

The Concept of Poverty (Faqr) in Iqbal Lahori Divan

Hosniyeh Novin., Dr. Kamran Pashayi Fakhri*, Dr. Parvaneh Adelzadeh

Department of Persian Literature, College of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages, Tabriz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran

ABSTRACT

Economics is one of the essential sciences that human life is based on it. After world wars and regression in the world, the economists tried to offer solutions to improve people life conditions. No doubt, our rich and valued literary works offer solutions for improvement of living and involve attitudes toward fruitful life. Muhammad Iqbal Lahori is one of the great and bilingual poets of India and Pakistan subcontinent. He presents the economic concepts and offers solutions for problems in skilled way.

The most important issues that have been considered in his divan are poverty, disdain, charity, richness and beneficence. In spite of domestic and foreign riots and other factors influencing on society, he has paid attention to poverty and tried to expand culture of kindness and beneficence in the community by inspiration of religious teachings and indicate the importance of beneficence. He has encouraged the poor to contentment and patience in solving economic problems to balance the society and prevent poverty. The only way to improve the current conditions is simple living and to accomplish this goal, he advises the rich to help the poor as a kind of consolation. The way that prevents social disorders resulted from poverty.

KEYWORDS: Iqbal Lahori, Persian literature, economic categories, India.

INTRODUCTION

We live in a world where, on one hand we encounter with diverse needs of man and on the other hand, try to meet these needs by limited resources. Thus, constant efforts of human for meeting needs using scarce resources and limited production, led to emergence and evolution of economics. Economy is an important aspect of life and understanding the ideas presented in this field could be have a lot of fruits. On the other hand, there are various economic theories that are applicable to different countries, especially third world countries. "People think that economics is a technical, confusing and mysterious subject. It is a subject that should be left to the experts and these experts are economists"(Economy in our language, 2012:11) "But the reality is that the economics should be quite frankly. Indeed, it is about what we produce, how we distribute our products and how we use them. Economics is about who does the work and what a person earns and what he does with it. In the simplest and the most popular case, all of us know about economics, therefore, we have to say about the economics"(ibid). "Economics has three functions: trying to understand how an economy discipline works, providing the schemes to improvement and justification of the measures of improvement. Measures for determining the optimal criteria include essentially moral and political judgments. Thus, the science of economics can never be completely "neutralized" and independent of the human values"(ibid: 107).As one of the important branches of social sciences, economics is related to other human sciences such as literature, law, psychology, sociology, history, geography, political science, mathematics, statistics, etc.It is closely connected to law so that in personal and organizational economic relationships, the labor law, business law and commerce law are approved. Economic categories have been defined differently and we refer to comprehensive definitions. "As a general definition, economics is the science that studies the application and optimal allocation of scarce resources and limited production, in order to meet unlimited human needs. In this definition, there are concepts that familiarity with them adds on our understanding of economics"(Microeconomics,2012:3)."The relationship among economics, psychology and sociology is very close. In this regard, human behavior is examined socially and personally in economics and psychology. However, in the economics, the purpose of the analysis of human behavior generally is to assess the economic benefit of the individual with society, but due to the discovery of the laws governing on the evolution of groups and communities, the main subject is sociology, it can be said that according to the nature of economics, it also focuses on these areas (ibid:8-9).Persian literary prose and verse works are very diverse. Poets and writers have raised a variety of discussion in their works. Among them, it can be referd to theological, philosophical, spiritual, social and political discussions. One of the most controversial issues is economic argument. Human is two-dimensional creature and his needs can be divided into physical and spiritual needs. His material needs are provided

* **Corresponding Author:** Dr. Kamran Pashayi Fakhri, Department of Persian literature, College of Persian literature and Foreign Languages, Tabriz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran.
Email: pashaei@iau.ac.ir

by economic activity and sometimes material needs overshadow his spiritual needs. Economic importance in human life is represented by different categories in Islamic texts as heritage, poverty and wealth and etc. The poets and writers in Persian literature have also addressed to the economic categories and these categories with respect to the subject can be divided into two classes: the first category relates to the economic and material interests and the second category involves lack of interest in material benefit and economy. Very long and detailed odes are often found with various themes that have been written to receive rewards of kings and officials. However, today, they are considered as the literary masterpieces, but in fact they are rooted in economic problems. Iqbal Lahori, the contemporary poet, philosopher and politician has used the topic related to economy and economic categories including poverty, richness, the poor and etc. However, he is a religious poet and philosopher mystic that has considered mystical, spiritual and religious issues more than worldliness, wealth and worldly possessions and in some of his poems refers to economic categories with religious aspects. The aim of this paper is to explain the economic outlook of this famous poet. Although much said and written about him, but still many features and aspects of his life are unknown. He is not only a poet, but also his works have numerous advantages and features. He is a Muslim theologian and philosopher, thinker, wise man, prominent politician, mystic and heart burning lover and he has written the book of "Economics" that is the first book about economics in Urdu. "This book is the first book of Iqbal published in 1903 in Lahore" (Iran from Iqbal Lahori perspective: 2011:37). He refers poverty in specific context. This word in the Quran is synonym of needy and indigent that is particular trait of mankind, while God is described rich and needless.

(O people, you need to Allah, and Allah does not need anyone). In his opinion, the holy prophet is proud of satiety (PBUH) (Religion and world view of Iqbal, 2001: 45). Poverty in his poems is according to Quran and prophetic definition. For him, the poor depends only on God. It means renunciation and ignoring others except God and connection to the universe and exaltation.

Poverty (living in simple way) is a way of living that results of particular attitude towards religion, ethics, economics and social and material aspects of life. This attitude to foster a healthy personality is very important. Those who live simple are called dervish in Persian.

Annemarie Schimmel describes this view: "Simple living (Faqr) in the Islamic tradition is the primary step in Sufism that its lexical meaning is poverty, but later its spiritual meaning was defined according to Junaid Baghdadi: the person who does not need anything while everything needs him. Faqr gained attention and positive aspect by influence of pious attitude in Islamic mysticism and traditional literature filled with the beggar beside the king as the warning secularist governors and protest against the wealth and power of the rulers (The meaning of life from the perspective of Molana and Iqbal, 2012: 168-169).

Iqbal considers Faqr as one of the main factors in personality development. His works are full of definitions and instructions in this regard. Faqr is not source of weakness and solitude, but it is an ideal leading to dynamicity and effort in strong and powerful men that causes them to ignore luxuries and temptations of the world. Such poverty is sign of self-sufficiency that offers right reasoning and a sense of individuality. It does not mean Iqbal welcomes weak people who do not learn from their right and cannot defend their rights. Faqr is used in the positive meaning in the later works of Iqbal. In his works, Faqr is a symbol of traits of a true Muslim that Quran describes them. In *Javidnamh*, he writes:

Avoid the poverty that leads to nakedness. Faqr leads man to kingship (Iqbal Lahori: 1964:35).

It leads the Muslims to happiness:

Although he is sitting on mat but he is on the throne Poverty and regality is due to his satisfaction (ibid. 402).

The person who believes only in God

Brings the world under his control

Where there is faqr, dancing and nakedness

Faqr is kingship where is monastic (ibid: 311)

In Iqbal's opinion, satiety leads to self-sufficiency and independence and it is making diamond glass and seeing nothing except God.

It means leaving water and mud, joining to heart and soul and life and conquering the world. In other words, controlling the worldly facilities without need to something and satiety while in poverty (ibid: 397). Also, he rejects leaving worldly affluences and living in solitude. The real satiety directs mankind to live in gratitude. This kind of salvation is not achieved by living in solitude but it is obtained by controlling of material properties (ibid: 397).

Faqr is making the mat and eliminating any fear and anxiety and obeying only God. It is dealing with minimal resources and leading economic life, with development and catharsis of the heart and strengthening human temperament mainly traits.

He believes that, man can live liberal with a few material properties and preserve his humanly character and lead simple life with affection and gratitude.

A poor man protests to kings
A throne trembles by glory of mat
His heart strengthens by his conduct and quest
He cries near the king loudly and fearlessly
Our fire is burning due to his soil
Flame fears on his dust and soil
Whenever people have dervish among them
never lose in the battle
our reputation is from his disdain
We are eager because of his fearless eagerness
See yourself in my mirror
To be offered kingship
Faqr is philosophy of religion
It is empowering of religion (ibid:396).

Faqr is prostrating on the earth and exaltation in the sky without need to worldly properties. The capital of dervish is releasing from world affluences and looking beyond the worldly affairs.

Look at my resplendence
Look at my austerity
I learned from my ancestors that
Man reaches to kingship by satiety (ibid:451).
I never demand power from somebody
I am graceful by your sun
I look beyond moon and stars
I never talk in favor of somebody (ibid: 447)

In his opinion, faqr causes man to be needless on the worldly wealth and leads him to God and divinity.

What are cloth, silver, ruby and gemstone?

Who is handsome servant with golden belt?
They are needless on both worlds
What is the capital of the artist?(ibid:482).

Poverty for Iqbal is magnanimity and serving people recommended in Islam. It is not forcing to serve by offering variety of drinks and food, but it means withdrawal of worldly and material needs.

Magnanimity is serving people for us
It is justice and living in satiety
Faqr has been added in splendor monuments
Like Salman at Ctesiphon (ibid: 191-192).

Iqbal praises high mindedness combined by poverty so that he tends to retain the poor traits while he is rich and has position and this quest is possible when man considers only God and aims to reach perfection and knows this world as a mean for reaching the other world. If the person attaches on the world he will not reach to higher levels and never live in poverty so he will be proud of his wealth.

Live as a dervish while you are king
Live with vision, awakened and pious (ibid:191).

The pious men owe their piety and brevity to Quran. Who is educated in this school reaches to happiness whether in spiritual matters or financial affairs. Struggling in the shadow of the Quran leads to happiness in this world and source of blessing and mercy and progress in economic and financial affairs.

O, you that are captive in its imitation
Follow Quran and free up (ibid: 311)
If you want to live as a Muslim
You have to follow Quran
You will be pleased by reading Quran (ibid: 84)
Apart from the Quran, lion looks like a fox
Poverty mentioned in Quran is kingship (ibid: 316)

In Iqbal opinion, when man of faith finds God as his spiritual supporter and obeys commands of God and teaching the Quran he will be powerful and can cope with difficulties and solve economic problems in other case he could not solve the problem and cope with material and immaterial difficulties.

The poor lined up to mosque
Protested on kings
When they lost their eagerness and depressed
They kept silence and never protested (ibid: 444)

The importance of persuasion of poverty concept in his attitude will be comprehended when it is found that achievements and success of mankind are results of efforts of groups who were poor and experienced poverty. They were not satisfied by worldly wealth and tried to reach to their ultimate goals. While selfishness and arrogance and life issues are maintained in mind of some men and it is natural they try to collect wealth and lose their humanly aspects:

Be just when you are angry and content
Do not forget justice in poverty and richness
Ruling on the earth and heaven
Is achieved by protecting body and soul
Life is nothing but a pleasure of flight
Being still is not compatible with his innate (ibid).

Iqbal employs poverty in its lexical meaning. In his opinion, it is a quest in life and attitude toward life beyond material tendency toward religion, economic and life social and material aspects.

What is poverty? O, the servants created from soil and water.
It is measuring his conduct
It is obeying only God (ibid:395-396).
Since Iqbal was affected by Rumi, he points that:
Learn the secret of being dervish and live in poverty from Rumi
His poverty is kingship
Learned the secrets by poverty (ibid: 459).

According to Iqbal, poverty is a way of life and unique approach to living away from materialistic attachment and considering religion, ethics, economics and social and material aspects of life.

Like Rumi, he rejects poverty and isolationism that caused the recession and knock man of action and prevents man of social and economic progress in worldly life. For him and Rumi man has to gain the favor of the world ambition, but release himself from constraints and dependences and live and die free and virtuous and noble. According to Iqbal, *faqr* does not necessarily mean misery. He warns on this kind of poverty.

“O, the Sufis, I withdrew such poverty

Your poverty is nothing except embarrassment and misery”(The meaning of life from Rumi and Iqbal perspectives, 2012:172).

In his Iqbal opinion, the poor is one who asks something from somebody. Poverty is a way to earn an acceptable solvent. These two factors are very important economic aspects in life. From his perspective, legal earning is one of the most characteristics of humility.

Do not ask your provisions from other
Do not ask water from east spring
If you not be ashamed before the Prophet
Never find the savor in the resurrection day (ibid).

He believes that earring by effort is not only credit for human, but it develops his character that this feature is poverty.

Alas on the person who demands from other
Who bends his neck for seeking beneficence of other?
That sacrifices his zeal for a trivial demanding (ibid).

He does not mean that a man should not earn more income, but it means that if failed to achieve wealth despite his efforts chose self-sufficiency and never complain and examine illegal ways to earn wealth.

That dervish who complains on difficulties

Begging remains still in his poverty(The meaning of life from Rumi and Iqbal perspectives, 2012:178). Concerning to living without demanding others, Iqbal believes that honored life is the life that the man is like a bubble in the water that is moving without need to water.

Be like the bubble that is floating on the sea(divan,1964:19).

Iqbal considers love and faith in God as main factors. This faith eliminates problems and greed and causes man to with economic difficulties and shortages of material.

Quran mentions incorporation of remembering God and thinking
Thinking is not complete unless remembering God (ibid).

Iqbal was influenced by Rumi. He confirmed Rumi's view point on poverty and fair trade and he was convinced that the characteristic of poverty is contentment.

Faqr for Iqbal does not mean avoiding or abandonment society, but it is an attempt to prosperity of others and oneself. He compares "pious poverty" and "infidel poverty":

Poverty of the disbeliever is solitude
Poverty of the believer is trembling of sea and land
Life is stillness of the cave and mountain
This life ends with magnificent death
That is seeking God by leaving body
That is killing oneself and suffering
This is going toward light (ibid: 397).

The sultan that was aware of the power and influence of the poor mystic resorted to Amir Khosrow Dehlavi, the poet and mystic, to demand him to forgive Delhi governor. Finally, after much effort, the governor was forgiven. Iqbal recommends at the end of this story:

Do not hurt the dervishes
Do not put yourself in fire (ibid: 21).

Impressed with this idea that poor do not attach to the material world statements and do not pay attention to worldly property he writes:

Glory and magnificence of Alexander is nothing for the poor (The meaning of life from Rumi and Iqbal's perspectives, 2012:185).

In his book "Foundations of Education of the individual and community from Iqbal's perspective" Seyedin writes "finding an exact equivalent in English for faqr is difficult. The eastern people are familiar with this concept from the past but, the westerners do not know what does it mean? We know that Iqbal is an opponent of solitude and considers it a result of neo Platonic philosophy Sufism and welcomes struggle to gain property to control the world but, he knows that wealth and property is a cover on spiritual perfection that prevents mankind from progress toward divinity.

One day everybody will know what is faqr?
Since greed of gold and silver has ruined the western people's soul (ibid).

He compares this kind of poverty with that some religions have promoted and offer more clear definition: Indeed, leaving the world the truth does not mean ignoring affairs of this world

It is perfection in dominating the earth and sky
Companions ! I never recommend this kind of living
your poverty is magnificent (ibid: 186).
There is a difference between real faqr and false weakness and isolation.
Faqr that teaches the predator to prey
reveals the secret of domination of the world
Poverty that teaches the people misery and misfortune
There is faqr that converts the soil into alchemy (ibid).

CONCLUSION

If a man does not trust on his ability and sublime dignity always considers other properties more and his properties less and this attitude leads to demanding others and mistrust on oneself and losing of faith. Iqbal believes that the man who pretends miserable and demands people to offer something to him loses his self-esteem he weakens in terms of both material and spiritual character. Iqbal points to the abomination and rejection of demanding other except God and he suggests men that never to complain and demand something from rich. According to Iqbal, enthusiasm and lofty nature of human aids him to cope with economic and financial difficulties which prevents him desperately asking others to meet the need and necessities. The man should be live freely and democratic and humanly life should be combined with material features. According to the poet, requesting others to meet the person needs and living as misery is unacceptable in Islam, demanding from God is the only desirable wanting and this kind of demanding is honorable and leads mankind to purity and honor. Iqbal considers living in simple way mentioned in Quran and prophetic tradition. For him, this life style is accompanied with self-sufficiency and dependency on God connection to the universe and reaching to excellence. Poverty is a way of living that result in particular attitude towards religion, ethics, economics and social and material aspects of life. This attitude is very important to foster a healthy personality. Iqbal considers poverty as one of the main causes of personality growth. His works are full of definitions and instructions in this regard. Faqr is not cause of weakness but it strengthens man and leads him toward dynamism and avoiding luxuries life and temptations of the worldly affairs. It is

manifestation of self-sufficiency, the right reason and a sense of individuality. So he does not support the notion that poverty is desire to have low interest, indecision and timidity and the poor who do not observe their right.

Iqbal rejects leaving worldly affluences and living in solitude. The real satiety directs mankind to live in gratitude. This kind of salvation is not achieved by living in solitude but it is obtained by controlling of material properties.

Poverty for Iqbal is magnanimity and serving people recommended in Islam. It is not forcing to serve by offering variety of drinks and food, but it means withdrawal of worldly and material needs.

Faqr plays an important role in personality growth and it is a special attitude to material things, the economic and social aspects of life. It is contentment and trust and struggle in life. According to Iqbal, the poor could eliminate inefficient ideals and offer better measures and criteria for simple life. Since fear, disappointment and imitation lead to destruction of mankind. Such individuals try to earn their life by legal ways that associated with a complete efficiency in humans.

Iqbal in "Inner secrets" narrates a tale of lazy lions that never try to preserve their lives by influence of advice of sheep in dream finally they become misfortunate and miserable. This viewpoint is very important where the fate of everyone depends on how much he work and try. Iqbal puts the main emphasis on the action and effort in life and believes that regression and laziness prevent material and spiritual progress. This is a reflection of human action effect on his future and destiny and his good or bad fate depends on his performance and contribution in activities.

He believes that prophetic wisdom does not accept any government unless that its basis is on theology. This government rules out according to Islamic Prophet and his followers' mission. So, in Iqbal opinion, ruling out by military force and power and putting people under economic pressure is not competent ruling and the true governance is ruling out the hearts not on the properties. In a country whose people are benefactors and establish social relations on the basis of collective interest rather than self-interest, undoubtedly, they play a main role in economic status and as result in country conditions. Religious and moral education teaches people to be beneficent and attention to people status. According to Iqbal, a person must try to conquer the world and never attach materialism. In this case he promotes self efficiency. The true meaning of poverty is a kind of austerity based on affection and the poor never considers the world as source of evil and ugliness, but he uses possibilities in charitable goals. Such poverty protects spirituality.

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