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FROM THEOCRACY TO  
TRANSCENDENCE: THE EVOLUTION OF  
CIVILIZATIONS AND DIVINE  
AUTHORITY IN GOVERNANCE

Abdul Hameed Kamali



## ABSTRACT

This paper examines the evolution of human civilizations, contrasting theocratic systems with the Islamic worldview, which emphasizes the transcendence of God and the autonomy of human beings. In ancient civilizations like Sumer, Egypt, and Assyria, rulers were often deified, demanding total submission from their subjects. Islam, introduced as a revolutionary force, challenged these systems, offering a framework based on the unity of God (*Tawhid*) and equality among all people. The paper traces the roots of Islamic history to the prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) and highlights the Islamic rejection of polytheism and divine claims of authority by rulers. The study further critiques modern neo-Islamist ideologies that mistakenly adopt Western political concepts like sovereignty and apply them to Islamic theology. It argues that sovereignty as understood in political terms is misapplied when attributed to God, as God's dominion is existential, not political. The paper emphasizes that Islam calls for human responsibility and the rejection of totalitarianism, advocating for a political system grounded in mutual respect, social justice, and the divine order of grace.

The ancient world hummed with many a civilization in which humanity was dociled to bow spellbound before the established authority with awe and reverence.

In the prodigal show of the state functionaries, the common man overwhelmingly found himself in the gripping environ of the attendant to gods, who used to grace the mighty thrones as kiths and kins of the Supreme One.

The Sumerian, Egyptian and Assyrian empires were in this way thoroughbred theocracies. All the people had to lie in prostration before the 'living god' or 'ruling demigod' as on his pleasure depended the fortunes of their life, fertility of their soil, prosperity of their offsprings and pleasure of the higher gods in heaven.

Islam, the religion of the Unity and Transcendence of God exploded in the very heart of those civilizations, and it meant a full-scale revolution in moral fibre, social structures, economic relations and political constitution of the people. It was a message of deliverance from the dead weight of theocracy by recasting man as a responsible person to live in the community of his own fellow beings exercising own direction and chalking out own destiny for own self.

Islam is submission to God, Who is one, Who is above all support, Who begets not and Who is not begotten, and none is of His class. It is not only a spiritual enlightenment but also a social theory and a political principle which shuns all inequalities between man and man.

In the history of mankind, it is therefore, traceable to the untiring resistance to all the superhuman pretensions of a chosen blood, heroic stand against divinization of the wielders of power and uncompromising struggle for abolishing the so-called pantheons of gods, demigods, assistant gods, vicegerents of gods with rights to have control over all the affairs and institutions of mankind on the pretension that the God (or gods) was sovereign unto them.

That Islam is as old as mankind itself is at the nucleus of the Muslim creed. It means that Islam cannot be guessed as to have been an outcome of the long mental and moral evolution of the human race. On the other hand, it formed the very starting point of



human evolution as the first man, born along with his espouse, had a revealed knowledge from God and was a divine messenger. He and his espouse (known as Adam and Eve) lived and passed their life happily as Muslims. It was later on that their progeny (perhaps most of them) had a fall and fell in the ditch of polytheism. The story of the fall of Adam pertains to those later generations and not to this prophet and messenger of God who was forefather of all mankind.

Thus Islam is much older than the Iron Age (1800 B.C.), and the Bronze Age (4000 B.C.). It is also older than the polished Stone Age (20,000 BC.). Accordingly, all else beyond Islam, particularly polytheism and its products, theocratic regimes and their gods of various orders, castes and classes, were of later origin depicting the decline of man from a blissful state.

But our historical reconstruction of the past does not go properly beyond 1500 to 2000 B.C. Beyond that limit only vague indications are available up to 3000 to 4000 B.C. What the data at hand suggests is that humanity and Islam as great prehistory, might be stretched over to 70,000 B.C. forming back-ground of some what an exact history of the last three to four thousands years up to our age. Great societies and great messengers must have existed in the prehistory. For instance, Noha, Salih, and before them Idris were part of prehistoric societies. Rama and Krishna of India also belonged to prehistory. No chroniclers, continuous narratives from all of those illustrious figures can be built up to a future age. We have their stories but cannot locate them on a time scale.

The historical Islam, which we do witness, by now has a time span of nearly 4,000 years. And it has its concrete origin in Ibrahim's (Abraham) act of faith immortalized as it were in his encounter with the potentate of Ur. It was in fact the first moment of Islam in history. The encounter has been a living force in the entire history of Islam deeply affecting the attitude of the Muslim people towards the human problems.

Ibrahim's teachings meant to have pulled down all the pillars of theocracy, freeing the neck of men from the priestly order, and removing from them the yoke of aristocracy who stood as the knights of the false gods. The call that there was no god but the God alMighty and Glorious, that He was the sustainer of all creation and all men, and that He admitted none as His partner was too good a message to be believed. Even the commoners could not

believe Ibrahim, and he was forced to migrate to other remote lands. He was successful in spreading the message in part of the present Syria, Hijaz and nearby lands.

Messengers and Prophets of God came to revive his religion and expand its followers. Nearly 600 years after Ibrahim, Mosa (Moses) was raised to call the people of Egypt to renounce false gods and free the followers of Ibrahim. In the end, he was successful in establishing the first independent Muslim community in Palestine where all the people were servants of God and were equal to one another. After a time, the state fell apart; its territories were overpowered by neighbours. Then about 1025 B.C. the second state of Islam was established with Talut (Saul) as its head. He was succeeded by Dawud (David 1010 - 974 B.C.) and Sulayman (Solomon 974- 937 B.C.). After Sulayman, the State split into Ephraim and Judah and corruption followed. Ephraim was sacked in the Seventh Century B.C., and Judah was wiped out in 586 B.C.

Islam had to wait for its reemergence on the map of the nations for a full 10 centuries. And now it appeared in a different land in a different people. Mohammad (peace be upon Him) was raised as the last Messenger of God, and he established the third but ever-expanding Community and State of Islam.

### **Splendour**

It was for the first time in its history since Ibrahim that by having its independent state now this time (622 A.D.) under the leadership of Mohammad, that Islam was destined to become a leading world power. Peace be on him. Zion was not a world power even under Sulayman. It was for the first time that theocracies of the world and their polytheistic socio-political orders had to look materially diminished before the worldly splendour of Islam in not a far off future.

The entire Persian empire was engulfed in its surge within 30 years of its foundation. Lands from Spain to India came under its sway in a century.

Thus, it was after the arrival of Mohammad as the last messenger and Prophet of God to mankind that the principle of Transcendentalism and Unitarianism of God transformed into the most venerated heritage of mankind, influencing even the polytheistic civilizations resulting in the rise of modern, enlightened, and egalitarian humanism and benevolent public order as the universal goal of all mankind.

## The Truths of God and Humanity

Delivering from obscurities and mythical shroudings, the revelations of Al-Quran organize human morality, religion, and society on the broad daylight of historicism and scientific outlook. In very plain terms, they do communicate the inviolable law of human history as follows:

Witness is the Time. Verily man is in loss. Except those who did believe and did good works. And pledged (each other) to live by truth and pledged (each other) to stay on with perseverance (Q, 103 Al-Asr).

Time is history and history is the rise and fall of nations, blossoming and withering away of communities. It is concrete time and bears witness to the most universal law operating in human destiny. Every one is doomed and none is spared with the exception of only those children of Adam who are armed with trust in their Lord, Most High. And this trust is untiringly demonstrated by them in their good deeds.

But even those ones are also doomed who have faith in their Lord but are content to be good in themselves. Redeemed are only those who go beyond their own narrow existence, enter into the social space, and join to exhort, pledge and reinforce one another to abide by the truths. The truths of God and that of humanity. Those truths are as clear to everybody as sunshine. They are so evident to every common sense that they are appalled by the Glorious Quran as “the well known (Al-Maruf).” In our every day language, they are called the values and virtues.

When everyone exhorts and pledges every one else, and the mutual pledges and testaments to abide by truth are enshrined in their heart, in their mutual dealings, in their individual acts, social relations and public institutions, and their every day life thus begins to reflect the order of values and virtues, they overcome all disaster. They are saved. They are however saved for ever, if they are very particular about exhorting and pressing each other to stay on with constancy for the truths in all circumstances, in all trials and tribulations.

When they are careless and do not support one another for constancy and perseverance, the whole edifice of faith in God, and adherence to truth begins to crumble. The Universal law of human history is the same in all ages and for all people.

Witness is the Teen, witness is the Zytun, Witness is the Tur Sineeen, (and) witness is this City of Security. “We created man in the best mould, then We threw him to the lowest of the low. Except those who did believe and did good works. For them is reward unending. “Then who belies thee about the Law and its effects. Is not Allah the best of disposers (Law Giver and Judge) (Q: 95 Wal- Teen).

### **Civilizations**

Mt. Teen, Mt. Zytun. Mt. Tur Sinai and ‘This City of Security (Mecca)’ are places of significance. As they move in time they signify different human civilizations. Mt. Zytun is associated with Isa Massih Ibn Maryam (Jesus Christ). Its dynamic view in the flow of time develops into the march of the Christian Civilization with all of its greatness and decadence, achievements and failures.

Mt. Tur’s voyage in time forms the career of the Jewish Civilization. It commenced from the august day when in one of the vales of Mt. Sinai, Musa was invested with the mission of God as His Messenger unto the people of Egypt and the Children of Israel.

Mecca, the City of Security, commenced moving in time with the first sermon of the Messenger Prophet of God and the Muslim Civilization unfolded itself in its thrust into the future.

*Al-Teen* is a hillock near Damascus, the heart of Syria, which was the crossing bridge and melting pot of all great civilizations; the Sumerian, Phoenician, Egyptian and Assyrian. *AlTeen* signifies all of them. It is also known as the habitat of Adam after descent. Thus what Mt. Teen signifies as floating in time, is the rise and fall of the ancient civilizations and early history of man.

The Jewish, Christian, Muslim and all ancient civilizations are testimony to the Divine Law of human destiny; (1) man was created in the best mould, (2) then he was thrown to the lowest of the low, (3) save those who believed and performed good deeds. The society created around Musa was in the best of the moulds. The Tur bears witness to its excellent form. But as time moved on, the civilization fell to the lowest of the low and met disasters after disasters. Yet those of its folks or periods were saved which embodied trust in God with record of good deeds.

The same is with the Christian Civilization. It was in the best mould in its beginning when it was created with Isa as its light. Time rolled on and the Christian Civilization flowered and expanded. The inescapable Divine Law operated in its history and dealt with its periods and people according to its inward necessity.

## **Superb Mould**

The Muslim community, having its origin in Mecca, was created in the superb mould as the end of all human communities. It filled history as the Muslim Civilization. Every page of it attests to the inviolable sway of the Divine Law. After being created in the best of mould, man was thrown to the lowest of the low, with the exception of those who were loyal to God and steadfast in their good deeds, established the Kingdom of values and vigorously guarded it.

The law does vividly apply not only to groups, civilizations, states and nations, but also to individuals as personal careers in time and bearers of the burden of civilization. Every single man is doomed forever, if he does not take his Lord seriously and does not save himself from evil.

Had God so willed, he would have set for every soul a noble course. And none would have faltered away from the right path as set. But then it would not have been the law fit for human history. This kind of law was the most perfect law for stars, sun and moon. And indeed those objects have such a law.

For man, the Lord decreed a law of quite different kind according to which after creating in the best mould as His creation should be, He has allowed every man either to slip into the throes of the lowest of all lowly ditches or to save himself and adopt a course of reward that never ends.

It may be repeated once again that:

In the beginning, mankind lived in a blissful state. Men lived in a garden and they enjoyed all of its fruits and were in perfect mutual harmony. But they were forbidden to touch a particular tree. This was the price of their perfect community and of its constitutional order which they had to pay and keep in mind.

## **Ugly Turn**

But it so happened that the tree of forbidden things was touched. All the values were disturbed and everything took an ugly turn. Men tried their own short-sighted measures, and failed. Then they repented and turned to their Lord. In His infinite Mercy, their Lord turned to them, taught them words (formulae) for a new good start and said:

Get you down all from here. And if, as is sure, there, comes to you guidance from Me, whosoever follows My guidance, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. But who reject (it) and belie Our Signs, they shall be those of fire. They shall abide therein (Q. 2:38-39).

The Quran narrates the story of the first great crisis in human history at several places. But in each narration highlights a new critical aspect of it. Here we have referred to it very briefly just to bring home the central problem of all blissful life which is implicit in the inviolable law of human destiny as expounded above.

Every state of bliss, every human order of beautiful patterns and forms and every constitutional setup has its own tree of forbidden fruits. One can enjoy all fruits, may enjoy the shadow of all trees, but one cannot approach the tree of forbidden things, nor can take refuge under the shadow of any of its branches.

When people touch the forbidden tree of their constitutional arrangement and taste it's fruits, the entire blissful state it envisages and all of its order vanish. Thus they are banished from it. This fundamental truth is cogently expressed in the Holy Quran as: "Get you down all from here."

### **No Room for Usurpers of Power**

God revealed to His Prophet.

Thou art not a compeller (Jabbar) over them (Q,50:45).

Therefore, there is no place for a compeller or dictator in Islam. The Most High said to him:

We have not set thee as a keeper over them nor art thou responsible for them. (Q,6:108).

Those who put themselves as the conscience-keeper of the people and self-appointed custodian of their interest are violators of the public order envisaged for the believers. The Lord reminded His Prophet:

Thou art not a warder (musaiter) over them (Q,88:22).

Therefore, those who impose a regime of watch and ward over the people and set spying in every nook and cranny are enemies of God and mankind.

The usurpers of power who exalt themselves above the people and seize public authority by conspiracy or by sword cannot establish an Islamic order, nor can they give leadership to the

Ummah of Islam. They are those who are denied guidance from God:

I shall turn away from My signs (revelations) those who exalt themselves without right in the land; and if they see a sign believe it not; and if they see the way of uprightness, adopt it not; and if they see the way of evil, they adopt it as (their) way. It is because they deny Our signs and are used to ignore them. Those who deny Our signs and the meeting of the hereafter (with Us), wasted are their works. Are they requited aught what they used to do (Q,7:146-7).

It was not surprising therefore that the Muslim dominions lost their living contact with the revelations of God as soon as the ways of the Righteous Succession (Khilāfat-i-Rāshida) faded away in the rise of tyranny and despotic rule. The system of mutual support and protection offered by Islam was badly in tatters even before the turn of the first century. The spirit of taking care of every member of the community receded into background as a pious hope. A truncated individualism was sweeping the Muslim multitude changing their heart and soul and they began to live for themselves. Public speakers appeared to reconcile the people with the emerging evil order and elicit their loyalty for the usurpers of power. They recited the following verses of the Quran:

Say, O God, Owner of the dominion! "Thou givest the dominion unto whom Thou wilt and Thou withdrawest the dominion from whom Thou wilt. Thou givest exaltation whom Thou wilt and Thou abasest whom Thou wilt. In Thy hand is the good. Lo! Thou art able to do all things (Q.3:26).

So far as the successful usurpation of power is justified by reciting the above revelations, it exposes the depravity of the wicked souls. No doubt the evil doers are deprived of proper guidance from the words of God. The revelations recited as such further mislead them. Only God-fearing men who are desirous of decent and good life can follow properly the light of the revelations and their intents.

Moreover, the Holy Quran makes it obligatory on the believers to approach the signs of God (ayat and revelations) for getting at a seemly interpretation. This principle is key to the Sharia of Islam. No Divine words can justify conspiracy and overthrow of public order, seizure of authority by force and the evils which follow. Those transgressors are condemned in unmistakable terms who seek crookedness through the Book of God.

Praise be to God who hath revealed the scripture unto His servant and hath not placed therein any crookedness. (But hath made it) straight to give warning of stern punishment from Him; and unto the believers who do good works the news that theirs will be a fair reward (Q, 18:1-2).

### **Two Kinds of Revelations**

The same sura of the Quran (chapter 3) which contains: “Thou givest the dominion whom Thou wilt and withdrawest from whom Thou wilt” also contains those verses which give insight into the nature of revelations as follows:

He is who revealed unto thee the book wherein are clear signs (Ayat Muhakamāt). They are substance of the Book (Ummul Kitāb) and others (which are) allegorical (Mutashabihat). But those in whose hearts is perversity pursue that which is allegorical seeking dissension (to cause) by seeking to explain it. And those who are of sound instruction say: We believe therein, the whole but only men of understanding really heed (Q,3:7).

All the revelations of the glorious Quran conform to one another, but they do not belong to one plane or the same level of reality in their intention. Therefore they are not equally clear to man. The signs (revelations) of God which are essential to human station and order of existence are comprehensible by him with all certitude. They are the firm signs and form the hard core, the basic intention of the Book. They consist of the knowledge of right and wrong, definition of the permissible and the impermissible, distinction between the straight path and the evil ways, warnings to the rejecters of truths and glad tidings to the men of virtue. All other revelations are auxiliary or support to the body of these main revelations. Men of sound character with a burning desire to reform their life and alleviate the sufferings of humanity base their conduct on the clear revelations.

But those who are of wicked stuff and love to shun their duties run after those other revelations of higher order that belie clear and perfect comprehension. It is because the revelations allude to very high orders of truths beyond the terms of finite human experience, they are called by the Quran the *mutashabihat*, which the translators put as the allegorical (The translation does not however correspond satisfactorily to the original term). They are fraught with various similitudes and are susceptible to various ends and meanings carved out by the limited human experience. Thus from the ordinary station of man, their comprehension ends at a doubtful interpretation or a conclusion which is enigmatic.



Men of weak character and of perverse spirit are duped to peck on those allegorical revelations. Therefore, they are misled and in turn mislead the people to ambiguities. The verse 3:26 (revealing that God giveth the dominion whom He wilt, etc.) belong to the groups of *mutashabihat*. Man must falter in its grasp. It describes a Divine truth in terms of human experience of giving and withdrawing. The consequence is that the determinists (*jabbariya*) who take it as guidance for their conduct are impelled to set aside the firm and clear verses of God which are the mother-book or the substance of all revelation. Thus they undermine human spirit to fight against the unjust order and to fulfill those indubitable obligations which are assigned to the believers as followers of the wright path.

After the first century, Muslim culture fastly moved from the firm and clear revelations to the allegorical revelations. Consequently, different creeds and ideologies weakening the moral and religious spirit emerged and flourished all testifying to their ambiguous comprehensions of the Divine revelations as part of their culture.

It required no greater insight in arriving at a definite conclusion about the verse 3:26. As it describes the Divine activity, men cannot comprehend the truth contained in it; for the latter presupposes full knowledge of God and it is impossible for man to have it. Therefore it is not one of those revelations which may be made elements of human order and part of the clear verses which are the purpose and roots of the Glorious Quran.

### **Neo -Islamists**

In their zeal to Islamize everything, the neo-Islamists take the modern (omnipotent) state as their model and declare God as its sovereign. Apparently they substantiates their claim by pointing out that God is the Creator of the world, He is the Sustainer of everything and He is the Nourisher of all existents.

From those truths, they infer the idea of the Sovereignty of God over the Universe. But this inference may be meaningful if only the meanings of sovereignty are radically changed. It must mean Creation, Substance and Nourishment. But it is not what we mean by sovereignty, political sovereignty.

Those Islamists have exceeded the rules of logical consistency and confused a political notion with the categories of the Divine Order.

The main line of argument propounded by those Islamists is like this: ‘All the attributes of authority belong to Allah. No one is possessor of those attributes and authority in the Universe beside Him, He is the Over-powering. He is the Knower of all. He is the Spotless, Errorless, Protector of all; all the authority is in His hands. No one can do any harm without His will... No one has the power to defy His decree’. The argument is said to have been built on the following verses of the Holy Quran:

It is He (who is) irresistible to His servants, and it is He the Wise, the Aware (6: 18).

The Knower of the Unseen and the Seen, the Great, the Most High (13:9).

He is Allah beside whom there is no God; the Dominus, the Holy; the Errorless, the Granter of Security; the Guardian; the Mighty, the Super-determinate, the Possessor of Greatness (59:22-23).

Blessed is He in whose hand is the Dominion and who is Overpowering and who is Overwhelming to all things (67: 1).

All the arguments, based on the above and many other alike verses, it may be noted, return to a single order of truths: the order which unfolds the relation of God to things-in-creation. It is He who brings the things into existence, sustains them and causes them out of existence.

In this order of reality, nothing defies God’s Command. Since by its very nature, this order manifests the Divine Domination, it constitutes the realm of God’s Dominion; Himself being the Dominus unto it. The distinctive mark of the Divine Dominion is that it is existentially impossible in it to deviate to the slightest degree from the dictates of the Overwhelming Power, Holiness, Majesty and Glory of its Dominus.

But God’s Glory and Bounty is not exhausted in His Dominion which is only one of the orders of reality. There is no doubt that all of his creations belong to it yet there are some things which inspite of their place in it go beyond and participate in other orders of reality, which are willed, brought into existence and sustained by the Same God, the Most High, Most Wise. In those realms, the rule of Dominion does not permeates the way of existence, and therefore God is not the Dominus in their boundaries. Consequently, no light is shed on their nature from the truths obtaining in the kind of realities which are subsumed under the category of the Dominion of God. These other orders are generally

comprehensible under the category of the Âlam-i-Amr (the World of Command).

### **Logical Error**

All the thinkers of the modern renaissance of Islam who have invented the fiction of (political) sovereignty about God are victims of logical error; confounding two different levels and contexts of reality: The Âlam-i-Amr and Âlam-i-Khalq (Creation / Dominion). From the verses that unfold the truths about God's Dominion, they draw laws of those other spheres of reality which are differently constituted by the Wisdom, and Power and Glory of the same God, the World of Command.

The ideas of corruption and improvement, virtue and vice, compassion and indifference, pleasure and anger are inapplicable to the structure of events in the Dominion of God; the Dominion which has no problem of what ought to be for everything in it is only with its Isness as such and behaves as fixed in its course.

Consequently, none of its contents, and accidents/events are amenable to value judgments. Such are the implications of the Dominion and the Dominus.

### **Sovereignty**

The doctrine of God's sovereignty in human societies or states projects the idea of Dominus beyond the sphere of the Dominion into the sphere of those entities which are endowed by God with the power to follow or violate the Divine Ordinances, and to whom gain and loss, co-operation and competition, piety and mischief, progress and regress are the forms of mutual interaction.

In other words, God's Dominion, as an existential category, does not absolutely determine the structure of events in this sphere. To be true to our experience, this sphere at least contains the human world. Though it is grounded in the Dominion of God, yet it is God's Will that it exhibits a new order which has laws and events different from those that of the former. The problem of sovereignty arises in this sphere of reality in which man rises above the 'Dominion' as a level of reality.

Consequently, the verses of the Glorious Quran which unfold the order of Divine Dominion cannot yield those inferences which are valid for this human world.

Thus from the axiom that God is the Dominus, it does not follow that 'God is the Sovereign.' The neo-Islamists' arguments are precisely reduced to this sort of inference, which disengages the concept of sovereignty in the concept of 'domination', relentless and absolute.

This disengagement makes the' concept of sovereignty empty of all value-connnotations. When the human world is completely packed into the concept of Dominion, it becomes emaciated of all value components and everything of it looks as if swaying in an irresistible· dominating push from beyond. This kind of vision is a conceit of the Devil, and fosters that kind of heresies about the constitution of human events, which are impermissible according to the imperatives of the religious and moral sense even of the ordinary people.

The concept of sovereignty, its reduction to pure 'domination' as such makes it a heretical notion which teaches us the doctrine of submission to naked force and despiritualises the human race.

It is true that all the concepts of domination are true of God, but their field is the order of Divine Dominion in which the moral and religious issues· have no meaning; every thing of it, submits to His Domination. The Quran also teaches us that man and his affairs are not exempted from the Divine Dominion and God is 'dominus of the people' also He is Overpowering to His servants and He is the Wise, the Aware (6:18).

### **Order of Grace**

The above verses confirm that man has his station within His Dominion. But this is not the whole truth. Man grows up beyond His Dominion and lives in the realm of His Grace which is subsumed under the concept of His Majestic Throne from where He showers mercy on His servants, accepts their repentance, gives them help and allows them chance to reshape themselves in seemly ways. His Majestic Throne surrounds the unique order in which the laws of His Dominion are overwhelmed by the laws of His Grace. This forms the logical structure of the Âlam-i-Amr for His living creatures.

Indeed, He is the Originator and is the Repeater, the Forgiver and the Lover, (Holder) of the Majestic Throne, Doer of what He will (Q,85: 13-16).

The idea of Divine sovereignty or domination does not signify anything in this world of Grace which is revealed in the above verses: but rather serves to distort its nature and twist its implication, the implication of the *Âlam-i-Amr*. It is here, in *ÂIam-i-Amr* that His words - God leads man from darkness into light, and the Devil (Taghut) leads man from light into darkness become true and significant. The Glorious Quran vividly describes the Role of God in relation to human world, its institutions and arrangements (including the state' organization) by "Al-Rahman" (the Beneficent One) is established on the Throne (al-Rahman 'Al al Arshistawa). He is never a political sovereign over them.



ISLAMIC DEMOCRACY AND THE  
INTEGRATION OF SPIRITUAL AND  
TEMPORAL REALMS: IQBAL'S VISION  
FOR A UNIFIED POLITY

Dr. Mohammed Maruf

## ABSTRACT

This paper explores Iqbal's perspective on Islam as an integrated system where the spiritual and temporal are inseparable, providing a holistic framework for governance and society. Unlike Western political models, which often separate religion from state, Iqbal asserts that Islam unites both in a single reality, aiming to establish the "Kingdom of God" on earth. The paper delves into Iqbal's view of Islam as a complete polity or "deen," not merely a religion but a political and ethical system aimed at actualizing spiritual ideals in worldly governance. It emphasizes Iqbal's belief that Islam is inherently democratic, rooted in the equality of spirits, and distinct from Western democracy, which grew out of economic considerations. The study highlights the historical achievements of Islamic democracy, where the principles of justice, equality, and accountability were exemplified in the early Islamic states. Iqbal critiques the modern Muslim world, identifying two major challenges: the loss of strong, integrated personalities and the disintegration of communal solidarity. He proposes remedies, including focusing on the unity and spiritual principles of Islam, organizing into strong, independent Muslim republics, and addressing humanity's spiritual needs. Iqbal envisions a global transformation led by Islamic values that emphasize a spiritual interpretation of the universe, individual emancipation, and universal principles to guide societal evolution. Ultimately, Iqbal's vision calls for a return to Islam's foundational ideals to counter materialism and achieve moral and spiritual renewal in the world.



Islam does not make any distinction or bifurcation between the spiritual and the temporal; they are not two distinct domains. According to Iqbal, 'In Islam it is the same reality which appears as Church looked at from one point of view and State from another.... Islam is a single unanalyzable reality which is one or the other as your point of view varies.<sup>1</sup> The Quran is very emphatic on this point as it 'considers it necessary to unite religion and state, ethics and political in a single revelation.<sup>2</sup> In Islam, the spiritual and the physical are not intermingled that the Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) is reported to have said, "The whole of the earth has made the mosque and the purifier for me."<sup>3</sup> This saying of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) is extremely important in the life of a Muslim, because it does away with the profane nature of the world as is generally thought. In fact, according to Islam, the ultimate has to be attained through conquering this world (and not by being conquered by it as is the case with non-believers). "The State' according to Islam', says Iqbal, 'is only an effort to realize the spiritual in a human organization'.<sup>4</sup> Iqbal goes to the extent of saying that "The truth is that Islam is not a Church. It is a State conceived as a contractual organization long before Rousseau ever thought of such a thing and animated by an ethical ideal which regards man not as earth-rooted creature,..., but as a spiritual being...<sup>5</sup> Hence, Islam is not only a religion, it rather a complete polity, a complete system of life, a "*deen*"; it is rather a means or a machinery to actualize the ideal or the system of ideals and thereby to introduce the "Kingdom of God" on earth, that is, to actualize the spiritual in the earthly domain which is the final goal of Islam in this life, Now, what is the nature of the "Kingdom of God" on earth and what are its pre-conditions or pre-requisites?

According to Iqbal, Islam is democratic in its spirit. He expressly says, "The republican form of government is not only thoroughly consistent with the spirit of Islam, but also has become a necessity in view of the new forces that are set free<sup>6</sup> in the world of Islam'. Iqbal is referring to the growth of the republican spirit in the Muslim countries of the world today. He says, "The growth of republican spirit, the gradual formation of legislative assemblies in Muslim lands constitutes a great step in advance."<sup>7</sup> He appreciates the 'transfer of the power of Ijtihad from individual representatives of schools to a Muslim legislative assembly which, in view of the

growth of opposing sects, is the only possible form Lima can take in modern times,...<sup>8</sup> That Islamic spirit in democratic is obvious from the following occurrences. When the Prophet of Islam (p.b.u.h.) became the leader of the Muslim world he is reported to have proclaimed, “I am a man like you; like you my forgiveness also depends on the mercy of God”, Iqbal quotes him. Iqbal added, ‘In fact the idea of personal authority is quite contrary to the spirit of Islam...’<sup>9</sup> Again, when the 1st Caliph of Islam, Abu Bakr (R.u.u.h) succeeded the Holy Prophet he was hastily elected to the position of a Caliph. ‘Omar, however, afterwards held that the hurried election of Abu Bakr, though very happy in its consequences and justified by the need of the time, should not form a precedent in Islam; for as he is reported to have said, (Reinhart Dozy in his famous book *Spanish Islam: A History of the Muslims in n Spain*, “an election which is only a partial expression of the people’s will is null and void”<sup>10</sup> This means that the Muslim set up in the times of Caliphs was a completely democratic type of set up; it may rightly be said that Islam introduced an unparalleled type of democracy in which an ordinary nomad could stand up and question the then Caliph, which was again great Omar, whence he could get his garment which could not be stitched from the piece of cloth which went to his share alongwith any other Muslim free man. The Caliph had to satisfy him before he was allowed to proceed with his sermon. This type of democracy is unknown to the Western world, rather to the modern world which is following the model of the Western democracy. Iqbal is of the view that the Western type of democracy in which m heads are just counted is not suitable to all the countries and the systems.

Iqbal concludes his chapter on “The Principle of Movement in the Structure of Islam”<sup>11</sup> in the following suggestion:

‘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’.<sup>12</sup> The spiritual democracy, Iqbal adds, unlike European democracies, did not emerge from any economic considerations. In his Introduction to *Israr-e-Khudi* (1916) he writes, ‘The democracy of Islam did not grow out of the extension of economic opportunity; it is a spiritual principle based on the assumption that every human being is a centre of latent power; the possibilities of which can be developed by cultivating certain type of character’.<sup>13</sup> What Iqbal has referred to is that the West was ignorant of democracy till his imperial

reigns in India, Africa, Australia, etc. bestowed unprecedented riches and power on the Western rulers, and it was this affluence which taught them the merits of democracy and the Western countries started turning democratic. Iqbal, in a letter to R.A. Nicholson, writes: 'The Kingdom of God on earth mean the democracy of more or less unique individuals, presided over by the most unique individual possible on this earth.'<sup>14</sup> Thus Islam does not net an ideal which is not attainable in this world. The basic difference between the Western democracy and Islamic democracy in that the latter is that 'where human society is founded not on the equality of stomachs but on the equality of spirits,..., where private ownership is a trust and where capital cannot be allowed to accumulate so as to dominatable the real producer of wealth'.<sup>15</sup> This democratic system is achievable in this world and was achieved in truly Muslim states in the past.

What according to Iqbal ails the Muslim world today and what is the remedy he suggests? The Muslim world today is ailing of suffering from two major evils: (i) 'The first is the want of personalities' and (ii) 'The second evil... is that the community in fast losing what is called the herd instinct',<sup>16</sup> He adds, 'This makes it possible for individuals and groups to start independent careers without contributing to the general thought and activity of the community.'<sup>17</sup> This deterioration has been caused by the introduction of racism, sectarianism, lingual prejudices, etc, which were unknown to the Muslim world and racism forbidden by Islam. Iqbal suggests under the circumstances the following remedies:

(i)'If today you focus your attention on Islam and seek inspiration from the ever-vitalizing idea embodied in it, you will be only reassembling your scattered forces, regaining your lost integrity, and thereby saving yourself from total destruction'.<sup>18</sup>

(ii) When there is a political crisis you need 'to achieve the organize wholeness of a unified will... Rise above sectional interests and private ambitions, and learn to determine the value of your individual and collective action,...'<sup>19</sup>

(iii) Iqbal, however, suggests that 'For the present every Muslim nation must sink into her own deeper self, temporarily focus her vision on herself alone, until all are strong and powerful to form a living family of republics. It is truly manifested in a multiplicity of free independent units whose racial rivalries are adjusted and harmonized by the unifying bond of common spiritual aspiration'.<sup>20</sup> Thus, what Iqbal eventually envisages is a family of Muslim

republics which are beyond all prejudices and sources of mutual hatred and enmity.

Iqbal was not only concerned about the formation of the living family of the Muslim republics, he rather envisaged the whole of humanity in the embrace of Islam as the final ideal to be achieved. He regrets that the humanity today has become too materialistic in its approach to the world problems, and also that the individual man has been shackled in the net of materialism, as a result whereof the humanity is heading towards self-destruction. So, he offers following remedies for the humanity at large needs three things today:- He says, 'Humanity needs three things today:-

(i) 'a spiritual interpretation of the universe;

(ii) 'spiritual emancipation of the individual; and

(iii) 'basic principles of a universal import directing the evolution of human society on a spiritual basis.'<sup>21</sup>

These three things, which humanity needs today, can be provided only by Islam which can extract humanity from the shackles of materialism which is gnawing her ethically and spiritually. Today morality has been confined to business with the Western people with all the other necessary facets of morality having been ignored.

## Notes and References

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- <sup>1</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, Allama, *The Reconstructin of Religious Thought in Islam*, Iqbal Academy Pakistan, Lahore, 2021, p. 122
  - <sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 132
  - <sup>3</sup> *Sabih Muslim*, Hadith No. 1167
  - <sup>4</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, Allama, *The Reconstructin of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 123
  - <sup>5</sup> Sherwani, Latif Ahmad, *Speeches, Writings & Statements of Iqbal*, Iqbal Academy Paksitan, Lahore, p. 12
  - <sup>6</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, Allama, *The Reconstructin of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 125
  - <sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 138
  - <sup>8</sup> Ibid.
  - <sup>9</sup> Sherwani, *Speeches, Writings & Statements of Iqbal*, p. 142
  - <sup>10</sup> Ibid, p. 139
  - <sup>11</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, Allama, *The Reconstructin of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 116
  - <sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. 142
  - <sup>13</sup> Sherwani, *Speeches, Writings & Statements of Iqbal*, p. 157
  - <sup>14</sup> A.J. Arberry (Eng-tr.), *Javid Namah*, Intro., p. 11
  - <sup>15</sup> Sherwani, *Speeches, Writings & Statements of Iqbal*, p. 44

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 27

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 29

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, Allama, *The Reconstructin of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 126

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p. 142



THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF  
EXISTENCE: A CALL TO AWAKEN THE  
LIGHT OF *DHARMA*

Muhammad Suheyl Umar

## ABSTRACT

This paper examines the spiritual crisis of the modern world, which transcends political and economic systems. As the 20th century approached, both the East and West were affected by a shared crisis—rooted in the loss of religious certainties and transcendence, a condition that emerged with the rise of the scientific worldview. The belief in humanity as the highest measure of meaning led to the diminishment of human stature and control. Drawing on various religious traditions, the paper emphasizes the need for spiritual reform, reconnecting humans with the divine and transcendent principles, symbolized by the concept of *Dharma*. This concept, present in Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, and other Wisdom Traditions, calls for a holistic understanding of the world, where humanity's spiritual and cosmic well-being are intertwined. The author critiques the modern Western reliance on science for understanding reality and the disregard for *Dharmic* principles, which encompass existential and ethical values. The environmental and societal crises facing the world are seen as a result of spiritual detachment. The paper advocates for a return to the transcendental worldview, where all of nature and human actions are interconnected with the divine, urging humanity to adopt a more spiritually grounded approach to life and the environment.



An attempt to make a better world on the basis of a worsened humanity, can only end in the very abolition of what is human, and consequently in the abolition of happiness too.

The crisis world found itself in as it swung on the hinge of the 20th century is located in something deeper than particular ways of organizing political systems and economies. In different ways, the East and the West were going through a single common crisis whose cause was the spiritual condition of the modern world. That condition is characterized by a loss— the loss of religious certainties and of transcendence with its larger horizons. The nature of that loss is strange but ultimately quite logical. When, with the inauguration of the scientific worldview, human beings started considering themselves the bearers of the highest meaning in the world and the measure of everything, meaning began to ebb and the stature of humanity to diminish. The world lost its human dimension, and we began to lose control of it. In the words of F. Schuon:

The world is miserable because men live beneath themselves; the error of modern man is that he wants to reform the world without having either the will or the power to reform man, and this flagrant contradiction, this attempt to make a better world on the basis of a worsened humanity, can only end in the very abolition of what is human, and consequently in the abolition of happiness too. Reforming man means binding him again to Heaven, reestablishing the broken link; it means tearing him away from the reign of the passions, from the cult of matter, quantity and cunning, and reintegrating him into the world of the spirit and serenity...<sup>1</sup>

**This is exactly what *Dharma* is all about.**

If anything characterizes the modern era, it is a loss of faith in transcendence, in God as an objective reality. It is the age of eclipse of transcendence. No socio-cultural environment in the pre-Modern times had turned its back on Transcendence in the systematic way that characterized Modernity. Transcendence means that there is another reality, symbolized by *Dharma* that is more real, more powerful, and better than this mundane order. The eclipse of transcendence impacted our way of looking at the world, that is, forming a worldview? Whatever transpires in other domains of life—politics, living standards, environmental conditions, interpersonal relationships, the arts—was ultimately dependent on

our presiding world view in which the light of *Dharma* has been eclipsed to a large extent. Modern Westerners, forsaking clear thinking, allowed themselves to become so obsessed with life's material underpinnings that they had written science a blank cheque; a blank cheque for science's claims concerning what constituted Reality, knowledge and justified belief. We continue to honour science for what it tells us about nature or the natural order/natural world, but as that is not all that exists, science cannot provide us with a worldview— not a valid one. The most it can show us is half of the world, the half where normative and intrinsic values, existential and ultimate meanings, teleologies, qualities, immaterial realities, and beings that are superior to us do not appear; *Dharmic* principles are marginalized and relegated to the status of beliefs that belonged to the “childhood” of the human race.

**“Awakening the Light of *Dharma*: How to Uphold *Dharma* in the World Today”**, was yet another initiative of the GWIP to bring the *Dharmic* principles to the forefront and, possibly, make it a part of the modern discourse. In what follows I want to make a redress; redress for the absence from the discourse of the *Dharmic* principles as expounded in the Wisdom Traditions or enduring faiths of the world other than Hinduism and Buddhism. When I received the vision statement and, later on, the detailed program of the congregation, my initial impression was that Hinduism and Buddhism were being given a privileged position in having the notion which I have termed as The “Anthropocosmic Vision” of *Dharma*; as if the other Wisdom Traditions or world religions somehow lacked this perspective on reality. It would be the burden of my remarks that this is not the case. The deficiency that I hope to supply to some extent through these remarks. I would like to start with Hinduism. Yesterday Sraddhalu Ji did a marvelous job of explaining the concept of *Dharma* from the Hindu perspective and no one can surpass or even equal his eloquence in this regard. But, no, wait, there is someone who can, let me seek the help of this superior authority which says:

### **Hinduism**

As a spider sends forth and draws in its threads, as herbs grow on the earth, as the hair grow on the body and the head of a living person, so from the Imperishable here arises the universe.

(Mūndāka Upanishad I.i.7).

I am the birth of this cosmos:/Its dissolution also.

I am he who causes:/No other beside me.

Upon me, these worlds are held/Like pearls strung on a thread.  
I am the essence of the waters,/The shining of the sun and the moon,  
Om in all the Vedas,/The word that is God.  
It is I who resound in the ether/And am potent in man,  
I am the sacred smell of the earth,/The light of the fire  
Life of all lives,/Austerity of ascetics.  
You must know that whatever belongs to the states of sattwa/Rajas and  
tamas proceed from me.  
They are contained in me,/But I am not in them....

(*Bhagavat Gīta*)

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## Buddhism

جو ہے بیدار انسان میں وہ گہری نیند سوتا ہے  
شجر میں، پھول میں، حیواں میں، پتھر میں، ستارے میں

That which is awake in the humans, is in slumber deep  
In trees, flowers, animals, minerals and stars.<sup>2</sup>

(Iqbal)

\*\*\*\*\*

.....the ultimate ground of all experience, a rationally directed creative will which we have found reasons to describe as an ego. In order to emphasize the individuality of the Ultimate Ego the Qur'an gives Him the proper name of Allah, and further defines Him as...<sup>3</sup>  
Say: He, God, is One God, the Self-Sufficient Besought of all,<sup>4</sup>  
He begets not, nor is begotten,  
And there is none like unto Him.

(Qur'ān, 112: 1-4)

\*\*\*\*\*

There is, monks, an unborn, not become, not made, uncompounded; and were it not, monks, for this unborn, not become, not made, uncompounded, no escape could be shown here for what is born, has become, is made, is compounded.

But because there is, monks, an unborn, not become, not made, uncompounded, therefore an escape can be shown for what is born, has become, is made, is compounded.<sup>7</sup>

(Gawtama the Buddha—Udāna, 80-81)<sup>5</sup>

## The Unborn

In terms of time, then, the 'unborn' and the 'not become' can be understood to refer to a reality or essence which, being above and beyond the temporal condition, is perforce the origin of that condition; it is from this 'not become' that all becoming originates. This unnamed degree of reality thus has an explicit resonance with

the way in which Allāh is described in 112:3, as being unbegotten; and one might discern an implicit relationship with certain dimensions of the divine reality, in particular.

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### ***Al-Samad and Dharma***

The Islamic distinction between the oneness of God's Essence and the multiplicity of creation evokes the Buddhist distinction between the oneness of the uncompounded and the multiplicity of the compounded. This conceptual similarity is further reinforced by the meaning of the term *Samad*: in addition to being positively described as that which is eternally self-sufficient, and that which is sought by all else, it is also apophatically referred to as 'that which is not empty or hollow' (*ajwaf*).<sup>6</sup> This immediately brings to mind the fundamental Buddhist belief that the *Dharma*, as such, is alone 'full', all other *Dharmas* are 'empty', empty that is, of 'self-being' (*svabhāva*). Indeed, one of the most fundamental propositions common to all schools of Mahayana Buddhism is the 'emptiness' of all specific '*Dharmas*': 'selfless are all *Dharmas*, they have not the character of living beings, they are without a soul, without a personality.'<sup>7</sup>

In other words, as applied to any existent entity, the word '*Dharma*' implies an emptiness deprived of suchness, whereas the *Dharma* as such is absolute Suchness. Relative *Dharmas* cannot sustain themselves; they depend entirely for their existence on a range of other *Dharmas*, nothing in existence being free from dependence upon an indefinite series of factors, all of which are interdependent, and at the same time totally dependent upon the *Dharma* as such, which alone is 'full' of Itself. The *Dharma* has no 'hollowness' or emptiness within it, but rather, just as in the case of *al-Samad*, it is that to which all 'empty' things resort in order to be filled with being, a being which, however, never ceases to be that of the Absolute; it does not become a property or defining quality of the relative things, which are all fatally marked by impermanence and unreality, even while they are endowed with existence.

In Buddhist texts the *Dharma* is stressed as the ultimate Essence of all things or their ultimate Suchness (*tathatā*); but to avoid any possible reification of this Essence, either in thought or in language, the Suchness is in turn identified with the Void (*Shūnya*).

All this also resonates deeply with the following simple statement by the Buddha, which figures in the very first chapter of the *Dhammapada*:

Those who think the unreal is, and think the Real is not, they shall never reach the Truth, lost in the path of wrong thought.

But those who know the Real is, and know the unreal is not, they shall indeed reach the Truth, safe on the path of right thought. <sup>8</sup>

This statement echoes the first testimony of Islam, understood metaphysically or epistemologically, rather than simply theologically. It also echoes the verse of the Qur'ān: There is no compulsion in religion. Indeed the right way has been made distinct from error. So whoever rejects [lit. 'disbelieves': *yakfir*] the false gods and believes in God, he has truly held tight to the firmest of handles, which can never break (2: 256).

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### Zoroastrianism

In Zoroastrianism earth is itself seen as part of the hierarchy of angels so central to Zoroastrianism. "We are celebrating this liturgy in honour of the earth which is an angel". And as H Corbin has observed "We have to capture here the phenomenon of the Earth as an angelophany".

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### Judaism

In Judaism the Divine Reality or Ein-şof (in Arabic *Aḥad*) is also present in God's creation. According to Zohar the process of creation involves the nexus between the archetypal realities and the outer world: "the process of creation, too, has taken place on two planes, one above and one below, and for that reason the Torah begins with the letter "beth" the numerical of which is equal to two. The lower occurrence corresponds to the higher; one produced the upper world (of the Sefiroth), the other the nether world (of the visible creation).

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### Christianity

Because all *lógoi* exist in the Logos and have their unity in Him, and the Logos is incarnated in the *lógoi*, the Christian can contemplate the Logos in the *lógoi*. "The *lógoi* of intelligible beings may be understood as the blood of the Logos and the *lógoi* of the

sensible things as the flesh of the Logos.....” The Logos is not only incarnated in the flesh in Christ but also in the *lógoi* of all things (*svadharma* of Hinduism may not have been lost on the audience). Western Christianity was far from being bereft of the similar vision and exposition of the Divine Roots of nature, and for it I allow some poetry to make the point:

I am the supreme fiery force  
That kindles every spark of life  
That I have breathed on will never die,  
I order the cycle of things in being;  
Hovering round in sublime flight,  
Wisdom lends it rhythmic beauty.

I am the divine fiery life  
Blazing over the full-ripened grain  
I gleam in the reflection of the waters  
I burn in the sun and moon and stars  
In the breeze I have secret life  
Animating all things and lending them cohesion.

I am life in all its abundance  
For I was not released from the Rock of the Ages  
Nor did I bud from a branch  
Nor spring from man’s begetting  
In me is the root of life  
Spirit is the root which buds in the word  
And God is the intelligible spirit

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## **Islam**

In its root, the existence of the cosmos is tied to the Being who is Necessary through Himself. Hence each part of the cosmos is tied to every other part, and each is an interconnecting link on a chain. When man begins to consider the science of the cosmos, he is taken from one thing to another because of the interrelationships. But in fact, this only happens in the science of the Folk of Allah. Their science does not follow the canon of those of the learned who know only the outward appearances of phenomena. The canon of the Folk of Allah ties together all parts of the cosmos, so they are taken from one thing to another, even if the scholar of outward appearances sees no relationship. This is knowledge of God....

He who knows the Koran and realizes it will know the science of the Folk of Allah. He will know that their science does not enter

into limited chapters, nor does it follow the canon of logic, nor can it be weighed by any scale. It is the scale of all scales. (III 200.26)

Most people work contrary to this direct tasting [of the divine things]. That is why their speech is not tied together. He who considers their speech looks for a root to which all their words go back, but he does not find it. But each part of our speech is interrelated with the other parts, since it is one entity, while these things I say are its differentiation. A person will know what I am saying if he knows the interconnection of the verses of the Koran.

Ibn 'Arabī *Futuḥāt* (II 548.15)

\* \* \*

Like pearls do we live and move and have our being in the perpetual flow of Divine life.<sup>9</sup>

(Iqbal)

\* \* \*

The world, in all its details, from the mechanical movement of what we call the atom of matter to the free movement of thought in the human ego, is the self-revelation of the "Great I am".<sup>10</sup>

(Iqbal)

\* \* \*

Throughout the entire gamut of being runs the gradually rising note of egohood until it reaches its perfection in man. That is why the Qur'an declares the Ultimate Ego to be "nearer to man than his own neck-vein."<sup>11</sup>

(Iqbal)

\* \* \*

هَذَا رُوزِي كِه پيش از روز و شب  
فارغ از اندوه و آزاد از طلب  
متحد بوديم با شاه وجود  
حکم غيريت بکلی محو بود  
ناگهان در جنبش آمد بحر جود  
جمله را در خود ز خود با خود نمود  
واجب و ممکن ز هم ممتاز شد  
رسم و آئين دوتی آغاز شد

جای

Celebrate the “Day” when before all day and night/Devoid of all grief  
and free of desire  
We were one with the Lord of Being/the property of “Otherness” was  
entirely obliterated  
All at once the Ocean of generosity rose into outpouring and effusion  
Manifested everything out of Itself, by Itself  
The Necessary Being and Possible existents became differentiated from  
each other  
Thus began the rule and canon of duality

\* \* \*

نگہ پیدا کر اے غافل تجلی عین فطرت ہے  
کہ اپنی موج سے بیگانہ رہ سکتا نہیں دریا

Secure some insight, O heedless soul, self-disclosure (or manifestation)  
rises from the depths of the Divine Nature  
Because the sea cannot remain indifferent to its waves.<sup>12</sup>

(Iqbal)

\* \* \*

God radiates. It is in the nature of the Good to wish to communicate  
itself, and it is for this reason that God created the world and man; this  
is the whole mystery of Maya.

(Frithjof Schuon)

\* \* \*

The Shahādah (of Islam— *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*) refers to *Tawhīd*, to the  
Consciousness of Oneness, therefore to the theme of unique and  
transcendent Reality and to that of pure and immanent Ipseity, because  
it expresses both the unicity or exclusivity of the Principle, and its  
totality or inclusivity.

(Frithjof Schuon)

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While talking about Buddhism mention was made of the  
cardinal concept of *Al-Ṣamad* which corresponds to the Buddhist  
idea of *Dharma*, that is, the *Dharma*, as such, which alone is ‘full’, all  
other *Dharmas* are ‘empty’, empty that is, of ‘self-being’ (*svabhāva*). It  
is now time to reflect on the Islamic exposition of the *svadharma*,  
(the shari‘ah of each order of existence, or in Buddhist terms, the  
*Dharmas* of things, “the laws of nature”), how the prototype of all  
existence in the Divine Order (the *Lawh Mahfūz*), the Holy Ground,  
descend to the lower levels of existence and finally to the world of  
nature. The order of nature, therefore reflects and issues from the  
order that exists in the Divine Realm.



The central idea of Islam is the principle of *Tawhīd*, which really should be translated as ‘integrating Oneness’ rather than simply as ‘unity’– integrating Oneness, that makes One, realises One. And this Oneness is to be understood not just on the level of the Divine; that there is one God as opposed to many gods. It is also to be understood on the level of Reality. There is one Reality that encompasses all that is, penetrates all that is. We are moving from a theological conception of unity to an ontological conception of unity, not just a question of one God, but one Being, one Reality.

The roots of this perception, the conception could easily be discerned from one of the most important sayings of the Prophet called *hadīth* of the hidden Treasure where God speaks in the first person: ‘I was a hidden treasure and I loved to be known so I created’. The hidden treasure loving to be known becomes this entire cosmos. And the Qur’anic verses that most explicitly refer to this manifestation of this hidden treasure are ones which talk about God being the First and the Last, the *awwal* and the *ākhir*, the *ẓāhir* and the *bāṭin*, the outwardly manifest and the inwardly hidden. So, this outwardly manifest aspect of God, the *ẓāhir* aspect of God is the one that has given risen to the most fruitful speculations and reflections because it is clear to most people using their intellect that God must be the origin of all things. The Divine Reality must be the end of all things; the Divine Reality is hidden within all things. An all-encompassing Divine Reality, which, likewise, is organic and this is what the meaning of Tawhid is all about; the interconnectedness of all phenomena in this Oneness of divine Reality.

The environmental crisis could not have happened in a universe fashioned by the Qur’anic view of nature, this is an incontrovertible fact. We could not conceive of a small group of scientists breaking away from a community of believers who had instilled into them the sense of the holiness of virgin nature. And this holiness is not just an abstract holiness. It was a concrete one. The Qur’an dominated the thinking and the being of the Muslims as it still does for the overwhelming majority at least, if not all, of Muslims today.

A very telling remark is encountered in some of the traditional writings. It is often said there are two Qur’ans: The Qur’an *tadwīnī* and The Qur’an *takwīnī*, i.e. Word made Book and Word made Nature, or in other words, the signs, the manifestation of the Principle that appears in the form of a Book and as the natural realm in the macrocosm. When the Qur’an tells us ‘*in min shay’inillayusabbihu bi-hamdihī*’: There is no thing which does not

hymn the praise of the Lord. It is easy for the outsiders to point to this and say this is a sort of philosophical abstract ideal. It becomes very concrete as soon as you see that in so many of the other verses we are told specifically about the phenomena of nature and we have this remarkable verse, which tells us, sort of a rhetorical question: ‘Do you not see (أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَبِّحُكُمْ كُلَّ) that everything that is in the heavens and the earth praises God?’ And then, just as you think that this may be an abstract philosophical idea that everything by virtue of its existence praises its creator, the Qur’an tells us about the birds, a graphic image of the birds in flight. Then you have to read it, when you are reciting these words, in such a way that it makes it onomatopoeic: (وَ الطَّيْرُ أَصْفَتْ كُلُّ قَدْ عَلِمَ صَلَاتَهُ وَ تَسْبِيحَهُ ط) ‘And the birds in flight, each one knows its prayer and its mode of praise.’

So you cannot get away with any abstract philosophical idea. You have the metaphysics of it expressed and then the concrete image of it, the birds being the most wonderful example to be given here and symbolic of the higher spiritual states. The birds, whose very flight indicates the defying of gravity, therefore, something supernatural. The birds that can sing—and what sound is more moving to us human beings than bird-song amongst the sounds of animate creatures? The birds are a wonderful image, wonderful symbols given to us, of the prayer and glorification of nature.

To sum up, God is not only the creator of the cosmos, *ex nihilo*, from nothing. The Divine creativity also inhabits the cosmos, as it were in *principio*, in the principle, and not just ‘in the beginning’. There is nothing that evades this principle. The divine Name *Al-Muḥītis*, among other divine Names and Qualities, the one that indicate this most explicitly. It is: that which encompasses. *Muḥīt* also means the ‘environment’. The perfect submission of the order of nature to its *Dharma* is a lesson for man to submit himself perfectly to that norm which is his *Dharma* and which is none other than the quest for enlightenment. So when we talk about the environmental crisis, we talk about a crisis that afflicts the very nature of the content of this divine environment, the environment which is, implicitly divine.

It might appear as paradoxical, but virgin nature, that grand work of sacred art created by the Supreme Artisan, also manifests the beauty of the Eternal Realm through its forms and rhythms, through the grace that flows from her and the subtle metaphysical message imprinted upon the pages of cosmic reality. One usually thinks of nature only as the abode of change bound in the clutches

of time, and indeed that is what it is if viewed scientifically and from the point of view of natural philosophy, the word *natura* itself being the Latin equivalent to the Greek physics, which means that which is born and enters into the domain of change. But there is not only nature as *naturanaturata* but also as *naturanaturans*, to use the medieval Scholastic distinction between “created” and “creating” nature. An eternal reality shines through the very forms and processes of change which we identify with nature, a reality to which modern science is totally impervious. This reality was, however, the very foundation of the traditional cosmologies and sciences of nature. It also remained and still remains the vivid background for the daily experience of nature by traditional man, who perceives, thanks to tradition, the permanent forms reflected upon the surface of that flowing river of time in which man cannot ever put his finger in the same water twice.

Everyone talks today of the danger of war, over population or the pollution of air, water and soil. But usually the same people who discern these obvious problems speak of the necessity of further ‘development’. In other words they wish to remove the problems brought about by the destruction of the equilibrium between man and nature through further conquest and domination of nature. Few would be willing to admit that the acutest social and technical problems facing mankind today come not from so called ‘under development’ but from ‘over development’. Few are willing to look reality in the face and accept the fact that there is no peace possible in human society as long as the attitude toward nature and the whole natural environment is one based on aggression, violence and exploitation. Furthermore, there is little realization of the fact that in order to gain this peace with nature there must be peace with the spiritual order. **To be at peace with the Earth one must be at Peace with Heaven.**

The Qur’an helps each and every one of us to see the inalienable relationship between human responsibility and cosmic wellbeing, however large the consequences of the past actions of humanity be writ on the cosmic scale. The Qur’an never lets you stray into hopelessness, or despair, because the more you see the ‘signs’ of the end of the world, the more you train your focus on what you, individually, must do about your world: the signs rebound upon yourself.

And so it is on that note of optimism based on realism of where we stand that I will finish and just add that this note of the invocation and its relationship to the natural world is not, by any

means, confined within Islam. It is something that is found in all of the traditions and, in a sense, it is an expression of the truth that the whole of creation is the utterance of God, the word of God, the Name of God. The Name is always an expression of the Named. So when the human being within the world utters the divine Name, that human being is integrating himself within the divine Nature and thereby the whole of creation participates in that re-integration. And that's the meaning that Platonic philosophy brings home so clearly, and is found expressed also in all the major spiritual traditions of the world: the microcosm is a small world. When correctly understood, this means that when you correct yourself, this actions has repercussions that ripple throughout the whole universe.

**This is expressed most beautifully by a great sage Ramana Maharshi, when one of his disciples came to him and said 'I am trying to realise myself in accordance with your teachings, but what about the world, how can I improve the state of the world?' And the Ramana looked at his disciple and said: 'You are the world.'**

### Notes and References

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- <sup>1</sup> F. Schuon, *Understanding Islam*, reprinted, Suhail Academy, Lahore, 2004, pp. 26.
  - <sup>2</sup> This is statement of Lord Buddha which Muhammad Iqbal, the poet-Philosopher, rendered into Urdu verse.
  - <sup>3</sup> M. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, IAP, Lahore, 1987, pp. 50.
  - <sup>4</sup> This rather wordy translation of the single Arabic word (which is one of the Names of God) *al-Samad* is given by Martin Lings (*The Holy Qur'an—Translations of Selected Verses*, Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute & The Islamic Texts Society, 2007), p.200. Lings' translation does full justice to the two fundamental connotations of the name: al-Samad is absolutely self-sufficient, on the one hand, and, for this very reason, is eternally besought by all other beings, on the other. See al-Rāghib al-Isfahānī's, classical dictionary of Qur'ānic terms, *Mu'jammufradātalfāz al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, n.d.), p.294.

- <sup>5</sup> *Buddhist Texts Through the Ages*, eds. E. Conze, I.B. Horner, D. Snelgrove, A. Waley (Oxford: Bruno Cassirer, 1954), p.95.
- <sup>6</sup> *Mu'jammufradāt*, op. cit., p.94.
- <sup>7</sup> *Diamond Sutra*, cited in E. Conze, *Buddhist Wisdom Books* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1958), p.59.
- <sup>8</sup> *The Dhammapada—The Path of Perfection* (tr. Juan Mascaró) (Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1983), I,11-12.
- <sup>9</sup> Underlying the human self and animating it is a reservoir of being that never dies, is never exhausted, and is unrestricted in consciousness and bliss. This infinite center of every life, this hidden self, is no less than the Godhead. Body, personality, and this infinite center— a human self is not completely accounted for until all three are noted. That was not only Iqbal's fundamental position, as reflected in this quatrain, but the shared “anthropocosmic” vision of all wisdom traditions of the world.
- <sup>10</sup> This is reference to Qur'an, 20: 14. The statement continues: “Every atom of Divine energy, however low in the scale of existence, is an ego. But there are degrees in the expression of egohood.” (M. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious thought in Islam*, IAP, Lahore, 1987, pp. 57-58.)
- <sup>11</sup> Qur'an, 50: 16. Underlying the human self and animating it is a reservoir of being that never dies, is never exhausted, and is unrestricted in consciousness and bliss. This infinite center of every life, this hidden self, is no less than the Godhead. Body, personality, and this infinite center— a human self is not completely accounted for until all three are noted. That was not only Iqbal's fundamental position, as reflected in this quatrain, but the shared “anthropocosmic” vision of all wisdom traditions of the world.
- <sup>12</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, *Bāl i Jibrīl*, in *Kulliyāt i Iqbal* (Collected Poetical Works=CPW), Urdu, Iqbal Academy Pakistan, Lahore, 1994, p. 359/35.



REIMAGINING GENDER ROLES: ALLAMA  
IQBAL'S FEMINIST DISCOURSE WITHIN  
AN ISLAMIC FRAMEWORK

Mehnaz

## ABSTRACT

This study explores the intersection of feminism and Islamic thought, particularly through the lens of Allama Iqbal's poetry and philosophy. It begins by defining feminism as a movement advocating for equal rights, bodily integrity, and protection from violence for women, highlighting the transformative impact of its core moral insights. The paper discusses the evolving perspectives on gender equality, emphasizing that thinkers like Germaine Greer view the concept as overly simplistic, advocating instead for an understanding of inherent gender differences. Margot Badran's notion of Islamic feminism is introduced, positioning it as a discourse that seeks gender equality within an Islamic framework. Iqbal's works are examined to demonstrate how he challenges traditional representations of women as weak, instead presenting them as powerful, capable figures integral to societal progress. Through selected poems, the study illustrates Iqbal's advocacy for women's education, freedom, and societal roles, arguing that his perspective is shaped by Islamic teachings that emphasize respect and dignity for women. Ultimately, the paper asserts that Iqbal's vision remains relevant, offering a path for modern women to reclaim their agency while navigating the complexities of contemporary society.



The term feminism involves political and sociological theories and philosophies concerned with issues of gender difference aims at establishing equal rights to bodily integrity and autonomy, reproductive rights and legal protection for women from rape, sexual harassment and domestic violence. It has altered the lives and minds of women forever with its core moral insight, that women are due the same rights and dignity as men and advocates gender equality for women and campaigns for their rights and interests.

As the feminist writer Carol Gilligan (2002) observes, ‘women not only define themselves in a context of human relationship but also judge themselves in terms of their ability to care.’ Men and women are neither equal nor unequal for intelligent thinkers such as Germaine Greer who no longer demanded ‘equality’. They knew that the awareness of the categoric difference between the sexes made the whole concept of ‘equality’ rather too simpleminded. To use the old language of ‘equality’ is in fact to be guilty of what the philosopher Wittgenstein (1953) called a ‘category mistake’ because we can no more say that men are better than women than we can say that ‘the rain is better than the earth’.

A combination of Islam and feminism has been advocated as “a feminist discourse and practice articulated within an Islamic paradigm” by Margot Badran in 2002. Islamic feminists ground their opinions in Islam and its teachings, pursue the full equality of men and women in the private and public sphere, Islamic feminism really worth viewing is that it has the potential to play an extremely important part in improving the lot of women.

Allama Iqbal has discussed about women’s role and status in a society in his poetry, lectures, research papers and discourses. The stereotypical representation of women as the weaker gender has been challenged and given a new perspective by him as of strong and capable women. By doing so, he has made readers reflect on the current social and cultural norms, and to challenge, renew and redefine practices, which have become part of the then society. This study has set out to examine how he has employed the Islamic feminist thought in his selected poems and its role in contributing

to raising awareness and as an agent for change as well. I argue that his perspective is shaped by his religion Islam.

Islam worked on creating equality among people and tried to eliminate the different barriers created by people fourteen hundred years ago. History is witness that not a single religion or civilization of the world has endowed women their due status except Islam and woman has always been suppressed and deprived of their rights since ages. Allama Iqbal as Muslim feminists actively reinterpreted and contextualized woman's status according to Islam to make it relevant to their lives today. He had felt threatened by European culture to traditional arrangements between the sexes. In the West, feminism lagged behind religious reformation; in the East Islamic feminism affirm the dignity of Islam while at the same time bringing it more in line with modernity. Although West has attracted the eastern woman in the name of women's right but Western feminism does not take into consideration the needs and expectations of Muslim women.

Allama Iqbal assimilated the new insights insisting that the demand for 'equality' is less helpful than the demand for opportunity and respect and to know them as they are. After all, it's striking that Iqbal, who throughout his intellectual life had almost nothing to say to women, in his last volume *Zerb i Kaleem* actually created the specially titled little group of *ghazals* for women. In his poetry it's easy to feel how boldly Iqbal urged Muslims to reimagine and remake the world a proper abode for women. He felt troubled by the inspiration and aspirations of westernized women, and struggled to find worthy place for Muslim women in his view of society.

There were times in the human history when the center of creation and universe were only men, while the women only served as a means of sexual gratification and subservience to men and were considered lesser beings with no human or social rights. However, Islam hold great respect for woman and commends the followers to respect women in every role. Iqbal shares the same view and does not consider a Woman weak; rather he believes in her natural compassion, sympathy and feminine strength that has the capacity to create, recreate and move toward the goal to build nation.

Allama Iqbal has expressed the significance of women in his poem "aurat" as follows:

وجودِ زن سے ہے تصویرِ کائنات میں رنگ  
اسی کے ساز سے ہے زندگی کا سوزِ دُروں

Color in the portrait of universe is from Woman  
From her warmth is the inner warmth of life

شرف میں بڑھ کے ثریا سے مشیتِ خاک اس کی  
کہ ہر شرف ہے اسی دُرج کا دُرِ مکنوں

In glory her dust is greater than stars  
Each glory is the hidden pearl of her shell.

Her this potential inspired Allama Iqbal to discuss woman, her freedom and education in *Zarb-i-Kaleem*. He has not presented the traditional man with power, sovereignty, with princely accomplishment and woman as weak, submissive and indecisive rather his men and women are deviation from the prescribed gender roles. His woman is educated and has brilliant mind to turn the world around her into heaven with her beautiful colors.

According to Iqbal woman is the root of all civilizations (Mueene, 1963). Women role in nation building and development of a society is pivotal and peculiar. It should not be evaluated with reference to men's role. Women are the 'Creative Functionaries' (Dar, 1981). They are entitled with the sacred responsibility of procreation. They cannot get rid of it otherwise, life will cease to continue. Whereas In the industrial revolution, western culture used woman as a labor and destroyed the basic unit of its society i.e. 'home' to reach this target. Therefore their women are facing more psychological and social problems. He feels pity on their pathetic condition that they are not being given the status, consideration and freedom they deserve at home or in society. Although Islam, a religion of equality, has provided the social status to the women equal to that of men but in patriarchal society men don't like hearing and accepting the truth that their women are not only are not respected as they should be but they are even treated with contempt.

The same he expresses in his poem "*aurat*":

جوہر مرد عیاں ہوتا ہے بے مئیتِ غیر  
غیر کے ہاتھ میں ہے جوہرِ عورت کی نمود

The essence/quality of man is plain, without indebtedness to another,

The manifestness of the essence/quality of woman is in the hands of another!

راز ہے اس کے تپِ غم کا یہی نکتہ شوق  
آتشیں، لذتِ تخلیق سے ہے اس کا وجود

Of her sorrow and grief, this is the point of ardor--

Her existence is inflamed with the relish of creating!

کھلتے جاتے ہیں اسی آگ سے اسرارِ حیات  
گرم اسی آگ سے ہے معرکہ بود و نبود

They open out through this fire, the mysteries of life,  
It is warm from this fire, the arena of existence and nonexistence!

میں بھی مظلومی نسواں سے ہوں غم ناک بہت  
نہیں ممکن مگر اس عقدہ مشکل کی کُشودا

I too am very sorrowful at the oppression of women,  
but it's not possible, the opening of this difficult knot!

He unveils the reality of the woman's exploitation and her condition that how she has not had the control over her life. It shows that although she has potential but still Men are reluctant to create an environment free of intellectual and emotional inequality and pressure to give her opportunity and right to explore and grow.

In modern times, women struggled for their emancipation and claimed for 'equality' and 'complete freedom'. In practice, the objective of women emancipation is to provide equal treatment to the women not just in politics and the work place, but in every sphere of life including access to education and financial security. Iqbal was against the 'equality' demanded by European women because he knew that the perceived roles of men and women and their natural responsibilities are different, how both can be evaluated by the same scale. It is said that the west champions the concept of gender equality and brings it to a desirable and ideal level but that concept of equality was not 'rational' in Iqbal's view. If we analyze the Islamic concept of equality we find that it does not affect the position of men or women as far as their responsibilities or accountabilities are concerned. Islam suggests a division of responsibilities for the survival and growth of its system. Individuals have to perform different roles as family is the corner stone of Islamic civilization. Islam gives woman the right of

property, trade and income-generation and the right to keep her profit to herself. Allama Iqbal shares the same view that Women's emancipation is not making women equal to men but it is to giving them the possibility to choose about their future, their jobs and their time.

He tries to show in his poetry that men could never understand women who had the confidence to do anything, and also showed how women can be strong and self-reliant. He maintains that it is only the women's intellect and vision that can clarify and explain the complex argument of 'women's liberation' in his poem *Azadi e Niswan*.

اس راز کو عورت کی بصیرت ہی کرے فاش  
مجبور ہیں، معذور ہیں، مردانِ خرد مند

This secret, only the insight of a woman would reveal--

They are helpless, they are [to be] excused, the men of wisdom

کیا چیز ہے آرائش و قیمت میں زیادہ  
آزادی نسواں کے زمرہ کا گلوبندا

Which thing is greater in adornment and value,  
The freedom of women, or an emerald necklace?

The line shows that freedom and feelings of a woman's existence were unknown to men and when men tried to understand the worth of woman's freedom they never really understood why it could be so valuable. Iqbal wanted to consider the need to understand the women's need, only then can their condition be changed. He believed that since majority of men didn't take action to try to reveal the inner mystery of woman then it was crazy to believe only his voice would work to change the lot of women. Through the poem He wanted to illustrate that the beauty of a woman is not from her ornamental appearance but her beauty can be represented as the power, confidence, and the strength of woman when she has freedom to express her potential. The "secret" meant her inner beauty that can be seen by men who thought the beauty of woman was only from her attractive looks. Iqbal in the poem tries to show how the society sees a woman and her freedom, how the men is helpless to see her inside as a woman but still she has positive side which is unknown to men. The last line showed that just women knew how much it was necessary to have a choice and finally sing for their freedom.

The gender concept of Islam does not restrict women to progress rather outlines the roadmap to their higher status. When Iqbal points out woman as the more important component of society, he lays so much emphasis on the education of woman. Woman equipped with both religious and modern education can definitely lead the younger generation to better individual and community life. Iqbal, according to the teachings of Quran, has encouraged providing equal opportunities of getting education as provided to man. He was against western teachings because it provokes women to disregard their domain. He considers, for woman religious educations even more important than worldly education.

Women has the right to get education however, Iqbal in “*aurat aur taleem*” expressed his feelings like this:

#### Woman and Education

عورت اور تعلیم

تہذیبِ فرنگی ہے اگر مرگِ اُمومت

ہے حضرتِ انساں کے لیے اس کا ثمر موت

If from European civilization is the death of motherhood,

For the presence/dignity of man, the fruit of this is death!

جس علم کی تاثیر سے زن ہوتی ہے نازن

کہتے ہیں اسی علم کو اربابِ نظر موت

The knowledge through the effect of which woman becomes non-woman--

This knowledge, the possessors of insight call death!

بیگانہ رہے دیں سے اگر مدرسہ زن

ہے عشق و محبت کے لیے علم و ہنر موت

If the madrasah of woman would remain a stranger to faith,

Then for passion and love, knowledge and skill are death!

Iqbal as a great poet with vision had predicted about a century ago the situation of his nation sandwiched between the teachings of Islam and western culture and education. Western education and their culture is derided by him as anathema to Islamic precepts and concepts of womanhood in Muslim states. In the poem he addresses the women not to follow the western culture and warns

that he can visualise the nation facing a great disaster just because of following the western culture.

Iqbal recommended that as a nation our solidarity depends on our adhesiveness to the religious principles. The moment it weakens, we will stand nowhere among nations (Eijaz, 2011). Iqbal considers women the principal depository in a nation; that is why he wants woman to get excellent and consistent religious education because she is the real builder of the nation. As education is the solution to all ills education should be meaningful. He wanted to create a culture of education and civilisation in which we can learn values and ethics as well. Therefore Iqbal is not convinced of western system of education rather education system should be determined according to the needs of a nation along with other systems (Iqbal, 1961).

In one of his poems “*aurat*” he argues the women power were as same as men. Although they were not as philosophical as men but they had another positive side that can make them look special.

To reach this goal Iqbal wants woman to be well equipped with religious as well as modern education as being a mother she plays a very important role in family life. Family is the basic unit of society and women is an inevitable constituent of a family. Her position cannot be denied; it's not important for the elevation of soul and personality of woman herself but it is of great importance for any nation and when it comes to the Muslim nation a mother is a trainer of future generation. Therefore, it is only woman who knows how to move forward in the given circumstances and get the utmost benefits.

In the family system, male is responsible to meet the fiscal needs of the family and the household. If a husband is poor, even then he has no right to take possession of what belongs to wife, in the name of household expenditure. Iqbal says, “I openly acknowledge with reference to Quranic verse ‘men are protector of women’ therefore, I can never be a supporter of equality between men and women” (Mueene, 1963).

In Islam men have been given the role of protectors and maintainers that is pure responsibility, pure liability, and not so much a position of authority. He is responsible for the women under their care and held liable for handling the affairs of women. Allah has favoured men over women by making men more perfect in reasoning and running affairs, but it does not mean that he has the right to behave obstinately towards her, suppress her

individuality, compel her, subject her to his will, and thus heinously negate her identity. God has given them more strength and reason as he has the responsibility of taking care of his family, protecting them, defending their honor, and fulfilling their needs regarding religion and worldly life. Iqbal stated in his interview, published in Liverpool Post, “It is in Islam that husband is duty bound to provide for his wife’s maintenance, in addition to the payment of dowry. In order to enforce her above rights she can take full possession of her husband’s property” (Dar, 1981).

In one of his poem

The Protection of Woman

Iqbal says:

### عورت کی حفاظت

اک زندہ حقیقت مرے سینے میں ہے مستور  
کیا سمجھے گا وہ جس کی رگوں میں ہے لہو سرد

A living truth/reality is hidden in my breast,  
How would he understand, in whose veins the blood is cold?

نے پردہ، نہ تعلیم، نئی ہو کہ پرانی  
نسوانیت زن کا نگہباز ہے فقط مرد

Neither pardah nor education, whether it be new or old--  
The guardian of the femininity of woman is only man

جس قوم نے اس زندہ حقیقت کو نہ پایا  
اُس قوم کا خورشید بہت جلد ہوا زرد

The community that didn’t realize this living truth/reality--  
That community’s sun very quickly became yellow [and faded]”

It does not mean that Iqbal is indicating that there is some inherent preference of men over women, but the matter of the verse refers to the natural makeup of men and women, with respect to their natural strengths, their different manners of thinking and their intellect. He knows that men, by nature, are more hot-blooded, tending more towards strength and severity can better take care of women, can spend on women and provide for them while women’s natures are cooler, tending more towards gentleness and softness has the power to build nation as a mother. Since Iqbal perceived gender difference as a biological phenomenon and



nature's plan, he did not consider women inferior to men. He takes women as a distinct, different and discrete creature therefore education should not aim to transform them into men. She should take pride in her being woman as she has been entitled with the important duty to perform but with her own will. Over all the message of Allama Iqbal for women is the same as directed by Islam. Allah granted a high place for women, and they should share the responsibilities of upholding the truth and forbidding evil.

We can conclude from the poetry of Iqbal that some of Iqbal's views about women's role in society are culturally conservative but these views constitute a very small fraction of his total philosophy. For me, the most important reason Iqbal remains profoundly relevant and inspirational not only to men but also to women is that as a universal humanist philosopher he considered all human beings to be God's vicegerents who were called upon to develop their potential to the fullest. Iqbal has given, and continues to give, to millions of Muslims – both men and women – the vision and the energy to engage in a passionate quest for a new world “vibrant with hope and high endeavour”.

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RUMI AND IQBAL: PHILOSOPHICAL  
BEACONS OF PEACE AGAINST  
TERRORISM

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## Abstract

This study examines the psychosocial dynamics of terrorism, particularly in the context of Pakistan's ongoing struggles following the American invasion of Afghanistan. It highlights the absence of a singular definition of terrorism, noting the consensus on its violent manifestations, including assassination, suicide attacks, and political kidnappings. Differentiating terrorism from general violence, the paper emphasizes the political motives underlying terrorist actions, often executed by extremist groups. It underscores the role of local individuals, influenced by socioeconomic factors and ideological motivations, in perpetuating terrorism. The study proposes education as a transformative tool to combat these issues and highlights the philosophical contributions of figures like Rumi and Allama Iqbal, who advocate for peace, harmony, and inter-religious coexistence. Rumi's teachings emphasize love and self-control as essential for societal harmony, while Iqbal's perspective integrates Islamic values with the need for a modern educational framework that nurtures individual character and promotes collective well-being. The paper concludes that effective leadership and a commitment to peace and harmony are vital for societal progress, offering a pathway to counter the challenges posed by terrorism.

## **Introduction**

Terrorism is a psychosocial process<sup>1</sup> that attracted global attention during the last few decades especially after 9/11. No single definition of terrorism can be found in literature as different people perceive and interpret it in different ways. But there is a consensus over its consequences as violence, assassination, suicide attack, hijackings and political kidnappings or political inhumanity. There is need to differentiate between terrorism and violence. Violence is an assurance of terrorism which must have a political motive.<sup>2</sup> It may be individual or group activity, which mostly depends on specific mind sets as domestic violence. On the other hand, terrorism is the practice of particular types of violence to threaten, coerce, or cause great harm and an act of illogicality for harming innocent people by a group. These groups are generally called extremist; they have their own agenda without any appropriate relation with a government or religion. After 40 years of American invasion in Afghanistan, Pakistan is still facing its consequences in the form of social, economic and political instability and becoming victim of terrorism. The most alarming fact is that in these activities, no one comes from outside, instead the native people are involved. They have been used in these criminal and inhuman activities either inspired by someone's preaching or motivated by money.

The strength of a community comes from inside, especially the young generation. Underprivileged and young unemployed community members suffering from injustice in society can easily divert from their paths. Education is the only tool to modify their behavior.

Philosophers play an important role in improving society. Rumi and Iqbal are considered the beacons of harmony and peace in society. The present study presents their thoughts as a remedy to terrorism. Harmony within a family promotes harmony in the society. Harmony is about co-existence, which means to live and let others live. In a world of increasing social, political and economic differences harmony paves the path for peace and prosperity. Interreligious harmony contributes to them. People having understanding of extensive human goals, are able to be harmonic with all human beings and with the rest of nature as wells. They are

able to see that they have association with nature and assure mutual gratification in that relationship.<sup>3</sup>

Peace is the state of being free from any kind of human conflict and violence. All the activities of the country run smoothly in the presence of peace. Peace is the sign of development and prosperity. Peace helps to promote human rights, democratic norms and values. Peace helps to create the feeling of love, trust, tolerance, and brotherhood among people. In other words, the development process of a country cannot go ahead without peace and harmony.<sup>4</sup>

All religions support and promote peace, justice, equality, brotherhood, liberty and harmony in society, and are against exploitation, brutality, barbarism and oppression of any kind. Same is the case with Islam. The word Islam means “to submit or to conciliate”. In Arabic language, “Islam” etymologically means harmony, peace and safety.<sup>5</sup> Islam is a religion of peace. The rules for behavior of life disclosed by Allah Almighty and those taught by all His Prophets spread patience, equivalence, union, integrity, peace and harmony.

Islam condemns aggression and advocates tolerance, peace and harmony. Muslim relationships are mainly based on peace and harmony.<sup>6</sup> It is a very common misconception that Islam is a violent religion.<sup>7</sup> Islam has played an essential role in developing and bringing man to this civilized, sophisticated kind of peaceful and harmonious existence. Indeed, like other religions of the world, Islam preaches the values of humanity, equality, sacrifice, a sense of obligation, peace and harmony in the society.

### **Mulana Rumi’s thoughts on Harmony and Peace**

Mulana Rumi propagated the lesson of harmony, peace and brotherhood. For the development of a well civilized society, universal spirituality is also required. Mulana Rumi presented the true purpose of a human being in a society as becoming a harmonious and peaceful person. Any philosophy that ignores the importance of peace and harmony in a society is neither Islamic nor Sufism. Ghabool opined that sectarianism can be eliminated from a society by providing harmony and peace.<sup>8</sup>

Mulana’s teachings are for all the generations, especially youth. His poetry focuses on everlasting peace and harmony in the journey of human struggle in the present life and beyond. Mulana asserts that patience, love and tolerance can magically speed up the process

of our mystical growth, and transform this harsh, aggressive world into a harmonious and peaceful place. He says

Being in love is made manifest by soreness of heart: there is no sickness like heart-sickness.

The lover's ailment is separate from all other ailments: love is the astrolabe of the mysteries of God.

Whether love be from this (earthly) side or from that (heavenly) side, in the end it leads us yonder.

Whatever I say in exposition and explanation of Love, when I come to love (itself) I am ashamed of that (explanation).

Although the commentary of the tongue makes (all) clear, yet tongueless love is clearer.

Whilst the pen was making haste in writing, it split upon itself as soon as it came to Love.

In expounding it (Love), the intellect lay down (helplessly) like an ass in the mire: it was Love (alone) that uttered the explanation of love and loverhood.

The proof of the sun is the sun (himself): if thou require the proof, do not avert thy face from him!"

(*Mathnawi* I: 109-116)

On another occasion, he said:

Set a fire in your heart from love,  
Burn all thoughts and statements,  
God stayed and everything else left,  
Be happy, oh fierce love, the burner of all our ills....

(Translated by Naini, 2008)

Mulana combines Islamic mysticism with artistic experimentation. Rumi saw himself as a teacher and a preacher. Naini, after a comprehensive study of Mulana's poetry concluded that his work promotes peace and harmony and gives expression to deep longing.<sup>9</sup>

Rumi said that:

نیت و ش باشد خیال اندر روان  
تو جهانی بر خیالی بین روان  
بر خیالی صلحشان و جنگشان  
وز خیالی فخرشان و ننگشان

(*Mathnawi*: I, 70-71)

Within the spirit, imagined forms are as nothing -- (yet) witness an (entire) world going on (based) upon something imaginary!

(Witness how) their peace and their war (is based) upon something imaginary, and (how) their pride and their shame (derives) from something imaginary.

باد درویشی چو در باطن بود  
بر سر آب جهان ساکن بود  
گرچه جمله این جهان ملک ویست  
ملک در چشم دل او لاشیست

(*Mathnawi*, I: 988-989)

When the breeze of (spiritual) poverty is (blowing) within (someone), he is abiding peacefully upon the surface of the world.

Even though this entire world is his kingdom, (such a) kingdom is (as) nothing in the eye of his heart.

گر به جهل آئیم آن زندان اوست  
ور به علم آئیم آن ایوان اوست  
ور به خواب آئیم متان و تیم  
ور به بیداری به دستان و تیم  
ور بگرییم ابر پر زرق و تیم  
ور بخندیم آن زمان برق و تیم  
ور به خشم و جنگ عکس قهر اوست  
ور به صلح و عذر عکس مهر اوست

(*Mathnawi*, I: 1510-1513)

If we come to (a state of) ignorance, that is His prison. And if we come to (a state of) knowledge, that is His (lofty) balcony. If we come to (a state of) sleep, we are His drowsy-drunken ones. And if we come to (a state of) wakeful alertness, we are in His Hands. If we come to (a state of) weeping, we are His cloud full of glistening (raindrops). And if we come to (a state of) laughing, we are His lightning in that moment. If we come to (a state of) anger and battle, it is the reflection of His Wrath. And if we come to (a state of) peace and pardon, it is the reflection of His Love.

(Translated by Nicholson's 1926)



“Lovers (are) lamenting like the reed flute [nây], and Love is like the Flutist. So, what things will this Love breathe into the reed pipe [sôr-nây] of the body?! The reed pipe is visible, but the pipe-player is hidden. In short, my reed pipe became drunk from the wine of His lips. Sometimes He caresses the reed pipe, sometimes he bites it. (Such) a sigh, because of this sweet songed reed-breaking Flutist!” (*Divan*: Ghazal 1936, lines 20374-20376)

### **Peace and Harmony through Education according to Rumi**

The aim of education, according to Rumi, is spiritual awakening. The Qur’an states that God only changes people’s conditions when they make efforts to improve themselves. Education obliges people to undergo the process of the purification of their soul (*tazkiyah al-nafs*). Purification is required on account of man’s proclivity to follow his desires. The challenge of education is to harmonize man’s inclinations with his obligations for a harmonious and peaceful society.

Rumi’s focus was on the need to obtain control over one’s self (*al-nafs*) as a requirement for approaching nearer to God. This requires spiritual discipline. Central to the Sufi concept of education is the idea of the “perfect man” (*al-insanalkamil*). This perfection is attained by acquiring virtues such as piety, justice, compassion, truthfulness, sincerity, patience and courage. These virtues in people are necessary to build a peaceful and harmonious society.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad exemplified the perfect man, and thus serves as a “good example” for mankind to emulate (Qur’an, 33:21). Realization of potentials and spirituality are developed in a person through struggle (*jihad*). Jihad is not limited to armed struggle, but includes first and foremost the strife for self-improvement and achieving mastery over one’s self, known as the greater jihad.

His *Masnawi* is a collection of meditations on human virtues and vices. It is addressed to all humanity. Rumi teaches by illustrating virtues and vices using stories, parables, and allegories. He sought to restore the equilibrium (*mizân*) between spiritual and physical existence, and emphasized greatly inclusivity, peace and harmony. These qualities can help to avert a clash of civilizations and even bring about an alliance of civilizations. By promoting peace and harmony, Rumi contributed to inter-religious and inter-cultural harmony. Peace can be achieved and maintained by attaining inner tranquility, which is based on self-purification.

Rumi's approach to peace has two dimensions: universal peace and humanistic peace. Humanistic peace is the peace based on love for all even for his worst enemies. This approach would lead to harmony, safety, enthusiasm, supervision, sincerity, brightness, and magnificence. Universal peace is peace based on love for nature and the universe. It results in positive behavior towards the world and respect for nature. Rumi's insight and knowledge based approach for harmony and peace are reflected in his thoughts and allegories.

Peace and Harmony is a major subject of Islamic mysticism, so in Rumi's work too, harmony and peace is a major subject. Peace is a remedy for settling disputes of war and violence. It has been realized throughout the world that all international disputes can be resolved through dialogue. To obtain social, economic or political goals, any form of physical violence, including defense of others and self-defense should be refused.

Harmony and peace are based on pragmatism (view of consequential) or moral principles (deontological view). Pacifism shares some characteristics with interpersonal physical violence. On moral grounds this kind of violence is wrong. Pragmatic pacifism which covers the war costs and interpersonal violence makes appropriate ways certain for resolving disputes. Theories of just war are generally rejected by pacifists.

In Islamic mysticism, pacifism means general and public peace for all humanity. Being a true mystic, Rumi's view about peace and harmony is the love for all people and for the universe as well. He tried all his life through his works to inculcate love among people to help them spend their lives in a peaceful and harmonious environment.

### **Basis of Peace and Harmony**

Love and pantheism can be derived as the basis of peace and harmony from Islamic mysticism and Rumi's thoughts.

Usually, love is considered as an expression of experiences and feelings which relate to a strong sense of affection seeking for oneness. There are many theories and definitions of love and these all theories teach how to be united with God and come close to Him. In Islamic mysticism, love is one of the very important principles.<sup>10</sup> The reason for all creation is divine love; it is the doctor of all diseases, the cure for disrespect, self-centeredness and misery. Rumi beautifully enunciates the Sufi concept in these

words, “love is the meaning of life and creation”.<sup>11</sup> In the presence of love, hate and violence cannot prevail.

Rabia al-Adawiyya, the famous Islamic theorist and mystic of divine love, was asked if she would see Satan as an enemy. She replied negatively, arguing that her love for God takes all her attention so there was no place for any other feelings.<sup>12</sup> Rumi also states that there is no confirmed evil in this world. He believes that evil is relative, because anything negative can turn into something positive. He has faith that with love war can be transformed to peace, ugliness can be replaced by beauty, copper transforms into gold, bitter things change into sweet, healing replaces pain, dead feelings can become alive and a slave can become a king.<sup>13</sup> That is why, he has no unfriendliness or hostility for anyone. According to Rumi, thoughts and Islamic mystic love is divided in two parts: love for all creations and the entire world, and love for humans. So, peace can be divided into two parts: harmony and peace for all the creations and the world, and peace and harmony for people. According to Rumi, one should show mercy to the weak, if one wishes for mercy; have mercy on those who are responsible for tears, if you wish for tears.<sup>14</sup>

Rumi’s pantheism sees the universe and human as the enlightenment of God, as in all things the spirit of God prevails. He believes that pain of one person is the personal pain of another, as pain in one part can be felt in the whole body.<sup>15</sup> Deficient (knowledge) gives birth to love, but (only love) for that which is (really) lifeless.<sup>16</sup> As a preacher and a teacher Rumi enjoyed a harmonious and peaceful life.<sup>17</sup>

Rumi said that peace is a state of harmony in the absence of aggression. He presented it for the abandonment of inter- religious and international violence and conflict. Diversity in every form can be eliminated by stopping hatred and continuous stream of hostility through incorporating Rumi’s ideas. The Sufi path of Rumi is not an ordinary knowledge system or idealism of fantasy; instead it is the act of peace, harmony, realization, joy and love.<sup>18</sup>

### **Leadership role for Peace and Harmony**

Disasters in human life are caused by false leadership. Problems may also arise as a result of adopting a flawed approach to leadership. What is required is to have good leadership for bringing peace and harmony in the society. It is in helping man to re-establish his connection with good leadership, and then Rumi’s

work may become useful to modern man for making peaceful and harmonious society.<sup>19</sup>

### Allama Iqbal's thoughts on Harmony and Peace

To Iqbal a peaceful society requires the protection of property and life of all its members. The members of a society must respect the rights of one another, practice justice, peace, equality and harmony.<sup>20</sup> A peaceful society produces intellectual persons (*mujtahideen*) who interpret and reflect on sciences in all fields (*ulum*) with the belief that Islam gives a complete way of life. The society gets back the world's leadership (*imamat-e-alam*) to establish world's harmony and peace having the vision and insight for the future (*amn*), equity (*adl*) and overall welfare (*falah-o-bebbud*).<sup>21</sup>

ہوس نے کر دیا ہے ٹکڑے ٹکڑے نوعِ انساں کو  
اُخوت کا بیاں ہو جا، محبت کی زباں ہو جا

(Bang-e-Dra-163) Tulu-e-Islam

Allama Iqbal had ever given a message of unity, faith, peace and self-reliance for the national prosperity. Allama Iqbal had ever wanted to see human development through the way of selfhood and *Khudi*.

اپنی ملت پر قیاس اقوامِ مغرب سے نہ کر  
خاص ہے ترکیب میں قومِ رسولِ ہاشمی  
ان کی جمعیت کا ہے ملک و نسب پر انحصار  
قوتِ مذہب سے مستحکم ہے جمعیتِ تری  
دامن دیں ہاتھ سے چھوٹا تو جمعیت کہاں  
اور جمعیت ہوئی رخصت تو ملت بھی گئی

(Bang-e-Dra-279)

قومِ مذہب سے ہے، مذہب جو نہیں، تم بھی نہیں  
جذبِ باہم جو نہیں، محفلِ انجم بھی نہیں

(Bang-e-Dra-223)

Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal was a great humanist and advocate of global peace who presented the true face of Islam through his narration and poetry. Iqbal also emphasized on love with humanity,

humbleness, mercy, justice, compassion, forgiveness, cosmopolitan tolerance and implementing the other Islamic values in society for creating an ideal environment.<sup>22</sup>

Allama Muhammad Iqbal pulled the Muslims out of the spirals of ignorance and restlessness through his poetry and showed them the right path to their destiny of achieving independence and 'khudi.' Iqbal in his poetry, especially in "Javid Nama", had referred to Rumi as Peer-e-Rumi or his mentor as he was deeply influenced by 13th century Persian Sufi poet, Jalal ud din Rumi but Iqbal's inspirations were not limited to the East.

Together we can bring harmony, peace, justice and prosperity which for sure is need of the hour and desirable too. Definitely Iqbal's philosophy and thoughts preached to youth can play a constructive role in progress.<sup>23</sup>

Iqbal says:

Love is the foundation of life, Love is the flashing sword of death.  
The hardest rocks are shivered by love's glance.

This is English translation from Iqbal's Persian poem *Asrar-i-Khudi* by Professor Nicholson.

Iqbal in his famous poem "Qortaba Mosque" from his book '*Baal-i-Jibreel*' explains this fact in following two verses:

عشق کے مضراب سے نغمہ تارِ حیات  
عشق سے نورِ حیات، عشق سے نارِ حیات

The song from the strings of life is the result of the plectrum of love,  
The light and flame of life are all due to love.<sup>24</sup>

We need to be united and live on equality basis to create a peaceful society.

### **Peace and Harmony through Education according to Iqbal**

An understanding of Iqbal's views on nature and the ultimate destiny of man is necessary before having a meaningful discussion on his educational philosophy. Allama Iqbal considers that man's essential nature consists of will and not of his understanding and intellect. To him, the will has germs of infinite power and ongoing activity, which is the object of human life. He believes that a strong will in a strong body is Islam's ethical ideal.

The personality of a pupil can be defined as an integration of several wills together, united by instructive ambitions. Each of

these wills is an energy or force. The understanding of Iqbal's absolute displeasure and repulsion is not difficult for those systems of education which only work on the intellectual development of a pupil. He favors only that kind of educational systems which are able to bring out peaceful personalities. Therefore, he offers a system of education in which science and religion can discover previously mutual unsuspected harmonies and these are no longer aggressive. Iqbal believes that religion blended with science is also a kind of mysticism. This belief is very appropriate for the present generation's minds. Religion for people is the sum of the experiences in their life to find an absolute countenance through the medium of a great personality. He believes that the operative for the divine release of a pupil is the personality of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.), and it will continue to be so for all coming times. For motivating students to follow the life of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.), our system of education must teach about the ideal of individual divine release of a high order, and for the formation of an exclusive society on the basis of freedom, harmony, equality and peace for all individuals. For the creation of a less violent and more suitable psychologically tangible type of mind, it is now for the Muslim scientists to play the role of mystics to have a peaceful and harmonious society. It is the liability of our system of education to provide instruction, practice and training in the Islamic concepts of peace and harmony for bringing spiritually and the sense of equality which is the basic aim of Islam. Speaking briefly, the central theme of Iqbal's educational philosophy, is producing an Islamic type of character and personality through the training of students, so that they can play their role to bring peace and harmony in the whole world to meet the challenges of this age.

For practical purpose for attaining the objectives of Iqbal, that the *sirat* of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) should find an important place in our system of education. In this way students can develop intellectual and emotional attachment with the Prophet's great personality and to follow him as an ideal character throughout their lives, which will bring them harmony and peace at the time of starting practical life after the education.<sup>25</sup>

According to Iqbal, the overall aim of education is to elevate man to a sublime position in the scheme of creation, next only to God as his Creator and Sustainer. Iqbal's philosophy of education enunciates that another vital objective is to harmonize man's spiritual progress with his accomplishment in the material sphere. Here, Iqbal also asserts that the educational process should direct

man's intellectual activity according to the basic principle of *Tawbeed*, that is, all mankind represents harmony, peace and one human brotherhood. Therefore, any human society based on such a consideration is one indivisible unit. They should live with harmony and make a peaceful society, as all humans are related as brothers, irrespective of colour, race or geographic situation. Thus, the principle of monotheism provides human psychology with an antidote against exploitation, class conflict etc. This principle of monotheism in reality will restore unity in diversity. This whole issue is summarized by Iqbal in his several famous lectures, stating that in the principle of *Tawbeed*, a new culture finds the foundation of world-unity. In both the emotional and intellectual lives of mankind, Islam is a means of uniting human beings.

To Iqbal, any society which fails to recognize the fundamental harmony and peace is bound to disintegrate. Iqbal maintains that a purposely designed meaningful educational system is necessary to reconstruct a new social order. A society cannot be harmonized without building integrated personalities of pupils. He was amazed to see how the educational systems of the world were pushing forward without any definite aim. Iqbal's ideal educational atmosphere creates a society which is harmonious and peaceful and is to be founded in secure ground; its basis must be deep rooted not to be affected by any adverse influences.

According to Iqbal, search for a purely psychological foundation of human unity becomes possible only through the belief that life of all human beings is mystic in its origin. With this ideal before him man sets out on the arduous course of self-affirmation and self-development for bringing harmony and creating a peaceful society. The role of inspired leaders or prophets in the evolution of society and in making it harmonious and peaceful cannot be underestimated. In Iqbal's philosophical scheme education must equip student with a life of action, keeping in view the development, maintenance and consolidation of his individuality as its prime aim. In an ideal society, Iqbal regards the development of individuality as of fundamental value, but does not ignore the importance of promoting harmony and peace in the society. In any system of education the question that naturally arises is: what norms contribute to the making of a harmonious and peaceful society? There are conflicting theories about this. An important feature of Iqbal's philosophy is a reliable and veridical balance between individualism and collectivism, as he believes in the

individual personality of a person to attain peace and harmony in the society.

A pupil is a supreme being and has to play his supreme role in the making of a harmonious and peaceful society. Iqbal considers it the social responsibility of a pupil. Thus the social consciousness of man becomes an important aim of education. Education should become pupil-centered, giving him all possible opportunities to take part in the making of a harmonious and peaceful society. The Leader should guide the pupil and help him in the pursuit of the development of his personality so that he would be able to take part in the making of a harmonious and peaceful society. However, the leader should not overshadow the pupil to the extent that he becomes only a reflection of the leader's personality. Iqbal's point of view reveals the idea that the primary emphasis on individuality does not mean that there is a lack of social sense and collective responsibility in the students. The virtues of social consciousness and responsibilities should be instilled in them from the very beginning, and it is the responsibility of a leader to prepare for social service and responsible citizenship. Iqbal asserts that modern education is an evil because it neglects the moral and spiritual development of younger generations. The result is that a crisis of character has overtaken the youth. The intellect of modern youth is bright and refulgent but they have no sense of harmony and peace. Iqbal finds that the modern educational system serves as an instrument of western imperialism and results in creating a society without any peace and harmony.<sup>26</sup>

### Iqbal's Concept of Jihad

Iqbal's poem named *jihad* is best representation of his vision about jihad and is completely applicable to current situations, pointing out that Allah (SBT) gave Iqbal a very great vision.

#### جہاد

فتویٰ ہے شیخ کا یہ زمانہ قلم کا ہے  
دُنیا میں اب رہی نہیں تلوار کارگر  
لیکن جناب شیخ کو معلوم کیا نہیں؟  
مسجد میں اب یہ وعظ ہے بے سُود و بے اثر



تہنغ و تہنگ دستِ مسلمان میں ہے کہاں  
ہو بھی، تو دل ہیں موت کی لذت سے بے خبر  
کافر کی موت سے بھی لرزتا ہو جس کا دل  
کہتا ہے کون اُسے کہ مسلمان کی موت مر  
تعلیم اُس کو چاہیے ترکِ جہاد کی  
دُنیا کو جس کے پنجہٴ خونیں سے ہو خطر  
باطل کے فال و فر کی حفاظت کے واسطے  
یورپ زرہ میں ڈوب گیا دوش تا کمر

According to Iqbal present day scholars claim that jihad by sword is no longer valid and necessary now and that only pen and worldly knowledge is useful nowadays.

For them he says that they don't know that nowadays in mosques such secular propaganda is not useful anymore. Reason behind is that in modern society Muslims have already left jihad so their anti-jihad fatwas in first place is no longer present. Muslims has lost true spirit of jihad. They are afraid to give sacrifices, to fight against oppressors and are weak morally. Iqbal thought that why not modern Muslim scholars urge *kufar* to stop their wars against Muslims, as its *kufar* whose swords are killing them. On the other side, Europe has armed itself to the teeth to protect their anti-Islam system they are enforcing throughout the world, and for this they are using their full resources and weapons along with man power, just for the strengthening it. Iqbal asked Muslim scholars of his age that why they only criticize Muslims who take up swords in defense of their religion and nations? Why they don't criticize evil practices of Europe who invade Muslims in first place and enslave them? He felt sorrow over these practices which leads to destroy peace of world.

Iqbal reminded the Muslims their forgotten lesson and wanted them to go back to the Quran and the Holy Prophet. He wished that they may be able to re-discover themselves.

### **Leadership Role for Peace and Harmony**

Leadership plays a significant role in carrying the ideals of any system of education to its logical conclusion. For him, teachers are the leaders. Iqbal himself worked as a leader. He was well

acquainted with the instructional techniques and psychology of students. Iqbal sees the role of the leader as a producer of men of vision and the cultivator of a nation's progress, peace, harmony and prosperity. Iqbal obviously emphasizes an ideologically oriented system of education. He wishes a leader to have the understanding of the ideal education, which he is going to transmit to the people mainly through his ideal character. The present leader according to him is completely unaware of the current trends in different disciplines. His approach lacks vision and far-sightedness. Naturally, he fails to involve self-activity and creative potential among people and this is the biggest reason of the lack of harmony and peace in society. Other values like enthusiasm (*jazbah*), peace (*faqr*), belief (*ammanah*), patience (*tabammul*), sense of integrity (*ghairat*), loyalty (*diyanat*), regulation (*nazm-o-zabit*), bravery (*jur'at*), act (*amal*), holy effort for the cause of Allah swt (*jihad*) and supremacy and spirit (*qudrat-o-barkat*) are also required to be induced right from the beginning among individuals for the development of leadership. For Allama Iqbal, youth is like eaglets, and it is the responsibility of the leader to give them strong wings to soar high. According to Allama Iqbal, a society cannot progress if it does not have progressive and enlightened leaders. He sees leaders as role models who have the responsibility of bringing out the best in their people –their development for creating a peaceful, harmonious society.<sup>27</sup>

## **Conclusion**

As a guide Rumi's acceptance by Iqbal does not mean that Iqbal has followed blindly. In fact, he transcends Rumi in some very important respects, like Aristotle. Iqbal's philosophical thinking, original reflections and eloquent style regarding peace and harmony earn him a distinctive place. For his vigorous and extremely inspirational philosophy and inspired vision regarding harmony and peace, he is regarded with great respect by philosophers, religious leaders and scholars.

Iqbal is a believer who, by his faith's nobility in the essence of his master dyed deeply. Iqbal's return to Islamic heritage is actually a return to Rumi. It is natural to take supervision and motivation from one's heritage. A master-piece is supplied by the accumulated heritage of the past with which an intellect builds and no one can see the full influence of his genius without the study of this heritage, which was personified in the literature and life of his time. This is why Iqbal returned to Rumi. For the people of 1300 A.D. the interpretation of the Quran was found in the *Mathnavi* of Rumi.

Similarly, for the people of 20<sup>th</sup> century the works of Iqbal are the Quran's interpretation for the reconstruction of religious thought in the light of modern knowledge of peace and harmony in Islam.<sup>28</sup>

It is astonishing that one can reach Rumi very easily through Iqbal by focusing in the works of these two poets on the subject as to what brought peace and harmony. This line of Iqbal explains his thought:

مری نوائے پریشاں کو شاعری نہ سمجھ

Don't misunderstand my disturbed voice as poetry.

Iqbal took us back to Rumi's ideas regarding peace and harmony, and is therefore important to us.<sup>29</sup>

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