

IQBAL'S ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF HIS OWN PERSIAN COUPLETS

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Allama Iqbal was not only a poet par-excellence of Persian and Urdu but also a versatile writer. In his correspondence as well as in the accounts of his journeys, detailed statements and articles, he quoted many of his Persian and Urdu couplets: in some cases his lyrics or quatrains are included in full in these writings.^[1] He has quoted his earlier couplets in his later books also.^[2] In this respect a study of his *Javid Nama* is very interesting as here the poet has inserted couplets of his *Asrar-e-Khudt*^[3] and a few lyrics of his *Payam-e-Mashriq* and *Zabur-e-'Ajam* in different firmaments^[4] referring to different appropriate characters of this dramatic *Mathnavi*. But quotations from his earlier Urdu books in the later works are rare.^[5] There are a few common parts of his English writings, too.^[6]

By now almost all the Persian works of Iqbal have been rendered into English. Though we do not find any example of Iqbal's have been rendered into English. Though we do not find any example of Iqbal's own translation of any of his Urdu couplet into English, we, nevertheless, have a few examples of his own translation of Persian couplets into English which he has quoted in his articles or lectures. These translations pertain to his two *mathnavies*; the first being of *Gulshan-e-Raz-e-Jadid* and the second from *Javid Nama*. One couplet each has been translated from the lyrics of *Payam-e-Mashriq* and *Zabur-e-'Ajam*. These examples provide us important guidelines about Iqbal's vivid pattern of translation.

In 1925 Iqbal's article on "Self in the light of relativity"^[7] was published and in 1932 his another research article appeared under the title of 'McTaggart's Philosophy.'^[8] Both these articles have the translations of Iqbal's couplets taken from the Gulshan-e-Raz-e-Jadid and Javid Nama. Persian couplets and translation is hereunder:

ازاں مرگے کہ می آید چه باک است
 خودی چوں پختہ شد از مرگ پاک است
 زمرگ دیگرے لرزد دل من
 دل من، جان من، آب و گل من
 زکار عشق و مستی بر فنا دن
 شرار خود بخاشا کے ندادن
 بدست خود کفن بر خود بریدن
 بچشم خویش مرگ خویش دیدن
 ترا این مرگ ہر دم درکین است
 تبرس ازوے کہ مرگ ما ہمین است
 اگر گوئی کہ من وہم و گمان است
 نمودش چوں نمود این و آل است
 بگو بامن کہ دارائے گمان کیست؟
 یکے در خود نگر آں بے نشاں کیست؟

جہاں پیدا و محتاج دلیہ
نمی آید بکھر جبریلے
خودی پہناں زحمت بے نیاز است
یکے اندیش و دریاب این چه راز است
خودی را حق بدال باطل پندار
خودی را کشت بے حاصل پندار
خودی چوں پختہ گرد و لازوال است
فراق عاشقان عین وصال است
شدر تیز بالے می توای داد
پتید لایزالے می توای داد
دوام حق جزائے کار او نیست
کہ اورا این دوام از جستجو نیست
دوام آل بہ کہ جان مستعارے
شود از عشق و مستی پایدارے
مرا دل سوخت در تنہائی او
کنم سامان بزم آرائی او
مثال دانہ می کارم خودی را
برائے او نگہدارم خودی را

"Why fear that death which comes from without?

For when the "I" ripens into a self it has no danger of dissolution.

There is a more subtle inner death which makes me tremble!

This death is falling down from love's frenzy

Saving one's spark and not giving it away freely to the heaps of chaff;

Cutting one's shroud with one's own eyes;

This death lies in ambush for thee!

Fear it, for that is really our death."^[2] –

If you say that the "I" is mere illusion –

An appearance among other appearances –

Then tell me who is the subject of this illusion

Look within and discover.

The world is visible, yet its existence needs proof!

Not even the intellect of an angel can comprehend it;

The "I" is invisible and needs no proof!

Think a while and see thine own secret;

The "I" is Truth, it is no illusion;

Don't look upon it as a fruitless field.

When it ripens, it becomes eternal!

Lovers, even though separated from the Beloved

Live in blissful union!

It is possible to give wings to a mere spark,

And to make it flutter for ever and for ever!

The Eternity of God is (elemental and) not the reward of His action!

For His eternity is not through seeking.

That eternity is superior, which a borrowed soul
Wings for herself by love's frenzy.^[10]

My heart burns on the loneliness of God!

In order, therefore, to maintain intact His Ego-Society

I sow in my dust the seed of selfhood,

And keep a constant vigil over my "I".^[11]

In the article on "McTaggart's Philosophy" and in his last 7th lecture entitled "Is Religion Possible?", in *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* Iqbal has quoted his couplets from *Javid Nama*: these are about Nietzsche and the significance of 'Mi'raj'. The couplets and their translation by Iqbal is being quoted here under:

بود	حلّاج	بشهر	خود	غریب
جال	زماً	بردو کشت	او	اطیب
آنچه	او	جوید	مقام	کبریاست
این	مقام	از عقل	و حکمت	ماواست
خواست	تا	از آب	و گل	آید بردن
شاهد	ثانی	شعور		دیگرے
خویش	را	دیدن	بنور	دیگرے
شاهد	ثالث	شعور	ذات	حق!
خویش	را	دیدن	بنور	ذات حق
پیش	این	نور	ارہانی	استوار
حی	و قائم	چوں	خدا	خود را شمار

بر مقام خود رسیدن زندگی است
 ذات را بے پردہ دیدن زندگی است
 چیست معراج؟ آرزوئے شاهدهے
 امتحانے روبروئے شاهدهے
 شاهده عادل کہ بے تصدیق او
 زندگی مارا چو گل را رنگ و بو
 در حضورش کس نماند استوار
 در بماند ہست او کامل عیار
 ذرّہ از کف مدہ تابے کہ ہست
 پختہ گیر اندر گرہ تابے کہ ہست
 تاب خود را برفزودن خوشتر است
 پیش خورشید آزمودن خوشتر است
 پیکر فرسودہ را دیگر تراش!
 امتحان خویش کن، 'موجود' باش
 ایں چنین موجود 'محمود' است و بس

ورنہ نار زندگی دور است و بس

A Hallaj, A stranger in his own land!

Safe from the Mullah's hit, killed by the Physician's hand
 The 'I am' which he seeketh,

Lieth beyond philosophy, beyond knowledge.
 The plant that growth only from the invisible soil of the
 heart of man,
 Groweth not from a mere heap of clay!^[12]
 Art thou in the stage of 'life', 'death', or 'death-in-life'?
 Invoke the aid of three witnesses to verify thy 'Station'.
 The first witness is thine own consciousness –
 See thyself, with thine won light.
 The second witness is the consciousness of another ego–
 See thyself, then, with the light of an ego other than thee.
 The third witness is God's light,
 If thou standest unshaken in front of this light,
 Consider thyself as living and eternal as He!
 That man alone is real who dares –
 Dares to see God face to face!
 What is 'Ascension'? Only a search for a witness
 Who may finally confirm thy reality –
 A witness whose confirmation alone makes thee eternal
 No one can stand unshaken in His Presence;
 And he who can verily, he is pure gold
 Art thou a mere particle of dust?
 Tighten the knot of thy ego;
 And hold fast to thy tiny being;
 How glorious to burnish one's ego
 And to test this luster in the presence of the Sun!
 Re-chisel, the, thine ancient frame;
 And build up a new being.
 Or else they ego is a mere ring of smoke!^[13]

The translations of the followings two couplets of the
 lyrics of *Payam-e-Mashriq* and *Zabur-e-'Ajam* also appear in the
 article 'McTaggart's Philosophy' and also in a note entitled
 'An exposition of the self' dictated by Allama Iqbal to Sayyid

Nazir Niazi in the summer of 1937 respectively:

اسرار ازل جوئی؟ بر خود نظری داکن
یکتائی و بسیاری، یزمانی و پیدائی
گرفتم اینکہ شراب خودی بے تلخ است
بدرد خویش نگر، زہر ما بدرماں کش

'Shall I point the way to the external secret? Open thine eyes on theyself;

Thou art visible and invisible, many and one.

The wine of egohood is no doubt bitter, but do look to the disease and take may poison for the sake of the health.

The Translation of a couplet by the poet himself actually reveals depth of meaning contained in his short words and the specimen of Allama Iqbal own translation of his Persian couplets displays this fact quite vividly. It is very difficult for an ordinary translator of Iqbal's poetry to trace the varied and deep meanings especially of his lyrics in the *Payam-e-Mashriq* and *Zabur-e-'Ajam* or the Philosophical Poetry of *Gulshan-e-Raz-e-Jadid* and *Javid Nama* and all examples have been derived from these four books here. These can provide good examples to the persons busy in translating and annotating Iqbal.

NOTES

^[1] For example, an Urdu Lyric now included in the first part of bang-e-Dara was first put forth in Iqbal's journey accounts written for the editor of the then newspaper 'Watan'

in 1905.

^[2] As couplets from 'Bandagi Nama' (*Zadur-e-'Ajam*) are asserted in Mathnavi 'Musafir' or of *Javid Nama* in 'Armaghan-e-Hijaz'.

^[3] In the 'Tawasin-e-Muhammad: Cry of Abu Jahil' and also in the appendix 'Address to Javid'.

^[4] But the book has now lyrics (ghazels), too.

^[5] E.g. in the poems 'Shama' aur 'Khizer-e-Rah', such quotations are envisageable.

^[6] See "The Muslim Community..." being Iqbal's address at Aligarh (1910) and portions of the Diary Stray Reflections, e.g. about Aurangzeb and Irna's conquest by the Arab Muslims.

^[7] Text in, Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal, edited by S. S. Vahid, pp. 111 to 115).

^[8] Ibid., pp. 116-117, and also in Speeches, Writings and statements of Iqbal, edited by Latif Ahmed Sherwani (1977 Edition of Iqbal Academy Lahore), pp. 143-150.

^[9] From answer to question 6.

^[10] From answer 8.

^[11] From last answer number 9.

^[12] From the sphere of 'beyond the heavens': the Stations of Nietzsche.

^[13] From the prelude of the earth: the essence of the Mi'raj. With these translated couplets, *The Reconstruction* ends.