

TENNYSON AND IQBAL

A Study in Affinities

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I

Sir Muhammad Iqbal, poet-philosopher of pre-independence India who died in 1938, has gained international recognition as one of the greatest poets of humanity. His fame extends to the entire Muslim world and is spreading across other lands like Germany, France, England, Italy, Japan, Russia, and the United States. Some years ago Columbia University Press published a study of Iqbal in which scholars from East and West paid glowing tributes to the genius of Iqbal. He is found to have a great kinship of spirit with Western poets like Dante, Milton, Goethe, and Browning. Since Iqbal's poetry is concerned with problems that transcend the barriers of race, language and geography, he will in future studies be found to have many things in common with other great poets of both East and West.

As a young man Iqbal was exposed to English poets and quite early he was rendering into Urdu verse some English poems, especially those of Cowper, Tennyson, Emerson, and Longfellow.²¹¹

As a professor at the University of the Punjab he would read passages from English poets, comment on the beauty of certain lines, and compose lines of his own to show how he would have handled the same ideas

²¹¹ Annemarie Schimmel, *Gabriel's Wing* (London, 1963), p. 329. An early monument of Iqbal's indebtedness to Tennyson is a poem entitled "Ishq aur Maut" included in his volume of Urdu poetry published in 1924 under the title of *Bāng-i Darā*. It is a poetic version of one of Tennyson's early poems, "Love and Death" published in 1833. It is a colloquy between Love and Death, which foreshadows Tennyson's mature philosophy of Love and is also in consonance with Iqbal's doctrine of Love. Addressing Death, Love says :

"Thou art the shadow of life, and as the tree
Stands in the sun and shadows all beneath,
So in the light of great eternity
Life eminent creates the shadow of death:
The shadow passeth when the tree shall fall,
But I shall reign for ever over all."

somewhat differently.²¹² He assimilated much from the philosophical thought of Persia and the West, adapted it to his own vision to which he gave expression in a poetic idiom that is startling in its originality and imaginative power. It is difficult to believe that Iqbal was unaffected by Tennyson because at the time he was growing up Tennyson was acknowledged as one of the greatest poets of the English-speaking world. This paper is an attempt to trace the affinities between Tennyson and Iqbal in that realm of thought where they courageously face the timeless problems of life and death as individuals. Both have specific ideas on the role of poetry in modern society ; both are landscape painters ; both explore the nature of the Self, God, time, and immortality; both propound a theory of moral and spiritual evolution ; and both find in the doctrine of Love the central unitive force which encompasses human life and the universe of phenomenal and transcendental Reality.

Before we examine these areas we may point out that even the casual reader of Tennyson and Iqbal can find certain similarities between the two poets. For example, both poets cast themselves in the role of prophets and have interesting things to say about the future of civilisation and the human race. Iqbal presents a glorious vision of the future of Man:

"The lustre of a handful of earth one day shall outshine
the creatures of light ; earth through the star of his destiny
one day shall be transformed into heaven. His imagination,
which is nourished by the torrent of vicissitudes, one day
shall soar out of the whirlpool of the azure sky. Consider
one moment the meaning of Man ; what thing do you ask of us?
Now he is pricking into nature, one day he will be modulated
perfectly, so perfectly modulated will this precious subject
be that even the heart of God will bleed one day at the
impact of it!"²¹³

²¹² H. Malik, Ed., *Iqbal: Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan* (New York Columbia U. Press, 1971), p. 347.

²¹³ Arthur J. Arberry, Tr., *Javid Aroma* by Sir Muhammad Iqbal (London: George Allen &

Iqbal spoke of poetry as "the heir of prophecy,"²¹⁴ and described the function of poetry as "the fashioning of men". Tennyson concluded his In Memoriam with the prophecy of "one far-off divine event,/To which the whole creation moves".

Both regarded mystical experience as a valid mode of revelation of Truth. Tennyson was subject to mystical trances in which, out of the consciousness of individuality, his individuality itself seemed to dissolve and fade away into boundless being ; "and this not a confused state, but the clearest of the clearest, the surest of the surest, the weirdest of the weirdest, utterly beyond words, where death was an almost laughable impossibility, the loss of personality (if so it were) seeming no extinction but the only true life."²¹⁵ Iqbal did not claim to be a mystic, but his thought was steeped in sufi mysticism ; and his heart was not alien to mystical feeling:

"Rapt in its music, in evening's hush, the Ravi:

But how it is with this heart, do not ask—

Hearing in these soft cadences a prayer-call,

Seeing all earth God's precinct, here beside

The margin of the onward-flowing waters

Standing I scarcely know where I am standing."²¹⁶

Elsewhere he records experiences which have strong mystical overtones not unlike the transfiguring states described by Tennyson in "Timbuctoo," *In Memoriam*, *Idylls of the King*, and "The Ancient Sage". For illustration we may quote from Iqbal's *magnum opus*, *Javid Nāmāh*, an allegorical dream vision like Dante's *Divine Comedy*, in which Iqbal travels to the different planets and the world beyond them:

"I passed beyond the bounds of this universe

and set foot in the undimensioned world,

Unwin, 1966), pp. 26-27. 11. 174-82. All subsequent references to this title will be given in the abbreviated form, JN.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 1. 728.

²¹⁵ C.F. Masterman, *Tennyson as a Religious Teacher* (London: Methuen & Co., 1910), p. 320

²¹⁶ V. G. Kiernan, *Pomes from Iqbal* (Translated from Urdu), (London: John Murray, 1955), p. 9

s world without both right and left,
a world devoid of night and day.
Before it the lantern of my perception dimmed,
My words died in awe of the meaning.
To speak of the spirit with the tongue of matter and clay—
It is very hard to soar in a cage !"²¹⁷

An even more vivid experience is described in the following vision:

"Suddenly I beheld my world,
that earth and heaven of mine,
I saw it drowned in a light of dawn;
I saw it crimson as a jujube tree:
out of the epiphanies which broke in my soul
I felt drunk with ecstasy like Moses.
That light revealed every secret veiled
and snatched the power of speech from my tongue."²¹⁸

Tennyson also complains about the inadequacy of speech to describe such a trance, which is hard "to frame/In matter-moulded forms of speech," and he also passes beyond the world of space and time," and whirled:

"About empyreal heights of thought,
And came on that which is, and caught
The deep pulsations of the world."²¹⁹

Iqbal observed that only in the mystical state could one come into contact with "the total passage of Reality". In such a state the "diverse stimuli merge into one another and form a single unanalysable unity in which the

²¹⁷ JN, 11. 2753-60.

²¹⁸ JN, 11. 3625-32.

²¹⁹ Christopher Ricks, Ed., *The Poems of Tennyson*, p. 947. *In Memoriam*, section not, 11. 37-40.

ordinary distinction of subject and object does not exist."²²⁰ It was not a matter of mere retirement into "the mists of pure subjectivity".²²¹ It was a moment of transcendence of the self and intimate association with a unique Other Self whereby the private personality of the self was overpowered but not obliterated.

Both poets discredited philosophy as the source of true knowledge. Whatever assurance Tennyson found for his faith did not come from the grand spectacle of the created universe or from the evidences of design in the works of Nature, "Nor thro' the questions men may try" ; he speaks of traditional philosophical schools as fragile constructs manufactured by the human mind. Iqbal is equally sceptical of reaching knowledge of Reality through the teachings of philosophers: "To bard and scholar listened I,/Philosopher to boot ; /Although their palm is proud and high,/It yields nor leaf nor fruit."²²²

Both writers were opposed to an ascetic way of life which involved renunciation of the world; they regarded service to one's fellowman as the noblest social ideal that holds the key to the salvation of the individual. Tennyson's Ancient Sage advises the young sceptical poet to "Let be thy wail and help they fellow-man. . . . And send the day into the darkened heart."²²³ Iqbal's morning star musing on its life says that if its life were dedicated to human service it would be more satisfying than a life of lonely splendour: "Let me rather be changed to a flower-falling dewdrop,/A speck in the gold dust that paints a bride's forehead,/A spark in the sigh that a wounded heart breathes."²²⁴ Later on Iqbal extended this ideal to embrace all living things: "A radiant nature glories the man of God,/to serve all God's creatures, that is his aim."²²⁵

Iqbal shares with Browning and Tennyson a feeling of the in-adequacy of speech as a vehicle for the communication of spiritually apprehended

²²⁰ Sir Mohammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1962). p. 18. Subsequently Reconstruction.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

²²² A.J. Arberry, *It, Persian Psalms* (Lahore : Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1961) p. 115. All subsequent references to this title will be given as PP.

²²³ Ricks, *op cit.*, p. 1356

²²⁴ Kiernan, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

²²⁵ IN, II. 1991-92.

truths. He writes:

"Truth chokes, into words' garment thrust—
Truth the clear mirror, speech its rust ;
The spirit's torch blazes in my breast,
The lamp of speech fails in the test
My wings, if I mount one hair's breadth higher,
Must shrivel before that blinding fire !"²²⁶

Tennyson had recorded in *In Memoriam* a similar feeling:

"Vague words ! but ah, how hard to frame
In matter-moulded forms of speech,
Or even for intellect to reach
Through memory that which I became."²²⁷

Regarding the inadequacy of thought itself to convey divine realities Iqbal had written: "It is, therefore, the operation of thought, working with static concepts, that gives the appearance of a series of immobilities to what is essentially dynamic in its nature."²²⁸ In some poems like "Break, break, break," Tennyson expresses a vague yearning of the soul for an unidentified primordial or probably pre-natal state, which he sometimes calls the *Passion of the Past*. At one stage in his career, Iqbal also believed with Plato and Wordsworth that the soul at birth was in communion with *Eternal Beauty* and its yearning for beauty is a reflection of its desire to return to its origins.²²⁹

Both writers addressed themselves to the female question, a social issue in Victorian England as well as in contemporary Muslim society. Iqbal offers an exalted concept of womanhood:

²²⁶ Kiernan, op cit., p. 50.

²²⁷ Ricks, op. cit., p, 947.

²²⁸ *Reconstruction*, p. 51.

²²⁹ S.A. Vahid, *Studies In Iqbal* (Lahore : Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1967), p. 144.

"Woman is the guardian of the fire of life,
her nature is the tablet of life's mysteries;
She strikes our fire against her own soul
and it is her substance that makes of the dust a man.
In her heart lurk life's potentialities,
from her glow and flame life derives stability;
She is a fire from which the sparks break forth,
body and soul, lacking her glow, cannot take shape.
What worth we possess derives from her values
For we are all images of her fashioning;
If God has bestowed on you a glance of flame
Cleanse yourself and behold her sanctity."²³⁰

He regards motherhood a mercy "being linked/By close affinity to Prophethood".²³¹ Mothers are the preservers of the mystery of fraternity to him. Iqbal is critical of Western education because he feels that it promotes the death of maternity. He eloquently opposed ideals of female liberation that are based on hostility to-ward and hatred of man. His Martian prophetess, whose separatism sounds somewhat like the philosophy of Tennyson's Princess, has taken vows to liberate women from the snares of man and to set up an autonomous female class motivated by a common hatred for man. She exhorts her followers to "rise up and wage war with nature,/that by your battling the maiden may be freed./Woman's unitarianism is to escape from the union of two bodies,/be guardian of yourself, and tangle not with men!"²³² Iqbal finds that there is no secure foundation for the life of the community except "in the honouring of the womb".²³³ He says that men and women do not have identical functions in

²³⁰ IN, II. 1185-96.

²³¹ 21. Arthur J. Arberry, Tr., *The Mysteries of Selflessness*, by Sir Muhammad Iqbal (London : John Murray, 1953), p. 151. All subsequent references to this title will be given in the abbreviated form MS.

²³² JN, 11. 2083-87.

²³³ MS, p. 63.

life; they complete each other ; both are creative but their true creativity cannot be realised except by mutual cooperation. Man, in his view, may be able to attain high levels as a spiritually creative agent ; woman may not be able to write the dialogues of Plato but "Plato's sparks are from her fire."²³⁴

A cursory reading of the two poets would yield similarities even in their verse technique. For example, both are acknowledged masters of the art of onomatopoeia, communicating as much through the sound of words and rhythm as they do. through connotational means. It is somewhat of a coincidence that the two poets poured their highest imaginative powers and their maturest vision into the epic mould. Leaving aside any thought of instituting comparisons regarding their handling of the epic form as a medium for poetry, one might find it more instructive to review the thoughts of the two writers pertaining to the role of poetry in modern society.

Tennyson and Iqbal, like other modern poets, are fond of discussing their theories of poetry and art in their poems. Iqbal had nothing but contempt for the theory of Art for art's sake. He was convinced that poetry is the vehicle of eternal truths; that it en-shrines in imperishable words the highest verities known to man. He saw an intimate relationship between Art and Life. He wrote:

"The ultimate end of all human activity is Life — glorious, power. full, exuberant. All human art must be subordinated to this final purpose, and the value of everything must be determined in reference to its life-yielding capacity. The highest art is that which awakens our dormant will force and nerves us to face the trials of life manfully. All that brings drowsiness and makes us shut our eyes to Reality around, on the mastery of which Life depends, is a message of decay and death. There should be no opium eating in Art. The dogma of Art for the sake of Art is a clever invention of decadence to cheat us out of life and power."²³⁵

Iqbal advocated an art that should impinge dynamically on human life, an art that does not merely provide amusement or give delight but acts as a stimulus to human thought and energy and awakens man's highest sympathies. Tennyson conceived of an equally noble mission for poetry in

²³⁴ Schimmel, op. cit., p. 248.

²³⁵ Syed Abdul Wahid, *Iqbal: His Art and Thought* (London: John Murray, 1959), p. 107.

his poem "The Poet". His poet is a messianic liberator of humanity, a universal propagator of divine truths that lie before him like "an open scroll". Tennyson also vehemently decries a decadent art:

"Art for Art's sake ! Hail, truest Lord of Hell !
Hail Genius, blaster of the Moral Will !
"The filthiest of all paintings painted well
Is mightier than the purest painted ill
Yes, mightier than the purest painted well,
So prone are we toward that broad way to Hell."²³⁶

According to Iqbal the poet as the creator of Beauty casts a spell of enchantment over Nature and invests Nature with an original beauty:

"Tis in the poet's breast that Beauty unveils,
"Tis from his Sinai that Beauty's beams arise,
By his look the fair is made fairer,
Through his enchantments Nature is more beloved."²³⁷

Tennyson and Iqbal are equally concerned with the nature of the creative process. In poems like "The Hesperides" and "The Lady of Shallot," Tennyson recognises solitude and withdrawal from society as a precondition for creativity. Iqbal also feels the necessity of solitude for creativity:

"Though you possess a soul illumined as Moses,
Yet without solitude your thoughts remain barren;
by isolation the imagination becomes more vivid,
more vivid, more questing, more finding."²³⁸

Iqbal characterises creativity as the fire in the body whose light illuminates society ; it is " the joy of manifestation, the wish of becoming

²³⁶ Ricks, op. cit. p. 1229.

²³⁷ Vahid, *Iqbal: His Art and Thought*, p. 108.

²³⁸ JN, 11. 1211-14

more and more individual"²³⁹; and it is the leading force in life. Life and creativity are interdependent: "Whoever possesses not the power to create/in Our sight is an infidel, a heathen ;/ such a one has not taken his share of Beauty/has not tasted the fruit of the Tree of Life."

Creativity, he says, is embodied in the very nature of man. In another context he writes: "The creative element in man raises him to the divine plane ; frustration of the creative impulse distorts human character."²⁴⁰ The light of poetry shines in proportion to the brightness of the flame of life: "Verse lights up life, while hearts burn bright but fades/For ever when those rays decline, oh, Sagi."²⁴¹ Iqbal may be said to be in agreement with the Victorians in his views on the function of poetry. The art of poetry for its own sake did not interest him: he felt that he was using it as a vehicle for the improvement and guidance of humanity: "The destinies of nations have been shaped by a song,/ by a song nations are destroyed and rebuilt."²⁴² In these lines there seems to be an echo of Tennyson's Camelot being built to music. Poetry has the power to ravish the angelic creatures in heaven;²⁴³ it can transmute the dull substance of life "into a rose garden"; things undergo a transformation in the hands of a poet: "His breath makes stones and bricks to speak;/We all are as the harvest, he the sown field./ He purifies the bones and fibres/gives to the thoughts the wings of Gabriel."²⁴⁴ To Iqbal, poetry is the "aureole of true philosophy and a complete science," whose object is to appeal to the finer side of human nature, to strengthen it, and to come to the rescue of man. kind in its struggle against all that is sordid and ugly. As a guide to humanity, poetry illuminates, inspires, and elevates: "The poet's is a glow that giveth light/In life's dark night/A radiance shines in her wings anon."²⁴⁵ Iqbal shares with the Victorian Baconians the idea that poetry improves upon Nature:

"A melody must be nourished on madness of love,

It should be like fire dissolved in life blood.

²³⁹ Ibid.,

²⁴⁰ Vahid, *Iqbal: His Art and Thought*, p. 40.

²⁴¹ Kiernan, op. cit., p. 26.

²⁴² IN, 11. 3057-58.

²⁴³ Ibid., 11.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., II. 733-36,

²⁴⁵ PP, p. 79.

A melody that has no meaning is lifeless,
Its warmth is only from a dying fire!
The skilful master improves upon nature
And reveals her secret to our gaze!
He creates a new world
And gives a new life to our being!"²⁴⁶

With all their exalted views on poetry Tennyson and Iqbal refuse to regard it as a substitute for religion. In *In Memoriam*, Tennyson accords Urania a highest station than Melpomene and is somewhat apologetic when he fears he is impinging upon the sphere of religious truth. Iqbal, in accord with Tennyson, writes: "But the kind of knowledge that poetic inspiration brings is essentially individual in its character; it is figurative, vague, and indefinite. Religion, in its more advanced forms, rises higher than poetry."²⁴⁷

In Iqbal's universe both God and man are engaged in the work of creation and man enjoys the advantage of improving upon the works of the Archetypal Artist:

"You made the night and I the lamp,
And You the clay and I the cup;
You—desert, mountain-peak, and vale:
I—flower-bed, park and orchard:
I Who grind a mirror out of stone,
Who brew from poison honey-drink."²⁴⁸

Iqbal's poet can flourish only in an atmosphere of freedom and only as a free artist can he create great art: "Where Selfhood droops, doubts fight ding-dong ;/Where it blooms — a world of verse and song, If your soul rot under slavery's blight,/Your art on idolator's soulless rite."²⁴⁹ The ideal poet

²⁴⁶ Vahid, *Iqbal: His Art and Thought*, p. 107.

²⁴⁷ *Reconstruction*, p. 1

²⁴⁸ Kiernan, op. cit., p. 95.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

as prophet preaches a single doctrine in order to summon the peoples around it like a flag. As a leader he is the spokesman for the inarticulate heart of a people. His thread, which is "knotted to the skies,"²⁵⁰ has the power to weave all the dissevered parts of life into a single whole:

"At his fiery breath
A people leap like rue upon a fire
In sudden tumult, in their heart one spark
Caught from his kindling, and their sullen clay
Breaks instantly aflame."²⁵¹

The poet is a liberator of the fettered slave. Iqbal attaches to him most of the qualities which distinguish Tennyson's "The Poet". He is a creator of Beauty who penetrates deep into the mysteries of life and universe: "a whole world of meaning hidden in two words./He is intimate with the workshop of life,/he is Jamshid, his poetry Jamshid's cup".²⁵² The Beauty created by the poet exercises a beneficent influence on life:

"When his zephyr blows in our garden,
It slowly steals into the tulips and the roses.
His witchery makes life develop itself
And become self-questing and impatient."²⁵³

But the seductive power of poetry can also become a destructive force ; a degenerate poet who is not inspired by great ideals is like a "fish, and from the breast upward a man,/Like the sirens in the ocean,/With his song he enchants the pilot/And casts the ship to the bottom of the sea," because "His melodies steal firmness from thine heart,/His magic persuades thee that death is life."²⁵⁴

As poets of Nature, Iqbal and Tennyson have striking affinities; they are

²⁵⁰ MS, p. 9.

²⁵¹ Ibid., p.10.

²⁵² JN, 11. 3095-98.

²⁵³ Reynold A. Nicholson, Tr., *The Secrets of the Self* (Lahore : Sh. Mohammad Ashraf, 1969), p.

63. All subsequent references to this title will be given in the abbreviated form SS.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 64.

equally alive to the beauty of minute detail and are profoundly sensitive to the sensuous appeal of Nature's phenomena; they are at their best as poets of Spring, and they VI equally adept in depicting scenes of natural sublimity, as well as the loveliness of valleys and the desolation of wastelands. There are few poets in whom pure sensuous delight in the colours, scents, and forms of Nature is more evident than in Iqbal. He writes:

"Hail the Season, Hail the Spring,
Meadows have liberated the stars of the Pleiades.
How sweet the melody, how charming the sound,
That emanates from the solitude of the shrubbery!
In the body life, in the life yearning rises
From the melody of starling and from the song of the nightingale.
Thou canst say that the Almighty has put Paradise
Among the recesses of the mountains."²⁵⁵

Like Tennyson, Iqbal is a master in delineating the a inspiring grandeur of the mountains, the quietude of a dark Ion. night, the glory of the morning sky, the multi-hued twilight of the evening, and the joyous song of birds. He captures the aloof grandeur of the Himalayas in the following:

"O, Himalaya, rampart of Hind's domain!
The neavens bow to kiss thy brow;
Snow has capped thy brow with esteem's turban,
Which laughs at the crown of world-illuminating sun,
Thy peaks are engaged in conversation with the Pleiades,
Thou art on earth and yet thy peaks soar to Heavens!
Moses of Sinai had but a faint glimpse of illumination
Thou art all-illumination for the discerning eye"²⁵⁶

²⁵⁵ Vahid, *Studies in Iqbal*, p. 191.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

Tennyson's early preference for wild and stormy mountain scenery and awesome aspects of Nature is evident in poems "On Sublimity," where he exclaims:

"Give me the wild cascade, the rugged scene,
The loud surge bursting over the purple sea:
On such sad views my soul delights to pore,
By Teneriffe's peak, or Kilda's giant height,
Or dark Loffoden's melancholy shore."²⁵⁷

Tennyson has created landscapes of great beauty like that in "Oenone," and "The Lotos Eaters"; he is equally successful in depicting scenes of utter desolation and ruin. One could think of the land that his "Mariana" inhabits, or one could turn to a Dantean scene like the following landscape painted on a canvas in "The Palace of Art": "One seem'd all dark and red — a tract of sand,/And some one pacing there alone,/Who paced for ever in a glimmering land,/Lit with a low large moon." Iqbal's wasteland scenery in *Jāvid Nāmāh* is also marked by a strange compelling power and enchantment. On the first day of creation, Heaven rebukes Earth because it is a dreary waste:

"Man's realm was a heap of earth, no more,
an empty wilderness, without a caravan ;
not a river wrested in any mountain,
not a cloud sprinkled on any desert,
no chanting of birds among the branches,
no leaping of deer amidst the meadow.
Sea and land lacked the spirit's manifestations,
a curling vapour was the mantle of earth's body ;
the grasses, never having known the breezes of March,
Still slumbered within the depths of earth."²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷ Ricks, op. cit., p. 117.

Thet sphere of Mercury in *Jāwīd Nāmāh* is forbidding in its desolation; the moonscape is a worn-out world bereft of all colour and sound and there is "no sign of life therein, neither of death,/ no root of the palm-tree of life in its navel,/no events hidden in the thighs of its time."²⁵⁹ But when it comes to celebrating the beauties of Spring, the two writers are equally refreshing. One of Tennyson's spring poems goes like this:

"Now fades the long streak of snow,
Now burgeons every maze of quick
About the flowering squares, and thick
By ashen roots the violets blow.
Now rings the woodland loud and long,
The distance takes a lovelier hue,
And drowned in yonder living blue
The lark becomes sightless song."²⁶⁰
No less tender and evocative is Iqbal's palette:
"In spring thou hast heard the clamorous nightingale,
And watched the resurrection of the flowers;
The buds arrayed like brides ; from the dark earth
A veritable city of stars arises ;
The meadow bathed in the soft tears of dawn
That slumbered to the river's lullaby
A bud bursts into blossom on the branch;
A breeze new-risen takes it to its breast."²⁶¹

Nature remained a source of beauty to Iqbal throughout his career as a poet: to the discerning eye, he says, every drop in Nature's fathomless deep,

²⁵⁸ JN, II. 127-36.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., II. 512-14.

²⁶⁰ Ricks, op. cit., p. 967.

²⁶¹ MS, p. 33.

"has a tumult of Beauty./In the awe-inspiring silence of mountains is Beauty,/In sun's radiance as well as in the sombre dress of night. "²⁶² As a youthful pantheist-poet he had believed that every object in Nature was a manifestation of Eternal Beauty which became speech in man and the joy of bursting in a bud. He would speak of the fragrance of a flower and the lustre of a glowworm as a kind of melody; later on he came to believe that everything in Nature is an ego and that God is the Supreme Ego. He regarded man and natural objects as existing in varying stages of egohood. This belief helped him personify and animate objects of Nature with great ease. In many a passage of entrancing beauty he establishes communion with winds, clouds, and stars, and speaks to them as though they have a sentient personality that accepts him as a familiar spirit, but he never commits any violence against Truth in such evocations nor can he be charged with pathetic fallacy. In a monologue, a cloud says:

"In height my habitat kisses the sky,

I am cloud of the hills and I shed flowers.

At times I dwell in deserts, at times I make my abode in gardens,

Towns and wastes are mine, the ocean and the forest is mine.

The verdant young crops look to me for sustenance

I am born out of the ocean and nourished by the sun."²⁶³

Neither Iqbal nor Tennyson could live in an ivory tower of art. They castigated the advancing tide of materialism and greed of modern society and they showed a clear distrust of the strident claims of democracy as a panacea for all human ills. Iqbal's unqualified sympathy for the lot of the downtrodden masses of man-kind, who suffer no matter what the form of government, led him to criticise democracy as a new form of autocracy and organised tyranny:

"whether parliaments

Of nations meet, or Majesty holds court,

Whoever casts his eye on another's field

²⁶² Vabid, *Studies in Iqbal*, p. 179.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

Is tyrant born. Have you not seen in the West
Those Demos-governments with rosy faces
And all within blacker than Ghengiz' soul ?"²⁶⁴

Western democracies appear to him to be organised forms of tyranny in attractive disguises:

In Demos-dress let tyranny's
Old demon-dance be seen,
Your fancy calls up Liberty's
Blue mantled fairy Queen !
Those Parliaments and their reforms,
Charters and Bills of Rights
The Western pharmacopoeia swarms
With opiate delights."²⁶⁵

The modern brands of democracy appear synonymous with materialism and mammonism: "That rhetoric of the Senator,/Flowing in fiery stream — /God save the mark!/the broker's war/Of gold its true theme."²⁶⁶ Tennyson had made no secret of his scepticism about democracy. Long before Iqbal he had written: "Equal-born? O yes, if yonder hill be level with the flat,/Charm us, Orator, till the Lion look no larger than the Cat,/Till the Cat through that mirage of overheated language loom/Larger than the Lion, — / Demos end in working its own doom."²⁶⁷ Iqbal and Tennyson are equally vociferous in denouncing economic exploitation and capitalistic greed:

"Robbers they, this one wealthy, that one a toiler
all the time lurking in ambush one for another ;
now is the hour to disclose the secret of those charmers

²⁶⁴ Kiernan, op. cit., p. 80.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 21.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 20

²⁶⁷ Ricks, op.cit., p. 1363.

We are the merchandise, and they take all the profits.

Their eyes are hard out of the love of silver and gold,
their sons are a burden upon their mother's backs."²⁶⁸

The speaker of Tennyson's *Maud* is even more indignant and vitriolic:

"Why do they prate of the blessings of Peace?we have made them a
curse,

Pickpockets, each hand lusting for all that is not its own;

And the lust of gain in the spirit of Cain, is it better or worse

Than the heart of the citizen hissing in war on his own hearthstone?"²⁶⁹

In his *Persian Psalms* Iqbal speaks of greed in a similar manner: "Greed is
acting still his play/This world to dominate/What new, turbulence, I
pray,/Behind Heaven's veil doth wait?"²⁷⁰

The foregoing discussion may be said to serve as a prelude to a
consideration of those areas of the thought of the two poets where there are
basic parallelisms and divergences in doctrines involving abstract reasoning
and metaphysical thought. The philosophies of the two poets spring from
certain basic assumptions regarding the nature of the Self, the nature of Time
and Reality, and the doctrine of God or Supreme Reality; and these
assumptions provide them a basis for their theories of spiritual evolution,
immortality, and a rather complex doctrine of Love.

What Tennyson calls the Self is no other than the concept of personality
which Iqbal prefers to designate as the Ego. Master-man in his study of
Tennyson regards "the apprehension of God, the existence of the Self, the
hope of immortality"²⁷¹ as the key questions in Tennyson because they are
central to his speculative thought. The physical immensity of the universe
and the "unfathomable abysses of Time and Space" had haunted Tennyson
and at times had threatened to rob him of a sense of moral purpose in the
universe. He was thrown back on the self, "a tiny spark of being," as a reality

²⁶⁸ JN, 11. 1259-64.

²⁶⁹ Ricks, op. cit., p. 1042.

²⁷⁰ PP, p. 67

²⁷¹ Masterman, op. cit., p. 227.

of which he could be sure. It was, to him, a real spark and not a phantom. To Iqbal also the Self was the incontrovertible basis of reality. He wrote: "The form of existence is an effect of the Self,/Whatsoever thou seest is a secret of the Self,/When the Self awoke to consciousness/It revealed the universe of Thought."²⁷² To Iqbal the Self is the motive power behind all existence; it "rises, kindles, falls, breathes,/Burns, shines, walks, and flies." The Self or the Ego remains in a state of tension and strife with the physical environment and on the success of the Ego to overcome the environment depends its very life as a directive energy formed and disciplined by its own experience.²⁷³

In Iqbalian universe all activity is teleological and the choice of ends depends on the Ego itself. It is free to choose and act.²⁷⁴

Bergson's social self and appreciative self are Iqbal's efficient ego and appreciative ego. The appreciative Ego lives in pure duration, in eternity, which implies change without succession; and the time of the Ego in terms of its appreciative entity is fundamentally different from the time span of the physical world. The testimony to the existence and reality of the Ego comes through intuition.²⁷⁵ It is the degree of intuition of I-am-ness of the Ego that determines, for Iqbal, the place of a thing in the scale of being. He believed that everything in Nature is an Ego in varying stages of development and that God is the Supreme Ego.²⁷⁶ In his poems the Ego is frequently conceived as a principle of movement. The sea-shattered cliff that craves Egohood is told by the headlong hurrying wave: "Only if I move I live, for if I halt I die."²⁷⁷ The reality of the Ego confers self-sufficiency upon it

"Through Self the mustard-seed becomes

A hill ; without, the hill a seed.

Your own heart is your candle, your

Own self is all the light you need:

²⁷² SS, p. 16.

²⁷³ *Reconstruction*, p. 87.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 98-110.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

²⁷⁶ Vahid, *Studies in Iqbal*, p. 185.

²⁷⁷ Kiernan, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

You are this world's sole truth, all else
Such as sorceries breed.
These desert thorns prick many a doubt,
Do not complain if bare feet bleed."²⁷⁸

At times Iqbal represents the Ego as the soul in opposition to the body: "What is the soul ? Rapture, joy, burning and anguish,/ delight in mastering the revolving sphere./What is the body? Habit of colour and scent,/Habit of dwelling in the world's distensions."²⁷⁹ The soul is a stranger to the body; it "dwells in time, yet is a stranger to time."²⁸⁰ The world, for Iqbal, is founded on Selfhood; it has been compounded out of love and violence: "Self-hood is everywhere visible, yet invisible,/our gaze cannot endure to look on Selfhood ;/Within its light many fires lurk hidden,/From its Sinai creation's epiphanies shine."²⁸¹

In the Introduction to his translation of Iqbal's *Asrār-i kbudī* [*The Secrets of the Self*] Professor Nicholson tells us that, according to Iqbal, only through "self-affirmation, self-expression, and self development" can an individual or a nation become strong and free. This wisdom was expressed by Tennyson through the words of Pallas in "Oenone," quite early in his career: "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,/These three alone lead life to sovereign power." In Iqbal self-control is the second of three stages in the evolutionary ascent of the Self toward divine vicegerency which is "the completest Ego, the goal of humanity, the acme of life both in mind and body."²⁸² Love brings out, according to Iqbal, the hidden potentialities of the Self; it is a luminous point kindled into a glorious vitality by the spark of Love:

"By Love it is made more lasting,
More living, more burning, more glowing.
From Love proceeds the radiance of its being,

²⁷⁸ Kiernan, op. cit., p. 97.

²⁷⁹ JN, 11. 369-72.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., I. 1815.

²⁸¹ Ibid., 11. 2269.72.

²⁸² SS, p. xix.

And the development of its unknown possibilities.

Its nature gathers fire from Love,

Love instructs it to illumine the world."²⁸³

Tennyson's *In Memoriam* is, among other things, a testimony to the Reality which he found "through the reality of his love both for the living and the one dead friend. It was the survival of his affection for his friend Hallam long after he had vanished from the earth and his bodily form had crumbled into dust that confirmed for Tennyson the reality of the living Self. According to Masterman: "In a world where all else might be dreams and shadows he [Tennyson] asserted with unshakable conviction the reality of the self here and now."²⁸⁴ Tennyson is reported to have stated that the highest thing known is human personality and that God must be at least personal.²⁸⁵ This belief is indeed central to Iqbal's doctrine of the Self and the mainspring of his poetic inspiration. It is valid to say, if the experience he records in *In Memoriam* is kept in mind, that Tennyson discovered the secret of the Self in the formula: "amo, ergo, sum." This also is one of the basic premises in Iqbal's philosophy of Love. To Tennyson the self is the whole indivisible personality; he emphasised the self as willing, and as feeling ; he went on to assert that through feeling and through love we first awaken to the consciousness of our personality. In his poetry consciousness of love provides him a guarantee of the reality of his being.²⁸⁶ Both Tennyson and Iqbal regard the Self as a mode of free will. For Tennyson it' is "Living will that shall endure/When all that seems shall suffer shock."²⁸⁷ In both poets it is the free will and the deliberate choosing of the highest that lead our wills gradually into accord with the Divine Will; and we move closer to God. Tennyson writes:

"Live thou: and of the grain and husk, the grape

And ivy berry, choose; and still depart

From death to death thro' life and life, and find

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

²⁸⁴ Masterman, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

²⁸⁷ *In Memoriam*, sec. cxxxi.

Nearer and ever nearer Him, who wrought

Not Matter, nor the infinite-finite,

But this main miracle, that thou art thou

*With power over thine own act and on the world.*²⁸⁸ [De Profundis]

The readers of Iqbal can easily recognise that he found this theme extremely close to his heart ; he lavished nearly all the powers of his imagination, eloquence, and persuasive reasoning in expounding its far-reaching implications in his poetry. I propose to explore this and other related themes in the second half of this study.

II

In Part I of this study I have illustrated Tennyson and Iqbal as landscape painters ; I have discussed their views on the art of poetry, its relationship to society, and their doctrine of the Self. In this part I propose to discuss their views on God, Time, immortality, their thoughts on spiritual evolution, and their doctrine of Love. The two poets believe in a personal, omnipotent, and omniscient God Who, as the Ultimate Reality, is both transcendent as well as immanent. In one of his early poems Iqbal, addressing God, says: "Your light is in the lightning and in fire and sparks: And your image appears in the sun, in the stars,/In the heights of the heavens and in the depths of the earth,/In the motion of the oceans and the stillness of the shores. "²⁸⁹ In another early poem he goes on to say that God runs like potent wine in our blood; He is like the "soul in the body of the Universe."²⁹⁰ Iqbal spells out his theism more explicitly than Tennyson in holding the doctrine that God is a Personality with many attributes including those of creativeness, omniscience, and eternity. At times Iqbal speaks of God as the master artist who has created the universe and is anxious to withdraw into solitude like an artist:

"On all sides life's traces appear unveiled,

its fountains well up in the heart of creation.

²⁸⁸ Ricks, op. cit., p. 1283.

²⁸⁹ Vahid, *Studies in Iqbal*, p. 200.

²⁹⁰ Schimmel, op. cit., p. 123.

Consider the tumult that rages through all horizons;
Inflict not on the Creator the trouble of display,
solitude is the protection of every artist,
solitude is the bezel in the artist's ring."²⁹¹

According to Iqbal, God is the supreme artist, "whose vast mind/Both day and night designed,/Engraving these, displays/ Upon Himself His gaze."²⁹² The creative possibilities of His being which retains its wholeness throughout the entire process are infinite. In short, Iqbal and Tennyson take a personalistic and theistic view of God; Iqbal, however, is much more emphatic in proclaiming the pluralistic idea that God as the Ultimate Ego holds the finite human egos in itself without erasing or attenuating their separate existences.

To Iqbal the knowledge of God was a direct intuition, an absolute conviction despite contradictory appearances; to Tennyson. it was a "secondary deduction derived from a long and painful journey and "by faith and faith alone,"²⁹³ maintained. Speaking of God as personality, Tennyson says: "Take away belief in the self-conscious personality of God, and you take away the backbone of the world."²⁹⁴ He stressed the immanence of God in the infinitesimal atom as well as in the vastest system. Once he observed: "If God were to withdraw Himself for one single instant from this Universe, everything would vanish into nothingness."²⁹⁵ He disliked the Atomic Theory and was inclined to support the idea of *aboriginal centres of force* which looks like a dim prefiguration of Iqbal's doctrine of the Ego. But whereas Tennyson was groping for certainty for some passionately held beliefs, Iqbal does not appear to have experienced great pangs of doubt or disbelief. To both poets the human personality is the ineluctable fact of existence. Both agree that God will speak to it, guide it, and finally bring it to Himself. Tennyson's Self, independent in some in-explicable manner and having the power of unconditioned choice, can directly address the Creator: "Hallowed

²⁹¹ 7N, 11. 1215-30.

²⁹² PP, p. 121.

²⁹³ Masterman, op. cit. p., 50.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 54.

²⁹⁵ Hallam "Tennyson, *Alfred Lord Tennyson : A Memoir By His Son* (London and New York, 1897), I, 319.

be Thy name — Hallelujah!/Infinite Ideality! /Immeasurable Reality!] infinite Personality !/Hallowed be thy name--Hallelujah."²⁹⁶ To Iqbal, Nature is the handiwork of God and all good things flow from Nature: "All this is an overflow of the springtime of Nature,/Nature which derives from Nature's Creator".²⁹⁷ Iqbal characterises the material universe as God's behaviour²⁹⁸ and Tennyson in "Higher Pan-theism" speaks of it as a "Vision of God". To Iqbal the created universe is the unfolding of the inner possibilities of the Ultimate Ego. It is both a single act whereby our world of serial time has come into existence and a continuing act unfolding new universes of possibility.²⁹⁹ In the Iqbalian cosmos Nature in relation to the Divine Self is like character in relation to the human self ; and the knowledge of Nature is the knowledge of God's behaviour. This leads him to the conclusion that science and religion are not working at cross-purposes. In our observation of Nature, he says, we are virtually seeking a kind of intimacy with the Absolute Ego, and this is another form of worship. In a metaphysical sense God is not so situated as to take a perspective view of an alien universe; consequently, the phases of his life are wholly determined from within. One of Iqbal's persona, in his address to God, proudly points out that his works are equal if not more exquisite than the works of God, Who is repeatedly acknowledged as the perpetual creator: "Consider well this being and not-being; Continuously worlds are coming into existence. "³⁰⁰

In spite of the boundless optimism of Iqbal, his poetry is not without moments of despair and forlorn questioning of God's purpose. Shāh-i Hamadānī in *Jāvid Nāmāh*, like the speaker in Tennyson's "Despair," challenges God to account for the meaning and purpose of life:

"I ask you, what is this magic-mongering,
 What this dicing with an evil adversary?
 A handful of dust against yon revolving sphere—
 Tell me now did it beseem Him so to do?"

²⁹⁶ Ricks, op. cit , p. 1283.

²⁹⁷ JN, 11. 1987.88.

²⁹⁸ *Reconstruction*, p. 57.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

³⁰⁰ JN, 11. 2311-12.

Our labour, our thoughts, our anguish
Is but to bite our hands in despair."³⁰¹

In other and far more representative contexts Iqbal speaks of God's relationship with Man as a creative partnership in a divine venture. God is as committed in his quest of Man as Man is unceasing in his quest of God:

"We are gone astray from God;
He is searching upon the road,
For like us, He is need entire
And the prisoner of desire.
On the tulip petal He writes
The message His heart indites,
Yea, and His voice is heard
In the passionate song of the bird.
He lay in the iris' fold
Our loveliness to behold;
Bright cup of the ardent gaze
Whose glance is a hymn of praise."³⁰²

Tennyson based his faith in an all-embracing God on His revelation of Himself through the human attributes of the highest self-sacrificing love, the freedom of the human will, and the immortality of the soul. Man's destiny, as Tennyson and Iqbal saw it, was to evolve himself through his free will in order to bring him-self into harmony with the divine will. Tennyson observes: "Man's Free-will is but a bird in a cage ; he can stop at the lower perch, or he can mount to a higher. Then that which is and knows will enlarge his cage, give him a higher and a higher perch, and at last break off the top of his cage, and let him out to be one with the Free-will of the Universe."³⁰³ Neither Iqbal nor Tennyson is willing to accept the prospect of

³⁰¹ Ibid., 11. 2888-92.

³⁰² PP, pp. 84-85.

³⁰³ Hallam Tennyson, op. cit., I, 319.

the eventual absorption of the human personality into the divine personality. Tennyson held the belief:

"That each who seems a separate whole,
Should move his rounds, and fusing all
The skirts of self again, should fall,
Remerging in the general soul.
Is faith as vague as all unsweet;
Eternal form shall still divide
The eternal soul from all beside:
And I shall know him when we meet."³⁰⁴

In both poets, God is a "living God," moving and working and sustaining all things. He is not "far from any one of us"; in fact, he is closer, according to Tennyson and Iqbal, than the breath of our lives. He is guiding us, imperceptibly communing with us, reaching hands through the darkness, and moulding us to His ends, and will ultimately bring us to Himself. According to Tennyson, He is around us, manifesting Himself to us through the senses, speaking directly to our souls, although "the ear of man cannot hear the music of the world and the eyes of man cannot see the fulness of the vision."

The thoughts of Iqbal and Tennyson on immortality are some-what divergent. Tennyson was led to a belief in immortality because he regarded it as a prerequisite for a viable meaning in life "My own dim life should teach me this,/That life shall live for evermore,/Else earth is darkness at the core,/And dust and ashes all that is" ; without immortality love would be mere sensuality and not worth preserving.³⁰⁵ In *In Memoriam*, Tennyson is seeking to confirm the truth of immortality as a realisable goal. It was his inexpungible conviction of the Reality of Self and the reality of love that confirmed his faith in the truth of immortality. Iqbal sought no such proof for his belief in immortality ; he rested his case on his belief in the indestructibility of the Ego. The scene of a boat gliding and disappearing

³⁰⁴ Ricks, op. cit., p. 904.

³⁰⁵ *In Memoriam*, sec. xxxiv.

quickly beyond the "eye's curved boundary" evokes in him thoughts of immortality of the spirit: "So glides the bark of mortal life, in the ocean/Of eternity, so born, so vanishing,/Yet never knowing what is death, for it/May disappear from sight, but cannot perish."³⁰⁶ Iqbal's thoughts on immortality can be understood best in terms of his attitude toward death. He writes: "Fearest thou death in thy deathless heart Death's but a prey that before thee lies./Life once given thee, none can take ;/Tis for lack of faith man faints and dies."³⁰⁷ He argues that life is dear in Nature's eyes and every object is striving to preserve it: "If Death could efface the impress of life,/The universal order would not have made it so common./Being so wide-spread, death has no significance. /Like slumber it causes no loss to existence."³⁰⁸ Iqbal believes that human life continues to grow after death and that there shall be no end to its growth: "Man's spirit never knows extinction./It is lost to sight but does not fade away."³⁰⁹ He wrote that after death, "the ego must continue to struggle until he is able to gather himself up, and win his resurrection. The resurrection is, therefore, not an eternal event. It is the consummation of a life-process within the ego. Whether individual or universal it is nothing more than a kind of stock-taking of the ego's past achievements and his future possibilities."³¹⁰

Like Goethe, Spinoza, and Lotze, Iqbal believes in a conditional immortality. He refused to consider personal immortality as a matter of human right ; he insists that man is only a candidate for it and can achieve it only through personal effort. He wrote: "The eternity of God is not a recompense for His actions, /For Him the eternity is elemental and needs no seeking;/But that eternity is better which a borrowed soul/Wins for itself through love and frenzy."³¹¹ Immortality may be achieved through infinite yearning and undaunted desire: "A mote through infinite yearning becomes the envy of the sun,/In its breast the nine spheres cannot be contained./When yearning makes assault upon a world/It transforms momentary beings into immortals."³¹² The Indian Muslim martyr Tiptū

³⁰⁶ Kiernan, op. cit., p. 10.

³⁰⁷ Iqbal, *Zabūr-i 'Ajām* (Lahore : Dr Jāvīd Iqbāl, 1970), p. 164.

³⁰⁸ Iqbal, *Bang-i Darā* (Lahore : Sit. Mubarak Ali, 1924), p. 259. Subsequently BD.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 264.

³¹⁰ *Reconstruction*, p. 120.

³¹¹ Vahid, *Studies in Iqbal*, p. 209.

³¹² JN, 11. 2219-22.

Sultan speaks of death as a mere magic talisman, a fantasy because, "The man of God is a lion, and death is a fawn,/Death is but one station for him of a hundred."³¹³ Death holds no terrors for Iqbal, the man of God. He believes in the eternity of the Ego which is greater and older than the "circling skies"; he exhorts his listeners not to entertain fear of death. Personal immortality, he argues, is an aspiration; one can have it if one makes an effort to win it by adopting in this life "modes of thought and activity which tend to maintain the state of tension".³¹⁴ In the words of Iqbal's spiritual mentor Rūmī, the Persian poet-mystic, "Immortality is association with God by getting rid of limited and conditioned individuality."³¹⁵

Speculations on the nature of time and space, prompted as they were by the quest for reality, led Tennyson and Iqbal to reach divergent conclusions. Tennyson spoke of time as duration and also tended to adhere to the Platonic premise that the world of appearances is a shadowy and unreal world ; Iqbal, on the contrary, categorically rejected the idea that this world is a pale reflection of another. He accepted the "time-space continuum," of the scientists who maintain that time and space are not distinct and autonomous categories. Discarding the doctrine of atomic time, Iqbal proposed the concept of a dynamic universe characterised by motion which he defined as a sequence of positions and instants. His favourite theory of time as duration was anticipated by Tennyson in *The Princess*:

"For was, and is, and will be, are but is;
And all creation is one act at once,
The birth of light: but we that are not all,
As parts, can see but parts, now this, now that,
And live, perforce from thought to thought, and make
One act a phantom of succession: thus
Our weakness somehow shapes the shadow, Time."³¹⁶

Iqbal distinguishes between earthly time which is "divisible into past,

³¹³ Ibid., II. 3421-22.

³¹⁴ BD, p. 264.

³¹⁵ Vahid, *Iqbal: His Art and Thought*, p. 70.

³¹⁶ Ricks, op. cit., p. 782.

present, and future": and Divine Time, "which is absolutely free from the quality of passage, and consequently does not admit of divisibility, sequence, and change."³¹⁷ Iqbal's "efficient ego," in its relation to time-space appears as a series of discrete states, but his "appreciative ego," abides in pure duration, i.e. change without succession. Its states of consciousness melt into each other and its unity is "like the unity of the germ in which the experiences of its individual ancestors exist, not as a plurality, but as a unity in which every experience permeates the whole. There is no numerical distinctness of states in the totality of the ago, the multiplicity of whose elements is ... wholly qualitative. There is change and movement, but this change and movement are indivisible; their elements inter-penetrate and are wholly non-serial in character."³¹⁸ Iqbal considered ultimate Reality as pure duration in which thought, life, and purpose inter-penetrate to form an organic unity ; he spoke of time not as a static absolute but as "a living creative movement":³¹⁹ in its organic wholeness it is Destiny that overrides the net of causal sequence ; it is time as felt and not as thought and calculated. Physical time considered as a dimension of the time-space continuum is relative. But:

"Time regarded as destiny forms the very essence of things... . To exist in real time is not to be bound by the fetters of serial time, but to create it from moment to moment and to be absolutely free and original in creation. In fact, all creative activity is free activity."³²⁰

Tennyson also makes a sharp distinction between atomic time and pure duration, but he differs from Iqbal in his belief that only the divinity is the inhabitant of durational time. According to Tennyson's Ancient Sage, "The days and hours are ever glancing by, .../But with the Nameless is nor Day nor Hour ;/Though we, thin minds, who creep from thought to thought/Break into 'Thens' and 'Whens' 'the Eternal Now'." Iqbal claims that the degree of awareness of existing in pure duration apprehended intuitively by the self determines its place in the hierarchy of being. Secular time, in Iqbal, is, like time in Shakespeare's sonnets, a spectacle of mutability: "What other sense have your nights, what have your days, but one/Long blank current of time empty of sunset or dawn ?/All Art's wonders arise only to

³¹⁷ *Reconstruction*, p.75.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

vanish once more."³²¹ But on a spiritual level, Time is an emblem of God's presence:

"Day succeeding to night — moulder of all time's works!

Day succeeding to night — fountain of life and of death!

Chain of the days and nights — two-coloured thread of silk

Woven by Him that is, into His being's robe!

Chain of the days and nights — sign of eternity's harp,

Height and depth of all things possible — God revealed."³²²

Iqbal attaches a specific spiritual dimension to time-space continuum: "Open wide your eyes upon Time and Space,/for these two are but a state of the soul."³²³ As emblem of divinity, Time partakes of the paradoxical attributes of the Godhead; it is both mercy and retribution: "Time? It is a sweet mingled with poison,/ a general compassion mingled with vengeance ;/You see neither city nor plain free of its vengeance — /its compassion is that you may say, 'It has passed'. "³²⁴ Secular time, considered by Iqbal, as a unity of continuity invests life with wholeness and significance:

"Fix in firm bond to-day with yesterday;

Make life a bird accustomed to the hand.

Draw to thy hand the thread of all the days,

Else thou art blind-by-day, night-worshipping.

Thy present thrusts its head up from the past,

And from thy present shall thy future stem."³²⁵

To break up time into moments is to invite the tyranny of time on life. The right approach to time is psychological and spiritual; it is inseparable from our deepest self. Iqbal wrote: "Spatialised time is a fetter which life has

³²¹ Kiernan, op. cit., p. 38.

³²² Ibid., p. 37.

³²³ IN, II. 369-70.

³²⁴ Ibid., 11. 633-36.

³²⁵ 115. MS, p. 62.

forged for itself in order to assimilate the present environment. In reality we are timeless, and it is possible to realise our timelessness even in this life."³²⁶ Both Tennyson and Iqbal suggest a purposive goal to which time is moving. With Tennyson time is not a repetitive process but a forward-looking and creative unfoldment:

"Wild Hours that fly with Hope and Fear,
If all your office had to do
With old results that look like new...
Why, then my scorn might well descend
On you and yours. I see in part
That all, as in some piece of art,
Is toil cooperant to an end."³²⁷

Though both poets believe in "one far off divine event,/To which the whole creation moves," in Iqbal's teleology the future remains an open-ended possibility without being subject to any form of predestination. More concerned with the nature of Time and less with its effects, he represents it as a mode of the manifestation of being: "Phenomena arise from the march of Time."³²⁸ In some contexts Iqbal comes to identify Time with Life and characterises it as the ruler of all created things: "I [Time] am the world-burning word, I am the fountain of life,/I am the cloak of man, I am the dress of God."³²⁹ In a similar vein Tennyson describes Time and Space as symbols, "the garments worn by the living soul, in which it clothes itself for a reason."³³⁰ When the awesome mysteries of distances in Space and countless aeons of Time threatened to rob Tennyson of a sense of moral purpose he took refuge in the Berkeleyan theory that the material world of time and space is a human construct, "a phantom of our own dreams," the faltering attempts of finite and shadowy human intelligence to gather into unity the infinite world beyond us.

³²⁶ SS, p. xxv.

³²⁷ Ricks, op.cit., p. 978

³²⁸ SS, p. 137.

³²⁹ Schimmel, op. cit., p. 293.

³³⁰ Masteman, op.cit., p. 24.

As prophets of the future of mankind Tennyson and Iqbal offer us their vision of a regenerated and spiritually evolved humanity. They share, with Vico, the optimism that humanity is moving toward a higher and more spiritual state; but they differ in their explanation of the causes that would promote the upward ascent. Tennyson seems to assume that a moral and spiritual evolution is a consequence of physical and material evolution. In Iqbal spiritual evolution is furthered or retarded in proportion to man's deliberate resistance to and self-conscious struggle against an alien environment. Both consider man as an unfinished picture of what he might become. In "The Making of Man," a poem Tennyson wrote at the end of his life, he asks: "Where is one that, born of woman, altogether can escape/From the lower world within, moods of tiger, or of ape?/Man as yet is being made, and ere the crowning Age of Ages,/Shall not aeon after aeon pass and touch him into shape?"³³¹ Both poets look forward to a future time when all the races of mankind shall be united in the common bonds of brotherhood, the goal of human perfection:

"All about him shadow still, but, while the races flower and fade,
Prophet-eyes may catch a glory slowly gaining on the shade,
Till the peoples all are one, and all their voices blend in choric
Hallelujah to the Maker 'It is finished. Man is made.' "³³²

The interaction between God and the human spirit will help remove the defect in man and the universe: it is

"So beautiful, vast, various, so beyond
All work of man, yet, like all work of man,
A beauty with defect — 'Till that which knows,
And is not known, but felt through what we feel
Within ourselves is highest, shall descend
on this half deed, and shape it at the last
According to the Highest in the Highest."³³³

³³¹ Ricks, op. cit., p. 1454.

³³² 122. Ibid.

Man, according to Iqbal, will achieve his perfection only by exercising his latent capacity for unlimited development.

To Iqbal evolution means the gradual growth of the individual, "in self-possession, in uniqueness, and intensity of his activity as an ego."³³⁴ Because ego is a free and personal causality whose nature consists in its intensity and not extensity; it further means growth in personal freedom, personal immortality culminating in the evolution of the perfect man. Similarly, Tennyson believed that man is advancing toward a state of fuller consciousness and a "widening conception of personality."³³⁵ His man of the future is "the ultimate perfection of the Self-conscious Spirit through individual effort continued in this world and the world beyond the grave ; the coming into one, the bringing all things back to unity, through the harmony of the will and the perfection of Love."³³⁶ The destination of moral and spiritual evolution in both poets is God. It is God's way of fulfilling Himself in different ways; nor is it a series of meaningless cyclical sweeps through an empty sky: it is the "full realization of The Spirit, the Restitution of all things in God."³³⁷ One of the major themes of Tennyson's *in Memoriam* and *Idylls of the King* is evolution. The Hall of Merlin provides a pictorial representation of this theme: "In the lowest beasts are slaying men,/And in the second men are slaying beasts,/And in the third are warriors, perfect men,/And in the fourth are men with growing wings."³³⁸

In this eternal process the spirit walks "from state to state".³³⁹ Evolution is brought about because of the eternal craving in the heart of man, the undying desire for new knowledge and new experience: "How dull it is to pause, to make an end,/To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use !/As though to breathe were life. Life piled on life/Were all too little."³⁴⁰ In short, evolution to Tennyson and Iqbal means a world process conceived in Divine Consciousness for the purpose of elevating man into a state of intimate

³³³ Ibid., p. 1352.

³³⁴ *Reconstruction*, p. 117.

³³⁵ Masterman, op. cit., p. 89.

³³⁶ Ibid., p. 120.

³³⁷ ibid., p. 108.

³³⁸ Ricks, op. cit., p. 1669,

³³⁹ *In Memoriam*, sec. xxxv.

³⁴⁰ Ricks, op. cit., p. 563,

union with God.

The relationship of man and God is the keystone in the arch of the thought of Iqbal and Tennyson. In both the doctrine of Love encompasses the complex implications of this relationship. It is the mystery of the sanctum sanctorum of their poetic and spiritual belief. It defines the nature of man and serves to give meaning and purpose to life. Iqbals poetry the concept of Love embraces all of man's psychological, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual modes of self-expression. He defines it as "the desire to assimilate, to absorb".³⁴¹ As assimilative experience, "Love is at Being's board to sup,/To drain its glass, till all is gone ;/Seek not the world-revealing cup,/Seek the world-conquering hand alone."³⁴² In its highest form, Love is the creation of values and ideals and the endeavour the realise them. It is the effort to actualise the most unique character of the individuality of the lover and the beloved. Iqbals never-ending speculations and piercing insights into the nature and function of Love take shape in his most inspiring and exquisite lyrical poetry. He finds a profound kinship between Love and the unflagging creative and artistic energies of man. Love is the integrating principle of the Iqbalian universe where all other spheres of human activity are subservient to it. Science, for example, is inadequate because it is "a mass of sectional views of Reality — fragments of a total experience which do not seem to fit together."³⁴³ He goes one step further and points out that "In fact, the various natural sciences are like so many vultures falling on the dead body of Nature, and each running away with a piece of its flesh."³⁴⁴ But Iqbals antagonism toward science is not a rigid posture betraying complete blindness to scientific culture. Science and reason become evil only when they pose a threat to human freedom and integrity. Tennyson depicted knowledge not sanctified by Love as "some wild Pallas [sprung] from the brain/Of Demons? fiery hot to burst/All barriers in her onward race/For power. Let her know her place;/She is second, not the first."³⁴⁵ Iqbals contention is that Reason, a useful torchlight on the dark road to God, is

³⁴¹ SS, p. xxv.

³⁴² PP, p. 104.

³⁴³ *Reconstruction*, pp. 41-42.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p 42.

³⁴⁵ Ricks, *op.cit.*, p. 966.

capable of grasping Reality piecemeal as contrasted to the epiphany of Love which makes it manifest in its wholeness. Both poets fail to see any correspondence between the advancement of science and the moral growth of man. In *Locksley Hall*, Tennyson wrote: "Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,/And the individual withers, and the world is more and more." Science, without the sanctifying power of Love, presents a bleak spectacle of universal anarchy to Iqbal's mind:

"Love fled, Mind stung him like a snake;
he could not Force it to vision's will.
He tracked the orbits of the stars, yet could not
Travel his own thought's world;
Entangled in the labyrinth of his science
Lost count of good and ill;
Took captive the sun's rays, and yet no sunrise
On life's thick night unfurled."³⁴⁶
The same thought recurs in *Jāvīd Nāmāh*
"God save us from majesty that is without beauty,
God save us from separation without union!
Science without love is a demonic thing,
Sciences together with love is a thing divine;
science and wisdom without love are a corpse,
reason is an arrow that never pierced the target."³⁴⁷

In fact, Iqbal gave expression to this theme in a variety of ways. In Persian Psalms he finds the man of science, with his "speculative eye," wanting in the scale of humanity because he has never been endowed by God with a "wakeful heart". His heart is empty of Love and the "Brain/Snakelike bites into his vein,/Even though his golden cup/Flowing

³⁴⁶ Kiernan, op. cit., p. 66.

³⁴⁷ JN, 11. 1339.44.

ruby fillet up. ³⁴⁸ Conversely, Science humanised by Love is Promethean servant of Man: "Science is an instrument for the preservation of Life./Science is a means of invigorating the Self./Science and art are servants of Life./Slaves bred in its house."³⁴⁹ The antithesis between Science and Love persists in all of Iqbal's poetry. Science casts its consuming gaze upon phenomenon and weighs everything in the balance of technology, whereas gnosis or Love augments in the balance of intuition and its gaze is directed to the pure spirit. The great Muslim martyr, Ḥallāj, presents a vivid picture of this position:

"The mulla's Resurrection is the splitting of the tomb and the trumpet's blast,

tumult arousing Love is itself the Dawn of Resurrection.

Science is founded upon fear and hope,

lovers are troubled by neither hope nor fear;

science is fearful of the grandeur of creation;

science gazes upon the past and the present,

love cries, 'Look upon what is coming!'

Science has made compact with the canon of constraint

and has no other resource but constraint and resignation;

Love is free and proud and intolerant

and boldly investigates the whole of Being."³⁵⁰

In other words, science is a very limited and inadequate instrument of knowledge and illumination as compared with Love. At times Iqbal softens his criticism of Science by recognising it as a constructive human activity: "Science and passion are both stations of life/both take a share of the impact of events./Science derives pleasure from verification,/love derives pleasure from creativeness."³⁵¹

³⁴⁸ PP, p. 83.

³⁴⁹ SS, p. 26.

³⁵⁰ JN, II. 2197-2200.

³⁵¹ Ibid., II. 1215-18.

The dichotomy between Love and Science runs parallel to the antithesis between Love and Reason ; "Reason draws life towards manifestation,/love draws life towards solitude."³⁵² Reason makes assault on the world, but Love casts its noose on the Infinite.³⁵³ In his earlier poems, Iqbal regarded Reason as the offspring of Love. Both are ruthless forces, but Love is more so because it is purer, nimbler, and more unafraid. Reason is lost in the maze of cause and effect, but "Love strikes boldly in the field of Action":

"Crafty Reason sets a snare:

Love overthrows the prey with strong right arm.

Reason is rich in fear and doubt ; but Love

Has firm resolve, faith indissoluble.

Reason constructs, to make a wilderness;

Love lays wide waste, to build all up anew.

Reason is cheap and plentiful as air;

Love is most scarce to find, and of great price.

Reason stands firm upon phenomena,

But Love is naked of material robes.

Reason says, 'Thrust thyself into the fore';

Love answers, 'Try thy heart, and prove thyself.' "³⁵⁴

With the deepening of his mystical thought, Iqbal felt that Reason was incapable of leading him to a knowledge of God: "Your eyes may be wakeful or asleep;/the heart sees without the rays of the sun./Know that world by the world of the heart — /Yet what shall I say of what defies analogy."³⁵⁵ It is only in the Perfect Man who has actualised in his being the Attributes of God that intuition and reason become harmonised.

Tennyson, in *In Memoriam*, was engaged, like Iqbal, in a quest for

³⁵² Ibid., II. 307-08.

³⁵³ Ibid., 1. 160.

³⁵⁴ MS, p. 26,

³⁵⁵ JN,11. 2775-78.

certainty; quite early in that poem he discredited the senses as a reliable epistemological medium. The effect of intense emotion on his mind was to, blot out all meaning and purpose in the cosmos:" And all the phantom, Nature, stands — /With all the music in her tone,/A hollow echo of my own.— /A hollow form with empty hands."³⁵⁶ Iqbal also felt that the senses distort the truth: "Seek thou pure revelation/Past sun and moon's low station,/For all things here reported/By vision are distorted."³⁵⁷ Both poets speak of "the heart" as the seat of perception of higher Reality: for example, Tennyson rejects conventional philosophies as "The petty cobwebs we have spun"; nor could he put his faith in Paley's argument from design: "I found Him not in; world or sun,/ Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye." The answer to the riddle of existence came to him through his "feeling" heart: "A warmth within the breast would melt/The freezing reason's colder part,/ And like a man in wrath the heart/Stood up and answered 'I have felt.'"³⁵⁸ In a similar vein Iqbal had written: "In the interests of securing a complete vision of Reality, therefore, sense-perception must be supplemented by the perception of what the Quran de-scribes as 'Fuad' or 'Qalb,' i.e., heart.... The 'heart' is a kind of inner intuition or insight which, in the beautiful words of Rumi, feeds on the rays of the sun and brings us into contact with aspects of Reality other than those open to sense-perception."³⁵⁹ In Iqbal, intuition of the heart is a modality of apprehension different in nature from perception and thought. It is an immediate experience of the Real. While perception proceeds through the senses and grasps reality piecemeal, intuition has no reference to the sense and grasps the whole. Iqbal maintains that intellectual thought is relative and communciabile whereas intuitive thought is absolute and imperfectly communicable, except where love and intellect work in unison:³⁶⁰

"Only through love intelligence gets to know God,
love's labours find firm grounding in intelligence;
when love is companioned by intelligence
it has the power to design another world.

³⁵⁶ *In Memoriam*, sec. cxi.

³⁵⁷ PP, p. 60.

³⁵⁸ Ricks, op. cit., p.974.

³⁵⁹ *Reconstruction*, pp. 15-16.

³⁶⁰ Vahid, *Studies in Iqbal*, p. 36.

Then rise and draw the design of a new world,
mingle together love and intelligence."³⁶¹

What then is Iqbal's philosophy of Love? In developing the mystical doctrine of Love, Iqbal owed a great deal to his spiritual master, Rūmī, the great mystic-poet of Persia. Rūmī counters the loveless philosophy of the Martian Prophetess, in Iqbal's imaginative epic, *Jāvid Nāmāh*, in the following words:

"Love is the law and ritual of life,
religion the root of education ; religion is love.
Love externally is ardent, fiery,
inwardly it is the Light of the Lord of the Worlds.
From its inward fever and glow, science and art derive,
science and art spring from its ingenious madness;
religion does not mature without Love's schooling;
learn religion from the company of the Lords of Love."³⁶²

According to Iqbal, Love unlocks the hidden energies of the Ego or Self. The luminous point of the Self, the life spark in our dust, is kindled into life by Love which makes it "more lasting,/ More living, more burning, more glowing."³⁶³ Love makes for the radiance of its being and the development of its unknown possibilities. The Self gathers fire from Love; "Love instructs it to illuminate the world". It may be understood as a power that transcends the elemental forces of earth, water, and air; but it shapes the course of peace and war on earth and the patterns of life and death: "Love is the Fountain of Life, Love is the flashing sword of Death./The hardest rocks are shivered by Love's glance: /Love of God at last becomes wholly God."³⁶⁴ As the creative principle of the universe, Love nourishes the soul of the artist and releases his creative energies. Love is often represented by Iqbal as a revolutionary energy whose fire-baptism invests poetry with a secret vitality.³⁶⁵ Tennyson

³⁶¹ JN. 11. 1103-08.

³⁶² Ibid., II. 2089-96.

³⁶³ SS, p. 28.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 29.

³⁶⁵ Vahid, *Iqbal: His Art and Thought*, p. 107.

also exalts Love as the mainspring of his creative energy in *In Memoriam*. Love sustains him in his supreme sorrow in the aspect of Venus as Hesper and Love points the way to life and faith and hope under the new aspect of Venus as Phosphor. This dual concept of Love is the hinge on which the entire poem turns. In section cxxvi of *In Memoriam*, Tennyson writes: "Love is and was my King and Lord,/And will be, though as yet I keep/Within his court on earth, and sleep/Encompassed by his faithful guard." It is Love that has helped him survive through the dark night of the soul.

Just as Iqbal's God can be understood in terms of His attributes and essence, so also his doctrine of Love. He ascribes to Love the attributes of a cosmic principle ; it is a creative cause, a sustaining and perfecting power, and a harmonising and unifying influence both in the universe and in the life of man. Man is the vessel of Love: "Love went searching thro' the earth/Until Adam came to birth;/Out of water, out of clay/ Manifested his display."³⁶⁶ Love is the supreme Law and Truth of human life. Iqbal finds "gleams of immortal life," in those works of Man which have been wrought by the spirit of Love:

"Swiftly its tyrannous flood time's long current may roll:

Love itself is a tide, stemming all opposing waves.

Other ages in Love's calendar are set down,

Ages as yet unnamed, far from this now flowing hour;

Love is Gabriel's breath, Love is Mahomet's strong heart,

Love is the envoy of God, Love the utterance of God.

Even our mortal clay, touched by Love's ecstasy glows."³⁶⁷

As a power in the affair of men, Love is an axe that can hew the heart of a mountain. The resolution of man's problems can come only through the regenerating force of Love; it [Love] is the spirit that should cut the Gordian knot of all man's perplexities and provide an antidote to all human vices."³⁶⁸ It is God's greatest gift to the poet: "Lo, love's ocean is my vessel/And love's

³⁶⁶ PP, p. 98.

³⁶⁷ Kiernan, op. cit., p. 38.

³⁶⁸ Vahid, *Iqbal: His Art and Thought*, p. 33.

ocean is my strand/For no other ship I hanker,/Nor desire another land."³⁶⁹ Tennyson regards love as the reality of the Universe; it is the "transcendent, all-pervasive" spirit of God to him ; it is also the "link that unites persons together".³⁷⁰

Beyond the realm of attributes, Love becomes co-extensive with God in both Iqbal and Tennyson; it is an undimensioned essence free from spatiotemporal limitations: "Love knows nothing of months and years./Late or soon, near and far upon the road."³⁷¹ To the mystic, love is a resurrection beyond hope and fear. Tāhirah, the female Persian mystic, sings: "My sorrowful heart wove your love into the fabric of my soul/Thread by thread, thrum by thrum, warp by warp, woof by woof. /Tahira repaired to her own heart, and saw none but you/page by page, fold by fold, veil by veil, curtain by curtain."³⁷² For Tāhirah Love is "the symbol for that experience of intuition in which the mystic grasps reality in its wholeness in a single undiscernible moment."³⁷³

In Tennyson, it is man who must seek the God of Love but in Iqbal, as suggested earlier, man's love of God is reciprocated by God's equally intense yearning for man: "He sighs with the breath of morn,/Within and out He doth stand,/Around, and on every hand.../Hidden in every grain/Not yet is He known to man."³⁷⁴ Both Tennyson and Iqbal consider Love as the supreme authority and the only test for the rightness and wrongness or worth of human action. At the close of his life, Tennyson's one great aspiration was for a fuller knowledge of "That Love which is and was/ My father, and my Brother, and my God."³⁷⁵ According to Iqbal, the world can transcend the barriers of race and religion only under the sovereignty of Love and the freedom and honour of Love alone can ensure social and political harmony: "The martyrs of Love are not Muslim nor Pavnim,/The manners of Love are not Arab nor Turk!/ ... When the spirit of Love has no place on the

³⁶⁹ Schimmel, op.cit., p. 131

³⁷⁰ Masterman, op.cit., p. 135.

³⁷¹ JN, II. 321-22

³⁷² Ibid., II. 2175-78.

³⁷³ Schimmel., op.cit., p. 131.

³⁷⁴ PP. p.85.

³⁷⁵ Ricks, op.cit., p. 1454.

throne,/All wisdom and learning vain tricks and pretence!³⁷⁶ IN Love alone can unite mankind and can help evolve a new order based on universal brotherhood:

"See, my brave comrade, in the honeyed cells
That constitute the hive a subtle truth;
One drop from a red tulip is distilled,
One from a blue narcissus; none proclaims,
I am of jessamine, of lily I!
So our Community the beehive is
Of Abraham, whose honey is our Faith."³⁷⁷

In his declining years, Tennyson also dreamed of a world community based on love and universal brotherhood. Although Iqbal's contributions to the poetry of Love cannot be illustrated fully in the brief compass of this study, one more stanza may be quoted to illustrate his celebration of Love as a universal presence:

"In both worlds everywhere are the marks of love;
man himself is a mystery of love.
Love's secret belongs not to the world of wombs,
not to Shem or Ham, Greece or Syria:
a star without East and West, a star unsetting
in whose orbit is neither North nor South."³⁷⁸

In conclusion, it may be pointed out that this comparative study of Tennyson and Iqbal suggests, among other things, that poets of East and West, although they might differ greatly as products of their peculiar cultures, can none the less meet on a common ground if the theme of their poetry embraces the universality of Love.

³⁷⁶ Kiernan, op. cit., p. 54.

³⁷⁷ MS, p. 74.

³⁷⁸ JN, 11. 1157-62.