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IQBAL ON OBSERVATION OF NATURE AND GOD-KNOWLEDGE*

Abdul Khaliq

Iqbal, in his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, has consistently built up a case for God-Knowledge or, what he calls, "direct contact with the Ultimate Reality". He, however, takes care to distinguish his position from mysticism "which is supposed to be a life-denying, fact-avoiding attitude of mind directly opposed to the radically empirical outlook of our times."¹ Accordingly, he adopts a positive empirical approach instead. Anyhow, exactly in what sense is the experience of Nature relevant to the knowledge of God is a question which needs to be carefully explained and examined.

Iqbal, to begin with, rejects the celebrated cosmological and teleological arguments as a proof apparatus for the existence of God. The former, he holds, is self-contradictory. It reduces God to just an item in the long chain of causes which is arbitrarily elevated "to the dignity of an uncaused first cause,"² thus setting at naught the very principle of causation. The latter, on the other hand, "gives us a skilful external contriver working on a pre-existing dead and intractable material the elements of which are[*ex-hypothesi*], by their own nature, incapable of orderly structures and combinations. The argument gives us a contriver only and not a creator."³ Both these arguments agree in being "cosmological" in a broader sense of the term as they equally well start from the cosmos or the universe and lead up to God. And it is specifically due to this essential character that, in spite

*Paper under this title was read out by the author at the International Congress on Allamah Muhammad Iqbal held at Lahore in December 1977. The present article is the revised and enlarged form of the same.

due to this essential character that, in spite of being fallacious on strictly logical grounds, they "embody a real movement of thought in its quest after the Absolute".⁴ Nature is, after all, relevant to the existence of God. The

¹ Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 182.

² *Ibid.*, p. 28.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

Qur'ān, i.e. the word of God, gives certain verbal characterisations of Him. Nature, on the other hand, is the work of 'God. So between them there should be complete accord. The thesis of the essential harmony between the work of God and the word of God was propounded most forcefully by Sayyid Aḥmad Khān⁵ (1817-1898) and later by 'Allāmah Ināyat Allah Khan Mashriqī⁶ (1888-1953). Iqbal also had the conviction that the two are in mutual agreement and somehow support each other. That is very much the reason why in one of his Lectures⁷ he sought the confirmation of the descriptions of the Ultimate Reality as contained in the Qur'ān by a reference to the findings of natural, empirical sciences. In Islam the instrument of encounter with God has been technically known as prayer. And Iqbal rightly observes that the scientific observer of Nature too is involved in the act of prayer.⁸ "The knowledge of Nature," he says, "is the knowledge of God's behaviour. In our observation of Nature we are virtually seeking a kind of intimacy with the Absolute Ego."⁹ It is instructive to point out here that the Qur'ānic word āyah (pl. āyāt) has been used for a verse in the Scripture as well as for a phenomenon of Nature. This adequately shows the affinity between the Divine and the natural orders.

However, what is particularly wrong with the traditional Nature-based cosmological arguments is, for one thing, that they abstract particular single aspects of the natural happenings—causality or movement or harmony and order, and so forth—at the total exclusion of our experience as such. Talking of these arguments, H.J. Paton, for instance, writes: "They appeal . . . not to a rich and full and diversified experience but to its bare bones. The

inference, so to speak, is not from the living body of experience but only from its skeleton. Hence the cosmological argument is arid."¹⁰ Happily, the Qur'ān, while building up its metaphysics, does not abstract in this way. It accepts the whole of Nature that is revealed to sense-perception as a system of signs of the Ultimate Reality, which signs we are almost duty bound to

⁵ Cf. his favourite formula: "Islam is Nature and Nature is Islam." This is the title of one of his essays. See Maqālāt-i Sir-Sayyid, III, 16.

⁶ *Tadhkirah*, p. 84.

⁷ Iqbal, op. cit., Second Lecture: "*The Philosophical Test of the Revelations of Religious Experience*."

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁰ *The Modern Predicament*, pp. 193-94.

observe and peculate over. Those who are oblivious of the facts of experience here and now, it says, will remain blind to the beauties of the Ideal in the Hereafter.¹¹ The Qur'ān says:

"Surely, in the creation of the heavens and of the earth and in the alternation of night and day ; and in the ships which pass through the sea with what is useful to man and in the rain which God sends down from heaven, giving life to the earth after its death and in scattering over it all kinds of cattle ; and in the change of the winds and in the clouds that are made to do service between the heavens and the earth are signs (of God) for those who understand."¹²

Further:

"And it is He Who sends down rain from heaven, and We bring forth by it the buds of all the plants and from them we bring forth the green foliage and in the close growing grain and palm trees with sheaths of clustering dates and gardens of grapes and the olives and the pomegranates like and unlike. Look at the fruits when they ripen, Therein are signs for people who believe. "¹³

And so on.

The Qur'ān records a number of instances where Prophets themselves had a recourse to the observation of Nature while seeking to know God. When Prophet Moses expressed his wish to see God, he was directed to look towards the mountain,¹⁴ which is a natural object. Prophet Abraham, the "Upright Muslim" and the unitarian *par excellence*, found his way to God through a strong realisation, based on observation and experience, of the ephemeral character of the stars, the moon and the sun.¹⁵ Even when he had acquired a belief in God in this way he had to refer back to the world of experience in order to confirm his belief and be at peace with that belief.¹⁶

However, all these Qur'ānic references do not imply that even the

¹¹ The Qur'ān, xvii. 72.

¹² Ibid., ii. 164.

¹³ Ibid.i vi. 99.

¹⁴ Ibid., vii. 143.

¹⁵ Ibid., vi. 76-80.

¹⁶ Ibid., ii. 260.

diverse phenomena of Nature mentioned do in any way provide sufficient proofs for the existence of God. There can, strictly speaking, be no logical argument worth the name for the existence of God in which Nature, even in its organic wholeness, is accepted as the major premise. Nature is finite and temporal; God is infinite and eternal. Neither a deductive nor an inductive reasoning is in principle applicable here because in both these types of argument the premises and the conclusion must mutually have at least a continuity of reference and belong to the same universe of discourse. We may extend finitude to whatever degree we desire: it would never be transformed into infinity. Nor can any number of moments joined together give us a glimpse of eternity. Eternity is simply timelessness and infinity is the very negation of all finitudes and determinations. God is Wholly Other. There is nothing and no one like Him.

Now, how to bridge up the gulf between Nature and God so that we may have God-Knowledge the natural way, as envisaged by the Qur'ān? In other words, how is natural theology possible? Nature, we have already observed, is a system of signs or symbols pointing towards God. So, knowledge of God should be a matter of interpreting these signs and giving them a meaning rather than of arriving at a conclusion on the basis of certain premises. In order so perform this interpretative function, it is necessary but not sufficient that we observe well and find out in the spirit of naturalism as to how things happen. What we are required to have, in addition, is a cosmic vision, or, in the beautiful phrase of Iqbal, "the vital way of looking at the universe". This cosmic vision which is duly presided over by an I-Thou encounter with God comprises faith in the Unseen. The Qur'ān says:

"This Book, there is no doubt in it, is a guide to those who keep their duty, who believe in the Unseen. . . ." ¹⁷

By belief (or, more appropriately, faith) in the Unseen is meant faith in God, the angels, the Day of Judgment and other realities mentioned in the Qur'ān which are not open to ordinary observation. I-I-However, more generally, it implies an overall non-natural attitude of mind. For a naturalist or an empiricist, the world of experience is the only reality and a talk of anything beyond it is a nonsense, pure and simple. Hume, for instance, says:

¹⁷ Ibid., ii 2-3.

"If we take in our hand any volume of divinity or school meta-physics, for instance, let us ask, Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning quantity or number? No. Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact or existence? No. Commit it then to the flames for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion,"¹⁸

In modern times this position was taken up by Logical Positivists. With their principle of verifiability in hand, they rejected the validity of everything that was outside the purview of positive sciences. "The theist may believe," says Ayer, one of the pioneers of the Logical Positivist movement, "that his experiences are cognitive experiences, but unless he can formulate his knowledge in propositions that are empirically verifiable. we may be sure that he is deceiving himself."¹⁹ As opposed to this positivism, the kind of attitude that the Qur'ān requires from its readers is that they should have a firm conviction that there are realities beyond the physical world. This is what may be meant by faith in the Unseen. In the verse quoted above, "The Book" has, in fact, sometimes been interpreted to mean not the Qur'ān, but the "Book of Nature". In that case the verse would mean that only those observers of Nature are capable of going beyond the appearances that are directly encountered and having a vision of reality, who are convinced that reality does exist and that the world of sensible experience is not the end-all and the be-all of everything. It is truly at this level of his attitude towards God that a scientific observer of Nature can be identified with the religious seeker after the Ultimate Reality. It is at this level alone that he realises that the spatio-temporal world is not simply a three-dimensional world: it has a fourth dimension as well. "Every thing we experience in the course of our lives," says Herbert Butterfield, "is not only what it is; it can be psychologically a symbol of something more. It is this something more that is the fourth dimension."²⁰ The Qur'ān condemns the strictly matter-of-fact type of people. It is about them that it says that their hearts are sealed:

"Allah has sealed their hearts and their hearing and there is covering on their eyes. "²¹

¹⁸ Quoted by C.A. Qadir, Logical Positivism, p. 36.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 143.

²⁰ Quoted by G.S. Spinks, Psychology and Religion, p. 187.

²¹ The Qur'ān, ii. 7.

"They have hearts with which they understand not, and they have eyes with which they see not and they have ears with which they hear not ; . . . nay, they are more astray. "²²

The phrase roughly corresponding to the "sealing of the heart" is "expanding of the breast":

"Whomsoever Allah intends to guide, He expands his breast for Islam."²³

This "expansion of the breast" helps the individual to develop in himself a profound vision and understanding. He begins understanding the true, esoteric meaning of the word as well as the work of God and is thus transported from finite Nature to God, the Infinite. Iqbal has this level of experience in mind when he says that the observation of Nature sharpens our inner perception so that we can have a deeper vision of it (i.e. Nature).²⁴ Once we have that vision, our normal perception, our reason and understanding are in turn thoroughly metamorphosed against new perspectives. "Positive views of ultimate things," Iqbal rightly observes, "are the work rather of Inspiration than Metaphysics."²⁵ Elsewhere, indicating the inadequacy of natural-cum-rational approach to God, he quotes with approval the saying of Ibn 'Arabi that God is a percept as differentiated from the world which is a concept.²⁶

Observation of Nature as the basis for God-Knowledge has been emphasised by the Qur'ān, as shown above, due to the simple fact that Nature furnishes pointers to God and suggests the right direction in which a search for Him can be fruitfully undertaken. It is thus only an evocative technique and simply furnishes the occasion to have a knowledge of God Who thus, in spite of its relevance to Him, retains His singularity and autonomy. This can be made clear with the help of an illustration given by I.T. Ramsey in his *Religious Language*.²⁷ Suppose, he says, I have to bring home the existence of a circle to a person who has a peculiarly developed geometry

²² Ibid., vii. 179.

²³ Ibid., vi. 125.

²⁴ Iqbal, op. cit., p. 91.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 114.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 183.

²⁷ *Religious Language- An Empirical Placing of Theological Phrases*, p. 69.

which is completely without curves. I will ask the person to draw a regular polygon with a certain number of sides. Then I shall ask him to make more polygons each time adding one side more to the last figure already drawn. If the process goes on, there generally comes sooner or later a point of disclosure. The man realises with a flash of insight that his activity of drawing polygons with more and more of sides is leading to an absolutely new kind of figure—the circle—which these figures are approaching more and more nearly but which he will never reach. The circle is then, according to Ramsey, the "infinite polygon". The word "infinite" is significant here. It implies that we may add as many sides as we like to our polygons, but still the difference between the circle and the polygon nearest to it will be as wide as between the infinite and the finite. Yet, the circle is definitely relevant to the growing polygons and presides over the whole series. On the same analogy, Nature is relevant to the existence of God, but still it cannot be equal to Him, nor can it furnish a sufficient proof for His existence.

The entire above account speaks eloquently for a need to under-go a process of self-culture on which the Muslim mystics in particular have invariably laid special emphasis. Iqbal, also, speaks of ego's gradual growth in self-possession, in uniqueness and intensity of his activity as an ego. "The climax of this development," he says, "is reached when the ego is able to retain full self-possession, even in the case of a direct contact with the all-embracing Ego."²⁸ So, it is only a full-grown, well-integrated ego who can afford to have personal knowledge—knowledge by acquaintance, roughly speaking—of the Divine Being. From the very beginning, the seeker of God must learn to discipline his attitudes and be most sincere in his efforts for the realisation of the ideal. Daily canonical prayers are generally begun with the declaration: "I have turned my face towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth and I am not one of the polytheists." So also the observer of Nature should always have in mind the attainment of the Ultimate Truth as the grand objective of his experimentations and should never divert his attention elsewhere, however strong the temptation. There is no holiday in the spiritual life of man.

God-Knowledge, which is pursued with such absorption and single-mindedness and with the discovery of the true I-amness in the background,

²⁸ Iqbal, op.cit., p.118.

is, of course, not knowledge in the discursive or analytical sense of the term. It is not the sort of knowledge in whose case it would be possible to make a watertight distinction between the knower and the known and also we could understandably talk about the known object in normal everyday language. It is rather of the nature of what the sufis call *ma'rifah* or gnosis where the gnostic develops a kind of unicity with God and, not very infrequently, comes out with the spontaneous eruptions like "I am the creative truth" or "I am holy; how great is my majesty" and so on. The distinction between discursive knowledge and gnosis can be well brought out by referring to a corresponding distinction made by Bergson between a man's knowledge of a city which he gathers from the hundreds and thousands of photo-graphs of that city taken from all possible angles and viewpoints and another man's knowledge who lives in that city and roams about its streets.

Anyway the unicity of the human ego with the Divine Ego and the spontaneous ejaculations of certain mystics in that regard can very easily be interpreted in terms of pantheism. Iqbal scrupulously guards against this interpretation. The finite ego, he holds, must remain distinct though not isolated from the Supreme Ego.²⁹ . . . unitive experience is not the finite ego effacing its own identity by some sort of absorption into the Infinite Ego ; it is rather the Infinite passing into the loving embrace of the finite."³⁰ Talking specifically of the well-known words of Ḥallāj ("I am the creative truth"), Iqbal says: "The true interpretation of his experience . . . is not the drop slipping into the sea, but the realization and bold affirmation in an undying phrase of the reality and permanence of the human ego in a profounder personality."³¹

References

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²⁹ Ibid,

³⁰ Ibid., p. 110.

³¹ Ibid., p. 96.

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—Editor, Iqbal Review

IQBAL ON QUR'ANIC CONCEPT OF HISTORY

Muhammad Munawwar

The literal meaning of the word "*tarikb*" is to write, to narrate and to make entries. If we have to say that a letter had been written on such and such a date, we would use *mu'arrakbhab*, i.e. written on: be it 11 September 1977. On the death of a certain historian a poet said mournfully:

وكان يؤرخ
ذكر الانام
وهـاهـو
اليوم قد
ارخـا

[He used to write the accounts of other people.

Lo! today he himself has been written down.]

In more plain words, the above verse means that the historian himself became a "part of history". This shows that in technical terms "history" deals with the past, but not the past at large; it is rather the past of man in a society. Professor Toynbee defines history a bit more precisely. In his words: "What we call history is the history of man in a civilized society."³²

Professor Toynbee, continuing, maintains that if history means all that period which human beings have spent on this earth, then the civilised span will be only two per cent of the total. Keeping this stance in view, perhaps it would not be far from truth if history, as a particular branch of knowledge, is

³² A Study of History (abridged edition, 1971), I, 61. 11

considered as a link with the dawn of civilisation. Prehistoric ages, on the contrary, should be studied under the title of Anthropology.

Now if history is taken for the story of the past, then what is the purpose served by the study of history? Should it be studied as we study fiction? That eventually would mean a sort of amusement. Surely it is not like this; at least Muslim historians did not accept it as fiction or fable. According to Muslim historians, the contents of history are living realities. Therefore, they invite those who are really alive to listen attentively and to observe the phenomena of the past with vigilant eyes. This will make man learn lessons which will add to his knowledge and wisdom and will reshape him into a better human being.

In fact, the viewpoint of Muslim historians is influenced by the Holy Qur'an. The Qur'an asks the human beings time and again to go through the world with open eyes and diligent hearts "(so that they may) see what was the End of those before them. They were superior to them in strength: they tilled the soil and populated it in greater numbers than these have done."³³

Abdullah Yusuf Ali, interpreting the above-quoted verse of the Qur'an, lays down:

"Let not any generation think that it is superior to all that went before it. We may be 'heirs to all the ages, in the foremost files of time'. That is no reason for arrogance, but, on the contrary, adds to our responsibility. When we realise what flourishing cities and kingdoms existed before, how they flourished in numbers and prosperity, what chances they were given, and how they perished when they disobeyed the law of God, we shall feel a sense of humility, and see that it was rebellion and self-will that brought them down."³⁴

Those who transgressed the limits and gave themselves to covetousness, carnal pleasures and cruelty were annihilated. There were others who lost heads on account of power. Power corrupted them so much so that they saw in themselves the attributes of God and declared that they were gods. The reality was simple; they had ceased to live as human beings. What else could be the result? They collided with the pervasive order of God and became

³³ Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Tr., The Holy Qur'an, xxx. 9.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 1053, footnote 3515.

extinct.

Whenever and wherever human beings lose balance, the inevitable consequences are anarchy, cruelty, chaos, bloodshed, carnage and ruin. All the Prophets of God preached Justice, i.e. equilibrium, individual as well as collective, in all fields of life. They instructed people to outgrow animality and attain humanity. Man is not all matter. Man is not all soul. Soul and matter go together. Balance has to be maintained. Wherever, in some era and in some society, the great majority of individuals became temperate, society became strong, prosperous, integrated and free. It is only this kind of society which can produce great individuals who in return add glory to their society—sometimes to all man-kind. But the hard fact is that temperateness and equilibrium are seldom maintained for a long time. Ease brought about by affluence and nonchalance, resulting from a sense of security, begin to tell. Then the bell tolls. That is the march towards the end. Ups and downs, with short levels in between, be it material or spiritual, construct the story of man in society.

What else history is? One should not forget that man himself is the author of this sad and gay story, repenting now and taking pride then. He is the author because he is a thinking, analysing and foreseeing existence. He is not like inert matter; he does not belong to the world of plants and animals as such. History asks man to feel his responsibility and be always on the alert. History is among the open books of God. It must be studied in the light of the Book.

Taqī al-Din Maqrīzī (845/1441) in his renowned book *al-Khitāṭ* writes:

"In short there are two kinds of knowledge, rational and revealed. One should be proficient in both kinds of knowledge, according to one's needs. After that he should get absorbed in the study of history and speculate over the lessons taught by it. He whose heart is open and eyes awake, by the grace of God, gets to know as a reward for his deep thinking the ruinous end of those who prided in their wealth and fighting forces. And so on and so forth."³⁵

The same author, in another book, *Al-'Uqūd al-Farīdah*, explains:

³⁵ *Al-Plan Bi al-Taubikb* (Urdu translation, Markazi Urdu Board, Lahore), p. 86.

"God Almighty makes mankind inhabit the world generation after generation, split into tribes. The aim is that the forerunners should leave behind the lessons to be learnt by those who follow and that they who follow should keep the stories of their for-bears fresh to be related to others so well that the wise refrain from things despised and the well-mannered adopt the agreeable conduct."³⁶

Another historian, al-Badr Ḥusain al-Ahdal, states in the beginning of his book *Tuḥfat al-Zamān* 'Ta'riḫ-i Sādāt-i-Yaman:

"This [history] is a very useful branch of knowledge. Through it the successors come to know of the circumstances of their pro-genitors and thus the just stand higher in the estimation of men than the unjust. The reader of history profits by its lessons. He is enabled to evaluate the intellect and wisdom of the former gene-rations. He comes to understand their rationale. Had there been no history, mankind would not have been able to know the affairs and conditions of various governments, lineages, characteristics, causes and events of the preceding peoples. There could then have been no discrimination between the reasonable and the unreasonable, the foolish and the wise."³⁷

Yet another Arab historian, Abu 'Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Ya'qūb al-Rāzī Miskawaiḥ, states that when he studied the circumstances and events of foregoing nations, the character of their kings and the description of their cities and when he read the books of history, he realised that he had gained the knowledge of things that occur again and again. Thus the occurrence of like events is expected any time. This is why he wrote his book called *Tajārib al-Umam wa 'Awāqib al-Himam*—which is in four volumes.³⁸ The book deals with the experiences of various nations belonging

to the past ages, what they did, desired, deserved and how they met their end.

Through these and other like references it becomes crystal clear that, in the opinion of Muslim historians, history does not mean the history of kings and their kingdoms. It is rather the stories of nations which include kings

³⁶ Ibid., p. 88.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 89.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 93.

also. History describes the character and behaviour of different peoples. It records the extent of their intellect, wisdom and other accomplishments. It depicts the phenomena of collective rise and fall of communities. It re-ports the causes and reasons of the rise and fall that appear again and again. Ibn Khaldūn vehemently says:³⁹ فالماضى اشبه بالاتي من الماء [The past is more similar to the present than water is to water].

Ibn Khaldūn also defines in the manner the other Muslim historians have done. However, he emphasises that history should be studied with profound contemplation so that truth may be achieved, realities of things may be discerned and one may know the causes behind the creation, evolution and changes that occur in things. According to Ibn Khaldūn, the study of history demands depth of knowledge, breadth of visioa and clarity of thought which enable one to understand Causes and Effects. Ibn Khaldūn asserts:

فهو (التاريخ) لذلك اصيل في الحكمة عريق و جدير بان يعد في علومها و خليق.⁴⁰

[Hence it (history) is solidly rooted in philosophy and is quite worthy of being treated as one of its departments.]

Hegel stresses: "Philosophy of history means nothing but the thoughtful consideration of it."⁴¹

The truth is that with the thoughtful study of the Qur'ān a particular worldview takes place giving birth to a particular behaviour. And if we penetrate a bit deeper, the study of the Qur'ān brings us to the conclusion that the fountainhead of several sciences and disciplines is the Book itself. History is one of them.

Faqīr Sayyid Waḥīd al-Din narrates:

"When Dr. Iqbal was residing at a bungalow on the McLeod Road, a new

³⁹ *Al-Muqaddimah* (al-Maktahah Tijārīyyah, Egypt), p. 10.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴¹ *Philosophy of History* (Dower Publications, New York), p. 8.

visitor called at him. Stray conversation went on for a while. Then the new visitor put a question to Dr Iqbal saying, 'You have read books on religion, economics, politics, history, philosophy, etc. Which one of them is the best and most pro-found in respect of wisdom? Dr Iqbal stood up from the chair, made a gesture with his hands indicating that he should wait as he would be back in no time. So he went in. After two or three minutes he returned with a book, He put the book into the hands of the questioner and said, "The Qur'ān'." ⁴²

At the moment we are not concerned with other branches of knowledge. We are here to deal with history only. According to Iqbal, the general historic vision of Ibn Khaldūn had sprung from the fountainhead of the Qur'ān. It goes without saying that Ibn Khaldūn is the founder of sociology and is regarded as a pillar of philosophy of history. This is how Iqbal explains:

"...It is, therefore, a gross error to think that the Quran has no germs of a historical doctrine. The truth is that the whole spirit of Prolegomena. of Ibn-i-Khaldūn appears to have been mainly due to the inspiration which the author must have received from the Qur'ān. Even in his judgements of character he is, in no small degree, indebted to the Quran." ⁴³

Almost all Muslim historians and a great majority of Orientalists are of opinion that the beginning and development of Islamic history has been due to the Holy Qur'ān. Iqbal also upholds this

view. He points out that the Holy Qur'ān has established a principle for knowing the facts correctly.

"O believers! If any bad man comes to you with a report clear it up at once." ⁴⁴

In this regard Iqbal explains:

"Since accuracy in recording facts which constitute the material of

⁴² *Rūzguār-i Faqīr* (ed. Nov. 1963), pp. 92-93.

⁴³ *Reconstruction* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1944), p. 139.

⁴⁴ The Holy Qur'an, Xlix. 6.

history is an indispensable condition of history as a science, and an accurate knowledge of facts ultimately depends on those who report them, the very first principle of historical criticism is that the reporter's personal character is an important factor in judging his testimony."⁴⁵

Fāsiq means a profligate, wicked person, who leads a disorderly life and, therefore, becomes untrustworthy. He who is of a vicious nature must create, concoct and spread scandals. If such a person holds a pen and assumes the role of a recorder of events or of a historian, can he be expected to hold fast to truth and support it? His vicious nature will certainly mar the face of events in order to quench his own thirst for scandal-mongering. Ibn Khaldūn is quite aware of this sequel. He refers to a number of scandalous narrations and states thus:

"There are many such stories. They are always cropping up in the works of the historians. The incentive for invention and re-reporting them shows a tendency to forbidden pleasures and for smearing the reputation of others. People justify their own subservience to pleasure by citing the supposed doings of men and women of the past. Therefore they often appear very eager for such information and are alert to find it when they go through the pages of published works."⁴⁶

We have already laid down that in Iqbal's opinion the *Muqaddimah* of Ibn Khaldūn appears to have been influenced by "the inspiration which the author received from the Quran".⁴⁷ It is quite evident that, according to Iqbal, a student of history needs deep knowledge, wide experience, and mature intellect, because history encompasses the entire life. All theories and practices thereof, crafts and professions, arts and letters, politics, economics, mythologies, religions, physics and metaphysics and what not have a history and hence are to be regarded as history. But of all these multifarious, multi-coloured and multiplex activities, professions and departments, none has profound meaning if taken separately, however high the standard of any performance might be. Life is one integrated whole. It is a meaning which is always one though it has innumerable shades. Hence no art can be

⁴⁵ Reconstruction, p. 140.

⁴⁶ *The Muqaddimah*, Eng. trans. Rozenthal, abridged by N J. Dawood (London : Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967), p. 23.

⁴⁷ Reconstruction, p. 139.

comprehended apart from life. Rather no accomplishment can fully be attained or appreciated without referring to other accomplishments. So it is with history. Without comprehending the comprehensiveness of life history and its pedigree of evolution cannot be construed. Let us take a crude example, that of an elephant. If the elephant is not kept in view, can the trunk and its functions be fully explained and understood? What does the trunk of the animal stand for, without reference to the comprehensive elephant? Similarly, no philosophic doctrine, political revolution or economic change, etc., treated separately can make us feel its full significance. Iqbal, in respect of a complete history of philosophy, states:

"The progress of thought cannot be divorced from other phases of human activity. Our histories of philosophy tell us what various peoples have thought, but they give us no information as to the various causes—social and political—which have determined the character of human thought. To write a complete history of philosophy would certainly be a tremendous task. A mere theologian cannot fully reveal to his readers the rich content of Luther's Reform. We are apt to isolate great ideas from the general stream of man's intellectual activity."⁴⁸

In this context, Iqbal's Presidential Address of 11 June 1932 may also be taken into account. It was read out in a public meet-

ing of the Muslims, held outside Mochi Gate, Lahore. The Muslims had gathered to protest against a move put before the

Senate of the University of the Punjab in which it was proposed that the Indians should be taught the history of India only and Islamic history should be excluded from the syllabus. It should be remembered that the University of the Punjab and its bodies were in those days predominantly Hindu concerns. The proposal was made at the behest of the Hindus, by Professor Bruce, who then was the Chairman of the Department of History. In this regard the strongest argument given by Iqbal was that history had never belonged to any particular group of people, related to a certain area. History in his view belonged to all mankind. For the whole of humanity history was a common heritage. A few lines from that address are given below:

"History in its totality is a movement of human soul. Human soul has no

⁴⁸ Javid Iqbal, Ed. (Iqbal), *Stray Reflections* (Lahore : Ghulam Ali -& Sons, 1961), pp. 60-61.

specific environment. The whole world is its environment.... To treat it as belonging to a particular nationality is to demonstrate narrow-mindedness. I went to Italy and came across a gentleman called Prince Caetani, who was fond of Islamic history. He has written so many books on history and has expended a large wealth in this pursuit. No Muslim country can undertake the task of even getting all this huge material translated. I asked him as to why he was interested so much in Islamic history. His answer was that it turned women into men."⁴⁹

The man was an Italian and not one of the inhabitants of Muslim lands nor was he a Muslim that he felt attracted towards Islamic history on account of religious affinity. The reason quite obviously is that history of mankind is a spiritual outcome. It represents all. It teaches all. It is a common treasury. Borders are only material impressions. There exist no borders for soul, neither spatial nor temporal. We cannot cut time into pieces. We cannot cut away the past from the present. We, for our convenience, do take into account the serial time and devise years, months, days, hours, minutes and seconds and even fractions of seconds, but the Duration is one. It is indivisible. Iqbal vehemently declares:

زمانہ ایک، حیات ایک،
 کائنات بھی ایک
 دلیلِ کم نظری، قصہ
 جدید و قدیم⁵⁰

[Time is one, Life is one, the universe is one,

To talk of ancient and modern is but shortsightedness

For Iqbal life is a continuously evolving movement which serves as a field of action for man to put his capacities to test and show his worth. The Qur'ān says:

⁴⁹ Rafiq Afzal, Ed., *Gustār-i-Iqbal* (Punjab University, Lahore), p. 153-54.

⁵⁰ *Darb-i Kalim*, p. 26.

"Every man's fate We have fastened on his neck: on the Day of Judgment, We shall bring out for him a scroll, which he will see spread open."⁵¹

Through this verse God has made it abundantly manifest that the fate of man depends on his deeds, good or evil, and they hang round his neck. Man is the maker of his fortune.

Here I feel tempted to quote some verses of Iqbal from his famous poem *Zamānah* (Time) included in *Bāl-i Jibrīl*. The diction of the poem is superb. It seems to have a celestial music. As to its meanings it is one of the most profound poems, although it consists of only ten verses. Anyway, the following verses have direct bearing on the subject alluded to above:

مَری صراحی سے قطرہ قطرہ نئے حوادثِ ٹپک
 رہے ہیں
 میں اپنی تسبیحِ روز و شب کا شمار کرتا ہوں
 دانہ دانہ!
 ہر ایک سے آشنا ہوں، لیکن جدا جدا رسم و راہ
 مری
 کسی کا راکب، کسی کا مرکب، کسی کو عبرت
 کس کا تازیانہ!
 نہ تھا اگر تو شریکِ محفل، قصور میرا ہے یا
 کس کا تیرا؟
 مرا طریقہ نہیں کہ رکھ لوں کسی کی خاطر مئے
 شہ بانہ!

مرے خم و پیچ کو نجومی کی آنکھ پہچانتی
نہیں ہے
ہدف سے بیگانہ تیر اُس کا نظر نہیں جس کی
عارفانہ!

[New realities are trickling from my gohlet, drop after drop,
—I tell every bead of my rosary of day and night.

I am everybody's acquaintance but my behaviour with each of them is
different,

For some I am the rider, for some others I serve as a means of
conveyance

(or vehicle) and there are yet others with whom I deal as a whip of
warning.

If you did not attend the feast the fault is yours, not mine,

It is not my custom to hold back the nocturnal wine for any absentee.

My twists and turns are not discernible to astrologer's eye,

He who does not possess the intuitive eye cannot hit the target with his
arrow.]

No doubt, every moment is a creative moment. Things are coming to
life. Things are dying out. Every moment the universe is a new universe.
Hence no human being can afford to be inert, neither physically nor
mentally. One has constantly to be alert, up and doing. Time gives no special
consideration and makes no concession to any individual or society. Those
who capture the spirit of creation and change know what to do, how to do
and when to do. They subjugate Time. Those who are otherwise are
subjugated by Time. There are people who learn and conquer. There are
people who do not learn and are trampled upon by others. Their affliction

serves as a warning to those who follow. Moreover, it is not the knowledge of natural laws alone that leads man to the abode of reality. Development of spiritual faculties is also needed, otherwise our understanding of the world we live in will not be sound. Ideas will fall and ideals will crumble down to earth before long adding yet another sad chapter to the record book of human failures: failures caused by stubborn ambitions entertained by immature minds. But what history is otherwise?

Anyway ours is not a universe which is locked or blocked. It is an ever-developing and ever-expanding universe with open possibilities, where everything is in search of its ultimate fate. Man, whom Nature has equipped with material as well as spiritual powers, has also to toil constantly, consciously and wilfully to maintain his dominance over the forces of Nature. If he slackens, he falters. For him to rest is to rust. Islamic thought and especially Muslim view of history is replete with this very spirit. Iqbal explains this fact as under:

Thus all lines of Muslim thought converge on a dynamic conception of the universe. This view is further reinforced by Ibn-i-Maskawaih's theory of life as an evolutionary movement, and Ibn-i-Khaldūn's view of history. History or, in the language of the Quran, 'the days of God,' is the third source of human knowledge according to the Quran. It is one of the most essential teachings of the Quran that nations are collectively judged, and suffer for their misdeeds here and now."⁵²

After quoting the following verse of the Qur'ān: "Every nation has its fixed period" (vii. 32), Iqbal stresses that the verse "suggests the possibility of a scientific treatment of the life of human societies regarded as organisms".⁵³ Now life regarded as an organism means that nations are connected with previous nations as one generation is to its predecessor and successor generations. This shows that history is a continuous movement towards progress, a movement which cannot be divided into past, present and future. Time-process has no compartments. The seed is pre-sent in the sapling. The seed and sapling are both alive and grow in the tree. A baby growing into boyhood is really the same baby as he was born. When the boy became a full-grown human being, the baby and boy were there within him, living. Then

⁵² *Reconstruction*, p. 138.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

the organ-ism began to decline into old age, being reduced to a mere skeleton. Still it was the same person. Similar is the position of societies, nations, rather humanity at large.

It is already quite apparent that by history we mean the history of man in society. If human beings are not there the world is void. All sensibilities end. Every sort of perception or intuition is extinct. It means there would be no self-consciousness, no senses, no knowledge, neither qualities, nor quantities, neither attributes nor tributes. What a world where there is no colour! Where there is no grace. Where there is no perfume. Moreover, where there is neither pleasure nor grief nor victory nor defeat. Still further where there is no notion of good and evil. Without man the universe is deaf and dumb and blind. Meanings lose all meanings. Says Maulānā Rūmī, in one of the opening verses of his *Mathnavī*:

عالم از ما هست شد نے ما

ازو

باده از ما ست شد نے ما

ازو

[The world came to exist through us and not we through it, Wine became intoxicated through us and not we through it.)

In other words, we may say that man is the measure for all things (not the measure of all things). He is the critic, the analyst, the judge, the umpire, and the guardian examiner. It is he who lauds. It is he who denounces. All worlds from atoms to celestial spheres, all beginnings and ends, all tastes and colours, all relations and proportions, in short, the whole world of perception and ideas is in reality the world of man. Man is the meaning and all other created existences are absurdities if man is not there. Iqbal addresses God and lays bare the pride of man in humble words:

قصور وار، غریب الدیار
 ہوں، لیکن
 ترا خرابہ فرشتے نہ کر
 سکے آباد!⁵⁴

[I am guilty, I am alien,

Yet this desolate world of yours could not be inhabited and cultivated by your angels.]

At another occasion Iqbal repeats this same theme:

نمی بینی کہ ما خاکی
 نہ داداں
 چہ خویش ایس خاکداں
 را⁵⁵

(Do not you see that we clay-born things,

How pleasingly have decorated your Earth!]

It is all man's toil, his sweat and blood, which has made the world colourful, graceful and musical. Yet all done is just in a tiny speck of brilliance in relation to the universe. The worlds and heavens, trillions into trillions in number, are yet to be explored. Every breath taken consciously brings man face to face with awfully immeasurable challenges. To know and to conquer is man's perpetual enterprise. It is all man's manifold history. And

⁵⁴ *Bāl-i Jibrīl*, p. 8

⁵⁵ *Armughān-i Hijāz*, p. 18.

it is all in Time.

The Qur'ān says: "And teach them to remember the days of God,"⁵⁶ and "Such days (of varying fortunes) We give to men and men by turns."⁵⁷

Both the above-quoted verses relate to human beings. In brief, Time is the touchstone of human performances whether they were pure or dross. Thus to them who are blessed with vision, history shows how to live. To them history is a record of the manifestation of human capabilities. Simultaneously it is a "whip of warning". So that man's endeavours continue to make him better every moment. If Time is not taken as a vital reality, then Iqbal's whole philosophy loses its very basis. Self-consciousness, self-preservation, self-fulfilment, in other words full realisation of man as such cannot be apprehended in a universe which is not ever-growing. An inert world is a senseless concept. It must move on, it must progress and evolve. It's not even to slow down. And its rest is its end. Similarly, man in this world—a restless world—cannot rest. In rest lies his death. Iqbal says:

ہمہ سوزِ نا تمام، دردِ آرزویم
بگماں وہم یقینِ را کہ شہیدِ
جستجویم

58

[The whole of me is burning and it has not burnt out the whole of me
is a series of pangs of unfulfilled desires.

I turn certainty into uncertainty because I am madly devoted to search
and inquiry (and it should never come to an end)

It has been stated in the beginning, in relation to Maq'rīzī, Ahdal and Ibn Khaldūn that the stories of the past related by the Qur'ān are not just a stock for amusement. It is rather a school where the call *fa'tabirū*, i.e. "learn from

⁵⁶ xiv. 5.

⁵⁷ iii. 140.

⁵⁸ *Payām-i Mashriq*, p. 87.

the plight of former generations" keeps resounding perpetually. Like the great majority of Muslim historians, Iqbal too is of opinion that history is not simply a collection of amusing anecdotes, stories or tales. He very artfully and yet in plain words tells what history stands for:

چيست تاريخ اے ز خود
بيگانہ _____
داستانے، قصہ، افسانہ؟
ايس ترا از خویشتن آگہ
کنند _____
آشنائے کار و مردِ رہ کند
ہمچو خنجر برفسانت می
زند _____
باز بر رومے جہانت میزند

شمع او بخت اُمم را
کوکب است
روشن از وے امشب وہم
دیشب است
چشم پرکارے کہ بیند
رفتہ _____ را

پیشِ تو باز آفرینند رفته را

سرزند از ماضی تو حالِ

تو

خیزد از حالِ تو استقبالِ

تو

مشکن از خواهی حیاتِ

لازوال

رشتهٔ ماضی ز استقبال و

حال⁵⁹

(Do you know what is history? But you do not know even your own self. Do you think it is just a story, a tale or a romance?

Instead, it makes you know yourself. It makes you know your purpose and then sets you to the path (of achievement).

It sharpens you as a dagger on the whetting-stone and then strikes you against the face of the world. .

Its candle is like fortune-star of nations which illumines the present and the past night.

It is an eye well trained. It reads the past, recreates it, and puts it

⁵⁹ *Asrar-o-Rumūz*, pp. 147-148.

before you. . . .

Your past bursts forth into the present and from your present your future is born.

If you desire to live a life everlasting then do not cut asunder your past from your present and future.]

The Qurʿān has instructed human beings repeatedly to get acquainted with the affairs of former generations. They should explore the world and see how the ancestor nations and societies became exterminated although they were very strong in every respect. They had huge man-power and unlimited wealth. Nothing could save them from ruin. The Qurʿān emphasises off and on that lessons should be learnt from history which is an open book containing guidance as well as warning. Good things of the past should be upheld and imbibed, bad ones are to be avoided. This shows history lives in us as a vital force. Therefore, we must always keep in mind factors which gave strength to individuals and societies in the past and also the factors which brought about their doom. Hence the concept of history with Semetic races, i.e. the inheritors of revealed books, was different from those who had none. For example, the Greek mind had been dominated by the idea of frequency and recurrence of events, while the Semitic religious thought held that events were immediate, non-recurrent and unique, and this fact introduced dynamism to historical movement.⁶⁰

B.A. Dar proceeds further with this idea and, explaining Iqbal's view of history, lays down:

"History as thus considered is both creative and conservative and the historical process would be incomplete with either. The conservative element means a tie with the spiritual tradition and an acceptance of the sacred heritage of the past. But it also demands a dynamic-creative element, a creative purpose, an urge towards fulfilment."⁶¹

One thing is of great import. It is that far Iqbal, as for almost all the Muslim historians, history is not essentially the history of kings, courts and caliphs. Iqbal, as is the Qurʿānic way, always deals with communities, races,

⁶⁰ BA. Dar, *A Study in Iqbal's Philosophy* (Ghulam Ali & Sons, Lahore), p. 253.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 253-54.

groups and societies—kings no doubt included. Kings, kingliness and kingdom is just one department of the comprehensive life of society. That department is administrative-cum-political. Surely this department is of utmost importance. Yet the difference between the collective life of communities and kings is made adequately manifest in the following quatrain:

سکندر رفت و شمشیر و
علم رفت
خراج شهر و گنج کان ویم
رفت
امم را از شهاں پاینده تر
دان
نمی بینی که ایران ماند و
جم رفت؟⁶²

[Went away Alexander and with him his sword, his banner,
and all sorts of tributes that came from cities, his treasures (of pearls
and rubies) brought from mines and seas.

Know that communities are much more lasting than the kings;
Do you not see that Iranian nation is there while Jamshid is no more.]

Yet the influence of lords, chiefs, dignitaries and families that wield power and also individuals and groups possessing vast riches is great because they are imitated by others who are less fortunate. People bereft of character, education and self-confidence are sheer imitative animals. Hence the responsibility of the "Biggies" is commensurate with the extent of their influence. They influence the society they are related to, according to their

⁶² *Payām-i Mashriq*, p. 70.

importance [This is what the famous Arabic saying connotes: *الناس على دين ملوكهم* [People follow the ways of their kings].

This imitation right from the uppermost circles of a society comes down step by step to the lowest one. This is why the Holy Prophet enjoined upon every individual, man and woman, to feel his and her responsibility to their juniors in age and station:⁶³ *كلكم راع و كلكم مسئول عن رعيته* [Every one of you is a herdsman (guardian) and hence accountable for his charge].

And higher the station, the greater the accountability. According to the Qur'ān, evil-doing spreads in a society much more easily through the wealthy and affluent individuals than through any other mode. This is why whenever a certain society met its ruinous plight, it could be taken for granted that the well-to do members of it had surely fallen into bad ways. They were followed by others. Gradually the whole social body became a moral wreck. Then they heard the call. Their time was up.

"(And) when We decide to destroy a population, We (first) send a definite order to those among them who are given the good things of this life, and yet transgress; so that the word is proved true against them: then it is that We destroy them utterly."⁶⁴

Interpreting the above verse says Abdullah Yusuf Ali:

"Those who are highly gifted from God—it may be with wealth or position, or it may be with talents and opportunities—are expected to understand and obey. They are given a definite order and warning. If they still transgress there is no further room for argument. They cannot plead that they were ignorant. The command of the Lord is proved against them, and its application is called for beyond doubt. Then it is that their punishment is completed."⁶⁵

As already quoted, Iqbal believes that one of the most essential teachings of the Qur'ān is that nations are collectively judged and suffer for

⁶³ *Riyāḍ al-Ṣalīḥīn* (Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, Beirut), p. 281.

⁶⁴ Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Tr., *The Holy Qur'ān*, xvii. 16,

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 693, footnote 2192.

their misdeeds here and now. The Qur‘ān emphasises the fact that whenever the majority of the members of a society fall into evil ways, the nation is deemed fit for punishment. Then it is given no time. If good individuals form the majority and those who are bad are in minority, then a society is treated to be a healthy society and it can pull on. But the position is reversed when the society is to be taken for a diseased body which without timely and proper treatment may give way and expire. Individual evil-doers are also not let off. They along with the majority receive punishment here but the punishment in the next world is far severer and longer. Says Iqbal, as already quoted:

فطرت افراد سے اغماض بھی کر
 لیتے ہیں
 کبھی کرتی نہیں ملت کے
 گناہوں کو معارف⁶⁶

[Nature may at times ignore individual misdeeds,

but the collective misdeeds of a community are never ignored or forgiven.]

Individual laxity is like a negligible defect in a body otherwise healthy and stout. The body can put up with it, but when ills become strong and rule over the body, the body crumbles. Similarly, a small number of ill-meaning and evil-doing persons can be, though with reservation and reluctance, tolerated, but when evil gets hold of society due to overwhelming numbers, then there can be no remedy. The result is death. This death, i.e. collective punishment, takes place in the shape of epidemics, earthquakes, droughts, excessive rains, floods, famines, foreign invasions, civil wars and, worst of all, slavery. Slavery is collective death in life because the slave societies are like breathing dead bodies. The fact needs no amplification.

After all what do we mean by evil? In plain words, it is the surrender of

⁶⁶ *Masterpieces of World Philosophy* (New York, Harper & Brothers, 1961), p. 759.

a man's soul to his animal self. It is a constant tussle between the soul and the body of a human being, one trying to subjugate the other. Sometimes the values pull up, sometimes the material considerations of pomp and pleasures transgress limits and drag down. Now a certain person enjoys the thrill of soaring high and then the same one is seen stooping down to carnal ferociousness. Now he thanks and then repents. But this process of thanks and repentance concerns only those whose spiritual death has not yet occurred. It is obvious that the complete subjugation of material self by the spiritual self is almost impossible while the contrary is not impossible. We know, people become so much reconciled to their animal level of existence that they seem no more capable of understanding what humanity denotes. According to Bergson, to become a human being an individual has to outgrow his animality. In his words: "Evolution is the effort of life to free itself of the domination of matter."⁶⁷ Similarly, Iqbal says in respect of a disciplined and principled life achievable through the observance of *Din*:

چيست ديس بر خاستن از
 رومے خـ _____ اک
 تاز خود آگاه گردد جان
 پـ _____ اک⁶⁸

[What is Din, it is to outgrow the earthliness (earth-rootedness) so that soul achieves self-consciousness.]

Soul's journey upward is slow and difficult. But the downward movement is always much easier as if automatic, because it is pro-earth. Relation of the body with earth is immediate. Hence matter is attracted by matter. This means the downward pull is always far stronger than the upward. But soul, as long as the complete surrender to matter does not take place, tries somehow to defend the body's individual existence and tries to protect it from mass matter (the earth) which is always after it to make it an

⁶⁷ *Darb-i Kalim*, p. 86.

⁶⁸ *Jāvid Nāmāh*, p. 62.

easy morsel. Strife is life. Surrender is tantamount to death. Says Shelley:

"First our pleasures die and then
Our hopes and then our fears and when
These are gone, the debt is due,
Dust claims dust and we die too."

It means wherever a society's demise occurs it occurs on account of the surrender of soul to matter. Societies rise trying to be human. Societies fall when reconciled to animality. Dominance of soul can be illustrated as Prophet Sulaimān who, with all his wealth and possessions, soared high in the air while the dominance of matter can be characterised as Qārūn (Korah) whose treasures dragged him down into deep dark abyss leaving no trace behind. In respect of wealth to "possess" it is spiritual. To be possessed by it is material. One state makes the master, the other slave.

For Iqbal, the whole history of mankind is a sort of perpetual strife between soul and matter. Islam for him symbolises all that is good for man and that good is the soul-dominion. To reconstruct Muslim societies, in Iqbal's view, is to enliven the soul, is to strengthen belief in God, the Fountainhead of all soul atoms. That would mean to put the flow of history in Islamic spheres again on the right track. This view was a gift of God to him through the discerning study of the Qur'ān. The Qur'an being the mirror of the past, the present and the future is the best Warner as well as the most reliable source of hope.

The concluding paragraph is the translation of Iqbal's speech delivered at Muslim University Aligarh in 1929.⁶⁹ It is helpful in respect of understanding as to how Iqbal's view of history was shaped and to what extent it was impressed by the Qur'ān. And here it is:

"Another subject, which I want to emphasise, concerns the discovery of our past. I am not one of those who love their past only, rather I have faith in the future. I need the past in order to understand the present. It is the need of the day that we should have an understanding of the mainspring of culture and civilisation so that we may comprehend the

⁶⁹ *Guftār-i-Iqbal*, pp. 104-105.

significance of the events taking place in the world of Islam today. It is for the same reason that I exhort you to know your past. As we are unaware of the principles of modern civilisation and culture, we are lagging behind the other nations in the acquisition of modern knowledge. I want you to consider and observe those lost links which relate our past to our future. One such link is the inductive method which has been applied to modern sciences. It is a blessing bestowed on the world (of man) by the Holy Qur'ān. The results and fruits of the inductive method are quite apparent today. I have been diligently studying the Holy Qur'an for the last twenty years. I recite its verses every day, but I cannot claim that I have understood even a few of its chapters. If God grants me time and courage, I shall, one day, write a comprehensive history to point out how the modern world has reached its present stage by developing the ideals of life set forth in the Holy Book. I hope that the university will produce a group of people who will dedicate their lives to the study of the Holy Qur'ān. I wish that you should collaborate with me. For the last several years I have been the owner of my body only but my soul has always remained in your service and, as long as I live, it shall continue to serve you" (applause).

METAPHYSICAL IMPLICATIONS OF IQBAL'S EPISTEMIC VIEWS

Dr Mohammed Maruf

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*,⁷⁰ a lecture delivered by Dr H.H. Bilgrami at the Oxford University and later included in his *Glimpses of Iqbal's Mind and Thought*,⁷¹ 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*,⁷² 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

⁷⁰ Lahore : Sh. Muhammad Ashrat, 1976.

⁷¹ Lahore : Sb. Muhammad Ashraf, 1977.

⁷² 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*,⁷³ 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"⁷⁴ to man, and the whole line of epistemologists ensuing from his tradition followed him doggedly. Iqbal brings home other applications of thought⁷⁵ 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"⁷⁶ and (ii) "the character of man's knowledge is conceptual. ..." ⁷⁷ 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*,⁷⁸ is the internal or subjective working of the various faculties of the mind itself. Kant proceeded to distinguish between, what he called, "sensible intuition"⁷⁹ 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

⁷³ London : Oxford University Press, 1931.

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

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

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁷⁸ N.K. Smith, Tr., op. cit., p. 42.

⁷⁹ *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.⁸⁰ 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,⁸¹ and (ii) the word “fact” is applicable to natural phenomena only, to phenomena which C.B. Martin describes as “public and neutral”.⁸² 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.⁸³ It may be added that this illumination did not come with the Freudians, for such processes had already been recognised by Spinoza,⁸⁴ nay, centuries ago by that great Muslim thinker Ibn Taimīyyah (661-728/ 1263-1328);⁸⁵ but it was the psychoanalysts who brought it to prominence in the present century. Ever since the modern epistemologists⁸⁶ 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

⁸⁰ Iqbal, op. cit., p. 52

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 182.

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

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

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

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

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

experiences⁸⁷ 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 countries⁸⁸ that there are “potential types of consciousness lying close to our normal consciousness”⁸⁹ and that “these types of consciousness open up possibilities of life-giving and knowledge-yielding experience. . . .”⁹⁰ 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.⁹¹ 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,⁹² 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*,⁹³ 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”.⁹⁴ Intellect is important because it affords a knowledge of the observable aspects of reality, which, says Iqbal, lives in its own appearances.⁹⁵ 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

⁸⁷ Cf. Malcolm, *Dreaming and Other Material*.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 185.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid. p. 127.

⁹² Iqbal, op. cit., p. 3.

⁹³ P. 148.

⁹⁴ Iqbal, op. cit., p. 22.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 14.

direction alone could not illumine the whole of reality in all its manifestations”.⁹⁶ 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.”⁹⁷

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”.⁹⁸ 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?”⁹⁹ 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.”¹⁰⁰ 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.”¹⁰¹ The

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

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

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

⁹⁹ Iqbal, *Jāvid Nāmāh*, p. 22.

¹⁰⁰ Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, pp. 187-88.

¹⁰¹ 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*,¹⁰² 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.”¹⁰³

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*.¹⁰⁴ 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.¹⁰⁵ He further stresses: “Solitude begets desire and search, congregation affords vision; solitude brings proximity to God, company bestows power and sovereignty.”¹⁰⁶ 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

p. 49.

¹⁰² New York: Rinehart, 1955.

¹⁰³ Mahmud Ahmad, Tr., op. cit., p. 41.

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

¹⁰⁵ Mahmud Ahmad, Tr., op.cit., p. 41.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

forces in view of the light received from the world within".¹⁰⁷ 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."¹⁰⁸ 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"¹⁰⁹ for the individual, and in *Darb-i Kalim*, where he denies that the ego can develop in monasteries.¹¹⁰ 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.¹¹¹ 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. . . ." ¹¹² 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.¹¹³

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

¹⁰⁷ Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p.9.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 102.

¹⁰⁹ *Javid Nāmah*, p.5.

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

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

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

¹¹³ *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.”¹¹⁴ He adds that the West has wrecked the East with its Imperialism and has bedimmed its flame of faith with its Socialism.”¹¹⁵ 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.¹¹⁶ 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.¹¹⁷ 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.”¹¹⁸

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”¹¹⁹ 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,

¹¹⁴ Mahmud Ahmad, Tr., op. cit., p. 50.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ *Bāng-i Darā*, p. 107.

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

¹¹⁸ *Reconstruction*, p, 183.

¹¹⁹ *Jāvid Nāmāh*, p. 55.

while it is dividing the people of *tauhid* into races and countries.¹²⁰ 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.¹²¹ 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.”¹²² 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,¹²³ 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.¹²⁴ He also says that it is by nature that we yearn for originality and desire to create a new world out of the old one¹²⁵ (meliorism). To him, vehemence and creativity are the very marks of true life.¹²⁶

¹²⁰ Ibid,

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 178,

¹²² J. Oxenford, Tr., *Conversations of Goethe with Eckermann*, I, 391.

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

¹²⁴ *Payām-i-Mashriq*, p 62.

¹²⁵ Ibid., pp. 154-55.

¹²⁶ *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; ...”¹²⁷ 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.”¹²⁸ The fusion of the two, he adds, bestows power, vision and sovereignty--in short, *faqr*¹²⁹ as inculcated by the Qur’an. In the *Gulshan-i-Rāḡ-i-Jadīd*,¹³⁰ 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”.¹³¹ In its true sense, it is “neither mere feeling, nor mere action; it is an expression of the whole man”.¹³² 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

¹²⁷ Mahmud Ahmad, Tr., op. cit., p. 66.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 54.

¹²⁹ *Kulliyāt-i-Iqbal*, p. 149.

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

¹³¹ *Reconstruction*, p. 198.

¹³² Ibid., p. 2.

the human situation. Iqbal understands religion at different levels:¹³³ 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. . . .”¹³⁴ 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.”¹³⁵ 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.”¹³⁶ Only a true religion can provide for these three basic needs of

¹³³ *ibid.*, p. 181.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

¹³⁶ *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
ONE OF THE IQBAL ACADEMY'S PUBLICATIONS
BROUGHT OUT ON THE OCCASION OF
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SOME UNREALISED DREAMS OF IQBAL

Riaz Hussain

To reinforce Muslim solidarity in the aftermath of London Round Table Conferences, the All-India Muslim Conference held its annual session in Lahore on 21 March 1932 and elected Iqbal as President. In his presidential address, Iqbal made some solid suggestions of permanent value which surprisingly have escaped the notice of the academician and the administrator so far. In this address, Iqbal envisaged "the formation of youth leagues and well-equipped volunteer corps throughout the country under the control and guidance of a central organisation". The Youth Leagues should actively concern themselves with "social service, customs reform, commercial organisation" of the Muslims. Iqbal suggested the founding of "male and female cultural institutes in all big towns. ... These institutes . . . should have nothing to do with politics" and should make the younger generation aware of "what Islam has already achieved and what it has still to achieve in the religious and cultural history of mankind". The cultural institutes were further advised to maintain close academic relationship with religious madrassas and modern Muslim educational centres "to secure the ultimate convergence of all the lines of our educational endeavour on a single purpose"¹³⁷

In December 1937, the Punjab Muslim Students Federation organised an "Iqbal Day" function. Iqbal and the then Premier of the Punjab, Sikandar Hayat Khan, were political opponents. In a message to the function, Sikandar Hayat Khan offered a deliberate insult to Iqbal's self-respect. "I propose," said Sikandar Hayat Khan, "that in the cities where Iqbal Day is celebrated, the citizens should collect money and present it to the Great Poet. The Iqbal Committee should immediately open an Iqbal Day Account in the Imperial Bank of India, and his followers and admirers should directly make contributions to this Fund."¹³⁸ Iqbal smarted under Sikandar's suggestion, but kept his composure and came out with a counter suggestion, which, if implemented, would have revived interest in the political and economic teachings of Islam. "I feel," said Iqbal, "that the needs of the people as a whole are far more pressing than the needs of a private individual even

¹³⁷ Latif Ahmad Sherwani, *Speeches, Writings and Statements of Iqbal* (Lahore: Iqbal Academy, 1977), pp. 41-42.

¹³⁸ *The Civil & Military Gazette*, Lahore, 5 December 1937.

though his work may have been a source of inspiration to most people. The individual and his needs pass away: the people and their needs remain. If the people want to honour me, they should establish a chair for Islamic research on modern lines in the Islamia College, Lahore." Iqbal hoped that his proposal "will meet the Premier's approval and his influence will make this proposal a success. I offer a humble contribution of Rs. 100 to the fund."¹³⁹ But the Punjab Premier who had all the power and re-sources to implement this scheme turned a deaf ear to it.

Iqbal was partial to *Hakīms* and the indigenous system of medicine. Though he appreciated and believed in the efficacy of Western medical system, he nevertheless had some reservations about Western drugs. Iqbal was no medical man and, from that point of view, his observations may be taken as a layman's opinion. Yet all *Hakīms* and many doctors would not disagree with the observations he made on the floor of the Punjab Legislative Assembly. Speaking on the resolution regarding Yūnānī and Ayurvedic systems of medicine (22 February 1928), Iqbal expressed the opinion that Western medical science had yet to learn much from the Yūnānī system. Many works of Muslim *Hakīms*, especially those of Najībuddīn Samarqandī, lay unpublished in European libraries. "If they were published," suggested Iqbal, they could yet give surprise "to those who boast of the superiority of Western system of medicine."¹⁴⁰

His second suggestion was that the Government should establish an Institute of Pharmacy to teach the *Hakīms* the improved methods of preparing medicines. At the same time, he thought that the *Hakīms* should not imitate the Western pharmacopoeia because their own simple preparations are more natural. Taken all together, Iqbal's recommendations are worthy to be implemented even today.

¹³⁹ Latif Ahmad Sherwani, op. cit., p. 249.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 54.

References

Iqbal On

AN ASSEMBLY OF ULEMA*

" ... I suggest the formation of an assembly of ulema which must include Muslim lawyers who have received education in modern jurisprudence. The idea is to protect, expand and, if necessary, to reinterpret the law of Islam in the light of modern conditions, while keeping close to the spirit embodied in its fundamental principles. This body must receive constitutional re-cognition so that no bill affecting the personal law of Muslims may be put on the legislative anvil before it has passed through the crucible of this assembly. Apart from the purely practical value of this proposal for the Muslims of India, we must remember that the modern world, both Muslim and non-Muslim, has yet to discover the infinite value of the legal literature of Islam and its significance for a capitalistic world whose ethical standards have long abdicated from the control of man's economic conduct. The formation of the kind of assembly I propose will, I am sure, bring a deeper understanding of the usual principles of Islam at least in this country."

* Presidential Address delivered at the Annual Session of the All-India Muslim Conference, Lahore, on 21 March 1932 (Latif Ahmad Sherwani, *Speeches, Writings and Statements of Iqbal* [Lahore : Iqbal Academy, 1977], p. 93).

GOD-MAN RELATIONSHIP IN SHAH ABDUL LATĪF'S POETRY

M. Rafiq Chauhan

Since the death of Shah 'Abdul Latīf of Bhīt in 1752, the province of Sind, quite appropriately called the Gateway of Islam to the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, has seen many political, ethnological, cultural and other changes of diverse and profound nature. Due to rapid progress in the means of communication and immense increase in industrial and commercial activities in the area, Sind is no longer now an isolated area cut off from other adjoining regions by its deserts or the mighty Indus. The modalities and practicalities of the modern age are bringing in changes in the ways of living and thinking of its people. Even the language itself, spoken as well as written, is not exactly the same as was used in the days of Shah 'Abdul Latīf. But, in spite of all these changes, the influence of Shah Latīf on the people of Sind remains unaffected. His verses are recited, chanted and enjoyed by learned and unlearned alike. Originally known and recognised within the limits of Sind itself, now the poetic and mystic genius of the Shah has won recognition, not only at the national, but also at the international level. The depth of meaning and significance of his *Risalo*, i.e. message, is more and more asserting itself as more and more research is being conducted on his works. Like the verses of any other great mystic poet, the Shah's verses will always remain a living force and the treasure of meaning and guidance present therein would never be exhausted.

Love of God has invariably been an important element of ail mysticism. For Shāh 'Abdul Latīf also the true relationship between God and man is that of the Beloved and the Lover. God is perfect while everything else is imperfect. The true object of love and devotion, therefore, is the Perfect One, i.e. God. This love has been described by Latīf in different ways on different occasions. For example, he says:

"Mankind covets wealth. But all the day long
Covet I my, beloved."¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ H.T. Sorley, Shah Abdul Latīf of Bit : His Poetry, Life and Times (London : Oxford

The yearning for a knowledge of the Divine should always be kept alive by the enquirer after Truth. For Laṭīf the union with or approximation to the Divine is the ultimate goal towards which man should direct his efforts. All glory is to God and only He is worthy of all worship. He is the Merciful, the Compassionate and the Sustainer. He is the Causer of causes. It is, therefore, in-appropriate for a man to bow before others and thus make them his masters. Laṭīf says:

"In the beginning Allah is,
Who knoweth all, Who sits Aloft,
The Lord of all the World that be,
He is the Mighty, Old of Days,
Of His Own Power established.
He is the Lord, One, only One,
Sustainer and Compassionate.
Sing ye the praise of Him Who Heals,
Acknowledge ye the Praised One, Who
The Causer of the causes is.
Why go ye then and bow yourselves
In front of others, why go ye?"¹⁴²

At another place Shah Laṭīf says:

"But of the Lord alone true worship is.
There's none of pir or prophet. They do sin
Who worship pirs, and worse than these are they
Who worship idols, those poor luckless folk
From path misled who grasped untruthfulness."¹⁴³

University Press, 1940), p. 330.

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 312.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 354.

The constant feature of Shah ‘Abdul Laṭīf ‘s verses is the elucidation of the glory and beauty of the Divine Being as well as emphasising that the worthiest aim of man is "to free the soul from the tyrannical yoke of passions, to deliver it from his wrong inclinations and evil instincts in order that in the purified heart thus attained there should constantly remain Love for God and longing for the adoration of His Holy Name".¹⁴⁴ An enquirer after Truth should constantly strive towards God, keep his heart clean and pure, submit to the Will and Law of God, always be aware of his defects and shortcomings. He should neither indulge in pride and self-boasting, nor deflect from the path of righteousness for the sake of worldly gains and pleasures which are quite worth-less as compared with Divine grace and assent.

This, however, does not mean that Laṭīf had preached or believed in any sort of asceticism or other-worldliness. Reportedly belonging to the Qādirite order of mysticism,¹⁴⁵ he set out to travelling far and wide at the age of twenty-one. This brought him in contact with the people of different interests and occupations belonging to different schools of thought. He also visited many shrines and places of pilgrimage. He met *Jogīs* and *Sanyāsīs*, thus enabling himself to evaluate their asceticism. He came to the conclusion that, for the purpose of achieving the goal of spiritual illumination, it is not necessary for one to go on wandering in barren wastes of deserts or forests. One may physically stay on anywhere and yet succeed in getting Divine Enlightenment. Laṭīf says:

"A thousand doors and windows too,
the palace has ... but see,
Wherever I might go or be
Master confronts me there."¹⁴⁶

"The real travelling" is, therefore, "within, the wastes of one's own soul!" Thus while addressing Sasuī, Laṭīf says:

¹⁴⁴ A.K. Brohi, Introduction, to Elsa Kazi's *Risalo of Shah Abdul Laṭīf* (Hyderabad, 1965), p. 10.

¹⁴⁵ Akhtar Anṣārī Akbarābādī, *Shah ‘Abdul Laṭīf-Ḥayāt aur Shā‘iri* (urdu) (Hyderabad, 1967), p. 28.

¹⁴⁶ Elsa Kazi, op.cit. p.32

"However far thou journey'st forth
Lo! is thy friend still at thy door!
Return and ask thy self again:
Thy friend is on thy very floor.
'Tis bootless wandering far a field
And crying out thy lord to find.
Avoid the doors of stranger-folk;
But search instead within thy mind."¹⁴⁷

The real spiritual progress does not lie in renouncing the world *per se*. Islam asks its followers to discharge all their social obligations to their fellow-beings to the best of their capabilities as enjoined upon them by the Law of the *Shari'ah*. The real spiritual excellence is that a man should carry out his economic, political and social responsibilities and yet never lose sight of the Will of God. In the language of Aristotle we may say that the goal of a Muslim is not the total eradication or killing down of his lower self. It rather consists in subjugating or subordinating it to his higher self. This subordination of the lower impulses, urges and inclinations to the higher, rational and spiritual principles, however, requires an ever active endeavour and strife. Man is surrounded by all kinds of temptations, inducements and incentives. To live amongst them and yet to save oneself from falling a prey to them is quite a difficult task. The arduousness of the situation has often been described by many a Sufi poet. Shah 'Abdul Laṭīf describes this difficulty in the following beautiful verses:

"The loved one bound me—
Threw me into waters deep;
And said: 'Now dry do keep,
And getting wet avoid.'
One that is into water thrown

¹⁴⁷ Sorley, op. cit., pp. 370.71.

From getting wet how could be free?

Enlightened one, this mystery

How I might solve it, say."¹⁴⁸

The solution to this problem for Shah ‘Abdul Laṭīf lies in living a clean and pure life, obeying the Law of God, contemplating upon the nature of the Divine and to keep on the struggle resolutely. Thus he says:

"Rely on contemplation, but

Of law neither neglectful be...

Your heart get used to Reality

Which is your destiny to see;

Be resolute, and verily

You'll be immune from getting wet."¹⁴⁹

A large part of Shāh ‘Abdul Laṭīf’s poetry is composed around folk stories which the people of Sind had already known for centuries. Laṭīf’s interest in these stories, however, is not mere narrative in nature. This is borne out by the fact that he never gives full details of these stories. None of his poems is a *mathnawī*, i.e. a full-length story. His primary aim is to communicate the higher spiritual truths through main incidents and characters of these stories. In the words of Elsa Kazi, "Incidents, episodes, legends, subjects of observation are not related as stories; only their significance is expressed in poems that deal with higher evolution of man. These episodes and legends employed by Laṭīf are but the pegs on which he hangs his divine themes."¹⁵⁰ In these stories Laṭīf reveals the fittingness or otherwise of certain attitudes and modes of behaviour which a genuine seeker of God's pleasure and assent should always be aware of. Thus in the "Sur Kamode" he emphasises that the enquirer after the truth must never indulge in self-pride or boastfulness. The central character of this story is a fish-selling woman Nūrī. She has no high caste to boast upon. Jam Tamachi, a ruler of the area, is impressed by her beauty, simplicity, and innocence. He,

¹⁴⁸ Elsa Kazi, op. cit., p. 61.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 241.

therefore, marries her. Nūrī never forgets her past and does not indulge in any kind of haughtiness. She proves herself to be an obedient and serving wife. This endears her even more to her husband *vis-a-vis* his other wives who are proud of their family connections. The symbolism employed in this parable is very significant. The inference that Laṭīf successfully brings home to his readers is that God dislikes self-boasting on the part of human beings. He appreciates humility and respectfulness. Superficial extrinsic formalities are of no importance to Him. Intrinsic goodness of the soul and its reflection in deeds is what always wins His Favour. For God, the distinction of high or, low birth of a man is insignificant. He does not value or devalue any caste, profession or status. He rewards worship, prayers, constant piety and remembrance.

"The gifts of the Almighty do not depend on caste.

The worker is the finder. The King, All-Powerful, Great,
Bears coaxing of the ignorant. With Him the night who
passed

Will find that trouble's burden hath no weight. "¹⁵¹

Man should always pray and request to God for His Forgiveness and Mercy. By his very nature man is beset with one or the other defect. He should, therefore, never be deceitful either to himself or to the Divine Self. He should frankly admit his shortcomings and defects. This is, however, not to be taken in the sense of abandoning all hope. On the contrary, man should constantly long and pray for God's favour, for He is the Most Compassionate and the Most Merciful. He forgives if a man admits his sinfulness and sincerely requests for forgiveness.

"Thou hast gained by thy haggling the flimsy alone,

Go, tell then to God Thou art lacking.

Drive out thy deceit. For the Lord Ioveth truth."

Or, again

"The swing of the surge sets foul and the boat

¹⁵¹ Sorley, op. cit., p. 329.

Cannot suffer its flooding and swelling.

I loaded her up to her hatches with sins

In multitude far beyond telling.

God ! show Thy favour and take me across

This ocean in terror compelling."¹⁵²

If the Perfect, Merciful and Compassionate God favours a man with His grace and bounty, he too can become relatively perfect in spite of his shortcomings and defects. Proximity to God is another name for perfection. The more a man approximates to God, the more perfect he becomes and, conversely, the more a man moves away from God, the more imperfect he becomes. Philosophers like Plato and Aristotle have dwelt upon this subject in their own terminology. Thus in Plato the terms used are the degrees of rationality and intelligibility. Man is rational and good in so far as the goodness and rational nature of the Divinity are present in him and is irrational and bad in so far as God's rational nature and goodness are not present in him. Aristotle speaks in terms of the principles of form and matter. God for him is pure form absolutely free from any admixture of matter. Consequently, the nearer a being is to God, the more real, actual and purer in form it is. Shāh 'Abdul Laṭīf, however, describes the effects of one's proximity to God in terms of the purity and cleanliness of the soul. In the "Sur Suhini" he says:

"Away from Sahir Suhini is a thing unclean.

But by the side of him who drives the horned kine to

purity she riseth."¹⁵³

In fact, the sufi poets by and large speak from the platform of religion and not that of philosophy. Religion and philosophy cannot use the same language. Philosophy is essentially esoteric and elitist because only the lettered few can be appealed by it. Religion, on the other hand, being a popular way of life, has to make a universal appeal. In the words of W.F.R. Hardie: "Religion is essentially popular universalist, that is to say, it must be

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 322.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

within the reach of everyone, lettered or unlettered. It is not relative to the variable degree of intelligence and knowledge; it remains exactly the same for the scholar and the unlettered man, for the clever and the lowly, for the ages of high civilization and for races that are still barbarous."¹⁵⁴ The sufi poets, therefore, generally employ symbols and metaphors to make the meaning of their verses clear and penetrating. See how beautifully and impressively Shāh Laṭīf has expressed his yearning for perfection through approximation to the Divine when he says:

"I am a blockhead: but thou art of magic stone the holder,
While I am of iron's core.

If thou but touch this iron 'me,' gold I should be by reason.

Thou Giver art of gifts ; the rest but wandering beggars are."¹⁵⁵

But things of value cannot be achieved merely by asking. Simply desiring a thing of value is not enough. One has to deserve it in order to achieve it. *Riḍā'-i Ilāhī*, i.e. Divine Approval and Grace, is the *summum bonum* for man's endeavours. Intensive moral training and a strict self-discipline is the first and the fore-most prerequisite for obtaining Divine approval. The impulses and urges of the lower self have to be subordinated to the reason of the higher self. Allurements and temptations have to be over-powered. For depicting the nature of the baser self of man Shāh 'Abdul Laṭīf often draws an analogy from a camel who has gone out of his master's control and who not only brings grief and sorrow to his master but also brings harm to itself.

"When he on wealth of buds might feast,

He, sneaking, on the salt-bush feeds,

He prefers salt-bush to sandalwood and fragrant grass.

And wilt thou, thus, O Camel, pass

The sandalwood, nor drink thy fill?

Thou seekest not the fragrant grass

But spurnest it as something ill.

¹⁵⁴ W.F.R. Hardie, *Aristotle's Ethical Theory* (Oxford, 1968), p. 340.

¹⁵⁵ Sorley, op. cit., p. 329.

It must be thy distorted mood
That made thee find the salt-bush good
Undoing all my works for me.
The stupid brute I tell and tell
That in the milk-bush there is no zest;
Yon poison bush is many's knell
But hath his silly head obsessed."¹⁵⁶

In much the same way when a man loses control over his lower self, he is driven away towards the things of lower value. Worldly pleasures and fortunes attract him away from the path of righteousness. He becomes unable to restrain and check himself from falling a prey to corruption. He is trapped into greed and temptation for money and all that money can bring. The result is that the soul slips down from its higher place and rolls and roams hither and thither. This has aptly been described by Laṭīf in a character "Līlan" who is tempted to do an act of trick with her husband for the sake of a *Naulakḥkha Hār*, i.e. a magnificent diamond necklace worth nine lakhs of rupees. Her trick, however, recoils on her own self. Her husband, upon finding out the truth, is so much displeased with her that he turns her out of his sight and favour. Līlan, to her disappointment, finds that her greed has done her an incalculable loss.

"I was the senior of them all;
And girl friends in their throng would come
And visit me within my house,
But when I touched the ornament I lost the favour that I had.
I was cast out by my beloved,
And branded with the failure's brand.
I used to lie on swinging cots,
And did not realize my luck.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 327.

To sheer destruction was I brought
By necklace's catastrophe.
Sorrows met me face to face
My husband took himself away."¹⁵⁷

To save oneself, therefore, from losing the hard-earned success one has to be constantly on the alert. The allurements and seductions of evil are to be recognised and resisted. One should always try to lead an uncorrupted life of restraint and rectitude. The will to tread upon the path of righteousness should never be made to weaken. Whatever the dangers, difficulties, hardships of this spiritual journey, the lover of Truth, Beauty and Goodness has to bear them wholeheartedly. Despair and timidity have to be avoided. In the poetry of Shāh ‘Abdul Laṭīf, a reader finds an immensely rich collection of allegories and symbols to express these hardships. Sometimes he speaks of the sands of the desert, scorching heat, sandy storms as well as dangers and hard-ships of the passes. The genuine lover is not daunted by any of these hardships and continues his journey. At other places he tells how the hard and rough stones of mountains are to be treaded upon before the traveller can reach the doors of the beloved. Only he can stop to look after his wounded feet who lacks in his love. Whatever the losses may be and however meagre the left-out energies or resources may be, a true lover has to continue his journey for reaching his cherished goal. In many verses, especially those that are included in "Sur Suhini," the dangers and hard-ships to be met in the endeavour to reach the ideal are symbolised with reference to waterways. The rage and fury of the flood, dreadful and terrifying crocodiles, onrush of the water-lashes, dangerous whirlpools, etc., fail to weaken the will of a true lover. Those of course may be daunted by all these things who value safety or comforts of life, but a true lover of Divinity does not care about them. He takes the risk and plunges into the surging waves: "Sahir indeed is theirs who risked and entered in."¹⁵⁸ In the struggle for approximation to the Divine there is no room for slackness, indifference or lack of vigilance. "The forces of evil are always on the Idol: out for any chance to undo what a pious man has achieved with so much labour and

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 410-11.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 392.

toilsome effort. This loophole may take the form of vanity or ignorance and sometimes it may be inattention or simply the desire to ease down some hardship met with in the way of Truth. One moment of weakness may be enough to turn one's success into failure. Talking in the language of love, the mystic poets of almost every language have stated this problem in moving and appealing ways.

Shah 'Abdul Laṭīf has also highlighted the need of constant vigilance on various occasions. Dwelling upon the folk story of "Sasui Punnuh" he says:

"Rise, sleeping one, awake,
So much thou should'st not sleep
Thou may'st not savour the Sultan's favour
If sleep thy senses steep.
Sleep will not serve thee well
'Where is Beloved?' say,
Thy time will go: wrung hands will know
The sad repentant's way."¹⁵⁹

Similarly, in the "Surf Rag" he warns the boatman that, in view of the perils lying ahead in his sailing, he should be ever watchful and vigilant.

"Sleep not, O helmsman! shun your cot
When danger lurks ahead;
The Shore is foaming like the curd
That foams in churning pot.
O helmsman, sleep befits you not
In such an awful state."¹⁶⁰

Thus man should always be watchful and alert lest he is made to deviate from the life of rectitude by the urges and impulses of his *Nafs-i Amārah* or the lower self. If due to any reason, how-ever, one slips down from the path

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., p, 364

¹⁶⁰ Elsa Kazi, op. cit., p. 103.

of righteousness, one need not feel total despair or hopelessness. Instead, one should constantly long and pray for God's forgiveness. God will definitely forgive him provided he is sincere in his repentance and is not a habitual deviator.

God-Man relationship in Shāh ‘Abdul Laṭīf’s verses has been dwelt upon from multi-angular directions. This article has been an attempt to highlight only some of the features of this relationship. In fact, one can safely conclude that the many aspects of God-Man relationship as expounded by Shāh Laṭīf can never be exhausted by any description. The *Risalo* of Shāh ‘Abdul Laṭīf is a fathomless ocean of meaning, guidance and enjoyment.

IMPORTANT

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—Editor, Iqbal Review

IDEOLOGICAL ORIENTATION OF IQBAL'S DEMAND FOR PAKISTAN¹⁶¹

Syed Abdul Rahman

We are still too close to the times of Iqbal to be able to make an impartial and objective assessment of his thought as well as of his mission. Admittedly, Iqbal, so to say in Toynbee's terminology, was "creative individual,"¹⁶² whose inspiration enabled the Muslim community of India to discover its ideal and destiny at a crucial moment of its history.

It is well known that the Indo-Muslim society, which was already in the process of decay, was subjected to a great catastrophe in 1857. As a reprisal to their participation in the War of Liberation the Muslims were made to suffer greatly. In the words of Hunter, "they [Muslims] were a race ruined under British rule."¹⁶³ The hostility of their new masters was also exhibited in the favour and patronage they (the British) extended to the Hindus. This state of affairs proved a great handicap for Muslims in the ensuing competition with Hindus, for their economic and political salvation under alien rule.

Moreover, there was another factor of far greater importance which placed Muslims in an exceedingly disadvantageous position. As Aziz Ahmed says: "Centuries of Muslim rule had helped Hinduism to shed its shell of insularity, and infused it with an apparatus of eclectic receptivity by which it could adapt itself to comfortable co-existence with the influx of Western ideas which education in English brought necessarily in its wake. Muslim India had passed through no, similar process of immunization. For it the change meant secession from its own cultural heritage to adopt to an alien one."¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹ Nowhere Iqbal has ever used the word "Pakistan" in his writings. But, since the idea of proposed Islamic State finally assumed the name "Pakistan" we have used this for convenience sake.

¹⁶² For Arnold J. Toynbee's concept of creative individual, see *A Study of History* (abridgement of Vols. I-IV by D.C. Somervell ; London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 212 et. seq.

¹⁶³ W.W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans* (reprinted from the 1871 Edition : Lahore : The Premier Book House, 1968), p. 128.

¹⁶⁴ Aziz Ahmed, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment* (Karachi: Oxford University

Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) was among the first to diagnose the Muslims' plight and to offer a solution. Not only did he prescribe a separate course for the Muslims, but also thought of demanding from the Government a special status for Muslims commensurate with their historical importance as former rulers of the subcontinent and architects of a great civilisation.¹⁶⁵ So successful were Sayyid Ahmad Khan's efforts and of his successors that before long Muslims were assured of their "political rights and interests as a community". Sayyid Ahmad Khan's movement is generally held to have been inspired by the British policy which was based upon the principle of "divide and rule". Although this question lies outside the scope of the present study, it may be remarked that "the real problem confronting British officials, as they saw it, was not how to divide and rule India, but rather was how to rule a divided country."¹⁶⁶ A careful analysis of the facts will reveal that, far from being an attempt to divide the electorate and the national movement itself, the constitutional safeguard of separate electorates was in recognition of the religious and cultural differences which already existed between Hindus and Muslims. At first, "special electorates" and weightage were distasteful to the Hindus, but, later, either because of the legitimacy of their demands or out of sheer expediency they reconciled to them, as evidenced by Lucknow Pact of 1916.¹⁶⁷ The Hindu-Muslim unity forged by Lucknow Pact reached its high watermark during the Khilafat and the non-cooperation movements in early 1920's. The unity which was actuated by pure negotiations, however, proved to be artificial, and very soon the inherent tension assumed enormous proportions, thus accentuating the Hindu-Muslim situation. Differences came to a head when the Nehru

Press, 1970), p. 263.

¹⁶⁵ It was the Simla Deputation which demanded special status for Muslims through separate electorates and weightage in its Address presented to Lord Minto, the Viceroy, on 1 October 1906, but M.S. Jain has proved that earlier the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental Defence Association founded by Sayyid Ahmad Khan and his colleagues in 1893 prepared a memorandum to demand for Muslims a special status through separate electorates and weightage. This could not be submitted to the Government because of some unhappy development at Aligarh and the demise of Sayyid Ahmad Khan in 1898 (M.S. Jain, *The Aligarh Movement* [Karachi: Crimsons, 1979], p. 127).

¹⁶⁶ Stanley Walport, *Morley and India, 1906-1910* (University of California Press, 1967), p. 191.

¹⁶⁷ "The Congress-League Scheme of Reform, 1916," *vide* C.H. Philips, *The Evolution of India and Pakistan, 1858-1947* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 24.

Committee tried to solve the Muslim political problem just by ignoring it. It did away with separate electorates "as thoroughly bad"¹⁶⁸ and weightage as "harmful to the development of Muslims themselves on national lines."¹⁶⁹ As a matter of fact, the Nehru Committee looked at the Muslim problem from a different angle. It refused to consider Muslims as a political minority; instead, it treated it as a religious and cultural community which needed only certain religious and cultural safeguards.¹⁷⁰ This led to a strong urge for unity and cooperation among Muslims and forced them, not only to revive their old demands for separate electorates and weightage, but also to demand the highest degree of provincial autonomy in the forthcoming reforms envisaging an all-India federation. The Nehru Report and the League's reaction expressed in Jinnah's Fourteen Points led to a *cul-de-sac*.¹⁷¹

It was at this critical juncture that Iqbal (1877-1938) emerged as a great leader, whose insight proposed a new solution to the constitutional tangle. In his Presidential Address to the Annual Session of the League at Allahabad in 1930 he declared that "The principle of European democracy cannot be applied to India without recognising the facts of communal groups."¹⁷² He, therefore, proposed the creation of a separate Muslim state in India. "I would like to see," he said, "the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single State. Self-government within the British Empire or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims at least of North-West India."¹⁷³ A group of Muslim students at Cambridge, most prominent being Rahmat Ali (Choudhary), later, suggested the name Pakistan¹⁷⁴ for the proposed state which captured the imagination and fired the zeal of the masses of Muslim India.

¹⁶⁸ *The Nehru Report*, (New Delhi : Michiko & Panjathan, 1928), p. 30.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid* , p. 52.

¹⁷⁰ I.H. Qureshi, *The Struggle for Pakistan* (Karachi, 1965), p. 54 .

¹⁷¹ Aziz Ahmed. op.. cit., p. 271.

¹⁷² "Presidential Address delivered at the Annual Session of the. All-India Muslim League at Allahabad on 29 December 1930," *vide* S.A. 'Vahid, Ed., *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1964), p. 170.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 170-71.

¹⁷⁴ Rahmat Ali (Choudhary), *Now or Never: Are We to Live or Perish for Ever?* (Cambridge, 1933), *vide* K.K. Aziz, *Complete Works of Rahmat Ali* (Islamabad: National Commission on Historical & Cultural Research, 1978), p. 52.

Now, it is to be pointed out that, although the idea of a Muslim state in India was proclaimed from the platform of the All-India Muslim League, it did not attract the attention even of the League leaders, so much so that when it was brought to the notice of the members of the Round Table Conference in 1931 it was dismissed as "chimerical," "impracticable" and "a student scheme" and as one which has not been "considered by any representative gentlemen and association so far".¹⁷⁵ This lack of interest of Muslim leaders is understandable, for at the time it was presented the idea could not be carried out constitutionally. Moreover, it has been held that Iqbal's scheme of amalgamation of North-West area into a single state was tantamount to the formation of a Muslim *block*¹⁷⁶ within the Indian Empire rather than to the demand of an independent Muslim state. As held by Tara Chand, Iqbal was not thinking in terms of "the partition of India," but in terms of a federation of autonomous states within India.¹⁷⁷ But I.H. Qureshi contends this view. According to him, had Iqbal proposed formation of a big Muslim province he would not have talked of that unit being within the British Empire or without. He has talked of other matters in the address, not because he was asking for mere autonomy, but because he was speaking from the platform of a body which had not yet accepted the policy of complete separation from India. The resolution of the Muslim All-Parties Conference he considered to be a demand for free Islam within a free India. This is autonomy; therefore, he prefaced his remark about a Muslim state by saying that personally he would like to go even further which could mean only independence. In the third Round Table Conference Iqbal reiterated the opinion expressed by the Aga Khan that there should be no central government in the subcontinent and that there should be autonomous and independent dominions.¹⁷⁸

Dr Qureshi's analysis carries much weight. However, it would not be going too far to say that the idea of independent Muslim state in the subcontinent did not emerge from Iqbal's mind as a fully developed concept

¹⁷⁵ Joint Select Committee, on Indian Constitutional Reform (Session 1932-33), Volume IIC.H.L. 79 (Ile), 1934, p. 1496 b.

¹⁷⁶ K.K. Aziz, *The Making of Pakistan, A Study in Nationalism* (Karachi, 1976), p. 54.

¹⁷⁷ Tara Chand, *History of Freedom Movement in India* (New Delhi: Government of India Publications, 1972), III, 253.

¹⁷⁸ I.H. Qureshi, *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent* (The Hague, 1964), p. 297.

all at once. It matured in his mind in the late' thirties when at length he envisioned an independent Muslim state to be carved out of India, comprising the North-West and the North-East zones.¹⁷⁹ Only when Iqbal had crystallised his vision into the idea of an independent state the Quaid-i Azam became convinced of its viability which he himself admitted. Said he:

"His views were substantially in consonance with my own and had finally led me to the same conclusions as a result of careful examination and study of constitutional problems facing India, and found expression in due course in the united will of Muslim India as adumbrated in the Lahore Resolution of the All-India Muslim League, popularly known '*Pakistan Resolutian*' passed on 23rd March 1940."¹⁸⁰

In any case, it is certain that Iqbal was not the first to put forth the idea of a Muslim state to be carved out in India. In fact, the idea can be traced back to the advent of Islam in India. K.M. Paniker says:

"The main social result of the introduction of Islam as a religion into India was division of society on a vertical basis. Before the tenth century Hindu society was divided horizontally and neither Buddhism nor Jainism affected the division. Islam, on the other hand, split Indian society into two sections from top to bottom and what has now come to be known in the phraseology of today as two separate nations came into being from the beginning. At all stages they were different and hardly any social communications or intermingling existed between them."¹⁸¹

Notwithstanding that during the Mughal period, especially after 1555, the hostility of Hindus to Muslims' presence in India had toned down, and there had been extensive cultural and religious communication between Hindus and Muslims. However, this communication, on the part of the Hindus, was in the nature of insular co existence with Islam, so, "despite the conscious efforts of a few individuals or movements as eclecticism. The soul of Hinduism remained as distrustful of Islam as ever, and the principle of repulsion remained operative in the case of both, considerably more than

¹⁷⁹ *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1963), p. 22.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, see Foreword.

¹⁸¹ Cited in S.S. Pirzada, "*The Lahore Resolution (1940)*," in M. Husain, Ed., *A History of the Freedom Movement* (Karachi, 1970), Vol. IV, Parts I & II, p. 75.

that of attraction".¹⁸²

It is customary to claim that the unification of the subcontinent was the greatest contribution of the British rule in India. But even as early as 1858 British statesmen doubted that an extensive country like India, with its different nations and languages, could be consolidated into one compact and enduring empire, while others foresaw the division of India and withdrawal of the British from India.¹⁸³ Apart from some faint hints about the division of India, some thinkers even put forward the scheme of carving out an Islamic state in the subcontinent. In 1870's, Jamaluddin Afghani conceived "an European idea of a Central-Asian and North-West Indian State," which would necessarily involve separation of the North-Western region from the rest of the country. Sayyid Ahmad Khan was the first to declare that India was a continent rather than a country. "In his whole attitude," says Percival Spear, "was implicit the concept of Pakistan."¹⁸⁴ Not longer afterwards in 1911 Mohamed Ali said: "The problems of India are almost international."¹⁸⁵ After Iqbal's famous Address at Allahabad on 29 December 1930, Mohamed Ali in his last letter to the Prime Minister of England on 1 January 1931 decided:

"The real problem before us is to give full power to Musalmans in such provinces as those in which they are in majority, whether small or large, and protection to them in such provinces as those in which they are in a minority, and in order to be absolutely fair to the Hindu community also, precisely the same thing must be done with the Hindus. . . . Unless in these few provinces Muslim Majorities are established by the new constitution, I must submit, not as threat, but as a very friendly warning, there will be civil war in India."¹⁸⁶

Earlier in March and April 1920, one Muhammad Abdul Qadir Bilgrami published in the *Dhul-Qarnain* of Badaun "An Open Letter to Mahatma

¹⁸² Ahmed, op. cit., p. 100.

¹⁸³ *Selected Speeches of Rt. Hon. John Bright on Public Question* (J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., London) p. 14, quoted in S.S. Pirzāda, *Evolution of Pakistan* (Lahore 1963), p. 38.

¹⁸⁴ Percival Spear, *India, Pakistan and the West* (London : Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 191.

¹⁸⁵ *The Comrade*, I/1.

¹⁸⁶ Afzal Iqbal, Ed., *Writings, and Speeches*, II, 572.

Gandhi,¹⁸⁷ advocating the division of the subcontinent between Hindus and Muslims giving even a list of districts, fundamentally not very different from the present boundaries of East and West Pakistan.¹⁸⁸

Despite these not insignificant anticipations, Iqbal's own contribution to the idea of Pakistan is incomensurable with them. All earlier ideas were either prompted by the immediate fear of the domination of Hindu majority, or by the desire for appropriate sharing of power while still remaining a minority, or inspired by romantic ideal of pan-Islamism. But, Iqbal's idea of a Muslim state was born out of his keen insight into Islam as a religion and a polity, not only its past and its present, but also its destined role in world history. As this point needs elucidation it would be appropriate to dwell upon it at some length here.

Iqbal was essentially a philosopher whose:

“theme was the all-embracing sufficiency of Islam as expressing a dynamic spirit of struggle for spiritual freedom. Islam was not merely a valid religion to be compared favourably with others, it was the root and branch of all religious experience. It was not a fixed and a precious deposit to be treasured with the zeal of the antiquarian, but a living principle of action which could give purpose and remake worlds.”¹⁸⁹

Iqbal elaborates his theme by elucidating the nature of the human self and the way to its perfection, individually and collectively. According to him, "Self is a veritable reality. It exists and exists in its own right."¹⁹⁰ Unlike those philosophies which presume the world of phenomena as unreal and non-existent and look upon the human self as a mere fragment of the External Mind,¹⁹¹ constantly striving for reabsorption into it,¹⁹² Iqbal emphasises the reality of the human ego and its unfolding into a complete and perfect personality.¹⁹³ Ego or personality, he argues, is primarily a state of tension

¹⁸⁷ R.A. Jafri, Ed., *Aurāq-i Gumgashtah* (Lahore, 1968), pp.. 388-89

¹⁸⁸ I.H. Qureshi, *The Muslim Community*, p. 295.

¹⁸⁹ *Oxford History of India* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 805.

¹⁹⁰ I.H. Elver, *The Metaphysics of Iqbal* (Lahore : Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1963), p. 37.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² K.G. Saiyidain, *Iqbal's Educational Philosophy* (Lahore: Sh. Muham-

mad Ashraf, 1954), p. 8.

¹⁹³ As cited in Nicholson's Introduction to *The Secrets of Self*, p. xxi.

and as such it continues to develop only if that state is maintained. This constant strife is possible only if it keeps itself involved with other egos. This prerequisite for the perfection of the human ego calls for necessary membership of society. As a matter of fact, Iqbal greatly stresses man's need for social life, which alone affords opportunities for the individual to discover its inherent riches and its potentialities to grow fully and ideally. This brings us to the nature of an ideal society envisaged by Iqbal. Certainly to him the ideal society is Islamic society as he understood it, It must be pointed out that, like his entire thought, his political philosophy was based on the two essential tenets of Islam, Unity of God (*tauḥīd*) and Prophethood (*risālat*) of Muhammad (peace be upon him). These two principles make Islamic civilisation dynamic reconciling the categories of the temporal and the spiritual as well as those of permanence and change. Of the basic features of Islamic civilisation is the unity of mankind based on the idea of a common human origin. Owing to its emphasis on the unity of human origin, a corollary of *tauḥīd*, Islamic culture largely excludes racialism and geographical nationalism.

Elaborating the ideal society Iqbal makes it clear that:

"In Islam the spiritual and the temporal are not two distinct domains, and the nature of an act, however secular in its import, is determined by the attitude of mind with which the agent does it. It is the invisible mental background of the act which ultimately determines its character. An act is temporal or profane if it is done in a spirit of detachment from the infinite complexity of life behind it; it is spiritual if it is inspired by that complexity. In Islam it is the same reality which appears as Church looked at from one point of view and State from another. It is not true to say that Church and State are two sides or facets of the same thing. Islam is a single unanalysable reality which is one or the other as your point of view varies."¹⁹⁴

We have referred to the Islamic concept of human unity implicit in the essential principle of *tauḥīd*. Islam denounces national-ism based on race, colour, language and territory. The Islamic conception of society can be compared with the conception of a nation as defined by Ernest Renan.

¹⁹⁴ Sir Mohammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious, Thought in Islam* (Lahore : Sh. Muhammed Ashraf, 1958), p. 154.

According to Renan, "Man is enslaved neither by his race, nor by his religion, nor by the course of rivers, nor by the direction of mountain ranges." To him "A great aggregation of men, sane of mind and warm of heart, creates a moral consciousness which is called a nation."¹⁹⁵

While Iqbal emphasises unity of the Muslim *millat* and oneness of the religious centre (Ka'bah), he does not seem op-posed to political and cultural divisions within the framework of Islam. What he is opposed to is treating race, colour, language or territory as the basis of human solidarity. He pointed out that, although truth has a universal character, it engenders varieties of scientific and national cultures which comprise the totality of human knowledge. Much in the same way, Islamic culture creates varieties of national, moral and social ideals. In view of this the idea of the universal state (*khilāfah*) is not wholly a Divine institution and consequently not indispensable. In fact, it is merely a matter of expediency. Thus, instead of emphasising universalism, Iqbal advocates the international character of Islam. Applying his views to the present condition he endorsed the views of Ziya Pasha that, although a real universal caliphate of all Muslim nations would be an ideal thing, until this is achieved, each Muslim state should first try to put its own house in order. In the existing situation of the world, Islam can best survive neither by narrow nationalism, nor in the form of a universal state, but in a multi-national free association, something like a league of nations of Islam, "which recognizes artificial boundaries and racial distinctions for facility of reference only, and not for restricting the social horizon of its members."¹⁹⁶

Iqbal's mission of life was to rehabilitate Islam in the modern world and to reinterpret it as a religion and as a polity which was best suited to replace the heterogeneous systems under which humanity was reduced to the level of animal existence but this ideal of his remained a future dream. His immediate concern was the fate of the Muslims in the slowly growing pattern of self-government in India. As against the negative motif of the fear of Hindu domination and the romantic ideal of the universal *khilāfah*, he suggested the formation of an Islamic state in the subcontinent on the Muslims' claim to

¹⁹⁵ Quoted by Iqbal in his Presidential Address delivered at the Annual Session of the All-India Muslim League at Allahabad on 29 December 1930, *vide* SA, Vahid, Ed., op. cit. p. 167,

¹⁹⁶ *Reconstruction*, p. 159.

the right of self-determination on a more positive basis. He, in fact, asserted man's right to live as he likes, which is possible only on the basis of the autonomy and in-dependence of his community. According to him, love of one's own community is a natural desire which does not necessarily involve hatred for other communities. "There are," he said, "communalisms and communalisms. A community which is inspired by feelings of ill-will towards other communities is low and ignoble. I entertain the highest respect for the customs, laws, religious and social institutions of other communities. Nay, it is my duty according to the teaching of the Quran, even to defend their places of worship, if need be. Yet I love the communal group which is the source of my life and behaviour and which has formed me what I am by giving me its religion, its literature, its thought, its culture and thereby recreating the whole past as a living operative factor in my present consciousness."¹⁹⁷

Autonomy is thus indispensable for every community. It is even more so for the Muslims of the subcontinent. For, in Islam religion is not a private affair. It would not like to see, as a moral and political ideal, meeting the same fate as Christianity has met in Europe. It is not possible to retain Islam as an ethical ideal and reject it as a polity in favour of national polities in which religious attitude is not permitted to play any part. This question became of special importance in India where the Muslims happen to be in minority. "The religious ideal of Islam, therefore, is organically related to the social order which it has created. The rejection of the one will eventually involve the rejection of the other."¹⁹⁸

He not only asserted that autonomy to the Muslim community was vital, but also pointed out that India lacked the prerequisites for Muslim-Hindu unity and living together harmoniously. He reiterated what Sayyid Ahmad Khan had said earlier that India was not a country but a continent which contained two major units: a Hindu solidarity and a Muslim solidarity.¹⁹⁹ These two nations had little in common between them and their sources of inspiration were altogether different. While Islam had its links with the Muslim Middle East, Hinduism had its cultural affinities with the Buddhist

¹⁹⁷ S.A. Vahid, Ed., op. cit., p. 169.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 167.

¹⁹⁹ Aziz Ahmed, op. cit., p. 273.

world in the Far East in South-East Asia.²⁰⁰ This fact has made the two cultures so distinct rendering each to develop its own Ego. It would be in the greater interest of both Hindus and Muslims to allow their separate egos to develop mutually exclusively.

Iqbal, thus, gave the intellectual justification on more positive lines for Pakistan while others argued its case on a political plane. In fact, he envisioned on one hand a political solution of Hindu-Muslim problem and on the other hand conceived an Islamic state where Muslims would be able to realise Islam in such a manner as would meet the requirements of the modern age. It must be pointed out that the Islamic state which Iqbal dreamt was not to be either a theocracy²⁰¹ or a national democracy in the modern sense. Iqbal had observed the fruits of nationalism in Europe which led to constant international strife and exploitation of the weak by the strong. Despite his repulsion to Western nationalism, he does not hold that democracy is repugnant to Islam. While he is opposed to national democracy as a creed, he is of view that the true spirit of Islam in the modern age can best be expressed through democracy alone. The finality of the institution of Prophethood, which stands. *Inter alia*, for the abolition of priesthood as well as of kingship, leads to the idea that human affairs must be dealt with by the people themselves²⁰² through the principles of *ijtihad* and *ijma'*. The failure of Muslims to establish a democratic tradition was due largely to entrusting *ijtihad* and *ijma'* to certain individuals, who were exploited by Muslim caliphs and kings. In order to provide Islam with opportunities to express itself best in the modern age it is now imperative that the power of *ijtihad* and *ijma'* must be entrusted to Muslim legislative assembly. Iqbal, however, was critical of the manner Turkey had dealt with *ijtihad*. For, not realising the limitations Islam imposed on *ijtihad* and *ijma'* the Turks gave themselves up to secularism. Iqbal was quite hopeful that, owing to the heritage of healthy conservatism of the people of the subcontinent, such state of affairs would

²⁰⁰ S.A. Vahid., Ed., op, cit.

²⁰¹ About theocracy Iqbal observes: "The state, from the Islamic stand-point, is an endeavour to transform these ideal principles [i.e. equality, solidarity and freedom] into soace-tiine f rces, an aspiration to realize them in a definite human organization. It is in this sense alone that the state is a theocracy, not in the sense that it is headed by a representative of God on earth who can always screen his despotic will behind his supposed infallibility" (*Reconstruction*, pp. 154-55).

²⁰² *Reconstruction*, p. 126,

not occur in Pakistan. Moreover, in order further to prevent any deviation from the Islamic path in the exercise of *ijtihad* and *ijmā'* he asserted that the *ulema* 'should form a vital part of Muslim legislative assembly'.²⁰³

In the economic field Iqbal held the belief that the economic principles of Islam, if properly understood and applied, would offer a far better solution as compared to the other systems believed and practised in the modern world. According to him, the principle of *zakāt* is an effective source of income for an Islamic state for fulfilling the primary obligations of *kifālat-ī-'āmmah*, i.e. to provide and guarantee the means of subsistence to one and all. However, it appears that he is convinced of the state's right to take surplus wealth from them who possess it in order to assure equitable distribution of wealth among the people. This fact is borne out by his following couplet:

پوشیدہ ہے جو حرفِ قل
 العفو میں اب تک
 اس دور میں شاید یہ حقیقت
 ہونے کو نمودار²⁰⁴

[Whatever remains concealed so far in the phrase:

May it unfold itself in the present age.]

This couplet has reference to a Qur'ānic verse:²⁰⁵ یَسْئَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ

العفو [They ask you what they ought to spend. Say: What is superfluous.]

In another place Iqbal has stated that adoption of the socialistic economic system with certain modifications making it consistent with Islamic

²⁰³ Ibid., p, 176.

²⁰⁴ *Darb-i-Kalim* (Lahore, 1972), p. 136, *vide Kulliyāt-i-Iqbal* (Urdu), (Lahore, 1975), p. 598.

²⁰⁵ The Holy Qur'an, ii, 219.

legal system would not be a deviation from Islam, but would be reverting to its original teachings.²⁰⁶

In calling for the establishment of an independent Islamic state in the subcontinent, Iqbal was inspired by a positive ideal. This ideal, in turn, was the result of the philosophical insight into the secrets of life and reality and an understanding of the mission of Islam as well as a realistic appraisal of the history of Islam in the subcontinent and elsewhere and, moreover, a prophetic imagination of future. His concept of Pakistan, in fact, reconciles national-ism with the Islamic unity of mankind. Prior to Iqbal, Muslim efforts at regeneration were confined to the idea that the Muslims of the subcontinent were a minority of special importance whose interests must be assured through safeguards and weightages. In-deed, it was the imagination of Iqbal that created a consciousness among Muslims that they were a nation by themselves and in their own rights. Yet another of Iqbal's achievements is that his concept of Pakistan provided a basis for the realisation of the Islamic ideal of unity which seized the Muslim imagination in the modern age since the time of Jamaluddin Afghani. And it was because of the fact that Iqbal had combined Afghani's idealism with Sayyid Ahmad Khan's realism that Muslims came to accept the Pakistan ideal as a new message for emancipation from all sort of exploitation. Admittedly it also led to the discovery of the potentials of the new culture of the future.

²⁰⁶ *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah*, p. 17.

PAKISTAN'S GEO-POLITICAL POSITION: A PERCEPTION

Ejaz Faruqi

Whereas the geographical position of a country remains fixed, the political possibilities and bearings arising out of this position continue to undergo changes due to various factors, some of which are:

- (i) Internal political changes.
- (ii) Political changes in the neighbouring countries.
- (iii) Realignments and regroupings amongst the neighbouring countries.
- (iv) Realignments and regroupings of the countries of the world vis-a-vis the Big/Super Powers.

In the political combinations and permutations of different nations, the only permanent factor is the geographical unity and integrity of a country. Although there are instances in which the factor of geographical unity of a country was also subjected to political changes, such as the Union of Egypt and Syria into a United Arab -Republic, but such political experiments have not lasted long and ultimately the national feelings and prejudices have re-emerged undoing: such mergers. Even ideological affinities have not been able to melt the geographical barriers between two countries. Communist countries are living examples in the contemporary period. In spite of the fact that both Russia and China are Communist countries, they are at loggerheads with each other.

Let us recapitulate Pakistan's geographical position:

- (i) It is situated in South-West Asia.
- (ii) It commands the entrance to the Persian Gulf.
- (iii) It is a littoral state of the Indian ocean.
- (iv)- There is Russia, a Super Power, and China with potentialities of a Super Power, in the north neighbourhood,
- (v) There is India, with ambitions of becoming a Regional Big Power, in the south-eastern neighbourhood.

(vi) There is a continuous block of Muslim countries extending from its western borders to the Atlantic coast of North Africa.

Unlike other countries, Pakistan has also to live with an almost permanent political factor internally. This country was carved out of British India on the basis of separate Muslim nation-hood. There is no possibility in the foreseeable future of Islam not occupying a predominant position in the national life of this country. This factor has predetermined to a certain extent the choices available to Pakistan in the realignments and regroupings of international forces in the world.

There are some other factors which have continued to influence the external relations of Pakistan. The first is the opposition, tooth and nail, of the Hindus to the partition of India. "Akhand Bharat" still remains the dream and political goal of the Hindus. This dream appears to be the part of the Hindu psyche. India, there-fore, cannot see Pakistan grow strong. There was great jubilation in India when the eastern wing (now Bangladesh) seceded from Pakistan as this reduced the strength and international leverage of Pakistan. Whereas India is arming itself with modern and sophisticated weapons, it starts making hue and cry if it comes to know that Pakistan is likely to purchase some weapons to cater to its barest minimum defence needs.

The second factor is the Jewish opposition to Islam. This dates back to the life of Muhammad (peace be upon him) when Jews indulged in all sorts of intrigues to murder the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and to extinguish the light of Islam. With the state of Israel established in the midst of the Muslim lands by forcible eviction of more than a million Muslims, the Jewish community would not like the existence of a strong and powerful Muslim country, much less a united block of Muslim countries, in the neighbourhood of Israel. As Jewish community controls the economic forces as well as the information media in the West, the latter is always antagonistic to the resurgence of Islamic identity, as such, of a Muslim nation, much less the emergence of a united group of Muslim countries with a geographical continuity running from Pakistan in the east to Mauritius in the west. This group of Muslim countries, if united, can control the vital trade-routes of the world.

The third factor is the fear of proselytising Islam in the minds of the

Christian nations. This fear is a part of their psyche which has a distorted image of Islam as a militant religion. This is borne out by a flood of articles and comments which are appearing in the Western Press, expressing apprehensions about the resurgence of Islam in the Muslim countries.

The fourth factor is the geographical contiguity of Central Asian Muslim Republics of the U.S.S.R. with this group of Muslim countries. This makes Russia suspicious of the emergence of a Muslim block on its southern flank inducing resurgence of Islamic identity of its Central Asian Muslim Republics and the risk of their secession.

This is the broad outline of the geo-political position through which Pakistan has to struggle in pursuit of its objectives. The most fundamental and basic factor is the internal cohesion, integrity and stability. This can be achieved by launching a two-pronged attack. In the material sphere, there is an urgent need for economic redistribution and dispensation of justice without fear or favour. This will create amongst the peoples of all regions a sense of sharing the economic resources of the country and, consequently, a sense of belonging to it. In the non-material sphere, it is absolutely necessary to develop the character of the individual, to bring out the good in his nature and to root out the bad in him. This can be brought about through a process of education and spiritual emancipation. This development of character means both self realisation and self-negation, that is, realisation of the good and negation of the bad in one's personality. This involves a spirit of self-sacrifice which can be achieved only by accepting the principles of Islam and following the practices of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). Without this character-building, no amount of economic redistribution will alleviate the conditions of the poor and the deprived as those, who are perverse in nature, would subvert any economic redistribution through profiteering, hoarding, black-marketing, smuggling and concealment of wealth.

It is only if Pakistan has a reasonable level of internal stability that a rational foreign policy can be formulated keeping in view the realities of the external political situation. The internal instability in the country affords an opportunity to the external political forces to manipulate internal dissensions to their advantage. This forces the Government to take *ad-hoc* foreign policy decisions to meet such emergent situations. In such conditions, a long-term foreign policy cannot be formulated and the country is led compulsively by the powerful tide of events on to a course which may spell disaster in the

end.

Recently, strong waves of resurgence of Islam have appeared in various Muslim countries. The strongest and most powerful movement for Islamic Renaissance has been witnessed in Iran where a powerful and strongly-embedded monarchy has been toppled over. This resurgence of Islam coincides with the aspirations of Pakistan and advances the possibility of the emergence of a Muslim block. This has introduced a new factor in international politics.

Due to a strong Jewish lobby in America, the latter is committed to not only the protection but the predominant position of Israel in the Middle East. Emergence of a Muslim block is considered by the Jews as a threat to the existence of Israel. America would welcome the Islamic resurgence only to the extent that it pushes out Russian influence from the Middle East. But this sympathetic American attitude would not be unqualified as the Jewish lobby in America would not like the emergence of a Muslim block. As Western media are controlled by the Jews, they are trying to fan dissensions amongst Muslim countries by playing upon and highlighting the Shiah-Sunni differences. The purpose appears to be twofold. To let this wave of Islamic resurgence push out Russian influence from this area and, at the same time, to prevent the emergence of a united Muslim block which may pose a threat to the security of Israel.

Because of the rising tide of anti-Zionist and anti-American sentiments in the Middle East, Russia would also welcome this resurgence of Islam to a limited extent as it would serve to push out American influence from this area. But a united Muslim block also poses a threat to the U.S.S.R. as it induces the risk of secession of the Central Asian Muslim Republics. During the fourteen hundred years of its history, Islam has never been completely vanquished except in Spain. It has always remained present at least on emotional level in Muslim societies. Even in the Central Asian Muslim Republics of the U.S.S.R., Islam is being practised secretly in the form of a *Tariqah* or *Tasammut*. Communists appear to be conscious of this fact and have introduced a new concept, a hybrid of Islam and Communism, known as Islamic Socialism. This hybrid is meant to play upon the emotions of the Muslim masses and to serve the interests of Communism.

China's position is unique. It has no such constraints as are present in

the case of Russia and America. It has, therefore, comparatively a freer hand and more manoeuvrability in dealing with this new phenomenon. It would be simply interested in containing Russian influence in the Middle East and would welcome the emergence of a Muslim block if it serves that purpose.

The position of India is quite interesting. The vision of "Akhand Bharat" is a part of the Hindu psyche and in that perspective India would always wish the reunification of Pakistan into India. India has been a caste-ridden society during thousands of years of its history and would always be averse to Communism as such. With the Communist coup in Afghanistan, Communist expansion in South-East Asia, the Chinese menace from the north and growing Russian naval activity in the Indian Ocean, there is a growing realisation amongst the elite circles in India of the impending Communist threat to it from all sides. These elite circles have begun to consider Pakistan and Bangladesh as, buffer states between India and the Communist world. But, at the same time, India would not like the emergence of a Muslim block where-by the possibility of Pakistan reuniting with India disappears and the vision of "Akhand Bharat" is shattered for ever.

These are the constraints within which Pakistan has to formulate its long-term foreign policy. There are both positive and negative aspects. Wisdom lies in extracting maximum advantage from positive aspects, neutralising negative aspects by diplomacy and tact and avoiding or putting off irritants as far as possible.

There are clear signs that a third civilisation, that of Islam, is being born again to herald the dawn of Islam's fifteenth century. There are bound to be pangs and pains. The other two civilisations, Capitalist and Communist, will oppose or resist the new development. The Muslim countries are in a predicament. Both the Communist and Capitalist civilisations are advanced in science, technology, weaponry, warfare and management in all fields. The Muslim countries depend on them for acquiring skills in these fields. With mutual antagonism and opposition, the pangs and pains of the rebirth of Islamic civilisation will be much greater. On the one hand, it is in the interest of the Capitalist and Communist countries not to oppose the Islamic Renaissance. The tide of history cannot be stopped, but the antagonism will leave deep hatred and enmity between them and the Muslim world. After all, the Muslim countries comprise one-sixth of the population and one-fifth of the land mass of the world. On the other hand, it is in the interest of Muslim

countries to find a rapport with the Capitalist and Communist civilisations on the basis of common values in order to make the process of transfer of technology smooth and painless. All the three civilisations belong to different sections of mankind and there are bound to be some common human values underlying these civilisations. These common values can serve as bridges of mutual understanding. After all, it is in the interest of world peace and tranquillity that the three civilisations should find mutual accommodation. In this process, Pakistan occupies an important position and has to play a vital role. If it can meet the challenge of the modern age, reconstruct its society on Islam and move with tact and diplomacy in its external relations, it can serve as a bridge of understanding between the Islamic civilisation on the one hand and the Capitalist and Communist civilisations on the other hand. This will promote the cause of Islamic Renaissance.

GROUP, GROUP-MIND*

Q. M. Aslam

I

During my student years and, soon after, during my teaching years, Social Psychology was a very new discipline, interesting to psychologist and non-psychologist alike and full of general good promise. But it soon became evident that the main text used those days—McDougall's *Introduction to Social Psychology*—contained very little strictly social material in it. Where was a student to turn, therefore, unless it was to Ross's Social Psychology or to Floyd Allport's *Social Psychology*? These early texts were agreeably social in their content, but Ross leaned a little too much on crowd or crowd-like behaviour and Floyd Allport was outspokenly behaviouristic and schoolish. McDougall, however, made up by bringing out his *Group Mind* which was very very social in content, but the theoretical affiliation of which was not so clearly proved or even spelt out. Fashions in science required strict adherence to “objective” methods and “objective” methods meant experimental, quantitative, and statistical methods. McDougall's *Group Mind*, therefore, did not make a hit. It proved not half as successful as McDougall's *Introduction*. Over-fondness of empirical and analytical descriptions made McDougall's basic idea—the idea of a group-mind—very difficult and controversial. Our own Chatterji at Lahore tore to pieces this basic idea, saying it was devoid of logical and empirical validity. It was bad philosophy and bad science. It was bad philosophy because it made unimportant the only indubitable reality we know of, viz. the human individual and his mind. It was bad science because it failed to take account of the patent fact that what so often passed for decisions of groups—of legislatures, of cabinets, of commissions, committees or arbitration courts—were really the disguised decisions of powerful individuals.

F.C. (later Sir Frederic) Bartlett whom I heard expound his social psychology was not so hard on the group-mind. It was a question of appropriate vocabulary. We used to say: If the individual could be said to have a mind when his dispositions display a certain degree of unity and

* Courtesy Pakistan Psychological Society.

continuity, why not concede a mind to a group with an integrated set of dispositions and a continuity of historical existence? However, even Bartlett receded from the groupmind in his important book *Remembering*. Social factors could be demonstrated as factors in the content or style of remembering, but there was no way to demonstrate a group as a unit, a group *qua* group, capable of perceiving, imagining, remembering. Other attempts to instal the group-mind as a little bit of science proved infructuous (Rivers's, for instance). But things began to change with Kurt Lewin's projection of the small group—a group of two or three—as an object of experimental observation. A whol movement got going. Experiments with laboratory groups, with field groups, with action groups, not only installed social psychology as a scientific discipline in its own right, but also promoted faith in the future of experiment in psychological or human science in general. Muzafer Sherif, the Turkish-American psychologist, proved the hero of this movement. However, the tough-minded empiricists in social psychology continued their work and so flooded the research field with their surveys, their questionnaire studies, and so on, that the significance of Muzafer Sherif was more or less completely lost on the younger generation of social psychologists. Muzafer Sherif had demonstrated—and this is precisely what Bartlett wanted to see demonstrated—that small groups could be handled not only for objective shifts of behaviour, but also for subjective states, for shifts of perceiving, judging and thinking, to which one could add imagining and remembering. The idea of the group as a unit and of the group-mind as a social reality did not yet become current coin, and this despite the fact that clinical psychology had lent its support to the group and group-mind through its invention of group therapy sessions, and leaderless group discussions. I had a pretty good shock one evening when a doctoral student of mine at Karachi came to me on one of his weekly visits and said that he was going to give up everything, not knowing what to do instead. He and I had agreed after a lot of thinking to produce a study of the Arab character. Being an Arab and a graduate of al-Azhar and our own M.A. in Psychology, his fitness for undertaking the study could not be doubted. My own interest and faith in the subject could not be suspected. It's all wrong, he said, distressedly. What we were trying to do was all wrong. But why?—asked I. What had happened? There is no such thing as national character, he said, and produced out of his bag a Thinker's Library publication, captioned *The Illusion of National Character*. I could half see what had happened. His young mind had become

infected by the fashionable analytical criticism of wholes, of complexities, of collectivities as examples of existence and reality. I read the book with him here and there. The argument ran. Every time we try to come in live contact with a “national” group, say the American nation, the French nation, the British nation, and so on, we come upon individuals, upon Americans, Frenchmen, Britishers and so on, but not the American nation, not the French nation, nor the British nation. So what were we going to do? Change mid-stream and find another subject? Or, change our method and fabricate attitude scales and work with samples of Arabs to test on and on their answers build the edifice of Arab national character? No. I persuaded my young friend that we could go on with our plan. Social sciences could build on general observations of immediate interest and experience. We could go on doing this for a long time, before having to look at the *elements* of each experience. But I could see that we touched here on an issue writ large in the history of science. We look at undivided and undissected wholes of experience and then work towards the parts of those experiences. In the process, we generally destroy the characteristic nature of a whole and begin to think the parts with which we are left, not only important, but all-important. The danger involved in it did not become apparent in psychology until the Gestalt school appeared on the scene. The Gestalt school began to teach that the whole has a nature, a character, a reality, a function of its own. The parts are important. Without the parts, there would be no whole. But the parts have to be tailored into a whole before the whole becomes what we know it and value it for. Such a simple matter, psychologists and social scientists have refused to appreciate, suffering much unnecessary loss of progress in consequence.

II

How did this happen? I think it is generally understood to be because of the tremendous progress physical science made in the later years of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century. The model of scientific research, of scientific knowledge, began to be set by physics and chemistry. In course of time, chemistry also was left behind. The model was physics, and chemistry itself had to be modelled on physics. The newer disciplines, the biological and the social disciplines, had to follow suit. What hard work did the early experimentalists in psychology do for us? Weber and Fechner and Wundt and Titchener, and Ebbinghaus and others? And they

were not physicalists but mentalists and looked carefully for mental elements, the ultimate particles of *mind*, in the style of the physical scientist who looks for the ultimate particles of *matter*. But much of their work was wasted because the more interesting—and shall we also say the more important?—things about mind were to be found as undivided intact wholes. The mind itself was at its best when viewed as a whole. The human organism shows itself at its best when it is allowed to behave as an intact organism. Not only was the work of the first experimentalists in psychology wasted, it also encouraged indirectly a physicalist outlook in psychology. The behaviourists did not half care for the concern for mind which early experimentalists showed in their work. They seized the general frame in which psychological phenomena were being fitted at the time. A row of complex mental states—albeit a new state added to the row now and then—was being reduced to its elements. The behaviourists began to do the same. Only, their elements were muscles and tissues and reflex arcs. The edifice of human behaviour, they thought, had to be built out of these bricks.

Despite the inadequacy of their attitude, the general approach, they had laid the foundation of, survived, and survived not only as a method specific to psychology but as a method *par excellence* of all scientific work. However, the behaviourist frame never became the universal frame of psychology. Those who became converted to it began to teach and hope that the unity of science will one day be achieved with physics as the universal model. The elements of history, they began to teach, were to be found in economics, the elements of economics in sociology, the elements of sociology in psychology, the elements of psychology in nerve physiology, of nerve-physiology in chemistry, of chemistry in physics, of physics again in physics. The unity of science was the unity of ultimate particles. What the ultimate particles conglomerated, or better coordinated or collaborated into, stage after stage, they did not bother to know or understand. Not all could be persuaded, however, by this fantastic programme. Somewhere a big fallacy was involved and one man, a psychologist, Sloane, spotted this fallacy and dared even to name it and write about it.

It was the fallacy of reductionism or reducing a whole to parts, parts to their parts, and then assuming that the whole is the parts aggregated together. Sloane (*Psychol. Rev.*, 1945) listed up examples of reductionism drawn from many fields. Not only that, he identified six different forms of it giving the

subject a sound basis in fact and logical analysis.

“There are many different types of wholes in nature,” Sloane writes, “atoms, the solar system, amoebae cells, a human being, a clan, a nation, etc. Each whole has qualities that are over and above the parts or elements of which it is composed, and the whole must be treated as a unit and cannot be accounted for by a mere recital of the smaller units of which it is composed.”

III

Sloane then—however unknown—is to my mind the man to have spotted, named, and described with welcome elaboration the fallacy of reductionism. I do not know of another man who claims to have done this. In a recent series of Gifford Lectures, Professor Longuet-Higgins (*The Nature of Mind*, 1972) discusses what he calls the future of reductionism. He says nothing about who coined the name of this fallacy and what it means. The fact that he takes it for granted suggests the fallacy is well recognized and even physical scientists have to steer clear of it and guard themselves against it. Longuet-Higgins is a Royal Society Professor said to be much concerned these days with the possible physical basis of mind. He takes sides with psychologists who are not ready to reduce mind to anything else.

“Loyalty to one's colleagues apart, I suspect,” he says, “that neuro-physiology alone can never lead to a full understanding of the brain” (p. 22). Again, “If we want the neuro-physiologist to help us to understand how the brain works, we must tell him in non-physiological terms what we mean by the word ‘works’” (p. 22). And he has a word to say to the psychologists:

“Psychologists have tended to play down the significance of subjective evidence and to concentrate on those things that can be measured with clocks, electrodes and chemical tests. But the baby is in danger of being thrown away with the bath water” (p. 23).

I said that Sloane has given a rather full description of the reductionist fallacy. He has identified six different forms of it. All the six are interesting and relevant to my own present theme, the reality of the group and group-mind.

The first is the fallacy of isolation. This fallacy consists in isolating a part

and considering it out of the whole—the total field of forces—to which it belongs. In sociology and history scientific understanding is often vitiated by isolating the, individual and considering him as the only important factor involved. True, a leader often plays an unexceptionable part. Some leaders are almost the most important single causes of their movements. But, remember, nothing can be taken for granted. You have to see what really happens.

The second fallacy is that of mathematical summation. The whole is seldom just the sum of its parts. Nature or society is not a conglomeration of fixed units or individuals. The units or individuals themselves change, grow, mature.

The fourth fallacy is the fallacy of origins. It assumes that the organism even as it grows and learns is all a matter of what it: was to begin with:

An individual's nature or for that matter the character of a society is all given at birth.

In actual fact this is seldom true. It is true neither of individuals nor of societies. The fallacy is of great importance, as a considerable lot of thinking on the subject of cultural origins is fatally misdirected by this very fallacy.

The origin of social institutions, of language, of religion, of law and so on. What happens to be first or earliest is assumed to be the whole cause of what comes later.

The fifth is the fallacy of metaphor or analogy. Once a metaphor is admitted it is assumed that it can be applied wholesale. The metaphorical resemblance of society with the individual is valid, but only for certain purposes, on certain points. The fact that the two are strikingly similar on certain points does not mean that they are similar on all points or similar in identical ways. The similarity serves as a pointer. The precise situation to which it points has to be worked out with care. When verbal expression is careful and precise, the points of similarity are picked and named. If even then the similarity is extended and applied wholesale it is not the fault of expression. In the Qur'ān, we have an example in Sūrah Luqmān, verse 29: “Your creation and your resurrection are only similar to the creation and resurrection of an individual soul.”

Two points of similarity are specified, viz. creation and resurrection. It is

in these two respects that society and individual are similar. Which is saying a very great deal indeed. The perimeter of the metaphor is defined and laid down beautifully. It would be wrong to extend it beyond its limits.

The sixth fallacy is the fallacy of models. This is to interpret and explain a complex phenomenon or process by a model which is helpful to a point. The misuse of the model consists in treating the model too literally, too seriously. Eddington was able to spot this and to say that many scientists were the slaves of their own models. They worshipped the idols their own hands had fashioned. The glory of twentieth-century science lies in its relative freedom from models (Sloane, pp. 218-19).

IV

Now, if to the question, is the group a reality? my answer is yes, the question for me to consider is whether I am not being misled by a mere word. If I am, I can be accused of reification. But if I am not. I barely assert the existence of something of which there is as indubitable evidence as of anything else. The superficial existence of groups nobody would doubt. Whether a group has causal reality may be open to doubt. The only way to settle this is by seeing whether when we change the character of a group, the change results or it does not result in a change of output, whether the presence of others in a dark room does or does not make any difference to the perceptions, the judgment, the imagination, the thinking of individuals functioning in their absence. It is because small group research is able to demonstrate these things experimentally, that we can assert we have experimental proof of the reality of groups.

It is in the interest of scientific austerity—respect for scientific method and logical inference—that we need to try and invent experimental demonstrations of commonly observed phenomena. Natural experiments there may be in abundance. If anybody really doubts the existence of social, communal, racial, national groups, he has only to go to the United Nations. He has only to go where the U.N. Assembly is having its sessions or to the visitors' gallery, if there is such a thing, at the U.N. headquarters where the Security Council is in session. Again and again it is individuals who rise and speak. But who does not know it is not individuals but groups—powerful, real, groups, each with a history, a character, a personality—which speaks through its individuals? Can I answer now the question which disturbed the

young Arab student who had planned to write a dissertation on the Arab character? The answer is—you can see the causal influence of groups, why strain at the existence of groups? But we cannot see the group, it may yet be said. What we see is individuals?

This question disturbed the villagers who first saw a moving train pulled by an engine with no horse or ghost hidden in it. This provided the Oxford Gilbert Ryle with a joke against those who would insist on believing in a mind over and above tissues and muscles and nerves. How can there be a mind, a real, existent, mind, if you cannot see it? True, I cannot see it, but I can see its effects. I can see what it does and what it sometimes fails to do. That is evidence enough in science.

I am reminded here of something I heard our Anis Alam quote from Heisenberg, the physicist leader of the Gottingen School of Physicists. This is what Heisenberg had to say on the invisibility of scientific constructs. Talking of the development of Quantum Mechanics, he said:

“To begin with, I thought the important philosophy in this development was probably the idea of introducing only observable quantities. But when I had to give a talk about quantum mechanics in Berlin in 1926, Einstein listened to the talk and corrected this view. Einstein pointed out to me that it is really dangerous to say that one should only speak about observable quantities. Because every reasonable theory will, besides all things which one can immediately observe, also give the possibility of observing other things more indirectly. For instance, Mach himself had believed that the concept of the atom was only a point of convenience, a point of economy in thinking. He did not believe in the reality of atoms. Nowadays, everybody would say that this is nonsense, that it is quite clear that atom really exists”(*Proceedings of the Pakistan Philosophical Congress*, Session 1973).

When we turn to the human group, the political group, the racial group, the national group, the family group, and so on, we know that it is not the case that we cannot observe it even if we wish to. This is not the case at all. The group is as much visible or apprehensible as the individuals in the group. Only, we must learn to focus our eyes properly. For, focussing makes all the difference. When a psychologist fails to observe the group, he only makes an error in focussing. When a sociologist fails to observe the individuals in the

groups, he also makes an error of focussing. The same can be confirmed by a first few days of observation in a strange country, by a glance at insect societies, or at a colony of ants. We confront first a group, but very soon after the individuals in the group. Ask a herdsman. He knows the herd as well as the individual cows. It is like perceiving the depth effect in such a drawing as the Necker cube or the Schrodinger staircase. We can alter the depth effect—it is now this, now the reverse of it—according as we focus our eyes now one way, now the other.

However, one could still say it is a far cry from the *group* to the *group-mind*. But why? We have already agreed that outspoken visibility is not a requirement of reality or existence. Why strain at the group-mind? I can think of one real difficulty. When we concede a group, do we at the same time concede a group-mind? No. The group can be a mindless group or a group with a poor, primitive kind of mind, an infantile mind, a sick mind and so on. A group which aspires for an adult, healthy, sensitive grown-up mind, a mind capable of seeing, hearing, thinking, judging, resolving, acting, will have to achieve such a mind. Nature's part is to endow human beings with the potentiality for such achievement. Man's part is to achieve what is possible to achieve. Ever so many groups pass away without achieving the status of a group-personality, a group-mind, or a group-soul. A group-mind then cannot be taken for granted. It cannot be assumed wherever we find a group, even a vociferous group. What then are the requirements, the dimensions of a group-mind?

The requirements are listed up easily. If both the individual and the group are to be credited with the possession of a mind (true, the group not always), the requirements in each case have to be the same. The group-mind, like the individual-mind, should be capable of and should be occupied with perceiving, imaging, imagining, remembering, thinking backward and forward, also verbalising, choosing, calculating, planning, valuing, aspiring, achieving, amending, associating with other minds, fighting, for-giving, going for what is right and reasonable as such and so on. Other requirements could be added. Nature provides the potential capability. To turn the potential capability into achievement is the group's own business. The question does arise: where does the initiative take place. when the group-mind performs any of its functions? Naturally in some individual-mind or minds. But that does not mean the group *qua* group is nothing. No, it is there all the time. The

individual who initiates or the individuals who initiate are under the magic influence of the group. It reminds me of something very similar, only slightly, different, but relevant. Humean scholars, when they come to discuss Hume's *Dialogues*, raise the question: In which one of his several characters does Hume himself speak? There are answers and answers. I turned once to my friend Professor Sirajuddin for help on this question. I asked him: Does not a similar question exist in Shakespearean studies? In which one of his numerous characters does Shakespeare speak? Or, in which one does he speak more nearly than in any other? Professor Sirajuddin said his own answer was that Shakespeare expresses himself partially in *every one* of his characters, but wholly in *none*. I liked the answer and wish to apply it to the individual-group relationship. I should say that the group expresses itself partially in *every one* of its members, even in the meanest of them all, but wholly in none. I could add that the group, better the group-mind, keeps moving between individual-minds, its many mansions, now this, now that. It probably frequents one mansion or some mansions more than others. But that is about all we can say. The subject is difficult and one naturally fears to elaborate.

There is, however, the question as to the difference between the two, the group-mind and the individual-mind. My answer, and I have more than hinted at it already, is that the group-mind is much more, very much more, a matter of achievement, than the individual mind. Strictly speaking, we cannot take even the individual-mind- for granted. You have only to ask the clinical psychiatrist, especially the child psychiatrist, what sometimes happens. But nature is generous and beneficent. It is ready to correct its own mistakes. Individuals grow into mature minds, and generally healthy minds, capable and efficient minds, provided they are born in reasonably normal, healthy and happy families and homes. We have—largely speaking—only to wait and see the proof of nature's generous, just, and unerring provision, as far as the individual-mind is concerned. When we come to the group-mind, the potentialities—of capability, of achievement and so on—are infinitely larger than in the case of the individual-mind. But these potentialities, for their fructifying, require infinitely greater care and vigilance than does the individual-mind. The reward also is infinitely greater. The fruits of hard work done, of sacrifices voluntarily undertaken, by one or two or three generations, are inherited by generations which come later. I have listed up a

large number of requirements which have to be fulfilled before mind can be called mind. But these can be summarised in one or two sentences. An individual—in the course of his conscious and unconscious behaviour—must show a reasonable degree of unity and continuity, before it can be credited with the attribute of mind. The same is true of the group-mind. To unity and continuity, we may legitimately add responsibility. Of course in case of both.

We are interested in the nature of the national group, the national mind. What is the natural history of the national group? This is the question which intrigues practical men. The answer I seem to like is the answer given by a Russian philosopher who lived before the 1917 revolution, Jacque Novicov (d. 1912). He said that men first gather in a society, then become organised in a state, and from a state advance into a nation. So the natural sequence is society—state--nation. Nationhood is born out of statehood and statehood out of society. This means there are at least three levels of integration and effort involved in the emergence of a national group, a national character, a national personality, a national conscience. In the first stage we have a degree of togetherness. When this togetherness becomes organised by the provision of a bureau—a bureau of information and action—it becomes a state, and when this bureau has shed its beneficent influence and character, it results in the emergence of a nation. Each level of integration requires a pact, a plan, a resolution, and an effort. Each level of integration requires participation by all, literally all. It may be all individuals or—as is more often the case—all the smaller co-groups which compose the large group. The group-mind is not worth speaking, until all its parts—individuals and co-groups—have come to identify themselves with it, the meanest as well as the highest among them.

V

In conclusion let me point out that academic discussions seldom go very far without raising practical issues, or without pointing to practical possibilities. The affairs of the world are run more, much more, between groups, than between individuals. Social psychology, therefore, speaking practically, is much more important than individual psychology. But perhaps the division is an artificial division. It is, as I have said, like the division between the two perspectives of depth between which our perception alternates when we view geometrical figures which are capable of yielding depth effects. There are, therefore, two perspectives, and what I really wish to say is: Woe to those who think one perspective less real than the other.

Another thing—and this is the last thing—I wish to say is that the human species seems tailored by nature to fit on to higher and still higher levels of integration. Let us, therefore, try and look *up* to the levels of integration we have still to achieve without looking *down* upon the levels of integration we have already achieved.

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SATAN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL*

M. Hadi Hussain, Tr.

Satan

This old sport of the elements, this base-born earth,
Which spelled death for the yearnings of the Heavenly host,
Is being sent to its destruction by the One
Who willed it into being and gave it a name.
For my part, I made the West dream of monarchy
And broke the spell of mosque and church and idol-house.
I taught the poor to reconcile themselves to fate,
And gave the rich the mania for capitalism.
Who can put out the all-consuming fire of it,
Whose conflagrations are fanned by Satanic zeal?
Who can fell to the ground that old, deep-rooted tree,
Which flourishes because it is watered by us?

The First Adviser

What doubt is there that the Satanic order, which
Confirms slaves in their slavishness, is truly strong?
To prostrate themselves are these wretches destined from
The first: it is not theirs to stand erect and pray.
Desires are not, in the first instance, born in them:
And if they do, they die before they are mature.
It is a miracle of our unremitting labours that

* "Iblīs Kī Majlis-i Shūrā," *Armaghān-i Hijaz* (Kulliyāt-i Iqbāl—Urdu [Lahore : Sh. Ghalam & Sons, 1977], pp. 647-57. 95

The *Ṣūfi* and the *mullā* are bondmen of kings.
Fit opium for the Eastern mind is slavery:
Apologetics and qawālī are no less.
What does it matter if the ḥajj fuss is still there?
The Muslim's unsheathed sword has gone completely blunt.
Of whose despair is this new ruling evidence
That no more may the Muslim now wage holy war?

The Second Adviser

Good or bad is this cry about the people's rule?
You do not seem to know of the world's latest threats.

The First Adviser

I know of them, but my sagacity tells me
We need not fear this plain disguise of rulership.
It was we who lent monarchy its democratic garb
When we found that man had become a little self-aware.
This rulership job is not what you think it is:
It does not need to be performed by kings and chiefs.
Be it a national assembly or a royal court,
The ruler is the one who covets other people's fruits.
Have you not seen the democratic system of the West?
—Fair-countenanced, but more black-souled than Jenghiz Khan.

The Third Adviser

Why worry if the kingly spirit is alive?
But what cure have we for the mischief of that Jew,
That Moses sans theophany, that Christ without a cross,
Who is no prophet, but who has a book to call his own?

I do not know what is there in this pagan's glance which
burns

All veils and which has brought forward the Day of
Reckoning

For all the peoples of the East and of the West?
What worse corruption of mind could there be than this
'That slaves have cut away the ropes of their lords' tents?

The Fourth Adviser

Look at the counterblast to that in Rome's assembly halls.
We made the Romans dream the dream of Caesar once
again,

Who is it who is clinging to the Mediterranean's waves,
Now growing like a pine-tree and now sobbing rebeck-like?

The Third Adviser

I am not sure of the foresight of this man, who
Exposed the politics of Europe in this way.

The Fifth Adviser (Addressing Satan)

O you, whose ardent spirit is the motive force that runs
The world, you have at will unveiled things that lay veiled,
Your heat enkindles mere clay into warm vitality,
Your teaching made a wise man of the Fool of Paradise.
He whom these simple-minded humans call their Lord
Does not know human nature better than you do.
Those whose life's task was worship, praise and going
round and round
Will always keep their heads bowed down in envy of your pride.

Although the West's magicians are all your disciples, yet
I have now lost all faith in their sagacity.
That Jewish mischief-maker, Mazdak's soul reborn,
Will badly tear to shreds all fabrics that are there.
A desert crow the equal of the eagle and the hawk!
O how soon do the times change their complexion, O how
soon !

What we so foolishly took for a mere handful of dust
Has spread and covered all the spaces of the sky.
So frightful is this menace of the future that today
The mountains, meadows, streams are all atremble,
facing it.

My Lord, the world that is dependent on your stewardship
Is going to become one awful topsy-turvydom.

Satan (Addressing His Advisers)

(1)

The whole world of the elements is under my control,
The earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, the fold-upon-fold skies.
When I warm to the right degree the Western peoples' blood,
Then there will be great fun for East and West to watch.
One incantation of mine can turn raving mad
Both politicians and caretakers of the church.
If some fool thinks that Western culture's winecups are mere glass,
Let him try and destroy them for good by just breaking them.
The needle of a Mazdakian logic cannot mend
A madman's garment's collar torn by nature's hand.

How can these wretched communist tramps frighten me,
These feather-brained, wild-looking ne'r-do-wells?
The only threat I fear is from the *ummah* of Islam,
For in its ashes there still are some embers of desire.
There are in it a handful still of persons who
Perform their morning-time ablutions with
Tears of devotion and solicitude.
Whoever has insight into the ages' inwardness
Knows that Islam, not communism, is the future's threat.

(2)

I know this ummah does not any more abide
By the Qur'ān and that its creed is capitalism.
I also know that in the dark night of the East
The Ḥaram's holy ones have no White Palm to show.
But I fear that the modern world's demands
My bring to light the Prophet's law again.
I seek protection from this awesome sacred law,
A law which safeguards women's chastity,
Which challenges men's manhood and which breeds true men.
It is a sentence of death for all kinds of slavery.
It is the same for everyone, beggar or king.
It cleanses wealth of all kinds of impurity,
And makes the rich custodians of all that they possess.
What greater revolution could there be in thought and deed
Than laying down that all land is God's property, not kings'.
It is best that this law remains concealed from people's view.

How fortunate the Muslims themselves have lost faith in it!
Let them remain involved in theological disputes
And exegetic controversies over the Qur'ān.

(3)

Let not the night of these God-knowers be lit up
Whose thunderous hosanna, "God is great," can shake the world.
Is Mary's son dead or will he live till the end of time?
Are Allah's attributes distinct from His essence or part of it?
Who is the Promised One? Is he Jesus of Nazareth
Or some renewer with the attributes of Christ?
Are the words of the Qur'an uncreated and eternal, or
Created and time-bound? And which of these twodoctrines will
Ensure salvation for a Muslim's soul?
Are not these idols fashioned by theology
Enough to keep the Muslims busy in this age?
Keep them busy with these:and far from action's field
So that they lose all their chessmen on life's chessboard.
It will be good if they remain slaves until Judgment Day,
And leave this unabiding world for others to exploit.
Their poetry and mysticism are most fit for them,
For they conceal from them the spectacle of life.
I dread the waking up of this *ummah* whose faith
Consists in exploration of the universe.
Keep it engaged in recitations, prayers and counting beads:
Confirm it in its quietist, monastic frame of mind,

BOOK REVIEWS

M. Hadi Hussain, Tr., 'Umar Bin 'Abd al-'Azīz (by 'Abd al-Salām Nadvī. Lahore: Institue of Islamic Culture, 1978. Demy 8v0. xxiv, 200 pp. Rs. 25.00

The late Maulānā 'Abd al-Salām Nadvī (d. 1954) was an illustrious pupil of 'Allāmah Shiblī Nu'māni. He was one of the most renowned writers of the Dār al-Muṣannifin, Azamgarh. Like Shiblī, the writers of his school of thought have been compiling valuable books on Islamic culture and history. Maulānā 'Abd al-Salām Nadvī's one remarkable work is entitled *Sīrat 'Umar Bin 'Abdal-'Azīz* in Urdu which has been rendered into English and published.

Ḥaḍrat 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz was an Umayyad Caliph. Though his reign was a short-lived one (99-101/717-720), yet it was undoubtedly the most important era in the history of Islam after the days of the Pious Caliphs. A few historians of Islam have been mentioning him as the fifth (or sixth, if Ḥaḍrat Imām Ḥasan be stated as fifth) "Khalīfah-i Rāshid" (Rightly-Guided Caliph).

No doubt, this revolutionary Umayyad Caliph occupies an exalted position in Islamic history; after a lapse of about six decades, he was able to reapply the real teachings of Islam, as envisaged in the golden era of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace of Allah be upon him) and his four Successors. 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz has been widely mentioned in Islamic sources, but Maulāna 'Abd al-Salām Nadvī was perhaps the first to cornpile a complete book about his life and achievements. In his discussions, the late Maulānā has laid down the chief characteristics of the Umayyad caliphate, and in this way the unique position of the era of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz has been portrayed.

Mr M. Hadi Hussain is a well-known author and scholar-translator. He is a retired Civil Servant of Pakistan and has been a reputed non professional writer. The publishers of this translation Culture, have also published a number of his books and translations. He has enviable command over the English and Urdu languages. It is expected that *'Umar Bin 'Abdul 'Azīz* will prove to be a nice book of reference for readers at home and abroad.

The worthy translator's lengthy introduction (pp. v- xxii) has made the book's contents more explicit.

—(Dr) Muhammad Raiz