

IQBAL AND KHAWAJA GHULAM FARID ON MAN-GOD POLARITY

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Allama Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938) and Khawaja Ghulam Farid (1845-1901) are two great representatives of the Islamic heritage. Iqbal builds a religious metaphysics by taking fundamental inspiration from Jalaluddin Rumi (1207-1273) whom he openly acknowledges as his spiritual guide.

Khawaja Ghulam Farid, on the other hand, commits to the traditional metaphysics of Islam by mainly accepting the doctrinal formulations metaphysical and traditional truths as realized by a number of Sufies including Bayazid Bistami, Mansur Hallaj (858-922), Ibn' Arabi (1165-1240) and his own spiritual master, Khawaja Ghulam Fakhruddin. He pays homage to these saints in the following lines:

Learn the Mansurian tradition and its realization; now shelve, 'Kanz'.
'Kuduri' (books of jurisprudence).

The antagonist mullahs seem to be hardened in their way; undoubtedly Ibn' Arabi and Mansur impart heart---knowledge.

The sermons of the mullahs do not touch us; undoubtedly we are committed to the Way shown by Ibn' Arabi. The entranced lover exists beyond disdain. Be Bistami by saying 'Glory he to Me'. Say: 'I am the Truth' and he Mansur.

Adopt the Way of Ibn' Arabi; shelve jurisprudence, its principles and problems.

Fakhr-e-Jehan, the preceptor, has pontificated that Ibn' Arabi, the gnostic, is our Master.

Learn Oneness and thrust aside the vice of otherness.

Adopt the ways of Ibn' Arabi. This has been said by the resplendent Fakhr-e-Jehan.

His foremost disciple Maulana Ruknuddin who recorded the proceedings of his doctrinal sittings over a period of time says:

In the eye of Hazrat (Khawaja Ghulam Farid), Shaikh Mansur is the Man of God and the Imams of the Righteous....We servants know full well that Shaikh Mansur, Shaikh Muhyuddin Ibn' Arabi and Shaikh Bayazid Bistami are considered by Hazrat (Khawaja Ghulam Farid) as Imam of 'Faqr' (Poverty) and 'Tariqah' (Sufism). There are numerous 'kafis' in his 'Diwan' wherein he acknowledges them as his Masters and has followed their Way.

Both Iqbal and Khawaja Ghulam Farid believe in man---God polarity but with this essential difference that for Iqbal this polarity is absolute, final and categorical whereas for Khawaja Ghulam Farid it is essentially relative, provisional and hypothetical and is ultimately transcended by virtue of the Self, the intellect or the Spirit which is identical with the Divine Essence. Here lies the essential difference between a religious metaphysics and an intellectual one. The former stands for individuality, limitedness and duality whereas the latter is essentially characterized by universality, unlimitedness and non-duality.

Iqbal builds his religious metaphysics on the subject and object structure of reality. His theory of knowledge embraces the triplicity of sense-perception, reason and intuition within the framework of individualistic experience. The distinction between subject and object subsists at each level of experience including the mystical one. Mystic experience maintains this subtle distinction which is understood in the language of religion as a polarisation between man and God. The polarisation alluded to is manifest in the following main characteristics of religious experience as presented by Iqbal.

1. Mystic experience is immediate like other levels of human experience. Its interpretation gives us knowledge of God. The immediacy of mystic experience simply means that we know God just as we know other objects. God is not a mathematical entity or a system of concepts mutually related to one another and having no reference to experience.'
2. Mystic experience is characterized by unanalysable wholeness. The mystic state brings us into contact with the total passage of Reality in which all

the diverse stimuli merge into one another and form a single unanalysable unity in which the ordinary distinction of subject and object does not exist’.

3. The private personality of the mystic, in state of mystic experience, is neither obliterated nor permanently suppressed. ‘The mystic state is a moment of intimate association with a unique Other Self, transcending, encompassing, and momentarily suppressing the private personality of the subject of experience.’ The truth of this intimate association is the element of response which essentially posits ‘the presence of a conscious self’.
4. Mystic experience by virtue of being direct is incommunicable but the interpretation put on it can be conveyed in the form of propositions.
5. The mystic, in the ultimate analysis, remains linked with serial time. ‘The mystic’s intimate association with the eternal which gives him a sense of the unreality of serial time does not mean a complete break with serial time. The mystic state in respect of its uniqueness remains in some way related to common experience. This is clear from the fact that the mystic state soon fades away though it leaves a deep sense of authority after it has passed away. Both the mystic and the prophet return to the normal S. QAIser: Iqbal and khazaja Glurla’n Lnid levels of experience.

Iqbal consistently maintains that sense-perception needs to be supplemented by the perception of heart in order to have a total vision of Reality. ‘In the interests of securing a complete vision of Reality, therefore, sense-perception must be supplemented by the perception of what the Quran describes as ‘Faud’ or ‘Qalb’, i.e., heart...

The ‘heart’ is a kind of inner intuition or insight which, in the beautiful words of Rumi, feeds on the rays of the sun and brings us into contact with aspects of Reality other than those open to sense-perception. It is, according to the Quran, something which ‘sees’ and its reports, if properly interpreted are never false. We must not, however, regard it as a mysterious special faculty; it is rather a mode of dealing with Reality in which sensation, in the physiological sense of the word, does not play any part. Yet the vista of experience thus opened to us is as real and concrete as any other experience.

Iqbal considers man as self, ego, nafs or soul. For man both 'Anfus' (self) and 'Afaq' are sources of knowledge. 'God reveals His signs in inner as well as outer experience, and it is the duty of man to judge the knowledge--yielding capacity of all aspects of experience'. In other words,

'One indirect way of establishing connections with the reality that confronts us is reflective observation and control of its symbols as they reveal themselves to sense-perception, the other way is direct association with that reality as it reveals itself within'.

Here conscious experience is the royal road to Reality.

'Now my perception of things that confront me is superficial and external; but my perception of my own self is internal, intimate and profound. It follows, therefore, that conscious experience is that privileged case of existence in which we are in absolute contact with Reality and an analysis of this privileged case is likely to throw a flood of light on the ultimate meaning of existence.

Both efficient and appreciative aspects of the ego are oriented towards conscious existence which means life in time. Human 'self in its inner life moves from the centre outwards... on its efficient side it enters into relation with what we call the world of space... The self here lives outside itself as it were and, while retaining its unity as a totality, discloses itself as nothing more than a series of specific and consequently numerable states... The unity of the appreciative ego is like the unity of the term in which the experiences of its individual ancestors exist, not as a plurality, but as a unity in which every experience permeates the whole. There is no numerical distinctness of states in the totality of the ego, the multiplicity of whose elements is, unlike that of the efficient-self wholly qualitative'.

The levels of experience are understood in reference to the dynamism of human thought.

'In its deeper movement, however, thought is capable of reaching an immanent Infinite in whose self-unfolding movement the various finite concepts are merely moments. In its essential nature, then, thought is not static; it is dynamic and unfolds its internal infinitude in time like the seed

which, from the very beginning, carries within itself the organic unity of the tree as a present fact.... It is in fact the presence of the total Infinite in the movement of knowledge that makes finite thinking possible. It is a mistake to regard thought as inconclusive, for it too, in its own way, is a greeting of the finite with the infinite’.

Also, one finds no cleavage between thought and intuition. ‘They spring up from the same root and complement each other’. ‘Thought therefore, in its true nature, is identical with life’.

Iqbal believes in the individuality and uniqueness of man. Human ego is real and its reality cannot be denied.

‘The finite centre of experience, therefore, is real, even though its reality is too profound to be intellectualized.. The ego reveals itself as a unity of what we call mental states... True time-duration belongs to the ego alone... Another important characteristic of the unity of the ego is its essential privacy which reveals the uniqueness of every ego’.

Iqbal rejects the theological view of considering, the ego as ‘a simple indivisible, and immutable soul substance, entirely different from the group of our mental states and unaffected by the passage of time’. He states that ‘our conscious experience can give us no clue to the ego regarded as a soul substance; for by hypothesis the soul-substance does not reveal itself in experience... the interpretation of our conscious experience is the only road by which we can reach the ego, if at all.

Iqbal considers the ego as a directive energy which ‘is formed and disciplined by its own experience’. He quotes the Quranic verse in this context: ‘And they ask thee of the soul. Say: the soul proceeded from my Lord’s ‘Amr’ (command) but of knowledge, only a little to you is given’ (17:85). His explanation of the verse is as follows:

‘The verse quoted above means that the essential nature of the soul is directive, as it proceeds from the directive energy of God; though we do not know how Divine ‘Amr’ functions as ego-unities. The personal pronoun used in the expression Rabbi (‘My Lord’) throws further light on the nature and behaviour of the ego. It is meant to suggest that the soul must be taken

as something individual and specific, with all the variations in the range, balance, and effectiveness of its unity... Thus my real personality is not a thing, it is an act... My whole reality lies in my directive attitude.'

In the divine scheme of things, ego occupies a prominent place.

'The degree of reality varies with the degree of the feeling of egohood. The nature of the ego is such that, inspite of its capacity to respond to other egos, it is self-centered and possesses a private circuit of individuality excluding all egos other than itself. In this alone consists its reality as an ego. Man, therefore, in whom egohood has reached its perfection occupies a genuine place in the heart of Divine creative energy and thus possesses a much higher degree of reality than things around him. Of all the creations of God he alone is capable of consciously participating in the creative life of his Maker.

Iqbal on the basis of individualistic experience considers the ultimate Reality too as an ego. He says:

'Thus a comprehensive philosophical criticism of all the facets of experience on its efficient as well as appreciative side brings us to the conclusion that the ultimate Reality is a rationally directed creative life... intuition reveals life as a centralizing ego. This knowledge, however imperfect as giving us only a point of departure, is a direct revelation of the ultimate nature of Reality. Thus the facts of experience justify the inference that the ultimate nature of Reality is spiritual, and must be conceived as an ego'.

In other words:

'The more important regions of experience, examined with an eye on a synthetic view, reveal, as the ultimate ground of all experience, a rationally directed creative will which we have found reasons to describe as an ego. In order to emphasize the individuality of the ultimate Ego the Quran gives Him the proper name of Allah, and further defines Him as follows:

'Say: Allah is one:

All things depend on Him;

He begetteth not, and He is not begotten: And there is none like unto Him' (112:1-4).

Iqbal derives the egos from the ultimate Ego. He says: 'Reality is, therefore, essentially spirit. But, of course, there are degrees of spirit... from the ultimate Ego only egos proceed. The creative energy of the ultimate Ego, in whom deed and thought are identical, functions as ego-unities.. The world, in all its details, from the mechanical movement of what we call the atom of matter to the free movement of thought in the human ego, is the self-revelation of the 'Great I am'. Every atom of

. Divine energy, however low in the scale of existence, is an ego. But there are degrees in the expression of egohood. Throughout the entire gamut of being runs the gradually rising note of egohood until it reaches its perfection in man. That is way the Quran declares the ultimate Ego to be nearer to man than his own neck vein. Like pearls do we live and move and have our being in the perpetual flow of Divine Life'.

Iqbal presents an individualistic conception of God and interprets the metaphor of light in the Qur'an accordingly. He says: 'The metaphor of

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light as applied to God, therefore, must, in view of modern knowledge, b taken to suggest the Absoluteness of God and not His Omnipresence which easily lends itself to a pantheistic interpretation.' He poses a question: Does not individuality imply finitude? In other words, if God is an ego and as such an individual, how can we conceive Him as infinite. He says:

The answer to this question is that God cannot be conceived as infinite in the sense of spatial infinity. In matters of spiritual valuation mere immensity counts for nothing--moreover, temporal and spatial infinities are not absolute.. space and time are interpretations which thought puts upon the creative activity of the Ultimate Ego...The infinity of the Ultimate Ego consists in infinite inner possibilities of his creative activity of which the universe, as known to us, in only a partial expression'.

He believes in the self-revelation of God.

‘God’s life is self-revelation, not the pursuit of an ideal to be reached. The ‘not-yet’ of man does mean pursuit, and may mean failure the ‘not yet’ of God means unfailing realization of the infinite creative possibilities of His being which retains its wholeness throughout the entire process.’ Further it is in the concrete individuality manifested in the countless varieties of living forms that the ultimate Ego reveals the infinite wealth of His being’.

Infinite Reality remains in the process of creative unfolding. Life is one and continuous. Man marches always onward to receive ever fresh illuminations from an infinite Reality which ‘every moment appears in a new glory’. And the recipient of Divine illumination is not merely a passive recipient. Every act of a free ego creates a new situation, and thus offers further opportunities of creative unfolding’.

Iqbal poses another question: Does the universe confront God as His ‘other’ with space intervening between Him and it? He answers in the negative.

‘The answer is that, from the Divine point of view, there is no creation in the sense of a specific event having a ‘before’ and an ‘after’. The universe cannot be regarded as independent reality standing in opposition to Him. This view of matter will reduce both God and the world to two separate entities confronting each other in the empty receptacle of an infinite space... space, time and matter are interpretations which thought puts on the free creative energy of God. They are not independent realities existing per se, but only intellectual modes of apprehending the life of God.’

He further discusses the intuition of I-ness in reference to both the human self and Divine Self with corresponding relation to Nature.

‘To exist in pure duration is to be a self, and to be a self is to be able to say ‘I am’. Only that truly exists which can say ‘I am’. It is the degree of the intuition of ‘I-ness’ that determines the place of a thing in the scale of being. We too say ‘I am’. But our ‘I-ness’ is dependent and arises out of the distinction between the self and the not self. The ultimate Self, in the words of the Qur’an, ‘can afford to dispense with all the worlds’. To Him

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the not-self does not present itself as a confronting 'other', or else it would have to be, like our finite self, in spatial relation with the confronting 'other'. What we call Nature or the not-self is only a fleeting moment in the life of God. His 'I amness' is independent, elemental, absolute. Of such a self it is impossible for us to form an adequate conception. As the Qur'an says: 'Naught' is like Him, yet 'He hears and sees' Now a self is unthinkable without a character, i.e., a uniform mode of behaviour. Nature... is not a mass of pure materiality occupying a void. It is a structure of events, a systematic mode of behaviour, and as such organic to the ultimate Self. Nature is to the Divine Self as character is to the human self. In the picturesque phrase of the Qur'an it is the habit of Allah. From the human point of view it is an interpretation which, in our present situation, we put on the creative activity of the Absolute Ego... Nature, then, must be understood as a living, evergrowing organism whose growth has no final external limits. Its only limit is internal. It is the immanent self which animates and sustains the whole. As the Qur'an says: 'And verily unto thy Lord is the Limit'. (50:14)

All limits have to be understood in this context. For instance,

the element of guidance and directive control in the ego's activity clearly shows that the ego is a free personal causality. It shares in the life and freedom of the Ultimate Ego Who, by permitting the emergence of a finite ego, capable of private initiative has limited this freedom of His own free will.

It is very pertinent to note that Iqbal mentions Bayazid Bistami on the question of creation to bring home the fact that matter is not co-eternal with God. He says:

"The question of creation once arose among the disciples of the well-known saint Bayazid of Bistam. One of the disciples very pointedly put the commonsense view saying: 'There was a moment of time when God existed and nothing else existed beside Him'. 'It is just the same now', said he, 'as it was then'. The world of matter, therefore, is not, a stuff co-eternal with God, operated upon Him from a distance as it were. It is, in its real nature, one continuous act which thought breaks up into a plurality of mutually exclusive things'.

What is the ultimate nature of the ego in reference to the climax of religious life? Iqbal says:

‘Indeed, the incommunicability of religious experience gives us a clue to the ultimate nature of the ego... The climax of religious life, however, is the discovery of the ego as an individual deeper than his conceptually describable habitual self-hood. It is in contact with the Most Real that the ego discovers its uniqueness; its metaphysical status, and the possibility of improvement in that status. Strictly speaking, the experience which leads to this discovery is not a conceptually manageable intellectual fact; it is a vital fact, an attitude consequent on an inner biological transformation which cannot be captured in the net of logical categories’.

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Iqbal understands the ultimate aim of the ego not in the category of ‘seeing’ but in the category of being. He says:

‘The ultimate aim of the ego is not to see something, but to be something. It is the ego’s effort to be something that he discovers his final opportunity to sharpen his objectivity and acquire a more fundamental ‘I am’, which finds evidence of its reality not in the Cartesian ‘I think’ but in the Kantian ‘I am’. The end of the ego’s quest is not emancipation from the limitations of individuality; it is, on the other hand, a more precise definition of it. The final act is not an intellectual act, but a vital act which deepens the whole being of the ego, and sharpens his will with the creative assurance that the world is not something to be merely seen or known through concepts, but something to be made and re-made by continuous action. It is a moment of supreme bliss and also a moment of the greatest trial for the ego’.

Iqbal holds that even the Day of Judgement shall not

‘affect the perfect calm of a full grown ego... Who can be the subject of this exception but those in whom the ego has reached the very highest point of intensity? And the climax of this development 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. As the Qur’an says of the Prophet’s vision of the Ultimate Ego:

‘His eye turned not aside, nor did it wander’. (53:17) this is the ideal of perfect manhood in Islam. Nowhere has it found a better literary expression than in a Persian verse which speaks of the Holy Prophet’s experience of Divine illumination:

(‘Moses fainted away by a mere surface illumination of Reality: Thou seest the very substance of Reality with a smile!’). Pantheistic Sufism obviously cannot favour such a view, and suggests differences of a philosophical nature. How can the Infinite and the finite egos mutually exclude each other? Can the finite ego, as such, retain its finitude besides the Infinite Ego? This difficulty is based on a misunderstanding of the true nature of the Infinite. True infinity does not mean infinite extension which cannot be conceived without embracing all available finite extensions. Its nature consists in intensity and not extensity; and the moment we fix our gaze on intensity, we begin to see that the finite ego must be distinct, though not isolated, from the Infinite. Extensively regarded I am absorbed by the spatio-temporal order to which I belong. Intensively regarded I consider the same spatio-temporal order as a confronting ‘other’ wholly alien to me.. I am distinct from and yet ultimately related to that on which I depend for my life and sustenance’.

Iqbal further discusses the nature .of this final experience. He says:

"This final experience is the revelation of a new life-process-original essential, spontaneous. The eternal secret of the ego is that the moment he reaches this final revelation he recognizes it as the ultimate root of his

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being without the slightest hesitation. Yet in the experience itself there is no mystery. Nor is there anything emotional in it... Thus the experience reached is a perfectly natural experience and possesses a biological significance of the highest importance to the ego. It is the human ego rising higher than mere reflection, and mending its transiency by appropriating the eternal. The only danger to which the ego is exposed in this Divine quest is the possible relaxation of his activity caused by his enjoyment of and absorption in the experiences that precede the final experience’

It is interesting to note that for Iqbal the religious experience of the Prophet is, in fact, the contact of the Prophet with the root of his own being. He says:

‘A Prophet may be defined as a type of mystic consciousness in which ‘unitary experience’ tends to overflow its boundaries, and seeks opportunities of redirecting or refashioning the forces of collective life. In his personality the finite centre of life sinks into his own infinite depths only to spring up again, with fresh vigour, to destroy the old, and to disclose the new directions of life. This contact with the root of his own being is by no means peculiar to man. Indeed the way in which the word Wahi (inspiration) is used in the Qur’an shows that the Qur’an regards it as a universal property of life; though its nature and character are different at different stages of the evolution of life.’

Iqbal moves on to discuss the expression of this experience in the religious life of Islam. He says:

‘The development of this experience in the religious life of Islam reached its culmination in the well-known words of Hallaj--‘I am the creative truth’. The contemporaries of Hallaj, as well as his successors, interpreted these words pantheistically, but the fragments of Hallaj, collected and published by the French Orientalist, L. Massignon, leave no doubt that the martyr-saint could not have meant to deny the transcendence of God. The true interpretation of his experience, therefore, is not the drop slipping into the sea, but the realization and hold affirmation in an undying phrase of the reality and permanence of the human ego in a profounder personality’

He further says:

In the history of religious experience in Islam which, according to the Prophet, consists in the ‘creation of Divine attributes in man’, this experience has found expression in such phrases as--‘I am the creative truth’ (Hallaj), ‘I am ‘Time’ (Muhammad), ‘I am the speaking Qur’an (Ali)’ ‘Glory to me’ (Bayazid). In the higher Sufism of Islam 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’.

Before we proceed to present the views of Khawaja Ghulam Fund on man-God polarity, it is imperative to examine a few essential points arising

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out of Iqbal's approach to the subject. Iqbal is a religious metaphysician and he starts with an individualistic conception of man and God. He is neither concerned with pure metaphysics nor with the traditional one. This is precisely the reason that he does not start from the Essence or undifferentiated Reality. His starting point is the Divinity or differentiated Reality. This approach lands him in the orbit of individualistic experience whether discursive or intuitive. His conception of man and God within the individualistic framework is fraught with much meaning for both religion and philosophy but remains incomplete from the metaphysical point of view. His starting point is not the Supreme Principle which is formless but the divine form which is termed as God or the Ultimate Ego, Metaphysically speaking? it has been possible to say that the Avatara was "created before creation", which means that before creating the world, God hasp to "create" Himself" in divinis, if one may say so. the word "Create" having here a higher and transposed meaning which is precisely that of Maya.' Thus, 'there is Atma and there is Maya; but there is also Atma as Maya, and this is the manifesting and acting Personal Divinity,' And when it comes to understanding the total universe, Iqbal does not appreciate that Maya is Atma. From the metaphysical point of view, 'then is also Maya as Atma, and this is the total Universe when seen as one polyvalent reality. The world will then be the Divine aspect termed "Universal Man" (Vaishwanara) or. in Sufism, "The Outward" (az-Zahir) this is, incidentally, the deepest meaning of the Far Eastern Yin-Yang." Iqbal considers man as an individual, ego, self, soul or nafs. He does not

take into consideration the metaphysical reality of man which is understood by dint of intellect or Spirit(ruh) which is in man but is not his It is the presence of this universal element i.e. the Self in man which makes him transcend the narrow circuits of his individuality. Iqbal not only misses this metaphysical perspective but further makes a mistake of translating 'ruh' Spirit as 'nafs' soul in the, Quranic verse alluded to. Resultantly, many problems like pantheism arise which have no cause of origin in traditional metaphysics. Thus, when it comes to realization, Iqbal can only talk of

individual realization and not of universal one. He is condemned to interpret the utterances of Mansur Hallaj and the like from the individualistic perspective whereas they can only be understood in reference to the universal realm. It is here that Khawaja Ghulam Farid emerges on the scene to provide intellectual foundations to both religion and philosophy by reiterating the doctrine of Oneness of Being (wahdat al. 'wujud) which not only embraces man-God polarity but further suggests doctrinal and realizational measures to transcend it. It is emphatic to note that Iqbal in his study of God, man and universe, at certain points, reaches the threshold of traditional metaphysics but in the absence of a perspective of gnosis he fails to develop these points and returns back to his essential individualistic approach. Khawaja Ghulam Farid, as if by Providence, takes these points to their logical conclusion. Thus Iqbal's incomplete religious metaphysics, in a certain sense, is completed by the traditional metaphysics of Khawaja Ghulam Farid.

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Khawaja Ghulam Farid starts with the metaphysical idea of the Absolute. He uses the word 'Haqq' which literally means the Truth or the Reality in referring to the Absolute. He in one of his Kafees brings home the message that nothing can be ascribed to the Absolute for all ascriptions, in principle, fall short of describing the Real. He starts his kafi by posing a fundamental question as to whether the-essential Beauty or Primordial light can be called necessity and possibility. He goes on equating it with certain sensuous and non-sensuous realities and in the end shows the deficiency of this approach in the following verses:

Farid hasten to have eternal repentance. Sayeth, each ascription is impregnated with imperfection. Sayeth, He is Pure. Transcendent, unblemished. Sayeth, He is Nameless Truth without Signs.

These verses are very translucent in revealing the essential nature of the metaphysical truth. The Absolute in its absoluteness is Nameless and It has no Signs by which It can be approached. It is beyond human perception, conception and imagination. No qualification or relation can be attributed to It for It even transcends transcendence. It is 'the most indeterminate of all indeterminates'. No linguistic category can describe It.. It lives in permanent

abyssal darkness and is 'the most unknown of all the unknown'. The Absolute in its absoluteness is the 'Mystery of mysteries' and no one, in principle, can have access to It. The Absolute does not manifest itself in its absoluteness. 'The self-manifestation of the Absolute does not yet occur'. There is as yet no theophany or tajalli. The Absolute in its absoluteness is termed as 'Dhat' or Essence. The Pure Absolute in its fundamental aspect of absoluteness is beyond the insatiable human quest and all attempts to reach It prove to be negatory. Khawaja Ghulam Farid says:

Where to seek! Where to find You Friend. All the fiery creatures, human beings, forces of Nature and the entire world is amazingly drowned in the sea of bewilderment. The sufis, devotees, men of wisdom and learning have ultimately lost. Arshi and Bistami while embracing each other cry in vain. Ptolemy and Pythagoras did a lot of thinking and reasoning but found no mark and clue of the Friend which made them resign to the human limitation. The Buddhists, Zoroastrians. Jews, Christians. Hindus and the People of Book say that He is Pure, Perfect, Unlimited, Transcendent and Limitless. Saints, prophets, mystics, poles and even messengers and deities incarnate proclaim weepingly that He is beyond the reach of vision. Scientists, erudites, gnostics and professionals, in all humility have admittedly resigned. Ask Farid, naive and simple: Where do you stand?

Thus, the Absolute in its absoluteness is the highest metaphysical stage of Reality.

At this highest metaphysical stage, Reality is undifferentiated. Khawaja Ghulam Farid accounts for the principle of differentiation within the Reality. He says:

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'Hidden Treasure' testifies Love in itself. Originally Love emerge within the Reality which caused the entire universe". The above verse refer to the Holy Tradition: 'I was a hidden treasure, and longed to known, so I created the cosmos'. Self-consciousness is the primordial at fundamental polarisation within the Absolute. The otherness is not absolute for in case of Self-consciousness the principle of otherness t differentiation is essentially for Self-Realization. Ibn 'Arabi explains this point in these beautiful words:

The Reality wanted to see the essences of His Most Beautiful Names or, to put it another way, to see His own Essence, in an all-inclusive object encompassing the whole (divine) Command, which, qualified by existence, would reveal to Him His own mystery. For the seeing of a thing, itself by itself, is not the same as its seeing itself in another, as it were in a mirror, for it appears to itself in a form that is invested by the location of the vision by that which would only appear to it given the existence of the location and its (the locations) self disclosure to it. The Reality gave existence to the whole Cosmos (at first) as an undifferentiated thing without anything of the spirit in it, so that it was like an unpolished mirror the (divine) command required (by its nature) the reflective characteristics of the mirror of the Cosmos, and Adam was the very, principle of reflection for that mirror and

the spirit of that form

In order to know the emergence of the principle of differentiation within the undifferentiated Reality, one needs to understand that Supreme Reality is absolute and infinite.

‘That is absolute which allows of no augmentation or diminution, or of no repetition or division; it is therefore that which is solely itself and totally itself. And that is infinite which is not determined by any limiting factor and therefore does not end at any boundary; it is in the first place Potentiality or Possibility as such, and ipso facto the Possibility of things, hence Virtuality, Without All-Possibility, there would be neither Creator nor Creation, neither Maya nor Samsara’.

The distinction between the absolute and the infinite expresses the fundamental aspects of the Real i.e. the Absolute.

The Infinite is so to speak the intrinsic dimension of plenitude proper to the Absolute; to say Absolute is to say Infinite, the one being inconceivable ‘without the other. The distinction... expresses the two fundamental aspects of the Real, that of essentiality and that of potentiality; this is the highest principal prefiguration of the masculine and feminine poles. Universal Radiation, thus Maya both divine and cosmic, springs from the second aspect, the Infinite, which coincides with All-Possibility.

Speaking etymologically, the Infinite is that which is without limits. It has absolutely no limits. The infinities of number, space and time belong to the domain of the indefinite which is qualitatively different from the Infinite. The Indefinite is merely an extension of the finite and may be understood as enhanced finiteness.

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The Infinite.. if it is truly to be such, cannot admit of any restriction, which supposes that it is absolutely unconditioned and indeterminate, for all determination is necessarily a limitation simply because it must leave something outside itself, namely all other equally possible determinations. Limitation, moreover, presents the character of a veritable negation, for to set a limit is to deny that which is limited everything that this limit excludes. Consequently, the negation of a limit is in fact the negation of a negation, which is to say, logically and even mathematically, an affirmation. Therefore the negation of all limits is equivalent, in reality, to total and absolute affirmation. That which has no limits is that to which one can deny nothing, hence is that which contains all, outside of which there is nothing. This idea of the Infinite, which is thus the most affirmative of all because it comprehends or embraces all particular affirmations whatsoever, can only be expressed by a negation by reason of its absolute indetermination. Any direct affirmation expressed in language must, in fact, be a particular and determined affirmation—the affirmation of something—whereas total and absolute affirmation is not any particular affirmation to the exclusion of others, for it implies them all equally. It should now be simple to grasp the very close connection which this has with universal Possibility, which in the same way embraces all particular possibilities.

The idea of the Infinite cannot be contradicted for it contains no contradiction and there is nothing negative about it.

If, in fact, one envisages the "Whole" in an absolute and universal sense, it is evident that it can in no way be limited. It could only be limited by virtue of something outside itself, and if there were anything outside it, it would no longer be the Whole.... the Whole in this sense must not be assimilated to a particular or determined "whole" which has a definite relationship with the parts of which it consists. It is, properly speaking, "without parts," for these

parts would be of necessity relative and finite and could thus have no common measure with it, and consequently no relationship with it, which amounts to saying that they have no existence from its point of view. This suffices to show that one should not try to form any particular conception of it.

Likewise, universal Possibility is necessarily unlimited and an impossibility being a pure and simple negation is nothing and cannot limit it.

Thus, when we say that universal Possibility is infinite or unlimited, it must be understood that it is nothing other than the Infinite itself, envisaged under a certain aspect, insofar as one may say that there are aspects to the Infinite. For the Infinite is truly "without parts", and strictly speaking, there can be no further question of a multiplicity of aspects existing really and "distinctively" within it. It is we who in fact conceive of the Infinite under this aspect or that, because we cannot do otherwise, and even if our conception were not essentially limited (as it is since we are in a individual state), it is bound to limit itself in order to become expressible, for that requires its investiture with a determinate form. All that is important is that we should understand well from what side the

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limitation comes and to whom it applies, so that we do not misattribute our own imperfection, or rather that of the exterior and interior instruments which we now use as individual beings, and which possess only a definite and conditioned existence. We must not transfer this imperfection, purely contingent and transitory as the conditions to which it refers and from which it results, to the unlimited domain of universal Possibility itself... The determinations, whatever the principle by which one creates them, can exist only in relation to our own conceptions.... Perfection being identical in its absolute sense with the Infinite understood in all its indetermination... Being does not contain the whole of Possibility, and that in consequent it can in no wise be identified with the Infinite, that is why we say that our present standpoint is far more universal than that from which we envisage only Being.

Khawaja Ghulam Farid identifies the stage of the Absolute in absoluteness with Allah's Essence. He ascribes to this view of identity set forth by Ibn 'Arabi who 'explicitly identifies the absolute Being with Allah, the Living, Omniscient, Omnipotent God of the Qur'an'. The Absolute in its absoluteness is not only identified with Allah's Essence Divine Essence but has complete identity with Unity (al-ahadiyah). 'Div Essence (dhat) and Unity (ahadiyah) are completely identical with e other in indicating one and the same thing, namely, the Absolute in absoluteness as the highest metaphysical stage of Reality'.

Khawaja Ghulam Farid maintains a subtle distinction between Essence and the Divinity. 'God may be considered in respect of Himself, which case He is referred to as the Essence, or in respect of His level, which case He is referred as the Divinity. In both cases he is called 'Allah However, in respect of Himself i.e., the Essence, He is unknowable, 'C is known through the relations, attributions, and corelations that becon established between Him and the Cosmos. But the Essence is unknow since nothing is related to it. In proof of this assertion, the Shaykh (Ibn 'Arabi) often cites Qur'anic verse, "God warns you about His Self" (3: 30), which he frequently explains in terms of the prophetic saying: "Reflect] (tafakkur) upon all things, but reflect not upon God's Essence'. Ibn At says:

'God is described by Nondelimited Being (al-wujud al-mutlaq), for He neither the effect (ma'lul) nor the cause ('ilia) of anything. On the contra He exists through His very Essence. Knowledge of Him consists of knowledge that He exists, and His existence is not other than His Essence, though I Essence remains unknown; rather, the Attributes that are attributed to h are known, i.e., the Attributes of Meanings (sifat al-ma'am), which are 1 Attributes of Perfection (sifat al-kamal). As for knowledge of the Essence's reality (haqiqat al-dhat), that is prohibited. It cannot be known through logical proof (dalil) or rational demonstration (burhan 'aqli), nor

definition (hadd) grasp it. For He-- glory be to Him--- is not similar anything, nor is anything similar to Him. So how should he who is similar things know Him to whom nothing is similar and Who is . similar to nothii

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So your knowledge of Him is only that "Nothing is like Him" (Qur'an 42:10) and "God warns you of His Self" (Qur'an 3:28). Moreover, the Law (al-slar') has prohibited meditation upon the Essence of God.'

The principle of differentiation emerging within the undifferentiated Reality as alluded to is named by Khawaja Ghulam Farid as Ahmad. He says: 'The Primordial Beauty become manifest; Ahad's formlessness assumed Ahmad's form'. "Ahad emerged in the form of Ahmad.'

The name Ahmad signifies the Logos; First Intellect; Reality of realities; Light of Muhammad; Reality of Muhammad and so on and so forth:

Thus understood, the Reality of Muhammad is not exactly the permanent archetypes themselves. Rather, it is the unifying principle of all archetypes, the active principle on which depends the very existence of the archetypes. Considered from the side of the Absolute, the Reality of Muhammad is the creative activity itself of the Absolute, or God 'conceived' as the self-revealing Principle of the universe. It is the Absolute in the first stage of its eternal self-manifestation, i.e., the Absolute as the universal Consciousness.... The 'Reality of realities' is ultimately nothing but the Absolute, but it is not the Absolute in its primordial absoluteness; it is the very first form in which the Absolute begins to manifest itself.

Likewise, the Reality of Muhammad can be called the Light of 'Muhammad for the prophet said that the first thing which God created was his light. This Light was eternal and non-temporal and was manifest in the chain of prophets till its final historical manifestation in the prophet himself.

Since the light was that which God created before anything else and that from which He created everything else, it was the very basis of the creation of the world. And it was 'Light' because it was nothing else than the First Intellect i.e., the Divine Consciousness by which God manifested Himself to Himself in the state of the Absolute Unity. And the Light is in its personal aspect the Reality of Muhammad.

How does the possibility of relativity arise in the Absolute?

The Divine Essence-Beyond-Being include in' Its indistinction and as a potentiality comprised within Its very infinity a principle of relativity; Being,

which generates the world, is the first of the relativities, that from which all the other flow, the function of Being is to deploy in the direction of 'nothingness; or in an 'illusory' mode, the infinity of Beyond-Being, which thus, becomes transmuted into Ontological and existential possibilities.... Relativity is the 'shadow' or 'contour' which allows the Absolute to affirm Itself as such, first before Itself and then in 'innumerable' gushings forth of differentiations.

The chapter of Sincerity (surat al-Ikhlās) beautifully delivers the message of the Essence, al-ahadiyah.

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"Say: He, God is One (A had) God, the Absolute Plenitude Sufficing-unto-Himself (as-Aamad)". It is no doubt in virtue of this last Name--- of Oneness that the chapter is called the Chapter of Sincerity (Surat al-Ikhlās). For sincerity implies an unreserved assent, and for this to be achieved the soul needs to be made aware that the oneness in question is not a desert but a totality, that the One-and-Only is the One-and-All-and that if the indivisible Solitude excludes everything other than Itself, this is because Everything is already there'.

Behind the illusory veil of created plurality there is the One Infinite Plenitude of God in His Indivisible Totality.

Khawaja Ghulam Farid is highly committed to the metaphysical idea of the Indivisible One-and Only'. He says:

Discard the worthless falsehood, Remember the sole Reality. Except the essential One, there is mere imperfection. The forged, fake beauty is perishable, ruinous. Whither Majnun, whither Laila. Whither Shireen Farhad. Things totality beside God is annihilative, unfounded. Without divine love, there is repulsive, thundering antagonism. Farid understand. Always remain free from the non-divine.

Get rid of the craving for other than God; everything is pseudo-thought. Whither Laila, whither Majnun, whither Sohni Mahinwal. Whither Ranjhan, whither Kheras, whither Heer Sayal. Whither Sassi whither Punnu, whither the tale of anguish and suffering. Whither Saifal, whither Fairies whither that

parting and meeting. Except the essential One, all things are ephemeral. Anything besides God is false, undoubtedly, a concocted lie.

The existence and activity of total things is illusory; the Reality is Omnipotent, all else is powerless.

Each instant concentrate on the Real; undoubtedly this is the Committed Way.

Letter Alif alone is enough for me; set aside your sophistic ramblings. Alif has captivated my heart.

After establishing the principle of 'the Indivisible One-and Only' which in the religious language means transcendence of God, Khawaja Ghulam Farid moves to affirm that the 'One-and Only' is the 'One-and All.' He says:

One is, One is, One is; each breath yearns for the One. The one dwells in each place, whether high or low. The One is Outward, the One is Inward; all else is annihilative. He who considers the One as two is veiled, polytheist.

Lovers know the Omnipresence of Punnaal with certainty. The Friend's demonstration is in each form: be Heavens, earth.

Laudation to the conduct of the Beautiful, who descendeth in each form. Understand and recognize and do not consider it non-divine; all form is

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sure manifestation. Do ascertain, don't ramble: Ka'bah (House of God), Qibla (Direction of prayer), Dair (idol-temple), Dawara (Sikh place of worship), mosque, temple are identical Light.

Recognize the Essence in all forms: do not place the other beside Reality. Neither there is Adam nor Satan: it has become a totally fabricated story. Without God there are mere thoughts: do not associate heart with the other. Each move means unity; do not crave for the other side.

The immanence of Beautiful Friend Punnaal is manifest everywhere. Know that the First, the Last, the Outward, the Inward is His manifestation.

It is pertinent to note that both transcendence and immanence are human viewpoints pertaining to the understanding of the 'Supreme Principle which is neither one nor the other. .

'In itself, the Supreme Principle is neither transcendent nor immanent. It "is That which is" only in relation to Manifestation may one speak either of transcendence or immanence... transcendence annihilates, reduces or diminishes the manifested; immanence on the contrary ennobles dilates or magnifies it'.

Khawaja Ghulam Farid's understanding of the Absolute as the Essence (al-ahadiyah) and as the Divinity (al-wahidiyah) becomes precisely formulated in his metaphysical conception of tawhid. He manifests an intellectual understanding of the idea beyond the exoteric constriction of it. He says:

Everlastingly repent and seek forgiveness; remain constantly spiteful about innovation and polytheism; be purely unitarian, clearly singular.

Farid, duality is a false pretext.

Shelve jurisprudence, principles. kalam, lexicon, logic, syntax and accident for tawhid is high-minded. Mullahs impute contrary meanings to the message of verse, teaching and hadith. They are proud of mere sound. Undoubtedly, Ibn 'Arabi and Mansur impart heart-knowledge. The manifest Unity is in substance and accidents; in secret of esoterism and exoterism. It is apparent and not hidden. Remain ascertaining; accept the Faridian tradition and be delighted.

Consider all evidence as real. Unity is the story of love. Understand and reflect on the unity behind the veil of multiplicity. Do eradicate resentment and grief. Truly understand the Friend as Formless. By hiding askance light Hijazi, He has manifested in each form. The otherness is sacrilegious. Inherit the tradition of Truth. Do real ceaseless struggle and become exalted victor. This Faridi Way of Sufism, the tradition of tawhid is strange. It is relishing, delectable and contemporaneous. Leave long distant modes.

Any one who is convinced of tawhid is our bosom friend. The receptivity of the purified self makes it capable of knowing the realities.

Farid, Face of God remaineth; all else is annihilative, ephemeral and disintegrative.

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Tawhid is essentially expressed in the doctrine of Shahadah which is the fountainhead of Islam. Khawaja Ghulam Farid says:

The "negation" tradition of the religious Way is the kernel of the entire Arab heritage. It is evident in the teachings, hadith and Qur'an. Learn to be thyself and cast away the craving for the other. The majestic Fakhr-e-Jehan advises to remain in the tracks of Ibn "Arabi. Unmindful, devotee, neglectful, reader, virtuous, vicious, faithful, infidel: all is the Splendor of the Primordial Light. He is Ahad, He is Ahmad. Wins the heart while hiddenly manifest in Meem. Farid, keep constant watch.

From this inward, esoteric and intellectual point of view Shahadah means: 'There is no divinity (or reality, or absolute) outside the only Divinity (or Reality or Absolute) and Muhammad (the Glorified, the Perfect) is the Envoy (the mouthpiece, the intermediary, the manifestation, the symbol) of the Divinity.' The entire Shahadah demonstrates that 'God alone is' and 'all things are attached to God'. 'All manifestation and so all that is relative is attached to the Absolute.

'The Shahadah-- "There is no divinity (reality, quality) but the sole Divinity (reality, Quality) "--which in the first place signifies the exclusive and extinguishing primacy of the Sovereign Good, assumes in esoterism an inclusive and participatory signification; applied to a given positive phenomenon; it will mean: this particular existence or this particular quality--this miracle of being or of consciousness or of beauty--cannot be other than the miracle of the Existence or the Consciousness or the Quality of God, since precisely there is no other Existence, Consciousness or Quality, by the very terms of the Shahadah. And it is this truth that lies at the basis of such theopathic expressions-- of the highest level-- as "I am the Truth" (ana 'l-Haqq) of the illustrious Al-Hallaj, or "Glory be to me" (subhani) of the no less illustrious Abu Yazid al-Bistami. It goes without saying that in ordinary language, the first Shahadah... is connected with Transcendence, without in any way excluding a certain causal existentiating and efficient Immanence

which is essential for Islamic unitarianism. But it is in the second Shahadah—"Muhammad (the perfect Manifestation) is His Envoy (His unitive prolongation)" that we meet with the direct expression, or the formulation-symbol of Immanence and thus of the mystery of Union or Identity'.

The metaphysical conception of tawhid opens the door to the doctrine of Oneness of Being (wahdat al-wujud). The term Oneness of Being (wahdat al-wujud) simply means that 'there is only one Being, and all existence is nothing but the manifestation or outward radiance of that One Being. Hence "everything other than the One Being" that is whole cosmos in all its spatial and temporal extension is non-existent in itself, though it may be considered to exist through Being. Khawaja Ghulam Farid considers the sensible world as not-self, imagination and dream. He says:

The world is fancy, imagination and dream; all forms are marked on water. If you ask about Reality, then listen, understand and pay heed. The

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Unity encompasses like sea wherein all multiplicity is bubble-faced. Duality has no essential reality; know yourself that duality is not everlasting. The airy duality vanishes; well, the water remains the same water. —

These forms and properties are not real in themselves but are manifestations of the Reality. In other words, 'reality is not a subjective illusion, whim or caprice but is an 'objective' illusion. It 'is an unreality standing on a firm ontological basis'. One could say that 'the world of being and becoming (kawn) is an imagination but it is, in truth, Reality itself'.

The doctrine of the Oneness of Being (wahdat al-wujud) accounts for both the undifferentiated Reality and the differentiated one and gives a metaphysical vision of wholeness. 'Thus God, although One in His Essence, is multiple in forms.' Khawaja Ghulam Farid spells this metaphysical idea in numerous verses.

He says:

Understand reflectively and do not consider it as other. All form is His Glory. The openly manifest Friend is the First, the Last, the Outward and the Inward.

Friend is not hidden, Farid. Everywhere He is openly manifest Darkness in all-pervasive light. Only it has been named differently.

Discard the style of apprehension and risk. There is no other except one God. In the interior and the exterior there is the everlasting existence of Truth, the existence of Reality. There is no other except Thou. There is absolutely no odour of the non-Divine. There is permanent One and not two. Be with One, discard otherness.

Face of God remaineth Farid; all else is annihilative, ephemeral and disintegrative.

The mysteries of Oneness of Being are remarkable. They are known by the dealers of Unity who behold the real Sinai theopany in each and every existent.

The entranced lover exists beyond disdain. Be Bistami by saying 'Glory be to Me'. Say 'I am the Truth' and be Mansur.

All that is, is obviously manifest. How can I acknowledge except Him. The murshid, after full verification, imparted instruction on Oneness of Being.

Oneness of Being has made me realize a noble tradition.

After imbibing learning of Oneness of Being, the hidden intricacies were disclosed.

The religion of Being is imperative; all else is in wane, conceit. I have seen with the 'Eye of Certainty'. The same is called the passion of the lovers.

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Khawaja Ghulam Farid maintains a subtle distinction between the soul or nafs and the Spirit or ruh. The former is individual whereas the latter is universal. He follows the metaphysical tradition which considers the

‘intellect’ and ‘spiritual’ as more or less equivalent terms. Both ‘body and soul are purely human and belong to the ‘individual’ domain, the Spirit or Intellect is ‘universal’ and transcends the human state as such... the Latin Spiritus vel Intellectus (‘Spirit’ or ‘Intellect’) corresponds to the Arabic Ruh. Anima (‘Soul’) corresponds to the Arabic nafs’. Resultantly, the realization of the soul or nafs is individual whereas the realization of the Spirit or ruh is universal.

Khawaja Ghulam Farid, under the guidance of his spiritual master, attained both mystic and metaphysical realization. He expresses it thus:

The Master disclosed all secrets. Made me forget reason, thinking and all forms of comprehension. Taught me sobriety in drunkenness. Made me understand the entire voyage of spiritual elevation.

The cup-bearer made me perceive one intricacy. Understand the Beloved as near. At all places and at each moment, do not be oblivious of the Beloved even for an instant. In order to captivate the heart of Farid, he became Fakhr-ud-Din.

I completely owe my Master, Fakhr with whom I accomplish nuptial rites. Why should I grieve when I belong to him. The Friend has made me understand everything.

Fakhruddin made me understand all the deeper secrets of faqr (Sufism). He has fully demonstrated the contraction and expansion in states and stations. The cordial friendships and sociable companionships have withered away. Farid, since love captivated me, all other activities have finished.

The time of eternal bliss dawned. Fakhr-e-Jehan laid bare the principles of gnosis. The harmonious disposition of Farid understood the language of the birds.

Fakhr-e-Jehan made me perceive one tradition. The terrestrial became
1 celestial. The darkness turned light upon light.

The perfect Pir complete in gnosis made me perceive the intricacy. Farid, the Face of God remaineth; all else is annihilative, ephemeral and disintegrative.

The Master taught the total doctrine, Taifuri (of Bayazid Bistami) and Mansuri (of Mansu Hallaj). The Sinai theopany became openly manifest. Everything is Aiman (the valley of Mount Sinai) and Meeqataan (the .moments of communication with Lord).

In fondness of sweet Fakhruddin, each breath of mine emits smoke, Farid attained union after becoming extinct.

Khawaja Ghulam Farid consistently maintains a distinction between

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mystic realization and metaphysical realization. Mystic or individual realization is by virtue of self, ego, soul or nafs. It realizes the way from man to God. It manifests a temporary identity with the Lord (Rabb) for a complete identity, in principle, is not possible in the axis servant-Lord. Such an experience momentarily suppresses the soul or nafs of the subject of experience and in this single unanalysable unity the ordinary dichotomy of subject and object ceases to exist and. there is a 'sense of the unreality of serial time'. When the mystic state fades away the mystic returns back to the normal level of selfhood which includes the distinction between subject and object and the reality of the serial time. But such an experience is restricted entirely to the individual domain for the nature of the mystic state is in no manner supra-individual. Mystic state stands for 'indefinite extension of purely individual possibility'_ spread on a broader spectrum than ordinarily supposed by the psychologists but it only leads to partial realization. This realization of the soul or nafs is no match to the realization of the Self which is universal for in the latter it is not the soul or nafs but the Spirit or Intellect which attains universal realization. Unlike a mystic who returns to his ordinary self or the precise limitations of individuality, a man who has attained metaphysical realization does not return to his 'habitual selfhood but achieves a complete emancipation from the limitations of individuality. His human overlay no more remains permanent, fixed and unalterable but becomes impermanent, fleeting and ephemeral. Khawaja Ghulam Farid says:

The heart is engrossed within imagination. I cannot bear any differentiation. This imagination is imminent union and this is perfection and not madness. I have openly witnessed the Supreme Principle in every nook

and corner. This witnessing is so glaringly evident that I cannot disengage myself even for a moment. That what was spatial has become without signs. The names and customs of the ages have left me forlorn. O God! What should I call myself. Neither there is openness nor hiddenness; neither there is speech nor thought. Neither the body has remained nor the life-impulse; how can I blame my sense and senses. There is double

reflection for fana' (extinction) is baqa' (subsistence) and baqa' (subsistence) is fana' (extinction). Except the ultimate where is that and you; where is yes and yea? Sometime there are loud offensives; at times there are great falterings. There are many types of prattles leading to meaningless discourse. Farid, the lust has been uprooted and I have become incapacitated as a straw. Be quiet fro there will be tumult in determining who absolutely merits or who does not merit.

The ultimate aim of the Self is to see His own Essence in the 'human' medium. Once the soul or nafs has withered away, the self-identity of mystic realization is transformed into the Self- identity of metaphysical realization which is understood as 'the Supreme Identity'. Such identity cannot be termed as philosophical monism though it can be called sapiential monism. From the purely metaphysical point of view, this identity is essentially covered under the principle of non-duality. Man subsists in the Divine Consciousness as realized possibility. It is pertinent

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to note that originally man is nothing but a mere name of the Divine unrealized possibility. It is by virtue of freedom and grace that this possibility is partially realized in the mystic state and completely realized in the universal one. In the mystic state the principle of fana' (extinction) and baqa' (subsistence) has a single reflection whereas in metaphysical realization this principle has a double reflection. Fana' (extinction) is baqa' (subsistence) in the sense that nothing remains of man as such except the Spirit which is not his; and baqa' (subsistence) is fana' (extinction) in the sense that the baqa' (subsistence) or the feeling of 'I am-ness' is an illusion for in the ultimate analysis it is only the Reality which can say 'I am'. Thus, it is the Spirit which says: 'I am the Truth'; 'Glory be to Me! How great is My Majesty.' In other words, 'the final end and ultimate return of the gnostics— though their

entites remain immutably fixed is that the Real is identical with them, while they do not exist!

From the metaphysical point of view 'I' is an imagination, dream and illusion but it is not vain, groundless or false. 'I' is not the Reality itself but it vaguely and indistinctly reflects the latter on the level of imagination. It is 'a symbolic reflection of something truly real'. It is essentially a dream-symbol which needs to be interpreted and whose interpretation shall lead to the real I. Man does not see in a dream the Reality itself but an 'imaginal' form of the Reality and by interpretation he has to take back this symbol to its Origin. The Prophet says. 'All men are asleep (in this world); only when they die, do they wake up'. This dying is to the soul or nafs wherein man realizes that the reality of the I does not belong to him but to the Spirit which is identical with the Divine Essence. Thus, the I, which is essentially Spirit, fully unravels itself once the 'I' grounded in soul or nafs has withered away. And, this I is nothing but the Reality itself. The veracity of this metaphysical truth dawns when one has achieved metaphysical realization.

Iqbal envisaged the problem on the individualistic level and did not transcend to the universal realm. It is in the form of a category-mistake in the sense that he tries to place the metaphysical truths at the level of the mystical plane and criticised them for being pantheistic. He interprets the utterance of Mansur Hallaj: 'I am the Truth' on the mystic plane whereas Khawaja Ghulam Farid excels in interpreting and realizing the truth of this assertion at the metaphysical level to which it rightfully belongs. What is the secret of Mansur Hallaj's assertion 'ana 'l-Haqq,' I am the Truth'? The secret revealed in the process of metaphysical realization is that the Self withdraws from the 'servant-Lord' polarity and resides in its own transpersonal being. The subject-object dichotomy or complementarism is transcended by virtue of pure intellect or Spirit which is identical with the Divine Essence.

"If soul is the element in man that relates to God, Spirit is the element that

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is identical with Him--not with his personal mode, for on the celestial plane God and soul remain distinct, but with God's mode that is infinite.

Spirit is the Atman that is Brahman, the aspect of man that is the Buddha-nature, the element in man which, exceeding the soul's fully panoply is that 'something in the soul that is uncreated and uncreated' (Eckhart). It is the true man in Lin Chi the Ch'an master's assertion that 'beyond the mass of redish flesh is the true man who has no title; and the basis for the most famous of Sufi claims: Mansur Hallaj's assertion 'ana'l-Haqq,' I am the Absolute Truth, or the True Reality.... Peripherally Spirit is without boundaries; internally it is without barriers. It knows neither walls that encompass nor walls that divide"

Mansur Hallaj delved in this secret by virtue of the inner illumination. 'His ana'l-Haqq (I am the Truth) has become perennial witness to the fact that Sufism is essentially gnosis and ultimately it is God within us who utters "I" once the veil of otherness has been removed. It is a process of annihilation wherein the Divine Self is alone real. Mansur Hallaj says: 'You have wasted your life in cultivating your spiritual nature: What has become of annihilation in Unification (al fana fil tawhid). It is at this stage that even man's own individual self as testifier to the Shahadah ceases to exist for "the soul is not competent to voice the Shahadah.... The Witness must be, not the self, but the Self.' It is in this ultimate sense that Mansur Hallaj says: "Whoso claimeth to affirm God's Oneness thereby setteth up another beside Him." No one can affirm truly the Oneness of God for the very process of affirmation creates a duality through the intrusion of one's own person. 'Who is it that can bear witness that there is no god but God, no reality but the Reality? And for the Sufis the answer to this question lies in the Divine Name ash-Shahid (the witness) which, significantly enough, comes next to al-Haqq (the Truth, the Reality) in the most often recited litany of the Names. If God alone is, no testimony can be valid except His. It is hypocrisy to affirm the Oneness of Being from a point of view which is itself in contradiction with the truth'. There is nothing beside God. 'If there were anything which, in the Reality of the Eternal present, could show itself to be other than God, then God would not be Infinite, for Infinity would consist of God and that particular thing. Thus, the Self, the pure intellect or the Spirit says ana'l-haqq (I am the Truth) and it was obliviousness of this metaphysical truth which led people to crucify the great Saint.

Metaphysical realization is the process through which man ceases to be. The final goal is union.

"If sacred knowledge involves the whole being of man, it also concerns the giving up of this being for its goal is union. The miracle of human existence is that man can undo the existentiating and cosmogonic process inwardly so as to cease to exist, man can experience that "annihilation" (The fana' of the Sufis) which enable him to experience union in the ultimate sense. Although love, as the force "that moves the heavens and the stars", plays a major role in attracting man to the "abode of the

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Beloved" and realized knowledge is never divorced from the warmth of its rays, it is principal knowledge alone that can say neti neti until the Intellect within man which is the divine spark at the centre of his being realizes the Oneness of Reality which alone is, the Reality before whose "Face" all things perish according to the Qur'anic verse, "All things perish save His Face."

Thus, it is the immanent Divinity, pure Intellect or Spirit within man which says: 'Glory be to me' and 'I am the Truth'.

'Man qua man cannot have union with God. But man can, through spiritual realization and with the aid of Heaven, participate in the lifting of that veil of separation so that the immanent Divinity within him can say "I" and the illusion of a separate self, which is the echo and reverberation upon the planes of cosmic existence of principal possibilities contained in the Source, ceases to assert itself as another and independent "I" without of course the essential reality of the person whose roots are contained in the Divine Infinitude ever being

annihilated 'the goal of sacred knowledge is deliverance and union, its instrument the whole being of man and its meaning the fulfillment of the end for which man and in fact the cosmos were created'.

Before we conclude, it is exceedingly imperative to reiterate the point that Iqbal's rigorous approach to man---God polarity is purely derived from the individualistic dimension and not the metaphysical. Also, his

apprehension of pantheism has no foundation in the metaphysical realm. Metaphysical pantheism, if we can use this term, neither denies the transcendence of God nor the degrees of reality. Though the separation between creator and creature is rigorous yet 'by compensation there is an aspect which admits the created and the Uncreated to be linked, since nothing that exists can be other than a manifestation of the Principle or an objectivization of the Self; "everything is Atma"... If philosophical pantheism had this aspect of things in view-- which it has not, being ignorant of the degrees of reality and ignorant of transcendence-- it would be legitimate as a synthetic or inclusive perspective. The polemics of the . theologians readily confuse these two kinds of pantheism.'

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