



IQBAL

**IN HIS VARIED
ASPECTS**

PROF. NAZEER SIDDIQI

IQBAL ACADEMY PAKISTAN LAHORE

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Iqbal Academy Pakistan

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Dedication

**To my dear son
Ahmad Salman**

Preface

This book is composed of my articles on different aspects of Iqbal written for journals and specific occasions. Iqbal is one of those fortunate poets of the world on whom hundreds of books have been published by this time. He is an inexhaustible subject for writers and will continue to draw the attention of the writers and readers alike for all times to come. I have endeavoured to say something fresh about Iqbal in the following pages. However this book is intended for general readers rather than specialists on Iqbal.

June 1, 1990

Nazeer Siddiqi

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Iqbal's love for the prophet

Iqbal's poetry is unique in more than one respect. Though rooted in the best traditions of Urdu and Persian poetry, it appears as a strange phenomenon in the history of Urdu and Persian literatures. One of the salient characteristics of his poetry is that it is deeply inspired and informed by his profound love for Islam and the prophet of Islam. His Urdu and Persian works reflect his heart-felt respect for the great prophets of humanity but his personal love is exclusively reserved for the prophet of Islam. In one of his most famous Persian lines he says:

مصطفیٰ برساں خویش را کہ دیں ہمہ اوست
اگر بہ او نہ رسیدی تمام بولہبی است

(Try to reach Mustafa for he is all religion; if you fail to reach him you will remain an infidel).

In other words, the prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) was Islam incarnate. He is the point of reference for all the human values which are represented by Iqbal's poetry. His love for the prophet is not merely emotional ecstasy or spiritual rapture. Iqbal derives all his views and values from the life and character of the prophet. It means that Iqbal's devotion to the prophet is not devoid of rational and intellectual understanding of the prophet. One or two examples will suffice to illustrate the point. One of the most important events of the prophet's life is his ascension (*معراج*).

This event has proved to be highly controversial in its nature and meaning. Iqbal has attempted to interpret the event from a rational and intellectual point of view. In one of his verses he says:

سبق ملا ہے یہ معراج مصطفیٰ سے مجھے
کہ عالم بشریت کی زد میں ہے گردوں

(The lesson I get from the ascension of the prophet is that the Heavens are within human reach).

Another interpretation of the ascension in Iqbal's poetry is still more thought-provoking. He says:

پیت معراج ؟ انقلاب اندر شعور

(What is ascension? It is just a revolution in the consciousness).

We can easily see that Iqbal's love for the prophet has expressed itself not only in the form of deep devotion but also in terms of the philosophy of life which emanates from the words and actions of the prophet. His love for the prophet exhibits itself not only in the contemplation of the prophet but also in his insistence that human life should be based on the values which are symbolised by the prophet.

Now the questions arise: What is the philosophy of life which has been given by the prophet to the world? What are the values which have been preached and practised by the prophet? What are the demands of the love which one may claim for the prophet?

It is not only Iqbal's profound love for the prophet

which compels him to view the prophet's life as the criterion in human affairs. The Quran itself has insisted upon the fact that the good will of God can be attained only by treading the path of the prophet which ensures salvation for humanity. The prophet is the concrete example of all the abstract virtues which are dear to God and which He would like to see in all human beings. That is why God himself makes the prophet a point of reference in all matters. Love for God is supposed to be impossible without love for the prophet. In Iqbal's famous poem (جواب شکوہ) God says:

کی محمد سے وفا تو نے تو ہم تیرے ہیں

(If you are faithful to Muhammad, I am faithful to you)

The best way to be faithful to Muhammad is to adhere to all that he said and did. Iqbal's entire poetry is an attempt to emphasize the importance of the words and actions of the prophet. That is why he exhorted even a great theologian like Maulana Ahmad Husain Madani to assimilate the spirit of the teaching of the prophet without which it is impossible to be a Muslim.

Muslim Renaissance and Iqbal

Iqbal may be called the finest flower of the Muslim renaissance that took place towards the end of the 19th century in the sub-continent of Pakistan and India. He was not only the end-product of the renaissance; he may also be regarded as instrumental in bringing about the renaissance and helping it reach its culmination in the establishment of Pakistan.

The downfall of the Moghal empire had started long before 1857 when the British administered the final blow to it, resulting in the complete annihilation of the political power which the Muslims enjoyed over the sub-continent for several centuries.

The factors that contributed to the political downfall of the Muslims in the sub-continent may be traced back to the setback Islam suffered at the hands of the Great Moghal Emperor Akbar who attempted to introduce a new religion namely Deen-e-Ilahi which was repugnant to the spirit of Islam. Mojaddid Alf-e-Saani played a significant role in counteracting the move of Akbar and protecting the pristine glory of Islam. The suppressed conflict between the Muslims and non-Muslims in India had been raising its head from time to time. After the death of the Moghal Emperor Aurangzeb, the Moghal empire began to show its weaknesses and shrink in size. The Jats, the Marhathas and the Sikhs were no less antagonistic to the Muslims than the British who ultimately subjugated all of them by overthrowing the Muslim rule with their aid. Shah Waliullah, Shaheed Ahmed Barailwi and their companions went a long way in meeting the challenges that were thrown by the non-

Muslim forces both on religious and political fronts.

However with the liquidation of the Moghal empire in 1857 the decay of the Muslims had reached its logical conclusion. The grim and graphic picture of the Muslims and the Muslim society of the age has been presented by Maulana Hali in his celebrated poem Mosaddas-e-Hali. There was not a single aspect of the life of the Indian Muslims which was not stamped by the impacts of decay and degeneration. It seemed as if their condition was beyond any remedy. They had lost not only what they had achieved during the long course of their rise to power and glory; in the words of Iqbal, they had lost even their sense of loss. This predicament constituted the real tragedy.

Though the situation was extremely gloomy, a man like Sir Syed Ahmad Khan appeared on the scene. First of all he devoted his intelligence and energy to secure mere physical survival of the Indian Muslims who stood as the greatest culprit at the bar of the British. He succeeded in pleading not guilty in the case of the Muslims against whom serious charges were levelled by the new British rulers of the country. The very physical existence of the Muslims was in danger. It was through the efforts of Sir Syed that the threat was removed. He was the first man who awakened them to the demands of the situation they were placed in. He made them alive to the challenges they were confronted with. He persuaded them to learn how to adjust themselves to their existing circumstances.

Fortunately for the Muslims of the sub-continent, Sir Syed collected a group of intellectual companions around him who joined his struggle to salvage the sunken ship of the Muslims. Their aim was not only to bring the ship

ashore but also to set the ship in order so that it may sail again in the stormy sea of life. These companions of Sir Syed viz., Maulana Hali, Maulana Shibli, Dr. Nazeer Ahmad and Maulana Muhammad Husain Azad brought about an awakening in the different walks of the Muslim life.

Besides their backwardness, the Muslims faced many hurdles. The British were far from being friendly and the non-Muslims were revegefully hostile. Sir Syed wanted the Muslims and the non-Muslims to live together peacefully and make progress unitedly. But in spite of all his good will towards the non-Muslims he was compelled to conclude that the Muslims and the non-Muslims could not go together. This observation formed the cornerstone of Pakistan at a time when the country was not even being conceived.

Sir Syed tried his utmost to equip the Muslims of his day with modern education and Western sciences in order to compete with the rivals in the new situation. Maulana Hali composed his famous Mosaddas to make the Muslims realize the contrast between their glorious past and their miserable present. Maulana Shibli endeavoured in his work on the heroes of Islam to make the Muslims feel that they were heirs of a very rich heritage like a magnificent religion Islam. Dr. Nazeer Ahmed began a series of novels to depict the deplorable condition of the Muslim society and suggest reforms in conformity with the spirit of Islam. Maulana Muhammad Husain Azad drew their attention to the unexplored fields of literature and poetry. Sir Syed himself brought about new changes in literary thinking of his day and revolutionized the language and style of Urdu literature. Akbar Allahabadi, who differed widely with Sir Syed,

alerted the Muslims against the Western threat to their religion and culture and exhorted them to find their salvation in their own tradition.

Such were the circumstances when Iqbal appeared on the scene. Sir Syed and his companions had paved the way for the work of a poet-philosopher like Iqbal who felt there was still much to be desired in the regeneration of the Muslims of his day. He composed poem after poem to mirror the position and condition in which the Muslims stood at that time. He tried to make them realize their shortcomings and regain their self-confidence as a nation. During his stay in Europe between 1905 and 1908 in connection with his higher education, he not only studied the conditions prevailing in Europe but also got an opportunity to see for himself the plight of the Muslim countries. He had started as a nationalist poet but during his stay in Europe he came to the conclusion that nationalism in the Western sense of the word is the greatest curse. He also came to maintain that the salvation of the Muslim countries lies in pan-Islamism. Hence his message that the Muslims should get united from the coast of the Nile to Kashghar:

ایک ہوں مسلم حرم کی پاسبانی کے لیے
نیل کے ساحل سے لے کر تا بہ خاک کاشغر

His study of Islamic history had made him conclude that in critical periods the Muslims had not saved Islam. It was rather Islam which always saved the Muslims. After his return from Europe, Iqbal turned not only a great champion of Islam but also an outstanding exponent of Islam. He developed an elaborate philosophy

of life which is essentially based on the teachings of Islam derived from the Quran, the sayings of the prophet and the thinking of the Muslim saints and seers. He held that Islam was not intended for the Muslims alone. He advanced Islam as the best solution of international problems. He made the Muslims feel that there was nothing to be ashamed of being a Muslims. He diagnosed that the basic maladies the Muslim were suffering from are that they were not fired with any great or sublime ideal and that they had lost their self-confidence. Iqbal was perhaps the greatest believer in the unimaginable potentialities of man.

He propounded the concept of Pakistan not only as the solution of the communal problems of India but probably also as the laboratory where Islamic way of life could be tested and adopted. He believed that once Islam succeeds with the Muslims, it will succeed with other nations of the world as well. This is why he, as a poet, primarily addressed himself to the Muslims although his message was intended for the entire mankind.

Forty seven years ago Pakistan came into existence but Iqbal's dream of a pure Islamic society has not materialized as yet. It always takes time to realize an ideal. With the attainment of Iqbal's ideal the Muslim renaissance in the sub-continent will reach its highest point of perfection. It is not enough to wait for it. Let us work for it.



Iqbal and his Perfect Man

Iqbal was a poet, no doubt, but not in the traditional sense of the word. His poetry was not dictated by his passing moods. He combined in himself a prophet, a philosopher and a poet. His vision was prophetic, his thinking philosophical and his mode of expression poetic. Except for a few early poems his verse was rooted in deep reflection on life and the major problems connected with life. Although his poetry was intensely inspired, it was no less motivated by the higher interests of mankind. As a prophet he played the role of a reformer which a prophet has always played. When he cast his glance on the human scene of his time, he perceived that the entire mankind had gone astray including his own nation. Consequently he set himself to the task of bringing humanity to the right path. He found his nation in all the more wretched condition. He was seized with the passion to bring about transformation in the life of his own nation and the rest of mankind.

In order to accomplish this task he not only analysed the causes of the decay of the Muslims and the decline of the Western civilisation but also prescribed positive recipe for the ailing nation and the suffering humanity.

Iqbal's poetry offers a complete system of life for both individual and society. It lays the greatest emphasis on the right and healthy development of the individual self on the ground that a society is composed of individuals and unless the individuals are educated and trained in the right manner, the society composed of them can never attain its ideals.

Iqbal's concept of perfect man has an apparent similarity to the superman of the famous German philosopher Nietzsche. But Iqbal had categorically stated that his perfect man had nothing to do with the superman of Nietzsche. He had also asserted that his critics were deceived by the superficial resemblance between the two concepts of man. Iqbal claimed that he had written about the mystical concept of perfect man long before he came to hear about Nietzsche. On this issue Iqbal had vital differences with the German philosopher for whom he had great respect.

Nietzsche's Superman had emerged from his reaction to Christianity he had ceased to believe in while Iqbal's Perfect Man is an outcome of his strongest faith in Islam and Islamic values of life. Nietzsche had declared that God had died and the Superman was very much a substitute for God. Iqbal's Perfect Man was an embodiment of the highest moral, spiritual and divine qualities but never a divinity in himself.

A simple question arises: What is Iqbal's Perfect Man like and how is he expected in a living society to evolve or emerge?

In the light of Iqbal's philosophy the development of the self passes through three stages:

(1) Obedience to Divine Laws (2) Self Control and (3) Divine Vicegerency.

The first stage refers to discipline or Obedience to a particular code of behaviour indispensable for the development of self.

The second stage of self-control helps man in overcoming all the temptations and difficulties that

hinder self-development. In this stage man negates or overcomes fears, anxieties and inner conflicts.

In the third and last stage of the development of the self, man reaches the highest position of divine vicegerency on the earth. He achieves both physical and spiritual perfection. His life represents the best combination of thought and action, instinct and reason. He combines in himself both knowledge and power. He becomes capable of solving all the complicated problems of mankind. In short, he emerges as the finest flower of humanity. In our prophet one can see an example of a perfect man. In presenting the concept of Perfect Man, Iqbal had invited man to reach this zenith of humanity.



The glorification of Man in Iqbal's Poetry

In his thought-provoking book 'The Age of Defeat', Colin Wilson, the founder of New Existentialism, has diagnosed the basic malaise of modern Man as it is reflected in the major part of Western literature today. He tells us that Man is suffering from what may be called the 'fallacy of insignificance'. The penetrating analysis of writers like Eugene O'Neil, James Joyce, William, Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, Graham Greene, Aldous Huxley, Samuel Beckett, Sartre, Camus etc., led him to conclude that modern Man is actually suffering from a general sense of insignificance. Almost all the heroes of modern fiction are unheroic, defeated, paralysed and pessimistic. The idea of the meaninglessness of life has entered the soul of modern man to the extent that he now considers himself no more than a worm. Existentialism raised the question: Is man a God or Worm? Man, who has always aspired to be God, has come to believe that he is an insignificant worm.

There are very few modern writers who affirm the meaningfulness of life and the essential or potential greatness of man. Among such writers Bernard Shaw occupies the most prominent place. Hence Bernard Shaw occupies a high place in Colin Wilson's estimation.

Whenever I read Colin Wilson's eulogies of Blake and Shaw, I wish in my heart of hearts that Wilson were aware of Iqbal's poetry. In fact, I once ventured to draw his attention to Iqbal, but found him too busy to take any interest in an oriental poet-philosopher like Iqbal.

Whether a Colin Wilson cares to know Iqbal or not, no reader of Iqbal can deny the fact that in the present age the most vigorous affirmation of man's significance and greatness has found expression in the poetry of Iqbal. Indeed I wonder if the grandeur of the style in which he has described the creation of man can be rivalled by a similar description in world poetry:

نعرہ زد عشق کہ خونیں جگرے پیدا شد
 حسن لرزید کہ صاحب نظرے پیدا شد
 فطرت آشفت کہ از خاک جہان مجبور
 خودگرے ، خود شکنے ، خود نگرے پیدا شد

(Love proclaimed that a bruised-hearted creature is born,
 Beauty trembled that a visionary is born,
 Nature was perturbed that from the clay of a predetermined world.
 A creature self-evolving, self-destroying and self-evaluating is born)

The concept of human greatness can hardly be expressed with greater conciseness and force or in a more superb and sublime manner. The most remarkable feature of the above quoted lines is that the man who emerges is not a mere figment of imagination. He possesses all the reality of a historical creature. He is in fact a bruised-hearted man, visionary, a self-maker, a self-breaker, and a self-critical creature. Undoubtedly he was born in a pre-determined world; but he remained no longer pre-determined.

In spite of insisting on the infinite potentialities of man Iqbal has admitted that man is not absolutely free;

he also has his limitations.

There is nothing new in maintaining that man is at once free and pre-determined. But the significant point, Iqbal has contributed on this eternal issue, is perhaps that the limits of human freedom and pre-determination are not fixed and final. Man is capable of enlarging the area of his freedom and narrowing his limitations. Through ceaseless efforts and creative actions, he can manage to transform his powerlessness into powerfulness, dependence into independence and pre-destination into freedom. He can attain mastery over himself as well as the world around him. He can conquer nature which has always posed a challenge to him. The history of human evolution testifies to all these ideas about man. His progressive conquest of space and time has widened his power to his own astonishment.

Man's rule over the elements of nature leads Iqbal to a revival of belief in the theory that man occupies the central place in the scheme of things:

نہ تو زمیں کے لیے ہے نہ آسمان کے لیے
جہاں ہے تیرے لیے تو نہیں جہاں کے لیے

(Thou art neither for the earth nor for the sky. The world is intended for thee; not thou for the world).

By assigning him the new role, Iqbal has discovered a new link between God and man. The earlier relationships between God and man have been those of the creator and the created, the ruler and the ruled, the worshipper and the worshipped, the adorer and the adored.

In Iqbal's poetry, man is not only the centre and the ruler of the world; he is also God's co-worker in the creation, refinement and perfection of the Universe which is still imperfect. Moreover, he is also a critic of God.

But God is certainly the supreme Creator; but the perfection of His creations has very often depended on the creative talents of man. Man's creations are supplementary to those of God.

The above claim sounds presumptuous but it rings true in one of Iqbal's most beautiful poems entitled 'Dialogue between God and Man' in which, accusing man, God says:

جهان را ز یک آب و گل آفریدم
 تو ایران و تاتار و زنگ آفریدی
 من از خاک پولاد ناب آفریدم
 تو شمشیر و تیر و تفنگ آفریدی
 تیر آفریدی نبال چمن را
 قفس ساختی طائر نغمه زن را

(I created the Universe from one and the same water and clay

You created Iran, and Africa
 Out of earth I created pure steel
 You made a sword, an arrow and a gun,
 You invented an axe for the branches
 You made a prison for the singing bird)

Refuting the charges Man says:

تو شب آفریدی چراغ آفریدم
 سفال آفریدی ایام آفریدم
 بیابان و کسار و راغ آفریدی
 خیابان و گلزار و باغ آفریدم

من آنم که از سنگ آئینه سازم
 من آنم که از زهر نوشهنده سازم

(Thou created night; I created lamp.
 Thou created clay; I created goblet.
 Thou created the wilderness, mountain and
 meadows;
 I created the flower-bed, garden and orchard.
 I am one who made glass out of stone.
 I am one who prepared an antidote from poison).

In the first part of the above poem, God suggests that the creative achievements of Man are destructive but in the second part Man has insisted on the fact that his creative achievements are not only constructive, but also superior to those of God in some respects.

Man's evaluative role viz-a-viz God finds expression in the following verses:

مجھ کو پیدا کر کے اپنا نکتہ چیں پیدا کیا
 نقش ہوں اپنے مصور سے گلہ رکھتا ہوں میں

(By creating me thou (God) has created thy critic,

I am a painting which harbours complaints against its painter).

گفت یزداں کہ چنہن است و دگر بیچ گو
 گفت آدم کہ چنہن است و چناں می بایت

(Said God: It is so and speak not anything else about it.

Thereupon commented Man: It is like this but it ought to be like that).

طرح نو افکن کہ ما جدت پسند افتادہ ایم
ایں چہ حیرت خانہ امروز و فردا ساختی

(Set a new pattern since I am a lover of novelty. What sort of world thou hast made? A wonder-house of today and tomorrow)!

It is this love of novelty which has given man superiority over the rest of nature:

فروغ آدم خاکی ز تازہ کار یہاست
مہ و ستارہ کنند آنچہ پیش ازیں کردند

(The glory of man, made of clay, lies in his ever fresh activities;

The Moon and the Stars do what they have always been doing)

The foregoing selection from Iqbal's poetry testifies that Iqbal's firm belief in the essential significance and inherent greatness of man has not only a logic behind it but it is also supported by the whole history of mankind. By his superb glorification of man Iqbal has rendered a great service to humanity. He has restored the dignity of man which is extremely reassuring.

Iqbal has depicted man in the varied aspects of his greatness. He has exhorted him to transcend his limitations, acquire qualities of head and heart, develop his reason and intuition in equal proportion, combine in himself both power and tenderness and attain the perfection which comprises both Majesty and Beauty. He harnessed all his intellectual and poetic power to release man from the impact of defeatism and pessimism.

The great philosopher Pascal has spoken both of greatness and miseries of man. It appears that Iqbal is too engrossed in the greatness of man to have an adequate view of his miseries. In his early poetry he seems to be a bit preoccupied with the idea of man's cosmic anguish. There is a feeling that man has been put into an unfriendly universe where he is subjected to loneliness and sorrow which are not shared by any objects of nature. Iqbal perceived the cosmic loneliness and helplessness of man to the extent that he could not help wondering if the pleasure of invention experienced by God was a favour or injustice to mankind:

ایں کوہ و صحرا ایں دشت و دریا
نے راز داراں نے غم گساراں

(These mountains and forests, these deserts, and rivers,

They are neither confidants of human beings nor sharers of human sorrows).

یہ مشت خاک، یہ صرصر، یہ وسعت افلاک
کرم ہے یا کہ ستم تیری لذت ایجاد

(On the one hand is Man, a handful of dust;
On the other, the violent wind and the infinite
vastness of skies.
One does not know whether thy pleasure of
invention is thy favour or injustice).

But this consciousness of man's miseries was eclipsed by the development of Iqbal's central philosophy of Khudi (The Self) and Bekhudi (Selflessness). Basically Iqbal was destined or determined to be a poet of human potentialities and possibilities, not of human limitations and miseries. He studied man in terms of ideals and values instead of the grim realities and tragedies of life. Unlike a particular school of Existentialists, Iqbal never felt that man has been thrown into a hostile world. He did perceive that the world in which man exists leaves much to be desired. But he urged upon man to do what has been left undone by nature which, according to him, does not lack in good taste:

بے ذوق نہیں اگرچہ فطرت
جو اس سے نہ ہو سکا وہ تو کر

(Though Nature does not lack in taste, yet
accomplish what has been left unaccomplished by
her).

Bhartrihari : A Favourite Poet of Iqbal

Bhartrihari, an ancient Sanskrit poet, came to be known to the readers of Urdu literature through a couplet quoted by Iqbal in Urdu translation with which he opens his famous book *Bal-e-Jibreel*. The couplet reads thus:

پھول کی پتی سے کٹ سکتا ہے ہیرے کا جگر
مرد ناداں پر کلام نرم و نازک بے اثر

It has been hotly debated if the first line of this couplet is interrogative or a plain statement. However, it retains its beauty of expression in both forms. The idea contained in the couplet was derived by Iqbal from a stanza by Bhartrihari, which, translated into English prose, stands like this:

"The endeavours of a man to bring a wicked man to the right path by the influence of his wise and mellifluous words are nowise better than the fruitless efforts of one who ventures to keep an elephant fast bound by means of the delicate threads of a lotus stem, or to pierce a diamond by the tender fibres of Shirisa, or to sweeten the saline waters of the vast ocean by pouring a single drop of honey into its midst".

I noted this passage from an English translation of Bhartrihari's poems, published in India, in the beginning of the present century. I came across the book through a Pakistani friend of mine, Samad Razvi, who was a scholar of Sanskrit and who believed that it was that collection

of Bhartrihari's poems which might have passed through Iqbal's eyes. I am extremely sorry that I did not note the exact name of the book, the name of the publisher or the year it was published.

It is obvious that Iqbal borrowed the central ideal of his couplet from Bhartrihari but not with all the similies which have been employed by him. Moreover, there is nothing interrogative in the verse of Bhartrihari while the first line of Iqbal's couplet may be read even as a question.

Among the Urdu and Persian poets, probably Iqbal was a man of the widest learning and scholarship. As a poet, he benefited from manifold sources, both eastern and western. Though Bhartrihari's poetry has enjoyed a reputation and importance even in Europe, he has never been a well-known name like some other Sanskrit poets such as Kalidas.

It will not be an exaggeration if Bhartrihari is characterized as a discovery of Iqbal who had profound respect for him. Iqbal's respect for Bhartrihari is displayed in his **Magnum Opus, Javed Nama**, where we find the following lines about Bhartrihari.

حوریاں را در تصور و در خیام
 نالہ من دعوت سوز تمام
 آن یکے از خیمہ سر بیرون کشید
 واں دگراز غرفہ رخ بنمود و دید
 ہر دلے را در بہشت جاوداں
 وادم از درد و غم آن خاکداں
 زیر لب خندید پیر پاک زاد
 گفت اے جادوگر ہندی نژاد
 آن نوا پرداز ہندی را گم
 شبنم از فیض نگاہ او گم

نکتہ آرائے کہ نامش برتری است
 فطرت او یوں سحاب آذری است
 از بہن جز غنچہ نورس نہ پید
 نغمہ تو سوسے ما او را کشید
 پادشاہے بانوائے ارجمند
 ہم بہ فکر اندر مقام او بلند
 نقش خوبے بندہ از فکر شرف
 یک جهان معنی نماں اندر دو حرف
 کارگاہ زندگی را محرم است
 او ہم است و شعر او جام ہم است
 ماہ تقسیم ہنر بر خاستیم
 باز با دست صحیفے آراستیم

Here is the English translation of the above Persian verses by Prof. A.J. Arberry:

Meeting with the Indian Poet Bartri Hari

The houris in their palaces and pavilions
 my lament provoked to supreme ardour;
 one here put forth her head from her tent,
 another there peeped out from her chamber and gazed;
 to every heart in eternal Paradise
 I gave of the pain and sorrow of yon terrestrial globe
 A smile played on the lips of my holy guide and he said:
 'O magician of Indian stock,
 behold now that Indian minstrel
 the grace of whose gaze converts the dew to pearls.
 a broiderer of subtleties, his name is Bartari,
 his nature generous as the clouds of Azar;
 from the meadow he plucks only the new sprung buds.
 Your melody has drawn him towards us,
 a king who, with a song sublime,
 even in poverty dwells in lofty exaltation;
 with his delicate thought he designs images of beauty,
 a whole world of meaning hidden in two words.
 He is intimate with the workshop of life,
 he is Jamshed, his poetry Jamshed's Cup,
 We rose in reverence for his art
 and prepared suitably to engage with him.

اے کہ معنی تکتے ہائے دل نواز شرق از گفتار تو دانائے راز
شعر را سوز از کجا آید بگوے از خودی یا از خدا آید بگوے

ZINDA - RUD

You who have uttered heart-delighting subtleties,
through whose discourse the East knows all mysteries,
say, whence comes the fire into poetry?
Does it come from the Self, or from God?

بھرتری ہری

کس نداند در جہاں شاعر کجاست
پردہ او از ہم و زیر نواست
آں دل گرے کہ دارد در کنار
پیش یزداں ہم نمی گیرد قرار
جان ما را لذت اندر جستجو است
شعر را سوز از مقام آرزو است
اے تو از ہاگ سخن مست بدام
گر ترا آید میر این مقام
با دو بیتے در جہان سنگ و خشت
می توان بردن دل از جور بہشت

BHARTRIHARI - HARI

None knows where the poet is in this world;
his melody springs from the high notes and the low.
That burning heart which he has in his breast
finds no repose even before God.
Our soul's delight is in questioning;
poetry's fire is of the station of desire.
You who are drunk with wine pressed from the vine of
words.
If you should ever attain to this rank,
with two verses in this world of stone and brick

one can ravish the hearts of the houris of paradise.

زندہ رود

ہندیاں را دیدہ ام در پچ و تاب
سر حق وقت است گوئی بے حجاب

ZINDA - RUD

I have seen the Indians twisting this way and that
it is time you told the secret of God unveiled.

بھرتی ہری

ایں خدایان نکل مایہ ز سنگ اندو ز خشت
برترے ہست کہ دوراست ز دیر و ز کشت
سجدہ بے ذوق عمل خشک و بجائے نرسد
زندگانی ہمہ کردار چہ زیبا و چہ زشت
فاش گویم بہ تو حرنے کہ نداند ہمہ کس
اے خوش آں بندہ کہ بر لوح دل او را بنوشت
ایں جمانے کہ تو بنی اثر یزداں نیست
چرخہ از تست و ہم آں رشتہ کہ بردوک تو رشت
پیش آئین مکافات عمل سجدہ گزار
زانکہ خیزد ز عمل دوزخ و اعراف و بہشت

BHARTRIHARI - HARI

These frail gods are but of stone and brick;
there is One more lofty, far from temple and church.
Prostration without the joy of action is dry and useless
Life is all action, whether fair or foul
I will tell you plainly a word not known to every one
happy is the man who has written it on his heart's tablet
This world you behold is not the handiwork of God,

The wheel is yours, and the thread spun on your spindle.
Prostrate yourself before the Law of action's reward
for from action are born Hell, Purgatory and Paradise.

The way Iqbal (as Zinda-Rud) meets Bhartrihari in his spiritual journey, the way he addresses him, the tribute he pays to his poetic genius and intellectual calibre, the conversation that takes place between them, all these things reflect the high esteem in which Bhartrihari was held by Iqbal. It appears that there was a phase in Iqbal's life when he was probably saturated and intoxicated with Bhartrihari's poetry. He seems to have been deeply impressed not only by the lofty ideas of Bhartrihari but also by the pregnant style of his poetry. In **Javed Nama** itself he acknowledge that:

(The voice of Bartri penetrated into my soul:
I was intoxicated with Bartri's song).

This deep impact of Bhartrihari on Iqbal's mind explains why Iqbal has called Bhartrihari—'a broiderer of subtleties'; why Iqbal has honoured him with such high-flown praise. "He is intimate with the workshop of life, he is Jamshed, his poetry Jamshed's Cup". Iqbal has also admitted that with his delicate thought he designs images of beauty, a whole world of meaning hidden in two words. Incidentally, it may be pointed out that most of these tributes are applicable to Iqbal himself. He, too, was intimate with the mysteries of life. Even his poetry is marked by the delicacy of thought and beauty of images. And he himself is one of the consummate masters of pregnant expression. Probably because of these similarities Iqbal felt an affinity with Bhartrihari. Perhaps Iqbal was never so generous in praise for any poet other than Bhartrihari.

However the ideas that have been elicited by Iqbal

from Bhartrihari are a little intriguing. In his final message, Iqbal has made Bhartrihari lay as much emphasis on action in life as he himself has laid in his own poetry. Rather, Bhartrihari has surpassed even Iqbal in this respect. He has been made to say that 'Life is all action, whether fair or foul'. As far as I have read Iqbal, nowhere has he gone to this extent.

I even wonder if a poet like Bhartrihari could lay so much stress on action in life and could go to such an extent. The biographical circumstances of Bhartrihari reveal that 'On discovering the faithlessness of his wife, Anangasena, he became disgusted with the world, abdicated in favour of his younger brother Vicramaditya, and retired to the forest'.

Bhartrihari was the kind of man who preferred life of contemplation to one of action. However, I will not venture to contradict Iqbal because I have not read all the poems of Bhartrihari. At the moment a small collection of his poems is lying before me.

The book is entitled 'Two Centuries of Bhartrihari'. The Sanskrit poems of Bhartrihari were translated into English verse by C.H. Tawney and the book was published in 1877 by Thacker, Spink, and Co. Calcutta.

Like several of the great figures in world literature, very little is known about Bhartrihari as well. The preface, contributed by C.H. Tawney to the "Two centuries of Bhartrihari" tells us that 'he (Bhartrihari) is said to have been the brother of the celebrated Vikramaditya, who reigned at Ujjayin, the capital of Avanti, or Malava about the year 56 B.C. But the late Prof. Lassen places the date of Bhartrihari at the end of the third century A.C. It is simply impossible on my part

Bhartrihari's longest poem is entitled 'Of Time, the Destroyer'. It is not a philosophical poem. It focuses on the destructions that are wrought by Time in human life. In the light of this poem Bhartrihari appears as a hard-boiled realist. He describes the tragic role of Time in human life without indulging in self-pity. The first stanza opens with the following lines.

Our parents long have passed away,
All old familiar faces fled.

Destruction nears us day by day
like trees in Pandu river-bed.

At times Bhartrihari appears cynical but even then he is never far from the truth. For instance, look at this stanza:

I have searched for years through earth and air and sky,
Nor yet one perfect saint hath met my eye,
Nor have I heard of one who could restrain
Desire's fierce elephant with reason's chain.

That life is boredom was perceived by Bhartrihari much earlier than the Existentialists could do so:

Night follows night, and day succeedeth day,
And thoughtless men hurry to work and play,
But sages ought to blush when treading found,
Year after year, the same dull weary round.

Bhartrihari was painfully sensitive to all the miseries to which every human being is subjected, irrespective of his position in life. He has depicted those miseries of life in a masterly manner. For example, read the following stanzas:

Hundred of various pains and griefs uproot the health

of man.

Where Fortune takes up her abode mishaps soon crowd the gate,

Nothing is born which Death makes not a subject of this state,

How full of faults is Destiny! How ill-conceived her plan!

A hundred years complete our span, half that is passed in night:

Childhood and age devour the half of what belongs to light:

The rest is torn with parting pangs, of ceaseless toil, the slave;

What profit in our human life, unstable as the wave?

The limbs contract, the gait's infirm, the teeth drop from the gums.

The eyesight dims, the hearing fails, and senile drivelling comes;

No more relations heed our words, our wife e'en disobeys,
Our son becomes a foe: alas! what ills in length of days!

Bhartrihari has summed up the drama of human life in the following stanza:

Man is an actor who plays various parts—
First comes a boy, then out a lover starts,
His garb is changed for, lo! the beggar's rags!
Then he is a merchant with full money-bags;
Anon an aged sire, wrinkled and lean;
At last death drops his curtain on the scene.

With these pictures of human life, Bhartrihari can hardly be expected to have regarded life as a blessing.

He's a poet of the naked and brutal realities of life. This is where Iqbal is widely different from him. The type of philosophy Iqbal developed did not allow him to

look at or depict the tragic aspects of human life. But while reading Bhartrihari's poetry, he could not have denied that his own philosophical poetry was excluding a good deal of human life. I wish someone undertakes a comprehensive comparative study of Bhartrihari and Iqbal.



Iqbal and Ghalib: A Comparative View

As Urdu poets, Iqbal and Ghalib are among the three poets of the sub-continent of India and Pakistan whose greatness is absolutely unquestionable. The third is Mir Taqi Mir. But Iqbal and Ghalib are not only Urdu poets; they are not even merely poets. Mir, Ghalib and Iqbal are also Persian poets. Mir may be ignored as a Persian poet; indeed little notice has been taken of him as such. But the Persian poetry of Ghalib and Iqbal has always posed the question: Are they greater as Persian poets or as Urdu poets? On this question Ghalib himself was very clear in his own mind. That is why he could claim,

فارسی میں تا بہ بنی نقش ہائے رنگ رنگ
ہگذر از مجموعہ اردو کہ بے رنگ من است

(Look at my Persian poetry so that you may see colourful art; skip my Urdu verses which are rather colourless).

Unlike Ghalib, Iqbal was never so proud of his Persian poetry, but it outweighs his Urdu poetry not only in quantity but in quality also. Bal-e-Gibreel and Zarb-e-Kaleem are certainly superb and can make a poet immortal, but books like Payam-e-Mashriq, Zaboore-Ajam and Javed Nama are definitely greater achievements. As for as prosewriting is concerned, both Ghalib and Iqbal have written in more than one language; Ghalib wrote in Persian and Urdu while Iqbal wrote in Urdu and English. In his Urdu prose Ghalib stands incomparably superior to Iqbal. Undoubtedly Iqbal enjoyed an extraordinary command over a foreign

language like English, but then Ghalib was a much superior stylist in Persian than Iqbal was in English. By making these points I simply intend to underline the fact that, as poets or writers, Iqbal and Ghalib are multidimensional, and their comparative study has to be made in their various dimensions.

Although Iqbal and Ghalib are among the most written about poets and writers of our language, no one can claim that every iota of meaning has been milked from their creative attainments. They are decidedly among the geniuses of world literature, and a genius never completely yields to any analysis or study, however deep and penetrating it may be. I wonder if justice can be done to the subject under discussion since it requires the space not of an essay but of a book.

Both Ghalib and Iqbal knew that they were great poets. Both of them were sure of their immortality. Both were confident that they would be truly appreciated and recognized better by future generations. Ghalib predicted that:

شہرت شعرم ہنگہتی بعد من خواہد شدن

(My poetry will gain reputation in the world after my death)

and Iqbal visualized the future, of which he said:-

پس از من شعر من خوانند و دریابند و می گویند
جہانے را دگر گوں کرد یک مرد خود آگاہے

(When I am no longer in the world, people read my poetry, discover me and say that an enlightened man has

transformed the entire world).

Ghalib was no less a self-conscious person than Iqbal. While Iqbal was probably the most learned of all Urdu and Persian poets, Ghalib was one of the most self-educated poets in those languages. While Ghalib was probably the best flower of the Indo-Iranian culture developed in India, Iqbal was the finest fruit of the Indo-Iranian and Western cultures. While Iqbal knew the art of turning philosophy into poetry, Ghalib knew the art of making poetry philosophical. While Iqbal was essentially the spokesman of his nation, Ghalib was the representative of common humanity. Where Ghalib is logical, Iqbal is ideological. While Ghalib is concerned with the actualities of human life, Iqbal is concerned with the values of collective life. While Iqbal speaks in terms of his nation or the nations at large, Ghalib, according to Iqbal himself, is one of those poets whose imagination and intellect place them above the narrow limitations of creed and nationality. While there is something Miltonic about Iqbal, there is something Shakespearean in Ghalib. Iqbal seems intent upon justifying the ways of God to man and brings all his creative powers to compel man to tread the path of Godliness. Ghalib pleads for the incapacities inherent in human nature which keep man from treading the path of Godliness despite all its benefits.

جاننا ہوں ثواب طاعت و زہد
پر طبیعت ادھر نہیں آتی

(I know the reward of prayer and piety; but cannot allure myself to these things).

However, Ghalib does not advocate the waywardness of human nature. He does believe in some sort of ethics which apparently look too simple to regulate human life but which are capable of making human life worth living. In one of his Urdu Ghazals he says:

روک لو گر غلط چلے کوئی
 بخش دو گر خطا کرے کوئی
 نہ سنو گر برا کہے کوئی
 نہ کہو گر برا کرے کوئی

(Hold him if someone is going astray. Forgive him if someone commits a fault. Refuse to listen to someone who is speaking ill of someone. Do not mention if someone is doing something shameful).

These two verses of Ghalib embody as much ethics as is contained in this verse of Hafiz:

مباش درپئے آزار و ہر چہ خواہی کن
 کہ در شریعت ما غیر ازین گنا ہے نیست

(Do not make it a point to torture others and do whatever you like because in my religion nothing is sin other than this).

If all humanity could adopt and practise this one principle, violent clashes in this world could reasonably be expected to disappear from both individual life and international affairs. Here I am reminded of a very beautiful and wise saying of the American philosopher George Santayana who said.

"We need no new philosophy, we need only the courage to live up to the oldest and best."

As a matter of fact any rational philosophy, whether new or old, is good enough to regulate human life

provided it is practised. Otherwise even the best philosophy is useless if one cannot live up to it. It is a mere academic exercise to discuss and prove which religion is the best and which philosophy of life is the wisest. The tragedy of the best religion and the wisest philosophy is that they are not practised by the overwhelming majority of human beings. We human beings can only pay lip service to the best religion and the best philosophy of the world.

However one must not be unaware of what is the best in religion and what is the best in philosophy. But this question has never been settled, and constitutes one of the major causes of conflict among the nations of the world. It is said that God created religions according to the gradual mental development of mankind. But the history of mankind does not attest to this claim. The old religions have never been replaced by the succeeding religions, culminating with Islam. The majority of every community has preferred to cling to its ancestral religion. This psychological trait of mankind has not only divided it into innumerable religious groups but has also made them inimical towards each other. The result is that mankind is not prepared to listen to a Hafiz or a Ghalib or a Santayana or a Radhakrishnan who was one of the most eloquent champions of humanism.

Iqbal's approach to religion and his attitude to ethics are undoubtedly idealistic. His lifelong meditation drove him to the conclusion that Islam is the best religion which provides the most perfect ethical code of life. Despite his strongest arguments in favour of this claim, the majority of mankind, I am afraid, would not wish to agree with him. But those who are intellectually interested in religion and ethics cannot help turning to a

profound thinker like Iqbal whose passion for the betterment of human predicament can neither be denied nor disregarded. Ghalib spoke to humanity very much in human voice, while Iqbal addresses himself to humanity in a prophetic manner. Iqbal is generally regarded as a philosopher poet; in him there is something of a prophet as well. Very often he speaks from the high pedestal of a prophet. In the middle of the 19th century there was an English critic, Henry Craik, who said of the English poet William Collins:

"The defect of his poetry in general is that there is too little earth in it but in the purity and depth of its beauty it resembles the bright blue sky".

I think this opinion is equally applicable to Iqbal. There is too little earth in Iqbal's poetry, but in the purity and depth of its beauty it certainly resembles the same bright blue sky.

The Romantic poet, Keats, said: "We hate poetry that has a palpable design upon us." Although Iqbal's poetry has a palpable design upon us, no reader of Iqbal can afford to hate it on that ground. At best one can differ from the design of Iqbal.

Iqbal is one of the very few life-affirming poets of the world, particularly in the present century. According to one distinguished British writer, Colin Wilson, almost all Western literature is suffering from what he calls the Fallacy of Insignificance of Man. All the modern heroes of modern fiction are anti-heroes, that is, they are heroes without heroic qualities. The outlook of all the modern Western writers except Bernard Shaw is absolutely negative and pessimistic. An atmosphere of defeat and doom is brooding over the 20th century

literature of the West.

Colin Wilson has confined his statement to Western literature. But his statement is no less applicable to Eastern literature of the current century. The same outlook on life pervades the literature of the East as well. Just as Bernard Shaw is an exception to the general mode of thinking and feeling about life in the West, so is Iqbal an outstanding exception in the literature of the East. Perhaps it will not be out of place to mention Earnest Hemingway and Saul Bellow, the American Nobel Prize winners, in the company of life affirming writers like Shaw and Iqbal.

Iqbal has a close resemblance to Saul Bellow in one aspect. Just as Bellow does not cherish any romantic view of human life and yet considers life worth living so Iqbal too does not suffer from any romantic concept of human life and yet his poetry is not a lamentation of human life. He is conscious of the fact that man has to encounter the red claws of Nature, yet he does not believe in cursing life or fate:

خون دل و جگر سے ہے سرمایہ حیات
فطرت لہوترنگ ہے غافل نہ جھترنگ

(Essence of life emanates from life blood. Nature, in its origin, is rather a serious affair, not a pleasurable activity).

Iqbal accepts life and wants it to be accepted by mankind not as a curse but as a challenge. Like the hero of Hemingway's novel, "The Old man and the Sea", Iqbal believes in facing up to life at all cost. He exhorts man to break, but not to bend. At the same time, like Browning

he never relinquishes hope. His optimism survives all dark circumstances.

In Ghalib's poetry one does not find the same emphatic affirmation of life which is found in Iqbal's poetry. He appears to be full of complaints against life, and the creator of life that is, God; nevertheless he believes in valuing life in spite of all its sorrows and misfortunes. His attitude to life resembles that of the American playwright Thornton Wilder in his play "Our Town".

نغمہ ہائے غم کو بھی اے دلِ غنیمت جانئے
بے صدا ہو جائے گا یہ سازِ ہستی ایک دن

(O my heart! treat even the songs of sorrow as a boon; the day is inevitable when the musical instrument of life will become silent).

Iqbal seems to be supersaturated with religion. He maintained that a "religious outlook alone can save humanity, but this outlook itself requires reexamination and reconstruction."

Ghalib is not a religion-oriented poet like Iqbal. His poetry is not inspired by any national or international motives. Nationalism or internationalism had not taken any distinct shape in his age, particularly the social set-up he was living in. His great contribution to poetry is probably that he was a very perceptive observer of human life. Keats has said about Shakespeare that, "He has left nothing to say about nothing or anything". This is what we feel while we read Ghalib though he cannot be favourably compared with Shakespeare. One of the qualities of good and great poetry claimed by Keats is

that;

"It should strike the reader as a wording of his own highest thoughts and appear almost as a remembrance."

While reading Ghalib we are reminded of this quality which reminds his own words:

میں نے یہ جانا کہ گویا یہ بھی میرے دل میں ہے

(I felt as if I knew it is in my heart)

Both Ghalib and Iqbal are among the glories and glammers of world literature. They display rare artistic energy in composing poetry of sustained excellence. Whatever language they use in their poetry, it comes alive under their hand. They are makers of their own language which was neither used by their predecessors nor adopted by their successors. Both of them were exceptionally precocious; consequently even their earliest performances in poetry are quite marvellous. Though Ghalib rejected the major portion of his Urdu poetry composed up to the age of 24, even that portion of his poetry contains a number of verses which are as immortal as Ghalib himself.

Similarly, Iqbal composed several unforgettable verses at a very early age. Their poetry is richest in its superb lyricism. There is a masculine note in the poetry of both although it is sharper in Iqbal than in Ghalib. Similarly, both Ghalib and Iqbal believed not only in the dignity of man but also in the divinity of man. But Iqbal has affirmed this aspect of man in a much more impressive and impassioned manner than Ghalib has been able to do. Iqbal has added a new dimension to the relationship

of man with God. His poetry tells us that if God is the creator of the Universe, man is the co-creator. Probably, with the exception of Mir, Iqbal and Ghalib tower above all other Urdu poets. Perhaps it can never be decided in a decisive manner who is superior, Iqbal or Ghalib. Both are worthy of lifelong study and much still remains to be done for both of them.



Iqbal's Journey from Negation to Affirmation

That Iqbal underwent a number of intellectual and conceptual changes is a fact which cannot be denied. Generally such changes are treated as evolutionary by the admirers and self contradictory by the detractors of the poet. However it is not necessary that every change should reflect some sort of evolution in thought or some decline in the mode of thinking. Man has had to choose between the hard realities of life and the expedient stand in a given situation created by subjective circumstances or objective predicament. This is precisely what Iqbal did in his development as a poet. He started as one kind of poet and ended as a quite different type of poet. But this is far from saying that in the beginning he was a romantic poet, interested in the manifestations of Nature and later on he became content to be a national poet of the Muslim Umma which required him to express himself on all the major international issues of the day. The national concerns are one of the most salient features of Iqbal's poetry. He was intensely concerned with the fate of his nation throughout his life.

Iqbal's poetic life began in an atmosphere which was built up by poets like Muhammad Husain Azad, Altaf Hussain Hali, Allama Shibli Nomani and Akbar Allahabadi. All of these poets have a strong national bias. Azad and Hali, the founders of modern Urdu poetry laid stress not only on the moral and national representation of life in poetry but also on the depiction of the beautiful aspects of Nature. This was probably an indirect impact of the English romantic poets of the nineteenth century on Urdu poetry. Because of his direct acquaintance with

the romantic poetry, Iqbal too was deeply interested in composing poems on the different manifestations of Nature such as the grandeur of mountains, the beauty of the moon, the fragrance of the roses, the relation between the nightingale and the rose, the serene music of the rivers, etc. etc.

The trends which Iqbal inherited from his immediate, rather contemporary, predecessors were related mainly with two themes of poetry — (1) poetry concerning objects of nature (2) poetry concerning national problems. As far as the second theme is concerned, Iqbal started as a nationalist poet in terms of the Western concept of nationalism which was adopted by All India Congress, claiming that all the communities, whatever their religions and cultures, living within the geographical frontiers of India, constitute one and only one nation. Within a short time, Iqbal switched over from his concept of nationalism to the Islamic view of nationalism which is based on religion instead of geographical boundaries. This change in Iqbal's outlook culminated in his famous presidential address of 1930 which he delivered in the annual session of the All India Muslim League held at Allahabad. In that historic address he dwelt with the concepts of nationalism at length and tried his best to prove that the Indian Muslims were not a minority but a nation by themselves, judged by any criterion of nationhood. That address became the cornerstone of Pakistan by reinvigorating the idea of the division of India as the most satisfactory solution of the Hindu-Muslim issue.

What I am driving at is the idea that there were two major changes in the early poetry of Iqbal which made him the kind of poet he is popularly known. One of them

is that he turned a nationalist in terms of its Islamic definition by abandoning the Western concept of nationalism. Here I do not propose to enter into further details or implications of this change.

The real issue involved here is Iqbal's poetry of nature. Though a romantic, he was unlike all the romantic poets of the nineteenth century who appeared in the English language. A great lover of beauty as he was, he did not find what may be called the solace of soul in natural as well as human beauties. What perturbed him most was the transience of natural beauties and the brevity of the relationship between the lovers. There is a peculiar strain of restlessness in almost all the poems he has written about the beautiful objects of nature. In his "Stray Thoughts" he has confessed that his study of Wordsworth saved him from being an atheist. But his romantic poetry does not reflect the type of spirituality one finds in Nature, he did not direct his observation towards the "Red Claws" of Nature either. His problems were different from the English romantic poets. In the romantic phase of his poetry he appears to be burning with some inner anguish. This anguish can be traced or related to the dissatisfaction which the failure of his first marriage had brought to him, on the one hand, and the attraction or attachment he was experiencing in Atia Begum Faizi and one of his German tutors Emma Weganast during his stay in Germany, on the other. This is the obligation of his biographers to relate all the relevant factors of Iqbal's life and see how all the factors influenced his romantic poetry. His philosophical bent of mind also played a significant role in the shaping of his romantic poetry. The anguish and loneliness he was suffering from as a result of his unhappy youth began to find expression as a cosmic factor in human life at large.

Iqbal's letters to Atia Begum Faizi reveal that he was extremely disgusted with his life and some of his early poems indicate his painful feeling that man has been thrown by Nature into a very unsympathetic world where there is nothing to share his sorrows and anxieties. Among such poems I would particularly refer to "Insan" (Human being) which is certainly not a great or major poem but which is a philosophical indictment of the callous joke which nature has cracked with mankind. It will not be out of place to quote this short poem here.

انسان

قدرت کا عجیب = ستم ہے
 انسان کو راز تو بتایا
 راز اس کی نگاہ سے چھپایا
 بیتاب ہے ذوق آگہی کا
 کھٹکا نہیں بھید زندگی کا
 حیرت آغاز و انتہا ہے
 آئینے کے گھر میں اور کیا ہے
 ہے گرم خرام موج دریا
 دریا سوئے بحر جاوہ پیا
 بادل کو ہوا اڑا رہی ہے
 شانوں پہ اٹھائے لا رہی ہے
 تارے مت شراب تقدیر
 زندان فلک میں پاب زنجیر
 خورشید وہ عابد سحر خیز
 لانے والا پیام بر خیز
 مغرب کی پہاڑیوں میں چھپ کر
 پتا ہے مئے شفق کا ساغر
 لذت گیر وجود ہر شے
 سرمست مئے نمود ہر شے
 کوئی نہیں غم عسار انسان
 کیا تلخ ہے روزگار انسان

In this poem Iqbal complains that Nature has been

peculiarly tyrannical to man (Human Being). She has made him curious about secrets (of life or universe) but at the same time has taken special care to conceal the secrets from him. This world is just a house of glass which gives only a sense of wonder, not only in the beginning but also at the end. When we look at the objects of Nature, we find that though they are determined in their movements, yet they are busy about deriving pleasure from their existence. But there is nothing in the universe which may be called sharer of human sorrows. How bitter is the life of human beings!

Iqbal's feeling that Nature is a great tyrant has found superb expression in one of the verses of a Ghazal (the most popular form of Urdu poetry) included in his book '*Bal-e-Jibreel*' which is one of his masterpieces in Urdu poetry. Since Urdu poets are not used to give the date of composition of their poems, it is not possible to say or surmise as to when that verse was composed by Iqbal. However one of the verses is equal to so many poems which could have been composed on the theme in question. The verse is:

یہ مہت خاک ' یہ صرصر' یہ وسعت افلاک
کرم ہے یا کہ ستم تیری لذت ایجاد

In this verse neither the word Nature has been used nor the word "God" has been employed. But as every student of literature knows, Nature and God are interchangeable in poetry. In the verse quoted, Iqbal addresses himself directly to God and says: "This handful of dust (man) has been left in an infinitely vast world where he is faced with violent wind. One wonders if thy pleasure of invention should be taken as thy benevolence

or oppression'. I wonder if human predicament in the universe can be given a more beautiful expression and the indictment against God can ever be expressed in a more beautiful style.

Such lines or verses are not in abundance in Iqbal's poetry but they speak volumes, about Iqbal's complaints against Nature or God. In his mature and exquisite Persian Poetry of "*Payam-e-Mashriq*" or "*Zaboor-e-Ajam*" we find such verses here and there:

These mountain and forests
 These deserts and rivers
 They are neither confidant of human beings
 Nor sharer of human sorrows.

There were moments when Iqbal felt man to be an insignificant and helpless creature and yet held accountable for whatever he did in this world:

گناہ ما چه نویسند کاتبان عمل
 نصیب ما ز جہان تو جز نگاہے نیست

(What sins of mine are being recorded by the angels sitting on my shoulders? My share in this world, O God! is nothing more than observing what is happening in the world)

All these modes of feeling led Iqbal to formulate an extremely bitter view of the world which is best expressed perhaps in this verse:

تراشا گاہ مرگ ناگماں را
 جہان ماہ و انجم نام کردند

(This world which is a sad spectacle of sudden death has been named a world of the Moon and the Stars).

This verse shows how much Iqbal distrusted the beauty of the world and how penetrating were his eyes in seeing the hidden tragic aspects of it. He did not accept the world as God wants Man to do. He suggests that the world should have been carved in quite a different fashion so that it might have suited mankind:

گفت یزداں کہ چنہن است و دگر یچ گو
گفت آدم کہ چنہن است و چناں می بایست

All these ideas and attitudes of Iqbal towards God, Nature and Man are based on the tragic realities of life. But these ideas and attitudes are traditionally treated as negative outlook on life. Iqbal was capable of being a superb exponent of negative outlook on life. Had he fully exploited this capacity, he might have been one of the greatest writers of tragedy. But he was destined to be otherwise. One can not be sure at what point of his life he abandoned thinking negatively about life, or since when he started to be reconciled to life. However before he became a life-affirming poet of world stature, he travelled a long way from negation to affirmation. Perhaps he completed this journey by the time he formulated his philosophy of the self (Asrar-e-Khudi). He got reconciled to life and began to look at life in an affirmative manner. He did not deny the defects and imperfections of the world we live in. Nevertheless his advice to man is this:

بے ذوق نہیں اگرچہ فطرت
جو اس سے نہ ہو سکا وہ تو کر

(Though Nature does not lack in good taste, accomplish what has been left unaccomplished by her).

Iqbal was destined to be a poet of human potentialities and possibilities. He insisted upon the fact that Man is capable of enlarging the area of his freedom and narrowing his limitations. Through ceaseless efforts and creative actions, he can transform his powerlessness into powerfulness, dependence into independence and pre-determinism into freedom. He can attain mastery over himself as well as the world around him.



Iqbal's Concept of Destiny

One of the basic causes of the decay and downfall of the Muslims all over the world has been their wrong concept of destiny or fate. This is one of the conclusions Iqbal arrived at when he analysed the causes of the decline of his nation. But it is no surprise that the Muslims became a victim of the wrong concept of fate. Ever since consciousness has dawned upon man, he has been struggling with the question whether Man is predetermined or he enjoys freedom of will in this world. The question has been hotly debated in every age and it is as much a living question even now as it was in the past. As recently as the early decades of the present century a great thinker like Spengler expressed, in his famous work 'Decline of the West', the idea that from the philosophical point of view life and the universe are preordained.

A few centuries ago the question of destiny divided the Muslim thinkers into two groups, one of them known as *جبریه* that is believers in predestination and the other one as *تقریه*, that is believers in free will. The believers in predestination have always maintained that Man is absolutely predetermined, the implication being that Man is absolutely helpless. He has no freedom of will and consequently he does not deserve to be held responsible for his actions, his deeds or misdeeds.

But the believers in the freedom of will do not regard man as completely free. They hold that despite his limitations man has sufficient freedom to be held responsible for his actions. Both groups derive their

arguments no less from the Quran than from other sources.

In this regard the Islamic point of view has been close to that of the *قدرية* group. Man is neither completely free nor absolutely predetermined. Our Prophet is recorded to have said that Iman *ایمان* lies between that is, predestination and free will. Some one asked Hazrat Ali: Is man free or not? Answering the question he asked the questioner to lift one of his legs. When the questioner did so, Hazrat Ali asked him to lift his second leg as well. Thereupon the questioner said it was not possible to do so simultaneously. Thereupon Hazrat Ali said: Now you can understand whether man is free or not. Hazrat Ali meant to say that man is free but to a certain extent. Similar idea has been expressed by Maulana Rumi in his own way. He says that a man is helpless in feeling sleepy but the compulsion to sleep does not mean that he should sleep at a dangerous place like a road. Here man has freedom enough to exercise his choice.

The Islamic poet as he is, Iqbal follows the same line of thought as expressed by our Prophet, by Hazrat Ali and Maulana Rumi. But, to my mind, he has made an important contribution towards the solution of the difficult problem of destiny.

As is known to every student of Iqbal, he regards life as a ceaseless struggle towards the development and perfection of the self. He holds that this ceaseless struggle or the continuous action which characterizes life, continually widens the powerfulness and limits the helplessness of man. In other words, action leads a man from the position of predeterminism to the position of free will. The frontiers of predeterminism and free will

are not permanently defined. The creative action of man has always effected changes in these frontiers with the result that man has been progressively attaining greater freedom of will with the passage of time.

This view of Iqbal is supported by human history. Man has become a very powerful creature from a very helpless creature. He is no longer at the mercy of the elemental forces of Nature which have been conquered by him to a surprising extent.

The question is: what is that key which unlocks the secret of destiny? In one word Iqbal's answer is: Action.

It is only human action, the creative action of man which reveals the secret of his predestination and free will. Through action man liberates himself from the claims of predeterminism. A decadent nation avoids action or attempts to escape from an active life under the excuse of predeterminism. Such a nation confuses predeterminism with being resigned to the will of God. God has never taught man to sit idle, thinking that he has no power to act and trusting that whatever is destined is bound to take place. At least Islam has taught man to be the architect of his own destiny. Hence Iqbal's poetry inspires man to carve out his own destiny. It is possible only through ceaseless effort and sustained action. But the time for action, Iqbal reminds us, is very short. After the short time for action, there are the long nights of the grave:

ہے مگر فرصت کردارِ نفس یا دو نفس
عوض یک دو نفسِ قبر کی شہنائے دراز

Javed Nama

Javed Nama is regarded as the magnum opus of the poet-philosopher Iqbal. It is composed in Persian on the model of Dante's Divine Comedy. Dante called his work a comedy because he had written it in Italian in a style different from the tragic Latin, and also because it commenced from a dark beginning and ended on a happy note of redemption and hope. Javed Nama was named after Iqbal's son Javed. The name also signifies the book of Eternity. Both the classics were conceived under almost similar circumstances — social and political, and were aimed at to achieve similar effect, that is, to bring about an improvement in the world, or for that matter, in their respective nations, by making them receive warning and instruction from the other world.

Iqbal was as much sick of the perversion and misery, greed, envy, injustice and violence prevailing in his world as Dante was sick of those evils of his own world. Both of them wanted to put the world on the right track.

There are other similarities between the two works. Both of them are a sort of spiritual travelogue. The similarities and differences of these world masterpieces have been studied in detail by some of the eminent scholars.

An outline of the main incidents of the spiritual journey undertaken by the two poets is given below.

The Diving Comedy consists of three books, Inferno, Purgatorio and Paradiso. In the very beginning of his

journey, Dante happens to meet the Roman poet Virgil whom he accepts as his guide after a little hesitation. The two, while going onwards, come to a gate with the inscription:

"Relinquish all hope, ye who enter here"

Both of them pass through Inferno, Purgatorio and Paradiso, encountering different scenes and meeting various kinds of persons—sinners, criminals, heretics, satan, theologians, the souls of the ambitious, the spirits conspicuous for justice, persons who passed their lives in holy contemplation, St. Peter, St. Paul, St. John, Dante's beloved Beatrice, and others. The triumph of the Christ is made visible to Dante and Virgil. During their journey, Dante is also questioned on Faith, Hope and Love. When the two come to Paradiso, they notice that the inscription on the gate starts with the line:

'The glory of Him that moves all things'

and ends with the line:

'The Love that moves the sun and the other stars.'

This is a bare sketch of Divine Comedy but it will help understand the structure of Javed Nama as far as it resembles Divine Comedy or differs with it.

While it took Dante ten years to write the Divine Comedy which consists of 14000 lines, Iqbal took three years to write Javed Nama which contains 4000 lines. The canvas of Javed Nama is obviously smaller than that of Divine Comedy. Iqbal does not visit Inferno and Purgatorio. Whereas Dante visits seven planets, Iqbal visits only six. However, both of them deal with a large number of themes relevant to their ages. If Iqbal was

inspired by the Divine Comedy, Dante was inspired by the Meraj Namas written by Muslim writers and poets.

In Javed Nama Rumi is to Iqbal what Virgil is to Dante in Divine Comedy. Accompanied by Rumi, Iqbal visits the planets and meets historical personalities who reveal eternal truths to Iqbal. First of all Iqbal visits the Moon where he is introduced by Rumi to a Hindu sage known as Jehan Dost (friend of the world). Here Rumi makes one of the most thought-provoking observations when he tells Jehan Dost that in the synthesis of eastern and western cultures lies the way to progress for mankind. While the East is neglecting the material, the West is neglecting the spiritual.

From the Moon, Iqbal and Rumi are transported to the sphere of Mercury where they meet Jamaluddin Afghani and Said Halim Pasha who played an effective role in the eastern affairs in the nineteenth century. Very important conversation is held by Afghani and Halim Pasha on significant subjects like Communism, Imperialism, Eastern and Western cultures, etc.

From Mercury, they proceed to Venus where they come across the abode of ancient gods who seem to be happy that religion and faith are being replaced by the dark forces of materialism and irreligiousness.

From Venus, they go to Mars where the people have surpassed the western nations in sciences and arts without loss of faith in God. They find the capital of Mars devoid of coinage, machines, demonstration of militarism and false propaganda. There they see that the labourers enjoy full economic justice, and find the society secure from the defects of capitalism. However, they also happen to meet a virgin from Europe who has

been brought there to create confusion and trouble.

The poets then are taken to Jupiter where they meet the Indian poet Ghalib, the Persian poetess Qurratul Ain Tahira and the mystic Mansur Hallaj. While Iqbal is engaged in talking to these interesting personalities, Satan appears on the scene. His conversation with Satan illuminates the principle of evil in human life. Satan is a subject to which Iqbal returns again and again. In *Javed Nama*, he has described the character of Satan at length and with greater beauty.

From Jupiter, Iqbal turns to Saturn where he meets traitors like Mir Jafar of Bengal and Sadiq of Deccan. Even the hell does not feel inclined to accept them.

From Saturn, the poet arrives in Trans Heaven region where he meets the German philosopher Nietzsche who failed to grasp Godhood because he relied mainly on intellect.

From Saturn, Iqbal goes to Paradiso where he sees the mausoleum of Sharafun Nisa who represents ideal womanhood. Then he meets Syed Ali Hamadani—a saint from Kashmir, and Tahir Ghani, a poet from Kashmir, who refer to the sale of Kashmir by the British to Gulab Singh.

The poet then meets the Muslim Kings, Nadir Shah, Ahmad Shah Abdali and Tipu Sultan. Ahmad Shah Abdali points to the growing tendencies in eastern countries to adopt western style of living and declares it unnecessary to make progress in the world.

Finally, when the poet requests the Almighty to reveal to him the destiny of nations, he is granted the vision of Divine Glory which reveals everything to the

poet. Javed Nama comes to its end on this great spiritual experience.

How large is the canvas of Javed Nama can be gathered from this outline of the grand poem. Iqbal has succeeded in combining the significance of subjects with the sublimity of style. The poetic effect has been heightened by the employment of lyrical style and changing rhythm.

Iqbal has taken care to avoid some of the blemishes which have been pointed out in Divine Comedy. For instance, Divine Comedy is full of woman worship, but there is nothing like this in Javed Nama. Similarly, there is violence, obscenity and grotesqueness in Divine Comedy, while Javed Nama is free from these characteristics. Unlike Dante, Iqbal has displayed his tolerance by avoiding to write a single line or word which can hurt people of any religious faith.

Javed Nama has been translated into German, Italian and English, and it can be legitimately hoped that its translation in other languages of the world will follow.





Iqbal's Visit to Spain

Places assume importance by the visits of important personalities. But Spain was visited by Iqbal because it has its own historic importance. For centuries Spain was ruled over by Arab Muslims as a result of which it had become one of the greatest centres of Arab civilization. Among the remnants of that civilization is the famous mosque of Spain the construction of which was started by Abdur Rehman I in 785 A.C. Its extension continued until 10th century. After the defeat of the Muslims in 1236 A.C., at the hands of the Christians the mosque was turned into a cathedral.

A lover of Islam and Islamic culture as Iqbal was, it was but natural on his part to have an ardent desire to see the seat of Muslim culture which Spain was during the ascendancy of the Arab Muslims.

Iqbal was accorded an opportunity to visit Spain after his participation in the Third Round Table Conference which commenced in London on 17th Nov., 1932 and concluded on 27th Dec., 1932.

During his stay in London Iqbal was invited to Spain for delivering a lecture. He gladly accepted the invitation. He was not given any topic for his lecture. He wanted to speak about Islamic civilization and culture and philosophy of Islam. When Iqbal reached the place of his lecture, he left the choice of subject with Prof. Aseen. Fortunately for Iqbal, Prof. Aseen's proposed subject was "Spain and Islamic philosophy". Iqbal spoke for one hour in the new university of Madrid. During his lecture he spoke about the Muslim civilization and Muslim

philosophy. He also explained several aspects of their culture and spiritual life. In the end he appealed to the audience not to be misled by hearsay but to study the history of the Arabs. Apart from delivering the lecture, Iqbal also visited the places of historical importance where he saw the relics of the old civilization. He was overwhelmed by whatever he saw there.

During his stay of Spain, Iqbal is reported to have sent two picture cards, which bore the photos of the Mosque of Cordova to his son Javed Iqbal. On one of the cards he wrote:

"I am grateful to God who granted me life enough to see this mosque which is superior to all the mosques of the world. May God brighten your eyes with the light of this edifice."

On his return to Paris from Spain, Iqbal wrote a letter to the Editor of "Inqilab" (Probably Abdul Majeed Salik) in which he exhorted him to see the Mosque of Corodova before he leaves this world.

On 27th March, 1933 Iqbal wrote a letter to Muhammad Ekram in which he said:

"I have extremely enjoyed my journey of Spain. Apart from other poems, there I composed a poem on the mosque of Qurtaba which will be published sometime. Alhamra did not impress me much but my visit to the mosque took me to that pitch of emotion which I had experienced never before".

Iqbal was a widely travelled man but his travel to Spain is most important because it provided him the inspiration to write some of his best and greatest lines in Urdu. One of his greatest poems in Urdu is Masjid-e-

Qurtaba which was composed in Spain as a result of the immediate impact of the mosque on him. According to another statement of Iqbal, some of the lines of Zauq-o-Shauq, another great poem of Iqbal, were also composed in Spain. These two great poems could never have been written if Iqbal had not visited Spain. His pilgrimage to Spain is significant not only from the biographical point of view but also from the poetic point of view. It was an event in his life and an achievement in his poetry.

However it is striking that the details of this journey of Iqbal have not been accurately recorded by his biographers and writers on him. How did this journey come to be undertaken? Was the Nawab of Bhopal instrumental to this journey? Was Iqbal extended an invitation by Prof. Aseen to deliver a lecture in Spain? Did Iqbal offer prayer in the mosque of Qurtaba while he visited it? How was the permission to offer prayer obtained? Did Iqbal's famous teacher Dr. Arnold help him in securing the permission from the relevant authorities of Spain? How was Iqbal photographed in the mosque in his state of offering prayer?

Questions like these have not been satisfactorily answered as yet. Statements of different writers on Iqbal contradict each other. These problems or controversies are the concern of Iqbal's authentic biographer who is yet to come. What is noteworthy for the general readers of Iqbal is that his visit to Spain was extremely inspiring from the poetic point of view.



Iqbal's Concept of Islamic Universalism

All the religions of the world cannot claim to be universal religions. Some of them are universal, no doubt. And that Islam is one of them goes without saying. Perhaps no other religion can be put at par with Islam in respect of universalism.

Since Iqbal drew his inspiration from the basic values of Islam, his poetry presents an exquisite and eloquent expression of Islamic universalism.

Before we proceed further, perhaps it will be proper to understand what universal religion is or what is the meaning of universalism in religion.

A universal religion is one which is open to the entire mankind, which is not based on distinctions of colour and race, which aims at wiping out such distinctions and endeavours to raise man, the regional creature, to the position of a creature with universal outlook; which regards entire humanity as one family and fosters brotherhood in the widest sense of the word.

Islam is a universal religion because its God is **رب العالمين** the God of all the world, its prophet is **رحمت للعالمين** blessing for all the worlds, and its message is intended for the whole of mankind. It does not admit of any distinctions pertaining to colour and race. It believes in equality of man irrespective of caste and creed. Any one who embraces Islam enjoys equal status as a **مؤمن** (Believer in Islam). There is no discrimination between the old and new converts of Islam. The only basis of superiority in Islam is good action which makes one entitled to better treatment and

greater respect. In Islam there is no room for regional, racial and national prejudices. Nationhood is, no doubt, permitted by Islam for the sake of mutual introduction but all the nations are treated as members of one international race, the human race. Indeed universalism and internationalism are the hallmark of Islam. It wants to see the entire mankind happy, prosperous and progressive. Hence it does not believe in an economy in which the gain of one is the loss of another or it does not justify a war which results in the exploitation and annihilation of the weak.

Iqbal's poetry represents all these universal attributes of Islam which were practised by the Muslims in the heyday of Islam. Iqbal has urged the Muslims to recultivate the world at large to develop those universal qualities which characterize the pristine glory of Islam. He found his contemporary world, including the Muslim world, suffering from all the vices which Islam had come to eradicate. He saw his own nation and the nations at large suffering from the consequences of disunity, strife, lack of love, dearth of humanity, religious bigotry, racial prejudices, national aggressiveness and territorial narrow-mindedness.

It is because of this national and international scene that Iqbal sang of human love as the solution of all human problems and criticized nationalism based on geographical territory as the root cause of most of the evils suffered by the world. He maintained that nationhood should be based not on geographical territory but on a wider principle which could bind humanity in common fraternity. He wanted men and women to extend their sensitivity beyond the boundaries of their country. In one of his poems he has lamented that

humanity is lost and merely nations have been left in the world.

Iqbal defined culture as respect for human beings and exhorted the world to attain awareness of the status of Man in the scheme of things. He believed that the position of man is higher than that of the sky and real culture or civilization lies in true respect for Man. In the present civilization Man has become capable of flying into the sky but he has been reduced to a very insignificant part of the whole which is known as Society or Organization. No poet in the twentieth century has raised the dignity of man greater than Iqbal.

A very acute critic of the West that he was, he refused to believe that the East is all good and the West is all evil. In one of his most exquisite and powerful verses he has said that one should neither feel disgusted with the East nor avoid the West. What is worth doing is to turn every night into a dawn. This is what Iqbal learnt from Islamic universalism and this is what he taught us.



Iqbal as a Thinker

Whenever Iqbal's name is mentioned before us, what is the first idea that comes to our mind? That he was a great poet. We even call him our national poet, because the major portion of his poetry concerns the Muslims and Islam.

But Iqbal was not only a poet. The second idea that comes to our mind about him is that he was also a philosopher. We call him even *Hakimul Ummat* which means the philosopher of the nation.

Iqbal was both a poet as well as a philosopher. But he does not confirm to the general concepts of a poet and a philosopher.

The early poetry of Iqbal belongs to the latter period of the 19th century when a new national awakening had dawned among the Indian Muslims as a result of the efforts made by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Maulana Hali, Maulana Shibli, Deputy Nazeer Ahmad and some others.

Though in the freedom struggle of 1857 the Muslims were defeated by their English rivals; they had lost their power and were subjugated by the Britishers, but Sir Syed and his colleagues had sparked a new national fervour and the Muslims had started recovering from their fall and improving their lot.

During the period of Sir Syed, two groups of intellectual guides seem to exist. One of them comprises Sir Syed, Maulana Hali, Deputy Nazeer Ahmad,

Mohsinul Mulk, Waqarul Mulk, etc. They persuaded the Muslims to keep peace with the Britishers to learn the English language and not to consider the acceptance of some aspects of the Western culture as something evil.

On the other side there were writers and poets like Shibli Nomani and Akbar Allahabadi who were not instigating any revolt against the new British rulers, but were making the Muslims conscious of the fact that their own history and culture had been glorious and they need not be crazy about Western civilization.

Such were the conditions when Iqbal was born in the latter part of the 19th century. Naturally enough, he could not escape the influences of his times. He started composing poems in the style of Dagh Dehlawi though he gave it up soon. While at Cambridge he tended to believe in pantheism but later on he was rather opposed to it. He wrote some of his early poems which represented Western type of nationalism, based on the boundaries of a country. Subsequently he switched over to the concept of Islamic nationalism founded on some common belief, religious or otherwise.

The nation-oriented poet as he was, he lamented in his early poems the decay and deplorable conditions of the Muslims all over the world. But he was no less concerned with the predicament of mankind as well. He endeavoured to understand the fundamental causes of the decline of the Muslims and the affliction of humanity. In this connection he expressed his findings in his poetry as well as prose. The perspective of his thought and the range of his poetry are incomparably vast. There are hardly any national or international issues which he has not touched either in his poetry or in his prose.

But his greatest achievement as a thinker or philosopher is that he presented a philosophy which covers both the individual and collective aspects of human life. From this point of view there is a balance in his philosophy which is conspicuous by its absence in some of the great philosophers of the world. Unlike Nietzsche, Iqbal did not glorify the individual alone. Unlike Marx, he did not attach all the importance to society alone.

Iqbal represents that moderation which is enjoined by Islam. Almost all of his basic ideas are derived from Islam but he has presented them not only for the Muslims but for the entire world. He maintains that the best solutions of the world problems lie in the Islamic way of life.

Generally Iqbal's philosophy is known as the philosophy of Self (*فلسفہ خودی*) but this is a misnomer. The correct and full name of his philosophy should be the philosophy of self and selflessness (*فلسفہ خودی و بیخودی*) which have been expressed in his poetic books (1) *Asrar-e-Khudi* (Secrets of the Self) and (2) *Ramooz-e-Bekhudi* (Mysteries of the Selflessness) composed in Persian.

The words *خودی اور بیخودی* (Self and Selflessness) have been used in Urdu poetry before Iqbal in quite different senses.

The word *Khudi* has been used before Iqbal to mean arrogance which is a bad quality. Therefore man has been advised in the didactic and mystic poetry to avoid it because one cannot reach God unless one gets rid of arrogance.

Similarly the word Bekhudi has been used before Iqbal in the sense of intoxication caused by ecstasy.

Iqbal has given specific meanings to these two words and used them in his own philosophical senses.

Iqbal has used the word Khudi to signify even Ego or I or the personality of a person. It may be regarded as the isness of a person while Bekhudi is the islessness of a person. Iqbal wants that a man should assert his being, his existence, his worth. He should not feel or say that he does not exist or he is nothing particularly in relation to God. God is only a greater ego, the supreme ego of the universe which has been created by Him.

The concept of Khudi in Iqbal's poetry is used in a metaphysical sense but when it is reduced to simple meaning, it comes to signify that a man should know himself, explore his inherent capacities, discover his essential qualities and attain as much individuality or uniqueness as possible.

There is a beautiful poem entitled 'Afrang Zadah' in his book Zarb-e-Kaleem. In this poem, addressing the youth who are inclined to atheism, Iqbal says:

تری نگاہ میں ثابت نہیں خدا کا وجود
میری نگاہ میں ثابت نہیں وجود ترا
وجود کیا ہے؟ فقط جوہر خودی کی نمود
کر اپنی فکر کہ جوہر ہے بے نمود ترا

(In your eyes God does not exist. In my eyes you do not exist. What is existence? Only the expression of the essence of the self. Take care of yourself because your essence is still unexpressed.)

In one of his ghazals (a form of Urdu poetry) in his book Bal-e-Jibreel Iqbal says:

بے ذوق نمود زندگی موت
تعمیر خودی میں ہے خدائی

(If you have no taste for manifestation, life is as good as death. Godhead or Godhood lies in building up your Self).

We may infer from such verses that by the term 'Khudi' (Self) Iqbal means self-recognition, self-awareness, self-manifestation and self-articulation. When he exhorts his readers to develop their Khudi (Self) he means to say: Know yourself. Discover yourself.

Iqbal maintained that every human being has been endowed by nature various kind of abilities and capabilities. The first duty of a person is to know himself or herself. By knowing oneself he means to know the nature of one's capabilities.

According to Iqbal it is also the duty of a man that he should express his capabilities or his essence in the world. Otherwise there will be no difference in his existence and nonexistence. Existence does not mean only the presence in the world. It actually means the display or articulation of one's self.

Iqbal has laid the greatest emphasis on the realization of one's self. In one of his Persian verses he says:

منکر حق نزد ما کافر است
منکر خود نزد من کافر تر است

(One who denies the existence of God is an infidel in the eyes of a Mullah. But one who denies one's own existence is a greater infidel in my eyes.)

Every man has two capacities—one individual, another social. Everyone is an individual as well as a member of his society.

Whatever Iqbal has said about Khudi (Self) concerns the individual and whatever he has said about Bekhudi (Selflessness) is related to the society.

Iqbal has emphasized self-knowledge and self-awareness. But when he says that one should display the essence of one's self, he puts the condition that one should train one's self before it is expressed. Without attaining proficiency and perfection the expression of one's self will not be effective.

Now what is the process which has been prescribed by Iqbal to train one's self?

Iqbal says that the feeling of one's self is present in every person. But unless a man develop a yearning to achieve some higher objective or objectives, his self is not awakened. In this regard Iqbal used the word (love) as a specific term. By love he does not mean physical and sexual love at all. In Iqbal's poetry love is concerned with the higher, rather the highest objectives of life. Somewhere in his poetry he says that the objectives should be higher than the pleiades. Although to earn money, to purchase property, to build a house, to celebrate marriages of one's daughters and sons in a majestic manner, all these activities constitute the objectives of life, Iqbal does not mean any of these things by the word objectives. He actually refers to those works

and achievements which benefit a nation or the mankind and raises their dignity in the world.

In Iqbal's philosophy of life words like longing and yearning are very important. In his poetry he has profusely used words or combination of words like (a taste for desire) and **سوز آرزو** **زوق طلب** (intensity of aspiration). There is little doubt that human life gains motion and fervour from **سوز آرزو** and **زوق طلب** (a taste for desire and intensity of aspiration). That is why we frequently come across such verses in Iqbal's poetry:

دل مردہ دل نہیں ہے اسے زندہ کر دوبارہ
کہ یہی ہے امتوں کے مرض کهن کا چارہ

(A dead heart is no heart at all. Make it alive again because only an alive heart is the treatment of the chronic disease of the nations).

طیب عشق نے دیکھا مجھے تو فرمایا
ترا مرض ہے فقط آرزو کی بے نیشی

(When the doctor of love examined my health, he said: 'your malady is only that you have not been stung by any aspiration).

So Iqbal tells us that first of all a man should be aware of his self, of the inherent capabilities with which he has been endowed by nature. Then in conformity with those capabilities he should determine the lofty objectives of his life and then develop such a love for those objectives that he should find it impossible to live without achieving those objectives. If he succeeds in the attainment of one objective, he should not be content with it. He should go on attaining one objective after

another. Thus he will reach the zenith of life:

ز شرر ستاره جویم ز ستاره آفتابے
سر منزلی ندارم کہ بھوم از قرارے

(When I am a spark, I search for a star in it. When I am a star, I aspire for being a sun. I have no intention to stay at any stage, because if I stay, I die.)

Iqbal tells us that just as **عشق** (love for the highest ends of life) strengthens the self of a man, so **سوال** (begging) weakens it. Iqbal does not want anyone to live by begging or borrowing things from others. Elucidating the term **سوال** (begging) he says that whatever is gained without personal labour comes under the category of begging. The son of a rich man who lives on the wealth inherited from his father is a beggar. So is the man who owns the ideas of others and does not think himself. In this way love represents action and begging represents inaction. Love for any purpose or objective takes a man to action and the habit of living on things or thoughts gained without labour leads a man to inaction.

Iqbal condemns inaction as much as he glorifies action. It is necessary to understand why Iqbal insists so much on action in his poetry and philosophy.

Every action is based on some idea or thought. But Iqbal lays more emphasis on action than thought. Why is it so?

For Iqbal, thought is not all important. When he says that it is the duty of a man to know himself, to discover his self and in order to make one's self strong and perfect, one should determine high objectives for one's self, all these things cannot be done without thinking.

But once these things are done and decided, life is a game of action, simple and pure action. Life is meant for action. This world is a field for action. The best of thought is meaningless if it is not translated into action. It is action which makes life good or bad. Iqbal says:

عمل سے زندگی بنتی ہے جنت بھی جہنم بھی
یہ خاک اپنی فطرت میں نہ نوری ہے نہ تاری ہے

(Action makes life a paradise or a hell. Man in his origin is concerned neither with light nor fire).

Action is indispensable for human life and human self. It is true that the lack of natural gift cannot be compensated for by action (effort and labour). If nature has not endowed a man with the ingredients of a poet, he cannot be a poet by labour. But even if a man is gifted with poetic talent, he cannot be a good or great poet unless he brings that talent into action. That is why Iqbal has said:

ہر چند کہ ایجاد معانی ہے خدا داد
کوشش سے کہاں مرد ہنرمند ہے آزاد

(Although the creative talent is a gift of God, no talented man is free from effort.)

بے محنت پیچیم کوئی جو ہر نہیں کھتا
روشن شرر تیشہ سے ہے خانہ فرہاد

(No essence flowers without ceaseless effort. The house of Farhad is lighted by the spark of his axe.)

With what potentialities a man has been blessed can be definitely known only by action. Action does not lead

only to destination; it also helps a man to understand himself and his possibilities.

In short, action is unavoidable as well as profitable for human life. Only those people have a right to the awards of life who are working day and night to achieve their desired goal.

Many nations of the world have fallen a victim to decay because they could not understand the relationship between life and action. Even the Muslims can be counted among such nations. One of the characteristics of the declining nations is that they are indolent and easy-going. Consequently they easily accept the wrong concept of destiny. Iqbal has said:

عمل سے فارغ ہوا مسلمان بنا کے تقدیر کا بہانہ .

(The Muslims freed themselves from action under the pretext of destiny).

From philosophical point of view the problem of fate is very difficult and complex. There are philosophers who regard man as predestined. There are also philosophers who think that man is born with a free will. The Islamic point of view is that man is neither absolutely devoid of free will nor does he enjoy it fully. What Iqbal has contributed to this problem is that the limits of man's powerfulness and powerlessness are neither fixed nor permanent. He says that by dint of action the circle of man's powerfulness goes on widening and the circle of his powerlessness goes on becoming smaller. This is a claim which is corroborated by human history. The way man has conquered Time and Space, the way he has made the journey of years the journey of

few hours, the way he has reached the Moon, these conquests provide evidence of the fact that man is no longer as helpless (devoid of free will) as he was thousands of years ago. His struggle has resulted into larger freedom. The secrets of fate can be known through action.

To Iqbal, mind life is action and the true standard of action is that every tomorrow should be better than every yesterday.

Begging (سوال) takes man not only to inaction but it also prevents him from acquiring higher qualities like self-respect and an attitude of not caring for earthly wealth.

Our prophet used to say that he was proud of his poverty (فقر) which literally means indigence but its accepted meaning is to avoid obligation despite being indigent. Iqbal has called Faqr the soul of Islamic character.

When Iqbal calls love (عشق) a good thing and begging (سوال) a bad thing, he provides a criterion for the good and bad. From his point of view everything that benefits human self is good and everything that harms human self is bad. In his poetry and philosophy Iqbal seems to examine everything such as knowledge and art, music and painting, poetry and literature, religion and mysticism on this criterion. He does not believe in the utility of even prayer if it does not help protect Khudi in a man:

یہ ذکر نیم شبی، یہ مراتبے، یہ سرور
تری خودی کے نگہباں نہیں تو کچھ بھی نہیں

(This mid-night remembrance of God, this meditation, this spiritual intoxication; all these have no value if they do not protect your Khudi (Self).

According to Iqbal, there are three stages for the training of Khudi (Self). First is obedience. Second is self-control. Third is vicegerency of God.

Obedience means to conform to the Islamic laws which are known as Shariat. Islamic laws are divided among Dos and Donts. The Dos (اوامر) have to be obeyed and the Donts (نواہی) have to be escaped.

Self-control means to overcome those weaknesses which prevent the discharge of duties.

Vicegerency of God is the last stage of the development of human self. One who reaches this stage, he becomes a perfect man, an ideal man who combines in himself love and reason, knowledge and action, strong body and soft heart. A man of such ideal qualities is yet to be born. In the future history of man this concept of an ideal man may become a fact.

In his philosophy of Selflessness (Bekhudi) Iqbal has dealt with the problem of the individual and the society. Every man is an individual as well as a member of some society. Every man has to live on two planes: on individual plane and social plane. When an individual establishes his relation with his society or nation, he moves from his Self (Khudi) to selflessness (Bekhudi). This is one of the fundamental situations with which every man is confronted. Iqbal has composed a most beautiful verse on this situation in Persian.

زندگی انجمن آرا و نگہبان خود است
 اے کہ در قافلہ ای بے ہمہ شو ' با ہمہ رو

(Life arranges congregation and guards itself. O'the one who is in the caravan! Separate yourself from all. At the same time go alongwith all.)

The relation between the individual and his society or nation is one of the complex problems which has been solved by some philosophers (for instance, Nietzsche and Marx) in an extremist manner. While Nietzsche has overemphasized the importance of the individual, Marx has overemphasized the society.

On this problem Iqbal represents moderation and balance. He believes in the freedom and respect of the individual but holds that the individual should use his best capabilities not for himself but for the society. This will result in good of both. Iqbal has described the relationship between the individual and the society very beautifully in his Urdu poem 'Paivasta Rah shajar Sai Ummed-e-Bahar Rakh' (Keep yourself connected with the tree and expect the Spring'). The greenness and freshness of the branches stay as long as the branches are connected with the tree. For the broken branch the Spring has no meaning. So is the case with the individual who loses all possibilities of development after breaking his relation with his society or nation. Iqbal has compared the relationship between the individual and the society with the relationship that exists between the wave and the river:

فرد قائم ربط ملت سے ہے تنہا کچھ نہیں
 موج ہے دریا میں اور بیرون دریا کچھ نہیں

(The individual stands on his relation with his nation. As a solitary figure, he is nothing. The wave is in the river. Beyond the river there is nothing).

The main ideas that have been expressed by Iqbal in his book 'Mysteries of Selflessness' are as follows.

The existence of a nation is based on the mutual connection among the individuals. The principal constituents of Islamic nationhood are two — (1) Declaring God to be one. Believing in the Unity of God. Belief in Monotheism (2) Belief in the prophethood of Hazrat Muhammad. The purpose of his prophethood was to lay the foundation of freedom, equality and brotherhood. In Islam nationhood is based on religion, not country.

The national system does not come into being without any constitution and the constitution of the Muslims is provided by the Quran (the religions scripture of the Muslims).

The virtues of national character depend on treading the path of the prophet. The Muslims should emulate their prophet.

When the Muslims are passing through a period of decline, they should not give way to new decisions (اجتہاد) in the problems of religion. They should act upon the decisions that have already been taken.

National life requires a centre. The centre of the Muslims is the two sacred places, Mecca and Madina.

The national unity of the Muslims rests on a national ideal which is the preservation and propagation of the theory of monotheism.

The expansion of national life depends on the conquest of the forces that are operating in the world system. That is national life expands by conquering the elements of nature. Iqbal did not like that the Muslims should keep themselves occupied with praising and praying God as a subjugated and meek nation. He wanted them to go upto the Moon and the stars.

The continuity of human race rests on motherhood. Its preservation and respect are among the basic principles of Islam. A woman does not enjoy a higher status in any religion other than Islam.

This is just a sketch of the system of life Iqbal wants the Muslims to adopt.

The Quran is the foundation of this system of life. He maintained that:

مگر تو می خواهی مسلمان زبستن
نیت ممکن جز به قرآن زبستن

(If you wish to live as a Muslim, there is no way except living according to the Quran).

Iqbal rejected the Western and communist systems of life because he perceived many faults in them. He felt that the western democracy is only a changed face of Kingdom and he found Communism devoid of God and spirituality. He preferred Islamic system of life because this system obliterates the distinctions of caste, colour and race. It creates the right type of equality among human beings; it gives man the lesson of self-sacrifice and it teaches man to respect man. In the eyes of Iqbal only those civilizations and cultures are true in which man is respected by man and status of man is regarded

higher than heaven:

برتر از گردوں مقام آدم است
اصل تمدب احترام آدم است

(Higher than heaven is the position of Man. Real culture lies in respect for Man.)

So this is the philosophy of Iqbal and this is the type of philosopher Iqbal was.



قبائل