging. In his poem entitled The Beggar of the Caliphate, he evaluates this Movement as follows:

If the country is lost, let it be lost	اگر ملک ہاتھوں سے جاتا ہے، جائے
Do not deviate from Allah's command.	تو احکام حق سے نہ کر بے وفائی
Have you no knowledge of history?	نہیں تجھ کو تاریخ سے آگہی کیا

[19] İkbal, *Hareket Zili*, 186.

[20] Iqbal, *Bang-e-Dara*, 243.

[21] Hatice Görgün, "Pakistan ve Türkiye İlişkilerinin Gelişiminde Hindistan Hilafet Hareketinin Etkileri", *Doğu Araştırmaları* 2022/26 (2022), 62.

You have begun begging for the Caliphate!	خلافت کی کرنے لگا تو گدائی
If we cannot take it with our blood,	خریدیں نہ جس کو ہم اپنے لہو سے
That sultanate is a disgrace for a Muslim!	مسلماں کو ہے ننگ وہ پادشائی
Begging for mummy medicine from others	مرا از شکستن چناں عار ناید
Is more shameful than the breaking of my bones.[22]	کہ از دیگراں خواستن مومیائی[23]

Muhammad Iqbal, who conceptualised the caliphate as the order of Islamic states, asserted that true superiority lies in piety[24]. The poet sees the loss of the caliphate as the loss of the political and spiritual power of the Islamic world. Iqbal, who does not see the idea of the caliphate as political power, expresses that this idea is a moral and religious responsibility and describes it as an institution that regulates the spiritual life of the Islamic ummah. Iqbal states that the caliphate is a means of salvation, especially for Eastern societies, and emphasises that it is based on a universal consciousness of the ummah that transcends race. He rejected the concept of territorial nationalism, advocating instead for the unification of Muslims into a single nation[25]. At the same time, the poet sees the caliphate not only for Muslims but as an element of balance and justice throughout the world. Muhammad Iqbal, recalling the power, splendour and courage of the past, desires the revival of the historical heritage. Believing in the power of the Caliphate, Muhammad Iqbal expressed his desire for a Caliphate, especially as it existed in the past, in his poem The Islamic World as follows [26]. Furthermore, Iqbal articulated his Pan-Islamist thought by revealing the vast extent of the Caliphate's boundaries:

Power has slipped away, and the people's eyes have been opened.	ملک ہاتھوں سے گیا ملت کی آنکھیں کھل گئیں
Allah has granted you sight, O heedless one: see your surroundings.	حق ترا چشمے عطا کرد ست غافل در نگر

[22] İkbal, *Hareket Zili*, 220.

[23] Iqbal, *Bang-e-Dara*, 267.

[24] Sekban Halifat, "İkbal'in İhya Projesinin Analizi", *Muhammed İkbal Kitabı: Uluslararası Muhammed İkbal Sempozyumu Bildirileri* (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 1997), 190.

[25] Amna Afreen, "Iqbal's Islamic Political Ideas", *Al-Adwa Journal* 41/29 (2014), 51.

[26] Görgün, "Pakistan ve Türkiye İlişkilerinin Gelişiminde Hindistan Hilafet Hareketinin Etkileri", 65.

It is better to be torn apart than to beg for mummy's medicine,	مومیائی کی گدائی سے تو بہتر ہے شکست
O ant! Do not even beg from Solomon.	مور بے پر حاجتے پیش سلیمانے مبر
The salvation of the East lies in the unity of the people	ربط و ضبط ملت بیضا ہے مشرق کی نجات
The Asians are still unaware of this truth.	ایشیا والے ہیں اس نکتے سے اب تک بے خبر
Moreover, abandon politics and enter the bounds of religion,	پھر سیاست چھوڑ کر داخل حصار دیں میں ہو
Wealth and property are the fruits of protecting the Harem.	ملک و دولت ہے فقط حفظ حرم کا اک ثمر
Unity is needed to protect the Muslim Harem	ایک ہوں مسلم حرم کی پاسبانی کے لئے
From the banks of the Nile to the lands of Kashgar.	نیل کے ساحل سے لے کر تا بخاک کاشغر
Whoever makes distinctions based on lineage and race shall perish.	جو کرے گا امتیاز رنگ و خوں مٹ جائے گا
Whether they be the tent-dwelling Turks or the noble-blooded Arabs.	ترک خرگاہی ہو یا اعرابئ والا گہر
If lineage comes before religion for a Muslim,	نسل اگر مسلم کی مذہب پر مقدم ہو گئی
They will vanish from the world like a speck of dust.	اڑ گیا دنیا سے تو مانند خاک رہ گزر
If your desire is to restore the world through caliphate,	تا خلافت کی بنا دنیا میں ہو پھر استوار
Then find a heart like that of your ancestors and bring it forth.	لا کہیں سے ڈھونڈ کر اسلاف کا قلب و جگر
"O you who cannot distinguish the hidden from the obvious, beware,	اے کہ نشناسی خفی را از جلی ہشیار باش

Beware of being addicted to the quarrel between Bakir and Ali![27]

اے گرفتار ابوبکر و علی ہشیار باش[28]

Iqbal views the caliphate not merely as a formal institution but as a force that mobilises the Muslim community. According to the poet, the caliph is the one who frees the Islamic ummah from stagnation, inertia, and issues of self-interest. He states that a symbolic caliphate based on form enslaves Muslims, whereas a true caliph liberates the ummah and makes them witnesses of Allah on earth:

You asked me what religious leadership is,

تو نے پوچھی ہے امامت کی حقیقت مجھ سے

May Allah grant you knowledge of secrets as He has granted me.

حق تجھے میری طرح صاحب اسرار کرے

The true leader of your time should be someone who

ہے وہی تیرے زمانے کا امام برحق

Who tires you of both the present and the moment.

جو تجھے حاضر و موجود سے بیزار کرے

Who shows you the face of your true beloved in the mirror of death

موت کے آئنے میں تجھ کو دکھا کر رخ دوست

And make life even more difficult for you.

زندگی تیرے لیے اور بھی دشوار کرے

May it give you a sense of loss and boil your blood,

دے کے احساس زیاں تیرا لہو گرما دے

Sharpen you like a dervish's wrist with a stone and turn you into a sword.

فقر کی سان چڑھا کر تجھے تلوار کرے

Religious leadership that makes the Muslim a slave to sultans

فتنہ ملت بیضا ہے امامت اس کی

Is a destruction for the ummah.[29]

جو مسلماں کو سلاطیں کا پرستار کرے[30]

Muhammad Iqbal, in the following poem, expresses that the Turks reflect the spirit of freedom and struggle, and that they are making a great effort to keep the caliphate alive.

[27] İkbal, *Hareket Zili*, 227-228.

[28] Iqbal, *Bang-e-Dara*, 275.

[29] Celal Soydan, *Musa Vuruşu & Hicaz Armağanı Muhammed İkbal* (Ankara: Hece Yayınları, 2013), 67.

[30] Khwaja Hameed Yazdani, *Sharh Zarb-e-Kaleem* (New Delhi, India: Qaari Publications, 2009), 48.

Iqbal prays and hopes that the Muslims in India will also be blessed with the spirit of revival and struggle, as in the Turks. The poet, who links true prostration to keeping the spirit of the caliphate alive, wants Muslims living under colonial rule, deprived of work, production and the power to struggle, to rise again and return to the revitalising essence of Islam. In the poem, he associates the prolonged prostrations of Indian Muslims with the phenomenon of slavery:

After prayer, the Turk mujahid asked me:	کہا مجاہد ترکی نے مجھ سے بعد نماز
Why do your imams make you prostrate for so long?	طویل سجدہ ہیں کیوں اس قدر تمھارے امام
That simple mujahid, that free believer	وہ سادہ مرد مجاہد ، وہ مومن آزاد
How would he know what the prayer of the slaves is like.	خبر نہ تھی اسے کیا چیز ہے نماز غلام
Free people have thousands of things to do in this world	ہزار کام ہیں مردان حر کو دنیا میں
The order in the community is only through their work!	انھی کے ذوق عمل سے ہیں امتوں کے نظام
The bodies of slaves are deprived of the fire of labour	بدن غلام کا سوز عمل سے ہے محروم
For it is forbidden for them to advance day and night.	کہ ہے مرور غلاموں کے روز و شب پہ حرام
If they prolong their prostration, what is there to be surprised about?	طویل سجدہ اگر ہیں تو کیا تعجب ہے
Do the poor have anything else to do but prostrate?	ورائے سجدہ غریبوں کو اور کیا ہے کام
May Allah grant this to the imams of India as well.	خدا نصیب کرے ہند کے اماموں کو
The prostration that carries the message of life for the nation![31]	وہ سجدہ جس میں ہے ملت کی زندگی کا پیام[32]

[31] Soydan, *Musa Vuruşu & Hicaz Armağanı Muhammed İkbal*, 218.

[32] Yazdani, *Sharh Zarb-e-Kaleem*, 159.

Muhammad Iqbal relates the caliphate to the spirit of the Qur'an and associates its essence with love and spirituality, not oppression and tyranny. In this vein, the poet sees the true foundation of the caliphate as an authority that has been purified of the self and has attained divine manifestation. Expressing that the power of the caliphate comes from spiritual maturity rather than worldly oppression, Iqbal states that this position is established through faith, love and spirituality. The poem refers to Muslims' corruption, their inability to preserve their identity and their surrender to the West; it mentions that they have lost the spiritual power they once possessed and have become slaves to the West. Interpreting it as a spiritual position centred on the Qur'an, he attributes the loss of the caliphate to Muslims' detachment from the spirit of love, spirituality, heroism and faith:

In darwishhood, where the spirit of the Quran is unveiled	کسے خبر کہ ہزاروں مقام رکھتا ہے
Who can know the thousands of stations?	وہ فقر جس میں ہے بے پردہ روح قرآنی
When the self-realises its own superiority	خودی کو جب نظر آتی ہے قاہری اپنی
This station is called the station of sultanate.	یہی مقام ہے کہتے ہیں جس کو سلطانی
This station is the measure of the believer's strength	یہی مقام ہے مومن کی قوتوں کا عیار
It is because of this station that man is the Shadow of Allah.	اسی مقام سے آدم ہے ظل سبحانی
This rank is not about coercion and force, but about love and devotion.	یہ جبر و قہر نہیں ہے یہ عشق و مستی ہے
For worldly governance is not possible through oppression and coercion.	کہ جبر و قہر سے ممکن نہیں جہاں بانی
You have been enslaved to servitude.	کیا گیا ہے غلامی میں مبتلا تجھ کو
This is why you cannot preserve your darwishhood.	کہ تجھ سے ہو نہ سکی فقر کی نگہبانی
The Islam in which the traces of prostration shine upon you like the moon	مثال ماہ چمکتا تھا جس کا داغ سجود
was purchased from you by the Westerners.	خرید لی ہے فرنگی نے وہ مسلمانی

That radiance, which rivals the moon and sun,	ہوا حریف مہ و آفتاب تو جس سے
No longer resides in your stars.[33]	رہی نہ تیرے ستاروں میں وہ درخشانی[34]

Conclusion

Among the most important intellectuals of the 20th century, philosopher and poet Muhammad Iqbal viewed the caliphate not as a political authority but as an institution representing the existence, unity, and spirituality of the Islamic ummah. He also saw the caliphate as a symbol of resistance against colonialism during this difficult period for Indian Muslims and the Ottoman Sultanate. In this regard, he equated the struggle of the Ottoman Sultanate during the Tripolitania and Balkan wars with the dignity and honour of the ummah. He exalted the caliphate office with the concept of law and justice, arguing that the self-sacrifice demonstrated by the Islamic community transcended the concept of gender. According to Iqbal, this office is an authority established not by coercion but by faith and spirituality. Linking the loss of the caliphate to Muslims' loss of spirituality, self-sacrifice and determination to fight, Iqbal stated that salvation could only be achieved through a revival based on the Holy Quran, ummah consciousness and struggle. In this vein, the poet expressed that the Caliphate is a consciousness of struggle that makes no distinction between men and women. Through the poems he penned, he emphasized that this institution transcends geographical boundaries and encompasses all Muslims of the world, rather than being grounded in lineage, race, or ethnic origin.

Muhammad Iqbal viewed the caliphate as an office symbolising the unity and independence of Muslim societies; he called it the guarantor of justice, law and security. His works reveal that symbols of the caliphate, such as martyrdom and self-sacrifice, strengthen the consciousness of the ummah. According to him, becoming dependent on the West and losing one's spirituality is equivalent to losing the caliphate. The historical, spiritual and political dimensions of the concept of caliphate in Iqbal's works offer a noteworthy framework of thought for Muslims. This study attempts to convey how Muhammad Iqbal reflected the phenomenon of caliphate in his poetry and how he related it to historical figures and events.

[33] Soydan, *Musa Vuruşu & Hicaz Armağanı Muhammed İkbal*, 44.

[34] Yazdani, *Sharh Zarb-e-Kaleem*, 29-30.

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