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# **IQBAL'S VIEWS ON THE MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL FUTURE OF HUMANITY**

Dr. Javid Iqbal

Iqbal's world-view is based on his deep concern with the future of humanity as well as religion. On the future of humanity his thoughts are scattered in his poetic works and some of his prose writings. But on the future of religion he has elaborated his ideas in the last chapter titled "Is Religion Possible?" of his book: *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*.

Broadly speaking, religion is required for the moral uplift of man. If there had been no man, there would have been no need for religion. Therefore humanity and religion complement each other. It is proper to assess Iqbal's view on the future of humanity before considering his ideas on the future of religion.

I wish to commence the discussion by defining two relevant terms. These are: (a) Development, and (b) Modern Man. "Development", in the modern context, means "increase in per capita income of a nation-state". This purely materialistic concept of development is generally considered a Western innovation. And what do we mean by the expression "Modern Man"? Certain changes took place in the mentality and way of life of the Western man as a result of the dissemination of materialism and the evolution of Western Europe from a developing to a developed society. Modern Man is sometimes called Industrial Man, Technical Man, Mass Man, One-sided Man, Angry Man, Lonely Man etc. He believes in the supremacy of science and technology of which he himself is a product. He relies on reason and feverish activity. He is secular, proud, selfish and amoral. He seeks happiness only through multiplying material comforts and wealth. According to Iqbal, he is so much overshadowed by the results of his intellectual achievements that he has ceased to live soulfully i.e., from within.

Many liberal thinkers and poets of the West have criticized Modern Man. There is a very interesting passage in Iqbal's *Reconstruction Lectures* in which he shows his disillusionment from both Western man as well as

Eastern man. About Western man, he comments: "In the domain of thought he is living in open conflict with himself, and in the domain of economic and political life he is living in open conflict with others. He finds himself unable to control his ruthless egoism and his infinite gold-hunger which is gradually killing all higher striving in him and bringing him nothing but life-weariness. Absorbed in the 'fact', that is to say, the optically present source of sensation, he is entirely cut off from the unplumbed depths of his own being"

About Eastern man, he laments: "The condition of things in the East is no better. The technique of medieval mysticism by which religious life, in its higher manifestations, developed itself both in the East and in the West has now practically failed. Far from reintegrating the forces of the average man's inner life, and thus preparing him for participation in the march of history, it has taught him a false renunciation and made him perfectly contented with his ignorance and spiritual thralldom". (Reconstruction. pp.148-149).

Generally speaking, Modern Man is Western man and he is found in materially prosperous countries, technically called I.D.Cs (Industrially Developed Countries) as opposed to U.D.Cs (Under Developed Countries).

What took place in Europe which eventually led to the development of materialism and the emergence of Modern Man?

The European society in the Middle Ages was a feudal society. The average man lived as a serf, totally dominated by cruel feudal lords and a static Church. The hold of the Church was primarily based on Ptolemy's cosmology, according to which the earth was the centre of the universe and everything including the sun revolved around it. On the basis of this cosmology, the position adopted by the Church was that man was under the direct gaze of God. Thus the Church being the Vicar of God, and with the support of the feudal lords, had acquired enormous power over the ignorant, superstitious and frightened masses who were exploited for centuries.

However certain events or movements in Europe changed the then existing state of affairs. These were: Reformation, which released man's faith from the clutches of a dominating and static Church. Renaissance, which liberated man's mind, and in his quest for knowledge man gradually learnt to depend on reason, sense-perception and scientific thinking. The Ptolemaic

cosmology was shattered by the Copernican astronomy, according to which the earth could no longer be considered the centre of the cosmos, but as one celestial body among many, it revolved around the sun and as for its position in the universe, it was merely an insignificant speck. So man was not under the constant gaze of God as such. Then followed Darwin's theory that man had descended from apes or had biologically evolved from animals.

Iqbal feels that this formulation of the view of evolution in Europe (unlike the one advanced in the world of Islam which brought into being Rumi's tremendous enthusiasm for the biological future of man), had led to the belief that there existed no scientific basis for the idea that the present rich complexity of human endowment would ever be materially exceeded. On this Iqbal comments: "That is how the modern man's secret despair hides itself behind the screen of scientific terminology". (Reconstruction. p.148).

However Iqbal realized that all these events collectively made man conscious that he had to depend solely on himself and this led to the awakening of man. He gained confidence through his philosophies of criticism and naturalism. He felt that his future lay exclusively in his control over the forces of nature. Thereafter the Industrial Revolution started changing the face of Europe, and with the French Revolution came the concepts of liberty, equality and fraternity. It was in fact this awakening which led to the rise and growth of materialism, and the disappearance of religion from the collective life of the people.

Man learnt to produce energy through coal and steam. Thus cheap energy and labour were used for running factories and mills. Europe manufactured so many goods that in the history of mankind this had never been achieved before.

For the sale of these goods markets were required. The search for markets and more raw material led to colonialism and imperialism. Thus in Europe a market society was created, and the standard of life of an average man improved. Through the emphasis on freedom of trade autocratic powers of monarchs were curtailed, and capitalist democracies were established on the basis of territorial nationalism.

In Europe these events engendered the formation of a new mentality and a new freedom. But the new man who came into being in this process, demanded absolute freedom. Absolute freedom meant ruthless trampling over the rights of others. Therefore, Modern Man with all his dedication to and respect for human rights, maintained double standards. Broadly speaking, human society was divided into exploiters and exploited.

The competition and jealousy among the exploiter-robber nations of Europe eventually led to the First World War on the one hand and the establishment of atheistic socialism or communism in Russia on the other.

However the struggle of Modern Man for supremacy over the others continued and resulted in the Second World War. But no lesson was learnt by man from these two wars of mass destruction of human life and property.

The race for the manufacture and production of fatal arms did not stop. According to the figures provided by Dr. Hans Blix upto 1985 the member-states of the Nuclear Club possessed 50,000 nuclear devices with an explosive yield of 1000 Heroshima bombs. In other words, according to him, there was 4 tons TNT explosive available for the destruction of each and every human being in this world, and this was the position in 1985.

How are the I.D.Cs sustaining their prosperous position or what is the secret of their material power? It is the production and use of energy. The position is that the population in the I.D.Cs is 27% of the population of the whole world whereas they consume 80% of the energy produced in the world. The population of the U.S.A is only 6% of the world population but it consumes 36% of energy. As for the U.D.Cs, they constitute 73% of the world population and the energy used by them is only 20%.

The U.D.Cs aspire to become like the I.D.Cs and the model of man before them is the Western Modern Man. But the I.D.Cs maintain their economic and technological hegemony over them by imposing a system of economics based on loans. If the U.D.Cs increase the prices of raw material, the I.D.Cs increase the prices of technology or finished products., This results in global inflation which is not as destructive for the I.D.Cs as it is for the poor U.D.Cs. Thus the material prosperity of Modern Man is founded and is being maintained on this discrimination between man and man.

However, despite the oil crisis, global inflation, and population explosion in the U.D.Cs, the movement in those countries for economic freedom and technological emancipation is gaining momentum.

Meanwhile a depressing picture of the future is presented in the annual reports of the Club of Rome. According to these reports by approximately middle of the 21st century the world's food resources may be completely exhausted. According to their estimate hunger is likely to strike first in certain parts of Africa and thereafter Bangla Desh, India, Pakistan etc. if the growth rate of the population remains the same as it is at present, and this situation is likely to arise in the first quarter of the 21st century. The reports also state that the conventional means of obtaining energy or the world's power resources may be completely exhausted before the end of 21st century.

In the light of these reports, some liberal thinkers of the West are recommending that the political leaders of the I.D.Cs should review their definition of "development". According to some of them the Utopias of early twentieth century i.e., communism and capitalism, as economic orders, have both failed to get rid of under-development on global scale, and that at present no one possesses any such economic system which can generate will and courage in man to improve his living conditions in the future.

Eminent Marxist philosophers like Herbert Marcos and Maximilion Robe] had been extremely critical of the Soviet policy of only concentrating on breaking the Western industrial and technological supremacy instead of using the Soviet revolution for the economic betterment of man. In a way, these thinkers had forestalled the eventual break-down of the Soviet economy if such a policy was to be pursued.

The worlds politics at present are not development oriented but are power oriented. If power is dependent on economic stability, then the emergence and continuance of the U.S.A as a unipolar power, would involve the length of time it can remain in the field as such. But the unipolar power cannot live in the ivory tower when 73% population of the world is afflicted with global inflation, population explosion and under-development. According to the liberal thinkers the world today is standing on the edge of a global economic crisis which can lead to total destruction of mankind. Consequently these thinkers are suggesting the establishment of a new

international economic order based on ethics and morality. According to them such artificial discriminations like blacks and whites, capitalists and communists, developed and under-developed etc. had been harmful for the natural advancement of humanity. Tofler suggests that the U.N. should establish an international body composed of economic experts belonging to both I.D. Cs as well as U.D. Cs, in order to control the threatened global economic crisis or to keep an eye on the negative trends of world economy. Tofler is of the view that in order to save humanity from all future economic crises, it is necessary to think in terms of unity of human beings rather than nations. According to him the world's population should be planned according to its resources and that these resources should be fully exploited. All men are under-developed in the sense that for their economic survival they have to depend on one another. Therefore the future survival of man is possible only if he becomes mature by his bitter experiences of the past and learns to respect his fellow men. (The Future Shock/ The Ecco Spasm Report).

It is interesting to note that the views which are being expressed by the liberal thinkers of today about the future of humanity, are more or less the same which had been expressed by Iqbal in his writings more than fifty years ago. Iqbal rejected territorial nationalism as a basis of human unity even when he was a student in Europe. In the Allahabad Address (1930) which contained his suggestion of the formation of a Muslim state in the North-West of the "Indian subcontinent, he had stated: "Luther... did not realize that in the peculiar conditions which obtained in Europe, his revolt (against the church-organization) would eventually mean the complete displacement of the universal ethics of Jesus by the growth of a plurality of national and hence narrower systems of ethics. Thus the upshot of the intellectual movement initiated by... Rousseau and Luther was the break up of the one into mutually ill-adjusted many, a human into a national outlook., y' (and) the transformation ill-adjusted states dominated by interests not result but national. And these mutually ill-adjusted states after trampling over the morals and convictions of Christianity, are today feeling the need of a federated Europe, i.e., the need of a unity which Christian church-organization originally gave them but which, instead of reconstructing it in the light of Christ's mission of human brotherhood, they considered it fit to

destroy under the inspiration of Luther.” (Speeches and Statements ed. by A. R. Tariq pp.4-6).

In a poem titled “Mecca and Geneva” included in his *Zarb-e-Kalim*, he points out that in this age nations seem to be mixing freely with one another, although the principle of human unity remains hidden from the discerning eye. This is so because the aim of Western diplomacy is to divide humanity into nations, whereas the mission of Islam is to unify human beings into one fraternity.

Respecting this matter Mecca sent a message to the city of Geneva: Are you content to be a seat of the League of Nations or would you prefer to be the centre of United Humanity?

In a statement recorded a couple of months before his death in 1938, Iqbal pointed out: “The modern age prides itself on its progress in knowledge and its matchless scientific developments.

No doubt, the pride is justified... But inspite of all these developments, tyranny of imperialism struts abroad, covering its face in the masks of (capitalist) democracy, (territorial) nationalism, communism, fascism and heaven knows what else besides. Under these masks, in every corner of the earth, the spirit of freedom and the dignity of man are being trampled underfoot in a way of which not even the darkest period of human history presents a parallel. The so called statesmen to whom government had entrusted leadership have proved demons of bloodshed, tyranny and oppression. The rulers whose duty it was to promote higher humanity, to prevent man’s oppression of man and to elevate the moral and intellectual level of mankind, have in their hunger for dominion shed the blood of millions and reduced millions to servitude simply in order to pander to the greed and avarice of their own particular groups. After subjugating ... weaker peoples... they sowed (the seeds of) divisions among them that they should shed one another’s blood and go to sleep under the opiate of serfdom, so that the leech of imperialism might go on sucking their blood without interruption.... The governments which are not themselves engaged in this drama of fire and blood are sucking the blood of the weaker peoples economically. It is as if the day of doom had come upon the earth, in which no voice of human sympathy or fellowship is audible. The world’s thinkers

are stricken dumb. Is this going to be the end of all this progress and evolution of civilization?... Remember, man can be maintained on this earth only by honoring mankind, and this world will remain a battleground of ferocious beasts of prey unless and until the educational (and moral) forces of the whole world are directed to inculcate in man respect for mankind... National unity too is not a very durable force. Only one unity is dependable and that unity is the brotherhood of man, which is above race, nationality, colour or language. So long as men do not demonstrate by their actions that they believe that the whole world is the family of God, so long as distinctions of race, colour geographical nationalities are not wiped out completely, they will never be able to lead happy and contented life, and the beautiful ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity' will never materialize". (Speeches and Statements ed. by A.R. Tariq pp.226-228).

Now we can consider the question: What are Iqbal's views on the future of religion? It has already been pointed out that broadly speaking, religion is required for the moral uplift of man. However a counter-argument may be advanced that morality or ethics being a branch of philosophy, why should it be founded on religion? This line of reasoning would naturally take us to the discussion as to what is the difference between philosophy and religion?

According to Iqbal, philosophy is an independent inquiry based on reason for the comprehension of Reality, and religion, in the broader or higher sense, is also a search for Reality. But its foundations are laid on experience which is other than the normal level of experience. If one claims that the normal level of experience is the only level of knowledge-yielding experience, then religion need not attract anyone's attention. But Iqbal argues, if the universe, as it is normally perceived, is only an intellectual construction, and there are other levels of human experience capable of being systematized by other orders of time and space, and in which concept and analysis do not play the same part as they do in the case of our normal experience, then the matter is different. It is precisely for this reason that a person who relies on religious experience, the knowledge gained by him through his experience is essentially personal and incommunicable. However, Iqbal maintains that the fact that the knowledge gained through religious experience is incommunicable does not imply that the pursuit made by the man of religion has been futile.

Modern Man is secular in the sense that he is indifferent towards religion. The reason is that according to his evaluation religion is in conflict with science, and since the findings of science are rationally demonstrable, religion is reduced to mere superstition providing solace to man in his stages of ignorance, but of no authentic relevance in the present and the future. Iqbal does not agree with this conclusion. In his view Reality has outer as well as inner dimensions. Science is concerned with the external behavior of Reality whereas the domain of religion is to discover the meanings of Reality in reference to its inner nature. In this respect both scientific and religious processes run parallel to each other. While commenting on these processes Iqbal states: "A careful study of the nature and purpose of these really complementary processes shows that both of them are directed to the purification of experience in their respective spheres". (Reconstruction. p.155).

Iqbal divides religious life into three periods. In the first period religious life appears as a form of discipline which is voluntarily accepted by an individual or a group of people as unconditional commands without any rational understanding of the ultimate purpose of those commands, It is only in this sense that religion is based on dogma, ritual or some kind of priesthood. In the second period revelation is reconciled with reason and discipline is followed by a rational understanding of the discipline and the ultimate source of its authority. It is at this state that religion may claim itself to be the sole possessor of the Truth and becomes exclusive or relative and engenders hatred of one religion against the other as well as within a religion itself when one mode of interpretation comes into conflict with another. In the their period religious life develops the ambition to come into direct contact with the Ultimate Reality and it is at this stage that religion becomes a matter of personal assimilation of life and power.

For Iqbal this stage of religious life is, what he calls higher religion. He states: "It is, then, in the sense of this last phase in the development of religious life that I use the word religion... Religion in this sense is known by the unfortunate name of Mysticism, which is supposed to be a life-denying, fact-avoiding attitude of mind directly opposed to the radically empirical outlook of our times. Yet higher religion, which is only a search for a larger

life, is essentially experience and recognized the necessity of experience as its foundation long before science learnt to do so” (Reconstruction. p.143-144).

The question may well be asked that if in the context of higher religion, God is the centre of all religions and the Truth is absolute, then why the diversity or relativity of religions? The answer provided by Martin Lings is that God has sent different religions especially suited to the needs, requirements and characteristics of the different groups of humanity in different temporal cycles. But if these groups of men, in the course of human history, have persecuted one another on account of religious differences, then Providence cannot be held responsible for it. However, despite winning converts through persuasion or slaughter of human beings in the name of religion, many religions which have fought against or competed with one another in the past history, have survived and now dominate different parts of the world. It is therefore necessary that irrespective of the position adopted by the partisan religious authorities we must carefully examine what, according to Iqbal, higher religion teaches about the nature of God.

The modern Western civilization has dealt with the problem of religion through encouraging the development of two types of secularism. One type of secularism is based on indifference towards religion and this is the attitude adopted by Modern Man in the capitalist democracies. The other type is based on the suppression of religion and for a number of years this policy has been followed by the socialist countries. But the experience tells us that indifference towards religion automatically leads to the demand for that variety of “freedom” which Albert Camus calls “tyranny” or “waywardness”. On the other hand, the recent developments in the U.S.S.R and the other socialist countries indicate that atheism cannot be successfully imposed from outside on a people, and whenever such an attempt is made, it is bound to fail. Thus it is evident that the existing types of secularism have not been able to resolve the problem.

It is perhaps in this background that Iqbal rejected the methodologies of territorial nationalism, capitalism, atheistic socialism as well as religious conservatism as drawing upon the psychological forces of hate, suspicion and resentment which tend to impoverish the soul of man closing up his hidden sources of spiritual energy. He points out: “Surely the present moment is one of great crisis in the history of modern culture. The modern world stands in

need of biological renewal. And religion, which in its higher manifestations is neither dogma, nor priesthood, nor ritual, can alone ethically prepare the modern man for the burden of the great responsibility which the advancement of modern science necessarily involves, and restore to him that attitude of faith which makes him capable of winning a personality here and retaining it hereafter. It is only by rising to a fresh vision of his origin and future, his whence and whither, that man will eventually triumph over a society motivated by an . inhuman competition, and a civilization which has lost its spiritual unity by its inner conflict of religious and political values". (Reconstruction. p.149).

From the above analysis it appears that the solution of the problem lies in the adoption of the policy not of indifference towards or suppression of religion, but of respecting all religions. Every religion in the narrower sense consists of dogma, ritual and some form of priesthood. This aspect of religion is exclusive or relative to the people who adhere to it and it is only in this context that the international community is multi-religious. Unfortunately some of the religious communities in the world today are passing through a phase of conservatism or fundamentalism which has let loose the forces of hatred and resentment. Whatever be the reasons for this affliction, let us hope that the phase is temporary and shall pass away. However according to Iqbal, each great religion, at the higher level contains the absolute Truth. Therefore it is necessary for every religious community to discover and project the higher level of its religion. It is at this level that religion can restore to humanity its spiritual unity and ethically prepare man to respect his fellow-men.

Iqbal does not consider Islam as a religion in the ancient sense of the word. For -him, he explains: "It is an attitude- an attitude, that is to say, of Freedom, and even of defiance to the Universe. It is really a protest against the entire outlook of the ancient world. Briefly, it is the discovery of Man". (Stray Reflections. p. 193).

It is interesting to note how Iqbal deduces the principles of higher religion from the verses of the Quran and bases his political idealism on them. The citing of a few examples may be useful.

In sura XXII. verse 40 it is stated: “ If God had not raised a group (i.e., Muslims) to ward off the others from aggression, churches, synagogues, oratories and mosques, where God is worshipped most, would have been destroyed”. Broadening the interpretation of this verse so as to include all the religious minorities (and not only the people of the Book) in a Muslim state, he proclaims in the Allahabad Address: “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 teaching of the Quran, even to defend their places of worship, if need be”. (Speeches and Statements ed. by A.R. Tariq. p.10).

For Iqbal “Tauhid” (Unity of God), as a working idea, stands for equality, solidarity and freedom of man. Therefore the state, from the Islamic standpoint, is essentially an effort to transform these ideal principles into space-time forces. (Reconstruction. p.122-123). According to him, the republican form of government is consistent with the spirit of Islam. In fact he is convinced that the ultimate object of Islam is the establishment of a “spiritual democracy”.

In support of this thesis, on which specific verses of the Quran, Iqbal could have possibly relied? Let us examine the relevant verses.

In sura XL. verse 78 while addressing the Holy Prophet, God say: “Verily We have sent messengers before thee. About some of them have we told thee, and about some have We not told thee”. The self-evident meanings of the verse are that God has not only sent those prophets whose names are known to the Semitic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam), but also other messengers had been sent by Him bearing the tidings of numerous other modes of the Religion of Truth.

The second relevant piece in this connection is sura V. verse 69 in which it is stated: “Verily the Faithful (Muslims) and the Jews and the Sabians and the Christians, whoso believeth in God and the Last Day and doeth good deeds, no fear shall come upon them neither shall they grieve”. As for the expression “Sabians” there is no general agreement as to which religion is referred to. However, as is indicated in the verse it is that category of religions which are based on a central idea of God, of accountability and

which emphasize on the doing of good deeds. Thus according to the Quran, everyone who believes in God, eventual accountability and who does good deeds need not fear as no grief shall come upon him.

The third is sura V. verse 48 in which God addressing human beings declares: “For each of you We have appointed a law and a way. And if God had willed He would have made you one (religious) community. But (He hath willed it otherwise) that He may put you to the test in what He has given you. So vie with one another in good works. Unto God will ye be brought back, and He’ will inform you about that wherein ye differed”. If God had only sent one religion to a world of widely differing aptitudes,, it would not have been a fair test for all. Therefore He has sent many different religions and in this Quranic verse He expects human beings to enter into rivalry with one another only in doing good deeds and nothing else. It appears that it was in the light of such verses of the Quran that Iqbal desired the Muslims of today to evolve and establish a “spiritual democracy”.

He maintains: “Humanity needs three things today - a spiritual interpretation of the universe, spiritual emancipation of the individual, and basic principles of a universal import directing the evolution of human society on a spiritual basis. Modern Europe has, no doubt, built idealistic systems on these lines, but experience shows that truth revealed through pure reason is incapable of bringing that fire of living conviction which personal revelation alone can bring. This is the reason why pure thought has so little influenced men, while religion has always elevated individuals and transformed whole societies. With him (i.e., the Muslim) the spiritual basis of life is a matter of conviction for which even the least enlightened man among us can easily lay down his life; and in view of the basic idea of Islam that there can be no further revelation binding on man, we ought to be spiritually one of the most emancipated peoples on earth. Early Muslims emerging out of the spiritual slavery of pre-Islamic Asia were not in a position to realize 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”. (Reconstruction. p.142).

The conclusion is that if for the survival of humanity it is necessary for man to respect his fellow-men, in the same way it is necessary for him to

learn to respect religions other than his own, It is only through the adoption of this moral and spiritual approach that, borrowing Iqbal's phrase, man may rise to a fresh vision of his future.

# THE ATOMISTIC CONCEPTION OF NATURE IN ASH'ARITE THEOLOGY

Osman Bakar

## Introduction

In Islamic intellectual history, we encounter several conceptions of nature, which differ from each other because they arose out of different perspectives of viewing and understanding nature. The most well-known of these, and also the earliest to have been formulated, was the theory of nature associated with the theologians (mutakallimun) of the Ash'arite school. It has been often referred to as the atomistic conception of nature, since it emphasizes the discontinuous and atomistic character of matter, space, and time. Our aim in this chapter is to provide an introductory discussion of several important features of this connection, including its treatment of the problem of causality and the related question of the meaning of "laws of nature."

## General Remarks on Atomism

The idea of atomism had a long history in both Eastern and Western thought.<sup>1</sup> Out of the different philosophical and religious molds in which this idea has been conceived throughout that long history, have arisen such a wide variety of its formulations that, content wise, no single definition can adequately express and comprehend them.

From the classical atomic theory of Greek philosophical speculation to fifth-century atomism of Indian religious sects, from the atomism of Kalam in ninth-century Islam to that of the European Renaissance and to the atomic theory of modern science, one fundamental idea, and the only one, that has remained common to all these theories is the idea of the finitude of the divisibility of particles constituting the material world. This is assuming

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<sup>1</sup> For the history of atomism, see L.L. Whyte, *Essay on Atomism - From Democritus to 1960* (London, 1961); also J.M. Baldwin, ed., *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology* (New York, 1940), Vol. 1.

that those variants which convey the idea of the divisibility of substance ad infinitum are excluded. Otherwise, they have nothing in common, save the claim by each of them that it is the explanation of the nature and reality of the physical world.

Of course, one finds certain interesting similarities, between some of them, as, for example, between Indian atomism and the atomic theory of Kalam, or even between the latter and the atomic theory of modern quantum physics. Similarities in the former case have led certain scholars to postulate an Indian influence on Kalam atomism,<sup>2</sup> in addition to an Epicurean origin for some of its ideas. However, neither of these claims has yet been conclusively established by modern scholarship. Similarities between kalam atomism and modern quantum physics have gained the attention of those contemporary historians of science, who are 'primarily interested in discovering the historical roots of modern scientific theories, or in examining in what way these earlier ideas anticipated the modern ones.

Whatever might have been the historical connections between kalam atomism and the various forms of atomism found in other cultures and civilizations, our main interest here is not in 'discussing it as a possible offshoot or as anticipation of one or more of the latter atomisms, but rather as an independent, integral philosophy of nature, which issues forth directly from the Islamic Revelation. More to the point, we are interested in understanding the atomic theory of kalam as one of several philosophies of nature formulated by Muslims.

The atomistic philosophy of nature is Islamic insofar as it has a Quranic basis. But it is only and not the philosophy of nature in Islam, because it is based not upon the whole teachings of the Quran concerning nature, but rather upon a specific theological perspective contained in that revealed Book. There are other theological perspectives in the Quran, which, in fact, have been used by other intellectual schools to serve as the bases for expounding philosophies of nature distinct from that of kalam. This point is worth emphasizing. In essential terms, the debate between kalam and falsafah was not a debate between two world views, one Islamic the other un-Islamic

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<sup>2</sup> See Majid Fakhry, *A History of Islamic Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), pp. 32-34.

or less Islamic. On the contrary, it was a debate between two particular philosophical perspectives which both fulfil the fundamental criteria of Islamicity and which therefore equally qualify to be called Islamic.

Understandably, one may have a personal preference for one particular theological-philosophical perspective over another. One's inclination and choice is influenced by one's intellectual constitution and background and a host of cultural factors. Thus there is the claim that kalam's theological perspective is more in affinity with the psychological make-up of the Arabs who first originated this atomism.<sup>3</sup> This perspective of kalam will be dealt with further in a later section in this chapter

### **Muslim atomism in historical perspective**

The theory of atomism was first developed in Islam by the Mu'tazila theologians during the first half of the third/ninth century. It is possible that the idea of atomism had already been discussed as early as the beginning of the second/eighth century, in relation to the fundamental problem of substance (jawhar) and accident ('arad). This possibility is suggested by certain arguments put forward by 'Dirac b. 'Amar, one of the earliest Mu'tazilite theologians, and a contemporary of Wasil b. 'Ata' (d. 131/748), the founder of the Mu'tazilah school. Dirar's arguments appeared to have been directed against the very basis of Kalam's atomic-theory. He was said to be one of the few dissidents of this theory. He rejected the doctrine of the body as consisting of two distinct elements, atoms and accidents, and instead reduced the body to "an aggregate of accidents, which, once constituted, becomes the bearer (or substratum) of other accidents."<sup>4</sup>

However, it is quite certain that by the middle of the third/ninth century, atomism had become firmly established in the theological circles of Islam as a theory which commended itself as the antithesis of Aristotelianism. According to an account of early kalam atomism, as given by Abu' l-Hasan al-Ash'ari (d.330/941), the founder of the Ash'arite school of

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<sup>3</sup> S.H. Nasr, "Islamic Conception of Intellectual Life," in P.P. Wiener, ed., *Dictionary of the History of Ideas* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), Vol. II, p. 642.

<sup>4</sup> Fakhry, *Islamic Occasionalism* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1958), p. 33; also his op. cit., p. 51

kalam, in his *Maqalat al-Islamiyyin*, such early ninth-century Mu'tazilite figures as Abu'l-Hudhail al-'Allaf (d. 226/840), al-Iskafi (d.241/855), Mu'mar ibn 'Abbad al-Sulami (d.228/842), Hisham al -Fuwati (a contemporary of Mu' ammar), and 'Abbad ibn Sulayman (d. 250/864) all accepted the atomic theory in one form or another.<sup>5</sup>

This atomism begun by the Mu'tazilite theologians was later refined and extensively developed by the Ash'arite school, especially by Abu Bakr al-Baqillani (d.403/1013) who may be considered its outstanding "philosopher of Nature." After the fourth-tenth century it was the atomism of Ash' arite kalam which flourished in Islam, having as its exponents such famous names as al-Ghazzali and Fakhr al-Din Razi (d.606/1209).<sup>6</sup> It has remained to this day the dominant "philosophy of nature" in Sunni theology.

The science of kalam has its roots in the earliest theological and political debates in the Islamic community concerning such problems as free will and predestination, the question of whether the Quran is created or uncreated, the relation of faith to works, the definition of a believer, and many more.<sup>7</sup> All these issues arose out of specific internal factors and developments then existing within the community, that were both religious and political in nature.<sup>8</sup> These debates led to the emergence, during the first/seventh century, of various sectarian groups with distinct, definable views which distinguished them from the majority of the community, and which thus placed them in the extreme fringes of the community. The most famous of these groups were the Murji'ites, Qadarites, and Khawarij. It was out of these early theological trends and manifestations that the first systematic theological school emerged, namely, the Mu 'tazilah.

If kalam owes its origin to factors that were internal to the Islamic community, its development owes much to external factors. The first major external factor was the theological attacks against the very tenets of Islamic faith, carried out by such religious groups as Jews, Christians, and Manichaeans, as well as the Materialists, who were all intellectually armed

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<sup>5</sup> Fakhry, *Islamic Occasionalism*, p. 34.

<sup>6</sup> M.M. Sharif, ed., *A History of Muslim Philosophy* (Wiesbaden, 1963), vol. I, p. 226.

<sup>7</sup> Fakhry, *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, pp. 42-44.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 37-41.

with the tools of Greek logic. Another major factor was the introduction of Greek philosophical ideas into the community through translations of Greek works into Arabic. The challenge to Muslim thought posed by these two factors was already manifest as early as the beginning of the second/eighth century. It added a new dimension to the whole problem of thought, which had to be grappled with by the new born kalam.

The nature of the new challenge is twofold, one methodological, the other doctrinal. At the methodological level the challenge involved finding rational answers to the fundamental problem of relationship between revelation and reason, of which the question of legitimacy of the use of logic or dialectical methods in theological discussions was but just one aspect. At the doctrinal level, the challenge involved the problem of identifying and formulating authentic criteria of orthodoxy or Islam city in the face of conflicting claims to Islamicity.

As in the case of earlier Muslim responses to their internal challenges, there emerged a wide spectrum of reactions and responses from within the Islamic community to its external challenges. Within the Mu'tazilite school itself, which dominated the theological scene from the second/eighth century to the fourth/tenth century, the response underwent a transformation from what was initially simply a rationalization of faith to an adoption of rationalistic tendencies that were inherent in Greek philosophy of the Aristotelian school. Mu'tazilite rationalism was to lead, among other things, to a denial of the reality of Divine Attributes with the consequence that God was viewed more as an abstract philosophical concept than as a Reality who is the fountainhead and basis of revealed religion.<sup>9</sup>

At the other end of the spectrum were the extremists of the literalist tradition, who were wholly opposed to any kind of rationalization of faith.

### **General remarks on Ash' ante theology**

Ash' ante kalam originated as a reaction against these two diametrically opposed schools of thought, a reaction in which it sought to strike a middle course for the community. On the problem of the relationship between

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<sup>9</sup> Nasr, *op. cit.*, p. 641.

revelation and reason, al-Ash'ari, succeeded in safeguarding the rights of interpretative intelligence, to use Schuon's words, without minimizing those of Revelation. Similarly, he presented a reconciliation between tashbih (comparison or analogy) and tanzih (abstraction or incomparability) in his conception of the Divinity by giving anthropomorphic qualities to God, while maintaining that these qualities should be abstracted, and were not to be understood in their literal sense. Likewise, as regards human freedom, he defined it in a way which was acceptable from the theological point of view, safeguarding both divine determinations and human responsibility.<sup>10</sup>

In fact, this spirit of "theological reconciliation" runs through most of his other doctrines, and thereby distinguishes him from both the Mu'tazilites and the literal traditionists. In our previous brief reference to the development of Ash'arite atomism, we have mentioned al-Baqillani, a student of al-Ash'ari, as one of the followers of this school most responsible for its refinement and detailed formulation. As regards the other Ash'arite doctrines, apart from al-Baqillani, it was al-Ghazzali and also Fakhr al-Din Razi, who further elaborated on them to produce a more refined rational exposition.

Although the Ash'arites accepted the necessity of rationalization of faith, they were generally opposed to the rational methodology and speculation of the philosophers (falasifah). Undoubtedly, this attitude of theirs was mainly influenced by their desire to preserve the fundamentality and supremacy of revelation over reason. As they saw it, this important principle had been compromised by the philosophers, as a consequence of their rationalistic approach to even metaphysical (spiritual) knowledge.

In one respect, the Ash'arites possessed an independent spirit of intellectual speculation. Unlike the philosophers, they were not bound to any particular school of Greek philosophy. This spirit was productive of some of the severest criticism of Aristotelian physics. Consequently, the Ash'arites were able to develop many original ideas pertaining to the sciences of nature, particularly in the theory of atomism.

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<sup>10</sup> This whole passage is a paraphrase of Schuon's excellent summary of the Ash'arite theological position contained in his *Islam and the Perennial Philosophy* (London: World of Islam Festival Publishing Company, 1976).

## **Ash'arite atomism and conception of nature**

Ash'arite atomism was the fruit of the direct application of a particular theological perspective embedded in the Islamic Revelation to the domain of nature. That application involved ideas and concepts drawn from many sources besides the Islamic ones. These "foreign" ideas and concepts were easily integrated into the theological perspective in question.

It is now time to explain what this "particular theological perspective" is all about. As the word "theology" necessarily implies, a theological perspective must be concerned with God. God has many Names, Attributes, and Qualities. The particularity of kalam's theological perspective stems from the fact that out of so many Divine Names and Qualities, it chose to concentrate on just one of them for the purpose of constructing a religious world view. Kalam seeks to depict the unlimitedness of Omnipotence almost to the point of ignoring all other Divine Qualities. The overwhelming motive for God's actions, according to al-Ash-'ari, is "what He wills" and "because He wills."

Applied to God's activity in nature, this perspective gave rise to that important idea known in the West as occasionalism which has been defined as the belief in the exclusive efficacy of God, of whose direct intervention the events in nature are regarded as the overt manifestation or occasion.<sup>11</sup> Occasionalism implies that all things and all events in nature are substantially discontinuous by nature. The world is a domain of separate, concrete entities which are independent of each other. There is no connection whatsoever between them, save through the Divine Will. If A is connected to B, it is not because it is in their nature to be connected, but rather because God has willed them to be so. Every effect observed in nature is exclusively caused by God. Hence occasionalism also implies a denial of causality in the sense understood by the philosophers and scientists.

Atomism is therefore a direct consequence of this principle of substantial discontinuity of things. Thus Muslim atomism can be said to have its basis in specific theological principles of Islam, which, in its intellectual history, have been mainly identified with the school of kalam. This answers

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<sup>11</sup> Fakhry, *Islamic Occasionalism*, p. 9.

Wolfson's amazement as to how atomism, "a discredited theory which has been rejected by most of the Greek schools of philosophy as well as the Church Fathers, could have found acceptance among the mutakallimun."<sup>12</sup>

Atomism was taken very seriously by the mutakallimun, because it was inseparably linked to their theology, so much so that, in Ash'arite kalam, its doctrinal status was transformed by al-Baqillani and other fellow theologians from being a mere premise in support of specific religious beliefs to being an essential part of the creed. Their interest in atoms and accidents was not scientific but theological. This was to "vindicate the absolute power of God and to ascribe to His direct intervention not only the coming of things into being, but also their persistence in being from one instant to another."<sup>13</sup> If it happened that certain elements of foreign atomisms fitted nicely into their theological framework, it was well and fine. Otherwise, those atomisms in themselves were of little or no interest to them.

How did the Ash'arites justify, religiously speaking, their rational speculation into the "metaphysics of atoms and accidents" as well as the particular atomistic doctrines which they had adopted? In his work, *Risalah fi istihsan al-khawd fi'l-kalam*, al-Ash'ari replies to criticisms made by the literal traditionists who considered discussion about such questions as motion, rest, body accident, atom, and space an innovation and sin. He argued that the Prophet was not unaware of all these things, only that he did not discuss them, since problems concerning them did not arise during his lifetime. Moreover, there was no explicit injunction in the Quran, or from the Prophet, which prohibits discussion of such matters. On the contrary, al-Ash'ari reminded his critics, one can find the general principles (*usul*) underlying these physical issues and problems explicitly mentioned in the Quran and the hadiths.<sup>14</sup> We may infer from these remarks of al-Ash'ari that the above problems, which we associate today with physics, were widely discussed during his lifetime. Since the discussions were not merely scientific, but involved issues that clearly touched upon the religious beliefs of Muslims, they necessitated the active participation of the religious scholars. And

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<sup>12</sup> See Harry A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 467.

<sup>13</sup> Fakhry, *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, p. 54.

<sup>14</sup> Sharif, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

attempts had to be made to find answers to these problems on the basis of the general principles contained in the Quran and the hadiths.

In fact, wherever possible, al-Ashari quotes verses from the Quran and hadiths to prove his contention that rational discussion of atomism is religiously (scripturally) justified. For example,<sup>15</sup> he invokes the following Quranic passage to show that there is a scriptural basis for their definition of the accident (arad) as “that which cannot endure but perishes in the second instant of its coming-to-be”:

Ye look for the transient things (‘arad) of this world, but God looketh to the Hereafter (Chapter VIII, verse 67)

Generally, the whole Ash’arite approach to the problem of atomism was guided by religious considerations. Their approach may be summarized as follows. In the first place they formulated a general theoretical framework based on the two most important sources of Islam, namely, the Quran and hadiths. It was within this general framework that they sought to offer formulations of conceptual problems related to atomism, as well as their solution. As regards the details, there were two possible sources or avenues open to them. The first of these were works on atomism from non-Islamic sources that were known to them. The second avenue was through their own speculative minds, relying on their reflective power and rational methods of inquiry, including elements of logic adopted from Greek philosophy. The necessary data for reflection and analysis came from the Islamic Revelation and non-Islamic atomisms. The result of this whole theoretical approach to the problem of the fundamental basis and structure of the world was an atomism which, in its totality, was unique, although, elementwise, we see similarities to, as well as divergence from earlier forms of atomism.

### **Nature and characteristics of Ash’arite atoms**

The Ash’arites postulate the existence of indivisible particles which they express in Arabic (sing.) as al-juz’ alladhi lam yatajazza’, literally meaning “the part that cannot be divided.” These particles are the most fundamental units

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<sup>15</sup> For more information on the various Quranic verses and prophetic hadiths quoted by al-Ash’ari, see his *Maqalat al-Islamiyyin* and *Risalah fi istihsan al-khauḍ fi’l-klam*.

that could exist, and out of which the whole world is created. Accordingly, we will refer to them as the ‘Ash’ arite atoms.’

The world, which the Ash’ arites define as everything other than God, consists of two distinct elements, atoms and accidents (a’rad). The atom is the locus which gives subsistence to the accidents. An accident cannot exist in another accident but only in an atom or a body composed of these atoms. Conversely, a body cannot be stripped of accidents, positive or negative, such as color, smell, life, knowledge, or their opposites.

The first major characteristic of the Ash’ arite atoms is that they are devoid of size or magnitude (kam), and are completely homogeneous. In other words, they are entities without length or breadth, but which combine to form bodies possessing dimensions. They therefore differ from the atoms of Leucippus and Democritus or those of Epicurus in Greek philosophy, which are always presented as having magnitude. This is an important divergence of Ash’ ante atomism from its Greek antecedents.

Not surprisingly, Wolfson poses the following question: where did such a conception of unextended atoms come from? For Wolfson, this “new idea” could not have arisen spontaneously in kalam, since “there is no conceivable reason, religious or rational, why Arabic philosophy should have departed on such a fundamental issue from its parent source.”<sup>16</sup> And he finds it difficult to accept the view of such orientalist as Mobbilleau and Pines, who have ascribed its origin to Indian atomism.

Wolfson is right in dismissing this view as mere conjecture, since it is lacking in historical evidence. But his own answer to the problem is no less conjectural. He could not throw away his suspicion that kalam must have inherited the idea in question from a Greek source. Unable to find support in the authentic writings of the Greek philosophers, he rests his hope in the spurious doxographies such as those preserved in Shahrastani’s *Doxography of Greek Philosophers*. However, the strongest claim he could finally come up with is to say that it was on the basis of these doxographies that the

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<sup>16</sup> Wolfson, *on. cit.*, p. 473.

mutakallimun were most likely to have made wrong inferences about the nature of Greek atoms!<sup>17</sup>

In our view, there is no reason why we should deny kalam of originality in the formulation of the idea of unextended atoms, even if a similar idea existed earlier in Indian atomism. Contrary to Wolfson, we think that the Ash'arites had strong reasons, both religious and rational, for insisting on the above idea. The following argument is sufficient for the purpose at hand. The atoms cannot have magnitude because extension is a property of physical space, involving the idea of boundary or surfaces. But since space too is atomized, and their theology demands that the atoms be completely independent of one another, there can be no question of the atoms occupying physical space. The atoms, themselves non-material entities, exist in an imaginary space or void. Further, the Ash'arite theology necessitates the existence of atomic substances that could adequately serve as a basis for explaining the originatedness, ever-newness, and absolute independence upon God, of all things, physical as well as non-physical, including all the qualities predicated of substances. In our view, the extended atoms, with all that are implied in the idea of extension, are not fundamental enough to meet this theological requirement.

The second main characteristic of the Ash'arite atoms is that they are determinate or finite in number. Thus, in opposition to all schools of Greek atomists, who believed in the infinite divisibility of matter, and who maintained that atoms are infinite in number, the Ash'arites rejected the infinity of atoms on the basis of the Quranic verse: 'And He counteth all things by number' (Chapter LXXII, verse 28). Here Wolfson agrees that there is a definite scriptural basis for kalam's departure from Greek atomism.

The third important characteristic of the Ash'arite atoms is that they are perishable by nature. The Ash'arites maintain that the atom cannot endure two instants of time. At every moment of time the atoms come into being, and pass out of existence. Each atom's duration (baqa') is instantaneous. Its momentary existence is made possible through God's supervision upon it of the accident of duration, which, like all other accidents, is perishable. In the words of al-Baqillani, the accident "perishes in the second instant of its

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<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, p. 475.

coming-to-be.” This perishability of atoms and accidents is a direct consequence of their theological belief that God directly intervenes not only in the coming of things into being, but also in their persistence in being from one instant to another.

If the atoms and accidents are created and annihilated at every instant, then how do we explain the fact that, as far as our ordinary experience tells us, it is the same world that continues to exist? Kalam’s answer to this question has been well summarized by Professor al-Attas:

The world, after its initial existence, does not endure or continue to exist (baqa), but passes out of existence (fana); it ceases to exist at every moment of time, and what we observe of its continuance in existence is in reality the continuous renewal of its similars. Thus at every moment of time the world is in need of existence, and what we observe of the world as such is that it is ever dependent for its existence upon the Truth Most Exalted, whose act of creation is perpetually bringing forth similar worlds from non-existence into existence. In this way we imagine the continuance of the same world in existence, whereas in reality such is not the case.<sup>18</sup>

The divine activity of “perpetually bringing forth similar worlds from non-existence into existence” takes place at the atomic level, and may be explained as follows. When God creates an atom of a body, He also creates in it the accidents that cast it into being. The moment this atom passes out of existence He replaces it with a similar atom by creating in it similar accidents, that is, accidents of the same species as the one subsisting in the preceding atom, so long as He wills the same body to continue in existence. If He wills otherwise, then He would cease creating the accidents in question.

All that we observe of generation and corruption, and change and motion in the meso world, including, for the Ash’arites, miracles, are the results of ‘atomic phenomena’ that are directly produced by this divine activity. One of the reasons why the Ash’arites adhered fervently to their atomism is that its theoretical framework is comprehensive enough to allow for a rational explanation of miracles.

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<sup>18</sup> Syed Muhammad N. al-Attas, *A Commentary on the ‘Hujjat al-siddiq*, of Nur al-Din al-Raniri (Kuala Lumpur: The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, 1986), p. 256.

If God wills a miracle to happen, for example, the instantaneous transformation of a body A into a body B, then He would cease creating the atoms bearing the accidents or qualities predicated of the body A. What He brings instantaneously into existence instead are the atoms bearing the accidents or qualities predicated of the body B.

One other aspect of Ash'arite atomism, which we have chosen to discuss here, is the atomic nature of time and motion. Corresponding to the bodily atoms are the atoms of time. The general Ash'arite view- of motion is that both motion and rest are 'modi' of substances. A substance which moves from one point of space to another is at rest in relation to the second point, but in motion in relation to the first. This is so because motion supervenes upon the body only when it has settled in its second position.<sup>19</sup> For at the atomic level we cannot speak of the translation (intiqal) of the same atom from one point of space to another. Rather we should speak of its recreation at the second point, since it is annihilated in between. This means that the concept of distance in Newtonian physics is not applicable here. A corollary of this theory of motion is the affirmation of the existence of vacuum or the void.

### **Causality in the atomistic perspective**

As we have seen, the Ash'arites atomize matter, space, and time, as a result of which the universe becomes a domain of separate, concrete entities which are independent of each other. There is no connection between one moment of their existence and the next. The Ash'arites therefore deny that there is any horizontal nexus between things. In other words they deny the Aristotelian notion of causality. How does this segmented, divided, and discontinuous reality then find its connection and unity? It is through the Divine Will which creates all things at every moment, and which is the direct and sole cause of their existence and qualities.<sup>20</sup> There is unity and harmony in Nature because it is brought into being,, and governed by the single will of the One.

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<sup>19</sup> Fakhry, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

<sup>20</sup> Nasr, *Islamic Life and Thought* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1981), p. 96.

The Ash'arite idea of God as the sole cause of all things and of all events negates the role of secondary causes in nature. No finite, created being can be the cause of anything. It is not in the nature of things to possess a causal power or quality. The so-called power which natural objects, including human beings, seem to possess is not an effective power, for it is a derived power. The following passage from al-Ghazzali's *Tahafut al-falasifah* (The Incoherence of the Philosophers) summarizes the view of the Ash'arite theologians concerning causality, in opposition to the philosophers:

According to us the connection between what is usually believed to be a cause and what is believed to be an effect is not a necessary connection; each of two things has its own individuality and is not the other, and neither the affirmation nor the negation, neither the existence nor the non-existence of the one is implied in the affirmation, negation, existence, and non-existence of the other --- e.g., the satisfaction of thirst does not imply drinking, nor satiety eating, nor burning contact with fire, nor light sunrise, nor decapitation death, nor recovery the drinking of medicine, nor evacuation the taking of a purgative, and so on for all the empirical connections existing in medicine, astronomy, the sciences and the crafts. For the connections in these things is based on a prior power of God to create them in a successive order, though not because this connection is necessary in itself and cannot be disjoined -- on the contrary, it is in God's power to create satiety without eating, and death without decapitation, and so on with respect to all connections.

The philosophers, however, deny this possibility and claim that that is impossible. To investigate all these innumerable connections would take too long, and so we shall choose one single example, namely the burning of cotton through contact with fire; for we regard it as possible that the contact might occur without the burning taking place, and also that the cotton might be changed into ashes without any contact with fire although the philosophers deny this possibility.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Al-Ghazzali, *Tahafut al-falasifah*. This whole passage is taken from S. van den Bergh's translation of Averroes' *Tahafut al-tahafut*, E.J. Gibb Memorial Series, New Series 19 (London: Luzac and Co., 1954), pp. 316-317. One may also refer to N. A. Kamali's

The concept of cause and effect and the idea of the necessary connection that exists between them is important to science and philosophy. In classical Greek philosophy as well as in medieval Jewish, Christian, and Islamic philosophy and science the Aristotelian notion of causality was widely accepted. In this notion explicit recognition was given to the role of finite, created beings as horizontal or secondary causes in nature. The philosophers distinguished between four kinds of causes, the material, the formal, the efficient, and the final. Even in modern science the idea of causality is of great importance, although it is no longer as comprehensive a concept as its medieval antecedent in that the efficient and the final causes are no longer taken into account in the explanation of natural phenomena.

The Aristotelian doctrine of causality is claimed to be based upon the nature of things. Each thing has its specific nature which determines its specific functions in the cosmic order. To summarize the views of the philosophers concerning causality we quote here a passage from Ibn Rushd's *Tahafut al-tahafut* (The Incoherence of the Incoherence), which was written as a response to al-Ghazzali's critique:

To deny the existence of efficient causes which are observed in sensible things is sophistry... For he who denies this can no longer acknowledge that every act must have an agent, The question whether these causes by themselves are sufficient to perform the acts which proceed from them, or need an external cause for the perfection of their act, whether separate or not, is not self-evident and requires much investigation and research.

And if the theologians had doubts about the efficient causes which are perceived to cause each other, because there are also effects whose cause is not perceived, this is illogical. Those things must be investigated, precisely because their causes are not perceived And further, what do the theologians say about the essential causes, the understanding of which alone can make a thing understood? For it is self-evident that things have essences and attributes which determine the special functions of each thing and through which the essences and names of things are differentiated. If a thing had not its specific nature, it would not have a special name or definition, and all

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translation is Al-Ghazali's *Tahafut al falasifah* [The Incoherence of the Philosophers] (Pakistan Philosophical Congress, 1963).

things would be one--indeed not even one; for it might be asked whether this one has one special act or one special passivity or not, and if it had a special act, then there would indeed exist special acts proceeding from special natures, but if it had no single act, then the one would not be one. But if the nature of oneness is denied the nature of being is denied, and the consequence of the denial of being is nothingness.

Further, are the acts which proceed from all things absolutely necessary for those in whose nature it lies to perform them, or are they only performed in most cases or in half the cases? This is a question which must be investigated, since one single action-and-passivity between two existent things occurs only through one relation out of an infinite number, and it happens often that one relation hinders another. Therefore, it is not absolutely certain that fire acts when it is brought near a sensitive body, for surely it is not improbable that there should be something which stands in such a relation to the sensitive thing as to hinder the action of the fire, as is asserted of talc and other things. But one need not therefore deny fire its burning power so long as fire keeps its name and definition...<sup>22</sup>

So here we have the classic encounter of two minds, two perspectives, and two philosophies within Islam, one theological, the other scientific. Faced with this confrontation of perspectives, one is easily tempted to take sides as the past intellectual history of the Muslim peoples in the last seven hundred years or so has clearly shown. We try hard here to resist this temptation. As far as we are concerned, both men were great thinkers. Both were honest, sincere and devout Muslims. Both, in their own ways, made significant contributions to the past glory of Islam. More important still, both views on causality can be defended by appealing to the Quran.

Each perspective has a positive function to play within the intellectual universe of Islam, and each perspective caters to the intellectual needs of a specific sector of thinking people in the Islamic community. Together the two perspectives enriched Islam's intellectual culture. Both are living perspectives in the sense that in every age we can always find the two types of minds, the theological and the scientific, here typified by al-Ghazzali and Ibn Rushd respectively, existing side by side and interacting with each other,

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<sup>22</sup> Averroes, *op. cit.*, pp. 318-319.

sometimes creatively and at other times negatively, depending on the level of their intellectual tolerance. We may find them not only among Muslims but also among people of other cultures as illustrated, for example, by the existence of the Humean and Einsteinian minds in the intellectual culture, of the West.

The theological perspective on causality seeks to explain the world and all phenomena, the “natural” and the “supernatural” or the miraculous, in terms of the divine omnipotence alone. In order to safeguard or glorify divine omnipotence, it denies the objective reality of causal powers in creatures, given to them by God as part of their respective natures. Apart from the phrase “God has power over all things”, which one finds repeated in almost every page of the Quran, there are numerous verses which provide a clear scriptural basis for the Islamicity of the theological perspective. We produce here a few examples: “It is God Who causeth the seed-grain and the date-stone to split and sprout” (6:95); “It is He Who sendeth down rain from the skies” (6:99); “It is not ye who slew them; it was God: when thou threwest (a handful of dust), it was not thy act, but God’s” (8:17).<sup>23</sup>

In all these verses secondary, horizontal, or immediate causes appear to be negated by being absorbed into the Ultimate Cause which is presented as the direct and sole cause of all the phenomena in question. The last verse, which refers to divine help given to Muslims at the battle of Badr, is the most explicit in its denial of the power of causation in created beings.

The scientific perspective on causality seeks to explain the world and all phenomena, including the miraculous, in terms of “natural causes” or by appealing to the natures of things, given to them by God. The Muslim philosophers never denied the reality of God as the Ultimate Cause of all things, nor did they ever deny the possibility of miracles, as often alleged by their opponents. But as men of science, they emphasized the importance of immediate and secondary causes, without, however, forgetting their divine origin. Their doctrine of a vertical causal chain, beginning with physical causes and ending up finally with the Necessary Being (God) as the First or

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<sup>23</sup> Further relevant verses include 56:63-64; 67:19.

Ultimate Cause, appears to its opponents as compromising or undermining the idea of God as absolute determination and freedom.

It can be said that in the perspective of philosophers like al-Farabi and Ibn Sina the world is dependent not only upon God's Will but also His Being. It is clear, however, that the aspect of God which they glorified is His Being and Intelligence (Knowledge and Wisdom). In order to safeguard and glorify this aspect of Divine Reality, they emphasized the objective reality of the essences and attributes of created things. "Creation," they maintained, "is the giving of Being by God and the shining of the rays of intelligence so that each creature in the Universe is related to its Divine Source by its being and its intelligence."<sup>24</sup>

The attitude of the philosophers toward miracles or "supernatural" events may be best illustrated by the following anecdote. It was reported in traditional Muslim sources that in a meeting between Ibn Sina and Abu Sa' id, a Sufi, in a bath house, the latter asked our philosopher-scientist if it were true that a heavy body seeks the center of the earth. Ibn Sina replied that this was absolutely true. Abu Sa' id subsequently took up his metal vase and threw it into the air, whereupon instead of falling down it stayed up in the air. "What is the reason for this?" he asked. Ibn Sina answered that the natural motion would be the fall of the vase but that a violent force was preventing this natural motion. "What is this violent force?" asked Abu Sa' id. "Your soul!" replied Ibn Sina, "which acts upon this."<sup>25</sup>

Ibn Sina's answer is most instructive. Here we have the typical traditional Muslim scientific mind at work! He did not attribute the miraculous event to the direct intervention of divine power. He explained it instead as the effect of a "natural" cause in the form of an invisible, violent force. Obviously then, by "natural cause," we do not mean here the same thing as it is understood in modern materialistic philosophy. In contrast to their modern counterparts who seek to explain the "higher" in terms of the "lower," traditional Muslim scientists identify the essential causes of things with principles that are higher, on the ontological scale, than the things explained. To explain miracles "naturally" or scientifically, they extend the

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<sup>24</sup> Nasr, *Islamic Cosmological Doctrines* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1978), p. 213.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194.

domain of natural causal powers beyond the physical and subtle worlds to include entities described as having superior natures and of which the miracles are perceived as the immediate effects. Thus in the anecdote Ibn Sina identifies the cause of Abu Sa' id's miracle with an invisible force radiating from the latter's soul, whose nature is superior enough to subdue the gravitational pull of the earth.

The philosophers' treatment of the phenomenon of revelation experienced by the Prophet provides another good illustration of their "scientific" attitude toward miracles and, more generally, causality. The revelation of the Quran is generally regarded by Muslims as the Prophet's greatest miracle. And yet, as explained by the philosophers in their treatises on faculty psychology,<sup>26</sup> this "greatest miracle" is to be attributed to the superior nature of the Prophet's intellect. They maintained that, by nature, the prophetic intellect is superior to all other human intellects, and is in constant, inner contact with Gabriel, the Archangel of Revelation. It is by virtue of its perfect nature that the prophetic intellect becomes the recipient of divine revelation.<sup>27</sup>

The many Muslims, the attempt by the philosophers to formulate a scientific theory of revelation on the basis of psychological principles could only mean the downgrading of the miraculous status of this greatest miracle. In the perspective of the philosophers, however, what greater miracle can there be than the fact that a human intellect is in direct communion with God's archangel. And who can blame the philosophers for emphasizing the intermediary role of Gabriel, when no less an authority than the Quran itself provides a clear support for their standpoint. Says the Quran: "Verily this is the word of a most honorable messenger (i.e. Gabriel), endowed with power, with rank before the Lord of the Throne," (81:19-20).

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<sup>26</sup> For a detailed discussion of the philosophers' theory of revelation within the framework of faculty psychology, see O. Bakar, *Classification of Knowledge in Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: The Institute for Policy Research, 1991), Chapters 2 and 3.

<sup>27</sup> Philosophers like al-Farabi and Ibn Sina placed the prophetic intellect in the highest position in the hierarchy of the faculties of the human soul. They identified the prophetic intellect with the "acquired intellect" (al-'aql al-mustafad) in its highest perfection. See *ibid*, p. 64.

The scientific perspective on causality too may claim its Islamicity on the basis of scriptural support. We produce below some of the relevant verses<sup>28</sup> from the Quran: “Glorify the name of thy Guardian-Lord Most High, Who hath created, and further, given order and proportion, and Who hath ordained laws and granted guidance” (87:1-3); “By the (winds) that scatter broadcast; and those that lift and bear away heavy weights; and those that flow with ease and gentleness; and those that distribute and apportion by command” (51:1-4); “God is He who created seven firmaments and of the earth a similar number; through the midst of them (all) descends His Command: that ye may know that God has power over all things, and that God comprehends all things in (His) Knowledge” (65:12).

The first and second passages confirm the philosophers’ belief in the objective reality of natures, essences, or attributes of created things, and of their intermediary powers of causation. In particular, the second passage reminds us of one very important point. In the Quran God swears in the names of the natures or realities of things, implying that He Himself acknowledges their objective reality. The last passage is perhaps the most significant of all. It would not be an exaggeration if we were to claim that the whole passage provides the best possible summary of the philosophers’ theory of causality. That part of the passage in italics, which refers to the “descent of the divine command” (*yatanazzal al-amr*) through the different levels of reality, provides a clear scriptural confirmation of their doctrine of “vertical causal chain.” Moreover, it is made perfectly clear in the passage that the whole idea of this vertical causal chain is so that through it man will finally be led to acknowledge divine omnipotence and divine omniscience. This is the philosophers’ way to the glorification of divine power and intelligence.

The foregoing discussion clearly shows that both positions are grounded on solid religious and rational foundations. There are some who think that the philosophers’ perspective on causality has been dealt a serious blow by al-Ghazzali’s wellknown “counter-example of the fire.” In denying fire its nature as a burning agent, al-Ghazzali was no doubt influenced by the story of the miracle of Prophet Abraham mentioned in the Quran. Abraham was thrown into the fire by his polytheist enemies, but was not burnt. We were

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<sup>28</sup> For more of the relevant verses, see, for example, 48:7; 82:10; 82:19.

once personally reminded by Schoun that the same Quranic verse can be used as an argument against the theologians in favour of the philosophers.

The verses in question read as follows: They said, “Burn him and protect your gods, if ye do (anything at all)!” We said, “O Fire! Be thou cool, and (a means of) safety for Abraham!” (21:68-69). Schoun answers on behalf of the philosophers that if indeed fire is not a burining agent, then God would not have commanded the fire to cool!

In the light of the denial, by the theologians, of the Aristotelian notion of causality, it is pertinent to ask whether the idea of “laws of nature” has any meaning for them, for in natural science it is inseparably linked to the idea of causality. By “laws of nature,” we mean the regular relationships, qualitative as well as quantitative, that exist between individual things in nature, as manifested in the uniformity of sequence of cause and effect. The Ash’arites do not deny the fact that natural phenomena display a remarkable uniformity. But in their view this uniformity is only apparent, not real in the sense that it has no objective existence. It is no more than a mental construct or a habit of the human mind.

It is the habit of the mind to connect two phenomena together as cause and effect. For example, by observing the phenomenon of heat connected with fire, the mind thinks that it is the fire which causes the heat, whereas in reality it is God who wills the fire to be hot. Therefore in the perspective of the Ash’arites, “laws of nature” are not objectively real. They are mental constructs determined by the will of God and given the status of “law” by Him.

### **The place and significance of Ash’arite atomism**

As we have noted, Ash’arite atomism occupies an important place in Sunni theology. As a philosophy of nature, it differs from those conceived by the Peripatetic philosophers and the Shi’ite theologians in that the latter emphasize the substantial continuity of things and the importance of the causal chain in nature. However, it has many similarities to the Sufi conception of perpetual creation and annihilation of the world.

The occasionalism of Ash'arite kalam had a great impact upon Latin scholasticism as well as upon post-Renaissance philosophy of Descartes, Malebranche, and Hume. The man credited with the transmission of kalam to the Latin West was the famous Jewish philosopher and theologian, Musa b. Maymun (Maimonides). His *The Guide for the Perplexed*, which provides a comprehensive account of kalam, was translated into Latin as early as 1220, and later served as the basis of Thomas Aquinas' critique of Islamic occasionalism. Interestingly enough, in his repudiation of causality, Hume presented arguments very similar to those offered by the Ash'arites, but without positing the Divine Will as the nexus between two phenomena which the mind conceives as cause and effect. Moreover, some of his examples were the same as those of the Ash'arites. This led certain scholars to assume that Hume must have been acquainted with Ash'arite atomism through the Latin translations of Averroes' *Tahafut al-tahafut* and the above mentioned work of Maimonides (its Arabic title: *Dalalat al-ha'irin*).

Ash'arite atomism also possesses a great significance for contemporary historians and philosophers of sciences. This is because of its many similarities to the atomic theory of modern physics. One important consequence of this is that we are forced to reexamine some of the assumptions underlying the currently accepted views concerning the epistemological foundation of scientific methodology and scientific theories. For Ash'arite atomism suggests to us the possibility of another way of viewing and understanding nature, which is different from the one adopted in modern science, but which was successful in formulating a unified atomic theory that shares several common features with contemporary quantum physics.

# THE NATURALISM OF IQBAL

Prof: Abdul Qayyum

Iqbal is well-known more as a great poet--- indeed he was a great poet --- than as a philosopher. In fact, he was not a philosopher in the technical sense of the -word 'philosopher'. He did not give any comprehensive metaphysical system, as the professional philosophers do. He was interested in philosophy of religion and this interest was shown in his lectures delivered by him in 1928-29 at Madras, Hyderabad and Aligarh. These lectures, alongwith the lecture delivered in English in 1932 constitute his major philosophical work 'The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam'. As one reads this book, one cannot but be impressed by his profound understanding of the Western thought, and sound grasp of Muslim philosophy and theology. This is a very difficult book and I must admit that I had to read it again and again to understand its contents. However, it is stimulating at the same time, and I have been inspired to reflect on the philosophical discussions undertaken therein. I propose to present some results of these reflections in my lectures.

Iqbal designed his lectures to meet the demand for a scientific form of religious knowledge. This demand, he thought could be met by attempting to reconstruct Muslim religious philosophy with due regard to the philosophical traditions in Islam and the more recent developments in the various domains of human knowledge'. Thus he undertook a philosophical discussion of some of the basic ideas such as religious experience, God, human ego, prophecy and ijtehad. By undertaking such philosophical discussion he wanted to provide a rational foundation for Islam, which, he thinks, "was begun with the Prophet himself. His constant prayer was: 'God! grant me knowledge of the ultimate nature of things". Indeed, Iqbal holds that "in view of its function, religion stands in greater need of a rational foundation of its ultimate principles than even the dogmas of science" of all the ideas that he discussed the one that pertains to Divine existence is the most important, because it is in the light of a certain conception of God that the nature of other ideas is determined. Hence he takes up the problem of Divine existence first.

Having found all the traditional proofs of the existence of God the ontological, the cosmological and the teleological open to criticism and as betraying “a rather superficial interpretation of experience” he looks to religious experience, which is identified with mystic experience, as the source of the knowledge of God. Religious experience, according to Iqbal, is a direct way of knowing God through intimate association or ‘encounter with God. Though it is essentially a state of feeling, it has a cognitive aspect also. The contents of this experience can be communicated to others in the form of judgements the truth of which Iqbal thinks, is guaranteed by the application of the intellectual test by which he means critical interpretation, without any presuppositions, of human experience generally with a view to discover whether our interpretation leads us to a reality of the same character as is revealed by religious experience<sup>29</sup> Human experience, Iqbal holds, presents three main levels - the level of matter, the level of life, and the level of mind and consciousness. Iqbal then undertakes a critical examination of these three levels of experience and interprets them so as to reach the conclusion that the ultimate Reality is a “rationally directed creative life”, and that the ultimate nature of Reality is Spiritual and that it must be conceived as an ego or self. This ultimate Ego or Self, Iqbal says, is the same as the Allah of the Quran. Since Reality that is revealed in religious experience is spiritual, it is also the same as that arrived at by the interpretation of religious experience. Thus Iqbal tries to show that both religious experience and the interpretation of the most important regions of experience give us the same conception of God as is proffered by the Quran: In this way, he thinks he has justified philosophically the Islamic conception of God and provided a rational foundation for Islam.

In my first lecture I shall examine Iqbal’s philosophical views in order to see whether he accomplished the task that he undertook. I would like to submit, with one reference to Iqbal, that in my view, he did not succeed in achieving his objective. Out of my interpretation of his views emerges a metaphysics which is naturalistic and as such, is not compatible with the Quranic conception of God. I shall try to show (a) how he throughout his discussion betrays his naturalistic trend and inclination and (b) how his views

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<sup>29</sup> M. Iqbal. ‘The Reconstruction of Religious Thought In Islam’, Institute of Islamic Culture, Lahore, 1986, p.21.

about the nature of ultimate Reality can be interpreted in naturalistic terms. At the end, I shall argue how in a different way religious beliefs, including the Islamic ones can be rationally justified.

In the first lecture Iqbal makes some pronouncement which clearly betray his naturalistic approach to human life. After regarding man as a creative activity, an 'ascending spirit' he says that 'man's life and the onward march of his spirit depend on the establishment of connections with reality that confronts him'.<sup>30</sup> These connexions, according to Iqbal, are established through the scientific knowledge of nature which provides a conceptual framework for human life. This means that man lives in a world which is capable of sustaining and responding to his interests. Further he says that man possesses the faculty of forming concepts of things and that 'forming concepts of them is capturing them'. This means that the concepts in terms of which nature is known are the concepts which are capable of making human living possible --a living which is so complex and rich as to include all different values social, aesthetic, economic and logical. Thus all, such varieties of human experience become natural events. It is the recognition of such relation of man with nature which Iqbal describes as 'the naturalism of the Quran' and which, he recommends, 'must be exploited -- in the nobler interest of free upward movement of spiritual life'.<sup>31</sup> As regards 'spiritual life', Iqbal says that whereas in Christianity 'it could be elevated not by the forces of a 'world external' to the soul of man, but by the revelations of a new 'world within' his soul', in Islam content for spiritual life could be sought 'by a proper adjustment of man's relation to these forces'. After designating spiritual life as 'the ideal' and the external world as 'the real' he indicates the basic importance of the real by saying that Islam 'recognizing the contact of the ideal with the real, says 'yes' to the world of matter and points the way to master it with a view to discovering a basis for a realistic regulation of life'.<sup>32</sup> In other words, spiritual life is to be lived in this world of nature and not in any other realm and that the knowledge and exploration of nature are of fundamental importance to human being. Indeed, spiritual life does not consist in the activity of any 'spiritual self' independent of and apart from this world. Spiritual activity arises out of man's relation with nature

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p.10.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p.12.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p.8

established by him as a component but distinct part of nature through scientific knowledge. Iqbal holds that there are aspects of man other than the spatial one's. If spiritual life means an aspect other than the spatial aspects then spiritual life according to Iqbal, comprises such things as 'evaluation, the unitary character of purposive experience and the pursuit of Truth'. These aspects of man are taken as natural by naturalists who would agree with Iqbal when the latter suggests that 'it is pure dogmatism on the part of science to claim that the aspects of reality selected by it are the only aspects to be studied and to ignore those aspects which constitute his spiritual life. Indeed, they, like Iqbal, would suggest that the understanding of aspects other than the spatial ones require categories other than those employed by natural sciences. Naturalists would side with Iqbal in combating Materialism by recognizing non-spatial aspects of man and stressing the need of employing for the study of these different categories which must, of course, fit in the naturalistic programme.

Iqbal's inclination towards naturalism is quite evident when he speaks of (1) 'the naturalism of the Quran', (2) 'the concrete spirit of the Quran', (3) 'the constant appeal to reason and experience in the Quran' and (4) 'the general empirical attitude of the Quran'. By such references to the Quran, Iqbal makes the point that, under the influence of the Quran, the Muslim thinkers, by realizing that the spirit of the Quran was anticlassical revolted intellectually against the speculative philosophy of the Greeks who, according to Iqbal, 'enjoyed theory and were neglectful of fact, and set out for the search of a scientific method of knowledge. Thus, Iqbal asserts, that 'the birth of Islam is the birth of inductive intellect'.

Iqbal mentions three sources of human knowledge: (1) inner experience, (2) nature and (3) history. If it is the basic tenet of naturalism that knowledge can be acquired only by the use of scientific method, then Iqbal certainly adopted naturalism when he holds that these three sources of knowledge could be tapped by the employment of scientific method in these fields. As regards the study of nature there is hardly any doubt about the employment of scientific method. So far as history is concerned, Iqbal regards it as an art of firing the readers imagination, as only a stage in the development of history as a genuine science, which can be possible by 'a wider experience, a greater -maturity of practical reason and a full realization of certain basic

ideas regarding the nature of life and time such as the unity of human origin and a keen sense of the reality of time'.<sup>33</sup>

It is not only in- respect of nature and history that scientific method is to be employed, but the religious or mystic experience is also according to Iqbal, to be subjected to critical examination before it can be accepted as a source of knowledge. Iqbal's account of the nature of mystic experience brings out his naturalistic tendency in a very clear manner. He regards mystic experience as natural as sense experience." The facts of religious experience are facts among other facts of human experience and, in the capacity of yielding knowledge by interpretation; one fact is as good as another. Iqbal does not regard mystic experience as self-authenticated. The validity of judgments based on such experience will be established only after these have been tested, And the tests to be applied here are not, according to Iqbal, different from those applicable to other forms of knowledge. These are: the intellectual test and the pragmatic test. While discussing the significance of the finality of the institution of prophethood, Iqbal observes that "the idea of finality does not mean that mystic experience has ceased to exist as a vital fact"; it means to create an independent critical attitude towards mystic experience by generating the belief that all personal authority claiming a super natural origin has come to an end in the history of man.<sup>34</sup> It is this independent critical attitude that will according to Iqbal, open 'fresh vistas of knowledge in the domain of inner experience, just as the spirit of critical observation of man's outer experience has divested the forces of nature of any divine character'.

The naturalistic character of mystic experience is further established when Iqbal compares it to prophetic experience. He says at more than one place that prophetic experience is not qualitatively different from mystic experience. The only difference between the two is that while the effects of mystic experience are confined to the person of the mystic himself, the effects of prophetic experience extend, beyond the person of the prophet, to mankind in general. The experience of the prophet awakes in him 'world shaking psychological forces which completely transform the human world'. Thus Iqbal defines a prophet as 'a type of mystic consciousness in which

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p.112

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p.101

unitary experience tends to overflow its boundaries and seeks opportunities of redirecting or refashioning the forces of collective life'. It is by examining' the type of manhood that he has created, and the cultural world that has sprung out of the spirit of his message' that the value of his religious experience is to be judged. All this implies that so far as the source and nature of the two experiences are concerned there is no difference between them; it is only in respect of their results that they differ from each other. The value and validity of a prophet's message are not to be judged with reference to its alleged divine source: it is to be judged with, reference to its effects or the state of affairs that is created by it in this world. When Iqbal says that in the prophet's personality "the finite centre of life sinks into his own infinite depths,"<sup>35</sup> he is regarding the source of the prophet's inspiration as something natural and not super-natural. At another place he describes the law given by the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) as 'arisen out of the depths of human conscience'. In the sixth lecture he refers to the revelation in Islam as 'speaking from the inmost depths of life'.<sup>36</sup> While describing Islam as a naturalistic religion he argues that it will be acceptable to the men's right nature as it arises out of the depths of life. All these pronouncements made by Iqbal about religious experience clearly suggest that, according to him, the source of ideas based on mystic or prophetic experience is natural and not super-natural. This view of religious experience is endorsed by the Quran which, as Iqbal has rightly stated, regards 'wahi' as a universal property of life. (Of course 'its nature and character, Iqbal adds, are different at different stages of the evolution of life'. Thus the plant growing freely in space, the animal developing a new organ to suit a new environment and a human being receiving light from the inner depths of life are all, according to Iqbal, cases of inspiration (wahi)'. From this it follows that just as the consciousness that accompanies the instinctive actions of an animal in an implicit manner as a part of the animal's nature, the intuitive consciousness in man is also a part of his nature. Besides the general naturalistic attitude of Iqbal shown by him in respect of religious experience his views of God and human ego are such as can be interpreted as naturalistic. After rejecting the three traditional arguments for the existence of God; the Cosmological, the Teleological and the Ontological, as betraying rather superficial interpretation

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p.100

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p.142

of experience, Iqbal himself undertakes the interpretation of the three main levels of experience: Ultimate Reality is 'pure duration in which thought, life and purpose interpenetrate to form an organic unity'. In other words, it is 'a rationally directed creative life'. But Iqbal conceives this unity as 'the unity of self --- an all embracing concrete self'. 'The introduction of the notion of self might suggest that he regards the ultimate Reality as a person, a being or entity, but, as it will be just agreed, this is not the case. He writes: "To interpret this life as an ego is not to fashion God after the image of man. It is only to accept the simple fact of experience that life is not a formless fluid but an organizing principle of unity, a synthetic activity which holds together and focalizes the dispersing dispositions of the living organization for constructive purposes".<sup>37</sup> Iqbal argues that intellect or thought will conceive life as 'a kind' of universal current flowing through all things' and that it is intuition which reveals life as a centralizing ego'. Here one would wonder how Iqbal admits this antithesis between thought and intuition, when earlier in the first lecture he clearly asserts that there is no reason 'to suppose that thought and intuition are essentially opposed to each other; they spring from the same root and complement each other'.<sup>38</sup> Here, in respect of the character of life, thought will complement intuition. if we reverse their objects and say that it is intuition which apprehends the dynamic and creative character of the universe and grasps the ultimate Reality as a pure duration and then it is thought which latter on interprets it as a centralizing ego. Ego or self as a centralizing agency is not intuited at all; it is conceived by intellect as such. Even if we may concede that the principle of unity is a person of ego who, through synthetic activity, organizes the world for some constructive purpose, such activity is not possible without conceiving such person or ego as having some ideal. But Iqbal does not admit the presence of any ideal which is being realized by the creative life. According to him 'God's life is a self-revelation, not the pursuit of an ideal'. If God's life is not the pursuit of an ideal,<sup>39</sup> there is hardly any warrant for holding that Reality is a rationally directed creative life'. And when he says that 'the ultimate ground of all experience is a rationally directed creative will', such will cannot be conceived without some ideal involved in its creative activity. Had Iqbal admitted the

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p.48

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p.2

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p.84

presence of an ideal, one would have accepted his characterization of creative life as the unity of a person or ego. In the absence of an ideal, unity can not be the unity of self. This contention is further supported by his clarification that the centralizing ego shall not be fashioned after the image of man who organizes his dispersing dispositions under an ideal self. It appears that Iqbal conceives the Ultimate Reality as an ego or self with a view to avoiding the pantheistic view of Reality which would have been suggested otherwise. And this is understandable. Pantheism is opposed to the individualistic conception of the ultimate Reality which is the Quranic view of God and which would be naturally acceptable to Iqbal. This is why Iqbal interprets the-Quranic verse describing God as the light of heaven and earth<sup>40</sup> as implying that it excludes ‘the suggestion of a formless cosmic element by centralizing the light in a glass likened unto a well-defined star’. But on the other hand, his view of relation between the ultimate Ego or God and nature is such as would tend toward pantheism, though such pantheism would not mean that God and nature are one thing: It would identify God with the universe in the sense that it is this universe through which God carries out His creative activity of self-realization. This relation is described by him in these statements: “To the ultimate self, the not-self or nature ‘does not present itself as confronting other: it is ‘only a fleeting moment in the life of God’<sup>41</sup> Space, Time and matter are interpretations which thought puts on the free creative energy of God;<sup>42</sup> the world in all its details is the self-revelation of the Great I am.’ Divine life is in touch with the whole universe on ‘ the analogy of the soul’s contract with the body; the ultimate Ego<sup>43</sup> that makes the emergent emerge is immanent in nature’, nature is the behavior of God; it is a systematic mode of behavior organic to the ultimate self!<sup>44</sup> When Iqbal says that ‘a self is unthinkable without a character’, it clearly implies that self is nothing but a systematic mode of behavior’ without which self will cease to be what it is. One may or may not regard Iqbal’s view as pantheistic, but one point is quite evident from the above assertions; the Ultimate Self is immanent and not transcendent. If He is the creator of nature He is not a transcendent creator in the Cartesian sense or on that of theistic religion; He

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p.51

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p.45

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p.53

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p.85

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p.45

is immanent creator in the sense that He animates and sustains the whole then one may doubt if He is a supernatural being or entity. On the other hand He should be something which is intimately and organically involved in the world of nature.

The above interpretation of Iqbal's thought is further supported by the analogy that he uses to show the relation of God to the world.

According to Iqbal, God's contact with the world of space, time and matter is similar to the contact that human soul has with his body. Now what is Iqbal's view of human soul, mind or ego? He does not accept the view that the soul is a substance or an entity. It is according to him, not a 'thing': it is an act, just as body is not a 'thing situated in an absolute void; it is a system of events or acts', 'the system of experience we call soul or ego is also', Iqbal argues, 'a system of acts'. This does not', he adds, "obliterate the distinction of soul and body; it only brings them close to each other". By stretching this analogy further we can say that the Ultimate Self is also a system of acts or events just as the world of space, time and matter is, as Iqbal holds. a system of events and acts and that, as such, both are brought closer to each other. Indeed, Iqbal's view of human soul as a system of events or acts is very similar to the modern naturalistic view of mind according to which "mind must be analyzed as behavior, since behavior is the only aspect of mind which is open to experimental examination, and is taken as ability to perform certain kinds of tasks. Mind is not some thing residing in the body. From the foregoing discussion, we may conclude that Iqbal's interpretation of human experience does not lead to a reality of the same character, as according to Iqbal, is revealed by religious experience. Iqbal holds 'that the religious experience yields the knowledge of God as a supersensible Being who really exists and possesses moral and natural attributes. Now I propose to examine the argument of religious experience for the existence of God.

Iqbal says that just 'as regions of normal experience are subject to the interpretation of sense-data for our knowledge of the external world, so the region of mystic experience is subject to interpretation for our knowledge of God'. That it is the interpretation of mystic experience which makes it intelligible cannot be denied, but Iqbal nowhere suggests how this interpretation should be carried out so that it could yield only genuine propositions about God. Even if some method of interpretation is available,

the contents of religious experience are too indeterminate to yield clear knowledge of the God of theism. If the argument is sound, then the conception of God resulting from it must be intelligible and free from inner contradiction. But what is found is a 'viciously muddled confusion of concepts'. Interpretation, whatever it be, means the application of certain concepts which can be handled as well as mishandled. No wonder then that we have all sorts of interpretations: theistic, pantheistic and even agnostic. So divergent are the results of religious experience that one may doubt the validity of the source itself. Either the experience itself is unreliable or there is something wrong in the interpretation of it. It has been observed that the concepts that are used in the interpretative exercise are those which belong to some established theological doctrine. What appears to be true is that, in mystic experience the mystic has a vague feeling of coming into contact with "something larger", and since he is not satisfied with such vague feeling, he tries to interpret it more fully to himself and others. In the absence of any interpretative technique the simple course before him is that he should interpret his experience within the context of those beliefs which he already entertains. According to Iqbal, God reveals his symbols both within and without, and God can be known indirectly by 'reflective observation and control of (His) symbols as they reveal themselves to sense perception' and directly by 'direct association with Reality (God) as it (He) reveals itself (Himself) within. One is the way of sense-experience and the other the way of religious experience'. About the latter he says that it supplements the former. In other words, religious experience cannot yield at complete knowledge of God. This fails as much as the three other traditional arguments. Since he regards sense experience as inadequate, he thinks that it must be supplemented by what the Quran describes as 'Fuad' or 'Qalb', i.e. heart. Thus he relies on the Quran for establishing the authority of Religious experience or mystic experience as a source of knowledge of God. But, I am afraid the interpretation that has given of the word of 'Fuad' may not be acceptable in the light of the context in which it has been used in the Quran. Fuad means 'Qalb' i.e. heart in the sense it is used by mystics and poets who regard it as a seat of emotion which made it a kind of intuition or insight involving no thought or intellectual element'. In the Quran, 'qalb' has been used as a reflective faculty or as a seat of understanding as these verses show: 'They have hearts wherewith they understand not'. (vii.179), 'Lo!on their hearts we have placed covering so that they understand not. (viii.57). Have

they hearts Wherewith to reflect'. (xxii-46) It is very significant to note that the word 'fuad' has been used in the Quran alongwith the words 'hearing' Sam'a and 'seeing' Basar which suggest that these three things together constitute the source of knowledge. Iqbal also says that 'knowledge is sense-perception elaborated by understanding. Here, hearing and seeing, the two most common sources of sense-data, stand for sense-perception, and fuad stands for understanding. Iqbal further points out that, according to the Quran (ii-28.31), 'man is endowed with the faculty of naming things, that is to say, forming concepts of them. This function of forming concepts is naturally performed by fuad which works on data supplied by ears, eyes and other sense organs. This also shows that fuad means the faculty of understanding and not the seat of emotions and feelings:

Thus neither the religious experience yields the knowledge of God, nor does the interpretation of experience lead to the individualistic conception of God. Iqbal's metaphysical views, as all have interpreted, then lead to naturalism.

Here critic may object that a naturalistic metaphysics will rule out the reality of a supernatural Realm of supernatural Being or God. Indeed naturalism repudiates the view that there exists or could exist some entities or events which lie beyond the scope of scientific explanation; True, God, being a supernatural entity, cannot be known according to naturalism, nor can His existence be established by any argument, logical or empirical but this does not mean that if the existence of God cannot be known one cannot legitimately believe in His existence. The great skeptic and naturalist Hume held that though we could not have the 'knowledge' of the external world of ourselves and of necessary connection between bodies in the physical world, we can legitimately believe in their existences. Beliefs in the existence of these objects are, according to Hume, natural beliefs, because human nature is so constituted that men in the absence of their knowledge have to believe in their reality, otherwise life would perish. Nature will always maintain her rights and prevail, in the end, our abstract reasoning. Similarly Hume held that God is not knowable but He is the object of belief. Hume also said that belief in God is natural in the sense that there is a natural propensity to believe in God which is a 'general attendant of human nature'. Kant was also concerned with the problem of the knowledge of God. Is the knowledge of

God possible? Kant's answer is that such knowledge is impossible, for no synthetic a priori statements can be made about God. But though God, for Kant, cannot be known, He can still be thought or believed to be; we can have the Idea of God. To believe in God, according to Kant, is to have the Idea of God which has no object corresponding to it. This Idea is not a fiction, but possesses objective validity because it serves the interest of practical reason. According to Kant, God must be conceived not as the object of knowledge, but of faith. Kant also regards belief in God as natural in the sense that this belief presupposes the existence of moral sentiments which are present in every human being, for 'the human mind... takes a natural interest in morality'. Just as both Hume and Kant, after seeing the frailty of human reason and the inadequacy of his mental construction so far as the knowledge of God is concerned, concluded that, in the absence of such knowledge! it was legitimate to have belief in His existence, Iqbal also can, after the failure of all the traditional arguments for the existence of God and his naturalistic interpretation of all levels of experience - matter, life and consciousness, legitimately resort to belief-attitude towards Divine existence. Indeed, it is on account of this belief-attitude that Iqbal characterized the creative life as an ego and then equated this ego with the Allah of the Quran and conceived Him as possessing the attributes of creativeness, knowledge, omnipotence and eternity. It is in this way that Iqbal can reasonably retain religion along with his naturalism.

The logical empiricists hold that religious statements, especially statements about God, are meaningless, because they cannot be verified. The religious man may reply that his statement about God's existence is meaningful because when he says that God exists, he does not mean that he knows that God exists; he means that God exists. He would claim that his statement, 'I believe that he believes that God exists' is meaningful. "Then the question arises: how can a belief statement be meaningful? The reply is that the meaningfulness of a belief statement does not consist in its being a factual statement which can be verified; meaningfulness consists in its practical implication. Belief in Divine existence means commitment to lead a certain type of life or, to use the religious terms, complete surrender to the will of God. Belief and action go together. Belief not followed by action is mere verbal affirmation which has no meaning. The close link between belief and action explains the nature of those religious statements which refer

to super sensible facts. This may be illustrated with the following example. Let us take the two statements

1) Mohammad was born in Mecca.

2) Mohammad was the messenger of Allah. As regards the first statement, it is clearly a factual statement which can be verified empirically. A person can say, I know that Mohammad was born in Mecca; since it can be verified it is a 'knowledge-statement'. But when he makes the second statement he will say "I believe that Mohammad is the messenger of God". It is not a knowledge-statement; it cannot be verified. It is a 'belief statement'. The meaningfulness of the first statement consists in its being factual, but the meaningfulness of the second statement consists in its having practical implications. When a person says I believe that Mohammad is the messenger of Allah, he commits himself to a certain way of life; he surrenders to the will of Allah as revealed to Mohammad. This point is borne out when we examine the 'Kalma' which is recited by a believer. He says "I bear witness to that there is no ilah but Allah and that Mohammad is the messenger of Allah'. Here 'bearing witness' does not mean mere affirming something verbally, but performing the actions which bear to witness to the fact' that there is Allah'. And this is possible when all the believers who recite the Kalma act as servants of one Master. Being the servants of one Master, they will obey the commands of one Master. Thus they bear the witness not by words but by deeds which will embody the will of one Master. Their deeds will, indeed, point to one Master.

That the meaningfulness of a religious belief is established by the actions implied by the belief is well borne out by the repeated conjunction of the word 'faith' and 'righteous action'. In fact faith is the basic category of religious life and belief arises out of faith. Belief is only the conceptualization of faith. And Iqbal has rightly saw that 'the Quran is s book which emphasises deed' rather than 'idea'.

# IQBAL ON DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY

Prof. Muhammad Munawwar

“One must think of the highly negative significance in Persian of the word Khudi, Self, with its implications of selfishness, egotism and similar objectionable meanings.” Iqbal gives this word a new meaning as Self, Personality, Ego in an absolutely positive meaning. But still, deepest dismay was caused by his new ideas; brought up since centuries with the idea of seeing in the Self, something which has to be annihilated in the Divine Essence. A stoically inclined group of Muslim mystics could not easily accept a philosophy that taught them to watch over the growth of their personality, to strengthen it, instead of melting away in the highest bliss of union with the Only Reality. Iqbal held that the Muslims of the Sub-continent had been corrupted by the influence of Persian pantheistic ideas, and had forgotten almost everything of true Arabic Islam and its ideals now he wanted to show here real Islam without veil. The accustomed ideals of self-surrender, and quietism were abandoned, and a new doctrine of the Self is put forth; man is the vicegerent of God, he has to strengthen his personality, and to cooperate with his Creator.

All our instincts and passions are to be regulated by the principle of harmony or balance. No instinct is to be altogether thwarted, nor is it be allowed to override others. All instincts have their functions within limits. In Iqbal’s opinion this demarcation of limits is the Shari’ah or the “Divine law” and to respect the “limits” is “justice”, which, according to Taha Husain, is the central principle of all Islamic injunctions. According to the Quran, one who transgresses the “limits”, is a mu’tad (معتد) or zalim, and God Almighty does not like him. This is why in the Islamic jurisprudence “hadd”, i.e. the “limits: is synonymous with “punishment”. The long and short of it is that to remain within “limits” is to be harmonious, good and beautiful. Imam Ghazali makes a very clear pronouncement in this regard. “Beauty”, he says, “has almost universally been recognized as a thing of intrinsic value. It means the orderly and systematic arrangement of parts, and this is not the quality of material things only; it lies in the activities and the behaviour of man and in

his ideas and concepts. Whatever is beautiful is loved by us for its own sake. This immediately recalls to our mind Iqbal's beautiful lines in praise of Mard-i-Musalman and more particularly the following:

فطرت کا سرود ازلی اس کے شب و روز  
 اہنگ میں یکتا، صفت میں سورۃ رحمن

Sometimes it is held that Iqbal's concept of Ego - the very pivotal notion of his philosophy - stands for the glorification of power. Nothing can be more misleading than this. Power, according to Iqbal, must be qualified; it is with him not blind and aimless and thus sheer ruthlessness. Whatever power there is for man, it is on account of his respect for "limits", (hudud). Bowing before "limits" is the very essence of power. In his opinion there is no power without some sort of compulsions or obligations.

Says Iqbal, it is not the beginning that counts. It is the "uppermost reach of the emergent that matters". At the animal level a human being is incapable of becoming self-conscious. To outgrow animality is not an easy job. It needs lot of determined effort on the part of the "grower". Man naturally, as is the wont of every earth-treading animal, feels comfortable in proportion to his nearness to earth. Nearer the earth the lesser the discomfort. Lethargy getting the better of energy, Says Iqbal:

"A spirit, on accepting the companionship of earth, is taken hold of by the luxury of sleepiness.. It wakes up when it creates "I" i.e. ego or self. And when the self succumbs to flesh, it dies out."

دلے چوں صحبت گل می پزیرد  
 ہماں دم لذت خوابش بگیرد  
 شود بیدار چوں "من" آفریند  
 چو "من" محکوم تن گردد، بمیرد

What Iqbal tries to explain is, his feeling that the physical part of man which is normally predominant, keeps man in a state of forgetfulness. He remains away from self-consciousness. Yet, through effort, he may shed forgetfulness and come to his own. This “coming to his own” is in Iqbal’s words, the emergence of his “I”, his ego, his self. For a while ego may get the better of his carnal companion. As long as this state continues all is not lost. A person asleep, anyway, is not a person dead. But when spiritual element surrenders to that of physical then the “I”, ego or self, meets its death. To remain sleepy is one thing, to sleep away, the other.

The gist of Iqbal’s thought is the problem of man’s self-consciousness. Does man try to know his station and rank in the universe? The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, opens up with the following words:

“What is the character and general structure of universe in which we live? How are we related to it? What place do we occupy in it, and what is the kind of conduct that befits the place we occupy?”

Man does not know his status in the universe. Rather he does not dare to know it. He avoids to know of his own greatness. His real splendour is too big. He covers before his grandeur. He shrinks from the very thought of his expense. He feels comfortable within his limits i.e. the limits of his sense-perception. Even when the scope of sense-perception expands to limits to which an individual is not accustomed it becomes awesome. Let an enormously vast stretch of land bust upon an unfamiliar eye. Let a person ascend a high minaret for the first time in his life. Let there be a blast causing a loud sound. Let a person experience some unusual smell. In short, whatever a person is not used to and for him is not normal or familiar, creates fear. It makes him shrink, shiver and crouch. Yet it is the same two-legged animal who through training and determination surmounts the Mt. Everest. He flies to the moon and alighting on it establishes dialogues with friends and advisers on the earth.

Man’s capabilities unfold to him by and by and that also with determined effort on his part to this effect. But man’s knowledge, as such, deals with the material world. It is attained with the help of sense-perception. It is the outer world being dealt with by the outer weapons of man. His

sense-perception is his outer world. His inner world remains hidden from him. Man's outer capabilities have been progressing and hence accordingly have been discovering and conquering the outer world steadily. Man, no doubt, works wonders in the field of material world. And whatever he performs, he tries to proclaim, propagate and institutionalize. All material progress which in other words, is the advancement of scientific knowledge, is in reality the extension and enhancement of man's faculties of sense-perception. All inventions and discoveries are performances of sense-perception. Not only that, they all turn to a sort of "foreign aid" to man's senses and enlarge his possibilities by opening up new vistas before him.

Man's inner senses are much more acute and far reaching than outer ones. His potentialities remain unrealized. Those who know themselves and hence try to become what they should, are a rarity. Hardly one in millions. It is a pity. Every animal reaches its ceiling because he lives instinctively. Animals have no choice hence no animal can commit a sin. Every animal has been vested with the nature of the specie to which it belongs. No animal can be other than itself. A jackal cannot be anything other than a jackal. A tiger is a tiger. A lamb is a lamb. This shows that every animal is a dependable entity. Hypocrisy is beyond the capacity of animals. They are true to their respective natures. But what about a kind called mankind? Mankind has been equipped with the faculty of choice. A human being is responsible for his deliberate actions. Therefore, he is accountable to God for what he does. To attain to his true self, he has to work hard. He has to out-grow animality. He has to rise above his material surroundings in the sense that he has to live not according to the animal instincts, he, rather has to bridle the fairy horses of his desires, emotions and ambitions. He has to conquer his material self. He has to be the captain of his fate and 'master of his soul. But this he would not do. He will try to gain the knowledge of the world. He will calculate. He will criticize. He will analyse. He will establish scientifically, this fact and that. He will philosophize. He will do every thing imaginable. But he will not seriously try to probe his own person. He persistently and deliberately will remain far aloof from himself. He is too big for himself to comprehend. A human being may be a fighter, a student, a scientist, a physician, an explorer and astronaut and what not. He may be anything but he will not dare survey his own self, and will never get to know what he

potentially is and to what spiritual heights he can rise. His inner world is much more expansive than the outer one. Says Iqbal and pathetically so:

بینی جہاں را، خود را نہ بینی  
تا چند نادان غافل نشینی!  
نور قدیمی شب را بر افروز  
دست کلیمی ذر آستینی!  
بیرون قدم نہ از دور آفاق  
تو پیش ازینی، تو بیش ازینی!

“You behold the world but you do not behold your own self. How long will you remain sitting (wrapped in ignorance.”

“You should enlighten the night with divine light in you. You are the hand of Moses but hidden in the sleeve.”

“You should set your foot out of the boundaries of the circling world. You are older than it, you are greater than it.”

Jacques Maritain states:

“In the flesh and bone of man there exists a soul which is a spirit and which has greater value than the whole physical universe. Dependent, though he may be upon the slightest accidents of matter, the human person exists by virtue of the existence of his soul, which dominates time and death. It is the spirit which is the root of personality.”

Person is concrete, tangible, hence “Sensible”. Personality is abstract, intangible, hence for a scientist it is “non-sense”. Person is matter. Personality is value. Values stand out of the ken of science. Person is body. Personality is spirit bestowed on our body by the soul. Person is one. Personality should also be one. But we observe, generally more than one personalities possessed by one person. This shows that the great majority of human beings do not possess one integrated “self”. Self has to be one. Self means one entity. If there are “selves” in one person then he is a person without a self -- without unity, without inner and outer truth becoming one. Such a person has “split personality” — He remains 'unrealized as a human

being. Oneness begins to take shape when soul begins to overwhelm a person's existence. If the case is otherwise then the result also is otherwise. And the tragedy is that human beings try and go on trying to know what is out there. They seldom try to know what is within them. But the question is, does man really know even the outer world? Every mystery which is solved points to a multitude of mysteries. What is within is much more mysterious, a thousand time more mysterious. Therefore, a being who partakes of both the microcosm and the macrocosm is his own greatest mystery as long as he does not dare to comprehend his reality. Lincoln Barnett states:

“He (man) does not understand the vast veiled universe into which he has been cast for the reason that he does not understand himself. He comprehends but little of organic processes and even less of his unique capacity to perceive the world about him to reason and to dream. Least of all does he understand is his noblest and most mysterious faculty; the ability to transcend himself and perceive himself in the act of perception.”

This ability to transcend himself enables man to perceive himself in the act of perception i.e. he can sit in judgement on his own self. He can be the critic of his own critical sense. This means he possesses that something also which he got from above. It is a particle of divine light. It is a particle of something definitely unearthly. This shows man is neither soul nor body. Man is above both because he possesses them. Here it is that we come face to face with the question as to who says “I” and “My”. Iqbal puts the same question and offers the answers as well:

اگر گوئی کہ "من" وہم و گمان است  
 نمودش چوں نمود این و آن است  
 بگو بامن کہ دارائے گمان کیست؟  
 یکے در خود نگر آن بے نشان کیست؟  
 جہاں پیدا و محتاج دلیلے  
 نمی آید ب فکر جبرئیلے  
 خودی پنہاں زحجت بے نیاز است  
 یکے اندیش و دریاب این چہ راز است  
 خودی را حق بدان، باطل مپندار  
 خودی را کشت بے حاصل مپندار

Translation of these verses is given by Iqbal himself and it is as under:

“If you say that the “I” is mere illusion - an appearance among appearances. Then tell me who is the subject of his illusion?”

Look within and discover The world is visible.

Not even the intellect of an angel can comprehend it;

The “I” is invisible and yet needs no proof. Think a while and see thine own secret.

The “I” is truth, it is no illusion. Do not think self to be a field without yield. (I have ventured to add the last line) (Thoughts and Reflections)

As expressed by Iqbal the “I” is truth. It does not belong to the realm of appearances. According to Lord Northbourne the “I” entails as follows:

“I am not anything that I can observe or feel or think about, since observation, sensation and mentation imply a duality between myself and some subject that is not myself. We commonly speak of “my feelings” or “my hand” or “my soul” as we speak of “my head” or “my hand” or “my dog”.

I am, however, certainly nothing that I can be said to possess. We also commonly use phrases like “I” said to myself or “I am ashamed of myself”. Then who or what is the “I” that says these things. It is not my body: it is not my soul. It cannot be myself of which I am ashamed not can it be said to be anything in particular other than these — what am I?”

This is why Iqbal has to say:

“This magic play of being and nothingness, called Adam is God’s secret.

Since the morn of eternity, time is on the move but all its forceful dashes could not render him archaic.” (Man has retained his vigor).

If you are not perturbed, I may tell you in clear words, that man is neither body nor soul:

Man being the master of his body, soul, intellect and imagination, is surely much more than all these put together. This is demonstrated by his

saying “my body”, “my brain”, “my heart”, “my thought”, “my reason”, “my argument”, “my honour”, “my shame”, “my emotions”, “my ambitions”, “my spirit”, “my soul” etc. If he is a genuine human being then he possesses all these phenomena, otherwise he is possessed by them. In that case his “I” and “my” is just a voice, a sound and a statement carrying no significance. Normally these faculties remain dormant and these potentialities lay idle. When ego comes to itself it shakes off this dust of idleness and dormancy. Ego’s coming, to itself means the state of transcending the realm of sense-perception. In the words of Jacques Maritan:

“It is this mystery of our nature which religious thought designates when it says that the person is the image of God.”

Explaining the meaning of the concept of Khudi, in his introduction to the first edition of *Asrar-i-Khudi*, Iqbal puts this question:

“What is this luminous center of the unity of intuition or mental awareness which intensifies human thoughts and feelings, this mysterious thing which is the repository of the diversified and unlimited potentialities of human nature, which is the make of appearances, yet cannot bear to be seen itself. Is it an eternal fact has life, in order to fulfil its immediate practical needs that invented this fanciful delusion or plausible deception? From the view point of ethics, the way of life of individuals and nations depends on the answer to this question.” The answer to this question says Iqbal does not depend on the intellectual capacity of individuals or nations, as much as it does on their attitude.

Allama Muhammad Iqbal as a poet-philosopher of Islam makes philosophy sing in his verses the message of love, hope and dignity of man. For him, as for almost all great thinkers of the world, the self of man has been a big and intriguing problem. Paragraphs that follow deal basically with the same problem: can a self actualize, i.e. can a homo sapiens become really a human being? The main source of inspiration for Allama Muhammad Iqbal is the Holy Quran and the Sirah of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He believes in the fact that man can realize fully his potentialities only through abiding by the commandments of Allah, and following the illustrious example of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) in all aspects of life.

Every individual is a unique phenomenon. He comes to the world alone; he goes out of it alone. And alone is he called upon by his Creator and Sustainer to account for the deeds he performed in this world. There is no proxy in birth. There is no proxy in feelings of pleasure and pain. There is no proxy in death. There is no proxy in accountability - accountability according to the degree of self-consciousness of the individual. To be conscious is to be responsible.

Yet the question remains whether a self really becomes conscious and is ever fully realized. All sensate and insensate existences, barring human beings, mature into what they ought to. A seed grows into a full tree according to its genre. An animal is a born animal and grows into a complete animal of its kind. All plants are earth-rooted from the beginning to the end. All animals remain almost at the same level of animality throughout their lives. They cannot outgrow their animality. They are not created for doing that.

And what about man? Does he remain at the same level from birth to death? He does not. He rises. He can soar higher than solar heights. His uppermost reach cannot be defined or delimited. Le Compte du Nouy ends his book *Human Destiny* with the following words that flatter as well as warn and caution:

“And let him [man] above all never forget that the Divine spark is in him and in him alone and that he is free to discard it or to come closer to God by showing eagerness to work with Him and for Him.”

Man in his spatial aspect is a material existence - a handful of clay. But that is just the start. And in the words of Allama Iqbal already quoted:

It is not the origin' of a thing that matters, it is the capacity, the significance, and the final reach of the emergent that matters.”

As a spatial aspect a man is bound to be ordered and governed by material pulls only, a state that manifests the dominance of unbridled instincts. There is nothing essentially wrong with instincts. Their running riot is wrong. All forces need control, but control does not mean elimination. Controlled instincts are like broken horses, who are much more useful than

the unbroken ones. It takes long to reach the stage where instincts bow before the commanding rational self. This means the dominance of spirit over matter. The impulse for change is an ingrained quality of man. Factors from outside only shake into wakefulness the slumbering inner possibilities. Without the inner capability no foreign aid can be of any use. Man learns and achieves what animals cannot. Man does so because he can. Iqbal says:

“Indeed the evolution of life shows that though in the beginning the mental is dominated by the physical, the mental, as it grows in power, tends to dominate the physical and may eventually rise to a position of complete independence.”

First of all, a man should be conscious of what he wants to prefer and to what. This consciousness is the starting point towards consolidating one's self - a self has to progress to achieve oneness. If a human existence is mentally not one, it is none. If there are many “selves” in one “self”, then the self concerned is without one particular entity. Achievements in the realm of genuine manhood are not possible for a man unless he succeeds first in achieving “oneness” within him.

Learning in a general sense may make a good physician of a homo sapiens. Experience may build an ordinary artisan into a renowned architect; training may turn a rough farmer into a competent commander of a well-equipped army; instruction and knowledge may shape an ordinary political worker into an intelligent diplomat, a carter may evolve into a Jimmy Carter, so on and so forth. But an individual's evolution towards this stage or that does not necessarily entail his genuine manhood. He may inwardly remain an animal, ruthless, covetous, avaricious, and cruel. Any such highly placed person can do anything. Benevolence, sympathy and sacrifice may have nothing to do with him. He may not even possess an idea of fairplay and justice. How could it be without moral training?

Even a learned judge may have no plain notion of justice. There is no contradiction in this stance. Judges themselves know that they pronounce judgements according to the legal code to be followed. They are supposed to know the law and decide cases brought before them accordingly. Legal justice is one thing, moral justice is quite another. Hence, even a judge, just by virtue of being a judge, cannot be adjudged to be a moral person. He can

be anything. A judge may even be really just, but outside the court when justice is not just a legal justice.

Man is a microcosm. He possesses the essence of all qualities possessed by everything in the universe, sensate as well as insensate. He has within himself the elemental principles of Nature that govern the universe. This necessarily implies that a particle of divinity should also be his. Keeping all this in view, we proudly declare: "O God! Man is great". No doubt, man is great potentially. It is the essential vocation of man to realize his true .manhood which necessarily brings him nearest to God, surpassing angels.

God is one. He who endeavors towards God should also, in the long run, be one. Man's conviction is the state of his directing all faculties possessed by him towards one point. Conviction is the central point of one's personality. A determination, aided by conviction is the manifestation of the sum-total of one's powers. In other words, the determined conviction means the readiness of personality for some achievement. The stronger the determination, the greater the achievement. Yet the fact is that efforts which are not God-oriented cannot make an individual necessarily a unified self for ever. Only a lasting purpose can give a lasting oneness to the seeker. The purpose of all purposes asks for an all-compassing singleness of man's personality.

Every purpose has an impact on the personality of the pursuer. Look at the mental quality of an idol-worshipper versus that of a worshipper of One God. No single god is an embodiment of all godly attributes. Every idol has some particular quality or qualities, hence so many idols. This gives the devotees, inevitably, split personalities, one person having more than one personality. Or suppose some wooden or golden idol possesses many heads, tongues and hands. Can a worshipper then be expected to possess coherence in his thought process, or uniformity in his dealings with others, or congruity in the import of his words of promise and pledge? If the thought process be one, the word one, and similarly the outlook one, then a god should not have many heads; tongues and hands. This is the clear case of many personalities in one. An idolater, howsoever civilised and sophisticated, can never be an integrated single person, hence essentially never a reliable entity. The character and behaviour of an idolater may be congruent with millions of other devotees of the same idols, yet it remains fundamentally different from

the genuine believer in one imageless and transcendent God. The condition for the believer in God is genuineness. A.M. Hocart, discussing Greek gods, observes:

“As the gods so must be the sacrificer, for the sacrificer and his acolytes represent the gods. It is necessary that he should know the myth which describes how gods succeed.”

Man forgets that the universe is “universe” only because it is created and sustained by one encompassing Divine Law of the Almighty Who is one. Says Khalifa Abdul Hakim:

“All nature is one because its creator is one. Everything is connected with everything else nearly or remotely. If there were more than one creator the universe would have had different laws of Nature and conflicting

spheres of sway. Could that universe turned multiverse last?”

Man begins to cultivate oneness in him when he starts rising above material pulls. Conquering his material self brings him near to conquering the universe, because in his own self he is a microcosm. He who rules the microcosm should be capable of ruling the macrocosm. Man’s God-ward journey frees him by degrees from earthly bondages. He rises above flesh. He fears God only. He seeks no favour from anyone other than God. Fear of material loss or hope of material gain, by and by, lose their grip and significance. This state comes when, in Iqbal’s words, the “mental dominates the physical and independence is achieved”. Man feels he has become his own master. What a thrill! In Iqbal’s opinion:

چیست دیں؟ برخاستن از روئے خاک  
تاز خود آگاہ گرود جان پاک

“What is Islam? It is rising above the level of dust, so that the soul, purged of matter, becomes self-conscious.”

Bergson also said the same thing;

“Evolution is the history of the effort of life to free itself from the domination of matter and to achieve self-consciousness.”

This shows that man's journey towards the One is a unifying experience. His unity within, grows in proportion to the height from matter. He should become one provided he imbibes the attributes of God, a state attainable only through abiding by God's Law and thus becoming God-centred. George D. Kelsay stated in this regard:

“Man is truly man and truly person only if he responds in obedient love to the Divine Call. He is so created that he has no true life except in God. He is an ‘independent’ being who can only be himself in free response to the call of God in every detail of his life.”

The best concrete example of godly persons whose lives were bodily presentation of God's guidance in all aspects of their lives were the Prophets of God. All Prophets had superior selves, compared with the peoples of the societies they were enjoined to live with and preach. The basic teachings of all of them were the same. The Prophets of God epitomised God's mercy on human beings, because, left to themselves, they could have no clear idea of good and evil, truth and falsehood, justice and transgression, pride and humility, covetousness and sacrifice and so on. This means they could have no notion of an integrated personality and character. They could not become truly men.

This potential of a human being is indicated by God Almighty Himself when He announced that He puffed His own spirit into the structure of Adam ( ). This puffing of the spirit has been accepted by the religious scholars in its literal sense as well as metaphorical one. For example, Jauhari Tantawi takes it metaphorically meaning by it that God has honoured Adam gracing him with the status of a special affinity. There are others who maintain that puffing of God's spirit into Adam denotes the potentialities of man which are capable of imbibing the attributes of God. Anyway, Adam stands out as a unique creation in the universe who has within him the World of Command as well as the World of Creation. He is a creation reflecting the attributes of the Creator. He is a lump of dust with a fraction of an iota of the Divine Light. This unique aspect of man's existence distinguishes him from all other existences. That Divine particle, howsoever minute, gives the “Self” of man an ego, essentially different from all other egos. Allama Iqbal vehemently stresses this point:

نقطہ نورے کہ نام او خودی است  
زیر خاک مائشرار زندگی است

“That particle of Divine Light which we call “Self” is a spark of life under the crust of clay.”

There is then another honorific status of man. It was Adam’s knowledge of the names of things. This knowledge was imparted to Adam by God Almighty Himself. It was this qualification of Adam, before which angels had to surrender, stating that they did not know more than what God had taught them, names of things not being a part of that knowledge. Thus, according to Allama Shariati Shaheed Adam’s first teacher was God Himself. And it was God Himself who knew what kind of knowledge and how much of it could be given to the angels and Adam according to their capacities to accept them. It is obvious that Adam and not the angels were to deserve the title of the “Vicegerent of God on earth:”. Capacities differed, deserts differed, hence gifts differed.

Puffing of the Soul, with all shades of its meanings as well as the knowledge of the names of things, with all its connotations, make it incumbent on man to continue to grow spiritually imbibing attributes of God, with the help of light within and knowledge of things around. For this purpose proper potentialities were vested in man. These potentialities were called the Trust of God of which man was made the trustee. None else from all the created entities could take upon themselves this enormous burden of responsibility. Not even the angels could do it. Potentialities were granted commensurate with the extent of Trust. Have the sons and daughters of Adam risen to demand of that Divine Trust? Have they ever understood the meanings of accountability on that account? Allama Iqbal exhorts the whole mankind to know the glorious Trust and awful responsibilities ensuing thereof:

مشو غافل کہ تو او را امینی  
چہ نادانی کہ سوئے خود نہ بینی

“Forget not, you are His trustee. How inadvertent you are not to look upon yourself, (to know your significance)?”

It is obvious that man can do justice to his function as caliph of God on earth only when he attains “humanity” in the real sense of the word. His “manhood” cannot become perfect unless he reaches the degree of excellence as the, i.e. servant of God. And this is in fact the gist of Allama Iqbal’s thought i.e. make man feel how he can realize his proper ego, his self, his “Manhood”.

Adopting the ways of God transforms a non-entity into an entity, by and by, and thus turns non-existence into existence evolving it gradually to a level where its potentiality to become a reflection of Almighty Allah’s attributes begins to show itself. A non-entity could grow to that height of excellence only because God had gifted his nature with this possibility and capacity. Here we have a verse from the Holy Quran:

فأقم وجهك للدين حنيفاً فطرة الله التي فطر الناس عليها لا تبديل لخلق الله <sup>ط</sup> ذلك الدين القيم. و لكن أكثر الناس يعلمون. (30-30)

“And so, set thy face steadfastly towards the (one ever-true) faith, turning away from all that is false, in accordance with the natural disposition which God has instilled into man; (for) not to allow any change to corrupt what God has thus created - this is the (purpose of the one) ever-true faith, but most people know it not.”

This means that belief in one God is man’s essential will to conform with his own nature whereas to worship things other than God is man’s assault on his own true nature.

Muhammad Asad in his commentary of the Holy Quran, explains the above quoted verse:

“The term Fitrah, rendered by me as ‘natural disposition’, connotes in this context man’s inborn, intuitive ability to discern between right and wrong, true and false, and thus, to sense God’s existence and oneness, as in the famous saying of the Prophet, quoted by Bukhari and Muslim: ‘Every child is born in this natural disposition, it is only his parent that later turn him into a Jew, a Christian, or a Magian. These three religious formulations, best known to the contemporaries of the Prophet, are thus contrasted with the natural disposition which, by definition, consists in man’s instinctive

cognition of God and self-surrender (Islam) to him. (The term “parents” has here the wider meaning of “social influences” or “environment”)

This stage of higher determinism, i.e. surrender of one’s power of choice for the sake of conformity with the fundamental law of one’s own nature, is the first of the three stages which Iqbal regards as essential for the development of the ego. He calls this stage “obedience to the law”. It may suffice to say that without proper self-restraint, as is imposed by obedience, freedom of choice enjoyed by the individual is sure not only to lead him astray and defeat the very purpose of evolution but it will be equally disastrous for the maintenance of social relationship without which the individual cannot hope to attain his desired end. If everybody were to be absolutely free accepting what he thinks to be true or false, there would be no knowledge, no science, no morality and no religion. According to the Quran, all objects, lower in the scale of being than man, obey the law of Nature and never, for once, swerve from the path laid before them. But their obedience to the law does not arise out of their own free choice. It is man alone who is given full option to follow the path or go astray. The two alternatives are open to him and the history of mankind affords sufficient evidence that man often chose to disobey the law of his own nature with, of course, unfavourable consequences. The Quran claims that the message which the ancient prophets brought to mankind at different stages of its history was meant to give concrete shape to the general law which God wished humanity to follow. In Islam this concreteness of law has assumed a final shape and therefore Iqbal recommends that an individual should surrender himself, of his own sweet will, to this law.

در اطاعت کوش اے غفلت شعار  
می شود از جبر پیدا اختیار  
ناکس از فرماں پذیری کس شود  
آتش ار باشد ز طغیان، خس و شود

Endeavour to obey, O headless one!

Liberty is the fruit of compulsion.

By obedience the man of no worth is made worthy; By disobedience his fire is turned to ashes.

شکوه سنج سختی آئین مشوا!  
از حدود مصطفی بیرون مرد

Do not complain of the hardness- of the law,

Do not transgress the limits of the Shariat of Muhammad.

Iqbal's idea of balance or harmony is no other than that of compulsion accepted by the component parts of an organic whole. Take the example of music: it is only the discordant sounds compelled to harmonize; it is to this compulsion that music owes its strength and its magic-power. Again, what is Taj Mahal, the exquisite poetry in marble, one of the greatest wonders of the world? It is only the building material of different kinds compelled to obey some laws, without which raw material could never have created such an awe in the hearts of the onlookers. What is an army? It is only a horde of individuals compelled to organise themselves and observe discipline, wherein lies its power to conquer and defend. Without a self-imposed discipline and compulsion the army is merely a lawless mob. The whole idea has been beautifully expressed by Iqbal in a number of verses such as the following:

برگ گل شد چون ز آئین بسته شد  
گل ز آئین بسته شد گلدسته شد  
نغمه از ضبط صدا پیدا سے  
ضبط چون رفت از صدا غوغا سے  
در گلوی ما نفس موج بو است  
چون ہوا پابند نے گردو نوا سے

“The petal becomes a rose when bound by law, And the rose bound by law becomes a nosegay. The music is a controlled sound;

When the control is gone, the music is turned into noise. Breath in our throat is a wave of air, which imprisoned in a reed becomes a melody.”

The second stage of this discipline is self-control which, in the words of Iqbal, is the “highest form of self-consciousness or Ego-hood”. In order to

bring out full realisation of the spirit of law, it is essential that the individual should gain control over himself. In the absence of such control, obedience usually degenerates into a mere mechanical and automatic conformity. The real driving force in that case would not be the individual's volitional submission to the law but farther the idea of merely conforming to a spiritless social code and following habit formed under this external compulsion. Adam was born of clay and in his making, according to Iqbal, "love and fear were mingled...; fear of this world and of the world to come, fear of death, of all the pains of earth and heaven; love of riches and power, love of country; love of self, kindred and wife". In him, "clay is mixed with water, (he) is fond of ease, devoted to wickedness and enamored of evil". All these elements of his nature are dragging him down to the lowest level of degradation. Immunity and protection against these tendencies lie only in self-control and obedience to the law without which the individual's life would be a mere playground of blind instincts and capricious impulses.

بر کہ بر خود نیست فرمانش روان  
می شود فرمان پذیر از دیگران

"He that does not command himself becomes a receiver of commands from others."

Instead of controlling himself he will be under the control of his lower nature.

To help the individual attain self-control, Iqbal suggests him to follow the moral and religious code of Islam in its entirety. First, belief in the fact that there is no supreme power in the world except God. This refusal on the part of an individual to accept any power in the world more supreme and more sublime than his Creator destroys the possibility of submission to a life of fear and superstition.

تا عصائے لا اله داری بدست  
بر طلسم خوف را خوابی شکست  
خوف را درسینه او راه نیست  
خاطرش مرعوب غیر الله نیست

So long as thou hold'st the staff of "there is no god but he, Thou wilt break every spell of fear.

Fear finds no way into his bosom,

His heart is afraid of none but Allah.

He then recommends all the four remaining obligatory acts of Islam. The daily prayer for a Muslim “is like a dagger, killing sin and waywardness and wrong”; fast “breaches the citadel of sensuality”; almsgiving “causes love of riches to pass away and makes equality familiar”, and “fortifies the heart with righteousness”, while increasing wealth “diminishes fondness for wealth”; pilgrimage “is an act of devotion in which all fell themselves to be one” and “which destroys attachment to one’s native land”. All these practices are a means of strengthening the higher nature of man and enable him-to achieve full control over body and the baser tendencies. As a logical consequence of both these disciplines, obedience to the law of Islam and control of one’s lower self through the prescribed means, the ego attains to the highest stage in life on this earth, viz. God’s vicegerency. Such an individual “is the completest Ego, the goal of humanity, the aim of life both in mind and body, in him discord of our mental life becomes a harmony. The highest power is united in him with the highest knowledge. In his life, thought and action, instinct and reason, become one. He is the last fruit of the tree of humanity and all the trials of a painful evolution are justified because he is to come at the end. He is the real ruler of mankind; his kingdom is the kingdom of God on earth. Out of the richness of his nature, he lavishes the wealth of life on others and brings them nearer and nearer to himself.

اے سوار اشہبِ دورانِ بیا  
اے فروغِ دیدہٴ امکان، بیا

The more we advance in evolution, the nearer we get to him. In approaching him we are raising ourselves in the scale of life. The development of humanity both in mind and body is a condition precedent to his birth. For the present he is a mere ideal, but the evolution of humanity is tending towards the production of an ideal race of more or less unique individuals who will become his fitting parents. Thus the Kingdom of God on earth means the democracy of more or less unique individuals presided over by the most unique individual possible on this earth.

# IQBAL AND JINNAH ON PALESTINE

Dr. Ghulam Ali Chaudhry

In 712 A.D. Hajjaj bin Yusuf Saqafi despatched Muhammad bin Qasim at the head of an expeditionary force to punish Dahir of Sind. That Hindu Raja had shown recalcitrance and behaved with impunity when warned not to neglect the safe passage of Hajis along the coastal strip of his territories. The young arab general won the first Muslim foothold on the Subcontinent. But it was a long time before torrent after torrent of Muslim conquerors from Afghanistan and Central Asia swept down the passes of the North-West Frontier. Thus, established Muslim rule in the Subcontinent continued in varying power and glory for about a thousand years. For in 1707 A.D. when Aurangzeb died, almost all India was under Muslim sway.

Early in the seventeenth century the British came to the Subcontinent by sea, appearing as merchants, and, favoured by Mughal generosity, they established trading posts mostly on and near the western coasts. A century and a half later they were in the thick of the power struggle going on to replace the declining Mughal authority. Through conspiracy, force and fraud, they grabbed, annexed and transacted Muslim principalities and Muslim territories wherever they lay, in Bengal in the east, in Oudh in the north, in Mysore in the south and in Sind in the west. The first big blow came 50 years after Aurangzeb, in 1757, when Nawab Sirajuddaulah lost the day against the English at Plassey in Bengal, and the last one 150 years after Aurangzeb, in 1857, when the last Mughal emperor, Sirajuddin Bahadurshah Zafar, lay prostrate at Delhi, watching helplessly the massacre of his children and appearing as a rare-show in the bazaars of his capital before being exiled to Rangoon in Burma where he died and was buried.

The British rise to power in the Subcontinent was marked by two perennial factors: first, their inveterate hostility to Islam and the Muslim which they shared with the other Christian countries of Europe since their defeat at the hands of Sultan Salahuddin in 1187 A.D. and, secondly, the ready and steady cooperation which the Hindu, having been ruled by the Muslim for a thousand years, extended to the British. Thus while the British built up and boosted the Hindu in every field and by every means, they put

down and ruined the Muslim everywhere and in all possible ways; and the Hindu, paying off old scores, has often on the side of the British and pitted against the Muslim. The most heinous outrage that this British-Hindu combine perpetrated was the sale-deed of Kashmir. In 1946 the British struck a deal with Gulab Singh, a Dogra Hindu of Jammu, to give him possession of that beautiful land, with its 80% Muslim population (now about 6,500,000) and its area well over 180,000 sq. km., for a cash payment of 15,000,000 rupees. A people and their homeland transacted as a common piece of landed property. It was an enormity, a most monstrous crime against humanity; Allama Muhammad Iqbal, himself of Kashmiri stock, cried out some eighty years<sup>45</sup>

Wood and stream and field and ploughman, And a nation into the bargain,

Without o'er a scruple or shudder,

All they sold for filthy lucre,

Against this double-barrelled British-Hindu gun aimed at them, Muslims in the Subcontinent took two lines of action. The more desperate among them set up a camp of resistance in the hills of the North-West Frontier after the earlier pattern of struggle of Syed Ahmad Shaheed and Shah Ismail Shaheed against the Sikh tyrants of the Punjab; and the more foresighted, led by Syed Ahmad Khan, advised their community to accept the fact of British supremacy with patience and fortitude, warned them of the coming Hindu domination and prescribed self-assertion through co-operation. No wonder the Muslims fell foul of the British-founded, Hindu-ridden Indian National Congress so early in the day and met at Dacca in Bengal in 1906 to organize their own separate political party, The All-India Muslim League. Among those who guided these deliberations were Nawab Viqarul Mulk, Nawab Mohsinul Mulk and Nawab Salim Ullah. The mujahid camp in the North-West was eventually liquidated by the British, but the policies of Syed Ahmad Khan and his circle paid immediate dividends. As the British gradually began to introduce reform for representative institutions through elections, the

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<sup>45</sup> Syed Sharifuddin, Pirzada, ed., *Foundations of Pakistan* (Karachi, 1969), Vol. I pp. 242, 431.

Muslims 25% of the total population of the Subcontinent, clearly saw the threat to their existence as a community: 25 Muslim votes against 75 Hindu votes, or 1 against 3, at all levels, district, provincial and centre! They demanded and won the separate electorates-- the principle that Muslims were to elect their representatives and Hindus their own, Muslims representing Muslims and Hindus representing Hindus.

It is interesting that this constitutional provision for a separate electoral register for the Muslim minority in a predominantly Hindu India had a very pertinent precedent. The Turkish minority in a predominantly Greek Cyprus had long before secured for Turks the right to represent, and vote for, Turks alone!

This assertion of their separate political identity sprang from the Muslims' abiding faith in Islam as their sheet-anchor. Their one-thousand year rule in the Subcontinent as believers in Allah and the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him) had shaped their attitudes in two definitive ways:

1) At home they never would accept the idolatrous Hindus as their political masters, and (2) Abroad they would always work for the solidarity of the Muslim world. Their Muslim consciousness never flagged, not even in their darkest hour. Whatever their own trials and tribulations, they never lost sight of their ideal of a universal Muslim brotherhood. Imagine their lot as British subjects during and at the end of World War I when the whole Muslim Ummah lay rent up and bleeding at the mercy of the treacherous and unscrupulous Allies! Hundreds of thousands of them through the length and breadth of the country stood up, agitating against their British rulers who shot them, rode their horses over them, threw them into jails, exiled them, burnt down their habitations and confiscated their properties. All this they suffered not for weeks or months but for years in the cause of Khilafah which in the end proved to be a hopeless struggle. And when the movement died out following certain unexpected developments in Turkey, hundreds remained sullen and unreconciled, and left their homes and hearths, performing "hijra" from India (which was Darul harb) to Afghanistan (which was Darul Islam).

Even a casual glance over the relevant historical documents of the period should reveal how sorrow seethed in the minds and hearts of Muslim

India at the predicament of the Muslim world. For instance, one can turn page after page of the annals of the All-India Muslim League and find the assembled delegates voicing their protests against the happenings in the Balkans, Algiers, Morocco, Iran, Turkey, Tunis, Tripoli, Egypt and Jaziratul Arab which was believed to include Syria, Iraq and Palestine besides Arabia proper. Reception speeches, presidential addresses and resolutions poured out their resentment and grief over the inhuman and unjust treatment meted out to their Muslim brethren in these lands. And the castigation came from some of the best minds of Muslim India, such as Hakim Muhammad Ajmal Khan, Maulana Muhammad Ali Jouhar, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Allama Muhammad Iqbal, Maulana Hasrat Mauhani and Maulana Zafar Ali Khan.

As the separatist Muslim struggle for freedom advanced and expanded under the Muslim League, this note of solidarity with the entire world of Islam rang loud and clear. It is not my purpose here to capture this fraternal sentiment in its full volume but to record it only in the utterances and activities of Muhammad Iqbal and Muhammad Ali Jinnah. I will try to show how these two founding fathers of Pakistan remained ever watchful of Muslim Arab interests on Palestine even during their grim battle against the British-Hindu axis.

Ever since November 1917 when the British Foreign Secretary, Arthur Balfour, in wicked league with that arch-Zionist Lord Rothschild, and with the prior endorsement of President Woodrow Wilson of America, declared British support for the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, the Muslims of the Subcontinent had been most unreservedly condemning this plan of international gangsterism. Their sense of shock was further aggravated when, in July 1922, the League of Nations gave its official blessings to the mandate forged clandestinely by the Allies and World Zionism. Through meetings, processions, speeches, resolutions and deputations, they tried to impress upon their British rulers the extreme heinousness of their policies in Palestine and the simple justness of the cause of the Arabs.

Jewish immigrant hordes were pouring into Palestine and the Arab land was being seized and auctioned under the aegis of the mandatory Britain and in the name of agriculture and colonization. Except for 88 years, from - 1099

A.D., when the Fatimids lost to the Crusaders, to 1187 A.D., when Sultan Salahuddin wiped out the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, the Arab community under Islam had dominated Jerusalem and the Holy Land politically, socially and culturally from 638 A.D. to 1917 A.D., and it was now being disinherited and supplanted by the Jewish community scattered all over the world whose Iron Age ancestors and their descendants had ruled in Palestine from 12th century B.C. to 721 B.C. when Israel became politically extinct! Only the British, who had sold the land and people of Kashmir. en masse, could sell the land and people of Palestine piecemeal. Muhammad Iqbal asked them a question, through the answer to it he well knew:

If the Jew had a right to the soil of Palestine, Why can't the Arab lay claim to Spain? No, British Imperialism has other aims. It's no tale of citron, honey or dates.

In poem after poem, Iqbal attacked the two Mandatories, Britain and France, for their ghastly deeds in Palestine and Syria.

In the 1930's the situation in Palestine became increasingly alarming. The British adopted ruthlessly repressive measures to quell Arab opposition, and the result was a general revolt. When in July 1937 the Royal Commission under Lord Peel recommended partition and further Jewish immigration, the whole world of Islam was left aghast.

Miss Farquharson of the National League of England requested Muhammad Iqbal to express his views on these shocking recommendations. Writing to her on 20 July 1937, he said:

“We must not forget that Palestine does not belong to England. She is holding it under a mandate from the League of Nations, which Muslim Asia is now learning to regard as an Anglo-French institution invented for the purpose of dividing the territories of weaker Muslim peoples. Nor does Palestine belong to the Jews who abandoned it of their own free will long before its possession by the Arabs. Nor is Zionism a religious movement... Indeed the impression given to the unprejudiced reader is that Zionism as a movement was deliberately created, not for the purpose of giving a National Home to the Jews but for the purpose of giving a home to British Imperialism on the Mediterranean littoral.

“The Report amounts, on the whole, to a sale under duress to the British of the Holy Places in the shape of the permanent mandate which the Commission has invented in order to cover their imperialist designs. The price of this sale is an amount of money to the Arabs plus an appeal to their generosity and a piece of land to the Jews. I do hope that British statesmen will abandon this policy of actual hostility to the Arabs and restore their country to them.”<sup>46</sup>

In a statement issued on 27 July 1937 to the press, Muhammad Iqbal said:

“I assure the people that I feel the injustice done to the Arabs as keenly as anybody else who understands the situation in the Near East

“The problem, studied in its historical perspective, is purely a Muslim problem. In the light of the history of Isreal, Palestine ceased to be a Jewish problem long before the entry of Caliph Umar into Jerusalem more than 1300 years ago. Their dispersion, as Professor Hockings has pointed out, was perfectly voluntary and their scriptures were for the most part written outside Palestine. Nor was it ever a Christian problem. Modern historical research has doubted even the existence of Peter, the Hermit. Even if we assume that the Crusades were an attempt to make Palestine a Christian problem, the attempt was defeated by the victories of Salah-ud-Din. I, therefore, regard Palestine as a purely Muslim problem.

“Never were the motives of British imperialism as regards the Muslim people of the Near East so completely unmasked as in the Report of the Royal Commission. The idea of a national home for the Jews in Palestine was only a device. In fact, British imperialism sought a home for itself in the form of a permanent mandate in the religious home of the Muslims. This is indeed a dangerous experiment... The sale of the Holy Land, including the mosque of Umar, inflicted on the Arbas with the threat of martial law and softened by an appeal to their generosity, reveals bankruptcy of statesmanship rather than its achievement. The offer of a piece of rich land to the Jews and the

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<sup>46</sup> Speeches, Writings and Statements of Iqbal, ed. Latif Ahmed Sherwani, (Lahore, 1977), pp. 244-245.

rocky desert plus cash to the Arbas is no political wisdom. It is a low transaction.

“It is impossible for me to discuss the details of the Palestine Report in this short statement. There are, however, in recent history, important lessons which Muslims of Asia ought to take to heart. Experience has made it abundantly clear that the political integrity of the peoples of the Near East lies in the immediate reunion of the Turks and the Arabs. The policy of isolating the Turks from the rest of Muslim world is still in action. We hear now and then that Turks are repudiating Islam. A greater lie was never told. Only those who have no idea of the history of the concepts of Islamic jurisprudence fall an easy pray to this sort of mischievous propaganda.”

Warning “The Muslim statesmen of the free non-Arab Muslim countries of Asia” that the present moment “was also a moment of trial” for them, Iqbal concluded:

“Since the abolition of the Caliphate this is the first serious international problem of both a religious and political nature which historical forces are compelling them to face. The possibilities of the Palestine problem may eventually compel them seriously to consider their position as members of that Anglo French institution miscalled the League of Nations and to explore practical means for the formation of an Eastern League of Nations.”<sup>47</sup>

Muhammad Iqbal wrote to Miss Farquharson again on 6<sup>th</sup> September 1937:

“I have been more or less in touch with Egypt, Syria and Iraq. I also received letters from Najaf. You must have read that the Shias of Kerbala and Najaf have made a strong protest against the partition of Palestine. The Persian Prime Minister and the President of the Turkish Republic have also spoken and protested.

“In India too the feeling is rapidly growing more and more intense. The other day 50,000 Muslims met at Delhi and protested against the Palestine Commission

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., pp. 245-247.

“I have every reason to believe that the National League will save England from a grave political blunder and in so doing it will serve both England and the Muslim world...”<sup>48</sup>

And on 7 October 1937, Iqbal wrote to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, President of the All-India Muslim League:

“The Palestine question is very much agitating the minds of the Muslims... I have no doubt that the League will pass a strong resolution on this question and also by holding a private conference of the leaders decide on some sort of a positive action in which the masses may share in large numbers. This will at once popularise the League and may help the Palestine Arabs. Personally I would not mind going to jail on an issue which affects Islam and India. The formation of a Western base on the very gates of the East is a menace to both.”<sup>49</sup>

Only a week later, on 15 October 1937, in the course of his presidential address to the All-India Muslim League Session at Lucknow, Muhammad Ali Jinnah said:

“May I now turn and refer to the question of Palestine? It has moved the Mussalmans all over India most deeply. The whole policy of the British Government has been a betrayal of the Arabs, from its very inception. Fullest advantage has been taken of their trusting nature. Great Britain has dishonoured her proclamation to the Arabs, which had guaran-teeed them complete independence for the Arab homelands and the formation of an Arab Confederation under the stress of the Great War. After having utilized them, by giving them false promises, they installed themselves as the Mandatory Power with that infamous Balfour Declaration, which was obviously irreconcilable and incapable of simultaneous execution. Then, having pursued the policy to find a national home for the Jews, Great Britain now proposes to partition Palestine, and the Royal Commission’s recommendation completes the tragedy. If given effect to, it must necessarily lead to the complete ruination and destruction of every legitimate aspiration of the Arabs in their homeland -- and now we are asked to-look at the

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 248.

<sup>49</sup> G. Allana, ed., *Pakistan Movement: Historic Documents* (Karachi, 1968) pp. 146-147.

realities! But who created this situation? It has been the handiwork of and brought about sedulously by the British statesmen ... I am sure I am speaking not only of the Mussalmans of India but of the world; and all sections of thinking and fair-minded people will agree, when I say that Great Britain will be digging its grave if she fails to honour her original proclamation, promises and intentions -- pre war and even post-war -- which were so unequivocally expressed to the Arabs and the world at large. I find that a very tense feeling of excitement has been created and the British Government, out of sheer desperation, are resorting to repressive measures, and ruthlessly dealing with the public opinion of the Arabs in Palestine. The Muslims of India will stand solid and will help the Arabs in every way they can in the brave and just struggle that they are carrying on against all odds.”<sup>50</sup>

At the same session at Lucknow, under the presidentship of Jinnah, the All-India Muslim League passed the following resolution on Palestine:

“The All-India Muslim League declares, in the name of the Mussalmans of India, that the recommendations of the Royal Palestine Commission and the subsequent statement of policy presented... to Parliament conflict with their religious sentiments and in the interests of world peace demands its rescission without further delay.

“The All-India Muslim League appeals to the rulers of Muslim countries to continue to use their powerful influence and best endeavours to save the holy places in Palestine from the sacrilege of non-Muslim domination and the Arabs of the Holy Land from the enslavement of British Imperialism backed by Jewish finance.

“The All-India Muslim League places on record its complete confidence in the Supreme Muslim Council and the Arab Higher Committee under the leadership of His Eminence the Grand Mufti, and warns the local administration in Palestine not to aggravate the resentment already created in the Muslim world by a policy of repression... ostensibly to uphold law and order, but in reality calculated to further the interest of aliens through the scheme of partition.

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<sup>50</sup> Syed Sharifuddin, Pirzada, ed., Foundations of Pakistan (Karachi 1970) Vol. II. p. 272.

“This Session of the All-India Muslim League warns the British Government that if it fails to alter its present pro-Jewish policy in Palestine, the Mussalmans of India, in consonance with the rest of the Islamic world, will look upon British as the enemy of Islam and shall be forced to adopt all necessary measures according to the dictates of their faith.”

During the years that followed the Royal Commission Report, the Arab rebellion, led by the Grand Mufti Al-Haj Amin al-Hussaini and the Arab Higher Committee, rose to an unprecedented fury. The number of Jewish colonies, which had risen from 22 in 1900 to 47 in 1917, was now 200. Case for partition had thus been treacherously forged, and the Jewish “national home” was now to become the “State of Israel.”<sup>51</sup>

Allama Muhammad Iqbal passed away on 21 April 1938 but his call rang on in the Muslim soul. On 26 December 1938, in his presidential address to the All-India Muslim League at Patna, Muhammad Ali Jinnah declared:

“I know how deeply Muslim feelings have been stirred over the issue of Palestine. I know Muslims will not shirk from any sacrifice if required to help the Arabs who are engaged in the fight for their national freedom. You know the Arabs have been treated shamelessly -- men who fighting for the freedom of their country, have been described as gangsters, and subjected to all forms of repression. For defending their homelands, they are being put down at the point of the bayonet, and with the help of martial laws. But no nation, no people who are worth living as a nation, can achieve anything great without making great sacrifices, such as the Arabs of Palestine are making. All our sympathies are with those valiant martyrs who are fighting the battle of freedom against usurpers. They are being subjected to monstrous injustices which are being propped up by British Imperialism with the ulterior motive of placating the international Jewry which commands the money-bags...<sup>52</sup>

At the same session at Patna, under the presidentship of Jinnah, the All-India Muslim League adopted the following resolution:

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid. pp. 277-278.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. p. 307.

“It is the considered opinion of the All-India Muslim League that the unjust Balfour Declaration and the subsequent policy of repression adopted by the British Government in Palestine aim at making their sympathy for the Jews a pretext for incorporating that country into the British Empire with a view to strengthening British Imperialism, and to frustrating the idea of a federation of Arab States and its possible union with other Muslim States. They also want to use sacred places in Palestine as aerial and naval bases for their future military activities. The atrocities that have been perpetrated on the Arabs for the attainment of this object have no parallel in history.”

“This Muslim League Session regards those Arabs who are being subjected to all kinds of persecutions and repressions, and who are making all sacrifices for preserving their sacred land, protecting their national rights and emancipating their motherland, as heroes and martyrs, and congratulates them on their bravery and sacrifice, and warns the British Government that if it does not forthwith stop the influx on Jews into Palestine and does not include in the proposed conference the Grand Mufti, the genuine leaders of the Arabs, as well as the representatives of the India Mussalmans, the conference will be nothing but a farce.

“This Session declares that the problem of Palestine is the problem of Muslims of the whole world; and if the British Government fails to do justice to the Arabs and to fulfil the demands of the Muslims of the world, the Indian Muslims will adopt any programme and will be prepared to make any sacrifice that may be decided upon by a Muslim International Conference, at which the Muslims of India are duly represented in order to save the Arabs from British exploitation and Jewish usurpation ....”<sup>53</sup>

World War II broke out in 1939. On the one hand, the British Government in India sought Muslim co-operation with the war effort, and on the other, they conspired with the Zionists to open the doors wide for Jewish immigrants entering Palestine as “war refugees.” On 21<sup>st</sup> March 1940, in his presidential address to the All-India Muslim League Session at Lahore - - at which the historic “Pakistan” resolution was passed -- Muhammad Ali Jinnah reported on his negotiations with the British Government, saying:

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid. pp. 315-316.

“We are told that endeavors, earnest endeavors, are being made to meet the reasonable, national demands of the Arabs. Well, we cannot be satisfied by earnest endeavours, sincere endeavours, best endeavours. We want that the British Government should in fact and actually meet the demands of the Arabs in Palestine.”<sup>54</sup>

At the same session at Lahore, under the presidentship of Jinnah, the All-India Muslim League passed the following resolution, moved by Abdur Rahman Siddiqui who had attended the Palestine Conference in Cairo the preceding year:

“The All-India Muslim League views with grave concern the inordinate delay on the part of the British Government in coming to a settlement with the Arabs in Palestine, and places on record its considered opinion, in clear and unequivocal language, that no arrangements of a piecemeal character will be made in Palestine which are contrary in spirit and opposed to the pledges given to the Muslim world, and particularly to the Muslims in India, to secure their active assistance in the War of 1914-18. Further, the League warns the British Government against the danger of taking advantage of the presence of a large British force in the Holy Land to overawe the Arabs and force them into submission.”<sup>55</sup>

At the All-India Muslim League Session held at Delhi in April 1943, under the presidentship of Jinnah, the following resolution “from the chair” was adopted:

“This Session of the All-India Muslim League views with great concern and alarm the new Zionist propaganda and move in the U.S.A., which is putting pressure on the U.S. Government, firstly to remove all present restrictions on Jewish immigration in Palestine, and secondly to adopt the policy of converting Palestine into a Jewish State.

“In the opinion of this Session the aim of this new Zionist move is to make Jewish majority in Palestine a fait accompli by opening her doors to the

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid. p. 334.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. p. 346.

Jewish war refugees, on the ground of the war emergency and the persecution of Jews in Europe.

“This Session condemns this new move as a deliberate attempt to perpetrate a wrong on the Arab and Islamic world at a time when the Arab National Higher Committee of Palestine stands disbanded and the Arab Nationalists are, at present, almost defence-less against organized Jewry and High Finance in the world.

“This Session, reiterating its demands for the fulfilment of Arab national demands for Arab independence in Palestine and Syria, solemnly warns the British Government against any step or move which may prove detrimental to Arab national interests, and declares that such a policy will be bitterly resented by the whole Arab Islamic world as an outrage on democracy and justice and inalienable Arab rights to their homeland.”<sup>56</sup>

Again, the the All-India Muslim League Session held at Karachi in December 1943 under the presidentship of Jinnah, the following resolution was passed:

“This Session of the All-India Muslim League urges, with all the emphasis at its command, upon His Majesty’s Government in particular and other Allied Powers, that the territories recently released from the control of Italy, viz., Ceranaica, be not handed back to the Italian Government, but be constituted independent sovereign States.

“This Session is further of opinion that the vicious system of mandates should be abolished once for all, and the countries of which the mandates were held by Great Britain and France, viz., Palestine, Syria and the Lebanon, should be restored to the people of the countries to set up their own sovereign Governments in their territories.

“Having regard to the oft-repeated declarations by the United Nations that they seek to liberate subject nationalists, this Session demands that the

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid. pp. 439-440.

United Powers should urge France to liberate Morocco. Algeria and Tunis.”

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The War ended in 1945. During the two years that followed the Muslims of the Subcontinent were locked in a life-and-death struggle against the British Government and the Hindu Congress. They were made to wade through blood and fire, but, Allah be praised, they emerged triumphant, and on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1947 there appeared on the map of the world the sovereign and independent State of Pakistan.

While, in the Subcontinent, the British enacted another piece of treachery against the Muslim people of Kashmir by clamping on them the Hindu Raj of New Delhi, in the Middle East, the Allies and the Zionists were now finally preparing to perpetrate a Jewish state on Palestine, the Arab world and Islam, and this they did on 14 July 1948. And the Pakistanis and the Arabs have fought three wars each against India and Israel and the Big Powers behind them.

Palestine or Kashmir --- the Big Power technique is the same. They choose a Muslim land or a Muslim people for their target, Take up conditions of hysteria around it, and the hit it with brute force, Crusades-style, exactly as the Church Militant would, which these powers really are; and then, to get legal cover for their fait accompli, they approach the League of Nations or the United Nations which is truly the Church Litigant. So the stricken Muslim land or people lies torn up between the two arms of the Church --the Church Militant and the Church Litigant.

Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah died with a thorn in his heart. For barely two weeks before he passed away on 11 September 1948, he said in his Eid-ul-Fitr message on 28<sup>th</sup> August 1948:

“My Eid message to our brother Muslim States is one of friendship and goodwill. We are all passing through perilous times. The drama of power politics that is being staged in Palestine ... and Kashmir should serve as an

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid. pp. 479-480.

eye opener to us. It is only by putting up a united front that we can make our voice felt in the counsels of the world.”<sup>58</sup>

Allama Muhammad Iqbal had insistently struck in his work this same note of mistrust of the presiding powers of the present-day world and prescribed this same remedy of self-reliance for the Muslim individual and the Muslim community. He hadn't lived to see his dream of Pakistan come true or to watch the enemies of Islam producing the last bloody act of the tragedy in Kashmir and Palestine. But he had offered a word of advice, perhaps as farewell:

To the Palestinian Arab

The flame that may enkindle a world conflagration, is yet alive in your soul.

I know

Seek not redress from London or Geneva.

The jugular veins of the Frank are in the grip of the Jew I hear — A people's chains snap when its

Ego grows and exults in proper self-expression.

In fact the call of these two great servants of Islam to the entire world of Islam derives directly from the Qur'an:

And he who reject the Taghut and believed in Allah,

hath grasped a firm handhold which will never break.

Only if we Muslims could learn to reject Taghut and hold fast to our faith in Allah, we would be on firm and safe ground.

Shall we then understand?

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<sup>58</sup> Speeches: Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah as G.G. of Pakistan, 1947-48 (Pakistan Publications, Karachi).

# IQBAL AND COMMUNISM

Dr. Waheed Ishrat

Trans. Dr. M.A.K. Khalil.

During Allamah Iqbal's life some people had attempted to create the impression of Iqbal's leanings towards communism, basing their arguments on some verses in favour of communism and its ideology. An Indian communist, Shamsuddin Hasan, commenting in the *Zamindar* of June 23, 1923 on the arrest of Professor Comrade Ghulam Hasan and his communist co-workers had said, "If supporting Bolshevik thought is a crime our country's greatest poet, Sir Muhammad Iqbal cannot escape legal action, because, the Bolshevik system of government is the essence of its political philosophy and Karl Marx' (1818-83) philosophy is commonly called socialism and communism. In these circumstances even a person of average intelligence will soon see by a careful study of Sir Muhammad Iqbal's *Khizr-i-Rah* (The Journey's Guide) and *Payam-i-Mashriq* (The Message of the East), that Allamah Iqbal is not only a communist but communism's high priest"<sup>59</sup>.

Immediately on publication of this articles, i.e. the very next day Allamah Iqbal explained his principles in the daily *Zamindar* as follows:

"I am a Muslim and believe, on the basis of logical reasoning, that the Holy Qur'an has offered the best cure for the economic maladies of human societies. No doubt the power of capitalism is a curse if it exceeds the limits of the happy mean. But its complete elimination is not the right way for freeing the world from its evils as the Bolsheviks propose. To keep its power within reasonable limits the Holy Qur'an has prescribed the law of inheritance, prohibition of usuary and the system of zakat etc\*(b), and considering human nature, this is the only practical system. Russian Bolshevism is a strong reaction against the selfish and short-sighted capitalism of Europe. But in fact the European capitalism and the Russian Bolshevism are two extremes. The happy middle path is what the Holy Qur'an has shown to us and to which I have alluded above. The equitable

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<sup>59</sup> Sarguzash-i-Iqbal

Shariah(c) aims at protecting one class from the economic domination of the other, and in my belief, the path chosen by the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) is the one best suited for this purpose.

“Islam does not exclude the power of capital from its economic system, but on account of its deep concern for human nature, maintains it and prescribes for us an economic system practicing which would not allow its power every to transgress reasonable limits. I am sorry at the Muslims’ indifference towards studying the economic side of Islam, otherwise they would have appreciated the great blessing of Islam in this particular respect. I believe in the allusion to this blessing in” *فاصبحتم بنعمة اخوانا*, because the individuals of a nation cannot feel mutually fraternal relationship without equality among themselves in all respects, and this equality cannot be attained without establishing a social system aimed at containing the powers of capitalism within reasonable limits. Europe today is engulfed in troubles and tribulations by ignoring this. I sincerely wish that all nations of mankind frame laws in their respective countries aimed at restraining the power of capitalism within reasonable limits, thereby leading to the creation of the above equality. Also, I am sure that the Russian nation itself --- experiencing the shortcomings of its own present system, will be obliged to incline towards a system whose basic principles will be either purely or approximately Islamic. In the present century, however laudable the economic ideals of Russians may be their practical programme cannot win any Muslim’s sympathy. The Muslims of India and other countries, who are very easily swayed by Western thought, by the study of Europe’s political economy, should make a deep study of the Holy Quran’s political economy. I am convinced that they will find the solution of their economic problem in this book. The Muslim members of the Lahore’s Labour Union should pay special attention to this. I have genuine sympathies with their aims and objectives but I hope that they will not adopt a course of action or ideology which will be contrary to the teachings of the Holy Qur’an.”<sup>60</sup>

This clarifies the following points:

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<sup>60</sup> Zamindar, Lahore, June 24, 1923.

1. Allamah Iqbal did not accept anything except Islam as an article of faith or philosophy of life and the Holy Qur'an is the source and center of all his thoughts.
2. Allamah Iqbal considers unbridled capitalism as an anathema for the whole world.
3. He rejects the use of Bolshevism system as a panacea for the evil effects of capitalism.
4. He considers the Islamic laws of inheritance, prohibition of usury and institution of zakat as very close to human nature for effective protection against capitalism.
5. Iqbal considers the Russian Bolshevism to be a forceful reaction against the Europe's selfish and short-sighted capitalism. Still he considers capitalism and Bolshevism as extremes, with the golden mean being the teachings of the Holy Qur'an.
6. Islam does not exclude capital's power from the economic system. To Iqbal, it is impossible to establish real fraternity between the individuals of a nation without economic equality. To achieve this equality the social system is imperative which would aim at containment of the forces of capitalism within reasonable bounds.
7. The Allamah expresses his ardent desire that all human nations frame laws within their respective countries which would aim at establishing the aforesaid equality by containment of the forces of capitalism within reasonable bounds.
8. The Allamah also predicts that "I am convinced that the Russian nation also, after experiencing the failures of their present system, will be compelled to incline towards a system whose basic principles will be purely or approximately Islamic".
9. The Allamah clearly says that "In the present conditions, however laudable the Russian's economic ideals may be, their practical programme cannot win any Muslim's sympathy".

10. The Muslims of India (Pakistan and India) as well as other countries, who are very easily swayed by Western thought, after studying Europe's political economy, should make a deep study of the Holy Qur'an's political economy. I am convinced that they would find the solution of their problems in this book.

The purpose of the above explanations was to clarify Allamah's views about capitalism and communism with the help of his own statements, which leaves no doubt about his thoughts concerning these two systems.

The question now remains as to why Allamah Iqbal lauded communism, Marx and Lenin so much. There are three basic reasons which follow:

1. The first reason is psychological and political. The Indian sub-continent as well as Islamic countries were under the capitalistic colonial system. The colonial system appeared invincible, and its defeat and destruction alone could free the Islamic world. When the defeat and destruction of this centuries old capitalistic colonial system started at the hands of Marx and Lenin it naturally attracted the sympathy of Iqbal, who had been perturbed by capitalism's colonial system, in that they had dealt an effective blow to this very huge monster of despotism, who was parading in the cloak of democracy, and had demolished the spell of its invincibility.
2. The second reason was that the inevitable result of the defeat and destruction of capitalism would not only be the freedom of the Islamic world from colonialism but that of the entire world from slavery.
3. Iqbal was convinced that, resulting from the defeat and destruction of capitalism, Islam also would rise as an economic power together with communism, and that when the human race would have experienced the two extremes of individual ownership in capitalism and collective ownership in communism it would appreciate the closeness of Islam's middle path approach to human nature, and would be inclined to accept it. He believed in the rise of Islam with its economic system and their universal acceptance of it in the wake of the destruction of capitalism and disgust with communism. To

him the creation of Pakistan was inevitable for this experiment in Islamic economics and was necessary, in Iqbal's view, to show the world an "old spectacle".

This was the background in which Allamah Iqbal, while cautiously illuminating and praising the affirmative and positive aspects of the communist experiment, persuaded Muslims to benefit from it, also pointed out its negative aspects and warned them to guard themselves against their ill effects.

A basic principle must be remembered that no system either deserves complete rejection or uncritical acceptance in its entirety. Human nature loves extremism. It strays about between extremes instead of adopting the mean. It was fascinated once by the Western system and then by communism. Very few people accept the positive aspects of both, considering them the lost heritage of the Mumin (believer in Islam), and discard the negative aspects on account of their ill effects. Iqbal commended the feeling of human compassion in communism, Marx and Lenin, and accepted their struggle for destroying the idol of capitalism. What appealed most to Iqbal was the elixir that communism proved to be for the cancer of the concept of national organization on the basis of colour, language and race in the capitalist system, and that it created, in Europe, the new concept of ideological nationhood. Islam itself shapes its nationhood on the ideology of tauheed (monotheism). This concordance in thought between the two produced a soft corner for communism in Iqbal's conscience. In other words Iqbal viewed with pleasure the successes of communism against capitalism as the ground preparation for Islamic renaissance. at the very outset of the communist experiment he predicted the arrival of the period when the meaning of the phrase \*(e) would be revealed, i.e. between the two extremes of the communistic and capitalistic systems the human race will benefit from the concept of "or the middle of the road of Islam". That is why the Allamah says:

قرآن میں ہو غوطہ زن اے مرد مسلمان  
اللہ کرے تجھ کو عطا جدت کردار

جو حرف "قل العفو" میں پوشیدہ ہے اب تک  
اس دور میں شاید وہ حقیقت ہو نمودار!

“O Muslim dive into the depths of the Qur’an

So that God may reward thee with renovation of character<sup>61</sup>

The late Mr. Justice S.A. Rahman writes in his English book “Iqbal and Socialism”<sup>62</sup>

“It is now evident that Allamah Iqbal praised communism in a limited sense and for a limited purpose, while viewing it in a broader sense and for broader purposes he regarded it as deleterious and harmful to the human race, and pointed to the Holy Qur’an as the only cure for social ills. We should view Iqbal’s sympathies with communism and his appreciation for Karl Marx and Lenin in the light of these facts. Whereas Iqbal has often praised the positive aspects of communism and has said:

صاحب سرمایہ از نسل خلیل  
یعنی آن پیغمبر بے جبرئیل  
زانکہ حق در باطل او مضمحل است  
قلب او مومن دماغش کافر است  
دین آن پیغمبر حق ناشناس  
بر مساوات شکم دارد اساس  
تا اخوت را مقام اندر دل است  
بیخ او در دل نہ در آب و گل است

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<sup>61</sup> Iqbal, Sir Muhammad (1936) Zarb-i-Kaleem. Published by Munira Banu Begum at the Kapoor Arts Printing Works, Lahore (Second Impression 1941, p. 138.

<sup>62</sup> Rahman, S.A. (Iqbal and Socialism.

“The author of Das Kapital is the descendant of Khalil”(f)

That Prophet not blessed with divine revelation brought by Jibreel

There is some truth concealed in his false line of thought His heart seems to be a believer but infidel is his thought

The creed of that apostle devoid of the perceptions of the Truth.

Is based on equality of materialistic life (not spiritual Truth)

When fraternal feelings are established in the human heart

Their roots are also established in the heart and not in water and earth<sup>63</sup>

In “The Satan’s Advisory Council” the third advisor of Satan says; about Marx:

وہ کلیم بے تجلی، وہ مسیح بے صلیب!  
نیست پیغمبر و لیکن در بغل دارد کتاب!  
کیا بتاؤں، کیا ہے، کافر کی نگاہ پردہ سوز  
مشرق و مغرب کی قوموں کے لیے روز حساب!  
اس سے بڑھ کر اور کیا ہوگا طبیعت کا فساد  
توڑ دی بندوں نے آقاؤں کے خیموں کی طناب!

“That Moses without Tajalli\*(g) that Christ without cross He is not a prophet, but keeps the Book for specious appearance

How can I explain what that pagan’s eye will be

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<sup>63</sup> Iqbal, Dr. Sir Muhammad (1932). Javid Nama. Published by Dr. Javid Iqbal Printed at Sheikh Ghulam Ali & Sons, Lahore, Seventh Impression (1970), p. 69.

To the East and West nations on the Day of Judgement\*(h) No worse human nature's mischief can there be

Than that the slaves have toppled the master's tent\*(i)<sup>64</sup>

Allamah Iqbal has written these and similar verses in praise of Karl Marx and Lenin. This is a tribute of approbation from him as well as a pointer to the fact that, in spite of attaining the climax of intellectual thought, establishing a rationalist system and writing a book aiming at curing human ills and misery, Marx is a Moses without divine guidance and is a Christ who was not crucified in a divine cause. While these verses exhibit extreme approbation for Marx on the one hand they also expose his deprivation from prophetic revelation and his lack of vision in spiritual values and ecstasy. Marx has been called a materialistic prophet, i.e. one who was devoid of the exhilarating and life-giving revelations brought by Hazrat-i-Jibreel. Marx presumed materialistic equality to be the panacea for human ailments. The Allamah says that the roots of his (Marx's) imagination have not penetrated the depths of his heart but are only floating in the baser existence, and though his sympathy for mankind may give the impression of a believer's heart, his insight, being deprived of divine revelation, the system produced by him through the innovations of his intellect is not beneficial. Being deprived of the divine revelation it is no more than the gleanings of an infidel mind. Consequently, Iqbal has said that the problem would not be solved by the proletariat's control of government. On the contrary the bourgeoisie would parade in the cloak of the proletariat, because the real revolution is more a change of, the intrinsic feelings of the heart than that of the material resources and conditions, and so

زمام کار اگر مزدور کے ہاتھوں میں ہو تو پھر کیا!  
طریق کوہکن میں بھی وہی حیلے ہیں پرویزی  
جلال پادشاہی ہو کہ جمہوری تماشا ہو

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<sup>64</sup> Iqbal, Dr. Sir Muhammad (1938) Armaghan-i-Hijaz. Published by Dr. Javid Iqbal, printed at the Kapur Art Printing Works, Lahore First Edition (1941), p. 218

جدا ہو دیں سیاست سے تو رہ جاتی ہے چنگیزی

“The transfer of political power to the proletariat will make no difference

The ways of the proletariat are the same as those of the bourgeoisie

It may be the majesty of kingship or the fun of democracy

If religion is separated from politics the latter becomes mere tyranny<sup>65</sup>

In these verses Iqbal has rejected the concept of communism that the establishment of a proletarian society is the solution of all problems. Iqbal rejects the very basic hypothesis of Karl Marx’ book Das Kapital in the following verses:

یہ علم و حکمت کی مہرہ بازی، یہ بحث و تکرار کی نمائش  
نہیں ہے دنیا کو اب گوارا پرانے افکار کی نمائش  
تری کتابوں میں اے حکیم معاش رکھا ہی کیا ہے آخر  
خطوط خم دار کی نمائش، مریز و کج دار کی نمائش  
جہاں مغرب کے بت کدوں میں، کلیساؤں میں، مدرسوں میں  
ہوس کی خوں ریزیاں چھپاتی ہے عقل عیار کی نمائش!<sup>66</sup>

“The world does not like tricks and guiles of science and will not their contests

This age does not like ancient thought, from core of hearts their show detest.

O wise economist the books you write are quite devoid of useful aim

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<sup>65</sup> Iqbal, Dr. Sir Muhammad (1935) Bal-i-Jibreel Published by Dr. Javid Iqbal at the Maktab-i-Jamia, Delhi, India (Second Edition 1941).

<sup>66</sup> Same as Reference 3, p. 139.

They have twisted lines with orders strange No warmth for labour though they claim.

The idol houses of the West Their schools and churches wide:

The ravage caused for greed of wealth Their wily wit attempts to hide<sup>67</sup>

So, to Iqbal communism is nothing but “wily wits” which attempt to hide the ravages caused by greed for wealth.

In “The Advisory Council of Satan”, where Satan and his advisors have been made to praise communism and Karl Marx Satan himself does not consider communism as a danger to his Satanic system (capitalism-colonialism). This means that the communism whose praises the Satan’s advisors celebrate, in the Satan’s opinion has lost its utility and importance. Actually, through Satan and his Advisors Iqbal, by comparing communism and Islam, wants to make it clear that the creed of the human race of the future would be Islam and not communism, and that Islam and not communism would lead the world opinion. This will be so, because if capitalism is the extreme of individualism, communism is the other extreme of anti-individualism and supports collectivism, Justice and fairplay is always in the middle path between two extremes and that is Islam. Hence, Islam is a rising power of the future and it has to shoulder the responsibility of the leadership of mankind. In other words Iqbal pleads for Islam’ acceptance after rejection of communism. So, Satan rejects communism as a danger to his Satanic system, and considers Islam and not communism as a challenge to his system as shown below:

دست فطرت نے کیا ہے جن گریبانوں کو چاک  
مزد کی منطق کی سوزن سے نہیں ہوتے زفو

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<sup>67</sup> Shah, Syed Akbar Ali (1983) The Rod of Moses. Versified English Translation of Iqbal’s Zarb-i-Kaleem. Published by the Iqbal Academy Pakistan at the Himayat-i-Islam Press, Lahore, Pakistan, p. 87.

کب ڈرا سکتے ہیں مجھ کو امشترکی کوچہ گرد  
یہ پریشان روزگار، آشفته مغز، آشفته مو  
ہے اگر مجھ کو خطر کوئی تو اس امت سے ہے  
جس کی خاکستر میں ہے اب تک شرار آرزو  
خال خال اس قوم میں اب تک نظر آتے ہیں  
کرتے ہیں اشک سحر گاہی سے جو ظالم وضو  
جانتا ہے جس پہ روشن باطن ایام ہے  
مزد کیت فتنہ فردا نہیں، اسلام ہے

“The collars to whom the Nature has torn The logic of Mazdak\*(j) to  
them cant. Darn How can frighten me the socialist lads,

Since long jobless, confused and loafing fads  
From that nation but I feel  
a threat grave, Whose heart yet holds embers of crave. A few of them I espy  
in this nation yet,

At dawn who make wuzu \*(k) with tear drops jet.

He knows on whom hidden times are bright  
That Islam not Mazdak\*(j)  
is the future’s fright<sup>68</sup>

So as far as the capitalist system is concerned it is evident from the Allamah’s political works that he was against capitalism and considered it contrary to Islam. The Allamah was pleased with communism because it had annihilated the tyranny of capitalism. However, in spite of all its goodness he considered communism harmful and destructive for mankind. He believed that Russia itself would eventually relinquish this system and would come close to the basic economic concepts of Islam. The fast retreat of China and

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<sup>68</sup> Kabir, Q.A., (1983) Armaghan-i-Hijaz. Versified English Translation of Iqbal’s Armaghan-i-Hijaz. Published by the Iqbal Academy Pakistan, printed at the Himaya-i-Islam Press, Lahore, Pakistan. p. 133.

Russia from communism and Marxism is a step towards the first stage of Allamah's prediction. A conflagration of the buried sparks in Muslim Turkistan will not be surprising, and Russia, being faced with a new commotion may move towards a system which will be Islamic or very close to it.

## **EPILOGUE**

Western colonization of Asian and African countries, which included the Muslim world was no exception to the usual process of slow but sure intellectual death of the colonized people. Iqbal was quick to realize this and focussed his entire genius on counteracting this influence. Western political, economic and social norms started capturing the imagination of the Muslim youth who were being exposed to the ideology of the West through western education. Materialism and capitalism were the very foundations of this thought, Islamic thought and Qur'anic teachings were being slowly but surely effaced, partly by the efforts of the colonizers and partly by our own indifference. The deleterious effects of this change were being felt by the conquered Muslim nations. When communism appeared as an adversary of capitalism after World War I it had great appeal to Muslims. Iqbal brought home to the Muslim intelligentsia that both these systems were man-made and equally harmful and that Islam was the correct system. This has been amply shown in the foregoing. Iqbal went farther than condemning the above systems. He explained at great length the blessings of a system based on divine revelation as compared with man-made systems. His works are replete with this theme. However, special attention is invited to the following passages in Javid Namah (Reference 5, pp. 63-92):

زیارت ارواح جمال الدین افغانی و سعید حلیم پاشا دین و وطن اشتراکیت و ملوکیت زنده رود افغانی محکمت عالم قرانی خلافت آدم حکومت الہی ارض ملک خداست سعید حلیم پاشا پیغام افغانی باملت روسیہ	Firmament of 'Mercury: Glimpses of the souls of Jamaludding Afghani and Saeed Haleem Pasha Religion and Territorial Loyalties Communism and Imperialism Saeed Haleem Pasha: East and West Zinda Rud Afghani Basic Principles of the Qur'anic World: Vice-gerency of Adam Kingdom of God The Earth is the Possession of God Saeed Haleem Pasha The Message of Afghani to the Russian People
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جذب حرم سے ہے فروغ انجمن حجاز کا  
اس کا مقام اور ہے، اس کا نظام اور ہے

The splendour of the brotherhood of Hijaz depends upon the *Haram* (Ka'aba)  
Its status is different, its system is different<sup>69</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Iqbal, Dr. Sir Muhammad (1924) *Bang-i-Dara*. Published by Sheikh Mubarak Ali, Lahore, Pakistan. Third Edition (1930), p. 119.

\*(a) This paper was first published by Dr. Waheed Ishrat (Iqbal Academy) in the Urdu daily *Nawa-i-Waqt* of Lahore for April 21, 1987 in response to a letter from Mr. Zia-ul-Haque Maimon of Sindh. In that letter Mr. Maimon had stated that some books were being published in the Sindhi language in which Allamah Iqbal, on the basis of his revolutionary poetry was being shown as a communist as well as a cherisher of communism. As the Sindhi knowing public did not have adequate direct access to

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Allamah Iqbal's thought and philosophy a clarification of his stand on communism was sought. This English translation is intended to convey Iqbal's views on communism to the English-knowing people in general and to English-knowing Muslims in particular, so that the misunderstanding created by the supporters of communism in the type of publications referred to above may be removed.

The secret concealed in "Spend what is surplus and is spare"

May perhaps be revealed in this age

- \* (b) A system in Islamic economics in which a tax is levied on the property of a person in excess of prescribed limits. The proceeds of this tax are used exclusively for the financial support of the indigent.
- \* (c) The divine system of Islamic jurisprudence.
- \* (d) The Holy Qur'an iii:103 (part), which means "And He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace you become brethren. See The Holy Quraan: Text, Translation and Commentary by Abdullah Yusuf Ali; Published by the Hafner Publishing Company, New York, U.S.A. and printed by the Murray Printing Co. p. 149.
- \* (e) See The Holy Qur'an ii:219 and the reference in Footnote (d).
- \* (f) Hazrat Ibrahim (A.S.) whose title is Khalilullah (the Friend of God)  
This is allusion to the fact that Karl Marx was a member of the Jewish race (Banni Israil).
- \* (g) Appearance of God or His Powers as was witnessed by Hazrat Musa A.S. on Mount Sinai.
- \* (h) It will bring doom to those who believe in his economic system in contravention of the clear message of the Holy Qur'an by which all mankind will be judged on the Day of Judgement.
- \* (i) This degree of freedom of the down-trodden people would be completely unacceptable to the Satanic system and its flag bearers.
- \* (j) Mazdak was a Persian thinker of the sixth century (C.E.) and lived during the reign of the famous Persian king Anushervan (531-578B C.E.). The most prominent feature of Mazdak's philosophy was communism, albeit rudimentary. He preached the equality of man and based his concept of equality on the equality of wealth. He said that the concept of individual property was the creation of demons hostile to God, with the purpose of turning God's Universe into a land of perpetual misery. For details see: "Iqbal, Muhammad (1908) The Development of Metaphysics in Persia. Published by Bazm-i-Iqbal, Lahore, Pakistan, Third reprint (1964): pp. 16-17.
- \* (k) Ablution