

Prof. Q. M. Aslam

Welcome Address

Vice-Chancellor Hamid Ahmad Khan, Officers and Colleagues from the University, and the Colleges and Students.

On my own behalf and on behalf of the staff and students of this new Department of Philosophy, I extend to you all a hearty welcome. We feel honoured and encouraged by your presence with us on this occasion ; and as this is an occasion for public resolve and prayer we value your presence as visible proof of your good-will and good wishes.

May I be permitted to go on to observe that the opening of a University Department of Philosophy at this time is an event of great historical and academic importance.

The University of the Punjab is now about 100 years old. It was founded as an examining university and remained so for many years. There was no other way it could take care of higher education in areas as far apart as Kashmir, Baluchistan and Bahawalpur, Pakistan and Indian Punjab, a large number of other native states and Delhi. Even so, it began to assume teaching functions. The first teaching departments to come under its direct care were Chemistry, Zoology, Botany and Mathematics, among the sciences ; and Economics and History among the humanities. Arabic, Sanskrit and Persian it had taken care of from the very beginning ; in its own Oriental College. Other departments came in and until a couple of years ago the chain was complete but for three subjects which had not yet come ; viz., English Language and Literature, Psychology and Philosophy.

Prof. Q.M. Aslam was the founder Chairman and Iqbal Professor of the Department. The Welcome Address was delivered at the time of the formal inauguration of the Department on March 7, 1964.

These came in recently in rapid succession ; first Psychology, then English, and soon after, Philosophy. The starting of Philosophy by the university has come last of all. The coming of it completes the chain.

This, of course, does not mean that Philosophy (or Psychology) did not flourish in this part of the world until now. All the conventional subjects have flourished in the affiliated colleges, their higher versions mostly in the Government College, Lahore. Other colleges have provided higher teaching with interruptions imposed by change of circumstance. But the philosophy tradition taking the colleges and areas served by the Punjab University as a whole—is both continuous and old. It is as old as the tradition of Arabic and Sanskrit. Taught in the colleges its syllabi and examinations have been taken care of by the university. For this, again, the University has had teachers from the colleges to function as agents and officers of the university for the subject.

II

On the subject of Government College and other colleges (the Islamia, the FC, the Dyal Singh and even Murray of Sialkot) which for long or short periods of time have been concerned in the teaching of philosophy at the higher level, and of which Government College, Lahore has been the longest it seems appropriate to recall the names at any rate of some of those teachers and scholars who have in the past promoted the study of the subject in this part of the world. Government College, alone has entertained some who attained to great renown in later life. Sir Thomas Arnold, later Professor of Arabic in the University of London, author of the *Preaching of Islam* and Editor of famous Oxford publication *The Legacy of Islam* was Professor of Philosophy at Government College and one of the teachers of our poet Iqbal. Sidney George Brett, later Professor of Psychology in the University of Toronto, and author of the now classic three-volume *History of Psychology* (most

of which is philosophical psychology) was Professor of Philosophy at Government College, Lahore from 1904 to 1908.

Iqbal became Professor of Philosophy at Government College after Brett. Iqbal had then just returned from studies at Cambridge and Munich. By a special decree the then Government permitted Iqbal to combine professional legal work with teaching in Government College. I have known at least one of Iqbal's M.A., pupils (Amar Nath Bhasin of Dyal Singh College) and have heard from him first hand accounts of how Iqbal played his role as teacher. Of Iqbal as examiner and as member of the University Board of Studies, I am myself a witness. I could, if I had the ability, reproduce for you the images I carry of how Iqbal performed his academic duties ; of the sense of responsibility, keenness and good humour he brought to bear on those wearisome tasks. However I am proud that I sat with Iqbal as a Junior colleague at the university bodies in philosophy and was able thus to observe Iqbal in a very special context. Iqbal left teaching at Government College but continued his connections with it. For years Iqbal acted as judge of the best Urdu verse written by students of the college for a special college prize. On a date in January 1922 Iqbal made a philosophical speech—a speech I could almost reproduce because I was present as a student—at a special reception held by the College Philosophical Society in his honour. At this reception were present Prof. GC Chatterji and Principal AS Hemmy, a great Principal and a great patron of philosophy and psychology.

Government College then had other philosophers : LP Saunders an Oxford-educated scholar of great brilliance ; who, if I am not wrong, had one or two articles accepted for the philosophical journal *Mind* ; and GC Chatterji (St Stephens, Delhi and Trinity, Cambridge) who joined Government College in 1921 and admitted me as one of his first pupils ; and who went on to teach and win the esteem of many generations of students ; many of whom spread

to parts of the sub-continent as teachers, research workers and civil servants. Chatterji himself attained to great distinction in education and administration here in Lahore; since 1947 he continues to prosper in India. Chatterji (and Rice of FFC) also possess the distinction of having initiated at Lahore the teaching of modern experimental social and clinical psychology; so that very early—I mean as early as the 1920's Lahore became one of two or three centres in the entire sub-continent which catered for Psychology as an M. A. subject.

Chaudhri Abdul Qadir now Reader in this new University Department of Philosophy was also a pupil of Mr. Chatterji's; my own old pupil and friend and an old colleague at the Government College, Lahore, I am glad we are together here again; as colleagues in the new University Department. Prof. Qadir, as president-elect, is writing his address for the Pakistan Philosophical Congress forthcoming session at Hyderabad. Both Qadir and I are glad, very glad indeed, that the other—the third—member of our team is a young scholar who has already made his mark as a teacher and as a friend of the students. Khawaja Ghulam Sadiq like so many others studied advanced philosophy at Government College; he built himself as teacher at the Islamia. A fine gentleman, his utility to the department is going to be manifold.

A contemporary of Chaudhri Abdul Qadir's (Chatterji's pupil and mine) and author of successful philosophical text in Logic and Psychology is Prof. Karamat Hussain, now Principal Government College, Lyallpur.

The Government College Department of Philosophy is now headed by Professor Hamid-ud-Din, product of Chatterji's and my own early days at Government College.

Chatterji's pupils (and mine) trained in composite courses in

philosophy, and psychology, who went over completely to psychology, clinical, experimental, applied, include Dr. Ghulam Jilani, now Head of Applied Psychology in the Punjab University, Dr. Muhammad Ajmal, Head of Psychology in Government College and Col. Muhammad Nasrullah Khan, Chief Psychologist to the Pakistan Army.

Islamia college has promoted Philosophy and Psychology as M. A., subjects even if this has been interrupted now and then by exigencies of time or circumstance. Islamia College was able to attract at least one outstanding philosopher from overseas, Dr. Vesey Hauge; who thought and worked during the years of the first world war and who was able to train one of our most outstanding teachers of philosophy, the late Khawaja Abdul Hamid, author of *the Philosophy of Maskawwath*. Khawaja Sahib taught for years at the Islamia College; later he was my most esteemed colleague at the Government College. Unassuming but penetrating as a scholar, Khawaja Sahib was pure gold as friend and man. From him I heard many accounts of Vesey Hauge's love of learning and of his charming personality. Lahore has particular reason to remember him. For, Vesey Hauge died in Lahore and lies buried in the cemetery on Ravi Road.

Islamia College in the 1930's was able to secure the services of Dr. Saidullah (educated at Aligarh, Munich and London); who continues now as Head of their psychology Department and Laboratory. On the political change of 1947 the Islamia were able to attract—my own old teacher—Mian Muhammad Sharif from Aligarh. In his green old age today Professor Sharif is universally acknowledged GOM of Pakistan philosophy. He has seen to completion and through the press the two-volume *History of Muslim Thought* which he himself designed and at which he has worked hard last several years as Editor-in-Chief. Prof. Sharif is also the founder, father and permanent President of the now 11-year old

Pakistan Philosophical Congress. This body has several publications to its credit ; among them, an interesting little volume called *Philosophical Activity in Pakistan*. It also issues the *Pakistan Journal of Philosophy*. Prof. Sharif is also founder and editor of the journal *Iqbal* ; Assistant Editor of which is Bashir Ahmad Dar, who holds other positions in the Pakistan philosophical hierarchy.

Professor Sharif is now Director of the Institute of Islamic Culture ; in which position he succeeded the late Dr. Khalifa Abdul Hakim.

The late Shaikh Muhammad Aslam who rose to be Head of Philosophy and Principal Islamia College (Railway Road) Lahore was trained at Government College. His services to philosophy are not less significant than his services to cricket or to student welfare in general.

Khalifa Abdul Hakim, yet another product of the Punjab University programmes, having studied Philosophy at St. Stephens College, Delhi, then affiliated to the Punjab University, did not stay in teaching on migrating in 1947 from Kashmir to Lahore (retiring from Osmania, Hyderabad, he had settled in Kashmir) ; but not only as teacher but also as thinker and writer and as commentator of Rumi, Ghalib and Iqbal, he will long be remembered in the intellectual and cultural circles of Pakistan Iran and elsewhere. Khalifa Hakim, let us also remember, was chosen to preside over the first public session of the Pakistan Philosophical Congress ; held in Lahore in 1954 at which the Punjab University played host to the philosophers from East and West Pakistan.

Talking of St. Stephens, Delhi, one must record the deep and lasting influence exercised for many years by the late Prof. N. K. Sen as teacher of philosophy and as friend and counsellor of the student community. Sen is said to have been very successful and very

informal in his methods of teaching ; used Urdu more often than English as his medium ; even though the Urdu of those days was very inadequate and Sen's Urdu was especially inadequate. Sen used to come from Delhi to Lahore for meetings of examiners and of the Board of Studies ; all under the auspices of the Punjab University to which St. Stephens was then affiliated. He was held in very high regard by his students ; one generation of whom included such outstanding philosophers and teachers as G. C. Chatterji, Khalifa Abdul Hakim and M.M. Sharif whom I have mentioned already ; Malik Ahmad Hussain who taught for many years at Government College, Lahore and since his retirement from Government has been Principal, Islamia College, Gujranwala ; Prof. Abdul Rahim Nayazee who taught at Islamia College, Peshawar during its period of affiliation with the Punjab University : the late Dr. Israel Latif who, however, went over completely to Psychology and taught for many years in collaboration with Government College and who introduced professional psycho-analysis in Lahore ; and Prof. Saadat Ali Khan who taught at Islamia and at Government College, Lahore and who is back again at the Islamia College.

Philosophy has existed in the Forman Christian College, not perhaps as an M. A., subject, unless it was for a couple of years under Dr. H. D. Griswold. Griswold was a most interesting personality whose lapses of memory, said to be typical of all philosophers are still related in Lahore as after-dinner anecdotes. Dr. Griswold was a great student of Hindu Philosophy and Christian Theology. I am old enough to have seen him in the house called 'the Abbey' adjacent to Newton Hall ; no longer to be seen now. FCC's outstanding contribution to philosophy and psychology came through Charless Herbert Rice who guided the birth and growth of psychology as an M A., subject. Rice (FFC) and Chatterji (GC) created the system of collaboration between FC and GC for the teaching of M A. psychology, which survived many years.

Higher teaching in philosophy also flourished for a time at the Brahme Samaj foundation, the Dyal Singh College, under a Professor Roy who was in Lahore during the years of the first world war, but who went away later to Dacca to teach in Dacca University then just come into existence.

Philosophy has also flourished in the Scottish Mission College, the Murray, at Sialkot; where Professor W. Lillie, author of a successful text on *Ethics*, and now lecturer in Biblical Study in Aberdeen University, maintained almost single-handed, an M. A. class in Philosophy. Murray has trained several teachers of philosophy; one of them Mr. Abdul Qayum is Head of the new Department of Philosophy at Peshawar. Pupils of Prof. Lillie are also in the civil services of Pakistan. Prof. Lillie is remembered warmly by those who were either his pupils or colleagues in Philosophy.

To complete this sketch of philosophy as it has flourished until recently under the aegis of the Punjab University let me also record that philosophy has existed at Sri Pratap College, Srinagar, certainly as a B.A., subject under Professor Kichlu; but perhaps also for a time as an M.A., subject. Srinagar has known at least one outstanding teacher, Prof. Iqbal Krishan Shargha whose commentary on Berkeley proved a boon for both students and teachers.

One is reminded also of Principal Diwan Chand who wrote—while in the Lahore Arya Samaj College—a most successful textbook on Elementary Logic.

III

The story of a subject as a teaching adventure—in any part of the world—deserves to be told well and with due care as to details of fact and circumstances. To be so told, it needs study and research and collaboration by all those who happen to know anything about

it. But even as I have been able to tell it here, it may have brought home to you all—as it has to me—that the institutionalisation of a subject under a university—such as we are witnessing today—clearly achieves many important results. It collects the many separate strands of a tradition and twists them into a single chord. Philosophy in this part of the world can now be treated as one long tradition. We have seen even through this brief recital how long and how worthy is this tradition. We who happen to have rehearsed it can feel further that we, of the University Department of Philosophy, do not walk into a wilderness but into a rich inheritance. Only a university department can claim the whole of this inheritance as its own. When a subject becomes organised directly under university auspices, therefore, socially as well as academically, it connotes a big and wholesome change. The logic of development in higher education points to the university as the direction in which we must go. A university by tradition is freer—much freer—than a college. Teaching and learning planned and carried out in an atmosphere of freedom tend to become more and more adult and more and more responsible. Money-grante at the university are easier to manage. Arguments have to be submitted to friends and colleagues, not to authorities. Proposals are heard and decisions taken with greater speed. The tempo of growth and development rises. Other things happen. A study which becomes the concern of a university acquires a much more than local status. It finds a place in maps and charts to which it was unknown before.

In the end, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, permit me just one observation which perhaps may help us to formulate some sort of an attitude on our subject. Modern Western Culture which sets the pace and pattern for all adventures in secular learning today is predominantly scientific; in one word narrowly crudely empirical and utilitarian. It has grown in these directions during the last 300 years or so. Dissatisfaction has been expressed against this excessively scientific

culture in the West itself. Methods have been proposed to remedy the excesses. One method generally favoured is to put students of science through courses in humanities and to counter balance—to put students of arts through courses in science. We in Pakistan tried to do the same. The recipe seems universal but its success is not universal. Even after courses have been supplemented there is no significant change in the total cultural outlook. A scientific culture remains scientific. A student of science who also receives some instruction in say history or philosophy undergoes little change in his thinking or outlook. I think this is because philosophy and history and other arts subjects have themselves become enamoured of the accents and outlook which a largely scientific culture breeds. Arts subjects like to call themselves sciences and to intimate the ways of science. Little wonder the disease called “science” receives no benefit from the “physicians” called philosophy, history and poetry. The physicians themselves have become diseased. Perhaps I am exaggerating but it does seem to me that at any rate philosophy quails a little too much before science. Philosophy likes to define itself as more general science. It shows fondness for elements, atoms, parts; same as science. With the result that the literate, the educated, and the cultured tend to acquire exaggerated respect for parts, very little respect for wholes, for concrete objects, for persons; little interest in aspirations, anxieties, purposes, ends and goals and larger human fellowships. Yet nature created both the parts and the wholes into which the parts conglomerate or seek to pattern themselves. The one species of existence or experience is as valid as the other. In fact, the wholes with their unities seem—practically and aesthetically—far more valid and for more important. Somewhere, therefore, modern philosophy seems to have gone wrong or overshot the mark. Philosophy today instead of curing the dissatisfaction produced by excess of science and technology, seems only to accentuate it.

I am not suggesting that philosophy should accept dictation from any quarter. That would be no more correct for philosophy than it could be for science. But philosophy which is supposed to criticise everything, even science, must become aware of the dissatisfactions which a predominantly scientific culture has created and which a scientific philosophy has failed to correct.

The moral of it for us here, for others elsewhere seems to be that the opportunity of philosophers—today—to provide a more satisfactory frame of thinking is as great as is the challenge posed before them. More than others, Pakistani philosophers need to grasp this opportunity; or, they will fail in the concern they evince in the ideological direction of mankind.

V

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, I have nothing more to say, but to welcome you once more and to thank you for the active and understanding interest you take in everything which concerns the welfare of the University and for the special interest you have taken in this new department of philosophy. It seems, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, philosophy is your secret love. If this be so, we can be proud of our company. Everything we have today is a bare beginning. Our department has just come into existence, though we already have in hand both MA (Previous) and MA (Final), programmes. Our library has a nucleus of books, thanks to our booksellers who can wait for the payment of their bills. Our students association is exuberant with life and with the promise of more and more life, even if it has not yet held a single formal meeting.

To all the three, the Department, the Library, the Association, I request you Mr. Vice-Chancellor to give your blessings.

VI

My own prayer (in the words of the prophets Ibrahim and Ismail) is :

Our Lord,
Accept this from us :
Verily Thou Hearest
and knowest everything.
Our Lord, and make us
Resigned to Thee ;
And our successors all
Resigned to Thee ;
And show us how
We can please Thee ;
And turn to us (in Mercy)
Thou art Oft-Returning
and Merciful.

(2 : 128-129)