



IQBAL REVIEW

Journal of the Iqbal Academy Pakistan

APRIL 1960

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Journal of the Iqbal Academy, Pakistan

THE Journal is devoted to research studies on the life, poetry and thought of Iqbal and publishes articles which explain, elucidate, or develop Iqbal's ideas on politics, ethics, education, history, economics, philosophy, sociology, psychology, literature, art, comparative religion, Islamics, etc., or otherwise deal with subjects in which Iqbal was interested.

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EDITORIAL

The world today is in the throes of a moral crisis. Material progress, unaccompanied by moral uplift, has created more problems than it has solved. The result is that the forces of nature, which man has harnessed in his service, now threaten his very existence. As T. S. Eliot points out:

'The cycles of Heaven in twenty centuries,
Have brought us farther from God and nearer to the dust.'

The way out of this impasse is a new reformation, a twentieth century renaissance of man aiming at rediscovering the meaning of existence and giving birth to a new moral consciousness in the individual and the society. And in the formulation of this future lies the real role of Islam and its best exponent in the modern times, Iqbal.

Iqbal's analysis of the human situation is candid and clear. He said:

"Humanity needs three things today—a spiritual interpretation of the universe, spiritual emancipation of the individual, and basic principles of a universal import directing the evolution of human society on a spiritual basis...Believe me, Europe today is the greatest hindrance in the way of man's ethical advancement. The Muslim, on the other hand, is in possession of those ultimate ideas on the basis of a revelation which, speaking from the inmost depths of life, internalizes its own apparent externality. With him the spiritual basis of life is a matter of conviction for which even the least enlightened man among us can easily lay down his life; and in view of the basic idea of Islam that there can be no further revelation binding on man, we ought to be spiritually one of the most emancipated peoples on earth. Let the Muslim of today appreciate his position, reconstruct his social life in the light of ultimate principles and evolve, out of the hitherto partially revealed purpose of Islam, that spiritual democracy which is the ultimate aim of Islam."

This is the task which Iqbal himself tried to perform and this is what he beckoned his co-religionists to do. *Iqbal Review* is being produced by the Iqbal Academy, Pakistan, to carry on this task in a humble way. The journal will be devoted to research-studies on the life, thought and poetry of Iqbal and will publish articles which explain, elucidate and develop Iqbal's ideas on politics, ethics, education, history, economics, philosophy, literature, art, comparative religion, Islamics, etc., or which otherwise deal with subjects in which Iqbal was interested.

With this objective we present the journal. So help us God!

MYSTICISM IN IQBAL'S POETRY

PROFESSOR SA'ID NAFICY

The mystical aspect is definitely the most significant aspect of Iqbal's poetry. In fact we should consider him a mystic poet and in this respect he is not different from other mystic poets of Iran and Pakistan. The great mystics of Iran and Pakistan, during the past 950 years, adopted the Persian language to propagate their ideas among the people at large. More than any other sect of Islam, the mystics paid attention to the common people and made efforts to give them proper guidance, but they did not attach much importance to those in power and high places and in their congregation assemblies of *sima'* they offered higher places to the poorer as against the wealthier people. In their eyes the Zoroastrians, the Christians and the Jews were all equal. They regarded every being as a symbol of God. The only differentiation acceptable to them was the one preached by the holy *Shari'at* of Islam, namely, "the most virtuous among you is the most esteemed in God's eyes" and the saying of the Prophet that "I am commissioned to bring perfection to man's moral conduct".

The ultimate goal and object of mysticism is to achieve the highest perfection possible for man. The great mystics of Iran and Pakistan have not attached any unusual importance to expansion of religion and have limited their teachings to the spirit of religion. That is why *tawhid*—Oneness of God—and *wahdat-ul-wujud*—oneness of the existence—are more important objectives for them, and they have carried the philosophy of 'monism' (as opposed to the philosophy of Dualism) to its highest stage. The highest perfection, according to them, was to lose one's existence in that of God. They have given many fine and beautiful interpretations to the Qur'anic Verse "God is the Light of heavens and earth."

One of the great mystics says, "Man should reach where he should see nothing but God." Our sufis, thus, have believed in a kind of annihilation (*fana'*) which some of them have termed as

'absorption into God'. This is not very much different from the 'Nirvana' of the Hindus.

Sina'i has said: "Die before death O, friend! if you want eternal life." According to the sufis, these stages cannot be achieved except through revelation (*kashf*) and perception (*shuhud*).

And the genuine traveller is he who achieves the various stages one by one and finally acquires the perfection of the soul. This interesting and valuable conception, which constituted the highest and noblest human thought, has been termed by Iqbal as the 'Philosophy of Self'. His first masterpiece of philosophic poetry, *Asrar-i-khudi*, deals with this extremely fine and subtle conception.

Iqbal has put the following questions:

"Who am I ? What are you? and Whither the universe? Why there exists distance between us? Why am I put in chains of Destiny (Predestination)? Why do I die while you don't?"

And in *Javed Namah*, he replies:

"Do you want Life? Then bring forth your 'self'—

Absorb all the four directions (dimensions) within yourself.

Then you will realise who you are and who am I—

And also how you died and how you lived in the world."

Iqbal, like other great mystics of Iran and Pakistan, believes that the realisation of the self has to be followed by "resignation of the self." This is the same as the philosophy of 'separation and annihilation' propounded by the sufis. The first step is 'Self' and the last "resignation of the Self".

This idea is one of the most beautiful poetic conceptions that have led to the creation of numerous great literary masterpieces. The famous *Ardaye Virafnamak* is a Zoroastrian religious poem in which the soul from the lower world moves upwards through the skies until it attains perfection. The Iranian mystics have drawn upon this idea and have propounded the philosophy of gradual evolution (ascension) of the soul until it loses itself in God. Sina'i has followed the same line in *Sairul Ibadi Ilal ma'aad*. In *Masnavi Mantiquttair* Fariduddin 'Attar has chosen a particular bird as representing a certain attribute of man and in their journey towards perfection the birds lag behind in various stages and at the end achieve perfection.

His *Mantiqut-tair* is an expression of the same mystic idea.

Fuzuli Baghdadi, a well-known poet of Iran of the fifteenth century, has described the same in his beautiful prose work "Soul's Journey". Ibn Tufail, in his *Tale of Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, and Abul 'Ula al-Ma'arri, in his *Risalat ul-Ghufuran*, have carried this subject to the highest poetical level.

In European languages the finest expression of the same idea is seen in the *Divine Comedy* of the great Italian poet Dante. After this could be named Milton's *Paradise Lost* and the *Sentimental Journey* of Swift.

Javed Namah, Iqbal's last masterpiece, offers the most beautiful and delicate example of the poetic treatment of the theme—Man's Ascension. Iqbal, in his onward journey, comes in contact with the great personalities of the human world like Zartasht, the Holy Prophet of Islam, Jalaluddin Rumi, an Indian ascetic 'Jehan Doost', Sayyid Jamaluddin Afghani, Sa'id Haleem Pasha, Mehdi Sudani, Husain bin Hallaj, Qurrat ul 'Ain, Shah Hamadan, Ghani Kashmiri, Abdali and even the ancient gods.

In the course of his conversations with the great minds, Iqbal, apart from discussing the fine points and intricacies of philosophic thought and agnosticism, brings in the social and political issues. *Javed Namah*, therefore, is to be regarded as the latest treatise on mysticism, and Iqbal has to be accepted not only as one of the topmost exponents of mysticism, but also as the last great exponent of Irano-Pakistani mystic thought.

A study of Iqbal's poetry shows that he has closely studied the writings of the great sufis, in particular the *Masnavi* of Rumi, *Gulshan-i-Raz* of Shaikh Mahmud Shabistari, a number of books by Sayyid 'Ali Hamadani and the works of Fakhruddin Iraqi.

Arsar-i-Khudi, *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi*, *Javed Namah* and even his last *Masnavi Pas Cheh Bayad Kard ai Aqwam-i-Sharq* should be regarded as the greatest epics of the twentieth century.

Iqbal, as is borne out by his four *Masnavis*, has not limited his philosophy of Perfection only to the individual (like the old masters) but he has extended it to the nations and peoples of the East as well, and thereby he has changed the traditional "Individualism" of

older sufis into a dynamic 'collectivism'. This has yielded a very important result —self-reliance and self-confidence for the people of the East.

And there is no doubt that it is his teachings that have brought into being the independent state of Pakistan. Pakistan, in my view, is one of the miracles of Iqbal's mystic thought.

The Europeans have named *Tasawwuf* as mysticism and sometime as 'esoterism'. I do not agree with them. For there is nothing secret or hidden in *Tasawwuf*. The sufis have always, and sometimes even at the cost of their lives, preached their moral principles most boldly and candidly. They were not scared of being excommunicated by the jurists.

And in certain cases the jurists, who opposed *tasawwuf*, realised the truth of their teachings through the methods of revelation and perception of Reality. Imam Muhammad Ghazali is a very good example in this respect, for in his later life he repented for having opposed the sufis.

I believe that it would be more proper to describe *Tasawwuf* by the term sufism and one should not accept that it has anything secret or mystical about it. Iqbal's is an eloquent and open expression which belies any such epithet.

From the purely literary point of view Iqbal is one of the greatest poets of *tasawwuf*. The sufi poets, from the very beginning of sufi poetry in the Persian language, introduced symbolism so as to make their ideas more easily understood by the common people. And this style of poetic expression which began with the first sufi poet, Abu Sa'ïd Abul Khair, in the 11th Century, continued at a great height till the end of the 16th century, and Jami may be regarded as the last great poet of this school.

One of the great poets of this school, Shamsuddin Hafiz, has at times made use of the cult of "impressionism" in his verses, which, in course of time, found favour with the poets of India and Pakistan, and this style is known in Iran as the Hindi School of Poetry.

In the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent poets like Fughani, 'Urfi, Faizi, Zuhuri, Naziri, Talib Amuli, Ghani, Kalim, Sa'ib, Bedil and Ghalib contributed to the development and progress of 'impres-

sionism'. The result was that poetry lost its easy fluency and simplicity that is so necessary for the expression and description of fine mystic thought. Bedil's poetry, in particular, became a speciality only for those who were very well versed in all the various aspects and intricacies of the poetic art.

Iqbal, better than anybody else, realised this drawback of this style and once again brought back to poetry the form, simplicity and flow of the symbolic school. For Iqbal was now addressing his message to the people of the East and the Muslims—old and young, educated and uneducated. That is why Iqbal's poetry in the first instance awakened the people of the sub-continent and then gave a new thrill to the Iranians. And now its influence is gradually growing even among those people who do not understand the Persian language.

The world has seen innumerable poets, but out of them only those could be regarded great and worthy of admiration who have played the role of a prophet or divine messenger in their respective ages. Not only do they express the wishes of the people but they also show the way to realise their wishes.

Iqbal, certainly, is one of such eminent men and we can rightly call him the prophet of poets—a poet with a prophetic mission.

In order to realise the greatness of such poets we should study them in the background of their own time and their own country, for then alone shall we find what a world their country and their people have gained from them.

THE CONCEPT OF ISLAMIC POETRY

ALLAMA I. I. QAZI

The resurrection of mud was the rose. Or, you may say *gil* rose as *gul*, while it was destined for the honey-bee to become the poet. Iqbal in his 'Foreword' to Ghalib's illustrated edition, *Muraqqa-i-Chughtai*, says: "The modern age seeks inspiration from Nature. But Nature simply 'is' and her function is mainly to obstruct our search for 'ought' which the artist must discover within the deeps of his own being."

The words are a bit ambiguous. Someone might think that the artist has to put in a continuous effort to harmonize 'is' with 'ought'; or that Nature plays no essential part in our lives. But that would not be correct. Iqbal himself says:

نوائے من ازاں پر سوز ہے پاکب و غم انگیز است
بخاشاکم شرار افتاد و باد صبحدم تیز است

Obviously, باد صبحدم represents the environment or Nature that enables the spark (شرار) to flare up.

The fact is that in the artist 'is' is harmonized with 'ought' by nature itself, and his function in human society, therefore, is to bring a resolution of discord between 'is' and 'ought' by sheer warbling. If so, why then so much criticism of the warbler? Why the reproach *الشعر الشعراء وقائدهم الى النار*? Why even *يتبعهم الغاؤون* even though the modification comes through *ان من البيان لسحراً* and *ان من الشعر لحكمة*? So then, there seem to be two kinds of poets: some speak *hikmat* while others only lead to eternal fire.

We get a hint from Iqbal, however unconscious, in the last passage of his 'Foreword' in which he says:

"And in so far as the cultural history of Islam is concerned, it is my belief that with the single exception of Architecture, the art of Islam (Music, Painting and even Poetry) is yet to be born—the

art, that is to say, which aims at the human assimilation of divine attributes *” تخلقوا باخلاق الله ”*

This clearly indicates that there are not only different kinds of poetry and art, but also there is a possibility of ‘Islamic poetry’ and ‘Islamic art’. Here it may be pointed out that the Qur’an and Iqbal are not the only sources to suggest this variety, but as early as Greek times, Plato won’t have poets in his Republic. Even in more recent times, Tolstoy was dead against the art of his day—music included. The danger of a ‘doubtful art’ we may again describe in the words of Iqbal himself from his very same ‘Foreword’:

“The spiritual health of a people largely depends on the kind of inspiration which their poets and artists receive. But inspiration is not a matter of choice. It is a gift, the character of which cannot be critically judged by the recipient before accepting it. . . . The inspiration of a single decadent artist, if his art can lure his fellows to his song or picture, may prove more ruinous to a people than whole battalions of an Attila or a Changez.”

For the time being, we need not worry about the actual words of Iqbal (which might be misinterpreted as we mentioned above) that the artist is to put in conscious efforts to achieve as great a result as *تخلقوا باخلاق الله*. For the nonce, we might address ourselves only to one problem. What is “Islamic poetry” and how does it differ from the non-Islamic one? Having established that there are many varieties of art, we will try to find out what kind is Iqbal’s art, and whether by any chance it does represent what he conjectured to be ‘Islamic poetry’.

Between the Greeks and Tolstoy came the master of Iqbal, the great Rumi, whose opinion we will quote below in his own words. *En passant* we may quote Caliph ‘Umar who said *كان الشعر علم قوم لم* Now says Rumi:—

یاران که نزد من می آیند از بیم آن که ملول شوند شعر می گویم تا
بدان مشغول شوند - ورنه من کجا و شعر از کجا! والله که من از شعر
بیزارم - پیش من بدتر از آن چیزی نیست

Thus, Rumi composed poetry for the entertainment of his friends and, in his own words, he was actually "sick of *shir*".

Now we may quote Iqbal's own words about his poetry. Says he:

مری نوائے پریشاں کو شاعری نہ سمجھ
کہ میں ہوں محرم راز درون میخانہ
نہ بادہ ہے نہ صراحی نہ دور پیمانہ
فقط نگاہ سے رنگیں ہے بزم جانانہ

Obviously, Iqbal considers "sight" (*nigah*) as the essence of poetry, all else being trappings and means to express it. He tries to explain his concept of *nigah* (sight) as:

خرد کے پاس خبر کے سوا کچھ اور نہیں
ترا علاج نظر کے سوا کچھ اور نہیں

He further clears his position in the following beautiful lines:

اقبال نے کل اہل خیاباں کو سنایا
یہ شعر نشاط آور و پر سوز و طربناک
میں صورت گل دست صبا کا نہیں محتاج
کرتا ہے میرا جوش جنوں میری قبا چاک

Still a further elucidation of the point comes:

اے اہل نظر ذوق نظر خوب ہے لیکن
جوشے کی حقیقت کو نہ دیکھے وہ نظر کیا
الفاظ کے پیچوں میں الجھتے نہیں دانا
غواص کو مطلب ہے صدف سے کہ گہر سے

This last one brings out the very word *Meaning* the significance of which we will speak later on:

جس معنی پیچیدہ کی تصدیق کرے دل
قیمت میں بہت بڑھ کے ہے تابندہ گہر سے

All this should make it clear to the reader, that Iqbal's concern is *Meaning* and not the *Form*. However, it should not be understood that he avoids the *Form* or concerns himself exclusively with the *Meaning*. That will amount to misreading the situation. It is not that he avoids *Form* deliberately, but rather the agent of inspiration is *Meaning*, not *Form*. This inspiration, as Iqbal himself says, is a natural 'gift'—

ذالك فضيل الله بوتييه من يشاء

His inspiration does not arise at the level of *Form* but at the level of *Idea*.

This brings us to the definition of poetry, the classical one, that Milton once formulated. He said poetry must be "simple, sensuous and passionate", But we find that Iqbal will have nothing to do with the 'sensuous'. All the verses that we have quoted above make it perfectly clear that he is neither moved by the 'sensuous' nor the 'sensation'. His inspiration is set in motion only at the level of 'Idea' or 'Meaning'. The earlier writers would have called this kind of poetry as "didactic verse" not fit to be called 'poetry' at all, because their inspiration was bound up with the sensuous. No lyric poetry ever came into existence but through the sensuous. They considered talk about 'ideas' as cold philosophical teaching through the form of verse. Therefore, to them such a composition was more formal, than inspired. Here Iqbal runs down the very 'Form' itself. He wants 'Meaning' and nothing less. Rumi goes much further. He will have nothing to do with 'Forms' of any kind. Ghazali in his own inimitable philosophic way puts it down that the next universe is the universe of 'meaning', not of 'form'.

Now any one might ask, can 'meaning' reach us unless it is dressed in a 'form'? Idea is defined as 'meaning of a symbol', yet there are no ideas apart from symbols, whether natural or linguistic, expressing and embodying them.

The reply to this argument is that the 'form' cannot be done away with, but the stress and the spotlight is on 'meaning' and not on 'form' as such. This may be illustrated this wise. In earlier times, discovery of a plot and originality of a tale were the main

glory of a literary composition. The Qur'an changed all that. It relates old *qisas* (stories) with an entirely new significance. The *qissa* (tale) itself was of no importance; it was the new wine put in old bottles that mattered. Iqbal would not be satisfied only with wine in a bottle but seeks significance further than wine itself:

یارب درون سینہ دل باخبر بده
در باده نشہ را نگرم آن نظر بده

This Qur'anic lead initiated and set up a new fashion in the literary world, that the most representative writers of the nation unconsciously followed. Dante and Shakespeare would take up an old tale and would try to give it a new meaning. All the Shakespearean plots are old stories. He has not invented a single one. But the meaning that he has given them is entirely new. Milton followed suit. Goethe, the most representative of the German literatti, also instinctively followed this fashion. His *Faustus* was treated by many writers before him, and so also his *Iphigenia*. But the *Iphigenia* and the *Faustus* of Goethe have entirely different significance than the earlier works. All this proves, as we have been mentioning all along, that *Meaning* and not the *Form* had become of consequence, since the Qur'an came.

Now the point that needs further clarification is: *How is it Islamic?* We have already mentioned that the Qur'an set the fashion. But that was only our implication. At the present time, more than at any other period in Muslim History, it is necessary for the people who call themselves 'Muslims' clearly to understand the position of Islam in the evolution of man. Europe, when it came of age, refused even to admit that religion was subject to evolution and was historical. They persisted to write "Judaism, Islam and Christianity": they would not have Christianity before Islam, because the importance of Christianity would then be historically reduced. All the same, that writing was a clear anachronism to the understanding mind. It falsified and misrepresented History.

What is the main difference between Islam and other religions? The first and the foremost is that Islam reduced formalism and ceremonialism to the minimum. Earlier religions emphasised 'cere-

mony' and 'form' to the utmost. No religious function was performed but as a ceremonial by the priest, and in a proper set-up in a formal place, be it a church or a synogogue. Even thinking was a sin in a devotee:

تا ز بخششهای آن سلطان دین
مسجد ما شد همه روی زمین

So far we have been talking about poetry directly or indirectly. A few words about the position of Islam may be permitted. Sufficient talk about Nature has also gone on in Iqbal's phraseology, although at times Iqbal separates Nature as 'is' from Art as 'ought', and makes one believe as if Art is outside Nature. Here we might for the sake of clarification, quote the Shakespearean lines:

"Nature is made better by no means,
But Nature makes that mean."

Let us, therefore, examine the fundamental position of the Qur'an. The Qur'an starts with 'اقرا'. What 'اقرا' indicates is: 'Read the meaning in the symbol'. The entire Nature is a symbol to Qur'an. You have to catch at its meaning. When you have been the recipient of it, then make use of بیان (expression) which has been taught to you. Expression is both verbal as well as written; the pen and the writing is emphasised in ن والقلم وما يسطرون which is chronologically the second surah of the Qur'an following 'اقرا' the first one.

Do these very first words of the Qur'an represent any values that were previously existent? We know only two fundamental values at the biological level: to assimilate food, to preserve life and to propagate and perpetuate the human species. Here these two values are represented by feeding the mind and assimilating that food 'اقرا', and then to give birth to and create an issue through self-expression. In one word, the values at the biological level are substituted by spiritual ones. That is the fundamental difference between the levels of earlier religions and Islam. Material life in Islam is only a means but the stress lies on the life of mind and spirit. المال والبنون زينده "الحيوه" الدنيا. But the actual بنون are your spiritual issues. Whatever you produce from mind and spirit, are your children. Those who understand this much, have no difficulty in deciphering the actual

position of Islam in the historical development of Religion.

With these preliminary viewpoints we are now in a position to review the history of Art, specially so far as it pertains to the Greeks. We hold that at that particular juncture, man was just becoming aware of his mind, and the toddler mind was learning to lisp, uttering words and trying to express itself, although in some other parts of the earth it had gone far beyond that stage. For example, in China, Confucius's moral philosophy is miles ahead of Aristotelian Ethics. But, the West, becoming suddenly alive and conscious of itself and inspired by 'power-thought', chose to start philosophy from the Greeks. That has gone on since then. So far were they drunk with power that they believed that humanity could be kept in the dark for all time. They did not even realise that an attempt to turn the Greeks into 'Westerners' and entirely different from the 'Easterners' was a silly attempt, when the very words of the language of the Greeks disclosed that they were the nearest cousins of the Iranian people, and had gone only a few hundred miles from home to Asia Minor. Their development took place in Asia Minor and Egypt rather than in Greece.

Now, which is the typical form of Greek art in which they could best express themselves and even hardly have an equal up to our times? It can be said without fear of contradiction that it is Sculpture and that too limited to the representation of 'Human Form'. No people have chiselled out of stone more beautiful human forms than the Greeks. They were absorbed in the beauty of human form. The two best specimens of their art, that they have left to the succeeding ages, are Apollo of Belvedere and Venus of Milo. They disclose human form at its best. That is what inspired the Greek artist at a time when Dionysus was the chief Greek god and when the spirit of grape wine was the chief moving agent to put the man in his best spirits. There was no question at that time for man to seek anything but the external.

However, Iqbal calls our attention by these emphatic words:

اگر بسینهٔ این کائنات در نه روی
نگه را به تماشا گذاشتن مضم است

And he further elucidates the point by declaring:

رقص تن در گردش آرد خاک را
رقص جان برهم زند افلاک را

To sum up our position, so far we have tried to show that Iqbal is not inspired at the level of 'form' and 'sensations' but at the level of 'Ideas'; in other words, the 'Meaning'. So far, then, his art is *Islamic Art* which he thinks has not yet come into existence. For the time being we are not in a position to talk about Painting and Music because that would be a subject by itself. The question is: Does Iqbal deal with 'Ideas' as a philosopher would do? Does he sit down to analyse them, classify them, create theories out of them as a thinker would do? If that were so, Iqbal's poetry will not move us at all. It will be what we call 'didactic verse'. But the most of Iqbal's poetry is not only lyrical but most times moves our depths. So it satisfies the definition of Milton that it is 'emotional' and 'emotion-creating'. It differs from Milton's definition only in one respect, that it is not 'sensuous' but 'ideal'. The poetry of Iqbal could be defined as 'simple, ideal and soul-stirring', instead of the Miltonic 'simple, sensuous and passionate'.

It is, therefore, that I have many years ago called Iqbal's works 'Museum of Ideas'. Almost every idea that was prevalent in his time, he takes note of as an object of artistic inspiration, is attracted and stimulated by it, and responds to it. He reads Nietzsche and for the time speaks in the language of Nietzsche because he has taken note of it. He even uses his phraseology. He calls peaceful men as 'lambs' (گوسفند). At one time he is most impressed by Goethe, particularly by that which used to be called demoniac by Goethe. His شکوه and such pronouncements as

ما از خدای گم شده ایم، او بجهت تجوست
چون ما نیارزید و گرفتار آرزوست

are merely reactions to Goethe's poem addressed to gods:

"You lead us into Life,
Then you let the poor one become guilty,
Then leave him over in pain,

Because all guilt is revenged on earth.”

This is how Goethe speaks in his demoniac mood, while poor Hafiz would go only to the length of saying:

گناہ گرچہ نبود اختیارِ ما حافظ :
تو در طریق ادب کوش و گو ”گناہ من است“

When Iqbal reads لا اُحبُّ الا فلین, he says “I too have created gods, worshipped them and broken them.” Here he is not busy with his *khudee* nor even in a mood to say:

خودی میں گم ہے خدا کی تلاش کرغافل
یہی ہے تیرے لئے اب صلاح کار کی راہ

He is not even building the *khudee* in that mood like Rumi who is all the time busy with his own *nafs*, and says: پختہ شدم، سوختم، خام بدم. Now put these three words by the side of Iqbal’s poetry، تراشیدم پرستیدم، شکستم، which occur in his following verses:

ہزاراں سال یا فطرت نشستم
باو پیوستہ و از خود گسستم
ولیکن سرگذشت این دو حرف است
تراشیدم، پرستیدم، شکستم

In this mood, Iqbal is visualising the man’s search of Nature as a ‘Scientist’ who goes to study Nature without keeping in mind ‘In the Name of thy Lord who created’ (”In the Name of thy Lord who created”). If he had kept that ”اسم ربک“ in mind, then the process of ”thousand years in the feet of nature” would not have produced this result. There too in الافاق (the cosmos) there were enough آیات (the signs). Obviously خودگسستن would have made no difference, for *fil afa’q* would have served the purpose. But the mood at that time was ”لا“ not ”یا“. Had the reading been, as we said above, باسم ربک الذی خلق، then ”لا“ would have intuitively led to ”یا“.

This is one more proof that the poet does not consciously take to reading but follows the mood. The wind bloweth where it listeth. The man who blames is wrong. The man who expects more is wrong.

The poet is a poet—neither a thinker nor a philosopher. So the ideas keep on agitating the poetic mind and the poet keeps on responding to them. The difference is that 'ideas' not 'sensations' are the agents.

IQBAL'S CONCEPT OF EVOLUTION

DR. M. RAFIUDDIN

We can have two different views about the manner in which the Universe, as we know it at present, has come into existence. We can believe either that it is the outcome of a sudden act or of a series of sudden isolated acts of creation in the past, or that it is the result of development through the ages. The latter view, which, of course, implies not only the evolution of a matter from previous states but also the evolution of all species, *including man*, from earlier and lower forms of life, is held by the evolutionists, while those who subscribe to the former view are known as the creationists.

Iqbal is definitely an evolutionist; for, according to him, it is a law of nature that an object can come into existence only gradually, as a result of a process of development stretched over an appropriate period of time;

چو فطرت سے تراشد پیکرے را
تماش سے کند در روز گارے

This law applies as much to the Universe as a whole as it does to every object in the Universe.

یہ کائنات ابھی ناتمام ہے شاید
کہ آرہی ہے دما دم صدائے کن فیکون

As the first couplet above indicates, Iqbal's view that creation takes the form of evolution is derived from his view of the attributes of Reality to which, of course, nature (*Fitrat*) holds the mirror.

According to Iqbal the reality of the Universe is an all-powerful consciousness which is conscious of itself. This entity which he denotes by the name of Self-consciousness or self (*khudi*) is the creator of the world:

خویشتن را چوں خودی بیدار کرد
آشکارا عالم پندار کرد

Since life is an attribute of consciousness and consciousness cannot be imagined apart from life, Iqbal sometimes uses the word Life (*Hayat* or *Zindagi*) for consciousness:

نقطہ نورے کہ نام او خودیست
زیر خاک ما شرار زندگیست

At other places, however, he uses the word life not so much for world-consciousness itself as for the *force* of the desire or the will of world-consciousness as it operates and incarnates itself in the material world:

چوں حیات عالم از زور خودیست
پس بتدر استواری زندگیست

The central and the most fundamental attribute of this self-consciousness or self of the world (of which a full reflection is to be found only in the human being who alone of all the creation has acquired self-consciousness) is to love an ideal and to act and strive for its realization. Its activity is caused entirely by the love of an ideal and is, therefore, entirely purposive. Love alone can create a wave of restlessness in the tranquility of its being and make its activity to flow like a tumultuous river:

آرزو هنگامہ آرائے خودی
موج بیتابی ز دریائے خودی

“Reality” says Iqbal “is not a blind vital impulse . . . Its nature is through and through teleological”. As the self-consciousness of the world acts and strives for the realization of its ideal, it expresses and asserts itself and thereby actualizes its potentialities and displays its qualities and capacities in creation. Self-assertion or self-display is thus revealed as one of the characteristics of self-consciousness:

وا نمودن خویش را خوئے خودیست
خفته در هر ذره نیروئے خودیست

The Universe is the result of the creative activity of the World-Self and the ideal that the World-Self is realizing through this acti-

vity is the Perfect Man, *i.e.*, the Perfect Human Society, of the future:

ما از خدائے گم شده ایم او بجهت جوست
 چون ما نیاز مند و گرفتار آرزوست
 گاهے به برگ لاله نویسد پیام خویش
 گاهے درون سینہٴ مرغان بد هاؤهوست
 در نرگس آرسید کہ بیند جمال ما
 چندان کرشمہ دان کہ نگاہش بگفتگوست
 آہ سحر گہمی کہ زند در فراق ما
 بیرون و اندرون زبر و زیر و چارسوست
 ہسنگاہے بست از پئے دیدار خاکپئے
 نظارہ را بہانہ تماشائے رنگ و بوست

The Perfect Man who is yet to come is the real meaning of creation. He is the final objective of all the creative activity of the World-Self which has already expressed itself in such a colourful variety of creation:

آیہ کائنات کا معنی دیر یاب تو
 نکلے تری تلاش میں قافلہ ہائے رنگ و بو

Since the creative activity of the World-Self in the Universe has a single purpose—the perfection of man—it must be a single and continuous process from its beginning to its end. This is not possible unless every state of the Universe emerges and evolves out of a previous state as every condition of a growing organism emerges and evolves out of its previous condition. This means that the universe as a whole and the various objects which make up the universe did not come into existence suddenly at a particular moment in the past but have acquired their present shape by a process of gradual development.

The whole of the creative activity of the World-Self which occurred in the past now belongs permanently to history and we have no means of reproducing it. But since the process of creation

is still going on and a portion of this creative activity is stretched before our eyes into the present we are eminently in a position to study it and to understand its nature as a whole. We see that nothing in this world happens abruptly and without passing through a series of earlier phases of development. A tree grows out of a seed by stages; an organism develops gradually out of a sperm; a gigantic industrial or commercial concern evolves slowly from an insignificant start; a mighty state has a modest beginning. There is no reason to suppose that objects used to come into existence suddenly in the past and that nature has now changed its old habit of creating abruptly and has started creating gradually and by stages. On the contrary, as far as the study of history enables us to penetrate into the past, we see that every state of the world was a growth out of a previous one. The modern civilized man has evolved out of the cave-man of an ancient age who was only a little better than animals, and there have been innumerable stages of civilization from the cave-man to the man of today. We can infer most reasonably that the cave-man too must have had a career of his own with a beginning disappearing into the mists of a distant past of biological evolution.

The fact that the creative activity of the World-Self in the Universe has a single purpose, the perfection of man, means also that the *cause* of evolution is the desire of the Creator for the realization of that purpose. All the attributes and qualities of the Perfect Man of the future exist potentially in this desire of the Creator and become more and more actualized as the desire achieves a greater and greater realization. This desire alone was the driving force of the evolutionary process in the past and will continue to be its driving force in the future. It created Space and Time and the earliest form of the universe.

It is not possible to love an object or an idea without hating its antithesis. Hate, therefore, becomes a necessary concomitant of love. The love of the Creator, too, has its concomitant of Hate. Since the Creator loves everything that is favourable to His ideal, He hates everything that is unfavourable to it. The result is that the driving force of evolution expresses at each level of creation in particular forms of attraction and repulsion which are suitable to

that level. During the material stage of evolution, it expressed itself in the attraction and repulsion of the particles of matter on account of which matter continued to develop in complication and organization till all the physical laws came into existence and matter became ripe for the production of the first living cell. This explains why every physical law is either a form of attraction or a form of repulsion. On reaching the biological stage the driving force of evolution expressed itself in the animal's instinctive attraction for everything that is favourable to its existence and repulsion from everything that is unfavourable to it. As the animal expressed its instincts of attraction and repulsion in its activities, its biological constitution became more and more complicated and organized and its instincts, too, developed in number and quality, till man, the most highly organized animal, came into existence. This explains why every animal instinct or innate tendency we know of is either a form of attraction or a form of repulsion. Effort or struggle continued to be the key to biological progress and evolution throughout. As living creatures strove to realize their desires and purposes arising from their instincts their efforts or struggle brought the driving force of the desire of the world-self more and more into play with the result that they developed new characters and capacities needed by them for the realization of their ends and thus actualized a little more of the potentialities of life and came a step nearer to the final objective of evolution, namely, the human form of life, with all its qualities and characteristics. It is by effort or struggle that birds have grown wings and learnt to fly or walk or sing and we, on our part, have developed such complicated organs as the eyes, the ears, the hands, the teeth and the brain or such useful faculties as thought, intelligence, imagination and memory.

چيست اصل ديده بیدار ما بست صورت لذت دیدار ما
 کبک پا از شوخی رفتار یافت بلبل از سعی نوا منقار یافت
 دست و دندان و دماغ و چشم و گوش فکر و تخیل و شعور و یاد و هوش
 زندگی مرکب چو در جنگه تاخت بهر حفظ خویش این آلات ساخت

In man life has come to its own and regained its quality of self-

consciousness with its fundamental attribute of love for an ideal, *i.e.*, an idea of the highest beauty and perfection. As a self-conscious being man's urge for Beauty can be satisfied only by an ideal of the highest beauty and perfection, *i.e.*, an ideal which has all beautiful and admirable attributes that he can imagine and is free from all the defects and shortcomings that he can think of. That idea can be the idea of the Creator; for man cannot think of any idea more beautiful and more perfect than that. The driving force of evolution expresses itself again at the human stage, in man's love of everything that is favourable to the realization of his ideal and the hatred of everything that is unfavourable to it. This means that the greater the approach of man to his ideal, the greater is his approach to the stage of his own perfection which is the ideal of the Creator. Man has thus become a conscious and willing participant in the creative activity of the World-Self. Effort or struggle continues to be the key to progress at the ideological stage as it was at the biological stage of evolution. As man acts and strives for the realization of his ideal, he expresses and asserts himself and thereby brings the driving force of the desire of the Creator more and more into play with the result that he actualizes more and more of his potentialities and comes nearer and nearer to his own perfection. The more he actualizes his potentialities, the greater is the manifestation of the qualities of the Creator in His creation:

تلاش خود کنی جز او نہ بینی

تلاش او کنی جز خود نہ بینی

نمود اسکی نمود تیری نمود تیری نمود اسکی

خدا کو تو بے حجاب کردے خدا تجھے بے حجاب کردے

To say that struggle is necessary for evolution means that life meets, at every step, with some resistance which it has to overcome. This resistance comes in the way of life from life itself; it comes from the whole of life's past. Life that has grown offers resistance to life that has yet to grow. The reason is that the tendencies of life are not only hormic but also mnemonic. Life not only acts and strives for the realization of its ends but also safeguards and preserves the ends

it has already achieved. For unless it preserves its achievements of the past it cannot make fresh achievements. The emergence of new qualities and characters is the direct result and the immediate end of the creative activity of life. But as soon as life has achieved an end its achievement becomes fixed, automatic and permanent which enables life to leave it there and pass on to the achievement of new ends. When it does so it meets with resistance from ends it has already achieved.

During the material stage of evolution the achievements of life are represented by the physical laws. They are automatic, permanent and immutable not because they were always so, but because they do not need to change now. They kept changing and growing for a long time in the past and when they had evolved themselves into a form most suitable for the development of animal life, they became set and fixed while change manifested itself at higher levels of life. During the animal stage life met resistance from the physical laws which it had itself evolved with a purpose. Living creatures had to struggle against these laws in order to protect and feed themselves and thereby to continue their life and race. The result of their struggle was the evolution of instincts in various directions consistent with the potentialities of life and the emergence of a large variety of species in the process. Thus the efforts of life to conquer the resistance of physical laws enabled it to achieve new victories in the form of instincts which, like the physical laws, became fixed, automatic and permanent in due course of time. We have also to note that the past of life at every distinct step of its biological evolution included not only the physical laws but also the instincts of all the species which had come into existence previous to that step. Hence every species of animals met resistance not only from the physical laws but also from the instinctive purposes of all the contemporary species; it had to participate in a widespread war between different species. The struggle of every species proceeded in accordance with a mode of behaviour prescribed by the instincts which it had already developed.

During the ideological stage of evolution that is now going on life is meeting resistance not only from the physical laws but also from

the instincts which like the physical laws it had itself developed for its own protection. For, human beings have not only to struggle against the physical laws in order to continue their existence but also against the exaggerated demands of the instincts in order to satisfy their urge for beauty and perfection which is their fundamental characteristic as self-conscious beings. The result of their struggle is the evolution of ideals in various directions consistent with the qualities of beauty and perfection and the emergence of a large number of ideological communities in the process. The past of life at every distinct step of its ideological evolution includes not only the physical laws and the instincts in man and other species but also the ideals of all the ideological communities which had come into existence previous to that step. Hence at this stage of evolution every ideological community meets resistance not only from the physical laws and the instincts but also from the objectives of all the contemporary ideological communities. The struggle of an ideological community proceeds in accordance with a moral code which exists potentially in its ideal and becomes actualized gradually in the life of the community. In due course of time it becomes fixed, automatic and permanent and is known as the constitutional, the civil and the military law of the community. At this stage if the members of the community desire to change over to a higher ideal they have to struggle against this law, in order to shatter its resistance. If they succeed the event is known as a Revolution, otherwise, a Rebellion.

The resistance that life meets from itself, however, does not retard its progress in the direction of its goal. On the contrary impediments stimulate its efforts and quicken its progress. As a river flows the hardest when it has to pass through a narrow gorge in the mountains and wears away the rocks that obstruct its passage, so the current of life is never so powerful as when it is facing a resistance and making an effort to overcome it. Life is not the least tolerant of resistance to itself in any form or shape and never makes a compromise with it. On the other hand, whenever it meets with resistance it musters the whole of its power in an effort to crush it and it never fails, no matter how formidable the resistance. The

result is not only that the resistance is swept away completely but also that life is able to acquire new powers and qualities and to rise to a still higher level of evolution. That, in fact, is the reason why life creates resistance for itself out of itself. Iqbal alludes to this aspect of the nature of life as follows:

در جهان تخم خصومت کاشت است خودشن را غیر خود پنداشت است
سازد از خورد پیکر اغیار را تا فزاید لذت پیکار را

In a poem entitled *irtiqa'* (evolution) Iqbal explains that it is the nature of life to court hardships and to meet and shatter its impediments boldly. Struggle, according to him, is the process by which life progresses at the material, biological and ideological stages of evolution. Hence the Muslim community has to struggle in order to live and progress.

حیات شعلہ مزاج و غیور و شور انگیز
سرشت اسکی ہے مشکل کشی جفا طلبی
سکوت شام سے تا نغمہ سحر گاہی
ہزار مرحلہ ہائے فغان نیم شبی
کشاکش زم و گرما تپ و تراش و خراش
ز خاک تیرہ درون تابہ شیشہ حلبی
مقام بست و کشاد و فشار و سوز و کشید
سیان قسطرہ نیشان و آتش عنبی
اسی کشاکش پیہم سے زندہ ہیں اقوام
یہی ہے راز تب و تاب ملت عربی

Iqbal compares the irresistible onward march of life through the various stages of its evolution to a swiftly running stream which faces the rocks and turns in all directions to avoid them or washes them away to make a smooth passage for itself:

وہ جوئے کہستان اچکتی ہوئی انکتی لچکتی سرکتی ہوئی
اچھلتی بھسکتی سنبھلتی ہوئی بڑے پیچ کھا کر نکلتی ہوئی

رکے جب تو سل چہر دیتی ہے یہ پہاڑوں کے دل چہر دیتی ہے یہ
ذرا دیکھ اے ساقی لالہ فام سناتی ہے یہ زندگی کا پیام

دمادم رواں ہے یم زندگی ہر اک شے سے پیدا یم زندگی
اسی سے ہوئی ہے بدن کی نمود کہ شعلہ میں پوشیدہ ہے موج و دود
گراں گرچہ ہے صحبت آب و گل خوش آئی اسے صحبت آب و گل
چمک اسکی بجلی میں تارے ہیں ہے بہ چاندی میں سونے میں ہارے ہیں ہے
اسی کے ہیں کانٹے اسی کے بیول اسی کے بیابان اسی کے ہیں پھول
کمپیں اسکی طاق سے کمہسار چور کہیں اسکے پھندے میں چہریل و حور
کہیں جبرہ شاہن سیماب رنگ لہو سے چکوروں کے آلودہ چنگ

ٹہرتا نہیں کاروان وجود کہہ ہر لحظہ نازہ ہے شان وجود
سمجھتا ہے تو راز ہے زندگی فقط ذوق پرواز ہے زندگی
بہت اسنے دیکھے ہیں پست و بلند سفر اسکو منزل سے بڑھکر پسند
الجھ کر سمجھنے میں لذت اسے تزیئے بھڑکنے میں راحت اسے
ہوا جب اسے سامنا موت کا کتھن تھا برا تھا سامنا موت کا
اتر در جہان مکافات میں رعی زندگی موت کی گھات میں
سذاق دوتی سے بنی زوج زوج انہی دشت و کمہسار سے فوج فوج

زبانے کے دریا میں بہتی ہوئی ستم اسکی سوجوں کے سپتی ہوئی
تجسس کی راہیں بدلتی ہوئی دہا دم نگاہیں بدلتی ہوئی
سبک اسکے ہاتھوں میں سنگ گراں پہاڑ اسکی ضربوں سے ریگ رواں
سفر اس کا انجام و آغاز ہے یہی اس کی تقویم کا راز ہے

At the biological stage of evolution some of the species succeeded in adapting themselves to their environment but proved unfit to

evolve into superior forms of life and hence continued to exist in the form they had achieved. Some of them, however, failed even to adapt themselves to their environment and, therefore, perished entirely. Although consciousness lost some of its achievements in this way, yet it more than compensated for their loss by creating new and more promising species to take the place of those that had disappeared. Similarly, at the ideological stage of evolution, some ideological communities disappear and others appear in their place. Again, individuals of every species belonging to one generation die in the course of time and a new generation is born to take its place and thus the process of evolution is continued. Iqbal alludes to this fact when he says:

گل اس شاح سے ٹوٹتے بھی رہے اور اس شاخ سے بھوٹتے بھی رہے
سمجھتے ہیں نادان اسے بے ثبات ابھرتا ہے مٹ مٹ کے نقش حیات

The waste and destruction involved in the process of evolution are more than compensated by the valuable results achieved:

بہر یک گل خون صد گلشن کند از پے یک نغمہ صد شیون کند
عذر این اسراف این سنگین دل خلق و تکمیل جمال معنوی

Life that was struggling slowly and steadily along the tedious path of evolution since the creation of the world emerged finally in the human form of life.

ازل سے ہے یہ کشمکش میں اسیر
ہوئی خاک آدم میں صورت پذیر

The self-consciousness of man reflects the Self-Consciousness of the Universe as the pupil of the eye reflects the firmament.

خودی کا نشیمن ترے دل میں ہے
فلک جس طرح آنکھ کے تل میں ہے

Since man developed the capacity to love ideals the process of evolution which was so far biological changed its character with the emergence of man and became ideological. The inevitable goal of ideological evolution is the emergence of an ideological community which loves and strives after an ideal of the highest beauty

and perfection. The love of that ideal—and that ideal is no other than the Self-Consciousness of the Universe itself—alone will lead man to the stage of his highest perfection. As he will admire, adore and serve his Creator he will develop more and more his love and knowledge of the Creator as well as his knowledge of himself. In other words he will become more and more self-conscious. As his self-consciousness or his love for the Creator grows within, he is able to express more and more the Creator's attributes of Beauty and Perfection externally in his moral, material and social life and thus comes nearer and nearer to the stage of his internal and external perfection. When the stage of his perfection will actually arrive, the war of nations will end and perfect peace will reign over the earth. Iqbal yearns for the arrival of the Perfect Man of the future who, he says, is a potentiality that is being actualized gradually by the process of evolution (the motion of the black-and-white horse of time: *ash'hab-i-dawran*).

اے سوار اشہبِ دَورِاں بیا اے فروغِ دیدہٴ امکانِ بیا
رونقِ ہنگامہٴ ایجادِ شو در سوادِ دیدہٴ ہا آباد شو
شورشِ اقوامِ را خاموش کن نغمہٴ خود را بہشتِ گوش کن

Iqbal is the harbinger of the glorious age of human perfection which is approaching irresistibly as a result of the evolutionary process. Hence the true realization of his greatness will come only in future:

سبزہٴ نا روئیدہٴ زیبِ گلشنم گلِ بشاخِ اندر نہاں در دامنم
باسمِ از خاور رسید و شبِ شکست شبیم نو بر گلِ عالم نشست
انتظارِ صبحِ خیزانِ مے کشم اے خوشا زردشتیانِ آتشم
نغمہٴ ام از زخمہٴ بے پرواستم من نوائے شاعرِ فردا ستم
نغمہٴ من از جہانِ دیگر است این جرسِ را کاروائے دیگر است

The emergence of self-consciousness in man as a result of the process of creation and evolution is a proof that it was the same self-consciousness that started this process in a distant past. As the seed which is the final product of the growth of a tree is also the source and the ultimate cause of its growth, so self-consciousness which has revealed

itself in man as the final product of the evolution of the Universe must also be the source and the ultimate cause of its evolution. The nature of human self-consciousness is, therefore, an adequate guide to us to understand the nature of world-self-conscious.

اسرار ازل جوئی بر خود نظرے واکن
یکتائی و بسجاری پنهانی و پیدائی

This is the meaning of the well-known saying:

من عرف نفسه فقد عرف ربه

(He who understands his own self, understands also the self of the Creator).

We know that the human self-consciousness loves an ideal and expresses and asserts itself in a creative activity for the realization of that ideal. Hence we conclude that the World-Self too loves an ideal and expresses and asserts itself in a creative activity for the realization of that ideal. When we study the creative activity of the self-consciousness of a human individual, say that of a potter who is moulding a pitcher of clay on his wheel, we find that it exhibits the following characteristics:

- (1) It has a beginning and an end.
- (2) It advances continuously from its beginning to its end passing through a number of intervening stages.
- (3) Its continuous progress from its beginning to its end is caused by the single purpose of the potter which makes it a single, indivisible act of creation.
- (4) Its purpose is no other than the ideal of the potter to create a perfect pitcher. It is, therefore, a search for beauty and perfection.
- (5) At each of its various stages its object is to refine and improve the product of the whole of its past in a particular direction implied in its final purpose and not to create anything new or special unrelated to the past.
- (6) The internal purpose of the potter manifests itself in the external form of his creation and its manifestation becomes more and more definite and clear as his creative activity proceeds.

Even when we consider the whole of the creative activity of the potter as an individual having a particular ideal of life we shall find that it has the same characteristics. These are in fact the characteristics of the creative activity of every human individual. This means that if self-consciousness is really the seed, the source and the ultimate cause of the universe, the creative activity of the World-Self-Consciousness in the universe has the following characteristics:

- (1) It has a beginning and an end.
- (2) It is advancing continuously from its beginning to its end passing through a number of intervening stages.
- (3) Its continuous progress from its beginning to its end is caused by the single purpose of the World-Self which makes it a single indivisible act of creation.
- (4) Its purpose is no other than the ideal of the World-Self to create a perfect Universe. It is, therefore, a search for Beauty and Perfection.
- (5) At each of its various stages its object is to refine and improve the product of the whole of its past in a particular direction implied in its final purpose and not to create anything new and special unrelated to the past.
- (6) The hidden purpose of the World-Self is manifesting itself in the external universe of its creation and its manifestation is becoming more and more definite and clear as its creative activity is proceeding.

Thus the Creator's attribute of self-consciousness is itself enough to lead us to the conclusion that the Universe cannot but be the result of a process of gradual evolution. This is what Iqbal means when he says:

چو فطرت مے تراشد پیکرے را
تماش مے کنہ در روز گارے

This conclusion naturally implies that the human being has evolved out of the lower and less organized forms of life. The idea of evolution is perfectly consistent with the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. Iqbal writes in his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*:

Drew man out of the animal into the human state.
 Thus man passed from one order of nature to another,
 Till he became wise and knowing and strong as he is now,
 Of his first souls he has now no remembrance,
 And he will be again changed from his present soul.”*

The two main aspects of the theory of evolution are (1) the fact of evolution and (2) the cause of evolution. We have seen that according to Iqbal (1) evolution is a fact and (2) the cause of evolution is the desire, the will or the purpose of an all-powerful Creator operating in the Universe. Every philosophical truth is supported sooner or later by scientific discoveries. It is very good that the scientists have already arrived at a *complete* agreement among themselves as regards the fact of evolution. They are now unanimous in their belief that evolution has actually occurred. “To-day,” say the writers of *The Science of Life*, “there is no denial of the fact of organic evolution, except on the part of manifestly ignorant, prejudicial or superstitious minds.” The scientists are, however, still divided into two main sections so far as their views about the cause of evolution are concerned. Some of them, led by Darwin and commonly known as the mechanists, believe that evolution results from the aimless functioning of the mechanical forces of nature. Others believe that it is the outcome of some hidden purpose working in and through living organisms. The views of the latter, known as purposivists, are, of course, favourable to the Iqbalian theory of evolution.

Unfortunately the common intellectual too often identifies the fact of evolution with its cause and ignores that to say that evolution has occurred is not the same thing as to believe in its cause as explained by a particular philosopher or scientist. It is, however, easy to see that to know a fact is not the same thing as to know its cause. A person, for example, may know that a railway engine moves and yet he may not be able to explain the cause of its motion or he may give an extremely erroneous explanation of it. A man who believes in the fact of evolution is generally imagined to be a Darwinist, although Darwinism is a theory relating to the cause of

*Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*—p. 814

evolution and not to its fact. Darwinism is not evolution, nor evolution is Darwinism.

Darwin, moreover, was not the originator of the idea of evolution. Several thinking men in the history of our race have thought of the possibility of the Universe having come into existence by a process of evolution. Adumbers of the idea of evolution are clearly traceable in such ancient writers as Lucretius and Empedocles. Aristotle, too, was inclined towards it. Schelling, Fichte, and Hegel were definitely evolutionists. The idea became a subject for scientific study *even in the domain of science* long before Darwin had said anything about it. The European who first put forward the idea of evolution in its modern scientific form was Buffon, the French naturalist. Goethe in Germany and St. Hilare in France received it with enthusiasm. The latter in fact called attention to the embryological evidence in its favour. But the true father of the modern theory of evolution is another French naturalist Lamarck whose epoch-making work on *Zoological Studies* was published in 1809. Unfortunately, however, Lamarck did not receive in his lifetime the recognition that he deserved. The idea of evolution was widely known and understood only after Charles Darwin (1809-82) had published his *Origin of Species* and Wallace had stated that he, working independently, had arrived at similar results. Darwin soon followed up his first publication by his *Descent of Man*. Since then the theory of evolution has found an increasing confirmation in practically every field of science especially in Physics, Astronomy, Geology, Biology, Sociology, Embryology, Palaeontology and Comparative Anatomy. Darwin not only collected and systematised all evidence for evolution that could be available in his own days, but also put forward the view that Natural Selection, through the survival of the fittest in the struggle for existence, is in itself a complete explanation of the cause of evolution. It is this particular explanation of evolution that is known as Darwinism. Darwin's books, however, created a fierce controversy about the fact of evolution because they attracted the attention of the common intellectual, for the first time, to a theory which questioned his age-old beliefs and assumptions and which, though long in existence, was so far going

unnoticed. In this controversy some eminent biologists like Thomas Huxley and Ernest Haeckel championed the cause of evolution and defended the views of Darwin both as regards the occurrence of evolution and the factors responsible for its occurrence. Their critics, on the other hand, refuted these views wholesale with the result that Darwinism and evolution came to be identified with each other on both sides. While the scientists have now accepted the fact of evolution, the controversy about Darwinism still persists although it is perfectly true to say that Darwinism is rapidly losing its ground and its opponents are already on the way to a complete victory. Indeed if we take into consideration what we hear and read in scientific circles and journals again and again we have to conclude that even now there is no dearth of serious students of evolutionary science who believe that Darwinism has already collapsed.

Briefly the theory of Darwin is that it is in the nature of life to vary. The whole organism and its individual organs and functions are subject to minute variations which occur blindly and haphazardly in any and every direction. Moreover, all species of animals have to struggle against a hostile environment, against their enemies and dangers of every kind in order to feed and protect themselves and their offspring. In this struggle only the fittest species are able to maintain their race; all others perish. This means that nature favours the maintenance and further development of only that accidental change of shape, colour, structure, function or instinct which renders the animal better able to secure food for itself, to grasp its prey, to avoid or defeat its enemies, to protect its offspring, to propagate its species and so on. Without choice, without aim and without conscious purpose nature offers a wealth of variations, the conditions of existence act as a sieve, variations which correspond to them maintain themselves gliding through the meshes of the sieve, those that do not disappear. In this process of passive adaptation the forms of life are raised from the originally homogeneous to the heterogeneous, from the simple to complex, and from the lower to the higher. The absence of purpose is the very essence of Darwinism. Variations arise fortuitously out of the organism and present themselves for selection in the struggle for existence,

They are not actively acquired by means of the struggle. If there is any purpose in evolution it is, according to Darwin, apparent and not real. Darwinists endeavour to explain the emergence of even the most complicated organ such as the eye and the most puzzling function such as the instinct of a bee, as a result of a series of accidents. This position is, of course, completely antagonistic to that of Iqbal.

Darwinism has passed through several stages and undergone several differentiations and transformations since its birth but its essence and main features have remained the same. Although it is primarily a biological theory, the Darwinists use it to answer all questions relating to Psychology, Metaphysics, Logic, Epistemology, Ethics, Aesthetics and even History, Economics and Politics. Indeed if Darwinism with its radical opposition to teleology and its stress on mechanical selection is really an adequate explanation of a part of the evolutionary process, it ought to be an adequate explanation of the whole of it. As was only natural, Darwinism has deeply influenced all subsequent developments of the human and social sciences. It has yielded many bitter fruits and the bitterest of them all is Marxism on account of which the world is now divided into two hostile camps, each ready to blow the other to atoms.

"My theory", said Darwin 'will lead to a whole philosophy'. He was right. But the philosophy that results from the theory of Darwin is a terrible shock to man's justified conviction of his own dignity over the rest of creation, which he thinks he enjoys by virtue of the nobility of his mind and spirit and the sanctity of his reason and free-will. For the implications of his theory are that the whole of this wonderful world of life is nothing but the blind and fortuitous play of the reckless forces of nature. It is completely devoid of plan or method. What is now a human being may have been a worm crawling in a gutter. The higher activities of man like Religion, Morality, Politics, Art, Science, Philosophy, Law and Education have no worth or value of their own, since their very basis, *i.e.*, the conscience of man and his desire for ideals of Beauty and Perfection, is the result of an accident, a chance product of ignoble tumult of animal impulses, desires and sensations,

which may not have come into existence at all.

The spirit of man revolts against such ideas and their scientific accuracy at once becomes doubtful. No wonder, therefore, that there were soon many powerful rebels in the Darwinist camp. Wallace, the co-discoverer of the Darwinian theory of the struggle for existence, ultimately came to believe in a spiritual explanation of evolution. Romanes, a prominent disciple of Darwin, ended in Christian theism. Fleischmann kept illustrating the orthodox Darwinian stand-point during many years of personal research, but finally developed into an outspoken opponent of not only the theory of selection but also of the doctrine of descent. Friedmann did the same. Driesch started with a mechanical theory of life but wrote a series of essays to show that life is fundamental and evolution is purposive. Among the founders of constructive theories of evolution opposed to Darwinism may be counted Lamarck, Etienne Geoffroy, St. Hilaire, Ersner, Kassowitz, W. Haacke, Nageli, De Vries, Driesch and Bergson. The scope of the present article does not permit me to give here even a brief outline of these theories. Suffice it to say that the commonest and the most prominent feature of all these theories is that a living organism has not to wait passively for natural selection and prolonged accumulation of minute variations. On the other hand there is a hidden purpose working in and through the organism which enables it spontaneously and of itself to bring forth what is necessary for self-maintenance, often what is new and different with an extensive range of possibilities. It is, for instance, able to produce protective adaptations against cold or heat, to regenerate lost parts, often to replace entire organs that have been lost and under certain circumstances to produce new organs altogether. There is no end to illustrations that have been adduced in support of this view. As such it is a mere caprice on the part of those Darwinists who still cling to the theory of natural selection and do not take into account the spontaneous capacities and characteristics of living organisms which constitute a definite proof of the teleological nature of evolution.

The emergence of conscious purpose in man itself, as one of his most important characteristics, constitutes an evidence in favour

of purposive evolution. The very word evolution implies purpose, since it means growth or movement towards higher and higher stages of development. Every kind of growth or development must have a destination from the very beginning, otherwise it will not be any growth or development at all. The highest product of the growth of a tree is the seed and the seed is implied in the tree at every stage of its growth. If the Universe has really evolved and developed upto its present stage does it not mean that purpose, one of the most precious products, of its development, was implied in it from the beginning, that purpose of some sort was present at every stage of its development? At the material stage it was entirely unconscious, at the biological stage it was half conscious, at the human stage it became completely conscious and deliberate.

Although science has proclaimed the justification of a belief in evolution, we have seen that Iqbal's belief in evolution is not the outcome of a desire for fashionable thinking. It is derived by him independently from the attributes of Reality as stated in the Holy Qur'an.

It does not depend upon the discovery of fossils or the successful search of the missing links in the theory of any particular scientist. Nor does it imply, as Darwin and other evolutionists of the West seem to believe, that man descends from the ape or any other non-human species, known to us to be in existence at present or to have been in existence in the past. The Iqbalian or the Qur'anic theory of evolution implies that man has developed out of man, out of his own earlier forms and not out of any other non-human species.

A human embryo passes through various stages of its development, but at no stage it is anything other than a human embryo. Similar is the case with the development of man as a species; it has passed through a number of stages of its own development but at none of these stages it was anything other than a human species. From the moment of its first emergence in matter, life continued to progress steadily and continuously along the line of evolution that was leading to the human form. All other species that came into existence were branches that shot out of this main trunk of the

tree of evolution. The main line of evolution was the right path of life that was destined to persist indefinitely while all other lines were deflections from this path that were doomed to disappear or vegetate without evolving.

WHITHER CIVILISATION?

The world's thinkers are stricken dumb. Is this going to be the end of all this progress and evolution of civilization, they ask, that men should destroy one another in mutual hatred and make human habitation impossible on this earth. Remember, man can be maintained on this earth only by honouring mankind, and this world will remain a battleground of ferocious beasts of prey unless and until the educational forces of the whole world are directed to inculcating in man respect for mankind. Only one unity is dependable and that unity is the brotherhood of man, which is above race, nationality, colour or language. So long as this so-called democracy, this accursed nationalism and this degraded imperialism are not shattered, so long as men do not demonstrate by their actions that they believe that the whole world is the family of God, so long as distinctions of race, colour and geographical nationalities are not wiped out completely, they will never be able to lead a happy and contented life and the beautiful ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity will never materialise.

—IQBAL

IQBAL : THE PHILOSOPHER-POET

KAVI GHULAM MUSTAFA

An erroneous impression obtains in some quarters that Iqbal is not so great a poet as great a philosopher and that his poetry has no universal appeal because of its 'sectarian' outlook and religious undertone.

In the present article I shall try to show that, in spite of all his omissions and commissions, Iqbal is not only a great poet, but the greatest poet of this age.

The under-estimation of Iqbal is largely due to a general misconception about poetry and the poet. We should, therefore, have, at the very outset, a clear idea about the meaning and significance of poetry and the function and the province of the poet.

What is Poetry

It is very difficult to give a correct definition of poetry. For, it is one of those few things which we understand but cannot define. "If not asked, I know; if you ask me, I know not" that is exactly the attitude of our mind in respect of definition of poetry. Different persons have, therefore, given different definitions, but none is self-sufficient or all-comprehensive. Carlyle defines it as 'musical thought', while to Wordsworth, it is "a the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge." Matthew Arnold characterises poetry as "the criticism of life", while in the opinion of Edgar Allan Poe it is "the rhythmic creation of beauty". On the other hand, Dante defines it as "the divine phantom of Reality".

A fuller idea of poetry can be had if we interpret it in terms of Art. Poetry falls within the province of Art, in as much as a poet does by means of words what an artist does by means of colour. Both attempt at conveying adequately and beautifully their inner feelings and sentiments to others. Art is thus "the expression of the impression". All good pieces of art, therefore, must embody sincere feelings and beautiful expressions; in other words, *the idea* and *the form*

constitute the two main contents of Art. Both need equal looking into. Without idea, the expression or form becomes meaningless, however exquisite or gorgeous it may be. On the other hand, a good and genuine idea may prove ineffective or unimpressive if it is not properly and beautifully garbed. Any failing on either side will proportionately undermine the quality of Art.

Another determining factor in Art is its power of communication. If the artist conceives an idea and if he can transmit it to others in such a way that they can equally share his feelings, then his work becomes a successful piece of Art. Thus, the success or failure of Art largely depends on its communicative value.

There remains still a controversy as to what should be the content of Art. There are some who maintain that Art has no connection with Truth or Good; its only connection is with Beauty. To them, Religion or Ethics is taboo to Art. They uphold the theory of "Art for Art's sake." But that view is not tenable. Beauty or pleasure is, no doubt, a component part of Art; it cannot be the sole standard or criterion of Art. Pleasure is a vague term. Different persons have different standards of pleasure. Whose pleasure will then be the criterion of Art? The pleasure of the producer or the consumer? What sort of pleasure will it be? Will it be sensual pleasure, or intellectual satisfaction or spiritual ecstasy? Then, again, the pleasure of A may not be pleasure to B and *vice versa*. The "Art for Art's sake" theory has, therefore, no leg to stand upon. The guiding principle of all artistic works should be: "Art for man's sake", or more precisely, "Art for life's sake", as has been beautifully explained by Iqbal himself in the following lines:

"The ultimate end of all human activity is Life—glorious, powerful, exuberant. All human art must be subordinated to this final purpose and the value of everything must be determined in reference to its life-giving capacity. The highest art is that which awakens our dormant will-force and nerves us to face the trials of life manfully. All that brings drowsiness and makes us shut our eyes to Reality around, on the mastery of which alone life depends, is a message of decay and death. There should be no opium-eating in Art. The dogma of "Art for the

sake of Art" is a clever invention of decadence to cheat us out of life and power."

Thus it is clear that poetry or Art is useful and good only when it impinges dynamically on life and works harmoniously with the eternal varieties of mankind: Truth, Beauty and Good.

The pleasure-theory of Art therefore betrays perversion of taste. No man can discard religion or moral values of life for the sake of mere aesthetic enjoyment. There should be no antagonism between Religion and Art. All great works of Art have emanated from a deep sense of religion and moral sentiments. A good piece of Art may outwardly represent any particular religion or community and maintain its local colouring, but that does not stand in the way of its universal appeal. In Poetry and Art, the Individual becomes the Universal if it can represent any phase of the three fundamentals of humanity: Truth, Beauty and Good. Dante's "Divine Comedy", Milton's "Paradise Lost", Raphael's "Madona", Rumi's "Masnavi", and such other artistic creations will bear me out.

How a religious theme can be transformed into a brilliant piece of Art can be illustrated from Iqbal himself. His "Shikwa" and "Jawab-i-Shikwa", judged from the view-point of Art and Literature, cannot but give universal satisfaction. The subject-matter is, after all, a prayer to Allah for bestowing favours upon the Muslims. But what a wonderful myth has been created by the poet out of this simple thing! It is not the customary supplication of a devoted voter with tearful eyes or with a beggar's bowl in hand; it is a forceful demand of favours, almost bordering on extortion on point of bayonet! Iqbal files a regular complaint in the Court of Allah against Allah Himself, alleging colossal neglect, on His part, of the legitimate rights and privileges of the Muslims and partiality to others. The force of argument was so great and irresistible that Allah had to put up a self-defence and come to an amicable settlement with the poet! Is it not pure poetic artistry, even though the material used is Islamic in character? Where is hostility, then, between Poetry and Religion?

Philosophy also is not hostile to Poetry; rather they have close affinity to each other. Poets are "seers", as Carlyle has aptly said.

They are nothing if their poetry does not reflect any philosophic truth or foreshadows the shape of things to come. Philosophers may not be poets, but poets must be philosophers. "No man was ever yet a great poet", says Coleridge, "without being at the same time a profound philosopher." Browning goes one step farther and says: "Philosophy first, and poetry, which is its highest outcome, afterwards." Indeed, there is no reason why philosophy must not come in the arena of poetry. Of course, philosophizing or moralising often makes poetry didactic. But that is the fault of the poet. Didactic poems are detestable, not because they are didactic, but because they are not poetry.

The scope of the poet is, therefore, unlimited. He cannot be confined to a particular place or a particular subject. His penetrating eye pervades through heaven and earth and encompasses the entire universe. Little poets think of little things, they may be adepts in composing love-songs, sonnets or lyric poems; but great poets come with prophetic missions for giving new ideas and new messages to mankind. They revolutionise and reconstruct religious, social, political, scientific, moral, economic and cultural outlook of the people and deal with major problems of humanity. A great poet is thus a philosopher, a religious reformer, a political thinker, a man of science, a literary critic—all combined in one. Such a poet was Iqbal. It is an irony that these outstanding qualities of Iqbal as a poet are turned down as great disqualifications by the pseudo-critics of art and literature! That is why, perhaps, that it has been said that "critics are the men who have failed in art and in literature."

With these introductory remarks, let us now study the various aspects of Iqbal's poetry and thought and see where he stands.

Iqbal as a Philosopher

Iqbal was confronted with the dominating influence of the philosophy of Pantheistic Idealism that was exercising the minds of both the West and the East, in some form or other, from the time of Plato. The Western philosophers held that the external world is unreal, a mere illusion, and that the Absolute Idea is the only Reality. The inevitable corollary of this view is that man is also

unreal and that he disappears into nothingness as soon as he dies. The independent existence or immortality of the Soul was thus denied. In the East, the Hindu and Buddhistic philosophies also held identical views on human life and the world. Self-annihilation or absorption into God was their motto. A section of Muslim spiritualists was also caught in the grip of Sufistic Pantheism, called "*Wahdatul-Wujud*" which, too, denied individuality of the Soul and maintained that absorption unto God was the ultimate end of human life. It encouraged men to run away from the battle of life and evoked in them a spirit of passivity and other-worldliness. The recognition of Ego was nowhere to be found.

Iqbal assailed these soul-killing doctrines and propounded a new philosophy. He said: God is not a mere "Idea", He is a living personality; man is not a mere emanation from God, he has an independent identity; and this world is not an illusion, it has also a reality. Of course, this world, he said, is not the only reality; beyond this phenomenal world there is another world—the world of transcendent reality, which, no doubt, corresponds to physical reality. In short, Iqbal assigned the right place to man *vis-a-vis* God and Universe and exalted his status and position by emphasising his independent entity and the immortality of the human soul. He further said that the Ego or Self, far from being a mere illusion, is the centre of all reality because to know one's self is to know God and the Universe.

"I-am-ness" is thus the keynote of Iqbal's philosophy. He says:

"Thou alone art the Reality
All the rest is a mirage."

Again he says: "Only that truly exists which can say 'I am'. It is the degree of the intuition of 'I-am-ness' that determines the place of a thing in the scale of being."

But Iqbal's independence of the Ego does not mean any separation or revolt from God. He recognises God as the Creator and Sustainer of this universe and admits that He is the Ultimate Reality; but at the same time, he proclaims the immortality of the Soul. This gives a permanent value to human life and provides an incentive to work for the progress and development of the world. In this

connection, Iqbal says that the ego has tremendous powers and potentialities and, if properly strengthened and developed, it can attain the exalted position of the Vicegerent of God. The ego can achieve this power and strength through vital communion with God as He is the supreme source of all life and strength. But this communion with God must not be misconstrued as absorption unto Him. Man must communicate with God, but must not absorb himself unto God; rather he must absorb God unto himself. Says Iqbal:

“Abandon thyself and flee to God
Being strengthened by God,
return to thyself.”

Evidently, Iqbal's philosophy is the philosophy of affirmation of the Self, and not its negation or annihilation, as maintained by others.

But the philosophy of Egoism is not yet complete. Iqbal is conscious of the danger of excessive egotism. He realises that the Ego, however strengthened and developed it may be, cannot do anything in complete isolation. It can grow to its full stature only in Society. Primarily, man must look upon himself as a single entity, but he must not forget that he is a social being and that beyond his individual self, there is a wider circle of Society of which he is a member. In Society, man feels the existence of his greater self—the social or national self—in which he cannot but take a lively interest. The Ego has, therefore, two “I”s: (i) the individual ‘I’ and (ii) the national ‘I’. The individual ‘I’ and the national ‘I’ must, therefore, cooperate with each other for reciprocal interests. Iqbal, therefore, emphasised the simultaneous strengthening of the Individual and the society, as both are inter-dependent on each other for their all-round development. How beautifully has he said about the mutual relationship between the individual and the society:

“Individual exists in relation to the Community,
Alone he is nothing,
The wave exists in the ocean
Outside the ocean it is nothing.”

The philosophy of the Self which Iqbal started in his “*Asrar-i-*

Khudi” is thus completed in his “*Rumuz-i-Bekhudi*”, where he preaches the necessity of merging one’s self with the Society or Nation to which he belongs. The two books must be studied together, so that one can have a complete picture of Iqbal’s philosophy and thought.

It is interesting to note that this over-all conception of Man, God and the Universe is in complete accord with the teachings of Islam. Iqbal cannot, therefore, be blamed for his alignment towards Islam. His searching mind saw that the Islamic society was pre-eminently fit for the implementation of his philosophical, social and political ideas. Muslims may feel proud that Islam has come upto the mark even at the touch-stone of modern philosophy and social science. Credit must go to Iqbal for his bold adventure of testing Islam in the light of philosophy and science and proving its efficiency and superiority to the modern world. It is really heartening that in the spiritual darkness and intellectual stagnation of the present-day Muslim world a true son of Islam got over all inferiority complex and servile mentality and brought out in bold relief the hidden beauties of Islamic ideology, so long relegated to the background of apathy and neglect. Iqbal may truly be called a “*Mujaddid*” of the modern age. True Islamic Renaissance dates from Iqbal.

It is really astonishing that Iqbal had also up-to-date scientific knowledge. We have definitely reached a new age—the age of space-flight and interplanetary journeys. All the time-honoured notions of Space, Time and Velocity have now been changed. It is now universally admitted that our knowledge of Space, Time and Velocity is relative. Iqbal knew all this, as will be evident from the following lines of his lectures:

“The object observed is variable; it is relative to the observer; its mass, shape and size change as the observer’s position and speed change.”

In *Javid Nama* Iqbal takes a flight into space along with his spiritual guide, Maulana Rumi, and visits different planets, such as the Moon, Mars, Jupiter, Mercury, etc., and gives interesting accounts of those stellar regions. This description of the

heavenly spheres and imaginary conversations between different persons there, are, no doubt, poetic fantasy, pure and simple; but we now find that it has a great scientific significance. Modern space-scientists are now busy preparing expeditions to the Moon and then to other planets by means of rockets and spaceships. Readers of "Man on the Moon", "The Exploration of Space" "Across the Space Frontier", "The Worlds in Space" and such other books will be surprised to find striking affinity between poetic fiction and scientific facts. Here is a brilliant example to show how poetry, philosophy, religion and science can meet together in a beautiful amalgam. It is a pleasant surprise to learn that Islam lies at the root of all these poetic fictions and scientific speculations. It is the 'Mi'raj' or Ascension of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him) that coloured the mind of Dante resulting in the production of one of the world's greatest epics: *The Divine Comedy*. Iqbal was equally inspired by the same Mi'raj' and wrote his immortal book "*Javid Nama*". Modern space-scientists, too, have drunk deep from the same fountainhead of inspiration and are trying, just like the Holy Prophet Muhammad, to conquer space and time and make interplanetary journeys. Can Iqbal be blamed, then, if he places his superstructure of poetry and thought on the basis of Islam?

Iqbal not only accepted the modern theories of Space and Time, but also criticised them and gave his own views on the subject. This is not a mean achievement on the part of a poet.

Iqbal was also a great political thinker. He attacked many of the existing political theories of the West, viz., Nationalism, Communism, Capitalism, Democracy, etc., and propounded new theories of his own. His conception of an "Ideal State" did not conform to any prevalent political system. The most outstanding of his political thoughts was the conception of the idea of Pakistan. It is no mean glory to Iqbal that he was the architect of a new State.

Iqbal as a Poet

I have so long showed the versatility of Iqbal's genius. But the main charge remains yet to be answered. What was his position as a poet? He might be a great philosopher, a great thinker, but

was he really a great poet? We must, therefore, judge him once from a purely literary point of view. I am glad to say that even in that exclusive perspective, Iqbal will shine as a brilliant star in the literary firmament of the world. Apart from the philosophic, religious, moral or ideological excellence of his poetry and thought, Iqbal stands unparalleled in point of word-music, similes, metaphors, imagery, original ideas and their artistic expressions. I give below a few examples to substantiate the point:

- (i) We have grown up under the shadow of the sword,
The curved crescent is thus our national emblem.
- (ii) The fading of the stars is the sign of the advent of dawn,
When the sun rises and nobody remains dormant,
The dead veins of the eastern horizon again become live
with new blood of twilight
Avicenna or Al-Farabi does not know this secret.
- (iii) The simili of the Mu'mins is the Sun,
If it sets in one horizon,
it rises again in another.
- (iv) The Muslims have built a new Haram,
The Azar of modern civilisation has supplied
many idols to them,
Of all these new gods, the greatest is the god of
Nationalism,
What is garment to it is the shroud to our *Millat*.
- (v) Raise the self to such a height that, before destiny,
God asks man: "What dost thou desire?"
- (vi) Be a man of honour and, like the bubble,
Keep thy cup inverted
even in the midst of the sea.
- (vii) Like the Moon, scrape food from thine own side,
Albiet thou art poor and wretched.
- (viii) The journey of the moon is nearly complete,
It is now hiding its face behind the hill,
The dawn is peeping through the eastern gate,
It has no longer its night-gown on,
It is now waking in the morning breeze.

- (ix) Fashion a new pattern,
 Bring a more perfect Adam into existence,
 This making of playthings of clay
 Is not worthy of God, the Creator.
- (x) Woman is the covering for the nakedness of man,
 Her heart-ravishing beauty is the attire for love.

The examples are illustrative, not exhaustive. They can be multiplied *ad infinitum*.

The subject-matter of Iqbal's poetry and thought is not confined to Islamics only. The range of his themes is very wide. It represents the entire universe, the sun, the moon, the stars, the planets, heaven and hell, God, angels, Satan, man, woman, Hindustan, China, Arabia, Iran, Turkey, Asia, Europe, Western civilisation, Lenin, Karl Marx, Mussolini, Religion, Politics, Democracy, Communism, Socialism, Capitalism, and many other topics of abiding human interest. He has written in three languages: Urdu, Persian and English—a quality rarely found in other poets. The influence of his poetry and thought is also not confined to his own people and country. His name and fame have travelled far and wide in the modern world. He opened up a new chapter in the realm of Philosophy and Political Science. The sweeping current of Western thought and civilisation got a successful rebuff only from Iqbal. His anniversary is now observed almost throughout the world. Translations of his works are now appearing in all the languages of the world. This shows the extensive popularity and appeal of his poetry and thought to the modern mind.

Can we not then call Iqbal as the greatest poet of this age? In point of versatility of genius, vastness of subject-matter, breadth of outlook, originality of ideas, metaphors, similes, imagery, diction, style, word-music, myth-making power, sincerity of feelings and their communicative values, Iqbal outshines all others in the galaxy of poets and thinkers. In the domains of Philosophy, Religion, Politics and other social sciences, Iqbal has given a message of his own. Shakespeare, Shelly, Byron, Rabindranath Tagore—all are great poets, no doubt; they excelled in one or the other branches of literature; but they appear less luminous when they stand in line

with Iqbal. Iqbal's poetry is of a superior type in the sense that it deals with the fundamentals of humanity and the major thought-movements of the world.

Let us conclude with the beautiful observations of a distinguished literary critic:

“We may write little things well and accumulate one upon another, but never will any be justly called a great poet unless he has treated a great subject worthily. He may be the poet of the lover and the idler, he may be the poet of green fields and gay society; but whoever is this, can be no more.”

IMPACT OF IQBAL ON BENGALI MUSLIM THOUGHT

ABUL HUSAIN

The task of tracing out the impact of an author on individuals, groups or classes of people, on communities and nations, is indeed a difficult one. If the author belongs to the same language-group and to the same community to which his influence is to be related, then it becomes a comparatively easy task. Even the slightest shade of resemblance is likely to be found out. If, however, these are different, one needs conclusive evidence from which alone valid inferences can be drawn. In a world of shrinking distances and rapid thought-movements this has become all the more difficult. Different people may be thinking on the same lines and at the same time and it may be silly to trace the influence of the one on the other. Again, a particular idea or thought may originate with several persons in which case to single out the particular person from amongst these may prove wellnigh impossible. It is only when the author concerned is distinguishable because of ideas of a unique nature that his impact on others can be clearly detected.

The fact of the matter is that the impact of Iqbal on the Bengali Muslim mind can, in force and depth, be paralleled only to that of Tagore on the Bengali Mind. Now, while Tagore's influence over the Bengali mind has been frequently acclaimed and rightly too, the impact of Iqbal on Bengalees has yet to be studied and assessed.

This is indeed a difficult task. For one thing, it demands a deep knowledge of Iqbal and the Bengali mind and an equal mastery over both, which is unfortunately rare. Moreover, there has been very little work in this regard either in Bengali or in Urdu. This important field of research our scholars have so far left unexplored—a fact which we all must deplore. I am no scholar, I must frankly confess, and my knowledge of both Iqbal and the Bengali mind is very limited. If I have agreed to tread on unfamiliar ground, I have done so in the hope that others more competent will soon take up this question.

To a Bengali, the name of Iqbal is invariably linked up with the idea of Pakistan. I would, therefore, start my study from this point. Dr. Md. Shahidullah, a wellknown Bengali writer and linguist, has remarked in his book "Iqbal" that what Bankim Chandra did for the Bengali Hindus, Iqbal did for the Muslims of this sub-continent. Although it may sound paradoxical, the idea of Nationalism among Bengali Muslims owes much to Iqbal's teachings. I say paradoxical because Iqbal himself was no votary of Nationalism but it was undoubtedly he, more than any one else, who gave the Muslims of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent the intellectual basis for the demand for carving out a home land of theirs. The call to awake, however, came much earlier. It may be traced as far back as Titumir's militarily ill-conceived but politically vehement and spontaneous movement in the first quarter of the 19th century. But the voice which broke through the inertia of the Muslims of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent and gave them a new feeling of confidence was the voice of Hali. His call was taken up and his voice echoed by Mir Mosharraf Husain, Mozzammul Huq, Ismail Husain Shirazi and others whose exhortations to Bengalees to rise and move forward reverberated throughout the length and breadth of the country. But the call was expressed in the most general terms, and ideas and ideals of the new revival were rarely clearly stated and defined. Besides the literary appeal of these writers was not very great. It was, therefore, left to Nazrul Islam in the first quarter of the 20th century to capture the imagination of Bengali Muslims and to create an urge in them for throwing off the century told enslavement. While Nazrul Islam undoubtedly was the greatest single force in rousing the Bengali Muslims to the consciousness of freedom, he unfortunately did not emphasise the role of Muslims as *Muslims*. Although fully conscious of Islam's cultural role, he did not choose to identify it particularly. Nor did he champion its cause as vehemently and enthusiastically as he did that of the fight against the foreign rulers. In a correct assessment, Nazrul Islam will, therefore, appear as a product of the Indian Nationalist Movement in which Muslims too had undoubtedly played a glorious part, although not always from the same platform, rather than as a champion of the

Muslims and the Muslim cause in particular. Uptil now the dominant note in the Bengali Muslim thought was an awareness of the glories of the past, the decadance of the present and the need of throwing off the yoke of foreign rule. And in all these Nazrul Islam's voice rang at the top. While he was the reigning monarch, we first heard the voice of Iqbal through a very able translation of '*Shikwah*' by Ashraf Ali Khan, a poet who, driven by poverty, sacrificed his life while still very young. Soon came Iqbal's plea for a Muslim homeland from the Allahabad Session of the All-India Muslim League. The idea of a Muslim nationhood had at last been clearly defined and stated. And Iqbal overnight wrought a remarkable transformation in the thought-movement of the Muslims of Bengal. The comprehension of Islam and its principles, the depiction of the glories of Islam and the portrayal of Muslim life were nothing new to Bengali Muslim literature. One can trace these as far back as the 16th century and since then there has been no flagging of enthusiasm in Islam and Muslim life, but what Iqbal now brought to us were radically different religious ideas and conceptions of man and society in Islam. He had reinterpreted Islam in terms of the modern world and had given it a new meaning. And what is more he kindled the unique consciousness in man of his true status and importance in relation to God and the universe, so that he may imbibe the necessary impetus for action. In his clarion call for action, the Muslim youth heard his own heart-beats. In Bengal the finest flowering of this new spirit is to be found in Farrukh Ahmed's poetry of which the best example is his "*Satsagarer Majhi*" (Mariner of the Seven Seas), first published in 1944 in Calcutta. Writing during the tumultuous days of the Second World War, Farrukh had clearly indicated his debt for the ideas to his great master by dedicating the book to Iqbal.

The days of ease and sleep are over: embark on a new voyage.
We hear the call of the sea.

I woke up at night and heard the clamorous waves in God's
world: stars fall in mid ocean and rock our ship.

Tear yourself away from the balmy rest of nights of ease; unfurl
your sails in new waters, O'Sindbad!

Farrukh had used the Sindbad myth to rouse his countrymen from their stupor. He had prompted them to action, so that they might seek new frontiers. To him, however, the goal was crystal clear: he has to reach the golden gate of Hira.

I do not think it necessary to quote from Iqbal to bring out the relationship between the two. It is too obvious.

Not only Farrukh Ahmed, even older poets did not escape the influence of Iqbal. Shahadat Hussain, who was well known for his highly sanskritised diction, wrote a number of poems preaching the idea of a brotherhood of all Muslim peoples as well as of Muslim Nationalism. So did Gholam Mustafa, but with lesser popular appeal and success.

The note of protest in *Kankal* (Skeleton), the only printed volume of the late Ashraf Ali Khan, can also be traced to the influence of Iqbal with whom Ashraf Ali was already familiar through his translation of '*Shikwah*'. He says:

'In my heart burns the fire of pangs; it is now a volcano. Pardon me, for some of it will burst out of the stove. In the mosque of Allah is now the Kingdom of Mulla, whose only work is now to declare revolutionaries as Kafers. Forgetting that in the heart of the devotee is God's seat, they want to imprison Him with their beards and turbans.'

As I have already stated, Iqbal first struck root in Bengali thought through *Shikwah*. What it lacked in poetic qualities was more than compensated by its sentimental appeal. In point of fact, Iqbal's appeal to Bengalis was greatly an emotional one. The poet rather than the thinker captured their imagination. No wonder his influence first percolated through Bengali poetry. As the burst of emotion gradually calmed down, the serious content of his writings came to be more and more recognised. A signal service in this regard was done by the West Bengal poet, Amiya Chakravarty, who was one of the very first to draw the attention of Bengalis to Iqbal's great genius. Mr. Abdul Huq published translations of the "Lectures on Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam", serially in the *Masik Mohammadi*. While stray writings on Iqbal and his poetry and message continued in periodicals published by Muslims, Mujibur

Rahman Khan wrote a book entitled 'Pakistan' in 1942 which borrowed heavily from Iqbal's writings. The essence of Mujibur Rahman's arguments could be found in Iqbal's Presidential Address at the All-India Muslim League Conference at Allahabad in 1930. But for a fuller mirroring in Bengali of Iqbal's thoughts and ideas, particularly in the religious field, one must turn to post-Independence years.

Writing on the progressive role of Iqbal, Wilfred Cantwell Smith mentioned "throughout his life he devoted himself to inciting activity, to insisting eloquently that life is movement, that action is good, that the universe is composed of processes and not of static things". And again "His Islam repudiated the conception of a fixed universe dominated by a dictator God and to be accepted by servile man. In its place he would put a view of an unfinished growing universe, ever being advanced by men and by God through man". To quote again, K. G. Saiyidian explained his master's conception of religion thus: "It is a force that liberates, not a force that imprisons. Iqbal's religion—of which he finds the best and most congenial example in Islam—demands breadth of vision and toleration and sets free the dynamic and dangerous power of thought—which religious fanatics have always sought to suppress—because restrictions on this, the most precious of God's great gifts to man, are a denial of his distinctive significance in the scheme of the universe". Both Smith and Saiyidain have quoted so extensively from Iqbal in support of their views—which are now too obvious to any student of the poet—that I need not recount them here again. Yet, this conception of God, universe, man and man's relationship to God and the processes of nature is so revolutionary that no thinking Muslim could ignore or outgrow its radical impact. In fact these teachings have become such common intellectual coins that we rarely credit them today to their original author. To cite an example I quote below from an essay by a Bengali author, Motahar Hussain Chowdhury whose first book "*Sanskriti Katha*". (Talking About Culture) was posthumously published sometime back in Dacca. Writing about "our poverty" he lamented that the lack of a sense of religion was our greatest deficiency, to which all our other

deficiencies could be traced. "Many of you" he points out, "will be shocked at this statement, 'Don't we strictly follow the tenets of the Scriptures and follow them unquestioningly?' 'Yet you say we have no religion'. But however hurt one may feel, I cannot avoid saying that religion does not lie in the ceremonies, it is to be found in the heart's comprehension and understanding. We have closed the door to the heart and enchained ourselves to the Scriptures only. That is why although the fear of religion constantly dogs us, we are not properly religiously-minded. By religion, I mean, the leading of an honest and ethical life illumined by love". Now, Motahar Hussain's conception of religion follows, I believe, to a great extent from the liberalising forces which Iqbal's teachings on the subject released. Whether he had borrowed these directly or they were common coin which came to him naturally, is immaterial. These were, however, thoughts which the present generation of Bengali Muslims did not find in any way challenging. They recur in the writings of significant authors quite frequently. Mohammad Wazed Ali, perhaps the most versatile and prolific of all contemporary Bengali essayists who also died a few years back, raised his powerful voice by way of warning, against what he called falsehoods and hypocrisies of a section of the people. "As a matter of fact here lies the danger. We have the outer garb of religion. Nay, we decorate that garb and make it look more gorgeous and dazzling everyday. But we have entirely given up the desire to search and find out the inner truth lying hidden beneath that garb which alone is of real importance". In 'the desire to search' and 'the seeking of the inner truth', one hears a voice which could be as well Iqbal's.

A surer reflection of Iqbal's teachings is, however, traceable in Ebrahim Khan's socio-theosophical writings. In an essay on "The Status of Man in Islam" he wrote, "At the time of creation of man Allah said, 'I will create a representative on earth'. Can one imagine anything nobler than this for man? In this way Islam has glorified man at every step. Iqbal says man may be so powerful by his own actions that even God would decide his destiny by asking him first". Even if Ebrahim Khan did not mention Iqbal by name, the influence of the "Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought

in Islam" would be clearly discernible in this essay. But I believe the best example in Bengali prose writings of the impact of Iqbal's teachings may be found in a book entitled "*Dharma Nirapekhyā Rastra O Islam*" (The Secular State and Islam) by Hasan Zaman, a young lecturer in the Dacca University. Zaman's progressive views and attitude towards religion closely follow the liberalism of the 'Lectures'. In point of fact, Iqbal's ideas about man's place in growing evolution and his acceptance of the world and material life have left their imprint on a number of other Bengali writers among whom mention may be made particularly of Gholam Mustafa and Dewan Mohammad Azraf.

It is interesting to note what reaction Iqbal had on a great poet like Jasimuddin. In one of the Seminars on Contemporary Literature conducted by the Dacca University last year, I had expressed the opinion that nowhere else can one find the stamp of the unadulterated Bengali so unmistakably and so completely as in Jasimuddin. His poetry breathes the essence of the land and, therefore, more than any one else he represents the Bengali spirit, but he is little else. My emphasis is on the words: *he is little else*. Although Jasimuddin today ranks as the foremost East Pakistani poet, his appeal to the educated, intelligent modern Bengali readers, who are closely aware of the central problems of modern civilization and are, therefore, concerned with finer and subtler thought in poetry, is rather limited. He gives the impression of a mind which has no contact with the world, e.g., beyond the East Pakistani village community. When such a poet writes about another great literary genius, one with whom he has had no personal acquaintance, it naturally attracts wide notice as Jasimuddin's poem on Iqbal *Pathbhola Kabi* did. In a series of romantic images Jasimuddin extols Iqbal whose abode, he thinks, is the rose Garden. He talks of Iqbal's message being carried far and wide by the nightingales and his poetry traversing the path of the rainbow. To him Iqbal's poetry is highly colourful and a fit material for the bride to transmit to the bridegroom through kisses on the bridal night. These are no doubt highly imaginative pieces, liberally used to convey the uniqueness of Iqbal's poetry but I believe in describing a poet of Iqbal's

stature and giving unfamiliar readers an idea of his poetry in such highly coloured images as used by Jasimuddin are totally inadequate. Although Iqbal was no votary of intellect, his poetry is anything but romantic and sentimental. To present Iqbal in purely fanciful language appears to me rather incongruous. As it is, while Jasimuddin's veneration for Iqbal is expressed in no uncertain manner, the poem conveys little of the kind of genius Iqbal was. Not only that, Jasimuddin is frankly doubtful if the underdog in his part of the world would find it possible to appreciate Iqbal! Would Iqbal, he enquires, pause for a while and take up their cause? I do not know if Jasimuddin is in sympathy with those critics who thought Iqbal an escapist, one who had no time to devote to thoughts of the 'have-nots'. Nothing could be farther from truth. Iqbal undoubtedly was not a socialist, in the technical sense of the term, but he was fully conscious of the unprecedented exploitation of man by man. He had an abhorrence for the unjust social organisation which bred and perpetuated bitter conflicts between groups and classes. These to him were manifestations of a scientific civilization dizzy with intellect and characterised by lack of love and absence of moral values. Thus the difference between the scientific socialist and Iqbal is really one of approach. While the former's attitude is dictated by necessity and expediency, the latter's is dictated by moral, religious and humanitarian considerations.

Jasimuddin, however, seems to have made amends towards the end of the poem when he says that we have no right to invoke Iqbal, since we did not give human beings their inherent rights. We have played and toyed with them. Our pride and vanity have led us astray. This is a sentiment which is unmistakably Iqbalian.

I have dealt at length with Jasimuddin's solitary poem on Iqbal because I want it to be clearly understood that the mere fact that there are more meetings and discussions and books and writings on Iqbal in Bengali from year to year is no certain evidence of Iqbal's thoughts and message striking firm roots in East Pakistan's soil. While Iqbal's popularity among Bengalis has been steadily increasing, he is not yet fully and even adequately understood. For one thing the educated younger generation, who form the core of

Bengali society, are no more as well acquainted with Persian and Urdu as their fathers and grandfathers used to be. For another, Iqbal's translators in Bengali, excepting a few, have not been quite competent. A third factor militating against the spread of Iqbal's poetry and message among the Bengali middle classes has been the militant attitude of some of his over-zealous followers who are more keen to use him for furthering their own social, political or even economic purposes than to provide forums for a correct assessment of his great genius. There is nothing unusual in this, for all great writers in all ages have been claimed by opposite groups, each trying to annex him to its own camp for furthering their its ends, since the ideas of a great creative writer are often so divergent and varied, touching life at so many points, that these are capable of a number of interpretations. This makes the need for a correct evaluation all the more imperative. And this can only be done when one is not emotionally worked up, while having a sincere interest and genuine love for the subject. Here, to my mind, lies the crux of the problem of ensuring for Iqbal his rightful place in the East Pakistani's mind.

IQBAL AND THE RECONSTRUCTION OF ISLAMIC LAW

KHURSHID AHMAD

Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, on one occasion, said:

“Today, Islam’s greatest need is the reconstruction of the Islamic law and its re-codification in such a way that it may provide the Islamic answer to the hundreds of thousands of new questions that have been posed by the modern economic, political, social, national and international developments.”¹

In a letter to Maulana Sayyid Sulayman Nadvi, he wrote:

“It is my firm conviction that he who critically reviews modern jurisprudence from the Qur’anic viewpoint, reconstructs it, and establishes the truth and eternity of Qur’anic laws, would be the real leader and pioneer of Islamic renaissance and the greatest benefactor of humanity at large. . . . This is the time for action; for in my humble opinion, Islam today is on trial and never in the long range of Islamic history was it faced with such a challenge as the one that besets it today.”²

Iqbal, it seems, was extremely preoccupied with the idea of the reconstruction of Islamic law. He was looking with sober anxiety at the currents and cross-currents of thought in the Muslim world. He was worried at the spectacle of the growing alien influences in the world of Islam and wanted to awaken the intelligentsia to the dangers of indiscriminate assimilation.

Law is the sheet-anchor of a culture. It deals with life in all its multifarious aspects. Every science is its domain, every field is its jurisdiction. It guides and controls human life in every walk of activity. As such its importance is paramount. Iqbal realised this

1. *Hayat-e-Anwar*, p. 160, quoted A.R. Khan, *Iqbal aur Mister*, Gosha-i-Adab, Lahore, (1956) p. 67.

2. *Iqbal Namah*, Ed. Shaikh Atullah, Ashraf Publications, Lahore, Vol. I., p. 50.

cardinal importance of law and looked with grief at the gradual disintegration of the law and custom that had held together the Muslim society.

Although the contact of Islam and the Modern Western Civilization began in the seventeenth century yet it entered a crucial stage only in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. In these later periods the political supremacy of the Muslims was on the wane. The Muslim world was succumbing, at a heavy pace, to the encroachments of Western imperialism. Under the sheltering care of imperialism, Western education and Western technology were creeping into the world of Islam. New ideas began to fill the air, new techniques began to hold the sway. These forces disturbed the old order to its roots. The Muslim world was thrown into convulsion.

Two diametrically opposite reactions emerged in this age of crisis. One was that of undiluted conservatism and the other that of uncontrolled modernism. The conservatives sought refuge in the asylum of 'no change'. They became rigid in their outlook and approach. Every change, they thought, would be a change for the worst. So, they concluded, that the only way to save the Islamic law and culture, in this hour of chaos and confusion, was to stick to the past stubbornly and guard the old order jealously.

The modernists, on the other hand, were swept away with the current of the time. They thought that the royal road to glory lay in the imitation of the West. The Muslim revival, in their view, could be achieved only through adopting Western technique, Western law, Western education and Western modes of thought and behaviour. They saw no contradiction between Islam and the modern West and pleaded for the adoption of Western civilization so that Muslims could also emerge as a progressive nation.

These two reactions manifested themselves in every walk of life, but they were most poignant in the field of law, for law is the epitome of the whole life. The conservatives stood for rigid adherence to *fiqh*, the modernists wanted to change the entire law in the light of the new thought and practice and to adopt western codes of law in one way or the other.

It was at this moment of our history that Iqbal appeared on the

intellectual firmament of the Muslim world. He studied the situation very dispassionately and disapproved both these reactions which betrayed lack of depth and realism. He tried to point out the golden mean.

Careful reflection reveals that neither rigid conservatism nor unbridled modernism can deliver the goods. The conservatist approach is unrealistic. Life is a process of continuous change. History is moving ahead. Society is being moulded into newer folds. New situations are arising, new relationships are being reared and new problems are cropping up. It is imperative to take note of this change and see how the tenets of Islam can be applied to these new conditions. It would be futile to try to *put a brake* to change, for that would stop all movement and clog the wheels of progress. It would be still more futile to *ignore* the change and try to stick to things that *might* have become inapplicable to the new situations. In any case this approach is foredoomed to failure. It cannot but result in driving religion out of the social field and affecting an estrangement between law and life. It would arrest the evolution of the Islamic law. And fossilisation of law means fossilisation of the entire civilization. This attitude cannot work.

The modernist approach, on the other hand, is still more shallow, unrealistic and unsuited to our conditions.

This approach of the so-called liberals is in fact not a reform movement. It is tantamount to the rejection of Islam. Its ultimate result would be the discarding of Islam. For, the liberties they are taking with Islam cannot come under the category of *ijtihad*, they amount to a departure from the law of Islam. These people try to maintain the Islamic terminology, but give it an entirely new meaning—a meaning that cannot fit into the scheme of Islam. Even a leading Western critic of Islam, Professor Joseph Schacht, had to admit that what these 'progressives' are driving at is not Islam, it is the very anti-thesis of it. He writes in a recent essay:

“The method used by the modernist legislators savors of unrestrained eclecticism: the ‘independent reasoning’ that they claim goes far beyond any that was practiced in the formative period of Muhammadan law; any opinion held at some time in

the past is likely to be taken out of its context and used as an argument. On the one hand the modernist legislators are inclined to deny the religious character of the central chapters of the sacred law; on the other, they are apt to use arbitrary and forced interpretations of Koran and traditions whenever it suits their purpose. Materially, they are bold innovators who want to be modern at all costs; formally, they try to avoid the semblance of interfering with the essential contents of the sacred law. Their ideals and their arguments come from the West, but they do not wish to reject the sacred law openly as Turkey has done."³

This is the position of the modernists. But they have failed to realise that Islamic law is basically different from the modern Western law. Both have arisen out of different situations. Their sources are vitally different and there is no parallel between their history and institutions. An imitation of the West in this respect cannot but breed chaos and confusion.

Secondly, they do not realise that the conditions in the Muslim world *today* are diametrically opposed to those that prevailed in Europe during the periods of Renaissance and Reformation. The history, the traditions, and the cultural background of Islam and the modern West are totally different. In such a situation how can Western institutions work in this part of the world.

Thirdly, law is nothing but a representation of the norms and values of a community. If the people have not discarded these values, how can a law, based on some other set of values, work among them. The famous jurist Lord Wright rightly says:

"Law is not an end in itself. It is a part in the system of Government of the nation in which it functions and it has to justify itself by its ability to subserve the ends of government, that is, to help to promote the ordered existence of the nation and the good life of the people".⁴

Another leading English Judge, Sir Patrick Devlin, in a recent Address to the British Academy, says:

3. Joseph Schacht, in his article "The Law," *Unity and Variety in Muslim Civilization*, Ed. G. E. Von Grunebaum (University of Chicago Press) 1955 p. 83.

4. Lord Wright, *Interpretation of Modern Legal Philosophies*, p. 794.

“Law exists for the protection of society. It does not discharge its function by protecting the individual from injury, annoyance, corruption, and exploitation; the law must protect also the institutions and the community of ideas, political and moral, without which people cannot live together. Society cannot ignore the morality of the individual more than it can his loyalty; it flourishes on both and without either it dies. . . . The morals which under lie the law must be derived from the sense of right and wrong which resides in the community as a whole.”⁵

This being the situation, if the Muslim community were to adopt a system of laws derived from the norms of a culture which is not their own, the grafting is bound to create a serious problem. At least the following three complexities are certain to arise:

- (i) Such a law will have to be imposed despotically and dictatorially, for it cannot be introduced in a society like that of the Muslims, in a democratic manner. This is admitted by Dr. Northrop when he says: “I believe this is one of the reasons why such law usually has to be put in first by a dictator. It cannot come in as a mass movement because the masses are in the old tradition.”⁶
- (ii) Even if it is imposed from above, it will engender a social schism and conflict and a growing disrespect, disregard and ultimately violation of law. The reason being that on account of its irrelevance, nay, antagonism with the spirit of Muslim culture it is bound to be hated and despised by the community.
- (iii) It will lead to disintegration of the society and will result in cultural confusion.

Lastly, these people ignore that the West itself has lost much and gained little through the secularisation of law, so much so that Iqbal said: “*Believe me, Europe today is the greatest hindrance in the way of man’s ethical advancement.*” Western thinkers also seem to be realising this mistake more and more and some of their leading

5. Sir Patrick Devlin, *The Enforcement of Morals*, Maccabaeen Lecture in Jurisprudence of the British Academy (1959) p. 23.

6. Dr. Filmer S.C. Northrop, *Colloquium on Islamic Culture*, Princeton University Press (1953) p. 109.

authorities are now suggesting that their own system of law is wanting.

To have an idea of what the state of mind of some of the leading authorities in modern law and jurisprudence is, we refer to the following authorities. Professor G. W. Paton says:

“Philosophy has not yet evolved an acceptable scale of values; *its answer to the fundamental problems of jurisprudence is still confused.*”⁷

Morris Cohen, in his book *Reason and Nature*, says:

“No ideal so far suggested is both formally necessary and materially adequate to determine definitely which of our actually conflicting interests should justly prevail.”

W. Friedmann comes to the following conclusion:

“What is the purpose of life? is the fundamental question to be answered by legal theory. In many endeavours to give an answer the principal movements in legal thought veer between certain fundamental values of life. *Western civilization at any rate has hitherto been unable to agree even theoretically on the ultimate values and purposes of life.* So persistently has the pandulum swung backward and forward between certain anti-nomic values that we cannot but register a tension which perpetually produced new efforts and a search for harmony.”⁸

The same author also asserts that:

“The tale of natural law is a tale of the search of mankind for absolute justice and of its failure. . . . *The problem is as acute and as unsolved as ever.* With changing social and political conditions the notions on natural law have changed. The only thing that has remained constant is the appeal to something higher than positive law. . . . It is easy to deride natural law as it is easy to deride the futility of mankind’s social and political life in general, *in its unceasing but hitherto vain search for a way out of the injustice and imperfection, for which so far Western civilization at any rate has found no other solution but to move between one extreme and another.*”⁹

7. G. W. Paton, *A Textbook of Jurisprudence*, Oxford University Press (1946), p. 106.

8. W. Friedmann, *Legal Theory*, London (2nd ed. 1953) p. 465.

9. W. Friedmann, *ibid.*, p. 17-18.

The feeling is also now dawning that some religious basis is essential for law and the legal system which humanity needs must be grounded in religion.¹⁰ This being the state of modern legal thought, how can a law which is failing in its own lands come to the rescue of the world of Islam. According to Iqbal:

زندہ کر سکتی ہے ایران و عرب کو کیونکر
وہ فرنگی مدنیت کہ جو ہے خود لب گور

How can it infuse new life into Iran and Arabia when the Western polity is itself moribund?

Iqbal realised the futility and hollowness of both these approaches and exposed the dangers of conservatism and modernism in an illuminating way. He pleaded for a balanced approach, for he believed that:

“Only we must not forget that life is not change, pure and simple. It has within it elements of conservation also. While enjoying his creative activity, and always focussing his energies on the discovery of new vistas of life, man has a feeling of uneasiness in the presence of his own unfoldment. In his forward movement he cannot help looking back to his past, and faces his own inward expansion with a certain movement of fear. The spirit of man, in its forward movement is restrained by forces which seem to be working in the opposite direction. This is only another way of saying that life moves with the weight of its own past on its back, and that in any view of social change the value and function of the forces of conservatism cannot be lost sight of. It is with this organic insight into the essential teachings of the Quran that Modern Rationalism ought to approach our existing institutions. No people can afford to reject their past entirely; for it is their past that has made their personal identity. And in a society like Islam the problem of a revision of old institutions becomes still more delicate, and the responsibility of the reformer assumes a far more serious aspect. Islam is non-territorial in its character, and its aim is to furnish a model for the

10. See W. Friedmann, *Ibid*, p. 450. Also: Sir Patrick Develin, *opt. cit.* p. 6-7 and 10-25, and Sir Alfred Denning, *The Changing Law*, last chapter.

final combination of humanity by drawing its adherents from a variety of mutually repellent races, and then transforming this atomic aggregate into a people possessing a self-consciousness of their own. This was not an easy task to accomplish. Yet Islam, by means of its well-conceived institutions, has succeeded to a very great extent in creating something like a collective will and conscience in this heterogeneous mass. In the evolution of such a society even the immutability of socially harmless rules relating to eating and drinking, purity or impurity, has a life-value of its own, in as much as it tends to give such society a specific inwardness, and further secures that external and internal uniformity which counteracts the forces of heterogeneity always latent in a society of a composite character. The critic of these institutions must therefore try to secure, before he undertakes to handle them, a clear insight into the ultimate significance of the social experiment embodied in Islam. He must look at their structure, not from the standpoint of social advantage or disadvantage to this or that country, but from the point of view of the larger purpose which is being gradually worked out in the life of mankind as a whole."¹¹

This rather lengthy quotation from Iqbal clearly reveals *his approach to the task of reconstruction*. He was eager to see the Muslims march ahead—but he was not a lover of “movement” as such, but a movement in the *right direction*, through the *right process* and in pursuit of *right objectives*. Thus Iqbal was neither a liberal in the current sense of the word, nor a conservative in the often-expressed meaning of it. His approach was balanced and he wanted to steer ahead, avoiding the Scylla and Charybdis of modernism and conservatism. He had no brief for either.

This being Iqbal's approach, now let us see how he proposed to accomplish the task of the reconstruction of Islamic law and what is the nature of his contribution to the legal thought of contemporary Islam.

11. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Lahore (1954), pp. 166-67.

Iqbal's Contribution

In the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent there had been, for some-time past, a clamour for *ijtihad* but no one succeeded in articulating the need for *ijtihad* and in pointing out the process of growth and evolution in Islamic law. Iqbal's greatest contribution is that he clearly brought out in view the need for *ijtihad* and gave a new stirriag to the Muslim thought in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent.

Iqbal's analysis, it seems, was that Muslims are willy-nilly drifting away from Islam because they are faced with a paradox. They see a new world around them and want to move ahead. But they have no definite Islamic guidance before them. They are labouring under the misconception that Islamic law is a closed system, devoid of any potentialities of evolution and growth and unable to provide solutions to the questions of the day. This misconception has been strengthened because of the unrealistic rigidity of certain *'ulama* and the introduction of Western education which has perverted values of the educated classes and has given currency to those baseless objections to Islam and its law which have been put forward by certain Western critics of Islam. Because of this, Muslims themselves began to believe in these objections and criticisms and thus were helplessly drifting away from Islam, under the strain of something similar to an inferiority complex. Iqbal embarked upon a project to show:

“Whether the history and structure of the law in Islam indicate the possibility of any fresh interpretation of its principles. In other words, the question I want to raise is—Is the law of Islam capable of evolution?”

Iqbal focussed the attention of the intelligentsia on this question and himself admirably discussed the different aspects of the problem.

Permanence and Change in Islamic Law

1. He, first of all, removed the misconception that life is change

pure and simple. He pointed towards the fact of an unbroken continuity in history. He asserted that life is composed of elements of permanence and change. If there are no eternal values and principles, nothing but chaotic relativism would be the result. And if every minute detail is made unchangeable, the structure would crack under the pressure of changing situations. He says:

“The ultimate spiritual basis of all life, as conceived by Islam, is eternal and reveals itself in variety and change. A society based on such a conception of Reality must reconcile, in its life, the categories of permanence and change. It must possess eternal principle to regulate its collective life, for the eternal gives us a foothold in the world of perpetual change. But eternal principles when they are understood to exclude all possibilities of change which, according to the Quran, is one of the greatest ‘signs’ of God, tend to immobilize what is essentially mobile in its nature. The failure of Europe in political and social sciences illustrates the former principle, the immobility of Islam during the last 500 years illustrates the latter.”¹²

Islam propounds the basic values of life, the legal norms, and sets the limits which are not to be transgressed. After setting the four corners of life, it gives man freedom to move ahead and apply those norms and principles in every age and epoch. The basic principles are eternal. They are not the product of any human mind that is subject to the limitations of space and time. They are truths based on revelation and hold good for all time to come. But they do not go to regulate every little detail of life—which are to be decided in every age by an application of these principles. And as there is an unending continuity in life and culture, “each generation, guided but unhampered by the work of its predecessors, should be permitted to solve its own problems.”¹³

Sources of Islamic Law

2. Iqbal undertook a critical study of the sources of Islamic law and showed that they contain within them the potentialities of evolution and of meeting newer situations. He maintained the

12. Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, pp. 147-148.

13. Iqbal, *Ibid*, p. 168.

orthodox classification of the sources of *fiqh*, viz., Qur'an, *Sunnah*, *Ijma'* and *Qiyas* and threw light upon the potentialities they hold for the future.

The Qur'an is the basic source of law and, being the Divine Revelation as it is, gives the eternal principles for human guidance. These principles are the corner-stone of Islamic law, the very foundation of it. This Holy Book, on the one hand, sets the basic eternal principles of life, and on the other, endows man with a new revolutionary outlook and awakens in him a unique insight into life, so that he may reform and refashion the entire field of life in accordance with the spirit of Islam.

The *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet is the second great source of Islam. Iqbal regarded the *sunnah* of the Prophet as the real binding force of the Muslim society. He regarded the authentic traditions as an indisputable authority in law and believed that "the traditionists, by insisting on the value of the concrete case as against the tendency to abstract thinking in law have done the greatest service to the law of Islam."¹⁴

Ijma', the third source of Islamic law, says Iqbal, is the 'most important legal notion of Islam.' It consists in the consensus of the *Mujtahids* on a point of law and such a consensus becomes a permanent source of law. This is a process through which new values are established and preserved in Islam. This is the most important avenue of growth and evolution—the vista of progress and development.

Qiyas is the last source of Islamic law and consists in the use of analogical reasoning in legislation. This is the process through which the Islamic principles are applied to local problems or to the changing conditions. Through *Qiyas*, which is another name for *ijtihad*, the growth of Islamic law takes place and the principles are applied to the concrete cases.

Iqbal explained and elucidated these sources of Islamic law and showed that they are so constituted that growth and evolution are guaranteed for all time to come. *Ijma'* and *Qiyas* are two im-

14. Iqbal, *Ibid*, p. 173.

portant instruments of growth and are fully capable of meeting the requirements of genuine change. Iqbal's chief merit lies in the fact that instead of following in the footsteps of the modernists, he thoroughly studied the structure of Islam, imbued himself with its real spirit, and forcefully proved, by a thoughtful discussion over the legal system of Islam, that it was a masterly system which catered to the needs of permanance and change both. Neither was it a closed system, nor subject to atomic relativism. Thus, it was capable of meeting the needs of our age and has the potentialities of transforming a modern society into the Islamic mould.

Is the door of Ijtihad closed?

3. Next comes, automatically, the question of the closing of the door of *Ijtihad*. For, even when the structure of Islam is elastic, if practically the door of future progress and movement has been closed down then the situation won't be any different. Iqbal has dwelt upon this topic at different places. His analysis seems to be as follows:

- (i) He rejects the idea that rigidity came into the world of Islam under the influence of the Turks. He regards this view as shallow.
- (ii) His own opinion was that the door of *Ijtihad* was closed for three reasons, *viz.*, *firstly*, to serve as a check against the disintegrating and confusing influences of the *Mu'tazila*; *secondly*, to meet the sufi challenge to the Muslim society which came in the form of the obscurity of the social vision and the deprivation of the society of its best minds; and, *finally*, the destruction of Baghdad which shook the entire Muslim world and threw it into chaos and confusion. As such the only road to safety was found in strict adherence to the opinion of the authorities of the past. This was an important device to save the Muslim world from further disintegration. And at that critical moment of our history the community did achieve this end by closing the doors of *Ijtihad*. Iqbal

thinks that it was advisable to do so *in that age* for in times of disintegration *Taqlid* is better than *Ijtihad*. In the *Rumuz-i-Bekhudhi* he says:

مضمحل گردد چو تقویم حیات
سلت از تقلید می گیرد ثبات
راه آبا رو که این جمعیت است
معنی تقلید ضبط سلط است

When the structure of life begins to decay,
The Nation takes stability through *Taqlid*.
Go through the way of thy forefathers, for therein
lies strength.

The purpose of *Taqlid* is the maintenance of the Nation.

And again:

اجتهاد اندر زمان انحطاط
قوم را برهم می پیچید بساط
ز اجتهاد عالمان کم نظر
اقتداء بر رفتگان محفوظ تر

In the time of Decadence *Ijtihad* completes the
people's disintegration.

It is safer to follow those who have gone forth
Than the *Ijtihad* of the so-called claimants to
knowledge who are short-sighted.

- (iii) Although Iqbal recognised the utility and the function of *Taqlid*, he thought that the situation has now changed. New problems have arisen which call for new solutions and as such the door of *Ijtihad* must not remain closed. As the door was kept open by God, no one had the right to *permanently* keep it closed. If some of the former doctors of law have upheld this view, Muslims of today are not bound by that "voluntary surrender of intellectual independence."

He therefore, asserted:

“I have tried to explain the causes, which in my opinion, determined this attitude of the Ulema; but since things have changed and the world of Islam is today confronted and affected by new forces set free by the extraordinary development of human thought in all its directions, I see no reason why this attitude should be maintained any longer.”¹⁵

Iqbal is perfectly right in making this observation. The fact is that the situation today is materially different in many respects and due note must be taken of that.

(a) Although the true Islamic Caliphate came to an end by the middle of the first century *Hijra*, during the Ummayad and the early Abbaside periods, the law of the land was fully Islamic and Islam's teachings were not being tampered with. With the fall of the Abbasides the Muslim state disintegrated and the paramount need of Islamic law, which arises in an Islamic polity, was greatly diminished. This disintegration of the Islamic state sapped the springs of creativity and drifted Muslims into the lap of orthodoxy. Now, Muslims are attaining political independence. Free states are emerging. There is a strong movement in the Muslim world to make these states Islamic and to adopt Islamic law. As such the old attitude must change.

(b) The historical situation is also different. In the past the intellectual and political challenges came like a blizzard and confused the entire scene. Now the situation is such that although Europe has achieved great material progress, its spiritual bankruptcy has become crystal-clear. The Muslim world, on the other hand, is in the grip of a new awakening. This new awakening can be guided only by a new insight into the message of Islam and a realisation of its prospects for the future. Mere parrot-like repetition of that which was taught in the past can be of little avail in this hour of renaissance. Therefore, the gate of *Ijtihad* should be reopened and *Ijtihad* should be exercised to meet the new situations.

15. Iqbal, *Ibid*, p. 168.

Iqbal and Ijtihad

4. This brings us to the problem of *Ijtihad*. Iqbal does not believe in uncontrolled and unbridled exercise of opinion. *Ijtihad* is a legal concept of Islam and it is wrong to think that every independent judgement can fall under it. Here some confusion has been created by those who have torn Iqbal's definition of *Ijtihad* from the general scheme of his ideas and have given it some new fangled meanings. Therefore a little detailed discussion is called for.

Iqbal has defined *Ijtihad* as follows:

“The word literally means to exert. In the terminology of Islamic law it means to exert with a view to form an independent judgement on a legal question.”¹⁶

Now it is strange that some people conclude from this that, according to Iqbal, any and every independent judgement can be *Ijtihad*. Nothing can be farther from truth. Although this definition is not as exact and as comprehensive as a definition should be, it would be unjust and incorrect to think that Iqbal regarded every independent judgement as *Ijtihad*. For, if that is so, every legislature of the world is performing *Ijtihad*, for, what are they doing except forming independent judgements on legal questions? Iqbal believed in independent judgement, but not so independent as to be independent of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*! Iqbal was one of the staunchest critics of this unbridled freedom and we would like to refer to the following points in support of our plea:

(a) Iqbal opposed that freedom of thought which cuts man asunder from Divine Guidance. He valued human reason but knew that it should be used within proper limits; otherwise instead of being a great asset and blessing it might turn into an evil and an instrument of destruction. He says:

آزادی افکار سے ہے ان کی تباہی
رکھتے نہیں جو فکر و تدبیر کا سلیقہ
ہو فکر اگر خام تو آزادی افکار
انسان کو حیوان بنانے کا طریقہ

16. Iqbal, *Ibid*, p. 148.

In freedom of thought lies their destruction,
 Who do not possess discipline of thought.
 If the mind is immature, then freedom of thought
 Is an instrument for making a beast of a man.

At another place he expresses his evaluation of the unbridled thought of the Modern age as follows:—

پختہ افکار کہاں ڈھونڈنے جائے کوئی
 اس زمانے کی ہوا رکھتی ہے ہر چیز کو خسام
 مدرسہ عقل کو آزاد تو کرتا ہے مگر
 چھوڑ جاتا ہے خیالات کو بے ربط و نظام
 مردہ لادینی افکار سے افرنگ ہیں عشق
 عقل بے ربطی افکار سے مشرق میں غلام

Where to search for mature thought?

The spirit of the age keeps things unripe and uncouth.

Education liberates the intellect no doubt,

But it leaves ideas disconnected and un-disciplined.

In the West '*ishq*' is moribund because of irreligious thought,

In the East intellect is in chains because of thought
 indisciplined.

And when a certain section of Muslims, in exercise of this independent judgement, began to twist Islam, Iqbal sarcastically said:

ہے کس کو یہ جرأت کہ مسلمان کو ٹوکے
 حریت افکار کی نعمت ہے خدا داد!
 چاہے تو کرے کعبہ کو آتشکدہ پارس
 چاہے تو کرے اس میں فرنگی صنم آباد
 قرآن کو بازیچہٴ تاویل بنا کر
 چاہے تو خود اک تازہ شریعت کرے ایجاد

Who has the courage to check the Muslim?

For freedom of thought is a blessing from heaven!

If he so wishes, he can turn *Ka'ba* into the
 fire-worshipper's synagogue.

Or implant into it idols from the West,
And, making a plaything of the Qu'ran,
Innovate a new *Shari'ah* of his own.

Thus we find that Iqbal was never in favour of that independence of thought which refused to recognise the limits set by God and His Prophet

(b) While explaining his views on *Ijtihad* Iqbal refers to the famous *Hadis-i-Ma'az* which clearly reveals his concept of *Ijtihad*. In this *Hadith* Ma'az bin Jabal said that if he did not find any direct guidance from the Qur'an and Sunnah, then he would *exert to his utmost to form an opinion as to what would be the law of Islam in that case*. This clearly shows that:

- (i) If any explicit guidance is available on an issue in the Qur'an or the *Sunnah*, there is no question of *Ijtihad*;
- (ii) If no explicit guidance is available, then the *faqih* will exert himself to the utmost to find out the implicit guidance; and
- (iii) If nothing explicit or implicit is available in the Qur'an and *Sunnah*, then he will decide the issue in the light of the spirit and the general teachings of Islam, i. e., The Qur'an and *Sunnah*.

That is why the word *Ijtihad* (exerting to the utmost) is used and not merely *ra'y* (opinion). Iqbal clarifies the point at another place as well. While discussing the sources of Islamic law, he uses the word *Qiyas* as synonymous with *Ijtihad* and on the authority of Imam Shafi'i says:

“*Qiyas*, as Shafi'i rightly says, is only another name for *Ijtihad* which, *within the limits of the revealed texts*, is absolutely free, and its importance as a principle can be seen from the fact that according to most of the doctors, as Qazi Shawkani tells us, it was permitted even in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet.”¹⁷

(c) Iqbal did not believe in that kind of free exercise of opinion which totally disregards the traditions of the *millat*. He was very particular on this point and raised it again and again. In *Rumuz-i-*

17. Iqbal, *Ibid*, p. 178.

Bekhu di he captions a chapter as follows:

در بیان این که کمال حیات ملیه این است که ملت مثل فرد احساس
خودی پیدا کند و تولید و تکمیل این احساس از ضبط روایات ملیه
ممکن گردد

“That the perfection of Communal life is attained when the Community, like the individual, develops the sense of Selfhood; and that the propagation and the perfection of this sense is made possible through the perpetuation of National traditions.”

He says:

خود شناس آمد ز یاد سرگذشت	قوم روشن از سواد سر گذشت
باز اندر نیستی گم می شود	سرگذشت او گراز یادش رود
ربط ایام آمده شیرازه بند	نسخه نبود ترا اے هوشمند
سوزنش حفظ روایات کهن	ربط ایام است مارا پیرهن
داستانے قصصہ افسانہ؟	چیست تاریخ اے ز خود بیگانه
آشنائے کار و مرد رہ کیند	این ترا از خویشتم آگه کند
جسیم ملت را چو اعصاب است این	روح را سرمایہ تاب است این

The record of the past illuminates
The conscience of a people. The memory
Of past achievements makes it self-aware;
But if that memory fades, and is forgot,
The folk again is lost in nothingness.
Know, then 'tis the connecting thread of days
That sticks up thy life's loose manuscript;
This self-same thread sews us a shirt to wear,
Its needle the remembrance of old yarns.
What is history, O Thou unaware of the self !
A fable? or a legend, a tale ?
Nay, 'tis the thing that maketh thee aware
Of thy true self, alert unto the task,
A seasoned traveller; it is the source

Of the soul's ardour, 'tis like the nerves to
The body of the whole community.

And that:

اے پریشان محفل دیربہ اش
مرد شمع زندگی در سینہ اش
نقش بر دل معنی توحید کن
چارہ کار خود از تقلید کن

O thou! whose old concourse is dispersed,
Within whose breast the lamp of life is out,
Engrave on thy heart the truth of *Tawheed*
Solve thy problem by resorting to *Taqlid*.

And that:

مضمحل گردد چو تقویم حیات
ملت از تقلید می گیرد ثبات
راه آبا رو کہ این جمعیت است
معنی تقلید ضبط ملت است

When the structure of life begins to decay
The Nation attains stability through *Taqlid*.
Go thou the way of thy forefathers for therein
lies strength;

The purpose of *Taqlid* is maintenance of the Nation.

This was the approach of Iqbal to the past. He has discussed it in detail in his *Lectures* where he has expressed the view that:

“Life moves with the weight of its own past on its back, and that in any view of social change the value and function of the forces of conservatism cannot be lost sight of. No people can afford to reject their past entirely; for it is their past that has made their personal identity. And in a society like Islam, the problem of revision of old institutions becomes still more delicate, and the responsibility of the reformer assumes a far more serious aspects.”

How could Iqbal plead for that uncontrolled independence which certain modernists try to put into his mouth?

(d) Iqbal thinks that every Tom, Dick or Harry cannot exercise *Ijtihad* in Islam. It must be exercised by those who have knowledge and whose character can be fully relied upon. In *Rumuz-i-Bekhudī*, while discussing the question of *Ijtihad* and *Taqlid*, he throws light on this problem and says:

ز اجتهاد عالمان کم نظر
 اقتداء بر رفتگان محفوظ تر
 عقل آبایت هوس فرسوده نیست
 کار پاکان از غرض آلوده نیست
 فکر شان رسید همه باریک تر
 ورع شان از مصطفیٰ نزدیک تر

“It is safer to follow those who have gone forth,
 Than the *Ijtihad* of the claimants of knowledge who are
 short-sighted.

Caprice corrupted not the wisdom of thy forefathers,
 Nor was the labour of the pious soiled by personal motives.
 Finer far was the thread of thought their meditation wove,
 Closer to the Prophet’s way was their piety.”

In his *Reconstruction* he says:

“It is the duty of the leaders of the world of Islam today to understand the real meaning of what has happened in Europe, and then to move forward with self-control and a clear insight into the ultimate aims of Islam as a social policy.”¹⁸

In his quest for safety and protection against modernism he was even prepared to go to the extent of saying as follows:

“I very much appreciate the orthodox Hindus’ demand for protection against religious reformers in the new constitution. Indeed, the demand ought to have been first made by

18. Iqbal, *Ibid*, p. 163.

the Muslims.”¹⁹

Thus, according to Iqbal, those who are to exercise *Ijtihad* must be endowed with certain qualifications which may be summed up as follows:

- (a) Knowledge of Islam, deep understanding of the ultimate aims of its ideology, institutions and politics.
- (b) Understanding of the modern problems that beset the Muslim world;
- (c) Closeness to the Prophet's way and an understanding of his methods and approach; and
- (d) Reliable moral character so that his decisions may be looked upon with respect.

Now this has been the position of Iqbal and he again and again warned that:

“Our religious and political reformers in their zeal for liberalism may overstep the proper limits of reform in the absence of a check on their youthful fervour.”

What that check should be?—Iqbal was not very definite, but the suggestions he gave now and then show that he wanted to move ahead with deep caution and to organise an academy where he could put together the *‘ulama* and the modern educated people. He felt that it was not always possible that all the aforementioned qualities may unite in any one individual. Then, what should be the way out? Iqbal, it seems, wanted to organise a council consisting of *‘ulama* and modern educated persons who may, through their corporate efforts, make some original contribution to the reconstruction and the re-codification of the law of Islam.

The problem was so prominent in his mind that in his famous Presidential Address of 1932 he said:

“I suggest the formation of an assembly of *Ulema* which must include Muslim lawyers who have received education in modern jurisprudence. The idea is to protect, expand, and, if necessary, to reinterpret the law of Islam in the light of modern conditions, while keeping close to the spirit em-

19. *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal* ed. by: ‘Shamloo’, Al-Manar Academy, Lahore (1948) p. 98.

bodied in its fundamental principles. This body must receive constitutional recognition so that no bill affecting the personal law of Muslims may be put on the legislative anvil before it has passed through the crucible of this Assembly.”²⁰

Iqbal was working on this idea and he thought that the deficiency could be met through consultative *Ijtihad*. (*shoorae Ijtihad*).

The above discussion clearly shows that Iqbal’s above quoted definition of *Ijtihad* does not represent his own ideas in entirety and is not a comprehensive definition. The fact is that it does not fully and completely reflect Iqbal’s concept of *Ijtihad*. A comprehensive definition of *Ijtihad* may be given to elucidate the concept. Allama Aamadi in his renowned work *Al-Ahkam fiusul al-Ahkam*.” says:

“In the terminology of the jurists *Ijtihad* is restricted for that utmost effort which is exerted to form an opinion about any legal matter as to whether it is in consonance with the *Shari’ah*.”

Imam Shatibi, another Muslim jurist, says in *Al-Muwafiqat*:

“*Ijtihad* is that utmost effort which is made to discover the divine commandment (*Ahkam-i-Shari’at*) and to apply the same over newer situations.”

Subhi Mahmasani writes:

“Literally *Ijtihad* means to exert to the utmost, but in the terminology of Islamic law it is used for that effort which is made to discover the law from *dala’il-i-Shara’iya*, i.e., to deduce commandments from the fundamental sources of *Deen*.”

These definitions come from leading Muslim jurists and scholars. But even Western scholars have defined *Ijtihad* in the same way. The *Dictionary of Technical Terms* defines it as under:

“*Ijtihad* means the exerting of one’s self to the utmost degree to attain an object and is used technically for so exerting oneself to form an opinion (*Zann*) in a case (*kadiya*) or as to a rule (*hukm*) of law.”²¹

20. *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, p. 60.

21. *Dictionary of Technical Terms*, p. 198. Quoted in *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, Laiden (1953) p. 158.

Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam* defines it as follows:

"*Ijtihad* is the logical deduction on a legal or theological question by a *Mujtahid* or learned and enlightened doctor."²²

Thus we come to the conclusion that although Iqbal's definition of *Ijtihad* is not comprehensive, the over-all approach that he adopted was dynamic and constructive.

Iqbal and Turkey

But before we take up the other point we must make it clear why Iqbal welcomed the liberalism of Turkey?

Our analysis is that Iqbal was eager to see the Muslim world set along the road to emancipation. He welcomed the Turkish experiment for it reflected the stirrings of a new awakening. And as the detailed information about Turkey was lacking, he thought that Kamal Atatürk was continuing the revivalist tradition of Jamal-uddin Afghani and Sa'ïd Halim Pasha which was not a fact. Turkey did not resort to *Ijtihad*; it, unfortunately, tried to discard Islam.

Iqbal was not looking upon Turkey with full confidence. He was quite sceptical but hoped that a change for the better might occur soon. But this did not happen. And he himself was quite disillusioned.

In the *Reconstruction* he said:

"We heartily welcome the liberal movement in Modern Islam. But it must also be admitted that the appearance of liberal ideas in Islam constitutes also the most critical moment in the history of Islam. Liberalism has a tendency to act as a form of disintegration."

About Zia Gokalp, the Turkish philosopher-poet, he says:

"With regard to the Turkish poet's demand, I am afraid, he does not seem to know much about the family law of Islam. Nor does he seem to understand the economic significance of the Quranic rule of inheritance."²³

In his *Rejoinder to Pandit Nehru* he says:

"The adoption of the Swiss code with its rule of inherit-

22. Thomas Patrick Hughes, *A Dictionary of Islam*, London, (1935), p. 197.

23. Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 169.

ance is certainly a serious error which has arisen out of the youthful zeal for reform.”²⁴

Similarly about Turkey's law to recite the Qur'an in Turkish he said:

“Personally I regard it as a serious error of judgement.”²⁵

In his later poetical work his disillusionment with Turkey becomes quite manifest. Looking at Turkey's westernisation with grave concern he says:

سمجھ رہے ہیں وہ یورپ کو ہم جوار اپنا

ستارے جن کے نشیمن سے ہیں زیادہ قریب

They deem Europe as their equal and associate

From whose abode stars are much nearer!

In *Javed Nama* he says:

مصطفیٰ را از تجدد می سرود

گفت نقش کہنہ را باید زدود

نو نگردد کعبہ را رخت حیات

گرزافرنگ آیدش لات و منات

ترک را آہنگ نودرچنگ نیست

تازہ اش جز کہنہ افرنگ نیست

And in *Zarb-e-Kalim* he openly declares that:

میری نوا سے گریبان لالہ چاک ہوا

نسیم صبح چمن کی تلاش میں ہے ابھی

نہ مصطفیٰ نہ رضا شاہ میں نمود اسکی

کہ روح شرق بدن کی تلاش میں ہے ابھی

My voice is piercing the heart of the flower,

The gentle breeze is still searching for a garden,

Neither in Mustafa (Kamal), nor in Reza Shah has it manifested,

The spirit of the East is still in search of its abode.

24. *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, p. 136.

25. *Ibid*, p. 135.

This was Iqbal's reaction to the Turkish experiment and on the authority of it we are justified in concluding that it would be wrong to say that Iqbal approved of the secularist trends of the Turkish reforms or of their approach of unbridled liberalism which amounted to nothing short of discarding Islam.

Ijma' and its potentialities

5. Iqbal's most potent contribution to the legal thought of Islam is his elucidation of the principle of *Ijma'*. *Ijma'* 'in the terminology of Islamic law, means the consensus of opinion of the *Mujtahids* and of the *Ummah* on a matter of law. An *Ijtihad* is an individual judgement and it becomes law only after *Ijma'*.

Every student of law is aware of the chasm that has always existed between the ideals of justice and the social realities of life. The fact is that the history of law is a history of shifting emphasis between the ideal and the real. Natural law failed to cater to the changing needs and was twisted like anything and for any purpose. The sociological approach disregarded the question of natural norms and as such inaugurated an era of relativism. Iqbal thought that fundamental malice rests with:

- (i) a lack of eternal values embodying the realities of life,
- (ii) the misjudgement of human reason, which, devoid of Divine Guidance, works in an unrealistic and erroneous way, and
- (iii) the absence of any process through which the ideal is brought into perpetual contact with the real.

Islamic law fulfils all these fundamental needs of a legal order. The Qur'an and *Sunnah* give the eternal values and norms while *Ijma'* is the process through which new norms are created and preserved. The Qur'an and *Sunnah*, being the embodiment of Divine Guidance, are based on the unchanging realities of life and enunciate the basic principles of social existence. They provide the framework into which the principle of *Ijma'* operates. Through it social realities of every age are given recognition and as it commands absolute obedience, it is a unique process to weld the ideal with the real. Iqbal brought to light this fundamental and hitherto unappreciated importance of the principle of *Ijma'*.

He further showed that *Ijma'* is a democratic process and reveals that Islam is basically different from priestcraft. *Ijma'* of a later generation can also change or alter the *Ijma'* of an earlier generation, of course on the basis of legal arguments. (*Dala'il-i-Shar'iya*).

After the period of the *Khilafat-i-Rashida* the democratic machinery of *Ijma'* could not be re-established and reliance was placed on individual *Ijtihad* alone. This was a great tragedy. But now the institution can be revived and Iqbal thinks that a modern legislative assembly can become an agency for its performance. But he is conscious of certain practical difficulties, viz.,

- (a) The presence of non-Muslims in the modern legislatures; and
- (b) Lack of religious understanding and of the knowledge of Islamic law among the present legislators.

He, therefore, suggests that there should be Muslim legislative Assemblies and:

“The *Ulema* should form a vital part of a Muslim legislative Assembly helping and guiding free discussion on questions of law. The only effective remedy for the possibilities of erroneous interpretations is to reform the present system of legal education in Mohammedan countries, to extend its sphere and to combine it with an intelligent study of modern jurisprudence.”²⁶

Thus he not only brought to light the real importance and role of *Ijma'* but also suggested the ways and means through which this principle could be translated into reality in the modern world. This, I think, has been one of his basic contributions to the contemporary Muslim thought.

Iqbal's Legal Philosophy

6. And lastly I may venture to say that in the legal thought of Iqbal we can see the rudiments of a legal philosophy, which, had he lived to formulate and finalise it, would have revolutionised the modern thought, for it was based on the Qur'an and *Sunnah* and would have been an exposition of the Islamic philosophy of law.

26. Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 176.

Law's fundamental concern is the establishment of justice. Although it operates on the current social realities it derives its life and concept from a people's outlook of the cosmos, of man's position in it and of their ideas of social justice. The position of the individual and the nature of his relationship with the society and the world at large determine the norms of law. Iqbal's basic philosophy seems to be that life is a unity and the ultimate ground of life is a rationally directed will which he conceives as ego. He believes that there is a higher law which is based on the realities of existence and has been revealed by the Creator for the guidance of man and society. This higher law, in legal terminology, is the *grundnorm* to which the behaviour of the individual and the rules of the society must conform. And the contemporary confusion of thought and chaos of behaviour is because of the absence of such a *grundnorm*. He says:

“Modern Europe has, no doubt, built idealistic systems on these lines, but experience shows that truth revealed through pure reason is incapable of bringing that fire of living conviction which personal revelation alone can bring. This is the reason why pure thought has so little influenced man, while religion has always elevated individuals, and transformed whole societies. The idealism of Europe never became a living factor in her life, and the result is a perverted ego seeking itself through mutually intolerant democracies, whose sole function is to exploit the poor in the interest of the rich. Believe me Europe today is the greatest hinderance in the way of man's ethical advancement. The Muslim, on the other hand, is in possession of these ultimate ideas on the basis of a revelation, which speaking from the inmost depths of life, internalises its own apparent externality.”

This idea of a higher law based on Revelation is the most fundamental element of Iqbal's legal philosophy. This higher law is eternal and provides the possibilities of growth and evolution. The juristic implications of this idea are revolutionary.²⁷ It means:

27. See also, Hamidullah Siddiqui, 'Iqbal's Legal Philosophy' *Progressive Islam* Amsterdam. A pioneer work in this direction.

**That law has its real sanction in this ultimate and higher law which is objective and realistic. Thus we can avoid the cumbersome incongruities of the natural law controversy.

**That the society and state are only political and legal organisations affected for the purpose of the implementation of the higher law and, if they begin to defeat this purpose, they abolish their sanction for obedience.

**That an International law, regulating and guiding the different legal orders prevailing in different Nation-States, is possible. The difficulties which have been created by the Austinian theory of law are eliminated and the International law of nations, emanating from one *grundnorm* becomes possible.²⁸

**And that the totalitarian consequences of the Hegelian doctrine of law can be avoided, for, in the case of this law, state is not being obeyed because it is the sovereign but because it is the legal agency for the establishment of the higher law. As such the state will be obeyed only as long as it follows the higher law. This is what is expressed in *Hadith* as 'there is no obedience to the creature if it involves disobedience to the Creator'.

These are some of the aspects of the juristic thought of Iqbal.

Thus we find that Iqbal tried to discover the real meaning and message of Islamic law, to reconstruct the contemporary legal thought, point out the vistas of growth and evolution and to construct a legal philosophy which could act as the philosophic formulation of Islamic Law. This has been a gigantic service to the modern renaissance of Islam.

28. See the writer's article "Law and Philosophy of Law" in *Chiragh-e-Rah*, Islamic Law Number, Vol. I, June 1958, pp 34-51.

IQBAL'S THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

BY

JAMEELA KHATOON

Iqbal cannot be classed under any of the three schools of philosophical thought: the empiricist, the rationalist or the intuitionist. In his theory of knowledge, sense perception, reason and intuition, all are combined in an organic whole. He knew full well that light from one direction alone could not illumine the whole of reality in all its manifestations. The ontological problem needs to be approached from all angles, scientific and religious, in order to secure some articulate, luminous and well-established grounds. It is in the light of this view that he advances his theory of knowledge, which promises both direct evidence and indirect experience of God or Reality—the former by intuition or immediate experience and the latter by reflective thought.

Rationalism, though not admired, is not wholly condemned and discarded by him. On the contrary, according to him, if rationalism is not divorced from concrete reality, it represents truth. This is visible from his own attitude and is also betrayed by his admiration for prophets and mystics and non-mystic rationalists, whose quest and yearning for a coherent system of ideas resting on a rational foundation and rendering religion more secure and fruitful is well-known¹. He admits and justifies the metaphysical methods. In his words, "Now since the transformation and guidance of man's inner and outer life is the essential aim of religion, it is obvious that the religious truths which it embodies must not remain unsettled. No one would hazard action on the basis of doubtful principles of conduct. Indeed, in view of its function, religion stands in greater need of rational foundation of its ultimate principles than even the dogmas of science. Science may even ignore a rational metaphysics;

1. Sir Mohammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, 1944, P. 3.

indeed it has ignored it so far. Religion can hardly afford to ignore the search for a reconciliation of the opposition of experience and justification of the environment in which humanity finds itself."² But rationalism, as preached by Iqbal, is not based upon logical categories or mere abstract representations. Born of and nursed in the realism of purely abstract ideas it is not divorced from concrete reality. It has a definite function to perform which should not, however, be over-emphasised to the detriment of other knowledge-yielding elements—at the expense of sense experience and other sources of knowledge.

Thus, while Iqbal embraces rationalism, he is not prepared to justify it at the cost of sense experience. Abstract thinking apart from the latter is of no consequence and even dangerous. He criticises Socrates, Plato, Mu'tazilites and other thinkers for avoiding visible reality as unreliable and misleading.

Socrates restricts the field of inquiry to the human problems particularly to morality. "Trees", he says, "can teach me nothing." Even within the human field he believes knowledge is possible only through concepts.³ Only reason could give true and ultimate knowledge; sensation gives only imagination or at the most belief.

Plato also accuses sense-perception as capable of giving mere opinion and not real knowledge. He rests all knowledge upon pure reason and weaves the whole fabric of Supreme and Ultimate Reality out of ideas, taken as Eternal and Really Real. This attitude towards sense-perception is not without a parallel in the subsequent thought. Ibn Rushd and Al-Ghazali, the former while defending and the latter while attacking Greek Philosophy, have trodden the same path as far as the avoidance of empirical reality is concerned.

Iqbal attacks Ibn Rushd as well as Al-Ghazali. He contends that Ibn Rushd, through his doctrine of Immortality of the Active Intellect, takes a view opposed to what the Qur'an has to say about the value and destiny of the human ego, and thus obscures man's vision of himself, his God and his world. Similarly, Al-Ghazali's

2. Sir Mohammad Iqbal, *Op. Cit.* P. 2.

3. J. Burnet, *Greek Philosophy*, P. 154.

philosophical scepticism is held by him as an unsafe basis for religion; it is also not wholly justified by the spirit of the Qur'an⁴.

All this shows that Iqbal is in favour of taking full cognizance of the visible and concrete reality. He does not encourage man's contemplative spirit to the extent that it may lead to his withdrawal from the world of matter, which, with its tempora, flux and shifting phenomena, is organically related to Ultimate Reality. Hence, for the purposes of knowledge, it is entirely inconceivable to turn away from the material world and to withdraw into a purely contemplative circuit. There is no possibility of complete separation or independence of thought from concrete experience. On the contrary, one should take his start from here because it is the mental comprehension of the concrete that makes it possible for the intellect of man to pass beyond the concrete.⁵ He invites us to take account of and to be fully awake to the material phenomena with all their passing and changing scenes and sights—heaven and earth, sun and stars, clouds and mountains, deserts and oceans.⁶ They are the signs of the Ultimate Reality and it is the duty of one to reflect on these signs and not to pass by them as if one is like the deaf and the blind, for one who does not see these signs in this life will remain blind to the realities of the life to come⁷. They are the manifestations of Divine Effulgence and reflective observation into their ultimate nature reveals the secret of Divine Reality⁸.

As a matter of fact, Iqbal takes an eclectic view of the whole question. He preaches neither reason nor sense-perception exclusively. Sensation being a chaotic jumble, upholds Iqbal, cannot lead to knowledge. It is reason that imparts harmony, organisation and coherence to this chaotic jumble and moulds it into a knowledge-yielding pattern. He pleads for reflective observation and scientific experiment. He takes full advantage of modern empirical science, though he never stops short at the visible aspect of Reality as the

4. Iqbal, *Op. Cit.* P. 4-7.

5. *Ibid*, P. 131.

6. Sir Mohammad Iqbal, *Bal-i-Jibril* Pp. 178-179 (The Spirit of Earth Welcomes The Advent of Adam).

7. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, P. 128.

8. Sir Mohammad Iqbal: *Pas Chih Bayad Kard Ai Aqwam-i-Sharq*, P. 57.

last word in the realm of existence. The sensible Reality is only a symbol of the Ultimate Reality, and the empirical attitude would bring us into contact with it.

Qur'an also takes both the conceptual and non-conceptual attitude towards existence. It recognizes the rationalistic attitude as the cause of the superiority of man over angels, and goes on to say that man has the ability to name things which endows him with the power of capturing them intellectually and thereby rising in the level of existence. But concepts here are not abstract logical entities. They are based on facts of sensation and are indissolubly united with the sensible and observable aspect of Reality. In other words, the knowledge of things is described by Qur'an as the knowledge of names.⁹ Again, Qur'an repeatedly invites man to take account of the physical phenomena. As Iqbal puts it, the Qur'an "sees in the humble be a recipient of Divine Inspiration and constantly calls upon the reader to observe the perpetual change of the winds, the alternation of day and night, the clouds, the starry heavens, and the planets swimming through infinite space"¹⁰. Iqbal fully agrees with the non-classical attitude of Qur'an and develops his own theory in consonance with it. Qur'an has a place for both metaphysics and empirical sciences. And it is through metaphysical search-light that Iqbal examines scientific researches and develops his own theory.

But Iqbal is fully alive to the limitations and short comings of knowledge gained through the normal channels. Firstly, scientific investigation and analytic thought have inherent limitations which are unavoidable. Scientific analysis is never complete and exhaustive in its nature. Reality is an organic whole. Its parts are united by vital internal connections. This underlying relationship confers a wholeness in the diversities and pluralities. Analysis would select a part of reality which, when taken apart, would become lifeless, shorn of the qualities it has by virtue of its integral position within a whole. It is rendered meaningless apart from its relations, as a part separated from its pattern, a single dot or line taken out from

9. Iqbal, *Payam-i-Mashriq*, P. 6.

10. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, P. 3.

the whole picture. Besides, analysis because of the immense complexity of its object can never attain ideal completeness. The ideal analysis involves the description of all the constitutive elements of a subject. It fails if any single element escapes notice or the units reached in the process are not ultimate. However, such an ideal cannot be accomplished, hampered as we are by our limitations. If we go a step further we find that the defect of analysis would also distort synthesis which is based upon it. In synthesis those elements only are combined that are discovered in the process of analysis. Thus the incompleteness of analysis results in the incompleteness of synthesis. It is obvious that an object discovered in this manner is not what it actually is but merely what it is mentally construed. Even if the completeness of analysis is taken for granted, what we cannot afford to overlook is the importance of the vital inner connections underlying the whole reality, which are lost through the analytic procedure. Spaulding, who believes that the whole is nothing but "the parts and their properties and the relations relating the parts and the possibly specific properties of the whole,"¹¹ has tried to remedy this defect of analysis. He asserts that the knowledge of the parts when accompanied with the knowledge of their relations could give the knowledge of the whole. This assertion carries some truth in the mechanical realm but is futile in its application to the knowledge of an organic whole. "The properties of the whole can be known from the observation of the behaviour of the whole as a whole; analysis does not disclose them."¹² Iqbal has kept this fact in view and does not over-emphasise the role of the analytic method, though he assigns to it a legitimate place in the practical domain. According to him, empirical sciences give a sectional and fragmentary knowledge of reality which, though trust worthy, verifiable and even useful so far as the prediction and control of events of nature go, does not explain Ultimate Reality in its entirety. Glorify as they do in an artificial, selective and sectional process which uses concepts relatively applicable to different levels of experience, they fail to

11. Spaulding, *The New Realism* P. 161. (1922),

12. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, P. 43.

give the complete view of Reality.¹³ It is an irony that our analytic thought first puts a veil on the face of Reality¹⁴ and then endeavours to penetrate through it. Its path is zigzag and intricate; its approach and progress are gradual and slow.¹⁵

Yet another difficulty besets the knowledge of ultimate reality. The subjective element, as the constituent element in the sensible Reality, has rendered the really Real unknowable. Kant goes so far as to reduce even space and time to subjective modes or forms of apprehending Reality; they are no more objective realities, empirical concepts or outward intuitions. They are merely the constructions or forms of inner sense, the necessary *a-priori* representations underlying all outer intuitions.¹⁶ The manifold of senses when it reaches us, has lost its purity; in order to reach us it has to fulfil the formal conditions and is bound to pass through the coloured glasses of space and time. "The thing in itself is only the limiting idea. Its function is merely regulative. If there is some actuality corresponding to the idea it falls outside the boundaries of experience and consequently its existence cannot be rationally demonstrated."¹⁷ Iqbal also believes that serial time and space are subjective and not objective realities.¹⁸ But he disagrees with Kant in so far as the acquisition of the knowledge of Ultimate Reality is concerned. The Ultimate Reality lies outside the normal level of experience, inaccessible to sense-perception and pure reason. But the normal level is not the only knowledge-yielding level.¹⁹

Though Iqbal is convinced that serial time and space are subjective, he departs from the view that they are the final and inflexible mental forms determining and limiting all knowledge. He takes the view that our intuitive experience is not determined and systematised by space and time. When we dive within our own self and pass

13. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, P. 43.

14. Iqbal, *Payam-i-Mashriq*, P. 35.

15. Iqbal; *Javid Nama*, P. 17-18.

16. Kant: *Critique of Pure Reason*, Pp. 67-77.

17. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction*, P. 181.

18. Iqbal, *Ibid*, Pp. 52-53; also, Iqbal; *Zabur-i-Ajam* Pp. 215-216.

19. Iqbal, *Ibid*, P. 181.

from sense-perception to intuition of the self, we perceive Reality, not as a concept or intellectual construction, not as a solid block or substratum underlying or holding together all experience, but as a dynamic and creative flow living in pure duration in which time is divested of spatiality and appears in its organic wholeness. However, it is no less true that this stage is attainable only through profound meditation, when the appreciative self gets the upper hand and all its potentialities are unfolded. It is now that the psychological experience expands into the intuition of Ultimate Reality—God. It discloses Ultimate Reality as a flux, a dynamic and creative flow that involves a progressive synthesis of various stages, in which life, thought and purpose all interpenetrate to form an organic whole.²⁰

Iqbal identifies intuition or immediate experience with love. Intuition or love would unfold to him new spheres of illumination, wherein unroll vistas of Reality comprehending Divine Presence itself. In contrast, the knowledge yielded by intellect is sectional, piece-meal and fragmentary because it is involved in the labyrinth of space and time. The knowledge through intuition is not imparted partially and by *innuendo*. It is grounded in the deeper and higher self of man. It is *incorporeal* and eternal and leads directly to the *incorporeal* and the eternal.²¹ Knowledge through love or intuition means knowledge through the heart, wherein we have change but no succession, pure duration but no serial time.²² It comes with a surer step, has a higher and more profound air of authority about it and is born out of direct and immediate luminousness. But it should not be construed that intuition is antagonistic to analytic thought or intellect. Love and intellect both aim at the knowledge of reality and differ only in the courses they adopt. The intellect grasps and views certain parts of reality as abstracted from the whole; it gives only the temporal aspect of reality. Intuition reveals the reality in its wholeness and fulness. It is the method which takes things as a whole without waiting for analysis.

20. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* Pp. 52-57.

21. Iqbal, *Javid Namah*, Pp. 1-18.

22. *Ibid*, P. 4.

Through a comprehensive grasp it gives the deepest truth. It forms that point of vantage which affords a perspective of the whole domain of Reality. Rather, it is the gateway at which Truth and Reality "rap and knock and enter our soul." Intuition and intellect together may be visualised as a double-edged sword in man's hand. With one edge he invades the Ultimate Reality; with the other he invades the Universe. In other words, the ego has two eyes: with one eye he sees and approaches the inner and invisible Reality, with the other, the visible Reality. If the ego sees with one eye, it commits a great sin; if it uses both eyes it reaches its destination.²³ Neither of them constitutes the exhaustive method or the only road to truth. Both should be employed and potentiated in the pursuit of exhaustive knowledge. They have a common source and are complementary to each other. Intuition is only a higher developmental state of intellect, and in order to view Reality as a whole it is necessary that we supplement intuition with intellect.²⁴ Intellect, when it is fused with love, becomes, as it were, illuminated by Divine Light; similarly, love when buttressed by intellect becomes more powerful and potent.²⁵ Knowledge based entirely upon reason and intellect, the intricate labyrinth of abstract reasoning, can lead to that articulation of beliefs which constitutes proof and demonstrated knowledge. But unless intellect is supplemented with intuition, this knowledge would become narrow, partial and lifeless and would lead to stagnation and pedantry. Intuition is its life and spirit; it is its "*ruh ul-qudus*" without which it would be reduced to a mere magic show, too impotent and crippled to lead us on to fruitful results.²⁶ Intellect, if not guided by love, becomes devilish or satanic—an evil force. It generates darkness and leads the world to blind power, chaos and destruction. Unanimated by love it is dead and lifeless, and its arrow, unguided as it is, flies without aim.²⁷ Let it be quickened and guided by intuition, love, yearning, and it

23. Iqbal, *Zabur-i-Ajam*, Pp. 207-208.

24. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, P. 2-3.

25. Iqbal, *Javid Namah*, P. 71.

26. *Ibid*, P. 4.

27. Iqbal, *Javid Namah*, Pp. 82-83.

shall yield knowledge par excellence—good, rounded and indispensable knowledge—knowledge which is power, encompassing heaven and deriving light from the stars, which contains the description of the whole existence and to which is related the destiny of the whole of existence. Intellect infused with intuition gives celestial and divine knowledge.²⁸ Intuition or love is thus the very law of life and regulative power. It expands and enriches personality, and confers vision. At the same time, it is corrective of intellect and abstract thought, of science and common sense.

If the above analysis is correct, the unqualified dismissal of the role of intuition or love in the achievement of knowledge as unscientific by the apostles of reason would appear to be highly unreasonable.

Though intuition is a mode of dealing with Reality in which sense-perception has no part to play, yet it gives knowledge, which is as concrete as that yielded by any other experience.²⁹

Intuition has its peculiar characteristics which differentiate it from intellect and sense-perception. They can be enumerated as follows:

1. It gives the direct and immediate experience of Absolute Reality or God. "God is not a mathematical entity or a system of concepts mutually related to one another and having no reference to experience."³⁰ Intuition gives the experience of God as sense-experience gives the experience of perceptible reality. And as regions of normal experience are subject to interpretation of sense-data for our knowledge of the external world, so the region of mystic experience is subject to interpretation for our knowledge of God.³¹
2. Mystic experience is characterised with un-analysable wholeness. It gives reality as an indivisible organic unity, not as broken segments with many missing links. The reason is that it does not entangle itself in a sectional treatment of

28. *Ibid*, Pp. 82-83.

29. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, P. 16.

30. *Ibid*, P. 19.

31. *Ibid*, P. 18-19.

reality, which would allow only a selective study of certain parts of its visible aspects. This *modus operandi* is the delight of rational consciousness, which specialises in analysis and synthesis as dictated by the practical needs of adaptation to our environment.³² As for example, out of the innumerable sense-data in a room, our rational consciousness selects only that which on synthesis would yield us the single experience of a table.³³ In mystic experience which includes the cognitive element in its minimum degree, there is no possibility of such analysis. It is unique in so far as it ranges beyond these frontiers and brings us into contact with the total passage of reality, in which all the diverse stimuli run into one another forming a single un-analysable unity, and in which the ordinary distinctness of subject and object does not exist.³⁴ But we should not run away with the idea that mystic experience is some "mysterious faculty"³⁵ having no continuity with ordinary consciousness, as maintained by William James.

3. God or Ultimate and Perfect Reality is both immanent and transcendent. He not only permeates and encompasses the universe but also His domain rolls beyond it. He is the unique Other Self that transcends and encompasses the private personality of the finite individual Self. Mystic experience brings the mystic into direct communion with God, "momentarily suppressing"³⁶ his own individuality. He is for the time being submerged in Supreme Reality and loses consciousness of himself as a distinct and private personality. But he emerges from his experience all the richer for in this brief moment of intimate association with God he has perceived Him as an Independent Other Self and as a Concrete Individual.

32. Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, P. 19.

33. *Ibid*, P. 19.

34. *Ibid*, P. 19.

35. *Ibid*, P. 16.

36. *Ibid*, P. 19.

It is, therefore, erroneous to presume that the mystic state is "a mere retirement into the mists of pure subjectivity."³⁷ Far from being so the contents of this experience are as objective as the knowledge yielded by an ordinary social experience. This may sound strange because we tend to believe that all objective experience must necessarily stem from sense-perception. But it is an extremely fallacious view. For, if it were true, we could never be sure of the reality of our social experience in so far as we know others as conscious beings. Granted that the knowledge of visible reality is based on sense-perception, granted also that the knowledge of our own inner and outer self is based on inner reflection and sense-perception, but when it comes to the knowledge of other conscious beings as such we are undergoing immediate experience—we are inferring the existence of a similar consciousness in them on the analogy of our own emotional states, which are exhibited by the two of us by similar physical movements. We do not tarry to work out or belabour the analogy in our daily lives; but the knowledge that the individual before us is a conscious being floods our mind as an immediate experience, which is further supplemented by his response to our signals, a fact which gives completeness to our fragmentary meanings. We never entertain any doubt about the validity of this knowledge because of its inferential quality. In the ultimate analysis the mystic and the social experience are parallel to each other; and they therefore belong to the same category.³⁸

4. The mystic experience is direct and immediate and hence does not lend itself to communication as such. It is feeling rather than thought, but like all other feelings it has a thought element which gives it direction and shapes it into an idea. It has two aspects: non-temporal and temporal. The non-temporal aspect is feeling, whereas the temporal aspect is

37. Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, P. 21.

38. Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, P. 21.

idea. The non-temporal aspect is also not without a sense of direction. Feeling is outward-pushing as idea is outward-reporting. Feeling is ever directed towards something that is feeling, some objective which transforms its characteristic instability into stability. It gives the direct vision of reality. But mystic experience, untouched as it is by discursive intellect, would not lend itself to transmission in logical forms. Nevertheless it seeks expression in thought and can be conveyed as interpreted by the prophet or the mystic who has experienced it.³⁹

5. The mystic experience reveals Reality as an eternal whole unbounded by past and future, as a single eternal now, and establishes the unreality of the serial character of space and establishes the unreality of the serial character of space and time. But this state does not abide. It gives the vision of reality and soon fades away leaving a sense of authority behind it.⁴⁰ "Both the mystic and prophet return to the normal levels of experience; but with this difference that the return of the prophet may be fraught with infinite meaning for mankind."⁴¹

The path to intuition, according to Iqbal, lies through religion. The intuition of the self as a psychological experience is approachable to all even at the normal level. But the higher intuition or the intuition of God is achieved gradually through a definite course only as the religious consciousness expands in intensity and richness. It consists of three stages, faith, thought and discovery. The first is the period when the individual, through his adherence to the unconditional command, cultivates self-discipline. Here we have the undemurring surrender to Divine Law without the interference of reason or logical demonstration. It enables man to find his niche in the set-up of political and social life. But so far as the evolution of man's inner self is concerned it is of no consequence. This

39. *Ibid*, Pp. 21-22.

40. *Ibid*, P. 23.

41. *Ibid*, Pp. 23-24.

stage leads to the next where reason and rational understanding manifest themselves as the source and ground of the authority of discipline, thus basing religion on metaphysics or philosophy. This is followed by the third and highest stage where philosophy gives place to psychology and the individual develops a yearning to attain direct contact with Divine Reality. "It is here that religion becomes a matter of assimilation of life and power; and the individual achieves a free personality, not by releasing himself from the fetters of the law, but by discovering the ultimate source of the law within the depths of his own consciousness".⁴² The Book is not imposed as something external but is revealed to a prophet. It is the period of discovery or intuition. "The climax of religious life, however, is the discovery of the ego as an individual deeper than his conceptually describable habitual self-hood. It is in contact with the Most Real that the ego discovers its uniqueness, its metaphysical status and the possibility of improvement in that status. Strictly speaking, the experience which leads to this discovery is not a conceptually manageable intellectual fact; it is a vital fact, an attitude consequent on an inner biological transformation which cannot be captured in the net of logical categories. It can embody itself only in a world-making or world-shaking act; and in this form alone the content of this timeless experience can diffuse itself in the time-movement, and make itself effectively visible to the eye of history. It seems that the method of dealing with Reality by means of concepts is not at all a serious way of dealing with it. Science does not care whether its electron is a real entity or not. It may be a mere symbol, a mere convention. Religion, which is essentially a mode of actual living, is the only serious way of handling Reality."⁴³ Science deals with concepts, factual reality or the "causality-bound aspect of nature", but the physical, sensible and external causality-bound aspect of nature does not exhaust the realm of Reality. The other aspect of reality is not less important than the visible one. It invades consciousness from another direction, untouched by rational thought dealing with the optically present universe. This broad path can

42. Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, P. 183.

43. Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, P. 183.

be opened through religion only, because religion concerns itself with deed, which is the outcome of the constant attitude of man's whole personality or structure to reality. The deed, "*i.e.* the control of man's physiological and psychological processes", is dynamically related to reality and prepares the finite self for immediate association with Infinite Ego."⁴⁴

Hence, religion, as Iqbal would have it, is not a mere collection of dogmas or theological formulae: "Conservatism is as bad in religion as in any other department of human activity. It destroys the ego's creative freedom and closes up the paths of fresh spiritual enterprise."⁴⁵ Religion in its highest manifestation does not imply the life-denying and fact-avoiding attitude. It does not work as an external imposition on the free and spontaneous expression of human personality. On the contrary, it is the open sesame to fresh and mere fruitful directions to communicate with the Ultimately Real. It awakens and actualises the level lying close to the normal level, directing one's vision to the inner side of the self. It regenerates the inner powers and possibilities of the human self. It expands and enriches the fields of human thought and emotion. It unlocks fresh spiritual sources. During this period man gets the power to overcome his intellectual reconstruction and to penetrate the crust of causal sequence and spatio-temporal manifold. He comes into contact with the everlasting and eternal source of life and power.

Here we have a picture of Iqbal's theory of knowledge in which he endeavours to give us a clue to the Ultimate Reality. Whether the perfect knowledge of the actual and The Ultimate Reality, of the final nature and essence of things is possible is a very subtle question. Iqbal's answer to it is an unhesitating, bold and optimistic affirmation. Reality can be known, grasped and comprehended not only in its partial and fragmentary aspect but also in its completeness. The great merit and virtue of his theory lies in the fact that he does not adopt and exalt any one method at the cost of the others.

44. *Ibid*, 182.

45. *Ibid*, 182.



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