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# THE ‘ANTI-CLASSICAL SPIRIT’ OF ISLAM: REMARKS ON A KEY MOTIVE IN THE WORK OF MUHAMMAD IQBAL

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## ABSTRACT

The present article deals with one of the main dichotomies in the various works of Muhammad Iqbal – i.e. in his poetical and philosophical texts, correspondences and political statements – namely the dichotomy between the Greek and Islamic spirit. First, the background of this dichotomy within Christian theology (a background Iqbal was acquainted with most likely) will be delineated. Subsequently, Iqbal’s statements concerning the relation between Greek and Islamic spirit will be examined. Finally, the general function and position of this *topos* in his thought, both in its proper limits and disclosing perspectives, shall be specified. The main thesis can be summarized as follows: Iqbal tries to find the essence of Islam within the framework of the general tension between Greek metaphysics on one hand, and revelatory religion on the other. The tension is his point of departure for raising a fundamental issue regarding the problem of authenticity in Islam – a discourse which was historically provoked by a time of crisis, namely the crisis of Islam in the Indian subcontinent at the beginning of the twentieth century. Iqbal felt impelled to rethink the concept of Islam by this historical situation, in order to identify its ‘proper’ essence, and this determined his view of Greek philosophy to a large extent.

Before turning to the relation between Greek and Islamic thought in Iqbal, some remarks will be made concerning a related topic which has a long history in Christian theology. Remarkably, we can take our point of departure from a passage of Iqbal himself, in one of his notes in *Stray Reflections*.<sup>1</sup>

Here Iqbal refers to an assumption which was present within Christianity for many hundreds of years, particularly – but not exclusively – in Protestant theology. In the latter, it was often discussed under the title ‘Hellenization of Christianity’.<sup>2</sup> Theologians like Adolf von Harnack coined this concept to express the process of reception and integration of Greek philosophical ideas into Christian thinking in the first centuries AD. According to some theologians, this process caused a radical transformation, or even deformation, of the genuine Christian message. Already, in antiquity, we can discern two main antipodal positions regarding this issue: on one side, we have an integrative approach that acknowledges (at least the relative) legitimacy of philosophy in the Greek sense, and which can positively take up several aspects of Greek thinking and culture (e.g. Clement of Alexandria); on the other side we find an exclusivist approach which insists on the radical ‘otherness’ of the Christian religion in relation to all pre- or anti-Christian forms of thought and belief – an attitude which was often accompanied with extreme anti-philosophical implications, and whose representatives frequently tried to discredit their adversaries by means of heresiological discourses (e.g. Tertullian). In fact, all Christian intellectual history oscillates between these two poles. Medieval Scholasticism can clearly be considered as a representation of the former attitude (i.e. the integrative), whereas the Protestant Reformation certainly marched under the banner of the latter. Martin Luther’s anti-philosophical attitude is quite well-known. In a famous passage of his *Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans* (1515/16) he asked: “So then, is it not true that the treacherous metaphysics of Aristotle and traditional philosophy have deceived our theologians?”<sup>3</sup> – the same Aristotle, whose ethics he considered as “the worst enemy of grace”.<sup>4</sup> Hence, it is not surprising that within Protestant theology, the claim for return to a Christianity cleaned from its ‘metaphysical superstructure’ frequently emerged.<sup>5</sup>

We cannot say with certainty the extent to which Iqbal was familiar with these theological quarrels and what exactly stimulated him to formulate the above cited note. But it is certain that he knew Adolf von Harnack – maybe the most prominent theologian who stands for the ‘Hellenization- thesis’ – and that he at least consulted some of his works. Iqbal cites him in his dissertation.<sup>6</sup> Besides, we can assume that Iqbal found the assertion of a Hellenization-based continuity between Greek philosophy and Christian doctrine confirmed more placatively in Nietzsche’s famous dictum “Christianity is Platonism for the masses” in the introduction to *Beyond Good and Evil*.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore one should not forget that the dichotomy of Greek and Islamic thought was also a *topos* in certain Muslim reformist movements in Iqbal’s environment.<sup>8</sup> Be that as it may, in any case the problematic relationship between philosophy viz. metaphysics and Islam as a revelatory religion seems to have bothered Iqbal for decades. It seemed not only to be decisive in his assessment of Christianity; also, the question had to be forced how to understand this relationship, historically and normatively, in Iqbal’s own religion, Islam. In this respect, Iqbal seemed to consider Christianity as a negative paradigm for a revelatory religion, unable to preserve its message uncontaminated by foreign influences. Christianity, as Iqbal seems to imply, suffered exactly the destiny against which Islam was able to resist and would continue to resist in the future.<sup>9</sup> Admittedly, one could object that Islam as such implies a decaying view on Christian history, insofar as the historical necessity for the Koranic revelation and for the occurrence of Muhammad as the ‘seal of the prophets’ presupposes a state of decline. Generally spoken, this is true. The necessity for the restitution of genuine Abrahamic monotheism presupposes that the previous revelations (Judaism, Christianity) have been, at least partly, forgotten or ignored. Now, Iqbal speaks more concretely than this general claim which would probably be shared by every Muslim. For it is scarcely self-evident to interconnect the problem of ‘idolatry’ primarily with the process of ‘Hellenization’, or, in Iqbal’s own words, with the “feeble translation of ancient paganism in the language of Semitic theology”. But precisely this is characteristic of Iqbal’s outlook.

Against the background of our previous account we are now able to examine Iqbal’s considerations concerning the dichotomy of Greek and Islamic spirit more systematically and based on some of the most representative passages referring to this matter.<sup>10</sup>

## II.

The destructive influence of Plato on the Persian spirit and, intimately connected to that, the genesis of an ‘otherworldly

mysticism’, was already denounced by Iqbal in his *Asrar-e-Khudi* (1915). The whole of the seventh chapter is dedicated to the Greek philosopher. Amongst other things, we read there about Plato:

He dominates our thinking, / His cup sends us to sleep and takes  
the world away from us. / He is a sheep in man's clothing, / The  
soul of the Sufi bows to his authority. / He soared with his intellect  
to the highest heaven, / He called the world of phenomena a myth.  
/ It was his work to dissolve the structure of Life / And cut the  
bough of Life's fair tree asunder. / The thought of Plato regarded  
loss as profit, / His philosophy declared that being is not-being. /  
His nature drowsed and created a dream, / His mind's eye created a  
mirage. / Since he was without any taste for action, / His soul was  
enraptured by the nonexistent. / He disbelieved in the material  
universe / And became the creator of invisible Ideas. / Sweet is the  
world of phenomena to the living spirit, / Dear is the world of Ideas  
to the dead spirit.<sup>11</sup>

Here we can find most of the motives execrated by Iqbal in the ‘Platonic mentality’. The core of Iqbal’s criticism concerns the ‘reassessment of values’ performed by Plato, namely his devaluation of the sensual world in favour of the proclamation of higher intelligible reality.<sup>12</sup> The preceding chapter of the *Asrar-e-Khudi* – entitled “A tale of which the moral is that negation of the Self is a doctrine invented by the subject races of mankind in order that by this means they may sap and weaken the character of their rulers” – leaves no doubt about Iqbal’s inspiration in presenting Platonism as a doctrine originated in a ‘weak mind’: Iqbal’s point of reference was most likely Nietzsche, especially *Beyond Good and Evil* and *On the Genealogy of Morality*. This becomes quite clear when Iqbal presents Platonism as an ideology for sheep who, as a result of their own weakness and resentments against the strong, imagine a world of ideas, taking their own weakness as moral credit, and distorting being to non-being (and vice versa). This perspective on Plato – with some other variations and accentuations – is predominant in all of Iqbal’s later works. So, let us examine some more relevant passages.

In the article “Islam and Mysticism”, published in 1917 in *The New Era*, Iqbal’s anti-Persian polemic hits its peak. What is of a special interest in our context is the fact that these anti-Persian affects are intrinsically tied to Iqbal’s anti-Greek position.<sup>13</sup> The fact that Iqbal explicitly uses the term “Hellenic- Persian Mysticism” shows very clearly that his criticism of the introverted mentality of Persian mysticism targets Greek-Platonic spirit, in principle. Basically, Persian mystics are considered only as the heirs of this latter spirit.<sup>14</sup> By the way, this passage is not contradictory with

Iqbal's positive references to the Persians on several occasions, because these references always allude to a 'Persianness' uncontaminated by Platonism (see below).

Iqbal's polemic against Plato is generally motivated by his search for a genuine Islamic identity, or rather by his designation of this identity as "anti-classical". Already describing Islam as "a protest against the entire outlook of the ancient world" in a 1925 published note of his *Stray Thoughts* (p. 3), Iqbal comes back to that subject more elaborately in *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (1930). One of the professed scopes of these lectures was "definitely to eradicate the misunderstanding that Greek thought, in any way, determined the character of Muslim culture".<sup>15</sup> Greek rationalism and Islam as two antipodal realities are evoked at the very beginning of his lectures.<sup>16</sup>

Not realizing that the spirit of the Quran was essentially anti-classical, and putting full confidence in Greek thinkers, their first impulse was to understand the Quran in the light of Greek philosophy. In view of the concrete spirit of the Quran, and the speculative nature of Greek philosophy which enjoyed theory and was neglectful of fact, this attempt was foredoomed to failure. And it is what follows their failure that brings out the real spirit of the culture of Islam, and lays the foundation of modern culture in some of its most important aspects.<sup>17</sup>

In these passages, Iqbal's opinion on the relationship between 'Greekness' and Islam, including the affiliated historical perspective, are summarized in a condensed form. His main points are the following: 1) A world view as presented in the Koran is incompatible with those of the Greek philosophers. Therefore, Iqbal stresses the sensual approach of the Koran, its esteem of 'hearing' and 'seeing' as legitimate access points to understand the world, its 'dynamic' understanding of reality, and the importance placed in 'time' and 'history'.<sup>18</sup> 2) From a historical point of view, the adequate understanding of the Koran was obscured rather than sharpened through Greek influences. 3) Nevertheless – and this points to the positive aspect of the Greek influences – they caused an anti-Greek reaction on the part of the Muslims. 4) Therefore – one might even take as the punchline of Iqbal's argumentation – the genesis of Muslim identity developed only through a dispute with the Greek world view. Though Muslim culture does not owe its genuine form to the Greeks, its awareness of its own identity was sharpened through its encounter with Greek thought. 5) Hence what Iqbal calls 'Islamic identity' was (and is) not something simply given just from the beginning, but an everlasting challenge. Not least the self-

positioning in the face of Greek thought becomes a continually open task for every Muslim. 6) At the end of the cited passages, Iqbal alludes to his thesis according to which experimental science must be understood as an achievement of Muslim culture which interpenetrated the Western world only mediated through the reception of Muslim scholars.<sup>19</sup> Here, Iqbal seems to go as far as to trace back the ‘anti-classical spirit’ of modernity rather to Islam than to Greek or Christian influences.<sup>20</sup>

There are still more passages to examine related to our topic – passages in which Iqbal evokes the dichotomy between Greek and Islamic spirit in different contexts and from different points of departure. Let us firstly consider one of Iqbal’s Urdu poems, entitled *Madaniyyat-e Islam* (“Islamic civilisation”).<sup>21</sup>

The first line announces the content, i.e. the characteristic of Muslim life. In the following lines, this is described with more detail and several images: at first positively, partly in paradoxical viz. oppositional attributes, then negatively, in stressing what Islam is *not*, just to come back to positive designations again at the end. The negative designations contain a dig at Plato – here representing Greek mentality as that which is distinguished from Muslim identity. The ‘rational’ Greek philosophy is opposed to “the aesthetic taste of the Holy Spirit”. Now, in Islam, the Holy Spirit corresponds to the archangel Gabriel. This shows that Iqbal wants to contrast two different modes or sources of knowledge: merely human or ‘rational’ knowledge, and ‘prophetic’ or ‘supra-rational’ knowledge. Only the latter, Iqbal seems to imply, can serve as a foundation of Muslim culture (As it is generally known in Islam, it was Gabriel who sent down the revelation orally to the prophet). Furthermore, the last line of the poem shows that Iqbal refutes the synthesis of ‘Greekness’ and Islam in favour of another synthesis which is presented as crucial for the genesis of Islam: the synthesis between (a not mystically deformed) ‘Persianness’ and ‘Arabness’.<sup>22</sup>

In an entry of the *Stray Reflections* (p. 57) the difference between Greek and Islamic spirit is evoked in a meditation on the phenomenon of ‘wonder’.<sup>23</sup>

Apparently, Iqbal refers to a famous passage in Plato (*Theaetetus* 155d), where Socrates argues that the initial impulse to philosophize is provoked by ‘wonder’ (*thaumazein*) – a claim which was later affirmed also by Aristotle (*Metaphysics* I 2, 982 b 11ff.). Now, Iqbal’s criticism concerns the factor that Plato had accepted ‘wonder’ only as an initial impulse for the following ‘rational’ investigation, and therefore deprived it of any self-value.<sup>24</sup> In contrast he praises the Indian poet Abd al-Qadir, who only brings ‘wonder’ into its own.

The passage follows the same pattern as most of the other aforementioned texts: Greek and Islamic mentality are discussed on the basis of one specific factor which then is considered as symptomatic for two antipodal states of mind.

Dealing with the incompatibility between Islam and nationalism, even in his last statement, made public on the ninth of March 1938, i.e. six weeks before his death, Iqbal finishes with a quotation of Haqani Sirvani (twelfth century) in which the Persian poet warns us about the destructive influence of Greek philosophy for the Arabic spirit of Islam. Even though it would be hyperbolic to consider this as the 'final message' of Iqbal to his readers, it is nevertheless highly significant that the 'Greek-Islam-dichotomy' seemed to remain 'unmediated' until the end of his life. Haqani's verse reads as follows:<sup>25</sup>

مرکب دین که زاده عرب است  
داغ یونانش بر کفل منهد  
مشتی اطفال نو تعلم را  
لوح ادبار در بغل منهد

The horse of the Religion of Islam was originally born in Arabia.<sup>26</sup> Now, do not brand him with the Seal of Greece! Similarly, don't place the Table of Decadence in the arm-pit of a few (Muslim) children, who have just begun their education!

### III.

In all the discussed passages, one and the same motive emerges, with some variations or accentuations: the assumed incompatibility between Greek and Islamic spirit. In fact, the therewith connected problem, i.e. the fundamental tension between revealed word and philosophical speculation – more so as this speculation was developed outside the framework of the Abrahamic tradition in the case of the Greeks – points to a core problem in the self-understanding of every revelatory religion. As mentioned previously, there were (and are) different ways of dealing with this problem. Regarding Islam, Iqbal tended towards a one-sided solution (or shall we rather say: *dissolution*) of this tension. In doing so, he seemed to be motivated by the modern identity crisis of Islam, which led him to a general revision and re-evaluation of Islamic history as a whole. This revision was accompanied by a clear discrimination against the supposedly 'non-Islamic' elements which influenced or 'threatened' Islam during its historical development. According to Iqbal, one, or rather *the* main force in question was Platonism (or what he conceived as such). The notion that Iqbal took a rather distorted

image of Platonism as the basis for his discrimination certainly deserves criticism. However, the notion that he did so becomes more comprehensible when we consider the strong political impetus of Iqbal's thought. We should not forget that Iqbal's main point of criticising Platonism concerns a genuine political problem, namely that a doctrine for which the sensual world has no intrinsic value is unable to unfold any socio-political force. Since, in Iqbal's view, spiritual and political decline of a community are inseparably interwoven,<sup>27</sup> it is not surprising at all that he considered a world-fleeing form of mysticism, detracted from any kind of inner-worldly activism, as the greatest obstacle for the hoped Islamic renaissance.

Notwithstanding all the polemics Iqbal carried out against Plato on many occasions, we must also bear in mind the following: What distinguishes Iqbal's theoretical considerations from those forms of 'origin-purism' which can be found in several religious reform movements – and which predominated in the inner-Christian debate about the 'Hellenization of Christianity' for a long time – is his insight, explicitly formulated in the *Reconstruction*, that main spheres of Muslim culture formed itself only after the encounter with the Greeks. Nothing would have been stranger to Iqbal than a simplistic demand alias 'back-to-the-roots'.<sup>28</sup> In the end, he admits the crucial role played by Greek thought in the formation of Islamic identity. Even though, in his outlook, Greek mentality is the radical 'other' to Islam, he seemed to perceive it as a *necessary* 'other' for the formation of Muslim self-awareness. This gives his sometimes all too simplistic judgements on 'Greekness' and 'Platonism' a dimension which is not restricted to purely negative implications. In fact, he points to an understanding of culture based on the acceptance of mutual fertilisation between different traditions, and – maybe even more importantly – the insight that the dispute with the 'other' is a necessary step in coming to yourself.

## Notes and References

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<sup>1</sup> Iqbal, Allama Muhamamd, *Stray Reflections*, "European Christianity" 1910, p. 27  
I do not include Christ among the world's revolutionaries, since the movement initiated by him was soon absorbed by pre-Christian paganism. European Christianity seems to me to be nothing more than a feeble translation of ancient paganism in the language of Semitic theology.

<sup>2</sup> On the history of this concept see C. Marksches, *Hellenisierung des Christentums. Sinn und Unsinn einer historischen Deutungskategorie*, Leipzig 2012.



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- <sup>3</sup> M. Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, transl. and ed. by W. Pauck, Louisville 2006, 211.
- <sup>4</sup> Cf. M. Luther, *Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe (WA)*, Vol. 1, Weimar 1883, 226: “Tota fere Aristotelis Ethica pessima est gratiae inimica.”
- <sup>5</sup> Cf. W. Glawe, *Die Hellenisierung des Christentums in der Geschichte der Theologie von Luther bis auf die Gegenwart*, Berlin 1912.
- <sup>6</sup> Cf. M. Iqbal, *The Development of Metaphysics in Persia*, London 1908, 13 Fn. 1, where he cites Harnack’s History of Christian Dogma.
- <sup>7</sup> Cf. A. Schimmel, *Islam in the Indian Subcontinent*, Leiden/Köln 1980, 229: “he [Iqbal] is not a blind imitator of the German philosopher [Nietzsche] [...]; he acknowledges the depth of his experience, his struggle against hellenistic trends in Christianity”. Cf. also Gabriel’s Wing. A Study into the Religious Ideas of Sir Muhammad Iqbal, Leiden 1963, 320.
- <sup>8</sup> Cf. A. Schimmel, *Gabriel’s Wing*, 319f.: “But his [Iqbal’s] attitude was kindred to that of other Islamic modernists, like Muhammad ‘Abdūh who has also stressed the anti-classical spirit of the Qur’an”.
- <sup>9</sup> In another note in *Stray Reflections* (p.72) we can read accordingly: “Both Islam and Christianity had to deal with the same adversary, i.e. idolatry. The difference, however, is this – that Christianity made a compromise with her adversary; Islam destroyed it altogether.”
- <sup>10</sup> This dichotomy is mentioned in the secondary literature on various occasions. As far as we know it was never analysed systematically indeed. Cf. the more general remarks in A. Schimmel, *Gabriel’s Wing*, 318-320.
- <sup>11</sup> M. Iqbal, *The Secrets of the Self*, transl. by R. Nicholson, London 1920, 57f.
- <sup>12</sup> A. Schimmel, *Gabriel’s Wing*, 339f. describes the intention of the *Asrār-e Khūdī* as follows: “the *Asrār* had been written as a protest of »Arabic« Islam against the Platonizing and Persianizing philosophy of medieval and largely of modern Islam, as a challenge against the monism which permeates Persian poetry”.
- <sup>13</sup> The text begins as follows: “The present-day Moslem prefers to roam about aimlessly in the dusky valleys of Hellenic-Persian Mysticism, which teaches us to shut our eyes to the hard reality around, and to fix our gaze on what it describes as »Illuminations«.”  
*Speeches, Writings and Statements of Iqbal*, ed. by L. A. Sherwani, New Delhi 2015, 154.
- <sup>14</sup> Accordingly, Iqbal does not criticize Sufism as such, but only a certain form of Sufism. To Aslam Jairājpūrī he wrote in this regard: “Prizada Muzaffaruddin did not understand my real intent at all. If tasawwuf means sincerity of action (and this is what it meant in the earlier centuries of Islam), then no Muslim should object to it. Yes, when tasawwuf tends to become philosophy and, under non-Arabian (ajami) influences, involves itself in hair splitting discussion about the system of our universe and the existence of God, then my soul revolts against.” Cited after A. A. Engineer, “Iqbal’s »Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam«: A Critical Appraisal”, in: *Social Scientist* 8/8 (1980), 53.
- <sup>15</sup> M. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, New Delhi 1974, 131.
- <sup>16</sup> Yet a careful study of the Quran and the various schools of scholastic theology that arose under the inspiration of Greek thought disclose the remarkable fact that while Greek philosophy very much broadened the outlook of Muslim thinkers, it, on the whole, obscured their vision of the Quran [...] They read the Quran in the light of Greek thought. It took them over two hundred years to perceive – though not quite clearly – that the spirit of the Quran was essentially

anti-classical, and the result of this perception was a kind of intellectual revolt, the full significance of which has not been realized even up to the present day.

M. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, 3f. Iqbal's general sympathy for the Aś' arīya movement is mainly caused by its anti-Aristotelianism (cf. 70-72).

- <sup>17</sup> M. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, 128.
- <sup>18</sup> It is in this sense that H. H. Bilgrami, *Glimpses of Iqbal's Mind and Thought*, Lahore 1966, 35f., speaks about the „gaze on the concrete and the finite” in the Islamic worldview. „It reveals two great sources of knowledge – history and nature”.
- <sup>19</sup> Cf. M. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, 129-131. For this point Iqbal relies on several Western historians of science. Generally, his position can be regarded as the reversion of a thesis which was promulgated by the prominent French orientalist E. Renan in his speech *L'Islamisme et la science* (1883), according to whom Islam and science were incompatible realities.
- <sup>20</sup> Cf. M. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, 143.
- <sup>21</sup> Do I tell you what the life of a Muslim is? / It is the culmination of thought and enthusiasm. / Its fall turns into a rise, like that of the sun / Unique and diverse, as is the Time. / Neither is the immodesty of the modern times therein, / Nor the myth and magic of the ancient times. / It is life and not the enigma of Plato. / Its elements derive from the aesthetic taste of the Holy Spirit. / The natural beauty of Persia combined with the internal glow of Arabia.  
M. Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i Iqbal* (Urdū), Aligarh 1989, 510f. Cited after the English translation in Abdul Moghni, “Iqbal's Envisioned New World Order” (available online: <http://www.iqbal.com.pk/944-allama-iqbal-studies/scholarly-articles/1663-iqbals-envisioned-new-world-order>).
- <sup>22</sup> This is another main dichotomy in Iqbal. Cf. *Stray Reflections* (p.32): “Our Muslim civilisation is a product of the cross-fertilisation of the Semitic and the Aryan ideas.” On this topic see H. Harder, “Hazy Aryan Mysticism and the Semitic Desert Sun: Iqbal on Arabs and Persians, Semites and Aryans”, in: G. Dharampal-Frick, A. Usman Qasmi, K. Rostetter (Eds.), *Revisioining Iqbal as a Poet & Muslim Political Thinker*, Heidelberg 2010, 161-178.
- <sup>23</sup> *Stray Reflections* (p.32), “Wonder, says Plato, is the mother of all science. Bedil (Mirza Abdul Qadir) looks at the emotion of wonder from a different standpoint. Says he: »Fragilities are contained in the glasshouse of Wonder. Blink not the eye, lest the show might be over!« To Plato wonder is valuable because it leads to our questioning of nature; to Bedil it has a value of its own irrespective of its intellectual consequences. It is impossible to express the idea more beautifully than Bedil.”
- <sup>24</sup> It must not be stressed that Iqbal's view of ‘Platonism’ – which is for him a blanked term to denote any kind of ‘otherworldly’ or ‘escapist’ tendencies – is highly problematical in many ways. Cf. S. Sinha, *Iqbal (1873-1938)*. The Poet and His Message, Vol. I, Lucknow 2010, 197-202, who rightly states (201f.): “His [Iqbal's] use of Plato is symbolic and it stands for the entire Greek philosophy [...] In other words, with generous inaccuracy he included in the term »Plato« all thinking which, in his opinion, was world denying and

transcendent". Although the question of the accuracy of Iqbal's view of 'Platonism' is beyond the scope of our present article, it might be stated that Iqbal's critique of the Greek concept of 'wonder' would hit Aristotle rather than Plato. For it was Aristotle who admitted wondering only as an initial impulse for (and to be overcome by) scientific research. In Plato's view, wondering persists to be an authentic experience of the cosmos even after having achieved philosophical knowledge. To put it differently: The Platonic sage is still able to wonder, the Aristotelian not. Cf. J. Rausch, "Über das Staunen", in: ANTAIOS XII/6 (1971), 616-633.

<sup>25</sup> *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, comp. by A. R. Tariq, Lahore 1973, 246.

<sup>26</sup> For the symbolism of the 'Arab horses' cf. the following remark of Iqbal (1931): „The meaning of Arab horses is the spirit of Islam". Cited in A. Schimmel, *Gabriel's Wing*, 84.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. M. Iqbal, *Stray Reflections* (p.13): "Ever since their political fall the Musalmans of India have undergone a rapid ethical deterioration."

<sup>28</sup> Therefore, it is misleading to consider Iqbal as the 'Luther of Islam', as some suggested (cf. A. Shariati, *Iqbal: Manifestation of the Islamic Spirit*, Chicago 52008, 31, 35, 60; A. Bidar, *L'islam face à la mort de Dieu. Actualité de Mohammed Iqbal*, Paris 2010, 27 et seqq.).