

IQBĀL'S CONCEPT OF THE MARD-Ī MU'MIN AND RŪMĪ 'S INFLUENCE

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Man is the pivot around which Iqbāl's philosophy revolves; but, though for him the Self is the fundamental reality of the world, "his revaluation of Man is not that of Man qua Man, but of Man in relation to God".¹ Iqbāl's Perfect Man or *Mard-i Mu'min* like Rūmī's "*Mard-i Haqq*", though the ruler of the world, is first and last the Servant of God. It is important to stress this point in order to differentiate between Iqbāl's Perfect Man and figures such as the Nietzschean Superman, the symbol of unlimited power in a world without God.

Iqbāl considers the Self to be the criterion whereby all things are measured. "The idea of personality", he says, "gives us a standard of value: it settles the question of good and evil. That which fortifies personality is good, that which weakens it is bad. Art, religion, and ethics must be judged from the standpoint of personality."²

According to Iqbāl, the ego "has the quality of growth as well as the quality of corruption."³ It can expand to absorb the elements of the Universe and the attributes of God.⁴ On the other hand, it can also degenerate to the level of matter.⁵ Iqbāl looks upon personality as a state of tension which can "continue only if that state of tension is maintained; If

¹ Annemarie Schimmel, *Gabriel's Wing* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1963), p. 382.

² Quoted by R.A. Nicholson in his Introduction to *The Secrets of the Self* [trans. of Iqbāl's *Asrār-i Khudī*] (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1950), pp. xxi-xxii.

³ S.A. Vāḥid [Wāḥid] (ed.), *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbāl* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1964), p. 239.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ S.M. Iqbāl, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Reprint; Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1963), p. 12.

the state of tension is not maintained, relaxation will ensue. That which tends to maintain the state of tension tends to make us immortal."⁶ For Iqbāl it is of the utmost importance that this state of tension be maintained, for it is only by the preservation and completion of the personality that we can achieve 'that awareness of reality which Iqbāl believed to be man's ultimate goal on earth, that awareness which Eliot has called the still point of the turning world."⁷ The chief of the factors which strengthen the personality are:

Desire

Throughout Iqbāl's writings, great stress is placed on desire (designated by names such as *sūz*, *ḥasrat*, *justujrr*, *arzu*, *ishtiyaq* and *tamannā*) as the spring from which the Self draws sustenance. Life can be viewed as dynamic only when it is imbued with restless burning. All that has been achieved is a product of desire:

'Tis desire that enriches life,

And the mind is a child of its womb.

What are the social organizations, customs, laws?

What is the secret of the novelties of science?

A desire which realised itself by its own strength

And burst forth from the heart and took shape.⁸

Man is man, according to Iqbāl, because he has the capacity for endless yearning. In his eyes, this capacity lifts man to a station where he would not change his place even with God:

⁶Iqbāl, *Asrār*, trans. Nicholson, *Secrets*, pp. 25-26.

⁷E. McCarthy, "Iqbāl as a Poet and Philosopher", *Iqbāl Review*, II (April 1961), 20.

⁸Iqbāl, *Asrār*, trans. Nicholson, *Secrets*, pp. 25-26.

Priceless treasure is the agony and burning of desire,

I would not exchange my place as a man for the glory of God.⁹

Love

Love is the active sense of positive desire.¹⁰ Iqbāl "lays great emphasis on the value of love for strengthening the Self."¹¹ He uses the word in a very wide sense, and means by it "the desire to assimilate, to absorb. Its highest form is the creation of values and ideals and the endeavour to realise them."¹² As Peter Avery points out, Iqbāl's philosophy is essentially a philosophy of Love.¹³ Like Rūmī he preached a philosophy of dynamic love leading to the fulfilment of human destiny as well as God's purpose in creation.¹⁴

For Iqbāl, as for Tillich, "Life is being in actuality and love is the moving prayer of life. In man's experience of love the nature of love becomes manifest. The power of love is not something which is added to an otherwise finished process, but life has love in itself as one of its constitutive elements."¹⁵

⁹ Iqbāl, *Bāl-i Jibrīl* (4th edition; Lahore: Sh. Ghulām 'Alī & Sons, 1964), p. 21.

¹⁰ I. Singh, *The Ardent Pilgrim* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1951), p. 10.

¹¹ E.G. Browne, Review of R.A. Nicholson's [trans.] *The Secrets of the Self, The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1921), p. 143.

¹² Quoted by Nicholson in the Introduction to *Secrets*, p. xxv.

¹³ P. Avery, "Iqbāl and the Message of Persian Metaphysics", talk given on Iqbāl Day functions in London, April 1960.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ P. Tillich, *Love, Power and Justice* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 25-26.

Love is the fundamental urge of Being, its *elan vital* and its *raison d'être*.¹⁶ For Iqbāl, as for Rūmī, only love is an intrinsic value. Other values are extrinsic and instrumental and are to be judged according to their capacity for the realization of this primary value. Love is the only categorical imperative and strikes no bargain with God or man.¹⁷ He who denies love is an infidel:

I have never discovered well

Law's way, and the wont thereof,

But know him an infidel

Who denieth the power of Love.¹⁸

Faqr

The words *faqir* (or its synonym *qalandar*) and *faqr* (or *istighnā'*) appear very frequently in Iqbāl's verse. Iqbāl uses *faqr* to denote an inner attitude of detachment and superiority to material possession. "It is a kind of intellectual and emotional asceticism which does not turn away from the world as a source of evil and corruption, but uses it for the pursuit of good and worthy ends."¹⁹

Ṣayādī

¹⁶ K.A. Ḥakīm, "The Concept of Love in Rūmī and Iqbāl", *The Islamic Culture*, XIV (1940), p. 268.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

¹⁸ Iqbāl, *Zabūr-i-'Ajam*, trans. A.J. Arberry, *Persian Psalms* (Lahore: Sh. Muḥammad Ashraf, 1961), p. 103.

¹⁹ K.G. Sayyidayn *Iqbāl's Educational Philosophy* (Lahore: SH. Muḥammad Ashraf, 1960), pp. 187-188.

Literally, *ṣayādī* means hunting, and *Iqbāl is a hunter*. In Iqbāl's thought *sayādi* comes to denote a kind of heroic idealism based on daring, pride and honour. The *sayād is* most often symbolised by the lion, and the falcon (*shāhīn*).

Suffering

Suffering is included in the concept of *faqr* and is associated with all the factors strengthening the Self, but it needs special emphasis. Since "all the results of individuality, of separate self-hood, necessarily involve pain or suffering,"²⁰ Iqbāl was right in observing that "suffering is a gift from the gods in order to make man see the whole of life."²¹

Rūmī often uses the symbols of rue and aloe-wood exhaling sweet perfumes when burnt.²² Iqbāl too wishes to be "burnt" — to be tried by fire — so that his heart can be perfected:

Tongue-tied thou art in pain:

Cast thyself upon fire, like rue!

Like the bell, break silence at last, and from every limb, Utter forth a lamentation!

Thou art fire, fill the world with thy glow!

Make others burn with thy burning!²³

²⁰ S. Bhikshu, quoted in the *Encyclopedia of Religious Quotations*, p. 432.

²¹ Javid Iqbal, (ed.) *Stray Reflections* (Lahore: Sh. Ghulam 'Ali & Sons, 1961), p 103.

²² Schimmel, *Gabriel's wing* p. 142.

²³ Iqbal, *Asrār*, trans. Nicholson, *Secrets*, p.11

Forbearance

"The principle of the ego-sustaining deed is respect for the ego in myself as well as in others",²⁴ said Iqbāl. He was a great believer in forbearance and tolerance. E.M. Forster points out about Iqbāl that "whatever his opinions, he was no fanatic, and he refers to Hindus and Christians with courtesy and respect."²⁵

Courtesy

While stressing that one must always be hard with oneself, Iqbāl does not forget to say, not once but repeatedly, that a leader of men must be kind and courteous in speech and manner. The full-grown ego must possess *husn-i akhlāq* (beauty of disposition). This makes Iqbāl's Perfect Man as worthy of affection as he is of obedience, his heart-winning ways supplementing his world-winning ways.

Obstructions

Like Rūmī, Iqbāl considers evil to be extremely important in the development of man's personality. "Evil is the inevitable condition of good; out of darkness was created light. From this stand-point it possesses a positive value: it serves the purpose of God, it is relatively good."²⁶ The spirit of obstruction, symbolised by Satan, directs man's energies to newer channels. It offers a challenge to his spirit and is one of the forces behind his evolution, leading him on from conquest to conquest.

²⁴ W. Goethe quoted by B. Stevenson (ed.) *Stevenson's Book of Quotations* (5th edition: London: Cassell & CO. Ltd., 1946), p. 1885.

²⁵ E.M. Forster, *Two Cheers for Democracy* (London: Edward Arnold, 1951), p. 296.

²⁶ L. Maiter, "Iqbāl, a Great Humanist", *Iqbāl Review*, 11 (April 1961),

Just as the Self is open to growth, so it is open to decay. Amongst the factors which weaken *khudī*, the following are the most important:

Sawāl

Literally *sawāl* means asking, but in Iqbāl's thought it has a wide connotation and refers to any action which degrades a self-respecting ego. One of the commonest forms of *sawāl* is *taqlīd* (imitation). Iqbāl's most powerful and most moving attack against all forms of 'asking' comes in the *Rumūz-i Bekhudī*²⁷ when he lashes out against his co-religionists who have lost all sense of their Self-hood, and have submerged all their pride and dignity in a life of superficiality and spiritual bankruptcy.

Despair, Grief and Fear

Iqbāl has devoted one whole section of the *Rumūz-i Bekhudī*²⁸ to the theme that despair, grief and fear are the sources of all evil and destroyers of life.

Servitude

Iqbāl was a passionate believer in freedom, which he considered to be "the very breath of vital living".²⁹ In the "Bandegī Nāmāh" Iqbāl speaks in detail about the attitude and mentality of "slaves" — those who live in spiritual bondage. A "slave" pays real homage to man-made gods and mere lip-service to the Eternal God. For the sake of his body he sells his soul. With the sadness of the Biblical verse: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his

²⁷ . Iqbāl. *Rumūz-i Bekhudī* (Lahore: Sh. Ghulām 'Alī & Sons, 1961), pp. 186-187.

²⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 108-111.

²⁹ Sayyidayn, *Iqbal's Educational Philosophy*, p. 40.

own soul or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Iqbāl says:

A slave holds both religion and knowledge in light esteem, He gives away his soul so that his body may live. Through the munificence of kings, his body thrives, While his pure soul grows feeble like a spindle.³⁰

Nasab parasti

Nasab parastī means pride in one's lineage or caste. It is to be discouraged in all forms, as it is in opposition to one of the fundamentals of Islāmic policy — namely, the equality and brotherhood of man. Iqbāl considers *nasab parasti* to be one of the reasons for the downfall of the Muslims.

The Three Stages of the Self

According to Iqbāl, the development of the Self has three stages — Obedience, Self-control and Divine Vicegerency.³¹

Obedience

In the first stage "religious life appears as a form of discipline which the individual or a whole people must accept as an unconditional command without any rational understanding of the ultimate meaning and purpose of that command."³² Iqbāl, like Nietzsche, likens the Self at this stage to a camel known for its

³⁰ Iqbāl. *Zabūr-i 'Ajām* (Lahore: Sh. Ghulām 'Alī & Sons, 1961), pp. 258-261.

³¹ Iqbāl's letter to Nicholson quoted in the Introduction to the *Secrets*, pp. xxvi-xxvii

Iqbāl, Asrār, trans. Nicholson, *Secrets*, p. 73.

³² Iqbāl, *Reconstruction*, p. 181.

"obedience, utility and hardihood."³³ Man must fulfil his obligations as patiently as does the camel:

Thou, too, do not refuse the burden of Duty:

So wilt thou enjoy the best dwelling-place, which is with God.³⁴

Without obedience to the law there can be no liberty. He who would command the world must first learn to obey.

Endeavour to obey, O heedless one!

Liberty is the fruit of compulsion.

By obedience the man of no worth is made worthy;

By disobedience his fire is turned to ashes.

Whoso would master the sun and stars,

Let him make himself a prisoner of Law³⁵

One must "not complain of the hardness of the Law"³⁶ but submit to it willingly, knowing that discipline makes the Self grow stronger.

The air becomes fragrant when it is imprisoned in the flower-bud;

The perfume becomes musk when it is confined in the navel of the musk-deer.³⁷

³³ S. Kashya, "Sir Moḥammad Iqbāl and Friedrich Nietzsche", *The Islāmic Quarterly*, 11 (April 1955), 181.

³⁴ Iqbāl, *Asrār*, trans, Nicholson, *Secrets*, p. 73

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

Self-Control

The second stage in the education of the Self is when it is able to command itself. "Perfect submission to discipline" says Iqbāl, "is followed by a rational understanding of the discipline and the ultimate source of its authority. in this period religious life seeks its foundation in a kind of metaphysics — a logically consistent view of the world with God as part of that view."³⁸

Both fear and love are constituents of a man's being. By understanding the meaning of *tawhīd* one can conquer fear.

So long as thou hold'st the staff of "There is no God but
He",

Thou wilt break every spell of fear.³⁹

Through Love of God, man is freed from all lesser loyalties and bonds:

He withdraws his eyes from all except God

And lays the knife to the throat of his son.⁴⁰

Prayer is "the pearl" within "the shell" of faith.it is also that which protects him from all evil.

In the Moslem's hand prayer is like a dagger

Killing sin and forwardness and wrong.⁴¹

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

³⁸ Iqbāl, *Reconstruction*, p. 181.

³⁹ Iqbāl, *Asrār*, trans. Nicholson, *Secrets*, p. 76.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

Fasting adds to the powers of endurance and gives moral strength. Fasting makes an assault upon hunger and thirst And breaches the citadel of sensuality.⁴²

The pilgrimage to Mecca "teaches separation from one's home and destroys attachment to one's native land."

It is an act of devotion in which all feel themselves to be one, 'It binds together the leaves of the book of religion.'⁴³

Almsgiving is helpful towards bringing about social equality.

It fortifies the heart with righteousness,

It increases wealth and diminishes fondness for wealth.⁴⁴

Thus in the second stage of the ego's education or development man does not merely obey the Law, but also perceives intellectually that the Law "is a means of strengthening thee" so that "thou may stride the camel of thy body"⁴⁵ (i.e. overcome the weakness of the flesh). If one would conquer the world, one must first conquer oneself:

If you can master the self-conquering technique,

The whole world will be yours to take.⁴⁶

Without self-control, no man can attain real sovereignty.

Sovereignty in the next world or in this world

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

⁴² *Ibid.*,

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ qbāl, *Gulshan-i Rāz-i Jadīd*, trans. Hādī Ḥusain, *The New Rose Garden of Mystery* (Lahore: Sh. Muḥammad Ashraf, 1969), p. 4.

Cannot be had save through perfect discipline of the mind and body.⁴⁷

Vicegerency of God

The third stage in the development of the Self is *niyābat-i Ilāhi* (the vicegerency of God). Although man already possesses the germ of vicegerency (*Qur'ān* 2:28),⁴⁸ "not man as he is now, but man purified through obedience, self-dominion, and detachment, can reach the high station of... Divine Vicegerency."⁴⁹

Iqbāl describes the Perfect Man in superlatives.

He is the completest Ego, the goal of humanity, the acme of life, both in mind and body; in him the discord of our mental life becomes a harmony. This highest power is united in him with the highest knowledge. In his life, thought and action, instinct and reason, become one. He is the last fruit of the tree of humanity, and all the trials of a painful evolution are justified because he is to come at the end. He is the real ruler of mankind; his kingdom is the kingdom of God on earth).⁵⁰

Nature must undergo long and painful travails to bring to birth the Perfect Man:

For a thousand years the narcissus bewails its sightlessness.

⁴⁷ Iqbāl, *Jāvīd Nāma* (8th edition; Lahore: Sh. Ghulām 'Alī & Sons. 1964), p. 239.

⁴⁸ Iqbāl's letter to Nicholson quoted in the Introduction to *Secrets*, p. xxvii.

⁴⁹ A. Bausani, "Iqbāl's Philosophy of Religion and the West", *Pakistan Quarterly*, II (1952), p. 54.

⁵⁰ Quoted by Nicholson in the Introduction to *Secrets*, pp. xxvii-zxviii.

After what anguish is one of vision born in the garden.⁵¹ Iqbāl points out that "the development of humanity both in mind and body" is a condition precedent to the birth of the Perfect Man, who, for the present, "is a mere ideal."⁵² The signs, however, are hopeful, since "the evolution of humanity is tending towards the production of an ideal race of more or less unique individuals who will become his fitting parents."⁵³

Iqbāl's poetry is full of the portraits of his *Mard-i Mu'min* who "wakes and sleeps for God alone"⁵⁴ and "executes the command of Allāh in the world."⁵⁵

His desires are few, his ideals are lofty,

His ways are gracious, his gaze is pleasing.

He is soft in speech but ardent in his quest

In war as in peace he is pure of heart and mind.⁵⁶

The Vicegerent is a creator and interpreter of values. He is "the goal of life's caravan",⁵⁷ the ruler of all things that God created.

Man is the deputy of God on earth,

And Over the elements his rule is fixed.⁵⁸

⁵¹ Iqbāl, *Bāng-i Darā* (8th edition; Lahore: Sh. Ghulām & Sons, 1964), p. 300.

⁵² Quoted by Nicholson in the Introduction to *Secrets*, p. xxviii.

⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁴ Iqbāl, *Asrār*, trans. Nicholson, *Secrets*, p. 80.

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ Iqbāl, *Bāl-i Jibrīl*, p. 132.

⁵⁷ Iqbāl, *Asrār*, trans. Nicholson, *Secrets*, p. 84.

For his coming, the poet longs fervently:

Appear, O rider of Destiny!

Appear, O light of the dark realm of Change.⁵⁹

Iqbāl's Perfect Man, then, though a co-worker with God, is not a breaker of Divine Law. He is the master of all created things, but a slave to God. In fact, the degree of his servitude to God is the measure of his perfection. Iqbāl's Perfect Man, says Professor Bausani, has something to teach us:

First: that tolerance and all those so-called virtues of modern man are not in contradiction to the simple strong faith in the transcendental. 'Wherever you turn' — to use a Koranic sentence — 'There the countenance of God stands,' ... second: Man, who is merely an impotent being completed by Him who is 'nearer to him than his jugular vein', becomes omnipotent and creator of new spiritual worlds. Third: to achieve this, a preliminary act of submission is necessary: in Dante's philosophy it is repentance, in Iqbāl's declaration of slavery — but slavery of God and only of God, of that God whose glory permeates through all the Universe.⁶⁰

Even a cursory glance at any part of Iqbāl's philosophy, in particular his conception of the *Mard-i-Mu'min*, would reveal Rūmī's profound influence. Rūmī was Iqbāl's acknowledged *murshid*. Professor Hakīm has observed, "If a free man like Iqbāl could be called the

⁵⁸ Iqbāl, *Rumūz-i Bekhudī*, trans. A. J. Arberry, *The Mysteries of Selflessness* (London: John Murray, 1953), p. 57.

⁵⁹ Iqbāl, *Asrār*, trans. Nicholson, *Secrets*. p. 83.

⁶⁰ A. Bausani, "Dante and Iqbāl", *Crescent and Green* (1955), pp. 169-170.

disciple of any man, it is only of Rūmī⁶¹ Rūmī is Iqbāl's intellectual progenitor, and it is only with reference to this great mystic-poet that Iqbāl admits with frank pride:

You too belong to the Caravan of Love —

That Caravan of Love whose chief is Rūmī.⁶²

Iqbāl's view of evolution has been greatly influenced by Rūmī, whose ideas on the subject were a message of hope and joy and did not bring the gloom and despair which came in the wake of Darwin's theory.⁶³ For Rūmī the lowest form of life is matter, but matter is not dead or inert:

Air and Earth and Fire are slaves,

For you and me they are dead, but not for God.⁶⁴

According to Rūmī, the self originated in the form of matter consisting of dimly conscious monads. His theory is stated thus:

First man appeared in the class of inorganic things.

Next he passed there from into that of plants.

For years he lived on as one of the plants,

Remembering naught of his inorganic state so different;

And when he passed from the vegetative to the animal state,

⁶¹ K.A. Ḥakīm. "Rūmī, Nietzsche and Iqbāl", in *Iqbāl as a Thinker* (Lahore: Sh. Muḥammad Ashraf, 1944), p. 201.

⁶² Iqbāl. *Bāl-i Jibrīl*, p. 200.

⁶³ Iqbāl, *Reconstruction*, pp. 121-122.

⁶⁴ Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, *Mathnawī-i Ma'nawī*, ed. B. Furuzanfar and M. Darvish (Tehrān, 1963), Book I, p. 53.

He had no remembrance of his state as a plant,
Except the inclination he felt to the world of plants,
Especially at the time of spring and sweet flowers;
Like the inclination of infants towards their mothers,
Which knew not the cause of their inclination to the breast.
Again the great Creator, as you know,
Drew men out of the animal state into the human state.
Thus man passed from one order of nature to another,
Till he became wise and knowing and strong as he is now.
Of his first souls he has now no remembrance,
And he will be again, changed from his present soul.⁶⁵

Iqbāl's concept of the evolution of man expressed in lines such as the following is strongly reminiscent of Rūmī's thought on the subject:

That which is conscious in man, sleeps a deep sleep
In trees, flowers, animals, stones and stars.⁶⁶
and
With what great effort have I made
Rank by rank, part by part,
Inorganic into organic, organic into animal,

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, Book IV, pp. 173-174, trans. Iqbāl, *Reconstruction*, pp. 121-122.

⁶⁶ Iqbāl, *Bāng-i Darā*, p. 143.

Animal into brute, brute into man.⁶⁷

For Iqbāl, as for Rūmī, God is the ultimate source and ground of evolution.⁶⁸ He does not regard matter as something dead because from the ultimate Ego only egos proceed.

From its ray nothing comes into being save egos,

From its sea, nothing appears save pearls.⁶⁹

The ultimate Ego is immanent in matter and makes the emergent emerge out of it. There are various levels of being or grades of consciousness. The rising note of egohood culminates in man.⁷⁰

Iqbāl shares Rūmī's belief that evolution is the outcome of an impulse of life manifesting itself in innumerable forms. The vital impulse determines the direction of evolution as well as evolution itself. Life is that which makes efforts, which pushes upwards and outwards and on. All the striving is due to the *élan vital* in us, "that vital urge which makes us grow, and transforms this wandering planet into a theatre of unending creation."⁷¹

Like Rūmī, Iqbāl looks upon evolution as something great and glorious, not as something signifying man's sinfulness and degradation. The fall is the beginning of self-consciousness — the stage from where

⁶⁷ Cited in L. Badvī, "A Forgotten Composition of Iqbāl", *Iqbāl Review* (January 1965), pp. 77-78.

⁶⁸ Jamīlah Khatūn, *The Place of God, Man and Universe in the Philosophic System of Iqbāl* (Karachi: Iqbāl Academy, Pakistan, 1963), p. 121.

⁶⁹ Trans. BA. Dār, *Iqbāl's Gulshan-i Rāz-i Jadīd and Bandage Nāmāh* (Lahore: Sh. Muḥammad Ashraf, 1964), p. 36.

⁷⁰ Iqbāl, *Reconstruction*, pp. 71-72.

⁷¹ W. Durant, *The Story of Philosophy* (Reprint; London: Ernest Benn Ltd., 1948), pp. 345-346.

the Man of God will begin his conscious search for perfection. Greeting Adam, the spirit of Earth says:

The light of the world-illuminating sun is in your spark,

A new world lives in your talents.

Unacceptable is Paradise which is given,

Your paradise lies hidden in your blood,

O form of clay see the reward of constant endeavour.⁷²

One of the most notable characteristics of Rūmī's thought is his ardent belief in the efficacy of constant endeavour.⁷³ Iqbāl shares with Rūmī this special kind of mysticism — sometimes referred to as the mysticism of struggle — the kind of mysticism which strengthens and fortifies, rather than awakens or puts to sleep, the potentialities of the Self. In his Introduction to the translation *The Secrets of the Self*, Professor Nicholson comments: "Much as he (Iqbāl) dislikes the type of Sūfism exhibited by Ḥāfīz, he pays homage to the pure and profound genius of Jalālu'ddīn, though he rejects the doctrine of self-abandonment taught by the great Persian mystic and does not accompany him on his pantheistic flights."⁷⁴ Although, as has been observed above, Iqbāl could not follow Rūmī into all the regions of mystic ecstasy, their mysticism — Rūmī's and Iqbāl's — has a lot in common. It was 'positive', it affirmed life and upheld passionately both the dignity and the divinity of man. This mysticism may perhaps be best described in terms of Love — a concept which forms the chief link between Iqbāl and Rūmī. For both Rūmī and Iqbāl the Perfect Man is

⁷² Iqbāl, *Bāl-i Jibrīl*, p. 179.

⁷³ S.A. Vāhīd [Wāhīd], *Studies in Iqbāl* (Lahore: Sh. Muḥammad Ashraf, 1967), p. 102.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. xiv-xv.

an embodiment of Love, a paragon of *'ishq*. For both of them Love is assimilation and expansion. It is linked with the doctrine of hardness, and the sole mean of attaining "the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory". It is this attribute which distinguishes more than anything else Iqbāl's Perfect Man from Nietzsche's Superman and places him in close proximity to Rūmī's *Mard-i-Haqq*.

Not only do Rūmī and Iqbāl regard man's advent on earth as happy event; they are also staunch believers in the personal creation of destiny or man's freedom of will. In numerous places Rūmī has reiterated the thought of the following lines:

It is certain that we possess a certain power of choice,

You cannot deny the manifest evidence of the inner sense.⁷⁵

And Iqbāl's writings resound with the message of the immortal lines.

Through action life is made heaven or hell,

This man of clay, by origin is neither heavenly (light) nor hellish (fire).⁷⁶

Both Rūmī and Iqbāl go beyond upholding the freedom of the will to a belief in *tawakkul* or trustful renunciation. *Tawakkul* is not born out of an awareness of one's helplessness, but is the result of *Imān*, the vital way of making the world our own.⁷⁷ *Imān*, says Iqbāl, "is not merely a passive belief in one or more propositions of a certain kind, it is a living assurance begotten of a rare experience."⁷⁸ Only "strong

⁷⁵ Rūmī, *Mathnawī-i Ma'nawī*, Book I.

⁷⁶ Iqbāl, *Bāng-i Darā*, p. 307.

⁷⁷ Iqbāl, *Reconstruction*, p. 109.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*,

personalities are capable of rising to this experience and the 'higher fatalism' implied in it."⁷⁹ This higher fatalism, described thus by Tennyson:

Our wills are ours, we know not how,

Our wills are ours to make them thine⁸⁰

is described variously by Rūmī and Iqbāl. The former says:

The word 'Determinism' causes Love to grow impatient,

Only he who is not a lover regards 'Determinism' as a prison⁸¹

And the latter writes:

When he loses himself in the will of God

The *Mu'min* becomes God's instrument of destiny.⁸²

Both Rūmī and Iqbāl believe that the Perfect Man's life in God is not annihilation, but transformation. "The Ideal man freely merges his own will in the Will of God in the ultimate relation of Love."⁸³ It is more than likely that Iqbāl's ideas about the deep love between man and a personal God, which form one of the most profound and inspiring part of his writings, were clarified and strengthened through his contact with Rūmī's thought.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 109-110.

⁸⁰ A. Tennyson, *The Poetical Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson* (London: MacMillan & Co., 1950), p. 239.

⁸¹ Rūmī, *Mathnawī-i Ma'nawī*, Book I.

⁸² Iqbāl, *Pas Che Bāyad Kard* (8th edition; Lahore: Sh. Ghulām 'Alī & Sons, 1964), p. 14.

⁸³ K.A. Ḥakīm, *The Metaphysics of Rūmī* (Lahore: Institute of Islāmic Culture, 1959), p. 110.

The resemblance between Rūmī's *Mard-i-Ḥaqq* and Iqbāl's *Mard-i Mu'mim* is quite unmistakable. In both cases the Ideal Man is a combination of the man of contemplation and the man of action. Iqbāl places more stress on action than Rūmī does, but this hardly constitutes a fundamental difference.

Both Rūmī and Iqbāl believe that the whole course of evolution is steered towards the creation of the Perfect Man. "He is the final cause of creation and, therefore, though having appeared last in point of time, he was really the first mover. Chronologically, the tree is the cause of the fruit but, teleologically, the fruit is the cause of the tree."⁸⁴ To his Perfect Man, Rūmī says:

Therefore, while in form thou art the microcosm, in reality thou art the macrocosm.

Externally the branch is the origin of the fruit;

intrinsically the branch came into existence for the sake of the fruit.

Had there been no hope of the fruit, would the gardener have planted the tree.

Therefore in reality the tree is born of the fruit,

though it appears to be produced by the tree.⁸⁵

About his *Nā'ib-ī-Ilāhi* Iqbāl says:

He is the final cause of "God taught Adam the name of all things",⁸⁶

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

⁸⁵ Rūmī, *Mathnawi-i Ma'nawī*, Book IV, p. 27; trans. R.A. Nicholson, *Rūmī, Poet and Mystic* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1950). p. 124.

He is the inmost sense of "Glory to Him that transported His servant by night."⁸⁷

and then, turning to "the Rider of Destiny", proclaims:

Mankind are the cornfield and thou the harvest,

Thou art the goal of Life's caravan.⁸⁸

The ideal of the Perfect Man is for both Rūmī and Iqbal a democratic ideal, which does not have the aristocratic bias of Nietzsche's ideal. Both Rūmī and Iqbāl believe that the Perfect Man can work miracles, which do not, however, "mean the annihilation of causation but only bringing into play causes that are not within the reach of common experience."⁸⁹ Iqbāl, we may remember, said that "the region of mystic experience is as real as any other region of human experience."⁹⁰

It is not possible within the purview of these few pages to discuss in any depth the subject of this essay. However, an attempt has been made to indicate — in broad outline — the constituents of Iqbāl's concept of the *Mard-i Mu'min*, the stages of the education of the Self and some of the most striking similarities between the thought of Rūmī and that of Iqbāl in so far as they have a bearing on the genesis and growth of the Self and the emergence of the Perfect Man. Rūmī's influence on Iqbāl has been so all-pervading that it is not possible either to describe or to circumscribe it exactly. The *Asrār-i Khudī*, with which Iqbāl began his preaching of the doctrine of incessant struggle, carries as its

⁸⁶ *Qur'ān*, 2:29.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 17:1; trans. Nicholson, *Secrets*, p. 81.

⁸⁸ Iqbāl, *Asrār*, trans. Nicholson, *Secrets*, p. 84.

⁸⁹ Ḥakīm, *The Metaphysics of Rūmī*, p. 110.

⁹⁰ Iqbāl, *Reconstruction*, p. 23.

introduction the following lines of Rūmī (quoted again in the *Jāvīd Nāma*):

Last night the Elder wandered about the city with a lantern

Saying, 'I am weary of demon and monster: man is my desire.

My heart s sick of these feeble-spirited fellow-travellers;

The Lion of God and Rustam-e Dastan are my desire

I said, 'The thing we quested after is never attained.

He said, 'The unattainable — that thing is my desire'.⁹¹

And in conclusion one can hardly do better than observe with Iqbāl's most eminent biographer that "a more accurate description of Iqbāl's own approach to ideals would be difficult to find."⁹²

⁹¹ Trans. A.J. Arberry, *Jāvīd Nāma* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1966), p. 29.

⁹² Singh, *The Ardent of Pilgrim*, p. 103.