

# METAPHYSICAL IMPLICATIONS OF IQBAL'S EPISTEMIC VIEWS

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Iqbal's philosophy of knowledge has a special significance for his whole philosophical system. Too much stress has usually been placed on other aspects of his thought, overlooking that all these have their footing in it. His famous theory of "ego" is based on the feeling of "I-amness" and his philosophy of religion is embedded in a type of consciousness. Again, his poetry, both Urdu and Persian, is replete with the elucidation of "intellect" "*ishq*," "illumination," "*qalb*," and their synonymous terms, especially their relative cognitive import. Unfortunately, very little work has been done on this aspect. Except for a few articles, one by Dr L.S. May in her book *Iqbal: His Life and Time*,<sup>70</sup> a lecture delivered by Dr H.H. Bilgrami at the Oxford University and later included in his *Glimpses of Iqbal's Mind and Thought*,<sup>71</sup> and some stray articles here and there, not much work worth the name has been done. The present author's first book *Iqbal's Philosophy of Religion*,<sup>72</sup> based on his doctoral thesis entitled "Iqbal's Philosophy of Knowledge" submitted to the University of the Punjab in 1968, is an attempt in that direction. It deals with genuineness and cognitive import of religious experience, as discussed by Iqbal. It may be added here that Iqbal was not an epistemologist and he never claimed to have propounded a theory of knowledge, which one has to extract from his writings. In his epistemological views he drew inspiration from the findings of the modern epistemologists, and also from the Qur'an which is a great book of knowledge. Iqbal extended the application of epistemological principles, as enunciated in perception, to the realm of religion, showing how well they apply there. He differed with the commonly held view that religious knowledge was something weird and mysterious, and hence in-capable of verification. He rather emphasised that religious knowledge was amenable to the self-same kind of verification as other kinds of knowledge. His great contribution to religion lies in bringing it closer to ordinary forms of knowledge, shearing off its uncommon tinge. To me, what

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<sup>70</sup> Lahore : Sh. Muhammad Ashrat, 1976.

<sup>71</sup> Lahore : Sb. Muhammad Ashraf, 1977.

<sup>72</sup> Lahore : Islamic Book Service, 1977.

really goes to his credit is his analysis of thought which is more thorough than any put forward before him, because he does not acquiesce in confining it to discursive thought alone as done by epistemologists in general. There is no doubt that S.K. Langer in *Philosophy In A New Key*,<sup>73</sup> has come to emphasise presentational sense of thought, but it is much later and still falls short of Iqbal's analysis. However, the above confinement was first imposed by Kant, who denied "intellectual intuition"<sup>74</sup> to man, and the whole line of epistemologists ensuing from his tradition followed him doggedly. Iqbal brings home other applications of thought<sup>75</sup> also, where thought is able to transcend the pale of phenomenon into the realm of "noumenon," the infinite. From this extension some very important metaphysical implications ensue, which are going to form the main fabric of this paper.

Iqbal agrees with Kant in his basic presumptions, viz. (i) that knowledge is "sense-perception elaborated by understanding"<sup>76</sup> and (ii) "the character of man's knowledge is conceptual. ..."<sup>77</sup> These two presumptions necessarily involve that human knowledge has two elements, viz. (a) the data or "given," and (b) thought or understanding which organises the data into knowledge proper. This is true, says Iqbal, of all human knowledge, including religious knowledge. Knowledge has a "rational" element and a "non-rational" element, which must coordinate to generate complete cognition. As modern epistemology tells us, the non-rational element rises from external sources, i.e. external objects in the case of sense-perception ; while the rational element, as Kant has most thoroughly inquired in his famous *Critique*,<sup>78</sup> is the internal or subjective working of the various faculties of the mind itself. Kant proceeded to distinguish between, what he called, "sensible intuition"<sup>79</sup> and "intellectual intuition," and, on the basis of his agnostic leanings, came to declare that the latter was not possessed by man. Consequently, man could know only phenomena. This conclusion of Kant is surely debatable and a *petitio principii*; and Iqbal, in company of the majority of mystics, and drawing inspiration from the Qur'an, oversteps the boundaries set by modern

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<sup>73</sup> London : Oxford University Press, 1931.

<sup>74</sup> N.K. Smith, Tr. (Kant) *Critique of Pure Reason* (London: Macmillan & Co.,1963), p. 90.

<sup>75</sup> *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1568), p. 31.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>78</sup> N.K. Smith, Tr., op. cit., p. 42.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

epistemology. He acquiesces in the Kantian position followed by his disciples in the field of religion also, that discursive thought plays no part in religious knowledge, for it is incapable of reaching the infinite. But he agrees only to that extent, for his analysis of thought is more thorough than that of any of the Kantian epistemologists. His analysis reveals three potencies of thought, viz. (i) thought in its discursive potency, (ii) thought in its practical potency, and (iii) thought in its deeper movement.<sup>80</sup> The Kantians, as the students of Western philosophy are well aware, recognise only the first two potencies. Kant wrote two *Critiques*, one on each of the two potencies. With the denial of “intellectual intuition,” *ipso facto*, the third potency of thought found no place in his system.

In his theory of knowledge, again, Iqbal disagrees with the basic positivist assumptions, viz. (1) sense-experience is the only genuine form of experience,<sup>81</sup> and (ii) the word “fact” is applicable to natural phenomena only, to phenomena which C.B. Martin describes as “public and neutral”.<sup>82</sup> The first assumption has already lost ground in view of the findings of the Freudian psychologists, who have brought home the importance of sub-conscious and unconscious processes of the mind.<sup>83</sup> It may be added that this illumination did not come with the Freudians, for such processes had already been recognised by Spinoza,<sup>84</sup> nay, centuries ago by that great Muslim thinker Ibn Taimīyyah (661-728/ 1263-1328);<sup>85</sup> but it was the psychoanalysts who brought it to prominence in the present century. Ever since the modern epistemologists<sup>86</sup> have come to acknowledge other forms of consciousness and other kinds of objects of knowledge amenable to human research and industry. Quite lately, the greatest amount of light on the mystical recesses of the mind has been shed by the Inter-national Society for Psychological Research. One of the most interesting subjects of study today is the dream

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<sup>80</sup> Iqbal, op. cit., p. 52

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p. 182.

<sup>82</sup> *Philosophy*, XXXII/122 (July 1957), 232.

<sup>83</sup> W. Sellars & J. Hospers, *Readings in Ethical Theory*, New York : Century-Crafts, 1952. Cf. J. Hospers, *Free Will and Psychoanalysis*.

<sup>84</sup> C.D. Broad, *Five Types of Ethical Theory*, London : Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956. Cf. Spinoza's "Theory of Emotions".

<sup>85</sup> A.D. Woozley, *Theory of Knowledge*, London : Hutchinson University Library, 1969.

<sup>86</sup> M. Hanif Nadvi, *'Aqliyat-i Ibn Taimīyyah* (Urdu), Lahore : Idārah Thaqāfat-i Islāmiyah, 1968.

experiences<sup>87</sup> and the nature of their objects. Iqbal, however, in his avowal of other forms of consciousness, is more philosophical and empirical, because he appeals to the testimony of thousands of mystics of all ages and countries<sup>88</sup> that there are “potential types of consciousness lying close to our normal consciousness”<sup>89</sup> and that “these types of consciousness open up possibilities of life-giving and knowledge-yielding experience. . . .”<sup>90</sup> This is a great advance over the traditional view of knowledge.

This extensive and comprehensive view of knowledge was first propounded by the Holy Qur’ān, which emphasised three sources of knowledge, viz. Nature, History and *Qalb* or Intuition.<sup>91</sup> The instrument of the former two is Intellect, while *Qalb* is the internal source of illumination. These sources of knowledge, to Iqbal, are not discrete and isolated; they are rather complementary to each other,<sup>92</sup> and none can afford complete knowledge without a unison of the others. There is no rift between “head” and “heart” as the sources of knowledge. The two are organically related, nay, as says Iqbal in the *Gulshan-i Rāz-i Jadid*,<sup>93</sup> they spring from the same root and are two facets of the same light. Thus, the two sources of knowledge spring from the same root, and do not go counter to each other unless interfered with. Even a complete trance of a mystic, says Iqbal, “does not mean a complete break with serial time”.<sup>94</sup> Intellect is important because it affords a knowledge of the observable aspects of reality, which, says Iqbal, lives in its own appearances.<sup>95</sup> This knowledge of the observable is indispensable to a complete vision of the real; it is a necessary stage in the spiritual uplift of man. But for a collaboration of the internal and external sources of knowledge, no full and comprehensive illumination of reality is possible. It is keeping this fact in view that Dr Jamila Khatoon remarks that “In his theory of knowledge, sense-perception, reason and intuition, all are combined in an organic whole. He knew full well that light from one

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<sup>87</sup> Cf. Malcolm, *Dreaming and Other Material*.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 185.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid. p. 127.

<sup>92</sup> Iqbal, op. cit., p. 3.

<sup>93</sup> P. 148.

<sup>94</sup> Iqbal, op. cit., p. 22.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

direction alone could not illumine the whole of reality in all its manifestations”.<sup>96</sup> Reliance on any one of these sources alone can afford an incomplete and one-sided vision, and engender ills peculiar to it. The East and the West, says Iqbal, are clearly separated in respect of their reliance on any one of these sources. As Iqbal says in *Jāvid Nāmāh*, “For Westerners intelligence is the stuff of life, for Easterners love is the mystery of all being.”<sup>97</sup>

Iqbal traces the ills of the West back to its over-rationalism and excessive intellectualism. They have given birth to material-ism and atheism, and as a result”... the embers of the West are cold; their eyes cannot see, their heart is dead”.<sup>98</sup> Commenting on the excesses of reason in the West, Iqbal says: “Reason is a chain fettering this present age: where is restless soul such as I possess?”<sup>99</sup> It is because of the fact that the West has lost the restless soul that it is in the present explosive situation. He disagrees with the idea advocated by Russell and other rationalists in Europe that intellect has brought man to the verge of an imminent catastrophe, and that only reason can save him from this situation. Iqbal contends that “wholly overshadowed by the results of his intellectual activity, the modern man has ceased to live soulfully, i.e., from within. In the domain of thought he is living in open conflict with himself; and in the domain of economic and political life he is living in open conflict with others. He finds himself unable to control his ruthless egoism and his infinite gold-hunger which is gradually killing all higher striving in him and bringing him nothing but life-weariness.”<sup>100</sup> This has been confirmed by Aldous Huxley who similarly remarks on the situation of the modern man thus: “Most men and women lead lives at worst so painful, at the best so monotonous, poor and limited that the urge to escape . . . is and has always been one of the principle appetites of the soul.”<sup>101</sup> The

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<sup>96</sup> *The Place of God, Man and Universe in the Philosophic System of Iqbal* (Karachi : Iqbal Academy, 1963), p. 3.

<sup>97</sup> A.J. Arberry, Tr. (*Iqbal*) *Jāvid Nāmāh* (London : George Allen and Unwin, 1966), p. 57.

<sup>98</sup> Mahmud Ahmad, Tr. (*Iqbal's Javid Nāmāh*): Pilgrimage of Eternity (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1961), p. 54.

<sup>99</sup> Iqbal, *Jāvid Nāmāh*, p. 22.

<sup>100</sup> Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, pp. 187-88.

<sup>101</sup> A. Huxley, *Doors of Perception and Heaven and Hell* (Penguin Books, combined edition, 1959),

renowned modern psycho-analyst Erick Fromm, in his book *The Sane Society*,<sup>102</sup> has depicted no better picture of the modern man and has agreed to impute this situation to the present material development. His findings are very interesting and informative. Excessive rationalism can beget nothing but materialism and atheism, the two principal causes of the obnoxious conditions obtaining in the West, especially in developed countries. It has produced a state of perpetual conflict and strife, and led to self-estrangement and forlornness. Over-intellectualism has brought man face to face with an ex-plosive situation, which Iqbal describes in *Jāvid Nāmāh* thus: “Man’s chronicle both in the East and West narrates a single tale; the tale of war and strife for land.”<sup>103</sup>

An exclusive reliance on *Qalb* or inner experience also does not retrieve the situation a whit for it is equally one-sided and generates its own ills. It begets traditional pantheism and in extreme cases leads to nihilism. It encourages escape from the world of hard facts into a realm of phantasy, and it led to the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd* in the East, and to monasticism in the West. It renders man unfit for a manful life, and produces “resignedness” and “introversion,” the two states of mind which Iqbal condemns. Iqbal stresses the need for grappling with life, for eternal life is in this struggle, he says in *Payām-i Mashriq*.<sup>104</sup> Not to speak of a reclusive life, he condemns even meditation in seclusion, and refers to the Islamic emphasis on congregational prayer. He says in *Jāvid Nāmāh*, even search for truth in isolation is sinful, and one should seek in the company of seekers.<sup>105</sup> He further stresses: “Solitude begets desire and search, congregation affords vision; solitude brings proximity to God, company bestows power and sovereignty.”<sup>106</sup> Iqbal advocates an intensely active and practical style of life. Even religion and knowledge have a great practical import to him. He criticises traditional Christianity on the ground that the affirmation of spirit cannot come by “the renunciation of external forces which are already permeated by the illumination of spirit, but by a proper adjustment of man’s relation to these

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p. 49.

<sup>102</sup> New York: Rinehart, 1955.

<sup>103</sup> Mahmud Ahmad, Tr., op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>104</sup> *Kulliyāt-i-Iqbal* (Persian), (Lhore: Sh. Ghulam Ali & Sons, 1975), p. 45.

<sup>105</sup> Mahmud Ahmad, Tr., op.cit., p. 41.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

forces in view of the light received from the world within”.<sup>107</sup> Iqbal condemns renunciation of the world as cowardice and a means of escape. He expresses the same thing in his *Reconstruction* thus: “The life is a kind of tension caused by the ego invading the environment and the environment invading the ego. The ego does not stand outside the arena of mutual invasion.”<sup>108</sup> The environment is indispensable to ego-development, for which even enemy and Satan are very important, says Iqbal. The society is a boon or blessing to the human ego. The development of ego is not possible in isolation, which kills the higher nature and potentialities of man. The importance of society to man he expresses in *Rumūz-i Bekhudī*, where he calls it “rahmat”<sup>109</sup> for the individual, and in *Darb-i Kalim*, where he denies that the ego can develop in monasteries.<sup>110</sup> He condemns Plato’s philosophy and Ḥāfīz’s poetry, and pseudo-mysticism, because they teach the lesson of inaction and flight from society. Iqbal himself, after the publication of *Asrār-i Khudī* in 1915, devoted more attention to society or millat and to the principles which conduce to the emergence and growth of a true community. In one of his letters to (late) Dr Hādī Ḥasan, he regretted his having published *Asrār-i Khudī*, because he was afraid his doctrine of self would be largely misconceived.<sup>111</sup> However, he did not overstress this doctrine in his later works; rather he assigned to Individual and Community an equal treatment. As Professor A.J. Arberry has very acutely remarked, Iqbal “was not interested merely in the individual and his self-realisation ; he was equally concerned with the evolution of an ideal society, or community. . . .”<sup>112</sup> To him, individual cannot retain himself apart from the community; his very existence owes to the presence of a community, like a wave which owes its very existence to the ocean to which it belongs.<sup>113</sup>

Divining the ills of the East, Iqbal particularly condemns imitation and plagiarism. By blindly following in the footsteps of the West, it is falling into

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<sup>107</sup> Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p.9.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p. 102.

<sup>109</sup> *Javid Nāmāh*, p.5.

<sup>110</sup> *Darb-i-Kalim* (Lahore: Ahsan Bros., 1959), p. 77.

<sup>111</sup> BA. Dar, Ed., *Letters and Writings of Iqbal*, Karachi: Iqbal Academy, 1967.

<sup>112</sup> A.J. Arberry, Tr. (Iqbal's *Rumūz-i Bekhudī*), *Mysteries of Selflessness* (London : John Murray, 1953), Intro., p. xi.

<sup>113</sup> *Bāng-i Darā*, p. 190.

the same pitfalls. Imitation and dogged following have wrested the originality and research from the bosom of Oriental scholars, who are getting tailor-made knowledge from their counterparts to the West. And what is more to regret, the Eastern scholar plumes himself on his bondsman-ship of the West. In *Jāvid Nāmāh* Iqbal regrets that “The Turks, Iranians, Arabs lie benumbed with Europe’s noose around their throats.”<sup>114</sup> He adds that the West has wrecked the East with its Imperialism and has bedimmed its flame of faith with its Socialism.”<sup>115</sup> Consequently, two major ills have befallen the East: (i) disintegration and weakening of the ego, which are consequent upon “asking” and plagiarism; and (ii) the breaking up of the community or *millat* into countries and territories. As early as 1903 in *Bāng-i-Darā*, Iqbal preferred suicide to imitation.<sup>116</sup> In man imitation kills all aspiration and zest for research, and deadens his heart (i.e. inner illumination, which flows from original re-search and industry). He advises that *kbudi* is a very rare belonging of man, which should not be spoiled through plagiarism. It is also inimical to *faqr*, one of the greatest Eastern—rather Islamic—virtues. Dr A. Schimmel, a famous Orientalist from Germany, and a scholar on Iqbal, rightly observes that “imitation” or *taqlid* is considered by Iqbal as the negative complement of *faqr*, since it weakens and even destroys the ego.<sup>117</sup> Iqbal urges himself in his *Lectures*: “Conservatism is as bad in religion as in any other department of human activity. It destroys the ego’s creative freedom and closes up the paths of fresh spiritual enterprise.”<sup>118</sup>

Imitation is detrimental to the make-up of the society also. It disintegrates the society as well as the individual. Iqbal accuses the lords of the West for having taught the concept of “country”<sup>119</sup> to a people not previously conversant with it. The people of the East, especially the Muslims with faith in their bosoms, were familiar only with the higher ideal of humanity; it was the Western impact which has divided them, Iqbal regrets, into Syria, Palestine and Iraq. The West is trying for unity among its ranks,

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<sup>114</sup> Mahmud Ahmad, Tr., op. cit., p. 50.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> *Bāng-i Darā*, p. 107.

<sup>117</sup> *Gabriel's Wing* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1963), p. 143.

<sup>118</sup> *Reconstruction*, p, 183.

<sup>119</sup> *Jāvid Nāmāh*, p. 55.

while it is dividing the people of *tauhid* into races and countries.<sup>120</sup> The East cannot expect anything from the West except its imperialism, socialism, and racialism, which have encouraged hatred between man and man, and a consequent strife and struggle for supremacy. While discussing the Western impact on the East, Iqbal fears that it is seducing the East from itself, that is, from its essence and inheritance. He suggests in *Javid Nāmāh* that what the East requires is an incisive criticism of the Western culture rather than its blind following.<sup>121</sup> The East is in possession of much better systems, and in this connection Iqbal alludes to the Qur’ānic teachings which, even Goethe, in his *Conversations with Eckermann*, was forced to appreciate in the following words: “You see that nothing is wanting in this doctrine; that with all our systems we have got no further; and that, generally speaking, no one can get further.”<sup>122</sup> In this passage lies an unreserved appreciation of the system propounded by the Qur’ān. The real position is that, as realised by Goethe, the Westerner is looking for something in the East, after getting disillusioned with his own systems and “isms”. This fact was expressed by Bertrand Russell also in his *Re-awakening of the East*, and which is practically manifesting itself as indicated by the West’s greater interest in Eastern thought and practices, e.g. the Indian *yoga*, sufi practices; and the growing interest shown in the works of Jalāluddīn Rūmī,<sup>123</sup> the Persian sage, and Iqbal, the poet-philosopher of Pakistan. How funny it is that we are looking to the West for guidance, which is itself groping for something in the East. It is like a half-blind man looking for guidance to a full-blind man; the kind of guidance the latter can render can well be imagined. Iqbal advises that we should cut out our own path, because treading the path of others is a sin; if we commit a sin with our own effort, it is better than a borrowed virtue.<sup>124</sup> He also says that it is by nature that we yearn for originality and desire to create a new world out of the old one<sup>125</sup> (meliorism). To him, vehemence and creativity are the very marks of true life.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid,

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., p. 178,

<sup>122</sup> J. Oxenford, Tr., *Conversations of Goethe with Eckermann*, I, 391.

<sup>123</sup> A great Persian poet of the thirteenth century, known for his famous *Mathnavī*, Ed. R.A. Nicholson, London : Luzac & Co , 1925

<sup>124</sup> *Payām-i-Mashriq*, p 62.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., pp. 154-55.

<sup>126</sup> *Javid Nāmāh*, p. 191.

Iqbal concludes that life cannot be full and vision complete unless Intellect and Intuition combine; it is from their amalgamation that a true vision ensues, and a new world is “spawned”. In *Jāvid Nāmāh*, he says: “If reason be divorced from love, then knowledge is but Satan’s progeny; ...”<sup>127</sup> and again that “Love-led can reason claim the Lord and reason-lit love strikes firm roots. When integrated these two draw the pattern of a different world.”<sup>128</sup> The fusion of the two, he adds, bestows power, vision and sovereignty--in short, *faqr*<sup>129</sup> as inculcated by the Qur’an. In the *Gulshan-i-Rāḡ-i-Jadīd*,<sup>130</sup> Iqbal stresses that it is sin to get illumination through only one source, for it would detract one from the true path which can be found through the two sources combined, pushing one into antimonies (as Kant said) and inconsistencies. As said before, the West is too much engrossed in the external world, ignoring completely the internal side of reality; the East, on the other hand, is more given to the internal world, ignoring outward manifestations of reality altogether. The West, so much engrossed in empiricism and materialism, was disillusioned with the boons of reason after World War II. There was a very strong feeling that the West’s prevalent plight was due to the misdeeds of the Nazis and the Communists, and that the remedy lay in a return to Christianity. This feeling was not unfounded altogether because faithlessness, as Iqbal also acknowledges, had certainly brought man to the verge of a catastrophe. The rationalists like Bertrand Russell, however, combated this feeling on the ground that a return to traditional Christianity would bring in its wake all the ills of obscurantism and mutual mistrust, rather than remedying the prevalent ills. Iqbal will agree with Russell in so far as a return to traditional and orthodox religion is concerned, but he will not agree with his Welsh contemporary that the cure lies in a more of reason. To him, it rather lies in accepting true religion which is, unlike Freud, not a dogma or a ritual, but a “vital act”.<sup>131</sup> In its true sense, it is “neither mere feeling, nor mere action; it is an expression of the whole man”.<sup>132</sup> Such a concrete notion of religion presents a good fusion of thought and intuition and, in this sense, it can go a long way, Iqbal believes, to salvage

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<sup>127</sup> Mahmud Ahmad, Tr., op. cit., p. 66.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., p. 54.

<sup>129</sup> *Kulliyāt-i-Iqbal*, p. 149.

<sup>130</sup> *Why I Am Not A Christian* (London : G. Allen & Unwin, 1957), p. 178.

<sup>131</sup> *Reconstruction*, p. 198.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

the human situation. Iqbal understands religion at different levels:<sup>133</sup> viz. (i) the level of “faith” or discipline and obedience, which is the level of the common believer; (ii) the level of “thought” or understanding, at which “religious life seeks its foundation in a kind of metaphysics”; and (iii) the level of “discovery,” which is the level of original research and may be called “mysticism,” though with certain reservations. In the last sense, religion is “essentially a mode of actual living” and “can alone ethically prepare the modern man for the burden of the great responsibility which the advancement of modern science necessarily involves. . . .”<sup>134</sup> To Iqbal, “The basic perception from which religious life moves for-ward is the present slender unity of the ego, his liability to dissolution, his amenability to reformation and his capacity for an ampler freedom to create new situations in known and unknown environments.”<sup>135</sup> With this perception as the starting point, and with the goal in view which is the integration of personality, religion can prepare man to salvage his present explosive situation. True religion is very practical, and brings out and develops the latent capacities of man. Through fortification of the ego, it prepares man even for the most crucial tests, of which the highest test is facing the “ultimate reality” without flinching or withdrawing; and in the history of mankind, it was only in the person of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) that man reached that optimum development in which he could see God face to face with a smile on his lips (i.e. *mi’raj*). This level of development is not amenable either through intellect alone or through intuition alone; it is possible only through a right fusion of both thought and intuition. Such a fusion will beget a religion which arises in revelation, but finds its justification in thought; it is the rationally-based religion. By a rationally-based religion Iqbal does not mean a rationalistic religion like Calvinism or Quakerism which had no revealed basis. In fact, he is looking for a religion which has originated in revelation, but has a rational basis. He says: “Humanity needs three things today—a spiritual interpretation of the universe, spiritual emancipation of the individual, and basic principles of a universal import directing the evolution of human society on a spiritual basis.”<sup>136</sup> Only a true religion can provide for these three basic needs of

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<sup>133</sup> *ibid.*, p. 181.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 189.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 162.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 179.

humanity, says Iqbal.

To sum up, then, Iqbal believes that the ravages of reason can be remedied only through its fusion with intuition, which will afford a full vision of the real and enable man a better adjustment to his environment, ensuring him better survival in this world as well as in the world to come. To emphasise either thought or intuition alone will lead to inimical consequences, as discussed above. Religion, in the highest sense alone, can ensure the requisite fusion, and in this sense it is no mere dogma or ritual, but a genuine experience capable of yielding vision and guidance man needs today. Of all the systems known to the world, only true religion (which was Islam in his case) can guarantee such a complete vision and guidance, because it reveals those three ultimate ideas which alone can produce the requisite understanding in man which will enable him to transcend all rationalism, apartheid and petty nationalism, and teach him the noblest principles of equality, fraternity and justice.

#### References

WHAT SHOULD THEN BE DONE,  
O PEOPLE OF THE EAST?  
BEING ENGLISH RENDERING OF IQBAL'S  
PAS CHIH BAYAD KARD AY AQWAM-I SHARQ  
By B.A. DAR  
WITH USEFUL EXPLANATORY NOTES  
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