IQBAL REVIEW

Journal of the Iqbal Academy Pakistan

Editor:

Muhammad Suheyl Umar

IQBAL ACADEMY PAKISTAN

IQBAL REVIEW
Journal of the Iqbal Academy Pakistan

This peer reviewed Journal is devoted to research studies on the life, poetry and thought of Iqbal and on those branches of learning in which he was interested: Islamic Studies, Philosophy, History, Sociology, Comparative Religion, Literature, Art and Archaeology.

Manuscripts for publication in the journal should be submitted in duplicate, typed in double-space, and on one side of the paper with wide margins on all sides preferably along with its CD or sent by E-mail. Abstracts in English should be typed double-spaced on a separate page. It is assumed that the manuscripts sent to *Iqbal Review* are not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Publication of material in *Iqbal Review* means that the author assigns copyright to *Iqbal Review* including the right to electronic publishing. Authors may, however, use their material in other publications acknowledging *Iqbal Review* as the original place of publication.

In order to facilitate academic review and production, authors must conform to the following: 1) the name of the author, address, phone numbers, title, and name(s) of universities must appear on the title page of the article; 2) footnotes are to be numbered consecutively; 3) all foreign words must appear underlined/Italic with properly placed diacritical marks. Ten off-prints of the articles and two copies of book reviews will be sent to authors.

All contributions should be addressed to the Editor, Iqbal Review, 6th Floor, Academy Block, Aiwan-e-Iqbal Complex, Egerton Road, Lahore, Pakistan.

Subscription

PAKISTAN

Per issue	Rs.150/-
Per year	Rs.600/- (for one year.)
(Postage included)	

FOREIGN

Per issue	$ 6.00
Per year	$ 20.00 (for one year.)
(Postage included)	

CONTENTS

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Alia Saleem Naushahi
Department of Humanities &
Management Sciences,
University of Engineering &
Technology,
Lahore

Aygun Hamidulla Tagiyeva
Urdu Literature Teacher,
Urdu Department of Oriental
Studies,
Baku State University
Azerbaijan

Hazrat Umar
Assistant Professor,
Department of English,
NUML,
Islamabad

Khalid Yasir
Professor,
Department of English,
NUML,
Islamabad

Malik Mohammad Tariq
Chairman
Department of Philosophy
University of Balochistan,
Quetta

Muhammad Suheyl Umar
Ex-Director
Iqbal Academy Pakistan
Lahore

Nasir Mehmood
Lecturer in English,
Department of English,
NUML,
Islamabad

BRIDGING EAST AND WEST: THE LIFE, PHILOSOPHY, AND POETIC LEGACY OF MOHAMMAD IQBAL

Aygun Hamidulla Tagiyeva

ABSTRACT

Mohammad Iqbal, renowned as one of the world's most influential poets and a political leader, made profound contributions to literature, philosophy, and the socio-political fabric of his time. His work synthesized Eastern and Western philosophies, creating a unique value system to bridge diverse cultural perspectives. While Iqbal's influence is well recognized in many regions, he remains underexplored in Azerbaijan, particularly his Urdu works. This research fills a crucial gap, providing a detailed investigation into Iqbal's life, creative evolution, and contributions to philosophy and poetry. The innovative aspect of this research lies in the examination and analysis of Iqbal's Urdu works within the context of Azerbaijani scholarship. Utilizing an array of scientific, general publications, and online resources, the study delves into Iqbal's legacy as a leading figure in 19th-20th century Indo-Pakistani Islamic culture. His philosophy, deeply rooted in Islamic and European intellectual traditions, responds to the socio-political challenges of his era with a universal message of self-empowerment and cultural revival for the Muslim world. Iqbal's poetic corpus illustrates his critique of Western imperialism, advocacy for spiritual awakening, and emphasis on moral self-development. His works reflect a blend of Eastern and Western influences, drawing from prominent Islamic thinkers like Rumi, Al-Ghazali, and Ibn Sina, as well as Western philosophers such as Nietzsche, Goethe, and Hegel. Through his poetry, Iqbal sought to awaken individual self-awareness, strengthen collective identity, and inspire political, social, and cultural revival among Muslims, ultimately contributing to the creation of Pakistan. His notable works, such as "Asrar-i Khudi" (The Secrets of the Self) and "Rumuz-i Bekhudi" (The Secrets of Selflessness), provide profound philosophical explorations of the self and community, while his Urdu collections like "Bang-i Dara" (The Call of the Caravan Bell) and "Zarb-i Kalim" (The Rod of Moses) present socio-political critique and moral guidance. This research highlights the depth of Iqbal's engagement with themes of self-identity, empowerment, and cultural cohesion, emphasizing his enduring relevance in modern philosophical and cultural discourse.

Mohammad Iqbal is one of the world's most famous thoughtful poets. Apart from his poetic and prosaic works in Urdu and Persian, he was also known for being a political leader. Knowing both Eastern and Western history, and especially, philosophy, he tried to synthesize Eastern and Western philosophy and poitns of view and create a medium value universe.

Despite all that he wasn't very well-known and researched in Azerbaijan. Research of this topic is relevant because there is no detailed investigation in this regard. Therefore, it is very important to study Mohammad Iqbal's life and works, including those works that were written in Urdu.

Scientific innovation of the research. Scientific innovation of this research is in lack of study and analysis of Mohammad Iqbal's works written in Urdu in Azerbaijan. Analysis and research of Mohammad Iqbal's epoch and life, and his formation as a creative person can be considered as a scientific innovation.

Sources of the research. Scientific and general publications, libraries, and websites were used during this research.

Allama Mohammad Iqbal was one of the prominent people who provided valuable insights into humanity in the 19th-20th century in Indo-Pakistani Islamic culture in the contemporary world, great poet, word master, a genius personality worth of "the greatest" title.

Having received all his scientific-philosophical and aesthetic power and energy from the Islamic and European thinkers and teachers receive, preaching a different approach but still in accordance with the requirements of his era, his thoughts are very important for the whole Muslim world. Mohammad Iqbal's poetic creativity is very rich, he had great moral and esthetic power to show the inner face of Western imperialism, the insidious nature of its policy.

Mohammad Iqbal wipes away Eastern Islamic point of view in his poems, shows the way to Sufi perspective from sacredness of "Koran" to the human body and states that the highest goal is to get the true knowledge. Iqbal sees the secret power and mystery in understanding of the truth.

We can see the synthesis of the genius traditions of the prominent Eastern and Western poets and philosophers in Mohammad Iqbal's poetic creativity, including great Islamic thinkers and poets, such as Rumi Mevlana, Sheikh Nizami, Al-Ghazali, Farabi, Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushdi, Beyazid Bestami, Hallaji Mansur, Sohraverdi, Molla Sadra and others, and Western poets and philisophers, like Aristotle and Platon, Nietzsche, Hegel and Bergson, Goethe, Dante and Shopehhauqer and others. Thus, Allama Mohammad Iqbal was a reformist poet and philosopher, owner of high intellect, who was capable of bringing together the East and the West, trying to master the most philosophical currents and explain Islamic values in his works.

As one of the Turkish researchers and translators of Mohammad Iqbal's works, R. Ihsan Eliachik writes,[1] Iqbal's works expressed the following: "to recognize own existence, self-confidence and the ability to stand, feel self-respect and value, use one's skills to the best of their possibility; all of those things are extremely important for one's life."[2]

Iqbal's poetry and philosophy has inherently international meaning in connecting similar, and sometimes the same political, social and cultural issues, and difficulties that other Islamic countries are facing and provides the key to the future-oriented culture.

Facing the socio-political and social requirements of the period he lives in, Iqbal is trying to establish healthy ground for the future of Muslim Indian people. His main objective is to wake people up and make them act with all thier strength and power.

On one hand, Iqbal is showing the path to unite his fellow countrymen to fight for their political, social and cultural ideas, and on the other hand is leading them in embracing their power to acquire their independence. Iqbal believes in the mighty power of the man who is the "Caliph of Allah on earth" and wants to instill this belief into every Muslim individual. The formation of self identity, the "I" of the person is tightly closed to the notion of this objective and this desire. After the foramtion of an individual "I" Iqbal transitions to the formation of the collective self identity and pursues this goal. Thus, the main goal of Iqbal is to gradually wake up the individual by awakening every link in the chain of transformation of personality, extend, expand social-political awakening, self-awareness and the awareness of the society.[3]

The Muslim must be a master of his self-esteem and self-identity. Only then he or she can become the holistic, real person. Iqbal pays a lot of attention to this issue of self-esteem, self-identity and personality in Islam. This problem in Iqbal's works takes philisophical and aesthetic character and is explained in poetic way. This problem is repeatedly explained in details in his work "Asrar and Rumuz" ("Mysteries and allegories"). Self-esteem is the source of all kind of power and strength. (Allah exalts those people which create their own destiny!). The nation is the nation which has its own self-esteem.

Iqbal prefers spirit to the form. According to Iqbal, this world consists of the pictures drawn by Allah. Allah gave the part of his power to those created by him and gave the spirit to the people, unlike all his other creations.

In his early school years Iqbal learned Arabian and Farsi languages from his teacher Movlana Seid Mir Hasan, and was developing his style by writing and receivinn critique and recommendations from famous Urdu poet Dagh Dahlavi.

Later, Iqbal was developing his talent more and more, and got his poems published in "Mahzen" journal, his poems were spreading around, he started participating in poetry evenings, especially, in Defending Islam groups and Kashmir Muslims groups. Such poems as the "Weeping orphan" ("Cry of the Orphan", "India's march", "Himalaya", "New temple," which were read at these gatherings, on one hand, showed his deep commitment to the country, and on the other hand, represented his love for the nations made him very popular, and in 1923 the British governor of Punjab awarded him with the "Poet" title as the winner of the contest. Since then, Mohammad Iqbal started to be considered the spiritual leader of Muslims in India...[4]

Generally, during this period Allama Mohammad Iqbal describes the deplorable state of Indian Muslims, their heavy, disastrous situation and sheds tears over the peace, freedom, and independence. These poems helped Indian Muslim Mujaheds in their struggle against the British conquerors, encouraged and inspired them, and served the goal of establishing the Pakistani state. Due to such power, Turkish scientists compared him with Mehmet Akif Ersoy, great Turkish poet.[5]

"Tasvir-i Derd" (Description of the grievance), "Feryad-i Ummet" ("Ummah cry"), "Cry of the Orphan" ("Weeping

orphan"), and other poems are brillilant examples of poetic expression of his care for national trouble.

Iqbal had known Urdu, Pushtu, Arabic, Persian, English and German and wrote 14 works in those languages, and additionally there are available books consisting of his letters, articles, reports and speeches. For more detailed information and understanding, we submit the brief summary of Mohammad Iqbal's poetic works which were written in Persian and Urdu:

Works:

Being fluent in Urdu, Persian, English, German and Punjabi, his mother tongue to the extent that he could easily write in these languages, Mohammad Iqbal used Urdu and Persian for writing poems, and English and Urdu languages for writing prose. The facts about poems were taken from this source.[6]

I. Poems:

1. "Esrar-i Hodi".

The first edition of this work written in Persian was first published in Lahore in 1915, and later has been published many times more again. Allama Muhammad Iqbal known as "Real face of Islamic Benlig" wrote "Esrar-i Hodi" (also written as "Asrar-i Hudi") being inspired by the great genius of the East, Mevlana Jalaleddin Rumi (1184-1273) and his world-famous "Masnavi" ("Couplet") work. As they say, "the poem was written in the form of couplet and was first published in 1915...".[7]

This poem written in the same style with Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi's "Masnavi", is the poetic and philosophical interpretation, explanation of the relationships and connections between the self identity and God, the self identity and the Universe... In 1902 "Esrar-i Hodi" was translated into English by R. A. Nicholson under the name of "The Secret of the Self". Later, the poem was translated into other various languages and together with the translation of "Rumuz-i bi-hodi" by Prof. Dr. Ali Nihat Tarlan was published in 1964 in the book "Esrar and Rumuz" and was numerously re-published.

2."Rumuz-i Bi-hodi".

This poem is the continuation of "Esrar-i Hodi" and was also written in Persian. First was published in Lahore in 1918 as a separate edition, later was published together with "Esrar-i Hodi".

Main topic of this work is the relationship between the individual and the nation.

3. "Peyam-i Mashrik".

This poem was written in response to Johann Wolfgang Goethe's West–östlicher Divan (West-eastern divan). Goethe was world famous German poet, educator, public and political figure, scientist and naturalist, progressive thinker who had great sympathy for Islamism and called "Koran" a book of the books. This poem written in Persian was devoted to Afghanistan's King Amanullah Khan, and was dedicated to the topic moral apathy of the materialistic West.

"Peyam-i Maşrık" was translated into Turkish by Prof. Dr. Ali Nihat Tarlan and was published in 1956 in Istanbul under the name of "Sharktan Haber" (News from the East").

4. "Bang-i Dera" ("Movement Bell"-1924).

It was Iqbal's first poetry collection and was first published in Lahore in 1924. The poems included into that book represent first poetic works written bu Iqbal. It combines in itself the poems connected with Turkey and Turkish people, his student years in Europe, Indian nationalistic thoughts together with romantic feelings. Some of the selected works were tranlsated into Turkish by Ahmat Asrar (Ahmad Asrar). [8]

5. "Zebur-i Acem".

This work written in Persian consists of gazelles and represents two psalms under the name of "Gulshen-i Raz-i Cedid" and "Bendegi-name". First published in 1927 in Lahore, it was then translated into different languages, and translated into Turkish in 1959 by Prof. Dr. Ali Nihat Tarlan and was disseminated in Istanbul under the name of "Gulshen-i Raz-i Cedid. In 1964, it was printed once again under the name of the "Selected works from Zebur-u Ajem".

6. "Javidname".

This poem started to be written in 1929 in Persian after "Esrar-i Hodi", was completed in 1932 and devoted to Iqbal's son, Javid. The poem was written as an imitation of the famous Italian poet Dante's (1265-1321), "Divina Commedia" ("Divine Comedy"). However, according to experts, it is quite different and complex work. [9]

Prof. Dr. Anne-Marie Schimmel had made first translation of this poem into Turkish with extensive disclosures and explanations, which was published by the Ministry of Culture in 1958. Later, Ahmet Metin Sahin Bursa's poetic tranlsation was printed in Bursa in 1997. Poetic translation made by Prof. Dr. Halil Toker was published in 2008 by Cactus publishing agency.

7. "Guest"

This psalm written in Persian was created after the trip to Afghanistan by the invitation of Afghan King Muhammad Nadir Shah. This work, along with observations of Iqbal in Afghanistan, includes poems directed to support the development and the power of Islam undertaken by the King of Afghanistan.

The "Guest" was first published in Lahore in 1934. Was translated into Turkish under the name of "Wayfarer" by Prof. Dr. Ali Nihat Tarlan, and was later published in 1976 together with "Pes Chi Bayed Kerd Ey Akvam-ı Shark" and "Bendegi-name".

8. "Bal-i Cibril"-("Gabriel's wing")-1935.

It is Iqbal's second work in Urdu. Was disseminated in Lahore in 1935. Due to some statements, "Bal-i Jibril" has reached the highest point in Iqbal's poetry written in Urdu. Poetic translation made by Yusuf Salih Karaja was published in 1983. There is also a more thorough translation of this work made by Ahmad Gizilgaya in 2000. In addition to those, this famous poem was translated by Dr. Prof. Jalal Soydan, Urdu literature expert of Ankara University in 2013 an dpublished by Heje Yayin publishing agency. [10]

"Gabriel's wing" mostly consists of ghazals, then rubais, poems and verses. The lyricism and thickness of thought in these ghazals draw attention by their depth of philosophical thought. These works in Urdu, "Kurtaba Mosque", "Love and passion", "Saqiname", "Mentor and Disciple" remind lyric-epical poem and carry deep sense. Jalal Soydan writes in the "Foreword": "Overall, this work is a collection of Iqbal's thoughts arisen so far. This is the collection of poems expressing Iqbal's most powerful ideas in his philosophy of art. [11]

9. "Pes Chi Bayed Kerd Ey Akvam-ı Shark"

In this poem which was written in 1936 in Persian in addition to the "Guest" poem, there is described the debate between the truth and falsehood, and the course of modern politics.

10. "Zarb-i Kelim"- ("Moses's fight")- 1936.

It is Iqbal's third book written in Urdu, which was published in 1936. Consisting of six sections, this poem has the following titles, listed in the presented order: "Islam and Muslims," "Practice-Education", "Women", "Literature and Arts", "Eastern and Western Policy", "Mehrab Gul. Afghani's thoughts". In the "Moses's fight" work Iqbal presents his thoughts which were previously written in Persian languages by deepening, extending, and generalizing them and presenting this time in Urdu. However, the style of this work is quite sharp and concrete. He fights in this poem, starts debate, invites to debate which in its turn expands his style of expression".[12]

This work is not just another piece of poetry. It is one of the magnificent works carrying social, political, philosophical and ideological meaning. This poem was indeed the reason of Islamic awakening and progress, it was the poetic monument serving in opening the eyes of the Muslim people and providing deeper understanding of the Universe. According to the researchers, there is no other poem of this scale which provides the same insight into Islamic values nor in Persian, neither in Urdu.[13]

Persian translation of this work was made by Haje Abdulhamid-Irfani. Translation into Turkish was made from Persian by Prof. Dr. Ali Nihat Tarlan and was published in Istanbul in 1968. The last and the more thorough translation was made by Jalal Soydan in 2013.

11. "Armagan-i Hijaz" - 1938.

This poem consisting of four-line quatrains, such as "The Devil's Speaking Gathering", "Old Baluj's admonition to his son", "Spirits World" and cover religious, philosophical, social, diverse colorful topics. This is Iqbal's latest work, written in 1938. It is the lute of his wisdom. The two volumes, written in the last years of his life, contain the works written in Urdu and Persian. It was published 6 months after the death of Iqbal in November 1938. This work has been translated into Turkish by Ali Nihat Tarlan and Jalal Soydan.

Iqbal's researcher Abdusselam Nedvi (1914-1999), pointing out that this work was written in several days, said: "Iqbal was going to go on a pilgrimage in 1937, and he was living hard feelings during those days. They were filled with worry about his heart problems which resulted in a sense of inspiration when the verses would just

fall from his mouth. In a few days the manuscript was completed."[14]

First section of his Urdu part of the poem provides details into Iqbal's long verses. The "Devil's Speaking Gathering" is considered to be one of his best poems. According to another researcher of Iqbal's works, Rafiuddin Hashimi, rapidly developing thoughts were depicted in this poem which he started to write in 1894, reaching the comprehensive, fundamental stage."[15]

The other researcher Yusuf Salim Chishti said that the poem attracts attention by plentyful mystic elements. Even in some place he states that it resembles the sufi religious-philosophical current of Arabi and Rumi. However, Iqbal manages to provide unique perspective on the thoughts of Sufi beliefs.[16]

Notes and References

[1] Mohammad Iqbal. Love and Passion. 10 long verses. Ankara, Akchag Publishers, 2000, p. 17. Adapted from Turkish to Azerbaijani.

[2] R.Ihsan Eliachik. Leaders leaving traces. – Mohammad Iqbal. Istanbul, Principle Publishing, I. Basi-2004; II Basi- 2014, p. 17.

[3] Mohammad Iqbal. Zebur-u Ajem. Translated by A.Nihat Tarlan. p. IX

[4] Tunj Ramazan. Mohammad Iqbal. Istanbul, Zafer Publishing House, 1984, p.33.

[5] Dr. Ali Sherati. We and Iqbal. Translated by Ergin Kilichtutan. Istanbul, 1985, p.9.

[6] Mohammad Iqbal. You are a hawk. Translated by Halil Toker. Demavend Publishing, 2014, p. 9-12.

[7] Real face of Islamic Self-identity. – Mohammad Iqbal | Kitapyurdu, retrieved on: 9th December, 2024: http://www.kitapyurdu.com/kitap/islami-benligin-icyuzu/103603.html

[8] Mohammad Iqbal. Javidname. (translated into Turkish by and the author of the foreword - Halil Toker), Istanbul, Kaktus Publishing, 2 issue, 2008, pp. 15-16.

[9] Ibid., p. 16.

[10] Mohammad Iqbal. "Gabriel's wing", translated into Turkish by Jalal Soydan, Ankara, Heje Publishing, 2013, p. 203.

[11] Ibid., p. 9-11.

[12] Mohammad Iqbal. "Moses's fight", "Armagan-i Hijaz" (Urdu section), translated by Jalal Soydan,Ankara, Heje Publishing, 2013, p.13.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ebul Hasen Ali En-Nedvi. Great Islamic poet Dr. Mohammad Iqbal. (translated by Ali Ulvi Kurucu), Marifet Publishing, 2014, p.9.

[15] Rafiuddin A. Hashimi. Iqbal, Islamic awakening and Islamic world. urvetulvuska.net/ikbal-islami-dirilis-ve-islam-d...7 September 2014.

[16] Mohammad Iqbal. Moses's fight – Armagan-i Hijaz. (translated by Jalal Soydan). Heje Publishing, Istanbul, 2013, p. 245

Iqbal's Reconstruction: An Analysis of Iqbal's Philosophy and the Synthesis of Eastern Tradition with Western Modernity

Malik Mohammad Tariq

ABSTRACT

This article explores Allama Muhammad Iqbal's seminal work, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, highlighting his efforts to reconcile Islamic traditions with Western knowledge while preserving the chronologde and textual essence of Islam. It delves into Iqbal's dynamic vision of Islamic modernism, which emphasizes a proactive reinterpretation of Islam in a 20th-century context, allowing for both spiritual and socio-political growth. The distinction between modernity, modernism, and modernization in relation to Iqbal's philosophy is examined, showcasing his synthesis of rationality and metaphysical beliefs while maintaining a critical stance towards Western influence. Fazlur Rahman's perspectives on Iqbal's complex relationship with Western intellectualism and his advocacy for a revival of Islam are also considered. The article outlines how Iqbal integrated Eastern and Western thought, blending his poetic and philosophical expressions to promote a critical yet adaptive interpretation of Islamic and Western ideas, rejecting blind imitation and conservatism. Iqbal's work underscores the necessity for reformation and reinterpretation within Islam, rooted in its original ethos and adapted to contemporary challenges. By advocating for a new *ilm-ul-kalam* (Islamic theology) founded on modern scientific and philosophical principles, Iqbal sought to align Islamic beliefs with empirical sciences, emphasizing a holistic understanding of reality. His views on the convergence of religion and science, the restructuring of Islamic faith, and the socio-political revival of the Muslim world are examined in-depth, alongside his critique of rigid nationalism and traditionalist stagnation. The article concludes by recognizing Iqbal's influence as a modern Muslim reformer and intellectual bridge between Eastern and Western thought, who envisioned the revival of Islam through intellectual, moral, and political awakening. His legacy is one of inspiration and a call for Muslims to shape their destiny by reconnecting with the dynamic, spiritual essence of Islam, balancing tradition with modern realities.

In *'The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam'* Iqbal tried to reconcile the Islamic traditions with Western knowledge without uprooting the chronological and textual proportions and tradition. According to Fazlur Rahman, "Muhammad Iqbal, for instance, wrote his *Reconstruction of Religion Thought in Islam*, which contained sweeping reform proposals in English—a language not understood by the masses or the '*Ulama*', and kept his powerful and moving poetry—meant for the common man—mainly free of such reforms. [1] The significance of Iqbal's Islamic modernism is, "a dynamic worldview and an activist reinterpretation of the religion of Islam in the twentieth century perspective. To him, man himself and his world both are by nature free for creative movement." [2]

To rise the fundamental question of modernity in Western pretext one has to distinguish between modernization and modernism and then Iqbal views can be traced. Modernity belongs to the whole social fabric, modernism to only art and modernization to ways of adopting modern methods, techniques at some or all segments of society. Epistemologically modernity (and consequently its other forms) is based on rational, authoritative, self-sufficient human self, negating metaphysical and traditional grounds. Iqbal poetry shows some similarities with western concept of modernism and his philosophy seeks to adopt modernity's rationality, while preserving metaphysics. Iqbal does not accept loneliness, absurdity and meaninglessness of existentialism but he glorifies man's individuality." Iqbal ideas of modern world and modern man have been analyzed in the present studies. Iqbal argued that it is the realization of their destiny that the spiritual salvation and political emancipation of Muslims can be realized. Fazlur Rahman says:

> Nevertheless, the young educated Muslim progressively felt the vacuum and was soon looking for quarters whence guidance for liberal Islamic thinking would emerge to fulfill his dream of running the modern state on the basis of Islam. This powerful desire had been generated in him by the tremendous call of Muhammad Iqbal who untiringly called the Muslim to rediscover his place in the world, not to follow the Western culture slavishly and to develop his spiritual and moral future for his own fountains. [3]

The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam and *Payam-i-Mashriq,* were without any doubt are the books which were written due to

Western influence on Iqbal thought. He blended Eastern and Western thoughts skillfully. His poetry and prose has serious manifestation on Islamic traditions and Western modernity. He pleaded in his writing for a critical interpretation of Western and Islamic thought. Iqbal challenged blind imitation, conservatism, and blind acceptance of Western modernity. Fazlur Rahman says:

> The foregoing analysis of Iqbal's thought and motivations also helps to explain his contradictory stand on the West. Actually, he did not always address the West as such as alone but Westernism as well. Thus when he says in his first Lecture that the Muslim world is intellectually moving Westward with rapidity and encourages this movement, he is primarily addressing Westernism. He is therefore, so far, intellectually a Modernist, although ethically a revivalist, as we have seen. But when addressing the West, he condemned its intellectualism in such strong terms, that he positively discouraged intellectual Westernism and so Modernism—an ironical lesson indeed. And it is also related irony, of no less import, that the book which set out to reconstruct religious thought for the world would-be Modernist, should, by what it actually says, leave little room for thought at all. [4]

Iqbal pivotal thesis cannot be expected to be found in Iqbal himself, although it's sufficiently strong yet partial formulations and indications are interspersed everywhere in his writings. The primary reason is that Iqbal is a thinker and not an interpreter. In order to interpret someone the interpreter has to give what he regards as the kernel of the interpretee's message. [5] Fazlur Rahman says:

> It appears that when during his studies in the West, Iqbal began developing a positive philosophy of life under which he evolved definite attitude to this world, this involved if it did not even presuppose, an acute perception and awareness of Reality; that is to say Iqbal had become conscious of a Reality that was essentially demanded both of itself and of others. [6]

While discussing Iqbal's multivalence, Fazlur Rahman noted that while he rejected Western ethics and society generally, he was, at intellectual level, still a Modernist Westernist, although we noted too that by declaring Western thought to be basically void of spiritual direction, he has necessarily discouraged intellectual and philosophical Westernism as well. The most salient feature of the subsequent outlook has a total rejection of Western intellectualism in favour of a new future of Islam. [7]

Iqbal defended Muslims against rigid nationalism. He gives importance to Islam as a religion and as a civilization. He has firm faith on the Prophet Muhammad's project of Islam, which he

started in Arabia in seventh century, and there has a deep influence of the Qur'an in his poetry. In *The Reconstruction of Religion Thought in Islam* Iqbal quoted mostly, is from the Qur'an:

> Of a large number of passages quoted from it, about seventy-seven, generally set apart from the main text, carry numbered references to Qur'anic *Surahs* and verses. The unnumbered passages from the Qur'an, about fifty or so, given within the text are comparatively briefer-sometimes very brief, merely calling attention to a unique expression of the Qur'an. [8]

Islam holds the key to the realization of destiny, for faith is central to a Muslim's life. It is religion that defines human existence, and it is through religion that man may raise to greater heights. That height is predicated on rediscovery of the true faith and that rediscovery is in turn tied to the reconstruction of the Islamic community. [9] Like other Islamic modernism, Iqbal found the ideal polity in the early history of Islam. It was in the "Muhammadan' community that Muslims had reached the pinnacle of their spiritual and worldly power -the full realization of human destiny. It was that vision of the past that guided his prescription for the future. He became convinced that man was able to realize the full potential of his destiny only in the context of the revival of Islam, in an order wherein the perfection of the soul would be reflected in the excellence of social relations. [10] Fazlur Rahman, who says:

> Much more significant, however, was the thinking of Muhammad Iqbal whose message, delivered in moving poetry, summoned the Muslims to rise and shape their own destiny. Iqbal sought inspiration from his image of the pristine Islam of the Prophet Muhammad and the Qur'an—a spiritually creative and dynamic Islam which he saw buried under negative, non Arab forms of medieval *Sufism* and dead formulas of the *Kalam* on the one hand and, on the other, beguiled by the superficial creativity of the West, which had lost the purpose of life amid its tumultuous and riotous technology, and threatened to numb the moral faculties of man.
> Iqbal had, in a concrete sense, inherited the legacy of Sirhindi and Waliy Allah, his basic thought being but a restatement of Sirhindi's philosophy in twentieth century terms. And his own thought, in the same concrete sense, begot Pakistan. The thrust that had started with Sirhindi reached its final goal in altering the world map in August 1947. [11]

Idealization of Islam went hand-in-hand with advocating religious reform. Iqbal argued that Islam can serve man only if it is reformed and reinterpreted in the image of its Muhammad ideal-and Iqbal's understanding of the west-while using the tools of

philosophical analysis and mystical wisdom. Iqbal did not view this exercise as innovation or reformation, but rediscovery and reconstruction of Islam.[12] Iqbal advocated that Islam should work boldly and courageously for the reconstruction through fresh experience. He was well aware that reconstruction has more severe features than simple alteration in modern state of affair in life. According to him, "humanity needs three things today - a spiritual interpretation of the universe, spiritual emancipation of the individual, and basic principles of a universal import directing the evolution of human society on a spiritual basis. Modern Europe, has no doubt, built idealistic systems on these lines, but experience shows that truth revealed through pure reason is incapable of bringing that fire of living conviction which personal revelation alone can bring. This is the reason why pure thought has so little influenced men while religion has always elevated individuals, and transformed whole societies."[13]

Iqbal stress the call for enormous importance and requirement of developing a new *ilm-ul-kalam,* which should be based on modern knowledge and new scientific data, for the reconstruction of Islamic theology. Iqbal performed massive obligation by freeing Islamic theology from the sticky situation of Platonic thoughts and Aristotelian logic. He established the foundation of Islamic beliefs on modern experimental sciences which consist of physics, mathematics, biology and psychology. [14] Iqbal distinctive roles in modern Islamic thought is of making comparable 'God consciousnesses' with modern science, which according to him is more valuable than sheer belief in God. He equalizes the scientist's observation and research of nature and environment is in quest of familiarity with God, like mystic seek out in the act of pray. [15] He asserts that "scientific observation of nature keeps us in close contact with the behavior of Reality (God), and thus sharpens our inner perception for a deeper vision of it. [16] This alone will add to his power over nature and give him that vision of the total-infinite which philosophy seeks but cannot find."[17]

Iqbal hails the empirical exploration of science and gives glowing appreciation to the rational assumptions. He is not restricted to speculative rationalism or scientific empiricism or with both. Iqbal's theory of knowledge comprises intuition as superior degree of perfection. Iqbal asserts that science generate genuine knowledge, he says, "we must not forget what we call science is not a single systematic view of Reality. It is a mass of sectional views of Reality – fragments of a total experience which do not seem to fit

together." [18] Science state a little bit regarding life, matter and mind but it did not solve how to make a relationship among them. It is plainly changeable to provide sacred vision of Reality. [19] In this way science makes an artificial effort as it is choosy in selecting components of human experience and Reality which it examines. Iqbal describes, "Natural Science is by nature sectional; it cannot, if it is true to its own nature and function, set up its theory as a complete view of Reality." [20] Science is selective in organization of knowledge. In this way Iqbal asserts that religion should not concern about science. Religion should take the essential place in the combination of all "data of human experience" and must receive the partly data from science because religion treat with the entire Reality. The main plan of Iqbal was restructuring, rationalization and reformation of the Islamic faith, that is, to rebuild perfect Muslim culture in which man has essential role and man would attain his highest ideals. He has central and key role in the perfect society. This was the task which begin with the perfection of man best exemplified in example of Prophet Muhammad himself- and culminated in the creation of the ideal social order, hence for Iqbal revival of faith at individual level was ineluctably tied to the creation of perfect Islamic society, which mean that the political fortunes of Muslim would again rise in only pursuant to a revival of Islam. [21] Iqbal says:

> The truth is that among the Muslim nations of today, Turkey alone has shaken off its dogmatic slumber, and attained to self-consciousness. She alone has claimed her right of intellectual freedom; she alone has passed from ideal to the real—a transition which entails keen intellectual and moral struggle. To her the growing complexities of a mobile and broadening life are sure to bring new situations suggesting new points of view, and necessitating fresh interpretations of principles which are only of an academic interest to a people who have never experienced the joy of spiritual expansion. It is, I think, the English thinker Hobbes who makes this acute observation that to have a succession of identical thoughts and feelings is to have no thoughts and feelings at all. Such is the lot of most Muslim countries today. They are mechanically repeating old values, whereas the Turk is on the way to creating new values. He has passed through great experiences which have revealed his deeper self to him. In him life has begun to move, change, and amplify, giving birth to new desires, bringing new difficulties and suggesting new interpretations. The question which confronts him today, and which is likely to confront other Muslim countries is the near future, is whether the Law of Islam is capable of evolution—a question which will require great intellectual effort, and is sure to be answered in the affirmative; provided the world of Islam approaches it in the spirit

of Omar—the first critical and independent mind in Islam who, at the last moments of the Prophet, had the moral courage to utter these remarkable words: 'The Book of God is sufficient for us'. [22]

Iqbal developed an ideology of which the fundamental thought and effect was to cleanse and develop human life in every sphere. His ideology cannot be bracketed in any 'ism'. He can be interpreted differently. Many interpreters have seen him primarily a social reformer, although he was certainly not a socialist in the technically sense of the word. He did not know analytically and logically what is wrong with capitalism. But he was emotionally a socialist because he loved mankind. [23] As a staunch believer in a personal God, he was also theist. Believing that all existence is constituted of egos or selves are could claim him along with Rumi and Bergson as monodologist.[24]

Iqbal dreamt of leading his people back to the original Arabian Islam, unstained by Hellenistic philosophy, and in this attempt he stands in the same line as the great theologian of eighteenth century. He is also close to them when he accuses the Sufis of indolence and considers their work dangerous for the community. He stresses for active participation in life. Without any doubt, modern Muslim world produced Iqbal, the most versatile genius. No other thinker of Indian Islam has become more widely known outside the sub-continent than Iqbal. But he is one of the reformers that emerged in the sub-continent during restless years between the two world wars. Iqbal expressed his ideas and feelings in Islamic framework and considerable part of his message has indirectly spoken to the Muslims for reawakening and revival. His ideas and writing was without any narrow minded and sectarian stuff. His ideology stresses for the dignity of life and its everlasting creativity and prosperity. He had recognized the creative need of life with love, which is a substance of institution. Man can reach the high heaven with the force of Love. [25]

It can be concluded that Iqbal is perhaps the only personality in the recent history of Islam who is equally at home in modern history of Islam as well as in modern Western thought and eternal teaching of Islam. This fact, indeed, made him the only person qualified to take up the gigantic task of reconstructing the religious thought of Islam. He related Islamic thought to Western philosophy, and linked spiritual salvation to intellectual change and social development. Briefly, it may confidently assert that Iqbal was vitalist who believed in a dynamic, forward-looking approach towards life and life-problems. His goal was the renaissance of

Islam in all its pristine glory and simplicity, by facing the challenge of modern science and philosophy, and thereby to achieve the salvation of the whole of humanity not only in this world but also in the life to come as well. To the attainment of this ideal he passed into service both his philosophical insight and poetic acumen. The fact that the main goal Iqbal pursued throughout his life was renaissance of Islam can be substantiated both from his verse and philosophical prose works. His intense desire for the revival of moral social and political ideals of Islam finds passionate expression in his philosophical poems. Fazlur Rahman was inspired by the thinking of Iqbal, whose message delivered to the Muslims to raise and shape their own destiny and bring back the image of pristine Islam of the Prophet Muhammad and the Qur'an. He felt immensely the need of that "*The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam"* which contained sweeping reform proposals was written in English Language, which is not mostly understood by masses and *Ulama*, who can benefit from the Iqbal's philosophy, while his powerful poetry meant for common people mainly free from such reform.

Notes and References

[1] Rahman, Fazlur, Islamic Modernism: Its Scope, Method and Alternatives, *Int. Journal Middle East Studies* 1, printed in G. Britain, 1970, p. 324.

[2] Dar, B. A., *A Study of Iqbal's Philosophy*, Sh. Ghulam Ali and Sons, Lahore, 1971, p. 161.

[3] Rahman, Fazlur, Currents of Religious Thought in Pakistan, *Islamic Studies*, Journal of Islamic Research Institute, Pakistan, Vol. VII, No. 1, March 1968, p. 26.

[4] Rahman, Fazlur, *Muslim Modernism in the Indo-Pak Sub-Continent* n.p., n.d., p. 95.

[5] Rahman, Fazlur, Iqbal's Idea of the Muslim, *Islamic Studies*, Journal of the Central Institute of Islamic Research, Karachi, Vol. II, No. 4, Dec. 1963, p. 440.

[6] Ibid. p.440.

[7] Rahman, Fazlur, *Muslim Modernism in the Indo-Pak Sub-Continent*, n.p, n.d., p.95.

[8] Iqbal, *Reconstructio*n, p. v.

[9] Nasr, S. Vali Raza, Allama Iqbal's Role in Islamic Resurgance, *Dawah Highlights*, Dawah Academy, International Islamic University, Islamabad, Vol. XIII, Issue 11, Nov. 2002, p. 26.

[10] Ibid. p. 26.

[11] Rahman, Fazlur, Islamic Thought in the Indo-Pak Subcontinent, *Middle East, Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 1/ 2 , The University of Chicago Press, Jan.-April 1973, p. 200.

[12] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 27.

[13] Ibid. p. 179.

[14] Ahmed, Dr Israr, Iqbal and the Reconstruction of Islamic Thought, tr: by Dr Ahmed Afzal, *The Qur'anic Horizons, Quarterly Journal of the Qur'an Academy*, Markazi Anjuman Khuddam-ul-Quran, Lahore, Vol. 1, No. 3, July-September1996, p. 14.

[15] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, pp. 45, 73.

[16] Ibid. p. 72.

[17] Ibid. p. 73.

[18] Ibid. p. 33.

[19] Ibid. p. 33.

[20] Ibid. p. 36.

[21] Nasr, S. Vali Raza, Allama Iqbal's Role in Islamic Resurgance, *Dawah Highlights*, Dawah Academy, International Islamic University, Islamabad, Vol. XIII, Issue 11, Nov. 2002, p. 29.

[22] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 162.

[23] Smith, W. C., *Modern Islam in India*, Lahore, Chicago, 1947, p. 128.

[24] Sharif, M. M., *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, Vol. II, Royal Book Co., Karachi, 1983, p. 1620. Anwar, Dr. Khurshid, *Epistemology of Iqbal*, Iqbal Academy, Lahore, 1996, p. 98.

[25]

"Living without Transcendence" Some Observations on Religious and Theological Reductionism of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan

Muhammad Suheyl Umar

ABSTRACT

This article explores Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's engagement with modernity, highlighting his prioritization of social reform, education, and scientific development over metaphysical concerns. While much has been written on Sir Sayyid's religious and theological stances, little attention has been given to his acceptance of a worldview "bereft of Transcendence." This acceptance, rooted in Enlightenment principles such as positivism and reductionism, led him to adopt a modernist lens that subordinated metaphysical and spiritual issues. The article critically examines Sir Sayyid's intellectual milieu, juxtaposing premodern and modern conceptual frameworks, and argues that his reverence for Victorian science constrained his capacity to engage with transcendence. By focusing on the clash of worldviews between modern science and traditional spiritual perspectives, it highlights the broader implications of reductionist thinking in shaping societal values, existential meaning, and the human quest for purpose. Through the lens of thinkers like Robert Bellah and Allama Iqbal, the analysis emphasizes the necessity of integrating transcendence and metaphysics into a balanced worldview to counter modernity's metaphysical shortcomings. Ultimately, it calls for a nuanced synthesis of science and religion to address the spiritual crises that accompany modern secularism and materialism.

"Homo Sapiens have always been homo religiousus."

"A human existence bereft of transcendence is an impoverished and finally untenable condition."

—Peter Berger[1]

Much has been written about the religious, theological and metaphysical (if there was anything worth the metaphysical salt in his writings!) views of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan[2] but seldom has the most important and critical question with regard to the rampant "reductionism" in his works been asked:[3] Why did Sir Sayyid accept to live in a condition that was "bereft of Transcendence?; and as a ramification, for a host of historical, intellectual and political reasons, advised his followers/readers to focus on social reform, economic uplift, expansion and development of education, cultivation of modern science, political awareness etc. while relegating the metaphysical issues to a matter of secondary importance and of no immediate consequence and concern. To a straight forward question like this we can begin by giving an equally straight forward and unequivocal answer. Unaware of the *Modernity's Metaphysical Shortcomings*, Sir Sayyid had unquestioningly accepted the intellectual assumptions underlying the Enlightenment paradigm which Robert Bellah has brilliantly outlined as follows:

The assumptions underlying mainstream social science, can be briefly listed: positivism, reductionism, relativism and determinism. I am not saying that working social scientists could give a good philosophical defence of these assumptions, or even that they are fully conscious of holding them. I mean to refer only to, in the descriptive sense, their prejudices, their pre-judgments about the nature of reality. By positivism I mean no more than the assumption that the methods of natural science are the only approach to valid knowledge, and the corollary that social science differs from natural science only in maturity and that the two will become ever more alike. By reductionism I mean the tendency to explain the complex in terms of the simple and to find behind complex cultural forms biological, psychological or sociological drives, needs and interests. By relativism I mean the assumption that matters of morality and religion, being explicable by particular constellations of psychological and sociological conditions, cannot be judged true or false, valid or invalid, but simply vary with

persons, cultures and societies. By determinism I do not mean any sophisticated philosophical view, but only the tendency to think that human actions are explained in terms of "variables" that will account for them.

Sir Sayyid emerged on the intellectual landscape of the Indian Sub-Continent in the wake of one of themost significant conceptual shifts in history brought about by Modernity. I have detailed these elsewhere[4] but its summary would put the matter in perspective. The conceptual shifts refer to the overarching perspective or the paradigm that governs each conceptual shift. The present audience, I presume, agrees that with regard to the view of Reality we can speak of the entire Premodern world in the singular and simply assume that a common metaphysical "spine" underlies the differences in the worldviews, the theologies of the classical languages of the human soul, the world's great religions or wisdom traditions. This is coupled with the claims of all the Premodern civilizations, including the pre-renaissance Western civilization, that people need worldviews, that reliable ones are possible, and that they already exist. It is only Modernity that made the totalizing claim for the truth of a single worldview and Postmodernism which categorically denies the existence or the possibility of reliable worldviews![5]

Secondly, Sir Sayyid wished to address the issue not only in the context of "a South Asian sensibility" but with reference to emerging Western-dominated global reality (which his farsightedness had sensed) because he knew that the problems of social integration that India facedat the timewere not confined to its local situations any more but impacted all persons who around the world live out different degrees of accommodation with the local and global reality. This calls for a few remarks about the situation of the modern world, the "global reality" that engulfs us, shapes our worlds and determines our predicament.

In this late stage of secular modernity and its hangover in postmodernism, melancholy has become a collective mood. Melancholy used to afflict individuals who felt rejected and exiled from the significance of the cosmos. By our day it has turned into a cultural malady deriving from a world that has been drained of all meaning and which had come to cast doubt on all traditional sources– theological, metaphysical, and historical. The dominant mood of our time is "**a desperate search for a pattern**." The search is desperate because it seemed futile to look for a pattern in

reality. In terms of its mindset or worldview the modern world is living in what has been called the *Age of Anxiety*, and if one tries to look beyond symptoms to find the prime cause one comes to realize that there is something wrong with the presiding paradigm or worldview that our age had come to espouse. Something has gone wrong with the world and the Time is again out of joint? East and West both seem to face a predicament! As Iqbal has observed:

من از هلال و چلیپا دگر نیندیشم

که فتنۀ دگری در ضمیر ایام است

I am no longer concerned about the crescent and the cross,
For the womb of time carries an ordeal of a different kind. [6]

The crisis that the world found itself in as it swung on the hinge of the 20th century was 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.[7] That condition was characterized by 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:[8]

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, re-establishing 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, we would even say: into the world of sufficient reason.

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.[9]The eclipse of transcendence impacts our way of looking at the world, that is, forming a world view, in a far-reaching manner. According to our perspective, *Transcendence* means that there is another reality that is more real, more powerful, and better than this mundane order. It is an issue of the greatest magnitude. Whatever transpires in other domains of life– politics, living standards, environmental conditions, interpersonal relationships, the arts– is ultimately dependent on our presiding world view. 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. This is the cause of our spiritual crisis. It joined other crises as we entered the new century– the environmental crisis, the population explosion, the widening gulf between the rich and the poor, and the list goes on. But that is the subject for another day.[10]Suffice to say here that the enlightenment project and modernity's worldview had brought in the human thought, the damage that it had done to the academia, and the contemporary discourse created by it is marked by incredulity. Incredulity toward metaphysics. Wouldn't we be better off if we extricate ourselves from the worldview we had unwittingly slipped into and replace it with a more generous and accurate one that shows us deeply connected to the final nature of things?[11] A world ends when its metaphor dies, and modernity's metaphor– endless progress through science-powered technology– is dead. It is only cultural lag– the backward pull of the outgrown good– that keeps us running on it.

Sir Sayyid had also written a blank cheque for science's claims concerning what constituted Reality, knowledge and justified belief. With reference to it and in view of what has just been said, another issue is of the greatest magnitudethat comes into focus. That science had changed our world beyond recognition goes without saying, but more importantly, the two worldviews were contending for the mind of the future. The scientific worldview was a wasteland for the human spirit. It could not provide us the where withal for a meaningful life. Did Sir Sayyid realize how much, then, was at stake? That is the fundamental question. The overarching question relates to the view of Reality; of the *Worldviews: The Big Picture.* It is of great consequence to ask as to who was right about

reality: Traditionalists, Modernists, or the Postmoderns? Was Sir Sayyid aware of the Metaphysical Shortcomings of Modernity? I don't think so. Consider this. Modernity was metaphysically sloppy. Ravished by science's accomplishments, it elevated the scientific method to "a sacral mode of knowing"[12] and because that mode registers nothing that is without a material component, immaterial realities at first dropped from view and then (as the position hardened) were denied existence. This was metaphysics reduced to cosmology.[13] Modernity's Big Picture was materialism or (in its more plausible version) **naturalism** which acknowledges that there are immaterial things–thoughts and feelings, for example–while insisting that those things are totally dependent on matter [and that was exactly the title Sir Sayyid ascribed to his position and even went to the extent of calling "God a naturalist"[14] ''خدا۔۔۔تو پکّا، چھٹا ہوا نیچری'' ہے،وہ خود اپنے کو نیچری کہتا ہے'' (God is Himself a confirmed naturalist of the first magnitude, He Himself calls Himself a naturalist). Both versions are stunted when compared with the traditional worldview. It is important to understand that neither materialism nor naturalism is required by anything science has discovered in the way of actual facts. Sir Sayyid never realized that modernity [read modern science] had slid into this smallest of metaphysical positions for **psychological**, not **logical**, reasons. Unaware of what had happened– blind to the way method had vectored metaphysics and epistemology constricted worldview– modernity with a stroke of its methodological pen had all but written off the region of reality that religion up to the last century or so had been riveted to.[15]

Even today, when traditional peoples want to know where they are– when they wonder about the ultimate context in which their lives are set and which has the final say over them– they turn to their sacred texts; or in the case of oral, tribal peoples (what comes to the same thing), to the sacred myths that have been handed down to them by their ancestors. *Modernity* was born when a new source of knowledge was discovered, the scientific method. Because its controlled experiment enabled scientists to prove their hypotheses, and because those proven hypotheses demonstrated that they had the power to change the material world dramatically, Westerners turned from revelation to science for the Big Picture.[16] This much is straightforward, but it doesn't explain why Westerners

aren't still modern rather than Postmodern, for science continues to be the main support of the Western mind. By headcount, most Westerners probably still are modern, but I am thinking of frontier thinkers who chart the course that others follow. These thinkers have ceased to be modern because they have seen through the so-called scientific worldview, recognizing it to be not scientific but scientistic. They 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. This point is of crucial importance for understanding the Sir Sayyid phenomenon so we shall come back to it in greater detail but for the moment let us turn our attention to the way it relates to the dilemma that Sir Sayyid faced when his intellectual milieu was assailed by the waves of the worldview of high late modernity. It was not enough to exist on the map of modernity. To be a modern, as opposed to simply inhabiting modernity, was, first and foremost, to accept, whether reflectively, or reflexively, the worldview of modernism, a worldview characterized most significantly by the rejection of the *transcendent*. Modernitywas predominantly characterized by a "*lack of Transcendence*" but the personal trajectory of Sir Sayyid losing his grip on *Transcendence* displays the undeniable influence of a specific element of this altered worldview epitomized by the post-renaissance, Enlightenment Paradigm. This personal trajectory could be summarized as follows: Sir Sayyid had succumbed to the Victorian worldview [read post-renaissance, Enlightenment Paradigm] that was riddled with *scientism* and, in the words of Wittgenstein, had become the "captive of a picture! "These remarks by Wittgenstein were made in another context but they hold good for Sir Sayyid. Wittgenstein had remarked, "A picture holds them captive". Hypnotized by the unparalleled predictive and technological successes of modern science, they infer that *scientism* must be true, and that anything that follows from scientism– however fantastic or even seemingly incoherent– must also be true.[17] Major writings of Sir Sayyid provide ample evidence that in his zeal, or perhaps reverential awe, of the Victorian science went too far in honouring science and lost sight of the fact that Science did not deal with all of Reality; it cannot handle *Transcendence* as it only deals with a part of Reality or, in the words of Iqbal, "sectional

views of Reality".[18]It tells us only about nature or the natural order/natural world, but as that is not all that exists, all that **is**, science cannot provide us with a worldview– not a valid one.Once accepting modern science as the Court of Ultimate Appeal for deciding what is real and what is not real, Sir Sayyid then went on a tangent in his religious and theological views making the early doctrinal positions subservient to the dictates of conceptual paradigm of modern science. But to see it clearly we have to begin the tale from the beginning.

The world today is *massively religious*, and it is anything but the secularized world that had been predicted (be joyfully or despondently) by so many analysts of modernity. The religious impulse, the quest for meaning that transcends the restricted space of empirical existence in this world, has been a perennial feature of humanity. *"Homo Sapiens have always been homo religiousus."* (This assertion is not a theological statement but an anthropological one– an agnostic or even an atheist philosopher may agree with it.) The Sand People of the Kalahari say that there are two categories of "hunger": the "little hunger" and the "big hunger"– the quest for "Meaning/Purposes" – that lies deeper in the stomach than the "little hunger." There is within us– in even the blithest, most light-hearted among us– a fundamental dis-ease. It acts like an unquenchable fire that renders the vast majority of us incapable in this life of ever coming to full peace. This desire lies in the marrow of our bones and the deep regions of our souls. All great literature, poetry, art, philosophy, psychology, and religion tries to name and analyse this longing. We are seldom in direct touch with it, and indeed the modern world seems set on preventing us from getting in touch with it by covering it with an unending phantasmagoria of entertainments, obsessions, addictions, and distractions of every sort. But the longing is there, built into us like a jack-in-the-box that presses for release. Whether we realize it or not, simply to be human is to long for release from mundane existence, with its confining walls of finitude and mortality. Release from those walls calls for space outside them, and the traditional world (religious) provides that space in abundance. It has about it the feel of long, open distances and limitless vistas for the human spirit to explore– distances and vistas that are quality-laden throughout. The traditional (read religious) worldview is preferable to the one that now encloses us (the worldview of modernity based on scientism) because it allows for the fulfilment of the basic longing. Authentic religion is the clearest opening through which the inexhaustible

energies of the cosmos can pour into human existence. What then can rival its power to touch and inspire the deepest creative centres of man's being? Revelation has shaped human history more than any other force besides technology. Whether revelation issues from God or from the deepest unconscious of spiritual geniuses can be debated, but its signature is invariably power. The periodic incursions– explosions, we might call them– of this power in history are what created the world's greatest religions, and by extension, the civilizations they have bodied forth. Its dynamite is its news of another world. Revelation invariably tells us of a separate (though not removed) order of existence that simultaneously relativizes and exalts the one we normally know. It relativizes the everyday world by showing it to be less than the "all" that we unthinkingly take it to be, and that demotion turns out to be exhilarating. By placing the quotidian world in a vastly more meaningful context, revelation dignifies it the way a worthy setting enhances the beauty of a precious stone. People respond to this news of life's larger meaning because they hear in it the final warrant for their existence.

Wherever people live, whenever they live, they find themselves faced with three inescapable problems: how to win food and shelter from their natural environment (the problem nature poses), how to get along with one another (the social problem), and how to relate themselves to the total scheme of things, the worldview (the religious problem). If this third issue seems less important than the other two, we should remind ourselves that religious artifacts are the oldest that archaeologists have discovered.

As man of faith from the Islamic Tradition, as a leader of the community with a social responsibility, Sir Sayyid tried to come to grips to all three inescapable problems. What he did for the resolution of the first two according to the lights of his Tradition is beyond the scope of our present paper. We would only focus on the third where he parted ways with his Tradition and accepted modern science as the Court of Ultimate Appeal for deciding what is real and what is not real and, by the same token, assigned the role of providing us with a valid worldview to modern science hence becoming a typical example of the metaphysical muddle of our times– the Vectored Metaphysics and the Constricted Worldview of Epistemology. With both of these forces, science and religion, as permanent fixtures in history, the obvious question was how they were to get along. Alfred North Whitehead was of the opinion that, more than on any other single factor, the future of humanity

depended on the way these two most powerful forces in history settle into relationship with each other.[19] Ever since the rise of modern science various settlements have been suggested and it has come a long way from Warfare to Dialogue. Religious triumphalism died a century or two ago, and its scientistic counterpart seems now to be following suit.[20] It seemed clear to Sir Sayyid that both science and religion were there to stay.[21]But the settlement Sir Sayyid suggested was no less than a hegemonic sway of modern [now obsolete] science, typical of the colonial mind, and the closure which he proposed, as we shall see in the next section, was not only untenable forits flimsy and unconvincing intellectual foundations but was, in due course, rejected by both the religious and the scientific camps!
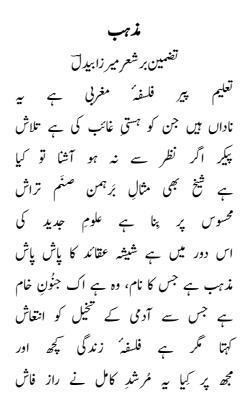
I would end like to end this section on Iqbal who not only completely disagreed from the closure which Sir Sayyid had proposed but presaged the next conceptual shift, that of Postmodernism, of which Sir Sayyid could not even have an inkling. Iqbal agrees that there is a Big Picture and his writings give us to understand that the Postmodern view of the self and its world is in no way nobler than the ones that the world's religions proclaim. Postmoderns yield to their dilapidated views, not because they like them, but because they think that reason and human historicity now force them upon us. Iqbal would argue that it is not necessarily the case and the present predicament is the result of a tunnel vision, similar to what Sir Sayyid had accepted in his days, that the Postmoderns have adopted but which really is not the only option for us. Here is Iqbal's depiction of the conceptual shift that the enlightenment project and modernity's world view had brought in the human thought, the damage that it had done to the academia. Cultures and their worldviews are ruled by their mandarins, like Sir Sayyid, the intellectuals and they, as well as their institutions that shape the minds that rule the modern world are unreservedly secular. The poem is addressed to our present day intellectual mandarins, the leaders of the academia.

شیخِ مکتب سے

شیخ مکتب ہے اک عمارت گر

جس کی صنعت ہے رُوحِ انسانی

نغمہ دلپذیر تیرے لیے
کہ گیا ہے حکیم قاآنیؔ
"پیش خورشید بر مکش دیوار
خواہی ار صحنِ خانہ نورانی"

To the Schoolman
The Schoolman is an architect
The artefact he shapes and moulds is the human soul;
Something remarkable for you to ponder
Has been left by the Sage, Qāʾānī;
"Do not raise a wall in the face of the illuminating Sun
If you wish the courtyard of your house to be filled with light."[22]

Also from Iqbal is the following poem[23] which, without naming him, appears to be a direct rebuttal of Sir Sayyid and his proposed closure:

مذہب

تضمین بر شعر میرزا بیدلؔ

تعلیم پیر فلسفۂ مغربی ہے یہ
ناداں ہیں جن کو ہستیِ غائب کی ہے تلاش
پیکر اگر نظر سے نہ ہو آشنا تو کیا
ہے شیخ بھی مثالِ برہمن صنم تراش
محسوس پر بِنا ہے علومِ جدید کی
اس دور میں ہے شیشۂ عقائد کا پاش پاش
مذہب ہے جس کا نام، وہ ہے اک جنونِ خام
ہے جس سے آدمی کے تخیل کو انتعاش
کہتا مگر ہے فلسفۂ زندگی کچھ اور
مجھ پر کیا یہ مُرشدِ کامل نے راز فاش

"با ہر کمال اندکے آشفتگی خوش است

ہر چند عقلِ کُل شدہ ای بے جنُوں مباش"

*****

Does Science deal with all of Reality or part of Reality?

Where, then, do we now turn for an inclusive worldview? Postmodernism hasn't a clue. And this is its deepest definition.[24] The generally accepted definition of Postmodernism now that Jean-Francois Lyotard fixed in place decades ago in *The Postmodern Condition* is, "incredulity toward metanarratives".[25] Having deserted revelation for science, the West has now abandoned the scientific worldview as well, leaving it without replacement. In this it mirrors the current stage of Western science which leaves *nature* unimaged. Before modern science, Westerners accepted Aristotle's model of the earth as surrounded by concentric, crystalline spheres. Newton replaced that model with his image of a clockwork universe, but Postmodern, quantum-and-relativity science gives us not a third model of nature but no model at all. Alan Wallace's *Choosing Reality* delineates eight different interpretations of quantum physics, all of which can claim the support of physics' proven facts.[26] A contemporary philosopher described the situation as *"the Reality Market Place"*– you can have as many versions of reality as you like.

Sir Sayyid advocated the acceptance of, or acquiescence in, an Enlightenment naturalism or materialism with respect to what it recognizes as "real". It had, in the main, isolated the intellectual, and rational from the poetic and the religious and worked on the assumption that the former deal with what is "really real", by which is meant the phenomenal world of sense data. This excludes a priori the possibility of a numinous or transcendent dimension as a "given" in the "real" world. For more secular historians, such a precommitment seems not only natural but wholly justified, any alternative to which would take one at once outside of the domains of objectivity and rationality. There are unfortunately, a number of problems implicit in such a stance, to be explored further below.The foremost among these and the most fundamental of all problems is the overarching question, "Does Science deal with all of Reality or part of Reality?" Sir Sayyid had acquiesced that Science dealt with all of Reality. Let us examine the position.

There are Six Things Science Cannot Get its Hands on. Despite its power in limited regions, six things slip through its

controlled experiments in the way sea slips through the nets of fishermen:

1. Values. Science can deal with descriptive and instrumental values, but not with intrinsic and normative ones.

2. Meanings. Science can work with cognitive meanings, but not with existential meanings or ultimate ones (What is the meaning of life?).

3. Purposes. Science can handle teleonomy– purposiveness in organisms– but not teleology, final causes.

4. Qualities. Quantities science is good at, but not qualities.

5. The invisible and the immaterial. It can work with invisibles that are rigorously entailed by matter's behaviour (the movements of iron filings that require magnetic fields to account for them, e.g.) but not with others.

6. Our superiors, if such exist. This limitation does not prove that beings greater than ourselves exist, but it does leave the question open, for "absence of evidence is not evidence of absence".

1. **Values in their final and proper sense.** Close friends at the start, Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein ended at opposite ends of the philosophical spectrum, but on one point they remained in full agreement: science cannot deal with values. Russell proposed one exception–except insofar as science consists in the pursuit of knowledge–but that is not really an exception, for although that value is assumed by scientists, it is not itself scientifically derived. Science can deal with *instrumental* values, but not *intrinsic* ones. *If* health is valued over immediate somatic gratification, smoking is bad, but the intrinsic values that conflict (health versus pleasure) science cannot weigh. Again, science can deal with *descriptive* values (what people *do* like) but not *normative* ones (what they *should* like). Market research and opinion polls are sciences; indeed, when the margins for error are factored in, they come close to being exact sciences. As such, they can tell us whether people prefer Cheerios to Raisin Bran and who is likely to win an election. Who *should* win is a different story. There will never be a science of the *sum-mum bonum,* the supreme good.

2. **Existential and global meanings.** Science itself is meaningful throughout, but on existential and global meanings it is silent. *Existential* meanings are ones that concern us; they relate to what we find meaning-full. Scientists can spread before us their richest wares; but if the viewer is depressed and buries his head in his arms, scientists cannot compel his interest. *Global* meanings are of the sort, *What is the meaning of life?* or *What is the meaning of it all?* As human beings, scientists can invest themselves in these

questions, but their science will not help them find answers to them.

3. **Final causes.** For science to get on with its job, Aristotle's final causes– the *why* of things– to be banished and the field left to explanations by way of efficient causes only. Except in biology, we must add. Living creatures seek food and sex to satisfy their hunger and libidinal drives, and their satisfactions are the final cause of their hunting. So *teleonomy,* yes, but *teleology* (final causes outside the animate world), no. Whether the case be that of Galileo's falling rocks or Kepler's light, the shift from classical to modern mechanics was brought about by the separation of primary from secondary qualities– which is to say, the separation of nature's *quantitative* from its *qualitatively experienced* features. Talk of volition and the why of things was removed to let impersonal laws of motion take over.[27]

4. **Invisibles**. Here too a qualification must be inserted. Science can deal with invisibles that can be logically inferred from observable effects. In the early 1800s, Michael Faraday discovered magnetic fields in this way by placing iron filings on a piece of paper and a magnet underneath. When he vibrated the paper slightly, lines of magnetic force appeared. The randomly scattered filings fell into lines as if ordered by a drill sergeant, revealing the pattern of the magnetic field. But if there are invisibles that do not impact matter thus demonstrably, science gets no wind of them.
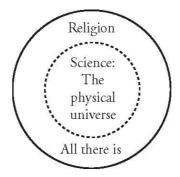
5. **Quality**. Unlike the preceding four, this fifth exclusion does not need to be qualified. And it is basic to the lot, for it is the qualitative ingredient in values, meanings, purposes, and non-inferable invisibles that gives them their power. Certain qualities (such as colours) are connected to quantitative substrates (light waves of given lengths), but the quality itself is not measurable.

6. **Our superiors.** This was covered in the initial six-point argument.

Division of Labour

When we put together the six things science cannot deal with– simplified to help us keep them in mind, they are values, meanings, final causes, invisibles, qualities, and our superiors– we see that science leaves much of the world untouched. With this caveat in place it is impossible to agree with Sir Sayyid for accepting modern science as the Court of Ultimate Appeal for deciding what is real and what is not real! A division of labour suggests itself which,

understandably, was not in sharp focus given the numerous historical, intellectual and political factors impacting the milieu Sir Sayyid worked with. Science deals with the natural world and religion with the whole of things, as this diagram suggests:

Figure 1.

That religion is represented by the larger of the two circles seems to give it the advantage, but that impression is corrected when we note that science works more effectively with its part than does religion with its. Science houses precise calculations, knockdown proofs, and technological wonders, whereas religion speaks in generalities, such as "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,*" (Christianity) or "*The heavens declare the glory of God,*" (Islam) or "*All things are the Buddha-nature,*" (Buddhism) or "*The world is maya,*" (Hinduism) or "*Only heaven is great*" (Taoism/Confucianism). Oliver Wendell Holmes's way of establishing parity is appealing: "**Science gives us major answers to minor questions, while religion gives us minor answers to major questions**."[28] If this way of slicing the pie is accepted, it follows that both parties should respect the other's sphere of competence. It would be unrealistic not to expect border disputes to erupt; but they should be negotiated in good faith without losing sight of the terms of agreement. When scientists who are convinced materialists deny the existence of things other than those they can train their instruments on, they should make it clear that they are expressing their personal opinions like everybody else and not claim the authority of science for what they say. From the other side, religionists should keep their hands off science as long as it is genuine science and not embellished with philosophical opinions to which everyone has rights. All responsible citizens have a right to oppose harmful outcomes that some scientific research could lead to– germ warfare, cloning, and the like– but that is an ethical

matter, not one that relates to science proper. This division of labour is not widely accepted as yet but I believe, however, that it points in the right direction. What is most right about it is that it allots religion an ontological domain of its own. It proposes respect for religion's concern to posit and work with things that exist objectively in the world but which science cannot detect. An analysis of the works of Sir Sayyid betrays that this is underplayed in his (muddled) thinking on science-religion splice while a strong bias in favour of the other hegemonic position courses through the veins of his works where he too often accept science's inventory of the world as exhaustive and contents himself with discerning the meaning and significance of what science reports.

Notes and References

[1] Peter L. Berger, "Secularism in Retreat", *The National Interest*, 1996/1997; 46, pp. 3-12. Also see Berger, "Sociology A Disinvitation?", *Sociology*, November-December 1992, and Berger, "Crisis of Secularity", in Mary Douglas & Steven M. Tipton (Eds.) *Religion & America, Spirituality in a Secular Age*, Beacon Press, Boston,1983.

[2] See, Dr. Saeeda Iqbal, "Sir Syed Ahmad Khan", in *Islamic Rationalism in the Subcontinent,* Lahore, 1984, pp. 135-215;Bashir Ahmad Dar, "Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan as a Religio-Philosophical Thinker", in M. M. Sharif, (Ed.) *A History of Muslim Philosophy,* Vol. II, Karachi, 1983, Wiesbaden, 1966, pp. 1598-1614;Abdul Khaliq, "Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's Concept of Islam as the Natural Religion", in *Journal of Research,* Lahore, XV/2, July, 1980, pp. 19-38;Christian W. Troll, "A Nineteenth Century Indian Muslim Restatement of Islam", in Dietmar Rothermund (Ed.), *Islam in Southern Asia, A Survey of Current Research*, Steiner, Wiesbaden, 1975, pp. 43-45;Mazheruddin Siddiqi, "Religious Thought of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan", in *Islamic Studies,* VI/3, Sept. 1967, pp. 290-308; Abdul Khaliq, "Syed Ahmad Khan's Concept of God", in *Iqbal Review,* April 1980, pp. 27-46; Christian W. Troll, "Syed Ahmad Khan", in Christian W. Troll, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan, A Reinterpretation of Muslim Theology*, Vikas, New Delhi, 1978, chapter 5 and 6, pp. 144-194; Hafeez Malik, "The Religious Liberalism of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan", in *The Muslim World*, Vol. LIV, No. 3, (July, 1964), pp. 160-169; Aziz Ahmad and G. E. Von Grunebaum (Eds.) *Muslim Self-Statement in India and Pakistan, 1857-1968*, Otto Harrasowitz, Wiesbaden, 1970, pp. 25-48. For a convenient ready reckoner also see M. Ikram Chaghatai, *Herald of Nineteenth Century Muslim Thought: Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan,* Sang e Meel, Lahore, Pakistan, 2005 and *Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan* (*A Prominent Muslim Politician and Educationist*) Sang e Meel, Lahore, Pakistan, 2005;

[3] An outstanding exception, however, deserves mention here; Dr. Zafar Ḥasan, *Sir Sayyid awr Ḥalī ka naẓariyya i Fiṭrat*, Idāra Thaqāfat i Islāmiyya, Lahore, 1990, which not only raises this critical question but delves into the deeper conceptual underpinnings of reductionism found in the works of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan that had created the debate and contextualizes it in the larger issue of Science-Religion conflict.

[4] Muhammad Suheyl Umar, *Iqbal Review,* 48: 2, Iqbal Academy Pakistan, 2007, pp. 57-67.

5   I have referred to the three periods of traditional, modern and Postmodern
     with regard to their respective conceptual shifts and also the word Modernity.
     For the rest of my presentation I would use Modernism in place of Modernity.
     In the wake of its Traditional and Modern periods, the Western world is now
     generally regarded as having become Postmodern. Both Modernity and
     Postmodernity refer to a life-style. Modernism and Postmodernism, by
     contrast, suggest an outlook, a worldview: the basic sense of things that gave
     rise to Modernity and Postmodernity in the first place and now reflects its way
     of life.

6   **I am... kind**. By "the crescent and the cross" is meant the historic
     confrontation between Islam and Christianity that took the form of the
     Crusades in the Middle Ages. Iqbal is saying that, unlike many other Muslims,
     who remain mentally imprisoned in the past, allowing their thought and action
     to be determined by certain crucial events of former times, he is more
     concerned about the momentous developments taking place in the present age.
     Iqbal does not specify what he means by "an ordeal of a different kind" (*fitnah-i
     dīgarī*)—whether he means a particular major development, like communism,
     or whether he uses the singular "ordeal" in a generic sense to refer to several
     major and decisive developments taking place on the world stage. The main
     point of the verse, in any case, is that the issues of the present and the future
     have greater claim on one's attention than issues belonging to a past that may
     have no more than historical or academic importance. In the second hemistich,
     "the womb of time" is a translation of *damīr-i ayyām*, which literally means "in the
     insides of time." See M. Mir, (ed.), *Iqbāl-Nāmah,* Vol. 5, No. 3-4, Summer and
     Fall, 2005, p. 3-6.

7   *Zubūr i ʿAjam*, in *Kulliyāt i Iqbāl,* (Persian), Iqbal Academy Pakistan, Lahore,
     1994, p. 376.

فلکِ فرنگ پیشِ مجاز آورد سجود   بینای کور و مستِ تماشای رنگ و بوست

مشرق خراب و مغرب از آن بیشتر خراب   عالم تمام مرده و بی ذوق جستجوست

8   F. Schuon, *Understanding Islam*, reprinted, Suhail Academy, Lahore, 2004, pp. 26.

9   Dr. Martin Lings had once remarked, "No socio-cultural environment in the
     pre-Modern times had turned its back on Transcendence in the systematic way
     that characterized Modernity. Martin Lings, *Mecca, from Before Genesis until Now*,
     Archetype, Cambridge, UK, 2004.

10   That science had changed our world beyond recognition went without saying,
     but it was the way that it had changed our worldview that concerns us here.
     More importantly, the two worldviews are contending for the mind of the
     future. The scientific worldview is a wasteland for the human spirit. It cannot
     provide us the where withal for a meaningful life. How much, then, is at stake?
     That is the fundamental question. The overarching question relates to the view
     of Reality; of the *WORLDVIEWS: THE BIG PICTURE*. It is of great
     consequence to ask as to WHO WAS RIGHT ABOUT REALITY:
     TRADITIONALISTS, MODERNISTS, OR THE POSTMODERNS? The
     problem, according to our lights, is that somewhere, during the course of its
     historical development, western thought took a sharp turn in a different
     direction. It branched off as a tangent from the collective heritage of all
     humanity and claimed the autonomy of reason. It chose to follow reason alone,
     unguided by revelation and cut off from its transcendent root. Political and
     social realms quickly followed suit. Autonomous statecraft and excessive

individualism in the social order were the elements that shaped a dominant paradigm that did not prove successful. There are five places where these contradict each other.

- According to the traditional, religious view spirit is fundamental and matter derivative. The scientific worldview turns this picture on its head.

- In the religious worldview human beings are the less who have derived from the more. Science reverses this etiology, positioning humanity as the more that has derived from the less; devoid of intelligence at its start, evolving and advancing to the elevated stature that we human beings now enjoy.

- The traditional worldview points toward a happy ending; the scientific worldview does not. As for the scientific worldview, there is no way that a happy ending can be worked into it. Death is the grim reaper of individual lives, and whether things as a whole will end in a freeze or a fry, with a bang or a whimper is anybody's guess.

- This fourth contrast between the competing worldviews concerns meaning. Having been intentionally created by omnipotent Perfection– or flowing from it "like a fountain ever on,"– the traditional world is meaningful throughout. In the scientific worldview, meaning is minimal if not absent. "Our modern understanding of evolution implies that ultimate meaning in life is non-existent." Science acknowledges that "the more the universe seems comprehensible, the more it seems pointless."

- In the traditional world people feel at home. Nothing like this sense of belonging can be derived from the scientific worldview which is the dawning of "the age of homelessness."

An age comes to a close when people discover they can no longer understand themselves by the theory their age professes. For a while its denizens will continue to think that they believe it, but they feel otherwise and cannot understand their feelings. This has now happened to our world. Current worldview is not scien*tific* but scien*tistic*. It continues 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. This important point is not generally recognized, so I shall spell it out. The death-knell to modernity, which had science as its source and hope, was sounded with the realization that despite its power in limited regions, six things slip through its controlled experiments in the way sea slips through the nets of fishermen:

1. *Values.* Science can deal with descriptive and instrumental values, but not with intrinsic and normative ones.
2. *Meanings.* Science can work with cognitive meanings, but not with existential meanings (Is X meaningful?), or ultimate ones (What is the meaning of life?).
3. *Purposes.* Science can handle teleonomy– purposiveness in organisms– but not teleology, final causes.
4. *Qualities.* Quantities science is good at, but not qualities.
5. *The invisible and the immaterial.* It can work with invisibles that are rigorously entailed by matter's behaviour (the movements of iron filings that require magnetic fields to account for them, e.g.) but not with others.

6. *Our superiors, if such exist.* This limitation does not prove that beings greater than ourselves exist, but it does leave the question open, for "absence of evidence is not evidence of absence".

11 There is no consensual worldview. The incredulity takes many forms and the discourse grew increasingly shrill. Minimally, it contented itself with pointing out that "we have no maps and don't know how to make them." Hardliners added, "and never again will we have a consensual worldview! In short, our contemporary discourse is filled with voices critiquing the truncated worldview of the Enlightenment, but from that reasonable beginning it plunges on to argue unreasonably that world-views (or grand narratives) are misguided in principle. Already at the opening of the last century, when Postmodernism had not yet emerged on the scene, Yeats was warning that things were falling apart, that the centre didn't hold. Gertrude Stein followed him by noting that "in the twentieth century nothing is in agreement with anything else," and Ezra Pound saw man as "hurling himself at indomitable chaos"– the most durable line from the play *Green Pastures* has been, "Everything that's tied down is coming loose." T. S. Eliot found "The Wasteland" and "The Hollow Men" as appropriate metaphors for the outward and the inward aspects of our predicament. It is not surprising, therefore, that when in her last interview Rebecca West was asked to name the dominant mood of our time, she replied, "A desperate search for a pattern." The search is desperate because it seems futile to look for a pattern when reality has become, in Roland Barth's vivid image, kaleidoscopic. With every tick of the clock the pieces of experience come down in new array. The views about the prevailing human predicament converge. Fresh "infusions" are needed. The opinions about the nature and origin of these fresh "infusions" that could rectify or change it for the better are, however, divergent. Some of our cotemporaries try to find an alternative from within the dominant paradigm. Others suggest the possibility of a search for these fresh "infusions" in a different direction: different cultures, other civilizations, religious doctrines, sapiential traditions.

12 This is a remark by Alex Comfort. I do not remember the context at the moment.

13 When Carl Sagan opened his television series, *Cosmos*, by announcing that "the Cosmos is all that is or ever was or ever will be," he presented that unargued assumption as if it were a scientific fact.

14 Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *Maqālāt i Sir Sayyid*, Ed. S. M. Ismāʿīl Pānīpatī, Majlis i Taraqqi i Adab, Lahore, 1964, Vol. VI, pp. 146-7.

15 As E. F. Schumacher reflected toward the close of his life: *most of the things that most of humanity has most believed in did not appear on the map of reality his Oxford education handed him as it launched him on life's adventure.*

16 Intellectual historians tell us that by the nineteenth century Westerners were already more certain that atoms exist than they were confident of any of the distinctive things the Bible speaks of.

17 Edward Feser, *Scholastic Metaphysics*, Editiones Scholasticae, Germany, 2014, p. 23.

18 There is no doubt that the theories of science constitute trustworthy knowledge, because they are verifiable and enable us to predict and control the events of Nature. But we must not forget that what is called science is not a single systematic view of Reality. It is a mass of sectional views of Reality– fragments of a total experience which do not seem to fit together. Natural Science deals with matter, with life, and with mind; but the moment you ask

the question how matter, life, and mind are mutually related, you begin to see the sectional character of the various sciences that deal with them and the inability of these sciences, taken singly, to furnish a complete answer to your question. In fact, the various natural sciences are like so many vultures falling on the dead body of Nature, and each running away with a piece of its flesh. Nature as the subject of science is a highly artificial affair, and this artificiality is the result of that selective process to which science must subject her in the interests of precision. The moment you put the subject of science in the total of human experience it begins to disclose a different character. Thus religion, which demands the whole of Reality and for this reason must occupy a central place in any synthesis of all the data of human experience, has no reason to be afraid of any sectional views of Reality. Natural Science is by nature sectional; it cannot, if it is true to its own nature and function, set up its theory as a complete view of Reality. MuhammadIqbal*, The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Iqbal Academy Pakistan/Institute of Islamic Culture, Lahore, 1989, p. 26.

[19] And their interface is being addressed today with a zeal that has not been seen since modern science arose.

[20] Here and there diehards turn up– Richard Dawkins, who likens belief in God to belief in fairies, and Daniel Dennett, with his claim that John Locke's belief that mind must precede matter was born of the kind of conceptual paralysis that is now as obsolete as the quill pen! But these echoes of Julian Huxley's pronouncement around mid-century that "it will soon be as impossible for an intelligent or educated man or woman to believe in god as it is now to believe that the earth is flat" are now pretty much recognized as polemical bluster.

[21] His critics may like to add here that, perhaps, he also believed that the standard bearers of modern science, the British, were also there to stay!

[22] Iqbal,"Shaykh i Maktab",*Kulliyāt i Iqbāl,* Urdu, Iqbal Academy Pakistan, Lahore, 1994, p. 494.

[23] Iqbal, *Kulliyāt i Iqbāl*, Urdu, Iqbal Academy Pakistan, Lahore, 1994, p. 275.

[24] Ernest Gellner defines Postmodernism as relativism–"*relativismus über Alles*" (Postmodernism, Reason and Religion)– but relativism is not an easy position to defend, so Postmoderns do everything they can to avoid that label; Clifford Geertz's "anti-antirelativism" is a case in point. The T-shirts that blossomed on the final day of a six-week, 1987 NEH Institute probably tell the story. Superimposed on a slashed circle, their logo read, "No cheap relativism". By squirming, Postmoderns can parry crude relativisms, but sophisticated relativism is still relativism. Postmoderns resist that conclusion, however, so I shall stay with their own self-characterization.

[25] Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, Minneapolis, Minnesota University Press, 1984, pp. xxiv, 3ff.

[26] Alan Wallace, *Choosing Reality*, Boston and Shaftsbury, Shambala, 1989.

[27] Near the start of modern science, Francis Bacon stated this with characteristic vividness. He likened teleological explanations in science to virgins dedicated to God: "barren of empirical fruit for the good of man."

[28] The famous Justice Holmes has also this to say on science-religion splice: "Science Makes Major Contributions to Minor Needs."

TIME, DETERMINISM, AND RELIGIOUS WORLDVIEWS: REVISITING THE OPEN FUTURE HYPOTHESIS IN ISLAMIC THOUGHT THROUGH IBN ARBI AND IQBAL

Alia Saleem Naushahi

ABSTRACT

As opposed to the deterministic, static and block universe of Parmenides that has generally been considered 'official' by philosophers and clergy alike, the present study aims at outlining the contours of a world with *open future*. Contrary to the *philosophy of being*, this work advocates the *philosophy of becoming*. The task has been undertaken in three steps. First, given the nature of time is compatible with the *philosophy of becoming*, the concept of open future is established. Secondly, the concept of destiny, which is the lifeline of static interpretations of time, is interpreted in line with the dynamic view. Finally, as the nature of God's knowledge of future events is in harmony with free, creative and accountable world, it is hypothesized. The seeds of this endeavor are collected mainly from Iqbal's *'The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam.'* Additionally, enlightening principles on the concept of time, destiny and the nature of God's names and attributes have been picked from Ibn Arbi's *'The Meccan Revelations.'* Whereas, the thoughts from the former are fully endorsed, the results drawn from the latter are divergent to what he offers in his deterministic system of *the unity of being*.

The concept of time is central to every metaphysical system. It is vitally related to such ontological categories as essence, existence, causation, and change. Apart from this, the concept of time is essentially at the core of the issue of free will and determinism. In line with Parmenides, the prevalent tendency favors the deterministic views in the Muslim world. Not only theologians (for instance, Asharites, Mutazilites, etc.), but even philosophers (for instance Razi) have favored the deterministic temporal picture of the world. But such determinism is a threat to ethical as well as eschatological essentials of religion. Iqbal goes so far as to declare the correct understanding of the concept of time (which for him is the open future hypotheses) as a matter of life and death.[1] With such centrality and significance attached to it, it is only natural to put an effort and attention in this direction to make it consistent with the religious worldview.

Following Iqbal, the author favors the dynamic religious worldview that can only coexist in the world with an open future. With this presupposition in the background, this study tries to suggest those conditions under which the open future hypotheses can possibly be maintained while remaining within the boundaries of Muslim thought. The principal Muslim thinkers from whom the main principles of such a paradigm are drawn are Ibn Arbi and Iqbal. The task has been undertaken by focusing on the nature of time, destiny, and God's foreknowledge as will unfold during the course of this study.

Traditionally speaking, there are two main descriptions of the nature of time. According to one, time is objective and self-existent ontological entity. This view is adopted by deterministic theories of time, following Parmenides. The past, the present, and the future are symmetric according to this view. Being the philosophy of *being*, this point of view treats the past, the present, and the future as equally real. Contrary to this, there are views which describe time as relational and not substantial. In being the philosophy of *becoming*, this view favors the asymmetry of time. Future, according to this view, far from being real is representative of open possibilities. Unless an event has occurred, it falls under the category of 'possible' with all the options open. This second view is called the open future view. According to this view, the concept of time arises out of relation between things (which are considered substantial).

Time is representative of processes and becoming, according to this view, in the absence of which it makes no sense to talk about time.

Relational View of Time:

The concept of time is essentially linked to matter, according to Iqbal, apart from which there would be no time.[2] While endorsing this, the author thinks that this view necessarily implies that time is not an ontologically self-existent entity. Time far from being absolute, is relational and makes sense only in the world with matter (things). Whatever there was before the current setting of the universe, of which we know about, there was no *time*. No *becoming* implies no *time*, according to the view favored in this study. This further implies that the theological questions related to the choice of the moment of creation of the universe by God or the nature of time before the existence of this universe are all faulty and do not make sense. This view is in resonance with the view Leibniz held on the issue, while favoring the relational view of time (in opposition to Newton's absolute view of time).[3]

The relational theory of time has also been favored by Ibn Arbi. He denies any substantial existence to time but still embraces the worldview of Parmenides by accepting determinism. Time, for Ibn Arabi, is an imaginary thing that stems from the question "when?". It is the measurement of the motion, as has been discussed by Aristotle, and therefore is a matter of convention. Selection of chronometric scale defines the conception of time in a setup. Ibn Arbi, in his *Futuhat-i-Makiyya* describes this in the following words.

> Time is an imaginary entity having no existence. It is denoted by the movements of the spheres or those of objects occupying a place when the question "when?" is asked. Space and time have no substantial existence. Only the objects of movement and repose have existence.[4]

Besides, Ibn Arbi openly advocates determinism in his writings. The world of Ibn Arbi (as opposed to Iqbal's), therefore, is necessarily static as there is no possibility of anything happening anew in it. To know and embrace the deterministic picture of the world is a great virtue for him. In *Futuhat*, he presents his position univocally as stated below.

> Know, my dear friend (may God help you), that when God created the Universe, He determined the courses of all things which they cannot escape from. He created angels as angels, messengers as messengers, prophets as prophets, saints as saints, believers as believers, hypocrites as hypocrites, and infidels as infidels. Everyone of these groups is distinctly and knowingly determined by God. Nothing can be added to

or abstracted from them. Nor can one be changed into another. No created thing can acquire or labor for a place unless it is created of it. Even the very desire happens in accordance with determination.[5]

These conclusions related to the negation of motion alongwith such open embrace and legitimization of determinism is a result of Ibn Arbi's ontological commitment to the doctrine of *the Unity of Being*(which does not let him embrace anything other than the deity as substantial). Nonetheless, the doctrine of *the Unity of Being* itself has problems and objections associated with it. First of all, creation implies coming into existence of something, quite apart from the Creator. However, if we consider creation to be a part of the creator then it implies a sort of imperfection (in the Aristotelian sense) in the Creator himself. Furthermore, whatever is a part of the Creator must also be creator and not the creation in the same manner as every part of human body is a part of the same human. All this implies that pantheism amounts to saying that while creating, God created his own parts. Nevertheless, as stated earlier this suggests the imperfection of God and renders it incomplete. Secondly, if creation would have been nothing other than God, the attribution of eternity to humans seems appropriate. It deems counter intuitive to attach two opposite attributes – eternity and mortality- to one and same entity. This not only violates the principle of identity but also the principle of contradiction.

The relational view does not in any way advocate the psychological relativity of physical time. Instead of being observer dependent or mind dependent, physical time depends upon the relatedness of actual events in the world. Any attempt to make physical time psychologically subjective leads to idealism – the doctrine of '*the unity of being*' being a version of it – and must be avoided. The problem in the case of Ibn Arbi lies in that even though he declares time to be relational and non-substantial, he deprives all entities (other than Being) of substantiality. So, the openness of future cannot be established in his system wherein nothing is substantial. The reason being, openness of the future demands some substantial agents in the world to make use of the resultant freedom and be responsible as well as accountable afterwards.

The postulation of time as relational rather than absolute is necessary to hold the future as open. In the universe with the absolute time, it would not be possible to maintain the asymmetry of time. Another problem that is related to the absolute view of time is 'time travel'. To declare time travel as possible amounts to

the adherence to Parmenidean static universe in which there is no becoming. Time travel theories treat time as analogous to space and consider that just as it is possible to travel backward and forward in space at will without any contradiction it is also possible to move in the past and the future. However, this conception of travel in time is contradictory to not only common sense but also gives rise to many known temporal paradoxes (for instance the grandfather paradox, causal loop, and Fermi paradox).

On the Question of Destiny:

It is the misinterpreted concept of fate that provides the base to widespread (yet unreal) religious fatalism. Fate is generally believed to be a determined life course of every creature, of the sort that has been described as the determinism of Ibn Arbi in the previous section. According to this view, '*whatever will be, will be of necessity*' and by no means can be otherwise. All the events of the world from origination till doomsday are present (either in actual or at least in written) in the metaphysical realm. All the creatures are going to meet their corresponding set of events, during the course of their lives. This view interestingly embraces a block universe where time is symmetric. The metaphor of flow of time is a feature of this sort of static and fatalistic world. Furthermore, this prison is considered to be inescapable irrespective of the effort. This sort of view is not only untenable but also poses serious paradoxes of ethical nature.

Any view that embraces the world with the open future must not only reject this sort of religious fatalism but also give tenable interpretation of the concept of fate. The concept of fate has to do with the potentiality of a thing. It is related to the possibilities associated with any creature which are not escapable. All species are imprisoned within a set of possibilities, which are characteristic of them and are incapable of acting against or beyond those. Even deity cannot make a thing act against the fate (associated possibilities) as stated by Hussaini, while explaining the system of Ibn Arbi, in the following words:

> God cannot make a thing act against its potentiality or aptitude. It is wrong to say that God can do anything. God cannot change the course of anything, nor can He do a thing which is impossible.[6]

So this interpretation impels us to declare that fate is only that everything has its own proper and defined course (qualitative entry into any species). It by no means is the determination of the whole life events of an entity. Both Ibn Arbi and Iqbal define destiny in the same manner. In the words of Ibn Arbi (*Fass-e-Uzayri*),

Destiny is keeping to the time (of expression) of what the things are capable in their essence and relates to every state of the particular entities without any excess.[7]

This interpretation of destiny is in resonance with that of Ali's (the Fourth Caliph of Islam). It is associated with him that freedom and destiny have equal share in the life of any creature. Just as a human being can lift only one leg at a time and not two at the same time is due to its course, constitution, or possibility that is utterly defined. However, to lift one leg alongwith the timing, reason, and other modalities are utterly in his control and are not dictated by any external agency. It is due to this reason that humans are and will be held accountable for all their actions. What Iqbal says on the subject is quite similar as is stated below.

> The destiny of a thing then is not an unrelenting fate working from without like a task master; it is the inward reach of a thing, its realizable possibilities which lie within the depths of its nature, and serially actualize themselves without any feeling of external compulsion.[8]

There cannot be any stronger and more valid external compulsion than the knowledge of God, considering the fact that it must necessarily be true and not otherwise, under any circumstances. The open future hypothesis favors the dynamic God of Iqbal in contrast to Aristotelian static God. It advocates an active deity, as opposed to a mere spectator. Prevalent deterministic interpretations of destiny have in their background the idealization of a static God. Not only this, most theological riddles – nature of God's knowledge, problem of motion and change, block universe with no novelty – originate from this static conception of deity. In such a static world, it appears as if god is not only static but also a choice-less entity. This naturally leads to the question about our very existence in this world, i.e., what we are here for? Therefore, we are not here as actors but as conscious individuals bestowed with the ability to choose between right and wrong and no one else can do it for us. Being human necessarily implies being directive. In the words of Iqbal,

> God Himself cannot feel, judge, and choose for me when more than one course of actions are open to me.[9]

The directive nature of human beings contrary to the widespread fatalism may also be established using the following argument;

> Man is fashioned in the image of God.
> God is directive in nature.

Therefore, man is also directive in nature.

The Nature of Knowledge:

Knowledge is essentially related to something that is already out there, in the presence of the knower. It is due to this reason that truth is necessarily linked to knowledge as knowledge implies the unveiling of the object of knowledge completely to the knower. In a world with open future, knowledge cannot be related to future in any objective way whatsoever. The reason being, any such declaration will inevitably lead to the confirmation of the symmetry of time. It will lead to the inference that like the past, the future is also determined, fixed, and knowable or known. Evidently, the association of knowledge with the future seriously threatens the open future hypotheses, and reduces it to a version of Parmenides' block universe where every time-event – no matter whether it belongs to the past, the present, or the future – is accessible, fixed and already out there. So, in the world with open future, we cannot grant such a privileged access to the future, even to deity. This difficulty can be avoided by declaring the knowledge of deity relational, following the footsteps of Ibn Arbi. Far from being substantial, the names and attributes of deity, according to Ibn Arbi, are a creation of human imagination. All the names and the attributes – including knowledge – exemplify the need of the creatures to know about the named. The creatures do not have any other access to the named, apart from the names, as the essence of God is too pure to have anything to do with the creatures. The essence is simply inaccessible, while the names are only speculative. In the words of Hussaini;

> … all the names of God are only speculative without any reality about them. Man has attributed God with all human attributes – with such attributes as he found in himself and also with such as he thought worthy of God.[10]

The names and attributes are related more to the creatures than to God, as they are representatives of the existential need in which creatures are, since their creation. They are related to the event of creation, and are responsible for the working of the universe – apart from which they have no significance – as has been advocated by Ibn Arbi by saying,

> Names are by us for us. They are based on us and are manifest in us. They are supposed by us to serve our purposes.[11]

On the same footing, knowledge – as an attribute and name – is also relational and related to the world dynamically. This

assumption supplies a revolutionary freshness to not only our conception – of the world, but also of God. This makes God a dynamic as well as an active entity rather than being a static observer of his plans. This view also elevates the status of man and makes him responsible and accountable in return. As far as the nature of universe is concerned, it proposes a growing universe with dynamism for both the creator and the creatures contrary to the static block universe of Parmenides – embraced and universalized through theology. Iqbal describes the contours of a dynamic world with the open future in these words.

> A time-process cannot be conceived as a line already drawn. It is a line in the drawing – an actualization of open possibilities….. It is a growing universe and not an already completed product which left the hand of its maker ages ago, and is now lying stretched in space as a dead mass of matter to which time does nothing.[12]

The future that is already known is not future anymore. The concept of prayer is quite contradictory to such a view. Prayers are invoked in order to get the favors of God regarding the matter. However, if God knows everything beforehand then what is the need of supplication and prayer. Because, if as a result of prayer nothing is going to change then prayer is useless (which in fact cannot be the case). Nevertheless, if as a result of prayer God changes what already forms his knowledge then it violates the very definition of knowledge (as either what was prior to prayer can be right or the posterior and not both). This implies that the future is open as well as unknown (as it is yet to become) and prayers are aimed at getting the favor of God regarding the variety of possibilities at hand and not written. This further implies that the acceptance of God's knowledge of fixed future comes at the cost of His freedom, as both cannot be held together. If God's knowledge of the future is deterministic then He cannot go contrary to it – under any conditions and at any time – as has been narrated by Iqbal in these words.

> Divine knowledge must be conceived as a living creative activity to which the objects that appear to exist in their own right are organically related. By conceiving God's knowledge as a kind of reflecting mirror, we no doubt save His foreknowledge of future events; but it is obvious that we do so at the expense of His freedom. The future certainly pre-exists in the organic whole of God's creative life, but it pre-exists as an open possibility, not as a fixed order of events with definite outlines.[13]

Conclusion:

The Philosophy of time plays a key role in the formation of our worldview. It is due to an adherence to a static block universe of Parmenides that Muslim Theology as well as Muslim thought are deterministic in general. Moreover, religious acceptance, indoctrination, and propagation of the doctrine made it official. The problem with such a static pre-determined world is that it poses serious threats as well as questions on ethical and eschatological doctrines of religion. It makes the concept of responsibility, accountability, creativity, and novelty fall flat. To get rid of such paradoxes, we must try to build a system that accounts for an open future. In this context, even Ibn Arbi who favors the relational view of time, as opposed to the absolute version of Parmenides, infers a thoroughly deterministic universe through his idealistic system. The main reason behind this is the declaration of all things as non-substantial. However, we get courageous and enlightening principles – such as those related to the nature of God's knowledge, time, and destiny – in his thought, which are very helpful in building the world where future is open and not determined. Regarding the open future hypothesis, some important contributions and insights have been offered by Iqbal in '*The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*', which was the reference point of the present study. Also, by focusing on other mentioned thinkers, an attempt has been made to analyze the contours of such possibilities, which are identified and summarized as follows.

On the basis of the assumption that things in the world are substantial irrespective of the degree that may be associated with this substantiality, it is concluded that far from being an independent and absolute ontological entity, time is relational in character. Secondly, on the basis of the interpretation that destiny is the determination of the possibilities or potentialities of species and not more, it is established that the concept of destiny does not render religion as fatalistic. As opposed to the misinterpreted notion of destiny, the offered interpretation of destiny (that is favored by both Ibn Arbi as well as Iqbal) favors the view that being fashioned in the image of God, man has the freedom and choice in the absence of external limitations. Lastly, by conjecturing on God's names and attributes, it is speculated that they are relational, speculative, and imaginative. The inference drawn from these speculations favors the asymmetry of time with the declaration that future is not known beforehand to anyone. As opposed to this, it is asserted that the future is open and not

defined, known, or determined in advance to further establish that there is novelty, creativity, and emergentism in the world.

Notes and Reference

1   Iqbal. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013), 105.
2   Iqbal. The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, 31.
3   For details see the Leibniz-clarke correspondence.
4   Hussaini, S.A.Q. *The Pantheistic Monism of Ibn al-Arabi* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf , 1970), 123.
5   Hussaini, *The Pantheistic Monism of Ibn al-Arabi*, 212.
6   Ibid, 207.
7   Ibid., 212.
8   Iqbal. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, 40.
9   Ibid., 80.
10 Hussaini, *The Pantheistic Monism of Ibn al-Arabi*,157.
11 Ibid., 173.
12 Iqbal. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, 44.
13 Ibid., 63.

Exploring the Invariant Core: An Analysis of Multiple Translations of a Selection from Iqbal's Shikwa

Nasir Mehmood/Khalid Yasir/Hazrat Umar

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to explore the invariant core among the three English translations of selected poetry from Iqbal's Shikwa. The study identifies that the complex nature of poetry makes it difficult for the translators to transfer the ST in terms of both content and form. Therefore, good poetry is translated not only once, but several times, by different translators, with their different approaches and strategies. Accordingly, Iqbal's Shikwa and Jawab-e-Shikwa is translated by three translators, including two foreign and one indigenous translator. This is a qualitative research, and Viney and Darbelnet's model of translational analysis was used as it best suited the qualitative nature of the present research. The study is delimited to the three selected translations of a stanza from Iqbal's famous poem Shikwa rendered by the three translators A.J. Arberry, KhushwanthSingh, and Sultan Zahoor Akhtar. The analysis of the translations has shown that in rendering the original text, the translators have used different procedures and strategies which consequently resulted in various losses, specifically in terms of form, however, the invariant core, which comprises both theme and tone, remains almost the same.

Poetry is a creative art and the poem reflects the innermost feelings of its author. However, no poetry is either purely subjective or objective as its subject matter consists of what the poet feels about the objects and events around him. It is quite natural that the poets' own feelings and the impressions which they take from the external environment as well as society must be expressed in the language of poetry. In simple words, both psycho and social elements constitute poetry. When it comes to the translation of poetry, it is not a simple task to do as it requires a very creative faculty and skills to reproduce the poem in another language. In comparison with the poet, it poses a double challenge for the translator to first understand a poem in the source language (SL), and then render it in the target language (TL) in a befitting manner.

As the present world has shortened into a global village, communication has also become quicker. People around the world feel the need to contact each other through language. However, due to rapid increase in multilingualism, there are around seven thousand languages used in different parts of the world as the recent studies have shown.[1] Because it is not possible for a speaker to communicate in every language, therefore, translation provides the only feasible solution, enabling the people of different language communities to develop a mutual understanding with one another in terms of language. But one tricky area with respect to translation is that languages are not similar because they organize experiences in different ways. As Sapir and Whorf [2] argue that "no two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality.[3] Therefore, the question arises: do languages vary beyond the limit? The answer to this question is simply no, because if it were so, then translation from one language to another language would not have been possible. Human beings would not have been able to communicate as well as understand one another. In fact, it is the act of translation which makes the task of communicating and understanding quite easy. It is a translation which brings together people with their different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Translators deal with a variety of subjects and literatures making them accessible to the readers of the target language in their linguistic and cultural system. Most importantly, of all genres of literature, poetry is perhaps the hardest to translate. As Bassnet[4]

argues that out of all literary translations, more time has been devoted to exploring the problems of rendering poetry as compared to other literary mode. She states further that these problems include both the evaluations of a single work as well as personal statements by individual translators in terms of how they have handled the issues during translating the poetry. As Popvic[5] argues that a single text is translated by more than one translator which will produce different versions of the original, but there will be a basic, stable and constant semantic element, shared by all those versions which is, what he called the "invariant core" of meaning. The present work is precisely in the same line as it is an attempt to figure out the strategies used by translators in rendering *Shikwa*. Moreover, it tries to explore how far these strategies affect the core meaning of the original and to what extent the invariant core of meaning is common among all the translations.

Pakistani literature is rich with a range of material which reflects our social, religious, political and cultural values. Most importantly, the poetry of Iqbal shows a true picture of our society in terms of religion, politics and culture. He was a great source of motivation, not only for the native translators, but also for many foreign translators who rendered his Persian as well as Urdu Poetry. Where Milton wrote "Paradise Lost" to justify the "ways of God to men", Iqbal wrote *Shikwa* and *Jabab-e-Shikwa* in order to do the same, but this time within the context of the woes of Muslims and their complaints. *Shikwa (*1909*)* exalts the legacy of Islam and its civilizing role in history, but it laments the fate of Muslims in the modern times. *Shikwa* arises from the anguish of the poet's heart in the form of a complaint to Allah for having let down the Muslims and *Jawab-e-Shikwa* is Allah's reply to the forceful voice of the poet. When the first part of these poems, i.e. *Shikwa* (1909) was published, it created a big uncertainty amongst Muslim scholars who perhaps thought that the poet is being impolite, inconsiderate in his words when talking to God in his book and being unthankful to God for His blessings, since the second part of his poem *Jawab-e-Shikwa* was not announced with their publication of the first one. But later when *Jawab-e-Shikwa* (1913) was published, everyone admired him for his useful contribution to Urdu Poetry and making a difference in Islamic literature. The focal point of the present work is the comparative study of three English translations of the subject poems which were composed four years after Iqbal's return from Europe. About the poems Arberry argues that "they mark the beginning of that remarkable career as philosopher and poet which

brought Iqbal ever-increasing renown, until long before his death in 1938......".[6]

Another significant factor which is related to the present study is the linguistic and cultural distance between the source text and the target texts. Venuti[7] describes three different situations: Firstly, when the languages and cultures comparatively (highly/equal /near) are related. Secondly, when languages are not related, but the cultures are closely parallel. Thirdly, the situation when both languages and cultures are highly distant. In the present case, the above three situations exist as the three English translations of the same Urdu poems have been carried out by different translators. Arberry is a British translator whose mother tongue is English and so is his culture. The second translation is rendered by Khushwanth Singh, who is from India. His translation, unlike Arberry is also accompanied by a Hindi translation (being his mother tongue) along with original Urdu text. In this case, languages are different, but cultures have many similarities. The third translation is done by Akhtar, who is an indigenous translator from the same language and culture.

The suggested study is valuable as it is an attempt to identify whether these translations bear the essence of the source text. The work is also noteworthy as it focuses on looking at translations in terms of how far they transfer the content of the source text which is rich with cultural, political and religious elements. These terms are linked toan ideology which is the most popular term with respect to the ongoing research in translation studies.

Statement of the Problem

The language of poetry is quite removed from a common language in use. Lexemes and phrasemes in a poem have not only individual meanings, but they also contribute to the overall meaning of the poem. The lexical and syntactical choices made by the translators have both denotative and connotative meanings which subsequently result in translational gains and losses. The present study takes into account linguistic strategies, the translators' syntactic and lexical preferences used in the three selected translations of the three translators belonging to three different nations, religions and with their different logics behind translating these poems. Further, this research also explores as to how these choices affect the meaning in the act of translations. Also, significant is to understand the message and the point of view of the author, which is not always explicit in the poems. The

presentstudy, by juxtaposing the ST with TTs as well as comparing and contrasting them in terms of the form and content, has investigated as tohow far the TTs reflect the point of view of the poet and preserve the message of the ST.

Research Questions

1. In what ways do the strategies used by the translators in the three selected English translations of *Shikwa and Jawab-e-Shikwa* impact the translation?

2. How far do the selected translations of the stanza share the invariant core of the source text?

Theoretical Framework

Translation is governed by certain norms, principles, theories, strategies and methodologies for different types of texts create the background for facilitating translational analysis, review and criticism, notes Newmark.[8] Accordingly, the present research has focused on the analysis of three English translations of the selected poetry from Iqbal's Urdu poem *Shikwa* for which Vinay and Darbelnet model has been used. The model describes two major translation strategies: direct translation and oblique translation. The first covers three more procedures, including borrowing, claque and literal translation. Borrowing is a technique in which the translator makes a deliberate choice to use the same word in the target text as it is found in the source text. Calque is a special type of borrowing in which a word or a phrase is literally translated root-for-root or word-for-word from one language into another language. Literal translation means word for word translation, which, according to Vinay and Darbelnet, is most common between languages of the same family and culture. He argues that literal translation is the author's prescription for a good translation, but in case where literal translation is not possible, notes oblique translation should be used. Oblique translation comprises transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation. Transposition means to change one part of speech, such as verb into a noun, adverb into a verb or changing the singular into plural without changing the sense. Modulation is a variation or change of point of view, of perspective or very often of category of thought. For example, 'it is not difficult to show' can be expressed as 'it is easy to show'. Equivalence refers to a strategy when two languages describe the same situation by different stylistic or structural means. Equivalence is particularly useful in the translation of idioms and proverbs where the sense if not the image can be conveyed. Adaptation involves changing the

cultural reference when a situation which exists in the source culture, but does not exist in the target culture.Keeping in view the nature of this research work, this model provides a rich ground for the analysis of three selected English translations of Iqbal's Urdu poem*Shikwa*. Keeping in view the three English renderings of the same Urdu poem by different translators, the model provides useful tools for the analysis of these translations.

Research Methodology

This research uses qualitative approach as its epistemological orientation is based on interpretation. The textual analysis is based on the original poems as well as the renderings by the translators. We have made a comparativestylistic analysis (translation analysis) of the texts (ST and TTs) in the light of Vinay and Darbelnet (2000) model. The model describes two main translation strategies: direct translation and oblique translation. The former covers three further procedures, including borrowing, calque and literal translation. The latter includes transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation. The model is useful for the present study as it provides the necessary tools for the analysis. The three translations will be juxtaposed with original text in order to see which translational strategies have been used in the three English translations of the Urdu poems *Shikwa* and *Jawab-e-Shikwa*. Moreover, the study also takes into account the role of the translators, their own thinking, knowledge, ideologies and the positions they take about their own language and the language and culture from which they are translating, as outlined in Penrod (1993). For this purpose, the introductions and prefaces of the selected translators have been considered before looking into the actual translations.

Iqbal's both Persian and Urdu works have been translated by several indigenous as well as foreign translators. They include, Nicholson, Victor Kiernan, Annemarie Schimmel, Frances Pritchet, A. R. Tariq, Syed Akbar Ali Shah, M. Yaqoob Mirza, M. Hadi Hussain, Ikram Azam, Sultan Zahoor Akhtar, A. J. Arberry Khushwanth Singh. However, the present research work was delimited to the analysis of the three translations of a single stanza from *Shikwa*. The two poems *Shikwa* and *Jawab-e-Shikwa* have been rendered by the two foreign translators, i.e.Khushwanth Singh in 1981, by Arberry in 1987. Later on, it was translated by Sultan Zahoor Akhtar — a Pakistani translator, in 1998. The prime focus of the present study remains on what translational strategies have been used in the three English translations. Moreover, the study

also explores as to how these strategies influence the translations as a finished product.

Literature Review

The debate over whether the translation should be source text oriented or target text oriented has continued from Cicero to the 21st century. Therefore, a historical investigation of the way in which the object of study has been conceptualized and discussed is always significant. As Gorp points out that the concept of translation is far from being universal and even if similarities exist, the boundaries between related concepts such as adaptation and rewriting are not necessarily clear or uniformly drawn, either historically or at a given moment of time, not even within the same linguistic tradition.[9] According to Venuti translation scholars and theorists are divided in their stand point concerning the two popular pair of words. He holds that translators in general have a propensity to translate 'fluently' into English to produce an idiomatic and readable target text and to create the false impression of transparency. He further points out that a literary text, when translated, is considered to be acceptable by the publishers, reviewers and readers when it is transparent and when the absence of linguistic and stylistic features makes it appear fluent. On the surface level, it gives the meaning of the foreign text in a way which shows that the translation is not a translation, but the original.[10] Alternatively, a translation project may obey the rules and values which are currently dominating the target language culture, taking a conventional approach to the foreign text, adapting it to support domestic canons.[11] According to Venuti, domesticating strategy has been used since ancient Rome, when Latin poets like Horace and Propertius translated Greek texts into Roman. He argues that domestication involves an adherence to domestic literary canons, not only in choosing a foreign text, but also in developing a translation method.[12] Sir John Denham translated Book 2 of the Aenied in heroic couplets emphasizing that "if Virgil must need speak English, it were fit he should speak not only as a man of this nation, but as a man of this age", notes Steiner.[13] Translation studies have recently become a fast-growing discipline and one of the interesting areas of research. It is no more restricted purely to language bound simple theories. In the closing years of the 20th century, translation theorists and scholars began to look at translation studies from a new angle. Thus the move from translation as text towards translation as culture was, in fact, in the words of Snell-Hornby[14], 'the cultural turn' which gave a new

course to the research in the field. Cultural studies have taken an increasingly keen interest in translation as a result of which it brought together scholars from a broad range of backgrounds.

Translation is basically associated with transfer of messages from one language into another; the standard of translation for the most part depends upon how effectively the original message is communicated. Analysis of translation entails comparing it with the original text in terms of relationship. This relationship has been generally defined as the degree of equivalence. The subject of equivalence with respect to typologies, and theoretical concept has provided a fertile ground for further research as translation theorists have interpreted the concept of equivalence in different ways. Catford states that "the central problem of translation practice is that of finding TL translation equivalents. A central task of translation theory is that of defining the nature and conditions of translation equivalence".[15] Although, Catford's model explains equivalence only at sentence level, yet his approach towards the nature of equivalence has found favour in machine translations.[16] Vinay and Darbelnet, while studying the stylistic differences between English and French pointed out that equivalence in translation is a procedure which 'replicates the same situation' of the original by using different words, notes Munday.[17] They claimed that dictionaries are useful for the translator in finding semantic equivalence of SL word, but the translator further needs to look into the SL situation and then use the comparable term in translation. Roman Jackobson (1959) based his work on the Sassuruian concept of *signifier* and *signified,* handled the issue of equivalence in translation (2001). Both signifier and signified combine to make a "linguistic sign", which is "arbitrary".[18] The application of linguistic sign was extended to translation by Jacobson who divided translation into three types, i.e. intralingual translation, interlingual translation and inter semiotic translation. The first type is associated with the substitution of verbal signs with other signs within the language. The second type is an interpretation of oral symbols in some other language. The last type, also known as transmutation, has to do with alternation of oral symbol with non-oral symbol.[19] The proposed research work is intended to deal with the second type as it aimed to study the relationship between the messages in two different languages. According to Jackobson (1959) translation involves two equivalent messages in two different codes, but he states that the contents of the message may include nuances and relations which are not transferred from one language to another; and therefore, 'there is

no full equivalence between code-units. He argued that "equivalence is the cardinal problem of language and pivotal concern of linguistics".[20] Both these theories highlight the limits of linguistic theory, but they also highlight the role of the translator as a decision maker who has several options to choose from in the process of translation. However, the choices made by translator should not go beyond the social conventions and norms of translation. As Chesterman (1997) argues, a translator must have a theory of translation or translate blindly.

Therefore, translation is primarily concerned with the transfer of meaning from one set of language signs into another set of language signs. However, language is not used in isolation; it is a medium of expression as well as a guide to social reality. Words are the primary units of text. They bear not only individual meanings, but also the contextual meaning. This polyphonic nature of a word shows the importance of translation. Equally important is the role of a translator who has to understand the communicative and pragmatic connotations behind a word. As an absolute equivalence between the original and translation is not possible, the degree of closeness depends upon the understanding and interpretation. According to Lefevere (1998) the translator proper is content to render the original's interpretation of a theme accessible to a different audience. The writer of versions basically keeps the substance of the source text, but changes its form. Hermeneutics is the art of understanding which does not rely on simple translation of text, but it seeks to understand others in the language of their own. It enables the translator to grasp the meaning in linguistic and historical horizon which does not remain the same in which the original text was produced by the author. In this way the process of translation involves both linguistic as well an extra-linguistic criteria.[21] In this context, at the textual level, the proposed study will focus on the translation strategies used by the translators in rendering these poems. Moreover, at extra-textual level, the role of the translators, their own thinking, stances and ideologies about their own language and the language and culture from which they are translating, will also be considered.

English Writers around the world have translated famous Urdu literature. Accordingly, by acknowledging his genius as well as the worth of his poetry, Iqbal's poems have been translated by the galaxy of translators in the twentieth century, notes Nath (1991). Several studies have been done by Pakistani researchers regarding the analysis of these translations from different angles. Ayaz[22] made

a research work on the exercise of manipulation in Kiernan's English translation of a few selected poems from Iqbal's poetry. Her study was concerned with critical discourse analysis of the power structure involved in translating a foreign text. Later on, Asghar[23] carried out research on the domestication in English translation of Iqbal's poetry, rendered by Kiernan. His work too has made a significant contribution to the existing knowledge in the field. One common feature in both these studies was that their scope was limited to the analysis of a single translation which left the scope for further research. As for the research work with respect to the analysis of the comparative analysis and worth of multiple translations of a single text, little work has been done so far. It is in this context, the current study aims to explore the translational strategies, applied in three different translations of Iqbal's Urdu poems *Shikwa* and *Jawab e Shikwa* rendered by two foreign and one indigenous translators. Moreover, it focuses on how far these strategies influence the process/product of translation.

Analysis of Data

The textual data for this study comprise the three translations of a stanza from *Shikwa* rendered by Singh, Arberry, and Akhtar.

<div dir="rtl">

کیوں زیاں کار بنوں، سُود فراموش رہوں

فکرِ فردا نہ کروں محوِ غمِ دوش رہوں

نالے بُلبل کے سُنوں اور ہمہ تن گوش رہوں

ہم نوائیں بھی کوئی گُل ہوں کہ خاموش رہوں

جُرأت آموز مری تابِ سخن ہے مجھ کو

شکوہ اللہ سے، خاکم بدہن، ہے مجھ کو

</div>

Arberry's Translation
Why must I forever suffer loss, oblivious to gain,
Why think not upon the morrow, drowned in grief for yesterday?
Why I must I attentive heed the nightingale's lament to pain?
Fellow- bard, am I arose, condemned to silence all the way?
No; the burning power of song bids me be bold and not to faint.
Dust be in my mouth, but God—He is the theme of my complaint.
Khushwanth Singh's Translation
Why must I forever lose, forever forgo profit that is my due,
Sunk in the gloom of evenings past, no plans for the morrow pursue.
Why must I all attentive to the nightingale's lament,

Friend, am I as dumb as a flower? Must I remain silent?
My theme makes me bold, makes my tongue more eloquent.
Dust fills my mouth, against Allah I make complaint.

Sultan Zahoor Akhtar's Translation

Why should I suffer loss,
And abstain to quest what avail I may?
Nor image of what tomorrow retains,
And despond over sorrow of yesterday?
Why I should my ears entrenched hear,
The doleful cries of the nightingale?
O fellow – bard! A posy am I,
To lose me in sweet music's dilate?
For I too have the gift of note,
Which gives me mettle to complain.
But alas! It is Creator Himself.
To whom in gloom I must explain!

Analysis

It appears that the three translations are different from one another in terms of length, shape, style and organization of lines. Both Arberry and Khushwanth Singh closely follow the original Urdu poem restricting their translations to six line stanza as they have employed a proper meter and rhyme scheme in their translations. They translate the initial line in somewhat similar way by preserving question style of the original with the word "why". However, both are different in terms of how they string words together in order to make larger constructions. Arberry translates the first half line *kion zian kar bannun* as "Why must I suffer loss." The same line is translated by Khushwanth Singh as "why must I forever lose". Both of the translators transfer the adjective *zian kãr* in the source text as a verb in their translations, a strategy which Viney and Darbelnet refer to as transposition in their model. Arberry has transposed it as "suffer loss" which is a verb phrase and Khushwanth Singh transposed it as "lose" which is a verb.

The remaining half line *sud faramosh rahun* has been translated by Arberry as "oblivious to gain" in which the adjective "oblivious", stands as the closest equivalent to the word *sud faramosh* which is also an adjective. However, in Khushwanth Singh's translation, the same has been translated as "forever forgo profit that is my due." It appears that Khushwanth Singh, while continuing with the same strategy of transposition, translates the adjective Urdu word *sudfaramosh* into the English verb phrase "forgo profit." He maintains the same "f" sound throughout the line by using the words forever, forever and forgo to create musical resonance, a

technique known as alliteration, but unlike Arberry, he lengthens the translation as the word 'forever' has been repeated, possibly for the sake of emphasis.

Sultan Zahoor Akhtar's translation is quite different from the other two translations in terms of structure and form as there seems to be no meter and rhyme scheme. However, his translation has some resemblance to Arberry's translation in terms of the content as he translates the initial first half of the line as "Why I should suffer loss" but he actually transposes both adjectives *zian kar* and *sud faramosh* as verb phrases i.e. "suffer loss" and "abstain to quest". The analysis shows that the translators have employed different strategies in their renditions, but on the whole we can infer, more or less, the same message from them. In other words, on the surface level they seem to differ from one another, but the invariant core remains the same to a significant extent.

The second line is also rendered differently by the three translators. Arberry, by following almost the same structure of the original, translates first half of the second line as "Why think not upon the morrow." Singh on the other hand, makes syntactical readjustment and moves the first half of the Urdu poem into the second half in the English translation, "no plans for the morrow pursue." Similarly, he translates the second half i.e. *mahw-e- gham-e-dosh rahun* as "Sunk in the gloom of evenings past" and moves it to the first half in his English translation. One possible reason for this syntactical shift may be that he is more concerned with making the word "pursue" rhyme with the word "due" in the first line. In Akhtar's translation, the structure of the original lines remains the same, but the translation shows only the occasional rhyme as it is only in the first stanza where, by changing the usual structure, the modal verb "may" has been moved to the end of the line in the alternate line. The normal English structure could be, 'what I may avail', but the translation reads like this: 'what avail I may'. This procedure enables him to use different syntactical pattern where the word 'may' rhymes with the word 'yesterday' in the fourth line, but the sense of the original remains the same. Thus, the three translations apparently look different, but the invariant core, represented by stable, basic and constant semantic elements remains the same.

As for the third line, Arberry's translation shows the continuation of the same tone as the word 'why' has been repeated three times which conveys the sense of the original. The same is the case with Khushwanth Singh's translation as he, like Arberry,

translates the words *Nale bulbul kesunun* as "why must all attentive be to the night in gale's lament" with the addition of the word "all." But where Khushwanth Singh's translation ends with the word "lament" where it rhymes with the last word "silent" in the next line, Arberry makes a further addition by putting the word "pain" after the word "lament." The apparent reason for this is that the word "pain" is a homophone of the word "gain" in the initial line. However, this variation in the translation does not affect the core meaning and sense of the original.

Akhtar's translation of the same line is literal, which looks very different from the other two translators as he translates it as "Why should my ears entrenched hear, the doleful cries of the nightingale?" where the existence of the initial letter 'e' at the start of the words 'ears' and 'entrenched' creates assonance. In the next line, the word *hamnawa* is translated by Arberry and Akhtar in the same way as they use the word "Fellow bard". Similarly, they respectively use the words "rose" and "posy", which are metonymically interrelated. However, the remaining half of the line is translated by the former as "condemned to silence all the way" and by the latter as "To loose me in sweet music's dilate?" which looks quite different with respect to the lexical and syntactical choices. Khushwanth Singh translates the same line in simple words and almost in a literal sense as "Friend, am I as dumb as a flower? Must I remain silent? The use of simile i.e. "as dumb as a flower" seems to be very uncommon in general use, but by choosing the words "Friend" in the beginning of the line, and "flower" in the simile, the translator seems to use alliteration as a euphonic device in order to create a musical and melodic effect. This becomes clearer when he continues with the "m" sound in the final couplet of the stanza:-

> My theme makes me bold, makes my tongue more eloquent.
> Dust fills my mouth, against Allah I make complaint.

This again creates a pleasant euphony in these lines. Finally, these differences to some extent affect the form, but the content more or less remains invariant.

The final couplet of the ST is translated by the other two translators with different lexical choices. Arberry translates the line as "the burning power of song bids me be bold and not to faint", "Dust be in my mouth, but God—He is the theme of my complaint. Here the repetition of the 'b' sound at the start of the words 'burning', 'bids' and 'bold' creates alliteration. Khushwanth

Singh's translation has some resemblance with Arberry's translation in terms of word choice. However, there is syntactical shuffling as the word "theme" has been brought in front of the line: "My theme makes me bold". Moreover, the word "Allah" has been transferred by Khushwanth Singh without any change, whereas Arberry has used the word "God". As for the translation of the word *Khakambadhan*, both Arberry and Khushwanth Singh have respectively made literal translations i.e. 'Dust be in my mouth', and 'Dust fills my mouth'. Moreover, they have applied alliterations by repeatedly using words with 'm' sound. Arberry's translation also shows the use of words with 'b' sound in the second last line, which make it more melodious as compared to Singh's translation.

As for Akhtar's translation, it seems that it is the meaning rather than the sound which happens to be the primary concern. In translating the same couplet, he not only uses different lexemes, but he also makes syntactical shifts. The word *tabesukhan* which occurs in the second half of the line in the original has been translated as the 'gift of note', very similar to the idiomatic English expression, 'the gift of gab' and adequately captures the sense of the original. Moreover, he also makes use of *enjambment* as he extends the translation to the next line which is read as 'Which gives me mettle to complain'. This strategy allows the translator to create cohesion and transfer the thought to the next line.

Similarly, he almost recreates the next line as unlike the other two translators who either directly transfers or translates the word 'Allah', he uses the expression 'it is Creator Himself' where the reflexive pronoun 'Himself', seems to be used for the sake of putting extra emphasis. Furthermore, the same sense continues to flow as the reflexive pronoun is linked to the next line: 'To whom in gloom I must explain! This translation seems to convey better sense and meaning of the original when compared to the literal translations of the other two translators. As far the poetic devices, he has used alliteration in some words like 'me' and 'mettle' and gives" and 'gloom'. However, his translation lacks a regular pattern of rhyme, but the word 'complain' in the first line rhymes with the word 'explain' in the fourth line. In short, there are some differences in the surface structures of the three translations, but the overall message of the poet is conveyed when compared with the original.

Discussion and Conclusion

The present study has revealed that rendering of poetry needs a lot of techniques and skills on the part of translators, especially in

those cases where the languages (such as English and Urdu) are different with respect to vocabulary and syntax. Moreover, for a translation, in order to be successful, it should contain both form and content of the original, which is itself not an easy task to do. The former refers to the way the poem is structured. It refers to the pattern of rhyme, rhythm and the words used by the poet. As the analysis has shown, most of the words in the Urdu stanza were compound words with the complex meanings association. Apart from the meaning, they were strung together in a specific manner where they appeared to have created a balance in the individual lines as well as in the stanza as a whole.For example, words like *ziankar* and *sudfaramosh;   Fikr-e-farada* and *mahw-e- gham-idosh; Nale bulbul* and *hamatangosh*; *gul* and *khamosh* show a relationship in terms of both comparison and contrast where the meanings and sounds are interconnected in an intricate manner. In such poetry, it is difficult for the translators to render everything. The three translations have shown that if the prime focus is on the content and meaning, the structure and form get disturbed. On the other hand, if the poetic beauty remains the first priority, then the meaning is partly (if not completely) lost. Another important area is the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic relationship which renders a certain pattern to the poem. For instance, the words *bulbul* and *gul* are placed in different lines, but they have dual relationship, including the way they sound and the way they complement the meaning. In other words, by using these words the poet wants to convey his own point of view that he is not the one to listen to the sound of the *bulbul* silently like *gul*. Looking at the translations, it becomes clear that the form changes which also affects the meaning and content. Content, in turn, is concerned with the subject matter, theme, tone, the overall message and the author's point of view conveyed in the poem. It reverts back to form because what the poem means is strongly linked with how it means. It is perhaps one of the reasons why *Shikwa and Jawabe Shikwa* was translated several times by different translators. As the analysis has shown, the three translators have used different strategies both in the choice of words and the way they have been structured to make phrases and clauses. Arberry and Khushwanth Singh have used long lines as compared to Akhtar where the length of lines is short as a result of which the number of lines increases. Moreover, his translation is in quartet form where, unlike Arberry and Khushwanth Singh, rhythm and rhyme are given no serious consideration. On the other hand, the other two translations show a much regular pattern of rhythm and rhyme throughout the stanza.

This has much to do with the choice of vocabulary which in turn affects the structure of the lines. Different word choices by the translators help them in the organization of the lines as they put words of the same sounds at the required places in order to produce rhyming effects. Sometimes, they use transposition and modulation as strategies to make different types of changes in the target texts. These changes mostly occur in the form rather than the content, which remains somewhat steady. This seems understandable as in selecting between form and content; it is generally believed that sense should have preference over form. Sense is connected with images in the poem and it is there that a poet or author puts the main idea and his mode of intention. In this context some of the three translations have in common is what Popvic calls the invariant core, the emotional tone of the poem and the emphatic style which is apparent from the use of anaphora 'Why' at the beginning of the first three lines in Arberry's translation and alternatively in the first and third line in Khushwanth Singh's translation. Similarly, in Sultan Zahoor Akhtar's translation, the main content remains the same, although theword 'why' is repeated in the initial lines of first two quartets. So, the three translations of the first stanza of the Urdu poem give the sense and logic for initiating a serious discourse which is to come in the following stanzas. This leads to the conclusion that even though the forms and strategies employed by the translators are different, the invariant which comprises both theme and tone remains almost the same.

Notes and References

1   Deumert, (A). (2011), Introduction: Worldwide linguistic diversity.In Mesthrie, R (Ed.) *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics,* Cambridge University Press.

2   Sapir, E. (1958): *Culture, Language and Personality* (Ed. D. G. Mandelbaum). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

3   Bassnet, S. (2002), *Translation Studies.* London: Routledge, p. 21

4   Ibid, p. 83.

5   Popvic, A. (1970). *The nature of translation: Essays on the theory and practice of literary translation.* The Hague: Mouton.

6   Arburry, A. J (1987).*Complaint and Answer* (*Shikwa and Jawab-i-Shikwa) Translated out of Urdu into English Verse.*Lahore: New World Printers, p. iii.

7   Venuti, L. (2000). *The Translation Studies Reader:* London: Routledge, p. 130

8   Newmark, P. (1988). *A textbook of translation.* Shanghai Foreign Language Press; Newmark, P. (1988). *An Approach to Translation:* London: Routledge.

9   Gorp, V. (2001).*Literary Translation.*In Baker, M. (Ed),*Routledge encyclopedia of translation studies.*London: Routledge.

10 Venuti, L. (2000). *The Translation Studies Reader:* London: Routledge.

11 Venuti, L. (2003). Strategies of translation. In Baker. M (Ed.), *Routledge encyclopedia of translation studies*.

12 Venuti, L. (2000). *The Translation Studies Reader:* London: Routledge.

13 Steiner, T.R. (1975).*English Translation Theory 1650-1800*. London:Brill.

14 Snell-Hornby, M. (1995).*Translated Studies*: *An integrated Approach*.Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

15 Catford, J.C. (1965/2000).*A Linguistic Theory of Translation*.London: Oxford University Press (1965), p. 21

16 In Baker. M (Ed.), *Routledge encyclopedia of translation studies*.

17 Munday, J. (2001). *Introducing translation studies, theories and applications*. London: Routledge, p. 58

18 Ibid, p. 36

19 Ibid, p. 36

20 Ibid, p. 37.

21 Bassnet, S. (2002), *Translation Studies*. London: Routledge, p. 21

22 Ayaz, A. (2009). *Translation as Manipulation*: Kiernan's Translation of AllamaIqbal Poetry(Unpublished MPhil Dissertation). National University of Modern Languages. Islamabad.

23 Asghar, J. (2014). *An Analytical Study of Kiernen's Translation of Iqbal's Poetry into English*(Unpublished PhD Dissertation).National University of Modern Languages. Islamabad.