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# IQBAL AND INTERNATIONALISM

A. F. M. ABDUL HAQ

Iqbal drank deep at the fountain of Islamic learning and its eternal source, the Holy Qur'an. His thoughts and philosophy were deeply influenced by the teachings of the Qur'an. The fundamental teaching of Islam is *tawhid* or unity of God. "Islam emphasised the unity of God-head in a manner which has rarely been equalled by any other religion. "There is no God but God' proclaims Islam. It has carried this urge for the unity of God so far as to deny that there is any religion but one. Each country and each age had its own prophet. Each prophet preached to his own people in his own language. The language, the people and the period may be different, but the religion was the same in every case. Islam has, therefore, repudiated the idea that an individual is the founder of any religious faith.

"Islam's claim to universality follows from this emphasis on the unity of God. It holds that, as a religion valid for all times, it must reveal the eternal nature of truth.

"Islam's emphasis on the unity of God was the basis of its scientific outlook. It was equally the foundation of its democratic temper. The universality of reason demands from all rational beings the same behaviour in the same circumstances. So far as men are rational, they are equal in the sight of God. There is no distinction between man and man on the plane of humanity."

Islam realised the concept of equality both in theory and practice. Even its worst enemies have been forced to admit that Islam broke down the barriers of colour and birth among Muslims. Not only in the formal act of worship but also in daily social intercourse, the darkest Nubian from the heart of Africa enjoys equality with the haughtiest of the Quraish or the most race-conscious of the blue-eyed and fair Aryan. Bernard Shaw held that the

real test of equality lies in inter-marriage. In formal worship, one can adopt an attitude of equality as one puts on ceremonial robes on formal occasions. Inter-marriage-ability is, however, a test which permits no subterfuge. The theory and practice of equality in Islam passed even this crucial test.

Reverence for the empirical fact is another reason for Islam's insistence on the equality of man in the eyes of God and society.

As already mentioned, Iqbal's philosophy of life and his conception of the individual and the community are based on Islam. The conception of life and universe as presented by the Holy Qur'an found expression in Iqbal's philosophy. Life is movement and strife as well as thought and contemplation. Power has greatest value in life but not such power as is devoid of any direction or objective. Rather, such power which is subservient to laws and has definite objective to the attainment of which it helps. This objective is the recognition of the dignity of humanity. Life progresses every day towards new objectives and aspirations and creates new values. It is the birth-right of man to unfold the secrets of nature and utilise its laws for his own benefit.

According to Iqbal the individual and the community build each other. The individual develops his ego and all its potentialities and then utilises them for building up the community. But such relationship cannot exist in a community based on class struggle and on privileges of race, colour or wealth. Only true realisation of the teachings of Islam based on the unity of God and equality of man, can ensure such a relationship most conducive to human welfare and progress.

Iqbal says, "Muslim society, with its remarkable homogeneity and inner unity, has grown to be what it is, under the pressure of the laws and institutions associated with the culture of Islam." Islam believes in a universal polity — a politico-religious system, or a social polity-based on fundamentals that were revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

According to Iqbal, the best social order is the Muslim. *Millat* based on the unity of God and equality of human beings. Iqbal was inspired by the vision of a world-wide Islamic State, not divided by territorial or racial considerations. The *millat* is a free and solid Muslim brotherhood, with *Ka'ba* as its spiritual centre, bound together by the love of Allah and devotion to the Prophet.

Man is a social being. He can only live in the society of his fellow men. The individual and the *millat* reflect each other. The individual is elevated through the *millat*, and the *millat* is organised through the individuals.

Allah is the real repository of sovereignty. His sovereignty extends to the entire universe, the whole humanity, and all organisations. Allah is the real source of religion, philosophy and law.

The object of Islam is to establish the fundamental unity of mankind on the basis of equality, liberty and fraternity. It is a message of human equality in social status and legal rights. The Islamic *Millat* is not therefore, circumscribed by geographical limits. Nationalism is foreign to Muslim genius. To a Muslim the entire world is his home, for it lies within the sovereignty of God. Islam bases the community of mankind on the belief in one God, and consequently on the belief of human brotherhood and fraternity as opposed to the idea of nationalism based on the accident of geographical situation, race, colour and language. The universal spirit of Islam means submission to the will of God and peace with fellow-men. Believing in one Supreme God a Muslim believes in the universal idea of fraternity and cannot confine himself to a particular territory or geographical boundary.

To Iqbal, Islam is a world system of living force which frees the outlook of man from racial, geographical and materialistic conceptions. Islam definitely rejects the claims of racial and geographical factors to order the loyalties of the Muslims. Territorial nationalism or aggressive patriotism is

not allowed in Islam. Narrow nationalism disrupts the essential unity and the humanising spirit of mankind.

According to Iqbal, "The ultimate fate of a people does not depend so much on organisation as on the worth and power of the individual man. In an over-organised society, the individual is altogether crushed out of existence. He gains the whole wealth of social thought around him and loses his own soul". He says, "Islam is neither nationalism nor imperialism but a league of nations, which recognises artificial boundaries and racial distinctions for facility of reference only, and not for restricting the social horizon of its members."

What has nationalism to offer? To quote Iqbal's own words, "Look at the history of mankind, it is an unending succession of deadly combats, blood-feuds and internecine wars. Now the question arises as to whether in these circumstances it is possible to bring forth a community the basis of whose collective life will be peace and goodwill. According to the Qur'an this is possible, but only when man adopts as his ideal the direction of all his thoughts and actions by faith in the unity of God, as ordained by the Almighty. But the quest and attainment of this ideal cannot be left to political statesmanship. It will really be a blessing from God, the Beneficent, that abolishing all self-imposed distinctions and differences among the nations of the world, a community is created which can be virtually styled as a 'people obedient to God', and whose thoughts and actions can be truly described in God's own words, as those of the 'guardians of mankind.'"

Islam is the only religion which brought the message to human race for the first time that religion is neither territorial, nor racial not even individual or domestic but it is purely human, meant for the whole human race. And its objective is to unite and organise the human race in spite of all natural differences. Such an organisation cannot be based on nationality or race. It can only be based on ideologies. It is the only way in which the emotional and intellectual life of the human society can be turned to one direction and

can be inspired with a singleness of purpose, which is essential for the formation and continued existence of an international or world society of human race as a whole. Any other system will be opposed to the true teachings of religion and against the dignity of human beings.

Iqbal was one of the strongest exponents of an international world-wide human society and opposed to all those movements which went against that ideal. He was therefore opposed to territorial and racial nationalism and preached the message of a universal human society based on the unity of God and equality of human beings, irrespective of race, colour or language. According to Iqbal, a Muslim can never be a party to narrow nationalism because he is a member of such a world-wide international organism which transcends all limitations of geography, race, colour or language.

It is true that in his earlier poems Iqbal extolled nationalism. But when he observed what miseries and sufferings were caused to human society by the clash of national interests, he realised that world peace and salvation of the human race lay in an international universal society based on equality and brotherhood of human beings, each working for the benefit of the other and not trying to exploit him, as in the poem called "وطنیت" where he says:

ان تازہ خداؤں میں بڑا سب سے وطن ہے

جو پیرہن اس کا ہے وہ مذہب کا کفن ہے

He also realised that the social order envisaged by Islam was the only organisation which could elevate the human society from the limitations of colour, race and nationality. That is why he preached the message of Islam in all his writings.

جوہر ما با مقامے بستہ نیست



## بادۀ تندش ز جامی بسته نیست

"Our existence is not confined to a single locality; its strong spirit is not contained in a single cup."

The Islamic state is a world-state, its citizens are a world fraternity all inter-linked and knit into a harmonic body politic. Political delimitation is alien to Islam and race or class superiority and colour prejudice, a heresy. Richness of self fully realised, and not of self, is the real wealth in Islam. Such a self alone harnessed with all the vim and vigour of the brain and posed with all the goodness and sweetness of the soul, is a true Muslim to Allah — a leader and a servant and not a tyrant nor a master, over his fellow brothers.

In such a world state, the citizenship is not exclusive. It is not the prerogative of the landed few, the learned few or the wealthy few. It is the birth-right of all human beings. Every individual is a born citizen with certain talents which, it is the duty of the State, to provide for their proper exercise and development to the fullest extent they are capable of. There shall be freedom for all, but within the bounds of the natural laws. Thus the first and the foremost duty of the State is to provide fully and completely for the education of its members which embrace the entire mankind. There cannot be any ignorant or ill-bred person in such a State. The aim of this education will be to give to every individual a sense of complete self-realisation or a sense of ardent faith in self, harmonised with the will of the Great Unseen.

It is sometimes pointed out that Iqbal addressed himself primarily to the Muslim people. The reason is obvious. The Muslim community is already based on the unity of God and equality of human beings. So it is easy for the Muslims to organise on an international basis into a world community without the limitations of territory, race, wealth, language etc. When such a world-community is organised it would be easier to draw other peoples to its ideal so that the objective of one world working for mutual development and

benefit can be realised and the efforts of the United Nations Organization and similar other bodies can meet with success.

The Qur'an says that whatever is in the heavens and earth has been made subservient to man. The conquest of outer space by man is another demonstration of this eternal truth. When man could rise so high in space, would it be too much to expect that he would rise above petty selfish and narrow nationalistic outlook and would seriously apply himself to work for world harmony and peace? I believe in the goodness of human nature and I am confident that it will prevail in the end.

# MODERN CHALLENGES TO ELIGION

MANZOOR AHMAD

"Is Natural Science finally committed to materialism? There is no doubt that the theories of science constitute trustworthy knowledge, because they are veritable and enable us to predict and control the events of a Nature. But we must not forget that what is called science is not a single systematic view of Reality. It is a mass of sectional views of reality - fragments of a total experience which do not seem to fit together. Natural science deals with matter, with life and with mind; but the moment you ask the question how matter, life and mind are mutually related you begin to see the sectional character of the various sciences that deal with them and the inability of these sciences, taken singly, to furnish a complete answer to your question. Nature as the subject of science is a highly artificial affair, and this artificiality is the result of that selective process to which science must subject her in the interests of precesion. The moment you put the subject of science in the total of human experience it begins to disclose a different character. Thus religion, which demands the whole of Reality and for this reason must occupy a central place in any synthesis of all the data of human experience, has no reason to be afraid of any sectional views of Reality".

- Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*. I

## I

August Comte (1798-1857), the French Positivist, maintains that the world of thought naturally runs through three stages. The first stage is theological; events are explained by referring them to divine powers and agencies. The second stage is metaphysical; events are explained by referring them to separate energies. The third stage is the positive stage, where events are explained by referring them to causes, known by observation of the laws

of phenomena, without attributing them to either spirits, gods, or abstract forces..

So far the prediction of Comte has not been proved true. In the modern era, despite the tremendous progress of science and of the knowledge of causation, and comparative inactivity of metaphysical speculations, so great is the religious vitality, that it defies any notion of its extinction by the development of Positivistic Philosophy of Science. It has been, as a matter of fact, on an increase, so much so that the feeling today is that it must either be opposed, or studied and encouraged.

That religion is a part of the pre-scientific world-view, and, there fore, is bound to fade away with the growth of sophistication or of scientific knowledge is no longer maintained anywhere in the Western world (except perhaps in the U.S.S.R.). But at the same time it will be wrong to suppose that religious thinking has solved all the problems, or has provided adequate explanation to all the questions of the modern world. On the other hand, it has added some more questions, and has to face some new challenges. That there is more religious vitality today is a happy augury, and we can look forward for better understanding of religion in the near future. But we must not overstate the case.

The problems that religion faces are many and multifold. My intention in this article is to examine a certain view point in some of its manifestations in Philosophy, Psychology and socio-economic systems.

The view point that I refer to is that of secularism — generally speaking — i.e., an attitude permeating the social, economic, political and intellectual pursuits of the modern man. In fact it is the secular character of our civilization which distinguishes it from earlier civilizations. Religion today is supposed to be a personal affair depending upon one's choice, rather caprice, which does not, or at least might not enter into the political arrangement of the day, or affect the freedom of economic, artistic, or general social intercourse. A distinction based upon religion is looked down

as primitive, and a cohesion based on such grounds is considered to be barbaric and 'uncivilized' ; whereas in the "age of faith" the only unifying and uniting factor, as well as the only factor of differentiation was faith. It had been the cause of war and peace, and religious sanctions of conduct were every where acknowledged. Now, one feels shy of referring to them, and any difference due to creed alone is immediately suspected of narrow-mindedness and bigotry.

That a secular foundation of human experience can be rightly upheld and maintained is doubtful in the first instance, and a gestalt point of view of experience makes it well nigh impossible. The reason that the experience as a whole can never be meaningfully understood, or interpreted if all references to religion are forbidden and a purely secular attitude is maintained. Take for instance the case of one of the recent movements in philosophy which tries to interpret experience in purely non-metaphysical and non-religious terms. Logical empiricism, or positivism, as it is usually called, proceeds with a declared abhorrence of metaphysics, and because of that, of religion. A sentence which deals with any religious phenomena is neither tautological nor empirical. Hence it is nonsensical. This may be termed as one of the extreme forms of secularism, as it totally denies any reference to any fact beyond sensuous experience of the individual. It is not the Question of relevance of one experience with the other, neither of their mutual independence, but of a total negation of the meaningfulness of such an experience — although as a matter of 'fact' it cannot be denied totally. It exists, and persists, and even if it is an illusion it is such a constant and continuous illusion in the history of human experience, that it has got to be 'explained' rather than discarded, which is very conveniently done by the votaries of this school. Professor Ayer summed up the whole situation like this: "We conclude that the argument from religious experience is altogether fallacious. The fact that people have religious experiences is interesting from the psychological point of view, but it does not in any way imply that there is such a thing as religious knowledge, any more than our having moral

experience implies that there is such thing as moral knowledge. The theist, like the moralist, may believe that his experiences are cognitive experiences, but, unless he can formulate his 'knowledge' in propositions that are empirically verifiable, we may be sure that he is deceiving himself."<sup>1</sup>

A detailed criticism is not intended here as it has been attempted elsewhere,<sup>2</sup> but one can't help asking, as to what right a logical positivist has to make a *normative* claim, that propositions *ought* to be empirically verified. Can this proposition "All propositions that are not empirically verifiable are false or non-sense" in itself be verified empirically, and if not, can we be sure that the logical empiricist while he is making such a claim is in fact not deceiving himself? Even if for the sake of argument we accept the thesis of logical positivists that such propositions should be empirically verifiable, we do have to admit that not only the sensuous, but every experience is verifiable in as much (or as little) as it is the experience of the individual. If sense experience is ultimately nothing but our own states of consciousness, and verification consists only in testifying one state of consciousness with another of the same individual then religious experiences, moral experiences, and aesthetic experiences, are all verifiable very much in the same way as others are.

And if a logical empiricist is not a thorough going believer of his own creed like a logical *positivist*, then a cognitive object of experience can be posited exactly in the same fashion in a '*non-sense*, experience, as it has been in a sense-experience, as a naive realist does, and a logical positivist has no 'logical' right to make a distinction between the two types of experiences — i.e. sense experience on the one hand and religious, moral, and aesthetic experience on the other.

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<sup>1</sup> Ayer A. J., *Language Truth and Logic*. rev. ed. pp. 119-120.

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed criticism see "Logical Discrepancies of Logical Positivism" *Iqbal Review*. vol. II. No.1.

The same contradiction occurs in case of a similar normative claim of the logical positivists that all necessary propositions are conventions. "Which of the two classes does it fall in, the class of empirical probabilities or the class of tautologies. if the former then at any moment a necessary proposition may turn up that is not tautology, and hence the sweeping statement is illegitimate. If in the latter, the theory is self-contradictory again, for having laid it down that no necessary proposition, says any thing about the facts, it lays down a necessary proposition about propositions: Since a proposition is described as a 'class of sentences' for sentences are facts, we have a necessary statement about facts after all".<sup>3</sup>

The case of religion therefore is not at all weakened by an attack from the logical empiricist, firstly because the arguments are not cogent enough, and are based upon a number of challengable assumptions, and secondly because the movement undermines itself in its attack on religion. In its attempt to fix the limits of rational inquiry, by fiat, it uses at the same time natural sciences unjustifiably as the basis of a new authoritarian orthodoxy, and hence the criticism of other orthodoxies is unjustifiable and comes with poor grace.

## II

There are yet two more viewpoints which contribute to the secular tendencies of the present age, one belonging to psychology and the other to socio-economic philosophy. One is the theory of psycho-analysis affected by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and the other is the Dialectical materialism expounded by Karl Marx. Though they differ in certain important points, the average man is not wholly wrong in associating Freud and Marx as belonging to the same chapter of intellectual history. The psychological relativism of Freud has seemed to buttress the sociological relativism of Marx. As a result of psychological relativism, ideas, values and standards are regarded as at bottom merely the expression of unconscious desires striving for fulfilment,

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<sup>3</sup> Blanshard, B. *The Nature of Thought*, Macmillan and Co., N. Y., 1940, vol. 2. pp. 416-17.

and of the various mechanisms by which these desires are diverted or checked.

Moreover, both Freud and Marx drew heavily on the philosophy of Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-1872) son, who traces the psychological origin of religious doctrine in human hopes, fears, and aspirations. God for him is a beautiful idealization of human wishes. Marx had accepted in his frustration, Feuerbach's basic theory of religion, which was nothing but a projection of man on a cosmic screen. With Sigmund Freud, however, this conception developed into something of central importance. Feuerbach's epithet "Man has given objectivity to himself, but has not recognized the object as his own nature," has become a brief statement of a crucial aspect of Freud's doctrine. "When religion — consciousness of God — is designated as the self-consciousness of man, this is not to be understood as affirming that the religious man is directly aware of this identity; for, on the contrary, ignorance of it is peculiar to the fundamentals of religion. To preclude this misconception, it is better to say, that religion is man's earliest and also indirect form of self-knowledge, as in the history of the race, so also in that of the individual. Man first of all sees his nature as if *out* of himself before he finds it *in* himself. His own nature is in the first instance contemplated by him as that of another being ....Hence the historical progress of religion consists in this: that what by an earlier religion was regarded as objective, is now recognized as subjective, that is what was formerly contemplated and worshipped as God is now perceived to be something *human*."<sup>4</sup> Feuerbach tried to show that each item of religious faith or experience, may be interpreted as an objectification of a certain wish. Providance is the desire to believe we are important; the experience of God is the effort to say that ours is the class of most important of beings; prayers, a desire to converse with ourselves; miracles satisfy the wishes of men in the most desirable way — i.e., without any effort or waiting etc. The New Psychoanalysis and the

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<sup>4</sup> Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity*. translated by Marian Evans, 2nd edition, London, 1881 p. 13.



theories of Freud gave a 'plausible' explanation of the above theory of Feuerbach by providing a methodology for analysing mental activities, and by pointing out the most important phenomena of mental science, i.e., unconscious, sub-conscious, and conscious, etc. So. even if one is saved by the hands of a logical positivist, and admits the presence, importance and meaningfulness of religious experience a psychoanalyst is closely at hand to give a "psychological explanation" of it in terms of "father image", "conditioning" or "wishful thinking".

Freud's teachings about religion are found in three of his important works, "*Totem & Tabu*", "*The Future of an Illusion*", and "*Moses & Monotheism*". His thesis, in the first instance, seems to be quite plausible. It begins with the hard facts of life. Life is, generally speaking, full of misery, sufferings and privation. There are evils of nature, disappointments in life, and in the end there always is the "evil of death". According to him "man's seriously menaced self-esteem craves for consolation, life and the universe must be rid of their terrors, and incidentally man's curiosity, reinforced, it is true, by the strongest practical motives, demands an answer".<sup>5</sup>

These problems are solved by a mechanism, termed as "the humanization of Nature", where human qualities are attributed to various natural phenomena." 'Psychology' is thus substituted for natural sciences much on the same lines as infantile fantasy makes father an object of fear, and dependence. Thus, man tries to make tolerable his own helplessness, and protects himself against the dangers of nature and fate at the same time. Hence the whole systems of religious beliefs are "not the residue of experience or the final result of reflection; they are illusions, fulfilments of the oldest, strongest, and most instant wishes of mankind; the secret of their strength is the strength of these wishes. We know already that terrifying effect of infantile helplessness aroused the need for protection — protection through love — which the father relieved, and that the discovery that this

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<sup>5</sup> Freud. *The Future of an Illusion*. Liveright. N. Y. 1953, p. 64.

helplessness would continue through the whole of life made it necessary to cling to the existence of a father<sup>6</sup> — but this time a more powerful one. Thus the benevolent rule of divine providance allays our anxiety in face of life's dangers, the establishment of a moral world order ensures the fulfilment of the demands of justice, which within human culture have so often remained unfulfilled, and the prolongation of earthly existence by future life provides in addition the local and temporal setting for these wishfulfilments."<sup>7</sup> These wishfulfilments are not errors, it is a belief in which wishfulfilments is a prominent factor in its motivation, notwithstanding any relation to reality. They neither admit any proof, nor can they be treated scientifically which, according to this view, is the only way to the knowledge of external reality.

In the first place let us admit that the theories of psychoanalysis have helped us to understand, to a very great extent, the nature of man, and, thereby, hard also given us an insight into the nature of religion. In the second place the opposition between the theories of psychoanalysis and that of religion depends, to a very great extent, on the concept of religion and the religious beliefs involved in this comparison. But it remains a fact, that although to a certain extent there can be compatibility between religious beliefs and Freudian doctrines, the general theory of psychoanalysis definitely shifts the whole edifice of religion from its original ground and fixes it on an altogether new pedestal and in its new fixation it certainly generates a secularistic outlook. A God of a believer, really existing with all the good attributes (اسماء الحسنی), is very much different from the idea of God created by fantasy. Thus, psychology, like logical positivism (though on different grounds), tries to understand human experiences without any reference to "religious experiences." One brands it as 'nonsense', the other as 'wishfulfilment'. The result in both the cases is the same and the moral of both the attempts is identical. No meaningful construction of ideas is

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<sup>6</sup> Where there is no conception of 'father' in religion it is God.

<sup>7</sup>S. Freud. *The Future of an Elution*. p. 52.

possible at all by omitting the most significant and the most persisting piece of human experience.

As a theory of psychology, Freudian explanation of human behaviour has lost much of its shine and is regarded as an overemphasis on certain phenomena . It is also said to have been based on a limited observation and with an extra amount of imagination and theorizing — a theorizing not warranted by the facts observed. Hence the scientific method, which Freud himself advocates in finding facts, has been misused by him in elaborating his theories. If the evidence of religious experience is taken into consideration, one will find that the authentic decisions of faith, are not something that is always pleasant to man or that is flattering to his ego.

In some reports of religious experiences (of all traditions, christian, Muslim etc. which I cannot quote for fear of space) one would often find the experience forcing one to believe what he does *not want to believe*. Any strenuous explanation (like some dream interpretations of Freud) of these phenomena in terms of wishfulfilment would forever remain unconvincing.

Moreover, a *normative religious experience* often reveals the unhealthy (though comfortable) situation of man, and compels him to adopt a strenuous life of obedience to the commandments of God, which again can never be explained in terms of wishfulness.

Not only the nature of God as revealed in religious experience, is different from what men desired, but sometimes it is different even from what they are expected to find.

The psychology of Freud does not appear to be supported by any adequate evidence. "If our vagarant impulses," says Iqbal, "assert themselves in our dreams, or at other times we are not strictly ourselves, it does not follow that they remain imprisoned in a kind of a lumber room behind the normal self. The occasional invasion of these suppressed impulses on the region of our normal self tends more to show the temporary disruption of

our habitual system of response, rather than their perpetual presence in some dark corner of the mind."<sup>8</sup>

### III

The same secular trend expresses itself more clearly and on a bigger canvas in the form of Marxism. Like Freud, Marx himself was very much influenced by Feuerbach who interpreted the Hegelian system in a materialistic sense and treated world history as the unfolding of matter and not of spirit. Marx vehemently supported Feuerbach, but simultaneously came under the influence of the scientific materialism which was spreading at that time. He accepted the essentials of the explanation of Feuerbach, and maintained that projection results because man is frustrated in two ways, by nature and by society. The easy answer to frustration is pious imagination. For Marx the omnipotence of God is nothing but the fantastic impotence of people before nature and before economic and social relations created by themselves.

The Marxist doctrine, in its inception, was not really something new, but only a faithful representation of the nineteenth century philosophy of materialism and atheism. Lenin propounds a less conventional rationalism and an atheistic humanism, and laid more emphasis on social conditions. "In modern capitalistic countries the basis of religion is primarily social. The roots of our religion are deeply imbedded in the social operation of the working masses, and in their apparently complete helplessness before the blind force of capitalism which every day and every hour cause a thousand times more horrible suffering and torture for ordinary working folk than are caused by exceptional events, such as war, earthquakes etc. Fear created the Gods. Fear of the blind force of capital — blind because its action cannot be forseen by the masses — a force which at every step in life threatens the worker with sudden, "unexpected", "accidental" destructions and ruins, bringing in their train beggary, pauperism, prostitution and death from

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<sup>8</sup> Iqbal: *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* p. 24.

starvation — this is the tap-root of modern religion which, first of all and above all, the materialist must keep in mind, If he does not wish to remain struck for ever in the infant school of materialism".<sup>9</sup> This is the real nature of religion. Whatever else has been taught in the name of religion and faith is evil, because it turns man's head from the real remedies, and substitutes a false faith, groundless and unscientific.

The creed based on the principles of scientific materialism provides not only a social programme and a scientific method, but also a kind of religion, the fundamental postulates of which are: —

- a. Scienticism
- b. Materialism and,
- c. Dialectic

In a nutshell the creed is based on an inherent assumption of scientific or natural explanation of the universe, governed by natural laws. Scienticism is also a watchword to guard against the idealistic tendencies, and normative ethics. The world is a factual world and can be known by employing scientific method. All pre-scientific explanations or descriptions are thus suspect in the very nature of the case. Like Auguste Comte the adherents of this creed show a willingness to leave behind both theological and the metaphysical stage of human development and to universally accept the dawn of a new era, the era of science. The whole idea is based on the logical priority of the material basis of existence. The fundamental order is material order. The class struggle is the necessary outcome of the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange which, in its turn, is the necessary outcome of the material structure of the world. History, thus, follows a pattern, not provided by any Divine agency, but determined by the material conditions in a given space and time. The inner dialectic is working itself out by successive steps with an inevitable logic. This is termed as dialectical materialism asserting a temporal priority of matter over mind, mind being an epiphenomenon. Thus, like the two previous attempts, dialectical materialism

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<sup>9</sup> Lenin, V.I., On Religion, P. 19.

is based on the same type of explanation of the phenomena of religion in human history. And if the grounds for the rejection of the psychological explanation are true the same may be true in regard to psycho-material explanation as well. The whole point lies in the above mentioned assumptions of dialectical materialism. To describe mind as an epiphenomenon of the processes of matter is to deny it as an independent activity, and to deny it as an independent activity is to deny the validity of all knowledge which is only a systematized expression of consciousness. As far as the assumption of the material nature of the world is concerned, which can be known by a scientific method alone (i.e. through sense experience) we can again best quote Iqbal who says " The question, then is, whether the passage to Reality through revelations of sense perception, necessarily leads to a view of Reality essentially opposed to the view that religion takes its ultimate character. Is Natural science finally committed to materialism? . . . It (science) is a mass of sectional views of Reality, fragments of a total experience which do not seem to fit together. Natural science deals with matter, with life, with mind; but the moment you ask the question how matter, life, and mind are mutually related, you begin to see the sectional character of the various sciences that deal with them and the inability of these sciences, taken singly to furnish a complete answer to your question. . . The moment you put the subject of science in the total of human experience it begins to disclose a different character. Thus religion demands the whole of reality and for this reason must occupy central place in any synthesis of all the data of human experience."<sup>10</sup>

Even if the so called scientific procedure is accepted and the ultimate nature of the world declared as material, and the logical priority of matter is granted, the question may be asked, does the marxist dialectic give a scientific account of nature and subsequently extract from this its moral and social ideal, or does it on the contrary pick and choose in nature precisely those phenomena which look as if they provide support for moral and social ideals

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<sup>10</sup> Iqbal: *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* pp. 41-42.

independently formed? According to the official doctrine, nature is an integral whole in which every part is conditioned by the other. The process of development in nature results in a series of changes in which some *insignificant* quantitative changes lead to rapid and abrupt quantitative changes. This movement *therefore* proceeds from the *lower* to *higher*, from *downward* to *upward*. Now a professedly scientific account does not and can not provide a vocabulary like "important", "higher", "lower" etc., a vocabulary that has been used in the official account of the philosophy of Dialectical Materialism by Stalin himself. The revolutionary *ideals* cannot be derived at all from the scientific study of nature. "The whole method of equating logical contradictions with opposing forces in nature, and with passage from the old to the new is a piece of mythology designed to support a political theory."<sup>11</sup>

In fact the whole argument can be very conveniently reverted. If in the process of dialectical development gradual quantitative changes produce abrupt qualitative ones, why can we not argue that gradual qualitative changes suddenly produce a new choir of heaven and a new furniture of earth. Neither argument has any validity, in so far as we remain true to the doctrine of scienticism. And no social and political change can be explained by this methodology.

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<sup>11</sup> H. J. Paton: *The Modern Predicament*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1955, p. 313.

# IQBAL ON THE CONCEPT OF IDEAL STATE

KAVI GHULAM MUSTAFA

From the very dawn of civilization right up to the present day, poets, philosophers, and political thinkers have been contemplating to establish an ideal state or society where men can live happily and beautifully with equal rights and privileges. Many have given formulae and prescriptions for the solution of this vexed problem, but none has been able to deliver the goods. Capitalism, Socialism, Communism, and many other 'isms' have appeared in the arena, but all of them have failed to give any relief to the suffering humanity. A wit has rightly observed: "All 'isms' have now become 'wasms'."

Against such a disappointing background, it is of special interest to study Iqbal's ideas about the establishment of an 'Ideal State' on Islamic ideology.

The idea of establishing a model state, providing equalrights, privileges and liberties for people, originated with the Greek philosopher Socrates. He first conceived the idea of establishing an "Ideal City" for the people of Greece. But he had some queer notions about his project. He said that men and women of his city should be placed on equal footing without any discrimination at all, so that their power and potentialities might have full and free play. He advocated community-life of citizens and was of the opinion that guardians should have wives and children in common, so that no one could know his father and mother and every one of the citizens could feel related and inter-linked with one another, as do the members of one family. He also recommended that the marriages and begetting of children should be regulated by the State, as such an important national problem should not be left for solution to the sweet will of the individuals. Then, again, his ideal city was to be Governed by "Philosopher-Kings", who could rightly be expected to turn away from this world of decay and to look upon the unchanging eternal world of ideas. His ideal city was thus in "heaven", and not in this



physical world. It was a city for gods and children of gods and not for men of flesh and bones. Slaves and barbarians also had no place in that blessed land.

The "Ideal State" of Plato was equally fantastic and impracticable. He improved upon the ideas of his master, Socrates, but, nevertheless, his own ideas were also wild and beyond the range of implementation.

The great sage of ancient China, Confucius, also thought of equal human rights. "Within the four seas all are brothers", was his assertion. But that was a pious wish and nothing more.

Great expressions of human rights have emanated from many other idealists and law-givers, but the "Ideal State" always remained a utopia with them.

We next find Locke, Hume, Rousseau, Voltaire and other political idealists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries formulating and developing a new social order. They propounded the theory of "Social Contract" and were of the opinion that the foundation of a society or state should be broad-based on mutual contract or on a give-and-take policy between the ruler and the ruled. The ruler must not behave in the way the shepherd treats his sheep, rather he should meet his people on an equal footing "Liberty, fraternity, and equality" should be the guiding principle of all social and political institutions. Such a contract, it can be asserted, was in existence from the very beginning of human history In the Old Testament, as also in the Holy Qur'an, we find frequent references to the "Covenant of God" made with the Jews and the Christians, as also with the Muslims. We also learn that the Jews and the Christians violated all covenants and did a lot of mischief to humanity. The following quotations will testify to it:

In the Old Testament, God says to Abraham:

"I shall establish my covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee; and I will give unto thee and to thy seed after thee the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the lands of Can'aan for an everlasting possession." (Gen. 17:7-8).

In this respect, the Holy Qur'an says:

"And when We made a covenant with the children of Israel.— But on account of their breaking their covenant, We cursed them and made their hearts hard; they altered the words from their places and they neglected a portion of what they were reminded of; and you shall always discover treachery in them excepting a few of them; so pardon them and turn away; surely Allah loves those who do good to others and with those who say we are Christians, we made a covenant, but they neglected a portion of what they were reminded of; therefore we excited among them enmity and hatred to the day of resurrection ; and Allah will inform them of what they did."

—(Al-Quran V: 12-14)

The "Kingdom of Heaven" that God desired to establish on earth was thus frustrated by the Jews and the Christians,

The building up of a State on the principles of 'Equality, Liberty, and Fraternity advocated by Rousseau and other political philosophers was, therefore, a far cry. The idea of 'Social Contract' was also not original with them. They only echoed the teachings and ideals of Islam which, in the meantime, spread far and wide in Europe, Africa and Asia and which must have influenced their mind and way of thinking.

But these revolutionary ideas, though not fully assimilated and put in their proper context, fired and inspired the popular mind in Europe and ultimately led to the French Revolution and there was an urge for social and political re-adjustment throughout the whole Europe. As a result, a new

political movement in the shape of Socialism came into being. This Socialist Movement contaminated many parts of Europe and ultimately culminated in its extreme form in Russia in the shape of Communism.

But even Communism has failed to build up an ideal State. It has been converted into a Dictatorship — not of the proletariat, but *over* the proletariat. An atheistic and materialistic view of life, absence of individual liberty and complete regimentation of thought and action are the dominating features of this new political cult.

The Modern World is sharply divided into two hostile blocs: *viz.*, Communist Bloc and the Capitalist Bloc, and they are at loggerheads with each other. Forces of chaos and confusion have been let loose and the world is in the vortex of constant tension, unrest and international dissensions. The League of Nations failed to restore peace and amity in the world. The United Nations is also going the same way. It has produced a "Declaration of Human Rights"; but its practical significance is meagre. It grants rights to other nations with some reservations. There is always a saving clause like "in so far as they do not conflict with the law of the State" or "subject to the requirements of public safety and order" or "so far as they do not conflict with public welfare". Such limiting clauses turn the sacred guarantees into ineffective phrases. Insincerity, hypocrisy, and treachery are thus the root cause of the frustration of all attempts of the peace organisations of the Western world. Is there no hope of any redemption, then ?

Iqbal says 'yes' to the question. He gives a message of hope to the trouble-afflicted world.

The 'Ideal State' of Iqbal is not a figment of imagination, but a historical reality. He has not propounded any new theory; he has only restated and re-oriented a theory that was put into practice fourteen hundred years ago. The 'Ideal State' of Iqbal is the 'Islamic State' of Muhammad (peace be on him) Hence, "back to the Qur'an" and "vision of a new Makkah" are the two principal motivating forces behind his poetry and philosophy.

Iqbal thinks that the Islamic State is the perfect form of Government, wherein individual and social life will be reared on most healthy and life-giving foundations. It is the '*vita nauva*' of all ills of humanity.

What is this Islamic State?

The Islamic State is a republican state based on the eternal verities of Islam and, therefore, of humanity. The model of this state was set up in Madinah by the Prophet Mohammad himself, (peace be upon him), who granted an International Magna Carta to all the Jews and the Christians and declared equal political rights and social justice to all.

Political consciousness has been flowing through two distinct channels: (i) Through the line of Israelities and (ii) through the line of Ismailites. The main stream which took its origin in Abraham was, after his death, bifurcated in this way. The Jews and the Christians fall in the first category, while the Arabs fall in the second. Historians have completely blacked out the social and political activities of the second group of mankind. They speak of Socrates, Plato, Rousseau and others, but never mention Muhammad (peace be upon him) or Islam or the part they played in the awakening of social and political consciousness among the people. The history of the first group from ancient times right up to the UNO is a history of failures and frustrations. They have failed to establish social equilibrium. Can covenant-breakers make fresh covenants with others? Can universal love and common brotherhood be expected from those people who hated and exploited other nations? Can they vouchsafe equi-distribution of wealth and property without recognising the Sovereignty of God over the universe and unity of mankind?

Iqbal does not, therefore, believe in the peace attempts of Western people because of this past history and tradition. He turns to the second and the only alternative source of remedy and redemption, viz., Islam, as it fulfils all the conditions of an ideal state. Islam believes in the unity of Godhead and unity of mankind; it assigns supreme sovereignty of all lands to the Almighty Allah, and not to the Kings or to the people; it aims at establishing

the "Kingdom of Heaven" on earth, it recognises the Vicegerent of Allah in the person of Muhammad (peace be on him), who came down to earth with the Qur'an as the Divine Code; it establishes a capital-city at Mecca which is still the Centre or Headquarters of the Muslim world. The Islamic State is thus a well-founded and well-organised entity and not a castle in the air. It is still a dynamic and progressive world force. It has got many other outstanding qualities and potentialities for building up a universal welfare state. Islam has no geographical frontier. It ignores all caste and class distinctions and gives exalted position to women and slaves and protection to minority. Charity and poor rate are compulsory and obligatory in it. It combines God and Universe, heaven and earth, spiritualism and materialism, communism and capitalism, church and the state and sword and the Qur'an.

With these ideas and convictions at the back of his mind, Iqbal explains as to how this ideal state can be strengthened and well-fortified. As the State is the highest form of society and as society consists of individuals, he first explains the relation between the Individual or Self and the Society. He says that self and society are relative terms; one cannot stand without the other. As an edifice cannot be perfect and beautiful if its units are defective and bad, so a Society cannot be ideal if its individual members are not ideal. He, therefore, starts with the 'Ego'. In his *'Asrar-e-Khudi'* he explains the secrets of the self. He lays much importance on the strengthening of the self and holds that a person is successful in life to the extent of the strength he commands. The degree of strength is thus the key-note of all differences and gradations between the high and the low, the rich and the poor and the perfect and the defective. How beautifully he says:

"When the mountain loses its self

It turns into sands

And complains that the sea surges over it.

Because the earth is firmly based on itself

The captive moon goes round it perpetually.

The being of the sun is stronger than that of the earth

Therefore is the earth fascinated by the sun's eye."

At another place he says:

"Only that truly exists which can say: I am,

It is the degree of the intuition of 'I-am-ness.'

That determines the place of a thing in the scale of being."

This Ego, he says, can be strengthened by communion with God who is the fountain-head of all power and success. Nearness to the God, therefore, indicates power to the Ego. The nearer is the individual to God, the stronger is he. But Iqbal does not support self-abnegation or absorption in God; rather he enjoins man to absorb God in himself. He says:

"Flee to God and being strengthened by Him

Return to thyself.

But the Ego or Individual has got no independent reality. In Islam, an individual is always envisaged as a member of the society. His 'I' is always a national "I". The Individual has no doubt, a permanent value, but it lives and moves in Society and has its being in society. It may be compared with the waves of the Sea:

"An individual owes his existence to the

Social cogency and is nothing alone,

The wave exists in the river and is nothing outside it."

In "*Ramuz-e-Bekbudi*", Iqbal has clearly explained the relation between the Ego and the Society. The following lines are worth quoting:

"The individual becomes strong when in society,  
The Society also gain; strength from the individuals  
Words have meaning and beauty if they are in rhymes.  
But they are meaningless if they are stray and loose.  
Does the spring come to that garden  
Where the green leaves forsake the branches of trees ?"

Iqbal denounces geographical nationalism and regards it as a menace to the ideals of Islam, which does not recognise native land to be the only basis of political solidarity. It was this perverted and misconceived concept of nationalism that was responsible for the last two great wars of Europe. Iqbal, therefore, advocates supra-territorial love of mankind. He says with a clarion voice:

"China is ours, Arabia is ours, India is ours.

Muslims are we, the whole world is ours."

This spirit of world-citizenship was best illustrated by the great Arab general, Tariq, when he destroyed his own fleet after landing at the shores of Spain. His soldiers remonstrated saying it was not wise of him to burn the last resource of going back to their native land, in case that eventually occurred. But the brave hero smiled with his sword in hand and said:

پر ملک ملک ما ست کہ ملک خدائے ماست

"All lands are ours because they belong to Allah."

Iqbal, therefore, warns the Muslims against the growing tendencies of nationalism, in blind imitation of the West. He says:

"The Muslims have built up a new Harem.

Wherein the '*Azar*' of modern civilization has supplied many idols

Among those living gods, the god of nationalism is the biggest.

Its attire is the shroud of our religion."

He then reminds the Muslims:

"The meaning of a Mussalman is that he will love everybody

He shall bind the entire world with bonds of fraternity.

Destroy all barriers of caste and creed, and declare the message of universal love,

So that there remain no Irani, no Turani, no Afghani."

He advises the Muslims to live like the fish of the river, now staying here, now staying there according to the exigencies of circumstances.

"If you confine yourself within the pond of your mother-land You will surely die.

Live like a free fish in the river."

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) acted upto this principle. He left his native land of Mecca and migrated to Medina where he found better opportunities to fulfil his mission. This corroborates the view that the realisation of ones' ideal or mission must be the *summum bonum* of ones' life, no matter whether he has got to forsake, his hearth and home and adopt another country as his native land.



A comparison of the pattern of this Islamic State with other social and political systems of the world, both past and present, will bring home the superiority of the former over the latter.

The Islamic concept of an 'Ideal State', as advocated by Iqbal, has a great bearing of far-reaching consequences for Pakistan. Pakistan has been formed and named just on the lines of Iqbal's thought and liking.

Pakistan has already shown a clear indication of its departure from the old pathway and is now creating a history of its own. While European political scientists declare that two territories cannot combine into a State if there is no contiguity between them, the Islamic political theory declares that no geographical barrier can stand in the way of unification of Mankind. While the poet of the West sings that "West is West and East is East; and never the twain shall meet." the poet of the East sings the song of unity and amalgamation of the West and the East. The birth of Pakistan with two wings, one about a thousand miles apart from the other, is a direct challenge to the political and ideological theories of the West. Western thought-leaders are still pursuing a policy of racial discrimination, dividing mankind into watertight compartments of caste, creed and colour. They have kept the church separated from the State. But here in Pakistan, the 'Church' and the State go hand in hand. A new experiment is thus going on with the ideals and teachings of Islam. Pakistan, therefore, marks a new epoch in the history of mankind. Pakistan has a mission to fulfil. Being the largest Islamic State in the modern world, it may first unite all the Muslim countries into an Islamic Commonwealth (because they are already trained and advanced in the same ideology and thought) and then may show the way to the entire world to come under the banner of the 'Horned moon'. It may lead to the establishment of a 'one-world' confederacy with Mecca as its Capital. Pakistan is thus destined to play a historic role on the political stage of the world. It may unite all nations and bring about a happy synthesis among the opposites and proclaim to the four corners of the world, the great Islamic message of universal love and brotherhood.

*"All mankind is a single nation".*

# PHILOSOPHY OF SELF AND THE NATURE OF SOCIAL EXPERIENCE.

A. H. KAMALI

Our examination of the Nature of Experience<sup>12</sup> in accordance with the Philosophy of Self shows that knowledge is a multi-level fact. Beginning as an ideation, it develops into perception; and passing through the activistic mode of formulation, it assumes new characteristics of disclosures in the Principle of Pathos. But it is in the Form of Revelation alone that it comprehends all the contexts of Being. Revelation designating the highest mode of experience transcending the categories of love-experience is grounded in an order which is comprised of inter-personal communication between egos. Consequently, in the nature of inter-subjective talk even of the 'Private Vacation' is given the ultimate matrix of all knowledge.

Philosophy of Self, therefore, is logically bound to develop a general theory of the inter-personal world as a necessary basis of its epistemology. Revelatory structure of knowledge, since it involves in its possibility the condition of social constitution of reality, presupposes social experience as its root-form of composition. Consequently, the epistemology corresponding to the Philosophy of Self is nothing short of the theory of social experience.

In the following paper, we make an attempt to analyse the social experience and bring forth its universal and necessary categories of composition. This sort of work has become all the more necessary because many philosophers who claim to represent the theory of self have failed to grasp the true nature of this philosophy on the score of social experience and have drowned the Philosophy of Self in the Philosophy of Ego. This discourse on social experience is expected to serve an essential purpose of clearly formulating the lines of demarcation between Idealism and our theory

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<sup>12</sup> *Iqbal Review*, October 1960

of Self, between metaphysical Monism and the world of inter-subjective existence.

## I

### THE THESIS OF EGOISM

Social experience is earmarked by the universal characteristic that it contains a logical reference towards other sentient beings. In designating an order of experience, it affirms the existence of a distinguishable subjectivity in logical opposition to the experiencing subject. Consequently, social experience is a presentation of the manifold of inter-subjective existence.

Egoism is that philosophical creed which denies the generic irreducibility of this species of experience and derives it from the germinal form of ego-experience; it is the class-name of all those philosophies which are based on the premise of the Unity of Subject and Object in the Act of Knowing. Here we are to examine the possibility of social experience on the basis of this philosophical premise of the nature of Knowledge.

#### *(a) A Stage of Universal Experience*

Egoism applies its own basic principle and construes Social Experience as a stage in the self-realisation process in which Universal Experience undergoes the ordeals of diversification in the forms of the limited centres of experience, impressing upon the ego as phenomenon of Society. The onward push of the Experience, *i.e.* the universalising process, cuts across the appearance of the multiplicity of selves and elevates the divided Experience to the ultimate Unity of Absolute Consciousness.

Phenomenal character of the Society and neumenal reality of the Ego-Experience are the cardinal principles in the dynamics of the Monistic Spiritualistic philosophies, whether of Spinoza or of Hegel. Von Hartman, Wundt, Munsterberg, Royce, Bousanquet, Croce and Gentile in their

treatment of the archetype of the Social Experience, adhere to the convention of the Monistic philosophies.

*(b) Multiple Personality*

The closest analogy to Social Experience, accordingly must be sought in the phenomenon of the multiple personality, in which the self breaks down to three, four or five centres of self-identity, memory, responses, ideations, and activities. Each centre, being an off-shoot of the dispersion of self-identity, develops into an isolated matrix of autonomy having history, character and attitude of its own appropriation. These smaller units, in which the real personality is spread, are disassociated from each other; and emerge as self-contained and independent wholes. What does this phenomenon imply? The experiencing ego is the same indivisible self which has lost its solidarity under the intolerable weight of many separate and mutually revolting rings of experience. Passing through a ring of experience, the ego becomes oblivious of other action-systems and their corresponding fringes of experiences. As a consequence, the ring, with which the ego is completely identified, falls apart from the general stream of life; and appears as an independent self-maintaining whole experience. Rings after rings are formed and separated. The one general life stream of a single ego is dissipated in many co-existing disassociated passages of experience, simply because the self suffers a loss of communication between various clustres of its experience. The phenomenon of the limitation of consciousness paves ground for the scatteration of personality in terms of many limited centres of self-existence which are discontinuous with each other. The ego acting in one centre, however, is the same which acts in others. All the acts have one identical referent, *i.e.*, "The Ego", in every independent gestalt-like entity of experience.

Psycho-pathological case studies report that the multiple personalities have a vague awareness of the alternate personalities. The ego in its identification with one configurate of experience due to the degeneration in consciousness, rejects other hinges of its own life as if they were aliens. At

every centre, it is vaguely aware of the presence of other loci of experience, yet falsely disown them as something other than his own contents. Thus, displaced identification and blurred consciousness are the essential logical principles beneath the phenomenology of the split up personality, which suffers from the delusion of many selves in opposition and alternation, although it is the same indivisible self acting in differing and narrow unities of the experience. Restoration of the self from the agonies of its wretched division makes possible its recovery from the night-mare of separate personalities, and deliverance from the hallucination of the plurality of conflicting egos.

Society, construed on the model of this pathological case, in the philosophy of Absolute Idealism, is a re-integration of all Universal Consciousness, which in its self-alienation process is wrecked into countless particles of limited consciousness, and parochial self-identifications. In the very act of self-consciousness, the Universal Experience is split up into "ego" and "not-ego". Not-ego is a determination, immanent in the very logic of self consciousness, which throwing out some portion of the Universal Experience from its limits, posits the former in opposition to the ego. Thus, the phenomenon of disintegration is grounded in the very dynamics of the Universal Consciousness. The scatteration of human person occurs only in two, three or at the most five or seven personalities. But here is the case of the Universal Consciousness. It is torn to pieces in billion and billions of particles.

In every dispersed particle, it is the same self but freezed in false identifications, anchored to illusive idealities. Multiplicity is a pathological stage in the life of the acting ego, but one which is necessary as a vehicle of its absolute realisation.

"In no other way is a spiritual world conceivable. Whoever conceives it as spiritual cannot set it up in opposition to his own activity in conceiving it. *Speaking strictly there can be no others outside us, for in knowing them and in speaking of*

*them they are within us.* To know is to identify, to overcome otherness as such. Otherness is a kind of stage of our mind, although which we must pass in obedience to our immanent nature, but we must pass through without stopping. When we find ourselves confronted with the spiritual experience of others, as with something different from which we must distinguish ourselves... it is a clear sign that we are not yet truly in their presence as spiritual existence, or rather that we do not see the spirituality of their existence."<sup>13</sup>

(c) *Unity of Acting Ego*

As Gentile puts it very clearly in above lines, the social experience has no genuineness in the Absolutistic philosophy. The multiplicity of selves in this philosophy, is analysable without remainder in terms of the Acting Ego which itself is unmultipliable. He further says, "If we think of our selves empirically as in time, we naturalise ourselves and imprison ourselves within definite limits, birth and death, outside of which our personality cannot but seem annihilated. But this personality through which we enter into the world of the manifold and of natural individuals... is rooted in a higher personality in which alone it is real.

*"I am not one of the elements of manifold, I am the one, the activity, which in itself is unmultipliable, because it is the principle of multiplicity."*<sup>14</sup>

*Thus, Absolutism completely dissolves the category of Sociation in the category of personality. This philosophy, then, has one task to perform, it traces out the historiography of the thinking from the stage of bare determination upto the heights of the Absolute Experience, wherein the spell of the plurality of spirits is completely dismissed. It is simply a philosophy of self-realization.*

Self-consciousness, dialectical in character, is differentiating and assimilating, it is, at once, alienation and unification, estrangement, and

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<sup>13</sup> Gentile, G: *The Theory of Mind As Pure Act*", Translated by Carr, H. W. P. 13.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid* P. 147, 149.

identification; and it is the only possible activity in the nature of reality. Cosmic stage is set in to unfold the enactment of the Drama of Self-development.

## II

### *The Nature of Thinking Act*

The thinking act dualizes the experience into subject and object. Self consciousness realises itself in the content of Experience. Posited in the very act of thinking, this self realization in the formation of and other, impels the self to negate and transcend it and return to the original indivisibility. By negating the determination, it regains the Universality. But, the thinking act, again expresses its dialectical and dualistic nature by positing the determinate Ideality, opposing the Reality of indeterminate Experience. Thus an eternal cycle from Reality to Ideality and from ideality to reality, from indeterminateness to determinateness and from determinateness to indeterminateness is set in motion. Experience identified with the articulate being returns back to the transcendental being, and united with the transcendental Being moves forward to the articulate Being. Limitation realizes itself in the Unlimited; the Unlimited discovers itself in the Limited. This structure is the archetype of the self-Conscious Experience which is reflected in every formation.

The above are the outlines of the idealism of Sheikh Ibn-al-Arabi.<sup>15</sup> The Archetypal Experience is the First Determinate sphere of Being, under the sphere of Universal Experience; which is Absolute Simplicity beyond distinction.

"He was observant of his own self", says Sheikh-al-Akber, "before manifestation, but this observance was not the same as observance of self in

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<sup>15</sup> Muhyi-D-Din Ibn 'Arab: *Fas-Shualiya: Fusus al Hikm.*



another. In the former case, there is no necessity for an external figure while in the latter there is."<sup>16</sup>

*(a) Personalism and Otherness*

Ibn-al-Arabi unequivocally holds that the Universal Experience is personalistic; it is the experience of an Ego, infinite and unbounded; it does not require an otherness for its being. Consequently, the nature of self-consciousness is not dualizing *i.e.*, it is not in its mode subject-knowing-object. His philosophy, then, may be called Personalistic Idealism as distinguished from Hegelianism which conceives that Universal Experience is not Personalistic and contends that Ego is Posited in the self-consciousness of the Experience which simultaneously formulates Not-Ego as its opposite. Bradley similarly conceives that ego, as a relative Being is posited in the process of relational thought and hence means a determination in the Universal Experience. Gentile also conceives it as a consequence of the Thinking Act which polarizes the Experience into the opposition of subject and object, Ego and Nature. Thus, Hegelianism is Non-personalistic or Absolute Idealism, in which ego is dependent on not-ego as against the personalistic outlook of Sheikh-Ibn-al-Arabi.

According to Ibn-al-Arabi, objective being is a lower category and constitutes self-knowledge of the Universal and Self-contained Ego in the mode of otherness. The Ego adequately reflects itself in the mode of otherness and the Adequate Other comes into being in a single Reflection (*Tajalli*). The Adequate Other is the self itself in the garb of the stranger. The Ego in its ideal self-alienation constitutes an instantaneous single perpetual emanation for Ibn-al-Arabi and Hakim Ishraque Shahab Suharawardy. This level of emanation constitutes the First Circle of Determinate Being; the circle comprised of the Perfect Self in its self-reflection giving rise to the Perfect copy. This is the First stepping down of the Universal Ego, who exists in his own right even before the coming into being of the copy.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.,

In Hegelianism, self-reflection is the only form of self-knowledge. Ego is made in subject-knowing-object act. The first self-reflection is constitutive of a self-determination which is simply a bare "Isness". It is so much weak that except a bare givenness nothing is intuited in it. Therefore, self-reflection completes itself in successive acts; the bare isness is accumulatively made richer in content and spread so that ultimately it is adequate enough to express what the self is. It is only at the absolute stage that the object is appropriate projection of the subject. It is, therefore, necessary to call this process of successive improvement in self-reflection a process of development. Contrasting enough, with Hakim-Ishraque and Sheikh-e-Akbar, it is the very first act which is complete and adequate. Consequently they do not call their philosophy Evolution. Here lies the essential point of departure between Personalism and Absolutism: the two varieties of Idealism.

For us, however, it is very much relevant to understand that the first Descent is not a separate Ego. It is the Universal Ego appearing other to itself, out of its own free will. Therefore, the Ego and its Reflection do not form a Society. They are plural in appearance and 'one' in reality.

The first circle of being is self-expression, and expression is self-estrangement and descension. The second circle of Being is further self-estrangement and differentiation. It constitutes the circle of Attributes; the self reflects itself in every possible attribute, in this second level of self-projection. Since, the self is beyond differentiation, its emanation in the differentiation, implied at this level, amounts to isolation and holding up all of its attributes. Every attribute so grasped is self in otherness, formulates Distinct self-determination and self-expression in the Context of the second circle. The copy being the self-in-otherness at the First level also reflects itself and expresses in distinctive emanations. These emanations are also distinct from each other forming the opposite arch of the Attributes, and thus complete the Circle of Attributes. Corresponding to every attribute of

the self-in-itself there is an attribute of the self-in-otherness at this stage of being.

The self in this manner descends and disintegrates itself. Primarily it divides itself under the veil of otherness, thence it further distributes itself in the divisions of the Prime Divisions. Every attribute is the self in determination which excludes other determinations, and is lit up separately. The world, at large, is the incessant illumination of these distinct 'lights'. The objective world is the mode of the reflections of these separations of the second circle. Therefore, it is a spread; every point of it excludes other points. The attributes are the vehicle of self; every attribute is a living reality; it is charged with ego, and therefore Egoism is the essence of their separate existence. It is in man alone that the separate attributes lose their autonomy; overcome their limitations; and move towards 'oneness'. Their separate ego assertions perish in the emergence of one single ego in the form of man. Man is the mirror of the second Circle of Being. All the attributes of the self-in-itself and the self-in-otherness are together in his essence. He may rise up to become the minor of the First Circle; for it is in him that the Ego and the otherness meet in detail. Universe is the permutation of the tiny, isolated, unconnected radiations of the first sphere through the mirroring of the Second. But the man is the incarnation of the unified and synthesized reflection of the Circle. In the existence of man the separate radiations abandon their separatist tendencies, subdue their conflicting assertiveness and transcend their limits. They are annihilated in their separations and live in the largeness of man.

Man, too, is a limitation which can obtain immortality by annihilating its separate egoism.

The principle of Expression and then the principle of Annihilation are the two processes in the nature of determinate reality. From the stand-point of descention the principle is emergence and differentiation, expression and alienation; from the side of the particulars the principle is mergence and

annihilation, divestment and identification. *The relationship between the self and its copy is self determination; the relationship between the copy and the self is self-annihilation.* Hakim Ishraque Suhrawardy holds that the light of the Lights (the Infinite self-conscious Ego) is *Quahir* (Determinant/Dictator) of the First Light; and the First light is the Lover of the 'Light of the Lights'. *In all Idealistic philosophies Love connotes self-divestment and ego-annihilation; and it pertains to the lower determinate strata of beings.* Therefore, in Spinoza 'God' does not love us, it is we who love him.

The very act of self-mirroring is the cause of two processes: differentiation and identification. Perpetuation of the shining forth (*Tajalli*) of the self perpetuates the processes, *the copy ceaselessly annihilates itself in the Real; and the Real continuously mirrors itself in the copy.* The same movements and counter movements pervade the second sphere of Being and sweep across the objective Universe which is the profused detailed and variegated shining forth of the former.

Hakim Ishraque, Avicenna, and Averroes have a slightly different schema from that of Sheikh-e-Akbar in their presentation of the order of Descention. They conceive descention as a successive and logical order of mirroring and re-mirroring through a chain of intermediary intellects. The act of self consciousness of the First Intellect (the adequate copy of the Universal Being) results in the appearance of another Intellect, which in turn causes a third intellect in its self consciousness. This schema approximates the Hegelian dialectical process in which the self articulates itself in successive and logical chains of determination in the process of self-realization.

The mirroring and remirroring, dissipating the self in the form of the outer universe, recaptulates itself in the phenomenon of Love. Avicenna and Rumi represent Love as the Cosmic process operating in every particular being. It is the sheer love which transforms the inorganic matter into the organic botanical life, and it is the impelling power of love which gives rise to

the animal Kingdom; and again it is love that from the animal human life emerges so that love becomes conscious of its objects and expresses untiring restlessness radiant in ceaseless longing that breaks through the veils of separation.

### III

#### *(b) Absolutism and Not-Ego*

Abdul Karim al-Jeili makes a radical departure from the convention of the Personalistic Idealism which takes descention as its necessary logical element. He builds it up on the principle of evolution<sup>17</sup> as a successive attempt which, moving through the dialectical patterns of activity, gradually approximates its true expression. Adequate self-consciousness is not direct and instantaneous. It is a wholesale movement; penetrates the lairs of Darkness (ignorance); makes its way through the twilight zone of Darkness and Light, and finally obtains complete self-illumination. It moves from a point to another point in progressive march; attains a degree of truth and renounces it advancing for the new one; receives a determination and obliterates it in a more comprehensive stage of determination. It is this formulation which gives his philosophy the colour of Modern Idealism. He is the first philosopher to state and formulate the dialectical Phenomenology of Mind, which becomes at the hands of Hegel the History of self-movement. According to his Dialectic, Self-Consciousness passes through three stages (1) *Abadiya* (2) *Huwija* and (3) *Aniya i.e.* (1) Oneness (2) Hisness and (3) I-ness. Thus it is ultimately the philosophy of Egoism, in which 'Hisness' is a transitory experience to be consummated in the mobility of self-experience *i.e.*, 'I-ness'!

#### *(c) Dialectical Law of Experience*

Idealism admits only one principle of Knowledge: resolution of object into the subject. Avicenna is categorical on the issue that object is united with

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<sup>17</sup> Jili, Abd 'L-Karim: *'Insan-e-Kamel: al Muqudima:* P 4-24.

the subject in the act of knowledge. This principle is not only epistemical but ontological, hence the germinal law of Reality.

*The object is perished in the expansion of the subject and passes over from the being-for-other (ANDERSSEIN) to being-in-itself (ANSICHSEIN).*<sup>18</sup> Hegel propounds the thesis that 'something' is inherently self-contradictory; "it is and *is not*; and therefore, it changes to become, waxes to overcome its nothingness. A thing perishes, and its perishing is not merely contingent, so that it could be without perishing." The process continues unstopped, till finally in the actualisation of Notion, it receives the concrete intensity of the subject. Notion connotes absolute self-determination. "The Notion, in so far as it has advanced into such an existence as is free in itself, is just the ego or pure Self-Consciousness."

The process of self-movement posits every condition and external presentation as its own movement. *This is the dialectical law of all experience: Otherness is a passing phase of a determination wherein it is governed from outside; in self-realising it is negated and reshaped as phases of self-determination.*

Social experience, to apply this philosophy, is transcended in self-experience. *Social Experience is essentially self-contradictory; it is self-experience and is not self-experience. It is partially determined by internality and partially by an externality. The self-expanding surge overwhelms the external determination and modifies its structure to make it a moment in the all embracing dynamics of self-determinations.* The limits are in one single subjectivity, which is self-controlled and self-existent.

Schelling, who starts from the matters of fact, reads demonstrations of the Identity of Being in the presentations of social experience. He departs from Hegel on the score of latter's apriorism. Hegel is occupied with the Abstract, and tries to trace out the whole course of reality from Notion to the concrete actuality. Schelling advocates a reversal of the process, and remarks, "if we had only a choice between empiricism and the despotic

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<sup>18</sup> Hegel, Fredrich: *Science of Logic*: Vol. I., Trans: Johnston, W.H. Pp. 85-90.

apriorism of extreme rationalism, no free mind would hesitate for empiricism."<sup>19</sup>

Empirical Orientation of Idealism means a change of starting point, a methodological innovation of first magnitude, a radical metamorphosis in the remiss tradition. In the recognition of concrete events, Idealism has to pay adequate attentions to matters of fact and has to perform a new job, the explanation of immediate experience. It was a work very poorly done in the classical tradition. Now, Idealism has to put at its disposal physical, psychological, social and other experiences as necessary data for philosophising. Such is the florescence of the revolution successfully thought about by Schelling in the name of the Positive philosophy (which should be distinguished from Comtean Positivism).

However, contemporary Idealism, instead of making airy allusions towards social events, tries to grapple with them directly; and many of the idealistic thinkers like Tonnies, Simmel, Sombart and Spann have made some of the most resonating contributions to the social sciences.

*Idealistic approach with empirical bias in its analysis of social experience, visualizes a glimmering of the ontological nature of reality, of the all pervading Identity of Being.*

Fechner<sup>20</sup> contends that each of us is aware of *multifarious sensations, strivings and feelings*; everyone of them negates the other. Their active intercourse, opposition and harmony, discord and compromise, is only possible on the ground that they are contained in one common consciousness of the Individual Ego. *They form small bits of the ego which is in them and also beyond them making possible their mutual relations and interactions; otherwise, they would not find each other neither check nor advance each other. Similarly, our individual human minds are contained in a super mind; they cannot depart from their individual positions, drift from their course and develop mutual*

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<sup>19</sup> Marcuse, Herbert: 'Reason and Revolution' Part II, P. 323f.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.,

relations if they are not conditional by this Universal common reality which connects them all.

Lotze<sup>21</sup> maintains that *if individual beings are not grounded in a unity, interaction among them is unintelligible*. Individual persons act upon each other by participating in the unity of absolute being. Hartman conceives social life as an emancipation from the fits of the will which has dashed off the undifferentiated stillness of the primeval reality of unconsciousness, in which it was indistinguishable from the Idea. The tread of the will in motion is demobilised in expanding consciousness, a task which is carried out in the multiplication of individuals. By dividing itself in the Swarming individuals, the will is tainted with feign weakness and is caught up in the meshes of growing ideas, which would finally dilapidate it by the redemption of Quiescence in the indistinct existence. An individual is a will to himself, and an idea to the other, two individuals would mean two wills, and two ideas, but three individuals are three wills and six ideas: the number of ideas to the number of will pieces is  $n(n-1)$ . The finiteness of will succumbs to the infinity of ideas.

Hartmann<sup>22</sup> represents a synthesis of Idealism and Voluntarism, Schelling and Schopenhauer. Voluntarism differs from Idealism in respect of the 'content' of reality; the former conceives 'consciousness' and the latter 'striving' as the ultimate principle of existence, otherwise both are monistic in character. Consequently, Schopenhauer and Bergson are convinced that the individuals are expressions of the oboriginal striving, and in the experience of mutual communion, they forfeit their individuality, and gradually melt in the cosmic principle of collective existence.

#### IV

##### *Identification: The Nature of Social Experience in monism*

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.,



To these monistic philosophies and their different varieties, the essential core of social experience is concealed in the phenomenon of identification. Fichte's words 'if there are to be human being at all, there must be a plurality of them. So soon as fully define the concept of human being, we are impelled to pass beyond the thought of the individual, and to postulate the existence of a Second, for thus only we can explain the first'<sup>23</sup> very substantially set forth the spiritual Monistic ideology of experience down to the present day.

*The limited human ego logically presupposes another human ego and as such is logically dependent on an alter-ego.* This statement posits the organic view of society entrenched in Absolutistic traditions. It destroys the notion of self-sustained, self-propelling, and self-centered character of human individuals and points out that by nature they are bound to pass beyond their limited and self-contradictory determinations towards something higher. This passing beyond according to Monism, opens the perspective of social experience.

Social experience is a development out of the stage of atomic dispersions, in which everyone excludes the other, and every particular life is engulfed in the conceit of being all in all. This limited egocentric experience is outmoded in self-examination, which untiringly stirs up commotions against the wretches of bounded existence. The ego is bent upon to blot it out but comes to know that his bounds are social limits, he is in oppositions to other individuals; and this vision makes the first thin fulguration of social experience. *All the individuals try to outlive the opposition betaking them. Abandoning their confluent warp and weft, departing from their splintery strivings, they come closer to each other; outspan their lithic particularities and melt into each other. Their mutual fusion coverages into a self-identical unity, which accomplishes itself in the growth of a social mind and formation of a collective will.* It is the height of social experience, but it is no more social; there is no multiplicity of individuals. *It is, nonetheless, one single individuality in which all the oppositions are petrified as an imposing content of one continuous subject.*

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<sup>23</sup> Fichte: *Collected Works*.

(a) *The Logic of Time*

If there are two individuals A and B; they are antithetical to each other. *A is a presentation to B, and B is an idea to A. This apprehension is external; never touches upon the core of the spiritual otherness which delimits self-hood.* Consequently, the experience does not come across a living individual, it is in possession of a dead nature. This naturalness pronounces a very primitive experience, which notoriously

proclaims every presentation as empty of life stream. This experience is superficial; does not convey the depth of the opposition; misses the texture of the inner continuity; fails to contact with the living dynamics of the given, and plays up with it in obedience to the static laws of formal logic. This apprehension is not concrete but abstract,<sup>24</sup> because it is given as 'posited' and 'finished' structured and completed; it stands confronting the subject divorced off the movement of life in the act of envisioning. It is distanced and spatialized, hence is intelligible only in *the logic of Space*. But as soon sentience leaps into the immediate life flow of the acting subjectivity, it swims in the logic of time; it is now apprehension as becoming, knowledge as positing and sentience as structuralizing. Real Experience is *ringing inwardness surging forth in perpetual change, which does not admit segmentation. Only in this flux of immediate life, in pure Time and Duration,*<sup>25</sup> *in unimpeachable wholeness which is experiencing intuiting acting and doing one immediately dives and thrusts into the very heart of the life-crust that is held as a mere presentation to the external spatial knowledge. Total self-abandonment to pure Duration, at once, implies shunning off the externality, embarkation from fixation and validiction to formality.* Negation and departure open the gateway to the immediate merge with the Life-Force, that throbs beneath the dead forms and agitates in spatial distances. Being one with immediacy, A intuites A-ness and B-ness as external vehicles of the life-flow. Now the subject of experience ceases to be A; it is the life itself which

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<sup>24</sup> C. H. Cooley: *Social Theory and Social Research*, pp 289-3C9.

<sup>25</sup> Bergson, Henri: *The Creative Mind* Ch. VI. Section VI to VIII.

is experiencing its ramifications in the moulds of A and B. Similarly, B in his self-divestment says good-bye to B-ness and returns to the life-flux which has contrived A-ness and B-ness and radiates through them. *It is the Logic of Life which governs the Ontology of Social experience. A and B, consequently, both are negated and both are united in a super-life flux, completely merged in a deeper reality, which is consciousness and conation, knower and maker; it is one continuous acting subjectivity.*

(b) *Collective Ego*

It is this method of knowledge and mode of reality in which all the presentations are clipped off their spatiality, and every life form is merged with others in the formation of a collective ego which is the highest the richest and the most durable Reality. To it alone belongs the 'specious presence'.

'Collective ego', 'general will' or 'social Mind' is not the sum of the individuals, nor is it the similarity of strivings, nor does it imply the consensus of views. It is outrightly a self-consistent self-identical ego directly enjoying its own experience, moving according to its own volition and governing its own forms of activity.

The above exposition is a resume of the meaning of Social Experience as generically implied and vouchsafed in the philosophy of ontological Monism. Social Experience accordingly, is a consciousness of higher self-individuality and society is posited as the higher ego.

This view is to be contrasted with the general outlook of Enlightenment. Humanism of that period discovered in individual human person an 'intrinsic value' and conceived human society on the pattern of a contract. It denied to Society a position of its own, and took it as an aggregation of individual persons under the law of Reason. The Rationalistic philosophy of enlightenment was interested in the rational shaping of human life, which

could be corroborated in the contrivance of intelligent contracts. Thus, the position was Social Nominalism and Individualism.

Philosophical Monism, which succeeded Humanism of the Enlightenment Period, as a reaction against its over-optimistic Rationalism under the impulse of Romanticism, although, is a tremendous advancement in its admission that society is never a sum of individuals neither is comprised of the contracts of the individuals yet could not rise up to conceive in society an unfolding of a quite distinct order of being, and consequently equated it with the imagery of a super-individual. In defence of the irreducible character of the social experience, it merely designates a higher centre of experience and thereby reduces Society to Personality. Consequently *there is no formal difference between Individualism and Collectivism; both of them take the egocentric experiences as frame-works of systematization and explanation of the social facts; both of them involve social Nominalism rather than Social Realism.*

*(c) Socialization in Monism*

Spiritual Monism picks up, as we have examined above, in the phenomenon of identification the Kernel of social experience. The degree of identification between the individuals itemizes the extent to which socialization is operative. *Total identification and complete unification for the spiritual Monists, singularizes the culmination of social formation which rules out even the minutest pocket of lock out existence.* The principle of Identification which is the ground process in spiritual Monism of the composition of social phenomena consequently becomes the Rule of Construction of the Social experience. Dissolution of the other in identification with oneself institutes the necessary and universal methodology of social knowledge according to the basic premise of this philosophy. The object is unified with the subject and the self

is projected into the other in the act of knowing. This methodology is acclaimed by Dilthey<sup>26</sup> as the "Philosophy of Understanding."

But does it really refer to social phenomenon? Does Identification formulate the essence of social experience?

## V

### **Examination of the Principle of Identification**

Hegel defines the Real as the Totality of Negations. Social Mind in its highest, is the Reality which institutes the Totality of the Negations of individual minds.

Concerned with the individuals and their progressive negations in a developing Ego-unity, Egoism, thus hits beyond the marks, for Society does not lie in the negations of Individuals, but in their affirmation. It is a system, which obtains between the individuals. We hold that *Realization of the unitary Ego is the very antithesis of social formation. Consequently, the process of identification cannot be the essential component of social experience.* To demonstrate this view; it is necessary to apprehend the class-characters of the social experience.

#### (i) *The Character of Social Experience*

Monistic theory does not distinguish between the knowledge of other individual and the social experience; and reduces the latter to the knowledge of other minds. It conceives a field of experience, wherein some breach has occurred, with the consequence that pieces of experience are sprinkled here and there. The drops of experience, so spread, are the individuals. Their only connections are gaps in knowledge rather absence of the continuity of experience. They stand to each other in this discontinuity, so that everyone is a natural (lifeless) presentation to other experiencing point. It is in the

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<sup>26</sup> Dilthey, Wilhelm: *From Fragment*, G.S. VII, Pp. 191-192. and Hodeges, H.A.: *'Wilhelm Dilthey' An Introduction'*; P. 114.

identification process, accordingly, which restores the continuum, that each individual sets aside his claim to be a self-contained whole and moves forward to become one with others. It is in this becoming one with other, unity and identification, that the external presentation is intuited in its expressiveness of one single selfhood. These are the implications of the monistic philosophy and exactly in them it may be discerned that identification horribly misses the essence of Social Experience.

*Social Experience is not the knowledge of other minds, rather it is an apprehension of the relationships which bind one another; the attention in its experience is not directed upon the individuals, but upon the connections which are between them. The individuals, in social experience, are relegated to the relative periphery of the attention field; only their mutual links and bonds capture the central position.* It is not necessary in Social Cognition that we must know what the individuals are between whom the connections are found. The only thing of importance is to cognize the network of connecting wires that are spun from person to person and *vice versa*. It is not A's knowledge of B, it is his awareness of 'A-B' relation (and its reverse) which embraces the social experience. Similarly, it is B's awareness of the 'A-B' relations which is involved in his social experience.

This experience means that A and B distinctly hold themselves up in face of each other; they do not lose their individuality; nor do they deny the intrinsicity of otherness which pertains to each other. *It is on the basis of mutual recognition that the experience of mutual relationship is built up. Consequently, identification is something which is quite foreign to the nature of social experience.*

#### (ii) *Refutation of Identification in Love Experience*

Monistic philosophies grant a special treatment to the facts of Love, and contemplate in its expressions the most general form of union of which all other forms of social life are particular exemplifications. They claim to find out cases of self-negation in the phenomena of Love, and thereby

demonstrate the Law of Identification as the central principle in the nature of social system.

Love, being a relation, presupposes at least two individuals who must be distinguished and separate from each other; and between whom it should stand as a connection. *Since, there is love, there is multiplicity of individual existence.* Mutual distinction is inviolable, and it is this principle which is integral to the Love-experience. The lover, as he advances on the path of love becomes more and more aware of the distinctive otherness towards which he is moving, and this revelation gives him an ever increasing impetus to still deeper and impassionate movement towards the one, he idolizes. The rising surge of eros intensifies the intrinsic opposition inherent in the mutual exclusion and consolidates the distinct individualities given in the nature of the Lover and the beloved. Even in companionship and closeness, love is unaccustomed to peace and tranquility; direct and unmediated presence sharpens the immeasurable otherness of the beloved and stirs up the glowing heart. The lover nourishes the distinction, sustains the discrimination and shields the difference. He is the one to whom the glory of separation is most thoroughly revealed.

*(a) Vivacious Otherness*

It is the experience of vivacious otherness, and not of supine unity which occupies the unfathomable depths of love experience.

*The absorbent never loosens his identity and never does he replace himself for his beloved.* The heaviness of experience exercises otiosity in his life. It happens that the bearer of experience goes far advance in his way, withdrawing himself from all other things; his thought and mind are gravitated to the shining forth of the beloved drifting him away from all other presentations in its constant display. Now, he becomes oblivious to the *Masiva* (all else) in his absorption in the one. The absorbed does not give himself up; he is not lost; his identity is not liquified; he is merely inattentive to every thing else. It is this withdrawal of attention which is wrongly pronounced as the

phenomenon of identification. The pinnacle of Love is reached in the direct communion, face to face contact with the beloved, and it is the privilege of a devotee that he shares the secrets of companionship.

*(b) I and Thou*

'The most elevated and loftiest rung of love' I hold 'commands the towering category of 'I and 'Thou' relationship'. Love starts, when the beloved is far away, and is merely He; its immeasurable heights are reached, when 'He' becomes the unmediated 'Thou'. It is here that devotion steals away its final march ever deviation. As I have said somewhere else 'I and 'Thou' are unbridgable gulf, corresponding banks, irreducible positions, and unmistakable status, and no other than the worshipper knows it better.

The principle of self-love, which keeps one a beloved of oneself, is transcended in the position of an absorbent. He is a complete lover. *A clear cut distinction, a very sharp division, a very bright demarkation of positions, Lover and Beloved, crystallizes in the progressive blossoming of Love in the life of an individual.* The ultimate revelation and disclosure is that of this discrimination and difference, duality and separation; and the lover does not allow it to be dismissed or confused.

*(c) Denial of Mergence*

Sheikh-e-Akber Ibn-al-Arabi, monist in ontology, is not only a philosopher, but a sufi shaped in the concretion of Love experience. In a very forceful tone, he denies *Hulul* (Unification) and says that the '*Abd* (servant) never becomes identified with God; there is no finality (*le Nahaiyat*) to the levels of '*Abdiyyat* (Servitude) and no finality is also there to the stature of *Ma'budiyyat*<sup>27</sup> (Mastership). *Abd* and *Ma'bud* are the heighest corresponding categories, the ultimate truths, which

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<sup>27</sup> Walliudin, Mir Dr. '*Quran Aur Tassawuf*'.



are revealed to the one, who has travelled in the path of Love. These categories involve distinction as essentialised in mutual otherness. Between them is a delineation irreplaceable; a delimitation uncorruptible.

The category of Otherness (*Ghairyyyat*), holds Sheikh-e-Akber, constitutes the ultimate link between the Universe and God, Man and his Creator, Lover and the Beloved. It makes the ultimate character of the relational order and there is no *Hulul* (unification) between these separations.

But what is the nature of this 'Otherness' ? It is on this issue, that the Sheikh is not conceptualising his own intuitive experience, but is engaged in speculative philosophising. He is talking about a realm not open to his experience. It is here that the indomitable sufi assumes the role of a conjecturing theoretician.<sup>28</sup> He suggests that it is the 'One' who appears dressed in otherness and it is this view we criticise as it renders impossible the social experience, invalidates even the experience given to the Sheikh himself. *It makes the 'Abdiyyat a mode of the Ma'budiyyat: and the lover that of the beloved: and renders the rhythm of love a thoroughbred delusion.* We stress on the point that if love relation has reality then this speculative philosophy of 'self-in-otherness' is unreal; if it is true, then the former is false. *The logical consequences of the Monistic Philosophy of the 'self-in-otherness' are nothing short of HULUL, which relegates the intuitive grasps of the unmistakable otherness in love to the sphere of unreality.* Abdul Karim al-Jili, like Sheikh-e-Akber, distinguishes his philosophy from the encroachments of HULUL, and reiterates that the servant remains the servant, however, enhanced he has become, and the master remains the master, however, close he may look. This reaffirmation of the distinctiveness between the two ultimate terms of the system of reality sets a limit to his own dialectical principle, which conceives the movement of the reality and experience as transformation of 'He' (¬HUSVIYAT) into 'I' (ANAIYYAT). The principle of movement must be, indeed, rephrased: 'He' descends to be

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<sup>28</sup> Nicholson, R.A.' *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*' Pp 152-53, and Affiti, A.E: *The Mystical Philosophy of Muhyid 'Arabi*', P. 141.

'Thou' and his descension is the ascension of self movement. Consequently reality does not move to organise itself as a single Ego-structure; it progressively marches forward as a system of plurality. al-Jeli recapitulates the soaring heights of the *Insan-i-Kamel* in his installation at the rank of '*Abd*' in the presence of the sublime Master. The ultimate form of reality, disclosed in the path of love, is a *Nisbat* (Affinity) between individuals under the definitions of the Servant and the Master. Al-Ghazali denies mutual fusion between the two terms of the NISBAT, and intuits that the supreme one is linked in the relation without being fused in the other (alter) *i.e.* the Obedient. Ruler and the Obedient are the ultimate Form of Reality, for Ghazali, in the articulations of Love and processes of becoming.

Thus the vibrations of love are engendered in the irrevokable marking off the positions; it is always posited as a bond between two distinct individuals, and the lover becomes the most disciplined, sensitive, and iron will to defend the holiness and protect the sublimity of his dear most. *It is not unity of being, but duality of existence, which is the structural law of the profound character of love.* It is the category of Mutual Otherness which is the universal principle laid down in the mysteries of love. (Almujaddid) Ahmed Sirhindi refuses to go beyond the evidences of experience, and consequently, he formulates in language what he had found in his mystic journeys. His critique of the idea, *that Otherness is Self-in-Otherness*, is lively and refreshing. He says that such a speculation *is a false and loose play with the concept of Otherness.* Its idealisation to be a mode of self-existence totally overshadows its worth and completely extenuates its givenness. *'Otherness and 'mutual exclusion' are facts of the reality.* Otherness, in its being actual and genuine, is a real invention ( $\equiv A$ ), an incontestible creation (*Kbulque*). It is the invention and creation of God, *Those who deny the reality of otherness really mitigate the element of novelty and the piece of originality in the Universe, and thereby deny a perfection (KAMAL) to Divinity. Multiplicity is not phenomenal it is a commandment (AMR) of God and so it is there.* God transcends it and transcends everything that exists (and by implication every existing entity transcends every other thing).

It is in this philosophy that love becomes a real relation, a genuine link between the separate and living existing individuals. *The living individuals transcend each other in their individual essence and as such mutual coalescence, mutual amalgamation is ruled out from the nature of their community.* The individuals are not planted into each other, it is their mutual love which takes root in their separately throbbing hearts.

## VI

*Mutual Otherness: Structural Principle of Social Experience* Consequently, *love if granted the status of arche type of social experience, does not prove the case of identification.* On the contrary, it demonstrates the thesis of dualization; it flourishes on the repeated and recurrent affirmation of mutual transcendence; and ceases to exist as any side of the experience, lover or the beloved is denied.

"Love calls explicitly for an understanding entry" writes down Max Scheller, "into the individuality of *another* person distinct in character from the entering self, by him accepted as such, and coupled, indeed, with a warm and whole-hearted endorsement of 'his' reality as an individual, and 'his' being what he is. This is profoundly and profoundly expressed by the Indian Poet Rabindranath Tagore, when he depicts the sudden revulsion from (erotic) subjection and the yearning for the willing self-devotion of love:

Free me from the bonds of your sweetness, my love.

I am lost in you, wrapped in the folds of your caresses.

Free me from your spells, and give me back the manhood Offer you my heart.

This giving and receiving of freedom, independence and individuality is of the essence of love. And, in love, as it gradually re-emerges from the state

of identification, there is built up, within the phenomenon itself a clear cut consciousness of two distinct persons."<sup>29</sup>

Iqbal pronounces in clear terms, "it is with the irreplaceable singleness of his individuality that the finite ego will approach the infinite ego to see for him the consequences of his past action and to judge the possibilities of his future. The unceasing reward of man consists in his gradual growth in self-possession, in uniqueness, and intensity of his activity as an ego. And the climax of this development is reached when the ego is able to retain self-possession, even in the case of a direct contact with the all-embracing Ego, As the Qur'an says of the Prophet's vision of the Ultimate Ego: "His eye, turned not aside, nor did it wander!"<sup>30</sup> (53:17)

Thus, Mutual Otherness is the defining category of the structure of Social Experience. It defines a relational order, which persists between individual persons; and does not remain social as soon as it lapses into a Unitary experience. Love, hate, sympathy, fellow-feeling, etc. are relational. Monistic philosophies have an irreversible tendency to deny or explain away relations. Their notion of Negation is a denial of the relational character of reality; and as such by their very nature they are disqualified to have an access to the essential nature of social experience, and by implications to the nature of revelation.

Royce says, " .. none of us finds it easy to define the precise boundaries of the individual self, or to tell wherein it differs from rest of the world, and in particular, from the selves of other persons.

"But to all such doubts our social commonsense replies by insisting upon three groups of facts. These facts combine to show that the individual human selves are sundered from one another by gaps which *as* it would seem, are in some sense impassible.

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<sup>29</sup> Scheller, Max: *The Nature of Sympathy*'.

<sup>30</sup> Iqbal, Mohammad, Dr: *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*'.

"First, in this connection, our common sense insists upon the empirical sundering of the feelings — that is, of the immediate experience of various human individuals.... As a fact the sufferer does not feel the sufferer's pain....

"The facts of the second group .... 'one man', so says our social common sense, 'can only indirectly discover the intentions, the thoughts, the ideas of another man' ....

" ....We are individuated by the law that our trains of conscious thought and purpose are mutually inaccessible through any mode of direct intuition ....

"The third group of fact ....no other man can do my deed for me. When I choose, my choice coalesces with the voluntary decision of no other individual." Royce develops an idea of community and concludes, " .... the selves sundered by the chasms of social Vond, should indeed not interpenetrate .... there would be no melting together, no blending, no meptic blur, and no lapse into mere intuition."<sup>31</sup>

The fulfilment of the law of Mutual otherness lays down the ultimate foundation of the possibility of social experience and the realization of social order in the nature of Reality. This order in its turn, becomes the ground of the structure of Revelation in consonance with the Philosophy of self as distinguished from all modes of Spiritual Monism like Egoism, Absolute Volunterism and Idealism.

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<sup>31</sup> Royce, Josiah: *'Christianity and Individual'* Lectures No. VII to X.

# AN EVENING—ON THE BANKS OF THE NECKAR

BY DR. MUHAMMAD IQBAL

TRANSLATED BY A. D. AZHAR

Quiet is the moonlight;

Quiet the twigs of the trees;

Quiet the "tune-sellers" of the vale;

Quiet the "green-robed" of the hills.

Nature is inebriated,

Asleep in the lap of the night.

Such magic has silence wrought

That e'en the ramble of the Neckar is motionless.

Quiet is the caravan of the stars—

A caravan that moves without the tinkle of the bells.

Quiet are hill, river and dale:

Nature, you might say, is in obeisance.

O my (beating) heart! Thou too be quiet;

Hug thy melancholy and sleep.

# IQBAL'S CONCEPTION OF SATAN

YUNUS M. SAID

To represent Iqbal's concept of Satan, one has to comb through his works and select bits and pieces. On these bits and pieces one can build up the skeleton and pad it with interpretation and explanation. I have chosen this subject because for a general understanding of Iqbal's philosophy or poetry, a lot depends on his concept of Satan. It is his Satan — a product of his mind and imagination, carved and chiselled out of the ancient legends of the Fall of Man, and the preconceived ideas of Good and Evil. His concept of Satan reflects to a very large extent on his conception of God and man; Satan being the inevitable cause of this eternal drama of life.

This most fascinating living character appealed to the poetic sensibilities of Iqbal; a character as old as time itself, as defiant as nothing that the Universe has ever known or will ever know; a being given to fierce condemnation, cursed by God and man alike; a being who has within him the absolute notions of evil and without him the absolute notions of good. Hero or villain? That indeed is the question. Is Satan the hero of the eternal drama of life? Villain of course. Villain for ever. All his undeniable splendour and majesty cannot wash away his sin. He will remain the villain of the piece because he revolted against love and not against sheer power. Surely it was a revolt against love because if we believe that Almighty is all powerful, it also follows that he is all love. Without all love, all power is inconceivable.

Milton was carried away completely by

"What though the field be lost?

All is not lost — the unconquerable will."

This defiance which has absolutely no parallel, appealed to Iqbal in an overwhelming fashion. But, he could not make a hero out of Satan. Not in so

many words. He described him in all his glorious dimensions of dignity and heroic endurance. He robed him in the turbulent grandeur of Hell. He clothed him in magnificent images of greatness, sublimity, dauntless courage and determination. But his purpose was at odds with his imagination. His purpose, as declared by Milton himself, was 'to justify the ways of God'. So he pointed out Satan's folly in fighting against Omnipotence — a folly which swallows up even the slightest trace of heroism, because all degrees of power become equally futile against all power. Milton condemned him as 'the infernal serpent', 'the subtle fiend', 'the spirit malign', 'the evil one', 'the Prince of darkness'. But in the picture of omnipotence, Milton's imagination failed, as human imagination must. He painted Heaven as a lecture room. His Omnipotence is anything but impressive when He delivers a thesis on Predestination and Free Will. The Omnipotent, in his scheme, seeks to justify himself and in doing so, he creates doubts in our minds whether Lucifer had some excuse to doubt His Omnipotence and Omniscience. In the background of this, it hardly looks absurd when Satan, cast down to Hell, half-persuades himself that only thunder has made his enemy greater.

Though a great poet, Milton is not a great philosopher by any means. His conception failed him when he needed it most. In *Paradise Lost*, Milton produced great poetry but he confounded the theme, because, as I have already pointed out, his purpose was at odds with his imagination.

Milton's Satan suffers pains, — pains confessed as 'utter misery'. Milton's Satan is also a coward; a defeated angel who cries and groans like a bashed up wrestler. Milton's Satan, after his externment from Heaven, casts his first look at Hell and screams,

"Is this the region, the soil, the clime?

Then said the lost archangel,

'Is this The seat that we must change for Heaven,



'This mournful gloom for that celestial light.' "

Iqbal's Satan has almost forgotten the celestial light. He is intoxicated by his own dissipation. He derives pride from the fact that he has none else but God as his enemy. He most certainly prefers to stay in this world of ours than to go back to Heaven.

In his poem *Gabriel and Satan*, Gabriel puts a direct question to Satan, "whether a reconciliation is possible." To which Satan replies, "It is no longer possible for me to live in your soundless, actionless world."

Says Gabriel, "You have insulted us all in the eyes of God by your refusal." Satan's reply to this is classic. These lines are immortal, and shall live as long as there is life on this planet:

ہے مری جرات سے مشمت خاک میں ذوق نمو

م میرے فتنے جامہ عقل و خرد کا تار و پو

دیکھتا ہے تو فقط ساحل سے رزم خیر و شر

کون طوفان کے طمانچے کہا رہا ہے میں کہ تو

خضر بھی بے دست و پا الیاس بھی بے دست و پا

میرے طوفان یم بہ یم دریا بہ دریا جو بہ جو

گر کبھی خلوت میسر ہو تو پوچھ اللہ سے

قصہ آمد کو رنگیں کر گیا کس کا لہو

سیں کھٹکتا ہوں دل یزدان میں کانٹے کی طرح

تو فقط اللہ ہو اللہ ہو اللہ فقط

But in Man's pinch of dust my daring  
spirit has breathed ambition,  
The warp and woof of mind and reason  
are woven of my sedition.  
The deeps of good and ill you only  
see from lands far verge:  
Which of us, is it you or I, that  
dares the tempests, scourge?  
Your ministers and your prophets are  
pale shades: the storms I teem  
Roll down ocean by ocean, river by  
river, stream by stream!  
Ask this of God, when next you stand  
alone within His sight---  
Whose blood is it has painted Man's

long history so bright?

In the heart of the Almighty like a

pricking thorn I lie;

You only cry for ever God, oh God,

oh God most high!

(Tr. by V. G. Kiernan, *Poems from Iqbal* p. 52).

Iqbal's Satan is proud, unrepentant, deprived of the pleasure of defeat; a confidante of the Almighty; the giver of knowledge and wisdom, the knower of the secrets of creation and annihilation. Iqbal's Satan is confirmed in evil and reeking with the proud spirit of seeking vengeance for the indignities and insults that he had to suffer because of the birth of Adam. In Iqbal there is no direct condemnation of Satan as such. In one of his Persian Ghazals addressing God, he says, "Our sin lies in eating the grain, whereas his (Satan's) fault lies in refusing to prostrate before man. You are neither on good, terms with him, nor with us."

Iqbal, in his capacity as a man, is not prepared to accept any responsibility about Satan's refusal to prostrate before Adam, his subsequent rebellion and externment from Heaven. He indirectly questions the origin of Satan's incomparable courage to defy the dictates of the Divine Will. "I cannot understand", he says, "how he dared defy you, because he is your confidante and not mine." This statement in itself contains more than it suggests. It has a much deeper significance.

Iqbal regards God as the ultimate source of existence, and recognises evil as a reality and not a delusive appearance and so faces the big problem, which indeed all such philosophical systems have to face. The problem is how to reconcile evil with an all powerful and all good God. The moment we recognise evil as a reality we have to answer this question, "who created it?"

Agreed, that in the midst of evil, good persists, or in other words evil is a *condition of the good*. Admitted, that these two conflicting forces are fundamentally parts of the same whole. But the question is "who created it?" If God created it, it limits His goodness. If God did not create it, it limits his Omnipotence. Iqbal, himself, calls it a "painful problem." In search of an answer he goes to the Quran, and gives a brilliant interpretation to the legend of the Fall of Man. He disregards the Semitic form of the myth as "the primitive man's desire to explain to himself the infinite misery of his plight in an uncongenial environment." He makes a comparative study of how the Quran and the Book of Genesis handle this legend. Here are the relevant portions from the Old Testament:-

"And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil."

"And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die!"

"And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made it a woman, and brought her unto the man."

"Now he (serpent) said unto the woman,

"Yea, hath God said, 'Yea shall not eat of every tree of the Garden'?"

Unto the woman he said,

"I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception;

In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children;

And thy desire shall be to thy husband,

And he shall rule over thee."

And unto Adam he said, "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, 'Thou shalt not eat of it.' "

"Cursed is the ground for thy sake;

In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.

Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee;

And thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.

Till thou return unto the ground;

For out of it wast thou taken:

For dust thou art,

And unto dust shalt thou return."

"And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them."

The Quran describes the two episodes as follows:

"O Adam! dwell thou

And thy wife in the garden,

And enjoy (its good things)

As ye wish; but approach not

This tree or ye run

Into harm and transgression".

"But Satan whispered him (Adam): said he, O Adam!

Shall I show thee the tree of Eternity and the

Kingdom that faileth not. And they both ate thereof,

And their nakedness appeared to them, and they began to sew of the leaves of the garden to cover them, and Adam disobeyed his Lord, and went astray.

Afterwards his Lord chose him for Himself, and was turned towards him, and guided him."

According to Iqbal the Quran omits the serpent and the rib story altogether. The reason for the first omission seems to be the desire to drop the "phallic setting" and to free the story from its original gloomy and depressing atmosphere. The second omission follows naturally as the Quran does not try to relate the history of man from the first human pair as does the Old Testament where this incident has been mentioned as a sort of introduction to the history of Israel.

The Quran relates these two legends as two distinctly separate incidents. One of these is related to the incident described simply as "the tree" and the other to the "tree of eternity" and the "kingdom that faileth not". The first is mentioned in the 7th and the second in the 20th *Sura* of the Quran.

The Quranic version has it that after Adam and Eve had been tempted successfully by Satan, whose prime work is to create doubts in the minds of men, this first human couple tasted the fruit of both the trees. According to the Old Testament, however, man was expelled from the Garden

immediately after he had disobeyed and committed the first folly. Angels and a flaming sword were then stationed in the eastern side of paradise to drive away this guilty couple even if they should care to re-enter the garden, thus keeping them away from the tree of life.

The Old Testament lays the blame for Adam's downfall on earth and curses it for this act of disobedience. But the Quran declares the earth to be the dwelling place of man, a bounty for which he should be thankful since it has been furnished with things which are or can be made to be a 'source of profit' to him. "And we have established you on earth and given you therein the supports of life. How little do ye give thanks (7:9)."

Because Adam disobeyed, Man lost paradise. But this first disobedience of Man was also his first exercise of the power to choose between right and wrong. This was his first act of free choice; and that being so he is forgiven his first transgression.

Goodness is not something hide-bound, straightlaced, without a choice of being anything else. It is the voluntary choosing of a line of action or deed by an ego which is free to balance the good and the bad side of any contemplated course of action. If it chooses 'goodness' it is not that it is oblivious of the bad or that it was not tempted to do otherwise. It chooses goodness freely and voluntarily, urged solely by its inherent desire to reach up to the peak of ideal nobility and goodness lodged in its soul. Had man no freedom of choice whatsoever he would be little better than an automaton and his actions would then be neither good nor bad. Freedom of choice alone gives meaning to the conception of goodness.

This, however, brings up another consideration. To permit a finite ego to come to life with the powers and liberty to weigh the pros and cons of every action and to decide then which he would care to accept is taking a very great risk. That God has done so shows the trust He reposes in Man; and it is for him now to justify this trust. Perhaps this great risk alone could

truly put to test the mettle and the potentialities of a creature of the 'goodliest fabric' who has been 'brought down to be the lowest of the low.'

Adam was prohibited to taste the fruit of the tree obviously because his finite make-up, his sense-equipment and his capacity to gather knowledge were of a kind that could permit him to gather in knowledge only through the method of patient toil and observation and experience. That Adam yielded to Satan was not because he was intrinsically wicked but because he was hasty — a defect present to some extent in all human beings. His expulsion from paradise to earth — from bliss absolute to this painful environment — can thus be looked upon not as a kind of punishment unadulterated but as a help to him. The environment and atmosphere of this earth are very painful to him both mentally and physically, but they are much better suited to the development and unfolding of his intellectual faculties. The placing of man on earth may thus be regarded not as a punishment but as a means rather to defeat the object of Satan who, as the eternal and vigilant enemy of man, tried to keep him ignorant of the joy of perpetual growth and expansion. But it is the continuous expansion of knowledge based on actual experience that decides the life of a finite ego placed in an obstructing environment. This continuous expansion of knowledge can come about only through a method of trial and error. Therefore error which can be regarded as an intellectual evil is necessary and indispensable for the growth and maturity of man.

This interpretation of the legend of the Fall of Man finds a good illustration in Iqbal's poem *تسخیر فطرت* ('The Conquest of Nature'), where Satan refuses to prostrate before man.

"I am not gullible as angels are,

Prostrate myself to this mere thing of clay,

This Adam, \_\_\_\_\_ I, fire-born, incarnate fire



Bow thus in lowly homage! No, not I Whatever I  
make, or elect to make, I break to fragments, crumble it to dust,  
And from the ruined old create the new  
Unsatisfied with presence uniform  
From dust of old, I raise, I rear new form, I cast and activise new mould.  
For you, — you did but fashion stars,  
Filled Space with planetary shapes and orbs,  
I gave them revolution, urged them on,  
I am the soul your cosmos draws upon —  
The principle, the secret, I, of every urgent act —  
Of life itself the breath.  
You give to body, life, but I, indeed,  
To life the impulse of its being,  
Tumult of desire; —  
You draw the active to its goals of rest —  
All movement is from me —  
The zest of *thine* created world is *mine*.  
What Adam! Bow to him, earth-moulded thing,  
Devoid of light, close-fisted, narrow, crude,  
Constricted in desire, in vision rude,

Still grovelling in his earth-born impotence!

Besides, remember — cradled in your lap,

He ripened to his present age, in mine."

Satan emerges as the enemy of man. He does compare himself with God, but all the time the tone is one of rebellion against authority, against a very much more powerful and superior being. For man, Satan has no kind words. Iqbal accepts this challenge. He is prepared to fight against it, because he believes that evil is necessary for the expansion of man's moral potential.

مزی اندر جهان کور نوقے

کہ یزداں دارد و شیطان نہ دارد

Very freely translated it means that without Satan life would not be worth living.

Iqbal's Satan is disappointed in man, even more than God is. He is bitter, terribly bitter about man's weaknesses. He takes it as an insult to have an enemy so frail and feeble. Through Satan, Iqbal criticises man's present state and through Satan again he gives a mental image, an idea of what man should be, as in ناله ابلیس 'Satan's Lament'. —

"Of Good and Evil thou progenitor".

With Adam thus consorting dismal long

I am dragged low, despoiled of all my power

Thou mighty Giver — hear my tale of wrong.

What viler than the yielding will?

How noble to command; but nobler still

The courage to disdain command, the strength  
To disobey where mind and soul require —  
But Adam! \_\_\_\_\_

O must I recall the shame,  
Unworthy dwarfing, fit for baser name  
Than spurning mind deems fit to coin,  
Could not respect potential self, nor Self discover,  
Even of his own Good proved imperfect lover  
The victim's eye invoked the tyrant's power,  
It is the prey provokes the hunter's barb!  
From such a prey redeem my ill-spent strength  
For unresistance dissipates the will  
Unequal matched, the tightened fibre preys  
Upon itself;       dost thou forget the hour  
When I *thee* worshipped for *thy* strength and power!  
By nature frail, he lacks the will to strive —  
Create thou me a creature eager, keen,  
Whose piercing eye unravels destiny,  
Responsive, quick, alive, — with will serene

In knowledge of its strength, — superb  
In seasoned thought, awareness of his being,  
Whose strength and vision rival well my own,  
Pitched tense against such power, I could atone  
A past unsoulful, and a life misspent! —  
Redeem me from this creature, crude and weak, unseeing.  
Take but a glance at him, this Adam's son!  
The eye meets poor reward —  
A handful he of miserable straw —  
Thy world contains no better wealth than this ?  
A single spark of mine would to its ash  
Consume the fragile frame, O such abuse of Power !  
Why gayest thou me, then, destructive fire,  
Wouldst quench my passion with a patch of straw?  
And I, eternal principle of fire!  
Wouldst do me this, when sheets of shimmering glass  
Would not invite my strength, — for I was born  
To melt the heart of steel and granite stone.  
To try my strength on straw I'm put to shame;  
The stain of idle conquest! I would change —

(O past inglorious, past without a name!)

Defeat in strength for feeble victory.

No idle pining worshipper I seek —

I seek for other boon, a compensation

For the bitter wrong of idling my strength,

An age of mockery and taunted power —

Give me, God, tried, and true, thy servant,

Such a one as sends a tremor through this giant frame,

With clasp of steel can coil around my neck

His bulging arm, and twist it clean about,

Afford, with clear commanding voice, to say,

"Lay off me        hence! ."

And with mere presence shrink me to a grain.

Grant thou me, mighty God,

The fruit and harvest of a proud defeat!

# IQBAL AND THE MODERN RENAISSANCE OF ISLAM

KHURSHID AHMAD

Iqbal was a versatile genius. The myriad aspects of his personality like the sparkling glow of a big diamond, dazzle the eye. Some people are enamoured of the elegance of his style and the beauty of his art. Some others are impressed by the width of his knowledge and the depth of his thought. Still others seek light from his philosophical vision and political acumen. But, when a student of contemporary history looks at Iqbal he feels that although he was a great poet, a noble master of his art, an inspired thinker, a sharp politician and an illustrious philosopher, he was some thing more than all that, he was a pioneer of the Renaissance of Islam in this country. And herein lies his real greatness.

The Muslim society had long been undergoing a spell of degeneration. The disintegration which set in after the early Caliphate continued to gradually sap the foundations of the Islamic civilization and after a long period of rout and rally, the dark night of gloom and stupor was cast over it. The creative faculties were benumbed and the political power was lost. Although different reform movements grew and many leaders of thought endeavoured to awaken the Muslims from their slumber and infuse a new life in the Muslim society, little ice was actually broken. The most tragic part of it was that Islam no longer remained a dynamic politico-cultural force. It was reduced to the miserable and ineffective position of an amalgam of a few rites and rituals and was denied by its own followers its real role of a culture-producing factor. This was the unfortunate position when the British took hold of India. They very cleverly tried to impose the Western civilisation upon the people of this region. This gave birth to a plethora of new problems.

The political and economic supremacy of the West and the system of education which it imposed created a slavish mentality among the Muslims. They got engrossed in an inferiority complex. Even the last vestiges of their political confidence were destroyed. They were reduced to a very hectic existence.

Signs of a new awakening appeared on the horizon when *Comrade, al-Hilal* and *Zamindar* shook the Muslims from their stupor and stirred them to rise and do their duty. *Khilafat Movement* proved a great boon. It spurred the emotions of the Muslim India and encouraged it to enter the arena of political fight and cultural revolt. But the new awakening lacked in proper intellectual and philosophical foundations. It was Iqbal who laid these foundations. He was the true pioneer of the modern renaissance of Islam in India.

### **Iqbal's Diagnosis**

Iqbal had a keen vision and a penetrating mind. He studied the conditions of the Muslim society and fully realised the ills that infested its body. He clearly understood the real impact of the Western culture and read the writing on the wall. He knew that a revolutionary change in the outlook of the Muslims was the greatest need of the hour. He warned them that if they ignored the great challenge of their time they will be eliminated from the surface of existence and be relegated to the dustbin of history.

Iqbal's diagnosis of the problem was that the long period of cultural disintegration and the influence of the modern West had destroyed the moorings of the Muslim society. Muslims declined because they left Islam and because they adopted an easy life of submissiveness and inactivity. Under the spell of the West, their confidence in their values was shaken and they began to ape the Western ways of life. Moreover, an inferiority complex developed in them and an estrangement between social life and the religious values ensued. The influence of non-Islamic Sufism further sapped the springs of activity and Muslims became what they were.

This was realistic appraisal of the situation and Iqbal harnessed all his energies to pull the Muslims out of this mire of degeneration.

### **New Attitude towards the West**

First of all, Iqbal asked the Muslims to revise their attitude towards the West. He said that all was not good in Europe. He critically studied the fundamentals of the Western civilization and exposed their fallacies. He criticised those who blindly followed the West and asked them to use reason and vision. In his *Lectures* he said:

"The only course open to us is to approach modern knowledge with a respectful but INDEPENDENT attitude".

He further expressed the fear "that the dazzling exterior of the European culture may arrest our movement". He took the lid off the destructive potentialities of the Materialistic civilization of the West and warned against the dangers of atheism and Godlessness. How beautifully he says in "*Pas Cheh Bayad Kard At Aqwam-i-Sharq*":

آدمیت زار نالید از فرنگ

زندگی ہنگامہ بر چید از فرنگ

پس چه باید کرد اے اقوام شرق

بازروشن می شود ایام شرق

در ضمیرش انقلاب آمد پدید



شب گذشت و آفتاب آمد پدید  
یورپ از شمشیر خود بسمل فتاد  
زیر گردون رسم لادینی نهاد  
گرگرے اندر پوستین بره  
پر زمان اندر کمین بره  
مشخلات حضرت انسان ازوست  
آدمیت را غم پنہان ازوست  
در نگاہش آدمی آب و گل است  
کاروان زندگی بے منزل است

"Humanity is in agony at the hands of Europe

And life has lost its joyful tumult

What, then, is to be done, O peoples of the East,

That the lost glories of the Orient be regained?

A revolution has taken place in the depths of her being,

The night is passed and the sun has risen;

Europe lies smitten by its own sword  
And has given irreligion to the World;  
A wolf in lamb's skin,  
Ever in ambush for the lamb,  
It has brought trouble to humanity  
And a growing grief.  
Man in its eyes is but water and clay;  
And life but a random caravan without a destination".

Iqbal gracefully declared that religion alone could extricate mankind out of the present babel of social chaos and intellectual confusion. He said:

"And religion alone can ethically prepare the modern man for the burden of the great responsibility which the advancement of modern science necessarily involves and restore to him that attitude of faith which makes him capable of winning a personality here and retaining it hereafter. It is only by rising to a fresh vision of his origin and future, his whine and whither, that man will eventually triumph over a society motivated by an in-human competition, and a civilization which has lost its spiritual unity by its inner conflict of religious and political values."

While pointing out the major weaknesses of the West and the hollowness of its materialism and secularism he did not look right of those real factors which have been responsible for Europe's success and grandeur. He says:

قوت مغرب نه از چنگ و رباب

نے ز رقص دختران بے حجاب

نے ز سحر ساحران لاله روست

نے ز عریاں ساق و نے از قطع پوست

محکمی او را نہ از لا دینی است

نے فروغش از خط لاطینی است

قوت افرنگ از علم و فن است

از ہمین آتش چراغش روشن است

حکمت از قطع و برید جامہ نیست

مانع علم و ہنر عمامہ نیست

"The Secret of the West's strength is not in the lute and guitar,

Nor in the promiscuous dancing of her daughters.

Nor in the charms of her bright-faced beauties,

Nor in bare shins, nor in bobbed hair.

Her strength is not from irreligiousness

Nor is her rise due to Latin script.

The strength of the West is due to knowledge and science,  
Her lamp is alight from this fire only.

Knowledge does not depend on the style of your garments,

And a turban is no obstacle to the acquisition of knowledge." Thus Iqbal surveyed the contemporary ideological panorama and honestly presented the true achievements and the real failings of the Western civilization so that the blind imitation of it may be stopped. But he did not stop there. On the other hand he conclusively showed the indebtedness of the West to Islam in those things which led to its rise and growth and thus inspired in the Muslims a new confidence in their own values. He said:

حکمت اشیاء فرنگی زاد نیست

اصل او جز لذت ایجاد نیست

نیک اگر بین مسلمان زاده است

این گہراز دست ما افتاده است

چون عرب اندر اروپا پرکشاد

علم و حکمت را بنا دیگر نهاد

دانه آن صحرا نشینان کاشته

حاصلش افرنگیان برداشته

این پری از شیشهٔ اسلاف ماست

باز صیدش کن که او از قاف ماست

"Science was not brought into being by the West;

In essence it is nothing but the delight that lies in creation;

If you ponder well, it is the Muslims who gave it life;

It is a pearl we dropped from our hands.

When the Arabs spread over Europe,

They laid new foundations of learning and science.

The seed was sown by these dwellers of the desert;

But the harvest was reaped by the West.

This spirit is from the flask of our own ancestors;

Bring this fairy back, for she hails from our own Caucasus."

### **Revolutionising Thought and Action**

Iqbal realised the need and the importance of the reconstruction of the Islamic thought. He knew that the modern attack on religion could be fought only with new weapons. The opponent will have to be met on his own ground. He also felt that Islam is a dynamic and revolutionary movement but centuries of stagnation had laid some layers of dust over its religious thought. He stepped ahead to remove the dust and bathe the diamond clean so that it may again radiate light to the world groping about in the dark.

His lectures on '*Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*' are an attempt to fulfil this need. One may disagree with some of his interpretations but it is impossible to honestly deny the revolutionary message these lectures contain and the tremendous influence they left on the mind of Muslim India.

But Iqbal had a still higher mission in view. He was not a mere philosopher who could feel satisfied with the simple intellectual exposition of the ideology of Islam. He wanted to stir every fibre of a nation that had fallen in slumber and to arouse it to play its rightful role in the fashioning of the future. In his two *masnavies*, *Asrar-e-Khudi*' and *Rumuz-e-Baikhudi*, he delineated the factors of individual and social growth. Iqbal discussed the causes of *millat's* decline and threw light on the alien influences which disrupted its body-politic. Iqbal asked the Muslims to return to the real message of Allah and his Prophet.

The fundamentals of Islam, he said, were *Tawbeed*, *Risalat*, *Akhirat* and *Jihad*. *Tawbeed* provides for all members of the society a basis for unity of thought and unity of action. It is the greatest revolutionary force under the sun.

در جهان کیف و کم گردید عقل

پی به منزل برد از توحید عقل

اهل حق را رمز توحید از بر است

دراتی الرحمن عبداً مضمراً است

تا ز اسرار توبه نماید ترا

امتحانش از عمل باید ترا  
دین ازو حکمت ازو آئین ازو  
زور ازو قوت ازو تمکن ازو  
عالمان را جلوه اش حیرت دهد  
عاشقان را بر عمل قدرت دهد  
پست اندر سایه اش گردد بلند  
خاک چون اکسیر گردد ارجمند

The Mind, astray in this determinate world,  
First found the path way to its distant goal.  
By faith in *Tawheed* (Unity of God); what other home Should  
bring the helpless wanderer to rest?  
Upon what other shore should Reason's barque  
Touch however? All men intimate with truth  
The secret of Tawheed have by heart,  
Which is implicit in the sacred words:  
*He comes into the Merciful, a slave.*

In action let faith's potency be tried,  
That it may guide thee to thy secret powers:  
From it derive religious wisdom, law,  
Unfailing vigour, power, authority.  
Its splendour doth amaze the learned mind,  
But giveth unto lover's force to act;  
The lowly in its shadow reacheth high,  
And worthless scum becomes like alchemy.

He dwelt upon the basic concepts of Islam in detail and showed the potentialities of the faith. His words gave a new message of life to a nation "forgotten so long, neglected so long".

Iqbal's poetry and thought stirred the Muslim India and inspired it to rise to the occasion and play its rightful role in the remaking of the world. After animating the nation with a new spirit, he also gave it a new concrete ideal to achieve in the political field so that the new energies that were released could be harnessed to build a homeland for Islam. This ideal was PAKISTAN.

Iqbal laboured hard to strengthen and foster the belief that Muslims are a nation, an ideological community and that it is a dictate of their faith to establish a state, a society and a culture in the light of the principles given by the Quran and the *Sunnah*. He gave sober thought to the political problem of the Muslim India and after years of reflection suggested the idea of Pakistan in his Presidential Address to the Annual Session of All India Muslim League in 1930 wherein he said, "The life of Islam as a Cultural force in this country very largely depends on its centralisation in a specified territory. This centralisation of the most living portion of the Muslims of India .... will



eventually solve the problem of India as well as of Asia. "This was essential so that the Muslim India may become "entitled to full and free development on the lines of its own culture and tradition." And in a letter to the Quaid-e-Azam he wrote in 1937, a year before his demise:

"A separte federation of Muslim provinces reformed on the lines I have suggested above is the only course by which we can secure a peaceful India and save Muslims from the domination of non-Muslims. Why should not the Muslims of North West India and Bengal be considered as nations entitled to self-determination just as other nations in India and outside India are."

This was a pointer to the future. Nation followed the lead given by Iqbal and after great effort and sacrifice, Pakistan became a reality and inaugurated the new era of Muslim renaissance.

Iqbal's message was a message of action. He was a pioneer of Islamic Renaissance in this sub-continent and herein lies his real significance. We have very briefly outlined the great and gigantic task he performed. But we could present only a few glimpses of his work, for you cannot bottle sunshine. Let us end this study with those immortal words of this great revolutionary which moved a nation and worked as a clarion call:

"Vision without power does bring moral elevation but cannot give a lasting culture. Power without vision tends to become destructive and inhuman. Both must combine for the spiritual expansion of humanity."

اہل حق را زندگی ز قوت است

قوت پر ملت از جمعیت است

رائے بے قوت ہمہ مکر و فسوں

## قوت برے رائے جہل است و جنوں

"The standard-bearers of truth live by being strong;

The strength of every nation lies in unity;

Wisdom without worldly power is but a fraud and a myth;

And worldly power without wisdom is folly and madness."

# RENAISSANCE: THE CULTURAL REBIRTH OF EUROPE

J. W. SYED

"Young and ardent, and resolved to live his life as he pleased, and to find his own answers to his questions in such experience as he could obtain, a man of the renaissance kicked down all the elaborate edifice of theory and formula, of ancient metaphysics and crystalized theology. He would breathe his own air of enfranchisement and liberty. He would go down the primrose path to the ever-lasting bonfire, or win his way through the strait gate and by the narrow path in his own fashion. Authority, theory, dogma — these he could not tolerate".

(W. L. Courtney: *The Idea of Tragedy*)

The Renaissance marked a new phase and a major departure in the history of European thought and literature, life and culture. Some of the most eminent Western writers on the Renaissance, including Hegel, Dilthey, Michelet, Burckhardt, James Frazer, Symonds, Sichel, Draper, Briffault and H. S. Lucas, have upheld the thesis that the Renaissance, in its most characteristic aspects, was a major and fundamental deviation and revolt from the medieval-Christian ideal and outlook. The new thought and the new culture of the Renaissance, made possible by the revival of classical learning through the medium of the Arabs, and the impact of the Muslim civilization on Europe laid the foundations of the new modern culture and civilization of the West. The new mental climate and attitude of the Renaissance fostered love of the temporal life, of beauty and pleasure and joy of living. After five centuries of sleep and gloom the dawn of light and learning, of life and joy, came to Europe in the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Renaissance love of the human, the natural and the sensual; its individualism, self-expression and self-assertion; its religious scepticism and free-thinking; its love of adventurous life; its love of power,

pomp, fame and earthly glory; its love of gold and wealth; its interest in discovery and exploration, were a clear antithesis of the medieval-Christian world-view which was characterised by transcendental other-worldliness and asceticism, by its three cardinal precepts: poverty, chastity, and obedience. Poverty was replaced by wealth and abundance, chastity by a frank pagan enjoyment of the flesh, and obedience by rebellion. But before examining the Renaissance and its ideals and values in detail, we must first examine the medieval-Christian order and its foundations.

### **Medieval Christian Order**

Under the pagan Roman Empire Christianity was one of the religions of the Empire, and its followers had to pay homage to the Roman Emperor. During its first three centuries Christianity passed through three phases: persecution, toleration, and, finally, acceptance at the hands of the Roman emperors, the first of whom to embrace Christianity was Constantine. But even after Christianity became the religion of the Roman Empire, the fundamental Christian separation and dualism of God and Caesar, Church and State, Pope and Emperor, continued to exist. This Christian dualism of the two Powers of the Pope and the Emperor, based as it is upon the dualism of the spirit and the flesh, the secular and the spiritual, was further based upon the words of Jesus: "My Kingdom is not of this world", and "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's". As a result of this dualism people's loyalty and allegiance was divided between the Church and the State, Pope and Emperor, between the City of God and the Earthly City. But, since in the very nature of things, there can be no complete separation between the various aspects of life, there developed a conflict and clash not only within the individual himself, torn between the claims of the spirit and the flesh, but also between the Church and the State, finally resulting in the struggles for power and supremacy between the Church and the State who both claimed to govern the human herd. The struggle continued throughout the Middle Ages and

came to an end with the victory of the secular forces and the establishment of sovereign nation-states.

The early and medieval Christian society considered the two realms of Pope and Emperor as autonomous powers, both divine in origin; but, in actual practice, the Church regarded itself as superior to and higher than the State and hence the clash of jurisdiction and struggle for power and supremacy between the two powers. The Church hierarchy derives its authority not from the people but directly from Christ through the mediation of the Apostles. All real power and sovereignty over medieval Christendom was vested in the Roman Pontiff. The evils proceeding from this basic and permanent division and dualism of Christian consciousness were noted, among others, by Rousseau. Referring to the religious and political unity of the Greek and Roman polity, Rousseau writes: "It was in these circumstances that Jesus came to set upon earth a spiritual kingdom, which by separating the theological from the political system, made the state no longer one, and brought about the internal divisions which have never ceased to trouble Christian peoples . . . this double power and conflict of jurisdiction have made all good polity impossible in Christian states; and men have never succeeded in finding out whether they were bound to obey the master (prince) or the priest . . . Christianity as a religion is entirely spiritual, occupied solely with heavenly things; the country of the Christian is not of this world .  
".<sup>32</sup>

The early and medieval Church upheld and preached, in theory, the ascetic and monastic ideal of life, regarding the earthly life as a painful but essential preliminary to the life to come; it held the life of this world in contempt and of no value and importance. The change from the medieval and the Christian to the pagan and the modern, from the theological to the secular, from the ascetic to the human, has been very well expressed by Sir

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<sup>32</sup> J. J. Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Ch: "Civil Religion", Everyman Library, London, 1952, P. 108.

James Frazer in these words . "The saint and the recluse, disdainful of earth and rapt in ecstatic contemplation of heaven, became in popular opinion the highest ideal of humanity, displacing the old ideal (Greek and Roman) of the patriot and hero who, forgetful of self, lives and is ready to die for the good of his country. The earthly city seemed poor and contemptible to men whose eyes beheld the City of God coming in the clouds of heaven. . In their anxiety to save their own souls and the souls of others, they were content to leave the material world, which they identified with the principle of evil, to perish around them. This obsession lasted for a thousand years. The revival of Roman law, of the Aristotelian philosophy, of ancient art and literature at the close of the Middle Ages, marked the return of Europe to native ideals of life and conduct, to saner, manlier views of the world".<sup>33</sup>

But the practice of the medieval Church did not correspond with its theoretical ideals; it had become a perfect spiritual and secular despotism. In the words of Henry S. Lucas, "The Church, which had been established during the Roman Empire, possessed extensive political privileges and an enormous amount of land. It was a powerful political and economic competitor of princes. It had elaborated a vast system of dogma and enjoyed greater sway over the souls of men than did any other organization".<sup>34</sup> The Church did not permit freedom of thought and belief. The laity had no right to think and express themselves freely; they had to accept Church doctrines and dogmas without questioning; they were expected to send their minds on a perpetual holiday in the blissful realms of ignorance. Condorcet has well expressed the intellectual condition during the dark ages of Europe: "During this disastrous stage we shall witness the rapid decline of the human mind from the height that it had attained and we shall see ignorance following in its wake, and sometimes bestial cruelty, and sometimes cruelty in all its refinement, and everywhere corruption and treachery. Nothing could

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<sup>33</sup> Sir James Frazer, *Golden Bough*, quoted by Arnold Toynbee in his *Civilization*

*on Trial*, London, 1949, P. 229-30

<sup>34</sup> H. S. Lucas, *Renaissance and the Reformation*, New York, 1934, P. 49.

penetrate that profound darkness save a few shafts of talent, a few rays of kindness and magnanimity. Man's only achievements were theological day-dreaming and superstitious imposture, his only morality religious intolerance. In blood and tears, crushed between priestly tyranny and military despotism, Europe awaited the moment when a new enlightenment would allow her to be reborn free, heiress to humanity and virtue . . . . The intolerance of the priests, their struggle for political power, their scandalous greed and moral depravity made even more disgusting by a mask of hypocrisy, revolted any one whose soul was uncorrupted, whose mind unclouded, whose heart undaunted. There was such a striking contrast between the dogmas, principles and behaviour of the priests and those of the early disciples, the founders of their doctrine and moral creed, of whom the priests could scarcely keep the people in total ignorance".<sup>35</sup>

The official attitude of the medieval Church was authoritarian and anti-liberal; it did not favour freedom of religious and scientific speculation. Learning was mostly scriptural, and that too was the privilege of the clergy. Man's chief concerns, theoretically, were religious and other-worldly. "During the Middle Ages" writes J. A. Symonds, "man had lived enveloped in a cowl. He had not seen the beauty of the world, or had seen it only to cross himself and turn aside, to tell his beads and pray. Like St. Bernard travelling along the shores of Lake Lemman, and noticing neither the azure of the waters, nor the luxuriance of the vines, nor the radiance of the mountains with their robe of sun and snow, but bending a thought-burdened forehead over the neck of his mule; even like this monk, humanity had passed, a careful pilgrim, intent on the terrors of sin, death, and judgment, along the highways of the world, and had scarcely known that they were sight-worthy, or that life is a blessing. Beauty is a snare, pleasure a sin, the world a fleeting shadow, man fallen and lost, death the only certainty; ignorance is acceptable to God as a proof of

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<sup>35</sup> Condorcet, *Progress of the Human Mind*,

faith and submission; abstinence and mortification are the only safe rules of life: these were the fixed ideas of the ascetic medieval Church".<sup>36</sup>

The whole medieval attitude and outlook was hostile to the freedom of the mind and spirit and was irrational and unprogressive. "The idea of the universe which prevailed throughout the Middle Ages", wrote Professor Bury, "and the general orientation of men's thoughts were incompatible with some of the fundamental assumptions which are required by the idea of Progress. According to the Christian theory which was worked out by the Fathers, and especially by St. Augustine, the whole movement of history has the purpose of securing the happiness of a small portion of the human race in another world; it does not postulate a further development of human history on earth. For Augustine, as for any medieval believer, the course of history would be satisfactorily complete if the world came to an end in his own lifetime"<sup>37</sup> The human mind, during these days of the dominance of the Church, was completely enslaved. "In the period, then, in which the Church exercised its greatest influence, reason was enchained in the prison which Christianity had built around the human mind".<sup>38</sup> There are some famous names among the victims of the Church, including Abelard, Savonarola, Bruno and Galileo. The anti-liberal, dogmatic, intolerant and authoritarian attitude of the Church resulted in the Crusades, and in the religious persecutions, massacres and religious wars between the Christian sects and states themselves, including the Massacre of St. Bartholomew which had deeply moved Montaigne and inspired his plea for sanity and tolerance in matters of faith. Ultimately the authoritarian and orthodox medieval-Christian order broke down under the impact of the combined forces of the Renaissance and the Reformation, although the attitude of the latter movement was as hostile to the liberal-humanist tradition, to reason, nature and liberty as that of medieval Christianity. Luther and Calvin were anything

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<sup>36</sup> J. A. Symonds, *A Short History of the Renaissance in Italy*, Abridged by Lt. Col. A. Pearson, P. 5.

<sup>37</sup> J. B. Bury, *Idea of Progress*, (New York, 1955), P. 21.

<sup>38</sup> J. B. Bury, *History of Freedom of Thought*, (Home University Library), pp. 67-68.



but liberals and humanists. The medieval chains, however, were broken, the European mind revolted against the despotism and dogmatic authority of the Church and its intellectual and political tyranny. Wycliff and Luther, Erasmus and Montaigne, Christopher Marlowe and Shakespeare, though differing between themselves, represent the new ways of thought and feeling, the new challenge and revolt against the medieval scheme of things. The medieval-Christian attitude of world-and-life negation gave place to an attitude of world-and-life affirmation. The intellect and conscience of Europe awakened to a consciousness of human dignity and freedom.

### **Forces Behind Renaissance**

Now the question arises: how did this great change come about? Wherefrom came the new impulse for the new awakening? The old and common theory, found in most Western books on the subject, that in 1453 the Turk captured Constantinople and the Greek scholars came over to Italy and the new era of light and learning suddenly started, dispelling the clouds of medieval ignorance, no longer finds favour with honest and serious scholarship. This popular but unhistorical theory of the origins of the Renaissance seemed to imply that the Greek scholars said: 'Let there be light, and there was light'. Rejecting this old theory, Douglas Bush writes: "Most of us must have encountered many times the idea that the fall of Constantinople in 1453 drove Greek scholars to Western Europe and so inaugurated the great revival of the classics. In the later nineteenth and the early twentieth century this was an almost universal pedagogical doctrine, and for English-speaking readers 1453 and all that was nearly as solid as 1066. This classic myth has so long been shattered that it might be allowed to rest in peace, or in the pages of popular writers, who so often cherish what scholars have abandoned ."<sup>39</sup>

### **The Influence of Islam**

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<sup>39</sup> Douglas Bush, *The Renaissance and English Humanism*, P. 14.

We shall have to find other answers to the question of the historical causes and origins of the Renaissance. An eminent and influential writer on the cultural and intellectual history of mankind says: "The light from which civilization was once more rekindled did not arise from any embers of Graeco-Roman culture smouldering amid the ruins of Europe, nor from the living death on the Bosphorus. It did not come from the Northern, but from the Southern invaders of the empire, from the Saracens".<sup>40</sup> "It was under the influence of the Arabian and Moorish revival of culture," continues Briffault, "and not in the fifteenth century, that the real Renaissance took place. Spain, not Italy, was the cradle of the rebirth of Europe".<sup>41</sup> It was in the period between the end of the tenth and that of the twelfth century that the European mind began to question and doubt the established Christian doctrines and dogmas and the whole Christian world-view; and this was the very period of the dominance of Arab thought and culture in Southern Europe. "The greatest achievements of antiquity were due to the Greek, Western, genius"; writes George Sarton, "the greatest achievements of the Middle Ages were due to the Muslim, Easterngenius".<sup>42</sup> The most important and valuable works on philosophy and science during this period were written by Muslims. From the second half of the eighth to the end of the eleventh century, Arabic was the language of learning and science, and the intellectual supremacy of the Muslims during this period was unchallenged. This period was essentially a period of transition, and of intimate and intense intellectual exchanges between the Christian and Muslim civilizations of southern Europe. During this period (1100-1250) 'the West was assimilating the East'. "It is then", writes Sarton, "that the conflicting cultures were brought most closely together, especially the Christian and Muslim, and that their interpenetration constituted the solid core of the new Europe".<sup>43</sup> This view found acceptance and support as early as the eighteenth century.

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<sup>40</sup> Robert Briffault, *Making of Humanity*, London, 1928, p. 183.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 188.

<sup>42</sup> George Sarton, *Introduction to the History of Science*, Vol. 1, Baltimore, 1955, p. 16.

<sup>43</sup> George Sarton, *Introduction to the History of Science*, Vol. II, Part 1, p.2.

Condorcet, one of the most enlightened thinkers of the Age of Enlightenment, acknowledged the debt of Europe to the Arabs. "The manners of the Arabs were gentle and dignified", writes Condorcet, "They loved poetry and cultivated it; ruling over the most beautiful countries of Asia, they allowed the taste for letters and the sciences to temper their missionary zeal . . . They translated Aristotle and studied his works: they cultivated astronomy, optics, and the various branches of medicine; and they enriched these sciences with new truths. We owe to them the spread of the use of Algebra, which had been applied by the Greeks only to one class of problem. If it is true that their fanatical interest in the secrets of alchemy and the elixir of life sullied their work in chemistry, it must be remembered it was they who revived or rather invented this science which had till then been confused with pharmacy or with technical skill in the arts. It was with them that chemistry appeared for the first time as the analysis of bodies into discernible elements and as the theory of their compounds and the laws of such compounds . . . . With the Arabs the sciences were free, and to this freedom was due their success in reviving some sparks of the Greek genius; . . . the work done by the Arabs would have been lost to the human race for ever if they had not done something to prepare the way for the more lasting revival which was brought about in the West".<sup>44</sup> "Then", continues Condorcet, "religious enthusiasm fired the Western nations to attempt the conquest of the Holy places, places consecrated, or so it was said, by the death and miracles of Christ. Not only this strange distemper assist the progress of liberty by bringing about the impoverishment and decline of the nobility, but it also furthered the relations between Europeans and Arabs, which began with the mingling of Christians and Arabs in Spain and were cemented by the commerce of Pisa, Genoa and Venice. People learnt the Arab language; they read Arab writings; they learnt something about their

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<sup>44</sup> Condorcet, *Progress of the Human Mind*, pp. 86-87.

discoveries. and if in scientific matters they did not go beyond them, at least they had the ambition to rival them".<sup>45</sup>

We also have the testimony of another modern historian, J.B. Bury, to the same effect: "At the end of the twelfth century a stimulus from another world began to make itself felt. The philosophy of Aristotle became known to learned men in Western Christendom; their teachers were Jews and Mohammedans. Among the Mohammedans there was a certain amount of free thought, provoked by their knowledge of ancient Greek speculation. The works of the free-thinker Averroes (twelfth century) which were based on Aristotle's philosophy, propagated a small wave of rationalism in Christian countries"<sup>46</sup>

We have still another and older assertion of the same truth, coming from the famous thirteenth-century scholar-monk, Roger Bacon: "The large portion of the philosophy of Aristotle received little attention either on account of the concealment of the copies of his works and their rarity, or on account of their difficulty or unpopularity, or on account of the wars in the East, till after the time of Mahomet, when Avicenna and Averroes and others, recalled to the light of full exposition the philosophy of Aristotle".<sup>47</sup>

One has the temptation to go on quoting from some of the most eminent Western scholars who had the honesty and courage to speak the truth in the story of the rebirth of modern Europe. "Whoever compares", wrote J. W. Draper, "the tenth and twelfth centuries together cannot fail to remark the great intellectual advance which Europe was making. The ideas occupying the minds of Christian men, their very turn of thought, had altogether changed...The presence of the Saracens in Spain offered an incessant provocation to the restless intellect of the west, now rapidly expandng to indulge itself in such forbidden exercises. Arabian philosophy,

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<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.* P. 92

<sup>46</sup> J. B. Bury, *History of Freedom of Thought*, (H. U. L.), P. 68.

<sup>47</sup> Quoted by C. G. Shaw in *Trends of Civilization and Culture*, (New York), P. 250.

unseen and silently, was diffusing itself throughout France and Europe, and churchmen could sometimes contemplate a refuge from their enemies among the infidel. In his extremity, Abelard himself looked forward to a retreat among the Saracens — protection from ecclesiastical persecution".<sup>48</sup>

From the backwardness and barbarism of the people of Europe in the Middle Ages, their theological disputes, their sordid political struggles, their belief in shrine miracles and relics, their religious intolerance, it is pleasant to turn to Arab Spain and Sicily where a different and fascinating scene presents itself to us. "Across the Pyrennes", writes Draper, "literary, philosophical, and military adventurers were perpetually passing, and thus the luxury, the taste, and above all, the chivalrous gallantry and elegant courtesies of Moorish society found their way from Granada and Cordova to Provence and Languedoc. The French, and German and English nobles imbibed the Arab admiration of the Horse . . . It was a scene of grandeur and gallantry; the pastimes were tilts and tournaments. The refined society of Cordova prided itself in its politeness. A gay contagion spread from the beautiful Moorish miscreants to their sisters beyond the mountains; the south of France was full of the witcheries of female fascinations, and of dancing to the lute and mandolin. Even in Italy and Sicily the lovesong became the favourite composition; and out of these genial but not orthodox beginnings the polite literature of modern Europe arose".<sup>49</sup>

Having sketched in outline some of the salient aspects of the Arab society, civilization and culture, Draper describes the medieval-Christian scene: "And now I have to turn from Arabian civilized life, its science, its philosophy, to another, a repulsive state of things. With reluctance I come back to the Italian system, defiling the holy name of religion with its intrigues, its bloodshed, its oppression of human thought, its hatred of intellectual advancement 'Ah! happy Saladin !', said the insulted Philip

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<sup>48</sup> J. W. Draper, History of the Intellectual Development of Europe.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.,

(Augustus of France), when his kingdom was put under interdict; 'he has no pope above him. I too will turn Mohammedan!' Draper continues: "We have now (during the Arab Age of Reason) to find human authority promoting intellectual advancement, and accepting as its maxim that the lot of man will be ameliorated, and his power and dignity increased in proportion as he is able to comprehend the mechanism of the world, the action of natural laws, and to apply physical forces to his use. The rise of the many-tongued European literature was therefore co-incident with the decline of papal Christianity. European literature was impossible under Catholic rule'.<sup>50</sup> Here we get the clues to the origins of the Renaissance and modern thought, culture and civilization, — secular, humanist, naturalistic, realistic and positivistic. Iqbal too refers to the above fact in his lecture on "The Spirit of Muslim Culture". He writes: "Duhring tells us that Roger Bacon's conceptions of science are more just and clear than those of his celebrated namesake. And where did Roger Bacon receive his scientific training? In the Muslim Universities of Spain. Indeed part V of his 'Opus Majus' which is devoted to 'perspective' is practically a copy of Ibn-i-Hatham's Optics'. Nor is the book, as a whole, lacking in evidence of Ibn-i-Hazm's influence on its author. Europe has been rather slow to recognize the Islamic origin of her scientific method."<sup>19</sup>(a)..

### **Major Characteristics of Renaissance.**

Having examined the medieval-Christian and Muslim worlds, existing side by side, and having traced some of the forces and factors that prepared the ground for the great revival and awakening of Euro - pean life and thought, we can now turn to the detailed and critical examination of some of the salient and fundamental characteristics of the Renaissance as an intellectual and cultural movement which laid the foundations of the modern world. A great intellectual and cultural, social, political and economic change

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<sup>50</sup> Draper, *History of the Intellectual Development of Europe.*

<sup>19</sup>(a) Iqbal, Muhammad, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Ashraf Publications, Lahore, 1954, P. 129

took place in Europe between 1300 and 1600, and this period marked the passage from the medieval to the modern world. The gloomy medieval view of the world and life was totally rejected by the emancipated man of the Renaissance — by Boccaccio, even by Petrarch, by Rabelais, by Montaigne, by Erasms, by Mirandola, by Thomas More, by Francis Bacon, by Bruno, and by Machiavelli. The typical figures of the age are Marlowe's Tamburlaine and Faustus, Rabelais's Gargantua: on the gate of Abbe de Theleme was inscribed the motto of the new age: Do what you like. The medieval-Christian ideal of self-denial and self-negation and self-mortification gave place to the modern ideal of self-expression and self-assertion; otherworldliness gave way to an intense interest in the visible world, man discovered man and nature, impulse and reason became man's guides instead of authority and tradition. The new change of outlook and attitude was manifested in the change of literary forms and motifs. Allegory and symbolism were the typical medieval literary and artistic forms. Since the main concern of man was with the invisible and intangible world of the spirit, literature also attempted to represent the transcendental world through allegory and symbol. Medieval literature was religious and mystical, or, in the words of Sorokin, it was 'Ideational'. The chief literature of the centuries from the fifth to the end of the twelfth was mainly Ideational. "From the point of view of its inner character", writes Sorokin, "the literature of the centuries from the fifth to the tenth was almost entirely religious. In that period there is almost nothing which can be styled secular".<sup>51</sup> The tone and attitude of this medieval literature, whether poetry, prose or drama, was consciously didactic, and contemptuous, even inimical, toward the secular life, its sensual joys and sufferings, which is nothing more than a mirage, carbest at painful preparation for the life in the beyond. Symbolism and allegory dominate all the thinking and literature of the Middle Ages.

When we pass to the period of the twelfth to the fourteenth century, the atmosphere and scene totally changes. The ascetic strain decreases and the

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<sup>51</sup> P. A. Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, Vol I, New york, 1937, p. 612.

secular and the sensual increases. This new change is most typically present in Petrarch and Boccaccio; in Petrarch the ascetic and the humanist-sensuous strains are still in a state of conflict, but Boccaccio is blatantly sensual and lusty. Earthly human love or passion between man and woman begins to occupy a much larger place in poetry and romance. Even Dante, whose work represents in completest form the whole medieval Catholic world-view, cannot help feeling the pangs of human love, however much he may idealise and sublimate his love for Beatrice. Petrarch too had his Laura. This interest in and love of woman was also a very significant change indicating the transition from the medieval to the modern. The medieval attitude towards woman was not sympathetic and respectful. Times were violent and brutal and women were not treated kindly and humanely. It was commonly believed that woman was inferior to man and the cause of man's fall and all the ills and sorrows consequent upon that fall. Woman was regarded by the Church Fathers and the monks as the greatest temptation and snare of the Devil. "Woman was represented" writes Lecky, "as the door of hell, as the mother of all human ills. She should be ashamed at the very thought that she is a woman . . . She should be especially ashamed of her beauty, for it is the most potent instrument of the demon . . . Their essentially subordinate position was continually maintained".<sup>52</sup> But this medieval ascetic ideal was now replaced by the totally different ideal of the natural and sensual love of woman. "Asceticism", continues Lecky, "proclaiming war upon human nature, produced a revulsion towards its opposite, . . ."<sup>53</sup>. The new society of the Renaissance loved woman frankly, sometimes shamelessly, and made her socially the equal of man. Woman and her love become the main topics of the new literature. Beatrice becomes the ideal inspiration of *Divine Comedy* and Laura the inspiration of Petrarch's Sonnets. All the interest and charm of Boccaccio's *Decameron* centres round fair women. Sonnets are addressed to her; even when the lover complains and pines, he still praises her and adores her. This interest in the human and the sensual was not confined to love

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<sup>52</sup> W. E. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals*, Vol. (ii) (New York, 1955), P. 338. 22

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, P. 336.



alone; it extended to whatever delighted the senses: beautiful sights and sounds, good food and feasts, fine houses, fine clothing, gorgeous living, dazzling weapons and arms.

Beauty of the nude human body, particularly the female body, was glorified in the art and literature of the Renaissance. Boccaccio is among the masters in describing the physical female beauty. A passion for beauty, beauty of nature and of the human form, was a characteristic passion of the Renaissance, a passion voiced by poets and painters alike. "The moment people stopped looking fixedly towards heaven their eyes fell upon the earth," writes an authority on the art of the Renaissance, "and they began to see much on its surface that was pleasant. Their own faces and figures must have struck them as surprisingly interesting, and, considering how little St. Bernard and other medieval saints and doctors had led them to expect, singularly beautiful. A new feeling arose that mere living was a big part of life, and with it came a new passion, the passion for beauty, for grace, and for comeliness."<sup>54</sup>

A sixteenth century Italian writer, Firenzuola, wrote a treatise on female beauty. This writer's ideal of female beauty has been beautifully described by Burckhardt in these words: "He defines the shades of colour which occur in the hair and skin, and gives to the 'biondo' the preference, as the most beautiful colour for the hair, understanding by it a soft yellow, inclining to brown. He requires that the hair should be thick, long, and locky; the forehead serene, and twice as broad as high; the skin bright and clear (candida), but not of a dead white (bianchezza); the eyebrows dark, silky, most strongly marked in the middle, and shading of towards the ears and the nose; the white of the eye faintly touched with blue, the iris not actually black...The eye itself should be large and full, and brought well forward; the lids white, and marked with almost invisible tiny veins; the lashes neither too long, nor too thick, nor too dark. The hollow round the eye should have the

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<sup>54</sup> Bernhard Berenson, *Italian Painters of the Renaissance*,

same colour as the cheek. The ear, neither too large nor too small, firmly and neatly fitted on, should show a stronger colour in the winding than in the even parts, with an edge of the transparent ruddiness of the pomegranate. The temples must be white and even, and for the most perfect beauty ought not to be too narrow. The red should grow deeper as the cheeks get rounder. The nose, which chiefly determines the value of the profile, must recede gently and uniformly in the direction of the eyes; where the cartilage ceases, there may be a slight elevation, but not so marked as to make the nose aquiline, which is not pleasing in women; the lower part must be less strongly coloured than the ears, but not of a chilly whiteness, and the middle partition above the lips lightly tinted with red. The mouth, our author would have rather small, and neither projecting to a point, nor quite flat, with the lips not too thin, and fitting neatly together; an accidental opening, that is, when the woman is neither speaking nor laughing, should not display more than six upper teeth. As delicacies of detail, he mentions a dimple in the upper lip, a certain fullness of the under lip, and a tempting smile in the left corner of the mouth — and so on.<sup>55</sup>

Another significant change from the medieval to the Renaissance, also reflected in Petrarch, was in regard to man's attitude towards the beauties of nature. Man began to look with delight and joy upon the lakes and the woods, springs and the mountains, flowers, birds and animals. Nature was losing its taint of sin. This change towards nature is reflected even in a saint, St. Francis of Assisi, who, in his *Hymn to the Sun*, frankly praises God for creating the heavenly bodies and the four elements. Petrarch deeply felt the influence of natural beauty together with the charm of intellectual pursuits. When standing on the top of Mount Ventoux, near Avignon and enjoying the beautiful panorama, and at the moment recalling to mind his past life with its human follies, he opened St. Augustine's *Confessions* and his eyes fell on the passage, "and men go forth, and admire lofty mountains and broad

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<sup>55</sup> Jacob Burckhardt, *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, New York, 1954, pp. 256-258.

seas, and roaring torrents, and the ocean, and the course of the stars, and forget their own selves while doing so".<sup>56</sup>

The discovery of new and exotic lands beyond the seas was one of the important factors in stirring the feelings, enlarging the bounds of imagination and quickening popular curiosity. After five centuries of sleep the dawn of light and learning, life and joy came to Europe. Renaissance turned men from the contemplation of the other world to this world; in some cases, this turning from the medieval to the modern caused spiritual conflict, as in the case of Petrarch. Man turned from the supernatural to the natural and the human; he became conscious of his faculties and potentialities, and of his freedom to use his powers as he pleased. This awakening to his own nature and freedom was man's discovery of man, as pointed out by Michelet and later by Burckhardt. Man now indulged in free speculations about religion, morals, philosophy, art and literature. Machievelli is one of the most representative men of the new age; in fact, Marlowe's Tamburlaine, Faustus and the Jew Barabas typify many of the Renaissance qualities associated with the name of Machiavelli. The decline of feudalism, expansion of commerce and trade, contact with the Moorish civilization, discovery of new sea routes, emergence of prosperous cities, the idea of separate nationhood, the decline of Papal power and the breakup of Christendom as a unity, rejection of ascetic and monastic ideals of life, brought about the great transformation of life, thought and literature in Europe. Renaissance, secularism and humanism meant a more human, generous and liberal estimate of human nature, and a belief in the right and power of man to reconstitute himself and his environment as a free being, not as the slave of ecclesiastical authority. Renaissance implied a movement of the European mind and will toward self-emancipation and assertion of the natural rights of man's reason, nature and the senses. Natural human impulses and desires for love and beauty, for power over nature through knowledge, for prosperity and pleasure, for fame and glory, for a full life, for adventurous and joyful living found expression in

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<sup>56</sup> Quoted by Jacob Burckhardt, *ibid*, P. 221.

such figures as Faustus and Tamburlaine, Falstaff and Gargantua. Medieval warnings that the pleasures of the flesh are fleeting, that the visible world is but a shadow of the invisible, that the earthly life is a preparation and probation for the life beyond the grave, were not heeded by the natural man of the Renaissance.

The most important and characteristic idea associated with the Renaissance was that of the dignity and freedom of the individual. "The process of secularization in the Renaissance", writes Leo Lowenthal, "has intimate connections not only with an emerging individualism but with the problem of authority. This problem is, in turn, closely identified with a typical Renaissance concept of history — an interpretation of events in terms of the passions, drives and inner conflicts of leading historical figures".<sup>57</sup> Ever since the Renaissance the idea has existed that man carries an infinity of possibilities within himself, their realization is always within reach. The characters of Marlowe furnish a complete illustration of the above statements of Lowenthal. The plays of Marlowe, as also those of Shakespeare, are the products of a mind which "locates the drama of human existence within the soul of the individual man; it is the innermost victory or defeat that determinise the success or failure, triumph or tragedy, of man's life".<sup>58</sup> To the medieval man the meaning of life had been salvation in the hereafter; but a Faustus or a Tamburlaine sought self-realization and self-fulfilment here and now, within the bourne of time and space. Shakespeare epitomized in his famous lines the new sense of the wonder of life and man:

This goodly frame, the earth . . . this most excellent canopy the air,  
look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with  
golden fire! . . . What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how  
infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action

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<sup>57</sup> Leo Lowenthal, *Literature and the Image of Man*, (Boston, 1957), P. 57.

<sup>58</sup> Leo Lowenthal, *Literature and the Image of Man*, P. 60.

how like an angel ! in apprehension how like a god ! the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals!

Freedom of speculation concerning the nature of man and of the universe, the desire to explore and travel over uncharted and unknown seas of knowledge and experience was a characteristic of the Renaissance, reflected in Faustus's thirst for infinite knowledge and Tamburlaine's thirst for unlimited power and dominion. Self-assertion and force of will were the admired Renaissance qualities. "The Italian, at least", writes William Boultong, "had cast off the restraints of that rigid and traditional world, and was in reaction against it . . . . With the revival of letters, society became imbued once again with the Greek and Roman conception of man as a progressive creature, and was awakened to the richness of thought and feeling to be enjoyed in vigorous passionate life. Self-sufficiency, self-assertion, and force of will were admired above all other qualities . . . Each man strove to fulfill his own nature in his own way . . . The rigorous men of the Renaissance sought to live fully, freely, and with diversity; they thirsted for new and refreshing draughts; they boldly winged their way to unfamiliar (and forbidden) spheres, or gratified sense and passion to the full . . . On the whole its passions were unrestrained, save by prudence; unchecked by any moral curb, which it had counted foolishness. The religious rapture of Savonarola was an ephemeral phenomenon, and almost unique".<sup>59</sup>

We thus find that the tag words of the Renaissance were Individualism and Humanism. "To the discovery of the outward world", wrote Burckhardt, "the Renaissance added a still greater achievement, by first discerning and bringing to light the full, the whole nature of man".<sup>60</sup> This period gave the highest development to human personality and individuality.

The Renaissance conception of the nature, dignity and freedom of man was best set forth by Pico della Mirandola. God, as Mirandola tells us, made

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<sup>59</sup> William Boultong, *Four Pilgrims*, London.

<sup>60</sup> Jacob Burckhardt, *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, P. 225.

man at the close of the creation, to know the laws of the universe, to love its beauty, to admire its greatness. God bound man to no fixed place, to no prescribed form of work, and by no iron necessity, but gave him freedom of will to choose his own station and destiny. In the words of Mirandola, God addressed Adam thus: "Neither a fixed abode nor a form that is thine alone nor any function peculiar to thyself have we given thee, Adam, to the end that according to thy longing and according to thy judgment thou mayest have and possess what abode, what form, and what functions thou thyself shalt desire. The nature of all other beings is limited and constrained within the bounds of laws prescribed by Us. Thou, constrained by no limits, in accordance with thine own free will, in whose hand We have placed thee, shalt ordain for thyself the limits of thy nature. We have set thee at the world's center that thou mayest from thence more easily observe whatever is in the world. We have made thee neither of heaven nor of earth, neither mortal nor immortal, so that with freedom of choice and with honor, as though the maker and moulder of thyself, thou mayest fashion thyself in whatever shape thou shalt prefer. Thou shalt have the power to degenerate into the lower forms of life, which are brutish. Thou shalt have the power, out of thy soul's judgment, to be reborn into the higher forms, which are divine".<sup>61</sup>

It is not without much interest and significance that in the very first sentence of Mirandola's Oration there is a reference to Arabs and a Muslim name. The Oration begins thus: "I have read in the records of the Arabians, reverend Fathers, that Abdala<sup>62</sup> the Saracen, when questioned as to what on this stage of the world, as it were, could be seen most worthy of wonder, replied. 'There is nothing to be seen more wonderful than man!'"<sup>63</sup> Mirandola was undoubtedly fully conversant with the Arab philosophy and science, as with Greek, Jewish Persian, and Christian doctrines. "Adding the study of

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<sup>61</sup> Mirandola's 'Oration on the Dignity of Man', in *Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, Chicago, 1956, pp. 224-225.

<sup>62</sup> Abdala, that is, 'Abd Allah.

<sup>63</sup> P. O. Kristeller, *Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, P. 223.

Hebrew and Arabic to the more common Latin and Greek, he not only gave an impulse to oriental studies but also came into direct contact with the heritage of medieval Arabic and Jewish philosophy" <sup>64</sup> It may be safely asserted that in his most characteristic ideas, namely, the Freedom and Dignity of Man, and the Unity of Truth, Mirandola was influenced by the thought of Muslim Arab philosophers. "Pico's notion of a universal truth in which the various thinkers and schools all have a part obviously belongs to this same tradition (Eclectic and Neo-Platonist). It has been suggested that Pico's conception may have had some connection with the Averroistic doctrine of the unity of the intellect".<sup>65</sup> Mirandola even refers to the Holy Prophet by name and attributes to him a saying. "Mohammed, . . .", writes Mirandola, "often had this saying on his tongue: 'They who have deviated from divine law become beasts', and surely he spoke justly".<sup>66</sup>

The new Renaissance concept of the dignity and freedom of man, his right to explore freely the realms of thought and speculation and to shape his own life as he chose, was the most characteristic thought of the new philosophy of life. As against the man of the Middle Ages, the man of the Renaissance no longer considered himself an exile from the Garden of Eden and a prisoner on earth; he said 'Yes' to life. Man discovered the value and importance of his earthly and human life and the wealth of his mind and heart. Boccaccio was among the first who frankly sought to justify the pleasures of the body and the mind, and whose warm sensuous temperament, unburdened by medieval asceticism, found a congenial element in amorous stories. The romances of Boccaccio are set amidst beautiful gardens, with fair women and fair lovers. The individual appears with all his virtues and vices: Petrarch is hailed by most writers as a typical individual personality, "who first broke through the bonds of corporation" and "made his ego the mirror of the world", and therefore, as "the prophet of the new

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<sup>64</sup> *IbidP.* 216.

<sup>65</sup> *IbidP.* 220.

<sup>66</sup> *IbidP.* 226.

age, the ancestor of the modern world". The individual distinguished himself by great deeds, great talents, great passions, even great crimes, This new Renaissance individualism expressed itself, on its darker side, in an attitude of irreligion, immorality, and violent passions. This unbridled individualism and freedom of the individual was also due to a reaction against the chains and shackles that were put on him by the medieval order based upon feudalism and ecclesiasticism. The new men of the Renaissance were like men who had long remained confined to some gloomy dungeon and were suddenly released, finding themselves in the warm sunshine of the Italian sky. They returned to freedom, life and light. And therefore Renaissance has been identified with the ideas of reaction against medieval transcendentalism, and of reassertion of man's self-consciousness, his moral and intellectual autonomy; and his reconciliation with the present world. This new spirit expressed itself through a humanised and sensualised art and literature, the study and revival of the classics, and the desire to explore the earth. "These three events", wrote Hegel, "may be compared with the blush of dawn, which after long storms betokens the bright and glorious day".<sup>67</sup>

In the medieval period man was conscious of himself only as a member of a collective whole: society, church, or the guild. But in the new or modern man of the Renaissance, such as a Petrarch or a Boccaccio or a Marlowe, the subjective self-asserted itself with full power. The Renaissance, for Burckhardt and Symonds, infact, for most writers, marked the birth of individualism and the modern spirit which has often been named 'Faustian', a spirit like that of Faustus which wants never to rest but seek all knowledge and experience, beauty and pleasure possible to man during his short sojourn on earth. The writers and artists of the Renaissance, not only in thought but in actual living, accepted life cheerfully, became wordly and irreligious, some openly pagan. Savonarola was an exception rather than typical of the age. Leonardo da Vinci, Boccaccio, Cellini, Arcino, Ariosto, Poggio, Valla,

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<sup>67</sup> Quoted by W. K. Ferguson in *The Renaissance in Historical Thought*.



Machiavelli, Michel Angelo, Montaigne and Marlowe stand at opposite poles from St. Augustine, St. Francis of Assisi and from other Christian saints of the Middle Ages. "With the Renaissance", wrote Wilhelm Dilthey, "the Epicurean, the Stoic, the nature - intoxicated Pantheist, the skeptic, and the atheist made their appearance once more".<sup>68</sup> From these new men with completely changed attitude toward life there came a new and rich literature devoted to man's inner life and personality and passions. Man emerged as a self-conscious, willing, and creative individual, trying to bring under his dominion and control nature and the elements, like Faustus.

Petrarch is the typical transitional figure. He stands wavering between two worlds and two ideals, the medieval and the modern. He has the Renaissance love of life and nature, of human love, of fame and glory, and yet he is conscious of the opposite medieval ascetic-Christian ideal. In Petrarch we get glimpses of the changing attitude towards nature. "During the Renaissance", writes one scholar, "European culture turned from unattainable ideals to nature and reality".<sup>69</sup> Paracelsus also had turned to "the book of Nature written by the finger of God".<sup>70</sup> Among the Renaissance humanists, Petrarch expressed the new spirit of humanism, but he still was not completely above the inner conflict between the ascetic and the humanist ideals. His love for Laura was something new and human. But his *secret*, an imaginary dialogue between St. Augustine and himself, proves that he was not completely emancipated and that the medieval strain persisted in his thought and work. In the first dialogue the saint tells the poet that the poet's melancholy and restlessness rises from his many human desires. Those worldly and human interests and desires — love of woman and love of fame — have caused him to forget his Creator. Ascetic self-denial and contemplation of God are recommended as remedies for the poet's

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<sup>68</sup> Quoted by W. K. Ferguson in *The Renaissance in Historical Thought*.

<sup>69</sup> Ehrenburg, *Capital and Finance in the Age of the Renaissance*, quoted by H. S. Lucas in *Renaissance and the Reformation*, P. 367.

<sup>70</sup> Quoted by H. S. Lucas, 357.

melancholy and restlessness. The last dialogue concerns Petrarch's love for Laura and his love of fame. To the poet's assertion that love has proved an ennobling influence, St. Augustine replies: "Nothing so much leads a man to forget or despise God as the love of things temporal, and most of all this passion we call love".<sup>71</sup> But in spite of the saint's advice, life's secular and human interests continued to draw Petrarch's mind away from his thoughts of eternity and God.

In the matter of religious beliefs there are clear indications of questioning the established traditional medieval attitude; the new Renaissance religious attitudes range from scepticism; atheism, free- thinking to religious liberalism and humanised Christianity. In this sphere a lovable and important figure is that of Erasmus. He is the most famous of the Christian humanists of the Renaissance, who tried to reconcile the ethical spirit of the Sermon on the Mount with a broad humanistic culture . In him were united all the ethical and intellectual conceptions which that age of revolt brought forth. He was a truly eligious humanist, who revealed the enlightened humanist's dislike of monasticism, the worship of saints and relics, and the religious intolerance of the Church. He emphasized the spirit of Jesus's real ethical teaching shorn of all dogma and ritual and formalism. He believed in the basic goodness of human nature. The real teaching of Jesus, according to Erasmus, was that of love and charity, of righteousness in thought and action, his finest and realmessage being found in the Sermon on the Mount. To Erasmus the idea that the human will is shackled by predestination and human soul vitiated by depravity was shocking. Freedom of will was necessary if men were to be morally responsible for their thoughts and actions. Erasmus was one of the most representative and one of the most civilized men of his time. Scholars like Erasmus opened the windows of the mind, letting in fresh air. But most of the Renaissance humanists were not as pious and religious as Eramsus ; to most of them the medieval dogmas and taboos were repugnant to reason and nature.

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<sup>71</sup> *Ibid* P. 198

The great bulk of the classical humanists of the Renaissance were surely marginal Christians. Most of them had abandoned the most essential doctrine of the Christian faith, namely, that of the original and essential depravity of human nature. They were "casting off all authority, not merely that of the medieval church; they were humanists in the sense that they believed that man is the measure of allthings, and that each man is a measure for himself". Most humanists share the nature and character of Don Juan and Faust; Don Juan and Faustus typify and represent the new man of the Renaissance who had longings and desires which cannot be sanctioned by the orthodox faith. "Don Juan is indeed a brother of another figure of legend who by the Renaissance has become a literary figure — Doctor Faustus. Both Faustus and Don Juan want something excessive — their very wantings excessive. Yet they cannot satisfy their unending wants in a way the Christian tradition had long provided in its many variants of mystic other worldliness.

They have to get what they want in the flesh, here and now, like other men ... They have the restless striving after something infinite that men like Spengler find in the northerners, in the Faustian man. But as good children of humanism, they want all this without God, without theoria, nirvana, or any other mystic self-annihilation".<sup>72</sup>

A great influence for religious tolerance and liberalism was Boccaccio, whose *Decameron* reflects almost every important aspect of the Renaissance — its levity, even its license, its humour, its free-thinking, as well as its exuberant joy in life. The most significant part of its contents, in the religious context, is the famous story of the Three Rings, embodied later by Lessing in his *Nathan the Wise*, as an apologue of tolerance. Rationalistic and anti-clerical thought is a constant feature in European thought of the age, particularly in Italy, France and England. In England the circle of Sir Walter Raleigh, to which belonged Marlowe, was accused of scepticism. even of atheism.

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<sup>72</sup> Crane Brinton, *Shaping of the Modern Mind*, (New York, 1953), P. 40.

The picture of the Renaissance will not be complete without Machiavelli, who exercised the deepest influence over the thought and literature not only of his own age but over the thought of succeeding ages. He represented in his thought the most outspoken departure from the Christian values: "our religion has glorified rather the humble and contemplative men than the active."<sup>73</sup> Machiavelli, anticipating Nietzsche, questioned and attacked the Christian values and ideals of humility and otherworldliness ; he, instead, favoured the Roman heroic ideal of self-assertion, power and strength, writing approvingly, " .. the Pagan religion canonised only men crowned with public honor, as generals and statesmen."<sup>74</sup> Machiavelli was reputed in his own age as an atheist, as was Marlowe in his time; he certainly was not a Christian moralist. He was a typical product of the age of the Renaissance and fully represented Renaissance ideals of conduct and character. He was generally considered a symbol of Renaissance scepticism, atheism, immorality and corruption. He summed up the individualistic and naturalistic ideals of the Renaissance, ideals which marked the newly awakened Europe from the religious and corporate ideals of the Middle Ages. Machiavelli, in keeping with the spirit of the age, glorified those qualities in man which drive him to find free and full expression of his personality

Marlowe seized upon these 'Machiavellian' qualities and represented the liberated spirit of the new age. He represents his heroes — Tamburlaine, Faustus, and Barabas — overriding the Christian moral code in an effort to find the complete realization of their extraordinary aspirations and goals. In the Prologue to *The Jew of Malta*, Machiavelli appears in person and declares the keynote of the play and of the age:

I count religion but a childish toy,

And hold there is no sinne but ignorance.

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<sup>73</sup> Quoted by J. M. Robertson in *A Short History of Free Thought*, (New York, 1957), P. 231.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid* P. 231

One important result of the Renaissance ideal of self-expression, self-assertion and self-realization was that differences of class were overlooked; and accordingly the dramas of Marlowe break away from the medieval pattern in some important respects. For the Middle Ages tragedy was a thing of princes, of men in high degree; for Marlowe it was a thing of individual heroes, individual will challenging all powers, human or divine, if those powers deny them the satisfaction of their ambitions and aspirations. The medieval conception of the royalty of tragedy is in Marlowe supplanted by the Renaissance ideal of individual worth.

The most characteristic and typical elements of modern culture and civilization, namely, the attitude of world-and-life affirmation, free and unfettered expression of the individual and the national ego, subjugation of Nature and pursuit of the goods of the world, are derived from the Renaissance. "The essential characteristic of the modern age", writes Albert Schweitzer, "is that it thinks and acts in the spirit of a world-and-life affirmation which has never before appeared in such active strength. This world-view breaks through in the Renaissance, beginning at the end of the fourteenth century, and it arises as a protest against medieval enslavement of the human spirit . . . Taking refuge from book-learning in nature, the men of that time discover the world . . . As inquirers they press on into the infinite and the secrets of the universe and learn by experience that forces governed by uniform laws are, at work, and that man has power to make them serviceable to himself... With Paracelsus (1493-1541), Bernardino Telesio (1508-1588), Giordano. Bruno (1548-1600), and others, an enthusiastic nature-philosophy is announced... Under the steadily active influence of the new mentality, the world-view of Christianity changes, and becomes leavened with the yeast of world-and-life affirmation ... discovery and invention have given him (modern man) power over the world. This enhancement of his self-reliance and the consequent strengthening of his will and his hopes, determine his will-to-live in a correspondingly pronounced and positive sense". It can thus be maintained that modern civilization and culture, —

secular, humanist, scientific, technological, liberal and democratic, is not the product of official and historical Christianity; rather, it arose not because of Christianity but in spite of it.