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# Table of Contents

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**Volume: 28**

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**Number: 3**

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1. THE RISE OF ISLAM .....	4
2. MUHAMMAD IQBAL AND MEHMED AKIF'S CONCEPT OF FREEDOM.....	14
3. THE IMAGE OF 'TURKEY AND TURKISH DEMOCRACY IN IQBAL'S THOUGHT' AND HIS CONCEPT OF A MODERN ISLAMIC STATE.....	22
4. SELF AND SYNTHESIS .....	34
5. IQBAL'S VIEW OF PRAYER .....	49
6. IS FREEDOM POSSIBLE? .....	61
7. REVIVAL OF" PUNJAB MUSLIM LEAGUE JINNAH – IQBAL COLLABORATION .....	71
8. A SCIENTIFIC CRITIQUE OF SCIENCE'S MOST POPULAR FICTION: EVOLUTIONARY THEORY.....	80
9. IQBAL: THOUGHT AND PRAXIS .....	87
10. TOWARD ISLAMIC ANTHROPOLOGY .....	89
11. ISLAMIC ART AND SPIRITUALITY .....	93
12. TRADITIONAL ISLAM IN THE MODERN WORLD.....	96
13. THE ESSENTIAL WRITINGS OF FRITHJOF SCHUON .....	100
14. THE RECONSTRUCTION OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN ISLAM.....	104
15. SURVEY OF METAPHYSICS -AND ESOTERISM.....	108
16. CHRISTIANITY/ ISLAM (ESSAYS ON ESOTERIC ECUMENICISM) .....	111

# THE RISE OF ISLAM

M.A.K. KHALIL

## Introduction

This is the English translation of the poem by Allamah Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, known as Tulu-e-Islam or the Rise of Islam. This long poem of nine ghazals, with differences in cadence, was written in the early 1920s after the First World War. In this poem Iqbal gives expression to his feelings on defeat of the Ottoman Empire and dismemberment of the Muslim Khilafat. It deals with the following subjects;

1. The starting point of the poem and its leading theme is the reassuring thought, that the time has come for the re-awakening of the Muslim world and re-assertion of Islamic values-Verses 1-4; 9-14<sup>1</sup>

2. The poet pleads with himself the need for awakening of Muslims-Verses 5-8;15-16

3. In order to regain their past glory Muslims must;

(a) Recognize the high place of Man in God's universe and also must appreciate the value of equality of Man above race and colour. This is also the essence of the teachings of the Holy Qur'an-Verses 37;46;57

(b) Recognize their high destiny as the architects of the new World order-Verses 17-24; 49-56; 62; 63;

(c) Consider the degeneration of the Muslim world, which has resulted from complaisance and forsaking of God's message in the Holy Qur'an-Verse 41-45

(d) Recognize the value of Faith and develop Faith- Verses 32-36;37;39;40;47;48

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<sup>1</sup> At the back of Iqbal's mind was the thrilling victories won by Kamal Ata Turk and Ismat Inono against the British, the French and Greek forces in 1921, 1922. This trumpeted resurgence of Islam

(e) Work and struggle for the establishment of a united ideological nation (millat) instead of secular, geographical nations, in other words pan-Islamism-Vreses 25-31; 49-57

4. There are passing remarks on the ethical degeneration of the Western world. This has been done to remove inferiority complex from the Muslim mind-Verses 37;57-60

5. He exhorts Muslims to be active and struggle hard to awaken Muslim and re-assert Islamic values – Verse 61

6. Create a new world order. This is also the closing message-verses 63-72

The verses are not arranged subject-wise in the above order for difficulties of rhyming.

Some words were difficult to translate into English correctly, such as illat and faqr. These are technical terms and can only be explained rather than translated. Most appropriate English words or phrases have been used in such cases and the original word has been mentioned in parentheses and underlined. In some cases additional words have been used in parentheses to bring out the special meaning of the word, such as the use of “brave” before “man” in verse 40. Some words have been translated with the first letter in capital to bring out the special meaning, such as “love” and “Man”. It is hoped that such efforts will help the reader in understanding the correct meaning.

Words needing explanation are indicated by numbers within parentheses in the text and explained in “Explanatory Notes” section.

## The Rise of Islam

### I

1. The fading glitter of stars is the signal of a bright morning. The sun has arisen from the horizon, gone is the period of deep torpor.

2. Life blood has started flowing in the veins of the corpse of the East Sina<sup>2</sup> and Farabi<sup>3</sup> cannot understand this secret

3. The storm of the West has made Muslim into the Muslim. Only the ocean storms complete the pearl's beauty

4. From the Court of God is again to be bestowed on the Believer. The Turkoman's dignity, the Indian's intelligence, the Arab's eloquence

5. IF there is some lurking slumber in the flower buds "Strike the beat harder if the taste for music is lacking"<sup>4</sup>

6. Jump restlessly in the garden, in the nest, in the bowers. Mercury cannot be deprived of its restlessness.

7. Why should the eye accustomed to seeing chaste things see the beauty of delicate leaves

When it can see the power of the holy warrior's soul?

8. Light the candle of Love in the tulip's heart. Make every dust grain of the garden a martyr in search (of the Truth)

## II

9. The tear of the Muslim's eye has acquired the effect of spring showers (nesan)<sup>5</sup>

Pearls will be produced again in the sea of God's Friend (Abraham)<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Sina-Abu Alai Hasnain Ibn-e-Sina He is a famous Muslim philosopher, historian, scientist and physician (980-1050 C.E.)

<sup>3</sup> Farabi-Abu Nasr Muhammad Ibn-e-Muhammad Ibn-e-Tarkhan Ibn-e-Afzalagh Farabi - He is one of the most outstanding and renowned Muslim philosophers. He became known as "the second teacher" "the first being Aristotle (870-950 C.E.) C.E.is Christian Era.

<sup>4</sup> This is the first line of the famous verse of Urfi, the well known persian poet of India. The whole verse is given below in translation:

"Strike the beat harder if the taste for music is lacking. "Sing livlier marching songs if the load is heavy"

<sup>5</sup> Nesan is spring rain. The drops of this rain are believed to produce pearls when they enter the pearl oyster.

10. The book of the Bright Nation (millat)<sup>7</sup> is being bound again. This Hashemite branch<sup>8</sup> is to blossom again

11. The beloved from Shiraz has carried the heart of Tabriz and Kabul.  
The zephyr finds its fellow traveler in the rose's fragrance

12. The avalanche of calamity over the Ottomans is not to be bereaved.  
Because the destruction of a hundred thousand stars gives birth to the dawn

13. Insight in world's affairs is more difficult than world's administration  
Insight is created only when the soul melts into blood

14. For thousands of years the narcissus bemoans its colourlessness. The  
person with insight is very hard to find in the garden

15. Sing O Nightingale so that thy modulations may produce. The heart  
of the falcon in the pigeon's frail body

16. The secret of life is concealed in thy heart; speak it out. Relate to the  
Muslim the traditions of the pathos of life

### III

17. Thou art the powerful hand and the Word of the Eternal God. O  
imprudent person develop Faith because thou hast been over-powered by  
doubt

18. The Muslim's destination is beyond the blue sky Stars are the dust of  
the caravan that thou art

---

<sup>6</sup> Khalil-ullah means the Friend of God. This is the title of Hadhrat Ibrahim (On whom be peace) (Abraham).

<sup>7</sup> Millat-e-Baida- This means "the Bright Nation" Baida means egg and refers to the egg shaped shining spot on the palm of Moses which was one of the miracles he performed in the Pharo's court. Iqbal has called Muslims as Millat-e-Baida or "the Bright Nation" through-out his works to indicate their purity as well as bright future.

<sup>8</sup> Hashemite means pertaining to the clan of Bani Hashem to which the Holy Apostle belonged. "Hashemite Branch" is the branch of the progeny of Hadhrat Ibrahim (Abraham) (On whom be peace) to which the tribe of Bani Hashem belonged, i.e. the Ismalite Branch. It also means Muslims.

19. Both the house and dweller are transitory but thine are the Beginning and the End. Thou art the Word of God, thou art Eternal

20. Thy life-blood adorns with hinnah the bride that is the tulip. Thy origin is from Abraham; thou art the architect of the world

21. Thy nature is the custodian of all that is possible in life. In other words thou art the touchstone for the hidden jewels of the world

22. Thou art the gift which the Holy Apostle took<sup>9</sup> From the material to the Eternal World

23. The history of the Muslim nation (millat)<sup>10</sup> reveals the secret. That thou art the guardian of the Asian nations

24. Learn again the leasson of Truth, Justice, Bravery Thou shalt be entrusted with the leadership of mankind

#### IV

25. This is the purpose of creation; this is the secret of Islam. Universality of Brotherhood, abundance of Love

26. Breaking the idols of race and colour merge into the millat. There should be no Toorani, no Irani, no Afghani

27. How long will continue the companionship of the garden's bird in the garden's confines? Thy wings are endowed with the flight of Quhistan's falcon<sup>11</sup>

28. In the world of life full of doubts the Muslim's Faith. Is the guiding light -in the dark night of the wilderness

29. What was it which demolished the grandeur of Qaiser<sup>12</sup> and Kisra<sup>13</sup>?

---

<sup>9</sup> (Meraj)- This refers to the Celestial Ascent of Holy Apostle.

<sup>10</sup> Millat is ideological nation as opposed to geographical nations.

<sup>11</sup> Quhistan is a tract of land in Kerman, now in Iran. The falcons of Quhistan are famous for the elegance and swiftness of flight.

<sup>12</sup> Qaiser is the Caeser of the Roman Empire.

Nothing else but the Prowess of Haider<sup>14</sup>, the Contentment of Bu Zar<sup>15</sup>, the Truthfulness of Salman<sup>16</sup>

30. With what dignity have- the free men of the millat marched out? The centuries-old prisoners are watching the spectacle through the door's fissure

31. The stability of life is from firm Faith. The Tooranis have lasted even longer than Germans

32. When Faith is created in this earthly ember. It acquires the wings and feathers of the Holy Spirit<sup>17</sup>

## V

33. Neither swords nor plans are of any. avail in slavery. Chains are cast away when the joy of Faith is created

34. Who can assess the power of his arm? Destinies are altered by a mere glance of the Believer

35. Sainthood, sovereignty, the universality of knowledge. What are all these? Merely explanations of the secret of Faith

36. It is, however, difficult to develop Abraham's vision. Greed stealthily makes images in, the sub-conscience

37. The distinction of the ruled and the ruler is the perversion of humanity. Beware 0 oppressors the punishments of God are severe

---

<sup>13</sup> Kisra is the persian emperor in whose reign Iran was conquered by Muslims.

<sup>14</sup> Haider is Hadhrat Ali ( May God be pleased with him) who was a cousin and son in law of the Holy Apostle and the Fourth of the Guided Caliphs (khulafa-e-Rashida) famous for his prowess, courage and spiritual as well as physical strength. He is proverbial for these virtues in Islamic literature.

<sup>15</sup> Abu Zar was a well known companion of the Holy Apostle and is proverbial for his piety, which includes faqr which has been translated as "contentment".

<sup>16</sup> Salman is a well known companion of the Holy Apostle who was of persian origin, and is known as Salman-e-Farsi.

<sup>17</sup> Holy Spirit is the Angel Gabriel (Jibril)in Islamic Literature.

38. The essence of everything is the same, be it made of dust or light. The sun's Blood will ooze out by cutting the core of the grain of dust

39. Firm Faith, constant effort, Love, conquest of the universe. These are the swords of brave Men in the struggle of life

40. What is expected of a (brave) Man? A high disposition, a sincere creed. A warm heart, an immaculate vision and a restless soul

## VI

41. Those who had leapt like an eagle turned out to be wingless. Stars came out drenched in the blood of the dusk

42. Those who used to dive under the sea were burned under the sea. Those who bore the dashes of the ocean waves emerged as pearls

43. Those who were proud of alchemy are now the road's dust. Those who put their foreheads to the ground emerged as makers of elixir

44. Our slow moving messenger has brought the message full of life. Those who were getting messages from lightning turned out to be ignorant

45. The sacred sanctuary was disgraced by the short-sightedness of the priest. What a deep insight the Tatar youth had<sup>18</sup>

46. The angels with celestial flight were saying to the earth. These earthly men proved to be more alive, longer lasting, and more splendid than them

47. The Believers live in this world like the sun Setting hither, rising thither, setting thither, rising hither

48. The individuals' Faith is the capital for the millat's reconstruction. This is the force which shapes the millat's destiny

## VII

---

<sup>18</sup> This refers to the Mongol invasion on the Islamic world. Muslims were defeated and badly humiliated. This happened because of their spiritual and military weakness. This part of Islamic history is famous in Islamic literature. Subsequently the Mongols Accepted Islam and their services in the cause of Islam are also well known in history.

49. Thou art the secret of “ Be and it is”<sup>19</sup>; be known to thyself. Know the secret of self-cognizance; be God’s interpreter

50. Avarice has torn mankind into pieces Become the declaration of Brotherhood; become the language of Love

51. This is Indian, that is Khorasani, this is Afghani, that is Torrent. O though the one disgraced on the shore; jump out and become universal

52. Thy wings and feathers are polluted with the dust of colour and race. O bird of the sacred sanctuary flutter thy wings before attempting to fly

53. Dive in self-cognizance O the imprudent one, this is the secret of life. Forsake the narrow confines of morning and evening and become eternal

54. In the struggle of life acquire the nature of steel In the Love’s bed chamber become soft like silk

55. Transcend mountains and deserts like a furious flood. If there be a garden in thy path become a melodious brook

56. There is no limit to thy Knowledge and Love. There is no melody sweeter than thou in the divine orchestra

## VIII

57. Man is still the helpless prey to imperialism. What a calamity that man is the hunter of the human race

58. The glitter of modern civilization dazzles the eye This is but the effect of unreal jewels

---

<sup>19</sup> This refers to the Holy Quran 11:117, which reads, “To Him is due the primal origin of the Heaven and the earth: When He decreeth a matter, He sayeth to it: ‘Be and it is’. “According to Iqbal’s theory of Khudi or self-cognizance, the purpose of God in the creation of the universe was to create ultimately His masterpiece, i.e. Man and endow Man with all the potentials of God’s vicegerent on earth and to train Man with divine guidance to

fit for this high position. For the details of the process of development of Khudi see Iqbal’s book “Asrar-e-Khudi” (Secrets of Self).

59. The science which was the pride of the sages of the West. Is the battle-sword in the blood-stained hands of avarice

60. The magic of prudence cannot stabilize the civilization based on capitalism

61. Deeds build up life; heaven as well as hell. This earthly creature (man) is neither made of light (like angles) nor of fire (like jins)

62. Partake the nightingale's clamour, open the flower bud. Because thou art the spring breeze for this garden

63. The spark of Love has again risen from the Asia's heart. The earth is the parading ground of the satin-clad Tatars

64. Come, a purchaser has appeared for the frail soul<sup>20</sup>. After a long time a caravan has arrived at our place

## IX

65. Come, O beloved the pasture's music has come from the garden. Spring has come; the sweetheart has come; as the sweet-heart has come so has tranquility

66. The spring cloud has established its camp up hill and down dale. The sound of waterfalls has come from the mountain tops

67. I have won you over, O Loved one, thou shouldst also sing melodies of the days gone by. Because flocks of songster birds have come in rows after rows

68. Withdraw from the (ritualistic) pious people and fearlessly draw the wine cup. After a long time the nightingale's song has come from this old branch

---

<sup>20</sup> This refers to the story of Hadhrat Yusuf (On whom be peace) (Joseph) as narrated in the Holy Qur'an. Joseph was thrown into a well by his jealous brothers. He remained there for a fairly long time after which a caravan arrived and rescued him.

69. Narrate to the anxious ones the traditions of the Master of Badr<sup>21</sup> and Honain<sup>22</sup>. Their hidden meanings have opened up before my eyes<sup>23</sup>

70. The other branch of Khalil<sup>24</sup> is greening up with our blood. In the Love's market place our currency has attained full value

71. I am sprinkling tulip petals at the martyr's grave Because his blood has nourished the young plant of our millat.

72. Come, so that we may sprinkle flowers and pour wine in the cup. Rend asunder the sky's roof and lay a new foundation.

---

<sup>21</sup> Badr was the first battle between the newly formed Millat of Islam in Madina and the pagan Quraish. It was critical in that it established the stability and political credibility of Muslims.

<sup>22</sup> The battle of Honain was fought immediately after the conquest of Makka. This battle also was decisive in the sense that Muslims were almost defeated on account of their pride and reliance on arms and their numbers instead of their Faith and the truth of their mission. Ultimately, Muslims won the battle and this victory completed the sovereignty of the Islamic State of Madina over the Arabian Peninsula. The Master of Badr and Honain means the Holy Apostle.

<sup>23</sup> Or perhaps the line can be interpreted as His hidden spiritual strivings (for the good of the Ummah) have opened up before my eyes.

<sup>24</sup> The progeny of Hadrat Ibrahim (on whom be peace) (Abraham) comprises two branches, i.e. the Judeo-Christian or the Isaraelite branch and the Muslim or the Ismaelite branch. The latter is meant here.

# MUHAMMAD IQBAL AND MEHMED AKIF'S CONCEPT OF FREEDOM

DR. ERKAN TIRKMEN

There is a deeply rooted historical as well as cultural link between Turks and the Muslims of India and Pakistan. The Urdu language and literature is the outcome of Turko-Islamic culture that flourished in India under the patronage of Ghaznavids, Khiljeits, Timurids and southern turkish dynasties of Kutab Shahies and Adil Shahies.<sup>25</sup> It was, therefore, natural for the Muslims of India to regard the Turks of Turkey as great heroes against the challenging advancement of the English imperialism. Indians, whole heartedly, supported Turks and Muhammed Iqbal wrote poems about their bravery and chivalry. As national poets Iqbal and Mehmed Akif (1873-1936)<sup>26</sup> had similar messages to deliver to their nations that fought for independence.

Although Akif and Iqbal never came face to face yet they had great sympathy for each other. Since Akif knew Persian well, he was able to appreciate Iqbal's works, particularly *Esrar-i-Khudi*. How much Iqbal had knowledge of Akif's Turkish poetry is not known.

Akif wrote the following lines about Iqbal in his letter to his friend Hafiz Asim on 8. 3. 1341 A.H:-

“Last week they (the Indian Muslims) sent me two books of Iqbal's verses. I had already seen his small booklet (treatise) at Ankara and I had found him to be very much like me. Iqbal is really a genius poet because he studied all the great mystics of the East first, then he went to Germany where he diggested the Western philosophy. There is hardly anyone among the Indian Muslims who does not know some of his poems by heart. It is natural that he has written his poems in Urdu, but the poems I have seen are in Persian. He has good study of Rumi and he loves him. He calls himself

---

<sup>25</sup> See my article entitled” Turkish Elements in Urdu”, *The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, VI, Enderun Kitabevi, Istanbul 1986, p. 1-30.

<sup>26</sup> ide prof. Dr. Ali Nihat Tarlan, Mehmet Akif, University of Istanbul, 1968 for complete biography of the poet.

“disciple of Rumi”. The copy of the work I have is entitled Payam-i-Mashrik. He has wonderful qitas (sections) and ghazels. Some of his ghazels made me cry out like an intoxicated person. Iqbal’s Arabic is also rich. His knowledge, culture and poetical efficiency is above mine<sup>27</sup>”.

Although the traditional lives of the two nations may differ, yet the two poets had discerned the similar shortcomings of the Muslims of those days. The mystic trends had led the Muslims to live a passive life by surrendering themselves to fate. Iqbal by studying the Western and the Eastern philosophy equally well, found his answers in the works of Great Master Rumi, while Akif was left alone between the devil and the deep sea i.e. the materialistic world and the spiritual. Iqbal was lucky to receive medicine from the great spiritual doctor which gave him an endless source of mystic dynamism the Akif failed to obtain<sup>28</sup>

Iqbal saw two extremities- the East and the West. In the East people would labour for the world hereafter, while in the West they would struggle for scientific as well as economic purposes regardless of the spiritual satisfaction. He found solution in Islam that promises prosperity of this world and of the other. Akif joined Iqbal in this cause. The hearts of both the poets beat for the unity of Islam without racial discrimination. They wanted to wake up the Muslim world. Akif addressed Turks in almost the same way as Iqbal did. He said:-

If you fail to wake up, you cannot reach the goal, see, is 5 there any traces of those who were wide awake?<sup>29</sup>

I don’t realise what is meant by meekness, what are you then waiting for? While God says” That man can have nothing but what he strives for”.<sup>30</sup>

Behold there is darkness everywhere yet it is bright!

For see the sky is awake, the stars are like the windows of divinely sight

---

<sup>27</sup> See Eshref Edib, M. Akif Hayati ve Eserleri, Asari ilimye Kutuphanesi, Istanbul p. 143.

<sup>28</sup> Nihat Tarlan, op. cit., p. 25.

<sup>29</sup> Mehmed Akif, Safahat, Inkilap ve Aka, Istanbul, 1975, p. 29.

<sup>30</sup> Surah” Al-Nejim, ayet No. 39.

(Safahat p. 102).

Don't give up thy determination due to the gloomy darkness, If there is the meanest way of dying then this the one indeed, O' the living dead, can't you earn your own bread?

Move on, the hands and the head they all belong to you, You have no feelings, no actions; are you a living corpse? You make me think and wonder because you were never so.

(Safahat p. 209)

Muhammed Iqbal has a similar message in the following verses:-

“I have called you “Muslim” rather expediently, otherwise thy breath has no warmth of the day of resurrection”.

(Zarb-i Kalim)

“Your Islam is probably of a different kind, for you hold asceticism and monkery equal”

(Zarb-i Kalim, Faqr-u Rahibi)

“If Mulla (the Islamic preast) has permission of prostrating he, the fool, thinks that islam is free(in India)”.

(Zarb-i Kalim, Hindi Islam) “O the Divinely bird, it is better to die,

Than to eat the food that hinders you to fly.”

(Bal-i Jibril) Addressing the young Muslims he says:-

“O you, the young muslims have you ever pondered?

What kind of sky it was of which you are the broken star?

You have been brought up in the lap of the nation, That had crushed down Dara's crown under their feet.

You have no similarity, at all, with your ancestors,

For you only talk while they acted; they were planets and you are a star.

(Bang-i Dara)

Iqbal encouraged the Muslims of India who felt themselves helpless and disappointed by such verses as follows:-

“raise your selfness (khudi) to the height where God consults his lover(slave) before writing his fate”

and

“You are like a hawk, your duty is to fly on because there are several other skies in front of you”

This was the message that warmed the hearts of the Indian Muslims who finally established a Muslim state in 1947. Mehmet Akif’s message also put the hearts of the Turks into action. They, too, swarmed around their leader kemal Ataturk to form a modern Turkish Republic.

Akif raised his voice against absolutism and imperialism forbidden in Islam:-

“Thirty million people are slaves in hands of three rebels, These enslaved people then should carry sinister burdens of the ruling class,

won’t you be ashamed if one counts the cruel and the oppressed, You (the cruel) who have no characteristics of a humanbeing, You have held your shadows of imageries higher than skies.”

(Safahat, Istibdat)

“Don’t give up if you see tomorrow in darkness, To die like this, is the meanest kind of death,

If I happen to see such a death with my own eyes, I won’t believe. For he who believes God does not die at all”

(Safahat)

Similarly Iqbal says:-

“The guarding of Oneness (vandet) is not possible without the force of arm,

The God given wisdom for this is not of any use O’ the man of God if you are powerless

Then go and abide in a cave in order to pray to god

And thus invent a kind of Islamic mysticism that depends

On eternal hopelessness, imprisonment and misery.

(Zarb-i Kalim)

Iqbal and Akif both used the word “millat” (nation) in the meaning of Islamic unity.<sup>31</sup> They yearned for the union of Islam, not for the national unity.<sup>32</sup> We find this message in their poems.

for example Akif says:-

“Your religion was Islam then what is racialism? You should have strongly attached to your own nation (Islam)”

(Safahat)

and Iqbal says:-

Muslim should unite to guard Mecca

From the bank of Nile unto Kashghar

He who has discrimination of colour and blood will vanish. May he be a nomadic Turk or a respect worthy Arab.

(Bang-i Dara, Dunya-yi Islam) We are neither Afghan, nor Turk nor a Tatar,

---

<sup>31</sup> For details see Ertugrul Duzdag, Safahat Tetkikleri, Med Yayinlari, Istanbul 1979, p.132.

<sup>32</sup> Nihaf Tarlan, op. cit., p. 47.

We are all production of the same garden and the trees, The discrimination of colour and smell is forbidden for us, because we have been grown up by the same spring.

(Payam-i Mashrik)

Iqbal and Akif's poetry is full of Islamic spirit. the spirit that was required those days for the Muslims of India and the peple of Turkey. Akif had the desire to see the country of Iqbal whose poems he would read every week.<sup>33</sup> In a letter to his friend Asim and in the poem given below he shows how much he respected the Muslims of India. As we gather from this poem entitled "India"<sup>34</sup> he did have a chance to visit haydarabad but he could not move arround freely because police chased him and checked him. Here is some part of his poem:-

“It was my great desire to travel India throughout,

I became tired so I had to surrender,

Yet I managed to be in some meetings there, Thanks to God that the Old Region (India) is still producing,

May a philosopher that equals “Rahmutullah” in knowledge

They discern the spirit of religions and wisdom of Kuran,

They have scholars in front of whom the Westerns bow,

Man also becomes surprised to see their educated young's,

Many of whom though educated in England,

Turn to be the heart and soul of their coreligionist,

They do not give up their determenations even at the cost of death,

They don't have any desires to act like monkeys, Their national feelings are so strong that they never weaken,

---

<sup>33</sup> See Ertugrul Duzdah, *ibid*, p. 31.

<sup>34</sup> Safahat p. 172.

If they take knowledge from the West, they take only science,

You behold their hands full of art yet they lack freedom,

They have neither immorality nor drinking, they have strong courage and content,

They respect and esteem the preserved laws (Shariat) more than we do,

The future of the nation that educate such children,

Deserves the independence to embrace in near future,

If not today, but soon will it come true,

If it seems too far it doesn't matter, future is future.”

While going to Haydarabad my host who came to see me off,

Uttered with grief the following words from the core of his heart:

“Alas, we are not useful elements of belief...

We never compare Islam of India with that of Turks,

They have spirit and boiling blood with bravery, We don't have such feelings and sincere nerves,

We are prisoners of meanness and shall remain for ever,

For many of us fail to see the losses we have,

All our hopes are in the strengthening of the Ottomans,

Once we hear about it, this happiness will suffuse.<sup>35</sup>

These words made me cry but his (my host's) son said:-

“It is not so, our nation has dignity in their chests that is waiting for an order. They will act upon it, although they have to wait for some time. If the

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<sup>35</sup> Full translation will be rendered in my Urdu article on “Mehmet and Iqbal”.

days are passing in imprisonment, it does not mean that we should let our nation be slave for ever and live a mean life because we, too, have a past like other Muslims...”

This is how Akif loved the Indian muslims who had brought forth a poet like Iqbal. Iqbal himself adored the bravery of Turks whom he praises in his poems. Ghulamun ki namaz (the prayers of the slaves), Mahasara-yi Edirne (besieg of Edirne), Khitab be Mustafa Kemal Pasha (an address to Mustafa Kemal) and Turk-i Osmani (the Ottoman Turk are worth mentioning. Here we give the translation of Turk-i Osmani:-

“The Ottoman is a commander in his country, His heart is aware and his eyes do see,

Although we cannot think that he is free from the european ties (chains),

He is still under the spell of the European’s attraction.

(Armughan-i Hijaz)

Akif praised the Indian Muslims and thus the people of Pakistan, while Iqbal considered Turks as the part of his nation. They laid the foundaton of Turko-Pak friendship that has a history long relation.

As long as, the crescented red flag of Turkey keeps on hoisting in company with the national anthem of Mehmet Akif and the crescented green flag of Pakistan as the symbol of independence; the two great poets will continue to live in the hearts of their people and will go on symbolizing the brotherhood of the two brotherly countries.

# THE IMAGE OF 'TURKEY AND TURKISH DEMOCRACY IN IQBAL' S THOUGHT AND HIS CONCEPT OF A MODERN ISLAMIC STATE

DR. JAVID IQBAL

When the Indian Sub-Continent was being transformed from Muslim-India into British-India, the interests of Muslims grew in Turkey as the Turkish Caliphate had awakened among the Muslims a new sense of solidarity. The predecessor of Iqbal, Shibli poet and scholar had visited Turkey in 1892. Shibli was the first Muslim poet who in his poems wrote on the misfortunes of Turkey and thus through his writings brought Turkey closer to Muslim-India.

In 1911 Italy attacked Tripoli and the Balkan war which deprived Turkey of her European territories followed in 1912. These events for the first time turned Iqbal's eyes towards Turkey. Following Shibli he wrote three of his famous poems on Turkey which stirred Muslim-India. One of his famous poems, namely, Jawab-i-Shikwa was recited in the Badshahi Mosque at Lahore. in 1912 in order to raise funds in aid of the Turks wounded in the Balkan war.

In 1920-21 the Khilafat Movement for the preservation of Turkish Caliphate and against the dismemberment of Turkey swept over the Sub-Continent. During this Movement almost the same number of Muslims lost their lives or were uprooted as subsequently in 1946-47 when the struggle for the establishment of Pakistan was on. The total number of immigrants from Muslim-India to Afghanistan in those days was estimated between 500,000 and 2,000,000. Sentiment in favour of Turkey was expressed violently by the Moplahs (Muslims of mixed Arab and Indian Descent) of Malabar whose uprising followed in 1921. They were a peasant community numbering about one million but the end in store for them was far worse than that of the immigrants. Irrespective of its disastrous after-effects, this magnificent sacrificial Movement clearly indicates the deep rooted love of Muslims of the Sub-Continent for their Turkish brethren. There is no parallel

in contemporary history of sacrifice of a people on such a large scale for another people.

From 1912 onwards Iqbal's interest for Turkey grew many fold and he was deeply involved with the Turkish cause also for the reason that through this association Muslims of the Sub-Continent could re-discover their own national identity and consolidate themselves politically. But he did not agree with the Khilafat leaders on the preservation of Turkish Caliphate. The subsequent events proved the soundness of Iqbal's reasoning. Therefore on the abolition of Caliphate Iqbal alone raised his voice in favour of the new legal order in Turkey. He welcomed the growth of a republican spirit in Turkey as a return to the original purity of Islam. He was likewise pleased with the growth of nationalism in Turkey although he attacked nationalism in the Western sense as he was of the view that the Muslims' attitude towards the West should be critical and not that of blind imitation. He even justified the initial isolation of Turkey by maintaining that for the time being each and every Muslim nation must concentrate on herself only until all were strong enough to form a living family of republics by adjusting their mutual rivalries through the unifying bond of Islam. It is in this context that he proclaimed that Islam is neither nationalism nor imperialism but a commonwealth of nations.

In the late thirties Pandit Jawahir Lal Nehru wrote a series of articles in order to persuade Muslims to adopt a secular attitude and join the Indian Nationalist Movement. He cited the example of Turkish secularism maintaining that Turkey had ceased to be Muslim by adopting nationalism, developing a pragmatic outlook, changing to Latin script and European dress, abolishing polygamy, curtailing religious privileges by licentiating Ulema, separating the department of religion from other departments of the state and replacing Muslim Personal Law by European codes of civil law.

Even on his death bed Iqbal reasoned that each and every reform promulgated in modern Turkey was not repugnant to Islam. He wrote that so long as the Turks believe in Tauhid and the finality of Prophethood, they do not step out of the fold of Islam, whatever may be their interpretation of the Law. The development of pragmatic outlook was in perfect harmony with Islam. Similarly change to European dress or Latin script did not imply renunciation of Islam because Islam as a religion had no territorial

attachment and as a culture had neither any specific mode of dress nor any particular script nor language. The reforms such as abolition of polygamy were not anti-Islamic for according to Islamic law the Head of a Muslim State could suspend a legal “sanction” if the social conditions so demanded. As for the licentiate Ulema, according to Iqbal, only the Head of a Muslim State or those whom he appointed had the right to preach or give a Fatwa - (an opinion on law). Again the distribution of departments into religious and civil in a Muslim State should not be confused with the European conception of the separation of the Church from the State. The former was only a division of departments whereas the latter was founded on a fundamental duality on spirit and matter. The separation of the department of religion therefore did not mean the exclusion of Islam from the life of modern Turkey. As for the adoption of European civil codes, Iqbal argued that this arose out of the youthful zeal for reform excusable in a people furiously desiring to go ahead. In his view such situation were bound to arise in other Muslim countries also and hence he raised the question of the revision of old Muslim institutions in the light of modern experience. It was in this background that he insisted on the opening of the gates of Ijtihad and the study of Islamic law in the light of modern jurisprudence so that it can be reinterpreted to suit the needs and the requirements of each and every Muslim generation.

It is therefore evident that Iqbal was deeply influenced by the developments in modern Turkey. He evolved the concepts of Islam as a nation building force for Muslim minorities, the carving out of viable independent States in their homelands, giving the power of Ijtihad to an elected legislative assembly and finally the assimilation of Muslim national States as a powerful family of republics, through receiving inspiration from the experiences of the modern Turkish nation.

According to Iqbal the following led to the political and cultural decay of Muslims:

- a) Autocratic Sultanate,
- B) Conservatism of the Ulema,
- C) Preachings of the other-worldliness and inactivity of the Sufis.

In the Indian Sub-Continent Iqbal had opened his eyes in the period of Islamic renaissance and thus was a successor of the intellectual movement started by Syed Ahamd Khan and Jamaluddin Afghani. As a path-finder his convictions were:

a) Islam was not only a Religion, but also a Culture.

Laying emphasis on the factor of change, he launched an attack on the static elements of Islam e.g. traditional as well as populist approaches towards Islam, and advocated the cause of reformist Islam. According to him under the Quranic teachings Muslims turned their attention towards acquisition of knowledge through sense-perception and discarded the speculative method of the Greeks. Thus Muslims were founders of modern sciences. In this background, in the field of culture, Iqbal wanted to re-join the severed connection between the ancient Islamic sciences with modern sciences, in order to rekindle the spirit of curiosity, inquiry, research, innovation, invention and creativity among Muslims. He was of the firm view that Islamic theological thought needed reconstruction as the traditional theological interpretations were based on ancient notions of the Greek speculative sciences which were now outmoded. He therefore felt the need of evolving modern Islamic theology on the basis of new discoveries in the fields of psychology, mathematics, physics, chemistry, astronomy, etc. He believed that Christians learnt from Muslims how to reconcile revelation with reason and sense-perception, and in this process they had gone far ahead than Muslims. It was therefore necessary and in accordance with the needs of modern times that scholastics should reconstruct religious thought of Islam in the light of discoveries of modern sciences and this was the only way through which they could strengthen the Faith in the hearts of modern generation of Muslims.

He also emphasised the re-interpretation of Shariah Law in the light of modern experience and changed conditions of modern life. In this connection he approved of a philosophical approach which he termed as “Permanence-in-Change”.

According to him religious obligations of Islam (Ibadaat) were permanent for all times to come but worldly matters involving life (Mua'mallaat) were subject to the law of change. Thus when he felt the need

of re-interpretation of the Foundational Principles of Shariah Law it was in the sphere of worldly matters.

b) Islam was a Nation Building Force.

Iqbal advanced the concept of Muslim nationhood as opposed to territorial nationalism. A Nation was created by the development of a sense among people of belonging to one another. This may be created through a common race, colour, language and territory. Thus on the basis of Muslim nationalism he dreamt of creating a new Muslim society and a new Muslim Commonwealth of the Culture.

c) Islam cannot be apprehended without Power.

Politically and economically subjugated Muslims according to Iqbal could not claim themselves to be Muslims. Muslims therefore in order to realise authentic Islam must always aspire for Power. Islam must always be free and freedom must always be bracketed with power.

d) Establishment of a State as Manifestation of Muslim Power.

Iqbal had provided all philosophical and moral justification to the Muslims of the Sub-Continent to struggle for the creation of Pakistan.

Fundamentalist Ulema had always opposed the ideas of Iqbal. Remarks of Maulana Najmuddin Islahi may be noted. (Muktubat-e-Sheikhul Islam, Vol. III, Page 141):

“We regard as a Shar’i crime to give a higher status to Iqbal than that of a mere poet and a philosopher. We have carefully examined his works. There is no denying the fact that there are hundreds and thousands of his verses which may be considered as useful; nevertheless among them there are numerous such verses which openly hit Islam and Islamic way of thing king-----

----- In Pakistan the principle of law making can be adopted in the light of Iqbal’s thought because the Islam on which Pakistan has ‘been founded is another name of the philosophy of Iqbal.”

The remarks of Maulana Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi may also be perused (Naqoosh-i-Iqbal pages 39-40):

“One finds such interpretations of Islamic beliefs and philosophy in Iqbal with which it is impossible to agree. Unlike some enthusiastic young Muslims of today I do not subscribe to the view that no one has understood Islam better than Iqbal or that except him no one could reach the depths of Islamic sciences-----

----- In his Madras lectures there lie scattered many ideas which are in direct conflict with the collective principles of Sunni Islam. It would have been better if these lectures were not published.”

Now we come to the question as to what is Iqbal’s concept of a modern Islamic State. The important features are:

Sovereignty of Allah According to him the idea of personal authority is contrary to the spirit of Islam. He says:

“The Prophet of Arabia succeeded in commanding the absolute submission of an entire people; yet no man has depreciated his own authority more than he. “I am, “he says, “a man like you; like you my forgiveness also depends on the mercy of God”. Once in a moment of spiritual exaltation, he is reported to have said to one of his he is reported to have said to one of his companions, “Go and tell the people - he who says - there is only one God - will enter the paradise,” studiously omitting the second half of the Muslim creed - “And Muhammad is his Prophet.” The ethical importance of this attitude is great. The whole system of Islamic ethics is based on the idea of individuality; anything which tends to repress the healthy development of individuality is quite inconsistent with the spirit of Islamic law and ethics. A Muslim is free to do any thing he likes, provided he does not violate the law. The general principles of this law are believed to have been revealed; the details, in order to cover the relatively secular cases, are left to the interpretation of professional lawyers. It is, therefore, true to say that the entire fabric of Islamic law, actually administered, is really judge-made law, so that the lawyer performs the legislative function in the Muslim constitution. If, however, an absolutely new case arises which is not provided for in the

law of Islam, the will of the whole Muslim community becomes a further source of law.”

The inference which can be drawn from this view of Iqbal is that Allah being sovereign, His Sovereignty is to be delegated to the representatives of the peoples. He therefore advances the view that “Election” is the method approved in the Quran on which the Islamic State could be founded. It may be pointed out at this stage that there is no direct Verse of the Quran in respect of “Election” or approval of the establishment of a democratic or republican order. However Iqbal’s argument on this point is based on Sura 42: Verse 38, in which Muslims have been described as those who conduct their affairs by mutual consultation. Some important questions arise here and these are: firstly, all the members of the Muslim community cannot conduct their affairs by mutual consultation and therefore such mutual consultation is only possible through their elected representatives; and secondly, when this elective body is brought into being as an assembly would it be a consultative assembly or an advisory assembly. In Iqbal’s view in modern times it is to operate as a consultative assembly, and for the purposes of law making, it must assume the role of Ijma (Consensus of the Community). The formation of these elected legislative assemblies in modern Muslim States, according to him, amounts to a return to the original purity of Islam. As shall be pointed out later, he gives power of Ijtihad (Interpretation of Islamic law and Its Promulgation) to these assemblies. He has no hesitation in approving the establishment of a multi-party system or political groupings in modern Islamic Democracies, for, in his opinion, this was in accordance with the practice of early republican phase in Islam.

In Iqbal’s view modern Islamic State is founded on three principles, and these are:

- a) Human Solidarity,
- b) Equality, and
- c) Freedom.

According to him the essence of Tauhid (Unity of God), as a working idea, is to realise the ideals of human solidarity, equality and freedom.

Therefore the State from the Islamic standpoint is an endeavour to transform these ideal principles into space-time forces, an aspiration to realise them in a definite human organisation. He advances a novel argument to the effect that since no further revelation is binding on man, the Muslims should regard themselves as spiritually the most emancipated peoples on earth. He observes:

“In view of the basic idea of Islam that there could be no further revelation binding on man, we ought to be spiritually one of the most emancipated peoples on earth. Early Muslims emerging out of the spiritual slavery of pre-Islamic Asia were not in a position to realise the true significance of this basic idea. Let the Muslim of today appreciate his position, reconstruct his social life in the light of ultimate principles, and evolve out of the hitherto partially revealed purpose of Islam, that spiritual democracy, which is the ultimate aim of Islam.”

Now each of the three foundational principles of modern Islamic State may be considered separately:

a) Human Solidarity. It is interesting to note that the first principle on which his modern Islamic State is to be founded is Human Solidarity instead of Muslim Solidarity. Why this is so? Because in this State the basis of Muslim nationhood would be common spiritual aspiration, whereas their solidarity with the non-Muslim minorities would be based on common territory, for, it is only through this two-fold dispensation that the ideal of human solidarity in a modern Islamic State could be realised. In his famous Allahabad Address of 1930, in which he for the first time proposed the establishment of an independent Muslim State, he explained his views on religious tolerance in this way:

“A community which is inspired by feelings of ill-will towards other communities is low and ignoble. I entertain the highest respect for the customs, laws, religious, and social institutions of other communities. Nay, it is my duty according to the teachings of the Quran, even to defend their places of worship, if need be”.

While making this statement, the Quranic teachings to which he has referred are contained in Sura 22: Verse 40. Therein it is stated:

“Had Allah not created a Community (Muslim Community) to ward off the others from aggression then churches, synagogues, oratories and mosques where Allah is worshiped most would have been destroyed”.

According to the early jurists, these Quranic teachings made it obligatory on the Islamic State to protect Jewish and Christian communities who were regarded as “People of the Book” but after the conquest of Iran, some Muslim jurists expanded this Quranic injunction so as to cover the followers of Zoroastrian faith by designating them as “Like the People of the Book”. Similarly during the Mughal rule over India some Muslim jurists gave the status of “Like the People of the Book” to the Hindus, and in this way they went on expanding the interpretation of this Quranic injunction in order to suit the needs and requirements of times. Even otherwise according to the Quranic teachings there is no compulsion in religion. Therefore if Iqbal’s idea of religious tolerance in a modern Islamic State is realised then it certainly contains the qualities for which an ideal secular State may aspire.

b) Equality. Under this head Iqbal discusses his concept of modern Islamic social democracy. In the field of economics he was as against socialist or communist economic order as he was against capitalist economic order. In his view the Quran provided the best remedy for the economic ailments of humanity. If one were to make an overall picture of his social democracy, it would appear that he contemplated it as a welfare State of the middle class based on mixed economy. In this field also he felt the need of re-interpretation of Shariah law in order to suit the economic requirements of the community. His views are worth quoting:

“The peoples of Asia are bound to rise against the acquisitive economy which the West has developed and imposed on the nations of the East. Asia cannot comprehend modern Western capitalism with its undisciplined individualism. The faith which you represent recognises the worth of the individual, and disciplines him to give away his all to the service of God and man. Its possibilities are not yet exhausted. It can still create a new world where the social rank of man is not determined by his caste or colour, or the amount of dividend he earns, but by the kind of life he lives; where the poor tax the rich, where human society is founded not on the equality of stomachs but on the equality of spirits, where an Untouchable can marry the daughter of a King, where private ownership is a trust and where capital cannot be

allowed to accumulate so as to dominate the real producer of wealth. This superb idealism of your faith, however, needs emancipation from the medieval fancies of theologians and legists. Spiritually we are living in a prison house of thoughts and emotions which during the course of centuries we have woven round ourselves. And be it further said to the shame of us - men of older generation - that we have failed to equip the younger generation for the economic, political and even religious crises that the present age is likely to bring. The whole community needs a complete overhauling of its present mentality in order that it may again become capable of feeling the urge of fresh desires and ideals.”

c) Freedom. It has already been pointed out that according to Iqbal the establishment of democratically elected legislative assemblies in some Muslim countries amounted to a return to the original purity of Islam. But the important point to note here is that while formulating his ideas on a new democratic order in Islam how much he was influenced by modern Turkish democracy. He was in favour of giving the power of I jthihad to the law-making assembly and in this respect the example cited by him was of the Turkish experiment. His argument is as follows:

“Let us now see how the Grand National Assembly has exercised this power of I Ijtihad in regard to the institution of Khilafat. According to Sunni law, the appointment of an Imam or Khalifah is absolutely indispensable. The first question that arises in this connexion is this - Should the Caliphate be vested in a single person? Turkey’s Ijtihad is that according to the spirit of Islam the Caliphate or Imamate can be vested in a body of persons, or an elected Assembly -----

-----Personally, I believe the Turkish view is perfectly sound. It is hardly necessary to argue this point. The republican form of government is not only thoroughly consistent with the spirit of Islam, but has also become a necessity in view of the new forces that are set free in the world of Islam-- ----- In order to understand the Turkish view let us seek the guidance of Ibn Khildun - the first philosophical historian of Islam. Ibn Khildun, in his famous ‘Prolegomena’, mentions three distinct views of the idea of Universal Caliphate in Islam. (1) That Universal Imamate is a Divine institution, and is consequently

indispensable. (2) That it is merely a matter of expediency. (3) That there is no need of such an institution. The last view was taken by the Khawarij. It seems that modern Turkey has shifted from the first to the second view, i.e. to the view of the Mu 'tazillah who regarded Universal Imamate as a matter of expediency only. The Turks argue that in our political thinking we must be guided by our past political experience which points unmistakably to the fact that the idea of Universal Imamate has failed in practice. It was a workable idea when the Empire of Islam was intact. Since the break-up of this Empire independent political units have arisen. The idea has ceased to be operative and cannot work as a living factor in the organisation of modern Islam -----

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Such is the attitude of the modern Turk, inspired as he is by the reality of experience, and not by the scholastic reasoning of jurists who lived and thought under different conditions of life.”

According to him the transfer of the power of I Ijtihad from individual representatives of schools to a Muslim legislative assembly was necessary in modern times because in this way contributions could be made to legal discussions from laymen or experts in other fields of knowledge who happened to possess a keen insight into affairs and that in this way alone the dormant concept of life in the legal system of Islam could be stirred into activity and given an evolutionary outlook. This was a very radical view which had been inspired by the Turkish experiment with democracy. However Iqbal raised the question as to how the possibility of erroneous interpretation of Islamic law could be avoided- when a modern Muslim assembly may consist mostly of men possessing no knowledge of the subtleties of Islamic law. He suggested that a Board of ulema could be formed as a part of the Muslim legislative assembly for helping and guiding free discussion on questions relating to law. But he also warned that this arrangement was not free from danger and that it may be tried if at all only as a temporary measure. In his opinion the only effective remedy of the possibilities of erroneous interpretation was to reform the present system of legal education in Muslim countries, to extend its sphere, and to combine it with an intelligent study of modern jurisprudence, In his view the lot of most of the Muslim countries today was that they were mechanically repeating old

values, but he made the Turks an exception, who according to him were on the way to creating new values. The Turk, he said:

“has passed through great experiences which have revealed his deeper self to him. In his life has begun to move, change, and amplify, giving birth to new desires, bringing new difficulties and suggesting new interpretations. The question which confronts him today, and which is likely to confront other Muslim countries in the near future is whether the law of Islam is capable of evolution - a question which will require great intellectual effort, and is sure to be answered in the affirmative, provided the world of Islam approaches it in the spirit of Umar - the first critical and independent mind in Islam.”

# SELF AND SYNTHESIS

MUHAMMAD FAYYAZ

Without naming it as such, Iqbal<sup>36</sup> has been, in prose and poetry, explicating philosophical and sociological theories of universe, self, society, and religion, using a mode of thought to be properly understood as dialectics. The spirit of his theories reveals the tension that permeates the universe, from the self to the cosmos, and thus constitutes the ultimate source of perpetually creative movement in nature.

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.<sup>37</sup>

Iqbal's conception of dialectics as a theory and a methodology of comprehending reality of existence is, however, neither Hegelian, neo-Hegelian, nor is it of pantheistic sufism form which "regard absorption in a universal life or soul as the final aim and salvation of man."<sup>38</sup> The kind of dialectics that Hegelianism and sufism proclaim, exhorts asceticism and self-negation, in short lures tension to relaxation -- a state of being which Iqbal denounced vehemently all his life. His dialectics, it would seem, is at once materialistic (as opposed to idealistic), scientific (as opposed to mythical and superstitious), and theistic (as opposed to those brands of materialistic-scientific dialectics popularized by left-Hegelians which negate the existence of any Ultimate Being of spiritual-ethical nature).

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<sup>36</sup> several biographers of Iqbal have noted 1873 or 1876 as his year of birth. However, as Malik has chosen to follow, and so does this author, that "After thoroughly examining this problem (Iqbal's year of birth), S.A. Vahid, an outstanding Pakistani scholar of Iqbal, has deduced 1877 as the most probable year of Iqbal's birth ... See S.A. Vahid, "Date of Iqbal's birth", *Iqbal Review* (Karachi), 1966, p.27" (Malik, 1971:391).

<sup>37</sup> Nicholson, R.A., *The Secrets of the Self*, R. ed. Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1940, XXI.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, XVIII.

Scholars have endeavoured to sharpen the contours of Iqbal's dialectics in various ways: on one end of the continuum are those who see a wide-ranging eclecticism in Iqbal's thought, for, they believe, it combines in itself chiefly the ideas of such western thinkers as Dante, Goethe, Kant, Fichte, Schopenhauer, Bergson, and Nietzsche, while on the other end are those who consider his ideas as reflecting purely true Islamic spirit. From among these, Dar takes a middle position and argues that "The main source of Iqbal's thought is Islamic philosophy, as he himself claimed, but in developing his ideas he drew upon the wealth of thought available to him from Western thinkers, especially who developed a particular trend or school of thought -- Kant, Fichte, Schopenhauer, Bergson, and Nietzsche."<sup>39</sup> Khalifa Abdul Hakim echoes almost identical interpretation by saying that "A question is often raised about Iqbal's originality. Was he merely an eclectic bringing together various trends of thought without any successful attempt at harmonizing them into an intellectually consistent organic system or did he succeed in removing the fragmentariness of different systems of thought and belief dissolving half-truths into the unity of one great truth?"<sup>40</sup> In summoning up an answer to this vexing question, Khalifa notes that "Most of Iqbal's thoughts and sentiments are expressed within the framework of Islam, and a substantial portion of his message is directly addressed to the Muslims<sup>41</sup> to whose regeneration and awakening he had dedicated his life."<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Dar, B.A. *Inspiration from the West* in Malik, Hafeez (ed.) *Iqbal: Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan*, New York, 1971, Columbia, p.187.

<sup>40</sup> Sharif, M.M., (ed) *A History of Muslim philosophy*, Vol. II, Wiesbaden, Otto Harrassowitz, 1966, p. 1620, Article of Dr. Khalifa Abdul Hakim (*Renaissance in Indo-Pakistan*).

<sup>41</sup> Sharif, M.M. (ed.) *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, p. 1630. See also B.A. Dar, 1967: 212 - 213. Here, after outlining the influences of Western thinkers, notably Kant, Nietzsche, and Bergson, Dar rightfully points out that:

Under the influence of Jalal al-Din Rumi (1207-1273), the great mystic poet, whose philosophical outlook was allied in several important respects with post-Kantian voluntaristic thought in the West, as represented by Nietzsche and Bergson, he evolved a new system of thought that was meant to revitalize the Muslims of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. (p. 212)

"Iqbal, Muhammad", in *The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, Vol.IV, ed. Paul Edwards. New York: Macmillan, 1967.

In Iqbal's writings, this framework emerged as an inspiration from Rumi (1207-1273) whom Iqbal adores as his 'Master':

The Master from Rum, a thinker of pure disposition, Unravelled Unravelled the secrets of Life and Death for us.<sup>43</sup>

Vahid who undertook intensive study of Iqbal's art and thought, arrived at a similar conclusion:

Rumi and Iqbal are so interconnected today that no student can work on one without referring to the other. So long as there are people in the world who will read Rumi's poetry and rejoice in its spiritual raptures, and seek sustenance in the peace and solace it generates, Iqbal's poetry will also be read with it, and will continue to be a source of inspiration, delight, and spiritual comfort for humanity.<sup>44</sup>

The distinctiveness of Iqbal's dialectics, namely, its entrenchment in theism, becomes yet more vivid when we read his critical appraisal of western thinkers. As ably condensed by Sibte Hasan, Iqbal in his poem 'Sohbat-i-Raftgan' [Assembly of the Departed] brings out the salient features of Western socialist thought in the following manner:

Explaining his theory of dialectics, Hegel says that "the garden, and the valley are manifestations of the hidden Reality. The nature of the contradiction has provided the taste of strife to the Master and the Worker, to the dictator and the dictated." Tolstoy says that "the double-faced intellect has, on the one hand created the philosophy of self-worship (egotism) and on the other teaches submission to the poor worker."... Karl Marx says that "Man, who knows the secret of the whole and parts is estranged from himself; and on account of capitalism, man has become the executioner of man." It is remarkable that a man (Iqbal) who was not familiar with Marx's

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<sup>42</sup> Fayyaz, Muhammad, "Faiz and the Dialectic of Revolutions", South Asian Horizons, Vol.IV, p. 73, (An overview of this aspect is given in this article.

<sup>43</sup> Iqbal, Muhammad, Payam-i-Mashriq, Lahore, Sh. Ghulam Ali, (First Published in 1923), p.7.

<sup>44</sup> Vahid, Syed Abdul, Studies in Iqbal, Lahore, Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1967 p. 124.

early philosophical manuscripts should have presented in two lines the kernel of Marx's philosophy of man in capitalist society.<sup>45</sup>

However closer this version of socialist thought may seem to that of Iqbal's, the fact remains that Iqbal has prefaced the above poem with an incisive critique of western civilization of which socialism is but one intellectual product. Iqbal is convinced<sup>46</sup> as does he establish in this preface ('Naqsh-i-Frang'), that West is deeply engrossed in intellectualism without distinctly realizing the limits of human intellect and without having any regard for the suffering humanity. As a consequence of this world-view that has inflicted global dehumanization under the garb of imperialism and colonialism, not only has the West donated crises to the non-West, but has also plunged itself deeper into these self-invited crises despite its scientific and technological marvels.<sup>47</sup> Not knowing where and how to search for solution, West is gradually but surely sinking into an abyss. Solution, says Iqbal, certainly exists for the one who wishes to sincerely look for it and implement it: it lies in complementing intellect with love for humanity, in exploring the true essence of existence hidden beneath the surface of perception, and in creating a system of social relations that transcends economics of human existence in order to view totality of existence as a

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<sup>45</sup> Hasan, S. Sibte, Iqbal's concept of man: Part II, Pakistan Progressive, Vol.7, No.1.

<sup>46</sup> Iqbal, Muhammad, payam-i-Mahshriq, p. 225-233.

<sup>47</sup> It seems relevant to give here Iqbal's conception of science and art in order that his criticism of Western civilization becomes much more clear. In the Secrets he says:

The object of science and art is not knowledge,

The object of the garden is not the bud and the flower,

Science is an instrument for the preservaton of Life.

Science is a means of invigorating the Self. Science and art are servants of Life,

slaves born and bred in its house.

(in Nicholson: 26)

At another place, Iqbal states it explicitly that "science must necessarily select for study certain specific aspects of Reality only and exclude others. It is pure dogmatism on the part of science to claim aspects to be studied." (1982:113).

synthesis of uniqueness of the self and the sociality of the community. In a pessimistic yet an argumentative tone, Iqbal asserts that the course that western civilization has charted for itself, is completely alien to this complementation and synthesis. The inevitable result of traversing such course would therefore be that:

Your (western) civilization will commit suicide with its own dagger,

For, a nest built on a tender bough is fated not to survive for long.<sup>48</sup>

Or

Western civilization is nothing but a confusion of perception and heart,

The reason is that its spirit could not resist contamination.

If the spirit does not remain pure, then all these finer things disappear---

Purity of existence, exalted imagination, nobler tastes.<sup>49</sup>

It is clear then that Iqbal did study western philosophical systems, not for imitation and emulation but in a quest for a self-sustaining, self-perpetuating social system which is in harmony with the potentialities and principles of nature and human nature:

Demean not thy personality by imitation. Guard it, as it is a priceless jewel.<sup>50</sup>

Returning to Iqbal's dialectics, at least one thing becomes irrefutably evident that it is not akin to a mode of thought adopted by western civilization which, through this adoption, enslaved itself of its own social product, leaving virtually no room for any possibility of transcendence. Iqbal's dialectics is of supreme theistic king which operates in the domain of nature, self, and society, and moves forward teleologically, clearing up

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<sup>48</sup> Kulyat-i-Iqbal: Urdu. One-volume edition of Iqbal's Urdu poetry, comprising Bang-i-Dara (1924), Bal-i-Jibril (1936), Zarb-i-Kalim (1936), and Armaghan-i-Hijaz (Urdu section: 1938). Lathore: Sh. Ghulam Ali.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p.533.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p630.

obstructions with will and action, to a destiny that has been awaiting its ascendance and completion since the very first day of coming into being of the universe. "...the universe," argues Iqbal, "is not a completed act: it is still in the course of formation. There can be no complete truth about the universe, for the universe has not yet become 'whole'. The process of creation is still going on, and man too takes his share in it, inasmuch as he helps to bring order into at least a portion of the chaos."<sup>51</sup>

The process of creation, or creative movement, hinges 'becoming'," and Iqbal firmly believes in their oppositional and appositional relations:

This world is perhaps still incomplete,

Since the sound of 'Being' and 'Becoming' is constantly heard.<sup>52</sup>

This dialectical relationship between Being and Becoming through transmutation and transformation of the one into the other, has occupied philosophical thought for a considerably long time. Even today the most contemporary philosophies like phenomenology and existentialism, show their deeper concern with the essence of these two basic entities with as much rigour as the early pre-Socratic philosophy. In fact, according to a well-respected norm of philosophical thinking, it is the exploration and understanding of the relation between Being and Becoming which legitimately claims a central concern in philosophy as distinct from natural sciences which deal primarily with its manifestations in the phenomenal world.

Iqbal as a serious student of philosophical thought was fully aware of the centrality of Being and Becoming in classical and contemporary idea-systems. Those who considered being as an abstraction and proposed to capture its essence in a language devoid of action, did not have any word of admiration or sympathy from Iqbal, may they be Plato, neo-Platonists, or rationalists: he is thoroughly critical of them all. About plato, for instance, he observes:

Since he (Plato) was without any taste for action,

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<sup>51</sup> Nicholson, *The Secrets of the Self*, XVII-XVIII.

<sup>52</sup> *Kulyat-i-Iqbal*: Urdu. p.320.

His soul was enraptured by the non-existent; He disbelieved in the material universe And became the creator of invisible Ideas.<sup>53</sup>

And:

The peoples were poisoned by his intoxication: He slumbered and took no delight in deeds.<sup>54</sup>

‘Action’ and ‘deed’ are certainly the prime foci of Iqbal’s thought, so much so that platonic philosophy which dominated idealistic thought for several hundred years became no more than deceit and opiate in Iqbal’s judgement. Perhaps it is too severe a verdict which needs some restructuration, especially in view of the most recent discoveries of quantum physics. Iqbal, so it seems, like Bergson was still appreciative of the atomistic theory first enunciated by Democritus: at times, he alludes to its authenticity fervently. However, this theory as an explanatory paradigm for the structure of matter has been shown to be inadequate by the theory of relativity and quantum theory. Heisenberg while discussing the philosophical history of the conceptualization of matter, unequivocally declares that:

This whole description agrees in every way with the central theme of Plato’s idealistic philosophy. The fundamental structure in the phenomena is not given by material objects. The ideas are more fundamental than the objects.<sup>55</sup>

Iqbal had the knowledge of Heisenberg’s principle of indeterminacy and its implications for the philosophy of matter<sup>56</sup>--and he invoked this principle to emphasize the incompleteness’ of the universe -- yet Platonic idealism as it penetrated and disfigured Muslim thought, remained with him a major target of disgust.

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<sup>53</sup> Nicholson, *The Secrets of the Self*, p.58.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p.59.

<sup>55</sup> Heisenberg, Werner, *Natural law and the Structure of Matter*, London: Rebel Press,1964, p. 19.

<sup>56</sup> Fayyaz, Muhammad, “Islamic Ideology: A preliminary Exploration,” *Pakistan Studies*, Vol. 1, No.1, 1982, p. 182.

It seems obvious from Iqbal's writings that he considers this version of idealism as the most singular source of decadence that humanity in general and the Muslims in particular experienced in past centuries. Under the influence of this philosophy, he maintains, Muslims lost every regard for action and indulged in utopianizing worlds and futures that would descend from above on their own volition. As remarked by Vahid:

He (Iqbal) began looking beyond symptoms for the root-cause of the evil (decadence). It did not take him long to diagnose the disease. His deep and wide knowledge of sociology and the history of different cultures convinced him that the main responsibility for Oriental decadence lay at the door of philosophical systems which inculcated self-negation, abnegation and self-abandonment.<sup>57</sup>

Such self-negation and self-abandonment promoted asceticism and fatalism which assumed the mystical form of 'Wandat-al-Wujud' (unityism) and gradually eroded all the vitality of existence. To what degree is this influence valid, is rather difficult to ascertain, yet fact of the matter is that degeneration had taken hold of Muslims and became chillingly pervasive in Iqbal's days. The West, contends Iqbal, freed itself of idealism, invigorated itself with philosophies of empiricism and materialism and consequently overpowered nature and human societies. It must be quickly added here that it should not be understood as meaning that by postulating this shift in western thought Iqbal tends to condone this thought's consequences and the intentions of its entrepreneurial practitioners. Quite to the contrary, as discussed earlier, Iqbal sees in this thought and civilization seeds of their own demise germinating. They lack, he holds, those essential ingredients of a lasting happiness which comes through only by articulating individuality with the centrality of community. As it is, the West has dismantled community -- the spiritual and moral focus of human existence -- and pitched one individual against another in the name of free competition. The nihilistic tendency woven into this kind of materialism is fatal to self-development, the very essence of individuality, and turns individual human beings into bundles of particles and perceptions that aimlessly wander in this vast universe. Godlessness, says Iqbal, is a logical outcome of such thought-systems and, therefore, it is bound to take away all that which could potentially provide a

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<sup>57</sup> Vahid, Syed Abdul, Iqbal: His Art and Thought, London, John Murray, 1959, p.27.

basic unifying force. As a result, instead of replenishing energy lost in aimlessness, constant depletion occurs, to the extent that a void envelopes the individual. Vitality and optimism as unique attributes of natural individuality, give way to decadence and despair.

Iqbal is a philosopher of hope, and his main task, after carrying out an intensive analysis of human thought, consists in synthesizing materialism with spiritualism: materialism of a different order, not of the western brand which legitimizes and nurtures exploitation of both nature and human beings; similarly, spiritualism of a novel kind, not of the traditional form of mysticism which rejects the existing world as unreal. To be sure, the task is an arduous one, and requires the philosopher and his audience to be simultaneously meditative and articulate. While the philosopher was undoubtedly a profound thinker, the audience -- the nation of Iqbal's time -- perhaps was not so patient with him. He complains with anguish:

It is not easy for the candle to throb alone: Ah, there is no moth worthy of me?

How long shall I wait for one to share my grief? How long must I search for a confidant?<sup>58</sup> And prays to God:

I beg of Thy grace a sympathizing friend, And adept in the mysteries of my nature,

A friend endowed with madness and wisdom,

One that know the not the phantom of vain things,

That I may confide my lament to his soul And see again my face in his heart.<sup>59</sup>

The synthesis Iqbal sought was the synthesis of 'madness' and 'wisdom' and he found it vibrating in what he calls khudi or self.<sup>60</sup> for its expression,

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<sup>58</sup> Nicholson: *Secrets of the Self*, pp. 146.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 147-148.

<sup>60</sup> Khudi has been translated as ego, ego-hood, self, self-hood etc. Literally, the term means "that which belongs to oneself" and therefore perhaps self-assertion, self-identity, or self-concept, may be the terms appropriate to convey the meaning that Iqbal associated with

he chose poetry as the most appealing medium and, from within poetry, the ‘masnavi’ as the most fluent and most effective form. The choice produced a systematic exposition in the philosophical poem, *Asrar-i-Khudi* [The Secrets of the Self] written, as tells Iqbal in the Prologue, under inspiration of the ‘Master’ [Rural] who said:

“O frenzied lover,

Take a draught of love’s pure wine.

Strike the chords of thine heart and rouse a

tumultuous strain.

... Thou art fire: fill the world with thy glow!

Make others burn with thy burning!<sup>61</sup>

In Iqbal’s own words, his philosophy of self as elaborated in the *Secrets* is based on the premise that “All life is individual; there is no such thing as universal life. God himself is an individual: He is the most unique individual.”<sup>62</sup> Life being individual, explains Iqbal, “its highest form, so far, is the Ego [Khudi] in which the individual becomes a self-contained exclusive centre. physically as well as spiritually man is a self-contained centre, but he is not yet a complete individual. The greater his distance from God, the less his individuality. He who comes nearest to God is the completest person. Not that he is finally absorbed in God. On the contrary, he absorbs God into himself.”<sup>63</sup>

Here Iqbal seems to be resorting to the Heglian idea of alienation, but it must be remembered that unlike Hegel he does not consider God as a transcendental idea whose very being depends on the self-consciousness of

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Khudi. However, the author has used ‘Self’ as the English equivalent of Khudi as Iqbal did occasionally in his English writings.

<sup>61</sup> Nicholson, *Op. cit.*, p. 10-11.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. XVII.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. XIX.

the individual being.<sup>64</sup> It is not so that an abstract idea is conceived in order to capture another abstract idea and thus a conceptual world apart from the real one created; on the contrary, Iqbal's individual is a person of here and now who lives and transacts with other persons and nature, with full consciousness of his own- and their potentialities:

subject, object, means, and causes -

All these forms it (Self) assumes for the purpose of action.

The self rises, kindles, falls, glows, breathes, burns, shines, walks and flies.<sup>65</sup>

Asceticism or withdrawal from action and drifting into self-negation, as mentioned before, are the antinomies of self. Self is a vitality that permeates the universe. While God created the universe and left it to its essence (self) to propel it, the individual, by the faculty of self-consciousness, took over the task of pulling it out of chaos and pushing it toward completeness. The strife is not over yet: the movement is continuing. To submit to chaos and to develop a sense of helplessness, is, in Iqbal's vocabulary, the defeat of the mission for which the act of creation of both the universe and the individual was first taken in hand. Such a defeatism was advocated and practised by Sufis of unityism which eventually infiltrated common people and led to inaction and stagnation. Such a world-view is nothing but a betrayal of the mission that was assigned them the very first day with their very first breath, and which they 'promised' to carry out. In the following verse, Iqbal reminds the Creator and the individual alike of this mission:

Why did you ask me to leave the paradise (and descend on earth)?

(Now when it is so) there is a lot to do in and for this world, so do not press me for return to you.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> For a brief discussion of the Hegelian notion of self-consciousness in human beings and in the Absolute Idea and their interrelation, see Fayyaz, 1982:5.

<sup>65</sup> Nicholson, *Opt. Cit.*, p.18.

<sup>66</sup> *Kulyat-i-Iqbal* (Urdu), p.299.

Being matter-bound yet conquering matter, and being with human beings yet nurturing individuality, are the kind of assertions which can lead one to declare in exasperation, as they did to Anand, that there is no doubt that there are contradictions in Iqbal's thinking; "but," defends Anand by saying that "Iqbal would say: Yes, I contradict myself! I contain multitudes."<sup>67</sup> 'Multitudes' have perhaps emanated from Iqbal's dialectical conception of reality of existence, which Khalifa has succinctly described as follows:

Iqbal has an organic view of life and existence in which heaven, embraces earth, intuition and faith \_ are reconciled with universal reason, science ceases to be antagonistic to religion, and infinity informs and animates finitude. His view of existence is based on a conception of the unity and continuity of all aspects aspects of Being with no breaks, gulfs, or gaps.<sup>68</sup>

Additionally, it could be argued that that which appears as contradictory on the surface is intrinsically not as such if we pay serious attention to two considerations: totality and symbolization. Thought and matter, subject and object, means and ends, particular and universal, and a host of other dichotomies coined by traditional philosophy, specifically idealism, are not in fact dichotomies in Iqbal's language: they are one whole, one totality, engaged in the process of constant evolution and shifting positions. Being of evolutionary character, it sounds unjustified at any point in evolution to freeze them and treat them as static entities. Until such time the evolution realizes its own will, transformation would continue resulting in infinite alternations, infusions, and diffusions, thus defying the application of any analytic approach.

With regard to the second consideration, namely, symbolization, Iqbal has emphatically stated in many passages and verses the role of knowledge -- true, mature knowledge, not the one which is a slave to perception and superficialities -- in fortifying self: "The highest power is united in him with

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<sup>67</sup> Anand, Mulk Raj, 1978, "Afterward: The Humanism of Muhammad Iqbal", an appendix to *Secrets of the Self* (tr. R.A. Nicholson) New Delhi, Arnold-Heinemann, p. 117.

<sup>68</sup> Sharif, M.M., ed., *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, vol. II, p. 1625.

the highest knowledge. In his life, thought and action, instinct and reason, become one.”<sup>69</sup>

Iqbal separates true knowledge from ‘modern’ knowledge on the grounds that while the former is the knowledge of the essence, the latter confines itself to the appearance and phenomena:

Modern knowledge is the greatest blind –  
Idol-worshipping, idol-selling, idol-making!  
Shackled in the prison of phenomena,  
It has not overleaped the limits of the sensible.  
It has fallen down in crossing the bridge of Life,  
It has laid the knife to its own throat.<sup>70</sup>

It is through symbolization that transcendence becomes a possibility in spite of its roots in matter, space and time -- in other words, in specificity. symbolization is not necessarily a generalization though it has its seeds in it. Its primary purpose is to mediate matter with action and reason, gain its knowledge and understanding, and absorb it into experience. The raw matter and its manifestations now become meaningful and sharable, and generate ideas which go beyond the immediacy of sense perceptions.

Self vis-a-vis community experiences these processes of transformation and transcendence: while it is unique, assertive and aggressive, it has to accept its negation. (non-Self) as an equally vital force in itself, contend with it, and grow through continuous syntheses. In *Ramuz-i-Bekhudi* [Mysteries of selflessness], Iqbal lays down eight essential requirements for an ideal community:

- (i) It must be based on spiritual considerations such as monotheism.
- (ii) It must centre round inspired leadership or prophet-hood.

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<sup>69</sup> Nicholson: *The Secret of Self*, p. XXVII.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 129-130.

(iii) It must possess a code for its guidance.

(iv) It needs a centre.

(v) It must have a clear goal towards which the whole community should strive.

(vi) It must gain supremacy over the forces of nature.

(vii) It must safeguard maternity.<sup>71</sup>

given the above requirements and the political-economic system that western civilization has created for itself, it is obvious that 'community', in its authentic sense, disappeared from its landscape with the onslaught of capitalism (privatization of property, glorification of profit motive) and pluralistic-democratic liberalism. Unless a reinstatement of 'community' in its genuine form is passionately sought and implemented in the West, self, as Iqbal envisages it, has no conceivable means of realizing its own potentialities through transcendence and synthesis.

By laying down properties of the self, its uniqueness, its grace and dignity, its potentialities, Iqbal has accorded self a meaning-context rarely accorded it in the earlier thought. Self and self-consciousness flow from the consciousness of potentialities, unobscured and undistorted by circumstances of subservience, dependence, and exploitation. In other words, the circumstances of subjugation which not only obliterate the very sense of self and self-realization but also make its achievement an impossibility. The result, then, could be, as witnessed by Iqbal, a negation of the role of self in guiding the universe to its ultimate destiny of peace and harmony. While the universe awaits its completion, the self remains unresponsive to its calling. It is, in Iqbal's thinking, a treason!

How long wilt thou fain lament like the nightingale?

How long make thine abode in gardens?

O thou whose auspicious snare would do honour to the Phoenix

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<sup>71</sup> Vahid, S.A., Iqbal: His Art and Thought, 1959, p.47.

Build a nest on the high mountains,

A nest embosomed in lightning and thunder, Loftier than eagle's eyrie,

That thou mayst be fit for Life's battle,<sup>72</sup>

That thy body and soul may burn in Life's fire. Notes and References

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<sup>72</sup> Nicholson, Opt.Cit, p.71.

# IQBAL'S VIEW OF PRAYER

DR. RIFFAT HASSAN

According to a well-known hadith; prayer is the essence of worship.<sup>73</sup> It is the living ground and basis of religion. In Iqbal's conception of prayer we find the keystone of all his religious ideas.<sup>74</sup> Prayer in the contact of God and humanity. As Iqbal says, "religious ambition soars higher than the ambition of philosophy. Religion is not satisfied with mere conception; it seeks a more intimate knowledge of and association with the object of its pursuit. The agency through which this association is achieved is the act of worship or prayer ending in spiritual illumination." For Iqbal, each act of prayer is a kind of 'meraj' or Ascension to Heaven. He says,

در بدن داری اگر سوزِ حیات  
هست معراجِ مسلمان در صلوات

(Pas chih Bayed Kard Ai Aqwam-sharq? P.50)<sup>75</sup>

Prayer is a principle of integration because it coordinates all the elements that make up a human being's personality-thought, will and emotion-through their relation to a dominant purpose.<sup>76</sup> Prayer is the activity of the whole person an activity through which human beings apprehend their high destiny and stretch towards it.<sup>77</sup> It is the way to the fulness of life.

Like William James, Iqbal regards prayer as being instinctive in its origin.<sup>78</sup> William James set forth in his Psychology what he believes to be the

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<sup>73</sup> Schimmel, A.M., "The Idea of Prayer in the Thought of Iqbal" Mohammad Iqbal, Karachi, 1960, p. 68

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> If your body has the ardour of life, then for the Muslim 'me'raj' lies in ritual prayer.

<sup>76</sup> Brown, W. A., The Life of Prayer in a World of Science, London, 1927, p. 132.

<sup>77</sup> Herman, E, Creative Prayer, London, 1921, p. 35.

<sup>78</sup> Iqbal, M. The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, Lahore, 1962 p. 90.

fundamental spring of prayer: “We hear in these days of scientific enlightenment a great deal of discussion about the efficacy of prayer; and many reasons are given why we should not pray. But in all this very little is said of the reason why we do pray, which is simply that we cannot help praying. It seems probable that, in spite of all that ‘science’ may do to the contrary, men will continue to pray to the end of time, unless their mental nature changes in a manner which nothing we know should lead us to expect. The impulse to pray is a necessary consequence of the fact that whilst the innermost of the empirical selves of a man is a Self of the social sort, it yet can find its only adequate Socius in an ideal world. Most men, either continually or occasionally, carry a reference to it in their breasts. The humblest outcast on this earth can feel himself to be real and valid by means of this higher recognition. And, on the other hand, for most of us, a world with no such inner refuge when the outer social self failed and dropped from us would be the abyss of horror.”<sup>79</sup>

Prayer, then, is the instinctive outreaching of the human spirit for some reality which satisfies its deepest longings and embodies its highest ideals.<sup>80</sup> The native yearning of the soul for intercourse and companionship takes it to God “as naturally as the homing instinct of the pigeon takes it to the place of its birth.”<sup>81</sup>

The very fact that men have the instinct to pray involves “the latent recognition of a metaphysical reality, standing over against physical reality, which men are driven to adore, and long to apprehend.”<sup>82</sup> In Iqbal’s picturesque language, “prayer ... is an expression of man’s inner yearning for response in the awful silence of the universe.”<sup>83</sup> And response there is, for if there were no response human- beings could not long continue to pray. The instinct to pray would then shrivel like the functionless organ.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> James, W., quoted by Jones, R. M., “Prayer and the . . . Mystic Vision” in *Concerning Prayer*, London, 1916, p. 119.

<sup>80</sup> Brown, W. A., *The Life of Prayer in world of Science*, p. 9.

<sup>81</sup> James W., “Prayer and the mystic Vision”, p. 119.

<sup>82</sup> Underhill, E., *Worship*, London, 1941”, p. 4.

<sup>83</sup> *The Reconstruction- of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 92.

<sup>84</sup> Jones, L. M., “Prayer and the Mystic Vision”, p. 118.

Iqbal denies that prayer is auto-suggestion since autosuggestion has nothing to do with the opening of the sources of life that lie at the depths of the human ego.<sup>85</sup> He points out that spiritual illumination confers new power by moulding the human personality, but auto-suggestion leaves no permanent life-effects behind.<sup>86</sup> Iqbal finds support in William Brown, who observes that rather than prayer being auto-suggestion, “I am disposed to say that auto-suggestion is prayer ... Just as the mere fact of seeking for the causes of a particular phenomenon involves as its intellectual basis the assumption of the principle of the uniformity of nature, so I would urge the emotional basis of a particular auto-suggestion is some measure of confidence, implicitly felt if not explicitly confessed, in the general beneficence of things. In religious natures this confidence expresses itself definitely as faith in God, and, with this explicitly assumed, auto-suggestion is quite clearly a form of prayer.”<sup>87</sup>

Iqbal believes that the spirit of all true prayer is congregational and that “the real object of prayer...is...achieved when the act of prayer becomes congregational”<sup>88</sup> When a group of persons all animated by the same passion and concentrating on the same object join in prayer, such an association “multiplies the normal man’s power of perception, deepens his emotion and dynamizes his will to a degree unknown to him the privacy of his individuality. “<sup>89</sup>In other words, associative prayer enhances human sensibility.

Referring to sura Al-Baqarah 2: 109, Iqbal says that the direction towards which one turns one’s face while praying “is certainly not essential to the spirit of prayer.”<sup>90</sup> But the choice of one particular direction in Islamic worship does serve a useful purpose. All Muslims pray with their faces turned in the direction of the Ka’ba. The Ka’ba thus becomes a symbol of

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<sup>85</sup> The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, p. 90.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Brown, W., The Practice of Prayer in Religion and Life, New York, 1923, pp 81-96.

<sup>88</sup> The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, p. 92.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid. p. 93.

Muslim unity, and figures very significantly both in the act of pilgrimage and in the act of prayer (which Iqbal calls “a lesser pilgrimage”<sup>91</sup>) Iqbal says,

مرکزِ ملتِ اسلامیہ بیت الحرام است

(Rumuz-e-Bekhudī, p. 154)<sup>92</sup>

Prayer performs another important social function. It “creates and fosters the sense of social equality as much as it tends to destroy the feeling of rank or race-superiority in the worshippers.”<sup>93</sup> In other words, it equalizes all. In classic lines, Iqbal says that at the time of prayer

ایک ہی صف میں ہو گئے کھڑے محمود و ایاز  
نہ کوئی بندہ رہا اور نہ کوئی بندہ نواز  
ابندہ و صاحب و محتاج و غنی ایک ہوئے  
اتیری سرکار میں پہنچے تو سبھی ایک ہوئے

(Bang-e-Dara, p. 174)<sup>94</sup>

In Iqbal’s poetry the various parts of the ritual prayer are transmuted into symbols having a spiritual significance<sup>95</sup>. The ‘azan’ (call to prayer) is the

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<sup>91</sup> Nicholson, R. A, *The Secrets of the Self*, Lahore, 1964, p.7.

<sup>92</sup> The centre of the Islamic Community is Mecca’s Sacred House.

<sup>93</sup> *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 93.

<sup>94</sup> In the same row stand the king (Mahmud) and the slave (Ayaz), no minister now remains, nor any master, servant and lord, the poor and rich are equal, coming into Your Presence all are equal.

<sup>95</sup> Schimmel, A. M. *Gabriel’s Wing, heiden*, 1963, p. 177.

symbol of the living religion, “perhaps the best single epitome of Muslim belief and action”.<sup>96</sup> The words “Allahu Akbar” (Allah is the greatest) which form the beginning of the call to prayer, are the triumphant affirmation of God’s greatness by a person who realizes his Or her own station as God’s deputy on earth.<sup>97</sup>

Prostration in prayer signifies ‘faqr’ or spiritual poverty, and standing upright is emblematic of sovereignty. -

The life of the ‘Momin’ consists of both prostration and standing upright, both humility and dominion. Of the faithful Iqbal says

جلائی کبریائی در قیاش  
جمالِ بندگی اندر سجودش

(Armaghan-e-Hijaz, p. 207)<sup>98</sup>

Humanity is more blessed than angels for to angels is granted only one of the movements of prayer-either ‘sujud’ or Qiyam’ or ‘ruku’ while humanity can perform them all.<sup>99</sup> Furthermore the angels cannot partake of human agony.

پیکرِ نوری کو ہے سجدہ میسر تو کیا  
!اس کو میسر نہیں سوز و گدازِ سجود

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<sup>96</sup> Cragg, K. Preface to The Call of the Minaret, New York, 1956, pp vii-viii.

<sup>97</sup> Schimmel, A. M., Gabriel’s Wing, p. 178.

<sup>98</sup> The tremendum of Divine Majesty is in his standing upright, the beauty of human worship is in his prostration.

<sup>99</sup> Schimmel, A. M. Gabriel’s Wing, p. 179.

(Bal-e-Jibril, p. 129)<sup>100</sup>

The hadith “There is no prayer at all if not with the presence of the God.”<sup>101</sup> is very dear to mystics. Iqbal too protests against those who pray mechanically without the spirit of true devotion. Paying only tip-service to God makes God’s complain in “Jawab-e-Shikwa”

رہ گئی رسم ازاں' روح بلالی نہ رہی

(Bang-e-Dara, p. 219)<sup>102</sup>

Iqbal also protests against those who indulge in unnecessary ostentation in matters of worship. Neither God nor the 'faqir' care for outward show - it is the inner feeling which makes holy and beautiful the act of prayer. God says to the angels with touching simplicity

میں نا خوش و بیزار ہوں مر مر کی سلوں سے  
!میرے لیے مٹی کا حرم اور بنا دو

Li? (Bal-e-Jibril, p. 150)<sup>103</sup>

Beginning from Asrar-e-Khudi, Iqbal never tired of repeating that humanity must not lose itself in God as a drop loses itself in the ocean, but,

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<sup>100</sup> What if the creatures of light have been granted the honour of prostration?

They do not know the burning and ardour of prostration!

<sup>101</sup> Schimmel, A. M., Gabriel's Wing, p. 176.

<sup>102</sup> Only the convention of 'azan' is left, the (ardent) spirit of Bilal is no more.

<sup>103</sup> I am unhappy with, and weary of, marble slabs, make for me another temple of clay.

on the contrary, strengthen its ego and enlarge its possibilities.<sup>104</sup> “Prayer”, says Iqbal, “is a unique process of discovery whereby the searching ego affirms itself in the very moment of self-negation, and thus discovers its own worth and justification as a dynamic factor in the life of the universe.”<sup>105</sup>

Iqbal denies that there is anything mystical about prayer, which he regards as “a normal vital act by which the little island of our personality suddenly discovers its situation in a larger whole in life.”<sup>106</sup> Prayer then does not mean “loss or annihilation of personal selfhood but rather the heightening of everything which constitutes the inner citadel of personality.”<sup>107</sup> Moses, standing losing himself in the flames is Iqbal’s symbol of the faithful in communion with God.<sup>108</sup>

“Prayer in Islam”, says Iqbal, “is the ego’s escape from mechanism to freedom.”<sup>109</sup> The timing of the daily prayers saves the ego “from the mechanizing effect of sleep and business.”<sup>110</sup> The routine of mechanical living atrophies the freedom and freshness of the human soul and deadens its awareness of deeper Reality. Ritual prayer leads to liberty because it “restores ‘self-possession’ to the ego by bringing it into closer touch with the ultimate source of life and freedom.”<sup>111</sup> Iqbal says

وقتِ عصرِ آمدِ صدایِ الصَّلواتِ  
آن که مومن را کند پاک از جهات

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<sup>104</sup> Schimmel, A. M., “The Idea of Prayer in the Thought of Iqbal”, in Mohammad Iqbal (Poet and Philosopher), The Pak-German Forum, Karachi, 1960, p. 70.

<sup>105</sup> The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, pp 92-93.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., p. 90.

<sup>107</sup> Jones, R. M. “Prayer and the Mystic Vision” p. 122.

<sup>108</sup> Schimmel, A. M., “The Idea of Prayer in the Thought of Iqbal”, p. 89.

<sup>109</sup> The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, p. 109.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

Not only does prayer free human being's from the bondage of mechanism, but through it they also rises above the other obstacles which limit their freedom, for "prayer delivers us from two great enemies of freedom - doubt and fear."<sup>113</sup> Fellow-ship and communion with God liberates humanity from all that is not God. Iqbal says

یہ ایک سجدہ جسے تو گراں سمجھتا ہے  
!بزار سجدے سے دیتا ہے آدمی کو نجات

(Zarb-e-Kalim, p. 32)<sup>114</sup>

Through prayer humanity freed from the mastery of all but God. But prayer, says Iqbal, is meaningful only if the one who prays worships God 'Truly and has no other gods before him or her

وہی سجدہ ہے لائق اہتمام  
کہ ہو جس سے ہر سجدہ تجھ پر حرام

(Bal-e-Jibril, p. 92)<sup>115</sup>

Prayer is not only ritual prayer. It is not just a certain act, rather it is a life-attitude.<sup>116</sup> "An act is temporal or profane," says Iqbal, "if it is done in a

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<sup>112</sup> In the afternoon came the call for prayer which gives the 'Momin' freedom from (the bondage) the world.

<sup>113</sup> Brown, W. A. The Life of Prayer in a World of Science, p. 132.

<sup>114</sup> This one prostration which you deem too exacting liberates you from a thousand prostrations.

<sup>115</sup> Only that prostration is worth solicitude which makes every other prostration forbidden for you.

spirit of detachment from the infinite complexity of life behind it, it is spiritual if it is inspired by that complexity.”<sup>117</sup> In other words, what-ever tends to make explicit to humanity the consciousness of God and sharpens awareness of its relation to ultimate Reality, is prayer. As Victor Hugo said, there are moments when whatever be the attitude of the body, the soul is on its knees.<sup>118</sup> The soul is on its knees whenever a person seeks for the Truth in utter earnestness. He or she may be engaged in offering his, her (ritual) prayer or in a scientific pursuit - it is the spirit inspiring the act which counts in determining whether or not the act is an act of prayer. In any case, says Iqbal, the loving ardour of the faithful is not confined to fixed forms of prayer.

رہِ دیرِ تختتہ گلِ رجبینِ سجدہ ریزم  
کہ نیازِ من نگنجد بدورکعت نمازے

(Payam-e-Mashriq, p. 177)<sup>119</sup>

“The truth is”, says Iqbal, “that all search for knowledge is essentially a form of prayer. The scientific observer of Nature is a kind of mystic seeker in the act of prayer.”<sup>120</sup> Like the mystic, the scientist seeks to establish relations with Reality. Like the mystic, “he ashes, he seeks, he knocks.”<sup>121</sup> Like the mystic he has on insatiable thirst for the Truth. Citing an illustration taken from Rumi, Iqbal points out taht the Sufi like the hunter, is first led in his/her search by the footprints of the musk-deer, but once his/her total self becomes passionately involved in the quest, then he/she is guided by the

<sup>116</sup> Mueller, W. A. quoted in The Encyclopaedia of Religious Quotations (Edited by Mead, F. S.) London. 1965, p. 344.

<sup>117</sup> The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, p. 154.

<sup>118</sup> Hugo, V. quoted in The Encyclopaedia of Religious Quotations p. 341.

<sup>119</sup> Wherever I bow my head into the dust, roses rise - My asking will not find room in two rak'as of prayer (translation by Schimmel, A. M., Gabriel's Wing, p. 179).

<sup>120</sup> The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, p. 91.

<sup>121</sup> Anson, H. “Prayer as Understanding” in Concerning Prayer (by Various author), London, 1916

musk-gland itself and has no need to watch the track.<sup>122</sup> The scientist, like the Sufi first follows the footprints of the musk-deer, but then his/her “close contact with the behaviour of Reality,” sharpens his/her “inner perception for a deeper vision of it” and he/she can follow the muskgland.<sup>123</sup>

The act of prayer, in so far as it aims at knowledge, resembles reflection. “Like reflection it too is a process of assimilation, but the assimilative process in the case of prayer draws itself closely together and thereby acquires a power unknown to pure thought. In thought the mind observes and follows the working of Reality; in the act of prayer it gives up its career as a seeker of slow-footed universality and rises higher than thought to capture Reality itself.”<sup>124</sup> One attains to the “vision of that total - infinite which philosophy seeks but cannot find,”<sup>125</sup> when “‘Ha’ becomes “‘ishq’”.

Most human prayer takes the form of a petition to God - in other words, we pray for something. some people would not regard the cry of anguish wrung from the heart of the mother of a dying child as prayer. Some people would also say that when we pray to God for something, we are only petitioning, not praying. Iqbal would agree that prayer is “no more a means to something else than love is,”<sup>126</sup> that it is an end in itself. But he would not have said that asking God for something makes one’s prayer insincere or a means to an end. The relationship between Humanity and God is a deeply personal one. When we ask those whom we love for help or strength we are not using them as means to an end. Such dependence is a part of love. And Iqbal sees prayer not only as an act of obedience but also of love. His God is not an impersonal Deity but a Beloved who is also a Lover, who promised “Call Me and I respond to your call” (sura Mo”min 40:62) Iqbal who spent a great portion of his own life in prayer - the ‘faqir’ who would not incur anyone’s favour - also petitioned God - and believed that his prayer would bear fruit

مری نواہاے سحر گاہی سے کیا عجب

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<sup>122</sup> The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, p. 9.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., p. 90.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., pp 91-92.

<sup>126</sup> Jones, R. M., “Prayer and the Mystic Vision”, p. 118.

ازندہ ہو جائے وہ آتش کہ تری خاک میں ہے

(Bal-e-Jibril, p. 95)<sup>127</sup>

The belief that God responds to our prayers does not mean that our prayers are always granted. Kierkegaard said, "Prayer does not change God, but changes him who prays."<sup>128</sup> This deep truth is also embodied in the famous statement, "Who rises from Prayer a better man, his prayer is answered."<sup>129</sup> In a beautiful poem in Zarb-e-Kalim Iqbal says

تری دعا سے قضا تو بدل نہیں سکتی  
!مگر ہے اس سے یہ ممکن کو تو بدل جائے  
تری خودی میں اگر انقلاب ہو پیدا  
!عجب نہیں ہے کہ یہ چار سو بدل جائے

(Zarb-e-Kalim, p. 167)<sup>130</sup>

prayer, then, does not change the order of things, but it changes people and people change things. As Sura Ra'd 13:12 states "Verily God will not change the condition of men, till they change what is in themselves."<sup>131</sup> Prayer purifies, enlightens and at last transforms those who submit themselves to it.<sup>132</sup> "Such prayer - prayer which changes both the man who prays and the world he lives in - is not achieved without concentrated

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<sup>127</sup> It may be that through my prayers at dawn, the spark in your dust kindle into life.

<sup>128</sup> Kierkegaard, S. quoted in The Encyclopaedia of Religious Quotations, p. 342.

<sup>129</sup> Meredith, G. quoted in The Encyclopaedia of Religious quotations, p. 343.

<sup>130</sup> Your prayer cannot change the Universal Order, but it is possible, it will change you.

If a storm within your Self is born - strange it will not be if the world does change

<sup>131</sup> The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, p. 12.

<sup>132</sup> Underhill, E, Worship, London, 1941. p. 18.

effort.”<sup>133</sup> But once a human being has made this effort and attained spiritual perfection, then he/she is asked-even by. God-what he/she desires as his/her destiny.

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<sup>133</sup> Herman, E, Creative Prayer, p. 38.

# IS FREEDOM POSSIBLE?

SHAHZAD QAISER

Since many centuries the Western profane man is witnessing the eclipse of freedom. The modern man has severed the roots of Transcendence and as a consequence has fallen in the everlasting pit of human finitude. He has woven a web of 'knowledge' around him which is perpetually constricting his intelligence, will and soul. It is no accident that one of the existentialists feels himself to be a spider. The modern West has completely lost the starting point and there are no visible sign-posts leading to destination. The epistemological road is highly deceptive and leads no where. It is the sacred highway which leads to the castle of metaphysics. Therein lies the destiny of man. In order to understand the road to freedom it is incumbent upon the traveler to have a 'map' of the Absolute. Schuon says: "In metaphysics, it is necessary to start from the idea that the Supreme Reality is absolute...and that being absolute it is infinite...The distinction between the Absolute and the Infinite expresses the two fundamental aspects of the Real, that of essentiality and that of potentiality; this is the highest principal prefiguration of the masculine and the feminine poles. Universal Radiation, this Maya both divine and cosmic, springs from the second aspect, the Infinite, which coincides with All-possibility"<sup>134</sup>. The term Absolute was introduced by Schelling and Hegel in the late eighteenth century though the concept existed much earlier. It signified the ultimate reality embracing the finite world. The nature of the Absolute was discussed by numerous Western thinkers but the profane methodology could not fathom the essentiality of the Absolute. The Absolute is the Alpha and Omega of intellectual metaphysics. It can only be studied metaphysically. The modern West correspondingly lacks the notion of the Infinite. The concept of infinity in mathematics, logic, theology, and metaphysics is either fallacious or merely peripheral. Even the Greeks could not envisage the idea in its metaphysical perspective. Guenon observes:"

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<sup>134</sup> Survey of Metaphysics and Esoterism, World Wisdom Books Indiana, U.S.A., 1986, pp. 15-16.

...the Greeks had no notion of the Infinite. Besides, why do modern Westerners, when they imagine they are conceiving the Infinite, always represent it as a space, which can only be indefinite, and why do they persist in confusing eternity, which abides essentially in the “timeless” If one may express it, with perpetuity, which is but an indefinite extension of time, where as such misconceptions do not occur among Orientals? The fact is that the Western mind, being almost exclusively inclined to the study of the things of the senses, is constantly led to confuse conceiving with imagining, to the extent that whatever is not capable of sensible representation seems to it to be actually unthinkable for that very reason; even among the Greeks the imaginative faculties were preponderant. This is evidently the very opposite of pure thought; under these conditions there can be no intellectuality in the real sense of the word and consequently no metaphysic<sup>135</sup>.” The modern West sets limits to That which is without limits. Except for the Middle Ages, the Western consciousness has remained opaque to the concept of the Unlimited. It is the logic of transcendence which posits the possibility of knowing the limitless. The concept of metaphysical Infinity teaches us that it is by dint of Infinitude that the Absolute yearns to become conscious of Itself through man and universe. And it is All-embracing. The concept of the Infinite is intimately linked with universal possibility. Since the modern man does not understand the Absolute, therefore, he remains oblivious of the Infinitude implied in the notion of possibility. He fails to perceive that possibility conceived in its totality is unlimited. To set a limit to All-Possibility is a contradiction in terms. Also, the Westerners often make a false distinction between the possible and the -real and this constitutes their main difficulty in understanding the notion of freedom. From the metaphysical point of view, the possible and the real are identical and this is true regarding both forms of possibilities-the non manifested and the manifested ones.

Even the compossibilities form a ‘part’ of universal possibility. It is pertinent to observe that the Western concept of Being constricts the realm of possibility and this cannot be identified with the, Infinite. The Western ‘Chain of Being’ is tied to the Realm of finitude and consequently fails to

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<sup>135</sup> An Introduction to the Study of Hindu Doctrines,  
Luzac, London, pp.119-120.

develop a meta-physical understanding of Non-Being or Nothingness. The Western debate on possibility, thus remains enmeshed in the world of shadows. Aristotle, no doubt, had some inkling of the realm of possibility but what little metaphysical understanding he achieved has been lost in the contemporary world. The profane methodologies cannot reach the essence of possibility.

Is Freedom possible? It is a question which needs to be understood in the metaphysical perspective. It is through possibility that freedom comes in the world. In the absence of universal possibility, no particular possibility could exist And hence no Freedom. Each possibility is unique and hence 'there cannot be two identical possibilities in the universe. Man is defined in reference to his possibility. And each man's possibilities have also to be taken account of. Possibilities are not merely quantitative, they are essentially qualitative. The existentialists attempted to understand human freedom in reference to the individual existential possibilities. Kierkegaard in his book *Either/Or* (1843) initiated an existential understanding of freedom. An individual faces his freedom in a situation of either/or. If there is no such possibility, the question of freedom does not arise. He, in his later works, delineated further contours of human choice. Freedom is not a concept. It is an existential reality. He concerned himself primarily with ontological freedom. Marcel's work, *The Mystery of Being* (1950) reflects his philosophy of freedom. Freedom is not a rational concept. It is not a problem but belongs to the domain of mystery. It is disclosed in self's possibility for commitment and reason, promise, and betrayal. Faith and freedom reflect transcendence. Jaspers in his *Reason and Existence*(1935) makes the truth of Existence confront man with transcendence by virtue of which freedom is disclosed to man. His phenomenological method establishes the concrete possibility of freedom. Heidegger's *Being and Time* (1927) is a phenomenological description of being-in-the-world. Freedom is disclosed in concrete situations and man wins or loses the possibilities of his existence. Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* is a phenomenological study of Being-in-itself(en-soi) and Being-for-itself(pour-soi). Man is condemned to be free. Freedom arises in a situation. Choice is the essence of freedom. Man cannot escape from it. It is interesting to note that the Westerners are habitual in tracing the genealogy and themes of existentialism from the Greek heritage. The fabric of Existentialism, for example, starts from Plato's Allegory of the

Cave recorded in his dialogue, *The Republic*. It banks upon the Symposium as well. It moves to St. Augustine's *Confessions*; Pascal's *Pensees*; Rousseau's *A Discourse on the Moral effects of the art and Sciences*; Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*; Coleridge's *Dejection: An Ode*, Goethe's *Faust*; Hegel's *The phenomenology of Mind*, *The Introduction to the philosophy of History*; Holderlin's *Bread and Wine*; Stendhal's *The Red and the black*; Kierkegaard's *Either/Or Fear and Trembling*, *The Concept of Dread*, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, *The Sickness unto Death*; Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground* "the Grand Inquisitor" in the *Brothers Karamazov*; Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*, *The Joyful Wisdom*, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, *Beyond Good and Evil*, *The Genealogy of Morals*. *The Will to Power*; Mill's *Autobiography*; Dickens's *Hard Times*; Arnold's *Dover Beach*, *Hebraism and Hellenism*; Crane's *The Open Boat*; James's *The Varieties of Religious Experience*; Rilke's *The Note books of Malte Laurids Brigge*, *Duino Elegies*; Kafka's *Diaries*; 1914-1923, *The Great Wall of China*, *The Trial*; Hemingway's *A Clean Well-lighted Place*; Unamuno's *The Tragic Sense of Life*; Gasset's *In Search of Goethe From Within*; Heidegger's *Being and Time*, *What is Metaphysics*, *Holderlin and the essence of poetry*; Jasper's *Reason and Existenz*, *Truth and Symbol*; Sartre's *Nausea*, *Being and Nothingness*, *The Wall*, *Existentialism is a Humanism*; Camus's *The Myth of Sisyphus*, *The plague*, *The*

*Rebel*; Merleau-ponty's *The Phenomenology of perception*, *The primacy of Perception*; Buber's *I and Thou*, *Between Man and Man*; Berdyaev's *Slavery and Freedom*; Marcel's *Being and Having*; Tillich's *The Courage to Be*. The literary overture is identified with Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych*. The work in question does not strictly record the authors in their chronological order but groups them in reference to the vital epochs and the corresponding themes. Though this existential repository excludes certain important writers and a few masterpiece writings on the subject yet it succeeds in giving a peep in the heart of existentialism. The essential contradiction of this movement is that it totally surrenders to human finitude. Either transcendence is denied or is placed within immanence. Even vertical transcendence, if any, remains on the periphery. The metaphysical understanding of vertical and horizontal dimensions is never developed. Freedom no doubt, is essential to man but first one must know what its essentiality is? The existentialists notion of possibility and freedom, is highly

constricted inspite of the claims to the contrary. The sealing of the metaphysical possibilities of human existence has restricted the scope of possibility. With the negation of the possibility of contemplation, the possibility of action has been highly cramped. The sphere of action has merely become an outwardness which is counterfeit to inwardness. The concepts of existential metaphysics unlike that of intellectual/ traditional metaphysics do not open limitless perspectives of possibilities. They simply extend the boundaries of the finite. The existentialists have no doubt, much to say than the Rationalists, Positivists, Empiricists, Dialectical Materialists, Linguistic analysts and other schools of thought but their basic error consists in insulating their phenomenological method from the objective principle of intellectuality. As a consequence their understanding of man and his situation turns deceptive. The concepts of individuality or person, reason, truth, nothingness, dread, freedom, choice, commitment, faith, transcendence, value, community, courage, suffering, love, joy, etc., lose their metaphysical meaning and significance. The existentialist, in the ultimate analyses, is merely the protogoras of existence. His phenomenological method fails to surmount the element of duality ingrained in the Western mode of thought. Since his idea of freedom emerges from this basic duality, therefore, it submerges into contradiction and become an ultimate constraint. True phenomenology makes the possibility of freedom manifest from the principle of “non duality” and consequently there arises neither constraint nor any contradiction. It passes from Non-Being to Being from “non duality” to unity. The source of freedom is the Freedom Itself. Man is a ray of the Infinite. He partakes of the universal possibility. He is the manifest degree of the Unmanifest. He is endowed with relative freedom in reference to the Absolute. His participation in the unity of Being shall make him free. Man takes his credentials from the Infinite. Though his relative freedom is absolute in a situation yet, in the ultimate analysis it is identified with the liberty Itself. Freedom is the reality and identity of a being which takes its light from the universal Being.

The fundamental lesson of the primordial tradition is expressed in the dictum ‘Know Thyself’. Man must know’ his own fundamental and primordial Nature’ before embarking on the voyage to the perilous seas. The modern West inspite of pretensions to the contrary does not know the essence of man; the fullness of his reality. The macrocosm and microcosm

aspects are not integrated in the hierarchy of the infinite. Man's isolation from his metaphysical rank degrades his whole being. It is a violation of inherent human dignity. His manifest behaviour is not the sole reality. Otherwise, he is caught in the net of multiplicity without an access to unity. He is identified with the surface aspects of his being. The Western disciplines lack the precise methodology to study the totality of man. Modern psychology, in particular, by a profane touch molests the sacredness of man. It mutilates his inner reality and transforms him into a hybrid. All systems and theories of Western psychology are condemned to take man as a phantom. Resultantly, the idea of freedom has been contaminated with the virus of finitude. The existential psychologists or psychotherapists are equally vulnerable to this widespread infirmity. The most fatal accident of the modern West has been to consider man merely an accident with no relation to the universal Substance. And without commitment with Freedom Itself, man's sense of freedom is illusory. It is metaphysics which unveils the layer of concealedness by maintaining a respectful attitude toward the inexpressible. It opens up a universe of possibilities. Unless one understands the metaphysical scheme of Reality, the perception of things shall remain essentially erroneous. The sources and modes of knowledge in the modern West, have remained highly limited. Sense-experience, reason and intuition have lost their metaphysical validity. Reason and imagination are completely divorced from intellect. Knowledge is not rooted in the Universal and the-formless. The concept of pure intellect with corresponding principal and archetypal truths is completely absent. Man's transcendent and immanent dimensions are not consummated metaphysically. Schuon says: "When we speak of transcendence, we understand in general objective transcendence, that of the principle which is above us as it is above the world; and when we speak of immanence, we understand generally speaking subjective immanence, that of the self, which is within us. It is important to mention that there is also a subjective transcendence, that of the self within us in as much as it transcends the ego; and likewise there is also an objective immanence, that of the principle in so far as it is immanent in the world, not so in so far as it excludes it and annihilates it by its transcendence...the Transcendent, by virtue of its infinity, projects existence and thereby necessitates immanence; and the Immanent, by virtue of its absoluteness

necessarily remains transcendent in relation to existence<sup>136</sup>”. He derives freedom of the will from the totality of the intelligence. Objectivity which confers self-transcendence and sacrifice on the will thereby making it free. We agree in principle with this penetrating analysis of objectivity except with an observation that the term ‘freedom of the will’ which frequently occurs in the writings of Schuon is not an appropriate term. Though it is derived from the totality of intelligence yet it gives an impression as if it is a condition of freedom. The will is not the foundation of the primordial freedom; it is merely its manifestation. It is posited by reflection. It is not the freedom of the will but it is man who is free. It is he who chooses his will. Man’s totality and his freedom, in the ultimate analysis are identical.

Man is prefigured in the Absolute. He is fundamentally inspired by truth. It is his ultimate orientation with God which bestows upon him freedom without constraint. Freedom is not only possible it is equally desirable. The capacity to transcend ourselves ushers in a corresponding freedom. Man has to transcend his empirical ego and has to relate himself to the self. He is the meeting point of the inward and the outward. The metaphysical concept of personality rises above the notion of individuality and makes man as quasi-divine’. The western concept of individuality is isolated from the Self-the transcendent and permanent principle-thereby imposing on it a purely illusory existence. Individuality in order to become personality has to derive all its reality from the principle. This is what the existentialists, in particular, and the westerners in general, shall never learn. They consider man more or less, as a windowless system. Even where they provide windows they put down shutters to ward off the light of transcendence. However, at present, they have completely jammed these shutters. They do not want to see that man is relative to the Absolute and that he derives his reality from the Universal. And his task is to ‘possess the highest possibilities in their fullest development’. Guenon says:”...a being will remain throughout the whole of his individual existence what he is potentially at the time of his birth. The question why a being is himself and not another is a pointless one; the truth is that every being, each according to his nature, is a necessary element in the total and universal harmony<sup>137</sup>”. The idea may be’ nauseating to those who

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<sup>136</sup> From the Divine to the Human, World Wisdom Books,p. 1.

<sup>137</sup> Guenon, Op.Cit. pp.219-20.

do not take into consideration' the intellectual possibilities of each human being' and the circumstances in which they are undertaken. We do not make man the victim of his heredity or environment for the simple reason that man by an act of self-transcendence overcomes both inner and outer obstacles, if any. We simply want each person to be himself. And this is man's basic vocation which manifests in the possibility of Freedom. It make man choose between the real and the illusory; between good and evil.

Before concluding our discourse on the possibility of freedom it is significant to analyze a few aspects of Iqbal's concept of freedom. He raises certain questions; "Does the ego then determine its own activity? If so, how is the self-determination of the ego related to the determinism of the spatio-temporal order? Is personal causality a special kind of causality, or only a disguised form of the mechanism of Nature?. He thinks that the modern tendency to give a mechanistic interpretation of the consciousness does not understand the qualitative difference between the material and the human level. He says;" ...the controversy between the advocates of Mechanism and Freedom arises from a wrong view of intelligent. action which modern psychology, unmindful of its own independence as a science, possessing a special set of facts to observe, was bound to take on account of its slavish imitation of physical sciences. The view that ego-activity is a succession of thoughts and ideas, ultimately resolvable to units of sensations, is only another form of atomic materialism which forms the basis of modern science"<sup>138</sup>. Though Iqbal's observation is (highly illuminating yet he fails to sustain it. The reason being) that he criticises science and philosophy from within the Western orbit. After demolishing one idol, he is trapped by the other in hope of philosophic salvation. There is shift of idols, no doubt, but the spirit of 'idolatry' remains essentially the same. He, in the particular instance, takes a fancy towards Configuration or Gestalt Psychology (and remarks, "There is, however, some relief in thinking) that the new German Psychology, known as Configuration psychology, may succeed in securing the independence of Biology. This newer German Psychology teaches us that a careful study of intelligent behavior discloses the fact of 'insight' over and above the' mere succession of sensation. This 'insight' is the ego's appreciation of temporal, spatial and causal relation of things- the choice,

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<sup>138</sup> The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, Ashraf, Lahore, 19, p.107.

that is to say of data, in view of the goal or purpose which the ego has set before itself for the time being...The essential feature of a purposive act is its vision of a future situation which does not appear to admit any explanation in terms of physiology...The view of the environment as a system of cause and effect is thus an indispensable instrument of the ego, and not a final expression of the nature of Reality. Indeed in interpreting Nature in this way the ego understands and masters its environment, and thereby acquires and amplifies its freedom”<sup>139</sup>. He does not seem to transcend the one-dimensional Western spectrum. He wants the independence of psychology and biology from the physical sciences but does not envisage their independence from the net-work of the Western profane thought. He does not question the presuppositions of the Occidental world. Rather, he considers the spirit of Islam and the West as identical. This is precisely the reason that his critique of modern thought remains peripheral. Modern psychology can never understand the relationship of knowledge and consciousness. The element of ‘insight ‘ over and above the mere succession of sensations’ does not transcend the realm of consciousness. And knowledge understood purely in its metaphysical sense can in no wise be identified with consciousness. Consciousness is contingent and thereby cannot fully embrace the Unconditioned. Mechanistic psychology and the Gestalt one both belong to the contingent realm. Consequently, they fall short of knowing the totality of man. They deal with “phenomenal consciousness”. which by definition belong to the phenomena. The psychologist lacks the metaphysical method to study the nature of consciousness. He fails to realize that consciousness is one manifestation of the universal domain and that it belongs to a particular mode of being. It cannot be identified with the intellectual principle itself. There are multiple states of being, each state having a different participation in universal intelligence. Freedom has infinite possibilities of non-manifestation and manifestation. It cannot be realized by consciousness alone. Likewise, the principle of cause and effect does not belong to a single domain. The Western notion of causality is highly limited. The metaphysical conception of causation opens up limitless vistas of freedom and establishes an intimate relationship of necessity and freedom. It is, in fact, a final expression of the

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid., pp. 107-108.

nature of Reality'. Divine necessity and Divine Freedom enjoy a metaphysical identity.

Iqbal further says; "Thus the element of guidance and directive control in the ego's activity clearly shows that the ego is a free personal causality. He shares in the life and freedom of the ultimate Ego who, by permitting the emergence of a finite ego, capable of private initiative, has limited this freedom of His own free will,"<sup>140</sup> It is pertinent to point out that freedom can both be 'acquired' and 'amplified.' Prayer in Islam is the ego's escape from mechanism to freedom. From our point of view if man chooses a right possibility, it enlarges and deepens the canvases of his personality and opens up higher possibilities of human existence. And if, on the other hand, he chooses a wrong possibility and sustains in his persistence, he ultimately loses freedom to realize his true essence. This is the modern 'Fall of Man'. The possibility of choose entails dread, anguish and courage. One has to achieve the identity of knowledge and being otherwise man shall turn into a mere fragmentation. However, his relative surrender to freedom can be reactivated by the alchemical work. It opens the soul to the spirit. It is Sulphur and Quicksilver which restore the creative equilibrium. Man no more remains divided within himself. He realizes the process of spiritual transmutation.

Thus, the possibility of freedom is such a risky Divine gift that if one becomes perfidious to it, it may destroy him completely. Our point of view is that the philosophical understanding falls short of the metaphysical one and this constitutes the failure of all philosophies of Religion. It is only when one transcends the limitations of one's ego or contingent consciousness that one is reunited with Freedom Itself. There is no limitation on Divine Freedom. Man becomes the vehicle of Absolute Freedom. It is the presence of the Absolute which confers reality on man. One can only understand the possibility of freedom if one starts from the Freedom Itself.

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid., p. 108.

# REVIVAL OF” PUNJAB MUSLIM LEAGUE JINNAH – IQBAL COLLABORATION

PROF. RIAZ HUSSAIN

Iqbal was the Dreamer of Pakistan and Jinnah its Creator. Aside from this broader link between the two, this essay attempts to study a little known area of their practical cooperation.

From the late 1920 began that political interaction between M.A. Jinnah’ and Iqbal which blossomed into a working partnership in reviving the Muslim Organization in the key province of Panjab.

On 20 March 1927 a “Unity Conference was held at Delhi at which M.A. Jinnah as President of the League and Srinivasa lynger as President of Congress “concluded an agreement which came to be known as “Delhi Proposals.”

The two leaders agreed:-

(1) To accept a system of Joint Electorates, provided that Sind was separated from the Bombay province and reforms were introduced in the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan.

(2) To reserve seats for all communities in all provinces.

(3) That in Bengal and the Punjab (the two predominantly Muslim majority provinces) the allocation of seats would be in proportion to population. (This clause abrogated the Lucknow Pact.)

(4) That in the Central legislature Muslim Seats were to be no less than one-third of the total Seats<sup>141</sup>.

(1) In retrospect it was a solid achievement to get the Congress agree to the above proposals. The Quaid-i-Azam was accepting joint Electorates in Exchange for sure safeguards for Muslims in all provinces.

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<sup>141</sup> M.H. Sayyid, Muhammad Ali Jinnah (Lahore: Ashraf, 1953) PP 238-39).

(2) In the Event that adult Suffrage, as proposed in the Nehru Report is granted, the Punjab and Bengal should have seats only on population basis subject to re-examination after ten years.

(3) The residuary powers should be vested in the provinces and not in the centre.

(4) The Separation of Sind from Bombay and raising North-West Frontier Province to the status of a Governor's Province should not be made contingent on the establishment of the constitution framed by the Nehru Committee.<sup>142</sup>

M.A. Jinnah who consistently had two purpose in mind (a) safeguard of Muslim rights; and (b) Joint Front with Congress to oust the British, pleaded with the congress to adopt the League's modification.

The Congress refusal to do so shook M.A. Jinnah's confidence in that organization once for all. Meanwhile the British Government set up the Simon Commission "to make recommendations for future constitutional reforms in India". The Commission Visited India from February to march 1928 and again from October 1928 to April 1929. The Muslim League split into two divisions on the question of the attitude to be adopted towards the commission.

One section of the League had M. A. Jinnah as President and Dr. Kitchlew as Secretary. The other was led by Muhammad Shafi (President) and Iqbal (Secretary) The Shafi section of the league met in Lahore (1928). It rejected the "Delhi Proposals" and offered cooperation to the Simon Commission. Meeting in Calcutta (1928) the Jinnah League disowned the Shafi faction, adopted the "Delhi Proposals" and declared its non-cooperation with the Simon Commission. It also proposed the following modifications to the Nehru Committee Report:

1. Muslim representation in the Central Legislature should not be less than one-third.

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<sup>142</sup> See Rafi Ahmad Kidwia, Proceedings of the All-parties National Convention, Calcutta 1928; All-parties National Convention, Allahbad, 1929: P.78).

Report at the All parties conference (12 February, to 15 March 1928). The composition of the Nehru Committee with its parity of Muslim and Hindu Mahasabha members besides Congress and liberal Hindus is revealing.

It Consisted of:-

(1) Pandit Motilal Nehru (Chairman) (2) All Imam (Muslim) (3) Shuaib Qureshi (Muslim) (4) M.S. Aney (Hindu Mahasabha) (5) M.R. Jykar (Hindu Mahasabha) (6) G.R. Pradhan (Non-Brahmin Hindu) (7) Sardar Mangal Singh (Sikh League) (8) Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru (Liberal Hindu) (9) N.M. Joshi (Labour).

The Nehru Committee recommended Separation of Sind from Bombay and the Elevation of the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan to the Status of Constitutional provinces, but it did not concede reservation of Seats in the Punjab and Bengal. Also, it insisted that the Central Government retain Residuary Powers and that Muslims compose only 25% of the Central legislature.

In the large Muslim-majority provinces of Bengal and Panjab, the allocation of seats would at any rate be in proportion to the population.

The “Delhi Proposals” thus contained the germ of Pakistan.

The All-India Congress committee “Substantially accepted the ‘Muslim proposals’ in a resolution passed in May 1927.”<sup>143</sup>

In December 1927, Sub-Committees were appointed both by the League and the Congress to prepare an agreed draft based on the “Delhi Proposals” of the constitution of a self-governing India.<sup>144</sup>

The Punjab Muslim League, under the leadership of Mian Muhammad Shafi, Main Fazl-i-Husain and Iqbal raised a voice of dissent from the “Delhi Proposals”.

The, Congress, too, betrayed the Delhi Agreement by adopting the Nehru Committee Report. The Shafi League convened a meeting in Lahore

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<sup>143</sup> Rajendra Prasad, India Divided (Bombay 1947). P-127).

<sup>144</sup> Waheed-uz-Zaman, Towards Pakistan (Lahore: 1964) PP 34-35).

in May 1928 and proceeded to draft a memorandum for the Simon Commission. Iqbal urged the imperative necessity of provincial autonomy. The meeting adopted a temporary draft for circulation among other leaders of the League for eliciting their views.

In the meantime Iqbal went to Delhi for a medical treatment and stayed there for a few weeks. In his absence the Shafi League released the draft for publication in the press. Mian Shaffi's conservative attitude appalled Iqbal. He considered it a reactionary approach to constitutional problems. Accordingly, he resigned his position as Secretary of the Shafi league. All his previous ideas culminated in this address and all his subsequent actions and those of the Muslim nation were dictated by it. Using identical language M.A. Jinnah in his Presidential Address to the All-India Muslim League session in March 1940 re-stated Iqbal's two-nation theory.

From 1932 to the last day of his life in 1938 Iqbal zealously devoted himself to the reorganization of Muslim League as a mass political party in the Punjab.

In this endeavour he was bound to come into conflict with the power clique in the Punjab which was composed of Muslim and Hindu feudal gentry led by Fazl-i-Husain and after his death in 1936 by his successor, Sir Sikandar Hayat khan. The British Government decision to hold elections in the provinces during January, February 1937, gave rise to feverish political activity. In May 1936, the League resolved to nominate a Parliamentary Board. The Board was entrusted with the task of drafting a platform and organizing election campaign in the provinces.

In the early months of 1936 the Punjab Political scene was dominated by two stalwarts, Fazl-i-Husain and Iqbal. After serving the Viceroy as his Executive Councillor Fazl-i-Hussain had returned to the Punjab to infuse new life into the Unionist Party.

He was busy in collecting into one party big Muslim, Hindu and Sikh landlords and urban capitalist interests.

Iqbal, on the other hand, was endeavoring to convert the Muslim league into a mass political party.

M.A. Jinnah arrived in Lahore in May 1936 in connection with the organizational work of the league. Iqbal at this time impressed on him the necessity of deriving strength from the support of the common man.

The objective, though laudable, was a long-term one. The elections were near and the League's organization was almost non-existent. Faced with this dilemma, M.A. Jinnah sought to convert political leaders of the Punjab and urged Fazl-i-Husain to accept the discipline of the League's parliamentary Board.

Rather than give a straightforward reply Fazl-i-Hussain indulged in constitutional hair-splitting. He argued that Provincial autonomy meant decentralisation; therefore, it was wrong to admit central control over provincial election. Since conditions in each province varied it was impossible to follow a uniform principle.

In the Punjab it was impossible to secure a Muslim majority through separate control of elections. Finally, in many provinces Muslims might find it necessary to have non-communal organisations, and in that case a central Muslim agency was obviously out of the question. Fazl-i-Hussain preached to the Muslim League to show "elasticity and initiative" to gain political support of Hindu landlords and money-lenders. He declared in an abusive tone that "Elasticity and initiative should not be sacrificed for the sake of an all-India leader's aspiration".<sup>145</sup>

Mr. Jinnah suggested that Fazl-i-Husain and the Muslim members of the Unionist Party could form alliances with other groups inside the Assembly according to the usual democratic practice, but they should stand at elections as League candidates. Fazl-i-Husain had contended that in many provinces Muslims might find it necessary to have non-communal organization. Referring to this M.A. Jinnah replied: "Why, the Congress is more progressive and non-communal than the Unionist Party. Why not join the Congress Party?"

M.A. Jinnah called on Iqbal at his Mecleod Road residence. No longer in good physical health, Iqbal was yet content in spirit to see the Muslim league

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<sup>145</sup> The Civil and Military Gazette, Lahore, 7 June, 1936).

progressing towards his ideal under the leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the man whom he had whole heartedly accepted as his leader. On 8th May, 1936, Iqbal, Khalifah Shujauddin, Malik Barkat Ali and their supporters issued a statement in which they stated:-

“Our nation has full confidence in Jinnah’s integrity and political judgement. It is for this reason that now the reactionary leaders are flustered. Jinnah’s organization endeavours would shatter illusory leadership of the selfish leaders, because the Muslims would now elect their true representatives in the forthcoming elections.<sup>146</sup> On 12th May 1936, at a special meeting of the Punjab Muslim League in Lahore the following office bearers were elected. President, Dr. Shaikh Muhammad Iqbal; Vice-Presidents, Malik Barkat All and Khalifa Shuja-ud-Din, Secretary, Ghulam Rasul Khan; joint Secretaries, Mian Abdul Majid and Ashiq Husain Batalvi. The meeting pledged support to the Central Parliamentary Board and its policies. Even the Majlis-i-Ahrar and Ittihad-i-Millat buried their difference over the Shahid Ganj Mosque and joined forces with the Punjab Muslim League. On 21 May the Quaid-i-Azam announced the membership of the central Parliamentary Board. Iqbal,s name ranked first in this list. Out of the total quota of eleven members from the Punjab, three seats were allocated to Ittihad-i-Millat and four to Ahrar, reserving only four seats for the Punjab Muslim League. Thus the Central Parliamentary Board showed ample appreciation of the cooperation offered by the Ahrar and Ittihad. The Ittihad group presided over by Maulana Zafar All Khan seeded from the compact on the pretext that it had not been given parity with Ahrar. The Ahrar too broke away. Both parties later opposed the League at the elections.

After the death of Fazl-i-Hussain on 9 July 1936, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan became the boss of the Unionist Party. At about this time a prominent and influential Unionist, Malik Zaman Mehdi Khan, joined the Muslim league. The Malik was an able man and a sagacious organiser. Iqbal welcomed his conversion and co-opted him as Vice-President of the Punjab Muslim League. On the recommendation of Iqbal, the Malik was also included in the Parliamentary Board.

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid, 9 May Ashiq Husain Batalvi, Iqbal Ke Akhri Do Saal, pp. 312-13.

Iqbal now proceeded to organize the election campaign. He appointed two committees to popularise the League message in the Punjab.

(1) The Draft Committee for drawing up the League platform. Members: Khalifa Shuja-ud-Din, Syed Tasaddaq Husain, Shaikh Mohammad Husain, Muhammad Azim Khan, Malik Barkat Ali, Malik Zaman Mehdi Khan, Ghulam Rasul Khan, Ashiq Husain Batalvi and Muzaffar Ali Khan Qazilbash.

(2) The Propaganda Committee. Its members were younger men like Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Pir Taj-ud-Din and Mian Muhammad Shafi, Secretary of the Punjab Muslim Students Federation.

At Iqbal's invitation the Quaid-i-Azam again arrived in Lahore on 9 October 1936 to inaugurate the League's election campaign. The Punjab League had no uniformed Volunteer Corps at that time. At last the volunteers of the Anjuman-i-Islamia, Amritsar, were mustered and they presented a smart guard of honour to their leader at the Railway Station. The Quaid-i-Azam passed two weeks in Lahore, discussing, advising and generally overseeing the League preparation for elections.

On 11 October, the Punjab Muslim League held a public meeting outside Delhi Gate, Lahore. Iqbal was scheduled to preside over this meeting but was prevented by illness to do so. In his place Malik Zaman Mehdi Khan chaired the meeting. The Quaid-i-Azam was the principal speaker. Addressing the audience he severely criticised the Unionist party for serving vested interests and for being interested only in fortune-hunting. The Quaid-i-Azam's forthright utterances gained him vast popularity among the masses and helped to build up the prestige of the Muslim League. However, the Unionists had two overwhelming factors in their favour, the feudal Baradari system and money, which returned them to power. After all the Muslim League had been riddled with factionalism and had only recently been united. It did not have much time before the elections to bring its message home to the masses.

The overall result of 1936 election in India is an interesting eye-opener, because it shows the communal character of the Congress. The total seats in all Provincial Assemblies were 1583, out of which the Congress won 711.

This sounds impressive. But careful analysis will reveal that the six provinces, in majority provinces, viz. Madras, united Provinces, the Central Provinces, Behar, Orissa and Bombay. In Muslim majority provinces the Congress suffered a humiliating defeat. In Bengal, it won only 60 seats out of 250, in the Punjab 18 out of 175 and in Sindh 8 out of 60, and the places where it won were all Hindu constituencies. As for Congress Muslims they contested 58 seats and returned only 26.

The composition of the Punjab Legislative Assembly was as follows: Unionists (89) + Congress (18) + Non League Muslims (4) + Muslim League (1) + Akali Party (10) + Khalsa Nationalists (13) + Non-Congress Sikhs (13) + Independents (27) = Total = 175. Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan formed the Ministry by forging a coalition between the Unionists, the Khalsa National Party and the Hindu Election Board Party.

Elated at their victory the Unionists determined to suppress the rise of Muslim League in the Punjab. The Congress, humiliated at their poor showing, started a "Mass-contact movement to wean the Muslims away from communal parties". Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru was the moving spirit behind this campaign.

In the Punjab the Muslim mass contact movement of the Congress created an intriguing situation. The Unionist Party found itself in great quandary. The Party would dissolve if the Hindu and Sikh members defected to Congress. In the event of Muslims deserting to Congress, the Unionist Party would equally be annihilated. At this hour of peril, the Unionist Party had no choice but to woo the Muslim League. The motives of the Unionists, however, were hypocritical. Their plan was to offer cooperation to Muslim League on the all-India front. They would forge an alliance with the Punjab Muslim League taking care to appoint their own men to its important offices. They would thus maintain their own political dominance while professing allegiance to the League. Of this policy of the Unionists Iqbal was an inveterate foe.

On 11 August 1937, Iqbal reported to the Quaid-i-Azam, "The enthusiasm for the League is rapidly increasing in the Punjab, and I have no doubt that the holding of the session in Lahore will be a turning point in the History of the League and an important step towards mass-contact."

A session in Lahore, as Iqbal had said, was in deed going to be a turning point in the history of the League and of the nation but that was not to be until 1940.

# A SCIENTIFIC CRITIQUE OF SCIENCE'S MOST POPULAR FICTION: EVOLUTIONARY THEORY

MUHAMMAD YUSUF

My purpose in this short paper is to expose only a few of the insurmountable problems that are posed by evolutionary theory. The seriousness of these problems is such that they are not in any way reconciled. Rather, they demolish this chimera of a theory and reveal it as a scientific mistake, untrue in its facts and unscientific in its method.

I will first concern myself with genetic variation and what the breeders show. In the words of the famous American biologist and evolutionist, Sisley, "It would appear that careful domestic breeding whatever it may do to improve the quality of race horses or cabbages is not actually in itself the road to endless deviation which is evolution."<sup>147</sup> Ernst Mayr of Harvard, also an evolutionary authority, observes that population of organisms have a certain persistence or inertia which resists drastic change and he calls this persistence "genetic homeostasis".<sup>148</sup> In other words species are subject to only trivial changes with respect to the wholesale transpecific (transformation of a species) changes that evolution proposes. This may surprise one who has received the standard scientific indoctrination of our formal institutions but it is so much so that the internationally celebrated breeder, Luther Burbank, stated that there is a law which dictates finite limits of development. He called this the Law of Reversion to the Average.<sup>149</sup> "Experiments carried on extensively have given us scientific proof of what we had already guessed by observation; namely, that plants and animals all tend to revert, in successive generations, towards a given mean or average".<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Loren Eiseley, *Darwin's Century: Evolution and Men who discovered it* (New York: Doubleday, 1958), p. 223.

<sup>148</sup> Ernst Mayr, *Animal Species and Evolution* (London, Eng., Cambridge, Mass., Univ. of Cambridge press, 1963), pp. 285-286.

<sup>149</sup> Quoted in Norman Macbeth, *Darwin Retried* (New York, Deall, 1971), p. 36.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*

Why is this so? As breeding pressure is applied continually to an organism it will reach an upper limit beyond which, if pressure is further applied, the progeny die, become sterile or revert to the original state.

Therefore, in spite of what evolutionists purport minute changes or what one might call micro changes to use Norman Macbeth's term do not accumulate into transpecific changes or macro changes.<sup>151</sup> No doubt, this is ironic since genetic variation perhaps more than any other argument has been adduced to "demonstrate" evolution. It does not matter what selection pressure man or nature subject a population to and it does not matter how long. Even in a million years micro variations will not transform the species--that is what genetics and breeding show.

As for spontaneous macro variation--it is not known to science and no mechanism for such a happening is even conceivable.

But if we entertain for a moment, evolution's proposition of neatly graduated series of slightly varied intermediate forms culminating in a new species and new taxa (categories of taxonomy), such a postulate collapses before the facts--the geological record is extremely imperfect. This is no secret; the biologists will admit it.<sup>152</sup> Evolutionists try to account for the gaps in' the fossil record, that is the absence of inter-mediate series, with a variety of pathetic hypotheses. One such standard rebuttal is that the intermediate forms were short-lived and therefore not preserved in the record. This begs the question that how is it known that the forms were short-lived if they are not even known.<sup>153</sup> Another contention is that fossilization was an accident, a freak of nature, so that a comprehensive fossil record of all forms was not left in every age. Thus it is supposed that the giant whales and dinosaurs were just lucky to be fossilized and their immediate precursor forms were unlucky presumably because they lived under such different conditions that they were not fossilized. These contentions are preposterous. Their improbability is manifest. They are the desperate attempts of theorists with preconceived notions to "save face". These feeble answers, ungrounded in any empirical basis, are merely adhoc hypotheses pulled out of the air.

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., p. 136.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

If then, micro variations are not additive and macro variations do not spontaneously occur, how can it be argued with any basis that transpacific evolution takes place? Indeed it is logically necessary to conclude that it does not.

Darwin wrote in 1859 that, “If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications my theory would absolutely break down”.<sup>154</sup> He was immediately challenged to explain such handiwork as the human eye. It is still a stumbling block for evolutionists. The eye is an enormously complex and efficient structure of retina, cornea, rods and cones, visual purple, muscles, nerves and fluids. The problem for the evolutionist is to explain how such a structure could be gradually acquired when the incipient and intermediary structure has no selective advantage to the organism until it has reached total size and total complexity. In other words what has to be conceived is a functional, useful, intermediate structure. Hardin, the prominent, American, biologist must have realized the impossibility of this proposition when he wrote, “...That damned eye--the human eye...which Darwin freely conceded to constitute a severe strain on his theory of evolution. Is so simple a principal as natural selection equal to explaining so complex a structure as the image-producing eye? Can step by-step process of Darwinian evolution carry this process so far?”<sup>155</sup> The answer is an emphatic no. There is no intermediate functional form. The eye is either perfect or perfectly useless.

The celebrated biologist and evolutionist Goldshmidt explicitly cited sixteen features which he defied evolutionists to account for by “accumulation and selection of small mutants.”<sup>156</sup> Among them were hair in mammals, feathers in birds, muscles, nerves, teeth, shells of mollusks, blood circulation, and poison apparatus in snakes. Complex structures which cannot be accounted for by evolutionary processes abound: the lungs of

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<sup>154</sup> Ibid., p. 76.

<sup>155</sup> Garret Hardin, *Nature and Man's Fate* (Toronto, Clarke, 1961), p.71.

#### EVOLUTION THEORY.

<sup>156</sup> Richard Goldshmidt, *The Material Basis of Evolution* (Paterson, N.J., Pageant, 1960), pp. 6-7.

vertebrates, the middle ear of mammals, the compound eye of insects, the spinnerets of spiders. For none of these features, and for none to literally thousands of structures in all the phyla of animals and plants can an adaptive precursor form be conceived. Consider for instance what could possibly be intermediary between a mammal, the dolphin for example, which gives birth to its young under water, and a mammal giving birth in the air on the seashore.

There is yet a further, particularly defiant example to be given. "There are certain sea slugs which have appendages called papillae on their backs. In these papillae are groups of sting cells usually of a long whiplike shape. In their undischarged condition the stings are folded up so that the least touch will cause the coiled nettle-lash to fly out and sting any foreign body within reach. Since similar stings have been found on Coelenterates (little animals on which the sea slugs feed) it was supposed for a long time that the slugs were related to Coelenterates. Recent research, however, has shown that there is no relationship and that the slugs have simply stolen the stings from the Coelenterates. They eat the Coelenterates but somehow they keep from exploding the stings. They get the stings into their stomachs, then work them into narrow channels that have cilia or hairs in them. By means of the cilia they sweep the stings up the channels into pouches out on the papillae and there the stings are all neatly arranged, right way up and still unexploded in such -a way that they can be discharged against an attacker."<sup>157</sup> This example is particularly eloquent in confuting evolution. A perfect mechanism has to exist before the stings can be passed through the sea slug without being caused to explode. There is no way the mechanism could gradually develop. The theory of evolution can not account for such an ability.

It seems that a favourite recourse of evolutionists when they are confronted with the embarrassing feebleness of their theory is to admit that there are many problems with evolutionism but that it is the best theory that we have at present.<sup>158</sup> I intend to spend the rest of this paper to show that this is emphatically not the case.

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<sup>157</sup> Macbeth, p. 101.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., p. 77.

First of all it is necessary to remember the limitations of science. Science has arbitrarily determined to concern itself only with physical reality or the material world. As the biologist Simpson phrases it, "...the progress of knowledge rigidly requires that no non-physical postulate ever be admitted in connection with the study of physical phenomena. We do not know what is not explicable in physical terms, and the researcher who is seeking explanations must seek physical explanations only..."<sup>159</sup> It is one thing to concern oneself with the physical reality only and it is another to presume therefore that it is the only reality. If Design and spiritual reality or any other reality for that matter are excluded from consideration at the beginning it is not surprising that they do not appear at the end. Earnst Mayr has written on this that "... if by teleology [Design] one means externally imposed goals on the part of a higher intelligence this definition is not useful because it is a supernatural concept. It may be the true order of things in nature but science can not use it to demonstrate the validity of this viewpoint nor use it as a conceptual scheme."<sup>160</sup> The problem is that science attempts to explain everything in purely materialistic terms. It harbours the illusory notion that it will one day "wrest from nature her ultimate secret but everywhere it runs up against enigmas that give the lie to its postulates and which appear as unforeseen fissures in the laboriously erected system. These fissures get plastered over with fresh hypotheses and the vicious circle goes on unchecked."<sup>161</sup> Science endorses evolutionism, not for its plausibility, but for its usefulness in covering up its own inadequacies. Science is helpless to explain, but it will not admit its inability to explain.

When it is contested that the necessary; and superior postulate is that of purposive creation, that is Design, science is loathe to admit the reality of such causes lying outside sensory experience. This denial, however, is not reasonable. It is not verifiable perhaps within the realm of sensory reality, but it does not follow that it is incapable of verification. There are other realities besides the physical, but the knowledge of them is not compassed by science.

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<sup>159</sup> Ibid., p. 126.

<sup>160</sup> Neal Buffaloe, J.B. Thornberry, *Concepts of Biology* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J. Prentice-Hall, 1973), p. 336.

<sup>161</sup> Frithjof Schoun, *Logic and Transcendence* (New York, Harper a Row, 1975), pp.67-68.

Lastly, I wish to establish that evolutionism is no more than a natural philosophy which masquerades itself as scientific fact. Evolution is ‘not subject to experimentation; it has no capacity to predict or to explain particular cases. It is based on speculation and circumstantial evidence and does not have a valid empirical basis. Therefore it must be relegated, as just mentioned to the arena of philosophy. But evolutionism in this its proper arena utterly collapses, for it must futilely maintain that a purely biological process “led up to a reflexive intelligence, to a sudden act of awareness that perceived the development for what it was.”<sup>162</sup> Such a proposition is manifestly absurd because there is “no common measure between the act of awareness”<sup>163</sup> and the biological movement which preceded it. Evolutionism and creationism are mutually exclusive philosophies. There is no reconciliation between the two. In this paper it has been demonstrated that evolutionism is contrary to the facts. Purposive creation is therefore the necessary and true deduction.

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

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# **IQBAL: THOUGHT AND PRAXIS**

**Fateh Muhammad Malik Bazm-i-Iqbal, Lahore, pp.52, Rs.22.00**

Mohammad Iqbal (d. 1938) was undoubtedly of the most brilliant and innovative thinkers of twentieth century Islam. His ideas on the reconstruction of Islamic religious thought have shaped the course of intellectual debate for over sixty years in the world of Islam. Many books have been written to understand, interpret and analyze the richness and versatility of his idea. Most works of Urdu criticism, however, are grotesquely unequal to the task of illuminating the quality and depth of Iqbal's many-sided and multi-layered thought. It is only occasionally that a book arrives upon the literary scene, witty, elegant and lucid in style, and capable of engaging the reader with its highly provocative and perceptive analysis. Such a work is Fateh Mohammad Malik's Iqbal-Thought and praxis.

Few interpretations of Iqbal are more imaginative and thoughtful than the present work by this Pakistani literary and cultural critic. A significant aspect of Malik's work is its attempt to take an integral view of Iqbal's ideas and praxis. He goes beyond the traditional, cliché-ridden Iqbalian scholarship and offers new insights into the creative thought of the greatest Muslim poet-philosopher of our time.

Malik addresses three major questions with regard to Iqbal's relevance for today's Pakistan. First, he re-opens the pre-1947 debate on the relationship between Islam and the demand for Pakistan as a "national" homeland for the Indian Muslims. Second, he analyses the post-independence controversies associated with the role of Islam in the public life of the new nation. And, finally, he investigates the extent to which Islam has manifested itself in the creative literature of Pakistan and how far the Pakistani intelligentsia have carried out the Iqbalian mission of the reconstruction of modern intellectual thought within the framework of Islam.

In general, Malik finds Pakistani intellectuals and creative writers deficient in their duty to strengthen the ideological moorings of the new nation and to help build a just and equitable social order based on the

teachings of Islam. He reproves the artistic, social and political elite of Pakistan for their intellectual waywardness and philosophical skepticism with regard to value statements and moral judgements.

Malik's approach throughout is critical and historical. Some of us may not subscribe to some specific judgement about authors and events in the book but, at the same time, the general validity of Malik's overall model remains unquestionable.

One of the most important themes that runs through Malik's works is what Sir Hamilton Gibb once called 'Islamic patriotism,' i.e., a passionate love for Islam and Pakistan. As a matter of fact, these two loves constitute a single experience in Malik's consciousness and thus tend to become indistinguishable in his works. One must also add here that this love for Islam and Pakistan is much more than the rhetoric of a politician and the Self-righteousness of a mulla. In term of the depth of this "Islamic-patriotic" experience, Malik can only be compared with Mohammad Hasan Askari, Ahmad Nadim Qasmi, Salim Ahmad, and Muzaffar Ali Seyyed. Askari, Salim, Seyyed and Malik are distinct from others in their overall framework defined by the larger issues of Indo-Islamic culture. Malik thus represents the best in Urdu literary criticism. He demonstrates what words like "artist" and 'intellectual' should really mean. He combines literary criticism with literary sociology and the sociology of cultural phenomena in a manner that is rare in the tradition of Urdu criticism. His confident use of historical data, conceptual analysis and techniques of sociological inquiry set him apart from most of his contemporaries. His intellectual equipment and analytic apparatus, though heavily embedded in historico-structural mythology, remains nevertheless integrally linked to the realm of creative literature. Malik is therefore eminently qualified to undertake the study of the ideas of a giant like Iqbal. He has given us an invaluable book on Iqbal which is sure to find its place among the major works in the field.

**Mumtaz Ahmad**

# TOWARD ISLAMIC ANTHROPOLOGY

**Akbar S. Ahmad New Era Publications, Ann Arbor, 1986, pp.79.**

An Islamic or Muslim perspective, when propounded in a discipline, prompts skepticism. When such a work is by a Muslim, skepticism crystallizes into doubt and dismissal. Such is Western academic training.

And justifiably so a lot of the 'scholarly' work undertaken in Muslim countries continues in its tired old way. Biography spins into hagiography, history into uncritical treatise, studies in theology and jurisprudence into mere repetition of classical works. The few references, or notes or quotes are vague and inexact. This practice perhaps caused by morality of pre-printing era is, now, inexcusable. The printing press arrived in Muslim countries at least a century ago. But practices persist. Mechanics of press operation have been learnt. Scholarly attitude is slow to be learnt.

But when a Muslim trained in the best European institutions, and equipped with both, scholarly sophistication and methodology writes, things begin to stir. Fazl ur-Rahman, Aziz Ahmad, Martin Lings (Abu Bakr Sirajuddin) and the youngest of them, Akbar S. Ahmad are such academics. The first two are primarily concerned with -Islam and its historical, social and theological aspects. Martin Ling's chief concern is the mystical and spiritual dimension. Each has contributed considerably towards correcting some of the assumptions and presumptions of the 'orientalists'.

Akber S. Ahmad, trained as an anthropologist, looks at a complex discipline from an angle which is bound to promote controversy and, hopefully, reinforce recent moves by Muslim intellectuals to interpret disciplines from Islamic Muslim viewpoint. Thereby expanding the discipline beyond its Euro-centric focus and shaking Muslim 'scholarship' from its persisting stupor.

As the full title states, the work discusses 'Definition Dogms and Directions'. This tri-partite division is not limited to the Muslim aspect of anthropology. It extends to the general concerns of the discipline itself. The work then is descriptive, analytic and prescriptive.

Covering the first 50 pages, the descriptive section is the longest. Key ideas are placed in the general parameters of the subject. The early contributions of the missionaries and colonial administrators to the discipline are narrated, European, British and American emphases stated, the relationship of anthropology to other sciences shown and nice distinctions ‘between ethnology ethnography, social and cultural economic anthropology made clear.

When Ahmad examines the ‘Colonial Encounter’ he neither runs with ‘orientalists’ nor runs with Edward Said and his ilk. While he accepts some of Edward Said’s devastating conclusions about the biases of the ‘orientalists’, he is also aware of the limited usefulness of the work of some ‘orientalists’. For a third world intellectual this can be quite damning. But Ahmad’s is the ‘middle path’, the golden mean’ prompted by intellectual balance:

‘Not all colonial ethnography is defective, although its political assumptions are.’ (p. 26)

The second, analytic section is challenging. Some of the factors that have influenced Western perception of Muslim societies are discussed. Citing example from contemporary work on Islam he uncovers some of the pervading, explicit and implicit, biases and warns that prejudiced works should not be dismissed as ‘nonsense’. Instead Islamic scholars should reply:

‘If not, their silence will be taken as an incapacity to prepare a suitable answer.’ (p. 51)

The author has taken issue with prof. Barth and his wife, Pehrson and Frederik Bailey who have worked in Muslim societies. The reaction is predictable:

‘When I suggest we refer to the holistic Islamic frame work (Islam as culture and politics) when examining Muslim Tribal/groups..., I was criticized for attacking Western anthropologists and Colonialism...My work was seen as an Islamic challenge.’ (p.55)

The final section is most relevant to the aims of the International Institute of Islamic Thought which has sponsored the series of works for the “Islamization of the (Sciences”.

The author states that the works of Ibn Khaldun and al-Biruni (973-1048) provide sound academic start for Islamic anthropology as a discipline. He defines it as:

“The study of Muslim groups by scholars committed to the universalistic principles of Islam-humanity, knowledge, tolerance-relating micro village trival studies in particular to the larger historical and ideological frames of Islam. Islam is here understood not as theology but sociology. The definition does not preclude non-Muslims”. (p.56)

The methodological position that Ahmad advocates is not “eclecticism”.

“There is only one Islam, and there can be only one Islam, but there are many Muslim societies, we must attempt to place the multitude of Muslim societies within the frame-work of one universal Islam”. (p. 58).

A nice distinction, but precisely one where conceptual crystallization by Muslim intellectuals is most needed. The key words in the definition are “humanity, knowledge, tolerance”. One could take issue with that. These qualities are common to all religions. What then distinguishes Islamic anthropology? Can there be such disciplines as Christian, Buddhist and Jewish anthropology? Specially to the view of the internal impulse rather than the subject group?

The historical experience of a people and the ideological parameters of their dynamic does prompt distinctions. Society is shaped by, and shapes, its people. When Islam is seen as sociology, the permutations and combinations of Islam as theology and indigenous group are rich and varied; from the Hindu-influenced Maples of India and the Javanese of Indonesia, to the magic-oriented Muslims of Nigeria. The range is broad and exciting and disturbing. Will studies of these groups constitute “Islamic” anthropology?

The definition does not preclude non-Muslims who study Muslims groups with “humanity, knowledge, tolerance”. Then what about the study of non-Muslim societies (Hindu) by Muslim scholars (al-Biruni)? In short, how Muslim is Muslim?

The answer has been provided ad nauseam by Mullah pontification. It is time for informed opinions. Until the Islamic ‘ideal’ or framework in

sociological and anthropological terms is defined the whole endeavour is bound to take on a whimsical character.

The ideal has been identified. In more aspects than one, it has been, and continues to be, the Muslim society during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Unfortunately, it has been seen either in myopic “orientalist” perspective, or has been couched in generative religious jargon, or discussed in fragments by Muslim scholars. No clear holistic model emerges. What is needed is to evolve the model and examine it in operative contemporary terms. Only when its relevance is made immediate will it exert the necessary influence to place Muslim societies-and by extension, academic disciplines-within the framework of one universal Islam.

The author’s seven recommendations merit attention on the highest level. They could practically help in intellectual proliferation of the Islamic revival. Slim, but not slight, the work is important for the issues raised and the answers proposed.

**M. Athar Tahir**

# ISLAMIC ART AND SPIRITUALITY

Syyed Hossein Nasr, Islamic Texts Society, Cambridge, 1987, pp.213,  
£. 25.00

Ugliness is the most outstanding characteristic of the present computerized age: the hideous concrete monstrosities that are increasingly defacing our cities, the subjective meaninglessness of modern abstract art, literature that has degenerated into verbal modern abstract art, literature that has degenerated into verbal pornography and the nerve-shattering noise of pop-music. The root-cause of all this ugliness is rejection of God - for godless materialism cannot be anything but ugly. Worst of all, under the impact of westernization, most Muslims themselves have lost all aesthetic sense to the extent that they cannot distinguish beauty from ugliness or truth from falsehood. The modernists condemn Islamic art as ‘stagnant’ and ‘backward’ while the fundamentalists insist it is ‘‘un-godly’’ and ‘‘satanic.’’ - a product of the decadent monarchies and foreign influences alien to Islam! Even the most sacred forms of Islamic art are at best regarded as a luxury and a waste of time and energy which they allege could far more be profitably spent in social, economic and political activism. All these fallacies used by the enemies of Islamic art and culture, are convincingly refuted in this book.

‘‘One of the most pertinent aspects of the spiritual message of Islamic art today is its ability to present the heart of Islam in a much more direct and intelligible manner than many a purportedly scholarly exposition. A piece of traditional calligraphy or an arabesque can speak much more eloquently of the intelligence and nobility which characterize the Islamic message than many an apologetic work of Islamic modernists or so-called activists. It is the serene, intelligible structured and highly spiritual character of Islamic art which more than any other element has helped to combat and off-set the very negative effect produced by that type of currently popular literature about Islam which would depict it as a violent, irrational and fanatical force.’’  
(pp. 195-196)

(There are those fundamentalists and activists) who emphasize the Shari’ite dimension of Islam at the expense of everything else. Now no Muslim could oppose the thesis that an Islamic society is one in which the

Shar'iah is promulgated and practiced. But if the Shar'iah as law governing the external actions of human society as well as the rites man must perform as part of his duties towards God - were the only aspect of Islam, why was such care taken throughout Islamic history even going back to the very beginning in the psalmody of the Quran, in the building of beautiful "mosques and in beautifying all that concerns God and His religion? Why was so much effort spent in bringing Islamic values into the lives of men and women through all kinds of means from story-telling and literature to weaving all of which are concerned with art? The answer is clear enough Human beings have more hours in the day than directly religious injunctions of the Shari'ah can fill. These injunctions include prayer, fasting, pilgrimage and so on while other activities such as earning a living or caring for the family are also religious duties as long as they are performed in accordance with the Shar'iah. But human nature being What it is, man tends to forget God in those other activities, ranging from economic transactions to what is called "leisure." Islamic art was the means whereby the spirit of Islam penetrated into all these types and modes of activity, reminding him, wherever he was, of the Divine presence. To destroy this is to empty the soul and mind of the Muslim to a large extent of its Islamic content, leaving a vacuum which is then rapidly filled by the worst clutter, noise and banality of the modern world, as in the case of many a Muslim today. As a result of the loss of a part of their soul to the false and the ugly, there are those who have lost their faith altogether." (PP. 197-198)

Islamic art stems not from alien influences but directly from the inner dimensions of Islam itself, always emphasizing the absolute, the immutable and permanent. In contrast to Western art, Islamic art is not the subjective expression of the individual but the sacred and traditional legacy of an entire civilization. For this reason, many of the greatest works of Islamic art are anonymous. Because the author is Persian, much of the book describes various aspects of Persian Islamic art, always making clear that this is applicable to the rest of the Muslim world as well.

"There is, moreover, another function which traditional Islamic art can play today, one which is itself a great boon and blessing if fully understood. In a world replete with deception and counterfeit, this art, along with doctrinal truth, can play the role of determining the Islamicity of all that

claims to be Islamic. It can serve as a criterion for deciding what social, cultural or even political manifestation or movement is authentically Islamic and not just making use of Islamic symbols and images or means for the achievement of other ends. Islam throughout its history and within the depth and breadth of all its authentic manifestations from architecture to the art of dress has emphasized beauty and been inseparable from it. Have those (fundamentalists), who claim to speak in the name of Islam today, created any form of beauty? Can the qualities of serenity, peace, harmony and equilibrium, which characterize both the Islamic religion and the artistic and cultural manifestations of Islam, be seen in what (propaganda) these present-day groups in question create and produce?” (p. 200)

Before she embraced Islam during her youth in America, the reviewer used to be creative in the arts and crafts. When she migrated to Pakistan after embracing Islam, she was constantly reminded that all the so-called “fine arts” are prohibited by the Shar’iah, artists, poets and musicians being threatened by the. Hadith with dire punishments in the Hereafter. Consequently, she henceforth - abandoned all artistic efforts in exchange for writing polemics in the cause of Islam.

A quarter of a century later when she finally realized the fallacies of the fundamentalists and tried to resume her artistic endeavours, with dismay she found that whatever creative talents she may have been formerly endowed with, had been utterly killed off by decades of discouragement and lack of practice.

This book is essential reading for all those who value the preservation and survival of Islamic civilization.

Maryam Jameelah

# TRADITIONAL ISLAM IN THE MODERN WORLD

Syyed Hossein Nasr, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1987, pp.335,  
£. 25.00

The labeling of the term “fundamentalist” by Western journalists and many scholars in describing the “revivalist”, “resurgent”, “revolutionary” movements in the Muslim world, which in the name of Islam, seek to re-establish Muslim political power, is most misleading. “Fundamentalism” originally meant those conservative Protestants in America who insisted on a narrow, literal interpretation of the Bible. Now it is commonly applied in a radically different context to contemporary movements in the Muslim world having a violently revolutionary, anti-Western and politically activist character. All of them believe that an Islamic order can be achieved through the rigorous enforcement of Shar’iah and the establishment of an Islamic state. All of them stress the outward, literal, Legal interpretation of Quran and Hadith to the almost total exclusion of its inner meanings and emphasize the supreme importance of action and constant agitation over contemplation, society over the individual and are unanimous in their intense hostility to the practice of Tasawwuf (Sufis). Devoid of any genuine aesthetic sense, beauty is regarded by them as a luxury they can ill-afford and all artistic endeavour, including traditional Islamic art, is scorned by them as “satanic” and “ungodly” unless directly useful to them for propaganda purposes. The more violent revolutionary movements in Iran and Lebanon, characterized by blind fury and hatred against all who disagree with them, incorporate Marxist ideas and methods into their programme while the milder ones in Egypt and the Indo-Pak sub-continent seek peaceful democratic forms of rule in an Islamic context.

All these Islamic movements today are the ripe fruits of the preaching and writings of Ibn Taimiya (7th/13th century) and the Arabian puritanical reformer (12th/18th century), Shaikh Muhammad bin Abd al Whahab. Condemning Sufi practices as mere pagan superstitions tantamount to Shirk (associating partners to the Divinity), the product of foreign influences contrary to Quran and Sunnah, and philosophy as Greek culture under Muslim names, they thought Sufism and philosophy were the causes for the

decay and decline of the Muslims. They sought to completely ban both as heresy. This prescription, for combatting the many abuses and deviations which had arisen to corrupt the Ummah or Muslim community, was tantamount to curing the disease by killing the patient! Both these reformers were convinced that only the literal Legal injunctions of Quran and Sunnah were binding on believers. According to them, Islamic history came to an end after the Khilafat Rashidun with the establishment of the monarchy and everything following that period was deviation, corruption and decadence. The remedy they prescribed for the Ummah was to return for its inspiration to the earliest years of Muslim history and hence a “pure” Islam. The repudiation of all later developments in the history and culture of Islam could be compared to acceptance of only the roots of the tree while its trunk, branches, leaves, fruits and flowers are all rejected and cut down! The wholesale rejection of the rich spiritual and cultural heritage of the later periods, resulted in a sterile mental vacuum, helpless to confront the invasion of the West, thus greatly facilitating the secularization and modernization of the Muslim world.

While the Islamic artistic heritage is condemned as “backward” and “stagnant” by the secularist and modernists, at best beauty is regarded by the revivalists as a luxury only the idle rich could afford under the “decadent” monarchies or at best a sheer waste of time and energy. Alien western architectural styles are enthusiastically adopted by both (even in the holiest sanctuaries of Mecca and Medina) which give our cities an uglier appearance year by year. In order to prove how modern and progressive they are, even the architecture of their new mosques has been radically changed (as can be seen here in Pakistan in the atrocious monstrosities of the Defense of Housing Society Mosque in Karachi and the Faisal Mosque in Islamabad), The fundamentalists are just as proud of them as the modernists.

The most conspicuous product of modern civilization is, of course, its science/technology which in its atheism, materialism, rationalism and humanism, is the deadliest enemy against religion, culture and all traditional spiritual and moral values. Today science/technology and modern civilization are synonomous with each other. Minus the former, virtually nothing of the latter is left! Yet fundamentalists welcome modern science/technology as enthusiastically as the secularists and modernists - from bulldozers to

computers, and waste much time and energy with far-fetched arguments to prove its conformity to Quran and Sunnah.

Hence the amazing phenomenon one sees of fundamentalists attacking and condemning the West on the one hand while simultaneously adopting its most important values and methods on the other! Fundamentalist criticism of the West is thus hollow, and superficial. Only the results and effects are condemned - never the root- causes. In their eyes, Islam is not Deen or religious faith at all but a “revolutionary, ideological movement” - concepts wholly unknown to our ancestors.

What is the end-result of “fundamentalism” but the destruction of the priceless remnants of our spiritual, intellectual, artistic, and cultural heritage? The importance given by Fundamentalists to social, economic and political goals above all else, is in fact, nothing but secularism in reverse! They have no sense of the holy. For them nothing is sacred. Yet in the name of Islam, fundamentalists continually defile the sacred (especially in Saudi Arabia) - which is much more dangerous than outright secularism.

“Traditional Islam” therefore is simply what Muslims throughout the world have always believed and practiced continuously for fourteen centuries or at least until the advent of European colonial rule and the imposition of modern Western education.

Such are the challenging views which one of the most eminent living Muslim scholars - Seyyed Hossein Nasr - expresses in this book.

The first section deals with various facets of the Islamic tradition including Jihad, the Islamic significance of work, sexuality, and Shi’ism in Safavid Persia, the latter revealing the glaring contrast between Shi’ism then and now so hideously distorted by Marxism in today’s revolutionary Iran.

The following sections of this book deal with Islam in the present-day Muslim world, Islam and modern thought, “development” and Islam, Islam and modern architectural city-planning, traditional Islamic education - which the author, unlike the fundamentalists, never condemns as obsolete and outdated but regards its sympathetic study of greatest value - and Islamic

philosophy which he is convinced is fully capable of responding to the modern age as well as solving its most acute problems.

Section IV, dealing with three major Western interpreters of Islam, is for the Muslim reader, the most controversial part of this book. However, since the imperialist Occident, culturally speaking has practically obliterated Corbin's "Orient of Light," if a non-Muslim orientalist speaks the Truth, we must not be so fanatical to reject his work just because he is a westerner. The criterion of Truth cannot be restricted to geography. Massignon and Corbin both pursued their studies out of genuine love for them. They never tried to refute Islam. Unlike most other orientalists, there is not trace of malice in any of their work. Contrast this with the numerous fundamentalists and modernists from the East who do not hesitate to distort Islam every single day!

In the concluding post-script, the author discusses present trends in the Muslim world as well as those most likely to persist into the future.

This book is essential for all scholars as well as the intelligent general reader who wish to understand the plight of Islam now.

**Maryam Jameelah**

# THE ESSENTIAL WRITINGS OF FRITHJOF SCHUON

**Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Amity House, New York, 1986, pp.543**

This book is a treasure - house which will bring much joy to all those who, in the realms of religion, spirituality, art and life, seek to explore, dig deep, and understand the true nature of things. The author is Frithjof Schuon, the Swiss authority on comparative religion - particularly Islam and its relations with other traditions - whose works, during the last thirty years, have generated an appreciative following in Britain and America, and, during the last decade, have also won many admirers in Pakistan. The present volume, an anthology of his major writings, is undoubtedly the fullest presentation so far of the author's works to the general public, and it must be said that it is an impressive achievement.

Frithjof Schuon's chosen fields are four - fold: (1) a fundamental and implacable analysis of the nature - and deviancy - of the secular modern world; - (2) an explanation of the meaning of "tradition" (and of the traditional civilizations which, historically, have embodied pre-modern and sacred values); (3) an exposition of metaphysics and of the principal wisdom-systems of the world, such as tasawwuf (as represented by Ibn 'Arabi and Rumi), Christian mysticism (as represented by St. Gregory Palamas, Master Eckhart and Jakob Boehme), the Advaita-Vedanta of the Hindus (as represented by Shankara), Greek philosophy (as represented by Pythagoras and Plato), and Taoism; and, finally, (4) an exposition of the spiritual and intellectual content of sacred symbols, from whichever tradition of religion they may derive. The present volume is a generous presentation of lengthy extracts from Schuon's published writings in all of these fields.

The crowning glory of all Schuon's writing is its unvarying capacity to uncover the essential truth, illuminating and saving, that lies at the heart of every traditional form. His point of view is thus that of the "religion of the heart", of which the most poignant expression is perhaps to be found in the famous words of Ibn 'Arabi: "My heart has opened unto every form: it is a pasture for gazelles, a cloister for Christian monks, a temple for idols, the Ka'aba of the pilgrim, the tables of the Torah and the Book of the Qur'an. I

practice the religion of love; in whatsoever direction its caravans advance, the religion of love shall be my religion and my faith.”

Schuon calls the religion of the heart the *religio perennis*; and in this connection we must mention a particular and characteristic dimension which is unfailingly present in everything that he writes. This is that intellectual understanding entails spiritual responsibility, that percipience and insight, to be truly sincere, must be complemented by commitment and faith, and that “seeing” (in height) implies “believing” (in depth). In other words, the keener our perception and intuition of essential and saving truth, the greater our obligation to take the necessary steps towards inward or spiritual “realization”. Schuon’s work invariably possesses the uncanny capacity never to allow the reader to stop short at theory, but rather to impel him, at a deep and serious level, towards practice and commitment. In an age of complacent skepticism, nothing could be more precious.

The religion of the heart is sometimes also referred to as “esoterism”, and it is important to know what Schuon means by this. To some the term suggests a flight of fancy, an indulgence in unbridled subjectivity. Here is what Schuon says: “The prerogative of the human state is objectivity, the essential ‘content of which is the Absolute. There is no knowledge without objectivity of the intelligence, no freedom without objectivity of the will, and no nobility without objectivity of the soul. Esoterism seeks to realize pure and direct objectivity; this is the reason for its existence.” Moreover, true esoterism is not the enemy of religion, as those familiar only with the many contemporary pseudo-esoterisms have found reason to suppose. Schuon writes: “Just as rationalism can remove faith, so esoterism can restore it.” These quotations give something of the flavour, precision, and incisiveness of the writings presented in this anthology.

As Ibn ‘Arabi in his day made clear, the religion of the heart in no way challenges the providential nature or paramount importance of the revealed religion. Indeed, one of the most important facets of Schuon’s writings is the stress laid on the need for “orthodoxy” - not only in Islam, but in the other religions as well. Nowadays “orthodoxy” is frequently regarded as a form of intolerance: the arbitrary imposing on people of a certain set of views. The question is more subtle, however, and, given the wide field of world religions evoked in this book, we are at liberty to have recourse in this connection to

the “Noble Eightfold Path” of Buddhism. We discover that the first item on this is nothing other than “right thinking”. It is obvious why this should be given precedence over all else, since, both logically and in terms of commonsense, “right thinking” must come before “right doing”. And what is the English word (derived from the Greek) that signifies “right thinking”? Nothing other than “ortho-doxy”. It is in this sense that orthodoxy is expounded by Schuon.

To go further:  $2 + 2 = 4$  is orthodox;  $2 + 2 = 5$  is unorthodox. Rather simple - but it also works the same way at much loftier levels. Another way of looking at it is this: even in the circumstances of today, many people still preserve the notion of “moral purity”, and lay high value on it. Orthodoxy is “intellectual purity”, which is indispensable for the proper worship of God, and the receiving of His grace. Seen in this way - and far from “telling other people what to believe” - orthodoxy is no more than a reference to the primacy and indispensability of truth. This viewpoint lies at the heart of every spiritual way based on knowledge or gnosis (known as ma’rifa in Islam, and jnana in Hinduism). In Christianity, the same viewpoint finds expression in the words of Christ: “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” All of Schuon’s writings are like a commentary on this “gnostic” or “jnanic” text. No greater service could be rendered in the present age of error.

Schuon’s best known works up to now have been *Understanding Islam* (1963), *Dimensions of Islam* (1969), *Islam and the Perennial Philosophy* (1976), and *Christianity/Islam* (1985). The present work includes long extracts from these, and also from his studies on other religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, and the religion of the North American Indians. This is a book for those who want an authoritative and reliable insight into the inner meaning and spiritual practices of the principal world religions.

The sixty-page introduction by the editor Seyyed Hossein Nasr is a masterpiece in itself. In it he outlines and comments on the vast scope encompassed by the author’s work. Not only all the main religions are covered, but also the manifold aspects of religion, art, and life: metaphysics, epistemology, cosmology, esthetics, man, woman, sexuality, the spiritual life, the virtues, prayer. There is also an interesting section on the traditionalist criticisms of modern philosophy, modern science, and modern art. But

perhaps most remarkable of all in this remarkable book are four previously unpublished private letters on the spiritual life. Here before our very eyes is the naked truth, a total uncovering of the spirit; here it can truly be said that heart speaks to heart.

It is much to be hoped that this comprehensive presentation of the writings and teachings of Frithjof Schuon, contemporary sage, spiritual authority, and expositor of tassawwuf and Vedanta, will reach those many seekers after truth who are capable of receiving the profound blessing and enrichment that it offers.

William Stoddart

# THE RECONSTRUCTION OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN ISLAM

**Mohammad Iqbal. Edited by M. Saeed Sheikh. Published by Institute of Islamic Culture, Lahore, 1986.**

M. Saeed Sheikh's edition of *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* is a pleasant surprise to the readers and scholars of Iqbal. The *Reconstruction* is a compilation of six lectures Iqbal delivered at Madras, Aligarh and Hyderabad from 1920-30. It also includes a seventh one delivered at a session of Aristotelean Society at London in 1932. This is Iqbal's attempt to reconstruct an Islamic Metaphysics in the light of Quran, accommodating modern science and knowledge.

Throughout the book Iqbal has maintained that the spirit of the Quran is essentially anti-classical, though some Muslim philosophers of the past have erroneously used the paradigms of classical philosophy (Platonic and Aristotelean) in constructing a metaphysics of Islam. In the first two lectures, Iqbal maintains that Revelation, Nature, and History are the three great sources of knowledge. But, with the advent of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) the task of revelation was complete. "The birth of Islam was the birth of inductive intellect". The finality of prophethood meant the affirmation of Nature and History as the future sources of knowledge, supplemented with Religious Experience. However, the revelations of the prophet could be confirmed both by the intellectual and the pragmatic tests. Iqbal further maintains that the Quran gives a dynamic view of the universe in which Nature and History play an active role. It rejects the duality and contrast of Spirit and Nature so characteristic of Christianity (as practiced and propagated); and affirms that reality is a spiritual order of which Nature and History are part and parcel. It is through active contact with Nature and History that the soul of man can grow and participate in the eternal and catch the glimpse of the Absolute.

In the third and fourth lecture Iqbal explains the nature of the Infinite and Absolute Ego (God) and that of finite ego (man). The ego which is the ground of all experience is a rationally directed creative will. Its infinity consists in the "Infinite possibility of its creative activity, of which the

universe as known to us is only a partial expression.” In the manner of God the Infinite Ego, man the finite ego, is also a creative will. He is chosen by God to be his vicegerent on earth, and is a trustee of a free personality and thus responsible to God for his deeds. His finitude does not imply the possibility of annihilation in the Absolute (as thought by some sufis); it rather means immortality. The highest state attainable by man is complete affirmation of his self.” The climax of his development is reached when the ego is able to retain full possession, even in the case of a direct contact with the all embracing ego.” Says Iqbal, “this is the ideal of perfect manhood in Islam which stands wholesome before every intellectual test.

The fifth lecture is dedicated to establishing the anti-classical spirit of Quran. Here Iqbal combats Spengler’s charge that there is an overlaying of Magian crust on Islamic culture in which revelation plays a vital role in all stages of its development. Rejecting this charge, Iqbal argues that declaring the finality of prophethood (which is an important element of a Muslim’s faith), the Quran has shown the direction in which man should look in future for guidance and knowledge. This should not be Revelation any more, but Nature and History. Thus, science becomes the greatest companion of man in his search for knowledge and fulfilment.

The sixth lecture, “The Principle of Self-movement in Islam” is a very precious note on the value of Ijtihad. Here Iqbal complains that the Islamic culture all over the world is suffering from stagnation. He expresses the dire need to revise Islamic jurisprudence. If Islam is a living and dynamic force, it must be capable of coping with different approaches to life provided they lead to the final goal which is the ego’s complete affirmation of itself before the Absolute Ego (Allah).

The last lecture “Is Religion Possible?” was addressed to a non-Muslim audience in which Iqbal reviews the possibility of giving a rational basis to religion. Faith, Reason, and discovery, these are the three levels of religious knowledge. It is at the level of discovery that the essence of religion is unraveled through religious experience which establishes the contact with one’s deeper self- the “appreciative self,” and, through that, with the Eternal and the Absolute (God). This experience is different from other normal experiences (sensory, rational etc.),but is not itself abnormal, or psychopathic. It is even different from mystic experience which aims at

assimilation of the finite ego in the infinite. It is a contemplative insight into the meaning of religion which enables man to achieve higher goals. Its rational basis is that, it stands the pragmatic test. Were it psychopathic, the Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him), who experienced it in the highest form (revelation) would not have been able to revolutionize the social, moral and ethical structure of the ailing humanity.

The Reconstruction is the most remarkable attempt of Iqbal to establish the philosophical foundation of Islam while showing its compatibility with modern Science and knowledge. However, despite the ingenuity of this work the Reconstruction, as and when written by Iqbal and published in 1930-34, was lacking in documentation. Great philosophers very little care for technicalities. In little time they have, they want to benefit literature and thought to the maximum. Iqbal, therefore, hardly gives complete references. He mentions philosophers or scientists, cites their views directly or indirectly without giving complete details of their work. Nor did he care to add a bibliography, an index or a glossary. This, he rightly thought is the work of his successors, who would perhaps write thesis, dissertation, or other scholarly work on his work, and would interpret and reinterpret him.

M. Saeed Sheikh in his edition of Reconstruction has done enormous scholarly work in giving it the present shape. By adding reference, annotations, bibliography, general Index, Index or Quranic verses etc., he has completely documented the Reconstruction. This was a very tough job, which required not only very vast and deep knowledge of Iqbal's ideas and thought, but also of the whole of Islamic and Western philosophical literature. Above all it required extensive and deep knowledge and understanding of Quran and Hadith.

This laborious, dedicated and challenging job could not have been undertaken by anyone less in calibre than the present editor. M. Saeed Sheikh is a renowned scholar of Islam who has contributed many valuable works to Islamic philosophical literature. Studies in Muslim Philosophy, Sh. Ashraf, Lahore, A Dictionary of Muslim Philosophy, Lahore, 1981, are a few among these. He had also been the Director of the Institute of Islamic Culture. It is actually during the period he was fulfilling this assignment that he undertook this challenging venture.

The nature of the work he undertook here, not only testified the extraordinary command of the editor on Western, Islamic and Quranic literature, but also shows his deep admiration and love of Iqbal. It is, I believe, far easier to write and expound ones own ideas than to search the material and ideas someone else has used from other sources to expound his views and thought, and to interpret them with responsibility and accuracy. You do it for someone only when you love that person and experience some joy in such acts of devotion. Saeed Sheikh's present enterprise undoubtedly, reflects his devotion to Iqbal and also for Islam.

On the cover page of the beautifully hardbound book appears the name of the author "Allama Mohammad Iqbal". It is obvious that Saeed Sheikh has deliberately ignored the modern convention of citing the given and the last name of the author as it is, and has chosen to cite the author's name alongwith his title "Allama" sheerly out of his love and respect of this great genius of the time and reformer of Islamic countries on whom the nation has conferred such titles as "Shair-e-Mashriq", "Pakistan Ka Qaumi-Shair", etc.

Saeed Sheikh's this well documented edition of Reconstruction will not only re-introduce Iqbal's work to the Western readers more effectively, but will also help reinforce his ideas and thought in Pakistan and other Islamic countries. It will greatly encourage the scholars of Iqbal and also of Islam in reading the Reconstruction with greater authority and confidence.

This new edition is such a valuable contribution to Iqbal's work, that one feels overjoyed to see it and use it. An addition of transliteration of Arabic, Persian and Urdu words, a glossary, and a brief outline of the contents of the book, is all that one can suggest for the future editions.

**Dr. Arifa Farid.**

# **SURVEY OF METAPHYSICS -AND ESOTERISM**

**by Frithjof Schuon ( Isa Nur-ud-Din) Published by World Wisdom  
Books P.O. Box 2682, Bloomington, Indiana, 47402-2682. U.S.A. 1986  
Price £ 12.00. pp. 224.**

Frithjof Schuon (Isa Nur-ud-Din) has mastered both metaphysics and esoterism. He has a keen perception of the entire Western metaphysics and has very ably brought forth the pitfalls inherent in this mode of thought. His deep understanding of Eastern metaphysics has made him the finest critic of modern metaphysics. He has learnt much from Rene Guenon but has added beautiful chapters on Islamic metaphysics and esoterism in the dying world of positivism and scientism.

Survey Of metaphysics And Esoterism is a book which is a beautiful summary of his thought. Each line is wedded to the central vision; Sophia perennis. The author starts with an introduction to the epistemological premises. 'There are truths inherent in the human spirit which are contained as potentialities or virtualities in the pure Intellect, These principle and archetypal truths prefigure and determine all others. They can be known intuitively and are infallible by nature. It is by dint of pure Intellect that the faculty of reason comes into being. Man's access in principle to the supranational vision of the Real and consequently to metaphysical certitude makes him capable of possessing reason together with language. The truth of the Absolute coincides with the very substance of our spirit. 'Revelation is to the macrocosm what intellection is to the macrocosm', likewise, 'free will proves the transcendence of its essential goal', 'for human will is proportioned to God, and it is only in God, and by Him that it is totally free. Man has to transcend himself by separating the Real and the Illusory. 'Man is made of thought, of will and of love'. 'Forms are doors to the essences in thought and in language as well as in all other symbolisms'.

The author gives a summary of integral metaphysics. 'In metaphysics, it is necessary to start from the idea that the Supreme Reality is absolute, and that being absolute it is infinite'. The Absolute and the infinite are the two fundamental aspects of the Real. The former expresses essentiality while the

latter manifests potentiality. The Infinite, in the ultimate analysis, coincides with All-Possibility. Both define the relationships of Transcendence and Immanence. It takes various forms; 'firstly, the Principle in itself; secondly, the prefiguration of Manifestation in the Principle; thirdly, the projection of the principle in Manifestation; and fourthly, Manifestation in itself'. The structure of the Universe is expressed by the words of perfection and Projection. 'Good is absolute and infinite. It is His intrinsic nature to radiate. The author further discusses 'Dimensions, Modes and Degrees of the Divine Order'. Here one enters into the heart of traditional metaphysics. Unlike the modern metaphysicians, Schuon reflects a true understanding of the metaphysical notion of the Substance and the corresponding problems of subject and object. Creation is considered as a Divine Quality and is understood in reference to Atma and Maya. He further discusses the dimensions of Omnipotence and puts Scholasticism to a searching criticism. The problem of good and evil is understood in a true perspective. Eschatology is considered a part of cosmology which in turn is a 'prolongation of metaphysics.' In 'The Mystery of the Hypostatic Face' the author again turns to the problem of 'substance and form in each religion'. It forms a basis for his views on religious typologies. Also, there are two types of esoterisms. The one is embraced by metaphysics whereas the other is clothed in religion and takes a sentimental form. The phenomenon of faith is discussed in detail and its deficiencies are brought-out. It is not a disinterested perception of the nature of things' but as a simple belief is based on self-interest and volition. It leads to 'pious myopia'. Likewise, there are pitfalls in the language of faith. The problems of necessity and freedom, good and evil, transcendence and immanence, Omnipotence and freedom etc. are manifested in different religions in different forms. 'The imagery is nothing, the underlying geometry is everything'. The author goes on to discuss, 'Enigma and Message of Islamic Esoterism'. Sufism is examined and its various perspectives are explored.' Sufism is in principle the third dimension, without which Islam is incomplete and after which there is no other'. Also, esoterism is to exoterism what the centre is to the circle in the geometry of Islam!

Schuon reveals the world of the Soul. He discusses the ambiguity of the emotional element. It is 'a subordinate mode of Knowledge'. He critically examines psychoanalysis and the method it involves for the study of Man.

He further stresses on the anonymity of the virtues and warns us against passion and pride. 'Passion reveals itself by attachment and pride by ambition.' An enlightening discussion takes place on the rationale of trials and happiness. In his 'Synthesis and Conclusion' he makes a beautiful discourse on Transcendence and Immanence. 'Truth and holiness, all values are in these two terms; all that we must love and all that we must be'.

Schuon has gathered pearls of metaphysics and esoterism. It is a finest introduction to his entire thought. His style is methodical, logical and imaginative. Each line is tied with other and is integrated with the central idea. It is a reflection of true phenomenology based on objective, intellectual principles. It is a masterpiece of true art.

**Shahzad Qai'ser**

# **CHRISTIANITY/ ISLAM (ESSAYS ON ESOTERIC ECUMENICISM)**

**by Frithjof Schuon (Isa Nur-ud-Din) Published by World Wisdom  
Books P. O. Box 2682, Bloomington, Indiana, 47402--2682 U.S.A 1985.  
Price \$ 12.00 pp.270.**

Frithjof Schuon (Isa Nur-ud-Din) is a writer who occupies a distinctive place in contemporary thought. His writings manifest a deeper understanding of both the traditional and the modern world. They present a critique of modern philosophy, science and art from the metaphysical/traditional perspective. He completely excels in the field of comparative religion by unveiling the principle of unity behind all manifestation. From his first book 'The Transcendent Unity of Religions' to his later works he has consistently tried to understand the essence of religious phenomena. Each religion has a substance and a form. The former is universal whereas the latter is a product of numerous variables. This single observation permeates his entire works.

'Christianity/Islam' is a book which comprises 'Essays on Esoteric Ecumenicism'. It is divided into three parts. Each essay in its unique way touches on certain fundamental aspects of the Tradition. Both Christian and Islamic perspectives shine forth in the light of Truth. The book starts with an enlightening discussion on liturgy. The author categorically commits that a liturgy cannot be invented and the modern languages by dint of profanity cannot replace liturgical languages. Neither the level of liturgy can be debased to the level of the modern man nor the sacred can be lowered to satisfy the demands of profanity. Next, he turns to the question of Evangelicalism and places Luther in the correct perspective. One finds his discussion on protestantism as highly illuminating. 'The Mystery of the Two Natures' of Christ is a wonderful essay on the subject. An intelligent discussion on the relation between the relative and the absolute gives a peep into the heart of the Christian tradition. The first part concludes with a discourse on spiritual values in reference to St. Francis of Assisi. Unlike the moral norms which remain stranded on the horizontal dimension, the spiritual virtues open up the vertical plane which embraces both God and man.

‘Truth and Presence’ is an essay which reveals the basic axioms of Islam and Christianity. The former is wedded to the idea that ‘it is the absolute Truth which saves’ whereas the latter holds on to the axiom that it is the Divine Presence which saves. However, both represent truth and presence in their own right and in a higher gnosis both Islam and Christianity meet.’ The Problem of Moral Divergences’ in traditional morals ‘may stem from outer conditions of life combined with profound differences of temperament; they may also stem from levels of application and differences of perspective. The gap between the Law of Moses and that of Christ offers a particularly clear example of this.’ The author further discusses the alternations in Semitic Monotheism and introduces the vital concepts of ‘holy equilibrium’ and ‘holy disequilibrium’.

There is an enlightening discussion on the Islamic perspective which reveals the quintessence of Islam and establishes the author as a master of the Tradition. “The Idea of The Best in Religions” is beautifully analyzed and the presence of an element of absoluteness constitutes the justification for the existence of a particular religion. ‘Religions are like lamps of colored glass’. However, they all converge at a transcendent point. ‘Faith, Obedience, Inwardness, Equilibrium; such is the entire Semitic monotheistic cycle’. ‘Images of Islam’ is an essay which takes us to the principle behind Shia-Sunni divergence. Both manifest different perspectives which can be understood at a higher level. In ‘Dilemma of Moslem Scholasticism, the author mainly shows the weaknesses of the Ash’arites and presents a critique of their basic dictum; will of God. No serious student of Muslim Scholasticism can afford to ignore the questions raised by the author in this behalf. The essay on ‘Atomism and Creation’ touches a favourable topic of the metaphysicians, philosophers and theologians, It raises one’s level of understanding on the issue dare one can expect from a great writer

**Shahzad Qiser**

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