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## IQBAL'S ORTHOGRAPHIC STYLE: A RESEARCH ANALYSIS

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### ABSTRACT

Iqbal is the shining star of Urdu literature. Iqbal's services in Urdu poetry and prose are highly valued. The series of research works regarding his poetry and prose is very wide. The subject of this article is the discussion on the orthographic style of handwriting that Iqbal liked and adopted, as well as the script that was adopted in connection with the printing and publication of his work.

The series of research works regarding Iqbal's life, thought, and art is quite important in Urdu research. Voluminous work has been done regarding different dimensions of his thought and art. Iqbal's orthographic style is also of special significance. We may define "Imla" or orthography as the fixed and standard methods of writing. Rashid Hasan Khan has given a comprehensive definition of Imla:

### INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the script of Urdu, "Imala" is the order and placement of the letters in a word and the standard method of joining these letters together. (1) In handwriting, Imla is the practice of correct choice of letters, spellings, parsing and inflection. Rashid Hasan Khan has mentioned the efforts of Ghalib regarding research and correction of Urdu spelling in the following manner:

He used to draw his students' attention to the spelling errors and would point out the correct spelling and orthographic way of writing as he deemed correct. (2)

Along with spelling, the script is also of great importance. The script refers to the handwriting style, such as Naskh, Nastaliq, Khat-e-Shekasta etc. In the era of Iqbal, people usually used to use Khat-e-Shekasta in the fair copies of their poetry notebooks. Letters are adjoined in this writing style; hence this method is used to write more words in less time. Iqbal's handwriting style is also Khat-e-Shekasta, or broken style. However, when Iqbal hired various calligraphers to

transcribe his works, he preferred the Nastaliq script. Dr. Rafiuddin Hashmi writes in this regard:

For the second time, it was proposed to print Bang-e- Dara in Nastaliq. After publishing the illustrated edition of Bang-e-Dara in Nastaliq from Berlin in 1925, Dr. Zakir Hussain expressed his intention to print a similar version of Bang-e-Dara, but Iqbal due to his particular taste, did not agree to sacrifice Nastaliq on Naskh, so this proposal could not be implemented. (3)

During the time of Iqbal, the ancient methods of orthography were still in vogue, and there was some variation due to the script change. Therefore, orthographic irregularities in Iqbal's works can also be noted. When Iqbal dictated his books to Abdul Majeed Parveen, the famous calligraphist of his time, we can observe carelessness towards the spellings and orthographic style. Also, there is some confusion about Abdul Majeed's spelling. This series of orthographic errors may be ignored by saying that it happened due to the prevailing principles and insufficient attention to spelling in that period, but the 1973 edition of Iqbal's Kulliyat is also not immune from these spelling errors. While describing its calligraphic style and beauty as a wonderful example of typography, Dr. Javed Iqbal pointed out the spelling mistakes and said that it was poor in terms of spelling or orthography.

Dr. Rafiuddin Hashmi also commented on the printing and publication of Iqbal's Kulliyat and mentioned the confusion or disparity that is found therein. He especially commented on its orthographic style. Though Iqbal Academy has made efforts to publish an error-free edition of Iqbal's works, this effort has not been entirely successful because some spelling differences still exist. Muzaffar Hussain Burney has compiled Kulliyat-e-Makateeb of Iqbal. Commenting on Iqbal's handwriting style, he says:

In fact, he (Iqbal) does not make a conscious effort about any standard orthographic style, rather, it seems that while writing letters, he would not even pay the slightest attention towards orthography...we have adopted the same spelling style in all the letters. (4)

About the explanation of this statement of Burney, it could be said that Iqbal was primarily a creator. Because of intellectual flight, sometimes the idea affects the style of spelling. From the word structure to the spelling style, he could not pay attention to creativity. Various handwritten manuscripts of Iqbal clearly show that in an effort to translate his ideas into word form, he repeatedly deleted or replaced sentences and word order. Burney's claim that "he employed the same spelling style" is not correct. Even in this collection of Makateeb, the uniformity of spellings is missing. Here are some points regarding Iqbal's orthographic or spellings style:

1. From the first edition of Iqbal's books to the current edition, it is not explained which recommendation regarding the spelling has been taken into account, though assertion has been made about the latest style of spelling. It has been mentioned in the foreword of Iqbal Academy's edition that "the foundation of Imla has been based on reference/authority instead of conservatism or

retrogression”. However, even in the Academy’s edition, the word “سرگذشت” is written with ”ز“, which is not correct according to the spellings rules.

2. Rashid Hasan Khan, while mentioning the principles of editing, has written that the editor must adopt a uniform style of spelling. That is, the text should be written according to a single script. A word should not be written in different ways. For example, in a text, a particular word is sometimes written in Nastaliq and sometime in Nastaleeq. In the Kulliyat-e- Iqbal, published by Sheikh Ghulam Ali, the word “بے باک” is written as باک بے and at another place, the same is written as “بیباک”.

3. Generally, the poet’s name is given a pseudonym. In Kulliyat-e-Iqbal (1973), this symbol has been applied in one place while it is not found in other places. This confusion abounds in the early editions, but its reduction was gradual.

4. Allama often used to write words by adjoining them, such as آپکا ، ملجانی ، گمشده ، کرونگا ، چابیے etc. The Script Reform Committee of Anjuman-e-Taraqqi-e-Urdu had suggested that separate words should not be adjoined. Rashid Hasan Khan writes:

One of the proposals approved by the Anjuman-e-Taraqqi-e-Urdu under the spelling reforms was that two words should not be written together. However, the space between them should be only as much as two parts of the same word. (5)

5. Allama used to write Hindi letters of mixed sound with (بائے مختفی) such as, (بہائی (بہائی) ، بہلا (بہلا) ، مجھے (مجھے) بہوپال (بہوپال) Likewise, the word ( بے ) is also found in two forms, i.e. ”بے“ and ”ہے“ in the manuscripts of Iqbal. In the printing of Kalam-e-Iqbal, this style was not followed, and the above words were written as مجھے ، بہائی etc.

6. According to the modern style of orthography, a distinction has been made between ہائے ملفوظ and ہائے مخلوط . However, in the Kulliyat-e-Iqbal (1973), the words ہلا دو ، ہلا دو ، مہرووفا ، ہلال شہر ، مہر و وفا and ہلال شہر should in fact were supposed to be written as, ہلا دو ، مہرووفا ، ہلال شہر and ہلال شہر

7. Allama Iqbal used to underline the proper names, but the style was arrangement was not adhered to in the Kulliyat.

8. There are also mistakes and contradictions regarding punctuation. In many places, Iqbal unnecessarily used the sign exclamation (!) in his writing. For example, in the poem “Maqsood”, in the “Bayaz-e-Iqbal, this symbol was applied at the end of each couplet, such as, حیات کیا ہے! . The edition by Sheikh Ali and Sons has this symbol, while the same is missing in the Iqbal Academy’s edition. In the Bayyaz, there is an interrogation sign (?) after the second part of every couplet, which has been deleted in the Academy’s edition.

9. In the 1973 edition of Kulliyat, we find that against the rule of **امالہ**, the word **ستارہ** has been replaced with **ستارے**.

10. Iqbal wrote the words of Hindi origin with “ہ” like **راجہ** is written with “ا” in modern spelling. The poem “Mussolini” was written as **راجہ**; thus, modern rules of spelling were not followed.

11. Iqbal used to write the symbol “ص” with Muhammad in his name. As this symbol should only be used with the name of the Prophet (PBUH), so this symbol was deleted in print.

12. There are two common spellings for the word “to say” in Urdu, “Kaha” and “Kaha”. Iqbal called it “Kaha”; the exact spelling was adopted in the edition of 1973, on pages 714, 723, 739 etc.

14. In Persian script, (نون غنہ) is not written, while there is a tradition of writing the same in Urdu. However, Iqbal has employed this in his Persian works.

15. In modern spellings, words ending with the letter “الف” or “و” letter (ے) are added for conjunction (اضافت). Iqbal used to write such words with “ئے” as could be found in his Beyaz:

"میدان جنگ میں نہ طلب کر نوائے جنگ"

. The same spellings have been used in the edition published by the Academy of Letters.

However, it is not completely followed in the edition of the Sheikh Ghulam Ali and Sons, such as **ہوائے چمن** (p. 396), **گدائے جلوہ** (p. 348), and **جستجوئے آدمی** (p. 210). Similarly, Iqbal used to add conjunction (اضافت) with the words ending with “ی” such as **شوخی آب و گل**, but the same has been ignored at some places in the Sheikh Ghulam Ali and Sons edition (p. 455).

If we look at Iqbal’s Persian poetry, there is also a spelling problem. Dr. Rafiuddin Hashmi writes:

The Persian Kulliyat, internally, like the Urdu Kulliyat, is subject to orthographical chaos. The Persian Kulliyat is more replete with spelling chaos, contradictions, inaccuracies in inflection and punctuation, and overall orthographical irregularity and defects. The biggest flaw is that no rules or principles have been formulated in relation to orthography. In fact, the rule of thumb being the discretion of the scribe. At one place, he chooses to write a word in one way, and the other in another way, while at the third place the same word is given a new look and form altogether. (6)

Determining the text is one of the most important factors in orthography, that is, standardization of the script format, Imla or writing style. In the arrangement and editing of the Persian poetry of Allama, the identical method has not kept

in mind, which means that if a particular orthographical style was used for a word, it was not retained again in the whole book.

The proper way to compile a research edition of Kalam-e- Iqbal is to include complete footnotes with whatever orthographic style is adopted. Changes incorporated by Allama himself should be duly pointed out. Spelling differences between the printed and handwritten versions should be clarified. The rules of spelling, punctuation, signs and symbols need to be written in detail, and the method adopted for the arrangement of the text should also be explained. We need to pay attention to the editing of Iqbal's poetry while realizing the importance and responsibility of its literary value in every respect.

While the literary works of celebrated scholars and legends like Iqbal constitute authority in terms of diction, presentation and prosody, the same could also be presented as a reference from the point of view of orthography.

Unfortunately, Iqbal's poetic work could not be given the attention it needed to be paid in terms of editing. Similarly, the issue of Imla or orthography has also been limited to claims only. Although efforts have been made to improve spelling, orthographic style and punctuation in the Kulliyat of the Iqbal Academy, there is still room for further improvement. If Iqbal's spelling and orthographic style could be clarified and some innovation introduced in all the Kulliyats and anthologies of Allama Iqbal, the orthographic nature of spellings would have become clearer. Though it has been claimed that the modern system of spellings/orthography has been utilized in the above-mentioned anthologies, it is not explained under what principles the innovation has been adopted.

Last but not least, just as Rashid Hasan Khan has written the book "املائے غالب" describing Ghalib's spelling and orthographic style, there is a much bigger need to write a similar book on Iqbal's style.

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