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# PROOFS OF ISLAM\*

Abu Bakr Siraj ud din (Martin Lings)

By proof, I do not mean logical proof, but a fact which establishes a state of certainty in the soul. The facts which will be mentioned here may not all have occurred to everyone who is present as proofs of Islam. But they are all known I think, to each one of you. Nonetheless, repetition of a known fact is justified, if it can lead to a deepening of knowledge; and it is sometimes good, as it were, to take stock of our treasures, to count up some of our reasons for saying *al-Hamdu li 'Llah*.

God never sends a new religion without proofs that it comes from Him; and a man has a right to these proofs, since without them he would have every excuse for following a false religion. In the modern world, false religions flourish largely because people today are increasingly subjective. When faced with some-thing that claims to be a new form of worship they ask them-selves: 'Does this suit my personality?' If the answer is yes, they are in danger of accepting it. Our ancestors were much more objective. Their attitude was: 'Does this message come from God?' If so, I will adapt my personality to it.' When we read the Holy Qur'an, we learn from it that the contemporaries of the Prophets were desperately anxious to know whether it was truly a Revelation. Many of them would have liked proofs of the kind they were familiar with from previous religions. Man tends to be 'tidy-minded'; he is inclined to think that it would be better if the proofs were always the same. If a book could make the dead speak, then we would know it was from God: if it could not, then we would know it was the invention of a false prophet. But Providence is mysterious, and there are countless factors which escape man's understanding. Certain kinds of proofs may not be in

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\* This is a lecture given at the Islamic Culture Centre, London.

accordance with the part to be played by this or that religion in what might be called the economy of the universe. Nonetheless God recognizes man's right to proofs by always placing his own imprint on every message that comes from Him, the imprint of the Absolute, In other words, a true religion is never mediocre, whereas the mediocrity of a false religion betrays it at once, to anyone who looks at it objectively.

Every true religion may be said to have two kinds of proofs—proofs for those who first receive it, and proofs for later generations. These partially overlap and basically the greatest proofs always remain the same; but a religion's initial magnetism may come now from one proofs now from another, according to the individual and the circumstances.

What proofs had the companions of the Prophet? We could say, in answer, that they had two proofs only, but they had them at an overwhelming degree of concentration, In considering the first of these proofs, namely the Holy Qur'an itself, we must remember the nature of those souls which were the first to recognize the word of God, Too much is said against the pre-Islamic Arabs. We must not forget that Providence chose them to receive the Revelation, and some of the reasons for this choice are evident; they had a marvelous language and they were intensely language conscious. To have a poet in the family was, to their way of thinking, an even higher honour than that of being related to a great warrior. Such sensitivity to language has nothing to do with literacy – or rather paradoxically from the modern point of view, it often goes with illiteracy. We today acquire a certain language-consciousness gradually by reading the Qur'an. They had it already in their nature. Sayyidna 'Umar, on his way to kill the Holy Prophet, was changed from violent hostility to fervent belief in a few minutes by some verses from the Qur'an, and there were other comparable cases. The special sensitivity of the Arabs was necessary in order that the Revelation could become recognized, and its authority established, within a very short space of time.

Their second proof was the Holy Prophet himself. At first, superficially speaking, he was at a disadvantage. Many considered him too normal to be a Prophet. It is true that during that period of his mission he performed many miracles, but unlike the miracles of Moses and Jesus which held, as it were, the centre of the stage, the miracles of our Prophet were in the background. In the foreground was, the Quranic reminder that the world itself was a miracle. What greater miracle do we need than the marvels of creation? Islam is Din al-Fitrah, the religion of primordial man. The Qur'an teaches man to look about him in wonder, and to give perpetual thanks to God. This perspective had first to take hold of the Arabs of Mecca and Medina. The more it did so, or rather, the more it re-asserted itself (for it is already deep in man's soul), the more they came under the spell of the Prophet. For the greatest wonder of creation is man himself, and the Prophet was there to typify the plenitude of human perfection. 'Verily thou art of a tremendous nature!' the Qur'an tells him. In other words, he was there to remind his contemporaries what man can be, and to show them how to live.

For the last ten years of his life he lived as the magnetic centre of his small but ever-growing community in Medina, imitated in all that he did. It was his function to penetrate with unparalleled depth into the domain of human experience,, and thus to sanctify every legitimate possibility of life, demonstrating how it could be made acceptable to God or even, if we may say so, more than merely acceptable, for we must remember the saying that God uttered upon the tongue of His Prophet "My slave ceaseth not to draw near to Me by devotions of his free will, until I love him: and when I love him I am the hearing wherewith he beareth and the sight wherewith he seeth, and the hand wherewith he smiteth and the foot whereon he walketh". This hadith qudusi clearly applies above all to the Prophet himself; and though it is out of keeping with the Islamic perspective to speak of the Prophet as divine, yet these' words clearly show that he was a divine manifestation in the midst of his people, and they were sufficiently aware of it, for him to be able to say to them: "Not one of you believeth until I am dearer to him than his

son and his father and all men together". A sceptic might ask: "Did they really fulfil this condition of faith? Does anyone really prefer another man to his own son?" But these objections fall beside the mark, for this hadith cannot be taken to imply any dilemma of painful choice. Above and beyond this being an incarnation of everything that it is in man's nature to love and adore, the Prophet was a window opening onto the next world, and as a transcendent other worldly presence in this world. The choice lay between the Absolute and the relative—hence its connection with faith. The Prophet's presence gave man a "Taste of the infinite and the Eternal - hence the obligation to love that presence more than others.

We still live today on the results of the tremendous impact made by that presence on the first Islamic community. Its reverberations still reach us down the centuries, so that the Prophet remains with us also, and for us also this is one of the great proofs which establish certainty in our souls. It is also something that cannot fail to impress any intellectual and sensitive man who comes into contact with Islam from the outside and who sees this love for a man who died over thirteen hundred years ago so deeply rooted in millions of souls.

Nonetheless, we cannot claim to have the presence of the Prophet as the companions had during his life. Otherwise they would not have felt so bereaved, when he no longer lived in their midst. Umm Aiman spoke with the voice of her whole generation when she said, on being questioned about her tears after the death of the Prophet: Not for him do I weep. Know I not that he hath gone to that which is better for him than this world? But I weep for the tidings of Heaven which have been cut off from us".

It was as if a door had been closed, and for us who have never known it otherwise, Providence—no doubt by way of compensation—has given proofs about which the Companions knew nothing, and these proofs are not only for us, but for the whole world.

Although throughout Christendom, that is, throughout Europe and America, Sayyidna Muhammed has 'officially' been considered as a false prophet, at any rate until very recently, this official attitude by no means corresponds to what is actually thought by Christians. Their attitude is, no doubt, largely still in the balance, but it is a noticeable fact that when they speak of 'the Prophet', they mean the Prophet of Islam; and they would certainly say that if there has been a true Prophet during the last 1900 years that Prophet was Muhammed and no one else. There have been many so-called 'great men', but according to the standard set by his immense and many-aspected greatness, these other greatnesses appear exceedingly relative or one-sided. The world has no choice but to admit that Muhammed is, for the whole of this period of nearly two thousand years 'a unique and incomparable apparition'.<sup>1</sup>

A Christian missionary recently wrote 'the rise of Islam will always be a painful puzzle to the Christian mind'. But not all Christians have such a negative reaction. Pope Pius XII said "how consoling it is to think that so many millions of men throughout the world prostrate themselves before God five times a day!" And his predecessor, Pope Pius XI, said to one of his Cardinals, whom he was sending to Libya: "Do not think you are going among infidels. Muslims attain to salvation. The ways of God are infinite". No objective intelligence can be blind to the dazzling signs of God-given truth that Islam carries with it throughout its history.

The Companions knew that in 622 A.D., the Prophet left Mecca in fear of his life, for what appeared to be an uncertain future in Medina, and they know that eight years later he had become master of Arabia. But they did not know, as the 'world now knows, that by 725, that is only 103 years later, the Empire of Islam reached the borders of China in the East, and that in the

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<sup>1</sup> I borrow this phrase from Frithjof Schuon, the author of *Understanding Islam* (Allen & Unwin, London, and now available also in Penguin Books, Baltimore, U.S.A.) though not from this particular book, but from *The Transcendent Unity of Religions* (new out of print), but shortly to be reprinted).



West its victorious armies were crossing the Pyrenees into France, having conquered the whole of North Africa and Spain Nor did they know, as the world now know, that these conquests were mostly definitive and lasting, and that the inevitable losses here and there were to be more than compensated by further gains. In this connection let me quote again from Frithjof Schuon's *The Transcendent Unity of Religion* where, in dismissal of the idea that Islam was the invention of Muhammad - an Idea. which has prevailed in Europe for hundreds of years - he writes 'That God should have allowed human blindness to create heresies within traditional civilizations is in conformity with the Divine Laws which govern the whole creation ; but that God should have allowed a religion which was merely the invention of a man to conquer a part of humanity and to maintain itself for more than a thousand years in a quarter of the inhabited world, thus betraying the life, faith and hope of a multitude of sincere and fervent souls - this is contrary to the Laws of Divine Mercy... 'To suppose that God could act in such a manner flagrantly contradicts the 'nature' of God, the essence of which is Goodness and Mercy. This nature, as theology is far from being aware, can be 'terrible' but not monstrous".

It is our duty as Muslims - especially as a minority of Muslims living in a non-Islamic country - to be aware of the point of view of those who look at it from the outside. For such people the masterly argument I have just quoted is of great importance.' since it is based on facts that everyone can see, and the conclusions it draws from these facts are altogether unanswerable. The manifest success of Islam, put to the test of time, is certainly one of its great outward proofs, and it is the one which has awakened the first positive reaction towards Islam in many non-Muslim souls. As such people approach nearer they are still further struck by the plenitude of Islam ; they see before them a law, a-theology and a mysticism which constitute between them a religion of unsurpassable height and depth - a message such as could never have been brought by a false prophet.

The theme of the success of Islam, which we take for granted, obliges us to touch on a less gratifying theme, to which many of us would like to turn a blind eye; for if Islam has succeeded, we have failed. The Proofs of Islam would be even more overwhelming than they are, if it were not for the painful disparity between the religion in itself and those who represent it. One of these God-given proofs we have even thrown to the ground and trampled underfoot, and that is the great Islamic civilization, which for nearly thirteen centuries was like a prolongation of the Prophet himself, whose function was, as we have already seen, to sanctify the whole of life and to make everything a reminder of God and of man's responsibility as His representative on earth. Having thrown that civilization scorn-fully away, as we throw away rubbish, we have eagerly taken in its place the profane and meaningless civilization of the modern Western world, every aspect of which is an offence against the dignity of man and against al-Fitrah, that primordial perfection,

to which Islam summons men back. And now, when the youth of the West are in revolt against the modern way of life with which we are so infatuated, we can no longer offer them our civilization in which some of them might have found the solution to their problems. We can offer them our religion, yes: we can offer them the kernel, but we cannot offer them its protecting shell, which we have thrown away; and religion has never needed protection so much as it does in the modern world.

But, in spite of us, parts of the Islamic civilization still remain, and the most immediately striking of these remains are the monuments. Sacred art is not a human invention: it is a divinely inspired crystallization of the-ideal that its religion represents. To stand in front of one of the great mosques can be an experience that could change a man's life. Few indeed are those tongues which could achieve an eloquence for Islam comparable with the eloquent silence of the Taj Mahal. for example, or the mosques of Persia, - Turkey, Egypt and Morocco ; and when the Arabs were driven out of Spain, they left

behind them an Islam in stone which still has power to penetrate the soul to depths of which it was hitherto unconscious

Parallel to these crystallizations are the great incarnations of the Islamic ideal. If we have failed, our ancestors, relatively speaking, did not fail or rather they failed less abysmally, in part because they were held up by the Islamic civilization, and partly, no doubt, because they drew incalculable strength from the presence of spiritual giants with which almost every generation was blessed. We must not forget that those non-Muslims who have made an objective study of comparative religion are unanimous in their judgment that no religion has produced, Saints greater than the Saints of Islam: and this, for those who are capable of seeing it, is an altogether self-sufficient proof, which needs to be supplemented by no other evidence whatsoever.

It would be possible to go on much longer illustrating, from our religion the general truth that God never sends a true religion without imprinting upon it unmistakable signs that it comes from Him - signs of many different kinds, according to the different needs of souls. But time is short and before I end I must return for a moment to what is and what always will be the greatest proof of all.

The greatest proof, the Holy Qur'an, has in a sense shifted its position from the foreground to the background. Today very few of those men and women who join Islam from the outside are of Arab blood. In consequence, the Revealed Word can seldom be the initial argument but though it is difficult to imagine a conversion comparable to that of Sayyidna Umar taking place today, the Qur'an has nonetheless its outposts ; as a man approaches Islam he soon comes face to face with the Bismalah and the Hamdalah, with the Surat-al-Fatihah and the Surat al-Ikhlās and first of all there is the Shahadah itself with its marvelous form, its dazzling clarity and its mystery of infinite implications. All these Qur'anic outposts bear the print of the Absolute; they are as gates, which invite and compel one to enter more

deeply into the Holy Book. And then, gradually the Revealed Word takes the central place and the other proofs recede somewhat to make way. As we read in the already mentioned Understanding Islam: 'The verses of the Qur'an are not merely sentences which transmit thoughts, but are in a way beings, powers or talismans. The soul of the Muslim is as it were woven of sacred formulae ; in these he works, in these he rests, in these he lives, in these he dies'.

# REFLECTIONS ON QURANIC EPISTEMOLOGY

Absar Ahmad

In these days of specializing it is perhaps something of a risk for one whose competence and training is mainly in Western Philosophy and thought to write on Quran and, in particular, Quranic epistemology. But surely none of us who professes to be a convinced and committed Muslim is spared from the task of making a rational enquiry into the foundational beliefs of his faith, and particularly from the obligation of epistemological reflection. This is because; living in a scientific ethos, every dialogue or debate between the secular-oriented scholars and protagonists of religion leads ultimately to a discussion of epistemological issues. In this article my concern is with an exploration in the epistemological zone of the Quran and with some basic questions in the relation of epistemology to a broad philosophical world-view.

My interest in the subject grew and was stimulated while working on my M. Phil dissertation at Reading University (England) in the year 1967-69. It consisted of a comparative study of the philosophies of Kant and Kierkegaard.<sup>2</sup> More recently, I have been hearing during the past several years extremely perceptive and deep exegetical sermons and lectures of a renowned religious scholar of Lahore on Quranic epistemology and allied themes. These also motivated me to write the present article: a humble contribution towards the great goal of analyzing the Quranic epistemological

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<sup>2</sup> It has been published under the title "Kant and Kierkegaard—A Comparative Study" by Karvan Book House, Katchery Road, Lahore, August 1983.

schema. And in this venture I have tried my level best to adhere to the most essential rule recently phrased very aptly by Dr. Fazlur Rahman thus:

"What is required is a willingness to get into the Quran itself rather than to go around it indulging in what must be distortions of the Quran at worst and trivialities at best."<sup>3</sup>

At the outset, let me say a few things which must be appreciated positively by any scholar studying Islam and its doctrines. About the character of the Quran one thing is abundantly clear. It neither is nor purports to be a book of philosophy or metaphysics. It calls itself "guidance for mankind" (hudan-lil-nas) and demands that people live by its commands. Islam has, as its central task, the construction of a social order on a viable ethical basis. It is a practical remedy for the multiple ailments of humanity and a recipe for how man may transcend his banalities and create a positive human brotherhood. In order, therefore, to derive epistemology from it, a determination of its teaching into a cohesive enough unity is required. Islam is a divinely revealed monotheistic religion: it is a complete way of life—ideology or Deen. As such, its epistemology is deeply enmeshed in its over-all metaphysical view of reality and being. In the present paper I shall mainly concentrate on the concept and nature of knowledge in the Quranic scheme of things and the sources of veridical knowledge.

### **Knowledge and Social Reality:**

In the present climate of academic 'learning' one usually drives a wedge between epistemology and moral philosophy. It has become a standard practice that philosophy teaching departments allot separate courses to epistemology and to moral philosophy. This seems to enshrine a fact/value distinction into the very structure of education. (In one course we discuss knowledge, in another values). One of the central questions of 'epistemology'

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. his contribution to Levi Della Vida Conference Proceedings entitled 'Islamic Studies: A Tradition and Its Problems', edited by Malcolm H. Kerr, Malibu, California, 1980.

concerns the conditions under which it is possible to acquire knowledge. But the knowledge about which this question is asked is usually knowledge of facts about the 'material world'. If the question is understood to include knowledge about oneself, about the Ultimate Reality, about one's society and one's relationship with others, then the Islamic contention that secularism (Scientism included) is intrinsically a mystifying social formation in which people are systematically prevented from seeing the truth about their lives, ideals and their society immediately become relevant. The question about knowledge has to be dealt with in the context of the question: what kind of society and social relations would enable a non-mystified view of reality, would replace illusion with knowledge? This transfers the focus of the epistemological question from trivial extraneous considerations to the individual mind and the type of society which makes knowledge possible and accessible. It also raises the question of how this knowledge enters the mind, and the relationship between the person and his knowledge; thus it would involve issues about non-oppressive forms of education, an education which liberates people's capacities to discover and to do things for themselves and with others which enables them to understand their society. It is a feature of the modern secular system that it cannot allow this to happen, that its nature and operation is obscure to those who work and live under it.

Thus the structure of education and knowledge reproduces the fragmentation of understanding which seems to be an essential feature of secular society. How, while remaining within the academy can we avoid being agents of this and other forms of oppression? How can we ourselves avoid being screwed up by the false positions and compromises we are forced into? Can we as Muslims get our own heads (and lives) straight while we are subject to its domination, to the disruption it imposes on our thinking should we not get out, trying to contribute to the building up of a truly and radically religious culture, living in a more integrated, humane manner?

The present-day academic philosophy is created and transmitted in an atmosphere of so-called 'scholarly detachment.' It appears to be entirely

remote from the struggles and needs of the world. Academic philosophers, both in their thought and in their lives have almost entirely withdrawn from any relationship with the concrete social reality around them. In short they seem to have abdicated from any socially valuable role, and their work consequently becomes entirely trivial and irrelevant. Though replete with technical jargon, hair-splitting distinctions and logic-chopping, modern philosophy is empty, formal and sterile. We Muslims, however, should stand for less academics and more self-understanding and concrete social change. We should liberate humanity from inhuman and enslaving philosophical presuppositions and reconstruct knowledge in the light of broad religious-humanistic framework of Islam. Let me here briefly explore how the above mentioned fragmentation and summarization of knowledge took place in the West.

### **Knowledge and Value:**

The historical roots of man's present intellectual crisis can be traced back to the Enlightenment and its successors "logical positivism", "logical empiricism" and "utilitarianism". Our physical and spiritual crisis is a logical outcome of the worship of Reason and Scientific Fact and the divorce of values from knowledge. A new theory of knowledge, multi-dimensional and multicultural in character, which reintegrates values and knowledge calls for an alternative epistemology—the epistemology of Islam--which synthesizes metaphysics with physics This theory of knowledge will be appropriated by any one who has a new awareness concerning our needs for enlightened cosmology and ontology. Let me here give a brief historical survey of the contemporary scene.

The epistemological and intellectual tradition which is responsible for the present status of modern knowledge and science has its roots in the Enlightenment which by many is considered to be the beginning of modern times. The Enlightenment was the work of the Philosophers - the



intellectuals who conceived and perfected it. The philosophers looked at science and exploration not just for new knowledge but also for new attitude towards knowledge. From science they acquired the skeptical attitude of systematic doubt (Descartes), and from exploration—a new relativistic attitude towards belief and used them as ammunition against traditional norms and values. Curiously, the effect of such skepticism and relativism was to glorify and magnify man in general and European man in particular.

When the Enlightenment wanted to characterize its power in one word it called it "Reason". "Reason" became the verifying force of the Eighteenth century, expressing all that it strives for and all that it achieves. The epistemological concerns of the Enlightenment derived from the seventeenth century. The intellectual spokesmen of that century—Bacon, Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, Newton—all appealed for a rational criterion of truth. The philosophy of the Enlightenment takes up this call, particularly the methodological pattern of Newtonian mechanics and begins to generalize it. This then became the basic epistemological framework of the Enlightenment. However much individual thinkers and scholars agree or disagree with the end results, they are all unified in their framework of knowledge.

The new tools of "reason" and "analysis", however, were not only for mathematical and physical knowledge but they were also used by the philosophers to dissect all branches of human Endeavour. Such fundamental disciplines as metaphysics, religion, politics, and ethics were also analyzed on the basis of reason and logic with a view to ending their perplexities once and for all. The principles which both the rational and empiricist philosophers attempted to apply were the new scientific cannons of the seventeenth century; there was to be no a priori deduction from "natural" principles without concrete experimental evidence. Isaiah Berlin writes;

"This use of observation and experiment entailed the application of exact methods of measurement, and resulted in the linking together of many diverse phenomena under laws of great precision, generally formulated in mathematical terms. Consequently only the measurable aspects of reality were to be treated as real - those susceptible to equations connecting the variations in one aspect of a phenomenon with measurable variations in other phenomena. The whole notion of nature as compounded of irreducibly different qualities and unbridgeable 'natural' kinds, was to be finally discarded. The Aristotelian category of final cause - the explanation of phenomena in terms of the 'natural' tendency of every object to fulfill its own inner end or purpose—which was also to be the answer to the question of why it existed, and what function it was attempting to fulfill— notions for which no experimental or observational evidence can in principle be discovered—was abandoned as unscientific, and, indeed, in the case of inanimate entities without wills or purposes, as literally unintelligible. Laws formulating regular concomitances of phenomena—the observed order and conjunctions of things and events—were sufficient, without introducing impalpable entities and forces, to describe all that is describable, and predict all that is predictable, in the universe, Space, time, mass force, momentum, rest—the terms of mechanics—are to take the place of final causes, substantial forms, divine purpose, and other metaphysical notions".<sup>4</sup>

This conviction—that reason and analysis can bring man knowledge of all reality—gained footholds in the most varied fields of eighteenth century culture. The celebrated saying of Lessing, that the real power of reason is to be found not in the possession but in the acquisition of truth, has its parallel everywhere in the intellectual history of the eighteenth century. This fundamental idea of the Enlightenment was the adhesive which united the Christian and romantic poets.

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<sup>4</sup> Isaiah Berlin, *The Age of Enlightenment*, Mentor Books, New York, 1956, p. 17.

The Enlightenment separated knowledge from values with-out giving an adverse judgment on the either. The philosophers were in favour of reason; but they did not throw intrinsic values overboard. Kant, for example, clearly saw in Newtonian mechanics knowledge of the law of the physical universe, but he did not submit the autonomy and sovereignty of man to deterministic mechanics. He separated the domains of physical knowledge and intrinsic values by proclaiming "the starry heavens above you and moral law within". The Philosophies that followed the Enlightenment took the divorce of knowledge and values further.

The nineteenth century heralds the true triumphs of reason in the unparalleled spread of materialism. Logical positivism and materialism (of which Marxism is a part) and their twentieth century counterpart logical empiricism threw, values overboard altogether. In their epistemological framework values are not considered proper knowledge. Utilitarianism declared that the goal, the ideal, of all moral endeavour is the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people. What came to be practiced, in fact, was the greatest, number of material goods for the largest possible number of people. Industrialization, which also became the main agent of the environmental devastation, had produced this reality.

Contemporary Anglo-American linguistic and analytic philosophy, I strongly feel is at a dead end. Its academic parishioners have all but abandoned the attempt to understand the world, let alone change it. - They have turned philosophy into a narrow and specialized academic subject of little relevance or interest to anyone outside the small circle of professional philosophers. The result has been that serious philosophical work beyond the conventional sphere has been minimal. The great mass of human beings undoubtedly have real need for an enlightened philosophy—that is, for a consistent world view and a body of guiding principles and clearly defined aims. This mass is effectively deprived by contemporary philosophers of any ideological material which might prove relevant to their existences.

## **Bazarovism:**

Henryk Skolimowski<sup>5</sup> has aptly coined the phrase "Bazarovism" to describe the currently widespread intellectual and academic climate. The spirit of the age is characterized by Sergei Bazarov (from Turgenev's novel *Fathers and Children*) who is a robust, exuberant believer in science, in materialism, and in the world in which fact and positive knowledge are supreme values. He has no use for art, for poetry, for other 'romantic rubbish'. The modern man is engulfed so completely by the worship of reason and scientific fact and bogus empiricism that it is often difficult to see through them and assess their impact on society. According to Skolimowski, Bazarov is at once an embodiment of the prevailing nihilism, materialism, scientism and positivism, which, in their respective ways, regarded intrinsic values as second, insignificant, or even non-existent in the world of cold facts, clinical objectivity and scientific reason.

By raising reason and fact to the level of 'gods' the modern man has brought himself into the era of supersonic age. The achievements and successes of modern science and technology no doubt have brought some benefits to humanity, but they have also brought us alienation, urbanization, moral degeneration and ecological crisis. The worship of economic growth has brought us fragmented and meaningless work, cracked and superficial relations. The assembly lines symbolize the way things should be done: rapidly, efficiently and, of course, massively. The whole society operates as a machine—including people. The vast amount of published work on philosophy and epistemology in the west is of utter worthlessness, and I have here in mind the works published strictly within the academic nexus. Indeed, the very system of contemporary 'learning' is in its structure and method geared to anaesthetize any incoming organism that might threaten its supremacy. According to the present social culture and academic milieu,

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<sup>5</sup> Ecology p. 5, 18 January 1975.

reality begins with the group, with publicly available data. The private project and inner life is denied any reality.

### **'Knowledge' in the Islamic Perspective:**

Historically speaking, philosophical thinking epistemological doctrines included, is closely related with religious beliefs and gnostic traditions. It has often culminated in the attempt to do intellectually what religion has done practically and emotion-ally: to establish human life in some satisfying and meaningful relation to the universe in which man finds himself, and to get some wisdom in the conduct of human affairs.

Knowledge, according to the Quranic doctrine, is both a gift of Divine revelation as well as a creative element or aspect of the human spirit. Most of recent philosophy threatens our spiritual existence and freedom by driving the contemporary mind into irrational and compulsive negation of religious truth. Islam, however, is a faith that is reasonable and rational, a faith that we can adopt with intellectual integrity and ethical conviction.

Philosophy, with all its variegated disciplines, in the frame-work of Islam cannot be squared with an antiactivist or 'spectator' view of it which aims merely at an enlargement of the understanding. Indeed it here becomes an essentially practical subject: it seeks to get people to do things. It cannot remain uncommitted to social action. The attack on spectator-ism which we find in Existentialism and in the pragmatists is very relevant to current philosophical scene. Moreover, Anglo-American academic philosophy is presently built around the assumption that its true centre is epistemology. This assumption is apparent particularly in the structure and content of university courses. The approach to the various areas of philosophy via the problem of knowledge is one possible way of organizing one's conception of philosophy. But the outcome has been the abstraction of 'man as Knower' from the rest of human life, and in particular from human practice. This has

been a distinguishing feature of the empiricist tradition—and epistemology is still dominated by that tradition: the so-called 'problems of knowledge' are the problems of the isolated individual knower confined to the world of his own sense perceptions.<sup>6</sup> Conversely it is essential to see the activity of 'knowing' as arising out of, and part of, man's general attempt to organize and cope with his world, in order to vindicate the status of human knowledge as a meaningful totality rather than a series of discrete sense impressions.

It is Ludwig Wittgenstein, the venerated philosopher of the later half of this century, who has said:

"Even if every possible scientific question were answered, the problems of our living would still not have been touched at all".

What are the real problems of our living to which Wittgenstein is referring? I am sure that he and his acolytes know it very well that these pertain to the meaning and value of human existence and his ultimate destiny.<sup>7</sup> All human beings worth the name feel that life must have a meaning--but what is it? Do they find it in the contradictions, double talk, and cynical resignation they encounter at every turn? They long for happiness, for truth, for justice, for love, for an object of devotion. Are the modern academics able to satisfy their longing?

According to Islamic doctrine, no one is born with knowledge; however, everyone is born with a greater capacity to acquire knowledge. We read in the Quran:

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<sup>6</sup> This contention is borne out by a study of contemporary philosophical treatises of Russell, Ayer, Ryle, Hemlyn and many others.

<sup>7</sup> Aspat of articles published in journals and books by philosophers like Kurt Baier, Ronald w. Hepburn, Antony Flew, Ilham Dilman, among others, prove my point beyond any shadow of doubt.

'It is He who brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers. You did not know a thing; and He gave you hearing, sight and winds in order that you may give thanks, (al-Nahl 16:77).

This Quranic verse amply shows that in Islam great emphasis is laid on empirical investigation and observation and it is in this sense that Allama Mohammad Iqbal rightly asserts that Islamic civilization represents the advent of inductive intellect<sup>1</sup>. The knowledge of physical world is attained through 'hearing' sight and minds'. However, the aim of such knowledge is to produce appreciation of Allah's attributes of creativity, power and wisdom, and to discharge man's duty as His vice-regent on earth with humanity:

Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day, there are signs for men of understanding. Those who remember Allah standing, sitting, and reclining on their sides and contemplate (the wonders) in the creation of the heavens and the earth" (al-Imran 3:191)

'Only the learned among His people truly fear Allah' (Fatir 35:28)

Scientific knowledge directed toward the glorification of man leads man to his own destruction in this world as well as in the Hereafter. The Quran relates the story of Quran explaining this point:

"He (Quran) said, 'This has been given to me because of a certain knowledge which I have.' Did he not "know that Allah had destroyed before him generations which were superior to him in strength and greater in number?" (Al-Qasas 28:78).

The only authentic source of knowledge concerning the Unseen realities is the Quran, the final and most perfect form of Divine guidance. Speculation, philosophical theories, and man-made theologies or 'isms' do not constitute true knowledge.

Islam is not against rational speculation. But it does not grant authority to such speculation. The ultimate source of knowledge is the Quran and the Holy Prophets sunnah. Allah gives<sup>1</sup>. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal: Reconstruction of Religions Thought in Islam, Lahore (Pakistan) p. 127, passim.

examples of such human speculations and surmises in order to reject them. For example, He say:

"And they say, 'What is there except our earthly life? We shall die and we live, and nothing destroys us except time.' But of that they have no knowledge; they merely speculate'. (al-Jathivah 45 24)

"But most of them follow nothing but conjecture; indeed, conjecture is of no consequence against the truth; Verily, Allah is well aware of what they do. This Quran cannot be produced by other than Allah ; but is a confirmation of (revelations) that went before it and a fuller explanation of the Book — wherein there is no doubt—from the Lord of the world" (Yunus 10: 37).

A person's faith must be based on knowledge. As Jung has acutely remarked, 'The modern man abhors dogmatic postulates taken on faith and the religious philosophies based upon them. He holds them valid only in so far as their knowledge-content seems to accord with his own experience of the deeps of psychic life. He wants to know—to experience for himself'. To be sure, Islamic faith is not a blind faith, whereby one is asked to believe in something which is either a contradiction, such as 'One-in-three and three-in-one' or if not a contradiction, so remote from reason that one has to twist his logic to bring him to say, 'I believe'. An example of this is the theory of reincarnation, in which a man's actions are judged by none (as there is no God) so that this none decides in what form to send him back to earth after his death. The faith in Islam, on the contrary, has to be sustained by metaphysical knowledge and enquiry. The worlds of reason and of religion do not turn in different orbits. The Real is to be known through reflection or 'tafaqquh' in Quranic terminology.



The intellectual approach to the knowledge of supreme reality is insisted in Islamic thought. We have to think out the metaphysical presuppositions and attain personal experience of the religious verities, from which alone the truly authentic and living faith starts.

Let me now dwell upon a few basic Quranic expressions which provide a clue to the understanding of essentially Islamic theory of Knowledge.

1 C. G. Jung ; Modern Man in Search of a Soul, Routledge & Kagan Paul, London, p. 163.

'Tazakkur'--Recalling the Fundamental Truths Intuitively:

'Tazakkur' is a very significant Quranic term which means recalling to mind the fundamental truths intuitively recognized by human nature For understanding the significance of this term we have to note that the Quran frequently calls itself 'Zikr', 'Zikra', 'Tazkir'—derivatives of the same root from which 'Tazakkur' stems. In essence, 'tazakkur' pertains to the first stage in the comprehension of divine realities and meanings. It also alludes to the truth that the Quranic teaching is not extraneous to the human nature. It actually reflects the Experiences of man's inner self and it is meant to awaken reminiscences of something already apprehended rather than to import anything altogether new. The Holy Quran appeals to all thoughtful persons whom it address as 'Ulul albab' (men of understanding) and 'Qaum-an-Yagilun' (people who have comprehension and insight) to think and ponder over the outer universe of matter as well as the inner universe of the spirit, as both are replete with the unmistakable signs of the Almighty Creator. Simultaneously, it invites them to deliberate over its own signs, i.e., its divinely inspired verses.' Thus the Quran, in addition to its own verses, regards both 'anfus' (self) and 'afaq' (world) as sources of knowledge. Pondering over the three categories of signs, a man will be able to perceive a

perfect concord between them; and, with the realization of this concord, he will grasp certain fundamental truths which are borne by the internal testimony of his own nature. So to say, the truths cherished by his inner self will emerge from its depths and shine in all their brilliance on the screen of his consciousness. In other words, full and intense awareness of Absolute Reality will spring up to his consciousness like the memory of a forgotten thing shooting up from the dark depths of the psyche to the surface of mind with the aid of a pertinent suggestion.

I. It is noteworthy here that the Quran calls its verses 'ayat' i.e., Signs (of God) These verses are considered as signs of God—as important as any other of His signs in the universe or in the heart of man. It is because the Quranic verses are parts of Ralamullah (God's speech) and also because, like other signs of God they, too, turn man's mind to the Al—mighty.'

The Quran thus declares in unequivocal terms that every man can derive the benefit of 'tazakkur' from it. It does not matter if a person's intelligence is limited, and his knowledge of logic and philosophy is poor ; and if he has no fine sense of language and literature. In spite of these drawbacks, he can develop an inkling and appreciation of ultimate truths if he has a noble heart, a sound mind, and an untainted nature not perverted by any kind of crookedness. The central themes and basic subjects of the Divine Book are nothing new or unfamiliar to the true human nature. While reading it a man often feels as if he were listening to the echoes of his inner self. In this sense, the Quranic theory of knowledge subtly resembles the Platonic theory in which true knowledge is also attained through recollecting forgotten memories of eternal forms.

### **'Tadabbur'—Intellection and Reflection:**

The Holy Quran urges us again and again to study it intelligently and with deliberation, bringing our thought to bear upon it, and exercising our

reasoning faculty in following its arguments and comprehending its meaning. For this purpose it uses the location 'Tadabbur' and its cognates, 'fahm"aqil' 'fiqha' and 'fikir'. 'Tadabbur' generally means pondering and reflecting over the meaning and significance of ultimate questions. Specifically in the Quranic context, it connotes diving deep into the fathomless ocean of Divine wisdom. We learn from authentic traditions that the companions of the Holy Prophet used to reflect and ponder over the different surahs of the Quran for years on end.

This brings us to the question as to what reason, reflection and ratiocination mean in the Islamic perspective. Of course, one must distinguish between the use of reason and rational faculty, and rationalism which makes reason the sole source of gaining knowledge and the only criterion for judging the truth. One does sometime speak of Aristotelian rationalism, although in the philosophy of Aristotle there are metaphysical intuitions which cannot be reduced to simple products of the human reason or logical understanding. Most regrettably, the meanings of many words like thought, reason, reflection and others have shrunk tremendously in contemporary philosophy, with the result that the suggested association of ideas have become quite restrictive.

In the human microcosm, intellect is the deep spiritual centre or being, and not merely any specifiable mental faculty. It is necessary to distinguish between rational thought which is discursive and proceeds from the mental faculty alone; and intellectual thought which proceeds from intuition and pure Intellect. The Arabic counterpart of reason or intellect—'aqil—signifies etymologically both that which binds or limits the Absolute in the direction of creation and also that which binds man to the truth, to God Himself. In this sense, the word 'aqil' is at once intellect us or nous and ratio or reason. In the Islamic perspective it is precisely 'aqil' which keeps man on the straight path and prevents him from going astray. The sense of the numinous cannot be excluded from the world of empiricism. Experience is not exclusively what comes through science and scientific method. In other words, a

distinction has to be made between terrestrial thought, aroused by the environment and celestial thought aroused by that which is our true being and finding its term beyond ourselves and, in the final analysis, in God.<sup>8</sup> Reason; in the present day limited sense, is something like a profane intelligence essentially the profane point of view springs from there. It is necessary for reason to be determined, transfigured or enriched both by faith and gnosis which is the quintessence of faith. Gnosis, in the Islamic theory of knowledge, keeps its original meaning of wisdom made up of knowledge and spiritual sanctity. It is the higher type of knowledge which comes of intuition by the intellect, the term intellect having the same sense as in Plotinus or Eckhart. If human intellect 'aql' is obscured by the passions, by the nafs, then it can become the veil that hides man from the Divine. Were it not be so, there would be no need of revelation at all.

### **'Love'—Mystic unitive apprehension**

There is intellectually nothing more depressing than to read the trivial writings of the linguistic philosophers and the existentially barren texts of the social theorists. The Islamically—oriented epistemological theory, on the contrary, represents a deep—knowledge process which transforms the seeker. Here the idea of knowledge being an ideational process is not even considered. The foundations of knowledge are only accessible to the one who is prepared to undergo a profound existential transformation. The Islamic approach to knowledge involves an operational zone taking in the whole life-pattern of the student.

According to Islamic epistemic theory, the sole element that can unite the soul to God is love, for love alone is desire of possession or of union;

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<sup>8</sup> I owe this very relevant and illuminating distinction to F Schuon. Ch. his book *Gnosis, The Divine Wisdom*, London, pp, 78-90 and *Spiritual Perspectives and Human Fact* London 1953, p. 54.

while discursive knowledge appears as a static element having no operative or unitive virtue. For securing a complete vision of Reality, therefore, sense perception must be supplemented by the function of what the Quran describes as 'fuad' or 'qalb' i.e., heart. 'Love' is held to include all modes of spiritual union, an eminently concrete participation in the transcendent realities. Intellect, divorced from Love, is a rebel (like Satan) while intellect wedded to Love has divine attributes. But surely 'loving' God presupposes being conscious of God. To be conscious of Him is to fix the heart in the Real, in permanent remembering of the Divine. 'Remembering' or 'dhikr' must be understood as referring essentially to an aspiration of the being towards the Universal with the object of obtaining an inner illumination. Heart, in Quranic epistemology, is symbolically the seat of the true self, of which we may be conscious or ignorant, but which is our true existential, intellectual and so universal centre. The heart is as it were immersed in the immutability of Being Contemplatively is here stressed more than the sharpness of intelligence. In contemplation of the heart things appear in their metaphysical transparency. The role of love is also emphasized in Christian philosophy. For example, Paul Tillich writes, 'Full knowledge does not admit a difference between itself and love, or between theory and practice'.<sup>9</sup>

Thus knowledge infused with intuition and love gives celestial and divine knowledge. Love acts as the purgative that effects the perfection of soul by purging it of all spurious matter accumulated by intellect. The practical explanation of love is also contained in Allama Iqbal's philosophy of self in a systematized exposition of it in the letter sent by Iqbal to Dr. Nicholson and incorporated in his introduction to the *Secrets of the Self*, the English translation of Iqbal's *Asrar-i-Khudi*, he says about love:

"The word is used in a very wide sense and means the desire to assimilate, to absorb. Its highest form is the creation of values and ideas, and

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<sup>9</sup> Paul Tillich, *The Shaking of the Foundations*, Penguin Books, 1966, p. 115.

the endeavour to realize them. Love individualizes the lover as well as the beloved".

The reason why in Islamic epistemological framework so much emphasis is laid on love or intuition is that intuition catches the glimpses of the ultimate reality while intellect fails to achieve that goal on account of its inherent imperfection. Love, in short, is able to know the unknowable.

To conclude, the various components of Islamic epistemology I have outlined are mutually supporting and interdependent. Islamic theory of knowledge, updated in idiom, sweeps away the contemporary western state of confused affairs in no uncertain manner. It recomposes man's divided self and restores his sanity because it restores the unity of knowledge and wisdom. It infuses in us the realization that the state of our knowledge is an important characteristic of the state of our being. It teaches one to be logical, rational and scientific without losing sight of the spiritual verities known through prophetic revelation, love and intuition. I have not loaded the essay with much technical detail but nevertheless tried to give a fairly intelligible account of the Quranic epistemology in the context of present philosophical scene.

# "IBLIS" IN IQBAL'S PHILOSOPHY

Riffat Hassan

The figure of Satan or Iblis occupies a considerable portion of Iqbal's religious philosophy. As Professor Schimmel observes, there are tendencies towards the development of the Iblis-figure in the traditional way, and yet towards a completely original re-formulation of it.<sup>10</sup> On the whole, in his treatment of Iblis, one can see many of Iqbal's brilliant "flashes" of poetic and philosophical insight.

Iblis as the principle of activity:

Mani had regarded Satan as a principle of activity, Iqbal refers to this fact in his thesis: "In darkness - the feminine principle in nature-were hidden the elements of evil which, in course of time, concentrated and resulted in the composition, so to speak, of the hideous-looking devil, the principle of activity."<sup>11</sup> Perhaps this is the germ of the idea which figured prominently in Iqbal's later thought, namely, that the movement of the world and the evolution of humanity is possible only through the conquest of darkness and the powers of Chaos.<sup>12</sup> In fact, in Iqbal's opinion, Satan is not far from the truth when he asserts in "Taskhir-e-Fitrat"

تو به بدن جاں دہی، شور بجاں

ن دہم

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<sup>10</sup> Schimmel, A. M. "The Figure of Satan in the Works of Muhammed Iqbal" (consulted in the manuscript by courtesy of the author).

<sup>11</sup> Iqbal, M., *The Development of Metaphysics in Persia*, Lahore, 1964, p. 18.

<sup>12</sup> Schimmel, A. M. *Gabriel's Wing*, Leiden. 1963, pp. 209-210.

تو به سکوں ره زنی، من به تیش  
 رهبم  
 آدم خاکی نهاد، دون نظر و کم  
 سواد  
 زاد در آغوش تو پیر شود در  
 بدم<sup>13</sup>

The stars' bodies were made by you;

I am their motive force.

I am the substance of the world;

I am life's primal source.

The body draws its soul from you

But I arouse the soul.

While you waylay with blissful peace, I lead with action's call.

That low-born creature of earth, man,

Of mean intelligence,

Though born in your lap, will grow old

Under my Vigilance

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<sup>13</sup> Payam-e-Mashriq, p. 98.



(Translation by Hussain, H., A Message from the East, Karachi, 1971, p: 43)

It is Iblis who leads human beings on from conquest to conquest, who shows them the way to knowledge and perfection.<sup>14</sup> The words of Iblis when he tempts Adam could very well be the words of Iqbal himself, and that is hardly surprising because, in one sense, both Iblis and Iqbal are prophets of a new world. First Iblis praises a life of action, of perpetual excitement and challenge - a marked contrast to the effortless case of parasitical living.

زندگی سوز و ساز، یہ ز سکون  
دوام  
فاختہ شاہیں شود، از تپش زیر  
دام  
کوثر و تسنیم برد، از تو نشاط  
عمل  
گیرز مینامے تاک، بادہ آئینہ  
نام<sup>15</sup>

A life of struggle, strain and stress

Is better than eternal rest.

When a dove strains hard at its nest

An eagle's heart beats in its breast.

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<sup>14</sup> Maitre, L. "Iqbal : A Great Humanist" Iqbal Review, April 1961, p. 28.

<sup>15</sup> Payam-e-Mashriq, p. 98.

These streams of milk and honey have Deprived you of the strength to act. Come take a hearty draught of wine From the cup of the vine direct.

(Translation by Hussain, H., A Message from the East, p. 43)

Then he urges Adam to open his eyes and reach out for a new world - a world in which there are untold opportunities for his manifold potentialities to manifest themselves and acquire maturity. Iblis becomes Adam's guide to a new world.

خیز کہ بنمایمت مملکت  
تـــــــازے  
چشم جہاں بیں کشا،  
بہر۔ تماشا خرام  
قطرہ بے مایہ گوہر تابندہ  
شـــــــو  
از سر گردوں بیفت، گیر  
بــــدریا مقام  
تیغ درخشندہ، جان  
جہانے گسل  
جوہر خود را نما، آئے  
بــــروں از نیام  
تو نہ شناسی ہنوز شوق

بمیرد ز وصل  
چیست حیات دوام،  
سوختن ناتمام<sup>16</sup>

Arise, for I will show to you  
The prospect of a whole new world  
Unveil your eyes and look around;  
Go forth and see it all unfurled.  
You are tiny, worthless drop;  
Becoming a shining, priceless pearl  
Descend from Eden's halcyon heights  
And plunge into the life stream's swirl.  
You are a brightly shining sword;  
Go dip into Creation's heart  
To prove your mettle issue forth  
And from your scabbard's bosom part  
You have not learnt this lesson yet;  
Fulfillment dooms desire to death.  
You know what is eternal life?  
To burn anew with each new breath

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<sup>16</sup> Payam-e-Mashriq, p. 99.

(Translation by Hussain, H., *A Message from the East*, pp. 44-45)

Adam does not leave Paradise with "wandering steps, and slow"<sup>17</sup> I but joyfully. He sounds more like Columbus setting out on an expedition to discover wonderful lands than as exile who has fallen from grace. Iblis has indeed, been successful in arousing his enthusiasm.

چه خوش است زندگی را همه سوز و ساز کردن  
دل کوه و دشت و صحرا به دمی گداز کردن  
ز قفس درمی کشادن یہ فضائے گلستانے  
رہ آسمان نور دن بہ ستارہ راز کردن  
بگداز ہائے پنہاں، بہ نیاز ہائے پیدا  
نظر می ادا شناسے بحریم ناز کردن  
ہمہ سوز ناتمام، ہمہ درد آرزویم  
بگماں وہم یقین را کہ شہید جستجویم<sup>18</sup>

O what a joy it is to make

One's life a constant, ardent glow!

And with one's breath make desert, hill

And plain like molten metal flow!

Open a door out of one's cage

Onto the garden's vast expanse!

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<sup>17</sup> Milton, J. "Paradise Lost" (Book XII) Complete Poetry and Selected Prose, Glasgow, 1952, p. 349.

<sup>18</sup> Payam-e-Mashriq, pp. 99-100.



I was deflected from the path  
Of virtue by the Devil's fraud.  
Forgive my error and accept  
My humble penitence, O God.  
One cannot subjugate the world  
Unless one yields to its allure  
For Beauty's wild pride is not tamed  
Untill it falls into Love's snare.

(From Hussain, M. H., A Message from the East, pp. 47-48)

True to some degree to the principle of Milton's Satan: "Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven",<sup>21</sup> Iblis tells the righteous (perhaps also a little self-righteous) Gabriel that it is he who has made possible the drama of human evolution, that in a way God is more aware of him than of the eternally-pious Gabriel.

ہے میری جرات سے مشمت خاک  
میں ذوق نم—و  
میرے فتنے جامہ عقل و خرد کا تار

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<sup>20</sup> Payarn-e-Mashriq, p 101.

<sup>21</sup> Milton, J., "Paradise Lost" (Book 1), p. 85.

و پ ————— و!  
 دیکھتا ہے تو فقط ساحل سے رزم  
 خیر و شر —————  
 کون طوفان کے طمانچے کہا رہا ہے؟  
 میں کہہ تو —————  
 گر کبھی خلوت میسر ہو تو پوچھ  
 اللہ سے —————  
 قصہ آدم کو رنگیں کر گیا کس کا  
 ہم ————— و؟  
 میں کھٹکتا ہوں دل یزداں میں  
 کائنات کی طرح  
 تو فقط! اللہ ہو اللہ ہو اللہ ہو!<sup>22</sup>

In Man's pinch of dust my daring spirit has breathed ambition.

The warp and woof of mind and reason are woven of my sedition,

The deeps of good and ill you only see from land's far verge

Which of us is it, you or I, that dares the tempest's scourge?

Ask this of God, when next you stand alone within his sight

Whose blood is it has painted Man's long history so bright?

In the heart of the Almighty like the pricking thorn I lie,

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<sup>22</sup> Bal-e-Jibril, pp. 193-194.

You only cry for ever God, oh God, oh God most high!

(Translation by Kiernan, V. G. Poems from Iqbal, London, 1955 pp. 52-53)

It is worth mentioning that in regarding Iblis as the dynamic principle of life, it is very likely that Iqbal was also influenced by Goethe<sup>23</sup> (for whom, next to Rumi, he had the greatest admiration and affection) who in Faust shows the Devil as humankind's companion, forming human beings, working on them lest they slumber.

Iblis as a principle of evil

In Iqbal's thought, Iblis is never wholly evil. He is the symbol of the eternal "la" (negation) but for Iqbal, "Id" implies "ilia" (affirmation) and is "an absolutely necessary constituent of a perfect social order."<sup>24</sup> Iblis himself, says:

من دہلی، در پردہ 'لا' گفتہ

ام

گفتہ من خوشتر از نا

گفتہ ام!<sup>25</sup>

Under the veil of "No" I murmured "Yes"

What I have spoken is better than what I never said.

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<sup>23</sup> Schimmel, A. M., "Mohammad Iqbal and, German Thought" Mohammad Iqbai, (The Pak-German Forum), Karachi, 1960, p 97)

<sup>24</sup> Khayal. T. M., "Iqbal's Conception of Satan" Iqbal, July 1953 Volume II Number I, p. 9.

<sup>25</sup> Javid Namah, p. 158.



(Translation by Arberry, A. J., Javid Namah, London, 1966, p. 184)  
Milton's Satan aims out of good still to find means of evil.<sup>26</sup> As God's representative, it must be Adam's endeavour to "seek to bring forth good,"<sup>27</sup> from his evil. In Javid Noma Shah-e-Hamadan says:

بنده کر خویشتن دارد  
خبر  
آفریند منفعت را از  
ضرر!  
بزم با دیو است آدم  
را و ببال  
رزم با دیو است آدم  
را جمبال!  
خویش را بر اهرمن  
باید زدن  
تو همه تیغ آن همه  
سنگ فسن!<sup>28</sup>

The man who is fully aware of himself

Creates advantage out of loss.

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<sup>26</sup> Milton, J., "Paradise Lost" (Book 1), p. 82.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

To sup with the Devil brings disaster to a man, to wrestle with the Devil brings him glory.

One must strike oneself against Ahriman;

You are a sword, he is the whetstone.

(Translation by Arberry, A. J., Javid Namah, p. 117)

True, however, to tradition, Iqbal identifies Iblis with whatever evil he sees in the world. Iblis is loveless which leads to the betrayal and destruction of humankind. One of the traditional symbols for Iblis is the serpent, and this symbol is suited to Iqbal's identification of Iblis with (negative) reason, for when attacked, a serpent defends itself with its head.<sup>29</sup>

Iblis also comes to stand for what Iqbal perceived to be Western values and attitudes e.g., materialistic creeds and indifference to the individual's higher self. In one poem, Iqbal says to God about Western politics:

بنایا ایک ہی ابلیس آگ  
سے سے تو نے  
بنائے خاک سے اس نے دو  
صد ہزار ابلیس!<sup>30</sup>

You made just one Satan from the fire,

It has made two hundred thousand satans from the dust

Iqbal regards most European politicians as devils in disguise. Furthermore, they are not creatures of fire but merely devils of the dust

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<sup>29</sup> Javid Nam p. 186.

<sup>30</sup> Schimmel, A. M., Gabriel's Wing, p. 216. 3. Zarb-e-Kalim, p. 144.

incapable of anything but scheming and base maneuvering. The politician - Iblis of "Iblis ka farman apne siyasi farzandon ke nam,"<sup>31</sup> and "Iblis ki majlis-e-shura"<sup>32</sup> has no element of the grandeur possessed by the proud worshipper of God. He is repulsive even as Milton's Satan is repulsive when he is shown gloating over his triumph in Book X of Paradise Lost. For Iqbal, the devils of modern civilization are far more unsatisfactory than Iblis who had been in the company of God for so long. He says,

گنہ ہم شود بے لذت  
 و سرد  
 اگر ابلیس تو  
 خاکی نہاد است  
 مشو نخچیر  
 ابلیسان ایس عصر  
 خسان را غمزہ شان  
 سازگار است  
 اصیلاں را ہماں  
 ابلیس خوششت  
 کر یزداں دیدہ و  
 کامل عیار است!<sup>33</sup>

Sin itself becomes cold and unsatisfactory.

<sup>31</sup> Iqbal, M., Zarb-e-Kalim, Lahore, 1949, p. 148.

<sup>32</sup> Iqbal, M., Armaghan-e-Hijaz, Lahore, 1948, pp. 213—228.

<sup>33</sup> Armaghan-e-Hijaz, p. 182.

As soon as your Satan is formed only of dust.

Do not become game for the devils of this time since their glance is directed only towards the inferior.

For those who are noble that Satan is better who has seen God and has a perfect standard. I; hal also shows Iblis as an advocate of the life-stultifying art and mysticism to which he was so bitterly opposed. In the confrontation of Zoroaster and Ahriman in Javid Nama, Iblis "defends the pure spirituality of mysticism and self isolated asceticism against the prophetic activity which manifests itself in the community."<sup>34</sup> Iblis urges his counsellors to preach that which weakens the life-urge in human beings and makes them strangers to the inner turmoil of life.

ہے وہی شعر و تصوف اس کے حق  
میں خوب تر  
جو چھپا دے اس کی آنکھوں سے  
تماشائے حیات<sup>35</sup>

That poetry and mysticism is best for it (humanity) which obscures its vision of the theatre of life.

But, as Professor Schimmel has observed, "whether it is as a seducer to useless dreams, fruitless mystical seclusion and in social flight from the world, or as a protector and defender of a civilization which is devoid of divine love, Saian is, in all these aspects, always a necessary partner of the Perfect Man."<sup>36</sup> That is why Iqbal says

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<sup>34</sup> Schimmel, A. M., *Gabriel's Wing*, p. 217.

<sup>35</sup> *Armaghan-e-Hijaz*, p. 228.

<sup>36</sup> Schimmel, A. M., *Gabriel's Wing*, p. 219.

مزی اندر جهانے کور ذوقے  
 کہ یزدان دارد و شیطان ندارد<sup>37</sup>

Do not live in such an ill-devised world where there is a God but no Satan.

### Creature of Fire versus Creature of Clay

Iblis is nothing if not proud. He does not doubt for an instant that he is superior to Adam. He is a creature of fire while Adam is made of dust. Iblis says to God justifying his disobedience

نوری نادان نیم، سجده بآدم  
 بم\_\_\_\_\_رم!  
 او به نهاد است خاک، من به  
 ن\_\_\_\_\_شاد آذر م!<sup>38</sup>

I am not creature of mere light That I should bow to man.

He is a base-born thing of dust, And I of fire am born

(Translation by Husain, H., A Message from the East, p. 42)

Iqbal's Adam is not the one to let himself get the worst of an argument - not even when his adversary is the ingenious Iblis, and so in his turn he retorts

جهان تا از عدم

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<sup>37</sup> Payam-e-Mashriq, p. 154.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

بیرون کشیدند  
ضمیرش سرد و  
بے ہنگامہ  
دیدند  
بغیر از جان ما  
سوزے کجا بود  
ترا از آتش ما  
آفریدند<sup>39</sup>

When they brought forth the world from non-existence, they saw that its heart was cold and lifeless.

Where was fire save in my heart?

They created you out of my fire!

Professor Schimmel observes that the contrast between fire and clay "leads back to early Islamic discussions about the prefer-ability of earth (of which the Ka'ba is made) to fire (the element brought into the discussion by admirers of Persian fire-worship):

Satan becomes, thus, the inventor of the misleading comparison of incomparable objects."<sup>40</sup>

Iblis and Predestination

In a poem called "Taqdir"<sup>41</sup> (which Iqbal acknowledges was inspired by Ibn Arabi)<sup>42</sup> we see another Iblis - not the proud lover and adversary of God

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<sup>39</sup> Armaghan-e-Hijaa, p. 177.

<sup>40</sup> Schimmel, A. M., Gabriel's Wing, p. 213.

for whom one can feel some admiration but a moral coward who is trying to attribute his wilful act of disobedience to God's will. Mystics and theologians have sometimes differentiated between God's Command and God's Will<sup>43</sup> According to Hallaj, 'the command is eternal whereas the will and foreknowledge of God concerning it, whether it shall be obeyed or disobeyed, is created, and therefore subordinate. God wills both good and evil, but commands only good.'<sup>44</sup> Iblis though he disobeyed the Word of God nonetheless obeyed God's inner command which forbids prostration before any but God.

The poem begins with Iblis seeking to justify his disobedience by the plea that he knew it to be predestined

اے خدائے کن فکاں مجھ کو  
 نہ تھا آدم سے بیّر  
 آہ! وہ زندانی نزدیک و دور و  
 دیـــــر و زود  
 حرف اشکبار، تیرے سامنے  
 ممکن نہ تھا  
 ہاں مگر تیری مشیت میں نہ  
 تھا میرا ســـــجود!<sup>45</sup>

God, Creator; I did not hate your Adam,

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<sup>41</sup> Zarb-e-Kalim, pp. 42-43.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Schimmel, A. M., Gabriel's Wing, p. 211.

<sup>44</sup> Nicholson, R. A., The Idea of Personality, in Sufism, Cambridge, 1923, p. 33.

<sup>45</sup> Zarb-e-Kalim, pp. 42-43.

That captive of Far-and-Near and Swift-and-Slow; And what presumption could refuse to You Obedience? If I would not kneel to him,

The cause was your own fore-ordaining will.

(Translation by Kiernan, V. G., Poems from Iqbal, p. 64)

God asks Iblis

کب کھلا تجھ پر راز؟ افکار  
سے پہلے کہ بعد<sup>46</sup>

When did that mystery dawn on you? before, Or after your sedition ?

(Translation by Kiernan, V. G., Poems from Iqbal, p. 64)

and Iblis answers

بعد! اے تیری تجلی سے  
کمالات وجود!<sup>47</sup>

After, oh brightness

Whence all the glory of all being flows,

(Translation by Kiernan, V. G., Poems from Iqbal, p. 64)

By saying that it was after his act of disobedience that he felt it was predestined, Iblis betrays himself for he is admitting indirectly that when he

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid, p 43.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, p. 43.



refused the prostration he felt free to choose. God then turns to the angels and says

پستئ فطرت نے سکھلائی ہے  
یہ جیت اسے  
کہتا ہے 'تیری مٹیت میں نہ  
تھا میرا سجود'  
دے رہا ہے اپنی آزادی کو  
مجبوری کا نام  
ظالم اپنے شعلہ سوزاں کو خود  
کہتا ہے دود؟<sup>48</sup>

See what a groveling nature taught him this

Fine theorem! His not kneeling, he pretends,

Belonged to My fore-ordinance; gives his freedom Necessity's base title;  
— wretch; his own

Consuming fire he calls a wreath of smoke.

(Translation by Kiernan, V. G., Poems from Iqbal, p. 64)

"It is Satanic short-sightedness," observes Professor Schimmel, "which ascribes any decision which leads to disaster to divine predestination and unchangeable laws."<sup>49</sup> This poem also indicates that the Iblis whom Iqbal

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid, p. 43.

<sup>49</sup> Schimmel, A. M., "The Figure of Satan in the Works of Muhammad Iqbal".

admires is not the one who denies the freedom of his will. Iqbal's interpretation of Iblis as a lover of God is based on the assumption that Iblis was not predestined to disobey but that his disobedience was a willful act.

Iqbal also mentions Iblis in another context of predestination and free will. It was through Satan's seduction of Adam that human beings acquired free-will. To Adam Satan said

ہیچ نیاهد ز تو غیر سجود  
نیاز  
خیز چو سرو بلند، امے  
بعمل نرم گام  
زشت و نکو زاده و ہم  
خداوند تست  
لذت کردار گیر، گام بنہ  
جوئے کام<sup>50</sup>

O you are fit for nothing but  
Abject obeisance like a slave,  
Like a tall cypress stand erect,  
O you which not act not crave.  
Good and evil, virtue and sin,  
Are myths created by your Lord

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<sup>50</sup> Jayam-e-Mashriq, pp. 98-99.

Come taste the joy of action and  
Go forth to seek your due reward.

(Translation by Hussain, H., A Message from the East, p. 44)

In Javid Mama Iblis shown as a sad old man, speaks to the sons of Adam in words touched with pathos:

شعله با از کشت زار من  
دمید  
او ز محبوری به مختاری  
رسید  
ز شتئی خود را نمودم  
آشکار  
با تو دادم ذوق ترک و  
اختیار<sup>51</sup>

Flames sprang forth from my sown field;

Man out of predestination achieved free-will. I displayed my own hideousness

And have given you the joy of learning or choosing, (Translation by Arberry, A. J., Javid Namah, p. 104)

Iqbal as a Unitarian

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<sup>51</sup> Javid'Natttah, p. 159.

According to Hallaj, "Iblis" is God's lover and one of the two true Unitarians in the world, the other one being Muhamntad.<sup>52</sup> As a strict believer in God's Unity, he refused to prostrate himself before Adam saying, 'Has somebody else taken away the honour of the prostration from my heart so that I should prostrate before Adam ?'<sup>53</sup> Iqbal seems to be sympathetic towards this view and the words of Hallaj in Javid Noma seem to speak also for him:

عاشقی در نار او وا سوختن  
سوختن بے نار او نا سوختن!  
زانکه او در عشق و خدمت  
اقدام است  
آدم از اسرار او نا محرم است!  
چاک کن پیراہن تقلید را  
تا بیا موزی از و توحید را<sup>54</sup>

Love is to burn in his fire;

Without his fire, burning is not burning

Because he more ardent in love and service,

Adam is not privy to his secrets.

Tear off she skirt of blind conformity

That you may learn God's Unity from him.

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<sup>52</sup> Schimmel, A. M., *Gabriel's Wing*, p. 210.

<sup>53</sup> Baqli, R. quoted in *Ibid*.

<sup>54</sup> Javid Namah. p. 155.

(Translation by Arberry, A, J.. Javid Namah, p. 101)

## Satan in the Poetry of Milton and Iqbal

Both Milton and Iqbal had a fiery, restless spirit and an intense religious consciousness. With all their individual differences the works of the two poets convey an impression of power. It is hardly possible to read their poetry without realizing the temperamental affinity between them. It is interesting to know that Iqbal had deep admiration for Milton, and In his youth wanted to write an epic similar to Paradise Lost.<sup>55</sup>

A number of writers have pointed out the similarity between Satan and Iblis. This statement needs a qualification (or a clarification) at the very outset Milton's Satan is not a uniform character. The Satan of the first two books of Paradise Lost is quite different from the Satan of the rest of the poem.<sup>56</sup> The reason most commonly given for this is that Milton was a man divided against himself, "a Promethean, a renaissance humanist in the toils of a myth of quite contrary import."<sup>57</sup> His explicit purpose was to justify the ways of God to man but the Satan he created, the Satan of Books I and II, the leader of the fallen angels, became such a formidable obstacle for him, that he had to "transform" him from indomitable rebel who could say in the face of eternal damnation to a wailing creature who could gaze tearfully at the sun and say

What though the field be lost?

All is not lost; the unconquerable will:

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<sup>55</sup> Iqbal's Letter quoted by Vabid, S. A., Iqbal : His Art and Thought, London, 1959, p. 7.

<sup>56</sup> This opinion is not universally accepted, but it finds support in a number of writers and seems to me to be valid.

<sup>57</sup> Willey, B., The Seventeenth Century Background, London, 1934, p. 255.

And study of revenge, immortal hate,

And courage never to submit or yield:

And what is else not to be overcome?

That Glory never shall His wrath or might Extort from me<sup>58</sup> O then at least relent: is there no place Left for Repentance, none for Pardon left:<sup>59</sup>

Iqbal's Iblis is also not a uniform character in the sense that the Iblis portrayed in various poems is not the same figure. Since Iqbal did not undertake to write a long poem in which Iblis appears as one of the chief characters, he was not obliged to be consistent in his treatment of Iblis. So we see different aspects of Iblis, sometimes a totally new Iblis, emerging in different poems. Therefore, when it is said that Satan resembles Iblis, it must be made clear that the Satan of the first two books of Paradise Lost resembles, in the main, the Iblis of "Taskhir-e-Fitrat",<sup>60</sup> "Jibril-o-Iblis" and Javid Nama, and that there is some resemblance between the degenerate Satan of the later books of

Paradise Lost and the politics-afflicted Iblis shown in "Iblis ka farman apne siyasi farzandon se" and "Iblis ki majlis-e-shura".<sup>61</sup>

The first point of similarity between the "heroic" Satan and Iblis is the splendour of their reckless courage. They are "sinners" but one cannot help admiring their unbroken spirit, their tenacity of purpose in the face of insuperable odds. Such qualities as they have would make a hero out of a

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<sup>58</sup> Milton, J. "Paradise Lost" (Book I) p. 81.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., (Book IV) p. 147.

<sup>60</sup> Iqbal, M., Payam-e-Mashriq, Lahore, 1948, pp. 97-101.

<sup>61</sup> Bal-e-Jibril. Lahore, 1947, p. 148.

rebel. A second point of similarity between them is that they are completely unrepentant. Even if they could, they would not retrace their steps.<sup>62</sup>

There are differences too, between them, and these are not often remarked upon. Satan is an adversary of God and hates God, Iblis is not an enemy of God and loves God Both Satan and Iblis are painted in brilliant colours but while those of the former glitter, those of the latter glow. We admire Satan but our heart does not go out to him as it does to Iblis. Satan is proud and belligerent, Iblis is proud and heart-broken. In the last analysis, despite all their similarities Satan and Iblis are very different - as different from each other as hate is from love. It is possible to build up a case for Satan as a tragic hero, but there is no doubt at all, Iqbal's Iblis - the Iblis of Bal-e-Jibril and Javid Nama - is a tragic hero.<sup>63</sup>

#### Iblis as a tragic hero

According to Aristotle a tragic hero is an outstanding character whose fortunes suffer a sudden reverse and who is, in some measure, responsible for his (her) downfall. Were he not responsible, were his (her) calamity just the working out of an unrelenting Fate, his (her) situation though it would call for pity would bring about no catharsis. It would not, in fact, be tragic, at all, but simply unfortunate. To say of Iblis that "he is fulfilling his allotted role in the scheme of things"<sup>64</sup> and that "the tragedy of Satan's life is that he cannot change his destiny, his inner helplessness and sheer inability to be other than he is,"<sup>65</sup>

is surely to misunderstand the Iblis nearest to Iqbal's heart. Although in most tragedies one is aware of a sense of predestination, of ominous agencies working against a character seeking to destroy him or her, yet - as has been said already - there is always something in the tragic characters themselves

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<sup>62</sup> Iqbal, M., Zarb-e-Kalim, p. 148.

<sup>63</sup> Armaghan-e-Hijaz, pp. 213-228.

<sup>64</sup> Vahid, S. A., Iqbal : His Art and Thought, p. 224.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

which brings about their tragedy Iblis is a free agent otherwise he would not have refused to obey God. The role he is fulfilling in the scheme of things is not an "allotted" one - it is a role he chose for himself and therein lies his tragedy - not in that he hates God and must serve God's ends, but that he loves God and has chosen forever to displease God.

Iblis denies the charge of being an infidel. His words,

از وجود حق مرا منکر  
مگی  
دیده بر باطن کشا ظاہر  
مگی  
گر بگویم نیست، ایس  
از ابلہی است  
زانکہ بدع از دید نتوان  
گفت نیست!<sup>66</sup>

Do not take me for one who denies God's existence;

Open your eyes on my inner self, overlook my exterior.

If I say, "He is not," that would be foolishness, for when one has seen, one cannot say "He is not".

(Translation by Arberry, A. J., Javid Namah, p. 104)

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<sup>66</sup> Javid Namah, p. 158.



wrung from the agony of his soul, are reminiscent of the tortured Mephistopheles who, when asked by Faustus if he was out of hell, answered sorrowfully<sup>67</sup>

Why this is hell, nor am I out of it.

Thinkst thou that I, who saw the face of God

And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,

Am not tormented with ten thousand hells

In being deprived of everlasting bliss?<sup>68</sup>

It was the "tragic flaw" in the character of Iblis which brought about the eternal separation between him and his beloved. The traditional motive for the disobedience of Iblis is pride, but due to the influence -of Hallaj, Iqbal also gave to his Iblis the passion and tenderness of a lover. Milton's Satan would not return to Heaven because farthest from Him is best whom reason bath equalled, force bath made supreme Above His equals.

Iblis when asked by Gabriel about the possibility of his return

کیا نہیں ممکن کہ تیرا چاک  
دامن ہو رفو؟<sup>69</sup>

Is it not possible that the rent in your robe be mended?

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<sup>67</sup> Marlowe, C., *Doutor Faustus* (Edited by W. W. Gregh Oxford, 1961. (Act I, scene III) p. 10.

<sup>68</sup> Milton, J., "Paradise Lost" (Book 1), p. 84.

<sup>69</sup> Bal-e-Jibril, p. 192.

answers:

آہ! اے جبریل تو واقف نہیں  
اس راز سے  
کر کیا سر مست مجھ کو  
ٹوٹ کر میرا سبوا!  
اب یہاں میری گزیر ممکن  
نہیں ممکن نہیں  
کس قدر خاموش ہے یہ عالم  
بے کاج و کو!  
جس کی نومیدی سے ہو  
سوز درون کائنات  
اس کے حق میں تقنطوا اچھا  
ہے یا لاتقنطو؟<sup>70</sup>

Ah, Gabriel; you do not know this mystery—by breaking, my glass made me intoxicated.

Now it is impossible that I should dwell here again how silent is this realm without palaces or lanes!

Whose despaire is the inner fire of creation?

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., pp. 193-194.

Is not for him, "Despair" better than "Don't despair?"

(Of God's Grace), (reference to Surah Al-Zunar (39:53)

Thus so far from setting out as Satan does, to pervert God's purpose, Iblis is actually conscious of being God's instrument. He does not seek for God's grace because if he were to do so, the world which God made - the world of human beings would come to a standstill. Professor Schimmel observes that in presenting this viewpoint Iqbal has made "one of the most original contributions to the problem of Satan's destiny."<sup>71</sup>

The Iblis portrayed in Javid Nama is sad and old - like the Satan of Nietzsche. His heart is heavy with the burden of his sins - sins not against God who "sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heaven",<sup>72</sup> but against his Beloved. He begs human beings before whom he would not bow, not to sin any more, not to make his scroll any blacker.

تو نجاتے دہ مرا از  
نار من  
واکن اے آدم گرہ از  
کار من!  
اے کہ انر بند من  
افتادہ

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<sup>71</sup> Schimmel, A. M., *Gabriel's Wing*, p. 212.

<sup>72</sup> Milton, J., "Paradise Lost" (Book I) p. 81.

رخصت عصیان  
بشـیطان دادہ<sup>73</sup>

Deliver me now from my fire;  
Resolve, O man, the knot of my toil.  
You who have fallen into my noose  
And given to Satan the leave to disobey,  
Live in the world with true manly zeal,  
As you pity me, live a stranger to me

Proudly disregarding my sting and my honey, So that my scroll may not become blacker still. (Translation by Arberrry, A. J., Javid Namah, p. 104)

Although he suffers endlessly, yet Iblis does not wish to return to the presence of God. It is a part of the character of a tragic hero that having brought about his (her) end he (she) accepts it without flinching. When the poet asks Iblis to give up "this cult of separation,"<sup>74</sup> the latter answers:

گفت "ساز زندگی"  
سوز فراق  
امے خوشا سرمستی  
روز فراق!

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<sup>73</sup> Javid Namah, p. 159.

<sup>74</sup> Arberrry, A. J., David Namah, p. 104.

بر لبم از وصل می  
ناید سخن  
وصل اگر خواهم نه  
او مانه نه من<sup>75</sup>

He said, "The fire of separation is the stuff of life; How sweet the intoxication of the day of separation. The very name of union comes not to my lips; If I seek union, neither He remains nor."

(Translation by Arberry, A. J., David Namah, p. 104)

These lines also bear the implication that Love does not mean union or the annihilation of identity. Thus in upholding the belief in separation, Iblis becomes a preserver of the principle of individuality.

"The Lament of Iblis" in Javid Nama is part of the most profound poetry Iqbal ever wrote. He shows a strange spectacle Iblis praying to God - not for relief from pain or remission of his sins, but for a worthy opponent! In lieu of all his past worships of God, Iblis asks for a man who dares to resist him. He says:

صید خود صیاد را  
گوید بگير  
الاماں از بنده فرماں  
پندیر!  
از چنیں صید لے مرا

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<sup>75</sup> Javid Namah, p. 159.

آزاد کن  
طاعت دیروزه من  
بیاد کن  
قطرت او خام و عزم  
او ضعیف  
تاب یک ضربه نیارد  
ایس حریف  
بنده صاحب نظر  
باید مرا  
یک حریف پخته تر  
باید مرا!<sup>76</sup>

The prey says to the hunts-man, 'seize me': save me from the all-too obedient servant'. Set me free from such quarry:

Remember my obedience of Yesterday. His nature is raw, his resolution weak, this opponent cannot withstand one blow from me.

I need a servant of God possessed of vision, I need a ripper adversary!

(Translation by Arberry, A, J., David Namah, p. 105)

Iblis is weary of all his easy triumphs. Tormented as he is, by his separation from God, he has not even the satisfaction of measuring his strength against a person of God. Iblis would rather meet his death at the

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<sup>76</sup> Javid Namah, pp. 160.161.

hands of a man of valour than live for a millennium surrounded by weaklings and cowards;

آنچنان تنگ از فتوحات  
آمدم  
پیش تو بهر مکافات آمدم  
منکر خود از تو می خواهم  
بنده  
سوئے آن مرد خدا را هم بنده  
بنده باید که پیچید گردنم  
لرزه انداز و نگاهش در تنم  
اے خدا یک زنده مرد حق  
پرسنت  
لذتے شاید کہ یابم در  
شکست! <sup>77</sup>

I have become saddened by all my triumphs that now

I come to you for recompense;

I seek from you one who dares to deny me—

Guide me to such a man of God.

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<sup>77</sup> Javid Namah, p, 161.

I need a man who will twist my neck,  
Whose glance will set my body quivering  
Grant me. O God, one living man of faith;  
Haply I shall know delight at last in defeat.

(Translation by Arberry, A. J., Javid Namah, p. 105)

In this cry of despair one can see the world of tragedy, the world which lies beyond good and evil. F.A Bijiefeld writes,

"I must admit that the passages about Iblis above all others Satan's lament that he can hardly find a genuine opponent in Inc world, appealed to me more than a lot of enlightened quasi-Christian statements about the devil, and that these words will live in my spirit for a long, long time."<sup>78</sup>

In seeing Iblis as a complex character, a character torn between his pride and his love, a character who possessed all the lineaments of a tragic figure, Iqbal revealed one of his deepest poetic insights. This Iblis - or whom the poet confessed his heartfelt sympathy:

جانم اندر تن ز سوز او  
تپید

79

My soul in my body quivered for hia agony. (Translation by Arberry, A. J., Javid Namah, p. 103)

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<sup>78</sup> Bijiefeld, W, A. quoted by Schimmel. A. M., "The Figure of Satan in the Works of Muhammad Iqbal."

<sup>79</sup> Javid Namah, p. 158.



is one of the greatest achievements of Iqbal's philosophic vision. This Iblis whose suffering brings catharsis is a much more profound and satisfying figure than the traditional Devil who leaves unexplained the greater part of the mystery of evil. It is true that Iqbal's presentation of the tragic Iblis is only very fragmentary, but even though it does not answer all the questions pertaining to good and evil, God and Satan, it does point to the close and complex relationship between concepts commonly held to be mutually exclusive.

# ALLAMA IQBAL AND COUNCIL OF STATE

Hassan Akhtar

We know that Allama Iqbal contested the election to the Punjab Legislative Council and won his seat in the Council. But his relationship with the Council of State is not known. Almost all his biographers have not written even a single line on the subject. Mr. Muhammad Hanif Shahid alone has the credit of mentioning it in his book entitled 'Mufakkar-e-Pakistan'. But unfortunately he was unable to assess the correct position in this regard. He states in his book mentioned above that Sir Abdul Qadir and Allama Iqbal were elected members of the Council of State in September 1929.<sup>1</sup> He refers to the notification of the Home Department dated 15<sup>th</sup> September, 1929.<sup>80</sup> As reference he quotes the Punjab Gazette, Extraordinary of 16<sup>th</sup> September, 1929.

The factual position is that Allama Iqbal and Sir Abdul Qadir never contested the election for the seats in the Council of State. So the question of their election does not arise. Mr. Muhammad Hanif Shahid misunderstood the notification issued by the Home Department on 16<sup>th</sup> September, 1929. Before the notification mentioned above another notification was published by the Home Department on August 1, 1929 in the Extraordinary Gazette of the Government of the Punjab. The relevant portion of this notification is reproduced below before we come to the notification mentioned by Mr. Shahid.

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<sup>80</sup> Mufakkar - e - Pakistan, published by Sang-e-Meel Publications Lahore, 1982, p. 262.

No. 3309:- Under regulation 4 of the regulations for the preparation and publication of Electoral Rolls of Constituencies in the Punjab for the Council of State, the electoral roll for the Punjab (Non Muhammadan), Punjab (Sikh) and Punjab (Muhammadan) constituencies of the Council of State is published as follows "

This is followed by a list of electors, for the Council of State. The name of Allama Iqbal is found at serial No. 505. The particulars of Allama Iqbal as given in the list of Muhammadan electors are reproduced below:

S. No.	Elector's name	Father's Name	Caste	Occupation
505	Muhammad Iqbal	Nur Muhammad	Sheikh	Barrister
	Dr. Sheikh, Sir, Kt.	Sheikh Sapparu		at Law
	Nature of Qualification:	Residence:		
	Fellow, Punjab University	Lahore, 43 McLeod Road		

From these particulars we come to know that every body was not the voter or elector for the Council of State. Fellows of the Punjab University, Members of the Punjab Legislative Council and some others were allowed to be the electors for the Council of State. This was the preliminary list of the electors. The final list of the electors for the Council of State was published on 16th September, 1929 in the Extraordinary Gazette of the Government of the Punjab. The said notification (photo copy of relevant portion is also being published) runs as follows:

No. 3791-H/E. In pursuance of the provisions of the regulation 4 of the Regulations for the Revision of Electoral Rolls of Constituencies in the Punjab for the Council of State, the final amended electoral rolls of the Punjab (Non Muhammadan), Punjab (Sikh), East Punjab Muhammadan and West Punjab Muhammadan Constituencies of the Council of State, are published".

In this notification, the name of Allama Iqbal appears at serial No. 324. The particulars are given as follows.

324	Muhammad Iqbal	Nur Muhammad	Barrister at
	Doctor, Sheikh, Sir, Kt.	Sheikh	Law
	Member, Punjab Legislative Lahore		43, McLeod Road Council and
	Fellow,		
	Punjab University		

I wonder how Mr. Shahid deduced from, this notification, that Allama Iqbal was elected a member of the Council of State. He was simply an elector or voter for the Council of State.

### **AINAH-I-AJAM**

Allama Iqbal compiled a few books for school children too. All of them except the book wider discussion were compiled or edited in collaboration with others. First of these was Tarikh-i-Hind which was published in 1913. Co-editor was Lala Ram Pershad. The Urdu course was compiled with the help of Hakim Ahmad Shuja for the students of 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> classes. The only syllabus book for school boys which was compiled exclusively by Allama Iqbal himself was Ainaah-i-Ajam. This book contains selections from Persian prose and poetry for students preparing for the matriculation examination of the Punjab University. Until now the year of the publication of the first edition was considered to be 1927 or 1926. Mr. Bashir Ahmad Dar in his book Anwar-i-Iqbal Included the reprint of the title page of Ainaah-i-Ajam which bore the year 1927/. Dr. Rafi-uddin Hashmi in Kitaoyiat-i-Iqbal (Lahore 1977) and Mr. Abdul Jabbar Shakir in Kainus-i-Iqbal (Lahore 1982) also gave 1927 as the year of publication. Later on Dr. Rafi-uddin Hashmi in his thesis leading to a Ph. D. degree (published by Iqbal Academy in 1982

under the title "fasanif-i-Iqbal Ka Tehkiki-o-fozihi Mutala") determined 1926 as the year of the publication of the first edition of Ainahi-Ajum. But the fact is that the book was first published in 1923. Fortunately I found the title page of the first edition of the book. The photocopy of this is being published for the first time. But even if I had not found out the title page, the year of first publication of the Ainah-i-Ajam could be known by going through the files of the Punjab Gazette. Some useful information is also given in the Gazette. Only one hundred copies of the first edition were published as it was to be put before the School Board of the Punjab University for approval the school board approved the book with the condition that 113 pages of first edition be deleted and the price reduced accordingly. The subsequent editions which are available were published according to the instructions of the School Board. The unrevised first edition also contained the following articles which were deleted from the later editions.

(1) ہزیمت

ہمایوں

(ہمایوں نامہ)

(2) حکایات

(کلید دمنہ)

(3) در اخزونی

بند

(4) زنبور و

مورچہ

(5) حکایت

- حکیم قآنی  
(6) آشیان بلبل  
(7) محاور، سیاح  
بایکے از  
وحشیان  
امریکائے  
شمالی  
(8) مجادلہ درمیان  
علوم و فنون  
(9) پروانہ  
(10) ماہ و انجم

One Urdu translation of the Aina-i-Ajam is available in the Punjab Public Library Lahore. This was published in 1925, by Mufid-i-Am Press Lahore. This translation is being introduced for the first time. So the first and last pages are being reproduced. This translation is according to the revised edition. We come to know from the Punjab Gazette (7<sup>th</sup> May 1926 supplement) that more translations were done. One of them was by Abdul Ghafoor, Head Oriental Teacher Khalsa High School Lahore. It consisted of 136 pages and was printed at Kapur Printing Works Lahore in one thousand numbers. The second translation was by Lala Gobind Ram and Talwar Bhan. It contained 220 pages. One thousand copies of this were printed at Mercantile Press, Lahore.

# THEISTIC ONTOLOGY IN RADHAKRISHNAN AND IQBAL

George Nordgulen

Whenever people face problems, their best opportunity of finding a solution lies in their ability to discover what is real for that problem and for its resolution. This is particularly true for value questions concerning what is good or beautiful or true. Questions of what is "real" have been under critical scrutiny in the contemporary world, not so much for its existential meaning but more for the metaphysical implications that it carries. Nevertheless, the two cannot be separated. If I am to find a solution to the problem of what I "ought" to do when confronted with a begging child, I must formulate a value principle in terms of which I come to a decision. I may decide not to give into my feelings of compassion because I know or strongly suspect that behind the child stands a racket or organization that my money will really support and hence, prolong the child's slavery. If I press the question further then my theistic convictions arise and these will either confirm or refute the decision. Hence, the ontological question arises out of the ethical question. The same could be said for the aesthetic, the epistemological or other areas of human experience.

In this paper I wish to examine the characterization and nature of ultimate reality as understood by Muhammad Iqbal, a provocative and important thinker out of the contemporary Islamic tradition and S. Radhakrishnan, a renowned and penetrating scholar of Hinduism. Both are concerned with- Onto-logical issues but they are also concerned with the practical realm of people. Both have done their important theistic philosophy within the first half of the present century. Both were aware of many currents

of thought in the West and addressed themselves to a synthesis of these ideas with their own traditions and both developed penetrating and powerful theistic ontologies.

Although they were contemporaries and from the same country (although this changed), they did not evaluate one another's works - so far as I have been able to find. They develop their thought independent of one another and though they have some common sources, such as Bergson and Whitehead, their thinking does not develop out of dialogue with one another. It is the purpose of this paper to develop such a dialogue. Finally, what emerges out of the first part of the paper is that both need to be more adequate in dealing with the absolute, Radhakrishnan more than Iqbal. This is reflected in their dealing with particular social issues. We shall first deal with the nature of the Ultimate as set forth by both men and then turn to an evaluation of these concepts and how they can help us to deal with our contemporary situation.

It might be noted in passing that though the separation of Pakistan and India has religious foundations (also political and economic reasons), these do not necessitate an unresolvable contradiction between Islam and Hinduism. And if such contrasts as do remain - and there are differences! - I believe that our chances of resolving them lies in our working out the ontological issues to see where the differences arise and what possible solutions can be formulated. I believe that this can be done by the use of the theistic ontology of Iqbal and Radhakrishnan.

## **II. THE NATURE OF THE ULTIMATE**

The nature of the ultimate is to be understood in terms of the nature and existence of God for both men. For Radhakrishnan the ultimate can best be understood in terms of the Absolute and God or, in Hindu terminology, The Absolute, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.<sup>1</sup> It will be noticed that the



supreme is complex and not simple, that is, The Supreme has the three poses of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva or God and The Absolute. The effort here is not to over-simplify the nature of deity or the supreme but to achieve an adequate description of that which is ultimately real. Brahman is the word that stands for the absolute in the Vedanta and it is derived from the root word "Brih" which means to grow, to burst forth.<sup>81</sup> The absolute is that which stands beyond or transcends the changing flux of everyday experience: it is absolutely permanent or, the same thing, it is incapable of increase or decrease or change of any kind. Since the absolute is "pure consciousness, pure freedom and infinite possibility . . . it is the foundation and prius of all actuality and possibility."<sup>82</sup>

But a description of the supreme is not to be limited by this brief account. Indeed, Radhakrishnan would have us to see the absolute as positive and he does not altogether agree with Samkara's negative descriptions. Rather, the absolute is the "inexhaustible positivist of God that bursts through all conceptual forms" because it is beyond all such descriptor's.<sup>83</sup> The absolute furnishes for the religious person that guarantee of permanence and unchangeability that is essential for the religious life. Without such permanence religious trust would lack confidence.

God, on the other hand, is bound up with the world and whereas the absolute is marked with permanence, God is involved in change. In this way God is "subject to the category of time" and His work is limited by the freedom of people.<sup>84</sup> If people are free then their decisions must be their own and they must determine something of reality. Hence, God is limited to the extent that people can make decisions and are thus creative of novelty. God is best characterized as wisdom, love and goodness and such a description

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<sup>81</sup> The Philosophy of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, edited by Paul Arthur Schilpp, (N. Y., Tudor Publishing Co., 1952), "Reply to Critics", pp. 796-97. (Hereafter : Schilpp, P. S. R.)

<sup>82</sup> Radhakrishnan, S., The Principle Upanisads, (London, George Allen and Unwin L. T. D., 1968, p. )2. (Hereafter : Radhakrishnan, P. U )

<sup>83</sup> Radhakrishnan, L. V. L., pp. 101-102.

<sup>84</sup> Op cit., 1. V. L. p. 342.

satisfies the religious demand.<sup>85</sup> When dealing with the concept of God, Radhakrishnan sets forth the triple character of God as "Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Redeemer and Shiva the Judge"<sup>86</sup> God is immanent in the world, the guide of people's strivings; God is the suffering companion who cares. Hence, the nature of God is complex and shares in the evolving development of the universe.

Radhakrishnan is opposed to those who merely describe God as Creator or as unchanging or as Father; God is all of these but more. Yet we need to press the question: how are we to characterize the supreme? Is God the best over-all description of the supreme since deity has both relations and non-relations? But there is a certain preeminence of the absolute in Radhakrishnan. In the end the absolute is all in all. On careful reading of Radhakrishnan it seems that the supreme is the overall description of the ultimate and that Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are merely three poses of the absolute. Hence, the absolute stands beyond any description. This raises the question, what is the nature of the supreme? There seems to be a tension between the absolute and God in Radhakrishnan that is not completely overcome. How are those two sides of the supreme related? Before further comments are made on this we must set forth the way in which Iqbal deals with the ultimate.

It is clear that for Iqbal the best way to describe the ultimate is in terms of Ego.<sup>87</sup> Iqbal is eager to satisfy both the intellectual and the pragmatic tests of religious experience.<sup>88</sup> We must consult experience and religious experience indicates to us that ultimately the supreme is a directive will. This directive will can best be conceived as ego. But Iqbal distinguishes between the ultimate ego and ordinary egos He selects the word ego because it refers

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<sup>85</sup> Op. cit., L. V L., p. 342.

<sup>86</sup> Op. cit., p. 338 ; p. 342.

<sup>87</sup> Iqbal, A. M., *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, (Lahore, Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, Publisher, 1965), pp. 62, 63. (Hereafter R. R. T. I.)

<sup>88</sup> Iqbal, R. R. T. I., p. 62.

to a center of experience .and all experience must have a center if it is to be distinguished as experience. This individuality of experience is given the proper name 'Allah" in the Koran. Allah as a distinct individual or person must be conceived in terms of "pure duration" and it is in terms of pure duration that we can conceive of "thought, life and purpose," and hence, to exist in pure duration gives an ultimate organic unity which can be called a self.<sup>89</sup>

To be a self is to say "I am" and thus to have personal identity. The ultimate ego or self has a uniform mode of behavior which always is and can never be changed into something else. Hence, the permanence, structure of stability of the universe is accounted for in terms of the absolute or ultimate ego. For Iqbal the best characterization of Allah is as the ultimate or cosmic personality. Allah, as a person, has both a relative, evolving and changing nature as well as a permanent character. This is analogous to people's personality: we have a relatively permanent character that is exemplified in various experiences. Yet a person can act out of character whereas Allah cannot. Hence, the nature of the ultimate or supreme can be best understood in terms of personhood.

Iqbal is quite clear that the absolute does not stand beyond the ultimate ego.<sup>90</sup> In terms of personhood we can discern that which is absolute but we do not find the absolute separated from Allah. For Iqbal the absolute can be integrated through personality in terms of the absolute ego. But for Radhakrishnan such integration is not as clear: we have seen that the absolute is the non-relative part of God. Yet there is a tension between the Absolute and God that is not overcome in his thought. We shall say more of this later. But for both men, it seems to me, the relation between the absolute and the relative could be greatly clarified if they would adopt the principle of 'inclusive contrasts.' We need to think in "triads": the relative and inclusive

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<sup>89</sup> Op. cit., p. 60.

<sup>90</sup> Op. cit., p. 56. Iqbal uses the terms "Absolute ego" and "Ultimate ego" interchangeably See pp. 56, 58.

term, the non-relative and external term, and the over-all characterization of the relation. Hartshorne states the principle clearly when he says that the "relative includes and exceeds the absolute,"<sup>91</sup> hence, the relative is the whole of the reality but as a whole it includes the absolute.

The absolute is unchanging and complete, in so far as it does not increase or decrease but it is only a part of the relative. The personhood of God has an absolutely fixed character but is also involved in the change of the universe. Since God is inclusive of all then there is nothing beyond God. We do have a sense of rest and completion when we fix our attention upon the absolute aspect of God's nature but we also have a sense of companionship when we experience that God is involved in our struggles and decisions.<sup>92</sup> Hence, I suggest that we take person hood as the characterization of God and that we seek to integrate both relativity and absoluteness within that concept. Since both men use the absolute-relative concepts in their description of ultimate reality, I do not see this as a massive over-hauling of their concepts. It is merely a sharpening of the categorical relations of these ultimate notions. Hence, it makes for greater integration of the notion of ultimate reality and also it removes any taint of inconsistency. We can then avoid what I would call the "double doctrine" of the supreme.

What I mean by this is that for Radhakrishnan the Absolute is the prius of the actual and possible and is also the prius of God. Radhakrishnan describes God as absolute and relative but he means by this the God of this world. The Absolute is beyond such description; it is not personal nor is it actual or possible. It can only be referred to symbolically; it is mystery. It is permanent and unchanging; it just is what it is.' We shall not further pursue this line of thinking but it should be pointed out that it compromises the ultimacy of creativity that Radhakrishnan holds and it does not escape the Buddhist criticisms of "substance" thinking. This is a topic for another,

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<sup>91</sup> Hartshorne, Charles, *The Divine Relativity*, (New Haven, Yale Press, 1964), p. IX.

<sup>92</sup> For a discussion of the Absolute in 'Radhakrishnan, see I. V. L., pp. 248 ff, particularly p. 271 ff.

paper. However, since, Radhakrishnan holds that God is the God of the world and that God creates, that God is permanent and change, then we can compare this with what Iqbal holds. Both of them hold to a dipolar doctrine of God.

Here we must seek to avoid a misunderstanding to say that God is absolute yet related to all, that the relative exceeds and includes the absolute does- not entail that we know everything about God. Nor to claim that God is the supreme cosmic person must not lead to the conclusion that God is simply a person. Both of our thinkers stress the mystery of deity and they both claim that we know very little about God. But whereas Radhakrishnan would locate this mystery within the absolute, the absolute is "inexpressible relationless mystery" and so stands beyond logic and reason, Iqbal would hold that the mystery is to be understood in terms of the personal relations between Allah and people. In other words, for Iqbal there is an I-Thou relation between the ultimate ego and ordinary egos but for Radhakrishnan this subject-object relation is suspended. All is completed in the absolute and this leads to the doctrine of identity. When the subject-object relation no longer holds then oneness is the result.

On the other hand, for Iqbal - there is the subject-object relation and here the best description is in terms of communion. Hence, the absolute stands beyond the subject-object relationship for Radhakrishnan but the same cannot be said for Iqbal. Whereas Radhakrishnan locates the mystery within the absolute, Iqbal locates the mystery within personality. It is my conviction that all the mystery one can legitimately hold can be found in personality. It is not the absolute that is mysterious but the becoming nature of God.

This confirms my suspicion that the absolute as beyond is exempt from all categorical description. I suggest, along with Hartshorne, that the absolute is the abstract feature of personality and hence, the mystery lies in the becoming nature of God about which we know the next thing to nothing. If

Radha krishnan would take personality more seriously than he does then he could avoid "disintegration" or at least tension in his ultimate concepts. Here is where I see the real strength of Iqbal's position; Iqbal takes personality not merely to be the empirical experience of people or even the rational and empirical natures of people as does Radhakrishnan but the whole being of the person. In God the ultimate of personality is embodied; people are only ordinary exemplifications of personality. Hence, the absolute or abstract can be known not because it is the whole of the supreme but because it is only a part of personality. It is that part that is permanent, absolutely in deity but only relatively permanent in people and thus it can give us the self identify that we strive for. Hence, we can retain everything in Radhakrishnan in terms of our interpretation in relation to God.

This may seem to over-look what Radhakrishnan calls "the highest spiritual experience we have" in the "sense of rest and fulfillment, eternity and completeness"<sup>93</sup> but these can be experienced in terms of the absolute as I have described it. There is the sense of permanence and bliss, of serenity and assurance because of the absoluteness and everlastingness of deity. Radhakrishnan admits that "The great problem of the philosophy of religion has been the reconciliation of the character of the Absolute as in a sense eternally complete with the character of God as a self-determining principle manifested in a temporal development which includes nature and man."<sup>2</sup> If the absolute be conceived as the abstract feature of reality and if reality is conceived as the becoming of new events - both of our authors assert this - then the question of "inclusiveness" is important. Though the absolute cannot include other aspects because of its permanence, change can include aspects that do not change and in the case of God and only God, deity includes an absolute essence that is the abstract feature of God's cosmic personality.

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

We have dealt with the nature of God from the standpoint of both Iqbal and Radhakrishnan; they also deal with the question of God's existence. What is the existence of God and is this an important question for religious experience? Neither Iqbal nor Radhakrishnan have much faith in theistic arguments and those they examine even in a cursory fashion are found unsatisfactory. They briefly examine the cosmological, the teleological, the moral, and the ontological arguments but find serious defects with each. For Iqbal the main problem of the cosmological and the teleological arguments is that they begin with the finite and seek to prove the infinite.<sup>94</sup> In the cosmological argument the mind is looking for the cause of effects and continues this search until finally one asserts a first cause. An infinite regress is impossible ; from the finite one can only derive the finite ; to assert that one member of the causes is to be elevated above all the others is to violate the "law of causation". Hence, the argument tries to reach the infinite through the finite and it fails in toto. "The teleological argument is no better." It tries to find the nature of effects as having purpose, foresight and adaptation. Since these are personal characteristics, they therefore point to a cosmic person. The argument is built on the analogy between the cosmic person and the ordinary person and the cosmos and ordinary works. But the differences are so great that such an analogy does not apply and it fails to understand the organic interdependence of the universe, An external though skillful contriver is not God. Once again we cannot move from the finite to the infinite. Hence, the argument has "no value at all." Iqbal does not deal with the moral argument but he does examine the ontological, He states it in Descartes way that an attribute is contained in the nature of a thing and therefore necessary existence is contained in the nature or concept of God. Again, we have an idea of a perfect being which can only come from God; Hence, the idea of the necessary existence of God is made known to us by God. His objections are that concept of existence does not prove objective existence and that there is an unbridgeable gap between the two.

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<sup>94</sup> R. R. T. I., pp. 28-30.

Furthermore, the argument is circular and thus moves from logical to real existence. Hence, the argument fails.

Radhakrishnan claims that logical arguments fail to reflect our deepest convictions.<sup>95</sup> He is particularly concerned with the ontological argument. The argument seeks to derive the existence of God from the experience of God, that is, the idea of God is result of our experience of God. If we think of perfection as merely a projection of our fancy then we contradict ourselves. Anselm argues that the idea of a perfect being necessarily involves the existence of that being.<sup>96</sup> Hence, the proof for the existence of God rests upon religious experience. Yet when one examines the arguments one must admit that they are not proofs and that our best insights come from prophetic souls.<sup>97</sup> But the real strength of the ontological argument and all other arguments such as the moral,<sup>98</sup> is that they point us to the depths and meaning of our religious experience.<sup>99</sup> The idea of God is not an invention or discovery but the self-revelation of God in the soul and our deepest convictions give us a trustworthy knowledge of ultimate reality, "perhaps the only knowledge possible!"<sup>100</sup> Hence, one needs to communicate the reasonableness of one's religious experience.

Though there is a negative evaluation on the above arguments, both men hold that there can be an argument for the existence/reality of God from religious experience. The argument can be stated in the following manner:

The existence of God is eternal and everlasting. Therefore, God necessarily exists or necessarily, religious experience occurs and God

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<sup>95</sup> Radhakrishnan, S., I. V. L. p. 173.

<sup>96</sup> Op. cit., p. 176.

<sup>97</sup> Op. cit., p. 175.

<sup>98</sup> Op. cit., p. 175.

<sup>99</sup> Op. cit., p. 176.

<sup>100</sup> Religious experience is an immediate intuition into ultimate reality.



necessarily exists as the adequate terminus of that experience.<sup>101</sup> Both men, then, would hold that religious experience is the foundation of our knowing the existence of God. It is not knowing simply that God exists since that is a central part of the experience but rather what kind of existence can be ascribed to God and how that existence differs from all other existing things. Here, it seems to me, the ontological argument is valuable as developed by Hartshorne in his *Logic of Perfection and Anseim's Discovery*. That which is the adequate object of dynamic/religious experience is that which is necessarily somehow actualized. This is what the ontological argument establishes and which clarifies the argument from religious experience. The cosmological argument begins with the proposition that something exists, that existence may be either necessary or contingent. God, as the adequate object of experience, necessarily exists. The argument from cosmic design to the cosmic designer follows the same order. In short, the arguments clarify the nature of the existence of God and so they clarify our own existence.

Once this characterization of ultimate reality is made, then we can ask "How can it help with the pressing issues that confront people today?" Also what can be said about the relation of the world religions and how can this help us in terms of our pressing problems of divisions from one another?

For Radhakrishnan the relation between the world religions is one of our most urgent problems. If religion embraces that which is of ultimate value and if such value needs to be heard in terms of our pressing political, military and social problems, then there must be a united voice to express that value. The various religions must dialogue with one another not only to show where there are similarities but also to show how differences can be dealt with. I wish to further develop this last point on the proper attitude that diverse groups and alternative positions can take in terms of the value questions of people.

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<sup>101</sup> Ultimate reality is the self - revelation of God in the soul.

For both Iqbal and Radhakrishnan the spiritual ideal of life is fundamental. It is the spiritual dimension of life that needs to be cultivated and to be expressed if people are to understand themselves and the world in which they live. For Radhakrishnan, "self-discovery, self-knowledge and self-fulfillment" are the destinies of people and the task of religions is to set forth these ideals for all people.<sup>102</sup> For Iqbal each person must sink deep into her/himself and there discover their identity as a child of God's.<sup>103</sup> Such discovery will lead to the spiritual person. It is the spirit in people that religion must bring out and this spirit in people is to be realized in relation to the supreme or deity. Both men appeal to God as the ground of the spiritual dimension of life. All people have the capacity or possibility of spiritual experience. The aim is to make a person truly a person. Can this common ground be used to unite various religions to one another?

In face of the plurality or variety that exists among the world religions and even between Islam and Hinduism, I answer that it can be a common ground. The attitude toward this relation is well expressed by Radhakrishnan in terms of tolerance. But in the case of Iqbal this tolerance is not as clear. As can be seen in the division of Pakistan and India, Iqbal changed. In the beginning Iqbal thought that differences could be worked out, that each community could keep its own self-identity and still have mutual relations.

But later he urged separation

1. Radhakrishnan, S., *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, (N. Y., Galaxy Book, 1959), p. 35.

2. Iqbal, R. R. T. I., p. 12.

because he feared that Islam was losing its identity as the community of Allah. Hence, there was separation and intolerance. But was Iqbal being true

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<sup>102</sup> Op. cit., p. 175.

<sup>103</sup> See Iqbal, R. R. T. I. pp. 31 ff, 15—27 ; Radhakrishnan, I. V. L., pp. 66 ff, particularly 97—99, 173—175.

to his own vision of one God and one community? Dialogue rather than force is the answer and tolerance leads to such dialogue. Differences there may be and this shows our limited vision but when such harrow perspectives become ontologically "True" then, not only is there ontological misplacement but also existential confusion. Hence, I suggest that we go back to Iqbal's original vision, which is more in line with his ontology, and that from that vision we can evolve the tolerance that we need to build a universal community. It is God who binds the various communities together and through our spiritual experience of deity we can see and appreciate the values that others have found in a different way. Hence, in Radhakrishnan and Iqbal, tolerance is not simply blind but is based on a strong doctrinal similarity between the two that can lead to Transcreative positions.

If the object of religious experience, deity, has the nature we have argued for above then the tolerance that is recommended is greatly strengthened. We have seen that the nature of deity as held by both men has both an absolute aspect as well as a relative aspect and that this doctrine is both philosophically defensible as well as religiously significant. God as the supreme cosmic being is fundamental in the thought of both men and is the basis for the self-realization of people. Hence, we have gone far in working out the ontological differences that seem to exist between Islam and Hinduism. If the ontological differences can be worked out then, as I have argued, the existential differences can not only be accepted but also they can be encouraged. Existential reasons are peculiar to different people in different places and times. And if this be accepted then it leads us on to the view of a world community.

Religions must think in terms of the union of all people. All people have the potential of spiritual self-fulfillment. But such fulfillment is a process and different people achieve it at different times and on different levels. The method to be used by all people is that of persuasion, hence, tolerance and not of force; it is a matter of transcreative integration of differences where religion is the matter of winning the allegiance of the person; of committing

the person to the ideals of a world community. But though there is a unity - all are committed to deity as the object of one's religious convictions; - still there is diversity in the existential working out of this religious commitment.

Methods of worship, ritual, prayer, songs, and pilgrimages all have a concrete meaning that lends significance to the religious life of particular individuals, in particular places. Hence, religious practices can vary and do vary but the underlying unity allows for such variety. Iqbal claimed that the Islamic community must sink deep into itself to discover itself. A part of that discovery has to do with the brother-sisterhood of all people. Brothers and sisters can differ from one another in what they do if they accept the fact that they are brothers and sisters because they are committed to deity which has been shown to be the ground of their true life. What is required is a strong feeling of unity, a similarity of vision about the ultimate nature of values that can bind us together. What this does rule out is exclusiveness: if we focus upon our existential differences and claim them to be essential then dialogue is ruled out. But if there is an ontological similarity then transcreative dialogue can be genuine and we can work out differences by means of change or by means of acceptance.

I would like to conclude this paper with consideration of some objections. An extreme objection would be that there is no possibility of such transcreative dialogue as I have suggested above. What we really confront when we compare and contrast the theistic ontology of Islam and Hinduism as well as existential practice is contradiction. Since both religions are complex and have received complex developments over the years there is a certain plausibility to this criticism, and it could be supported by the use of different sources. But what I have tried to show is that two renowned contemporary thinkers from each religion have developed strikingly similar ontologism. Though there is no absolute agreement between Iqbal and Radhakrishnan - this would be asking too much for finite minds like ours to reach such agreement - still there is a rough similarity between the two. People's knowledge is limited and we need to continually correct and update

our knowledge. Though our two authors do not seem to have dialogued with one another during their life-time and they thus developed their thought independent of one another, it adds strength to my argument of the striking similarities between them each saw the nature of reality in a comparable similar way. They had a mutual influence from currents of Western thought and sought to re-interpret their religion in light of that influence. This would rule out the first objection.

Another objection might be that there is no need for such transcreative dialogue since basically there are no differences. This would be to see too much similarity and would not take seriously the divergences. As has been pointed out, the absolute would have to be re-worked in Radhakrishnan and the exclusiveness of Iqbal would have to be redone. Hence, not to see differences between the two men is not to see the two men.

This leaves us with the third possibility, namely, there are striking similarities but there are also differences. I have contended that this is the most viable option. Furthermore, if transcreative dialogue is to be meaningful, then we must deal with the ontology of each man. For if ontological matters can be shown to have a rough agreement then existential concerns will be enriched. too often in such comparisons the practices of the various groups are compared and the conclusions reached are decidedly negative. My contentions have been that there may be a variety of differences on the existential level but there can be an essential agreement concerning the nature of ultimate reality. God is more complex than we often wish to admit and there are a variety of ways by which deity can be approached. It is here that tolerance is required: one practice may be good for one people in one location of the world and quite another somewhere else.

Lastly, the claim is not that all Muslims or Hindus would accept the above. Rather the claim is that two prominent thinkers of these two great religions have striking theistic positions that should be further pursued. In a day and time when the stress is upon the differences that exist among people

and when we are dangerously close to the use of nuclear weapons to deal with these differences that will spell the end of human civilization as we know it, then it is a time when the world religions need to take one another more seriously and need to have a united voice that will point up the value of people as people and will work out ways in which people can live together.

Akbar, the great Muslim leader of the sixteenth century in India, at his fort by Agra, had a hall built for the dialoguing of the various religions. It is called the seat of Akbar and has four spoke-like paths that lead out from the center and various participants from various religious persuasions would come to discuss their differences face to face. It is this kind of ideal that is needed in our world where different religions will be afforded the opportunity of coming together and discussing their agreements and disagreements and various ways of transcreative integration.<sup>104</sup> It is only hoped that we will be given the opportunity and the desire to bring about such dialogue.

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<sup>104</sup> One can only rejoice in the recent decisions that have been made between the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches to unite in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and seeking to serve the displaced and suffering in the world. It needs to be done on a larger basis where all religions will combine for such beneficial social and personal "relief" programs. But such programs need to have more doctrinal grounding "emergency drive" outlook and set forth the basis for a world community. We need to struggle on both levels.

# REFLECTIONS ON IDEOLOGICAL SENTIMENTALISM

Frithjof Schuon

A doctrine can be described as sentimental not because of the mere fact that it uses a symbolism of the feelings or because its actual point of departure is determined by a sentimental motive; in fact, a genuine doctrine founded on a particular aspect of reality may not try to avoid appeals to sentiment, whilst, on the contrary, an illusory theory and inspiration governed by passion in its very axiom will affect a rational or "icy" tone and display an impeccable logic while developing its basic error ; the "headless" character of this logic, however, will not escape the notice of those who know that logic has no validity but by virtue of the soundness—physical or metaphysical—of its point of departure.

If we take example of a doctrine which is apparently completely intellectual and inaccessible to the emotions, namely Kantianism, considered as the archetype of theories seemingly divorced from all poetry, we shall have no difficulty in discovering that its starting pointer or "dogma" is reducible to a gratuitous reaction against all that lies beyond the reach of reason acting alone; it voices, therefore, a priori an instinctive revolt against truths which are incomprehensible rationally and which are considered annoying on account of their very inaccessibility to ordinary reasoning. All the rest is nothing but dialectical scaffolding, ingenious or "brilliant" if you wish, but contrary to truth. What is crucial in Kantianism is not its pro domo logic and its few very limited lucidities, but the predominately "irrational" desire to limit the intelligence which it voices; this results in a dehumanization of intelligence and opens the door to all the inhuman aberrations of our century. In short, if the state of man means the possibility of surpassing oneself intellectually, Kantianism is the negation of all that is essential and

integrally humane.<sup>105</sup> Negations on this scale are always accompanied by a sort of moral taint which makes them less excusable than if it were merely a question of intellectual narrowness. The Kantists, failing to understand "dogmatic metaphysics," overlook the enormous disproportion between the intellectual and human greatness of those they label as "metaphysical dogmatists" and the illusions which they attribute to them; yet even if allowance be made for such a lack of understanding, it seems that any honest man ought to be sensitive, if only indirectly, to the claims of these "dogmatists" at the human level. What is evidence in metaphysics becomes "dogma" for those who do not understand it—and here is an extrinsic argument of considerable significance.

It is noteworthy that Descartes has been reproached, not with the reduction of knowledge to simple logic, but with "the arbitrary character of his auxiliary concepts to which the philosopher attaches the evidence and necessity which he demands of scientific knowledge as such" (Wundt). Modern philosophy is decidedly the liquidation of evidences. Logic itself is but evidence of the finite and not of the Infinite, which accounts for the latter's inability to accommodate itself completely to the frame-work of single-handed reason. The Cartesian inconsistency is to have presented at the fruits of logic alone evidences which in reality came to Descartes simply from his intelligence.<sup>106</sup> This disparity between intelligence and mere logic appears in the most brutal manner, if one may say so, with Comte, where "logicism" emptied of all intellectual content, lands one in a complete negation of the intelligence.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> German Kantianists of XIXth century called their philosopher the "universal nullifier"; they little knew what truth they spoke. In fact what was nullified was intelligence through its replacement by academic quibbles, if one may be permitted to express oneself so.

<sup>106</sup> The "categorical imperative" of Kant is an analogous inconsequence: it is both implicitly theistic and "officially" atheistic.

<sup>107</sup> According to Comte, the human spirit in its "evolution," paces through three stages, the "theological," "metaphysical," and "positive" we would say that here is an "ascension" of



Since Descartes, via the "criticism" of Kant and the "positivism" of Comte— both of which are, all things considered,

only systemizations of incompetence—all capacity for synthesis and conclusion has been removed from- the intelligence except on a plane so narrow as to be without relation to the real scope of the human spirit.'

Formerly people spoke childishly of intelligent matters ; in our time they excel in speaking intelligently of supidities. In those days they made mistakes on contingent matters, when they did make mistakes, and not on essentials ; in our era it is on the essential that people are mistaken, while holding positive opinions on contingent things.

A characteristic tendency of our time—due to the fact that "the gods" have been eliminated—is that everything is crystallized in philosophy ; everything becomes an article of laith, even the most innocuous things, even any kind of sentimental reaction or infirmity of the intelligence or will. It is as if one's legs, tired of being what they are by nature, began to think according to their own perspective and assumed for themselves, by the mere fact that they thought, a total and central character. Such a thinking longs to be dramatized in a tragic sense ; doubt and ignorance wish to be accepted at least under the beadling of a "contribution to culture," as apples make additions to a pile of other apples.<sup>2</sup> By a similar train of thought, not to follow the extravagancies of the day, be it in philosophy, literature, art or simply in one's manner of living, is called to "desert our own times." But what people forget is that our own times desert truth and all real values. We are told that nothing can or should be out of step with our times, as if they were not out

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which one of the representative bases would be Christ, for example till it arrived, by way of Aristotle, at the grocer on the corner.

1. If Positivism still admits the possibility of revealing natural laws, contemporary thought questions even this elementary function of reason; and that, with the help of scientific arguments which, however, are deployed on completely different ground. It is as if one concluded that because neither white nor black exist absolutely for the eye, there is therefore nothing but grey and the relative differences between greys ; as if this empirical and partial truth, whose metaphysical significance it is obvious, could weaken the "relatively absolute" difference between black and white.

2. In our time the normal admission "I am not intelligent enough" becomes "the world is nonsensical": and for the old inference that one should "ask the wise" is substituted the new conclusion that "it is the purveyors of the gods and of the worlds beyond who are the bad men," or some other remark of this kind.

of step with God, and if it were possible to be out of step indefinitely with God, truth and the nature of things, all three.

Throughout the ages religions have inculcated in man the consciousness of what he really is, of his fundamental majesty, coupled with his actual imperfection and impotence ; man accepted this message because he still possessed a natural intuition of his situation in the universe. Now the peculiarity of man desirous of embodying our times is the need to feel at ease in an imperfection becomes for him practically a perfection of its own ; it is the desire, as a reaction against the centuries, to feel oneself perfect at small expense—whence the reduction of the real to an infinitesimal segment of itself—and to shake off the yoke of a dogma which is thought degrading because it puts us in our proper place; in short, there is a wish "to start again from scratch" in full liberty of choice. This might well be described as taking one's own wishes for reality, for it is not sufficient to desire a change in order to be able to alter one's colour or size ; the reality into which we are woven by an ineluctable fatality is not modified at the will of our impulses, our needs of causality or our lassitudes ; it does not cease to be real as a result of

our repugnance towards given religious formalism, perhaps one that to us seems too imaginative or sentimental, but yet is required a priori by the human environment of which we form a part. From the standpoint of eschatological realities, to which nothing can remain immune in the final reckoning, all this rationalist-sentimentalist controversy would seem like a sort of literary game doomed to instantaneous evaporation in the abysses that lie beyond the grave.

Indignation against abuses is only too apt to bring with it the rejection of the positive principles which these abuses had falsified in the first place: when sentimental reaction is given a philosophical twist it perverts and impoverishes imagination. The error itself creates the stage-setting it requires in order to feel comfortable. The world becomes increasingly a system of stage-settings destined to limit and distort the imaginative faculty by imposing upon it an unshakable conviction that all this is "reality" and that there is no other and that all that is outside this system is nothing but naive and culpable "romanticism." In the nineteenth century, and to a certain extent ever since the

Renaissance, people have tried practically to create a universe in which there would be only man ; in our time man has lost the initiative and is now sliding about in a universe—or pseudouniverse—where only the machine is "real" ; under these conditions one can no longer speak even of "humanism." In any case, man by attributing to himself his own self-sufficient reason, cannot remain what he is ; no longer believing in that which surpasses him and not placing his ideals above himself, he thereby

condemns himself to the subhuman. If one is still at all sensitive to true norms, it is difficult to deny that the machine tends to make man into its own counterpart, violent, brutal, vulgar,

quantitative and stupid like Itself ; all modern "culture" is so

affected in greater or lesser degree. This is what partly explains the cult, of "sincerity" and the mystique of "engagement"

one must be 'sincere' because the machine is devoid of mystery and because the machine is devoid of mystery and because it is as incapable of discretion as of generosity ; one must be "engaged" because the machine possesses no value apart from its productive capacity and because it demands ceaseless surveillance and even a complete self-surrender by men and mankind who thus become its food We are to refrain from "compliance" in literature and art because the machine does not so behave and because in the minds of its slaves and creatures its ugliness, clamour and implacability pass for "reality." Above all one must not have a God, since the machine has none and even usurps this role itself.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the general trend of our times is instinctively hostile to everything spiritual. Supposing some tribe buys a cannon and that cannon happens to explode,

1. If it be objected that the same was true of the crafts of old, we would reply that there is a notable difference, in that these occupations displayed a properly human character based on contemplation, and on that account entailed neither the agitation nor the oppressions characteristic of the machine age.

2. We would stress that in speaking of "God" we have in mind, not a concept which would be contrary—or in as much as it would be contrary—to Buddhism, but the "nirvanic" Reality which underlies all traditional concepts of the Absolute. It is this Reality which in the Mahayana expresses itself by the universal Dharmakaya, or in other words, by the Adhi-Buddha In Japanese terms, the same function attaches to Amitabha (Amida) or Vairochana (Dainichi), according to the respective schools.

destroying a whole village, then the fault is not with those who bought the cannon nor with those who sold it or those who did not know how to handle it, but with the priests and gods who had governed the tribe over the ages. Fortunately this is not the whole story and in spite of everything one

can also some-times observe wholesome reactions against this state of mind ; but the preceding picture holds none the less a symbolic validity with regard to our deplorable epoch.

A typical example of the reasoning which results from this mentality is the following ; there are so many religions, each teaches something different, so they cannot all be correct, there-fore none of them is true.<sup>1</sup> It is as if one said: there are so many individuals, each one believes himself to be "I," so they cannot all be right and in consequence none of them is "I," starting with the speaker; this proposition demonstrates the absurdity—not logical, but effective—<sup>2</sup> of both the foregoing examples, thanks to the real analogy between the inevitable limitation of religious language and the just as inevitable limitation of the ego. To draw this inference, as do the atheists who invoke the argument in question, is practically to deny the diversity of the conscious subject as well as the diversity of the aspects of the object to be known, and the therefore also the existence of points of view and aspects ; logically the fact of noticing the diversity of religions could lead to the opposite conclusion, that is to say: since in every period and among all peoples there have been religions, affirming unanimously the the reality of one Supreme Power and of a beyond, it is more than proble-to say the least—that this unanimity of the human mind rests on something positive and transmits essential truths, "prelogical" if you wish, but also supralogical and "subconsciously evident",<sup>3</sup> If the materialists do not reason thus it is

I. Also why not reason thus: there are so many philosophies which contradict each other, so they cannot all be right, therefore no philosophy is correct, including atheistic materialism

<sup>2</sup> That which demonstrates only its own logically is not a guarantee of truth.

<sup>3</sup> We refer, here, not to the inferior "subconscious" of certain psychologists, but to the fact that the truth which Revelation communicates

to us, and which are contained in the very substance of the intellect, are "subconscious" for the majority of men.

precisely because they are affected by an imaginative and sentimental prejudice. The diversity of religions—or traditions, if one so prefers—far from proving the falseness of religion or tradition as such, on the contrary demonstrates the transcendence of Revelation and the relativity of human understanding at one and the same time.

In the same connection it is impossible not to pause over the very crucial question of democratic and anti-theocratic ideology. It is possible for a social theory, founded—as a reaction against particular abuses—on a desire for liberty but at the same time imparting an inordinate character to this claim in disregard of the real potentialities and interests of the individual, to develop without any obvious dialectical inconsistency and thus give the impression of a perfect objectivity. The success of an ideology of this kind is explained by the fact that men who ignore the profound reasons of our terrestrial situations and for whom principles are merely "abstractions," easily allow themselves to be convinced by the violent voicing of a partially legitimate cause, without asking themselves if the ideology that is being added to it be true or false ; because we are hungry—the inaccessible date-palm is a thief, and always has been. The passionate impulse—even when disguised as "cold" reasoning—takes no account of the fact that a partial truth becomes false when one takes it out of its total context and imparts to it, under this condition of artificial isolation, a quasi unconditional significance.

In reality the external liberty of creatures is relative and conditional and cannot be otherwise ; what tradition seeks to realize—and what it does realize to the extent that our world of

1. According to Guenon, the word "religion" is only applicable to the three Semitic monotheisms, which are characterized by three constituent elements: a dogma, a reality, and a cult. In the opinion of Coomaraswamy and also according to general usage, the word "religion" is the western term for all integral, and thus at the same time social and spiritual, tradition, be its formal doctrine theological or properly metaphysical. From this point of view all that need be observed is that the word religio (from relegere, "to gather together," or religere, "to bind together") bears a special connotation amongst the Semites and Westerners, as is the case with many other things. As for the word "tradition," it may be applied without abuse to various things, even in the interior of a religion.

approximations permits—is a kind of balance between individual terrestrial freedom and the chances of celestial well-being ; if one believes in eternal life, a liberty which is disproportionate in relation to such and such individual potentialities, and consequently compromises such and such chances of salvation, is clearly not more desirable than a privation of liberty which does not compromise them. It is from this angle that must be considered whatever in traditional civilizations (the mere question of abuses is by the way) offends in too absolute a manner the sensibility of individualists who believe in nothing or whose belief has no bearing on their intelligence and imagination ; we say "Moo absolute" since it is normal for "legitimate" or "inevitable" ills to offend the sensibility of just men ; but it is abnormal and

in any case illegitimate that men draw erroneous conclusions from their own sensibility.

The experience of the false "liberty" which is propounded as an end in itself or as "art for art's sake"—as if one could be really free outside the truth and without interior liberty! this experience, we say, is only in its beginning phase, though the world has already gathered some of the bitter fruits of it. All that is still human, normal and stable in the world only survives there through the vitality of ancestral traditions—of "prejudices" if one so

prefers—whether it be a matter of the West, moulded by Christianity, or even of some Nilotic or Amazonian tribe. To have some idea of what the "free man of tomorrow" might be like, the man starting again from zero and, "creating himself"<sup>1</sup>—but in reality the man of the machine which has escaped from his control—it is sufficient to take a glance at the peculiar "existentialist" psychology of certain young people, particularly in the big cities. Let us not anticipate, however, since our aim is simply to point out that if the profound and subconscious impressions of tradition are removed from man

there remain finally only the scars of his fall and the unleashing of the infra-human elements<sup>2</sup> in his being.

1. And creating the truth at the same time, of course.

2. Instead of repeating incessantly that the Middle Ages were horrible, people would do better to resign themselves to the fact that it is thus that men of the Iron Age behave—in Europe and elsewhere, and in both good or evil—when they take their religion seriously our vaunted "softening, of:

Logically, democracy is opposable to tyranny, but in fact leads to it. That is to say since its own reaction is sentimental—without which it would be centripetal and would tend towards theocracy, the only guarantee of a realistic liberty—it is only an extreme which, by its unrealistic negation of authority and competence, calls forth another extreme and a new authoritarian reaction, one which this time is authoritarian and tyrannical in its very principle. The democratic illusion appears above all in the following points: in democracy truth amounts to the belief of the majority, whereof the truth is practically the "creation"; democracy itself is only true in as far as, and as long as, the majority believes in it, thus it carries in its breast the germ of its own suicide. Authority, which one is obliged to tolerate under pain of anarchy, lives at the mercy of the electors, hence the impossibility of real government. The ideal of "liberty" makes a prisoner of the government, a prisoner who must constantly follow the interests of various pressure groups



; the electoral campaigns themselves prove that the aspirants to authority must dupe the electors, and the means of this dupery are so incredibly vulgar and stupid and constitute such a degradation of the people that this alone should suffice to reduce all democratic ideology to nonsense. That does not necessarily mean that no form of democracy is possible ; but then it is primarily a question of communities of limited size—especially nomadic ones—and secondly of a democracy having an aristocratic and theocratic centre, and not of a secular egalitarianism imposed upon large sedentary populations.

We can enlarge on this further: it can be that a man is intelligent and competent, or that a minority is: but it cannot happen that the majority is intelligent and competent, or "more intelligent" or "more competent" ; the adage *vox populi vox Dei* has no meaning except in a religious framework which confers a function of "medium" on the crowds, who then express themselves, not by thought but by intuition and under the influence of Heaven ; unless it is a matter of the competence

moral codes" and "tolerance" offer little interest apart from the fact that their price is religious indifference, anti-spiritual individualism, materialism and false mysticism.

pertaining to every sane-minded, God-fearing man, in which case the feeling of the majority coincides in all ways with what may be called "the good." It is clear that the people as a collective vehicle of religion enjoys a positive character—all religions testify to this<sup>1</sup>—and is thus instinctively right in the face of pernicious and impious exceptions;<sup>2</sup> moreover it is clear that, viewed from a slightly different angle. the people's "fanaticism"<sup>3</sup> in spite of its inescapable limitations and abuses, represents a centripetal and regulating force. The people is what it is, both in good and evil ; it has not the virtues of the "centre," but it may have those of the "totality," on condition that the "centre" deter-mines that totality. Besides the word "people" itself admits of two meanings ; it denotes either the majority, as

opposed to intellectual and aristocratic elites, or the total or integral collectivity, comprising the majority and the elites at one and the same time; in this last sense it is self-evident that the government -apart from its celestial origin —derives from the people and that the chivalric and sacerdotal elites themselves are an expression of the popular genius; one could almost apologize for pointing out anything so obvious.

A word on "free thought," or more exactly on the quasi !floral obligation to "think for themselves" currently attributed to all men ; this demand is incompatible with the nature of man, for the normal and virtuous man, as a member of a social and traditional community, generally takes into account the limits of his own abilities. One of two things is possible: either the man is exceptionally gifted on such and such a plane and there-fore nothing can stop him from thinking in an original way, which he will moreover do consonantly with tradition precisely because his intelligence enables him to grasp the necessity of his

I. Without which there would be neither "Israel" nor "the mystic body of Christ," nor "the Mohommedan community."

2 It can also be mistaken when it is a question of phenomena exceeding the bounds of exoterism, even though there is also an aspect of exoterism that is anchored in the people, notably in its craft institutions.

3. In our time all that is essential, or even merely serious, in a religion is called "fanaticism " Other labels of same kind are "convention," "conformity," "romantic," "picturesque" ; it is always a matter of compromising or ridiculing anything which is opposed to the reign of the machine.

harmony; or the man is of mediocre intelligence, either on some particular plane or in a general way, in which case he relies on the judgments of those more competent than himself, which in his case is the most intelligent thing he can do. The craze for detaching the individual from the

intellectual hierarchy, or, in other words, for individualizing him intellectually, is a violation of his nature and is practically equivalent to the abolition of intelligence and also of the virtues, without which real understanding cannot fully take effect. This way only leads to anarchy and to the codification of men's inability-to think.

A 'contemporary' variant of the ideological sentimentalism which we have in mind, one that is very prevalent even among "believers," is the demagogic obsession with purely "social" values. Formerly, when all the world was religious, poverty preserved the poor from hypocrisy, or from a certain kind of hypocrisy. In our time poverty too often leads to unbelief and envy, especially in countries which have been industrialized or otherwise contaminated by the industrialist mentality—with the result that rich and poor are quits; the hypocrisy of one side is answered by the impiety of the other. It is profoundly unjust to prefer this new short-coming of the poor to the habitual, and traditionally stigmatized, short-coming of the rich and to excuse the impiety of the ones because of their poverty without excusing the others because of their riches: if the poor are victims of their estate the rich are equally so of theirs ; if poverty confers the right to impiety, riches equally confer the right to a simulation of piety. If the one side is to be pitied spiritually the other is to be pitied and excused on the same grounds, seeing that the difference between them rests solely on completely exterior and easily reversible situations, and not on any-thing fundamental in the nature of man. One can only prefer the poor when they are better than the rich in their spiritual sincerity, their patience and their secret heroism—such poor always exist, as also do rich men who are detached from their

riches—and not when they are worse by their unbelief, envy and hatred. The Christians persecuted by Nero suffered far more grievously than any underpaid workmen of today. without theology granting them for that reason the right to cease to believe in God or to scorn His laws; tradition never admitted this kind of economic blackmail addressed to God.

In short, three questions determine the human problem, in spite of all the humanitarian and progressivist sentimentalities now in vogue; if all men were exempt from material cares, would the world be saved? Assuredly not; for evil resides above all in man himself, as experience proves abundantly.<sup>1</sup> If all men set themselves to supply the needs of others with regard to their physical well-being conceived apart from religion, would the world be saved? No, certainly not, for the very basis of the problem would remain untouched. If all men thought of God, to the point of forgetting their own well being, would the world be saved? Yes, certainly; "the rest shall be added unto you" says the Gospel, that is to say the reform of man would involve ipso facto a reform of the world, and even a beneficial reaction on the part of the whole cosmic environment.

Progressivism is a desire to eliminate effects without wishing to eliminate their causes; it is a wish to abolish calamities without realizing that they are nothing other than man himself; they necessarily result from his metaphysical ignorance, or his lack of the love of God. Account must equally be taken of this: God cannot in the first place "take an interest" in the well-being of creatures; what he wants is their souls and their imperishable good and not primarily the transitory things of the material world. If God also wants our earthly well-being it is not because a certain happiness is the normal condition of man who, however, is essentially created with a view to eternal values. God takes interest in our well-being to the extent that we may profit from it, in His sight, and not otherwise; but outside this "interest"—if such a word be permissible here despite its obvious inadequacy—God—"sends down his rain upon the just and unjust alike." The same applies to bread: truth must be imparted, because "man does not live by bread alone"; to hunger with truth is better than to live at ease with error. Well-being is there to serve our ultimate ends as clay is there to make vessels.

Many are prone to accuse the contemplatives, preoccupied with their salvation, of "selfishness" and maintain that instead

1. In economically super-saturated countries, imbued with social idealism and "humanitarian" psycho-analysis, the moral problem is in no

way solved ; privileged youth shows itself capable of the most monstrous crimes without having the excuse of poverty.

of saving oneself one should save others ; but this argument is firstly hypocritical and secondly absurd because, on the one hand, it is not from any excess of virtue that those who argue thus refuse sanctification, and because, on the other hand, it is impossible to save others for one can only know and will with one's own knowledge and one's own will; if it be possible to contribute to the salvation of others, it is only by virtue of one's own salvation. No man has ever rendered service to anyone out of "altruism" while remaining attached to his own faults; whoever neglects his own salvation certainly will save no one else. To mask passions and spiritual indifference behind a facade of good works only proves one's own hypocrisy. The social interest can only be defined in terms of the truth; it is impossible to define truth in terms of the social.

Too often one hears the reproach of "sentimentality" levelled at those who protest, not against some necessary evil, but against meanness; this reproach, even if it accidentally coincides with the truth from a purely psychological point of view, is yet completely unjustified when it is designed to reduce intelligent reactions to their possible emotional concomitants. For: that the strong attack the weak is sometimes an unavoidable evil and even in certain respects an effect of a natural law, provided the means used do not violate the laws of nature as in mechanized wars, and provided that force does not serve intrinsically false ideas, which would be yet another anomaly; but that the strong should crush the weak by means of an interested hypocrisy with its accompanying meanness is neither natural nor inevitable ;

it is gratuitous and even infamous to label as "sentimentality" all opinion which condemns these methods; "realism" can justify violence, but never villainies. But there is not only this alternative; there are still facts which, without being in themselves either necessary evils or villainies properly speaking, are due in the main to a distressing and senseless thoughtlessness; such are the abuses brought about by prejudice, complacency,

1. We are referring above all to tribal or feudal wars, or wars of expansion of the traditional civilizations. Some will object that there have always been machines and that a bow is nothing else, which is as false as to claim that a circle is a sphere or a drawing is a statue. Here there is a difference of dimensions whose causes are profound and not merely quantitative.

lack of imagination and unconscious habit; such things are inevitable, not only in the particular but universally, the collective man of the "dark age" being what he is. In this case, to be greatly moved by a particular happening does not necessarily spell a culpable sentimentality; what would be so is to be indignant against the very existence of such phenomena within an ancient civilization and to wish to destroy the whole civilization for the sake of abolishing the happenings in question.

When we set out to compare antiquity with our own times two extremes are noticeable; on the one hand we have the abstract and marmoreal hardness of the ancients, founded on the law of natural selection and on the aristocratic virtues of gods and heroes, and on the other hand we have the democratic excesses of our day, such as the reign of inferiors, the cult of mediocrity and vulgarity, the sentimentalist protection; not of the weak, but of weakness and defects as such<sup>1</sup> and the psychological softness in respect of all forms of laxity and vice, by which immorality is upheld in the name of

liberty and sincerity—not to mention stupidity and idle chatter masquerading as culture or the scorn of wisdom and the neutralization of religion or the misdeeds of an atheistical science that leads to over-population, degeneration and catastrophe. These aberrations allow us, if not, to condone the faults of the ancients, at least to understand their outlook; it will then be understood that there is no occasion to condemn this outlook in itself unconditionally in the name of a so-called "moral progress" such as in reality only leads to the opposite excesses, to say the least of it.<sup>2</sup> Like all social dreaming, that of egalitarianism presupposes a fragmentary world made up exclusively of honest men who think only of kneading their bread in tranquility without being molested by wolves or by the gods; but the wolves are to be found within the "decent fellows" themselves, and as for the conniving gods of "fanaticism," one

has only to banish them for devils to come in and take their place.

1. The protection of the weak has always been practised, in one form or another, in civilizations which still remain healthy.

2. Collectivist dictatorships have sprung from democracy and re-edit its

prejudices in the sense that they also intend to realize the so-called humanitarian ideals, but by Babylonian means.

Nothing could be more false than to claim that the Middle Ages were as good as our era is bad: the Middle Ages were wicked inasmuch as abuses which distorted the traditional principles were developed to their uttermost in relation to the possibilities of the time, without which the modern reaction—Renaissance and Reformation --could not have happened. But compared with our times the Middle Ages were nevertheless "better," and even "good," from the very fact that they were still ruled by genuine principles.

At every turn we are told that we must "be contemporary" in our ideas, and that the fact of "-looking back" or "hanging back" amounts to treason in respect of the "categorical imperative" which is our own century: nothing could ever confer justification or plausibility on this unreasonable demand "There is no right greater than that of the truth," say the Hindus ; and if two and two make four, this certainly is not more or less true in terms of some particular time or other. Everything which goes on in our time forms part of that time, including opposition to its tendencies ; the copying of antiquity formed part of the Renaissance outlook, and if in our time some people look towards the Middle Ages or the East, one is bound to register the fact as' also belonging to the period in which we live. It is the nature of things which determines definitely what is or is not of our times ; it is certainly not for men to decide what has the right to be true and what has not.

Philosophical "vitalism" masquerades also under the guise of an impeccable logic, a fallacious and properly infra-human line of thought. The devotees of "life," for whom religion. or wisdom, is only an unintelligible kill-joy, artificial and morbid, overlook all the following truths, namely that human intelligence is capable of objectivizing life and )f opposing itself to it to a certain extent and that this fact cannot be devoid of meaning, everything having its efficient cause ; also that it is by this capacity of objectivtzation and opposition versus subjective impulses that man shows himself human, lite and pleasure being common also to all infra-human creature ; that there is not only life but also death, not only pleasure but also pain, of which man alone can give account a priori ; that man ought to follow his nature as animals follow theirs, and that in following it fully he trans, cends-appearances and gives them a significance which surpasses

their shifting plane and finally unites them in the same stable and universal reality. For man is intelligence, and intelligence is the superseding of forms and the realization of the invisible Essence ; to speak of human intelligence is to speak of the absolute and the lranscendant.



Of all earthly creatures man alone knows, firstly, that pleasure is contingent and ephemeral, and secondly that it is not shared by all. That is to say he knows that other egos do not enjoy the pleasures of our ego and that, whatever our rejoicing, there are always other creatures who suffer, and vice versa ; which proves that pleasure is not everything, nor is life. Religion and metaphysics spring from the depths of our specifically human nature—precisely by virtue of its profundity which is not the case with the characteristics man shares with animals and plants.

To refute an error does not mean ignoring the fact that its existence is, in a sense, necessary: the two things are situated on different planes. We do not accept error, but we accept its existence because "scandal must needs be." It is feeble and vague minds which accept error merely because they perceive that it is impossible for it not to exist.

We said at the beginning of this article that a doctrine merits the epithet "sentimental," not because it makes use of a symbolism of the feelings, or because it reflects incidentally in its form the sentiments of the writer who expounds it, but because its point of departure is determined more by- feeling than by objective reality, which means that the latter is violated by the former. To this definition we must add a reservation in favour of the traditional doctrines, or some of them; strictly speaking a true doctrine could be qualified by the use of the word "sentimental" when sentiment is introduced into the very substance of that doctrine, whilst at the same time limiting the truth, by force of circumstance, on account of the "subjective" and affective character of sentimentality as such ; it is in this sense that Guenon speaks of the presence of a sentimental element in the Semitic exoterisms, while pointing out that it is this element which accounts for the incompatibilities between dogmas drawn from different sources. But, in this case, the term "sentimental" cannot mean that the doctrine itself originates in a sentimental reaction, one that is basically human therefore, as happens with profane ideologies; on the contrary, here the marriage between truth and sentiment is a beneficial and providential concession to certain psychological

predispositions, so that the epithet in question is only applicable on condition that one also specifies that it concerns doctrines that remain properly orthodox.

The Intellect—that kind of static Revelation which is permanent in principle and "supernaturally natural"—is not opposed to any possible expression of the Real; it is situated above sentiment, imagination, memory and reason, but it can at the same time illuminate and determine all of these because they are like its individualized branches and arranged as receptacles to receive the light from on high and to translate it according to their respective capacities. The positive quintessence of sentiment is love; and love, in the measure that it surpasses itself in the direction of its supernatural source, is the love of man for God and of God for man; finally it is Beatitude beginningless and endless.

# ISLAM AND MODERN HUMANISM

*Sabahat Masood*

The study of English Language and Literature, at the higher level, is essentially a study of Western Civilization in its sources, evolution and contemporary effects. The student of a language absorbs ideas and expresses them. His aim is proficiency in the language, but he ends up by acquiring a philosophy of life.

Situated as we are today, it would be rewarding to use the English language for a lay attempt at defining Islam as a way of life. Inevitably such an attempt would involve references to Islamic History and the immutable and unchanging Islamic values and injunctions. Likewise it will be necessary to refer to modern humanism as manifested in English literature and point to inferences in the hope that this exercise may be useful for a better understanding of the Islamic State.

It is appropriate and even necessary to begin these comments with a reminder of the proneness to error to which the contemporary student of Islamic statecraft is subject. This hazard consists in looking upon the expressions 'Islam' and "Muslim" as political group labels such as oriental or western or capitalist or communist. The attitude inherent in the language of modern political science makes for the tacit assumption that the human species is basically a-moral and aggressive, and that idealism of any kind is against the mainstream of biological drift, and must ultimately yield to egoism and the unlimited pursuit of self-interest at the expense of others. The Western historian and political scientist has, therefore, treated the emergence of peace movements and attempts at co-existence with, at best, polite contempt. Students of history have doubtless noted the covert ridicule with which the idea of the Concert of Europe mooted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the Czar Alexander was treated by those who imagined themselves to be serious historiographers.

Later the role of the League of Nations and in our own time the United Nations has been regarded as a largely make-believe refuge of the powerless. The logical result of this pseudo—scientific logic is fatalism and predictable disaster.

Obviously this is not the ethos in which Islam as the basis of statecraft

can be rightly presented. The language of modern political science is loaded with overtones and associations implying cynicism and hopelessness which are attitudes which Islam seeks to dispel, oppose and replace with faith and hope in human destiny. How pressing this need is in the modern times can be gauged from the circumstances that though the possibility of a nuclear clash is acknowledged with horror from which the imagination flinches, the compulsions of war-profiteering cause the minority which has seized control of the mind and money of the western world, to compel western governments to steer ever closer to the brink of total confrontation. The human race is indeed drifting on to the rocks of doom, and the quest for the Islamic State is the only credible objective left for those who reject the drift of despair.

Our primary task, therefore, is to clear away the cobwebs of prejudice and misrepresentation that cloud the universality of Islam in modern thought. We must reject the injustice of presenting Islam through such symbols as turbans, scimitars, domes, chopped hands and feet and harems filled with semi-naked women wearing yashmaks. For in Islam we are seeking a way of life for living beings entrusted with a special role in creation. The misrepresentation of Islam was needed by the upcoming European hegemonies in the 19th century when the Middle East was the nearest target of western political and military expansion. The period of Muslim world-dominance is still called the Dark Ages in European historical compilations which are the source material of educational texts produced in the mighty and multitudinous west. What aggravates the difficulty of the student of Islamic statecraft is that in his search for a definition of the Islamic State he constantly comes up against warped and partisan interpretations which vitiate modern source material. Recourse to original Arabic, Persian, Turkish and other texts is very necessary, for those who would do worth-while work in defining the Islamic State for contemporary readers. It is unfortunate that the powerful Western initiative

in International relations, the media, education and the realm of ideas generally has engulfed many Islamic countries and cut them off almost completely from the precious source materials of Islamic history and statecraft still available in Samarkand, Bokhara, Khokand and many other centres of old Islamic learning in the Southern reaches of the Soviet Union. It is to be hoped that these countries in the exercise of their sovereign independence and freedom will enable their scholars to have free access to

the diverse streams of thought that flow over the globe.

There is no doubt whatsoever that it was because of the rise of Islam that the centuries old stagnation of human societies of the old world was broken and mankind started on a course of progress of which the moral dimension appears to have been halted in our own days, The pre-Islamic societies became static since some sections of these societies adopted a posture of implacable oppression and exploitation against some others and neutralized the collective energies of the race. It was as though the human species had become incapable of higher evolution, and the limit had been reached beyond which large masses of humanity could not further join their capabilities to achieve the conquest of the palpable universe. In the orient one section of the society appeared to have the moral right to oppress another section of human beings, to treat them as untouchable, inflict on them holy torture ; bar them from drinking water and hold cattle as better, purr and more holy than they. In the occident the serfs were treated as chattels and if a lord was offended he could yoke a serf to his carriage and drive him till he dropped.

In this ethos Islam declared the immutable principle of the unity of the Creator of All and the unacceptable sin of SHIRK or holding that there could be a plurality of creators. "There is no god but God" the first part of KALIMA became the cornerstone of the way of life called Islam or the Path of Peace. Everything thereafter, individual or collective, social or political, of peace or of war, was to be moored to the sheet-anchor of the Unity of the Godhead. The sociological effects of the declaration of the principle of WAHDANIYAT' were truly far reaching, and changed the entire pattern of human gregariousness. The brute animality in humans was placed in a strait-jacket and a new era dawned for mankind. The rational law which flowed from the One and Indivisible Godhead was the same for all human creation, rich or poor, high or low, black or white. It became impossible for some to oppress and deprive some others beyond compatibility with the principle of equality in creation. Thus at last, a basis was established on which men could be sure of equitable treatment, and cooperate in ever growing numbers to move mountains and rivers and establish the dominance of Man, the vice-regent of the Creator, on the earth.

It is interesting to speculate if mankind would have progressed if Islam had not dawned on the earth Human aggregates had been stagnating for centuries because of internecine social struggle, and what man built he also

destroyed under the directionless compulsion of brute passions. In order to tame and harness the destructive animality of man, forces of the intellect and spirit reached out to him from the Infinitude of Being. In the shifting sands of time there rose a fixed tower of granite strength from which the understanding of man could take its cue of backward and forward, right and wrong, and what creates and what destroys. Instead of going in circles and clashing in the dark, the human caravan could now march onward and not stray in the blind void of moral chaos. With LA ILAHA ILLALLAH or the mandate that there was no god but GOD, Islam dawned on the earth. The rest of the religion was a paraphrase of this principle for the better understanding of men. The Prophet, the Messenger of God, announced to his people: I am a man like you, and the Quran, the Word of God, proclaimed that the Prophet had been sent to be a Blessing to the Worlds. The Prophet exemplified in his life the relations between men and their dealings among themselves. He conveyed to men the will of God which was that the children of Adam should be fair and just to each other ; should protect the weak and the helpless ; should be generous and forgiving ; should avoid mischief and trouble-making ; should arrange their affairs by consultation among themselves ; should pursue knowledge and in all matters exercise TA'AQQUL, TAFAKKUR and TADABBUR or reason, thought and understanding.

The Islamic State carries out these injunctions. Contrariwise, where these Islamic injunctions are implemented there we have the constituent factors of the Islamic State. Here we may repeat that Islam is for all humanity and the tendency to look upon Islam as the badge of a territorial, cultural or racial group is not rightly conceived. The Islamic State has obligations to its citizens and to all members of the family of Adam. The assumption tacitly fostered by several modern sociologists that Islam like some other systems of thought and conduct, is monopolistic and exclusive is again incorrect and has to be rejected. On the other hand Islam recognises the countinuity of human progress from the beginning of time and endorses all past prophets, teachers

and guides of mankind who exhorted their people to carry out the injunctions of approved conduct. Thus in history we have many instances of Muslims who were close to the time of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and were thus in better knowledge of the manner and spirit in which Islam was applied to statecraft.

Early Muslims interpreted and implemented Islam in the widest terms of sympathy, forbearance and human responsibility. A concrete instance in point is to be found in the early history of Pakistan. Muhammad bin Qasim set up the first Islamic State in the Sub-continent in the 8th century. Till then the people living in the delta of the Indus had been governed by caste, untouchability, cattle worship and other usages of animistic belief. They had seen nothing so egalitarian, so moral and so humanitarian as the philosophy of Islam by which the invaders lived in peace and war. As a result four thousand Jats joined the Muslims in giving battle to their ruler Dahir who was defeated and slain.

Clifford Edmund Bosworth, Professor of Arabic Studies at the University of Manchester, writes: "Within the occupied towns Muhammad bin Qasim established a social and religious framework of life which reflected the early Islamic policy of tolerance. The conqueror proclaimed the general principle of the freedom of religion, allowing Buddhists and Hindus be included among the 'People of the Book' or Protected Peoples as Jews and Christians had always been and as the Zoroastrians of Persia had become." That the Hindus and Buddhists should have been declared AHL-E•KITAB, or people who had received guidance, by the First Muslim Ruler of Pakistan and should have been integrated into the Islamic State and society on those terms, should serve as an indicator to the attitude of tolerance and co-existence prescribed by Islam.

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Because of the historical situation there exists a reticence in western knowledge regarding the Islamic sources of modern humanism. In the present day human predicament we cannot afford to suppress any evidence of sociological change in historical time. The West does not really need to further aggravate the political or economic exploitation of the Muslim lands of the Middle East. Indeed some noted Western scholars have begun to

acknowledge the fact that Islam brought modern civilization the enlightenment and egalitarianism on which the modern edifice of the human dominance of the earth rests. It cannot be repeated too often that the essential and basic factor in this great change in human history consists in the conquest of the faults of animality and the subjection of the biological being to the discipline of the intellect and the spirit. Because of this discipline the energies of the race are integrated and used for the control of the material environment. Today we are obliged to consider whether the discipline of the capacities and urges connoted by the vice-regency of God can be made to prevail so that the human race does not destroy itself with the material power which it has acquired.

Humanism seeks the well-being of mankind and is thus Islamic in its goals. However humanism is disorganized, weakly related to concrete action and not capable of offering firm resistance to those whose brute animality masters their being and operating as vanity paralyses their exercise of reason. It is here that Islam takes precedence over humanism for it makes the defence of universal values obligatory on the individual wherever the individual may be. Likewise it enjoins collective effort even to the limit of war against forces which seek to spread the use of force and fraud for the perpetration of oppression and injustice. Humanism despite its goal of human well-being similar to that of Islam, is not prevailing for it lacks the framework of SHARIA, prescribed exercises of IB and imperatives of the FARAIZ. In millions of well-intentioned individuals Humanism remains a pose and its beneficent results cannot materialize for it is rarely accompanied by the intensity of conviction or IQAN which drives men to resolute action in the defence of their beliefs. Nevertheless humanism remains the ally of Islam and the Islamic State in the maintenance of the sociological framework of Islam is likely to find invaluable support from humanism. In this regard the observations of the Soviet scholar Kerimov quoted in the Islamabad daily *The Muslim* of 1st December, 1983 are indicative of the attitude of the humanist who is not oppressed by imperialist assumptions. Mr. Kerimov said, "Pakistan was created on the basis of Islam and it should remain so. In Muslim countries there can be a social revolution under the banner of Islam. What is important is the revolution itself. The banner was of secondary



importance. It is a welcome change if the social problems are resolved through religion. When we are reviewing a social process we should not look at the surface alone, we should also see what was there in the depth "Islam is not only a religion, it's a way of life."

Perhaps no other canon of Islam has contributed to the recognition of the dignity of the individual as much as the concept that there is direct, immediate and ever-present contact of Man with his Maker; The divine Being is constantly and unremittingly in contact with the individual and aware of the individual's total activity. In the history of Islamic philosophy this has given rise to discussion that since God is Omnipresent, Omniscient and Omnipotent, therefore, in the ultimate analysis the individual human being's responsibility for the actions he or she commits, is qualified by the fact that human will and capability operates within the limits permitted by God.

The Omnipresence of God has operated against the tyranny of primitive faiths by which a selected class of persons made themselves out to be the earthly agents of the Almighty. They oppressed the common people by threatening them with the wrath of God, and became intermediaries of Divine Power for punishment and reward.

Islam came as a liberating force and emphasized the direct access of all creation to the Creator because of the Omnipresence, Omniscience and Omnipotence of God. In Islam the services of professorial priests are not necessary at births, deaths, marriages or divorces. The psychology of solemnization of social contracts make it easy and convincing for the common people to go to the person who specializes in assisting at religious duties, but in view of the philosophy of the Quran, it is not possible for the man of religion to become a tyrant as was the case in India and Europe in the pre-Islamic Era.

However, in societies marked by the decline of Islam, tendencies began to be apparent by which the religious leaders and teachers began to coerce the populace by threatening them with divine displeasure which they tacitly made a function of their own interpretations. Yet the constant presence of the immutable and changeless scripture made the worst excesses of an entrenched priesthood impossible.

There is a close relationship of the rise of a priesthood and discouragement of the Quranic injunction to all men to exercise their reason, judgement and understanding of the Will of God, The Quran which is the Word of God began to be recited not for comprehension and aid to understanding of the laws of God but as a holy exercise sufficient unto itself. There is a dangerous parallel between this and un-Islamic incantations and mantras. These pre-Islamic tendencies were more aggravated in Islamic countries during the days when Imperialism held sway and the alien state power tried to use the ministers of religion for exploiting the masses in the interest of foreign rulers.

The effects of these essentially un-Islamic tendencies still persist may be noted in such curious developments as calling on state power to make people conform to certain behaviour patterns in daily living through the machinery, of law enforcement comprising police, courts and jails. The thought and action of these groups operating in the half shadows of religion and politics is in marked contrast to the early evangelists of Islam who came into strange and populous lands, in the grips of idol worship and castes and won the hearts of millions including princes and slaves by proclaiming the word of a Just and Merciful Creator of All. It can be said that groups who seek to build an Islamic State through state coercion and penal action against those who do not conform to their version of the Islamic way of life, need to understand Islam in its basics and essentials, and the spirit in which the last of the Prophets (peace be upon him) who was sent as a blessing to the worlds, spread the faith which saved mankind.

In the contemporary context, when fourteen centuries have passed since the revelation of the Quran, nothing could be clearer than the injunction that there is no coercion in religion. Reason and logic dictate that this should indeed be so, for God in His fathomless Wisdom and mercy is a Knower of the mysteries of the human heart ; and a society dominated by fear, hypocrisy and the nameless cruelties of secret vice is the reverse of an Islamic society

wherein the sense of individual dignity is the first attribute of the high office of the Vice-regency of an Omniscient Creator.

This leads us to the most important feature of Islamic polity viz: the ceaseless quest for knowledge of the true relation-ship of things. As has been stated already, the advent of Islam in early 8th century of the Christian calendar and its subsequent expansion carried the message of human dignity, equality, reason and justice to the static and stagnant civilizations of Europe and India and started them on the course of evolution and change. The fact that though the teeming millions of these ancient societies did not adopt Islam in the ritualistic sense, and though only a section of the people became declared and formally initiated Muslims, yet the largest mass of these populations tacitly accepted the main directions of the new faith which was so much closer to the needs and urges of human nature. Above all Islam barred oppression of the weak by the strong, and laid down norms of mutual dealings on a sub-stratum of essential equality. In pre-Islamic societies knowledge was regarded as a privilege of the few and its pursuit an activity related to witchcraft and magic which decent persons avoided. In fact men who inquired into the mysteries of nature were often regarded as being in league with the devil. In India knowledge was deemed the right of only the highest caste and if by chance the untouchable Sudra should hear the words of knowledge, horrifying punishment was to be inflicted on him. The Islamic injunction to all men to pursue knowledge was in complete contrast to the pre-Islamic beliefs. Today when the status of a student confers on the individual the right to the social approval and regard, it is forgotten that Islam signalized the change in human evolution by which knowledge was made a universal right and duty for all members of the human family. This view of knowledge provided the foundation for the European renaissance and the Protestant Reformation. It is an unfortunate feature of Western historiography that the urge to knowledge was linked to Grecian sources only and the Islamic period was named the Dark Ages irregardless of the fact that most Grecian texts were lost and were preserved only in Arabic translations and corn mentaries.

Thus the pursuit of knowledge and making knowledge prevail in the governance of society, is a cardinal feature of the Islamic State. To the extent that this principle was falsified or perverted in subsequent times, the Islamic peoples suffered a decline and became subject to the domination of nations

who owned and fostered discovery and dissemination of knowledge. In our own day i.e. after the end of the 2nd World War, the stagnation of the economics of newly-liberated Western Colonies and their political instability is mainly due to the fact that they neglected knowledge in the administration of the state. In fact in some unfortunate countries the pernicious doctrine of keeping people with the attitude of educational research and inquiry out of state business, has become the source of much suffering and deprivation for the masses and ever-deepening exploitation by foreigners. This state of affairs is the reverse of what Islam calls for. When such states profess adherence to Islam and claim to be working for the revival of its past glories, their efforts amount to no more than slogan-mongering and idolatory of symbols including heroes and philosophers. The logical, persuasive and reasonable approach of the educator which really wins supporters and convinces workers is absent for the simple reason that the profound scholar is absent from the business of government which is conducted behind a system of graft, fear, penalties and unreasoning hustle thinly veiled by politeness. Seeing that Islam forbids coercion in the matter of religion and belief, the other logical course for making Islam prevail is a vast process of education, explanation, analysis and making the logic of cause and effect obvious and understood. For this purpose nation-building departments of the Islamic State have to become vast exercises in the spreading of enlightenment manned by those who can describe and name the processes, engage in research and inquiry and above all have the courage to admit the errors of the past and accept correction.

One of the modes of deviating from the stern egalitarian path of Islam in the ordering of matters of the State, is protecting the vested minority privileges and setting up a professional priestly class which should become an agency for coercion and oppression of the common people. This can be the result of the un-Islamic division of knowledge into religious and secular spheres. According to Islam the worlds of matter and spirit are not separate and mutually exclusive. On the other hand matter and spirit are facets of the same integral reality of human existence. The entrenched pre-Islamic concept of the duality of matter and spirit crops up again and again in societies of which the organization is basically contrary to the canons of Islamic sociology. When we apply this acid test to these societies some of which are constantly claiming allegiance to Islam, we find that their basic thinking is warped by a marked duality because of which they tend to divide life into

religious and secular spheres.

# IDEALS AND REALITIES OF ISLAM\*

Seyyed Hossein Nasr

Ten years ago as I was returning from a professional conference in the Midwest bad weather closed the local airport and threw me together with a colleague in world religions for a long train ride home. The redoubling was bothersome, but it turned out not to be a total loss for in the course of it my companion said something memorable. Long hours together and our shared inconvenience lowered inhibitions to the point where, around midnight, they triggered a confession. 'I've been teaching world religions for fifteen years', my friend confided, 'and I still don't know what the Upanishads are talking about, 'As their meaning had come pouring through to me on first reading I could scarcely believe my ears, but my friend was only half through and the balance of his statement left me as dumbfounded as its beginning, 'but when I get to Islam'—wreaths of smiles and relief—'I'm home!' The reason this astonished me was that my difficulties with Islam over the years had rivaled his with Hinduism. Carlyle's admission concerning the Quran had become an annual litany: 'As toilsome reading as I ever under-took. A wearisome, confused jumble, crude, incondite. Nothing but a sense of duty could carry any European through [it]'. I wince to think how far I could have extended his admission to my reading of Islam generally.

With a single sentence my friend brought home to me more compellingly than anyone before or since the extent to which temperamental (karmic?) differences affect our responses to the great traditions. It is not for that reason that I mention it, however, but because it sets the stage for the most succinct way I can identify my debt to the author of the book in hand. Thanks to him, and to the companions in Islam to whom he has introduced

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\* Both sets of images come from Frithjof Schuon whose *Understanding Islam* (George Allen & Unwin, 1963) Dr Nasr acclaims on page 40 of the present book the best work in English on the meaning of Islam and why Muslims believe in it'. The book has a valuable sequel, *Dimeasloits of Islam*, 197e, by the same author and publisher.

me, my train friend's *simpatico* with that tradition no longer surprises. No other faith now interests me more, and in none are explorations more rewarding. Over the Arab world too the heavens have opened.

The name of Seyyed Hossein Nasr first came to my attention through an invitation to a supper party in his honor at Harvard's Center for the Study of World Religions. An out-of-town conflict forced me to decline, but my wife accepted and I returned to raves of an evening with one of the most impressive men--and beautiful women, his wife—my wife could recall. On the strength of her hyperbole I took pains the next time he visited Cambridge to invite him to my class. His lecture was a landmark. I shall pass over his presence as a person and refer only to what he said. Beginning with the paradox that what is deepest in tradition is also most accessible to outsider—"The Gita belongs to the world, but try to read The Laws of Manu and you go mad"—he proceeded to unfold Islam from its mystical [Sufi] center. For the first time I saw unmistakably that Islam contained treasures I had not suspected, treasures that could be discerned not only by Muslims but by me.

## II

Each of the great religious traditions contains at some level the fullness of truth: truth sufficient unto salvation. This substantial truth 'outs' in these traditions, however, in guises that are conspicuously different. To see how revelation surfaces differently in different traditions is rewarding, but readers of this book, products in the main of a civilization shaped by Judaism and Christianity, face special difficulties in seeing truth in Islam. Conceptually as well as geographically Islam is the West's closest neighbor; we share not only common borders but a common theological vocabulary, though we use it at times to say different things. These commonalities would bode well for understanding were it not for an awkward fact toward the meeting of minds

proximity guarantees nothing. Family disputes are the most virulent kind, and bad blood is nowhere more evident than along borders.

Barriers to Euro-Arabian understanding that have arisen from political conflict I leave to historians, remarking only that recognition is growing of the extent to which Western accounts have been biased in the West's favor ; Norman Daniel's *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* outlines the history of the distortion in the greatest detail to date. To say that there are no objective grounds for charging that the Muslim world has been more violent than the Christian is, we now see, if any-thing an understatement. The stereotype of Islam as a 'religion of the sword' was forged in animus as much as in ignorance.

Unlike the animosities that were born of politics, theological differences bear directly on this book, so I shall mention several. Islam denies the divinity of Christ it takes explicit stands regarding social structures, and it claims to be the final revelation, superseding Christianity in ways comparable to those in which Christianity claims to 'fulfill' Judaism. Nothing any-one says will totally relieve the tensions these claims provoke, but this book does, I think, help to turn them into creative tensions, tensions that tone up the Christian positions them-selves by bracing them against alternatives in which even outsiders can detect a certain logic.

a. *Islam and Society*. H. Richard Niebuhr's minor classic, *Christ and Culture*, delineates five stances Christianity has assumed toward its social milieu. Defining culture as 'the artificial secondary environment [including social organization, customs and values] which man superimposes on the natural', he points out that Christianity has positioned itself against culture, with culture, above culture, paradoxically toward culture, and with intent to transform culture. Islam harbors no such range of options. The Christ left the social and religious spheres disjoined—'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's'—is not surprising; given the historical circumstances he had no alter-native, for his people, being



subjugated, had no political options. When his religion triumphed under Constantine it had to take on, so to speak, the social order beginning with the Council of Arles, 314 A.D., but by then its foundations had set; social guidelines could be added but not incorporated. Muhammad's circumstances were different so it is not surprising that revelation surfaced differently through them. During its first decade; his mission was persecuted, but no ethnic difference divided him from those in power, and the power-odds he faced, though formidable, were not insuperable. The stance toward social issues these circumstances permitted is instructive. The Prophet never disdained society and politics nor relegated them to secondary importance as if his mission were essentially to men's souls standing solitary before their Maker. Society was his medium as much as was spirit ; indeed, society was an aspect of spirit, for if man is unity, replicating in microcosm the unity of God himself, how can his social dimension be divorced from salvation? As the Prophet rose in the end to power, he provides history's clearest glimpse of the way an instrument of revelation, a 'Messenger of God', deals with affairs of state when confronted by them. Moses is his closest approximation in this respect, but he remains approximation only inasmuch as the society with which he dealt was exclusively tribal whereas Mecca and Medina were full-fledged cities. In assuming axiomatically that issues of power with all their ambiguities and complexities fall too under God's aegis, Muhammad made it impossible from the start for Muslims to dismiss the earthly as the worldly, the social as the profane.

It was part of his mission to reduce 'worldly' and 'profane' to null classes.

b. Christ's Divinity. Islam denies it; nothing this book says is going to change that. But note: (1) Regard for Christ is not precluded; the Quran hails him not only as prophet—authentic channel of God's revelation-- but as unique among these in having been born of a virgin. (2) Muslims can understand what it means to love Christ and try to emulate him, for their affection for their own Prophet and efforts to follow in his steps are no less

fervent. (3) Insofar as it is a question of faith's having a center, here too Islam has its counterpart, the Quran occupying in Islam a position roughly equivalent to Christ's in Christianity.

It remains true, however, that Islam is not a 'centered' religion to the degree that Christianity is. Where the latter rides imagery of center, pivot, and focus, these fitting Christ perfectly, Islam is like a block. Or to change the metaphors, if Christianity is like a centering fire, Islam is like a sheet of snow.' Importance adheres to its totality, through which it spreads more or less evenly, unifying and leveling concomitantly. The totality is, of course, God and his will-filled Being in the world. The Quran is the window to this totality, and this as we have noted, gives Islam a kind of center, but one sufficiently different to be termed inverse. It is, as it were, a diffused center—only paradoxical formulation will do—in that it be-comes adequate, i.e. central, only insofar as it gathers man's total will and deploys it onto the total world, every aspect, every corner, in the ways the 'uncreated Book' enjoins.

c. The Final Revelation. Each of the great historical revelations is, as we have said, in its own way complete. From a planetary perspective, however, there is in Islam's claim to be the final revelation and Muhammad the 'Seal of the Prophets' a plausibility which to other faiths is thought-provoking if not disturbing. (I) We have seen that the Quran incorporates the social order into the religious. This is, on the one hand, a recovery, it having been so included in all early—'whole'; tribal and ethnic—cultures. The inclusion is likewise logically indicated; the sacred/profane dichotomy may be required as an expedient in times and places, but it can never from the religious point of view be considered normative. Buddhism and Christianity, the other universal and missionary religions, do not embrace society. The ethnic religions—Hinduism, Judaism, and, in a different way, Confucianism and Shinto—do, but with a specificity which makes them unexportable. Islam (a) addresses society (b) in terms that are simple and supple enough to apply to a variety of cultures—to date from Morocco to Jakarta—yet not vacuous ; it is this double fact that makes it look as if it has the religious/social complex

distinctively in hand. (2) By not deifying Muhammad, which deification would require that he be the devotional focus of everyone, and by explicitly recognizing other 'People of the Book' too as: recipients of revelation, Islam eases the tension between - historical faiths. That Hindus, Buddhists, and Chinese are not listed among such people is no obstacle. As they lay outside the Prophet's world, they are no more excluded by his silence than revelations on distant planets would be excluded by the Quran's neglect of them.

The differences cited thus far are sharp and specific and therefore, like rough edges, the ones most likely to bruise and discomfit. Traditions can also be compared at a more abstract level, however, in which case they don't conflict, they are simply different, like different worlds: animal and mineral, or Jupiter and Mars. Granted that the difference is one of emphasis only, Christianity appears as a religion of the will, Islam as a religion of the intellect.

Christ enjoined his disciples to be perfect; the Quran doesn't.

I have heard Muslims say that if God had wanted another sinless species he would have created man as angel; as it was, He created him between angel and demon to complete the ladder of possibilities. When I first heard this view it sounded like a counsel of complacency, like rationalization for human weaknesses. Today it looks otherwise. Christ's injunction makes not only an extravagant demand: it is a demand that focuses on man's will. The Christian's will is constantly being put to the test; heroism permanently beckons. By comparison Muslim injunctions are indeed pedestrian, but for a reason—this is the insight that has recently come to me, again through Mr. Schuon. Islam's Shari'ah (Law, Chapter IV) is a far-reaching codex, not to perfect the will—that aim would accord to will a centrality that would divert from other concerns—but rather to calm it ; place it in equilibrium so that life can get on to other things, specifically to contemplation: perception of the divine immutability and perfection. Correlatively, whereas the pitfall for

the Christian is sin, for the Muslim it is forget fullness. In the end the goals converge; the merciful see God and those who see God become merciful. But along the way the routes diverge.

### III

Every depiction of a faith proceeds from a perspective, and I find myself wanting to set forth systematically, if only in capsule, the perspective from which I see Professor Nasr's depiction proceeding. The wish arises in part from the thought that it may help the import of certain passages in the book to body forth more amply, but also because it is a perspective which I believe deserves attention in its own right, being in my judgment the one which at this juncture in human understanding best equips us to see the truth in each of the historical traditions without prejudicing the truth in others.

Ultimate reality, name it the Absolute if you will, is beyond the reach of mind and language. It is 'the Tao that cannot be told', the Brahman that is Nirguna (without qualities), Israel's I AM, the Godhead of Christian apophatic theology, and Islam's Allah as the Supreme Name Itself. From this indescribable Absolute, Pure Being derives; as it is immaterial it doesn't register on man's senses or laboratory instruments, but unlike the Absolute it can be conceived. On this level stand 'the Tao that can be told of, Saguna (qualified) Brahman, Yahweh, the Logos, and Allah. After this come the archetypes or noumenal being, and then the phenomenal world in which we discernibly live: the spatio-temporal-material world of multiplicity, change, and individuation.

These are the four principal levels of existence. Religions are concerned with the relation of man's phenomenal life to the upper spheres. There are two lines of connection. First, as the Absolute would not be such were it anywhere absent, it must be in man. It is, in the form of Intellect, capitalized to indicate that the word is used in this book in a technical sense I shall

presently indicate. Intellect is present in us all, but it is too deep lying for most persons to detect, so a second link to the Absolute is needed. This is Revelation, the way the Ultimate erupts overtly, for human collectivities on the phenomenal plane.

First, intellect Professor Nasr writes: 'The intellect is not reason which is, at best, its mental image. Intellect is not ratio'. Ratio we know; it is reason as generally understood in the modern West. What is intellect us?

In India it is known as buddhi the faculty that understands directly, not indirectly by reflection through the lower mental faculties (manas, mind) among which reason rightfully dominates. Meister Eckhardt speaks of it when he writes: 'There is something in the soul which is unmated and uncreatable this is the intellect'. St. Thomas is on its track when he characterizes intellections as intuitive knowing in contrast to ratio which thinks discursively. Plotinus, Proclus, Dionysius, St. Bonaventure, and Nicolas of Cusa all in one way or another make intellection central to their epistemologies ; there is no point in adding other names. Intellectual knowledge is direct knowledge in that it operates without intervening concepts. It is adequational in that it adequates the knower to its object; it knows by becoming what it knows and thereby transcends the subject-object dichotomy. In so doing it offers itself as the only complete knowledge, for distinction implies distance and in cognition distance spells ignorance. As the object of the intellect is timeless and one and the intellect can be adequated to this object, indeed at some level is this object, it follows that the intellect too is trans-personal and eternal in some respect. Which is why Greek gnosis says, 'Know thyself', Christ said, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is within you', and it is written in the Hadith, 'Who knows himself knows his Lord'.

If the foregoing seems obscure to the point of unintelligibility, that is precisely why it must be supplemented by another map showing where man is and pointing the way to his destiny. This complementing map—there is one to fit the terrain of each of the great historical traditions, but they all

belong to the same genre—is provided by revelation. People differ in psycho-spiritual makeup as much as if not more than in body build. In relatively few is intellect in the technical sense here used prominent enough to render the preceding page intelligible, to fewer still will it seem plausible, and for almost none will it be self-evident. In Islam, these few are Sufis. Because their number is small, and equally because they too had to get where they are and be stabilized there, the Absolute must connect with man in other, more exoteric ways, exoteric here denoting ways that connect with more obvious human faculties: man's capacity to understand language and be moved by convincing example. Revelation in its verbal and personified modes.

God surfaces verbally in the Islamic tradition in the Quran. For most Muslims divinity discloses itself more there than through the intellect, but even for them the book is far from transparent. All sacred texts present difficulties ; in the final analysis these spring from the incommensurable disproportion between Spirit with its infinity and the limited resources of human language. 'It is as though the poverty-stricken coagulation which is the language of mortal man were under the formidable pressure of the Heavenly Word broken into fragments, or as if God, in order to express a thousand truths, had but a dozen words at his command and so was compelled to make use of allusions heavy with meaning, of ellipses, abridgments, and symbolic syntheses.'<sup>\*</sup> This holds for all sacred texts, but the Quran presents Westerners with special difficulties springing from the Arab's taste for verbal symbolism and 'depth' reading. The Arab extracts much from a few words. When, for example, the Quran notes that 'the world beyond is better for you than this lower world', or announces, 'Say Allah! then leave them to their empty play', it can evoke for the Muslim a mystical doctrine as profound and complete as any more explicitly catalogued. Moreover, many phrases and verses in the Quran function as mantras; commencing as sentences that convey thoughts, they become transformed, through use, into

beings, powers, or talismans. The soul of the pious Muslim comes to be woven of these sacred formulas. In them he works, rests, lives, and dies.

As for the Prophet—the way Being erupted in the Arab world in a human life—he serves as a kind of heavenly mold, ready to receive the inflow of Muslims' intelligence and will. With their wills, Muslims love him and seek to imitate him to the smallest details of everyday life. With respect to intelligence the Prophet represents unfathomable Logos. When Christ said, 'No man cometh unto the Father but by me', it is the Logos who spoke. For the Christian this universal Word is appropriately identified with Jesus of Nazareth. For the Muslim it is the Quran as conveyed through Muhammad. Paralleling Christ's human and divine natures, Muhammad is not the Absolute, yet the Absolute truly and distinctively announces itself through him. F. Schuon, *Understanding Islam*, pp. 44-45.

#### IV

But I am beginning to trespass on the book. Let me close by returning for a moment to its author.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr is a contemporary man or no such man exists. To begin with, he knows science. I merely teach at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; he holds an, M.I.T. degree, atop which stands one from Harvard University in the history of science. At the same time he remains integrally rooted in tradition, in his case the tradition of Islam. It remains for him normative; science he knows, but it is revelation that he reveres. I chanced to be passing through Tehran in 1970 while newspapers were carrying front page announcements that he had been appointed to head that year's official hajj from Iran, the pilgrimage to Mecca which annually draws from that land some 20,000 participants.

His range can be described another way. He is a ranking scholar; his publications are innumerable and he rides the international conference/lecture circuit with the intellectual elite of our time. Concomitantly he is a man of piety. I have been in gatherings with him only to have him slip away because one of the stipulated hours for prayer had arrived.

To claim that anyone speaks for Islam as a whole would be presumptuous, but Professor Nasr may come as close to dung so as anyone today. When the Aga Khan Chair of Islamic Studies was established at the American University of Beirut he was appointed its first occupant. I hear that the lectures there delivered, subsequently expanded into this book, have been well received not only in his own Shiite land, but by the Sunni 'ulama' in India, Pakistan, and the Arab World. Perhaps it is enough to cause the reader to turn the page expectantly.



# IQBAL—EPOCH-MAKING POET- PHILOSOPHER

Muhammad Munawwar

There are human beings who are born so that they may die just that. They do not live. They only exist. And then are simply extinct. Their birth is of no sequence. Their death also is without consequence. They, during their existence make no mark. They are not felt. And when they depart they do not leave behind "foot-prints on the sands of Time." They are persons only, having no personality. Their being is similar to what Abu Said Abul Khair conveys in the following verse:

"A bird sat on the top of a mountain and then flew away. Look as to what the bird added to the mountain and what it curtailed".

But there are others who mean and matter. They perform something, positive be it or negative. Their lives create a commotion in their circle or society. That commotion expands commensurate with the life-force of such meaningful individuals. And when they die they leave the world richer or poorer than that they had found.

Yes, there are men and men. They live differently. They die differently. There are who remain folded. There are who unfold themselves and thus expand their being i.e. they begin to live in others. Hence, we see a certain person whose death is just one death. And we see another person whose death is the death of many, according to and proportionate with the expansion of personality the affected circle of the departing is to be small or large. Sometimes, one death means the death of a family, sometimes, it is the death of a clan and sometimes it is the death of a whole society. Such a death

causes a sort of crisis in a society. There still is a kind of death that may shake the whole world of man.

Looking at these different phenomena we find that human societies are obliged to progress on account of individuals who possess individuality. Similarly it were individuals who retarded the onward march of a society on account of their overbearing negative influence. In short what essentially matters is the person blessed with a personality. William James in his article "Great Men And Their Environment" has dealt with this subject elaborately. It is a tight article, every sentence tied to the other, making it difficult to extract a portion to quote. Yet a few lines are penned down here. And thus says William James:

"There can be no doubt that the reform movement would make more progress in one year with an adequate personal leader than as now in ten without one. Were there a great citizen, splendid with every civic gift to be its candidate, who can doubt that he would lead us to victory? But at present, we, his environment, who sigh for him and would so gladly preserve and adopt him, if he came, can neither move without him, nor yet do anything to bring him forth. The lesson of the analyst that we have made (even on the completely deterministic hypothesis with which we started) forms an appeal of the most stimulating worth to the energy of the individual. Even the dogged resistance of the reactionary conservative to changes which he cannot hope entirely to defeat is justified and shown to be effective. He retards the movement, deflects it a little by the concessions he extracts; gives it a result and momentum, compounded of his inertia and his adversaries' speed and keeps up, in short a lateral pressure, which, to be sure, never heads it round about, but brings it up at last at a goal far to the right or left of that to which it would have drifted had he allowed to drift alone".<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Selected Papers on Philosophy, J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd. New York, p. 189.

Thus in William James' opinion it is energetic individuals who push a society on to the path of progress. Society, no doubt, strengthens them by supporting and following them.

Similarly it is the powerful individuals who mislead a society or retard the pace of its progress. But William James' view is deterministic, for he believes that such promoters or demotors of societal cause are persons made like that. They, according to him, just serve a purpose assigned to them from above.

Hegel too is almost of the same opinion in respect of persons who bring about a revolution or transformation in human societies. Hegel gives away that such extra-ordinary persons serve the World-Spirit like ready tools. According to Hegel these persons usually meet a - pathetic end. This is how he lays down:

"If we go on to cast a look at the fate of these World-Historical persons whose vocation it was to be agents of the World-Spirit—we shall find it has been no happy one. They attained no calm enjoyment; their whole life was labour and trouble; their whole nature was naught else but master passion. When their object is attained they fall off like empty hulls from the kernel. They die early like Alexander; they are murdered, like Caesar; transported to St. Helena like Napoleon".<sup>109</sup>

For Hegel, as we have seen, the World-Historical persons are fighters or rulers whereas William James' view is much vaster and "accommodating". According to him a tumultuous Hero could emerge from any department and stratum of a society. He can be a political leader, a social reformer, a religious preacher, a poet etc. It is obvious that a Hero's stature as an epoch-making individual can always be commensurate with the scope of change brought about by him. Anyway one thing is clear that it is not societies or communities which are historically consequential, it is rather the individuals

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<sup>109</sup> Philosophy of History, Dover Publications Inc. New York, (1956) p.31.

who by transforming communities become mile-stones on the highways of human expedition.

But here we are addressed by an intriguing question. Were persons so momentous in the annals of history who reform, transform and revolutionize communities designed and moulded according to what they were to perform or were they willful persons, self-conscious, determined aspirants and hopeful of achieving something great? Similarly, were the individuals who hindered the onward march of these people or led them astray, just agents to their fate or World-Spirit (as Hegel believed)? Did they serve the Divine purpose only in a state of will-less rather unconscious docility?

The study of the Quran shows that human beings were born with unlimited potentialities which needed guidance from Allah, Almighty, the Creator of man. It is Allah who knows what the nature of man is in need of. Man's nature is energy compressed. If properly guided it can do a lot of good and if misguided it is capable of bringing about a lot of havoc upon himself as well as upon his fellow human beings. Therefore, Allah sent down Messengers for the guidance of human beings who preached to them revealed lessons. This shows that Man was not cast in a hard and frigid mould. He could form, reform and build himself into a good individual if he so desired. Allah's guidance was not clamped upon humanity. They were not compelled to follow the personal examples of Allah's Prophets whose personality set before them the model of a fully realised human self. Human beings were free to accept the Message or to reject it. They were free even to kill Allah's Messengers. And they did kill several from amongst them, as is stated by the Quran. This shows that human beings were cast neither as believers nor as unbelievers. They were not machine-made. Theirs was not a mass-production. Every individual was born as an individual. Hence, he or she had individual personality as their potential—which it was he or she who had to unfold through conscious efforts.

This makes manifest the fact that persons who became historically momentous had become so on account of their self-conscious and willful momentum. By dint of hard but positive labour, human beings could rise to solar heights and because of their negative efforts could stoop to the abyss of darkness. They look extraordinary because they trampled on "ordinary".--The extraordinary are individuals who really matter. Poor "mediocrities" matter not. Mediocrity is of no consequence. It makes no difference whether a mediocrity is positive or negative. But the deplorable fact is that human societies are replete with, or rather composed of altogether mediocrities. They float helplessly along with the ordinary flow of life around like straws because they do not exert their will-power and do not assert themselves. Such societies as do not produce extra-ordinary entities, in a way, maintain status quo and live in "peace". Mirza Ghalib expresses this idea in his peculiar ironical manner and subtle style!

"مرغے سر کو ہے  
یہ نشست و  
برخاست  
بنگر کہ دران کوہ  
چہ افزود و چہ  
کاست"

"The world of man remains populous due to the absence of determined aspirants. A tavern becomes empty in proportion to the number of cups and jars filled with wine" (If there are no wine-biblers the flagons remain full).

Prolonged status quo leads to stagnation and deterioration. Determined aspirants who uphold positive values are thus imperative need of every society. Such persons are real figures. Others are zeros. It is obvious that

zeros become valuable on account of figures otherwise they are nothing even if they be one hundred million.

No doubt, it were figures like Sir Sayyed, Hali, Akbar, Zafar Ali Khan, Ali Brothers, Allama Iqbal, Quaid-e-Azam M. A. Jinnah and several other stalwarts who folded the Muslims of the Sub-continent into awareness and then gradually to self-awareness. Thus they transformed one hundred million zeros into a nation of as many individuals possessing will and might, alive, up-and-doing, ready to fight for the defence of their rights.

Allama Iqbal was a late-developer. He developed into a poet and a thinker of great consequence by dint of hard labour. He did not mind calling himself a thinker or even a seer. But he avoided calling himself a poet although the poet in him had got the better of that of the philosopher. No doubt, Allama Iqbal was a poet first and a philosopher afterwards. He entered the inner chambers of the souls of his devotees through poetry and not philosophy. It was his poetry that inflamed the spirit of the Muslim nation in South Asia. It was not the Six Lectures that brought about a change in the psyche of his enslaved people. "The Reconstruction" was essentially meant for the elite of learning. It addressed only a small circle of scholars and intellectuals. But his poetry impressed the elite as well as the ordinary students in the sphere of learning.

Anyway, Allama Iqbal was a rare example of a great poet avoiding to be known as a poet. The cause of his avoidance was the fact that his contemporary poets, barring exceptions, were just professionals. They were not serious about anything. Their poetry was a medium for the manifestation of an assumed and so-called artistic skill. And their art was only for the sake of art. They had no ideology to preach, no message to disseminate, no moral to communicate and no cause to support. They just versified the modes of their flitting moods or simply recorded their fleeting reflection in flimsy phrases. Allama Iqbal stood apart. He had to teach and guide the Muslims of the Sub-continent and through them had to transmit his hortatory tidings to

the Muslim Ummah, which for him, was neither a racial nor a territorial and linguistic entity. Muslim Ummah stood for spiritual brotherhood of mankind. Thus Allama Iqbal's message was, like Islam, extra-territorial and non-racial. Only a genius, well-versed in poetic art, could make theological, philosophic, social, economic, political, ethical and instructional contents sing like love-lyrics. His lyrics worked as swords. His verses were a clarion call against slavery, blind following, languor, aimlessness both in thought as well as in action. He waged war on despondency, defeatism and faithlessness. He was a voice of Hope. He conquered and is still conquering. He was a hero among poets.

Still it cannot be maintained that poetry was the sole or main occupation of his life. He was a very busy man. He was a practicing lawyer, hence had to devote lot of time to the preparation of cases. He was deeply involved in various matters concerning Muslims of the Sub-continent as well as the Muslim Ummah. He worked as examiner and paper-setter in different subjects and for different universities. He took practical part in his country's politics. He delivered dozens of lectures, presided over several functions, issued hundreds of statements of political, historical, educational and religious nature. He wrote thousands of letters, the great majority of which dealt with serious topics. He contributed many articles to so many papers. He met people freely from morn till late in the night. Every-body, from an ordinary college student to a scholar of high calibre and a politician of high standing, could come to meet and talk with him at leisure. He did not keep aloof from the hub of life. He was not a hermit-thinker. He remained in the battle-field of life. He led the leaders of Muslim India towards the pathway to Pakistan. Studied thus, he emerges as a great hero. There is hardly any other poet-philosopher in the world who developed his thought and art so steadily and tangibly and who left such a deep and transforming impact on the minds of his people. Allama Iqbal's circle of popularity is widening day by day, especially among the people who have to fight against slavery, despotism, despondency, demagoguery, injustice, high-handedness and lethargy. His is a

stirring message. Sincere recipient of that message cannot but be the master of his fate and the captain of his soul.

But Allama Iqbal's progress was not sudden. It was slow, and gradual but continuous and sustained. The conflict between the surroundings and the revolutionizing stalwart is always stern and unrelenting. For a determined person, a sustained state of tension is a source of unmitigating stimulant. To fight to conquer is an invigorating and rejuvenating enterprise. A thinker and a poet with no firm belief in some high ideology is always at much ease than the one who finds the surroundings absolutely different from what he liked or wanted them to be. An ordinary poet is seldom involved in some harsh conflict based on principles. An ordinary poet does feel the itch of conflicting circumstances but he does not go beyond expressing what he felt at a certain moment. Such expressions may be very impressive even without the fibre of a doctrine or belief or aim. But all these expressions remain scattered elements of emotions. They cannot make an integrated whole hence cannot create compact impression. Poets without a philosophy may also gain popularity. There have been innumerable poets who possessed artistic skill and enticing style. Yet it goes without saying that the great majority of poets left the works which can be characterized as accumulation of stray thoughts, scattered and contradicting sentiments. It is not something concentric. Hence, there is no unity of effect. Here is a quotation from an essay by David Daiches:

"Out of our quarrel with others we make rhetoric. Yeates once remarked: "Out of our quarrel with ourselves, poetry". Instead of the two poles being personality and tradition, they become opposing aspects of personality. A self-made tradition can only be of value to the literary artist when it contains self-contradiction. My thesis has been, as will, I hope, be clear by now that a religious tradition is of value to the literary artist as providing a challenge to individual experience out of which art may result. When that tradition disintegrates, the poet can take refuge in elegiac introspection or he can create or discover a tradition of his own. The former



practice may produce much that is valuable, but in the nature of things it cannot be maintained for long, its potentialities being limited and its possibilities soon exhausted. The latter can only work when the created or discovered tradition is complex enough to contain within itself the tensions which the great artist needs ; if it does not contain those tensions, then the artist is merely shadow boxing, being the product of his own imagination, it cannot at the same time be a challenge to his imagination"<sup>110</sup>.

When a person yields to obstacles and reconciles not to subjugate the opposition, his state of tension comes to an end. He begins to relax. Compromise means dying down of the spirit of confrontation. It is sustained state of tension which makes Heroes of uncompromising individuals. It is a sustained state of tension that sublimates resolute seekers into artists--poets included. The stronger the conflict, the higher the art. Allama Iqbal's personality had nourished upon a concrete and well-integrated religious, historic and cultural tradition. For him Islam, Islamic history and culture was never some ordinary object of learning. For him it was his life-blood. He lived it.

He lived on it. But surroundings were completely antagonistic to whatever Islam stood for. Islam stood for freedom whereas Allama Iqbal found the Muslim Ummah in a state of abject servitude all the world over, his own home-land included.

There was thus a harsh conflict between what he believed and what prevailed around. Allama Iqbal held Islamic moral values very dear whereas Western lax modes of culture had taken them by storm. Contribution of Muslim communities to the evolution of scientific research and enquiry had been laudable over the centuries whereas Allama Iqbal saw his contemporary Muslim societies given to all sorts of languor. They had become oblivious of the fact that theirs was a glorious past and what their forebears

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<sup>110</sup> Perspectives in Contemporary Criticism, Harper and Row Publishers, New York. Evanston and London (1968) p. 58.

did, could be done by themselves as well—and certainly more than that. But the Muslims, as it looked, had struck a compromise with their existing ignoble circumstances. As such future could offer no hope to them. ' Hope had not to come from outside, it had to surge out from within. That prevailing state of insensate noin-chalance could be called a state of death in life. In other words the Muslim societies were composed of individuals who were, in fact, breathing dead bodies. Muslims who were ordained by Allah to learn, study, search, research and ponder over the principles of nature at work and the natural phenomena all around, had lost interest in all this. The great majority of them consisted of illiterate persons, whereas they were directed by the Holy Prophet (SAWW) to keep on learning from the very infancy to the last breath. They were, as believers in one Almighty, Lord, told not to fear anything and anyone except Allah. But Muslims had lost faith in Allah and hence were afraid of everything and everyone except Allah. Allama Iqbal could hardly withstand such a deplorable sight. In short it was for Allama Iqbal all challenge, all around, his surroundings rather milieu invaded him from all sides but he did not give way. He stood his ground. He had to guide his people. He had to resuscitate their dying spirits. In spite of all what he stood confronted with, he never lost hope. He was sure it was not impossible. War could be waged and had to be fought till victory, howsoever' far away, the goal might look. And till the last breath he could not relax. He did not like to. This unbroken tension strengthened his self i.e. ego. This state of constant challenge added to the power of his determination and resolute-ness. It boosted his philosophy of Self.

Allama Iqbal generalised the meanings of tension and eulogised all kinds of challenges focussed on self-conscious, resolute and soul-ful persons. He relates the story of a youth from Merv who had come to Sayyed Ali Hujwairi and had complained of the high-handedness of his enemies. In Sheikh Hujwairi's reply lies the point Allama Iqbal wished to make

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! tj.A.t J.su ji v~✓ ~... tq 1:, 3 t.)L tjl) t\$~I a I w y3

"I tell you the truth, your enemy too, is your friend. His existence adds to your glory".

"Whosoever knows the stations of the self, considers a powerful enemy to be a blessing from Allah". "The sword of resolution is whetted by the stones that block the path".

"Traversing stage after stage is the test of the sword of resolution".

"What is death—it is be oblivious to the self

Do you imagine it is parting of soul and body ?".

Thus the significance of tension created by various challenges of life is explained by Allama Iqbal while writing to Professor

R.A. Nicholson on the meaning of the self and his philosophy aimed at it:

"In man the centre of life becomes an Ego or Person. Personality is a state of tension and can continue only if that state is maintained. If the state of tension is not maintained relaxation will ensue. Since personality or the state of tension, is the most valuable achievement of man, he should see that

he does not revert to a state of relaxation. That which tends to maintain the state of tension tends to make us immortal. Thus the idea of personality gives us a standard of value: it settles the problem of good and evil. That which fortifies personality is good, that which weakens it is bad. Art, religion, and ethics must be judged from the stand-point of personality--Personal immortality is an aspiration: you can have it if you make an effort to achieve it. It depends on our adopting in this life modes of thought and activity which tend to maintain the state of tension---Thus, if our activity is directed towards the maintenance of a state of tension, the shock of death is not likely to affect it. After death there may be an interval of relaxation, as the Quran speaks of barzakh, or intermediate state which lasts until the Day of Resurrection".<sup>2</sup>

Does tension exist and is available for everybody ? Is it felt by everybody ? Obviously, tension is only for those who confront

1. Kulliyat-i-Farsi. Sh. Ghulam Ali & Sons, Lahore p. 53.

2. Secrets of the Self: Sh. M. Ashraf, Lahore 1964 pp. xi, xii, xiii (Introduction).

it. It is not for those who yield to it ,,,. Here again the question raises its head. Are the great men moulded to become not less than 'heroes ? Or: Are men made great by certain circumstances amidst which they are thrown ? If they are born as and are destined to be great men then credit will go to the Maker who made them as such. To eulogize them for their great performance would be only a miscredit because in that case they were nothing more than puppets in the iron-band of Fate, greatness being thrust upon them. On the contrary if they earned greatness through their untiring endeavours and relentless resolution then and only then they are genuinely great. As for the circumstances it is thousands into thousands of persons who apparently are in the similar situation. Then why is it that only a few

emerge as conquerors or atleast as laudable fighters. The world of man is a vast, rather limitlessly vast, war-ground and a perpetual war of existence is on. Innumerable battles and skirmishes are taking place, here and there in every part of the ground. Here is the gun-battle and there the pen-battle. Here is the battle of stone, brick, metal and wood, while there is that of colour, sound and rhythm. All fighters do not emerge as heroes although there may have been among them persons much more valiant than the emergent hero or heroes—Life's battle is always on and is a challenge to everybody. The question is as to who takes part in it will-lessly and who is there to fight willfully rather aggressively. That makes all the difference. It discriminates between one who exists and the other who lives.

Carlyle in "On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History" deals with this subject and has his own particular angle to look at it. He states thus, "Hero, Prophet, Poet—many different names, in different times and places, do we give to Great Men ; according to varieties we note in them, according to the sphere in which they have displayed themselves We might give many more names, on this same principle. I will remark again, however, as a fact not unimportant to be understood, that the different sphere constitutes the grand origin of such distinction ; that the Hero can be Poet, Prophet, King, Priest, or what you will, according to the kind of world he finds himself born into. I confess, I have no notion of a truly great man that could not be all sorts of men—True there are aptitudes of nature too. Nature does not make all great men, more than all other. Men

in the self-same mould. Varieties of aptitude doubtless: but infinitely more of circumstances ; and for oftenest it is the latter only that are looked to. But it is as with common men in the learning of trades. You take any man, as yet a vague capability of a man, who could be any kind of crafts-man ; and make him into a smith, a carpenter, a mason: he is then and thenceforth that and nothing else.—The Great Man also to what shall be bound apprentice ? Given your Hero, is he to become Conqueror, King, Philosopher, Poet ? It is an inexplicably complex controversial calculation

between the world and him. He will read the world and its laws; the world and its laws will be there to be. What the world, on this matter shall permit and bid it, as we said, the most important fact about the world."1

All persons born at Sialkot between 1870 and 1980 did not become Heroes of Allama Iqbal's stature. All Muslims who got education in Lahore or Cambridge did not progress into "Seer".

All, poets born in India of yore around those years did not become harbingers of Islamic Renaissance. All educated Muslims of the Sub-continent belonging to Allama's contemporary era did

not react to the slavish plight of his society in such a fascinating and encouraging manner. All Muslim Barristers were not as conscious and worried about the rights of Muslims as Allama Iqbal, barring a few honourable exceptions. All students of Maulana Sayyad Mir Hassan did not rise to become historic personalities. All circumstances are not equal for all but mainly or on the average may be equal. Some may be better in some respects than others. A certain mean might be detected. But Allama Iqbal and Quaid-a-Azam rose exceptionally and disproportionably higher than their compatriots who educationally were equally qualified and had almost equal or better opportunities. Intellectually too, perhaps there did not exist much essential difference. Then why had such a great distance transpired in the long run ? Perhaps these two leaders were more sincere, more steadfast, more truthful, more reliable and more well-meaning than others. Hence, they proved to be more deserving recipients of Allah's Grace than others. They expanded into Great Personalities for others to look up to them with respect, love and

1. Sartor Resartus, Everyman's Library-London, New York

pp. 312.13.

awe. Such straightforward and reliable individuals grow into rallying point for the will and determination of their people who follow such worthies faithfully and thus undergo an imperceptible transformation. The Divine Message is being broadcast every moment but it is received only by those who keep their apparatus on the receiving end. Forbearance and sustained struggle with sincerity of purpose makes one rise above other in life's categorical competition ; a trader making more money than others in the same trade ; a lawyer amassing more wealth and fame than his numerous colleagues ; an administrator earning more respect than many of his fellow administrators ; a soldier winning more medals than his mates. But such examples of progress, rise and reward seldom build the persons concerned into great men of history or heroes of all times. Such persons will be called successful ones in their respective spheres of struggle. Their ambitions were personal and similarly their achievements. That too is commendable. That too in a limited circle sets a good example to follow, for those who are at a comparatively much lower level of affluence and influence. Such persons may earn millions of rupees, may rise as administrators to the highest rank in their country, yet they may not be lauded as great men. Greatness has its own measures and standards. Magnitude of greatness can be judged in proportion to the realization of high impersonal ideals.

High ideals are not personal or familiar goals. One wedded to high ideals, for example, strives to become beneficial for the society at large with no axe of his own to grind. He strives to set personal example of sacrifice for opening the pathway to progress for millions. He strives to teach mankind that the gist of morality lies in man's respect for man. He strives to infuse sense of confidence and self-respect in weaker elements of his society or in weaker societies of the world and exhorts them to fight for their legitimate rights.

A fighter who fights for the sake of conquering territories may retain his name in the annals of history as a great conqueror but not as a Great man. Superior killing skill is one thing but fighting to do away with high-handedness, to mitigate miseries of the down-trodden and enslaved peoples is quite another. Nietzsche's superman may be a killer, a despot, a conqueror and a ruthless mighty ruler. For A llama Iqbal, he may not perhaps be more than a big pirate, a robber or a murderer as we see in the following dialogue between a pirate and Alexander the Great—great as a conqueror.

سکندر

صلہ تیرا تری

زنجیر یا شمشیر

ہے میری!

کہ تیری رہزنی

سے تنگ ہے

دریا کی پہنائی

فراق

سکندر! حیف تو

اس کو

جو انمردی

سمجھتا ہے

گوارا اس طرح

کرتے ہیں ۵



مجشموں کی  
رسوائی؟  
ترا پیشہ بھی سفا  
کی، میرا پیشہ  
بھی سفا کی  
کہ ہم قزاق ہیں  
دونوں تو میدانی  
میں دریائی؟<sup>111</sup>

Alexander: Your reward is your chains or my sword. Your piracy has straitened the spaciousness of ocean.

Pirate: Alexander! I am sorry do you think your treatment of me is chivalrous? Equals do not tolerate dishonour of their equals in this manner.

My profession is spilling blood. Your profession also, is spilling blood. We both, are pirates, your field of action is earth and that of mine water.

Allama Iqbal's hero, on the contrary, is the best man, perfect man, a genuine human being, a fully realized self—an incarnation of all that is positive and good, an embodiment of Allah's Commandments and Injunctions. Allama Iqbal fondly awaited the emergence of such a benign person, every inch a man, hence fit to rule the world and capable of bringing to light the hidden potentialities of human beings. Mankind, according to Allama Iqbal, were ever in need of such heroes who give the message of love,

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<sup>111</sup> Zarb-i-Kalim, Kulliyat-i-Iqbal (Urdu) p. 156—617.

peace, progress, fraternity, equality and add to the beauty, vitality and grandeur of the world of man. Of that Hero, Allama

Iqbal spoke thus:

1.

اے  
سوار  
اشہب  
دوران بیا  
اے فروغ  
دیدہ  
امکان  
بیا!  
رونق  
ہنگامہ  
ایجاد  
شو!  
شورش  
اقوام را  
خاموش  
کن

نعمه

خود را

بهشت

گوش

کن

خیز و

قانون

اخوت

ساز ده!

جام

صہبائے

محبت

باز ده!

باز در

عالم بیار

ایام

صلح!

جنگجو

یار را

بدہ پیغام  
صلح!  
نوع  
انسان  
مزرع و  
تو  
حاصلی!  
کاروان  
زندگی  
را  
منزلی!

112

"Appear O! The ruler of the world.

Appear O! The light of the eyes of all that is to be". "Illumine the ever-creating scene of world's activity. Dwell in the pupils of our eyes (you are so fondly awaited)".

"Silence the tumultuous noise of nations. Imparadise our ears with your music".

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<sup>112</sup> Asrar-i-Khudi, Kulliyat-l-Iqbal (Persian) p. 46.

"Arise and tune the harp of Fraternity. Give us back the cup of the wine of love".

"Bring once more days of peace to the world. Give the message of peace to war-mongers".

"Mankin i are the corn-field and you are the harvest. You are destination of the caravan of life".

This Hero, is not greedy of gold and rubies He is not thirsty of blood. He does not side with the powerful. He does not hate the poor. He suffers from no prejudice, He is the human model for mankind to get at. In Dr. Yusuf Hassain Khan's opinion the Perfect Man or the genuine and real man "resuscitates life by his miraculous actions. He gives fresh and new interpretation to the confused and vague life-philosophy. He bestows new significance on ancient terms and gives new direction to the facts. He changes the course of the creative current of history as he wills. Through him the best human qualities appear in the form of best characters in history. Although he is beyond the possibilities and activities of history yet his struggle harmonizes with it. He is the soul of the world and quintessence of all that exists.<sup>113</sup>

We will never dare call A llama Iqbal a Superman. He never was but we can make bold to say that to some extent, some qualities of the Best Man or the Real Man did reflect in him. He saw life around him with a critical eye. He did not agree to the prevalent materialist mode of behaviour. He was never over-awed by the shoddy culture of the western nations who then ruled the world. As a true believer in the truth of human values of Islam he could never suffer from even a slightest feeling of inferiority. All around him threw a challenge to him. He accepted the challenge and tried to mould the surrounding mode of fashion-able ideas according to what he believed to be right. He could not be taken in by the glamour of the west. He was sure the

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<sup>113</sup> Ruh i-Iqbal, Aina-i-Adab, Lahore p. 206.

glittering diamonds of western civilization were gone. It was not Allama Iqbal's blind prejudice, for according to him whatever was good for mankind was "the lost property" of the Muslims and hence had to be obtained. Everything pro-human according to him, belonged to Islam. Similarly everything anti-human was anti Islam. His likes and dislikes had no territorial or ethnic basis, they pertained only to what was good and what was evil. He had studied the European way of life from close quarters. He was sure that a culture bereft of human values could not last long. Advanced technology could equip Europe with superior killing devices and enable her to subjugate the unadvanced nations and societies but could never furnish them with the prestigious attributes enabling them to be known as upholders of human values. He was sure, the materialistic attitude of the conquering nations was about to bring about their tragic doom. He was certain that nothing was wrong with Islam. Islam was the eternal Truth. Islam, hence could never become obsolete. It was ever fresh. That eternal Truth was revealed to the last Prophet of Allah and was contained in the Quran. It was Allama Iqbal's firm belief that the best practical model of best human qualities for all human beings till the Resurrection was the Prophet (S.A.S.) who was the best embodiment of Quranic Commandments and Injunctions and all other direct and indirect teachings of the Quran. European culture at its zenith, supported by all that the most advanced scientific discoveries could offer in the field of knowledge, in the form of decorous inventions, glamorous outfit, pompous banks, imposing buildings, fascinating clubs and dancing halls alongwith a general phenomenon of prosperity and mirth all around, could not even for a moment dazzle the penetrating eyes of Allama Iqbal. For him all that looked like a spreading and flourishing tree with rotten roots. A deplorable glory he made a declaration to this effect in March, 1907 when he was in London. He warned the West that the edifice of their culture was about to fall to the ground like a nest on a frail bough. It was the materialist, racist and territorial outlook of European societies which was about to array one society against the other and thus cause mutual devastation which Allama Iqbal called Europe's attempt at cultural suicide. He, simultaneously,

told the Muslims that 'Renaissance of Islam was just round the corner,'<sup>114</sup> And said so in unequivocal terms thirty one years before his death. This was his firm belief and not a kind of poetic trance or momentary fits of optimism or a reflection of wishful-thinking. He did not budge even in apparently the darkest moments of defeat in November, 1918 when the last Flag of Muslim rule went down. That was the Flag of Ottoman Turks. Allama Iqbal termed that disaster as last twinkling of stars and explained that when the stars become dim it shows the morn is about to dawn. This he had told in 1923 in his famous 'Tulu-e-Islam'<sup>115</sup>—And that year was the turning point. in the contemporary history of Muslim nations. It was not easy to awake Muslims from their deep slumbers. But Allama Iqbal went on issuing his clarion call. Slowly and slowly, Muslims of the Sub-continent began to react to the surrounding circumstances. Allama Iqbal left the trodden path of Urdu poetry when he was in England. It was a sudden jump upwards. He turned a new leaf as a poet, and a thinker. He was not a limelight-monger as generally the poets are. His poetry had turned into a mission and that too an august mission. He had to look to the pace of the success of the Mission and not to the pace of personal popularity won. This is why he shunned calling himself a poet. He did a great job and became great on account of it. Professor Muhammad Mujib states "Dr. Iqbal could not get absorbed in petty matters. People may admit it or may not but the fact is that he completed his great mission. Between the man' he dreamt of and himself, there existed the difference of situation only. A deed he thought good, was, if we ponder over it, an aspect of his own performance. He had infused within himself such a strong conviction as generates all the burden of life—He had come to know of many secrets which are the soul of faith and honour for humanity. He had qualities which denote true faith, genuine humanity and authentic knowledge. In other words, the sincere future-building and life-forming sentiments of a nation had become concentrated in his heart. This had built him into a model or example about which history proclaims. Yet it is genuine and upto the

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<sup>114</sup> Bang-i-Dara, Kulliyat-e-Iqbal (Urdu) pp. 140-141-142.

<sup>115</sup> Bang-i-Dara, Kulliyat-i-Iqbai (Urdu) Poem Tulu-e-Islam, first verse.

mark. Religion gives its verdict by declaring that it ought to be as it is. People belonging to every age desire to become like him."<sup>116</sup>

Allama Iqbal knew that the foresight and insight with which he had been endowed, was not for his personal benefit alone it was for the good of humanity, for the good of Muslim Ummah and particularly for the good of the Muslims of the Sub-continent.<sup>117</sup> His was, as Professor Muhammad Mujib has observed, an encompassing personality. An Arab poet epitomized this wide subject in the following verse:

ليس من الله بمستنكر ان يجمع العالم في واحد

"It would not be unbecoming of Allah if He deposits the world in the person of one man".

No person can grow into a useful individual of his society unless he gains experience pertaining to social problems by throwing himself into the turmoil of life's trials. A person is truthful only theoretically unless proved practically as such. And he cannot do it without living in a society and without dealing with its people in different concerns. A person puts up with others if he lives in and with others. He is tolerant only when he tolerates vagaries of others with grace. He has a spirit of sacrifice but this spirit cannot be put into practice by a hermit who dwells in a cave. The spirit of sacrifice has to be demonstrated in a society. An individual can be accepted as a man of integrity with reference to his deeds and dealings with other individuals or groups— Then and then only it transpires that a particular person led a useful life—life of truthfulness, forbearance, tolerance, integrity and selflessness. All these traits strengthen self—a man becoming man genuinely, a self realized veritably. Hermits cannot concretize morals, cannot set good models of it. Morals deal with actions. Morals are not preserves of

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<sup>116</sup> Perfect Man or Spirit of the Era.

<sup>117</sup> Iqbal-Jamiah Ke Musannifin Ki Nazar Mein corn. Dr. GoGnpichand Narang Maktaba-i-Jamia Ltd., Delhi pp. 30-31.



philosophy and hence are not kept at a respectable distance, high and dry like philosophy itself. Dr. Yusuf Hussain Khan observes:

"Even collective efforts of a society are essentially individual enterprise, strength and courage. Originality and inventiveness are purely individual tracts. Generally the outcome of individual creativity takes the form of collective one. It is always one who makes scientific discovery, but afterwards on account of its impact and results, it assumes the shape of something collective. Cultural values too, are created by individuals which then spread in a society. Abstract and analogical society which in fact, is a cumulation of individuals has till today neither created or caused a scientific discovery, nor has given birth to a cultural value. In the opinion of individualists, the measure of all things is the "individual". A society takes shape according to the way its individuals arrange and integrate mutual relations. Individuals are tangible centres around which collective perceptions and emotions get together").

Muslims of the Sub-continent sustained an all-embracing defeat around the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Sir Sayyed Ahmed Khan deserves our homage on account of his determination, faith, sincerity, steadfastness, courage, statesmanship and firm belief in the truth of Islam. He struggled hard and performed alone, what perhaps a huge army could not have done. He resuscitated the dying spirits of the Muslims-one individual fashioning many others who in turn became rallying points for thousands of their coreligionists. Among these pillars were Maulana Hali, Akbar Allahabadi, Allama Shibli, Waqar-ul-Mulk, Mohsin-ul-Mulk etc. Then as a younger contemporary Allama Iqbal accepted the challenge. He also tread the path of his Godly predecessors who followed the foot-prints of the Prophets of Allah. The traits of such wayfarers are perseverance, hopefulness, purity of

heart, love for all—good of others, being the supreme ambition. Such persons do not measure their success in material.<sup>118</sup> *Ruh-i-Iqbal* pp. 216-17.

terms. They feel successful if they are sure they did their duty faithfully according to the best of their capabilities. Hardships do not discourage them. Applauded, they do not become proud. Applaud adds to their humility and they are more thankful to Allah who enabled them to perform something laudable. Great Men on account of their lofty aims face hardest challenges, rather deserve it. Small challenges are meant for the small people. Life amplifies itself through conquering hardships and surmounting difficulties. Says Allama Iqbal:

"To live means to conquer, that is all. To desire is to dissipate the spell of victory and nothing else".

Allama Iqbal refers to a saying of Hazrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi and then offers his own observations relating to that saying. It is as under "Muhammad (S.A.S.) of Arabia, ascended the highest Heaven and returned. I swear by God that if I had reached that point, I should never have returned".

These are the words of a great Muslim saint. Abdul Quddus of Gangoh. In the whole range of Sufi literature it will be probably difficult to find words which in a single sentence disclose such an acute perception of the psychological difference between the prophetic and mystic types of consciousness. The mystic does not wish to return from the repose of "unitary experience" and even when he does return, as he must, his return does not mean much for mankind at large. The Prophet's return is creative. He returns to insert himself into the sweep of time with a view to control the forces of history and thereby to create a fresh world of ideals'.<sup>119</sup>

Allama Iqbal too, took the path the prophets of Allah had taken. He had to bring about a change in his society by injecting into the spirits of its

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<sup>118</sup> *Asrar-i-Khudi* p. 34-35.

<sup>119</sup> *The Reconstruction* : M. Ashrat, Lahore (1944)"p. 124.

individuals fresh ideals and an ever strong hope to achieve them. He was sure of his success. He knew his sincere efforts relating to the good for the Muslim Ummah and for human beings at large will attract the attention of people who would appreciate the revolution brought about by him, although the revolution was not brought about for the sake of winning applaud:

پس از من شعر من  
خوانند و دریا بند و  
می گویند!  
جهانے را دگرگون  
کرد یک مرد خود  
آگا ہے!

'When I am dead, this my lay man will recite and say: One man, who was self-aware transformed a world everywhere'.

# INDEX OF ARTICLES AND REVIEWS PUBLISHED IN THE IQBAL REVIEW (1960—1983)

Afzal Haq Qarshi

The Iqbal Review is a quarterly journal published alternately in English and Urdu. Started in April 1960, it publishes research studies on the life, poetry and thought of Iqbal. Articles relating to Iqbal's ideas on politics, ethics, education, history, economics, philosophy, sociology, psychology, literature, art, comparative religion, Islamics, etc, are also areas of special interest to the Journal. In fact all subjects in which Iqbal was interested fall within its scope.

In the last twenty-three years some eminent scholars have been associated with this journal, Dr. M. Rafiuddin (? - 1969) was its first editor. In July 1965 he was succeeded by Bashir Ahmad Dar (1908-1979). In 1971 an editorial board was set up. Syed Abdul Wahid was made the Chairman of the Board while Hadi Husain, Khwaja Ashkar Husain and Syed Ali Ashraf were the members. In July 1971 the Board was expanded and Manzoor Ahmad, Kazi Abdul Kadir and Hasan Murad Qasim were also included in its panel of editors. After a year, that is, in July 1972, the editorial board was reconstituted and Hadi Husain, Nazir Ahmad and Khwaja Ashkar Husain were appointed its members. The issues from October 1973 to April 1976 of the Journal do not bear the names of the members of the editorial board. The issues from July 1976 to October 1977 were published under the supervision of Sufi Ghulam Mustafa Tabassum (1899-1978), who was the Chairman of the editorial board during this period. In January 1978 the Board was reconstituted. Dr. Muhammad Baqir was made the Chairman of the Board and Dr. Abdus Salam Khurshid, Professor M. Saeed Sheikh and

Professor Khwaja Ghulam Sadiq were appointed its members while Dr. M. Moizuddin was made the editor of the Journal the issues from July 1982 to April 1983 were edited by Dr. Waheed Qureshi.

The present Index is for the volumes 1-23. It does not cover the following:

(i) those items published in the Iqbal Review (English edition) which are extracts from the writings of Iqbal.

(ii) reviews which are not directly concerned with Iqbal, and

(iii) poetry of other poets which is not directly related to Iqbal.

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