

# IQBAL AND THE WORLD OF QUR'AN

Muhammad Munawwar

For Iqbal the Qura'n is the last revealed book of Allah embodying eternal wisdom, a guide unto eternity. In his view, therefore, the Quran is for all mankind. It is not limited to or meant for some particular country, race or ethnic group. All human beings are essentially one. They are off-shoots of the same root. They are descendent of Adam, created out of clay. Spiritually they are one, enthused with the same spirit or soul. (and I have breathed in him a part of my own soul) Man is related on one side, with the selves and on the other with the universe. His is an existence spiritual as well as spatial. And every human being has got to return to the same Refuge );,2,11 419. He is the source and origin. He is the point to which all must return. Says Sa'di

بنی آدم اعضائے یکد  
یگر ند  
که در آفرینش زیک  
جوهر اند

“Human beings are like limbs to one another because they, in respect of their creation, belong to the same essence”.

Iqbal, explaining the unity of the origin of life states.”

“No doubt Christianity, long before Islam brought the message of equality to mankind: but Christian Rome did not rise to the full apprehension of the idea of humanity as single organism. As Flint rightly says “No

Christian writer and still less, of course, any other in the Roman Empire can be credited with having had more than a general and abstract conception of human unity.” —And since the days of Rome the idea does not seem to have gained much in depth and rootage in Europe. On the other hand the growth of territorial nationalisim with its emphasis on what is called national characteristics, has tended rather to kill the broad human element in the art and literature of Europe. It was quite otherwise with Islam. Here the idea was neither a concept of philosophy more a dream of poetry. As a social movement, the aim of Islam was to make the idea, a living factor in the Muslim’s daily life and thus silently and imperceptibly to carry it towards fuller fruition”,<sup>212</sup>

If we look upon the Quran, from this viewpoint it turns out to be manifesto of Allah for the unity of mankind. And Allah directed Muhammad (P.B.U.H), to whom the Quran was revealed to announce,

قل يا ايها الناس انى رسول  
الله اليكم جميعا

“Say Oh: men ! I am sent, as the Apostle of Allah, to you all”<sup>213</sup>.

If this religion had anything to do with a homeland then it were the Makkans who deserved to be addressed and especially the Qureishites. But Allah called upon all the human race to listen to the divine message, he had brought for them.

According to Montgomery Watt

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<sup>212</sup> The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam (1944), Sb. M. Ashraf, p. 141.

<sup>213</sup> Al-Quran, 7:158.

“The deeper reason, however, is that in this world which in a material sense has become one world, men are not likely to be attracted to any religion except one which claims to have a message for the whole world.

If we look at Islam, then, from this point of view, we see that it is not unfitted to be a religion for the whole world. It has throughout its history been a missionary and universalistic religion. In seeking to win the whole world it would be acting ‘congruently with its past record, It could make a good case, too, for thinking that its idea of a religious community based on revelation and following a divinely given code of conduct is the only satisfactory basis for a world society. In Islam’s conception of itself and its function in the world, these are elements of truth which could be developed.<sup>214</sup>

On the next page Mr. Watt lays down;

“There is a ‘blind’ and ineffective movement towards harmony between the nations and within each nation; or perhaps we should say that there is a desire for this without any clear perception of how that desire may be realized”.

Anyway it is only a religion which to Watt can unite the world of man<sup>215</sup>. ---Allama Iqbal, in his Javid Namah has ascribed a lament to Abu Jahl in his verses under the caption “Tasin-i-Muhammad” denouncing the fraternal basis of his teachings.

مذہب او قاطع ملک  
و  
نسب  
از قریش و منکر از

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<sup>214</sup> Aslam and the Integration of Society Routbidge and Kogan Pall London (1966), p. 283.

<sup>215</sup> Aslant and the Integration of Society Routbidge and Kegan Pall London (1966), p. 285.

فضل عرب  
 در نگاہے او یکے بالا و  
 پست !  
 باغلامے خویش  
 بریک خوان نشست  
 قدر احرار عرب  
 نشناخته  
 با کلفتان حبش در  
 ساختہ<sup>216</sup>

His, i: e the Holy Prophet's (peace be upon him) religion, is a deadly enemy of possessions and blood relationship. Himself a Quraishite (a proud Arab tribe) he denies the superiority of the Arabs (to other peoples).-

In his view high and low are equal. He sits for meals, with his servant, on the same table.

He has not made a correct estimate of the free Arabs and has developed friendship with thick—built (or thick—lipped) Negroes.

In spite of all advancement human societies are still slaves, or rather worshippers, of race and colour. Racism, intact has assumed the 'status of faith—an idolatrous faith. Josch. R. Washing puts this idea thus:

“This worship of one race and the will to the destruction of others is considered a diabolically artificial division of humanity, one which the author can only account for as an idolatrous faith. Racism is a faith in the sense that the racist trusts and values race as an ultimate concern to which he gives supreme loyalty. That is, the ultimate concern is faith in one race as superior

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<sup>216</sup> Javid Namah (Kulliynt-i-Iqbal), p. 55/643.

to another. The idolatry, is its exaltation of “purity of blood” and “racial homogeneity”.<sup>217</sup>

If a Muslim takes pride in lineage and race he practically works against the fundamental belief reflected in *واحدة خلقناكم من نفس* (we have created, all of you, from one breath of life).

That is why Salman-i-Farsi narrated his lineage in these words, Salman Ibn Islam, Ibn Islam when Islam came to be the Great Grandfather, other fathers were reduced to nonentitlinal position. Islam does not address itself to a race, a language or a geographical territory ; it addresses itself to mankind in general; brotherhood in Islam is the essence of the Quranic teachings, This brotherhood is infect an affectionate name of humanity.

The Holy Prophet preached this fraternity. He left his birth-place and native town in order to disseminate and fulfill its demands. So the order of priority in case of a conflict between one’s native place and religion, tilts on the side of religion because country is finite while religion is infinite Allama Iqbal stresses this concept thus

ہجرت آئین حیات مسلم است  
ایں از اسباب ثبات مسلم است  
معنی او از تنک آبی رم است  
ترک شبنم بہر تسخیریم است<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> The Politics of God, Beacon Press, Boston, 1967, p. 32.

<sup>218</sup> Rumuz-i-Bekhudī, (Kulliyat-i-Iqbal), Lahore, 1975, p. 114.

“Migration is the rule of a Muslims life It is one of the causes of his stability. It’s meaning is to leap from shallow waters. It is to quite the dew for conquering the ocean”.

The prophet (peace be upon him) himself set an example by migrating from Makkah to Medina and thus taught us that الاسلام غريب (Islam is a stranger) Islam is not earth bound. God was as much powerful at Makkah as at Medina. God is All-mighty everywhere. In order to make Islam a universal religion our prophet (peace be upon him) sacrificed his native land, for the love of Islam. The infidels as well as orientalisists see the migration as a ‘flight’ due to their usual cupidity. If this were a “flight” what obstacles could prevent our Holy Prophet from resettling at Makkah, after its surrender before him.

But migration was a great trial for the sake of a principle and an ideology. Our prophet has said.

219 احب شئى عند الله الغرباء . قال الفرارون بدينهم يجتمعون الى عيسى بن مريم يوم القيامة

Strangers are dearest to Allah, what sort of “Strangers” he was asked. “Those who migrate to safeguard their religion ; Such persons would rank with Jesus on the Day of Judgement”, was the prophets reply (peace be on him). It was an apt question, no doubt, people become strangers for so many reasons, for trade, for education, for marriage and for so many mundane purposes.

After native land comes lineage. In this respect the battle of ‘Badr’ is significant. Historically viewed, it amounts to a small battle. Ideologically weighed, it has enormous sigificance. One decision was arrived at through migration viz muslim ummah is not limited to the geographical but it is based on the spiritual. The other decision was made manifest through the battle of

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219 Awarif-al-M’aarif, Abd-al-Qahir ibn Abd-Ailab, at Subrawardy, Beirut, p, 126.

Badr viz Islam's protagonists are spiritual and ideological brotherhood. Muslims are cohesive not on account of blood relationship. Therefore, the nation concept was on one side and the Ummah concept was on the other. On the side of Umah there were 'helpers' (Ansars) who were non-Quraishites and non—Arabs like Hazrat Bilal. On the side of nation were Makkans, all Quraishits and blood relations. This battle proclaimed that in Islam it was the ideological relationship which had the better of blood relationship. Here- a brother faced a brother, a father faced a son, an uncle faced a nephew and a father-in-law faced a son-in-law: Ideology won. Blood failed. Ummah had thrown aside nation.

دل به محبوب حجازی بسته ایم  
 220 زمین جهت بایکدگر پیوسته

“Since Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the beloved of us all hence through his love we are tied to each other”.

In modern defination of a nation, language also holds a high positions. It is quite clear that the Qur'an had been revealed in the language of the Quraish i.e. the language of Makkah. Quran's language was in the words of the Quran itself "السانی عربی مبین" a very clear plain and evident Arabic. The prophet (peace be upon him) himself spoke the same language. He was, as he himself declared, more eloquent than any other Arab. (.,sll UI). It means the Quran gave birth to a society which hit at all the material basis of nationalisim, at the very out set. The Quran is a message of liberty, of freedom and self confidence to humanity at large maintaining that race, lineage, colour, language, riches etc are no measures of human nobility or honour. According to the Quran whosoever is God-fearing and checks

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<sup>220</sup> Rumuz-i-Bekhudi, 163/163.

himself from evil doing is nobler and more honoured near Allah—the farthest from evil is it the nearest to Allah and hence the noblest.

ان اكرمكم عند الله اتقاكم<sup>221</sup>

Thus the Quran has altogether changed the yard stick of human greatness and meanness and every other value was made subservient to humanity, ethics and morality. The root of human corruption and evil lies in lack of his self-knowledge and self consciousness Man becomes a slave of his possessions and hence a predatory. The more powerful and resourceful, he is the more harmful and dangerous. Hence the real evil is not the poverty in material wealth, the real evil is the poverty in moral stock. Once Allama Iqbal was asked about his idea of a Superman. His reply was every true believer is a superman and Islam is the only mould in which supermen are cast.<sup>222</sup>

And here is a saying of Hazrat Umar-ibn-al-Khattab

والله لئن جاءت الاعاجم بالاعمال وجئتنا بغير عمل فهم  
اولى بمحمد منا يوم القيامة فان من قصر عمله لا يسرع به  
حسبه<sup>223</sup>

By God if the non-Arabs came with good deeds and we (the Arabs) without good deeds then the non-Arabs will be nearer to the Prophet on the Day of judgement than us.,One slowed by his actions cannot be expedited by his \_lineage”.

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<sup>221</sup> Al-Qur'an 13: 44.

<sup>222</sup> Malfuzat-i-Iqbal, Iqbal Academy, Lahore, p. 212.

<sup>223</sup> Haqaiq-ul-Islam, Abbas Mahmood al-'Aqqad Dared Kitab al-Arabia, Beirut, p. 227.

Good is not restricted to a particular class of a society. It has nothing to do with some specific race, Besides it has nothing to do with the degree of knowledge. Evil and good are moral problems. They are classless. The difference is that the corruption or brutality of the weaker ones is limited in its harmfulness. It does not mean that such persons are by nature God-fearing whereas those who are stronger are by nature evil-seekers and corrupt. It is however a fact that the corruption of stronger ones affects a much larger circle. Every person unschooled in morals must transgress his limits like savage animals although as far as appearances go they could be assumed as cultured and sophisticated persons.

The crux of all schooling ought to be driving away all bestiality from human temperament. And that can be aimed at only when his spiritual potentialities are stirred and strengthened. Our material maladies have no material remedies. Swedish society is materially an affluent Society. If all wrong emanated from poverty then there should have been no crimes in Sweden. But the fact is that people are murdered there. They commit suicide too. In New York about a dozen years ago, electricity failed. Dark prevailed for some hours. All notions of man's respect for man were drowned in darkness. Culture went out alongwith light, Legal morality gave way. Savagery in man came to surface Hundreds -of shops, houses and stores were ransacked. Hundreds of women were assaulted. It proved to the ut most that a person not schooled in morals was nothing more than a law-abiding animal as long as he feared punishment if he broke the law. And the whole structure of "legal morality" crumbles if there may occur a vacuum in the administration of law. A human being should behave as a human being. His law should be within him. Darkness should not deprive him of moral light. Material well being without moral training does not turn "Social animals" into genuine human beings. Administration of law for such social animals is similar to a big cage in which ferocious existences are placed. Let the cage break and see the result. Failure of electricity in New York had broken that same cage. "Civilization" played well, proud and arrogant

civilization based on scientific advancement. It is advancement and progress. Science has no values. Values stand, out there, Says Huston Smith.

“Some time ago Bertrand Russel acknowledged that the sphere of values stands outside science, except insofar as science consists in the pursuit of knowledge, and even his exception is not truly such, for the value of persuing knowledge, though assumed by science, is not itself scientifically derived. Science can deal with instrumental values but not intrinsic ones --Again science can deal with values descriptively but not prescriptively.

It can tell us what men do prize, but not what men should prize. Market research and opinion polls are sciences, but as the word is used today there can be no science of the summum bonum. Normative values elude iis grasp”<sup>224</sup>

Man is not his own creator. Far from it. He infact is only

a manipulator of things created by the Creator. Elaborating on this theme says Lord North bourne.

“In that connection let it be clearly understood that no man ever created anything whatsoever ; not a speck of dust and not even an idea, for all ideas are derived from preexisting material, The most that man can do and that only to a very limited extent, is to arrange what is already there.”<sup>225</sup>

Not being creator of his own self, man can never known himself fully and hence never come to comprehend as to what is good for him and what is evil. In Allama Iqbal’s words,

آدمی اندر جہاں خیر و شر!

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<sup>224</sup> Forgotten Truth, Suhail Academy, Lahore, Pakistan, (1981), pp. 14-15.

<sup>225</sup> Religion in the Modern World, Suhall Academy, Lahore (1981), p. 67,

“Man, in the universe where there is good as well as evil can seldom distinguish between what is profitable for him and what is harmful”.

Rene Guenon says the same thing much more vehemently and eloquently—and rightly so for being a “Son of the western soil”.

Neither persons nor things are any longer in the position which they should normally occupy ; men no longer recognise on effective authority in the spiritual order nor any legitimate power in the temporal order; the “profane” permit themselves the discussion of sacred things contesting their nature and even their very existence ; what is this but the enfeebled judging the superior, ignorance imposing its limitations upon wisdom, error overtaking truth, the human substituting itself for the divine, earth in ascendancy over heaven, the individual setting himself up as the measure of all things and claiming to dictate laws for the universe drawn entirely from his own limited and fallible reason ? “Woe unto you, ye blinded guides” the Gospel says ; and indeed every-where today one sees these blind leaders of the blind, who, unless restrained by some timely check, will inevitably lead their followers into the abyss, there to perish in their company”.

Hence man cannot do without God’s guidance revealed to Prophets from time to time and perfected in the form of the Quran which is the last revelation of Allah sent down to the last Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), According to Allama Iqbal.

“In Islam prophecy reaches its perfection in discovering the need of its own abolition.”<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> Crises of the Modern World, Sindh Academy, Lahore, p. 65.

<sup>227</sup> The Reconstruction, p. 126.

As there was none to come as a prophet of Allah after Muhammad, the Prophet — (p.b.u.h) hence no other revealed book could ever be expected after the Quran. Thus Quran is the last and permanent code of life for all humanity. Life in all deeds, sayings, prohibitions and directions shaped in accordance with the Quran could for ever serve as the best practical model of behaviour for all races and climes. Muhammad (P.B U.H) was the embodiment of the Quran.

The Quran contains clear injunctions and prohibitions besides legends. Legends have their own specific import. Allama Iqbal explains.

“The Quranic method of complete or partial transformation of legends in order to besoul them with new ideas, and adopt them to the advancing spirit of time, is an important point which has near always been overlooked both by Muslim and non Muslim students of Islam The object of the Quran in dealing with these . legends is seldom historical; it nearly always aims at giving them a universal moral or philosophical import”<sup>228</sup>

Allama Iqbal saw the Russian Revolution and heard the voice proclaiming equality fraternity of human beings and hence for all subjugated peoples of the world. What the Revolution turned out to be is obvious Allama Iqbal also expressed his dissatisfaction with its results. The man made principles and theories kept the Russian revolution areas earth bound. They could not rise higher than the level of race, and colour. Russian communism in the long run became a tool for the service of Russian nationalism Broad based principle of Brotherhood of man was, thus, set aside Moreover the Russian revolution could bring about nothing which could enhance the idea of man’s respect for man. Whatever the revolution dealt with was material. Morals stood replaced by laws — Man made laws based on convenience and national expediency. Man’s spiritual schooling was ignored, rather mocked at.

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<sup>228</sup> Ibid., pp. 82-83.

Such a revolution, no doubt created commotion in the world of man but did not serve any moral, thus could not turn man into a better human being.

Allama Iqbal addressed the Soviet through Maulana Jamal-ud-Din Afghani and told them what the Quran offered to humanity. He asked them to look at the message of the Quran and the revolution it had brought about in human societies. He told the Soviets that it was the Quran that still could lead to the genuine revolution for the good of man by doing away with racial and territorial prejudices. It was according to Allama Iqbal the Quranic teachings which could bring about the spiritual evolution of human beings enabling them to look at all the human societies as different segments of one expansive brotherhood.

تو کہ دیگرے انداختی  
دل ز دستور کہن پرداختی  
کردہ کار خداوند تمام  
بگذر ازلا، جانب الا خرام  
اے کہ می خواہی نظام عالمے  
جستہ او را اساس محکمے؟  
داستان کہنہ شستی باب باب  
فکر را روشن کن از ام الكتاب  
پاسیہ خاماں ید بیضا کہ داد؟  
مژدہ لا قیصر و کسری کہ داد؟  
جز بہ قرآن ضیغمی روباهی است  
فقر قرآن اصل شاهنشاهی است  
فقر قرآن اختلاط ذکر و فکر  
فکر را کامل ندیدم جز بہ ذکر  
چیست قرآن خواجہ را پیغام مرگ

دستگیر بنده بے ساز و برگ!  
هیچ خیر از مردک زرکش مجو  
لن تنالو البر حتی تنفقوا!  
از ربا آخرچه می زاید ، فتن!  
کس نداند لذت قرض حسن!  
آب و نان ماست ازیک مائده  
دوده آدم کنفس<sup>229</sup> واحده

O thou who buildest on foundations new

Has torn thy heart from ancient ways?

Since thou bath done away with ancient Gods,

Proceed from “no” towards “exupt” God.

O thou that Seckest an order for the world

Hast fogred for it a basis all secure?

Thou hast erased all ancient tales, thy thought

Illumine now with the Qur’ans, who gave

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<sup>229</sup> Armughan-i-Hijaz, pp. 79/667, 80/668, 81/669.

The dark complexioned men the Shining Hand?

Who blazoned for the news 'No Caesars now ?

Divested of the sanction of the book,

All prowess is but crooked, jackal like,

The Quran inculcates a quality

Of Faqr, which is the very quintessence

Of sovereignty a faqr which indicates

The fusion of prayer and thought,

No thought completes its reach except by aid Of prayer.

A fatal warning for the rich, a sure

And certain succour for the destitute

is what the book implies Seek thou no good

From money Seekers for no righteousness

Shall thou attain untill in Charity

Thou spend thy store. The gifts of usury

Are strife, and systems that know not the joy.

Of noble lending.

A common Source provides our Sustenance,

Man's family is 'like a Single Soul'.

What devells within the heart I may disclose:

Tis no mere book, it is a different thing,

Which, when it soaks the soul, doth Change it all,

And, with the Soul transformed, the world as well

Is Shaped anew.

If human origin and destination are one and same why then the livelihood should not be the same. Human life, its problems, its resoures, have to abide by certain rules. And the most useful and successful rules are those which have been enunciated by our Prophet in accordance with the injunctions and prohibitions of the Quran. The pious Caliphs harmonised these rules with chief requisitions of their times, leaving guide-lines for future generations to abide by these rules. It would not be in the interest of humanity at large to educate it spiritually and morally on the Quranic principles and leave its livelihood to the non-Quranic. This lantamounts to partial belief in the Quran,

<sup>230</sup> افتومنون بيعض الكتاب و تكفرون بيعض

“Then is it only a part of the Book that you believe and do you reject the rest”.

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<sup>230</sup> Al-Quran 2: 85.

Human ills can be set right only if world of man becomes Quranic world in all practical purposes. And that Quranic world is effectively brought to light in the following verses.

زنده رود

زروق ما خاکیاں ہے نا خدا ست!  
کس نداند عالم قرآن کجا ست!

افغانی

عالم در سینہ ما گم ہنوز  
عالمے در انتظار قم ہنوز  
عالمے ہے امتیاز خون و رنگ!  
شام اور روشن تر از صبح فرنگ  
عالمے پاک از سلاطین و عبید!  
چوں دل مومن کراش ناپدید!  
عافے رعنا کہ فیض یک نظر!  
تخم او افگند در جان عمر  
لا یزال و واردتش نو بنو!  
برگ و بار محکمانش نو بنو!  
باطن او از تغیر ہے غمے!  
ظاہر او انقلابے ہر دمے  
اندرون ست آن عالم نگر!  
می دہم از محکمت او خبر!<sup>231</sup>

## The Living Stream

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<sup>231</sup> Javid Namah, p. 67/655.  
The Pilgrimage of Eternity, pp. 56, 57.

The boat of earthly man is rudderless,  
None Knows the path towards the Qur'anic realm.

### **Afghani**

All hidden in our breasts yet lies a world,  
That waits the bidding of the Lord of rise,  
A world without distinctions, free from race  
And pigment, with an eve far brighter than  
The western morn: a world unprofaned  
By kings and slaves ; a world. coastless Sea  
That can be likened to the faithfuls' heart,  
It is a world so beauteous that its seed  
Was Sown in Umar's Soul but by a glance.  
Its roots are constant, but its leaves and fruits  
Are never fresh ; experiences new  
It yields. Inside its heart a changeless calm,  
A central peace doth dwell, though outwardly  
Each instant brings a revolution new

To it. Behold this world in thy own Self.

I shall now tell thee of its principles.\*

In short Allama Iqbal did hope that the realm of the Quran was about to emerge. Its manifestation could not be withheld any longer. In such a world there would be no distinctions of blood, colour master and slave etc. A single glimpse of that world had transformed the heart of Hazrat 'Umar. The Quranic society was to be a lasting reality where new shapes and spectacles were to take birth, its principles being self evident and forceful. Capable of tackling new situations that might come to the fore. Therefore in Allama Iqbal's opinion Muslims would be able to cope with the challenges of modern times only if they acted anew upon the Quranic directions wholeheartedly.

Allama Iqbal has emphatically elucidated this point in the Devils Advisory Council. In Javid Nama, he has elaborated on the world of the Quran, and we have seen a bit of it in the foregoing pages, through Jamal-ud-Din Afghani. In the Devils Advisory Council he has forcefully laid down his ideas about the bright future of Islam but has employed Devil to say this. In the Advisory Council, Islam has been declared as the only religion of humanity. Devil has been made to declare that the emergence of true Islamic society would mean the doom of all forms, methods, institutions and establishments that kept human being divided in the shape of slaves and masters, exploiters and the exploited bank-owners and the bankrupts discriminators and the discriminated against, whites and the non-whites etc. The Master Devil bewailed that the possibility of Islamic resurgence could not be ruled out and if that happened it would mean the end of all devilish sway. Imperialism, race and colour conflicts, exploitation, man sucking blood of man in different manners of trade and commerce etc were all solidly established institutions which even communism could not demolish. Devils government could not be toppled through any nationalistic revolution. Nationalism instead strengthened anti-man bastions. Hatred based on

geographical and territorial prejudices made things easy for all the clans of Develish community.

Devil has been shown in his Advisory Council as tremendously afraid of Islam. Islam is shown as elemantly opposed to all what the Devil wished to see prevalent. As far as the most significant revolution of the contemporary era i.e communism is is concerned the Devil disposes of its threat to his ascendancy thus.

دست قدرت نے کیا ہے جن  
گریبانوں کو چاک  
مزد کی منطق کی سوزن سے نہیں  
ہوتے رفو!  
کب ڈرا سکتے مجھ کو اشتراکی  
کوچہ گرد!  
یہ پریشان روزگار ، آشفته مغز،  
آشفته ہو

When Nature's hand has rent the Seam, no needleworking logic Of  
Communison will put the stitches, back,

I be afraid of Socialists ? street-bawlers,

Ragged things, tortured brains, formented Souls.\*

And their turning to Islam and the Muslim Ummah he States with a  
doleful tone:

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<sup>232</sup> Armughan-i-Hijaz, Kulliyat-i-Iqbal, Urdu, p. 647.

\*Poems from Iqbal, V. G. Kiernan, John Murray, London West, (1955) p. 83.

ہے اگر مجھ کو خطر کوئی تو اُس  
امت سے ہے  
جس کی خاکستر میں ہے اب تک  
شرار آرزو  
خال خال او قوم میں اب تک نظر  
آتے ہیں وہ  
کرتے ہیں اشک سحر گاہی سے  
جو ظالم وضو  
جالتا ہے جس پہ روشن باطن ایام  
ہے  
مزوکیت فتنہ فردا نہیں اسلام

No, if there is one monster in my path  
It lurks within that people in whose ashes  
Still ambers of an infinite hope.  
Even yet Scattered among them. Steadfast ones  
Come forth, who make lustration of their hearts  
Within contrite tears in the pure hours of dawn ;  
And he to whom the anatomy of the age,  
Shows clear, knows well, the canker of to-morrow  
Is not your communism it is Islam.

After having given his comments on communism Allama Iqbal makes the devil describe those principles which guarantee riddance from all diabolic snares under proviso that the Quran is followed and lived as it ought to be

جالتا ہوں میں کہ مشرق کی  
اندھیری رات میں!  
بے ید بیضا ہے پیران حرم کی  
آستین!

عصر حاضر کے تقاضوں سے بے لیکن  
یہ خوف!!  
ہو نہ جائے آشکارا شرع پیغمبر کہیں  
الحذر آئین پیغمبر وے سو بار الحذر!!  
حافظ ناموس زن مرد آزما، مرد آفرین!  
موت کا پیغام ہر نوع غلامی کے لیے!!  
نے کوئی فغفور و سلطان نے گدائے راہ  
نشیں  
کرتا ہے دولت کو ہر آلودگی سے پاک  
صاف  
منعوں کو مال و دولت کا بناتا ہے  
امیں!  
اس سے بڑھ کر اور کیا فکر و نظر کا  
انقلاب!  
پادشاہوں کی نہیں اللہ کی ہے یہ زمین  
چشم عالم سے رہے پوشیدہ یہ آئیں تو  
خوب!

یہ غنیمت ہے کہ خود مومن ہے محروم  
یقین  
ہے یہی بہتر الہیات میں الجھا رہے!  
یہ کتاب اللہ کی تاویلات میں الجھا  
رہے<sup>233</sup>!

I Know that in this dark of the East  
No Shining hand that Moses raised to Pharaoh  
Hides, under his priests sleeve. Yet, none the less.  
The importunities of the hour conceal  
One peril that Prophets ordinance, that keeps Safe,  
The honour of woman, that forges men and tries them,  
That bears a death-warrant so every Shape  
Of Servitude, admits no Dragon Thrones,  
Knows neither empereror nor road side beggar;  
It Cleanses wealth of every foulness, making  
The rich no more than stewards of their riches;  
What mightier revolution could there be  
In thought or deed than it proclaims—Earth's Soil  
Belongs to no earth-monarch, but to God?

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<sup>233</sup> Armughan-i-Hijaz, Kuliyat-i-Iqbal, Urdu, pp. 654, 655.

\* The Pilgrimage of Eternity, pp, 83/84.

And well for us if those enactments Still  
Lie burried Smugly out of Sight and mind!  
Felicity it is, that the Believer  
Himself has lost all faith. Long way be halt  
Entangled in maze of Theology  
And glazing comment on the sacred Word.

In the last verse there is a pungent irony. Muslims who had to rule the world under the manifesto bestowed on them by the Quran lost themselves in the quibblings related to latent, literal, metaphorical, implied, real or deferred meanings of the Quranic verses. Allama Iqbal tells Muslim scholars, especially the religious ones that they had given up struggle of life thus vacating the field of action for non believers. For this defeatism they tried to find out justification from the Quran. In the perspective of these verses Allama Iqbal's statement published in the Zamindar, a renowned urdu Daily of the twenties and thirties, becomes categorically obvious and unequivocal in which he refuted the allegation leveled against him that he championed the Bolshevik ideas. The statement was published on June 24, 1923. It is clear that 1923, humanitarians all over the world had not felt disgusted with Communism. They still hoped some good to come from that revolutionary ideology. Communism till then had not been visualized as it really was or because it had as yet not appeared in its true colours and its essential opposition to basic principles of Islam had not till then been appreciated in detail. Even then Allama Iqbal resented the allegation. The last paragraph of the statement reads thus

“I am sorry that Muslims have not studied the economic aspects of Islam. Had they done so they would have found it a great blessing in this regard *فاصبحتم بنعمته اخوانا* — points towards the same blessing. Individuals of a

a nation cannot be really linked together in the bond of true and practical brotherhood until and unless they were equal in all respects, The aim of the present Soviet economic system may in itself be however, praise worthy but no Muslim can sympathize with its methodology and practical difficulties. On the mind of Indian Muslims and the Muslims elsewhere the political economy of Europe leaves a profound impact. But it is imperative for them to study the Islamic economic system in this age. I am sure they will find the solution of their problems.<sup>234</sup>

Not to speak of having adopted Bolshevic ideas Allama Iqbal on the contrary, persuades the Bolshevies themselves to take advantage of the light of the Quran so that they may come to know of the fragile nature of their system.

آفریدی شرع و آئین دگر  
اند کے با نور قرانش نگر  
از ہم و زیر حیات آگہ شوی!  
ہم ز تقدیر حیات آگہ شوی!<sup>235</sup>

An Order and a law

Entirely new, thou bast created, now

Let it be focussed in the Quran's light

And so examine It again a while

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<sup>234</sup> Guftar-i-Iqbal, (January 1969), Pak. Research Institute Punjab University, pp. 7-8.

<sup>235</sup> Javid Narnah p. 99,

\*Pilgrimage of Eternity, p. 74,

Do listen to the Silent notes of life

Its high and low, and Know its destiny\*

Allama Iqbal felt aggrieved to find that a section of the Muslims were impressed by theoretical discussions of European Political Economy, on account of its superficial study. Greek philosophy had penetrated into the temperament and psychology of the Europeans to such an extent that Christianity could not get rid of it contrariwise Christianity fell a victim to Hellenism. For Muslim philosophers and rationalists the mystifying Hellenism created lot of confusion in so many matters. Explicit teachings of the Quran, thus, became obscure because of the application of Hellenistic logic, to the Islamic beliefs. In this respect we can further see Allama Iqbal's own explanation.

“As we all know, Greek philosophy has been a great cultural force in the history of Islam. Yet a careful study of the Quran and the various schools of scholastic theology that arose under the inspiration of Greek thought discloses a remarkable fact that while Greek philosophy very much broadened the outlook of Muslim thinkers, it on the whole-obscured their vision of Quran. Socrates concentrated his attention on human world alone. To him the proper study of mankind was man and not the worlds of plants, insects and stars. How unlike the spirit of the Quran, which sees in the humble bee a recipient of Divine inspiration and constantly calls upon the readers to observe the perpetual change of the winds, the alternation of day and night, the clouds, the starry skies and the planets swimming through infinite space. As a true disciple of Socrates, Plato despised sense-perception which in his view, yielded mere opinion and no real knowledge. How unlike the Quran which regards hearing and seeing as the most valuable Divine gifts and declares them to be accountable to God for their actions in this world. This is what the earlier Muslim students of the Quran missed under the spell of classical speculation. They read the Quran in the light of the Greek

thought. It took them over 200 years to perceive — that too not quite clearly — that the spirit of the Quran was essentially anti-classical.”<sup>236</sup>

That there emerges no clear concept of God in the Greek philosophy is no ordinary shortcoming. The God of Greeks is not the Creator of the Universe out of nothing. He is an unmoved mover but cannot enforce this will. If he desires change in the universe then. He is needy. He set the great machine of the universe into motion once and for all and has settled down since then. Such a God cannot be responding to human prayers. The God of the Quran listens to prayers of every suppliant when he calls Him.

وإذا سالك عبادة عنى فانى قريب اجيب دعوة اذا  
دعانى<sup>237</sup>

“When my servants ask thee concerning me, I am indeed close (to them): I listen to the prayer of every suppliant. When he calls on Me.”

Moreover, the God of Greeks is not the creator of the heavens and earth who created life and death, and created all existences out of nothing. He in Greek thought is shorn of creatively because according to Greek philosophers, matter coexisted with God. Matter was out there already when God used it in giving shape to things, inanimate as well animate. God in a way, looked like an artisan who first manipulated the available material. For example the wood is already there, the carpenter has to turn it into a chair, idol ‘ or crucifix. In this perspective the Greek God emerges as a great artisan and not the creator. There is a world of difference between the two positions. The God of the Quran, on the other hand, has not only created

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<sup>236</sup> The Reconstruction, pp, 3, 4.

<sup>237</sup> AI-Quran, 2: 186.

everything he rather, has appointed a principle for its working everything should conform to this principle and fulfill its destiny. Everything obeys him.

سبح لله ما في السموات وما في  
الارض<sup>238</sup>

Whatever is in the heavens and on earth, let it declare the Praises and Glory of God”

الا وله الخلق والامر<sup>239</sup>

“Is it not His to create and to govern.

If then everything has to fulfill its destiny, it is clear that it has been created with an end in view. By analogy it appears that the universe has been created with a collective end in view

ما خلقنا السموات الارض وما بينهما  
لا عيبين<sup>240</sup>

Not for (idle) sport did we create the heavens and the earth and all that is between”.

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<sup>238</sup> Al-Quran, 57: 1

<sup>239</sup> Al-Quran, 7:54.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid., 21:16.

The creation of the universe is not:

“As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods, They kill us for their sport.”

In this perspective man assumes the role of an actor who cannot choose but play it out willy nilly. Hence he is not responsible for what he does and is aloof from all concepts of punishment and reward. His creative forces find no expression. But the Quran makes everybody accountable to Allah for all that he does or intends to do, and warns him of the reckoning.

“Certainly to us will be their return then it will be for us to call them to account.”

ان الينا ايايهم آتية يوم القيامة  
فردا<sup>241</sup>

And then everybody shall be accountable all alone.

وكلهم آتية يوم القيامة فردا<sup>242</sup>

“And everyone of them will come to him singly on the Day of Judgement.”

Sins of others are not debited to our account. In Islam there is no concept of original sin nor of expiation at the expense of others. In short the

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<sup>241</sup> Ibid., 88: 26.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid., 19: 95.

Greek God and the God (Allah) of the Quran are poles apart. We cannot but admit that Muslim philosophers were so overwhelmed by the Greek classical philosophy that they read, understood and disseminated the verses of the Quran in its light. Their Allah, like the God of Greeks, lost command and hence individuals lost sense of responsibility. Allama Iqbal's persuasion, on the contrary is as follows.

اپنی دنیا آپ پیدا کر اگر زندوں میں ہے،  
 سر آدم ہے، ضمیر کن فکاں ہے زندگی!  
 آشکارا ہے یہ اپنی قوت تسخیر سے!  
 گرچہ اک مٹی کے پیکر میں نہاں ہے زندگی!  
 قلم ہستی سے تو ابھرا ہے مانند حیات  
 اس زیاں خانے میں تیرا امتحاں ہے زندگی  
 یہ گھڑی محشر کی ہے تو عرصہ محشر میں ہے!  
 پیش کر غافل عمل کوئی اگر دفتر میں ہے!<sup>243</sup>

If you are amongst those who are (really) alive,

You should create your world

Yourself, Life is the secret of humanity and conscience of universe.  
 "Life makes itself manifest through its power to conquer, although it is hidden in a (small) frame of clay. "

"You have emerged as a bubble from the Sea of existence, Life means

your test (spiritually) in this abode of loosing bargain (materially). "This is the hour of turmoil. You are on the plane of resurrection.

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<sup>243</sup> Haqaiq al-Islam, Dar-al-Kitab-al-Arabi Beirut, pp. 109-110.

Show up, O! you negligent individual, if there is on record, some good deed done by you.”

Abbass Mahmood al-Aqqad throws light on man’s personal accountability in the following words,

فلاسلام لا يعرف الخطيئة الموروثة، ولا يعرف السقوط من طبيعة الى ما رونها. فلايحاسب احد بذنب ابيه ولا تزر وازرة اخرى و ليس مما يدين به المسلم ان يترد النوع الانساني الى ما دون طبيعته، ولكنه، مما يؤمن به ان ارتفاع الانسان و هبوطه منو طان بالتكليف وقوامه الحرية فهو بامانة التكليف قابل للصعود الى قمة الخليقة. وهو بالتكليف و قوامه الحرية فهو بامانة التكليف قابل للصعود الى قمة الخليقة. وهو بالتكليف قابل للهبوط الى اسفل سافلين، وهذه هي الامانة التي رفعته مقاما فوق مقام الملائكة ، وهبطت به مقاما الى زمرة الشيطان.<sup>244</sup>

“Islam does not place any ring of inherited sin around man’s neck. None is called upon to account for what his father did. None bears the burden of other’s sin. A Muslim believes that he would never be debased into any lower form of creatures. Man’s upward or downward journey depends on his own choice, This Amanat (Choice) is his own responsibility. He is capable of attaining the highest stations of his choice as well as falling lower than the lowest. This responsibility of choice, on the one hand lints him higher than the Angels and on the other, throws him down to the level of Devils coterie

Against this freedom of Choice we see what Communism gives to man. Aslam AbduTlah and Javed Ansari in their detailed article on “Marxism” lay down as under. “The consciousness which is created by the change in material conditions as described by Marx, is a false consciousness from the Islamic perspective because it denies man the role assigned to him by the creator. It compels man to surrender to his self (Nafs), instead of controlling it.—Islam does not define the individual as a by-product of a collective

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<sup>244</sup> “Arabia”—The Islamic World Review, Published by the Islamic Press Agency Ltd. East Burnham (Nov. 27, 1983), p. 39.

phenomena and outer environment but as a responsible being. The individual in Islam has an identity. No one in this life or in the hereafter is held responsible for his deed. His place in this world and life hereafter is determined according to his responses to the message and mercy of God. The Quran says, 'O you who attained to faith. Remain conscious of God and seek to come close unto Him, and strive hard in His cause so that you might attain a happy state' (6: 35). Elsewhere it says: Follow that (which) has been sent down unto you by your sustainer and follow no masters other than Him (7/3).

The Islamic ethic enables individual to seek the mercy and pleasure of God in his familial, social, political and economic life. Marxist ethics envisaged him as being compelled to remain at the mercy of social aggregates and the outer environment in all walks of life.”<sup>245</sup>

Man's potentialities are boundless. Man can learn and achieve what no animal can. But the beginning of man is not different from other animals. His growth towards his destiny as a human being is slow, physically as well as spiritually, spiritual growth being slower still. Man's real evolution is his spiritual evolution. In the words of Allama Iqbal;

“Indeed the evolution of life shows that though in the beginning, the mental is dominated by the physical, but the mental as it grows in power, tends to dominate the physical and may eventually rise to a position of complete independence.”<sup>246</sup>

To begin with man is a spatial aspect, and thus bound to be governed by material pulls only. This state manifests the dominance of instincts. There is nothing wrong with instincts. Their running riot is wrong. All forces need control, but control does not mean elimination. Controlled instincts are like broken horses, who are much more useful than the unbroken ones. And it

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<sup>245</sup> The Reconstruction, (1944), p. 106.

<sup>246</sup> Al, Quran, 8:55.

takes long to reach the stage where instincts bow before the commanding .rational self, which means the “dominance” of spirit over matter. The impulse of change is an ingrained quality of man. Factors from outside, only shakes it into wakefulness, the slumbering inner possibilities. Without inner capacity no foreign aid can be of any use. Man must achieve his destiny. Religion should mould man’s attitude into fighting his way out of all sorts of apparent chases. But man is not his own creator. He does not know himself fully. He can know himself only through Gods guidance. And that guidance has been revealed to the Holy Prophet (May peace be on him) in the form of the Quran. It is the Quran which can make man rise to his potential spiritual height yet man has not been compelled to do so. He is at liberty to reject the Guidance and remain earth-rooted i.c at the animal level. It is for his own good if he abides by the directions contained in the Quran. It is the Quran which makes man conscious of himself and thus enables him to understand others. This mutual understanding inculcates in human beings the sense of respect for man. Man’s respect for man is the real basis of all social ethics. Thus man becomes a social being and infact is far above the social animal.

Life means, life of a human being. The bi-ped has to outgrow his material self. By conquering the material self, a person can become capable of progressing towards a stage where conquest of the Universe may look possible. It is mans God-ward journey only which frees him by degrees, from earthly bondage. By living according to Gods commands contained in the Quran man rises above flesh. He fears God only. Fear of material loss or hope of material gain by and by loose their grip and significance. That is the stage where man feels he is his own master. His intellect moral sense and determination begin to shape his personality.

Man’s God-ward journey is a unifying experience. His unity within, grows in proportion to his freedom from the dominance of matter. He should become One provided he embibes attributes of the one, a state adainable only through abiding by God’s law and thus becoming God-centred. A man who does not believe in God remains only at the animal

level, rather according to the Quran can be characterised, as the worst of animals.

ان شرالدواب عند الله الذين كفروا و هم  
لا  
يؤمنون  
247

“The worst of all animals in God’s sight are human beings who reject him. They will not believe in him.”

It is clear that every animal has its limits commensurate with the species it belongs to. All the potentialities of an animal can well be defined. The extent of an animal’s intelligence, according to its species is obvious. The utmost that can be done by a certain animal is always clearly understandable, hence manageable. But what about a man’s expanse of mischief, if he plays the animal ? This bi-ped can achieve humanity only if he sincerely lives according to the last and Most perfect guidance of God is the Quran. And according to Allama Iqbal, wisdom and guidance offered by the Quran is eternal, everlasting.

آن کتاب زنده قرآن حکیم  
حکمت اولاً زوال است و قدیم!  
نوع انسان را پیام آخرین  
حاصل او رحمتہ للعلمین!!  
حرف او را ریب نے تبدیل نے!  
آیہ اش شرمندہ تاویل نے<sup>248</sup>!

<sup>247</sup> Kulliyat-i-Iqbal. (Persian), p. 46.

<sup>248</sup> 2.Kulliyat-i-Iqbal, (Persian), p. 46.

“It is the ever living book,  
The Holy Quran,  
Whose Wisdom is antique,  
And eternal.”

“Last Message of God  
To Humanity,  
And its Messenger is one:  
A great Blessing  
For the two worlds”

“There is no doubt,  
About the meaning  
Of its words,  
Nor can they be changed!  
It does not allow misinterpretation  
Of its Verses,”

Allama Iqbal was sure that man cast in the Quranic mould were about to emerge — genuine human beings — conquerors of the material universe --- the ideal realized at last.

اے سوارِ اشہبِ دورانِ بیا  
اے فروغِ دیدہ امکاں بیا<sup>249</sup>

“Appear! O the rider of  
Appear! O the light of eye  
The steed of whirling time!  
Of possibility's clime!”

The world as desired by Allama Iqbal is to be the world inhabited by such type of persons, obedient to God, high-thinking conquerors of material as well spiritual universe.

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