

SALVE REGINA UNIVERSITY

MUHAMMAD IQBAL AND THE PERFECT MAN:
THE RESTORATION OF MUSLIM DIGNITY THROUGH THE INTEGRATION OF
PHILOSOPHY, POETRY, POLITICS AND CONSERVATIVE ISLAM

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE HUMANITIES PROGRAM
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

APRIL 2007

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my wife, Linda Kay Nix, without whose patience and long suffering this work would never have been completed. Her understanding and encouragement during the long Icelandic winters when I burned the midnight (and noontime) whale-oil in the pursuit of an understanding of Muhammad Iqbal and Islam are responsible for the completion of this work.

I acknowledge and appreciate the patience and direction my committee provided in the preparation of this dissertation. Dan Cowdin Ph.D. (Mentor), Clark Merrill Ph.D. (Reader) and James Hersh Ph.D. (Reader) provided insightful guidance in the development and direction this work ultimately took. I especially appreciated their expertise in their respective fields and their persistence in keeping in touch with me as my Navy career took me all over the world.

ABSTRACT

MUHAMMAD IQBAL AND THE PERFECT MAN: THE INTEGRATION OF PHILOSOPHY, POETIC ART, POLITICAL IDEAL AND CONSERVATIVE ISLAM IN THE RESTORATION OF MUSLIM DIGNITY

Muhammad Iqbal lived at multiple human crossroads: of history as British Colonial power waned in India, of the human relationship with technology during the crisis of Modernism, and of the awakening of political Islam to its mortal conflict with the West. Iqbal perceived an attack on human dignity due to the “Mega-Technique” of Colonialism. In this dissertation, I present an inter-disciplinary humanities study of Iqbal’s prescription for the restoration of Muslim dignity: the Perfect Man. I will demonstrate how his philosophy, poetic art, political idealism, and conservative Muslim faith are integrated in this concept and how it contributed to the establishment of the state of Pakistan and the contemporary Muslim identity.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND DEDICATION.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
CONTENTS.....	v

Chapter	Page
1. INTRODUCTION: MUHAMMAD IQBAL AND THE PERFECT MAN: THE INTEGRATION OF PHILOSOPHY, POETIC ART, POLITICAL ACTION, AND CONSERVATIVE ISLAM IN THE RESTORATION OF MUSLIM DIGNITY.....	1
Introduction	
Iqbal's Life and Work	
Researchable Question	
Research Rationale	
The Humanities and Technology Relating to Iqbal	
Originality of Topic	
Methodology	
Conclusion	
2. DIGNITY AND CONTEXT: IQBAL'S MOTIVATION FOR THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE PERFECT MAN.....	22
Introduction	
A Hegelian View of Human Dignity	
The Historical Relationship Between India and the British	
British Globalization as a Utilitarian Mega-Machine	
British Globalization as a Dehumanizing Factor	

Chapter	Page
Britain's Civilizing Role	
The Mutiny of 1857	
Attitudes of British Racial Superiority	
Responsibility for Historical Conditions	
Muslim Passivity	
The Passivity of Allah	
Sufism: A Passive Muslim Philosophy	
Iqbal's Social Context	
Iqbal's Personal Journey	
Conclusion	
3. RESTORING MUSLIM DIGNITY: IQBAL'S PHILOSOPHY OF THE PERFECT MAN.....	67
Introduction	
Iqbal's Perception of the Early Twentieth Century	
Iqbal's Philosophy of the Perfect Man	
The Need for the Perfect Man	
The Characteristics of the Perfect Man	
The Need for Muslim Reformation	
The Three Stage Path to Perfect Manhood	
Khudi (Self)	
Action	
Freedom	
Hardness	

Emotional Attributes: Love, Passion, and Desire

Faqr (Indifference)

Sua'l (Beggary)

Faithfulness to Allah

The Ummah: The Perfect Community

Perfect Men in Social Context

Characteristics of the Ummah, the Perfect Community

Philosophical Foundations of Iqbal's Perfect Man

Eastern Conceptions of the Perfect Man

Al Jili

Rumi

Western Foundations of the Perfect Man

Hegel

Nietzsche

Bergson

McTaggart

Conclusion

4. RESTORING MUSLIM DIGNITY: THE PERFECT MAN AS A
RELIGIOUS MAN OF ACTION..... 118

Introduction

Iqbal's Religious Faith

Nineteenth Century Islamic Reformers

Sayyid Ahmad Khan

Jamal Al-Din Afghani

The Pan-Islamic Content of Iqbal's Thought

The East West Divide

The Need for a Charismatic Leader

Nationalism and Pan-Islam

The Centrality of Religion for Political Reform

The Need for an Inner Change in Muslims

Philosophy and Science

Islam as the Source of Contemporary Western Culture

The Inherent Superiority of Islam

The adoption of Urdu as India's National Language

Conclusion

5. IQBAL'S POETRY: THE TOOL OF THE PERFECT MAN..... 159

Introduction

Poetry in Islam and the East

Poetry as Dissent

The *Mushaira* and *Tarannum*

The Development of Iqbal's Poetic Gift

Iqbal's Poetic Self-Perception

Poetry as Political Dissent in India

Conclusion

Chapter	Page
6.	179
RESTORING MUSLIM DIGNITY: THE SPIRITUAL FATHER OF PAKISTAN – IQBAL’S POLITICAL ACTIVITY	
Introduction	
1900 – 1914: India, London, Germany	
1914 – 1919: World War I	
1919 – 1924: Post War Political Crisis	
1925 – 1930: Participation in the Political Process	
The Communal Problem	
Iqbal and the Legislative Assembly	
1927 – 1936: The Simon Commission and Round Table Conferences	
Iqbal and the Demand for a Separate Muslim State	
Iqbal and the London Round Table Conferences	
1937 – 1938: Ill Health, Political Influence, and Death	
Conclusion	
7.	225
CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION	
Introduction	
Significant Findings	
Contextual Issues	
The Hegelian Issue of Dignity	
Geopolitical Issues	
Iqbal’s Religious Agenda	
Iqbal’s Poetry: The Tool of the Perfect Man	

Chapter	Page
Iqbal's Political Activity	
Summary	
Implications of the Study for the Contemporary World	
Suggestions for Further Research	
Conclusion	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	239

CHAPTER 1

MUHAMMAD IQBAL AND THE PERFECT MAN: THE RESTORATION OF MUSLIM DIGNITY THROUGH THE INTEGRATION OF PHILOSOPHY POETRY, POLITICS AND CONSERVATIVE ISLAM

Introduction

...In 1934-35, he [Heidegger] was to argue that the poet, the philosopher, and the state founder were the authentic creators necessary for bringing forth the new historical world at the proper time. (Zimmerman 1990, 114)

Muhammad Iqbal was a poet, a philosopher, a political activist and is known today in Pakistan as the spiritual father of that country. Through his poetry, philosophical thought and political activity he worked for nearly thirty years to bring about cultural change in his native India and a new historical reality in his part of the globe. That new historical world was established in 1947, ten years after his death, with the establishment of the Muslim homeland and state of Pakistan. Iqbal perceived an attack on the human dignity of Muslims as a result of the occupation and exploitation of his homeland through British Imperialism. His doctrine of the Perfect Man, incorporating his philosophical, political, and religious views was his prescription for the restoration of that dignity, which he effectively communicated through his popular poetry. This dissertation presents an inter-disciplinary humanities study of this concept, examining its philosophical, religious and political foundations and its impact on Muslim dignity, as well as its continuing political and human influence.

In this chapter, I will introduce my dissertation topic, provide a short biography of Iqbal and his thought, discuss the researchable question, and present my research rationale. I will also discuss how this dissertation reveals original insight into Iqbal's thought and the methodology I have adopted, incorporating elements of humanities qualitative research, history of ideas, and a classical hermeneutic in attempting to explicate Iqbal and his impact on the modern world.

Iqbal's Life and Work

Born in Kashmir, Muhammad Iqbal lived from 1877 to 1938, an extremely volatile period of world history. A citizen of a mature British colonial world, he was educated in the best British and Western intellectual tradition in India, Cambridge, and Munich. During his life, he would observe the crisis of Western culture demonstrated in two world wars as well as the decline of British Colonial rule in India. His presence at the nexus of these historical events provided an opportunity for Iqbal to make a significant contribution to the future of the Muslims of India and the world.

Very early in his career, Iqbal was renowned as a poet. Much of his intellectual dialogue and exhortation were conducted through the medium of his poetry in the Urdu and Persian languages. He published hundreds of poems on a variety of subjects, including the themes of "self-hood" (*Khudi*), the "Perfect Man," the resurgence of Islam, and the failures of the Western culture. It was initially through his poetry that Iqbal gained an audience in India, with his passionate reflections on the Islamic legacy and his novel philosophical forays finding a sympathetic hearing. Even today, his poetry is put to music and sung in the Islamic world. While his philosophical musings are often difficult to follow, the beauty and passion of his verse communicated to a deep emotional longing

within the Muslims of his native India, a longing for a return to Islam's historic greatness. Reynold Nicholson notes the emotive power of Iqbal's poetry in the introduction to his translation of Iqbal's *Asrar-I-Khudi*:

....In the poem, naturally, this philosophy presents itself under a different aspect. Its audacity of thought and phrase is less apparent, its logical brilliancy dissolves in the glow of feeling and imagination, and it wins the heart before taking possession of the mind. (Iqbal 1915, xxx)

Iqbal took advantage of the popularity of his poetry to communicate his religious, political and philosophical ideas to a wide audience.

Iqbal was also a philosopher. Earning a Master of Arts degree in philosophy in India under the guidance of the well-known British scholar, Sir Thomas Arnold, he earned awards in that discipline, and served as a professor of philosophy at Oriental College in Lahore (1901 – 1905). He left India to attend Cambridge University (1905-8) where he studied under the British neo-Hegelian, John E.M. McTaggart and James Ward (Schimmel 1963, 37). While in Britain, he also wrote a scholarly dissertation, *The Development of Metaphysics in Persia*, which earned him the Ph.D. degree at the University of Munich in 1907. During his time in England, he also studied sociology, law, and politics and had opportunity to lecture publicly on Islam (Beg 2004, 3-20). He experienced firsthand the benefits of Western education and technology, while his studies enabled him to interact deeply with a wide range of Western intellectuals.

Iqbal returned to India in 1908 and later questioned the value of the time he spent in Europe. "I dwelt a while with the Westerners, sought much and saw scarcely"(Iqbal 1932, 44). Yet as a result of his studies, he developed a new philosophy based upon the Persian concept of *Khudi*, selfhood or ego. "...What then is life...It is individual: its highest form so far is the Ego (*Khudi*) in which the individual becomes a self-contained

exclusive centre” (Vahid 1948, 43). He built a complete system around the concept, encouraging the Muslims of colonial India to strengthen their selfhood and to fight for their cultural and religious heritage, thus becoming a “Perfect Man.” This Perfect Man would exemplify *Khudi*, as well as a number of other important characteristics, including *Faqr* (worldly detachment), action, and intense devotion to *Allah*. This most advanced personality could be experienced only through obedience and self-control that would culminate in vice-regency to God (Iqbal 1915, 72).

Be a conqueror of earth; that alone is worthy of a man.
Thou art soft like a rose. Become hard as stone,
That thou mayst be the foundation of the wall of the garden!
Build thy clay into a Man,
Build thy Man into a World!
(Iqbal 1915, 89)

Although he eventually rejected much of Western philosophy and attributed the best of it to Medieval Muslim scholars, he utilized that philosophy to develop a coherent apology for his Muslim faith in both poetry and prose. A good deal of his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, a series of lectures he delivered beginning in 1928, involves a continuing dialogue between Eastern and Western thinkers. Many commentators comment that Iqbal’s Perfect Man bears a striking similarity to Nietzsche’s Superman.

Iqbal became involved in politics soon after his return from England in 1908. Having been trained in the West, he was aware of its cultural strengths as well as its weaknesses. He was especially sensitive to the evils of Colonialism.

This knowledge, this wisdom, this statesmanship, this governance
They suck blood and teach the tenets of equality.
Unemployment and promiscuity and inebriation and destitution
Are these not victories enough for the civilization of the West?
(Iqbal 1935, 435)

Iqbal was aware of the political intrigues of the British who sought to maintain their power and influence in India by preventing a political union between Muslims and Hindus (Iqbal 1932, 78). To address the evils of British colonial rule and represent his community, he stood for election and was elected to the Lahore Legislative Council as representative of the Muslim community in 1926, and served as the President of the All India Muslim League and Conference in 1930. He also represented Muslim interests at the second and third Round Table Conferences in London in 1931 and 1932, which attempted to forge a solution to the Indian communal problem and discussed the future of a post-colonial India (Iqbal 1932, 35-39).

The valuable advice that Iqbal gave to the British statesmen, Mr. Gandhi and his friends at the Round Table Conference will always be remembered with gratitude by Muslims. Iqbal's work at the Conference will ever adorn the pages of Indian history because of his grasp of the intricate problems of the various races in India, their civilization and culture. (Iqbal 1932, 35-39)

Iqbal consistently opposed colonial rule of India, but his views on Indian self-rule evolved over time. In his early poetry and thought, Iqbal advocated a bi-cultural, post-colonial India, although he was opposed to nationalism and the nation-state as inimical to Islam. Later, he came to believe that the rights of India's Muslims would be protected only through the establishment of a semi-independent or independent Muslim homeland. His political demand for an independent Muslim homeland and the poetic expression of the hopes and dreams of India's Muslims earned him the title, "The Spiritual father of Pakistan." Although he opposed western nationalism and its imposition on the Muslim east, he believed the existence of a Muslim nation was a necessary stage on the path to a world-wide Muslim *Ummah* (Iqbal 1974, 159). Although he would not live to see the creation of Pakistan, he strongly influenced a generation of Indian Muslims and the future

leaders of that nation, chief among them Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the *Quaid-I Azam* (great leader), Pakistan's first political leader.

Above all, Iqbal was a deeply religious Muslim. The effects of World War I and colonialism caused him to question the impact of Western culture and influence in his country and convinced him of the need for a different approach to the world's problems. Iqbal found human dignity and meaning in Islam. Consistent with an Islamic belief that God judges Muslims through their historical and political situation (Armstrong 2002, 152), he felt that his countrymen's status as colonial subjects to the British Empire was a result of their neglect and disobedience of true Islam. In his poetry, Iqbal was often as critical of his fellow Muslims as he was of the West.

We, who keep the citadel of Islam
Have become infidels by neglecting the watchword of Islam.
The ancient Saki's¹ bowl is shattered,
The wine party of the Hijaz² is broken up.
The Ka'ba is filled with idols,
Infidelity mocks at our Islam.
(Iqbal 1915, 132)

He therefore pursued a personal struggle to revitalize the dignity of Indian Muslims through a renaissance of their faith. He belongs to an august line of Islamic reformers who attempted to arouse Muslims to their responsibilities to the historic and traditional faith of the Prophet Muhammad. These reformers are responsible for the development of political and radical strains in contemporary Islam. Such Islamic luminaries as the eighteenth century Saudi Arabian prophet Abdul Wahhab, the nineteenth century Jamal al-din Afghani (d. 1897) and the twentieth century Abdul Ala Maudoodi (b. 1903) called for a rejection of modernism, a return to the practices of the prophet, and even a war

¹ The Saki is the server of the wine, a common metaphor in Persian poetry.

² Muslim Arabia.

between the civilizations of the West and Islam (Schimmel 1963, 29-30). During the 1950's, Sayyid Qutb, the Egyptian Muslim dissident, would include the United States among the enemies of Islam. Iqbal utilized his poetry and his published articles to voice his opposition to the West and to advise his co-religionists of their role in the conflict he envisioned.

Against Europe I protest,
And the attraction of the West:
Woe to Europe and her charm,
Swift to capture and disarm!
Europe's hordes, with flame and fire
Desolate the world entire,
Architect of sanctuaries,
Earth awaits rebuilding; rise!
 Out of leaden sleep
 Out of slumber deep
 Arise!
 Out of slumber deep,
 Arise!

(Iqbal 1948, 76).

Iqbal believed the only hope for the world lay in the "Perfect Man," exemplifying *khudi* (empowered personhood) on the part of faithful Muslim men and women, the global victory of Islam, and the peace that would result with the institution of an Islamic state. In light of the shortcomings of Western technology, culture and colonialism, he believed that only Islam could restore human dignity to the world (Iqbal 1936, 163).

While Iqbal was opposed to the Western culture, he was not opposed to its technology. He understood the benefits of science and technology and encouraged the world's Muslims to work hard to acquire its power. To make it palatable to his co-religionists, he taught that the West's technology was a result of Islam's cultural history. Throughout his poetry and writings, he points out that the West's scientific and philosophical advancement has built upon the discoveries and thought of Eastern Islamic

sages. He therefore taught that Muslims should study hard and learn the best of science, economics, and philosophy in order to create a new world of peace, a world ruled by Islam.

For the Westerners, intelligence is the stuff of life
For the Easterners, love is the mystery of all being.
Only through love intelligence gets to know God,
Love's labors find firm grounding in intelligence.
It has the power to design another world
Then rise, and draw the design of a new world
Go, mingle together love and intelligence.

(Iqbal 1932, 58)

Researchable Question

Salve Regina's doctoral program asks the question, "What does it mean to be human in an age of advanced technology?" Muhammad Iqbal confronted this challenge in early Twentieth Century India as he experienced modernism mediated through British colonialism and developed a response that has far reaching consequences. In this dissertation, I will answer the question: "What is Muhammad Iqbal's concept of the Perfect Man and how does it address the issue of the restoration of Muslim dignity in the face of Western technology and colonialism?" I will examine this question through the multiple lenses that Iqbal utilized to address the cultural situation in his native India: philosophy, poetry, and politics as mediated through his conservative and religious perspective.

Research Rationale

Modernism and the response to Modernism in the West took many forms during the early years of the twentieth century. Much of the contemporary research examining the relationship between technology and the human condition has been firmly couched in

Western thought. In light of current history, it is imperative that Westerners understand how the Muslim world has been influenced by Western technology, how Muslims respond to that influence, and how those responses are playing out on the contemporary world stage. I believe Muhammad Iqbal represents a highly educated Muslim who had a good understanding of the West, including its strengths and weaknesses. As noted earlier, he deeply imbibed Western education and philosophy yet rejected it. The study of his concept of the Perfect Man contained in his poetry, philosophy, political activities, and religious viewpoint may provide insight into the thought processes that led to rejection of the West. It may also promote understanding and dialogue between the two cultures with the discovery of dialogue stimulating similarities, shared values, frustrations with the contemporary technological world, and insight on Professor Huntington's widely debated theory of a "Clash of Civilizations."

The Humanities and Technology Relating to Iqbal

Iqbal worked within the Humanities. Philosophy, literature, politics, and religion are all foundational elements of that curriculum. Because of his study and work in these fields, Iqbal was finely tuned to the human condition. The experience of World War I and the dehumanizing effect of the colonial "Mega-Machine" on his Muslim community in India caused him to question the efficacy of the West's technology and its benefit to humanity. While Great Britain attempted to preserve its position and influence in India through various political means, Iqbal seized the opportunity to awaken the Muslim masses to their historical legacy. Serving as an early twentieth century "lone prophet," Iqbal acted to awaken Muslims and Indians to their diminished human dignity. He encouraged them to take action and to powerfully assume their rightful place in the world

through the establishment of a contemporary Muslim political entity in India. His life and work serve as an example of how the humanities can help us understand the effect of technology on people, society and the environment.

Originality of Topic

There is not a great deal of literature in the West on Iqbal. Most of his works are out of print, although some are currently being republished as a result of the surge of interest in the Muslim world created by the events in New York City at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 and the resulting Global War on Terrorism. The Iqbal Academy in Pakistan has commissioned extensive research on Iqbal and published numerous articles and books relating to various aspects of his thought. These articles are not readily available in the West. Members of the academy have published works that demonstrate the relationship of Iqbal's thought to Bergson, Eliot, Martin Buber, and other luminaries. There have been a half dozen research theses in the U.S. since 1954. Most address his views on nationalism and his contribution to the establishment of the state of Pakistan. Only one addresses his concept of the Perfect Man. Titled, "The concept of the Perfect Man in the Thought of Ibn 'Arabi and Muhammad Iqbal: A Comparative Study," Iskandar Arnel's M.A. thesis compared the two philosopher's Perfect Man concept. He concluded that, "...Iqbal was influenced in a number of important ways by Ibn 'Arabi" (OCLC FirstSearch, Dissertation Abstract Online).

My research to date has included all the works by Iqbal that I could locate. Much of his work is out of print, and the ones I did find have come from India and Pakistan, often by "ocean mail." While this has been slow and often frustrating, patience has been rewarded with some excellent works by the author and his commentators.

The Development of Metaphysics in Persia, Iqbal's doctoral dissertation written at Cambridge University and delivered at the University of Munich, has recently come back into print. In this work, Iqbal traces the development of philosophical thought in Persia, tracing it from the ancient Persians (Zoroaster, Mani and Mazdak) to the Islamic Medieval philosophers and their interaction with Greek philosophy. He blames the Sufi mystics with responsibility for the destruction of the Islamic empire due to their adoption of Platonic thought and a quietism that, Iqbal believed, resulted in political weakness.

They taught,

Paradise is for the weak alone,
Strength is but a means to perdition
It is wicked to seek greatness and glory.
Penury is sweeter than princedom...

With the result,

The tiger tribe was exhausted by hard struggles.
They had set their hearts on enjoyment of luxury.
This soporific advice pleased them,
In their stupidity they swallowed the charm of the sheep...
Plato, the prime ascetic and sage
Was one of that ancient flock of sheep...

(Iqbal 1915, 54-56)

Although his father's Muslim religion exhibited a "sufistic tinge" (Ali 1988, 2) and "mystic trend of thought" (Beg 2004, 4) with a lasting influence on his son, Iqbal rejected the passivity and quietism of the Sufis while appreciating their absolute commitment, love and focus on the beloved, God. He was especially attached to the well-known Sufi mystic, Jalal al-din Rumi, who he adopted as his spiritual guide in his poetic work, the *Javid Namah*.

Three important poetic works form the core of Iqbal's philosophical and literary corpus. *The Secrets of the Self* (1915), *The Mysteries of Selflessness* (1918), and *The*

Javid Namah (1932) explicate Iqbal's philosophy of *Khudi*, that self-possessed and energetic ego that exists as a vice-regent of *Allah* within the Muslim community, always seeking to re-establish the ancient glory of Islam. In these poems, Iqbal is very critical of the people of the East, accusing them of abdicating their birthright through laziness and the adoption of Western philosophy.

The pith of life is contained in action,
The delight in creation is the law of life,
Arise and create a new world!
Wrap thyself in flames, be an Abraham...
If one cannot live in a world as beseems a man,
Then it is better to die like the brave.
He that hath a sound heart
Will prove his strength by great enterprises.
'Tis sweet to use love in hard tasks.
And, like Abraham, to gather roses from flames....
(Iqbal 1915, 90-91)

Iqbal produced numerous other poetical works, including *Bang-i-Dara*, *Rumuz-I-Baikhudi*, *Piyam-I-Mashriq*, *Zabur-I-Ajam*, *Bal-I-Jibril*, *Zarb-I-Kalim*, *Pas Chih Bayad Kard*, and *Armughan-I-Hedjaz*. They range from beautiful nature poetry (primarily his pre-England period) to works that engage and emulate the poetry of Western authors. In *Javid Namah*, for instance, Iqbal writes in the style of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, with the Persian poet and mystic Rumi serving as his guide on a journey to heaven even as Dante was guided by Virgil in his journey through hell and purgatory on his way to paradise. In this important work, Iqbal returns to the theme of the rejection of the West, and to the need for an Islamic renaissance.

For Westerners intelligence is the stuff of life,
For Easterners love is the mystery of all being...
The flame of the Europeans is damped down,
Their eyes are perceptive, but their hearts are dead;
They have been sore smitten by their own swords,
Hunted down and slaughtered, themselves the hunters.

Look not for fire and intoxication in their vine;
Not into their heavens shall rise a new age.
It is from your fire that the glow of life comes,
And it is your task to create the new world.

(Iqbal 1932, 57-58)

Possibly Iqbal's most important work is *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*. Published in book form, it consists of a series of seven lectures he delivered at Madras, Hyderabad and Aligarh, beginning in 1928. In these closely reasoned presentations, the author discusses the possibility of religion existing in a scientific world, touches on his philosophy, presents his perceptions of Islam, and discusses the possibility and necessity of bringing it into the modern era.

...The demand for a scientific form of religious knowledge is only natural... I have tried to meet...this urgent demand by attempting to reconstruct Muslim religious philosophy with due regard to the philosophical tradition of Islam and the more recent developments in the various domains of human knowledge. (Iqbal 1974, v – vi)

Throughout the pages of this work, Iqbal engages the great philosophical minds of East and West and concludes with the philosophical question: "Is Religion Possible?" His answer is a resounding yes! In fact, he believes that religion is necessary in light of the contemporary world situation.

There are a number of resources that supplement an understanding of Iqbal. The German scholar Annemarie Schimmel made Iqbal a focus of her life's work and has published a number of Iqbal studies, most notably *Gabriel's Wing*, a survey of his religious thought. The Iqbal Academy in Lahore, Pakistan, has published a number of works written in the East. *The Poet of the East*, by A. Anwar Beg, and *Iqbal: His Poetry and Message*, by Sheikh Akbar Ali, are written by Iqbal's contemporaries. In addition, I

have made use of a number of journal articles published on the Iqbal website, www.allamaiqbal.com, hosted by the Iqbal Academy of Pakistan.

Iqbal developed the philosophy of the Perfect Man, a Muslim who exhibits the characteristic of a strengthened ego or *Khudi*, and communicated it through his passionate poetry. He sought to integrate this concept into the life and thought of his homeland and people as a means of revitalizing their Islamic religion in order to combat the evils he perceived emanating from the West. His work is a powerful force that is still active in Pakistan and much of the Muslim world today. A number of works examine Iqbal's Perfect Man in terms of its history and its relationship to Nietzsche's Superman. None seems to do so, however, through the lens of Islam's response to British colonialism, Bentham and Mill's experiment in utilitarian social engineering in India, colonialism's impact on Muslim self-perception, nor do any place Iqbal within the context of Pan-Islamic reform. Additionally, my identification of Mumford's "mega-machine" with colonialism and British globalization is unique in the literature, as far as I can determine. Iqbal lauded the benefits that modern technology could bring to India, especially in the areas of medicine and communication. Yet his experience of British colonialism convinced him that the imposition of western political forms of technology upon nineteenth and twentieth century India had resulted in the de-humanization of that country's native population with an existential loss of dignity and ego. He addressed that loss with his doctrine of the Perfect Man. This examination of Iqbal's thought in relation to technology is, I believe, an original contribution to the literature on Iqbal as well as to that on the human response to technology.

Methodology

This dissertation is based on the traditional Humanities qualitative research model, including both a hermeneutic approach as well as elements from a history of ideas methodology. The process of my analysis will be a close reading of Iqbal's primary texts as well as numerous secondary resources relating to Iqbal and his thought. I will investigate his numerous writings: his poetry, his published lectures (*The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*), his doctoral dissertation (*The Development of Metaphysics in Persia*), as well as his available letters and published speeches. It will be necessary to place Iqbal's work in historical context. I will, therefore, work from accepted and current histories of India covering Iqbal's lifetime and supplement them with the insights and commentary of some of the primary actors of the period.

A hermeneutic approach "attempts to interpret meanings," understood through a dialogue between the researcher and the subject (Lappin 1986, 46). My ultimate goal is to understand why Iqbal chose to approach his world situation as he did. This will require some interpretation of his life and literary material. A key element in the hermeneutic approach is the understanding that the author brings his own perspective to the study and writing process. As a Christian U.S. military chaplain actively involved in the Global War on Terrorism against Islamist Muslims, my neutrality might seem suspect. However, it is my plan to take a scholarly, neutral stand in regard to Iqbal and his situation. My goal is to understand Iqbal in his historical and cultural context as a human being dealing with complex issues for which he developed strategies to address the dilemmas he faced. I plan to allow Iqbal to speak for himself through his prose,

poetry and activity. From his life and work, I hope to develop an understanding that can be applied to the current historical situation.

Iqbal's English works include his doctoral dissertation, numerous articles and speeches, his published letters, as well as his series of lectures, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*. His poetry was produced in Urdu and Persian. However, his major poetic works have been translated into English by the renowned British scholars, A.J. Arberry and Reynold Nicholson. His other poetic works have all been translated by Eastern scholars. Of necessity, I will be working from these translations of his poetry rather than from the original languages. However, I will supplement Iqbal's poetry with his published English lectures, speeches, letters and articles, which should provide ample corroboration between the translations of his poetry and other work.

I will also utilize elements of a history of ideas methodology in the examination of Iqbal's life and work. This methodology is especially applicable to humanities study since it is, by nature and intention, a multi- and inter-disciplinary approach (Lovejoy 1936, 21). Arthur O. Lovejoy, the originator of this approach, advises the discovery of two main factors in this approach:

- 1) There are certain discriminable factors or "units," both ideational and affective, logical and alogical, which may be, and often are, recurrent or persistent in the historic manifestations of the workings of the human mind;
- 2) The thought of an individual writer or of a school, or the dominant fashion of thought of a period, may, and usually does, contain a number of such distinct conceptual and affective components. To understand such a complex as a whole, it is necessary to discriminate these components and observe their relations and interplay. (Lovejoy 1944, 204)

This methodology attempts to identify a specific "unit-idea" (Lovejoy 1936, 15) that has arisen within a particular cultural context but that is also extant within the human milieu across time and culture. This idea, for Iqbal, is that of the Perfect Man, a concept that

falls within the unit idea of the perfectibility of man. While I will not take time to discuss the history of this unit idea, my discussion will add valuable data to its Muslim component.

In following this methodology, my discussion will consist of seven chapters. In this first chapter, the introduction, I am providing a brief synopsis of Iqbal's life and thought, the study's researchable question, methodology as well as an overview of the study. A key dimension that helps us understand the cultural and sociological conditions that drove Iqbal's thinking is the historical, social and human context in which he lived and wrote (Lovejoy 1940, 23). This will be the subject of chapter two, an examination of Imperial India in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the conditions experienced by Indian Muslims that motivated the development of Iqbal's thought. I will discuss the driving factors that required a human response, examine the idea behind that response, and trace its impact within the culture. As Lovejoy points out,

An idea, in short, is after all not only a potent but a stubborn thing; it commonly has its own "particular ego;" and the history of thought is a bilateral affair - the story of the traffic and interaction between human nature, amid the exigencies and vicissitudes of physical experience, on the one hand, and on the other, the specific natures and pressures of the ideas which men have, from very various promptings, admitted to their minds. (Lovejoy 1940, 23)

I will also address personal social factors that influenced Iqbal's thought (Boas 1969, 163). In chapter two I will also discuss the specific technological issue that engendered Iqbal's perception of an attack on Muslim dignity: the utilitarian bureaucracy (the Machine) developed in India following the ethical thought of Jeremy Bentham and James Mill. I will discuss how English Imperialism in India served as a vast Mega-machine that presented a challenge to Muslim dignity in India with lasting consequences throughout the global British Empire. This discussion will place this dissertation within the context

of Salve Regina's doctoral program, helping us understand the human response to advanced and advancing technology.

In chapter three, I will discuss the philosophical content of Iqbal's thought. Iqbal's primary scholarly pursuit was philosophy, and he introduced a unique philosophical system into the Indian context in answer to the pressing issues he identified. Specifically, I will discuss Iqbal's philosophic answer to the problems he diagnosed as a result of the Muslim experience of Western technology, his concept of the "Perfect Man." It will be necessary to discuss the characteristics of that man, especially *Khudi* – the powerful individualized self. I will present the philosophical context and backgrounds that influenced Iqbal's formulation of the concept. His ideas did not arise in a vacuum. They grew out of his study of philosophy, possess an historic pedigree, and resemble elements of both Eastern and Western thought. They also bear interesting similarities to other philosophic developments in the early twentieth century. My discussion in this chapter will examine these relationships. Included in the discussion will be Iqbal's "historical semantics," a discussion of the significant words and phrases contained in his thought (Lovejoy 1936, 15).

Iqbal was very committed to his Islamic faith. In chapter four, I will present Iqbal's religious perspectives and the "Perfect Man" concept in light of Islam and the Islamic reform movement, discussing similarities to other Islamic reformers while also pointing out the differences. I will also attempt to place him in the broad context of Islam and various Islamic reform movements. Of special interest is the similarity of Iqbal's thought with that of the nineteenth century Islamic reformer, Jamal al-Din Afghani. I

will discuss this relationship and the points of correspondence and difference between these two reformers.

Chapter five will address Iqbal's use of poetry. Iqbal was a master of what Lovejoy calls "metaphysical pathos." He attempted to bypass human reason and communicate his thought directly to the emotions of his audience. Lovejoy explains that,

'Metaphysical pathos' is exemplified in any description of the nature of things, any characterization of the world to which one belongs, in terms which, like the words of a poem, awaken through their associations, and through a sort of empathy which they engender, a congenial mood or tone of feeling on the part of the philosopher or his readers. (Lovejoy 1936, 14)

Iqbal's culture was particularly open to poetic communication and its emphasis on the emotions. I will suggest that he intentionally addressed his appeal at the emotional level as the most effective means of communication within his culture. This approach is well-known and accepted in the East, but the communication of philosophy or other rational thought through poetry seems illogical to Western scholars. I will attempt to bridge the cultural gap in this chapter.

Of primary interest in the history of ideas is the application of important ideas in the social setting. As Pearce explains, social action is the activity of putting an idea "back into its proper context,"

We proceed to put the idea back in its proper context (the social body) and attempt to see how both idea and context have been modified and how the idea has interacted with other ideas within the same context. The historical, political, economic record and the record of the society's day-to-day living, so far as it is available.... (Pearce 1948, 374)

In Chapter six, I will discuss Iqbal's life in political context as the integration of his poetic, religious and philosophical views in the day to day reality of colonial India, focusing on his political activity in India during the early years of the twentieth century.

Iqbal is known today as the “Spiritual Father of Pakistan,” the result of his political involvement in the life of Muslim India during the crisis of Imperial India, when Indian nationalist sentiment confronted British Imperial power. Iqbal’s call for a separate Muslim political entity within the context of that situation was consistent with his philosophic ideas as communicated through his poetic literature and had significant influence on the eventual settlement of the Pakistan question.

In the conclusion, I will discuss Iqbal’s continuing contribution to Muslim life, the issue of Muslim dignity in historical context and his solutions relating to contemporary issues, and suggest additional areas of study not addressed in this work. Of special interest in this section is the issue of power in the formulation of cultural perceptions of dignity relating to global political realities.

In the end, the problems of the historian of ideas remain the same. He must study his materials, make his hypotheses, isolate his ideas, test his hypotheses, follow the growth and mutations of his ideas, and then try to see what the ideas have come to mean in and for the life of such societies as have been particularly receptive to them. (Pearce 1948, 379)

Possible Findings

...But they did not see, and our modern ulema do not see, that the ultimate fate of a people does not depend so much on organization as on the worth and power of individual men. In an over-organized society the individual is altogether crushed out of existence. He gains the whole wealth of social thought around him and loses his own soul. (Iqbal 1974, 151)

In this research, I hope to demonstrate the following:

1) That British Imperialism, built upon the foundation of the utilitarian political thought of Bentham and Mill, formed a vast organizational technology that was perceived as an attack on the human dignity of Indian Muslims by Muhammad Iqbal, a poet and philosopher living in Imperial India from 1877 – 1938;

- 2) That Iqbal analyzed the historical and cultural situation of the Muslim *ummah* during his lifetime, diagnosed a theory to explain their situation, and prescribed a plan of action to restore dignity to his co-religionists, both locally and internationally;
- 3) That Iqbal integrated poetry, philosophy and religion in a political activity that contributed to decisive change in his world;
- 4) That an understanding of the British Imperial experience provides insight to today's world situation as well as a perspective on Huntington's much discussed theory of a "clash of civilizations" and the developing field of international ethics;
- 5) That the exercise of scientific and technological power by nations without regard to the cultural and human implications of its use can have unintended and long lasting world-wide consequences.

Conclusion

Muhammad Iqbal was one of most intellectually capable representatives of the Muslim world during the last century. His rejection of Western culture and promotion of an Islamic world-view stand as an important milestone in the history of the relations between East and West. Was his response a result of miscalculations by the Western powers during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, due to the tenets of Iqbal's Islamic religion, or the result of other complicating factors? In this study, I will attempt to address these issues and illuminate the important question asked in Salve Regina's doctoral program, "What does it mean to be human in the age of advanced (advancing) technology?" Perhaps an understanding of Iqbal's response to the modern age will lead us to a better understanding of our world and the relationship between Islam and the West.

CHAPTER 2

DIGNITY AND CONTEXT: IQBAL'S MOTIVATION FOR THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE PERFECT MAN

Introduction

Thou art true and worshipful
Guardian of eternal Rule,
Thou the left hand and the right
Of the World-possessor's might.
Shackled slave of earthy race,
Thou art time and thou art Space:
Wind of faith that fear defies
Drink, and from doubt's prison, Rise!
 Out of leaden sleep,
 Out of slumber deep
 Arise!
 Out of slumber deep
 Arise!

Against Europe I protest,
And the attraction of the West:
Woe for Europe and her charm,
Swift to capture and disarm!
Europe's hordes with flame and fire
Desolate the world entire;
Architect of Sanctuaries,
Earth awaits rebuilding, rise!
 Out of leaden sleep,
 Out of slumber deep
 Arise!
 Out of slumber deep
 Arise!

(Iqbal 1948, 73-76)

Muhammad Iqbal spoke to his generation of Muslims and Indians alike. His poetry was written to communicate a philosophical vitalism that would empower his countrymen and women and awaken his Muslim co-religionists to the reality of their contemporary situation. Iqbal wrote passionate poetry to communicate his ideas to the youth of his time (Iqbal 1978, 164). In order to understand his philosophy it is essential

that we understand the context in which it arose and the problems that Iqbal was attempting to address: his perception of an attack by a globalized, scientifically based imperial system on the culture and religious sensibilities of his traditional Muslim people. The title of this dissertation includes the phrase, “the restoration of Muslim dignity....” This is Iqbal’s goal, communicated through poetry, philosophy, political action and, always, through his religious belief. In this chapter, I will discuss the primary contextual issues necessary to understand Iqbal and his motivations in developing the concept of the Perfect Man, namely, conditions he perceived as attacking and degrading both the collective and personal dignity of the Muslims in India as well as the rest of the Islamic world. In doing so, I will examine Hegel’s understanding of dignity and the Master-Slave relation, describe British Imperialism as a vast machine with a broad human impact, outline the historical interaction of British globalization with Muslims in India, explain some of the religious explanations for India’s situation during Iqbal’s lifetime, and discuss the influence of Iqbal’s biography on his views.

A Hegelian View of Human Dignity

...Only man is capable of engaging in a bloody battle for the sole purpose of demonstrating that he has contempt for his own life, that he is something more than a complicated machine or a "slave to his passions," in short, that he has a specifically human dignity because he is free.... (Fukuyama 1992, 151)

Iqbal was trained in the British neo-Hegelian or idealist philosophy at Cambridge during his three year English sojourn from 1905 to 1908. He viewed Hegel as a great philosophical authority, commenting in his personal notebook, “Hegel's system of philosophy is an epic poem in prose” (Iqbal 1961, 11). Much of Iqbal’s writing reflects a Hegelian understanding of basic human relations as well as the view that the great march of history (the human spirit) is moving toward universal freedom (Hegel 1952b,

161). His perception of a lack of human dignity on the part of Indian Muslims in the early Twentieth Century and the processes of history that relate to dignity and freedom reflect Hegel's concepts.

Hegel writes in his monumental work, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, that human relations are ultimately built upon the human competition for recognition. True freedom consists of the ability to sacrifice one's life in the cause of recognition, and this is most perfectly realized when two individuals contest with one-another, each willingly risking his life in the contest.

...And it is solely by risking life that freedom is obtained; only thus is it tried and proved that the essential nature of self-consciousness is not bare existence...so death is the natural "negation" of consciousness, negation without independence, which thus remains without the requisite significance of actual recognition. Through death, doubtless, there has arisen the certainty that both did stake their life, and held it lightly both in their own case and in the case of the other... (Hegel 1967, 233)

The winner of this contest gains recognition while the loser gains death. But the loser's death ultimately leaves the winner with no-one to recognize him, so it is preferable that the vanquished simply submit. This leads, on individual, tribal and national levels, to the development of what Hegel terms the master and the slave relationship, or master races and slave races (Hegel 1967, 234). The masters enjoy their ease, and are served by their slaves, and gain recognition or human dignity in the process.

...In these two moments, the master gets his recognition through an other consciousness, for in them the latter affirms itself as unessential, both by working upon the thing, and on the other hand by the fact of being dependent on a determinate existence... (Hegel 1967, 236)

The slave, on the other hand, sacrifices dignity as a result of his acceptance of a servile position and unwillingness to accept death, and must serve the master. At this point, Hegel's dialectical process takes over. From the thesis of the master, to the antithesis of

the slave comes the synthesis of a new attitude in the servant. Labor provides recognition and dignity to the slave, for he must learn and grow in order to accomplish his assigned tasks. He thus assumes a superior philosophical position to his masters, requiring reflection upon his life condition.

... The truth of the independent consciousness is accordingly the consciousness of the bondsman... being a consciousness repressed within itself, it will enter into itself, and change round into real and true independence.... (Hegel 1967, 237)

The position of servitude requires self-reflection on the part of the servant relating to his lack of human freedom. Ultimately, self-reflection results in human freedom and “true independence.” According to Hegel, the servant becomes more truly human than the master, since, through conscious self-reflection he experiences the possibility of growth while the master, taking his ease and comfort from material wealth, experiences only malaise. In the long term, the servant experiences a deep seated hunger as he desires to obtain the dignity his position denies him, his recognition as a human being (Hegel 1967, 237).

The problem of human history can be seen, in a certain sense, as the search for a way to satisfy the desire of both masters and slaves for recognition on a mutual and equal basis; history ends with the victory of a social order that accomplishes this goal. (Fukuyama 1992, 152)

Hegel’s model is reflected in Iqbal’s poetry and philosophy. His poetry reflects a deep yearning for human dignity as well as the true freedom that Iqbal believed was denied his people as a result of England’s Imperial rule. His poetic insight demonstrates the self-reflective process described by Hegel as one of the characteristics of a “slave race.” This self-reflection is also the vehicle by which the subservient group could understand and reverse its situation, develop the resources and skills necessary to exist independently, and then to drive home its demands for recognition, equality and freedom.

“The elegant-styled poet is the nation’s clear-sighted eye” (Iqbal 2005a, 87).

Iqbal saw himself as a seer and a guide for his people, to bring about self reflection and to awaken India’s Muslims to their slave situation. In his “Book of Slaves,” Iqbal poetically describes the slave’s situation, with servitude resulting in far-reaching effects on his emotional well-being and psychology.

Bondage kills the heart in the live body
And makes the very soul a burden to it.
It enervates youth into palsied age.
It blunts the mighty jungle lion’s teeth....

Deprived of all sense of distinction, he
Thinks bee-stings to be honey and takes good
For evil. Dead, although he never died,
He bears his own corpse on his shoulders;
And having staked away life’s honor, he
Is happy like an ass to be fed grass.

(Iqbal 1991, 43)

Iqbal reveals a sense of mission as the possessor of understanding and self-reflection in another poem from his early period (before his trip to England in 1905). In the poem, Iqbal reflects upon his poetic gift and life-purpose at the tomb of the famous Indian Muslim, Sayyid Ahmed Khan. He is reminded that he should listen to and act upon the prophetic insight gained from his heart’s clear insight into events, an insight that reminded him of the legendary “Cup of Jam,” a magical cup in which the legendary emperor, Jamshid, could accurately see the entire world.

If your hands do hold the miraculous pen
If your heart’s cup is clear like the cup of Jam

You are a Divine pupil! Keep your tongue immaculate!
Beware, lest your prayer’s call remains unanswered.

With the miracle of your verse awaken those sleeping
Burn down falsehood’s produce with the flame of your call.

(Iqbal 2005a, 80)

As a seer and prophet, Iqbal was deeply sensitive to the historical and political interaction between Great Britain and his country. His descriptions of that relationship reflect Hegel's conception of dignity, described as the competition between two strong men, each willing to sacrifice his life in the interest of true freedom. Iqbal, throughout his life and work, responded to his people's historical situation, with the perception that Great Britain enjoyed the position of master over a servile, dependent, and colonial India. He believed that Muslim India had been especially victimized by this relationship.

The history of that relationship gives insight to Iqbal's poetry and state of mind. Since the gradual defeat and replacement of the Mughal Empire in the eighteenth century by the East India Company, India had been ruled first by its economic administrators and then by the Imperial representatives of the Crown (James 1997, 34). British goals were two-fold: first, the economic development of India and her vast resources while providing markets for British imports and, secondly, the civilizing (Christianizing) of her people (Baring 11-12). Often those who pursued these goals worked at cross purposes with one another, the one being idealistic and intent on the betterment of Indian culture while the other was intent on commercial enterprise.

The Historical Relationship between India and the British

British Globalization as a Utilitarian Mega-Machine

The Imperial world that Iqbal experienced at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century was a world of advancing technology. Great Britain was a world leader in machine technology, incorporating industrial and military advances in the hard work of empire creation and maintenance. For years, the British Empire and its organizational and bureaucratic structures had also been viewed as a vast social

machine, with its various parts working together as great cogs in an immense technological marvel, organizing human effort on a vast scale (Baring 1913, 35).

In 1818, James Mill, the “able lieutenant of Jeremy Bentham,” the originator of utilitarian ethics, had suggested the reorganization of India according to utilitarian principles in his *History of India*. On the strength of his suggestions, he was employed by the East India Company to administer the changes he had suggested. Working in tandem with Bentham, these utilitarians attempted a “vast social reform of India,” following a scientific methodology to bring about the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people (Ghosh 1978, 97). James Mill described Bentham’s method along lines that reminds us of the Cartesian scientific approach,

Bentham's method may be shortly described as the method of detail; of treating wholes by separating them into their parts, abstractions by resolving them into things, -- classes and generalities by distinguishing them into the individuals of which they are made up; and breaking every question into pieces before attempting to solve it. (Ghosh 1978, 104)

Both Bentham and Mill suggested the reform of India along scientific utilitarian principles. These principles involved a complete overhaul of India’s political structures and laws. For Indians, this reform would be experienced in every facet of life and would take years to implement. It included,

...The establishment of a strong central government possessed of exclusive legislative authority for the whole of British India, the embodiment of all law in a set of scientific codes, an entire reorganization and expansion of the judicial system, a complete overhaul and reshaping of the administrative service, the survey and registration of all landholdings, and a scientific assessment of the land revenue based on detailed statistics of agricultural production. Even in its final and unfinished shape, this programme was to occupy the British administration for more than a half-century after the publication of Mill's *History* in 1818. (Stokes 1959, 78)

Bentham and James Mill suggested that the best form of government for India would be authoritarian, one that could guarantee a high degree of central control.

“Bentham thought that an absolute authority would be the best machine to produce the greatest happiness to the greatest number of people....” (Ghosh 1978, 99). In addition to the “greatest happiness principle,” governmental control was deemed necessary to effectively administer the scientifically organized legal system they would develop.

James Mill had agitated for the development of this new law code for India, attempting to incorporate the best of both Hindu and Muslim jurisprudence, while following British utilitarian principles.

...For Mill, only a scientific jurisprudence, abstract, universal and secular in outlook, would do. After the early nineteenth century, this was the tack which British administrators of India's legal framework were encouraged to take. (Raman 1994, 758)

The utilitarian jurisprudence would be complemented with a completely new penal code and system, developed to ensure compliance with the law through the fear of consequences, the utilitarian pleasure and pain principle. Bentham's penal system came to fruition in the 1860's and 1870's, with British reformers even adopting his pan-opticon³ principles in the design of four gaols (prisons) in the Punjab (Stokes 1959, 257). Unfortunately, the British also adopted an uncompromising and belligerent attitude in enforcing this system, “...believing that a benighted people had to be compelled towards the light. Now reform was to be carried in the spirit of racial conquest that succeeded the Mutiny” (Stokes 1959, 269).⁴

³ Bentham's pan-opticon was a form of prison that provided its guards with a constant view of prisoners. It consisted of a central viewing tower and prison cells constructed in a circular pattern.

⁴ Discussed in this chapter, pp. 46-50.

The utilitarian philosophy supporting these reforms followed a Hobbesian understanding of human nature and the role of government. According to Hobbes, human nature is inherently conflictual, always seeking to acquire another's property through warfare. The only means to curb this nature is the leviathan, or a government strong enough to impose its will through the fear of punishment and death. In India, power and law served as the foundations of utilitarian governance. "Law and not liberty was for Bentham as for Hobbes the great instrument of all improvement" (Stokes 1959, 292).

Probably the most effective and lasting element of utilitarian reform was the development of a vast bureaucratic administrative system. Bentham and Mill believed an efficient bureaucracy based upon the principles of personal responsibility and accountability was essential for the smooth running of the government. In India, this resulted in the assignment of strong personalities with wide ranging authority to implement law in their areas of responsibility. With authority, however, came responsibility. British bureaucrats were required to document their activities with minute detail and submit regular reports to their superiors in the bureaucracy. The fulfillment of this machine-like bureaucracy would be realized in the late nineteenth century.

...Yet a great administrative machine had been created entirely novel to English experience....The careful overhaul of the land revenue system in the revised settlements being effected in most of the provinces, the registration of deeds, the census of population, and the compilation of statistics, all these were giving by the seventies a new precision and certainty to the working of the machine. Above all, the telegraph and the steel rail were providing a degree of unity unattainable by mere administrative arrangements alone. The whole effect was the product of government action, and the size and activities of the great Anglo-Indian bureaucracy of the seventies were the nearest realization in English experience of Bentham's vision of the administrative state, so minutely recorded in his Constitutional Code. (Stokes 1959, 281-282)

John Stuart Mill, the famous son of James Mill, succeeded his father at the East India Company and adopted his father's utilitarian approach, although moderating it in the interest of liberty. In spite of his commitment to liberty, he continued to support a thoroughly authoritarian bureaucratic system in India, believing that a "benevolent despotism" was necessary to bring about the social and material improvement of India. While he was committed to liberty and freedom, he believed that a despotic government was most appropriate for India due to its "backward" state. He believed that liberty was appropriate for a people only when they had advanced to the state of reason.

...Mill took the position that a good native despotism is a rare and transitory accident, but that when the dominion is that of a more civilized people, a gradual transition of the native population to a higher state of civilization and into self-government was more likely to be promoted. (Harris 1965, 191)

In order to institutionalize the reforms that the James Mill and Bentham suggested, it would also be necessary to reform India's educational system in order to prepare Indians for service within the bureaucracy, although the Utilitarians saw no reason to include them in leadership positions (Stokes 1959, 298). Up to this time, Indian education had included both Western and Eastern subjects, including the study of Persian, the official language of government and the courts. This changed, beginning in 1835 and culminating in 1855, with the elimination of Persian and the adoption of English as the official language. In order to promote the eventual assimilation and transformation of India along English cultural lines, English culture was adopted as the official educational program. Wilberforce voiced this sentiment in the early 1830's.

...let us endeavor to strike our roots into the soil by the gradual introduction and establishment of our own principles and opinions; of our laws, institutions, and manners; above all, as the source of every other improvement, of our religion, and consequently of our morals. ...Are we so little aware of the vast superiority even

of European laws and institutions, and far more of British institutions, over those of Asia.... (Stokes 1959, 35)

The eventual goal was to produce a class of Indians who would serve as a buffer between the Imperial government and India's masses. They would also serve as a means of transformation, communicating English values and culture to the population as a whole.

We must...do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern -- a class...Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country...with terms borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population. (Harris 1964, 196)

The utilitarian effort to reform India was effective. In 1883, when Rudyard Kipling returned to Lahore, he discovered an India that had experienced the institution of a wide-spread bureaucracy and rule of law. In his short story, "'57," Kipling describes a "regulation government" that had "mapped, registered, and assessed', [the Punjab], with '500 subordinate courts administering laws and rules adapted from every statute book in Europe" (St John 2000, 66). Kipling's tongue-in-cheek description of regulation government was a subtle attack on the bureaucratization and centralization that had taken place under utilitarian reform.

Beneath this criticism of machine rule lay an attack on utilitarian concepts of representative government, which enjoyed a resurgence in the late nineteenth century -- most popularly in the writings of William Wilson Hunter. Eminent administrator, member of the Viceroy's council, and compiler of the Imperial Gazetteer (a statistical survey of the Indian empire), Hunter inherited the classic utilitarian commitment to rational and well-ordered systems of philosophy and government.... (St John 2000, 66)

The reformers had the best of intentions for India. Their goal was to bring the very best of Western and English civilization to the backward Indians. In many ways, their plan worked. By the end of the nineteenth century, India had been transformed from a hodge-

podge of tribes and peoples into a modern nation. When the Indian National Congress held its first national political meeting in 1885, its members were able to announce,

...The progress of Education throughout the different provinces of the Indian Empire is so great, and the facilities for intercommunication so various that we, who were hitherto strangers to each other as the Sikhs, the Bengalese, the Madrassas, consider ourselves as the people with the same grievances, and with the same aspirations.(Ghosh 1978, 110)

It has been suggested that Britain's vast scientific experiment of authoritarian leadership and bureaucratic control, while effective in unifying India, also had the effect of furthering British imperial ambitions and inhibiting Indian liberty (Weiner 1960, 371). Originally fashioned as a benign and even well-intentioned effort to bring the West's civilizing influence to India, the machine enabled the British to maintain control of their far flung empire through outstanding efficiency and organization. The Indian Civil Service (ICS), while effectively running the country, also served as a barrier to the social and political improvements that various British administrations tried to implement (Wolpert 2004, 262). James Mill's utilitarian Penal Code, instituted in 1860, brought order to a chaotic Indian legal system but also had its dark side when applied to political opponents of the government. Describing his early twentieth century experience of India's prisons, Jawaharlal Nehru described its machine-like effect in his 1941 biography,

...One sees in prison the inhuman side of the State apparatus of administrative repression at its worst. It is a machine which works away callously and unthinkingly, crushing all that come in its grip, and the jail rules have been purposely framed to keep this machine in evidence. Offensive to sensitive men and women, this soulless regime is a torture and an anguish of the mind. (Nehru 1941, 169)

Muhammad Iqbal, writing in 1929, describes the limitations of human freedom, dignity and individuality that resulted from an "over-organized system." As a Muslim, he naturally interprets the impact of the machine in metaphysical terms.

...But they did not see, and our modern *ulema* do not see, that the ultimate fate of a people does not depend so much on organization as on the worth and power of individual men. In an over-organized society the individual is altogether crushed out of existence. He gains the whole wealth of social thought around him and loses his own soul. (Iqbal 1974, 151)

An older contemporary of Iqbal's and Nehru's, Max Weber, speaking from his experience of German bureaucracy, suggested that the increase of bureaucracy is detrimental to the realization of freedom in a society, being a superior means of control (Warren 1988, 48). Weber's views closely parallels Iqbal's insight regarding the over-organized society, "...The cost of bureaucratic efficiency is life in a world with reduced scope of individual autonomy, responsibility, spontaneity and initiative...." (Warren 1988, 34).

A number of middle and late twentieth century authors have reflected on the ethical implications of an over-organized global system such as that developed by Great Britain from the sixteenth through the twentieth centuries. Their thought illumines Iqbal's Indian experience of Britain's global dominion and scientific bureaucracy, a form of modern technology. In 1964, Jacques Ellul predicted the development of a worldwide civilization based upon science and technology. In his well-known work, *The Technological Society*, Ellul demonstrates the progression of a technological world from the earliest times to the present. Technology, an inherently positive human trait, allows humans to master the world. It is:

...The translation into action of man's concern to master things by means of reason, to account for what is subconscious, make quantitative what is qualitative, make clear and precise the outlines of nature, and to take hold of chaos and put order into it. (Ellul 1964, 43)

Ellul suggests that technology has global and civilizational implications. He understood that technology's benefits could result in a cultural system in which humans became the

objects of our own technologizing drive, a tendency he called Technique. He believed that technique supplants all civilizations and is, in fact, "...a whole civilization in itself" (Ellul 1964, 126). The civilization that Ellul describes in *The Technological Society* sounds strikingly similar to the British system envisioned by Jeremy Bentham and institutionalized in India by James and John Stuart Mill through the East Indian Company and later British governments.

Another mid-twentieth century author, Lewis Mumford, examined the impact of the "mega-machine" on human existence. Writing in 1964, his research indicates that the technological ingredients of a modern bureaucratic society have been present in much of civilization's history when rulers and nations have attempted to organize human energy for mass production or large-scale projects.

...Power, speed and control have been the chief marks of absolute monarchs in all ages: the doing away with previous natural limitations in these areas is the common theme that unites the ancient and modern mega-machine.... (Mumford 1964, 259)

Mumford's mega-machine is the historical organization that enabled the Egyptians to build the great pyramids, Napoleon to conquer Europe, and the English to construct a vast world-wide empire, with far-ranging human implications.

...Although modern technology is a primary example of monotecnics, this authoritarian form did not begin with the Industrial revolution. Its origins go back five thousand years to the discovery of what Mumford calls the "mega-machine" – that is, rigid, hierarchical social organization... The mega-machine brings with it striking material benefits, but at the expense of a dehumanizing limitation of human endeavors and aspirations. (Mitcham 1994, 43 – 44)

While Mumford is speaking in more contemporary terms than Iqbal, his descriptions of historical bureaucratic machines that changed the world bear striking similarity to the system established in India to bring Western civilization to the East.

While bureaucratic efficiencies brought order out of chaos, they also increased institutional power and control, experienced as a personal limitation on liberty and freedom. This is Weber's criticism of bureaucracy.

...What Weber is claiming is that bureaucracies both presuppose power relations based on control over means of existence, and provide superior means of increasing control. His pessimism regarding the march of bureaucracy stems from the fact that bureaucratic organizations are superior means of power, and this makes it less likely that concentrated control can be successfully challenged....
(Warren 1988, 48)

Stokes, in his *The English Utilitarians and India* has even suggested that the conflict that erupted between Indian nationalists and the British government from 1919 – 1948 was in fact a conflict between the forces of utilitarian bureaucracy and freedom (Weiner 1960, 371).

This discussion of nineteenth century British globalization is intended to provide a background to the discussion of Iqbal's desire to awaken Muslims to their loss of dignity, freedom, and individualism resulting from an "over-organized" society and the West's rational scientific incursion into India. This incursion was ubiquitous, bringing the blessings and curses of the British scientific world-view to every corner of India. While pursuing admirable goals, it was also perceived as an infringement on human dignity and freedom as a result of the application of a soulless bureaucratic machinery.

British Globalization as a Dehumanizing Factor

Contemporary scholars, dealing with the current experience of globalization, have suggested significant ethical issues connected with globalization and have written extensively on the impact of Western ideas and cultural norms on the non-western cultures of the world. Issues of cultural disintegration, loss of human dignity, and cultural resistance have been commonly suggested. Iqbal and his countrymen faced the

impact of British globalization developed for the purpose of civilizing the Indian masses and exploiting those masses for British economic gain, perceived by Iqbal and his countrymen as reducing the Indian masses to the status of a vast slave race and forming an attack on their human dignity.

The perception of an attack on the human dignity of Indians involved a number of key components, chief among them being the attitude of English racial superiority to which Indians were subjected. Along with globalization came Westernization and the introduction of nationalism, democratic norms, and Western ways of thinking which were, in Iqbal's thinking, evils that would destroy Eastern civilization. Iqbal also believed that his people were co-conspirators with the British in passively accepting British expansion in exchange for the benefits of globalization: jobs, Western ways, and markets for Indian goods. They had, he believed, passively accepted British imperial rule and "enslavement" and received nothing of worth in return.

In one of his early poems, "A Cow and A Goat" which is subtitled, "Adopted for Children" (a backhanded reference to the Indian masses), Iqbal presents a metaphor that is clearly designed to demonstrate the relationship between England (Man) and India (the Cow). The goat represents an evil counselor who advises appreciation for the benefits of bondage.

"How are you, Madam Cow"?
The Cow replied, "Not too well."

The poor ones like us are powerless
Misfortunes surround the ones like us.

None should nicely deal with Man
May God protect us from Man!

He murmurs if my milk declines
He sells me if my weight declines.

He subdues us with cleverness!
Alluring, he always subjugates us!

I nurse his children with milk
I give them new life with milk.
My goodness is repaid with evil
My prayer to God is for mercy!"

(Iqbal 2005a, 60)

The goat advises the cow to consider the benefits of bondage. Note that many of the benefits that are usually attributed to God by people of religion are described as deriving from the benefits of the cow's relationship with Man.

Having heard the cow's story like this
The goat replied, "This complaint is unjust.

Though truth is always bitter
I shall speak what is fair.

This pasture and this cool breeze
This green grass and this shade

Such comforts were beyond our lot!
They were a far cry for us speechless poor!

We owe these pleasures to Man
We owe all our happiness to Man

We derive all our prosperity from him
What is better for us, freedom or bondage to him?

....

If you appreciate life's comforts
You would never complain against Man?

(Iqbal 2005a, 60-61)

For Indians of Iqbal's time, it was considered ungrateful to complain of Great Britain's role in India. With colonial rule came the benefits of modernity, industry, and civilization

for India's backward masses. Certainly, (some might have argued) servitude was worth the benefits accrued from the relationship. Iqbal rejected this line of reasoning. His goal was to awaken India to his perspective. Chief among his complaints against England was the cultural impact that British imperialism was having on Indian Muslim culture.

The Cultural Impact of Imperial Globalization

Iqbal was influenced by another contextual issue resulting from English Colonialism, the technological and political culture of the West. His student life in Britain and Germany from 1905-1908 provided a wealth of experience and education but also "turned him into a Mussalman" (Zakaria 1993, 30-31). His experiences convinced him of the evils of Western culture, as represented by its science, its politics, and its treatment of foreign peoples. His European excursion gave him the opportunity to experience and form opinions on the whole of Western civilization. In the following poem, Iqbal condemns the East's acceptance of Western ways as well as the false worship of the West. Iqbal was convinced that the West was chasing only illusions, resulting in death.

The East, that holds the heavens fast
Within the noose its fancy cast,
Its spirit's bonds are all united,
The flames of its desire have died.

The burning glow of living birth
Pulses no more in its dark earth;
It stands upon the river side
And gazes at the surging tide.

Faint, faint the fires of worship be
In temple and in sanctuary;
The Magian still his cup would pass,
But stale the wine in his glass.

The vision of the West is blind,
Illusion fills the Western mind;
Drunken with magic scent and hue,
It bows before the great untrue.

Swifter it spins than heaven's sphere;
Death is a gentler ravisher;
Its fingers have so torn my soul,
Never again can it be whole.

Of the earth earthy, it would try
To emulate the ancient sky;
A rogue, a cheat, of works immense,
With pivot none, and little sense.

The East is waste and desolate,
The West is more bewildered yet;
The ardent quest inspires no more,
Death reigns supreme the whole world o'er.

(Iqbal 1948, 40-41)

Iqbal was critical of numerous aspects of the West's domination of India, as well as the rest of the Eastern world. One element that attracted his attention was the economic domination and exploitation of his country by Britain. While a professor at Lahore he authored an economics textbook in Urdu, hoping to train his countrymen in the basics of the globalized British economy and allow them to compete on an equal basis in the modern business world. "...Iqbal feared that the West was bent upon destroying Islam. He was, therefore, chary of their motives being convinced that they were determined to dominate the East not only politically but also socially and economically" (Zakaria 1993, 23).

Another key cultural danger to Islam that Iqbal identified and condemned was nationalism.

...Nationalism was the tool used by colonialism to dismember the Muslim world: 'to shatter the religious unity of Islam in pieces.' Its results are the estrangement of man from

his fellow man, the disunity of nations, and the separation of religion and politics that had led to the downfall of Christianity. (Esposito 182)

He believed that nationalism was simply the continuation of the Protestant Reformation begun in the 16th century in Germany by Martin Luther (Iqbal 1974, 162-163). He suggested that the Reformation had splintered the West's allegiance to religion, thus requiring a new focus for human allegiance, the nation. This nationalism is, for Iqbal, the cause of racism and disunity among the peoples of Europe as well as of Muslims. He suggests that nationalism was also the cause of the Great War, which he observed from his vantage point of India. The trenches, the utilization of technology to slaughter millions, and the human suffering that resulted could all be attributed to this one evil. As a result, he believed that nationalism had failed and its continuation put the entire world in peril.

And man creates an ever novel god
Whose joy is shedding blood, whose hallowed name
Is Colour, Fatherland; Blood-brotherhood.
Humanity is slaughtered like a sheep
Before this worthless idol. (Iqbal 1918, 55)

Along with nationalism, Iqbal also saw democracy as a cultural import to the East that was inconsistent with Islam and worthy of condemnation. He saw it as the child of nationalism and opposed to the spirit of Islam. Iqbal viewed democracy's universal adoption of the separation of church and state as a particular threat to the central tenet of Islam, its emphasis on the Unity of God with a corresponding unity of religion and state. Iqbal believed that modern man's soul and intellect have been split asunder by science, in that same way, government has been separated from religion. He believed this to be a great evil (Iqbal 1974, 153-155).

The West thinks Soul and Body to be separate;
Hence the dichotomy between Religion and the State.
The church is busy saying prayers on Peter's rosary,

Quite unconcerned with polity,
And as for Western polity, it is pure deceit.
thus Soul and Body in the West can never meet.
The intellect should always have the heart in train.
Look at the plight of Turkey, which has kept apart the twain.
The Turks forgot themselves in aping Western ways,
And cut between Religion and the state the ancient ties....⁵
(Iqbal 1969, 15)

Iqbal blamed democracy, as well as nationalism, for the wars that had been waged in Europe and that had significantly impacted the colonial world during the early years of the Twentieth Century. He believed that democracy's secularizing influence removes the issue of religion from war and makes all people subject to the dangers inherent in a secular world.

Convey this message to the West from me:
Democracy is a sword drawn out of
its sheath, a sword that kills, a sword that knows
No difference between a Muslim and
an Infidel. If it does not remain
Sheathed for a while, then it will very soon
Destroy both itself and humanity.
(Iqbal 1969, 30)

A final cultural influence subject to Iqbal's condemnation was Western science and technology. He considered the West to be the seat of reason, with the development of science for the benefit of the imperial machines of colonial Europe. The East he considered the seat of love and passion in the world, with reason at war with love and politically reigning supreme throughout the world (Iqbal 1918, 26). He longed for a reversal of this situation, but felt it was hopeless.

Thy world has been wasted by imperialism,
dark night ravelled in the sleeve of the sun.
The science of Westerners is spoliation;
the temples have turned Khaibar⁶, without a Haidar⁷.

⁵ Iqbal is referring to the secularization of Turkey that began in 1920 under the leadership of Mustafa Kamal "Attaturk."

He who proclaims 'No god but God' is helpless;
his thought, having no center, wanders astray,
slowly dying, pursued by four deaths --
the usurer, the governor, the mullah, the shaikh.
How is such a world worthy of thee?
Water and clay are a stain upon thy skirt.

(Iqbal 1932, 137)

The cultural impact of Britain's rule of India had direct impact upon the residents of the country. Economic growth benefited a small percentage of the population and may have been viewed as exploitation. The imposition of democracy and nationalism, viewed as an advance of civilization by western observers, was viewed in a much more negative light by Iqbal and his countrymen. I will discuss Britain's self-imposed civilizing role in the next section.

Britain's Civilizing Role

As noted above, Iqbal was deeply sensitive to the cultural influence of England on India. He was also a student of history, especially the history of the relationship between their peoples and the influence England enjoyed in his land. Key to that influence was the British perception that the English had been endowed with a civilizing responsibility toward their colonial peoples. But English motives were mixed. Economics played a key motivating factor for the English presence in India. Since the beginning of English incursion into India in the late sixteenth century, India had been run by the East India Company, established for the purpose of developing Indian resources and providing new markets for the sale and distribution of English manufactured goods.

⁶ "Khaibar was a Jewish settlement and stronghold, a hundred miles from Medina, which was conquered with miraculous ease in AD 628" (Iqbal 1932, 143).

⁷ One of many Arabic given names meaning "Lion." Possible allusions refer to Ali, the nephew of the Prophet Muhammad or Qutb al-Din Haydar (d. 1221) a Sufi saint who practiced celibacy and self-mortification.

The British Raj was a blend of altruism and selfishness; 'The only advantages which we receive from our occupation of these immense countries are control over trade, which can be developed by cultivation of order and peace.' This commerce was worth nearly 4 Million pounds a year and, thanks to land taxes, India needed no subsidies, unlike other colonies. (James 1997, 280)

The altruistic side of this interaction with India resulted from the sense that England and her people felt they had a providential responsibility to “govern, civilize, to educate and to improve the innumerable tribes and races whom Providence had placed beneath her scepter” (James 1997, 294). Lord Baring, British administrator in Egypt from 1886-1907, described this providential responsibility as a national philanthropy that devolved “grave national responsibilities upon England” as well as “the lofty aspirations which attach themselves to her civilizing and moralizing mission” (Baring 1913, 10-11). Rudyard Kipling, a literary contemporary of Iqbal’s, would describe this responsibility as the “White Man’s Burden.”

Take up the White Man’s burden –
Send forth the best ye breed –
To bind your sons to exile
To serve your captive’s need;
To wait in heavy harness
On fluttered folk and wild –
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half devil and half child
(Kipling 1989, 321)

This burden was implemented through the extension of British education to the elite of Indian society (from which Iqbal would benefit), the establishment of British government to provide a stable environment for economic development, and the provision of Christian missionary endeavors designed to replace Islam and Hinduism with Christianity.

The importance of Christian evangelism in the history of Britain's interaction with India cannot be overemphasized. It was believed that only Christianity could provide the civilizing influence that would finally provide for national and interracial cohesion of India's diverse people groups (Baring 1914, 19). In fact, Evelyn Baring Lord Cromer, author of a well known article on the administration of "Subject Races" (Said 1979, 35), felt that "Christianity is our most powerful ally" in establishing internal cohesion and a moral basis for English rule (Baring 1914, 52). While the government did not actually proselytize, it did give permission to Christian missionaries to conduct evangelism throughout India and all the East India Company's territories, provided by an act of Parliament in 1813.

For many, the Protestant faith was part and parcel of the civilization that Britain was then spreading across the world. Enlightened Protestantism was the essential ingredient in Britain's greatness; it provided the cement which held the nation together and released the genius and industry of its people. It was the partner of all human progress. According to the Evangelical vision, the conversion of India would bring unlimited benefits, for it would liberate the Indian mind and make it receptive to all the fruits of human reason. (James 1997, 224)

Enlightened leaders understood that the universal presence of missionaries could actually undermine the British presence in India. The imposition of a Christian moral code, the outlawing of traditional Hindu practices such as the self-immolation of widows on their husband's funeral fires, and allowing widows to remarry caused great consternation among Indians and was attributed to these missionary's influence. Many false rumors further stirred religious anxiety with the belief that, sooner or later, Indians would be forced to convert to Christianity (James 1997, 269). These religious fears led to a number of Indian uprisings, notably in 1807 and 1857. The 1857 Mutiny would have a lasting influence on the course of British rule in India.

The Mutiny of 1857

...In the nineteenth century the political power in India had been completely snatched from the Muslims by the British and the Muslim jurists had declared India *Dar al-Harb* (country of war). The followers of Syed Ahmad of Bareilly had been fighting against the British on the Frontier, and the allegation of treason for instigating the 1857 Mutiny had been leveled against the Muslims. After the suppression of the 1857 Mutiny, the British adopted the policy of crushing the Muslims, and the Hindus supported this British policy for their own political and economic ends. (Iqbal 1961, xi)

The Mutiny of 1857 was another important historical element that shaped the culture into which Iqbal was born as well as the relationship between the British and Indian Muslims during Iqbal's lifetime. Because of its lasting influence and importance in the relationship between England and India, I will provide a summary of that significant event.

The Mutiny was a nineteenth century revolt of British Sepoys, Indians of Hindu and Muslim religion, who served as militia under the East India Company. This paid militia formed the rank and file of the military forces required to maintain a military presence in the extensive Indian sub-continent. As with military forces everywhere, rumors ran rampant throughout the Sepoy ranks. Some rumors fueled the well-grounded fear that the British intended to turn these Muslim and Hindu soldiers and their families into Christians. There were also rumors that the British pursued policies that undermined local religious sensibilities, such as putting cow and pig meal in Sepoy food, or packing the bullets of the new Enfield rifle in pig fat, as well as restrictions on Hindu and Muslim religious practices that were "uncivilized" by English standards (James 1997, 236).

The mutineer's political goal was the expulsion of the English and everything that reminded of British civilization as well as to form an "alliance with the old Muslim ruling dynasty, the Mughals" in order to return India to its former glory days under Muslim rule

(James 1997, 239). For Muslims, it meant the elimination of the perceived threat to their Muslim faith and religion emanating from British civilization, especially from Christian missionaries. “Only through the expulsion of the British would Islam be secure” (James 1997, 270).

When the rebellion started in June of 1857 at Cawnpore, in North Western India, it did so with the ferocity that often accompanies religiously inspired violence.

The mob, swelled by Sepoys from the two infantry regiments, attacked off-duty British soldiers in the bazaar and rampaged through the cantonments, burning bungalows and murdering every European man, woman and child they encountered.... (James 1997, 239)

The poorly equipped British outpost of Cawnpore, housing nearly a thousand Europeans, could not resist the rebellion. After intense fighting, the British fort surrendered to the mutineers on the promise of safe passage on 27 June 1857. As the 450 surviving inhabitants of the fort embarked on boats for transportation to the safety of Allahabad, they were attacked by the mutineers on the order of their leader, Nana Sahib. More than half were killed by the boats, with the remaining men executed on the river banks later that day (English 1994, 170). 125 women and children were captured and imprisoned. Later, Nana Sahib would make a decision that would have a lasting influence on Indian-Anglo relations. It was also to define the immediate response of the British to the rebellion, with an “eye for an eye” character that resulted in unlimited warfare upon the non-combatants of both sides.

Nana Sahib proclaimed the massacre by the ghat a victory and celebrated it accordingly, inviting 'all peasants and landed proprietors of every district to rejoice at the thought that the Christians have been sent to hell, and both the Hindu and Mohammedan religions have been confirmed.... (later) Faced with the collapse of his power and beset by panic, Nana ordered the slaughter of the surviving women and children, which was undertaken by local butchers on the

night of 15-16 July. Their bodies were thrown down a well. (James 1997, 251-252)

The Mutiny spread to Allahabad, Delhi, and to most of India and targeted every facet of British life, including its science and technology. It was “defined in terms of a loathing for the British which, at times, seemed so intense that it appeared that [the Indians] were waging a racial war of extermination” (James 1997, 273). Even railway locomotives were destroyed, with Indians directing canon-fire into them in order to destroy these representations of British technology and civilization.

The British response was swift. Revenge was the order of the day and a powerful response was deemed the only way to put down the rebellion. Stories in the British press denounced the savage attacks as a challenge to British morals, civilization, womanhood, and its civilizing role in general. The Indians were characterized as savage butchers and revenge was called for throughout the England (James 1997, 297). Fueled by rage at the slaughter of women and children and mixed with a sense of racial superiority, no quarter was given to either combatant or non-combatant. In the fighting that followed, both sides acted with racial prejudice and without regard to gender or age.

The laws of evidence were suspended, age and sex ignored, and those who carried out the killings were proud of their deeds, which they justified as revenge for the atrocities at Meerut and Delhi. ...In Native histories, or, history being wanting, in Native legends and traditions, it may be recorded against our people that mothers and wives and children...fell miserable victims to the first swoop of English vengeance; and these stories may have as deep a pathos as any that rend our own hearts. (James 1997, 250-251)

Although outnumbered by the Indian population, the British had superior military technology and tactics on their side. They also understood that the situation required a fierce and powerful response, giving the rebellious forces no retreat and no hope of

success. The British forces put down the rebellion and peace was returned to India by the end of 1858.

The Mutiny had severe and lasting results for the relationship between Great Britain and India that would guide British actions even during Iqbal's lifetime. In 1857, the East India Company was replaced by a colonial government that responded directly to London. The British adopted a "carrot and stick" approach. The British offered Indians the benefits of civilization: "slow but steady progress in education, farming, communications and the generation of wealth through cash crops and industry" (James 1997, 315) as well as access to British goods. In the event of trouble, however, the colonial government responded swiftly and vigorously, quelling any and all disturbances quickly and powerfully, fearful that any trouble could quickly get out of hand if not dealt with forcefully (James 1997, 294-295). Even in Iqbal's time, British paranoia over the Mutiny had not dissipated. In 1918, "Young British Subalterns, fresh to India, were given a solemn lecture on the Mutiny by a senior officer which ended with a warning that history might repeat itself if they were not vigilant" (James 1997, 295). This attitude would later contribute to another slaughter, this one at Amritsar in 1919 that would fuel a powerful independence movement and would eventually lead to England's withdrawal from India.

Another result of the 1857 Mutiny was England's recommitment to empire and globalization. India was considered the key to British Empire in the East and had to be held at all costs. British dignity and its status as a world power, capital, technological expertise and civilization were invested in India. World markets were important for the security and well being of the homeland. It would not be given up easily. The potential

loss of India to the British Empire was considered to be a “national catastrophe which had to be prevented whatever the cost” (James 1997, 365).

Attitudes of British Racial Superiority

An important issue that Iqbal addressed throughout his poetry and philosophy was the issue of racism. He taught that his Muslim religion was superior to the ways of the West because it teaches that all people are equal before the supreme creator. Iqbal's world, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, was a world that taught Social Darwinism, the competition between the races, and discussion over the relative merits of particular racial groups. This atmosphere resulted in an unfortunate sense of superiority on the part of some groups, and the British, owners of a world-spanning empire, were not immune to this attitude. Many British expatriates living in India exhibited this sense of racial superiority, particularly in relation to the “subject peoples.” Iqbal was confronted with this attitude when he attended Cambridge University in England beginning in 1905. His experiences in England had a profound impact upon his outlook towards the West as well as his mission in life.

...While in Europe, he realized that the greatest enemy of Islam was not colonialism but the emergence of racial division in a virulent form; the white versus the black and brown syndrome which had then engulfed the world as a result of the West's dominance of the East; ...Iqbal wrote in his letter: 'I reacted strongly to this development; it brought about a revolutionary change in my whole outlook. In fact it is this atmosphere in Europe which turned me into a Mussalman. (Zakaria 1993, 30-31)

The attitude that turned Iqbal “into a Mussalman” was one that had characterized the relationship between Britain and India throughout their common history and which ultimately undermined Britain's empire. It also had a profound impact on many Indians'

sense of dignity (both Hindus and Muslims), producing a simmering resentment that later would erupt in violent opposition to British rule.

This attitude of racial superiority seems to have been common at all levels of British administration. It was generally believed that Eastern peoples were not well adapted to democratic and governmental duties, being “stricken with a fatal simplicity” (Baring 1913, 26). Part of the civilizing duty of Western people was to train and develop “subject races” for the prospect of self-rule. But the process was considered difficult, requiring long and intense training. For many, it was doubtful the “natives” would ever be ready for the responsibility of self-government, requiring the work “not simply of generations of centuries” and that, regrettably, “... it will probably never be possible to make a silk purse out of an Eastern sow's ear....” (Baring 1913, 25-26)

There was also a conception that peoples of the East were not capable of logical reasoning (Baring 1913, 40), that government by representation was not in the Eastern temperament (James 1997, 342-343), and that the Eastern mind was generally difficult for Westerners to understand. Kipling, the poet of the British Empire, explains this sense of Eastern opaqueness in one his famous short stories.

‘You'll never plumb the Oriental mind
And if you did, it isn't worth the toil.’
(Kipling 1989, 69)

Cultural differences, especially religious ones, served as a source of conflict in the ever present racial divide. The British believed that their culture was superior to Indian culture. Yet the vast majority of Indians, both Hindus and Muslims, persisted in following their own cultural traditions and rejected English ones. The British blamed Indians for their intransigence.

Without, therefore, in any way endeavouring to excuse or to palliate the conduct of those Englishmen who behave in a manner which is culpably offensive towards Easterns, it should in fairness be borne in mind that the more general causes which tend to establish a social gulf between East and the West are of Eastern rather than of Western manufacture. They are the natural outcome of those religious beliefs and practices which...permeate the inner life of India.... (Baring 1914, 212-213)

More troubling and certainly causing difficulties for the administration of the country were the racial prejudices and actions displayed by Lord Baring's and Kipling's countrymen. Some of the worst excesses were promulgated in the name of capitalism by planters and farmers who believed they could treat hired laborers in any way they pleased. "...They believed in a world in which some men were ordained to deliver blows and some to receive them," even using pejorative and offensive language to refer to their workers (James 1997, 350). This treatment fueled heated debate between Indian nationals and the English. In an article published in the British press, Lord Baring responds to the comments of an Indian living in England. He acknowledges that the "superior offensiveness of the ruling race" had caused problems for the colonial government.

Every one who has held a responsible position in the East knows that his long and patient efforts to establish friendly relations between the governors and the governed may be checked, and even frustrated, by a heedless word uttered or a foolish deed performed by some irresponsible Englishman. (Baring 1914, 211)

Well-educated Indians had difficulty understanding the racial divide that persisted between the races. Many believed that education and political position would overcome the divide, but discovered otherwise. Indians could not understand how the civilized English could teach equality through education and yet practice racism. Bolanath Chandra, an educated admirer of British ways, found their attitudes bewildering.

A native may read Bacon, Shakespeare, get over his religious prejudices, form political associations, and aspire to a seat in the legislature -- he may do all these and many things more, but he cannot make up his mind to board at an English hotel. (James 1997, 348)

Even though Englishmen were aware of the problems associated with racism, they did little to correct it, seeing it as a part of contemporary reality. Racism was an accepted reality and would remain so for the foreseeable future, both in England and the colonies. Lord Baring lamented the reality of cultural and social differences, but understood that its removal could not be accomplished by an act of Parliament. In 1914, "The world [had] as yet not accepted the principle that the tincture of the human skin is a matter as indifferent as that of the colour of flowers..."(Baring 1914, 210).

The attitudes of religious and racial superiority on the part of colonial administrators and Englishmen in general had profound impact on the relations with Indians in particular and colonial people in general. It served to accentuate issues of human dignity and freedom while radicalizing colonial subjects. Iqbal was well aware of these issues and personally experienced them during his stay in England. His experiences produced a lasting impact that would last the rest of his life and served as a motivation for much of his thought and philosophy. Near the end of his life, in a 1938 New Year's radio address that highlighted the evils then occurring in the Spanish Civil War, Iqbal again outlined his hopes for the future.

...Only one unity is dependable, and that unity is the brotherhood of man, which is above race, nationality, colour, or language. So long as this so-called democracy, this accursed nationalism, and this degraded imperialism are not shattered, so long as men do not demonstrate by their actions that they believe that the whole world is the family of God, so long as distinctions of race, colour and geographical nationalities are not wiped out completely, they will never be able to lead a happy and contented life and the beautiful ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity will never materialize. (Iqbal 1992, 375)

Responsibility for Historical Conditions

Muslim Passivity

Iqbal was very critical of his own people and what he perceived as their passive acceptance of servitude to British rule. In his poetry he described them as beggars, eagerly holding out their hands for whatever the English would bestow upon them. He roundly condemned such beggary.

If thou be Muslim, be not suppliant
Of other's succor; be the embodiment
Of good to all the world. Make not complaint
Of scurvy fortune to the fortunate,
Nor from thy sleeve reach out a beggar's hand.
Like Ali, be content with barley-bread.
...So far as is in thee lies
Become that Stone of the philosophers,
Not the base dross; a benefactor be,
Not a petitioner for others' alms.

(Iqbal 1918, 70-71)

Following the same thought, but with the metaphor of the prey in the talons of the falcon, he reminds his people of the foolishness of placing their hope in Europe.

Fool! Is there then such hope in thee
Of winning Europe's sympathy?
The falcon grieves not overmuch
About the bird that's in his clutch.

Shame on thee, only to desire
Rubies bequeathed thee by thy sire:
Is there not one delight alone --
to win thee rubies from the stone?

(Iqbal 1948, 116)

Another common theme in Iqbal is the reminder of Islam's glory days of empire and an exhortation to Muslims to recapture that glory.

China and Arabia are ours, India is also ours
We are Muslims, the whole world is our homeland

The trust of Divine Unity is in our breasts
It is not easy to destroy our identity

Chief among the world's temples is that first House of God
We are its sentinels, it is our sentinel

We have been brought up under the shade of swords
The crescent's dagger is the our national insignia

Our *Adhon*⁸ echoed in the valleys of the West
None could stop our advancing flood ...
(Iqbal 2005a, 184)

Iqbal believed that Muslim leaders had treasonously abdicated historical responsibilities and realms, and had therefore experienced the judgment of Allah. This was consistent with the Muslim "sacramental" view of history. When history has favored Islam through imperial conquest and territorial expansion, the Muslim believes it has been a result of his own faithfulness and Allah's pleasure. When history has not favored Islamic power, Muslims believe it has been the result his own faithlessness and of Allah's disfavor (Armstrong, xi-xii). The British rule of India and Muslim subjection to the English could only be a result of Muslim faithlessness.

In the heart of a people that once shattered the world
I have seen a conflict between religion and country.
The spirit is dead in the body through weakness of faith,
despairs of the strength of the manifest religion;
Turk, Persian, Arab intoxicated with Europe
and in the throat of each the fish-hook of Europe;
And East wasted by the West's imperialism,
(Iqbal 1932, 55)

Possibly more damning in Iqbal's mind is the simple passivity of his people. To him it seemed that Indians, both Hindus and Muslims, had simply fallen asleep and were passively accepting Great Britain's rule. As one British commentator noted, only through the prestige of their race could they have ruled so many with so few (James 1997, 307).

⁸ The Muslim call to prayer.

Iqbal condemned this passivity and called upon his people to arise against British imperial rule and domination.

See thy ocean is at rest,
Slumbrous as a desert waste;
Yea, no waxing or increase
E'er disturbs thy ocean's peace.
Ne'er thy ocean knoweth storm
Or Leviathan's dread swarm:
Rend its breast and, billow-wise
Swelling into tumult, rise!
 Out of leaden sleep,
 Out of slumber deep
 Arise!
 Out of slumber deep
 Arise!

(Iqbal 1948, 73-76)

Iqbal's prescription to remedy this passivity was manliness, a return to the values that once led Islam to greatness. The character trait he focused on was *khudi*, or ego (dealt with in chapter 3). Iqbal's goal in the development of this value was a return of Islam to world status through conquest, hardness, and struggle. He believed that all Muslims should act with resolve and adopt a "manly" attitude. But he especially looked for a great man, the Perfect Man, to arise and lead the Muslim world back to greatness and restore Muslim dignity.

Be a conqueror of earth; that alone is worthy of a man,
thou art soft as a rose, become hard as a stone.
That thou mayst be the foundation of the wall of the garden.
Build thy clay into a man,
Build thy man into a world
Unless from thine own earth thou build thine own wall or door.
Someone else will make bricks of thine earth.

(Iqbal 1915, 89)

The Passivity of Allah

Iqbal did not limit his criticism of the situation in India only to the British and passive Muslims. He also blamed God. In one poem, he suggested that Muslims had been faithful to Allah throughout their history. Certainly, they had made mistakes and suffered the consequences during their great empire building years as well as through its decline and defeat. In spite of their problems, Muslims had faithfully pronounced the Unity of God throughout their historical experience. Confronting God in one of his most popular poems (Iqbal 1955, v), he recounted the history of service Muslims had offered to Allah.

Who upraised the sword of battle in thy Name's most sacred cause;
Or who strove to right the ruined world by thy most hallowed laws?
It was we and we alone who marched thy soldiers to the fight,
Now upon the land engaging, now embattled on the sea,
The triumphant call to Prayer in Europe's churches to recite,
Through the wastes of Africa to summon men to worship thee,
All the glittering splendor of great emperors we reckoned none;
In the shadow of our glinting swords we shouted, "God is One."
(Iqbal 1955, 5-6)

Iqbal wondered if Muslim faithfulness and effort on the behalf of God had been rewarded. Was God worthy of his people's sacrifice and loyalty?

We erased the smudge of falsehood from
the parchment firmament.,
We redeemed the human species from the
chains of slavery;
And we filled the Holy Kaaba with our foreheads
humbly bent,
Clutching to our fervent bosoms the Koran in
ecstasy,
Yet the charge is laid against us we have
played the faithless part,
If disloyal we have proved, hast Thou
deserved to win our heart?
(Iqbal 1955,10)

Iqbal boldly asserts that Allah was responsible for the plight of the Muslims in Iqbal's world, and he complains against God's seeming lack of concern for his people.

No; the burning power of sin bides me be bold and not to faint;
Dust be in my mouth, but God -- He is the theme of my complaint.
(Iqbal 1955, 3)

Later, in Iqbal's poetic account of God's response to this accusation, Allah points out that Muslims had not been faithful, in fact had served idols, much like Abraham's father, Azar.

Sufism: A Passive Muslim Philosophy

Iqbal focuses on Sufism in his 1915 publication, *The Secrets of the Self*, as one of the negative influences on Indian Muslims. In the long poem, Iqbal suggests that early Muslims had adopted the Greek philosophy of Plato. He describes this philosophy as a quietistic philosophy that had turned Islam's wolves into sheep (Iqbal 1915, 56). The history of religion does reveal a vital link between modern religion and ancient Greek thought, with a number of Plato's concepts regarded as foundational to contemporary religious development, including, "...the belief in transcendental Reality, eternal values, immortality, righteousness, Providence, etc., and the characteristic mental and emotional attitude that is logically fostered by such belief..." (Copleston 1993, 504). Islamic Sufism also borrowed from Plato, by way of the Neo-Platonists, an understanding that human beings could enter a mystical union with God (Iqbal 1915, 56). While the transcendental nature of God is a core Islamic belief, Islam also teaches the immanence of God, that He is close to each believer, as close as "his jugular vein" (Quran 50, 15).

Sufis understood that the Muslim could only approach God through love, in conjunction with asceticism and various religious practices. The approach would

encompass a number of stages which would result, ultimately, in union between the lover and the beloved, often with the “annihilation” of the individual within God (Fakhry 1983, 239). This belief could result in extremes, with one Sufi, Hallaj (b. 858 A.D.), exclaiming, “I am the Creative Truth” (Iqbal 1974, 96). Hallaj, claiming an unorthodox and unacceptable identification with God, was executed for his beliefs. His body was, “cremated, and his remains scattered to the four winds” (Fakhry 1983, 246). It remained for Al Ghazali (d. 1111) and Ibn Arabi (d. 1240) to systematize Islamic mysticism and to save it from heresy, artfully dodging the pantheism which is a chief danger with Sufism (Fakhry 1983, 247). Although the extremes of Sufism have been condemned and refuted by Islamic scholars, Sufism has continued to hold sway over many Muslims and was a popularizing vehicle for the spread of Islam until the early twentieth century (Armstrong 2002, 110).

The concept of the Perfect Man, so central to Iqbal’s thought, is a Sufi concept that originated with Al-Hallaj and was later expounded by Ibn-Arabi. The Sufi sages taught that the Prophet Muhammad was the ultimate Perfect Man, but that there could be other, lesser, Perfect Men (Fakhry 1983, 253). Iqbal incorporated this Sufi concept into his philosophy, as well as its passion and complete dedication to God. He even adopted Rumi, the great Sufi poet, as his spiritual guide in his 1932 work, the *Javid Nama*. While adopting and appreciating certain aspects of Sufism, Iqbal (with the mainstream Muslim schools) rejected the characteristics of Sufism he considered destructive to Islam: its other-worldly focus in the pursuit of divine union, its concept of personal annihilation in the beloved, and its practical passivity in the face of Western expansion.

Iqbal's Social Context

A final contextual element that relates to Iqbal's perspective on Indian dignity concerns his personal situation. Iqbal was raised in a conservative Muslim home. At age 20 he was wed to Karim Bibi, a young Muslim woman. As was customary in his culture, this was an arranged marriage, but Iqbal was opposed to the union and eventually divorced his first wife (Zakaria 1990, 4). In 1905, Iqbal traveled to England and studied at Cambridge. His travels also took him to Germany and other countries on the continent where he studied for his Ph.D.

The cosmopolitan world of the West had a profound influence on Iqbal. He became a spokesman for Islam and the East, teaching courses on Arabic as well as delivering lectures on Islam and its implications for the world. His travels and educational endeavors brought him into contact with intelligent people of all races, but especially with young women who shared his interests in philosophy and poetry. It appears he formed some close associations, on an intellectual and possibly romantic level, which were not acceptable in his home culture. His response was to rail against the inhibiting strictures of his home culture and to even consider leaving India altogether. In 1909 he wrote to Attiya Begum, a young Indian woman he had known in England,

...My life is extremely miserable. They force my wife upon me. I have written to my father that he had no right to arrange my marriage especially when I had refused to enter into any alliance of that sort. I am quite willing to support her, but I am not prepared to make my life miserable by keeping her with me. As a human being I have a right to happiness -- if society or nature deny that to me, I defy both. The only cure is that I should leave this wretched country forever, or take refuge in liquor which makes suicide easier. (Iqbal 1978, 21)

Iqbal also felt obligated by family responsibilities to enter the legal profession for "financial reasons," to support a wife as well as to repay a brother who had provided the

funds for him to study in England (Iqbal 1978, 27). As a result of these social strictures, Iqbal entered a state of mind in which he felt compelled to refuse two positions at Indian universities and even considered giving up the writing of poetry (Iqbal 1978, 33).

Iqbal did not leave India, did not marry the young woman with whom he had formed a romantic alliance, did not reject his social obligations and did cause some consternation within his family when he refused another offer of a wife due to false accusations against her character, much to the embarrassment of his family and the prospective bride. Iqbal was a study in contrasts, calling for revolution against the West but accepting the rule of Great Britain and the benefits that accompanied it.

...He enjoyed being an armchair politician; he would pontificate from within the four walls of his home but did not actively participate in any movement. Being a philosopher, he lived in his ivory tower and wrote verse which took his fame to dizzying heights. He was hailed as a poet of revolution because of the fiery poems he wrote but his admirers were shocked and dismayed when he accepted knighthood from the British.... (Zakaria 1993, 56)

In his heart, Iqbal desired the dignity that comes with freedom and power. But in his personal life he either accepted or was compelled to accept the strictures of his culture and social milieu. No wonder he wrote so passionately on the subject of human dignity and was recognized as one of the most passionate aspirants for freedom in the East.

Rafik Zakaria comments, "No one in the East has done more to boost the human ego and to clothe man's self with confidence and respect than Iqbal":

Raise your Self so high that God Himself will ask:
Tell me O man! How would you want
Your destiny to be written?

(Zakaria 1993, 158)

Iqbal's Personal Journey

As with most human beings, Iqbal's views changed over time. As noted earlier, Iqbal was raised in British India and was exposed to a wide range of cultural, political, and religious viewpoints: the Sufism of his Kashmiri father; the traditional Muslim history and literature of his teacher, Mir Hasan; the Western influence of the Scotch Mission School at Sialkot; and the Western philosophy of his mentors and teachers, Arnold and McTaggart. Iqbal's life and writings reflect the various influences of his background. Very early he reflected the traditional religious views of his family and Muslim faith. Later, he seems to have reflected the more modern viewpoints of Western philosophy and the liberal tradition. Finally, upon his return to India in 1908, he adopted a conservative Islamic religion patterned after the thought of Wahhab and Afghani.

As a young man, Iqbal excelled in the study of Western philosophy and endeavored to plumb its depths. In 1900 he graduated the Government College at Lahore with a Masters Degree in Philosophy and earned a position as a professor of philosophy at the same school. Later, in 1905, he traveled to England to further his philosophical studies under Arnold and McTaggart at Cambridge. Iqbal seemed to thrive in the scholarly world of the West. However, in his 1915 work, *The Secrets of the Self*, Iqbal questioned the benefits of the western education he had received:

But do not seek the glow of love from the knowledge of today,
do not seek the nature of truth from this infidel's cup.
Long have I been running to and fro,
Learning the secrets of the new knowledge;
Its gardeners have put me to the trial
And have made me intimate with their roses.
Roses! Tulips, rather, that warn one not to smell them -
Like paper roses, a mirage of perfume.
Since this garden ceased to enthrall me
I have rested on the paradisaal tree.

Modern knowledge is the greatest blind -
Idol worshipping, idol selling, idol making.
(Iqbal 1915, 129)

Religiously, Iqbal also journeyed from a liberal perspective to a more conservative one. As noted above, his family had originated in Kashmir and followed the passionate religion the Muslim Sufis. One extreme characteristic of Sufism is pantheism, a metaphysical view that Iqbal had evidently adopted during this period of his life. In a 1920 letter to Iqbal, McTaggart described the student he had known at Cambridge as a “pantheist and a mystic” (Iqbal 1992, 118). His son, Javid, comments that Iqbal was probably following the teachings of the great Persian pantheistic poet, Hafiz (Iqbal 1961, xx). By 1915, Iqbal had adopted a very different view, however, communicated in his first Persian poetic work, *The Secrets of the Self*. Based on that work, McTaggart questioned Iqbal, “Have you not changed your position very much?” (Iqbal 1992, 118). In fact, Iqbal had adopted a much more conservative type of Islam, extolling the religion of the conservative Muslim reformer, Mohammad Ibn-i-Abdul Wahhab. Iqbal glowingly described Wahhab as the “great puritan reformer” in his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, a series of lectures he delivered beginning in 1928. Of the reformer he says:

The essential thing to note is the spirit of freedom manifested in it: though inwardly this movement, too, is conservative in its own fashion. While it rises in revolt against the finality of schools, and vigorously asserts the right of private judgment, its vision of the past is wholly uncritical, and in matters of law it mainly falls back on the traditions of the Prophet. (Iqbal 1974, 152-153)

Iqbal also journeyed from a commitment to Indian nationalism to a fervent espousal of Pan-Islam. Some of his early poetry contains beautiful nature poetry extolling the wonder of India’s geography. Some of that poetry is still sung by India’s

elementary age school children. In that poetry, he also lamented the failure of Hindus and Muslims to peacefully coexist. He suggested that Hindus and Muslims cooperate and dispense with their differences, for they were all of the same country. After returning from England in 1908, however, he adopted a new approach. In a 1909 letter, Iqbal wrote:

I have myself been of the view that religious differences should disappear from this country (India), and even now act on this principle in my private life. But now I think that the preservation of their separate national entities is desirable for both the Hindus and the Muslims. The vision of a common nationhood for India is a beautiful ideal, and has poetic appeal, but looking to the present conditions and the unconscious trends of the two communities, appears incapable of fulfillment. (Iqbal 1961,xxi)

In fact, Iqbal became an exponent of Pan-Islam and Islamic solidarity and supported that view until his death (Iqbal 1961, xx). It is important to understand this aspect of Iqbal's life. Much of his fame is derived from his ability as a poet and a philosopher. But, ultimately, he viewed both his art and his philosophy as instrumental to the revitalization of the Islamic community in opposition to the West.

Iqbal's views changed as he journeyed from youth to old age. As discussed in these paragraphs, his intellect ranged wide through the learning of both East and West and he critically examined his own views and changed them as necessary. This truth has caused some consternation among the students and admirers of his work. Iqbal answered them in a humorous poem titled Piety and Ecstasy. In the poem, he indicates that it is no wonder that his work causes questions among his admirers. Even Iqbal does not understand Iqbal!

I myself do not know my reality,
Very deep is the sea of my thoughts.

Since long I am also longing to see Iqbal
For long I have shed tears in his separation.

Iqbal also is not acquainted with Iqbal,
There is no joke in it, by God he is not.
(Iqbal 2005a, 86-87)

Conclusion

From this discussion it is clear that human dignity was a motivating passion for Iqbal. Reflecting a Hegelian perspective, he expressed the situation of his nation and his people from the vantage point of human freedom and dignity. British colonial policy in India, facilitated by utilitarian social theories, had established a machine-like political structure consisting of an authoritarian central government supported by a vast bureaucracy. In India, the impact of this vast social mega-machine, fueled by Britain's sense of racial superiority and the imposition of Western civilization, was experienced as a malignant paternalism that stifled human freedom and was destructive of Muslim culture. Early in his career, Iqbal awakened to the sense that Indian Muslims had, through political domination, become mere objects in the galaxy of colonial rule. "For it is the essential principle of slavery, that man has not yet attained a consciousness of this freedom and consequently sinks down to a mere thing -- an object of no value" (Hegel 1952, 198). In his poetry, Iqbal reflected upon the experience of British domination and concluded that even hell was preferable to foreign domination.

Like their own flames; fires whose flames pounce
Like biting dogs, which horrify, which burn
The living, but whose light is cold and dead ---
A million years in such a place
Are better than a moment's servitude.
(Iqbal 1969, 44)

While Iqbal was critical of Great Britain's role in India, he was just as critical of his Muslim countrymen and of his religion. He blamed them for their own situation, accusing Muslims of a lack of faith and of passivity in the face of Britain's expansion into India. Iqbal's religious perspective, influenced by his personal experience of the strictures of a traditional social environment, further fueled his desire for freedom and dignity.

Iqbal saw himself as a modern-day prophet and a source of national (and international) Muslim self-reflection, accurately judging his people's historical situation. He concluded that his Muslim countrymen required a personal renaissance of faith in order to reestablish the global dignity of Islam, to release Muslims from the slavery that had been imposed upon them through British Imperial domination. In order to bring about that renaissance of faith and restore Muslims freedom and dignity, Iqbal developed his philosophy of the Perfect Man. I will now turn to a discussion of that philosophy.

CHAPTER 3

RESTORING MUSLIM DIGNITY: IQBAL'S PHILOSOPHY OF THE PERFECT MAN

Introduction

As discussed in earlier chapters, Muhammad Iqbal was deeply troubled by England's Imperial rule of India. He did not entirely lay the blame for the situation at the doorstep of the English, however, believing that India's people were also to blame for their situation. Beginning in 1915 he published three poetic works, *The Secrets of the Self* (1915), *The Mysteries of Selflessness* (1918) and *Javid Nama* (1932), that provided a roadmap for the development of the Perfect Man, the personal reformation that he believed would enable the Muslims of India to stand up to their imperial rulers. In this chapter, I will discuss Iqbal's perception of the need for the Perfect Man, the character traits of the Perfect Man, and the Eastern and Western philosophical foundations of Iqbal's thought.

Iqbal's Perception of the Early Twentieth Century

By the early years of the twentieth century, Indian Muslims had experienced British Imperial dominion for a century and a half. The defeat of Mughal India by the British East India Company in the Eighteenth century and subsequent developments had made it clear that the British were the ruling force over both Muslim and Hindu peoples, with India serving as the cornerstone for the British Empire. With British rule came the imposition of British culture (discussed in chapter 2), the civilizing and attempted Christianizing of India as well as the economic development and exploitation of the sub-continent. Iqbal, living at the height of English Imperial power, was deeply sensitive to

the indignity he perceived was being inflicted upon India, particularly its Indian Muslims. Possessed of an expansive world-view, he was also pained by the great power struggles that would plunge his world into two great wars. In January 1938, near the end of his life, he delivered a radio address that presented a very dim estimate of the world situation.

The modern age prides itself on its progress in knowledge and its matchless scientific developments... But in spite of all these developments, the tyranny of imperialism struts abroad, covering its face under the masks of Democracy, Nationalism, Communism, Fascism and heaven knows what else besides. Under these masks, in every corner of the earth, the spirit of freedom and the dignity of man are being trampled underfoot in a way to which not even the darkest period of human history presents a parallel. (Iqbal 1992, 373)

Iqbal's prescription to restore the dignity of Indian Muslims was the concept of the Perfect Man. This great man, God's vice-regent on earth, would bring about the human dignity, peace, and harmony that he so ardently desired and that was so obviously absent from the world stage.

"Keep away from democracy: Follow the Perfect Man..." (Esposito 1983, 181)

Iqbal was convinced that the world needed a new answer to its problems. The "isms" of his time had failed to bring about world-wide peace and universal freedom, had instead brought warfare and the subjugation of nations and peoples. Iqbal longed for a new world, a world in which the Muslim dream of global utopia would be realized, brought about by the Perfect Man.

He rolls up this ancient carpet.
His genius abounds with life and desires to manifest itself.
He will bring another world into existence.
A hundred worlds like this world of parts and wholes
Spring up, like roses, from the seed of his imagination.
He puts the idols out of the sanctuary.

(Iqbal 1915, 80)

A deeply religious Muslim, it is impossible to separate Iqbal's philosophy from his religion. Iqbal's Perfect Man is a reflection of his religion as well as of the philosophies of the West and East. He fervently hoped and worked for the arrival of this man, of this individual who would assume the role of a Muhammad, God's vice-regent on earth, and fulfill the dreams of the Muslim faithful (Esposito 1983, 177).

Tis sweet to be God's vice-regent in the world
And exercise sway over the elements.
God's vice-regent is the soul of the universe,
His being is the shadow of the greatest name.
(Iqbal 1915, 79)

Trained in Western and Eastern philosophy, Iqbal developed a complete system of thought around the concept of the Perfect Man and attempted to communicate it to a world-wide audience. He believed the Perfect Man would arise like a Muhammad from the masses of the Muslim faithful. This great man, the product of a particularly Muslim developmental process, would be uniquely qualified to lead Islam to a new world order. He also believed that all Muslims were responsible for developing the character traits of the Perfect man within their own personalities. He advised, "Give up waiting for the Mehdi -- the personification of power. Go and create him" (Iqbal 1961, 94). Iqbal was convinced that the development of Perfect Manhood within Muslim society was essential if it was to assume its rightful place in the world and rediscover its lost dignity.

Iqbal's Philosophy of the Perfect Man

The Need For the Perfect Man

In 1915, Iqbal published his poetic work in Persian, *Asrar-i-Khudi*, later translated into English by Reynold A. Nicholson as the *The Secrets of the Self*. This work is a poetic philosophical treatise calling for the rejuvenation of Muslim personhood, or ego.

Of special interest to Iqbal was the issue of power: the power of those who ruled the empire and the powerlessness of those he saw as its slaves (Schimmel 1970, 126). He understood the importance of power in the world. "In the International world the weak find no sympathy; power alone deserves respect" (Iqbal 1974, 158). Iqbal's understanding of the use of power in the world is reminiscent of Thucydides' report regarding the use of imperial power by ancient Athens, "The strong do what they can, the weak suffer what they must" (Thucydides 1952, 505). In his personal notebook, Iqbal wrote, "the powerful man creates environments, the feeble have to adjust themselves to it" (Iqbal 1961, 91).

Iqbal was especially interested in restoring power to India's Muslims, and he believed that the first step in that restoration required the development and strengthening of a powerful ego in Muslims in general, and of Indian Muslims in particular. Thus, the positive traits he attributes to the Perfect Man are those which enhance power (*khudi*, love, desire) while the traits he eschews (*sua'l*, disunity, passivity) are those which diminish power. He also gives a peculiar twist to the traits he chooses, defining them in terms of power. Love, for instance, is defined as the "assimilation" of the beloved. Action is vitally important, as it is the essential ingredient for the worldly expression of power. Power is expressed both as an individual trait as well as an important aspect of the community. Iqbal suggests that a community, the *Ummah*, composed of powerful individuals working toward the ideal of the Perfect Man has the potential to become the perfect community on both a local and an international scale. Once again, Iqbal encourages the community's adoption of characteristics which contribute to its power (unity, Muslim womanhood, tradition) and warns against those that will dilute its

effectiveness as an actor on the world stage (nationalism, adoption of Western values, and beggary). Powerful Muslims led by a Perfect Man within a perfected Ummah was Iqbal's prescription to return the world's Muslims to their rightful place on the world stage.

Life has only one law.
Life is power made manifest.
And its mainspring is the desire for victory.
(Iqbal 1915, 92)

The Characteristics of the Perfect Man

The Need for Muslim Reformation

In *The Secrets of the Self*, Iqbal explains that the once powerful Muslims, characterized as tigers, had accepted a "sheep philosophy" in the idealistic teachings of Plato and ended up as "tigers who eat grass" (Iqbal 1915, 54). In his epigram to the poem, Iqbal writes, "A tale of which the moral is that negation of self is a doctrine invented by the subject races of mankind in order that by this means they may sap and weaken the character of their rulers" (Iqbal 1915, 48). His historical perspective reminisces to a time when Islam ruled most of the known world.

Conquest and dominion are signs of strength,
Victory is the manifestation of strength.
Those fierce tigers beat the drum of sovereignty,
They deprived the sheep of freedom...

The weak, in order to preserve themselves,
Seek device from skilled intelligence.
In slavery, for the sake of repelling harm,
The power of scheming becomes quickened...

By force we cannot escape from the tiger;
Our legs are silver, his paws are steel.
'Tis not possible, however much one exhorts and counsels

To create in sheep the disposition of a wolf.

But to make the furious tiger a sheep - that is possible:
To make him unmindful of his nature – that is possible.
He became as a prophet inspired,
And began to preach to the blood-thirsty tigers...

Whoso is violent and strong is miserable:
Life's solidity depends on self-denial.
The spirit of the righteous is fed by fodder:
The vegetarian is pleasing to God...

The tiger-tribe was exhausted by hard struggles,
They had set their hearts on enjoyment of luxury...
At length their tigerish nature was broken...
That craving after action dwelt in their hearts no more.
They lost the power of ruling and the resolution to be independent...
The wakeful tiger was lulled to slumber by the sheep's charm...

(Iqbal 1915, 48-55)

Later, Iqbal explains that Plato was actually one of the sheep that lulled the tiger tribe away from their natural, powerful inclinations.

Plato, the prime ascetic and sage.
Was one of that ancient flock of sheep.
(Iqbal 1915, 56)

It is apparent from the poem that Iqbal identifies Indian Muslims and Muslims in general as the tigers who have abdicated a proud history of conquest and expansion. He believed that their power had been weakened by the adoption of Greek philosophy (especially the teachings of Plato) by Medieval Muslim philosophers and exemplified in the mystical Sufi⁹ sect. According to Iqbal, this weakness prepared the way for the invasion and defeat by the Mongols under Genghis Khan in the thirteenth century, the English defeat of the Moghuls in India, and the early twentieth century experience of England's imperial rule.

⁹ Discussed on pp. 57-61 of chapter 2.

Iqbal states in the poem that the tiger “was lulled to slumber by the sheep’s charm.” The poet believes that there is still hope for the tigers; they only required an awakening to their current situation, restoration of a sense of self-hood, and acceptance of Iqbal’s poetic and prophetic call to character and action. With a proper response, with each Muslim incorporating the character traits of the Perfect Man, the glory of their former civilization would be restored.

In 1909, after his return from England, Iqbal published an article, titled “Islam as a Moral and Political Ideal,” in the *Hindustan Review*. In this article, Iqbal clearly identified his perception of the state of Muslim character and the need for personal reformation.

...Does the Indian Muslim possess a strong will in a strong body? Has he got the will to live? Has he got sufficient strength of character to oppose those forces which tend to disintegrate the social organism to which he belongs? I regret to answer my questions in the negative. The reader will understand, that in the great struggle for existence it is not principally number which makes a social organism survive. Character is the ultimate equipment of man, not only in his efforts against a hostile social environment, but also in his contest with kindred competitors after a fuller, richer, ampler life. The life-force of the India Muslim has become woefully enfeebled. The decay of the religious spirit, combined with other causes of a political nature over which he had no control, has developed in him a habit of self-dwarfing, a sense of dependence and, above all, that laziness of spirit, which an enervated people call by that dignified name of 'contentment' in order to conceal their own enfeeblement. (Iqbal 1992, 41)

Iqbal was clearly dissatisfied with his perception of the state of Muslim character in India. He believed that their situation was the result of centuries of wrong thinking and the acceptance of a philosophy that was inconsistent with Islam. His prescription to correct these ills was his philosophy of the Perfect Man.

The Three Stage Path to Perfect Manhood

Iqbal's teaching of the perfect man had its foundations in philosophy, both Eastern and Western. He studied the work of Muslim philosophers as well as that of Hegel, Bergson, and Nietzsche (and others). In Britain He studied under the British Neo-Hegelian McTaggart and was especially attracted to the German philosophers. Although Iqbal later consciously rejected much of that philosophy as being inconsistent with Islam, his thought continued to reflect the foundational categories and ideas of his philosophical education.¹⁰

Iqbal's teaching is founded on some basic principles. Iqbal explained these in a 1921 letter to his mentor, Dr. R.A. Nicholson.

The teaching of the 'Asrar-I-Khudi" rests on two points: a) That personality is the central fact of the universe. The Old Testament describes this ultimate fact as the great "I am." b) That personality, 'I am' is the central fact in the constitution in man... (Iqbal 1992, 238)

The Perfect Man, recognizing this central fact in his own constitution, would follow a path of growth and development leading him on an ever upward path toward God. Once he has followed that path, he would attain a near divine status. He would become vice-regent of God on earth.

It is described as ...the bearer of Divine trust...It has the quality of growth as well as the quality of corruption; it has the power to expand by absorbing the elements of the universe of which it appears to be an insignificant part, it also has the power of absorbing the attributes of God and thus attain to the vice-regency of God on earth. (Iqbal 1992, 238)

Iqbal believed that the path to vice-regency and perfect manhood was clearly laid out within the teachings of Islam, the life of the Prophet Muhammad, and particularly in the

¹⁰ I have discussed Iqbal's evolution of thought in Chapter 2, pp. 61-64.

Quran. "Behold, the Lord said to the angels: "I will create a vice-regent on earth" (Quran 2:30). In his *Asrar-i-Khudi*, he explained that the path to vice-regency was three-fold:

- a) Complete surrender to the law.
- b) Self control
- c) Vice-regency of God.

(Iqbal 1992, 238)

The first stage, obedience to the law of Islam, is absolutely essential for the Muslim. In Iqbal's understanding, Indian Muslims of his time would not have suffered the indignity of British rule if they had been fully obedient that law. The poetic prophet reminds them of their roots, calling them back to obedience to the Prophet Muhammad's teaching.

Whoso would master the sun and stars,
Let him make himself a prisoner of the law!...
The star moves towards its goal
With head bowed in surrender to a law...
Since law makes everything strong within,
Why does thou neglect this source of strength? ..
Do not complain of the hardness of the Law,
Do not transgress the statutes of Muhammad!

(Iqbal 1915, 73-75)

But this obedience to the law would not be a blind obedience to a list of cold tenets of religion. Iqbal believed that the perfect man would approach God out of desire and would discover the true source of the law within himself as he came into close contact with the divine (Iqbal 1974, 181).

Iqbal's second stage of the individual's approach to perfect manhood is self control. Iqbal compares the body to the camel, which requires discipline and control.

Thy soul cares only for itself, like the camel:
It is self-conceited, self-governed, and self-willed.
Be a man, get its halter into thine hand.
That thou mayst become a pearl albeit thou art a potter's vessel.

(Iqbal 1915, 75)

The goal of this discipline and self control is to overcome the negative aspects of the human emotions: fear, materialism, and vanity. Self control results from practicing Islam's religious acts: prayer, fasting, the pilgrimage, almsgiving and the *Shahada*¹¹ (Iqbal 1915, 76-78). Throughout history and in the contemporary Indian Muslim situation, he believed that failure to live up to and practice Islam's tenets had resulted in severe cultural and social judgment by God. If the Muslim world was to regain its dignity, self control was essential. "If thou canst rule thy camel, thou wilt rule the world" (Iqbal 1915, 79).

The final stage in achieving perfect manhood is vice-regency, available to every Muslim who faithfully practices what Iqbal and Islam teach. Iqbal believed that "every man is potentially a microcosm, and that when he has become spiritually perfect, all the divine attributes are displayed by him... and he becomes the god-man, the representative and vice-regent of God on earth" (Iqbal 1915, 79). In his poem, *The Secrets of the Self*, Iqbal eloquently describes the perfect man and his impact upon the world. He rules the world and fulfills in himself all the positive values of the biblical prophets. From his work and activity arise a myriad of worlds, and he completely refashions the present one.

Appear, O rider of Destiny!
Appear, O light of the dark realm of Change!
Illumine the scene of existence.
Dwell in the blackness of our eyes.
Silence the noise of the nations.
Imparadise our ears with thy music!
Arise and tune the harp of brotherhood,
Give us back the wine of love!
Bring once more days of peace to the world...
(Iqbal 1915, 83-84).

¹¹ "There is no god but God and Muhammad is His Prophet," the Muslim statement of belief and commitment to Islam.

Khudi (Self)

The most important aspect of the Perfect Man is self-hood, ego or *khudi*. It is this characteristic that Iqbal believes has been neglected or lost by Muslims, their “hidden wound” (Iqbal 1978, 164). *Khudi* is a Persian word that carries a negative connotation of the self, selfishness or hubris. Iqbal took the word and redefined it, giving it a sense of personal power and strength. Late in his life, Iqbal described the meaning of the term to a friend.

Ethically the word '*khudi*' means (as used by me) self-reliance, self-respect, self-confidence, self-preservation, even self-assertion when such a thing is necessary, in the interests of life and the power to stick to the cause of truth, justice, duty, etc., even in the face of death. Such behavior is moral in my opinion because it helps in the integration of the forces of the Ego, thus hardening it, as against the forces of disintegration and dissolution (vide Reconstruction); practically the metaphysical Ego is the bearer of two main rights that is the right to life and freedom as determined by the Divine Law. (Iqbal 1992, 244)

This one characteristic defines Iqbal’s work and makes it unique within the corpus of Islamic thought. It’s adoption was, in Iqbal’s mind, the salve to the mortal wound of Indian Muslims, and essential to the success of Islam in general. His first Persian work, *Asrar-i-Khudi*, is a treatise on this characteristic and the means of developing it in the individual. When the word self occurs in Iqbal’s poetry, it is the English translation of *khudi*.

At these words my bosom was enkindled
And swelled with emotion like the flute;
I rose like music from the string
To prepare paradise for the ear
I unveiled the mystery of the self
And disclosed its wondrous secret.

(Iqbal 1915, 13)

The powerful nature of the Iqbal’s *khudi* cannot be over-emphasized. Power is an essential attribute of the Perfect Man, an essential characteristic that he saw lacking in

the Muslims of his time. Writing in 1909 on "Islam as a Moral and Political Ideal,"

Iqbal expressed his understanding of the important relationship between power and Islam.

... The ethical ideal of Islam is to disentrall man from fear, and thus to give him a sense of his personality, to make him conscious of himself as a source of power. This idea of man as an individuality of infinite power determines, according to the teachings of Islam, the worth of all human action. That which intensifies the sense of individuality in man is good, that which enfeebles it is bad. Virtue is power, force, strength; evil is weakness. (Iqbal 1992, 36-37)

Later, in the same article, he says,

Power, energy, force, strength, yes physical strength, is the law of life. A strong man may rob others when he has got nothing in his own pocket; but a feeble person, he must die the death of a mean thing in the world's awful scene of continual warfare. (Iqbal 1992, 43)

This power is the source of *khudi* and, for Iqbal, forms the core of his Perfect Man. It is a theme that pervades all his poetic and literary production.

Action

Action is another important characteristic of the Perfect Man and a key element in Iqbal's philosophy. According to his view, passivity had been the bane of Indian Muslims due to the adoption of Greek philosophy. For the Perfect Man there can be no passivity, only action.

The pith of life is contained in action.
The delight in creation is the law of life,
Arise and create a new world!
Wrap thyself in flames, be an Abraham
(Iqbal 1915, 90)

According to Iqbal, this passivity resulted in defeat at the hands of England and the West.

"Life springs from perpetual movement; motion constitutes the wave's whole existence"

(Iqbal 1915, 112). This is consistent with Iqbal's vitalism, the "free spontaneous and

creative life as the essence of reality" (Underhill 1911, 27). "Being" is not the focal point

of Iqbal's thought, instead he focuses on the possibilities inherent in a Muslim's faith, what an individual can become in relationship with God through action and effort. Through continuous action, the Perfect Man can transform the world. More importantly, personal action is the means by which the ego or self is made manifest and experiences growth.

... 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 1974, 198)

Iqbal reminds us that action is also an essential principle of the Muslim faith.

Reminiscent of the Christian discussion regarding faith and works, Iqbal believes that action is the only way Muslims can communicate the reality of the unity of God in the world and create the ideal world envisioned by the Prophet Muhammad and the truth embodied in Islam.

A hundred nations thou hast raised from one,
On thy own fort made treacherous assault.
Be one; make visible thy Unity;
Let action turn the unseen into seen;
Activity augments the joy of faith,
But faith is dead that issues not in deeds.
(Iqbal 1918, 69)

The vice-regent, the Perfect Man, has a unique responsibility in the world. It is to be a man of action. Iqbal suggests that it is not God who fashions the contemporary world, but the activity of the Perfect Man (God's vice-regent), or of individuals who are attempting to inculcate the character traits of the perfect man in their personalities and their communities.

Prostration without the joy of action is dry and useless;
life is all action, whether fair or foul.

I will tell you plainly a word not known to every one--
happy is the man who has written it on his heart's tablet.
This world you behold is not the handiwork of God,
the wheel is yours and the thread spun on your spindle.
Prostrate yourself before the law of action's reward,
for from action are born Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise.
(Iqbal 1932, 124)

Iqbal understands that men of action inevitably encounter opposition. With action and effort comes the reality of tension and conflict, understood by Iqbal as necessary, even positive, aspects of life. The stronger the tension, conflict and even strength of an enemy, the greater the possibility of personal growth of ego, self or *khudi*. "Personality is a state of tension and can continue only if that state is maintained" (Iqbal 1915, xix).

Whoever knows the states of the Self,
considers a powerful enemy to be a blessing from God.
To the seed of man the enemy is a rain cloud.
he awakens its potentialities.

When thou mak'st thyself strong with self,
Thou wilt destroy the world at thy pleasure.
(Iqbal 1915, 98)

Freedom

The concept of freedom is another essential characteristic of the Perfect Man in Iqbal's thought. According to Iqbal and consistent with Muslim belief, the Prophet Muhammad rejected class privilege, separation of people based upon race, color or creed, and brought about perfect freedom for all within the Muslim community. According to Islam and Iqbal, the individual who most fully submits to the tenets of Islam and grows in his/her relationship with God is the one who is most free. Thus, freedom increases for individuals as they grow toward God. The ego attains freedom by the removal of all

obstacles that hinder the growth of this relationship. Because the ego is contingent, it is partly free, partly determined, but reaches fullest freedom by approaching the individual who is most free – God. All of life is an endeavor for the realization of this freedom (Iqbal 1915, xx-xxi).

For soul cannot be Soul, unless completely free.
Created by necessity, it hurled
Itself at this material world
and, conquering it, gained
A freedom unrestrained.

(Iqbal 1969, 26)

Hardness

Hardness is another important facet of Iqbal's Perfect Man. In *The Secrets of the Self*, he relates the parable of a bird in a garden which is faint with thirst and mistakes a diamond for a drop of water. He attempts to quench his thirst upon it, but fails due to its hardness. Seeing a beautiful dewdrop on a leaf, he hops over to the bush, drinks and his thirst is quenched. Iqbal asks his Muslim readers the question, "Art thou a drop of water or a gem?" (Iqbal 1915, 102). He provides the answer, communicating the essence of *khudi* (the word *khudi* below is translated as Self).

Be a diamond, not a dewdrop!
Be massive in nature, like mountains,
And bear on thy crest a hundred clouds laden with floods of rain!
Save thyself by affirmation of self,
Compress thy quicksilver into silver ore!
Produce a melody from the string of Self,
Make manifest the secrets of Self!

(Iqbal 1915, 103)

In another context, Iqbal quotes Mussolini regarding the importance of being "hard."

...Concentrate your whole ego on yourself alone, and ripen your clay into real manhood if you wish to see your aspirations realized. Mussolini's maxim was: "He who has steel has everything." Be hard and work hard. This is the whole secret of individual and collective life. (Iqbal 1992, 214).

This character trait finds application especially in relation to the difficulties of life. The Perfect Man must be able to endure hardship and pain. Difficulties and the proper response to them are character building and hasten the individual towards maturity and perfect manhood.

Emotional Attributes: Love, Passion and Desire

By love of Him the heart is made strong
And earth rubs shoulders with the Pleiades...

In the Moslem's heart is the home of Muhammad.
All our glory is from the name of Muhammad.
(Iqbal 1915, 30)

According to Iqbal the Perfect Man is also a loving man. This love is primarily focused on God, with the individual's desire directed forever on the path to increasing knowledge and experience of God. "The Moslem's nature prevails by means of love: The Moslem, if he be not loving, is an infidel" (Iqbal 1915, 116). But Iqbal gives love an interesting definition. It is the "...desire to assimilate or absorb. Its highest form is the creation of values and ideals and the endeavor to realize them" (Iqbal 1915, xxv). Ultimately, the entire world is absorbed or assimilated through this love and brought under the influence of Islam. The Muslim is even able to wage war through love.

Love makes peace and war in the world.
Love of God at last becomes wholly God.
Kiss the threshold of a Perfect Man!
Like Rumi, light the candle
And burn Rum in the fire of Tabriz!¹²
There is a beloved hidden within thine heart.
(Iqbal 1915, 29)

¹² Rum is a term for Rome. Rumi's spiritual director was Shams-i-Tabriz. This is a metaphor for engulfing the West in the spiritual passion of the East. (Iqbal 1915, 29)

Passion is also important in the character of the Perfect Man, and is closely related to Iqbal's definition of love. For Iqbal, passion must rule the intellect and reason. Both passion and reason are important, but for Iqbal, the emphasis on passion marks an important dividing line between East and West. He suggests that the West is ruled by intellect while the East is ruled by passion (Iqbal 1932, 61). The presence of passionate love for God provides the energy that motivates the Muslim to accomplish great things and to overcome the fears that beset all life.

True passion, yearning, zest,
A burning quest --
Keep these alive:
On them your Self will thrive.
The Self can be immortalized
And union with God realized
Without your losing your identity --
a lover's unity...
I sow the seed of Selfhood in my dust
And tend it as a sacred trust.
(Iqbal 1969, 38)

While passion provides the energy for action and love, desire provides the direction. Iqbal is well aware of the history of Islam and its conquests in the name of Allah. It was desire that looked out of the Arabian deserts and motivated the early Muslims to expand their borders into a vast empire only a hundred years after Muhammad began his preaching work. Iqbal equates the lack of desire with death, while those who are vibrant will possess a desire kindled toward some great purpose or goal (Iqbal 1915, 24). The mark of vitality, either individually or corporately, is the presence of "fresh desires and ideals" (Iqbal 1992, 213):

Life is preserved in purpose;
Because of the goal its caravan bell tinkles.¹³

¹³ The caravan bell is well known in the East. It is a bell worn on the lead camel that signals the direction and movement of the caravan.

Life is latent in seeking,
Its origin is hidden in desire.
Keep desire alive in thy heart,
Lest thy little dust become a tomb.
Desire is the soul of this world of hue and scent,
The nature of everything is a storehouse of desire.
(Iqbal 1915, 23)

Desire, according to Iqbal's philosophy, is essential to life. Iqbal believes that the desire of Muslims in India had been extinguished by the vicissitudes of history and the adoption of passive philosophies. One of his goals is to reignite the desire of his contemporary Muslim brothers and sisters in order to restore them to their rightful place on the world stage. For Iqbal, desire is always directed toward conquest, whether of a love interest or a world empire.

By the lamp of desire this dust is enkindled.
By desire life's cup is brimmed with wine,
So that life leaps to its feet and marches briskly on.
Life is occupied with conquest alone
And the one charm for conquest is desire.
Desire is love's message to beauty.
(Iqbal 1915, 60)

Faqr (Indifference)

Indifference to the benefits of life is another key characteristic of the Perfect Man. Iqbal calls this indifference, *faqr*, a term which Vahid says is nearly impossible to translate into Western thought. "According to Iqbal, the term means a complete detachment and superiority to one's material possessions" (Vahid 1948, 49). It also appears that Iqbal includes in this concept an indifference to the difficulties of life. "The highest art is that which awakens our dormant will-force, and nerves us to face the trials of life manfully" (Iqbal 1992, 85).

..Indifference

To worldly needs engenders fine disdain,
And holy pride takes many splendid shapes...

(Iqbal 1918, 72)

The Rejection of *Sua'l* (Beggary)

Iqbal believed that Indian Muslims had spent too many years accepting the “hand-outs” of the British and thus emphasized the absence of *sua'l*, or beggary, in the Perfect Man’s character. Iqbal explains that the individual exhibiting self-hood will not accept or seek anything without working for it. He felt that Indian Muslims had become too dependant upon the British. But he believed that even the son of a rich man who inherited his father’s wealth was guilty of *sua'l*, as was the one who “thinks the thoughts of others” (Iqbal 1915, xxvi).

By asking poverty is made more abject;
By begging the beggar is made poorer,
Asking disintegrates the self
And deprives of illumination the Sinai bush of the Self..

He who swept the rubbish of idols out of the Ka'aba
Said that God loves a man that earns his living.
Woe to him that accepts bounty from another's table
And lets his neck be bent with benefits.

(Iqbal 1915, 39-40)

Faithfulness to Allah

Finally, and most importantly, the Perfect Man (and the Muslim) must maintain a close and growing relation to God and the Muslim faith. Iqbal believed that the farther an individual is from God, the less complete he/she is. The closer to God, the greater the freedom and power the individual experiences. Further, individuals are to incorporate the attributes of God into their own lives. By doing so, “man becomes unique by becoming more and more like the most unique individual” (Iqbal 1915, xviii). Iqbal continuously

exhorts Muslims to be faithful to Islam and to practice its disciplines. The central belief of Islam that “there is no God but Allah” and the belief in the unity of God is absolutely essential for a vibrant Islam to exist. When Muslims practice this faith, the divine essence is made evident in the world.

We have honor from “There is no god but Allah,”
We are the protectors of the universe.
Freed from the vexation of today and tomorrow.
We have pledged ourselves to love One.
We are the conscience hidden in God’s heart...
In our essence Divinity is mirrored:
The Moslem’s being is one of the signs of God.
(Iqbal 1915, 140)

Iqbal developed his philosophy of the Perfect Man in order to correct the societal and civilizational ills he perceived in early twentieth century imperial India. The character traits discussed above are consistent with Islamic teaching and essential, in Iqbal’s thinking, to restoring Muslims’ sense of dignity and their ability to resist the incursions of British cultural and political influence. Iqbal’s Perfect Man, while exhibiting admirable character traits, does not exist in isolation but draws his strength from his community, the Muslim *Ummah*. Iqbal’s second book of Persian poetry, *the Mysteries of Selflessness* (1918), dealt with that important Muslim concept.

The Ummah: The Perfect Community

Perfect Men in Social Context

In Iqbal’s second work on the Self, titled *Rumuz i-Bekhudi (The Mysteries of Selflessness)*, the author and philosopher expands the conception of the self as it relates to community, the Muslim *ummah*. Iqbal’s use of “selflessness” refers to the necessity of the Perfect Man’s participation in the community, essential to the life of the Muslim as well as of the community. Iqbal’s translator, A.J. Arberry, explains that the author “aims

to show that it is only in an ideal Islamic society, as he understands the matter, that the individual can hope to achieve complete self-affirmation” (Iqbal 1918, xi). Iqbal believed that all Muslims had the responsibility and the opportunity to grow into selfhood, to progress toward the ideal of the Perfect Man. A central tenet of Islam, Iqbal believed that the *ummah* could re-establish the Prophet Muhammad’s vision of a perfect community only if it developed as a community of “self-affirming individuals” (Iqbal 1918, xi). The most complete and fulfilled self arises only in the community. Apart from the community, only selfishness and conceit results.

The link that binds the Individual
To the Society a Mercy is;
His truest self in the Community
Alone achieves fulfillment. Wherefore be
So far as in thee lies in close rapport
With thy society... (Iqbal 1918, 5)

Characteristics of the *Ummah*, the Perfect Community

The community that is to work toward perfection must have at its heart the central teaching of Islam: “There is no God but God, this is the soul and body of our pure Community” (Iqbal 1918, 12). All the character traits of the empowered Self also apply to the community, with the understanding that the aspect of unity applies to the entire world-wide *ummah*. This unity is not based upon nationalism but upon a common faith. The Islamic community embraces all Muslims and forms the source of their common bond. Iqbal thus rejects national associations based upon race, territory, or ideology and suggests that the only acceptable community is based on religious unity.

Though nations’ destinies their lands control,
Though nations build their edifice on race,
Thinkest thou the Community is based
Upon the country? Shall so much regard
Be blindly paid to water, air and earth?...

Well-pointed arrows in one quiver are we,
One showing, one beholding, one in thought;
One is our goal and purpose, one the form,
The fashion, and the measure of our dream.
Thanks to His blessings, we are brothers all
Sharing one speech, one spirit, and one heart.
(Iqbal 1918, 13)

The community does not exist only as a locus of perfect individuals. It also has a universal purpose. The passion and desire of the *ummah* is to spread the truth of the Muslim faith until the entire world also proclaims the Muslim belief in God.

Allahu Akbar!¹⁴ This the secret that holds
Of thy existence; wherefore let it be
Thy purpose to preserve and propagate

No other God. If thou a Muslim art,
Till all the world proclaims the Name of God,
Thou canst not rest one moment.
(Iqbal 1918, 54)

Much of Iqbal's *Mysteries of Selflessness* is concerned with the conflict between Islam and the rest of the world, especially with Western concepts. Iqbal is quite clear that western nationalism is inconsistent with Islam and that Muslims should avoid it at all costs, as it brings disunity to the *ummah* and diminishes its vital force. Muslims should "Seize the world that it may not seize thee" (Iqbal 1918, 57).

Iqbal recognized that both men and women had a vital role to play in the community, the perfect Muslim *ummah*. He believed that the woman's role was especially important, as she is the nurturer of the life and morals of the family and the community. In fact, he believed that woman, as she fulfills her role as wife and mother, is the very foundation of community life. He suggests that the Prophet Muhammad's

¹⁴ God is Great!

daughter, Fatima, is the role model for the perfect female (Iqbal 1918, 66) even as he believed that Muhammad is the role model for the perfect man.

The instrument of Man sings melodies
When struck by Woman's plectrum; his soul's pride
Swells of her deference. The Woman clothes
The nakedness of man; the loveliness
of the beloved a garment weaves for love.
The love of God is nourished at her breast,
A lovely air struck from her silent hand;
(Iqbal 1918, 63)

Iqbal was well aware of the early twentieth century social changes that had taken place in the West regarding women in society and was especially wary of that influence upon Muslim women. He suggested that Western attitudes had seriously compromised womanhood. Iqbal perceived a great danger to the Muslim *ummah* should those attitudes be adopted by Muslim women.

Now take the slender figure, bosomless,
Close-croseted, a riot in her glance,
Her thought resplendent with Western light;
In outward guise a woman, inwardly
No woman she; she hath destroyed the bonds
That hold our pure community secure;
(Iqbal 1918, 64)

Much of the remainder of *The Mysteries of Selflessness* illustrates how the character traits of the Perfect Man are to be realized within the life of the community. The importance of the community's unity is repeatedly emphasized (69), as is the necessity for action and deeds (70). He advises against receiving charity (70), encourages indifference to the highs and lows of life (71), and reminds Muslims that they are to be individuals and not just the reflection of the West and its culture (73). Most importantly, he advises Muslims to be committed to Islam and to God and thus fulfill their destiny and restore dignity to Islam.

Thou hast within thy grip a living book;
How long shall earth content thee for thy home?
Lift up thy baggage; hurl it to the skies!
(Iqbal 1918, 78)

Philosophical Foundations of Iqbal's Perfect Man

Iqbal's Perfect Man concept is not unique in the history of ideas, either Western or Eastern. Iqbal was a thinker of great depth and diversity and was acquainted with a wide variety of thought. From his youth he had been trained in Eastern philosophical thinking and was intimate with the details of Medieval Muslim philosophy and its development. His Ph.D. dissertation for the University of Munich was a treatise titled "*The Development of Metaphysics in Persia*," delivered in 1908 and subsequently published in book form. Trained by Sir Thomas Arnold in India and the Neo-Hegelian McTaggart at Cambridge University, he was also intimate with a wide range of Western philosophers. A contemporary professor and commentator on Muslim philosophy notes that Iqbal was, "A poet of profound sensibility and a scholar of vast philosophical culture" (Fakhry 1970, 349). John Esposito classes Iqbal as an important contemporary voice of "resurgent Islam" and notes his trans-cultural knowledge.

Iqbal's writings, spurred by his deep concern for the crisis of Islam in contemporary society, were indebted to two principal sources: his Islamic heritage and the Western philosophy he studied at Cambridge, Heidelberg and Munich. His writings reflect the influence of the Quran, hadith, and Muslim thinkers like the great jurist Ibn Taimiya, the Indian reformer Wali Allah, and the renowned Sufi sage Jalal ud Din Rumi. His selective, eclectic use of Western materials reflected the influence of Bergson and McTaggart. (Esposito 1983, 176).

Esposito notes that Iqbal's concept of the Perfect Man reflects Iqbal's broad scholarship and wide use of philosophical sources. He also places Iqbal in the broad stream of the history of ideas and the concept of the perfectibility of man.

The idea of a superman or Perfect Man is not a totally new concept in the history of thought. It was a favorite of Nietzsche in the West and had also been taught by Muslim mystical metaphysicians, as the "perfect man" (*insan-i-kamil*), like ibn Arabi, Rumi and Jili... "The perfect and godly man of Rumi embraces the superman of the unbelieving Nietzsche and becomes the Iqbalian man." (Esposito 1983, 180 – 181)

Iqbal was an eclectic, selective and critical student of philosophy. Philosophy, therefore, finds its way into nearly every aspect of his writing. In his 1928 series of lectures, published as *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Iqbal discusses his religion through the lenses of both Eastern and Western philosophy, referring to a veritable pantheon of philosophers: Plato, Ghazali, Hegel, Francis Bacon, Ibn Khaldun, and Einstein, among others. Majid Fakhry, a contemporary scholar of Islamic philosophy, describes Iqbal as, "...a poet of profound sensibility and a scholar of vast philosophical culture...[who] draws upon the philosophical heritage of the West without reservation....(Fakhry 1983, 349-350). Fakhry compares Iqbal to the Medieval Muslim philosophers, Al Ghazali, al-Kindi, and Ibn Rushd in their attempts to "harmonize the philosophical world view of the Greeks and the religious world-view of Islam" (Fakhry 1983, 350). But, he notes, Iqbal utilized the philosophical categories of "Hegel, Whitehead, and Bergson" (Fakhry 1983, 350) in his attempts at harmonization.

While Iqbal identified his philosophical sources in his scholarly works, he did not do so in his poetry. Yet the thought of his philosophical mentors is evident there as well. Hegel, Bergson, Nietzsche, Al Jili, and Rumi find their way into his poetry as subjects of his poetic musings or as characters through which Iqbal voices his philosophical ideas. For instance, Nietzsche is a major figure in Iqbal's *Javid Nama*, inhabiting a stage "on the borders of the universe" just outside of heaven (Iqbal 1932, 111). In a poem titled, "Hegel," Iqbal gives a brief summary of the impact of the philosopher on his world.

Reality is double-faced.
The orchard and the desert are
Two aspects of it that one sees.
To know the whole truth one must taste
both grapes and bitter gourds.
So fond is nature of antitheses
That it has set at war
Employees and employers, slaves and lords.
(Iqbal 1971, 59)

It is also important to note that Iqbal was a critical and selective student of the philosophers discussed in his works. For instance, he rejected Sufism's doctrine of annihilation but appreciated its emphasis on passion. He spoke glowingly of Nietzsche's emphasis on power but rejected his materialism. He described McTaggart as a "philosopher-saint" but rejected his friend's atheism. Iqbal was not one to reject a system of thought just because he disagreed with some of its details, but absorbed those details with which he agreed into his own system.

In the following pages, I will attempt to demonstrate the similarities and some differences between Iqbal's philosophy of the Perfect Man and the Eastern and Western philosophers who influenced his thought. While Iqbal does not always identify his poetic sources, the similarities between his philosophy and that of the philosophers discussed in these pages is often evident to students of philosophy and has been amply recognized by both Eastern and Western scholars, some of which are noted above.

Eastern Conceptions of the Perfect Man

Al Jili

Iqbal wrote on the subject of the Perfect Man very early in his scholarly career. As noted above, Iqbal studied Abdul Karim al-Jili's work, the *Insan I-Kamil* (the Perfect

Man) and published an article in the *Indian Antiquary* in Bombay in 1900. Al-Jili (d. 1428) was the “last great Sufi and poet, [who] continued the speculation of Ibn ‘Arabi on the themes of the perfect man, the reality of Muhammad and emanation, and exploited some of them, especially that of the perfect man, to the full” (Fakhry 1970, 255). In that article, Iqbal explained that al-Jili’s Perfect Man experienced three revelatory movements of God. In the first, the man is first called and then illuminated by God. The man is “destroyed” by that illumination, defined as the death of the will with submission to God. In the second movement, the “illumination of the Attribute” he responds to that illumination, receiving into himself the very attributes of the creator (Iqbal 1992, 18-20) in accordance with his capacity (Iqbal 2001, 128). Individuals in this stage possess amazing powers, similar to the miraculous abilities of Jesus described in the Christian Bible: including soaring in the air and walking on water (Iqbal 2001, 129). The final movement of perfect manhood is the experience of the Absolute Essence.

...Here is the end of our author’s spiritual ethics; man has become perfect, he has amalgamated himself with the Absolute Being, or has learnt what Hegel calls the Absolute philosophy. "He becomes the paragon of perfection, the object of worship, the preserver of the universe." He is the point where *Abudi Abudiyyat* (man-ness) and *al-Wahidiyyat* (God-ness) become one and result in the birth of the god-man. (Iqbal 1992, 19)

According to Iqbal, the attributes of al-Jili’s Perfect Man results from his illumination by God and the subsequent assumption of God’s character traits. These include:

- 1) Independent life or existence.
- 2) Knowledge which is a form of life.
- 3) Will - the principle of particularization or the manifestation of the Being. The author defines it as the illumination of the knowledge of God according to the requirements of the Essence, hence it is a particular form of knowledge...
- 4) Power which expresses itself in self-diremption¹⁵, creation.

¹⁵ A term used in philosophy, “A sharp division into two parts; disjunction, separation” (Webster’s Encyclopedic Dictionary of the English Language 1993, 250).

- 5) The Word or the reflected being. Every possibility is the word of God; hence nature is the materialization of the word of God...
- 6) The power of hearing the inaudible.
- 7) The power of seeing the invisible.
- 8) Beauty - that which seems less beautiful in nature (the reflected beauty) is in its real existence beauty. Evil is only relative, it has no real existence; it is merely a relative deformity.
- 9) Glory or beauty in intensity.
- 10) Perfection, which is the unknowable essence of God therefore Unlimited and Infinite. (Iqbal 1992, 23-25)

Iqbal also explains that al-Jili's Perfect Man must pass through three stages in his spiritual development, "Oneness, he-ness and 'I' ness..."(Iqbal 1992, 8). In these stages of spiritual ascent, the man "meditates on the name, ...steps into the sphere of the attribute and... enters the sphere of *zaat*, the Essence" (Iqbal 1992, 9). The result is that the Perfect Man becomes a "God-man" who experiences a close relationship with God as well as with God's creation. "It is here that he becomes the God-man; his eye becomes the eye of God; his word the Word of God.; his life, the life of God – (he) participates in the general life of nature and sees into the life of things" (Iqbal 1992, 8-9).

Al-Jili's God-man also has ethical and practical implications for the life of the world. He becomes a pivot of all of life and the creation must align itself in correspondence with his unity. Thus the Perfect Man brings all of life and the world into touch with his attributes and can bring about a peaceful and unifying existence. He moves in "every sphere of thought and being" (Iqbal 1992, 18) even having command over the angels. Iqbal concludes that Al-Jili's conception of the Perfect Man ultimately found its expression in the Muslim Prophet Muhammad and that the world awaits another like him (Iqbal 1992, 23-25). Al-Jili's Perfect Man is necessarily less perfect than the Prophet Mohammed, but he takes on Messiah-like proportions and is considered a great leader

who would benefit humanity by bringing about a renaissance of Islam in the world for the benefit of all humanity.

Iqbal found inspiration in Al-Jili's conception of the Perfect Man. Consistent with Al Jili's thought, Iqbal's Perfect Man is God's Vice-Regent on earth who brings a radical change in human society. But Iqbal's Perfect Man is less mystical and more practical than Al-Jili's conception. Iqbal brings the concept of the Perfect Man into the twentieth century, endowing him with the strength and characteristics that, taken together, bring greatness. But he also made those characteristics available to every Muslim, suggesting that the qualities of Perfect Manhood are the necessary ingredients of the successful Muslim life and are available to every Muslim.

Jalal al-din Rumi

Another Eastern source of the Iqbal's Perfect Man idea is the mystic poet, Jalal al-din Rumi, (d. 1273). Iqbal claimed a special relationship with this Sufi thinker, adopting him as his spirit-guide in his well known work, *Javid Nama*. He says of Rumi, "The Master of Rum transmuted my earth to gold , And set my ashes aflame" (Iqbal 1915, 9). Rumi also meditated and wrote on the Perfect Man concept. For Rumi, the Perfect Man was one who focused his life in love for the beloved, in whom he saw the essence of God. In this love, well-known among Western Christian mystics as the "unitive way" to God, the believer's goal is union with the beloved. "His ambition in life was to approximate himself to the mystical condition of the Perfect (ideal) Man in whom the divine qualities are so evident that the lover "realizes that he and his beloved are not two but one" (Levy 1969, 103). For Rumi, when this union is realized in life through love for another or in relation with God, the personality of the other is completely assumed into the lover's

being. In his own experience, Rumi so sublimated himself out of love for another that he substituted the other's name for his own in one of his most famous writings, becoming Shams-I Tabriz (the Sun of Tabriz) in his *Mathnavi* (Levy 1969, 103).

Rumi believed that the self must be surrendered out of love and in search of mystic oneness. "If therefore man desires to rise above mere names and alphabetic symbols, he must surrender his identity, his Self" (Levy 1969, 105-106). This view was consistent with much of Sufi thought.

When the soul has achieved this condition, it is no longer conscious of itself as a separate entity and may there be said to have achieved the mystical stage of annihilation (*fana*)... Such a Soul becomes dead, not only to itself but also to the world as a whole and is conscious of no entity, quality, or activity in the world other than God. In attaining this stage, the Soul would have attained the final goal of all human endeavor and realized intuitively and experientially the absolute unity of all things. (Fakhry 1970, 254)

The goal of this man's life is not simply to ruminate upon God and enjoy the experience of union. The sublimation of self in God also has a practical impact. Like Iqbal's Perfect Man who rules the world, Rumi's Perfect Man rules the universe, as explained in his famous *Mathnavi*.

Unto the man who can escape from being,
sky, sun, and moon bow down in reverence;
Since within whose body the miscreant flesh has died,
can have the sun and clouds at his command.
(Levy 1969, 110)

While Iqbal found great comfort and guidance in Rumi's poetry and saw him as his poetic muse and philosophical guide, he was also opposed to the concept of annihilation (in which the self is completely lost in the beloved), blaming it for many of the ills that the Muslim world had experienced at the hands of the Islam's opponents in history (Iqbal 1915, 52). Instead, Iqbal's perfect man would adopt a philosophy of

powerful “self-hood” that would empower Muslims to reestablish themselves to their former glory and place among the civilizations of the world.

Western Foundations of the Perfect Man

Hegel

As noted earlier, Iqbal studied under well-known Hegel scholars while in Cambridge from 1905 to 1908. McTaggart is known as a key thinker in the British Idealist or neo-Hegelian school. He published at least two books on Hegel’s philosophy (*Studies in Hegelian Cosmology* and *Studies in the Hegelian Dialectic*) and lectured extensively on the subject. Both McTaggart and Hegel had a lasting influence on Iqbal. In his notebook, written after his return from England, Iqbal made note of Hegel’s influence.

I confess I owe a great deal to Hegel, Goethe, Mirza Ghalib, Mirza Abdul Qadir Bedil and Wordsworth. The first two led me into the "inside" of things; the third and fourth taught me how to remain oriental in spirit and expression after having assimilated foreign ideals of poetry, and the last saved me from atheism in my student days. (Iqbal 1961, 54)

He further states in the same work, “Hegel’s system of philosophy is an epic poem in prose” (Iqbal 1992, 91). Later in life, Iqbal would suggest that he had rejected most of the philosophy he had revered as a young man. But Hegelian philosophy seems to have formed the foundation of his thought and is reflected in many of the key themes relating to the Perfect Man and his place in the world.

The World-Historical Man and the Perfect Man

Hegel’s writings suggest a “Perfect Man” of his own, the “world-historical individual.” This person is a key individual of his time and, like all human beings, pursues his/her own agenda guided by personal ambitions, goals, or desires. But the

ideas he follows have been the right ones, reflecting the needs of the time and in keeping with the goals of the “world-spirit” which guides the evolution of history (Hegel 1952b, 156). These individuals are, however, largely unconscious of the greater purposes they and their ideas are promoting.

...It was theirs to know this nascent principle; the necessary, directly sequent step in progress, which their world was to make; to make this their aim, and to expend their energy in promoting it. World-historical men, the heroes of an epoch, must therefore, be recognized as its clear-sighted ones; their deeds, their words are the best of that time. (Hegel 1952b, 167).

In the same way that Iqbal identifies his Perfect Man as a Muhammad, Hegel points to particular individuals who fit the requirements of “world-historical men,” such as Alexander the Great, Caesar, and Napoleon. But Hegel does not suggest a strategy for becoming a “world-historical person;” instead he states, “They are great men because they willed and accomplished something great....”(Hegel 1952b, 167). If there are any unique characteristics in these persons, it is that they had unique insight into the needs of their time and possessed a passion for the accomplishment of those needs (Hegel 1952b, 168).

Human Freedom

Human freedom is central to the thought of both Hegel and Iqbal. Hegel teaches that history is progressive and evolutionary, guided toward a *telos* by a world-spirit. The essence of that spirit is freedom, and the world-spirit’s purpose is to guide society’s evolution toward the realization of that freedom. Hegel’s concept of freedom is based upon the recognition and independence of the individual. “For if I am dependent, my being is referred to something else which I am not...I am free...when my existence depends upon myself” (Hegel 1952b, 160). Ultimately, the world-spirit has as its goal

the universal expansion of that freedom. "...The final cause of the world at large, we allege to be the consciousness of its own freedom on the part of spirit, and *ipso facto* the reality of that freedom" (Hegel 1952b, 161).

For Iqbal, freedom has a twofold essence. The first is his desire that India would experience political freedom from Imperial rule. The second is similar to Hegel's in that Iqbal seeks personal freedom for the individual. This individual freedom is founded upon the freedom experienced by the universal Ego which possesses absolute freedom as an essential characteristic. Humans share in that freedom since they are created in the likeness of the absolute ego. In his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Iqbal discusses the freedom of the individual ego in relation to the Ultimate Ego.

Thus the element of guidance and directive control in the ego's activity clearly shows that the ego is a free personal causality. He 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... Indeed Islam recognizes a very important fact of human psychology, i.e., the rise and fall of the power to act freely, as a constant and undiminished factor in the life of the ego... (Iqbal 1974, 108)

Action and Passion

For Hegel, the concepts of Idea and Action are vitally important. He believes that there are central ideas that each age is responsible to express, and that all the ideas of the different ages are evolving and coalescing toward the World-Spirit's motivating Idea, Hegel's concept of world-freedom. The element that brings about that Idea is human action. Hegel's world-historical individual is a man or woman of action. As noted above, each world-historical individual pursues his or her own goals for private reasons. But their action is absolutely essential in bringing about the ultimate reality of world-freedom.

...A second element must be introduced in order to produce actuality – viz., actuation, realization; and whose motive power is the will – the activity of man in the widest sense. It is only by this activity that that idea as well as abstract characteristics generally are realized, actualized; for of themselves they are powerless. The motive power that puts them in operation, and gives them determinate existence, is the need, instinct, and passion of man. (Hegel 1952b, 163)

Hegel asserts that human passion cooperates with human will in bringing about history's goal. "We affirm absolutely that nothing great in the world has been accomplished without passion" (Hegel 1952b, 163). Hegel defines passion as the objects of self interest pursued with all the elements of will and power. Passion for a particular outcome and state of affairs provides the ongoing motivation and focus that enables the individual to act and continue acting in spite of the many hurdles he or she will inevitably face.

...Nothing more than human activity as resulting from private interests – special, or if you will, self-seeking designs – with this qualification, that the whole energy of will and character is devoted to their attainment; that other interests (which in themselves constitute attractive aims) or rather all things else, are sacrificed to them. (Hegel 1952b, 163)

It is evident that for Hegel the idea of freedom united with human passion leading to action are interactive elements whose results lead to the *telos* of world-history. When elevated to the level of national consciousness, action and deeds are closely connected and are essential to life and vitality of a people.

...The very essence of spirit is activity... Thus is it with the spirit of a people: it is a spirit having strictly defined characteristics, which erects itself into an objective world, that exists and persists in a particular religious form of worship, customs, constitution, and political laws, in the whole complex of its institutions, in the events and transactions that make up its history. That is its work - that is what this particular nation is. Nations are what their deeds are. (Hegel 1952b, 187)

Action and passion are also central to Iqbal's thought. As discussed earlier, Iqbal believed that Muslims had sunk into a mind-numbing passivity leading to their

enslavement by imperial Britain. For Iqbal the concept of action has a supremely practical effect, to enable the Perfect Man to overcome Muslim passivity, arouse the Muslim masses to passionate action in the service of God, and to restore Islam to its rightful place in the world.

The pith of life is contained in action.
The delight in creation is the law of life,
Arise and create a new world!
Wrap thyself in flames, be an Abraham
(Iqbal 1915, 90)

I noted earlier that Iqbal also incorporated passion into his philosophical construct, teaching that it provides the direction for divinely directed action. In this case, the ultimate goal toward which Iqbal believed passionate action was directing the world's Muslims was the Islamic reorganization of the world under universal justice, equality and harmony. Indeed, he believed that action and passion would serve as the defining principle of the Muslim *Ummah*.

Our master, fleeing from his fatherland,
Resolved the knot of Muslim nationhood.
His wisdom founded one community -
The world its parish -- on the sacred charge
To civilize; that ruler of our faith
Of his abundant bounty gave the earth
Entire to be the confines of our mosque.
(Iqbal, 1918, 30)

Hegel Conclusion

Hegel provides an essential foundation to Iqbal's thought. Trained by Hegel scholars during the British neo-Hegelian resurgence, Iqbal was thoroughly acquainted with Hegel's thought and found it valuable to his thinking. There are striking similarities between the philosophical constructs of the two men, as noted within this discussion. The concepts of world-history, of the importance of great men, and of the concepts of

freedom, action and passion are very similar. The Hegelian view of human dignity derived from the master-slave relationship, noted in chapter two, is also present in Iqbal's thought. But Iqbal's muse is ultimately the Muslim God, a uniquely powerful spiritual personality who dwells in heaven and directs human history. Hegel's world-spirit is a non-personal entity guiding the world toward the ultimate ideal of freedom.

Nietzsche

Many commentators have found a close parallel between Iqbal's philosophy and the work of Friedrich Nietzsche. There are some striking similarities, but Muslim Iqbal experts and commentators have violently resisted any suggestion that he borrowed from Nietzsche. There are numerous reasons for this resistance, chief among them being Nietzsche's atheism, as well as his supreme individualism and selfishness in isolation from the community, both of which are inconsistent with Iqbal's Muslim faith (Iqbal 1915, xxviii). Iqbal himself resented the effort to paint him as a disciple of Nietzsche's. Responding to E.M. Forester's critique of Iqbal's "*Secrets of the Self*" as demonstrating a close relationship with Nietzsche, Iqbal responded in a letter to Dr. R. A. Nicholson in 1921:

...Nor does he rightly understand my idea of the Perfect Man which he confounds with the German thinker's Superman. I wrote on the Sufi doctrine of the Perfect Man more than twenty years ago, long before I had read or heard anything of Nietzsche. This was then published in the *Indian Antiquary*, and later in 1908 formed part of my *Persian Metaphysics*. (Iqbal 1992, 93-94)

Iqbal commented later, near the end of his life, on this same subject. He points out that Nietzsche is fully materialistic and suggests that Nietzsche might have borrowed some elements of his thought regarding the Superman, the *Übermensch*, from Eastern thought.

The conception of this Superman in Nietzsche is purely materialistic. This conception may be new in European literature... It is probable that Nietzsche borrowed it from the literature of Islam or of the East and degraded it by his materialism... This is materialism turning the human ego into a monster, which, according to Nietzsche's idea of immorality, has repeated itself and will repeat itself an infinite number of times. (Iqbal 1992, 241)

Iqbal's poetic commentary on Nietzsche is contained in the third work of his poetic series on the self, the *Javid Namah*. Iqbal, following his spirit-guide through the spheres from planet to planet, asks Rumi about the German thinker who he observes in his travels. In the poem, Iqbal describes Nietzsche as a "madman" who has received inspiration from heaven but fails to recognize the source of his knowledge. The description reminds us of the Sufi mystics who made profound and often theologically unacceptable pronouncements, but were allowed to live due to their "holy madness."¹⁶

On the frontiers of this world of quality and quantity
dwelt a man with a voice full of agony,
his vision keener than an eagle's
his mien witness to a heart afire;
Every moment his inward glow increased.
On his lips was a verse he chanted a hundred times;
"No Gabriel, no Paradise, no *hourî*, no God,
Only a handful of dust consumed by a yearning soul.'

I said to Rumi, 'Who is this madman?'
He answered, 'This is the German genius
whose place is between these two worlds;
his reed-pipe contains an ancient melody.
This Hallaj¹⁷ without gallows and rope
has spoken anew those ancient words;
his words are fearless, his thoughts sublime,
the Westerners are struck asunder by the sword of his speech.
His colleagues have not comprehended his ecstasy and have reckoned the ecstatic
mad...

Revelation embraced him, yet he knew it not,
being like fruit all the farther from the roots of the tree.

¹⁶ Sufi's often resorted to "affected madness," regarded as a mark of holiness (Fakhry 1970, 244).

¹⁷ Hallaj (b. 858) was a Sufi mystic who made extreme claims regarding his union with God while refusing the claim of madness. He was executed for his heresies (Fakhry 1970, 246)

His eyes desired no vision but man;
fearlessly he shouted, "Where is man?"
and else he had despaired of earth's creatures
and like Moses he was seeking the vision.
(Iqbal 1932, 111-113)

Just what are the points of intersection between Iqbal and Nietzsche that have caused so many to conclude that Iqbal had based his philosophy on Nietzschean foundations?

Probably the most obvious similarity between Iqbal and Nietzsche is that of the Superman and the Perfect Man, a "great-man" theory that seems to have much surface agreement. Nietzsche's Overman is described as an evolutionary leap from the common man. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche introduces a man who would surpass all others, Zarathustra. In doing so, he would introduce a new world order in which the members of a new aristocracy would lead the world to a higher plane of existence (Nietzsche 1954, 13). Iqbal's Perfect Man also has this goal, although with a particularly Muslim slant, arising from the masses so as to lead Muslims to their former glory as well as to lead the world to a great civilization, unified under the banner of Islam.

Nietzsche's concept of the Will to Power also has some correspondence with Iqbal's *Khudi*. The goal of the *Urbarmensch* is to gain power in the world for the purpose of ruling that world (Nietzsche 1954, 76). The powerful Superman utilizes that power for selfish purposes, in order to establish a master relationship over the weak (Nietzsche 1954, 115). The Will to Power is the very essence of life (Nietzsche 1954, 115) while pity for the weak is actually a temptation and sin (Nietzsche 1954, 327). Iqbal understood the role of power in his world, that "...power alone deserves respect" (Iqbal 1974, 158). Regarding the application of power in the personal realm, Iqbal wrote, "the powerful man creates environments, the feeble have to adjust themselves to it" (Iqbal

1961, 91). Iqbal's concept of *khudi* is intended to strengthen the personal power of the Muslim's ego, strengthening it to overcome the evils of slavery and indignity experienced under imperial dominion. The Perfect Man, possessing *khudi*, would serve as an able warrior to combat the evils of nationalism and democracy that Iqbal identified as the primary enemies of Islam. The goal of Iqbalian power is, however, always to be utilized consistent with the tenets of Islam.

Give me the heart whose rapture fine
flames from a draught of its own wine,
and take the heart that, self-effaced
By alien fancy is embraced.

Give me that heart, give me the heart
That of the world will have no part;
I yield the heart right gladly o'er
That is a slave to less and more...

This life is ne'er a weary thing
While there be worlds for conquering:
Behold, one world lies bound and tied -
Into another world I ride.

(Iqbal 1948, 36)

Iqbal also emphasizes the importance and role of power in the world, a characteristic he found woefully lacking in his countrymen. "Virtue is power, force, strength; evil is weakness" (Iqbal 1992, 37).

Nietzsche also emphasizes the Superman's escape from the world of men in order to dwell with nature. His Zarathustra escapes the world of men and dwells on the heights with the eagle and the bear. There seems to be a necessity to find power in the natural world. That same tendency is present in some of Iqbal's poetry. His poem, "The Himalayas," describing the beauty of this Asian mountain range is still regarded as one of the most beautiful of Indian poetry. Some of his poetry also displays what appears to

some as a disconcerting escapism to nature that has led at least one commentator to assert that his nature poetry is symbolic, representing Iqbal's "struggle between intellect and intuition" (Iqbal 2004a, 73). When that poetry is compared with the work of Nietzsche, an interesting correspondence seems to emerge. As Nietzsche's Zarathustra escapes the city to his cave to commune with his animal confidantes, so Iqbal writes of escaping to a remote hut where the call of the cuckoo serves as his call to prayer.

The early dawn's cuckoo, that morning's mu'adhadhin¹⁸
May my confidante be, and May I his confidante be.

May I not be obligated to the temple or to the mosque,
May this hut's window alone herald the morning's dawn.

May every compassionate heart be weeping with me
Perhaps it may awaken those who are unconscious.
(Iqbal 2005a, 75)

In Iqbal's thought (as with Hegel), the concept of freedom takes a central place. For Iqbal, freedom is an essential attribute of the Perfect Man. This is also true of Nietzsche's *ubermensch* who experiences freedom in the transformation from camel to lion, his second stage of growth. "In the loneliest desert, however, the second metamorphosis occurs: here the spirit becomes a lion who would conquer his freedom and be master in his own desert" (Nietzsche 1954, 26). In this freedom, the lion can say "no" even to duty. Later the Superman is free even from the demands of pity for human beings.

Yet another interesting parallel between the thought of the two men is the concept of the enemy. Iqbal saw the strong enemy as an opportunity for self-growth, with the stronger enemy developing a greater *khudi*. Nietzsche also values the impact of an enemy on the growth of the character of the Superman. "But if you have an enemy, do

¹⁸ The individual who calls the Muslim faithful to prayer five times daily.

not requite him evil with good, for that would put him to shame. Rather, prove that he did you some good” (Nietzsche 1954, 68).

There are other striking parallels between Nietzsche and Iqbal. For instance, Nietzsche’s *Übermensch* engages in a three stage process of growth, proceeding from the camel stage, to the lion stage and finally to that of the child (Nietzsche 1954, 25-26). Iqbal’s perfect man also proceeds through three stages, from obedience to the law, to self-control, which is the highest form of self-consciousness or ego-hood, to divine vice-regency (Iqbal 1915, xxvi). (Note that al-Jili’s perfect man also proceeds through three stages.) In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche relates a parable comparing the character of the *Übermensch* to coal and diamond, encouraging his Supermen to be hard, like the diamond (Nietzsche 1954, 214). Iqbal also relates a parable of coal and diamonds with a similar meaning in his first poetic work introducing the concept of *Khudi* (Iqbal 1915, 104-107). Like Iqbal, Nietzsche is opposed to the idea of the state and nationalism (Nietzsche 1954, 48).¹⁹

As noted earlier, Iqbal rejected any similarity between his Perfect Man and Nietzsche’s Superman. Yet Iqbal was extremely eclectic. He freely borrowed and assimilated a wide range of Eastern and Western ideas. A number of his poems follow themes found in western authors. For instance, Iqbal’s poem “A Mountain and a Squirrel” is subtitled, “Adapted for children from Ralph Waldo Emerson” (Iqbal 2004a, 58). Iqbal’s *Javid Nama* (1932) parallels Dante’s great classic *Inferno, Purgatorio, Paradiso* trilogy, with the main character engaging a journey from the depths to the heights under the guidance of a spirit. Iqbal’s work also reflects the influence of Eastern poetry, taking Rumi’s *Mathnavi* as one of his favorite patterns. Annamarie Schimmel,

¹⁹ I will discuss Iqbal’s opposition to nationalism in chapter 4.

the German expositor of Iqbal's thought, notes that Iqbal may have assimilated at least some of Nietzsche's thought.

...Iqbal himself has always maintained that the idea of the Perfect Man was Islamic, not Nietzschean; yet Nietzsche's superman may still have acted as a ferment in the formation of Iqbal's ideals...it is rather the brave and heroic will to accept life as it is and to master it which had fascinated Iqbal in the German philosopher. (Schimmel 2003, 323)

Iqbal was a scholar endowed with an expansive world view and learning. He incorporated the work of both eastern and western philosophers and poets into his work, integrating them into a unique worldview and outlook. It is not surprising that his work contains some elements that might have been borrowed, either consciously or unconsciously, from Nietzsche. While there are many similarities between Nietzsche's Superman and Iqbal's Perfect Man, Iqbal's conception is intrinsically different from that of Nietzsche. Iqbal's Perfect Man is a Muslim who draws his perfection and power from his close relationship with God. The closer he grows to God, the more perfect and powerful he becomes. Ultimately, this makes all the difference.

Bergson

Another Western philosopher that was important to Iqbal and with whom he is often compared is the Frenchman, Henri Bergson (1859-1941). Bergson's thought is termed "vitalism" and Iqbal is sometimes branded with the same appellation. For Bergson, life is the center of all reality, the "*élan vital*" (Gunn 1920, 6). The source of his inspiration lies in the thinking of the Greek philosopher Heraclitus who emphasized the view that all things are in a state of flux, strife and unrest (Underhill 1911, 28). Gunn, an early expositor of Bergson, suggests that his work could be termed "the philosophy of

change or of creation” (Gunn 1920, 20). For Bergson, matter and spirit exist and merge in life and, specifically, in humanity for the purpose of action. Action is inherent in all of life and especially in the essential biology of man, with his whole being evolved toward the fulfillment of an active purpose. “We are made in order to act as much as, and more than, in order to think -- or rather, when we follow the bent of our nature, it is in order to act that we think” (Bergson 2001, 286-87). He deduces much from what he calls a common sense approach, with intuition being an essential means of knowledge, complementary to and possibly superior to reason and intellect (Bergson 2001, 258-259). For Bergson, intellect tends toward the static while life and spirit tend toward continuous movement and change (Gunn 1920, 24). All of life exhibits different degrees of consciousness, with man possessing the most advanced form. For Bergson, life is evolving toward ever greater consciousness, but without a preconceived end or personal deity to direct it. Evolution does not, however, proceed along a direct line of development, but is chaotic. It does, however, possess a direction, persistently moving away from its initial “impulsion.”

...There are species which are arrested, there are some that retrogress. Evolution is not only a movement forward; in many cases we observe a marking-time, and still more often a deviation or turning back... Thence results an increasing disorder. No doubt there is progress, if progress means a continual advance in the general direction determined by a first impulsion; but this progress is accomplished only on the two or three great lines of evolution....(Bergson 2001, 100-101)

Bergson believes that humans demonstrate an evolved consciousness and inherent bent toward action through creative activity, and when they do so with awareness of their activity and the decisions that are involved, they exercise and display human freedom.

According to Bergson, most of us do not act freely, but out of needs and drives determined by our biology and our environment. Very few achieve true freedom.

... "Liberty consists in being entirely oneself." If we act rightly we shall act freely, and yet be determined. Yet here there will be no contradiction, for we shall be self-determined. It is only the man who is self-determined that can in any sense be said to know the meaning of "human freedom." (Gunn 1920, 63)

Important points of correspondence between Iqbal and Bergson include an agreement on the importance of action and tension or strife in reality, with strife being essential for the continued growth of the human actor. There is also agreement on the possibility of growth and "evolution" toward perfection of the human actor. Both reject the passivity of mere being, believing that life is in essence a "becoming." As Bergson suggests an opposition between intellect and life, Iqbal suggests opposition between intellect and love, with the Perfect Man finding the synthesis of the two and utilizing that synthesis to "create new worlds," in bringing about creative evolution.

Iqbal agrees with Bergson on the essential nature of action for the Perfect Man and of Islam in general, arguing continuously against Muslim passivity that had resulted in the defeat of Islamic empires by the West, specifically by Great Britain. Like Bergson, he engages Greek thought, rejecting Plato's passivity while suggesting that life is the continuous action of the individual toward a clear goal, the establishment of an Islamic Perfect Man and with him a perfect society.

... The primary difference between Vitalism and the classic philosophic schools is this. Its focal point is not Being but Becoming. Translated into Platonic language, not the changeless One, or the Absolute, transcending all succession, but rather His energizing Thought - the Son, the Creative Logos - is the superman reality which it proposes as accessible to human consciousness. (Underhill 1911, 28)

Iqbal comments on Bergson's thought in his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*:

...According to Bergson, then, Reality is a free unpredictable, creative, vital impetus of the nature of volition which thought spatializes and views as a plurality of things... Suffice it to say that the vitalism of Bergson ends in an insurmountable dualism of will and thought... (Iqbal 1974, 51)

While agreeing with the necessity of human freedom of action and the essential nature of action in the universe, Iqbal rejects Bergson's random and chaotic approach to reality. He also rejects Bergson's concept of a universal and impersonal consciousness that pervades all of life and opts instead for the traditional God of Islam. Iqbal believes in a uniquely powerful and personal divine being, God. God created the universe and is in control of that universe, directing it to its final conclusion. Instead of directionless chaos, Iqbal believes in God-directed order. With this Muslim understanding of a world-directing, sovereign Allah informing his thought, Iqbal adopts a Muslim approach toward reality, concluding that existence is "through and through teleological" (Iqbal 1974, 53).

McTaggart

John E. M. McTaggart (1866-1925), the British Neo-Hegelian idealist, was Iqbal's philosophy professor when he attended Cambridge from 1905 – 1908. It is evident from Iqbal's published works that the professor was held in high esteem by the student. Upon his professor's death, Iqbal wrote,

I was reading the other day Mr. Dickinson's memoir of the late and lamented Dr. McTaggart, that philosopher-saint whose lectures on Kant and Hegel I had the privilege to attend as an advanced student at Trinity College, Cambridge... (Iqbal 1992, 116).

While Iqbal would later apply important aspects of McTaggart's thought to his Perfect Man, Iqbal is not a slavish follower of any of the philosopher's studied in this chapter. Instead, he is critical and selective of their work and thought.

McTaggart was a Hegel scholar, although his views of Hegel's work may not have squared with the majority view of British Neo-Hegelians. He was far less enamored with their neo-Hegelian deification of the state and much more inclined to emphasize the ultimate worth of the individual (Geach 1979, 12). For McTaggart, individual selves are the source and construct of the absolute Spirit and are essential to reality.

Now it is clear that each individual must have a separate and unique nature of its own. If it had not, it could never be differentiated from all other individuals, as we know that it is differentiated. At the same time the nature of the individuals lies wholly in their connections with one another; it is expressed nowhere else, and there it is expressed fully. (McTaggart 1901, 282)

Here, McTaggart emphasizes both the individuality of persons as well as their essential relationship with a society of persons. Iqbal agrees with both aspects of McTaggart's thought. In his 1915 *Asrar i-Khudi*, he explains his doctrine of ego with an explanation of the self. "To my mind, this inexplicable finite center of experience is the fundamental fact of the universe. All life is individual....God himself is an individual" (Iqbal 1915, xvii).

As noted above, McTaggart also emphasized the importance of the individual in society. His thought can be summarized in one great idea, that "...the universe is a society of perfect persons who perfectly and eternally know and love each other" (Geach 1920, 17). It may be from McTaggart that Iqbal gained a well-defined understanding of the self existing in community, of a Perfect Man dwelling within an essential *ummah* (community). The importance of the community is also central to Iqbal's thought.

...While pride of self
Pulls its own way, humility is not born;
Pull pride together, and humility
Comes into being. Self negates itself
In the Community, that it may be
No more a petal, but a rosary.
(Iqbal 1918, 7)

McTaggart taught that the self is a differentiation of the absolute spirit. "It is on this principle that I have endeavored to show that all finite selves are eternal..."

(McTaggart 1901, 5) and reflect an aspect of the ultimate reality (McTaggart 1901, 26).

In a letter to Iqbal, he explained his position,

For my own part I adhere to my own belief that selves are the ultimate reality, but as to their true content and their true goal, my position is, as it was, that is to be found in eternity and not in time, and in love rather than action. (Iqbal 1992, 118)

Iqbal sensed that McTaggart was placing love and action in opposition, and rejected this dualism. He believed that love and action were essential to each other and provided for mutual vitality. Indeed, "love is no passivity. It is active and creative." Iqbal believed that, "on the material plane, it is the only force which circumvents death..."(Iqbal 1992, 124-5).

Love is an important concept in the philosophy of both men, but they define the term differently. For McTaggart, love is the personal attachment between individuals. It does not have a sexual content, but is, "...the emotion which joins two particular persons together, and which never, in our experience, unites one person with more than a few others" (McTaggart 1901, 290). It is also the foundation of society. As society and life achieve perfection, love is revealed, "...not only as the highest thing, but as the only thing, in the universe" (McTaggart 1901, 262). Iqbal defines love in relation to the individual and action, seeing it as, "the desire to assimilate, to absorb. Its highest form is

the creation of values and ideals and the endeavor to realize them. Love individualizes the lover as well as the beloved” (Iqbal 1915, xxv) and provides the passionate motivation for action. As noted above, McTaggart’s love serves as the essential cohesive factor of society while for Iqbal it is in God and Islam that the *Ummah* coheres.

Iqbal and McTaggart agree upon the importance of both intellect and intuition or mystical insight in knowledge and believed that the two approaches to “knowing” necessarily complement each other. Iqbal states that McTaggart came to his conclusions completely through reason, but had his conclusions confirmed by mystical insight. “McTaggart both knew and saw; but his vision, I believe, did not precede his system. It did not initially inspire his thought, though it did bring to him the warmth of conviction” (Iqbal 1992, 120-121). McTaggart’s writings confirm Iqbal’s evaluation.

...There is a mysticism which starts from the standpoint of the understanding, and only departs from it in so far as that standpoint shows itself not to be ultimate, but to postulate something beyond itself. To transcend the lower is not to ignore it. (McTaggart 1901, 292)

It is interesting that Iqbal and McTaggart could have such a close relationship, for they disagreed on the most fundamental religious issue. McTaggart rejected the Judeo-Christian-Muslim understanding of God, suggesting that the absolute is “not a self,” and is therefore not a personal deity. McTaggart, raised as an atheist, persisted in that disbelief throughout his life.

I think, therefore, that it will be best to depart from Hegel's own usage, and to express our result by saying that the Absolute is not God, and in consequence, that there is no God. This corollary implies that the word God signifies not only a personal, but also a supreme being, and that no finite differentiation of the absolute, whatever his power and wisdom, would be entitled to the name. (McTaggart 1901, 94)

While a student at Cambridge, Iqbal reports that he “met almost every day” in McTaggart’s rooms at Cambridge to discuss God’s existence. Iqbal could make no headway against his professor. McTaggart was well versed in the logic of his views, and Iqbal could find no rational means to refute him. Nevertheless, Iqbal was not convinced by McTaggart’s arguments and maintained his belief in Allah (Iqbal 1992, 124).

Iqbal held his professor in high esteem and maintained a lifelong relationship with him, maintaining a long-distance correspondence between India and England. He agreed with McTaggart’s views of the individual self and also the vital importance of love, but the issue of God ultimately brought a division between Iqbal and his professor. The concept of a personal deity was too important to Iqbal. “The real test of a self is whether it responds to the call of another self...sometimes by reflection rising higher than itself – i.e., the act of worship” (Iqbal 1992, 126). Perhaps this is one reason why Iqbal states that he rejected philosophy in favor of religion later in his life.

But do not seek the glow of love from the knowledge of today,
do not seek the nature of truth from this infidel's cup.
Long have I been running to and fro,
Learning the secrets of the new knowledge;
Its gardeners have put me to the trial
And have made me intimate with their roses.
Roses! Tulips, rather, that warn one not to smell them -
Like paper roses, a mirage of perfume.
Since this garden ceased to enthrall me
I have rested on the paradisaal tree.
Modern knowledge is the greatest blind -
Idol worshipping, idol selling, idol making.
(Iqbal 1915, 129)

Conclusion

Iqbal was deeply opposed to the English Imperial rule of India. He believed his Muslim countrymen had accepted a philosophical passivity that enabled the English to

rule for, without the consent of the vast multitude of India's population, so many could have never been ruled by so few (James 1997, 307). The philosophy of the Perfect Man was Iqbal's answer to that passivity, designed to inculcate a powerful character within Indian Muslims for the purpose of restoring Muslim dignity.

As discussed in this chapter, Iqbal's conception of the Perfect Man draws its inspiration from both Eastern and Western thought. Al Jili and Rumi provide Iqbal with an Eastern foundation, contributing a framework that is consistent with Islamic thought and placing his work firmly in that tradition. Western thinkers provide Iqbal with a number of important concepts. From Hegel we understand the significance of the World Historical individual, passionately pursuing a great Idea toward a *telos* established by a guiding world spirit. Nietzsche provides a philosophy of power that enables the Superman to rise above the crowd of common men and to accomplish great deeds according to his own purposes and goals. Bergson provides a vitalistic philosophy that incorporates the necessity of action guided by intuition toward ever greater consciousness, but without any guiding intelligence other than man's. This becomes man's "creative evolution." Iqbal's Perfect Man also displays McTaggart's individuality and love, but goes further than McTaggart was willing to go, positing the greatest individual, God. Iqbal goes beyond all these philosophers in his acceptance of the Muslim deity who directs and empowers the universe. Like a twentieth century Kierkegaard, Iqbal ultimately rejects his philosophic mentors' atheisms and empowers his Perfect Man through a relationship with the supreme being, Allah, who dwells in a heaven that is distinct from the earth. Thus Iqbal adopts a dualistic metaphysics that

ultimately separates him from his philosophic mentors. He utilizes their thought as a springboard to launch him to an essentially Muslim religious perspective.

In taking this approach, Iqbal endowed his Perfect Man with a dignity absent from the musings of the philosophers he studied. As he noted in his writings, the closer his Perfect Man draws to his God, the more perfect he becomes. This relationship to God also imparts a *telos* to human existence, with the goal always to know and please that God and to accomplish his purposes in the world.

Iqbal is certainly eclectic in his use and treatment of both Eastern and Western philosophy. But the sum total of his work was designed to provide a unique system that addressed the ills he perceived in early twentieth century India. That philosophy also had a religious content and agenda. I will examine that content in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

RESTORING MUSLIM DIGNITY: THE PERFECT MAN AS A RELIGIOUS MAN OF ACTION

The pith of life is contained in action.
The delight in creation is the law of life,
Arise and create a new world!
Wrap thyself in flames, be an Abraham.
(Iqbal 1915, 90)

Introduction

Iqbal's Perfect Man is a religious man of action, endowed with the essential characteristics discussed in chapter three. But the Perfect Man, like Hegel's world historical individual, would focus his life on one great purpose that he would pursue with passionate consistency to bring about world change. Iqbal understood that the one great purpose that Muslims of his time needed was the restoration of Muslim dignity, compromised through Islam's loss of world stature due to the encroachment on Muslim territories by the West. He understood that his Perfect Man would be a Saladin, a mythic hero who would incorporate in his being the military, political and religious power to bring about a renaissance of Islam.

Consistent with the attempt to build the characteristics of Perfect Manhood into his own life, Iqbal practiced an Islamic faith that was both historically and politically active. Like his Perfect Man, Iqbal's life was passionately focused on his goal to reestablish Muslim human dignity in light of the social ills he perceived in the world. In this chapter, I will discuss Iqbal's intellectual framework for this action orientation and demonstrate that it is an essential component of his philosophy of the Perfect Man endowed with *khudi*. I will also discuss two nineteenth century Muslim political

reformers who served as role models for social change for the Perfect Man , Sayyid Ahmad Kahn and Jamal ad-din Afghani. Finally, and most importantly, I will present an extensive analysis and comparison of Afghani's political agenda with the agenda adopted by Iqbal, the agenda of Pan-Islam. It is this agenda that Iqbal's Perfect Man would follow in changing the world.

Appear O rider of destiny!
Appear, O light of the dark realm of change!
Illumine the scene of existence.
Dwell in the blackness of our eyes!
Silence the noise of the nations.
Imparidise our oars with thy muse.
(Iqbal 1915, 83-84)

Iqbal's Religious faith

There is no doubt that Iqbal possessed a sincere and deep Muslim faith. His poetry and prose are full of references to the Quran. His family was Sunni with a profound Sufi influence, and that Sufi influence gave him a deep mystical faith that characterized his entire life and writing (Ali 1988, 2). Friends and acquaintances relate that he faithfully followed the Muslim practice of praying five times daily, even rising in the dark hours of the morning to observe the earliest prayer.

...Iqbal lived the life of a typical man of the Orient, whose behavior and life were dictated by the Word of God. He would prostrate himself before God with all the humility of a Muslim. He is said to have devoted himself to the early morning prayers....continuously for two months and was often seen reciting the Holy Quran with tearful eyes. (Beg 2004, 169)

Consistent with his Muslim faith, Iqbal displayed a wide ranging knowledge of and commitment to the Holy Quran, finding in its pages the foundation for much of his practical thought. His poetry also contains numerous allusions to scripture, which are not often recognized by the non-Muslim reader, but are readily accessible to those with

knowledge of the Quran. John C. Roome, a contemporary of Iqbal's, notes that, "the Holy Quran is for Iqbal the touchstone of principles governing life, and one is often taken by surprise by the manner in which the poet uses verse in the sacred book to illustrate the most abstruse philosophical issue (Beg 2004, xviii).

Iqbal has been claimed by various contemporary Muslim religious groups, especially in Pakistan where he is known as that country's Spiritual Father. Yet Iqbal's place in the Muslim religious spectrum is hard to categorize. He admired the eighteenth century Muslim reformer, Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (d. 1792), who, with the Saudi tribe, brought fundamentalist Islam to the entire Arabian peninsula (Armstrong 2002, 135). Wahhab is known as the source of radical Islam in the contemporary world. Iqbal also admired the nineteenth century Muslim revolutionary, Jamal al-Din Afghani and incorporated much of his Pan-Islamic thought into his own world-view. With these traditionalists, Iqbal believed that Islam is superior to any alternative the West has to offer, and called for Muslims to arise and take their proper place in the world, even to overthrow the West. But Iqbal also believed that Muslims should "reconstruct" their faith in the light of contemporary science and philosophy and bring it into the modern world. In the introduction to his published lectures, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, he notes,

...In these lectures, which were undertaken at the request of the Madras Muslim Association and delivered at Madras, Hyderabad, and Aligarh, I have tried to meet, even though partially, this urgent demand by attempting to reconstruct Muslim religious philosophy with due regard to the philosophical tradition of Islam and the more recent developments in the various domains of human knowledge...the day is not far off when Religion and Science may discover hitherto unsuspected mutual harmonies. (Iqbal 1974, v – vi)

Iqbal's thought bears some similarities with Salafism, an attempt to return Islam to the earliest "ancestors" (*salaf*) and their teachings. He agrees with their commitment to the Prophet Muhammad, to Islam's holy writings and traditions, the Quran, the Hadith, and the Sunna. He was also committed to the necessity to "...reinterpret the original sources in light of modern needs and demands" (El Fadl 2001, 32-33). But Iqbal disagreed with the Salafist's rejection of Islam's rich historical tradition of jurisprudence and philosophy. Conservative Muslims, including those following a *Salafist* ideology, find Iqbal's use of Western authorities in his interpretation and application of Islam to be inconsistent with Islam (Fakhry 1970, 354). Mustansir Mir, a more recent interpreter of Iqbal's work, probably has the best insight on the attempt to place a particular label on Iqbal.

...Here one might add that the various attempts made to identify or label Iqbal as a Sufi or an orthodox Muslim, as a radical or a reactionary are wide of the mark because he is too large a figure to fit in any narrow procrustean category; he demands attention on his own terms. (Iqbal 2000, 6)

Regardless of Iqbal's religious label, we know that he believed passionately in the concept of religious action. He believed this emphasis on action was fully consistent with the dictates of his religious faith, suggesting that the primary Muslim *Salaf*, the Prophet Abraham, had demonstrated an active lifestyle for all Muslims to follow.

If one cannot live in a world as beseems a man,
Then it is better to die like the brave.
He that hath a sound heart
Will prove his strength by great enterprises.
Tis sweet to use love in hard tasks.
And, like Abraham, to gather roses from flames.
(Iqbal 1915, 91)

Another key Islamic principle that is significant in Iqbal's work is the unification of politics and religion and the opposition to the Western concept of the separation

between church and state. The Prophet Muhammad serves as Iqbal's model in this regard. While still in Mecca and experiencing the opposition of the Quraish, he was approached by the leaders of Yathrib and asked to assume the political leadership of their tribal areas. Muhammad consented, on the condition that all the inhabitants of those areas convert to Islam. The deal was consummated and Muhammad escaped to Yathrib (later called Medina) in the event that marks the beginning of Islamic history, the *hijrah* (Armstrong 2002, xiii). The government he established in Medina has served as the model for all subsequent Islamic nations, notable for its unity of the politics and religion (Tariq 1973, xvi). Iqbal incorporated this important Islamic concept in his work, suggesting a religious-political agenda for the future of India.

Action: Philosophy and the History of Ideas

The historian of ideas has as her main task the identification of an idea which has been pursued and promulgated in some culture or historical context. A second important focus in the historical study is the action to which the idea gave rise, that is, does the idea "give rise to actions or merely serve to rationalize action" (Pearce 1948, 374). Hegel, one of Iqbal's philosophical guides (discussed in chapter three), postulates that there are two key elements in the development of history, the Idea and the passion-inspired action that brings the idea into reality. He suggests that "world-historical" individuals, aware of the needs of the time and epoch in which they live, act in order to bring the Idea into reality, consonant with the aims of the World Spirit.

All actions, including world-historical actions, culminate with individuals as subjects giving actuality to the substantial. They are the living instruments of what is in substance the deed of the world mind and they are directly at one with that deed though it is concealed from them and not their aim and object. (Hegel 1952, 111)

For Hegel, human instrumentality is essential to realize the Idea. A world-historical individual, imbued with a passionate commitment to a particular idea, is essential to bring about the realization of the Idea. The human actor may not be fully aware, is probably not fully aware, of the purposes she is accomplishing as she passionately pursues an object that meets her own interests and needs. Yet the goals of the World Spirit are met through passionate commitment of the individual to his/her idea. Yet this passion does not result in a wide dispersal of the individual's energy in countless pursuits. Instead, the individual recognizes the importance of focused effort. This person is devoted to one aim, and no other (Hegel 1952b, 168). "The motive power that puts them in operation and gives them determinate existence, is the need, instinct, inclination, and passion of man" (Hegel 1952b, 162). Hegel puts it very clearly for us in his *Philosophy of History*,

Two elements, therefore, enter into the object of our investigation; the first the Idea, the second the complex of human passions; the one the warp, and the other the woof of the vast arras-web of universal history. (Hegel 1952b,163)

Hegel does not leave this concept only on the individual level. He finds that there is also a particular spirit of a people or nation. The idea is expressed in that people's worship, customs, and culture. More importantly, it is expressed in its activities in pursuit of the particular Idea that the nation pursues and attempts to put into reality.

The very essence of spirit is activity; it realizes its potentiality, makes itself its own deed, its own work, and thus it becomes an object to itself; contemplates itself as a objective existence. Thus is it with the spirit of a people: it is a spirit having strictly defined characteristics, which erects itself into an objective world, that exists and persists in a particular religious form of worship, customs, constitution, and political laws, in the whole complex of its institutions, in the events and transactions that make up its history. That is its work - that is what this particular nation is. Nations are what their deeds are. (Hegel 1952b,187)

Henri Bergson, another of Iqbal's philosophical mentors (discussed in chapter 3), also emphasizes the importance of action in his philosophy. Bergson emphasizes that

action is the very essence of all reality. It is especially the essence of human reality, for "...We are made in order to act, as much as and more than in order to think -- or rather, when we follow the bent of our nature, it is in order to act that we think" (Bergson 1901, 313). Bergson finds the basis for the necessity of action in the biological constitution of man. "The brain centers are concerned with motor reaction rather than conscious perception," it is an "instrument of action and not of representation" (Gunn 1920, 27). Indeed, for Bergson, all of the universe is undergoing constant creation and change, for action is the very stuff of the life and the universe. "Life is not a thing, nor a state of a thing -- it is a continuous move or change" (Gunn 1920, 24).

The concept of action plays a central role in Iqbal's concept of the Perfect Man. As noted earlier, Iqbal sensed that the people of India had been imbued with a sense of passivity that he attributed to the adoption of Platonic philosophy by Sufi thinkers as well as their interaction with members of the Hindu religion (Esposito 1983, 176-177). He blamed this passivity for the ease with which Great Britain had expanded its influence over all of India, thus ending Mughal rule.

Iqbal's concept of self-hood, or *khudi*, was meant to reverse this passivity and to instill a powerful ego and passion for action within Indian Muslims with the end result being the eviction of the British from India and, eventually, the establishment of a world-wide Muslim *Ummah*. The Perfect Man, or any Muslim working his way toward becoming a Perfect Man, would be a man of action. His creative activity is centered around the best pursuits, working toward gaining a comprehension of God as well as bringing about the perfect society on earth. Iqbal's Perfect Man, a "world-historical" individual, is well aware of Islam's world situation and develops a plan to fully actualize

his own community through the establishment of Islam in a forceful and peaceful way. He pursues that plan with all the focused energy at his disposal. He is the vice-regent of God on earth and becomes a co-creator with the universal Creator. In fact, creation is the role of this man of action.

Prostration without the joy of action is dry and useless;
life is all action, whether fair or foul.
I will tell you plainly a word not known to every one--
happy is the man who has written it on his heart's tablet.
This world you behold is not the handiwork of God,
the wheel is yours and the thread spun on your spindle.
Prostrate yourself before the law of action's reward,
for from action are born Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise.
(Iqbal 1932, 124)

Just as importantly, Iqbal saw action as being an essential part of his Muslim faith. Islam is an active faith, requiring of its adherents acts of devotion intended to strengthen an individual's faith. Daily prayers, the *Hajj*, the giving of alms, the *Shahada* and the keeping of Ramadan are personal acts designed to provide an external foundation of action upon which the individual can build and develop faith. Iqbal reminds his readers that faith without action is not real faith, but is dead.

A hundred nations thou hast raised from one,
On thy own fort made treacherous assault.
Be one; make visible thy Unity;
Let action turn the unseen into seen;
Activity augments the joy of faith,
But faith is dead that issues not in deeds.
(Iqbal 1918, 69-70)

Iqbal may have seen himself as a Perfect Man, an individual with world-historical insight and action orientation who understood the needs of his people and who, through his poetry and philosophical originality, had taken the appropriate action to enlighten India's Muslims to their "fatal wound" and to arouse them from their lethargy so they

might throw off the yoke of slavery. In one of his poems, Iqbal describes himself as a visionary who calls his people to action and fears that his calls will go unheeded.

Your cry is a bell urging the caravans;
why then do you despair of the dwellers in the Vale?
Their hearts are not dead in their breasts,
their embers are not extinguished under the ice;
wait till you see, without the sound of the Trumpet,
a nation rising out of the dust of the tomb.
Do not grieve then, visionary;
Breathe out that sigh consuming all, dry and moist alike;
many cities beneath the turquoise heaven
have been consumed by the flame of a dervish heart.
Dominion is frailer than a bubble
and can be destroyed by a single breath.
The destinies of nations have been shaped by a song,
by a song nations are destroyed and rebuilt.
Though your lancet has pierced men's hearts,
none has perceived you as you truly are;
your melody springs from a poet's song,
but what you utter transcends poesy.
Stir up a new tumult in Paradise,
strike up an intoxicating air in Paradise!
(Iqbal 1932, 122)

His immediate goal is to destroy the dominion of the English by his poetic breath and to arouse a Muslim nation out of the dust of the tomb. He had greater long term goals, however. Consistent with nineteenth century Islamic reformers, he worked for the world-wide reform of Islam and its re-establishment as a powerful world force.

Nineteenth Century Islamic Reformers

During the nineteenth century were born Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in India, Syed Jamal-ud-Din Afghani in Afghanistan and Mufti Alam Jan in Russia. These men were probably inspired by Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahab who was born in Nejd in 1700, the founder of the so-called Wahabi movement which may fitly be described as the first throb of life in modern Islam...(Iqbal 1992, 276-277)

During Iqbal's lifetime, India was awash with discussion about possibilities for Indian representation in Great Britain's ruling government of India, the Raj, as well as the

possibility of complete independence from Great Britain (Beg 1939, 15). Iqbal was profoundly influenced by the religious and political ideas of two very different and opposing Muslim reformers, Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Jamal al-Din Afghani.

Sayyid Ahmad Khan

Iqbal's teacher at the Scottish Mission School at Sialkot had been Maulana Mir Hasan, a follower of Sayyid Ahmad Khan, the nineteenth century reformer (Iqbal 1961, xv). The Sayyid had encouraged Indian Muslims to adopt English education and to bring their culture into the modern world. His goal was to train Muslims so they might qualify for positions in the English government in India, the source of all power and influence in the country. Sayyid Khan had entered the political arena during the 1870s when Muslim fortunes were still deeply tarnished by the events of the Mutiny of 1857. He worked tirelessly to convince the Muslim community to adopt English culture and just as tirelessly to obtain English education for them (Keddie 1972, 24). His efforts resulted in educational reforms that brought modern English education to the Muslim population as well as positions and jobs in the English colonial government.

Iqbal was deeply indebted to Sayyid Ahmad Khan and his educational reforms. As a young Muslim, Iqbal received an education at the Scotch Mission School in Sialkot as well as the government university in Lahore that was designed to prepare him for service in the imperial government. Later, he was given the opportunity to travel to England and received an advanced degree in philosophy at Cambridge. Iqbal knew of and appreciated the early reformer's influence on his life. After the Sayyid's death in 1900, Iqbal visited the tomb of the great reformer and reflected on the guidance his elder

would have given him. Note that Sayyid Khan addresses Iqbal as a student, consistent with his life-long emphasis on education.

Listen to my advice if you are a statesman,
Courage is your support if you are a leader of men....

If your hands do hold the miraculous pen,
If your heart's cup is clear like the cup of Jam.

You are a Divine pupil! Keep your tongue immaculate.
Beware lest your prayer's call remains unanswered.

With the miracle of your verse awaken those sleeping
Burn down falsehood's produce with the flame of your call.
(Iqbal 2005a, 79-80)

Like Sayyid Kahn, Iqbal became a lifelong exponent of Muslim education to allow Muslims to confront the West on its own terms. He understood that the adoption of modern education would bring Muslims into the world of the present, and the future. Education was the only means possible for the training of his Perfect Man.

The ethical training of humanity is really the work of great personalities, who appear from time to time, during the course of human history. Unfortunately, our present social environment is not favourable to the birth and growth of such personalities of ethical magnetism... but all unbiased persons will easily admit that such personalities are now rare among us. This being the case, education is the only thing to fall back upon. (Iqbal 1992, 43)

Jamal Al-Din Afghani

Sayyid Khan's approach was violently opposed by the anti-Imperialist agitator Jamal Al-Din Afghani (1839-1897) who directed his appeal to the young college generation of which Iqbal was a part (Iqbal 1961, xvii). As a young man, Afghani was present in India during the 1857 Mutiny and was certainly influenced by its outcome. He became an ardent opponent to British rule in India and throughout his life called for *Jihad* against the West and particularly against Great Britain (Keddie 1972, 24-25). On the

Indian national level, Afghani believed that Hindus and Muslims should work together to provide a united front against the English in order to eject Great Britain from India. On the international level, Afghani taught Pan-Islam, the unity of all Muslims in an anti-Imperial state under the leadership of the Turkish Caliph. He saw India as the place where the English had the firmest hold in the East and sought to initiate a rebellion against British rule there. During the 1880's he wrote a number of articles for publication in India that laid out a revolutionary agenda. Written in Persian, they were later translated into Urdu and gained a popular reading in India.

Three striking themes of Afghani's Indian articles are: 1) advocacy of nationalism of a linguistic or territorial variety, meaning unity of Indian Hindus and Muslims, rather than unity of Indian Muslims with foreign Muslims. 2) Stress on the benefits of philosophy and modern science, 3) attacks on Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan as a tool of the foreigners. (Keddie 1972, 156-157)

Additionally, these articles stressed the importance of a charismatic leader to the anti-Imperial cause, the adoption of Urdu as a national language for India, Islam as the source of all contemporary culture and science, and the importance of an inner change in Muslims before any political change could occur. He also taught the inherent superiority of Islam.

Islam is superior for several reasons: First, its insistence on the unity of the Creator, which excludes incarnation or any sharing of divine powers; second, its lack of inherent race or class distinctions; and third, its rejection of beliefs that do not rest on proofs.... (Keddie 1972, 178)

Perhaps the most important aspect of Afghani's thought is his belief in the existence of an unbridgeable cultural divide between East and West (Schimmel 2003, 20). His nineteenth century thought sounds strikingly similar to the contemporary "Clash of Civilizations" theory of Professor Huntington.

Afghani appealed especially to the young and to students. Some of his most ardent supporters in Egypt were drawn from the student ranks and became spokesmen for his views. Afghani had lived a number of years in India, first during the Mutiny of 1857 and later during the 1880s. He saw India as the place where English intentions were most clear and where the line could be clearly drawn between East and West. Born at the height of Afghani's power and influence, Iqbal could not escape knowing and responding to his anti-Imperialist and Pan-Islamic agenda.

Many young Muslims responded with enthusiasm to the appeal of Jamal Al-din Afghani... Iqbal was one of the members of the younger generation of the Indian Muslims who were profoundly influenced by Jamal al-Din Afghani's vision of Islamic solidarity. (Iqbal 1961, xvii)

In his well-known work, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Iqbal praises Afghani as the one Muslim reformer who had the potential to effectively reform Islam and provide a "living link between the past and the future" (Iqbal 1974, 97). In his writings, Iqbal also links him with Wahhab and Sayyid Ahmad Khan as one of the great modern Muslim reformers (Iqbal 1992, 276). In his *Javid Namah*, Iqbal relates his poetic excursion through the solar system, traveling from the earth, through the spheres of the planets and into the presence of God. Afghani inhabits the sphere of Mercury, the first planetary level on Iqbal's journey. The poetic Afghani speaks passionately regarding the West and its emphasis on nationalism.

The Lord of the West, cunning from head to toe,
Taught the people of religion the concept of country.
He thinks of the center, while you are at discord –
Give up this talk of Syria, Palestine, Iraq!
(Iqbal 1932, 55)

Later, Iqbal's Afghani comments on the new Pan-Islamic world that he had so ardently preached during his life and the world that Iqbal hopes to realize out of the ruins of the British Empire.

It is a world lost now in our breast,
A world awaiting yet the command 'Arise!'
A world without distinction of race and colour,
Its evening brighter than Europe's dawn;
A world cleansed of monarchs and slaves,
A world unbounded like the believer's heart...
(Iqbal 1932, 59)

A comparison of Afghani's agenda with Iqbal's work reveals an extensive correspondence of thought. Iqbal's poetic description of the miserable condition of Indian Muslims, his lament for the Muslims in their bitter struggle for independence (Iqbal 1961, xviii), and his teaching of a charismatic leader endowed with *khudi* (the Perfect Man) sounds strikingly similar to Afghani's work. In the following pages I will compare and contrast the teachings of the two men, revealing a striking similarity between the two men's thinking.

The Pan-Islamic Content of Iqbal's Thought

Iqbal would be the first to acknowledge that his thought was eminently practical. He had a purpose in mind as he wrote and published his poems. As noted above, much of his thought parallels the published writings of Jamal al-Din Afghani. In the following pages, I will discuss Iqbal's religious/political agenda in light of the Pan-Islamic teaching and categories of Afghani. This is not to say that Iqbal's work is not original, only that he was very eclectic and often utilized the ideas of others when it suited his own work. Iqbal took Afghani's ideas and expanded them, gave them his own philosophical flavor, and translated them into poetry. His fame as a literary giant provided him a wide

audience for his poetic works in the local press and through his published works. These sources provide an excellent guide to his poetic-political agenda and served as the agenda by which the Perfect Man can recreate the world for the benefit of Islam.

I will discuss Iqbal's religious/political agenda under the following headings, all found in Afghani's work:

- a) The East -West Divide
- b) The need for a charismatic leader
- c) Nationalism and Pan-Islam
- d) The centrality of religion for political reform
- e) The need for an inner change in the Muslims of India
- f) The benefits of Philosophy and Science
- g) Islam as the source of contemporary culture
- h) The inherent superiority of Islam
 - 1) The unity of God
 - 2) The absence of racial distinctions
 - 3) The reliance upon proofs for religion
- i) The adoption of Urdu as India's national language

The East West Divide

...When his [Afghani's] major political activities are examined, however, they are nearly always found to concern not reform but the strengthening of the Muslim world against Western, and particularly British, encroachments, which he saw as the most important task of his age and the precondition of meaningful reform. (Keddie 1972, 142)

Afghani was virulently opposed to the West and its occupation of Muslim lands, and was especially antagonistic towards British Imperialism. He worked tirelessly throughout his life to eject Great Britain from Muslim lands as an advocate of Pan-Islam. Iqbal adopted Afghani's opposition to colonialism and taught that inherent differences existed between the East and the West. This idea was not original to either Afghani or Iqbal, but had been current in both cultures for years. It was poetically communicated through Kipling's well known lines in his "The Ballad of East And West."

Oh East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,
Till earth and Sky stand presently at God's great judgment seat;
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, though they come from
the ends of earth.

(Kipling 1989, 233)

Iqbal believed that there were deep cultural differences between the East and West. Most of those differences were a result of the imperial designs of the British as well as the other colonial powers of Europe, but also related to the historic conflict between Islam and Christianity. Having lived in Europe for three years and having experienced its culture first hand, Iqbal had developed very definite opinions about the value of Europe and its impact on world history. In the face of West's martial and scientific enterprises, he would say,

...Believe me, Europe to-day is the greatest hindrance in the way of man's ethical advancement... The idealism of Europe never became a living factor in her life, and the result is a perverted ego seeking itself through mutually intolerant democracies whose sole function is to exploit the poor in the interest of the rich.
(Iqbal 1918, xiii)

Iqbal identified other differences between East and West. He believed that the East was the land of passion and love while the West was the land of reason and intelligence. He suggested that passionate Easterners should recognize the benefits of Western strengths and harness them to passion, thus creating a new and powerful world.

For Westerners intelligence is the stuff of life,
For Easterners love is the mystery of all being.
Only through love intelligence gets to know God,
love's labours find firm grounding in intelligence;
when love is companioned by intelligence
it has the power to design another world.
Then rise and draw the design of a new world,
mingle together love with intelligence.
the flame of the Europeans is damped down,
Their eyes are perceptive, but their hearts are dead;
They have been sore smitten by their own swords,

hunted down and slaughtered, themselves the hunters,
Look not for fire and intoxication in their vine;
not into their heavens shall rise a new age.
It is from your fire that the glow of life comes,
and it is your task to create the new world.

(Iqbal 1932, 57-8)

Iqbal also suggested that Easterners lived without respect to history and time, while Westerners were driven by them (Iqbal 1992, 211). Probably the greatest difference, however, was the moral issue. He believed that the West had enslaved the East through its material superiority resulting in the “loss of the Easterner’s self and his soul” (Zakaria 1993, 150).

Listen to this subtlety
That reveals all mystery:
Empire is the body's dust,
Spirit, true Religion's trust;
body lives and spirit lives
By the life their union gives.
Lance in hand, and sword at thighs,
cloaked, and with thy prayer-mat, rise!
Out of leaden sleep,
Out of slumber deep
Arise!
Out of slumber deep
Arise!

Against Europe I protest,
And the attraction of the West:
Woe for Europe and her charm,
Swift to capture and disarm!
Europe's hordes with flame and fire
Desolate the world entire;
Architect of Sanctuaries,
Earth awaits rebuilding, rise!
Out of leaden sleep,
Out of slumber deep
Arise!
Out of slumber deep
Arise!

(Iqbal 1948, 73 - 76)

Religion provided an even greater difference between East and West, according to Iqbal. He believed that the East had maintained its belief in God while the West had abandoned God in an orgy of bloodshed and materialism.

The East saw God and did not see the world,
the West crept along the world and fled away from God.
(Iqbal 1932, 40)

Given the reality of this East-West divide, Renold A. Nicholson, the translator of Iqbal's work into English, commented on the tensions evident between Islam and the West in his introduction to Iqbal's *Ramuz i-Bekhuri*. His comments sound prophetic in 2006.

...It is impossible to live intelligently for a single day in any part of that large stretch of the earth's surface extending from Morocco to Indonesia, without becoming uncomfortably aware that Islam and Europe stand poised against each other, and that the choice between peace and war may not be far off. Whether we like it or not, be we Europeans or Africans or Asians, we live in dangerous times and may well be heading for the greatest collision since Richard fought Saladin.
(Iqbal 1918, xvi)

The Need for a Charismatic Leader

Appear O rider of destiny!
Appear, O light of the dark realm of change!
Illumine the scene of existence.
Dwell in the blackness of our eyes!
Silence the noise of the nations.
Imparidise our oars with thy muse.
(Iqbal 1915, 83-84)

The unification of the Islamic community under a charismatic leader has been a central concept in Islamic reform movements of the last two hundred years. Afghani worked for a Pan-Islamic ideal: the unification of the Muslim world under a single religious and political leader. This charismatic leader, the Caliph, would restore Islam to its historic greatness. Afghani possessed a passionate and charismatic personality. It is evident he was aware of this fact and used his influence to promote his agenda.

Commentators also believe that Afghani saw himself as the individual behind whom the Muslim world could unite in a Holy War against the West.

... The use of not only holy war but even messianic terminology -- the exact words that herald the advent of the Mahdi -- is surely no accident. It goes along with other indications that Afghani and some of his followers saw him as playing a messianic role. (Keddie 1972,140)

Afghani died in 1897 in Turkey after being implicated in the 1896 assassination of Persia's ruler, Shah Nasir ad-Din. Although Afghani denied a role in the affair, he may have viewed this act as a contribution to the Pan-Islamic ideal and the elimination of a competitor to the Turkish Caliph (whom he supported) then reigning in Constantinople (Istanbul). Although his promotion of a united Caliphate was primarily political, the idea that the Muslim world needed a charismatic leader to guide it out of political and cultural lethargy was steeped in both Muslim history and theology. It had been a charismatic leader, the Prophet Muhammad, who had established their faith. Another charismatic leader, Saladin, had defeated the European Crusaders in Palestine during the twelfth century. Ismaili²⁰ Islam looked for a Mahdi, a prophet with messianic implications who would establish a kingdom of justice upon the earth (Armstrong 2002, 70).

As a youthful supporter of the Muslim reformer Afghani, Iqbal was well aware of this aspect of his thought. He was also very well aware that the concept of a charismatic leader, a Perfect Man or an *Insan-I Kamil*, was central to Muslim philosophy. He had briefly discussed this idea in his Ph.D. dissertation in 1908, and had also published an article on the subject in 1901 (Iqbal 1992, 3). This idea was central to Iqbal's thought

²⁰ Ismailis reject the Shia concept of a Hidden or 12th Imam, believing the line ended with the sixth Imam. They look for a seventh Imam or Mahdi, "a successor to Ismail, the son of Jafar as-Sadiq, who had been designated imam but had died before his father." They are also called Seveners (Armstrong 2002, 69).

and also played a key role in his poetic agenda. The following quote from one of Iqbal's letters to Arnold explaining his *Asrar-i-Khudi* gives great insight to his thinking.

The truth is that we stand in need of a living personality to solve our social problems, to settle our disputes, and to place international morality on a sure basis. How very true are the last two paragraphs of Professor Mackenzie's *Introduction to Social Philosophy*:

"There can be no ideal society without ideal man: and for production of these we require not only insight but a motive power; fire as well as light. Perhaps a philosophic understanding of our social problems is not even the chief want of our time. We need prophets as well as teachers, men like Carlyle or Ruskin or Tolstoy, who are able to add for us a new severity to conscience or a new breadth to duty.

Perhaps we want a new Christ...It has been well said that the prophet of our time must be a man of the world, and not merely a voice in the wilderness. For indeed the wilderness of the present is in the streets of our crowded cities, and in the midst of the incessant war by which we are trying to make our way upwards. It is there that the prophet must be.

Or perhaps our chief want is rather for the poet of the new age than for its prophet --or for one who should be poet and prophet in one. Our poets of recent generations have taught us the love of nature, and enabled us to see in it the revelation of the Divine. We still look for one who shall show us with the same clearness the presence of the Divine in the human.... We still need one who shall...teach us the working out of our highest ideals in the everyday life of the world, and to find in devotion to the advancement of that life, not merely a sphere for our ascetic self sacrifice, but a supreme object in the pursuit of which all thoughts, all passions, all delights may receive their highest development and satisfaction."

It is in the light of the above thoughts that I want the British public to read my description of the ideal man. It is not our treaties and arbitrations which will put an end to the internecine wars of the human family. (Iqbal 1978, 141-143)

According to Iqbal, the problem in India was the lack of leadership within the Muslim community. During the early Twentieth Century there seemed to be a number of charismatic and committed leaders who energized the Hindu community to oppose British rule. Mahatmas Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru are two Hindu luminaries who caught a vision of an independent Indian nation and took effective measures to mobilize the Indian masses into a powerful independence movement. The Indian Muslim

community lacked such leaders who possessed a national or international vision. This lack of leadership was a common point of discussion within that community. Iqbal's Perfect Man philosophy was developed to address this problem. In an article published in the Indian Review in 1909, Iqbal commented on this problem.

The ethical training of humanity is really the work of great personalities, who appear from time to time, during the course of human history. Unfortunately, our present social environment is not favourable to the birth and growth of such personalities of ethical magnetism... But all unbiased persons will easily admit that such personalities are now rare among us. (Iqbal 1992, 43)

This issue of leadership also became a subject of Iqbal's poetry. At the tomb of Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Iqbal imagined the famous reformer advising him on his poetic leadership and the characteristics he should portray. In the poem, Iqbal also broaches the possibility that he, himself, is the Perfect Man, the poet-prophet mentioned in Professor Mackenzie's quote that possessed the political insight and poetic gift that could awaken the masses of India to their situation and their possibilities. In the poem, Iqbal uses the term "*Mu'min*"²¹, another word for the Perfect Man.

Listen to my advice if you are a statesman,
Courage is your support if you are a leader of men.

Hesitation in expressing your purpose does not behoove you
If your intentions are good you should not fear anything.

The *Mu'min's* heart is clear of fear and hypocrisy
The *Mu'min's* heart is fearless against the ruler's power.

If your hands do hold the miraculous pen,
If your heart's cup is clear like the cup of Jam²².

You are a Divine pupil! Keep your tongue immaculate.
Beware lest your prayer's call remains unanswered.

²¹ A faithful Muslim who exceeds the requirements of Islam, making, "...any sacrifice needed in the cause" of the faith (Iqbal 2005a, 326).

²² "This is the legendary wine-cup of the pre-Islamic Persian emperor, Jamshad, in which he could see the world" (Iqbal 2005a, 80).

With the miracle of your verse awaken those sleeping
Burn down falsehood's produce with the flame of your call.
(Iqbal 2005a, 79-80)

For Iqbal, however, this leader could not be only a poet; he also had to be a man of action and a man of power. Iqbal was firmly of the opinion that the contemporary world would accept and be changed only by such men. As a keen observer of world events, the implications of political power were evident to him. He also suggested that it might be time to forego waiting for the Perfect Man to arise; instead it was time to act. "Give up waiting for the Mehdi -- the personification of power. Go and create him" (Iqbal 1961, 94).

Nationalism and Pan-Islam

Afghani was very political, even duplicitous, in his teaching on nationalism and pan-Islam. Afghani hoped to harness the forces of nationalism in his attempt to wrest Imperial India from Great Britain. He therefore encouraged a union between Indian Hindus and Muslims in order to present a completely united front against the English. He condemned any element that would disrupt that united front and encouraged any effort to forge a lasting alliance between the two religions. In the international world, however, Afghani taught Pan-Islam, the union of all Muslims in a great world empire.

Iqbal followed both strains of Afghani's thought, but displayed more integrity than Afghani, following them at different stages of his life. Before his sojourn in Europe from 1905-1908, Iqbal agreed with Afghani's vision of a national unity between all the religions of India. His poetry brims with national fervor and appreciation for the beauty of his homeland.

If you understand, independence is veiled in love
Slavery is to remain imprisoned in the net of schism.

Distinction of sects and governments has destroyed nations,
Is there any concern for the homeland in my compatriot's hearts?
(Iqbal 1924²³, 796-97)

The concept of unity and nationalism is more firmly conveyed in another poem from Iqbal's pre-1905 period, "Ode to India".

Religion does not teach hostility with each other.
We are Indians, India is our homeland.
(Iqbal 1924, 104)

After his return from Europe, Iqbal adopted a new attitude, rejecting Indian nationalism and adopting Afghani's Pan-Islamic viewpoint. He had viewed first-hand the great arms race that would result in the First World War and came to believe that nationalism was the root cause of the conflict that would soon follow. From India he observed the carnage that resulted in the trenches of Europe, with many of his countrymen sent off to fight and die in the conflict.

And man creates an ever novel god
Whose joy is shedding blood, whose hallowed name
Is Colour, Fatherland; Blood-brotherhood.
Humanity is slaughtered like a sheep
Before this worthless idol.
(Iqbal 1918, 55)

Iqbal rejected nationalism and saw in it evils that would work to the detriment of India as well as Muslims and the greater Islamic purpose. He believed that the Protestant revolution in Europe had unleashed the powers of nationalism which had gradually eroded the rule of Christian ethics on the continent, replacing it with a system of national ethics. He blamed this development for the conditions that led to the Great European

²³ This poem was written before Iqbal's sojourn in Britain and published in an Urdu anthology, *Bang-i-Dara*, in 1924.

War (Iqbal 1974, 162). He also believed that nationalism had been used as a tool by the colonial powers to dismember the Islamic world order, gradually defeating all formerly Islamic nations and bringing them under the sovereignty of European colonial powers. Thus, for Iqbal, nationalism was “the greatest danger not only to Islam, but also to the unity of mankind” (Zakaria 1993, 30).

Iqbal warned of the dangers of nationalism. He believed in the Islamic concept of the unity of all mankind under Islam and taught that nationalism hinders the hope of unity by establishing allegiances of race, language, and geographical attachment. According to Iqbal’s world-view, nationalism and Islam are incompatible (Iqbal 1992, 165). In nationalism, Iqbal saw the seeds of an “atheistic materialism” that he believed was the greatest danger to modern humanity.

Patriotism is a perfectly natural virtue and has a place in the moral life of man. Yet that which really matters is a man's faith, his culture, his historical tradition. These are things which in my eyes are worth living for and dying for, and not the piece of earth with which the spirit of man happens to be temporarily associated. (Iqbal 1992, 196-197)

Iqbal took a different view of nationalism with regard to Islam, however. While he was opposed to the imposition of a European type of nationalism in India and saw Western nationalism as the enemy of Islam, he suggested that Muslim countries utilize nationalism as a tool in order to achieve the ultimate dream of Islam, the world-wide *ummah*. Taking a long-term view, he suggested that Muslim nations should first earn their freedom and establish modern democratic states. Eventually they would coalesce under one Caliph, thus forming a world-wide Islamic order.

It seems to me that God is slowly bringing home to us the truth that Islam is neither Nationalism nor Imperialism, but a League of Nations which recognizes artificial boundaries and racial distinctions for facility of reference only and not for restricting the social horizons of its members. (Iqbal 1974, 158-159)

For Iqbal, the religion of the Prophet Muhammad and the mosque is the one unifying factor for the human spirit, not a geographical territory or a racial connection. Indeed, he believes that his religion incorporates all humanity, all lands, and that one day they will be united in the bonds of peace.

Nor any fatherland do we profess
Except Islam. ...
Our master, fleeing from his fatherland,
Resolved the knot of Muslim nationhood.
His wisdom founded one community -
The world its parish -- on the sacred charge
To civilize; that ruler of our faith
Of his abundant bounty gave the earth
Entire to be the confines of our mosque
(Iqbal 1918, 29-30)

The Centrality of Religion for Political Reform

Afghani believed that religion was a key element in the fight against British rule in India and throughout the Muslim world. Nikki Keddie, Afghani's American biographer, has suggested that, "Afghani was far from the orthodox believer that some of his [Muslim] biographer's claim" (Keddie 1972, 193), that his, "writings have very little content that can justly be called religions" but are political in nature (Keddie 1972, 195). He believed that science held the key to the future and would always be in contention with religion. In his article, "Answer to Renan," of May 18, 1883, he suggested that only the elite intelligentsia could handle the revelations of science while the masses "dislike reason" and prefer to dwell "in dark and distant regions which the philosophers and scholars can neither perceive nor explore" (Keddie 1972, 193). It was for this reason that Afghani believed that religion could be useful, to keep the masses "moral and

obedient” as well as to motivate them for resistance against the West (Keddie 1972, 194).

It appears that Afghani’s direct experience of the 1857 Mutiny in India, in which religious sentiment played the motivating role in anti-British agitation, convinced him of this practical purpose of religion in bringing about political turmoil and change.

...It seems reasonable to suppose that his direct experience and indirect knowledge of religious revolts helped convince him that traditional religious sentiments were the most powerful weapons available to a Muslim who wished to raise a movement strong enough to sweep the foreigners from Muslim lands. (Keddie 1972, 28)

Iqbal was a true believer of Islam. Like Afghani, however, he believed in the efficacy of religion for bringing about political change. In this, he took the Prophet Muhammad as his model.

He instituted new laws in the world,
He brought the empires of antiquity to an end.
With the key of religion he opened the door of this world.
(Iqbal 1915, 32)

Iqbal’s work is suffused with the teachings of his Muslim faith. Annemarie Schimmel, in her great treatise on Iqbal, *Gabriel’s Wing*, arranges her analysis of Iqbal’s life and work according to the five pillars of Islam. Within the context of these beliefs, Iqbal’s understanding of religion, politics and history become clear. Time and again, Iqbal reminded Indian Muslims that they had left the true faith and had become apostate. Ultimately, this was the cause of their military and political defeat at the hands of the British. To regain world status and power, a return to faithfulness to true Islam was required. This insight and Iqbal’s understanding of true Islam formed his main message to his contemporary Indian Muslims. It was also the foundation of his political message and agenda. Once Indian Muslims returned to their faith, exhibited the characteristics of

the Perfect Man, and displayed a powerful self endowed with *khudi*, India's Muslims could once again expect the blessings of Allah.

Listen to this subtlety
That reveals all mystery:
Empire is the body's dust,
Spirit, true Religion's trust;
body lives and spirit lives
By the life their union gives.
Lance in hand, and sword at thighs,
cloaked, and with thy prayer-mat, rise!
Out of leaden sleep,
Out of slumber deep
Arise!
Out of slumber deep
Arise!

(Iqbal 1948, 73 - 76)

Whether Afghani was a true believer or a political opportunist, he understood the power of religion to mobilize the masses of true believers under the auspices of religion, especially Muslims, who have a history of military expansion and scriptural encouragement to fight aggressors when Islam is endangered. After defeat of Mughal India by Britain, Muslim jurists had declared India *Dar al-Harb* (House of War) and called for *jihad* against Great Britain (Iqbal 1961, xi). Afghani believed that *jihad* was the only means to mobilize the masses of Islam for war against Imperialism, and that a charismatic leader was required to lead the fight (Keddie 1972, 137).

The strong emphasis on holy war as the way to achieve Pan-Islamic goals is significant... Afghani, influenced both by Muslim and Christian history, saw in holy war with messianic overtones a sure means for arousing the world's Muslims to action and re-creating a strong Islamic state. (Keddie 1972, 139)

Iqbal did not call for *jihad*, but he did suggest time and again that Islam would be preserved through the sword and that Muslims who refused to accept this reality had left the true faith. His collection of poems, *The Rod of Moses*, is subtitled "A Declaration of

War against the Present Age” and is heavily suffused with religious themes. In the *Javid Nama*, Iqbal emphasizes the centrality of warfare to Islam as he describes the deathbed scene of one of Islam’s saints.

O happy life, passed in supplication!
When the last breath issued from her lips,
looking upon her mother most yearningly
she spoke: "If you would have knowledge of my secret,
regard this sword and this Koran.
These two forces preserve each the other
and are the axis of all life's creation...
for believers, sword and Koran suffice --
let this be the furniture of my grave.

(Iqbal 1932, 115 – 116)

The Need for an Inner Change in Muslims

As noted in chapter 3, Iqbal believed that one of the causes of British dominance in India was the passivity of the Muslims in his native land. The cause of this passivity was the acceptance of Sufi religious beliefs and the adoption of Platonic idealism. This idealism provided an other-worldly view of life and allowed Muslims to passively acquiesce to the imperial designs of the West. It was a common theme among Muslim reformers that the Muslim faithful were responsible for historical reverses as a result of their faithlessness and failure of obedience to the dictates of the Koran. Iqbal cited the eighteenth century reformer Wahhab in this light (Iqbal 1974, 152). Afghani also believed that Indian Muslims, “with their great numbers are mostly holders of property” and had “slept the sleep of neglect and reposed on the bed of ignorance” (Keddie 1972, 134). Afghani applied a key Quranic verse to them regarding the need for the personal reform of Muslims.

...“If someone says: if the Islamic religion is as you say, then why are the Muslims in such a sad condition?” I will answer: “When they were truly Muslims,

they were what they were and the world bears witness to their excellence." As for the present, I will content myself with this holy text: "Verily, God does not change the state of a people until they change themselves inwardly." (Keddie 1972, 179-180)

In his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Iqbal cites this very text as he describes the essential nature of man as a co-creator with God. The growth and vitality of the social universe depend upon his activity. Personal, social and political death results when he fails to live up to his responsibility,.

...And in this process of progressive change God becomes a co-worker with him, provided man takes the initiative: 'Verily God will not change the condition of men, till they change what is in themselves' (Koran 13:12). If he does not take the initiative, if he does not evolve the inner richness of his being, if he ceases to feel the inward push of advancing life, then the spirit within him hardens into stone and he is reduced to the level of dead matter. (Iqbal 1974, 12)

Iqbal took this verse to heart and suggested a resolution to the problems facing India. He suggested that the inward development that Muslims needed was the development of the characteristics of the Perfect Man within Muslim culture who would display the power of a strengthened and action oriented ego, or *khudi*. Once these powerful supermen arose to throw off the yoke of imperial domination, the rule of Islam in India could finally be realized.

Be a conqueror of earth; that alone is worthy of a man,
thou art soft as a rose, become hard as a stone.
That thou mayst be the foundation of the wall of the garden.
Build thy clay into a man,
Build thy man into a world
Unless from thine own earth thou build thine own wall or door.
Someone else will make bricks of thine earth.

(Iqbal 1915, 89)

Iqbal hoped for a revival of Muslim power and strength in order to bring about a Muslim reformation in order to revive Islam's ancient glory.

I have discussed Iqbal's concept of *khudi*, or ego, in a previous chapter. Yet it was far from obvious that this philosophical concept would have political impact. Iqbal aimed his poetry and work at the young (much as Afghani had directed his call to young students during Iqbal's youth). Both of these men hoped to awaken the passion and power of youth in bringing about their programs.

I, who despair of the great sages of old,
have a word to say touching the day to come!
Render my speech easy unto the young,
make my abyss for them attainable.

(Iqbal 1932, 24)

The publication of Iqbal's work had the desired effect. His work aroused great controversy, especially among those who believed he was too hard on Sufism. But the young especially received his message, and their appreciation for his message formed the basis of his popularity for the future. The translator of his *Javid Nama* relates that when Iqbal's first work, the *The Asrar-i Khudi*, was published in 1915, "on its first appearance [it] took by storm the younger generation of Indian Moslems. 'Iqbal,' wrote one of them, 'has come amongst us as a Messiah and has stirred the dead into life' " (Iqbal 1932, 11).

Philosophy and Science

Following Jamal al-Din Afghani's anti-imperialist program, we next come to his views concerning philosophy and science. It is striking that he understood that science is essential to the modern world and is responsible for society's advancement over the last two centuries. Unlike other conservative Muslim clerics, Afghani understood that any people who hoped to have a place on the world stage would have to accept and excel in the sciences. He stressed that "true" Islam is favorable to science and has a rich history in scientific pursuits. In an 1882 lecture in Calcutta, Afghani emphasized the role of

science in the world: "If someone looks deeply into the question, he will see that science rules the world. There was, is and will be no ruler in the world but science" (Keddie 1972, 161). Afghani included philosophy as one of the most important of scientific endeavors, a view that is foreign to contemporary scholarship.

...The science that has the position of a comprehensive soul and the rank of a preserving force is the science of *falsafa* or philosophy, because its subject is universal. It is philosophy that shows man human prerequisites. (Keddie 1972, 160-161)

Iqbal also took a modern view of science and philosophy. He understood that science is an essential ingredient in modern life and that the West's successes have been accomplished through science. He saw science as one of the differences between the East and the West, with the East lacking in scientific knowledge. Given the proper attitude, however, he believed that the East's lack of science could be reversed. Iqbal encouraged his countrymen to pursue science and to welcome its benefits into Indian culture. All they lacked was a commitment to hard work!

The power of the West comes not from lute and rebeck...
The power of the West comes from science and technology,
and with that selfsame flame its lamp is bright.
Wisdom derives not from the cut and trim of clothes;
the turban is no impediment to science and technology.
For science and technology, elegant young sprig,
brains are necessary, not European clothes;
on this road only keen sight is required,
what is needed is not this or that kind of hat.
If you have a nimble intellect, that is sufficient;
if you have a perceptive mind, that is sufficient.

If anyone burns the midnight oil
he will find the tack of science and technology...
(Iqbal 1932, 129-130)

As noted earlier, Iqbal had adopted a personal goal to awaken and strengthen the ego of the Muslims of India so they might find the courage and strength to stand and prevail

against the West, to exhibit the characteristics of the Perfect Man. He saw science as a means by which the self might be strengthened, so he encouraged Indian Muslims to pursue its rigors.

Science is a means of invigorating the Self.
Science and art are servants of life,
Slaves born and bred to its house
(Iqbal 1915, 26)

Although he condemned the wrong uses of science, especially by the West and its war machines, Iqbal understood that science itself is amoral, and that the uses to which it is put can be either positive or negative. He was especially interested that Muslims redeem science through their religious faith and love.

Science without love is a demonic thing,
science together with love is a thing divine;
science and wisdom without love are a corpse,
reason is an arrow that never pierced the target.
With the vision of God make the blind to see,
convert Abu Lahab into an impetuous Haidar!
(Iqbal 1932, 64)

Consistent with Afghani's rhetoric, Iqbal was committed to philosophy. Iqbal seems to have had a genius for philosophy that developed from childhood. As noted in earlier chapters, he studied widely in philosophy, gaining a foundation in his Master's degree from Government College, Lahore under the tutelage of Thomas Arnold. Beginning in 1905 he studied at Cambridge under the Hegel expert McTaggart while he also wrote his Ph.D. dissertation on the "Development of Metaphysics in Persia." He had opportunity during this time to travel to Germany and spent many hours discussing German philosophy there. He was conversant with Muslim philosophy as well as with that of the West, including Plato and Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, Fichte, Bergson and

especially Nietzsche. Each of these finds a place in Iqbal's philosophical system. A modern Muslim historian comments on Iqbal's acquaintance with and literary use of the philosophers.

...The reader of Iqbal's *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* is overwhelmed with the vastness of his learning and the scope of his metaphysical and religious speculation. His versatility and eclecticism, however, are often exasperating... Very often the multiplication of authorities, ancient or modern, Western or Islamic, is done at such a pace that the reader is left breathless. (Fakhry 1970, 354)

There is no denying the extent and depth of Iqbal's knowledge of philosophical themes. It is also important to note that he utilized that knowledge for the benefit of his people and country, discovering what he deemed the tragic flaw that had enabled the victory of British Imperialism in India and suggesting its solution, the implementation of Perfect Manhood strengthened by *khudi*. Additionally, he sought to provide a resolution to the conflict between philosophy, modern science and his faith, and sought to communicate that resolution through his lectures and subsequent book, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Iqbal 1974, v – vi).

Iqbal understood that philosophy incorporates free inquiry, suspecting all authority and attempting to trace out all the “nooks and crannies” of human thought in order to discover ultimate answers (Iqbal 1974, 1). For all of Iqbal's philosophical endeavors, however, he found philosophy inadequate for answering life's deepest questions. For those questions, he turned to his faith in God. Sounding very much like Goethe's Faust, Iqbal comments on his philosophical endeavors,

My reason diabolical resolved
To wear the Magian girdle; its impress
Stamped o'er my spirit's furrows. Many years
I was doubt's prisoner, inseparable
From my too arid brain. I had not read

One letter of true knowledge, and abode
Still in philosophy's confection-land;
My darkness was a stranger to the light
Of God, my dusk knew not the glow of dawn.
...And now my soul
Is emptied of all memories but Thee;
I will be bold to speak of my desire,
If thou wilt give me leave.
(Iqbal 1918, 82-3)

Islam as the Source of Contemporary Western Culture

Islam is superior for several reasons: First, its insistence on the unity of the Creator, which excludes incarnation or any sharing of divine powers; second, its lack of inherent race or class distinctions; and third, its rejection of beliefs that do not rest on proofs. (Keddie 1972. 178)

Afghani taught that Islam is superior to the West for the reasons mentioned above.

He also taught Muslims that all modern virtues had originated with Islam (Keddie 1972, 165). Iqbal followed Afghani in this area. He believed in the superiority of his culture and religion to those of the rest of the world. He taught that medieval Islam had provided the foundation of modern Western culture. In demonstrating the superiority of Islamic culture over that of the West, Iqbal often stated that the accomplishments of Western philosophy and science had been prefigured in Islamic thought, that "European culture, on its intellectual side, is only a further development of some of the most important phases of the culture of Islam" (Iqbal 1974, 7). This idea has been a common theme of Islamic reformers, and Iqbal is no exception. He suggested that the ideas of various Western philosophers were existent in complete or near complete form in the writings of Islamic thinkers of the past. He even suggested that Einstein's theory of relativity existed in Medieval Islamic science and that the work of Descartes was so similar to the work of Ghazali that the European would have been suspected of plagiarism if he had known Arabic (Iqbal 1978, 187). He includes Roger Bacon in the same discussion, stating that

the author of Western science received his education in the Muslim universities of Spain and that, "...Part V of his 'Opus Majus' which is devoted to perspective is practically a copy of Ibn-i-Haitham's optics" (Iqbal 1974, 129). Iqbal suggests that, in reality, Western culture is an extension of Muslim culture.

...It is not at all an exaggeration to say that the fruits of modern European humanism in the shape of modern science and philosophy are in many ways only a further development of Muslim culture. Neither the European nor the Mussalman of today realizes this important fact because the extant works of Muslim thinkers still lie scattered and unpublished in the libraries of Europe, Asia and Africa.(Iqbal 1978, 152)

The Inherent Superiority of Islam

There is no god but God: This is the soul
And body of our pure Community,
The pitch that keeps our instrument in tune,
The very substance of our mysteries,
(Iqbal 1918, 12)

According to Muslim belief, Islam is the final revelation of God to humanity, and the Prophet Muhammad is the final prophet in a line that includes Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. As such, it is deemed by Muslims to be superior to all other religions, including Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Christianity. The first three are regarded as pagan religions while the adherents of Judaism and Christianity are called, "people of the book" and are given a higher status than pagans but a lesser status within Islam. Iqbal, as a faithful adherent of the Islamic faith, accepted this line of reasoning (Iqbal 1918, xii) and suggested that Islam and the Islamic community serve as a model for all other social systems.

...The more you reflect on the history of the Muslim community, the more wonderful does it appear. From the day of its foundation up to the beginning of the sixteenth century - about a thousand years -- this energetic race (I say race since Islam has functioned as a race-making force) was continually busy in the

all-absorbing occupation of political expansion. Yet in this storm of continuous activity this wonderful people found sufficient time to unearth and preserve the treasures of ancient sciences, to make material additions to them, to build a literature of a unique character, and above all to develop a complete system of laws -- the most valuable legacy that Muslim lawyers have left us. (Iqbal 1961, 100 – 101)

The key concept of Islam is the unity of the God. Muslims believe that God is undivided, thus eliminating the possibility of a Christian Trinity. Muslims also teach that it is blasphemous to suggest that God could have a son, which, in their view, requires a female partner and, ultimately, opposes God's essential unity. In view of what Iqbal and Muslims believe are challenges to the concept of God's unity, they believe that Islam is essential to the health and well-being of the world. They exist as the only remaining testimony in to the "...absolute Unity of God" (Iqbal 1961, xxv).

For Muslims, God's creation is by definition consistent with God's unified nature and must reflect that unity in every detail. For Iqbal, the concept of unity eliminated any possibility of racism or any division based upon social status, color or creed, which Iqbal viewed as the most destructive of all human problems. He believed that western nationalism and democracy propagated these problems and were the source of much that is evil in the world.

...Only one unity is dependable, and that unity is the brotherhood of man, which is above race, nationality, colour, or language. So long as this so-called democracy, this accursed nationalism, and this degraded imperialism are not shattered, so long as men do not demonstrate by their actions that they believe that the whole world is the family of God, so long as distinctions of race, colour and geographical nationalities are not wiped out completely, they will never be able to lead a happy and contented life and the beautiful ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity will never materialize. (Iqbal 1992, 375)

Iqbal believed that unity of purpose is another consequence of the elimination of division based on race or nationality and the establishment of common social and

religious practice. When united by Islam, he hoped that society and individuals within that society would be able to work together toward a common purpose, as they had in the first centuries after the Prophet Muhammad. History revealed that a common language, holy book, common practice in the Pillars of Islam, and common social values based upon the Quran and the Sunnah had resulted in one of the world's great empires less than a hundred years after the death of the Prophet Muhammad.

Well-pointed arrows of one quiver are we,
One showing, one beholding, one in thought;
One is our goal and purpose, one the form,
The fashion and the measure of our dream.
Thanks to his blessings, we are brothers all
Sharing one speech, one spirit and one heart.
(Iqbal 1918, 13)

This unity of God and society also has political implications in Iqbal's thought. As Iqbal observed the West, he saw the universal adoption of the separation of church and state in a culture that had propagated the wars of religion in the seventeenth century and the Great World War of the early twentieth century. According to his view, these orgies of killing had resulted from the Christian Reformation in which the unity of the church was sundered into a plurality of warring factions. The elimination of Christian moral virtue as a universal standard and its replacement with moral values based on nationalism was responsible for many of the evils that pervaded the West's culture (Iqbal 1992, 164). Iqbal believed and taught that Islam is superior to Christianity since it teaches a unity of church and state (Iqbal 1974, 166) The Islamic state is intended to be ruled by Islamic law (Esposito 1983, 179) and a Caliph who is both a political and religious leader.

The West thinks Soul and Body to be separate;
Hence the dichotomy between Religion and the State.

The church is busy saying prayers on Peter's rosary,
Quite unconcerned with polity,
And as for Western polity, it is pure deceit.
thus Soul and Body in the West can never meet.
The intellect should always have the heart in train.
Look at the plight of Turkey, which has kept apart the twain.
The Turks forgot themselves in aping Western ways,
And cut between Religion and the state the ancient ties...
(Iqbal 1969, 15-16)

The concept of unity also gives to Islam a teleology that is world-wide in scope and that is easily accessible to the masses of Muslim believers: that their faith and religion calls them to world-wide expansion in order to bring universal unity and peace. Indeed, it was this understanding that drove early Muslims to unify nearly the entire known world of the seventh century into one great religious empire. This belief calls all Muslims to an energetic response.

Allahu Akbar! This the secret holds
Of thy existence; wherefore let it be
Thy purpose to preserve and propagate
No other God. If thou a Muslim art,
Till all the world proclaims the Name of God
Thou canst not rest one moment.
(Iqbal 1918, 54)

The Adoption of Urdu as India's National Language

Afghani believed that India should unite behind one national language in order to effectively resist English imperial power. His Muslim biases are evident in his choice of Urdu as opposed to Hindi, the language of the masses of Hindus. Urdu had been the language of the Persian court after its inclusion into the Muslim world domain. It consisted of Persian, Hindi and Arabic words and adopted the Arabic writing style. In India, it was spoken primarily by Muslims. Hindi, on the other hand, had ancient Indian roots and was written in the Sanskrit. Although they adopted different written scripts, the

two languages shared many common spoken elements, and the two communities communicated easily.

The issue of a national language would become a point of division between Hindu nationalists and Muslim communalists during the political debate leading up to freedom from the English. Iqbal participated in that debate by using Urdu as the language in which he first wrote and published his poetry. He was not the first to utilize Urdu in the production of literature and poetry, but he was one of the first to take ancient forms of poetry and to adapt them for contemporary political ends. He was not, however, fully committed to Urdu, and this reflects his pan-Islamic political agenda. Beginning with his visit to England, he began to experiment with the use of Persian as his poetic medium. Persian was the literary language of Islam from the eighth to the early twentieth century. Understood by the majority of educated Muslims and written with the Arabic script, the use of Persian gained him an international Muslim audience. It also provided a more extensive vocabulary, essential to his poetic art. His greatest and most popular works were written in Persian, including the *Asrar-i-Khudi (Secrets of the Self)*, *Asrar-i-Bekhudi (The Secret of Selflessness)*, and the *Javid Nama*. His Persian works gave him an international Muslim audience, reflecting his Pan-Islamic world-view and his self-appointed mission to the entire Muslim world. As he grew older, he also began to see Arabic as an important language. Reflecting his increasing identification with international Islam as well as his hopes for a world-wide Islamic Ummah, in 1934 he suggested that the “only non-European language that had any future was Arabic” (Iqbal 1992, 282).

The issue of the language Iqbal used in his poetry has another implication. After his return from England, his poetry was written primarily for a Muslim audience. His Persian and Urdu literary work is generally politically Pan-Islamic, with fiery appeals to awaken the passions of Muslims to the evils of the West and particularly British rule of India. His subjects repeatedly include calls for Indian Muslims to firm up their egos, to recognize the beauty of the Islamic past, to resist the incursion of the West into Muslim lands, and to re-establish a glorious Islamic heritage. His English work, including his published articles and lectures, is generally non-inflammatory, reasonable, and often includes laudatory comments regarding the British. This probably reflects the political realities of his world and the times in which he wrote. During the period 1915 – 1924, including World War I and its aftermath, the British were particularly sensitive to opposition and sedition. Iqbal seems to have publicly walked a fine line between loyalty to the Crown and loyalty to Islam in his English publications. Yet his Persian work is inflammatory of Pan-Islamic rhetoric.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that Iqbal was a religious man with world historical insight who passionately attempted to initiate change in India and the world for the benefit of Muslims. It is evident that he attempted to mold his own character after his Perfect Man philosophy and to bring about radical change in his country through religious action. His thought is the result of his interaction with the sacred works of his faith as well as some of the great philosophical minds of both East and West. He appears to have absorbed the thought of Afghani and incorporated it into his religious, political and philosophical program, communicating the necessity for Pan-Islamic action through

his poetry and published articles. Through passionate poetic appeals that communicated his religious and political message, he hoped to awaken Indian Muslims to their world situation and to inculcate in them the characteristics necessary to re-establish Islam as a national and world power. He hoped to emulate, create or discover one great leader or Perfect Man, like the Prophet Muhammad or Saladin, who would defeat the West and lead the forces of Islam to greatness, thus restoring Muslim dignity. More importantly, he understood that greatness and perfection lay in the heart of every Muslim and sought to convince all Muslims that their faith endowed them with unlimited potential, that within the soul of every Muslim lay the seed of the Perfect Man and that within every Muslim's faith lay the responsibility for fervent action.

As is evident from the discussion of the action agenda contained in his poetry, Iqbal's thought is both political and religious, reflecting the unity of these concepts within Islam. With Iqbal, as in Islam, religion and politics form an organic unity, the source of much misunderstanding between the East and West. In the next chapter, I will discuss Iqbal's use of poetry, another point of cultural divergence between East and West.

Traveler! The soul dies of dwelling at rest,
It becomes more alive by perpetual soaring.
Delightful it is to travel along with the stars,
Delightful not to rest one moment on the journey.

(Iqbal 1932, 37)

CHAPTER 5

IQBAL'S POETRY: THE TOOL OF THE PERFECT MAN

Introduction

In 1932 Muhammad Iqbal was at the height of his career as poet, philosopher and politician. He was invited to London to participate in the Third Round Table Conference that was called to discuss the political future of India and the “communal problem” with the hope of finding a means of agreement between the conflicting religious factions in India. Iqbal was introduced at a social gathering held in his honor by a Miss Farquarharson. She introduced him to her guests as a poet, philosopher and man of action.

We find in him the rare qualities of a man, with the vision of a poet to see far into the future, the insight and depth of a Philosopher to see the principles underlying man's problems, and powers of a man of action which made him also a member of the Round Table Conference. (Iqbal 1978, 202-203)

Iqbal taught that the Perfect Man, God's vice-regent on earth, would create new worlds. Iqbal believed that his poetry was the means by which a new Muslim world would be communicated and inaugurated. In this chapter, I will discuss Iqbal's use of poetry as a powerful tool to accomplish the philosophical, political and religious agenda of the Perfect Man. In order to illuminate these issues, I will also provide some background on Eastern poetry to provide insight to Iqbal's methodology and how he used the unique characteristics of his poetic culture to further his political, philosophical and, ultimately, religious ends. Throughout this discussion, it will become evident that Iqbal's poetic work was the primary expression of his views. His fame as a poet earned him the respect and stature that enabled him to act politically for change in India and the world. Although he was employed as a part-time professor from 1908-1911 and worked at Law

for most of his life, it was his poetry that brought him public recognition as well as personal satisfaction.

In the contemporary world, poetry is generally regarded as the focus of an intellectual minority, not a tool of philosophy, politics, or social change. In the East, poetry has a far different appreciation and utility. A discussion of the Eastern poetic tradition as well as Iqbal's place within that tradition will illuminate the importance of his poetry and its place within the culture of early twentieth century Muslim India.

Poetry in Islam and the East

Poetry has been a significant enterprise in the East for thousands of years. Poetry was not reserved only for aesthetic purposes, but served as a vehicle for all forms of knowledge, with texts of geography, history, mathematics, religion, and metaphysics being rendered in verse (Alger 1865, 4). Of the East it was said that,

...However good your prose may be, it is improved when a poet turns it into stanzas felicitously worded. In poetry the fortunate man expressed his joy or his day of happiness, in poetry the warrior boasts of his victory on the day of battle. And let him who attracts the poet's displeasure beware, for he will never wipe away the stain. (Levy 1969, 34)

Pre-Islamic Arabia had a well developed poetry, used for a variety of practical purposes. Moral codes, history, and even commercial guidance were put into verse for ease of memory, with much of that pre-Islamic poetry still studied throughout the Islamic world (Sells 1996,146). Pre-Islamic poets also served as an editorial voice, commenting on the issues and leaders of the day. When the Prophet Muhammad moved to Yathrib and assumed the leadership of the city that would become Medina, he earned the opposition of one well-known poetess, Asma bint Marwan, who distrusted the Prophet's

intentions and called upon local tribesmen to eject him and his followers. She published the following verses which were quickly repeated throughout the area.

Gutless men of Malik and Nabit,
And of Nawf,
Gutless men of Khazraj
You obey a stranger who has no place among you,
Who is not of Murad, nor of Madhhjij,
Do you when your own chiefs have been murdered
Put your hope in him
Like men greedy for meal soup when it is cooking?
Is there no man of honor among you
Who will take advantage of an unguarded moment
And cut off the gull's hopes?

(Fregosi 1998, 44)

As a testament to the effectiveness and respect with which poets were regarded, the Prophet's poetic opponent was assassinated before Muhammad's name could become an object of derision in the *suks* and public places of Yathrib (Fregosi 1998, 44).

As Islam expanded during its first hundred years, it quickly encompassed the realms of the East, including Persia and modern day India. Persia already possessed an ancient literature, and the interaction of the two cultures enriched its poetry through the merging of the languages of Arabia and Persia. The evolving language adopted the Arabic script but retained the Persian pronunciation and vocabulary. During the next twelve centuries, Persian became the "idiom of literature" in the Muslim world, and a great deal of that literature was poetic in nature (Levy 1969, 22).

Persian poetry was regarded as a craft requiring the same level of skill as jewelry creation or carpentry, requiring years of apprenticeship and training. The poetic forms adopted included the *quasida*, a formal long poem; the *ghazal*, a passionate love poem that usually addressed forbidden love; and the *divan*, a collection of poems consisting of the previous two forms (Levy 1969, 29-30). The *mathnavi*, comprising some of the most

famous of all Persian poetry, is an epic poem that may run into thousands of lines. All of these forms would be accompanied by music or sung, which made the poetry an aural rather than visual experience. The *mathnavi* was utilized to communicate in a number of important areas.

The form was used for epics, both narrative and romantic, and for didactic poems of all kinds, including ethics, history, religious doctrine, medicine, and even cookery. A very large number was devoted to the teachings of the Sufi mystics, one, the *Mathnavi-i Ia'navi* or Spiritual *Mathnavi* of Jalal al-Din Rumi, founder of the *Mevlevi* order of dervishes, being numbered amongst the outstanding classics of Persian literature. (Levy 1969, 42-43)

The *ghazal* was used primarily as love poetry, but also had important applications in philosophy. The Sufi poets especially utilized the *ghazal* to communicate their metaphysics, with Ibn al'Arabi, Hafiz and Jalal al-Din Rumi being the most well known. Iqbal continued a tradition that was well established.

How beautifully Iqbal has sung of his philosophy of ego in these graceful and melodious lines. It needed a superb artist to achieve this, but it must be remarked that Iqbal's task was rendered easier by poets like Hafiz, Bedil and Ghalib. So far as I know, Hafiz [d. 1390] was the first great poet to discuss philosophy and sociology, as he knew them, as well as politics in his lyrics. This trend continued in Persian till we find in Urfi and Bedil abstruse philosophical subjects discussed with the grace and charm of which only a Persian *ghazal* is capable. The same effect was achieved by Ghalib in Urdu. (Vahid 1948, 194)

Iqbal often referred to Hafiz in his works, with Rumi being his favorite poet as well as his spiritual guide. Iqbal's Urdu and Persian poetry continued in the tradition of these great poets and utilized all the poetic forms mentioned in this discussion. It is generally agreed that he was a master in their use.

Persian Poetic expression was a highly disciplined art and poets did not have a great deal of license in their literary production. They were forced by convention to utilize common metaphors, rhyme schemes and themes, all of which originated in the

eleventh and twelfth centuries (Arberry 1946, 704). It took great skill to utilize established forms, themes and metaphors and produce a poem that could excite the senses. But even the most skillfully produced literary works of this genre seem odd to western ears, apparently lacking coherence and a common theme. Thus, Persian poetry has been described as a “string of pearls,” with succeeding verses of a *divan* having little or no relation to the theme of the preceding one (Arberry 1946, 703). Yet the poet usually did have a “stream of consciousness” behind his artwork, with skill and attention required to discover his intent. The ability to produce an acceptable Persian or Urdu *ghazal* was regarded as the mark of education in the Muslim world (Qureshi 1969, 427).

The Persian language was the language of the Mughal court and of educated literature in India until the coming of the British. Even in the late nineteenth century, Persian was still being taught to Indian Muslim children, for all the great literature of the Muslim world, other than the Koran, existed in Persian.

...For almost eight centuries, Persian was the official language in Muslim India. It was employed not only by Muslims but also innumerable non-Muslims as a vehicle of their compositions in all the different walks of literary domains: religion, history, poetry, natural sciences and all else. Translations from Sanskrit, even of Hindu sacred books, abound. (Hamidullah 1954, 132)

As previously noted, Iqbal’s training in Persian literature was begun under the tutelage of Maulana Mir Hasan at Sialkot, well known in late nineteenth century north-west India for his knowledge of Arabic and Persian literature. Later, Iqbal would utilize all the poetic forms mentioned, although he would dispense with many of the ancient conventions that had grown up around the literature. Even so, his poetry is replete with common Persian poetic metaphors, such as the caravan bell, The Cup of *Jamshid*, tulips, wine, and the self-immolation of the moth in the candle flame. His earliest poetry was produced in

Urdu, the language of the Muslims of the Punjab region. Later, beginning in 1908, he adopted Persian as his language of choice. His most beautiful and widely known poetic-philosophical works were accomplished in Persian, gaining him a wide international Muslim audience.

Poetry as Dissent

One mark of Iqbal's poetry is his use of it to criticize Muslims, Hindus, the state, and even God. His "*Complaint and Answer*" is a long poem in which Iqbal complains to God regarding the sorry state of the Muslim world. During his lifetime, it seemed to Iqbal and other Muslims that Islam was under attack by the West. In this poem, he complains that that Muslims had been faithful to the Unity of God and did not deserve their sorry treatment. In "*The Answer*," God provides insight to Iqbal that, contrary to the popular view, Muslims had not been faithful, but had instead worshiped idols and left the pure faith of their fathers.

The theme of dissent is not unique to Iqbal, but is consistent with Persian and Urdu poetry, and characterized the Prophet Muhammad's social critique of the ruling clans of Mecca. Sufi holy men from the twelfth through the twentieth centuries often criticized their government's deviation from Islamic principles, utilizing Persian and (later) Urdu poetry (Mukhia 1999, 869-870). It was not unknown for faithful Muslims to complain even against God. These "faithful fools" or mystics of deep devotion could claim some latitude because of their love for the Divine.

...Sometimes, however, the eyes of these wretched people are raised towards Heaven in complaint and accusation, and sometimes they even utter heavy reproaches, yes, and what is more, they direct menaces to God himself...And this direct and intimate relation to God characterizes them as genuine mystics, as mystical fools, and distinguishes them from heretics and philosophers, who have

become alienated from God altogether....They are foolish lovers of God....(Ritter 1952, 8-9)

Iqbal's seemingly audacious poetry in fact establishes his special relationship with God, a relation he often emphasized in his poetry.

The *Mushaira* and *Tarannum*

Poetry was used as a powerful tool to move the emotions in Iqbal's culture, a fact that made it useful as a tool of the Perfect Man in bringing about social change. As noted earlier, Eastern poetry was often accompanied by music. In Iqbal's North West India, the poetry gathering, or *Mushaira*, followed a well established form involving the singing or chanting of poetry (*tarannum*). *Mushaira* were male social gatherings, where numerous poets, both amateur and professional, would deliver their work. Amateurs were scheduled early in the evening while the true professionals were reserved for the later hours. The poet sat on a mat and sang a line or phrase of his poetry. The crowd would then sing the phrase back to the poet, who responded with another phrase. The event could become very enthusiastic and emotional, with loud praise or silence signaling the approval or disapproval of the crowd upon completion of the poem.

...This allows for continuous, free interaction between poet and audience which leads to a high degree of "emotional harmony" in an atmosphere of intensity and excitement. 'Not rarely thousands of listeners stay from eight or nine o'clock until early morning, shouting applause, criticism, repeating verses, with their enthusiasm mounting from hour to hour. Young and old, rich and poor, educated and illiterate take part in these public symposia of poets, all with equal enthusiasm and delight.' (Qureshi 1969, 430-431)

Iqbal began to participate in these *Mushaira* at an early age in Sialkot, where it was noted that he had an innate poetic ability. When he moved to Lahore to attend the

University, he joined the *Anjuman-i-Himayat i-Islam*²⁴, a literary society, where he quickly made his mark as a budding young poet. It is easy to understand why Iqbal chose poetry to communicate his philosophical themes. Besides his skill in writing and singing poetry, the themes he treated were most effectively communicated and accepted in the emotionally charged surroundings of a Mushaira. Reynold Nicholson comments in his introduction to the *Asrar-i-Khudi*,

... While the Hindu philosophers, in explaining the doctrine of the unity of being, addressed themselves to the head, Iqbal...takes a more dangerous course and aims at the heart. He is no mean poet, and his verse can rouse or persuade even if his logic fails to convince. His message is... for Moslems everywhere. (Iqbal 1915, viii)

The Development of Iqbal's Poetic Gift

Iqbal's poetic gift developed into a powerful force while he was a college student at Lahore, India. Anwar Beg, biographer and friend of Iqbal's, relates that the young Iqbal joined a poetry symposium at the *Bazar-i-Hakiman*, inside Lahore's Bhati Gate, probably about 1896 (Beg 1939, 9 - 11). His poetry gradually gained a wide audience and was sought for publication by a Mr. Beg, with the first poem being published in 1901. It was also during this time that Iqbal became involved in political issues, attending a society (the *Shorish-i-Mahshar*) at which "locals with a refined taste" met to discuss national movements with "semi-political discussions" dealing with the issues of the day, including the war between Greece and Turkey (Beg 1939, 10-11).

After becoming a professor at Government College, Iqbal had more time for his poetic pursuits and often spent time with friends and admirers reciting his poetry. Beg recounts a first-hand experience of Iqbal's poetic production.

²⁴ Society of the Supporters of Islam (Malik 1995, 303)

His friends and students, who happened to be near him, used to sit close to him with pen and paper; they took down his verses, while Sheikh Sahib was in poetic ecstasy. I never saw him with pen and paper purposing to think out verses. With him it was more like a flowing river or a fountain of words and while writing poetry, he always appeared in a peculiar poetic mood. He sang his verses in a melodious voice, almost entranced, and the people around him could not escape his influence. (Beg 1939, 12)

For many Muslims, Iqbal's tendency to enter a "poetic trance" was evidence of a special relationship with God, and even conveyed saintliness (Sells 1996, 146). Iqbal's poetry won him wide acclaim and adulation. It included beautiful nature poetry, including his "Ode to the Himalayas," children's poetry (with overtly political themes), as well as poems with nationalistic themes.

From 1905 until 1908, Iqbal studied philosophy in Europe, attending lectures under McTaggart and Arnold as well as earning his Ph.D. at Munich University. Iqbal was moved during this time to focus his energies on the social and political renewal of his country, with the belief that the political situations of the day demanded more active work than poetry. At one point, he decided to abandon poetry in favor of social and political action. An acquaintance convinced him otherwise, telling him that "his poetry was of no small significance and could not be dispensed with... as it was replete with directive force and could beneficially be used for the uplift of fallen nations" (Beg 1939, 20). The argument was carried by Iqbal's professor, Sir Thomas Arnold, who convinced him that, "...It was not in the interest of his country to give up poetry" (Beg 1939, 20).

Iqbal's decision to continue writing poetry "for the good of his nation" meant that his literary effort would take a decidedly political and didactic turn. He decided that his poetry should have a purpose, that poetry simply for the sake of art was worthless. His

poetic and literary efforts became the primary outlet for the action required of his Perfect Man. Writing in 1917 for an Indian publication, Iqbal explained his view of art.

...Art is subordinate to life, not superior to it. The ultimate end of all human activity is life - glorious, powerful, exuberant. All human art must be subordinated to this final purpose and the value of everything must be determined in reference to its life-yielding capacity. The highest art is that which awakens our dormant will-force, and nerves us to face the trials of life manfully. All that brings drowsiness and makes us shut our eyes to reality around - on the mastery of which alone life depends - is a message of decay and death. There should be no opium-eating in Art. The dogma of Art for the sake of Art is a clever invention of decadence to cheat us out of life and power. (Iqbal 1992, 85-86)

Iqbal believed that poetry transcends the limits of science and philosophy and brings a knowledge that is beyond the bounds of intellect, a knowledge that is found through intuition. He believed that poetry touches the heart and it was to the heart of Muslims that he directed his message. Iqbal often referred to these types of knowledge as reason and love. He saw these two opposites as characteristic of the differences between the East and the West, with the East being guided by love while the West is guided by reason.

Reason says, "Thrust thyself into the fore";
Love answers, "Try thy heart, and prove thyself."
Reason by acquisition is informed
Of other; Love is born of inward grace
And makes account with Self. Reason declares,
Be happy and be prosperous"; Love replies,
"Become a servant that thou mayest be free."
(Iqbal 1918, 26)

The knowledge that Iqbal sought to instill in Muslims through intuition and love would take Muslims beyond the bounds of this world to gain a vision of the supernatural, ultimately of God (Iqbal 1961, 156). Iqbal appreciated another aspect of poetry that he utilized to communicate his message, its "vagueness". "I like, however, an element of vagueness in poetry; since the vague appears profound to the emotions" (Iqbal 1992, 78).

This vagueness could also serve political purposes, allowing him to hide his intentions behind metaphor and other poetic devices.

For the next twenty years, Iqbal's poetry served the interests of the political and religious life of India. He dedicated himself to the production and publication of a poetry that would revitalize Indian Muslims, would galvanize them against the British government in India, and would provide a passionate call to action that would fuel his call for the world-wide renewal of Islam. Poetry was the perfect vehicle for this message, a message that he vigorously pursued the rest of his life. He understood the importance of directed action and focused his energies in communicating the message and agenda of the Perfect Man, focused his energies in poetizing about the characteristics that would revitalize Muslims and bring about a world cleansed and guided by Islam. In the early pages of his work *Asrar-i-Khudi*, published in 1915, Iqbal explains that his poetry has a higher purpose than mere poetizing. He desires that his thoughts will be spread abroad and find a wide audience that will appreciate his views and take them to heart.

Driven onward by my high thoughts, my pen
Cast abroad the secret behind this veil,
That the deep may become co-equal with the sea
And the grain of sand grow into a Sahara.
Poetizing is not the aim of this Masnavi...
(Iqbal 1915, 14)

Iqbal's Poetic Self Perception

Persian poetry has an interesting characteristic that Iqbal used to communicate the role which he viewed himself playing in his poetry and in the Muslim community. As Arberry notes concerning Persian poetry, it generally contains, "One principle theme, one subsidiary theme, and one signature...." (Arberry 1946, 706). In the signature verse the

poet makes a brief statement about himself, generally giving insight to the poet's identity, intention or psychology . Iqbal's signature verses continued that tradition, giving valuable clues to his self-view and the intention of his work. They also illuminate his views regarding the acceptance of his message and his role in Muslim culture. Through these signature verses Iqbal speaks for himself from across the years.

Iqbal believed that his poetry came from God, and represented a higher type of knowledge than the intellect. It has been noted earlier that Iqbal often appeared to be in a trance when he delivered his poetry. In his culture, this was generally regarded as a characteristic of a Muslim saint (Sells 1996, 146) and gave his poetry a special status. In these states he produced very fine poetry, never wrote it down, and remembered it later with no assistance (Beg 1939, 12).

No one will tell the secret which I will tell.
Or threaded a pearl of thought like mine.
Come, if thou wouldst know the secret of everlasting life!
Come, if thou would'st to win both earth and heaven!
Heaven taught me this lore.
I cannot hide it from comrades.

(Iqbal 1915, 6)

Iqbal also believed that his poetry was a unique inspiration that called Muslims to a new way of life. He compared himself to the caravan bell, the tinkling bell worn on a camel that awakened the caravan and led it through the pathless desert. His self-appointed mission was to awaken Muslims everywhere, especially in India, and to lead them into a new age. He is of the firm opinion that his song can build a new empire and result in the destruction of the old one. Yet he often despaired that his message was not being heard or heeded.

Your cry is a bell urging the caravans;
Why then do you despair of the dwellers in the Vale?

Their hearts are not dead in their breasts,
 Their embers are not extinguished under the ice;
 Wait till you see, without the sound of the Trumpet,
 A nation rising out of the dust of the tomb.
 Do not grieve then, visionary;
 Breathe out that sigh consuming all, dry and moist alike;
 Many cities beneath the turquoise heaven
 Have been consumed by the flame of a dervish heart.
 Dominion is frailer than a bubble
 And can be destroyed by a single breath.
 The destinies of nations have been shaped by a song,
 By a song nations are destroyed and rebuilt.
 Though you lancet has pierced men's hearts,
 None has perceived you as you truly are;
 Your melody springs from a poet's song,
 But what you utter transcends poesy.
 Stir up a new tumult in Paradise,
 Strike up an intoxicating air in Paradise!

(Iqbal 1932, 122)

Iqbal realized that his message was a potent one, and that it could be destructive in the short term. Yet he was willing to pursue that course, understanding that the destruction of the old order was necessary in order to make way for a world-wide Muslim community.

They said, "This world of ours -- does it agree with you?"
 I said, "It does not agree". They said, "Then break it to pieces."
 In the taverns I have seen there is not one worthy adversary;
 Grapple with Rustam-i Dastan,²⁵ have done with Magian boys!
 Tulip of the wilderness, you cannot burn alone:
 Strike this heat-enflaming brand upon the breast of man'
 You are the ardour of his bosom, the heat of his blood --
 Do you not believe me? Then tear apart the flesh of the world.

(Iqbal 1932, 122-123)

Iqbal sometimes seemed to have a very high view of his accomplishments, stating that he had inflamed the heart of Iran and as well as of Muslims everywhere. Many of his contemporaries agreed with his evaluation. One commentator states that Iqbal

²⁵ Rustam i-Dastam was a well known hero of pre-Islamic Persia (Iqbal 1932, 142).

“...came as a messiah among us and has stirred the dead into life” (Iqbal 1932, 11) Iqbal reflected this view in a number of his poems.

Iran is young again thanks to my song,
Which has enhanced the lustre of her fame.
A crowd lost in the wilderness became
A caravan at the sound of my gong....
Emitting from my fervent soul a flame,
I put a living heart in the east's flame.
Its clay has been ignited by my song.
Like lightning I have darted to its core.
(Iqbal 1971, 23-24)

Iqbal believed that the poet was essential to the life of the nation, serving as its passionate heart. As noted earlier, Iqbal and other “Young Muslims” had a very high view of the political implications of poetry, stating that it could fashion a people and prepare it for a new political reality. In the following excerpt, he expounds his view of the poet’s role in society: one who serves as a prophet to guide the people into a new future.

The poet's nature is all searching,
creator and nourisher of desire;
the poet is like the heart in a people's breast,
a people without a poet is a mere heap of clay.
Ardour and drunkenness embroider a world;
poetry without ardour and drunkenness is a dirge.
If the purpose of poetry is the fashioning of men,
poetry is likewise the heir of prophecy.
(Iqbal 1932, 45)

He also believed the poet was an essential component of the body politic, serving as its all-seeing eye, with a focus on the past, the present and the future. Poetic vision also brings with it the knowledge of a people’s pain, resulting in poetic tears.

A nation is the body, people are its organs
Artisans are the nation's hands and feet.

The state administration is the nation's beautiful face
The elegant-styled poet is the nation's clear-sighted eye.

When any organ is afflicted with pain, the eye weeps.
How sympathetic to the world body is the eye.

(Iqbal 2005a, 87)

Another common theme in Iqbal's signature lines is the loneliness of his prophetic calling. He felt that no one truly understood his message and that he had to go on, alone, in his God-given calling.

I do not find a single comrade in the garden yet;
For springtime is approaching and I am an early rose.
I look at myself in the mirror of the rivulet,
Creating a companion through this self-deluding pose.
The pen that Destiny employed in writing Being's scroll
Inscribed a message on my leaves for everyone to read.

(Iqbal 1971, 27)

In spite of his loneliness and the inability of others to truly understand his message, Iqbal was proud of his work, of his passion, and of the effect his poetry had on those around him.

I am proud of my gift, my inner fire.
I burn, I blaze, I melt and play my lyre.
I melt you in my furnace into glass
And make of your minds mirrors for truth's face.

(Iqbal 1971, 21)

On the surface, Iqbal seemed to be very secure in his poetic mission. However, Iqbal often communicated an insecurity and uncertainty about his calling. He mused that, perhaps he had left his senses in his love for God and Muslims. Even this uncertainty placed him within the context of the Muslim holy men who often feigned insanity to deflect the attacks of orthodox Muslim leaders against their claims of a passionate encounter with God (Ritter 1952, 8).

At last from artful reason he has freed
Himself and taught his selfish heart to bleed
for love. Iqbal, that soarer in the skies,
Our savant, is now mad, no longer wise.
(Iqbal 1971, 27)

Iqbal understood that his message was very difficult for many of his contemporaries. But he hoped that the young would understand his message and would respond to his call. In his 1932 Presidential address he proposed a number of cultural youth programs to ensure that Muslim youth would not forget their Muslim heritage (Iqbal 1992, 215). This is also a subject of his poetry.

What I have said comes from another world;
This book descends from another heaven.
I am a sea; untumult in me is a fault;
Where is he who can plunge into my depths?
A whole world slumbered upon my shore
And saw from the strand naught but the surge of a wave.
I, who despair of the great sages of old,
Have a word to say touching the day to come!
Render my speech easy unto the young,
Make my abyss for them attainable.
(Iqbal 1932, 24)

Ultimately Iqbal believed that his prophetic and political poetry was destined for the future and not for the present (Iqbal 1971, 27); that it would probably not be fulfilled until after his death. But he understood from his extensive studies of Muslim history that his message, if God-ordained, would have an impact upon the future. He rested content in that knowledge.

My song is of another world than theirs;
This bell calls other travelers to take the road.
Many a poet was born after his death,
Opened our eyes when his own were closed,
And journeyed forth again from nothingness.
(Iqbal 1915, 4)

Poetry as Political Dissent in Colonial India

Iqbal understood that Poetry could serve as a powerful force to communicate his philosophy of the Perfect Man, but he also understood that it could serve as a powerful tool of political dissent. Gail Minault has investigated the Muslim use of poetry as political dissent in India during the early years of the twentieth century. She notes that a number of Western educated Indian journalists and lawyers agitated against the British throughout India, most notably Iqbal, Zafar Ali Khan (editor of *Zamindar*, an Urdu publication) and Muhammad Ali, famous for his leadership of the *Khilafat* movement in India. These “Young Muslims” or “Young Party” members disagreed with the conservative establishment Muslims who had formed the Muslim League in 1906 and who supported the government. They published their ideas in newspapers such as “Comrade” or “*Zamindar*” and often came into conflict with the British Government. Of special note is their view of poetry as a means of developing political awareness and voicing dissent.

...This jump from poetry to politics corroborates the Young Party position that poetry developed the political consciousness. Iqbal's statement written in his diary sometime between 1912 and 1918, that "nations are born in the hearts of poets" is literally demonstrated here. (Singh 1985, 267)

This group developed a radical Muslim ideology that eventually won the support of a large portion of the Muslim community and resulted in a mass movement that seriously undermined the British government from 1919–1924, in alliance with Gandhi's *Satyagraha* movement. Of greater import for India was its distinctly international Muslim orientation. The “Young Muslims” believed themselves to be citizens of a greater nation than India. Although Iqbal did not agree with their *Khilafat* agitation, he

did agree with their international orientation, and is counted among the group called, "The Young Muslims." They were supporters of Pan-Islam and religious communalism.

... It made them see their religion as the boundaryless nation to which all Muslims belonged, and themselves as patriots of Islam, rather than of India. This concept of religion-based nationality, fueled by the *Khilafat* agitation of 1920-1923, in which Indian Muslims led by Ali protested Britain's acquiescence in the dismemberment of Turkey after World War I; that country was supposed to be the home of the *Khalifa* or Caliph, the spiritual leader of Islam, their "real" homeland. (Singh 1985, 265-267)

Ali and Iqbal both published poetry in support of the communal purpose, attempting to convince Indian Muslims that their religion and culture were so different from Hindus that they should pursue political independence from Britain separately from the Hindu community (Sing 1985, 265). As noted earlier, classical Urdu and Persian poetry had utilized stock metaphors to communicate the pain of denied love, "the wail of an ossified society, a self-imprisoned civilization" (Mukhia 1999, 865). In Iqbal and Ali's work, these stock metaphors were transformed to incorporate political themes that communicated the revolt of the Muslim youth in British India. In Ali and Iqbal's poetry, a destroyed garden became India under British rule; a caged nightingale a caged opponent of the Raj; the tinkling caravan bell became a call to all Muslims to follow the path to a new world order (Minault 1974, 461).

Zafar Ali Khan published the weekly paper, *Zamindar*, in Lahore. His political poetry, addressing current events and political situations was a regular feature. Poems such as, "Martial Law," "The Central *Khilafat* Committee," or "*Swaraj*," " were turned to in much the same way that readers might turn to a political cartoon" (Minault 1974, 463).

One of Ali's poems reminds us of Iqbal.

The garden is restless to hear the song
'God is One'

The time to set the nightingale free from
His cage has come.
(Minault 1974, 463)

Muhammad Ali, poetically commenting on his regular imprisonments during World War

I and his agitation for the *Khilafat* movement, writes,

Grieve not over imprisonment in the cage, but
Do not forget the actions of the plucker of the rose.
Oh foolish nightingale! When free in the garden,
When did you find repose?
(Minault 1974, 467)

In another poem, Ali again finds himself again in prison. His poetry, like all poetry, can be read on different levels. It certainly refers to his own imprisonment, but can also be read to apply to the imprisonment of his country.

If ever a whiff of the flowers brings grief,
Perhaps we have become too accustomed to the cage.

Imprisoned for the sake of freedom,
Can it be that we have a taste for either stage?

Oh flower-plucker, we gave up the garden freely,
Why then should we complain of imprisonment or cage?
(Minault 1974, 470)

Iqbal, using the imagery of a falcon, delivered a somewhat different message.

Rather than meekly accepting imprisonment, he sought to instill in Muslims a strengthened ego that could confront the world powers of the day and proudly announce that Islam was once again triumphant. Instead of being bound in a cage, he advised Muslims to soar. He wrote,

A falcon thou art; yield not thy soul
to domestic fowl;
Rise, spread thy wing and pinion, and soar
Both high and far.
(Iqbal 1948, 79)

As noted earlier, the poetic culture of India during Iqbal's lifetime heightened the political importance and power of poetry. The poetic gatherings, or *mushairas*, at which amateur and well-known poets read their works could easily become mass political meetings, with politically minded poets working the attendees into an emotional uproar through the responsive reading of their poetry. The importance of the relationship between poetry and politics is further demonstrated by an event that occurred at the Muslim League meeting at Allahabad in 1930. When Iqbal delivered his famous Muslim League presidential address at that meeting, (a rather long and scholarly presentation), the bored attendees demanded a poem at the conclusion of his speech, which the organizers, after some difficulty, persuaded Iqbal to deliver (Zakaria 1993, 82).

Conclusion

Iqbal utilized his poetic genius as well as the rich poetic tradition of the East to effectively communicate his philosophy of the Perfect Man. That tradition included the use of poetry to communicate such varied topics as romance, history, as well as in the politics of dissent. Cultural practices, such as the emotionally charged poetry gatherings (*mushairas*), further increased the effectiveness of poetry in Iqbal's social milieu. It is evident that poetry played a key role in the Muslim politics of British India during the early years of the twentieth century. Poetry, in conjunction with mass meetings, newspaper editorials, co-operation with Gandhi's *Satyagraha* campaign, and participation in local and national elections, was used as an effective tool to voice Muslim opposition to British rule in India. Iqbal intended a greater purpose for his poetry, however, using it to bring about a heart change in Muslims as well as to remind them of the global focus contained in their religious tradition. Jawaharlal Nehru, in his biographical reflection on

India's history, acknowledges that Iqbal and his poetry played a significant role in opposing his own nationalist movement as well as in providing an important ingredient to the early Twentieth Century Muslim psyche.

...Sir Muhammad Iqbal played an important part in influencing the (growing middle class) and especially the younger generation....He supplied in fine poetry, which was written in both Persian and Urdu, a philosophic background to the Moslem intelligentsia and thus diverted its mind in a separatist direction. His popularity was no doubt due to the quality of his poetry, but even more so it was due to his having fulfilled a need when the Moslem mind was searching for some anchor to hold on to.... (Nehru 1985, 350-351)

Nehru indicates that Iqbal was successful in achieving his philosophical and political goals through the use of his poetry. Indeed, Poetry was the powerful tool of Iqbal's Perfect Man, utilized to speak to the hearts of Muslims and motivate them to incorporate the characteristics of Perfect Manhood and *khudi* into their lives. Iqbal hoped that his efforts would bring about the restoration of Muslim dignity as his poetry-inspired Muslims arose to counter the global impact of Imperial Britain. In the next chapter I will discuss Iqbal's human incarnation of Perfect Manhood as he sought to bring about change through political activity in early twentieth century India.

CHAPTER 6

RESTORING MUSLIM DIGNITY: THE SPIRITUAL FATHER OF PAKISTAN: IQBAL'S POLITICAL ACTIVITY

They said, "This world of ours -- does it agree with you?"
I said, "It does not agree". They said, "Then break it to pieces."
In the taverns I have seen there is not one worthy adversary;
Grapple with Rustam-i Dastan, have done with Magian boys!
Tulip of the wilderness, you cannot burn alone:
Strike this heat-enflaming brand upon the breast of man'
You are the ardour of his bosom, the heat of his blood --
Do you not believe me? Then tear apart the flesh of the world.
(Iqbal 1932, 122-3)

Introduction

In 1930 Iqbal made a speech as President of the All India Muslim League at Allahabad in which he called for a separate Muslim state within India. Because of this speech, he is known as the Spiritual Father of Pakistan, the first to recognize the impossibility of reconciling communal differences between Hindus and Muslims and to suggest a possible future. It was not until after his death that the idea would actually be included in the political agenda of the Muslim League. In 1947 his dream became a reality, with the establishment of the independent homeland for Indian Muslims called Pakistan. Was Pakistan truly the realization of Iqbal's dream? Did he foresee the millions of deaths that would result from partition and the continuing animosity between these Hindu and Muslim nations? Some commentators doubt that Iqbal's 1930 intentions included two competing national entities, but that he was arguing for a Muslim state within a federated India, with the recognition of religiously oriented majority regions and electorates. Yet this poet-philosopher's political activities played an important role in bringing about that new national reality only seventeen years after his watershed speech.

In this chapter, I will discuss Iqbal's political activities in the context of early Twentieth Century India. As demonstrated in earlier chapters, Iqbal's philosophy of the Perfect Man emphasizes the necessity of action in bringing about the perfect community, of creating new worlds as the vice-regent and co-creator of God on earth. I will discuss Iqbal's demonstration of Perfect Manhood in his political activities, essential to the development of his Muslim community and the restoration of Muslim dignity in India and throughout the world. In doing so, I will demonstrate that Iqbal played an important role as a prophetic voice, political leader, and poet laureate for the Indian Muslims of his day.

1900-1914: India, London, Germany, India

Iqbal lived in one of the most politically active areas of India during arguably the most important period of India's modern history. Lahore was the capital of the province of the Punjab and shared a border with the North West Frontier Province, a hotbed of Pathan resistance to British rule. It was only a few miles from the border with Afghanistan, the focus of seemingly constant British military activity. Muslims were the majority religious group in the Punjab and would play an important role in its political development. They would also serve as the core constituency of the future state of Pakistan. Lahore was the seat of the British government in the area and hosted a large contingent of British and Indian troops, and was often the jumping off point for military excursions into agitated areas.

Lahore was also a university town, site of the Government College, itself a result of nineteenth century reforms designed to prepare Indian youth for service in the Indian Civil Service. Trained in the Scottish Mission School at Sialkot, Iqbal gained admittance

to Government College and moved to Lahore to continue his education in 1895. Already a budding young poet, his literary activities gained him an introduction to the *Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam* (Society of the Supporters of Islam), a Muslim literary society in Lahore, an association he would maintain his entire life. This society provided Iqbal with an audience for his poetry and a venue for literary discussion. It also gave its members an outlet for political discussion and commentary, often carried out through thinly veiled criticism of the Raj. In one early poem, Iqbal criticized both the British and his countrymen. With a subtitle “adapted for children” (a subtle criticism of Indians who had accepted British rule), Iqbal describes a conversation between a goat and a discontented cow who has been complaining against the man who milks her and is never content with her production.

We derive all our prosperity from him,
What is better for us, freedom or bondage to him? ...

Hearing all this the cow felt embarrassed,
She was sorry for complaining against man.
(Iqbal 2006a, 61)

Iqbal was a committed nationalist during this early period, with the understanding that Muslim and Hindu unity was the most effective method for gaining independence from Great Britain. Aware of the disunity that plagued Muslim-Hindu relations, Iqbal upbraided his countrymen for their failure. In “The Painful Wail” Iqbal complains about the mutual hatred he had witnessed between his countrymen.

Consumed with grief, I find no relief.
O circumambient waters of the Ganges drown me.

Our land foments excessive mutual hatred.
What unity! Our closeness harbors separation...
(Iqbal 2006a, 69)

Metaphor and simile were convenient poetic elements for political criticism in the early days of the resistance against British rule. Iqbal's poetry often addressed innocent sounding subjects, directing political messages to his countrymen while criticizing the government. Subjects like cows and goats, birds in a cage, or the beautiful scenery were effective means to veil his criticism of the authorities. The use of the Urdu language also guaranteed a national Muslim audience while providing an additional level of insulation from British eyes. In "The Bird's Complaint" Iqbal reminds his audience of bygone times of freedom while complaining against British rule.

I am constantly reminded of bygone times,
Those garden springs, those chorus of chimes.

Gone are the freedoms of our own nests
Where we could come and go at our own pleasure.
(Iqbal 2005a, 63)

In 1905, Iqbal went to London in to continue his education at Cambridge University. The experience broadened his educational horizons, but also gave him the opportunity to develop his political opinions. The Muslim league was established in India in 1906 with the purpose of representing Muslim interests to the Raj (James 1997, 419). A London chapter was established in 1908 and Iqbal was enrolled on its membership and assisted in the writing of its constitution (Zakaria 1993, 19). Iqbal's Pan-Islamic activities reveal more about his political interests and views. Shortly after his arrival in London, he became embroiled in a dispute that pitted him against his mentor, Thomas Arnold. The dispute involved the name-change of an Islamic society from *Anjumat-i-Islam* (Islamic Society) to the "Pan-Islamic Society". The term, "Pan-Islam" had negative associations in Britain, a reminder of various Muslim agitations against the empire. Later, during the Great War, pan-Islam would be blamed for much

anti-British terrorism, especially in India. Opponents of the name change, including Arnold, were wary of these issues and opposed the change. Iqbal supported the change and subsequently delivered six lectures on Islam under the auspices of the London Pan-Islamic Society (Beg 2004, 18). These lectures were widely reported in the press. Later, Iqbal would report that it was his experiences in Europe that transformed him “into a Mussalman,” from a nationalist; a committed exponent of Pan-Islam (Zakaria 1993, 30).

While in Europe, Iqbal became well acquainted with European culture. He enjoyed London as well as Germany, visiting Heidelberg, Munich and Oberammergau (Schimmel 1963, 37-39). On the completion of his European studies he returned to India by way of Sicily, a former Muslim territory recaptured by the Normans during the Middle Ages. One of the recurring elements of Iqbal’s Pan Islamism is the grief-filled reminder of lost ancient glories. In “The Islands of Sicily” he reflects upon that history.

O blood-dripping eye! Now cry to your heart’s content
There you can see the mausoleum of the civilization of Hijaz...

Tell me your pathos, I am also the embodiment of pathos,
I am the dust of the caravan of which you were a stage...

I will take your gift towards India,
I myself weep here, and will make others weep there.
(Iqbal 2006a, 247)

Iqbal returned to India in July 1908 to a country that was embroiled in political change. His homeland, the Punjab, was a center of Muslim unrest. Since the 1905 British partition of Bengal into Hindu and Muslim provinces, India had seen an increase of nationalist sentiment and opposition to British policies. Hindus were violently opposed to the division of Bengal while Muslims applauded it, seeing it as the establishment of a majority Muslim province (Wolpert 2004, 270). The mainly Hindu

Congress party, seeing itself as the voice of India, protested the partition vehemently. Hindu opposition included the adoption of *swadeshi*, the boycott of British goods, especially of textiles essential to the production of clothing and cloth goods. While participation in *swadeshi* was encouraged of all Indians, it was especially a tool of Hindu nationalists and resulted in animosity between participating Hindus and those Muslims who refused to participate (James 1997, 427). Seditious activities against the government, including terrorist bombings and assassinations, were rampant. The government responded with severe measures, imprisoning agitators for “matters of state” as well as deporting leaders of the opposition (Wolpert 2004, 278-9). In 1908, with hundreds in prison for opposition to the government, Lord Morley, the Viceroy of India, moved to bring Indian nationalists into the governmental process. He instituted the Morley-Minto reforms, increasing Indian representation in the central Legislative Council as well as in the provincial councils (James 1997, 433). The government also moved, in December 1911, to reverse the partition of Bengal, announcing its decision at the Indian celebration of King Edward’s coronation in Delhi. The move pleased Congress and its supporters and left loyal Muslim supporters perplexed.

In the midst of this political turmoil, Iqbal published an article titled “Islam as a Moral and Political Ideal” in the *Hindustan Review* in late 1909. This article discussed important political issues from a Muslim perspective and presaged much of his later poetic and philosophic production. He explained that the fear of pain was the greatest enemy of man, and that Islam exists to “free man from fear” (Iqbal 1992, 35). An individual who is freed from fear experiences individuality and becomes a source of power. Sounding very much like Nietzsche, Iqbal explained,

...This idea of man as an individuality of infinite power determines, according to the teachings of Islam, the worth of all human action. That which intensifies the sense of individuality in man is good, that which enfeebles it is bad. Virtue is power, force, strength; evil is weakness. Give a man a keen sense of respect for his own personality, let him move fearless and free in the immensity of God's earth, and he will respect the personalities of others and become perfectly virtuous. (Iqbal 1992, 36-37)

In the article, Iqbal explained that Indian Muslims were fearful and lacked the character necessary to compete and win in the "contest with kindred competitors after a fuller, richer, ampler life" (Iqbal 1992, 41). He lamented the lack of "great personalities" and the social environment that precluded their development, explaining that their absence was to blame for the lack of moral force among Muslims. Lacking effective moral leaders, he suggested that education alone could correct the evils he had detected, with a special focus on Islam's proud history. Although he opposed the world-wide spread of democracy, he suggested that democracy was the best form of government within Islam, in order to provide Muslims with, "as much freedom as practicable" (Iqbal 1992, 51). In a comment probably directed at the censors, Iqbal explained that England was the "greatest Muhammadan Empire in the world" due to the large number of Muslims within its empire as well as its democratic spirit (Iqbal 1992, 52).

In the concluding paragraphs of the article, Iqbal discussed the issue of unity within the community and explained that Islam had no place for racism and class distinction. Emulating the Hindu practice of class distinctions, Indian Muslims had, "out-Hindued the Hindu himself" and had created both a religious and a social caste system. Muslims divided themselves according to education, social position, and wealth.

Let the idols of class-distinctions and sectarianism be smashed for ever; let the Mussalmans of the country be once more united into a great vital whole. How can we, in the presence of violent internal disputes, expect to succeed in persuading others to our way of thinking.... (Iqbal 1992, 55)

In 1911 Iqbal published another article with political implications. In "Political Thought in Islam" he repeated many of the themes mentioned above, but added a condemnation of the separation of church and state as anti-Islamic as well as a criticism and historical lesson for the British.

That according to the law of Islam there is no distinction between the Church and the State. The State with us is not a combination of religious and secular authority, but it is a unity in which no such distinction exists. (Iqbal 1992, 60-61)

In these articles, Iqbal appealed to Indian Muslims to rediscover their dignity and identity within their Islamic religion. Sounding Hegelian, he cited the social and economic competition that confronted his people and advised them to seek education in order to compete successfully. He also lamented the absence of charismatic Muslim leadership in comparison with the effective leadership and political successes of the Hindu Congress Party. He encouraged his readers to correct the problem by adopting the character traits and powerful egos that would transform them into leaders. Finally, in the face of increasingly stringent authoritarian measures adopted by the British to quell resistance movements, Iqbal reminded the English of their moral foundation and of the danger of following an ethic that was incompatible with their national ideals.

The life of early Muslims was a life of conquest. Their whole energy was devoted to political expansion which tends to concentrate political power in fewer hands; and thus serves as an unconscious handmaid of despotism. Democracy does not seem to be quite willing to get on with Empire--a lesson which the modern English Imperialist might well take to heart. (Iqbal 1992, 75)

In 1910, Iqbal recited a poem at the annual meeting of the *Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam* that was sure to draw the attention of Indian Muslims. Titled "*Shikwa*" or "Complaint," the poem is a complaint against Allah for the poor situation of world-wide Islam, and of Indian Muslims in particular. Translated by Thomas Arnold and published

in English in 1955, Iqbal's approach to God is highly unusual in any religion and is one of his most popular pieces (Iqbal 1955, v). He complains that infidels are enjoying modern day *houris* (maidens) and castles while Muslims languish in poverty. Yet he comments that Muslims perceive themselves as having been faithful to Allah, having conquered the world in his name.

We erased the smudge of falsehood from
the parchment firmament,
We redeemed the human species from the
chains of slavery;
And we filled the Holy Kaaba with our foreheads
humbly bent,
Clutching to our fervent bosoms the Koran in
ecstasy,
Yet the charge is laid against us we have
played the faithless part,
If disloyal we have proved, hast Thou
deserved to win our heart?

(Iqbal 1955, 10)

In God's response, titled "Answer," Iqbal explains that the Muslim's contemporary troubles were their own fault. Contrary to their perception, they have not been faithful to God but had left the faith of the Prophet Muhammad, evident in their social and political situation in India. Muslims had become idolaters and idol makers, like the biblical prophet Abraham's father, Azar. Yet their idols bore the marks of modernity.

Gone are idol-breakers, in their places idol-
makers dwell;
Abrahams their fathers were; the children
merit Azar's name.
New and strange the band of drinkers, and
their wine is strange and new,
A new shrine to house their Kaaba, new
and strange the idols too.

(Iqbal 1955, 27)

According to Iqbal, however, there was still hope for Islam. Muslims should listen to the message Iqbal was expounding and return to faithfulness and a pure Islam. Yet, the poet was not assured that Muslims would listen to his appeal. In a theme that is repeated throughout his poetry, Iqbal described himself as a lone prophet, crying in the wilderness and ignored by the masses. Time and again he lamented his loneliness and position as seer of a new truth that others either were not ready for or rejected outright.

In the mirror of my mind what gems of
thought are shimmering,
In the darkness of my breast what shining
revelations glow!
Yet no witness in the garden may the
miracle attest;
Not a tulip there lies bleeding with a brand
upon its breast.

(Iqbal 1955, 21)

Contrary to Iqbal's perception of the popular response to his poetry and articles, they had a profound impact upon India's Muslims. He introduced new ideas that focused on their situation but also gave hope for the future. His merging of historic Muslim philosophy with contemporary philosophy and his passionate poetic skill received a wide and appreciative audience.

The effect these poems had on Muslims was tremendous; they helped to give them new hope. He tore apart their deep-rooted superstitions and their outmoded traditions; every poem made a deep impact on their minds; it brought them out of the depression and slumber they had fallen into; (they) stirred Muslims all over the sub-continent; they were like a heady wine for the despondent and the frustrated, transporting them to another world. (Zakaria 1993, 34)

Iqbal's message of a revived Islam, of powerful men emboldened by their conservative religion, and of the evils of Western culture was a tonic for Muslims, and contributed to national unrest and caused even further difficulty for the English in India. By the eve of world War I in 1914, all of India was a tinder box, where an awakening Islam, Hindu

nationalism, terrorism, and an “irresponsible and hostile popular press” made life very difficult for the British government in India (James 1997, 436).

1914-1919: World War I

With the advent of World War I, new political possibilities emerged for India. There was a wide-spread belief among Indians that their assistance to Great Britain in the war effort would result in a greater share of political authority after the war was won. While India lacked industrial capacity, she was rich in the manpower and raw materials essential for the war effort, and India played a key role in support of Britain. Yet Indians experienced mixed emotions regarding the war effort, reflecting the diverse nature of the Indian polity. Although great numbers had participated in nationalist agitation, many of those same freedom fighters now supported the war effort, often fighting and dying in the trenches of Europe (James 1997, 441). Some, however, opposed British war aims as a result of their experience of colonialism. Jawaharlal Nehru, just returned from studies at Trinity College, Cambridge, reports,

There was little sympathy with the British in spite of loud professions of loyalty. Moderate and extremists alike learned with satisfaction of German victories. There was no love for Germany, of course, only the desire to see our own rulers humbled. It was the weak and helpless man’s idea of vicarious revenge. (Nehru 1941, 41)

Muslims were presented with a difficult religious and political dilemma by the war. Soon after the beginning of hostilities between Germany and Britain, the Ottoman Empire sided with Germany. Indian Muslims’ faith prohibited them from fighting against other Muslims, while their national loyalties belonged to the Raj. This reflected a crisis that had been building for years within international Islam. Prior to 1914, there had been a dawning awareness that the British Empire constituted a world-wide threat to

Islam. From the Balkans to Bengal, Britain had consistently opposed Muslim interests.

The issue was clarified by the events of World War I.

Finally, in 1914, when Turkey declared war against Britain, Indian Muslims were forced to choose sides....The deployment of a large body of Indian soldiers, including a great number from the predominantly Muslim province of the Punjab, in the campaigns against Turkey in the Middle East, caused an acute crisis of conscience, especially after the *Shaikh-al-Islam* in Constantinople in early 1915 had declared the fight against the British to be a *jihad*. (Ansari 1986, 511)

During the war, Muslims and Hindu nationalists attempted to find common ground in order to establish a united front against the British in their effort to eventually bring independence to India. Hindu-Moslem unity was a dream of the leaders of the Congress Party, essential to the success of any effective opposition to British rule. The Lucknow Pact of 1916, worked out in Motilal Nehru's living room, created that common ground (Nehru 1941, 42). Forged through the efforts of Congress Party leaders Tilak, Nehru, and the Muslim leader, M.A. Jinnah, the pact established separate Muslim and Hindu electorates (a key Muslim demand) and granted "weightage" to Muslims, conceding greater participation in the future power structure than Muslim numbers merited. The pact also demanded expanded Indian representation on government councils at all levels and specified, "province by province the percentage of seats that were to be reserved for Muslim delegates" (Wolpert 2004, 294). The "weighting" of different religious electorates would become a continuous issue and point of division after 1924, when Hindu-Moslem co-operation ended.

The war did not eliminate the challenge to the Raj posed by Hindu Nationalism and its desire for greater freedom. Opponents of the Raj, often encouraged by German agitators, saw the war as an opportunity to dislodge the British from their position in India and to damage the war effort in Europe. Faced by nationalist opposition in India,

Egypt and Ireland, the British imposed stringent measures to maintain the internal security of the Empire. The Defense of India Act, passed in 1915, eliminated trial by jury for those accused of terrorism as well as the jailing of those deemed politically dangerous (James 1997, 453). As the war came to an end, Indians expected relaxation of these strict measures and greater responsibility in return for their support of the Empire during the war. Instead, the British used the carrot and stick approach. The Rowlett Act of 1918 continued, and in some cases increased, the government's coercive power and imposed strict anti-terrorist laws that eliminated the normal legal process for political offenders (James 1997, 468) while the Montague-Chelmsford reforms of 1918-1919 increased Indian participation in the government.

Muslim political efforts during the war were limited to the actions of the All India Muslim League, an interest group of intellectuals, influential businessmen, and lawyers who were not generally representative of the Muslim masses. The most influential Muslim of the time was M.A. Jinnah, the Oxford educated barrister who worked within the Congress Party to bring about unity between Muslims and Hindus while he also worked within the government. It was said of Jinnah that he was more at home on London's busy streets than in the back-streets of India (Nehru 1941, 68). Another dimension of Muslim politics were the efforts of the Ali brothers on the part of the *Khalifat* movement, a political movement of Muslims designed to convince Great Britain to respect the Turkish Sultan, the Caliph of all Islam. This movement had been the brain child of Afghani during the late nineteenth century and gained currency with the war between Great Britain and the Ottoman Empire. Iqbal wrote a series of articles, published in 1917, that opposed this political effort (Zakaria 1993, 177). Consistent with

his view of *khudi*, Iqbal believed that the movement represented, in essence, begging the British for something that Muslims should have been able to bring about through their own efforts. In a poem entitled, "Begging for Khalifah," Iqbal forcefully expressed this sentiment.

Do you not have a knowledge of history?
You have started begging for Khalifah!

If we do not purchase it with our own blood
Such sovereignty is a disgrace to the Muslim!....
(Iqbal 2006a, 260)

Against this back-drop of World War and national political unrest, Iqbal focused his poetic and philosophic efforts on Muslim philosophical and psychological issues. In 1915 he published his first Persian poetic-philosophic work, the *Asrar-i-Khudi*, or *Secrets of the Self*. Designed for a wide Muslim audience, the work introduced the concept of *khudi*, the principle of strengthened Muslim ego and power aimed at the restoration of the dignity and identity of all Muslims, especially in India (discussed in chapter 3). Iqbal's goal was to instill a strong will in the character of Muslims as well as to develop in them the characteristics of the Perfect Man. He also hoped to discover a charismatic leader who would lead Islam out of its depressed state. While thousands of Hindu's and Muslim nationalists were going to jail in opposition to the government, Iqbal focused on developing Muslims' inner strength. Earlier, he had noted the absence of strong leaders in the Muslim community. His work sought to develop or reveal a generation of leaders that would bring about an Islamic renaissance, perhaps to answer the vigorous and effective Hindu leadership that filled the newspapers and jails with opponents of the Raj. In the context of the war and political opposition to the government, Iqbal's poetry takes a militaristic tone in the support of Muslim ascendancy. Reynold Nicholson, Iqbal's

English translator, explains that Iqbal's *Asrar-i-Khudi* introduced revolutionary ideas with long-term Muslim implications.

...He (Iqbal) is a religious enthusiast, inspired by a vision of a new Mecca, a world-wide, theocratic, Utopian state in which all Moslems, no longer divided by the barriers of race and country, shall be one. He will have nothing to do with nationalism and imperialism. These, he says, "rob us of Paradise": they make us strangers to each other, destroy feelings of brotherhood, and sow the bitter seed of war. He dreams of a world ruled by religion, not by politics... (Iqbal 1915, x-xi)

In the philosophic poem, Iqbal first explained the importance of the self (*khudi*), that all of life derives from its powerful expression. He suggested that this secret had been abandoned and was being revealed once again through his poetic inspiration.

When life gathers strength from the self,
The river of life expands into an ocean.
(Iqbal 1915, 22)

Later, Iqbal explained that the essence of *khudi* is love and that the self is enlivened by its passion. But the love he described is the believer's love for God and the Prophet, Muhammad. Love for God is also the source of the energy that brings conquest in the name of Allah. Of this love he says,

Love fears neither sword nor dagger,
Love is not born of water and air and earth.
Love makes peace and war in the world,
Love is the fountain of Life, Love is the flashing sword of death.
The hardest rocks are shivered by love's glance:
Love of God at last becomes wholly God,
Learn thou to love and seek a beloved....
Kiss the threshold of the Perfect Man!
Like Rumi, light the candle
And burn Rum in the fire of Tabriz!²⁶
(Iqbal 1915, 29)

²⁶Rome and Rumi's spiritual director, Shams-i-Tabriz, a metaphor for engulfing the West in the spiritual passion of the East. (Iqbal 1915, 29)

The love Iqbal reflected upon, that invigorates the self, was the same power that overcame the ancient world and that brought empires to an end through the pure religion. Iqbal encouraged Muslims to return to their pure religion, to their roots (Iqbal 1915, 32, 37).

In the following pages, Iqbal expanded his discussion of the Muslim's character as it adopts *khudi*. Desire is essential, as is self-control. Most important, however, is "negation," an attitude that eliminates every object of worship except Allah (Iqbal 1915, 76). The result of this negation was important as Iqbal sought to build a self-empowered army within Islam.

Whoso dwells in the world of negation.
Is freed from the bonds of wife and child.
He withdraws his gaze from all except God
And lays the knife to the throat of his son.
Though single, he is like a host in onset:
Life is cheaper in his eyes than wind.
(Iqbal 1915, 77)

Iqbal sought to discover a Perfect Man, one who perfectly exemplified *khudi*. When this individual comes on the scene, he will bring peace to the world, in the same way that the followers of the Prophet Muhammad brought peace to the world of his time. Iqbal believed there are champions lying hidden within the masses of Muslim India who were waiting to be discovered.

Our handful of earth has reached the zenith,
For that champion will come forth from this dust!
There sleeps amidst the ashes of our to-day
The flame of a world-consuming morrow....
Appear, O rider of destiny!
Appear, O light of the dark realm of Change....
Silence the noise of the nations,
Bring once more days of peace to the world,
Give a message of peace to them that seek battle!
(Iqbal 1915, 83-84)

Iqbal suggested that this champion, the Perfect Man, would be one who instilled in himself the qualities of hardness (89), action (90) and power (92). Ultimately, the Perfect Man would have global implications, especially important in a international context in which Muslims had largely lost any political influence.

Arise and create a new world!
Wrap thyself in flames, be an Abraham!
(Iqbal 1915, 90)

Regarding war and peace, Iqbal borrowed a page from Nietzsche when he extolled the benefits of a truly worthy enemy (98). The enemy awakens the creative energies within the Perfect Man who is able to wage war against the enemy for the benefit of God. Iqbal suggested that peace can be an evil if warfare for God is required. War waged for any reason but God is an evil. In light of the war between the Ottoman Empire and Great Britain, it appears that Iqbal encouraged Muslims who would support the Islamic Caliph by force of arms.

Peace becomes an evil, if its object be aught else;
War is good if its object is God.
If God be not exalted by our swords,
War dishonors the people.
(Iqbal 1915, 118)

Finally, Iqbal addressed the dignity of Muslims in light of their current world situation, through the eyes of their Western rulers. Their dignity was derived from their relationship with Allah, not with any association with empire or territory. In spite of their current state of powerlessness, "lightning flashes still lurked within their cloud."

Although crown and signet have passed from us,
Do not look with contempt on our beggarliness!
In thine eyes we are good for nothing,
Thinking old thoughts, despicable.
We have honor from "There is no God but Allah,"

We are the protectors of the universe....
Lightning-flashes still lurk in our cloud.
In our essence divinity is mirrored:
The Moslems being is one of the signs of God.
(Iqbal 1915, 140)

Continuing his theme of Muslim renaissance, Iqbal published a second Persian work in 1918, the *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi*, or the *Mysteries of Selflessness*. Where the *Asrar* had focused on the development of the Perfect Islamic Man, the *Rumuz* provided a recipe for the development of the perfect Islamic community. Iqbal's theme was,

That the perfection of communal life is attained when the community, like the individual, discovers the sensation of self; and that the propagation and perfecting of this sensation can be realized through the guarding of the communal traditions.
(Iqbal 1918, 59)

Iqbal saw the world as a "zero sum game," with room for only one community.

Seize thou this world, that it may not seize thee
And in its pitcher swallow thee like wine.
(Iqbal 1918, 57)

The opponent of the Muslim community is the West, and reflects the conditions in Europe during the Great War. In the poem, Iqbal denounced the evils of western nationalism as well as European racism.

And man creates an ever novel god
Whose joy is shedding blood, whose hallowed name
Is Colour, fatherland, Blood-Brotherhood.
Humanity is slaughtered like sheep
Before this worthless idol.
(Iqbal 1918, 55)

According to Iqbal, the conditions in war-ravaged Europe clearly demonstrated the failure of the West. He called upon the Muslim community to arise and take its rightful place in the world and bring about peace and human equality under the banner of Islam.

To do so, it must abandon its contemporary idols and return to the pure religion of Islam (Iqbal 1918, 80).

....And now my soul
Is emptied of all memories but thee;
I will be bold to speak my desire....
....And this my yearning is,
That I be granted in Hijaz²⁷ to die!
A Muslim, stranger to all else but God....
(Iqbal 1918, 83)

Thus Iqbal explained a philosophy that was meant to combat the power of the British and to revitalize the Islamic world. But his poetic and philosophical approach did not arouse the ire of the British government, for Iqbal contented himself to write poetry, magazine articles, and supervise the efforts of the *Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islami*, a Muslim literary society in the Punjab.

1919-1924 Post War Political Crisis

In a war-time letter to India's Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, the new Congress leader, Mahatma Gandhi expressed his and the Congress Party's support for the British government during its wartime crisis. He did so with the understanding that there would be a *quid pro quo* after the war, that India's freedom movement would benefit as a result of its support to Britain during the war. Gandhi wrote,

But is the simple truth that our response is due to the expectation that our goal will be reached all the more speedily. On that account, even as performance of duty automatically confers a corresponding right, people are entitled to believe that the imminent reforms alluded to in your speech will embody the main general principles of the Congress-League scheme, and I am sure that it is this faith which has enabled many members of the conference to tender to the Government their full-hearted co-operation. (Gandhi 1983, 405)

²⁷ Arabia, the spiritual home of Islam.

The end of the Great War brought with it high expectations for increased liberties and greater responsibility in India's government. There were reforms, in the shape of the Montague-Chelmsford reforms, named after the Viceroy and the Prime Minister of England. But these reforms fell far short of expectations, with the Raj maintaining responsibility for all defense and foreign relations while local legislatures gained authority over some financial and social and welfare matters (James 1997, 519-520). Along with the reforms, however, came the extension and expansion of the Defense of India Act's provisions which allowed for the incarceration of political offenders without trial, as well as expanded power against the press. These provisions, recommended by the Rowlett committee and passed over intense nationalist opposition, were universally condemned in India (Wolpert 2004, 298). The result was an intense "crisis of expectations." In his biography, Jawaharlal Nehru, the future president of India, commented on the mood of the times.

The dominant note all over India was one of waiting and expectation, full of hope and yet tinged with fear and anxiety. Then came the Rowlett Bills with their drastic provisions for arrest and trial without any of the checks and formalities which the law is supposed to provide. A wave of anger greeted them all over India....(Nehru 1941, 47)

The Indian response came swiftly. Gandhi initiated his first *Satyagraha* movement that very nearly brought about nationalist goals. Gandhi, having returned from South Africa in 1915, had gradually assumed the leadership of the Congress Party during the war years. The situation in 1919 was ideal for his non-cooperation, or *Satyagraha*²⁸, a movement in which adherents pledged to disobey the law at the risk of property, freedom and even of life. Gandhi, an astute politician, also managed to include the Muslims in his

²⁸ "Truth and firmness," Gandhi's designation for his non-violent struggle against the British (Gandhi 1983,284).

Satyagraha by announcing his support for their *Khalifat* movement, a largely Indian Muslim effort to convince the British government and the League of Nations to support the Muslim Caliph, the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire (Nehru 1941, 53). On 6 April 1919, Gandhi called for his first *hartal*, or day of work stoppage, fasting, prayer and demonstrations in support of *Satyagraha*.

The *hartal* was successful all over India, with vast crowds gathering in nearly every city. Speeches denouncing the government and its Rowlett Acts were the order of the day. The government responded with mounted police and various levels of violence. The Indian masses, by and large, kept to the non-violent pledge they had made to Gandhi. In the Punjab, the government arrested and deported the two popular leaders who had organized meetings in the area. The deportations were met with anger and a large group marched upon the local British agent's camp. The demonstrators were met with armed force and a number of them were killed. The situation quickly spiraled out of control, with a riot resulting in the destruction of a European bank and the murder of some English bankers. One missionary doctor, a woman, was attacked and experienced severe injuries. The response of the government was swift and lethal. The Governor, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, sent General Dyer to Amritsar to restore order. On 13 April a gathering at the *Jallianwalla Bagh* in Amritsar attracted a huge crowd. General Dyer had announced a curfew but the crowd gathered anyway, either unaware of or in defiance of Dyer's order.

...Dyer marched his Gurkha and Baluchi rifles across the narrow entrance to that otherwise walled field and ordered them to open fire without a word of warning. It was a Sunday, and some ten thousand men, women and children, mostly peasants from neighboring villages, had come to the bagh ("garden") to celebrate a Hindu festival. Dyer's troops fired for ten minutes, pouring 1,650 rounds of live ammunition into the unarmed mass of trapped humanity at point blank range. Some four hundred Indians were left dead, and twelve hundred wounded, when

the brigadier and his force withdrew at sunset from the garden they had turned into a national graveyard. (Wolpert 2004, 299)

Dyer was intent on restoring order and punishing the Indians for their misbehavior toward the Europeans and the government. In the street where the missionary doctor had been attacked, he ordered that any Indians who passed through the area had to crawl on their bellies. Gandhi and the world were appalled by the cold-blooded killing of 397 and the fact that Dyer had directed machine-gun fire at the masses trying to escape the enclosed area. Yet the indignities imposed on Indian bystanders also had a lasting impact. Gandhi notes that, "In Amritsar innocent men and women were made to crawl like worms on their bellies. Before this outrage the Jallianwalla Bagh tragedy paled into insignificance in my eyes...." (Gandhi 1983, 426).

These events had repercussions throughout India. Gandhi notes in his autobiography that it was Amritsar that compelled him to enter whole-heartedly into Congress politics (Gandhi 1983, 439). Those who had been undecided concerning their opposition to the Raj now found themselves motivated by the "Lacerated heart of the Punjab" to join in the opposition to the government (Nehru 1941, 51). Winston Churchill condemned the acts and commented that Dyer had come perilously close to branding Britain as a "civilization without mercy" (Manchester 1983, 693). Many commentators mark this as the beginning of the end for British rule in India, although it would take another twenty eight years before Indian independence. In the intervening years, hundreds of thousands of Indians would be jailed in Gandhi's mass movements. Many also sacrificed their lives, their property and their health to freedom. Nehru's and Gandhi's jail time amounted to years. Even Nehru's father, wife, and mother would accumulate jail time.

Muhammad Iqbal never spent a day in jail in the cause of Indian Independence. The independence that Gandhi and Nehru fought for was not the independence that Iqbal sought. They fought for the national freedom of all India. Iqbal was most interested in restoring Muslim fortunes that had been eclipsed by Europe and the British Empire. The Ali brothers had joined with Gandhi in seeking assurances from the British government concerning the continuation of the Caliphate in Turkey. Iqbal opposed their efforts, preferring stability and peace and opposing agitation (Zakaria 1993, 53). Instead, Iqbal continued to write poetry that was published in the local Urdu papers on a regular basis. These poems were published in his first Urdu work, *Bang-i-Dara (The Call of the Caravan Bell)*, in 1924. A perusal of the themes of his poetry after 1908 attest to his opposition to nationalism, his opposition to Europe and the West, as well as the reminder of Islam's past glories. One important poem that had been published earlier and had attained wide popularity was the Muslim National Anthem.

China and Arabia are ours, India is also ours.
We are Muslims, the whole world is our homeland.

The trust of divine unity is in our breasts,
Our identity cannot be destroyed.

Among the world's temples is that first House of God,
We are its sentinels, it is the sentinel of our heart.

We have been brought up under the shade of swords,
The crescent's dagger is our national insignia....

(Iqbal 2005a, 178)

In another poem he addressed western nationalism, and explained that the Muslim should not be enticed by nationalism's call. According to Iqbal, nationalism is a form of idolatry that results in tyranny rather than freedom.

...Country is the biggest among these new gods!
Its shirt is none other than the shroud of *Dan*.²⁹

Your arm is enforced with the strength of divine unity.
You are the followers of Musafa,³⁰ your country is Islam....

The limitation to country results in destruction,
Live like the fish in the ocean, be free from country....

God's creation is unjustly divided among nations by it,
The concept of nationality is uprooted by it.
(Iqbal 2005a, 179-180)

In a poem titled, "Addressed to the Youth of Islam," Iqbal stressed the need for Muslim youth to be acquainted with the actions and exploits of their ancestors. Consistent with his political philosophy, he attempted to awaken the youth of the nation, to utilize their vigor in changing the world.

In short what should I tell you what those wanderers in the wilderness were,
They were world conquerors, world rulers, world administrators, and world
Adorners....

You cannot have any relationship with your ancestors.
You are talk, they were action, you are stars, they were planets....
(Iqbal 2005a, 197)

As noted earlier, Iqbal remained aloof from the political turmoil that was rampant throughout the country. Whether in the interest of peace and stability or as a method to earn British support for a global Islam, many saw Iqbal and his advice as counter to the freedom of India. At the end of a political poem titled "The *Eid Crescent*" he advised his Muslim brethren to closely observe the events which were transpiring within the country, but not to participate. Instead, they were to wait for the denouement of those events.

²⁹ "The path or the way of life in accordance with the law of God," a meaning very close to religion (Iqbal 2005a, 324). Iqbal is saying that nationalism is a type of religion.

³⁰ The Prophet Muhammad.

Look at everything, and remain quiet like a mirror,
In today's tumult remain occupied with evening's music!
(Iqbal 2005a, 199)

Perhaps reflecting the reality of the great numbers of Indians who spent time in prison, Iqbal wrote a poem titled, "Imprisonment." He noted that some individuals actually benefit from prison, but that it is not for everybody.

Imprisonment enhances confidence if the nature is elegant.
The spring drop becomes blessed inside the shell's prison.

The excellent musk is nothing but a drop of blood,
Which becomes musk when it is enclosed in the deer's navel.

However, not everyone gets trained by nature
Only an odd bird is prosperous in imprisonment.

"Strength of crow's and kite's wing is not in cage and prey,
This grace is reserved for the falcon and the eagle"
(Iqbal 2005a, 260)

In another long poem titled "The Traveler's Guide," Iqbal commented on Imperialism and the attempts of Britain to include Indians in the government. He warned Muslims to remain aloof from participation in the government's excesses, calling it an enchantment that would lead them away from the true faith.

...Imperialism is the enchantment of victorious nations.

If the ruled from his stupor slightly awakens,
The ruler's spell lulls him back to sleep again....

Do not disgrace your independent position with slavery,
So that you do not mold yourself into the master who would be a worse infidel
than the Brahmin.

The Western democratic system is the same old orchestra
In whose frets is nothing different than the Kaiser's tune....

The monster of despotism is treading in democracy's robe,
You consider it the beautiful ferry of independence.

The legislative assembly, the reforms, the rights and concessions,
In Western medicine the tastes are sweet, the effect is soporific....

You have taken this apparent beauty's mirage as a garden!
Ah, O ignorant one! You have taken the cage to be a nest!
(Iqbal 2005a, 265)

Iqbal provided further advice to Muslims. They should ignore the allures of democracy and British rule and, instead, form an association of Muslim nations against the West.

The salvation of the East is in organization of the Muslim nations.
The people of Asia are still unaware of this mystery.

Relinquishing politics, enter the fort of *dan*³¹ again,
Country and wealth is only a reward for *haram*'s ³² defense.

Muslims should unite into one body for *haram*'s defense,
From the banks of the Nile to the City of Kashghar....

To establish the Khilafah's foundations in the world again,
The need is to bring from somewhere the ancestor's mettle....
(Iqbal 2005a, 266-267)

In a poem titled, "The Renaissance of Islam," Iqbal discussed the inevitable resurgence of Islam in the current world. He commented that Islam was far more powerful than Germany and its dreams of empire. In order to realize this potential, they must awaken and act.

Learn again the lesson of Truth, Justice, and Bravery.
You are entrusted with the world's leadership....

In the world of existence full of doubts, the Muslim's faith
Is like a beacon of light in the dark night of the wilderness....

Firm Faith, constant struggle, Love, conquest of the universe.
These are the swords for the brave men in the battle of life....
Humanity is still the helpless prey to imperialism,
Outrageous that man is the hunter of the human race!

³¹ Religion

³² The Ka'bah, the holiest site of Islam, as well as the pilgrimage sites in the surrounding area (Iqbal 2005a, 325).

The glitter of modern civilization dazzles the eye,
But this is the luster of unreal jewels only....

Come, so that we may sprinkle flowers and pour wine in the cup,
Rend asunder the sky's roof and establish a new foundation.
(Iqbal 2005a, 272-5)

Amid all this talk of Islam and revolution against the West, Iqbal was not involved in any activity, political or otherwise, that would bring about his renaissance of Islam. He believed that his poetry was an effective force, that his words acted like the "ocean to the rain cloud," feeding the resources for the coming storm. But his lack of action seems to have engendered some self-doubt. In the last poem of the *Bang-i-Dara*, he comments on his own role.

Iqbal is a good advisor, in moments he fascinates the heart.
He became a hero in talk, but a hero in deeds he could not be.
(Iqbal 2005a, 295)

In retrospect, Iqbal's counsel that Muslims remain aloof from the political process was probably wise. After three years of agitation in which thousands of Indians (both Muslim and Hindu) went to jail in support of Gandhi's *Satyagraha* campaign, Gandhi suddenly cancelled the movement in 1922, announcing that India's masses were not ready for the politics of non-violence. His supporters were astounded and amazed at the sudden move by their charismatic leader (Nehru 1941, 79). Later, the *Khilafat* movement collapsed when the new ruler of Turkey, Mustafa Kamal "Ataturk" abolished the Turkish Caliphate in 1924. Muslims suddenly had no focus upon which to base their political appeal. With the dissolution of these two movements and the retreat of Gandhi to the Indian hinterland to train Hindus in the spinning of thread, Muslim-Hindu co-operation disappeared and was never resurrected.

In 1923, the British government conferred knighthood upon Iqbal in recognition of his literary accomplishments. Iqbal accepted the honor, much to the consternation of his supporters. The leaders of the nationalist movement led by Gandhi had advised that its followers decline and return all British honors. Iqbal received hundreds of letters condemning his acceptance of the knighthood, but he refused to reconsider his action (Zakaria 1993, 56). In contrast, Rabindanath Tagore, the Nobel Prize-winning Hindu poet resigned his knighthood in the aftermath of the Amritsar massacre. In his message of resignation to the Viceroy, he wrote,

The universal agony of indignation roused in the hearts of the people has been ignored by our rulers -- possibly congratulating themselves for imparting what they imagine as salutary lessons -- The time has come when badges of honor make our shame glaring in the incongruous context of humiliation. (Wolpert 2004, 300)

Iqbal made no such resignation. He was completely consistent in his actions, however, opposing Indian nationalism and supporting a stable political environment in which he was free to communicate his Pan-Islamic message. He consistently advised Muslims to exert themselves in the cause of Islam and denounced the Imperialism of Great Britain. At the same time, he welcomed the social stability and honors of British rule, finding within that environment the ability to produce a poetry that would gradually develop the *khudi* (ego) of his Muslim countrymen.

1925-1930 Participation in the Political Process

As a result of Gandhi's 1922 withdrawal from public politics and his retreat to the countryside to focus on training the peasants for non-cooperation, the Indian Nationalist movement, which had seemed to be on the verge of victory, went into a free fall. The

death of the *Khilafat* movement and the end of Gandhi's *Satyagraha* movement gave the Indian British government a respite from organized political turmoil, but opposition still boiled throughout India. J. Nehru comments on the mood of the time.

We were angry when we learned of this stoppage of our struggle at a time when we seemed to be consolidating our position and advancing on all fronts. But our disappointment and anger in prison could do little good to anyone; civil resistance stopped, and nonco-operation wilted away. After many months of strain and anxiety the Government breathed again, and for the first time had the opportunity of taking the initiative. A few weeks later they arrested Gandhiji and sentenced him for a long term of imprisonment. (Nehru 1941, 79)

With the end of shared goals between Muslims and Hindus, conflict between the two religious communities, which had simmered beneath the surface, took front stage. While Congress leaders languished in jail, riots broke out throughout India between religious groups over issues that, though seemingly minor, reflected deep-seated antagonisms between India's religious communities (Nehru 1941, 112-113).

The Communal Problem

Conflict between Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and other Indian religious groups had existed throughout Britain's rule of India. The All India Congress Party, created in 1885, had always represented mainly Hindu interests. The 1906 creation of the Muslim League was designed to give Muslims a voice in the political process. Initially, each party served as the mouthpiece of the wealthy landowners, lawyers, businessmen, and intellectuals. They did not represent the great mass of Indian peasants, either Hindu or Muslim. When Gandhi came on the Indian scene beginning in 1915, he transformed the Congress Party into India's first mass political movement. He did so by appealing to already existing religious sentiments and laid the groundwork for the future problems that would end in civil war and religious strife. Much to the consternation of some political leaders, Gandhi

consciously included religion in politics, suggesting that politics could not be divorced from religion, especially in India (Nehru 1941, 71). He believed that truth and religion were bound inextricably with the political process.

To see the universal and all-pervading Spirit of Truth face to face one must be able to love the meanest of creation as oneself. And a man who aspires after that cannot afford to keep out of any field of life. That is why my devotion to Truth has drawn me into the field of politics, and I can say without the slightest hesitation, and yet in all humility, that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means. (Gandhi 1983, 454)

Appealing to the Hindu masses, Gandhi adopted the dress of a Hindu sage and “appealed mostly to Hindu cultural roots through [his] use of Hindu symbols” (Wolpert 2004, 297). Politically astute, Gandhi knew he would need to present a united national front against the British, and enlisted Muslim support by uniting Hindu nationalism with the Muslim *Khilafat* Committee, another movement that was completely organized around religious purposes. Although Gandhi recognized the need to join forces with the Muslims and had high hopes for Hindu-Muslim unity, he never really trusted the Muslims, uncertain of their commitment to non-violence (Gandhi 1983, 398). The Muslims also saw this alliance as purely opportunistic, pursued solely to achieve their own religious goals (Hardy 1998, 191). Nevertheless, the unified movement agitating against the British government using Gandhi’s *satyagraha* worked and presented the British government with its greatest crisis since the 1857 Mutiny.

That crisis was short lived. Gandhi’s ending of *Satyagraha* and the abolition of the Turkish Caliphate brought an end to Muslim-Hindu political unity. But religion would remain an unyielding and unsolvable communal problem in Indian politics that undermined the drive toward independence. Politically, communalism would be expressed in continuous wrangling over electorates, the numbers of reserved seats in

legislatures and councils, and eventually in the distribution of jobs and political favors. At the local level, communalism would be expressed in riots over Hindu insults to the prophet, Muslim cow slaughter, Hindu parades and music that interfered with Muslim prayer times, and a myriad of other religious slights that resulted in the destruction of property, abuse of women, and murder in the name of religion (Hardy 1998, 203-204). There was also a wide-spread belief on the part of Congress members that the government was orchestrating the friction between the communities, following a divide and conquer approach in order to ensure the continuation of the Raj (Nehru 1941, 112-113). While there is some evidence that the British followed this policy, there was already an abundance of distrust and animosity between the religious communities with or without British assistance. Communalism proved an intractable problem that ultimately resulted in the 1947 religious partition of India.

Iqbal and the Legislative Assembly

Iqbal was not opposed to participation in politics. In fact, he believed that a sound political structure and environment were essential for the development of a people's character and that the political environment had an important impact on spiritual and philosophical reality. He believed that one reason for the deterioration of Muslim character in India was the Mughal loss of political power in the nineteenth century (Iqbal 1961, xxv). Yet, until 1925, he remained aloof from active political involvement, allowing his poetry to do his political work for him. In 1926, however, he was persuaded to run for the Punjab provincial legislature. Earlier he had answered a respondent who had encouraged him to seek public office with the following poem.

Even if I have greed I do not have the strength for exertion,
Acquiring position is connected with the taste for search.

A thousand thanks to God that my nature is contentment,
A thousand thanks to God that my mind is not mischievous.

Cultivations of human hearts flourish with my writings,
In the world I am creative like the ocean feeding cloud.

Congratulations to you on these secrets of politics,
As my finger nail by Love's grace is breast-excoriating.

Desire for audience with kings is a sign of lifelessness,
This secret has been exposed by Hafiz's elegant poetry.

“If you desire that you elevated to Khiiar³³ be
Hidden from Sikandar's³⁴ eye as immortality's water be”
(Iqbal 2005a, 244)

In this poem, Iqbal suggested that his true value lay in his poetic influence upon his generation, not in politics. True insight into life (like a true Khiiar) was not to be attained by seeking political power or consort with kings. The true value of a self-respecting individual could be ascertained in his disdain of the worldly benefits of kings and princes (Iqbal 2005a, 245).

The reforms of 1919 had expanded the role of Indians in the government, introducing a dual system (diarchy) that shared power between the British and Indians. Diarchy divided the rule of the provinces between the provincial Legislative Councils and the governors. The Legislative Councils were given power to effect social legislation while the Governor's Councils controlled the police and tax authority. Divided religious electorates were also established, with the franchise extended to property owners in rural and urban areas. Many nationalists saw the reforms as an attempt to co-opt the independence movement and denounced its participants as supporters of the British

³³ An Islamic figure shrouded in mystery, who understands the secrets of the paradoxes of life. Possibly a prophet (Iqbal 2005a, 310)

³⁴ Alexander the Great.

program (Nehru 19481, 143). Iqbal viewed the reforms as an opportunity to support his community, opting to work within the political system for change. In 1926 Iqbal contested a Punjab Muslim seat as a Muslim Leaguer and won by a landslide (Zakaria 1993, 58). He was the only Muslim League member to win a seat in the majority Muslim province and allied himself with the province's political power, Sir Fazl-i-Husain and his Unionist Party.

Iqbal's term in the Punjab Legislative Council lasted until 1930. The Council had responsibility for social legislation in the province, and focused on a multitude of mundane issues. Iqbal participated fully in the debates, supporting Husain's Unionist platform. But he was not reticent to voice his idealistic sentiments in favor of active social reform. Iqbal spoke intelligently on issues of equal division of government funds for education between Muslim and Hindu villages where he felt the Muslim schools had been shortchanged (Iqbal 1992, 334), for rural sanitation, and for medical relief for women (Iqbal 1992, 310-311). The communal issue also made its way into discussion, and Iqbal was deeply concerned by the riots that convulsed the country. On 18 July 1927, he aired his concerns, chiding council members for their lack of action while civil war raged around them. He was also concerned that Hindu legislators publicly supported nationalism while they privately supported a communal agenda (Iqbal 1992, 323)

I wonder if the members have realized the fact that we are actually living in a state of civil war....This conference should carefully consider the present situation and suggest ways to suppress the existing communal tension. If this communal hatred permeates the rest of the country and the people living in villages also come to loggerheads, God alone knows where it will eventually land us. (Iqbal 1992, 317-318)

Zakaria suggests that Iqbal found the daily grind of politics “tiresome and meaningless”. Near the end of his term, he decided not to run for re-election but convinced his earlier electoral opponent to contest the election (Zakaria 1993, 59, 61).

1927-1936: The Simon Commission and Round Table Conferences

In November, 1927, the British Government nominated Sir John Simon to lead a commission to investigate the success of the 1919 Government of India reforms. To prevent charges of communal bias and ensure its neutrality, the commission included only British members. This decision was met with great dismay by Indian nationalists, who saw it as proof of British insensitivity to Indian sentiments. The Congress Party, which had lacked a focus since Gandhi’s ending of *Satyagraha* in 1922, was energized by the government’s mistake and mobilized against the Commission’s efforts. It staged mass rallies in every city the commission visited, with Indians carrying black flags and shouting, “Simon, Go Back” (Nehru 1941, 131). The government responded by outlawing mass processions and sent mounted police to attack gathered demonstrators. One popular national politician, Lala Lajpat Rai, was severely injured in a demonstration at Lahore and subsequently died from his injuries. Popular opinion was incensed by the Simon Commission and the government’s response to the popular demonstrations. But Indian nationalists were incensed by more than the physical abuse they endured at the hands of government forces. J. Nehru comments that it was the “sense of national humiliation that weighed on the mind of India” (Nehru 1941, 133).

Iqbal, consistent with his anti-nationalist views and distrust of Hindu politics, disagreed with the Congress opposition to the Simon Commission and efforts at Hindu-Muslim unity. He believed that a constitutional solution was impossible given the

communal animosities present in India and that only the British could be trusted to find an impartial solution. The result was a division of the Muslim League into two factions: with a Punjab League under Sir Muhammad Shafi and Iqbal, and an All India League under Jinnah (Malik 1995, 311). The Jinnah League met in Delhi in late 1927 and offered to abandon the requirement for separate Hindu and Muslim electorates in an effort to forge a Hindu-Muslim alliance, in exchange for certain political guarantees. Iqbal's group insisted on separate electorates and supported the Simon Commission, trusting the British to develop a constitutional solution (Zakaria 1993, 61).

The communal issue divided India and prevented any political agreement for the future of India. In the face of intense nationalist opposition, the Simon Commission failed in its efforts to update the 1919 reforms and the government asked the Congress and Muslim League to develop a plan on which all could agree. The All Parties Conference, held in Delhi beginning in January 1928, failed to come to a conclusion after six months of wrangling, with the biggest hindrance being the rights of minorities. Finally, a report was published which was characterized by Muslims as an effort to write Hindu political supremacy into the constitution. Called the Nehru Report, after the committee's chairman, Moolthalal Nehru, the report rejected separate electorates, community "weightage" in the assignment of legislative seats, the guarantees of the Delhi Muslim Report and suggested the adoption of Hindi as the national language (Wolpert 2004, 311).

After the Nehru Report, Jinnah abandoned hope of an alliance between Muslims and Hindus. He moved to England in 1930, washing his hands of Indian politics (Zakaria 1993, 79). The Punjab Muslims, led by Iqbal, Shafi and Husain, became the spokesmen

for Indian Muslims and formed a unified Muslim organization that opposed the Congress, recommended co-operation with the British, insisted on separate electorates, weightage for Muslim populations, and a weak federal organization with hopes that Muslim provinces could play a major role in a future federal Indian government (Zakaria 1993, 78-79).

In the face of Indian division along communal lines, the British government planned a Round Table Conference to take place in London to attempt to forge a solution to the constitutional issue. Scheduled for November 1930, Political leaders from the Indian States and Provinces as well as cultural leaders were invited. Gandhi insisted that he alone represented India and refused to attend the first conference. No other Congress representative was allowed to attend, for most were languishing in jail. Gandhi and the Congress considered the Round Table attendees to be representatives of the vested interests and looked with disdain upon the proceedings (Nehru 1941, 182). The conference proceeded with great fanfare but communal differences guaranteed the lack of any progress.

Iqbal and the Demand for a Separate Muslim State

1930 marks the beginning of probably the most influential period of Iqbal's life. He attended two of the three London Round Table Conferences initiated by Britain to address India's communal problem. He also presided over the annual meeting of the All India Muslim League held at Allahabad on 29 December 1930. In his famous address, Iqbal discussed a number of important issues. He condemned nationalism as inconsistent with Islam, encouraged a harmony of effort on the part of the various Indian religious groups, and advocated the full freedom of Muslims to develop their own culture and

religion. He took a position contrary to the nationalists, explaining that the foundation of India's future rested on its communalism.

...The units of Indian society are not territorial as in European countries. India is a continent of human groups belonging to different races, speaking different languages and professing different religions. Their behavior is not at all determined by a common race-consciousness. Even the Hindus do not form a homogenous group. The principle of European democracy cannot be applied to India without recognizing the fact of communal groups. (Iqbal 1992, 170)

Iqbal illuminated his political and social views when he commented that Islam is both a state and a spiritual reality, with a definite social purpose. He discussed the history of political thought, comparing Muslim political thought with that of Rousseau.

...The truth is that Islam is not a church. It is a State conceived as a contractual organism long before Rousseau ever thought of such a thing and animated by an ethical ideal which regards man not as an earth-rooted creature, defined by this or that portion of the earth, but as a spiritual being understood in terms of a social mechanism, and possessing rights and duties as a living factor in that mechanism. (Iqbal 1992, 172-3)

Iqbal also lamented the lack of trained leadership within the Muslim community and noted that the military lacked Indian military officers above junior rank, due in large part to limitations imposed by the British (Iqbal 1992, 182). Later, he made the demand that would earn him the title, "Spiritual Father of Pakistan."

...I therefore demand the formation of a consolidated Muslim State in the best interest of India and Islam. For India it means security and peace resulting from an internal balance of power; for Islam an opportunity to rid itself of the stamp that Arabian Imperialism was forced to give it, to mobilize its law, its education, its culture, and to bring them into closer contact with its own original spirit and with the spirit of modern times. (Iqbal 1992, 173)

Iqbal's speech has earned various interpretations. Some believe he was calling for a separate nation for Muslims. Others believe he was simply demanding the unification of the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan provinces into a large Muslim state that would exist within a weakly federated Indian nation (Iqbal 1992, 171).

In any case, this speech is referred to today as the first courageous call for a separate Islamic homeland within India and earned Iqbal the title, "Spiritual Father of Pakistan."

It was also during 1930 that that Iqbal published his series of lectures published as, "*The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*." In these lectures, Iqbal investigated the philosophical foundations of Islam and attempted to provide a "scientific form of religious knowledge" in answer to the needs to the modern world (Iqbal 1974, vi). The lectures covered all Iqbal's favorite themes, from nationalism to the need for a strong ego as well as the Perfect Man. One important concept he discussed at length was his understanding that religious knowledge and scientific knowledge are similar types of knowledge, with the religious being superior since it involves intuition (61). Iqbal suggested that the modern world, ruled by science, had lost its way through secularization and needed to rediscover itself through religion, and specifically through Islam (189). He concluded the lectures with a comment directed to his Muslim co-religionists.

...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. (Iqbal 1974, 198)

Ultimately, the lectures were a call to action and arms for India's Muslims, and all Muslims world-wide who had accepted Western culture and ways. Iqbal encouraged Muslims to adapt their religion to changing times and walk boldly into the future.

Tighten the knot of thy ego;
And hold fast to thy tiny being!
How glorious to burnish one's ego
And to test its luster in the presence of the Sun!
Re-chisel then, thine ancient frame;
And build up a new being.
Such being is real being;
Or else thy ego is a mere ring of smoke!
(Iqbal 1974, 199)

Iqbal and the London Round Table Conferences

In 1931 and 1932, in recognition of his status as an important Muslim cultural leader, Iqbal participated in the second and third Round Table Conferences in London. Like the first, these ended in deadlock, with the delegates unable to reach any agreement due to communal allegiances. Gandhi attended the second conference as the only representative of the Congress Party and insisted that only he and his party represented India. He presented the 1927 Nehru Report as the only settlement the Congress would accept. His position was rejected by the gathered minorities in spite of Gandhi's pledge to guard the rights of all minorities in India. In 1933 Iqbal published an article that explained his viewpoint and experiences at the conference.

...How is India's problem to be solved if the majority community will neither concede the minimum safeguards necessary for the protection of a minority of 80 million people nor accept the award of a third party, but continue to talk of a kind of nationalism which works out only to its own benefit?...Either the Indian majority will have to accept for itself the permanent position of an agent of British imperialism in the East or the country will have to be redistributed on a basis of religious, historical and cultural affinities so as to do away with the question of electorates and the communal problem in its present form. (Iqbal 1992, 367)

Due to the inability of the delegates at the Round Table Conferences to come to an agreement on the issues facing them, Great Britain announced the Communal Award in August 1932. The award expanded minority electorates to include all the minority communities of the country, including Sikhs and the Untouchables (Wolpert 1998, 320). The award left no group completely happy, with the Congress Party and the Muslim League opposing the scheme and Iqbal unhappily recommending its approval (Iqbal 1992, 368). In 1935, the government published the Government of India Act, based on

the Communal Award, which established India's last English constitution. Under this act, India would become a Federation which "would have consisted of eleven totally responsible governors' provinces [the provinces of British India], the princely states; and a small number of ICS-run, centrally administered areas called chief commissioners' provinces" (Wolpert 1998, 323). This scheme required the approval of the princes and never came into being. The provinces, however, did become self-governing under the communal award scheme and elections were called for in 1937. Even though neither the Muslim League nor the Congress Party were happy with the Government of India Act, both participated in the 1937 election, with the Congress scoring a significant overall victory while the Muslim League fared poorly even in Muslim majority provinces (Wolpert 2002, 324).

The five years 1932 to 1937 were significant years for Iqbal. Poetically, he published a number of works that maintained his popularity at home and confirmed his credentials as a serious poet. *Javid Namah* was published in 1932. Similar to Dante's tale of a journey from the inferno to paradise, it is an imaginary tale of Iqbal's journey from the earth through the spheres of the planets to heaven. As Dante was guided by the poet Virgil, so Iqbal is guided by the Sufi poet Rumi as he meets with different political, religious, and philosophical figures. All his favorite themes and personages are present and serve as Iqbal's mouthpieces regarding his contemporary world and the future he envisions. He suggests that his message originates in heaven and is especially directed to the young.

What I have said comes from another world;
This book descends from another heaven.
I am a sea, untumult in me is a fault;
Where is he who can plunge into my depths?

A whole world slumbered upon my shore
And saw from the strand naught but the surge of the wave.
I who despair of the great sages of old,
Have a word to say concerning the day to come!
Render my speech easy unto the young,
Make my abyss for them attainable.

(Iqbal 1932, 24)

Iqbal traverses the spheres of the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn and then moves beyond the spheres into heaven itself. Along the way he meets representatives of Buddha, Zoroaster, Christ, and Muhammad. In another sphere, he meets Afghani who comments on the nationalism sweeping the world.

The Lord of the West, cunning from head to toe,
Taught the people of religion the concept of country.
He thinks of the centre, while you are at discord—
Give up talk of Syria, Palestine, Iraq!
If you can discriminate between good and evil
You will not bind your hearts to clods, stones, bricks.

(Iqbal 1932, 55)

In another section, Said Halim Pasha, the eminent Pan-Islamic Persian statesman, comments on the differences between East and West.

For Westerners intelligence is the stuff of life,
For Easterners love is the mystery of all being.

(Iqbal 1932, 57).

Referring to the reforms in Turkey under Mustafa Kamal Ataturk, Pasha further comments,

No, the Turks have no new melody in their lute,
What they call new is the only the old tune of Europe;
No fresh breath has entered into their breast,
No design for a new world is in their mind....
If you possess the spirit of the true Mussalman
Examine your own conscience and the Koran –
A hundred new worlds lie within its verses,
Whole centuries are involved in its moments;
One world of it suffices for the present age –
Seize it, if the heart in your breast grasps the truth....

(Iqbal 1932, 58)

In the sphere of Saturn Iqbal meets with two “Vile spirits who have betrayed the nation and have been rejected by Hell,” the spirits of Jafar and Sadiq, two Indian generals who served the East India Company during the time of British expansion in India. Iqbal comments,

God save me from the spirit of Jaafar,
Save me from the Jaafars of the present time.
(Iqbal 1932, 109)

Beyond the spheres, but before heaven, Iqbal comes across Nietzsche, who has been embraced by revelation but did not realize its heavenly source. Finally, Iqbal enters into heaven and achieves completed insight as well as Perfect Manhood. He is also given a political vision of the future and the impact of his poetry.

Dominion is frailer than a bubble
And can be destroyed by a single breath.
The destinies of nations have been shaped by a song,
By a song nations are destroyed and rebuilt.
Though your lancet has pierced men’s hearts,
None has perceived you as you truly are,
Your melody springs from a poet’s song,
But what you utter transcends poesy.
Stir up a new tumult in Paradise
Strike up an intoxicating air in Paradise!
(Iqbal 1932, 122)

Iqbal continues that rebellion is the soul of self-hood (131) and that the Perfect Man has a liberated attitude toward death.

Life is fortified by cheerful resignation;
Death is a magic talisman, a fantasy.
The man of God is a lion, and death a fawn;
Death is but one station for him of a hundred.
The Perfect Man swoops down upon death
Even as a falcon swooping down upon a dove.
The slave dies every moment in fear of death....
He who proclaimed to the peoples the word of love

Said of warfare that it was 'the monasticism of Islam'.

None but the martyr knows this subtlety,
For he has purchased this subtlety with his blood.
(Iqbal 1932, 134)

Finally, Iqbal again emphasizes the importance of Unity – of nation, of people, of God, and of thought and action.

When a nation becomes drunk with the Unity
Power, yea, omnipotence lies within its grasp.
(Iqbal 1932, 139)

Iqbal's other major work during this time was, "*The Rod Of Moses, A Declaration of War Against the West*," published in 1935. The title speaks for itself and I will not go into detail of its contents here.

Iqbal also traveled extensively between 1932 and 1937, a well respected intellectual emissary of Islam. After the Round Table Conferences, he visited France where he met with the aged philosopher, Henri Bergson. In Italy he was invited to an audience with Mussolini and prayed at the Mosque of Cordova during a visit to Spain. He also attended meetings in Palestine at the World Muslim Conference (Zakaria 1993, 91, 95). Reflecting his international perspective, he called for Muslims to consider "practical means for the formation of an Eastern League of Nations" in a public statement read at a public meeting of the Muslim League in 1937 (Iqbal 1992, 372).

1937-1938: Ill Health, Political Influence, and Death

In 1937, Iqbal's health began to fail. In spite of his ill health, he was very involved in the political issues of the day. Jinnah had returned to India in 1935 at the encouragement of a number of Muslim leaders, Iqbal among them. In a letter dated 21

June 1937, Iqbal commented on Jinnah's importance to the future of the Muslims in India and the dangers facing the country.

...I hope you won't mind my writing to you so often, as you are the only Muslim in India today to whom the community has a right to look for safe guidance through the storm which is coming to North-West India, and perhaps the whole of India. I tell you that we are living in a state of civil war which, but for the police and the military, would become universal in no time. (Jinnah 1942, 20-21)

In 1936 Nehru had begun a nationwide program to enlist Muslim voters on the side of the Congress Party's nationalist cause. The program became a real concern for Iqbal. He sent a number of letters to Jinnah on the necessity of opposing Nehru and establishing the Muslim League as a national, unified Muslim political party. On 20 March 1937 he wrote again to Jinnah.

I suppose you have read Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's address to the All India National Convention and that you fully realize the policy underlying it in so far as Indian Muslims are concerned....I therefore suggest that an effective reply should be given the all-India National Convention. You should immediately hold an All-India Muslim convention in Delhi....to this convention you must state as clearly and as strongly as possible the political objective of the Indian Muslims as a distinct political unit in the country....It would further make it clear to the Hindus that no political device....can make the Indian Muslim lose sight of his cultural entity. (Jinnah 1942, 13-14)

Jinnah took Iqbal's recommendations and focused on making the Muslim League a party that would include all the Muslims of India. His work was so effective that, by 1939, Jinnah was recognized as a political power of equal stature to Gandhi (James 1997, 536-537). Sadly, Iqbal's illness prevented him from seeing the realization of his political dreams. He died at 5:15 A.M. on 21 April 1938.

Conclusion

It is evident that Iqbal was a man of action and political involvement. Throughout his life, Iqbal displayed a poetic consistency of action and viewpoint. Some have

identified glaring inconsistencies in Iqbal's political actions and writings, even suggesting that he was only an "armchair politician" (Zakaria 1993, 56). In fact, I believe there was an underlying unity of thought that harmonized his actions, similar to the "string of pearls" described earlier as a characteristic of Persian poetry. He dreamed of a unified world-wide Islam yet realized that his dream would come about only in stages. The first stage was to establish a Muslim national entity in his homeland. He was content that other Muslims in other lands would pursue the second step, the forging of their own Islamic homelands. The final step would occur one day, perhaps far in the future, when those Muslim nations could come together to form a supra-national Islamic entity.

'...In the International world the weak find no sympathy; power alone deserves respect.' These lines clearly indicate the trend of modern Islam. For the present every Muslim nation must sink into her own deeper self, temporarily focus her vision on herself alone, until all are strong and powerful to form a living family of republics. A true and living unity, according to the nationalist thinkers, is not so easy to be achieved by a merely symbolical over-lordship. It is truly manifested in a multiplicity of free independent units whose racial rivalries are adjusted and harmonized by the unifying bond of a common spiritual aspiration. It seems to me that God is slowly bringing home to us the truth that Islam is neither Nationalism nor Imperialism, but a League of Nations which recognizes artificial boundaries and racial distinctions for facility of reference only and not for restricting the social horizons of its members. (Iqbal 1974, 158-159)

Iqbal attempted to live up to the requirements of his own conception of Perfect Manhood. His lifelong poetic, philosophical and political involvements demonstrate an underlying unity of purpose, seeking always to motivate and develop Muslims for the international role that resides within Islam and that would restore Islam to its historic dignity and role as a world power. After his death, his dream realized a partial fulfillment in the creation of Pakistan, a Muslim nation that continues to play a significant role in world politics. Perhaps Iqbal was, according to his own definition, a co-creator with God on earth and an early twentieth century incarnation of the Perfect Man.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

In this dissertation I have investigated Muhammad Iqbal and the researchable question, “What is Muhammad Iqbal’s concept of the Perfect Man and how does it address the issue of the restoration of human dignity in the face of Western technology and colonialism.” Utilizing a combined history of ideas and hermeneutic methodology, I discussed Iqbal’s historical context and his Perfect Man philosophy through the lenses of his philosophy, religion, poetry, and political action. I hoped to find at least a partial understanding of the question addressed in the Salve Regina Doctoral Program, “What does it mean to be human in an age of advanced technology?” In this chapter I will provide an overview of the significant findings of this study, implications of the study for the contemporary world, and recommendations for further research.

Significant Findings

Contextual Issues

In chapter two I discussed Iqbal’s historical context, examining mid-nineteenth to early twentieth century India in light of a Hegelian approach to human dignity as well as the geopolitical and personal issues that contributed to Iqbal’s sense of a Muslim loss of dignity. It is apparent that Iqbal and the Indian nationalists of his time (Nehru, Gandhi, Jinnah) perceived an attack on their human freedom from British colonialism with a corresponding loss of human dignity. It was this loss of human dignity that Iqbal sought to correct through his philosophy of the Perfect Man endowed with *khudi*.

The Hegelian Issue of Dignity

Iqbal regularly described his countrymen as living in a master-slave relationship with Great Britain, with the British owning the master's role. Trained in Hegelian philosophy at Cambridge by McTaggart, Iqbal's poetry and prose reflects Hegel's understanding that human dignity is directly related to human freedom. In spite of the benefits of his English education, or possibly as a result of it, Iqbal's effort to restore Muslim dignity became a lifelong issue in his poetry, philosophy, religion and political action.

Geopolitical Issues

Iqbal's experience of British colonial and technological rule confirmed his sense of indignity. Britain's conquest and rule of India was accomplished through the application of superior governmental and military technology, establishing what amounted to a geopolitical mega-machine for the purpose of enhancing British power and culture. The elements of this machine included a strong authoritarian government supported by a rigid bureaucracy, established through the efforts of Jeremy Bentham and James Mill and their nineteenth century utilitarian experiment (Stokes 1959, 78). It also included a strong military that was utilized by the government to suppress dissent with a swift and often brutal response. British nationals, both at home and in India, often exhibited an attitude of racial and civilizational superiority, believing that providence had endowed them with the responsibility to bring English civilization to the world. This attitude was supported by government encouraged Christian missionary efforts in India (beginning in the early 1800's) and a program to transplant English culture and education to India beginning in the 1850s.

Britain's technological political system provided ease of administration and stability for the British in India, but was perceived as a stifling of human freedom and a threat to both Hindu and Muslim culture. These issues resulted in a number of insurrections against British rule, notably in 1857 and 1919. The destruction of British locomotives by Indians during the 1857 mutiny attests to the close association that Indians perceived between technology and British civilization (James 1997, 297).

Personal Issues

Between 1905 and 1911, Iqbal appears to have experienced a personal crisis of expectations as a result of his experience of British racial attitudes in England, a resistance to stifling cultural restrictions (his arranged marriage), and his observation of the sad state of Muslim affairs in India and the world. The crisis transformed him from an Indian nationalist to an advocate of Pan-Islam.

As a Muslim and Pan-Islamist, he believed that responsibility for the world-historical situation of Muslims was directly related to God's sovereign rule of the world and to Muslim faithfulness to God's revealed truth. The advance of Western power in the world at the expense of Islam would be corrected once Muslims returned to faithfulness to their religion. This became a key element of Iqbal's message.

Iqbal's Philosophy of the Perfect Man

Iqbal's diagnosed that Indian Muslims and international Islam lacked inner ego strength (similar to Nietzsche's "men without chests") and prescribed an approach that would revitalize Islam and combat the rising tide of Western technological and political dominance, his philosophy of the Perfect Man. Iqbal's concept of the Perfect Man reflects elements of both Eastern and Western philosophy. The idea of the Perfect Man

has a long tradition within Islam, which teaches that the Prophet Muhammad was the first Perfect Man and serves as a Muslim model of Perfect Manhood. Iqbal took the concept and expanded it with a number of modern attributes, most notably *khudi* (ego power) and action (Iqbal 1915, xix). Thoroughly acquainted with Western Philosophy, Iqbal's Perfect Man exhibits a number of traits reminiscent of nineteenth and twentieth century Western philosophy: the power of Nietzsche's Superman; the vitalistic action emphasis of Bergson; the individuality and love of McTaggart; the world historical impact of Hegel; and the religious fervor of the Prophet Muhammad. While Iqbal denied that his philosophy was based on any Western philosophy, especially that of Nietzsche, he writes admiringly of him and the other philosophers mentioned. A number of commentators have noted the close similarities of his work with that of Western philosophers.

Iqbal's Perfect Man is a religious man of action who exists in a perfect community (the *Ummah*) and displays the characteristics of Perfect Manhood, especially *khudi*, or ego power. Iqbal taught that all Muslims possess the Perfect Man potentiality, that each is responsible to incorporate the traits of Perfect Manhood into his character. Each becomes more powerful and perfect as he draws closer to God. Iqbal believed that Muslims, led by a Perfect Man and themselves empowered with *khudi*, would eventually prevail against the West and restore Islam to its former glory and dignity.

The Perfect Man's Religious Agenda

Iqbal's Perfect Man is a man of focused purpose and action. The focus of his effort, consistent with the Prophet Muhammad's example, was to bring about a revitalization of world-wide Islam in order to bring peace and harmony to the world. This goal could only be achieved by a Perfect Man who was fully committed to Islam and

who followed an agenda of passionately focused action. Iqbal's understanding of and emphasis on action finds parallels in the thought of Hegel and Bergson, two of Iqbal's favorite philosophers.

Iqbal adopted a religious political agenda for his Perfect Man that paralleled the religious-political agenda of Afghani, the nineteenth century Muslim agitator who followed a pan-Islamic plan in order to oppose the world-wide power of British imperialism and to bring about global Islam. This agenda contained a number of important points: the need for charismatic leadership; an unbridgeable East-West divide; opposition to Western nationalism; the centrality of religion for political reform, the necessity for a heart change on the part of Muslims; the cultural superiority of Islam; and a commitment to science; (Keddie 1972, 156-181). Ultimately, Iqbal's Perfect Man is similar to Hegel's world historical man, having a vision of the need of the times and working to bring about that vision through intensely and passionately focused effort.

Iqbal's Poetry: The Tool of the Perfect Man

Iqbal taught that the Perfect Man, God's vice-regent on earth, would create new worlds. Iqbal used his poetry as a powerful tool to speak to the hearts of the Muslims of his time in order to bring about the new world he envisioned and to accomplish the philosophical, political and religious agenda of the Perfect Man. Viewed as the property of intellectuals in the West, poetry has a long and respected tradition in the East. Iqbal published his philosophical writings on the Perfect Man in three well-received books of poetry beginning in 1915. The *Asrar-i-Khudi* (1915), the *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi* (1918), and the *Javid Nama* (1932) were written in Persian and directed to an international Muslim

audience. He also published a number of poetic works in Urdu for his Indian Muslim admirers, as well as a number of articles and lectures in English.

The poetic culture of early twentieth century India was particularly receptive to Iqbal's well developed poetic message (Qureshi 1969, 430-431). The emotion laden atmosphere of poetic gatherings (*mushairas*) enabled Iqbal to "bypass the head and speak directly to the heart" (Iqbal 1915, viii) and earned a hearing for even his most difficult concepts. The political turmoil in India also provided a ready audience for Iqbal's politically charged poetry of dissent while his manner of life and poetic delivery may have provided him a mystic "aura", reminiscent of the Sufi saints and mystics. Iqbal was, in fact, a very accomplished poet and achieved great fame and an English knighthood as a result of his poetic gift. Yet he was quite open about his purposes – poetry was not a mere aesthetic exercise for him, it was instead intended to be didactic and even propagandistic of his political and religious views. It is also apparent from his poetry that Iqbal may have regarded himself as an early Twentieth Century incarnation of the Perfect Man, the "all seeing poetic eye" of his people who had a vision of the future and adopted a means to achieve that vision: the transformation of the world to Islam through his philosophy of the Perfect Man, communicated through his heart changing poetry.

Iqbal's Political Activity

As noted earlier, Iqbal's Perfect Man is a man of focused action. Iqbal, exhibiting the traits of a Perfect Man, pursued a single-minded world-changing course throughout his life in early Twentieth Century India, that of Pan-Islam. In his poetry, prose, and political activity he consistently expounded the cause of global Islam and sought to convince Muslims of India and the world to do the same.

Iqbal's Pan-Islamist ideology precluded his participation in national political activities during the first forty- nine years of his life, preferring to allow his poetry and prose publications to do his political work. This period included some of the most volatile years in contemporary Indian history, with Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Gandhi leading a powerful national movement against British rule. Iqbal chose to remain aloof from that turmoil, sympathetic to the sufferings of the thousands who experienced incarceration in British colonial jails, but opposed to their nationalist agenda. He did stand for office in the Punjab in 1926 and won the seat, but found the daily legislative grind to be tiresome (Zakaria 1993, 59). He made his most lasting contribution to the political process as the leader of the Muslim League from 1930-1932. It was as the president of that league that he made his famous demand for a separate Muslim homeland in the northern and western provinces of India (Iqbal 1992, 173).

Iqbal consistently pursued a separatist Muslim communal program in his private and political life. When he was invited to the second and third Round Table Conferences in London in 1931 and 1932, he attended as a representative of Muslim interests. In 1936, when Nehru pursued an overt program to enlist Muslims in his nationalist cause, Iqbal wrote a number of letters to Jinnah advising him of the necessity of opposing that program (Jinnah 1942, 13-14). It is evident that Iqbal preferred the stability and predictability of British rule to the uncertainty of Hindu nationalist rule. British rule also allowed him to pursue a Pan-Islamist agenda internationally and Muslim interests locally.

Summary

My conclusions from this study of Iqbal include the following:

1) British colonial and technological hegemony in India and within the Muslim world was experienced by Iqbal and contemporary Muslims as a vast bureaucratic machine or “mega-machine” that imposed a profound limitation of their personal freedom and dignity, in effect reducing them to slave status vis-à-vis the British.

2) Iqbal viewed the world through a Hegelian world-view, with peoples and cultures engaged in a win-lose “zero-sum” power struggle. To restore Muslim dignity required the restoration of Muslim international power at the expense of Western culture.

3) Iqbal believed that the restoration of Islamic fortunes in the world had to begin with the individual Muslim. Like the ancient philosopher, Diogenes, who wandered the streets of Athens looking for an honest man, Iqbal’s goal was to search the Muslim world looking for a powerful man. His philosophy of the Perfect Man was designed to discover or develop that individual.

4) Although he shared a common opposition to British hegemony in India with Indian nationalist leaders, Iqbal’s conservative Muslim faith allowed for no compromise or power sharing relationship with them. He called for a separate Muslim homeland in the area that subsequently became Pakistan. His demand was also consistent with his Pan-Islamic ideology, seeing Pakistan as a stepping stone on the way to a world-wide Muslim *ummah*.

5) In the contemporary world, it has been noted that individuals should think globally and act locally. Iqbal’s response to local events in British Colonial India was to develop a global response. We see this in his decision to publish the three works of his Perfect Man philosophy in Persian rather than Urdu. He wrote for an international Muslim audience. His goal, consistent with his Muslim faith, was also global in scope.

The evidence indicates that Iqbal consistently pursued one agenda throughout his life. In his philosophy, poetry, politics and religion he passionately pursued the establishment of a revitalized Muslim international order and the return of earlier Islamic glory. Although he opposed nationalism, he was willing to accept the establishment of Islamic nations as a stepping stone to a world-wide Islamic order. He recognized that the goal would take time, and that he might not see the accomplishment of his dream in his lifetime, but he was sure the day would come when it would be realized. His goal, he realized, was to start with the heart of the individual Muslim. Through transformed Muslims he believed that the world itself could be transformed.

My song is of another world than theirs;
This bell calls other travelers to take the road.
Many a poet was born after his death,
Opened our eyes when his own were closed,
And journeyed forth again from nothingness.
(Iqbal 1915, 4)

Implications of the Study for the Contemporary World

Throughout this study, I have been guided by a personal desire to understand Islam and to discover a means by which the West and East can co-exist in the contemporary world. I am aware of Professor Huntington's theory of a "Clash of Civilizations" and hoped to discover evidence to counter his conclusions. Consistent with Salve Regina's Doctoral Program and its interest in the relationship between the human and technology, I theorized that the impact of British colonial and bureaucratic technology on a less advanced Indian culture would result in cultural resistance, experienced as terrorism, asymmetric warfare and political unrest. I did discover this ingredient in nineteenth and early twentieth century India. British globalization of that

period did impose an advanced technology on India. Its bureaucratic and political processes were developed along a very definite scientific basis according to the theories of Bentham and James Mill. This authoritarian and bureaucratic system, popularly called “the Machine,” was constructed to provide the maximum of security and order. The human experience of the machine, however, reflected a human loss of freedom and dignity. The Indian national resistance movement of Gandhi and Nehru reflected the understandable desire for human freedom from foreign rule as well as anger at the foreign mismanagement of their country.

Iqbal’s resistance to British imperial rule certainly contained elements of resistance to Britain’s social and technological experiments in India, which he described as a stifling of human freedom. Ultimately, however, his resistance stemmed from a different source. The gradual retreat of the Ottoman Empire during the late nineteenth century and its final defeat and dismemberment after World War I left Islam without a world empire for the first time in thirteen hundred years. This loss was felt keenly by many Muslims, who believed that a world political dominion was an essential part of their religious faith and that its loss could be attributed to the lack of faithfulness of its members. Wahhab, Afghani, and Iqbal were all Muslim reformers who understood the signs of their times and called for a revitalization of Muslim life and practice in order to restore Islam to its rightful place in the world order. Iqbal was never content to form a unified national movement with Hindu political elements. Instead, he focused on the health of his Muslim co-religionists and agitated for a separate Muslim homeland consistent with his Pan-Islamic agenda.

It seems apparent from this study that Iqbal, Pan-Islamists, and Radical Islamists see the world in Hobbesian terms, modified and made more virulent by religious fervor. They accept an ongoing competition between individuals, tribes, nations and religions for power, prestige and dominion. This competition is further fueled by religious belief, with Pan-Islamic Muslims understanding that God wills that the competition take place in the interest of Islamic hegemony. From my studies, it is apparent that Iqbal and those who shared his views would never consider compromise with those who disagreed with their views or who followed a different faith. This was evident in early twentieth century India where the communal problem proved intransigent and frustrated British efforts to forge a contemporary political nation out of its disparate religious bodies. Compromise and collaboration seem just as ephemeral in contemporary Iraq where Sunni Muslims, Shia Muslims, Kurdish Muslims, and Americans are locked in a bitter struggle to bring freedom and democracy to that ancient land. On the international level, Radical Islam seems to have a similar agenda, with the ultimate goal being mortal combat with the West. In this research, it appears that there is no evidence to counter the “Clash of Civilizations” theory.

Although Iqbal’s conclusions seem bleak in light of contemporary experience, an examination of his life and work does provide positive guidance for contemporary Muslims and hope for the future. As a young man, it is evident that Iqbal was intrigued with the learning of the West and thoroughly engaged its philosophers and their thought. His journals and poetry reflect deep appreciation for their work as well as admiration for the West’s technological achievements. His *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* discusses Islam in light of contemporary western thought and demonstrates many

areas of disagreement. But it is encouraging that he also found some areas of agreement. Had the early twentieth century geopolitical and racial environment been more congenial to Muslim faith and culture, it is possible that Iqbal might have developed a different message than Pan-Islam. This possibility imposes a heavy responsibility on those wielding geopolitical power in the contemporary world, a responsibility to provide an environment of dignity and freedom for all people, regardless of their color or faith. The continuation of ancient animosities and conflicts is pointless. Some wag has observed that the definition of insanity is constantly repeating the same actions with the same results. The contemporary world needs to develop new approaches with, hopefully, different outcomes. Iqbal's life and attitude may provide a positive model in this respect.

It should be noted, in the interest of fairness, that not all Muslims are Pan-Islamist or accept the Radical Islamic viewpoint. Many are peace-loving and simply want to live their lives, enjoy their families, and enjoy the benefits of the modern world. A recent State Department briefing estimated that only 5% of the world's Muslims accept the radical approach. The briefing was concluded, however, with the simple mathematical conclusion that 5% of the more than one billion Muslims equates to 50 million Muslims who support the radical enterprise. The seminar concluded with the projection that the current war on terrorism would last from twenty-five to fifty years, similar to the Cold War.

Recommendations for Further Research

Iqbal is a popular focus of study in Pakistan where the Iqbal Academy continues to research Iqbal as the spiritual father of that country. Very little of that research is available in English or the West. I recently discovered that Iqbal's son, Javid, published a

biography of his father in the late 1980s. It was published in Urdu, however, which makes it unavailable to the English reader.

Iqbal was very interested in Goethe as an advocate of human freedom and political renewal of his nation. The Iqbal academy has published a work containing a number of papers on the relationship between Iqbal and Goethe, yet these articles focus on literary comparison and contain no research on the political or social impact of these two authors. It might be productive to examine the writing of these men in light of their political viewpoints and impact.

The polarities of passion (love) and reason are referred to by Iqbal throughout his poetry, with passion representing the East and reason representing the West. A study of these approaches and their philosophic underpinnings might be productive in developing understanding between the two cultures.

In order to understand Iqbal's daily involvement in and view of the political affairs in India, it would be interesting to research the newspapers and journals of his time to read the poems and articles he wrote in response to the daily events in India during the volatile 1920's and 1930's. The published articles and speeches to which I had access primarily deal with the large national and international issues. An analysis of the daily and weekly production of Iqbal's pen might provide a different understanding of the author's work and impact.

On a more contemporary plane, an analysis of the work of moderate Muslim scholars and politicians might provide a counterweight to the published writings of the Pan-Islamists and Radical Islamists. Bassam Tibi has published a number of works that

disagree with the Professor Huntington's thesis. Unfortunately, moderate Muslim voices are not receiving a great deal of attention in the contemporary discussion.

Conclusion

Muhammad Iqbal has been an interesting companion for the last three years. I have been amazed by the man's intellect and breadth of knowledge. His poetry, even in translation, contains wonderful images and insightful commentary on the human condition. Iqbal's prose writing is dense, though readable, and contains a wealth of insight on his contemporary world and very agreeably recognizes the need for his religion to adapt to that world. His philosophy of the Perfect Man, motivated by the world-historical situation of his time, contains timeless guidance for men and women of all ages who would take a stand and express their individuality.

Iqbal's synthesis of politics, philosophy, religion and art also provide us with a wonderful example of a Muslim "Renaissance Man" of the spirit. Iqbal's passionate pursuit of these disciplines reflect the wonderful ability of the human mind and spirit to engage different disciplines and produce a product that is greater than the sum of their constituent parts. This synergizing element of Iqbal's mind is the essential component of the technological mind of man and enabled him to poetically craft a unique philosophy that addressed the problems he faced in his time and place. While we don't necessarily agree with his conclusions, we have to admire the man and his abilities.

Ultimately, however, Iqbal's "declaration of war against the West" produces hopelessness as he encourages his co-religionists to establish world-wide peace through the conquest of the world by Islam. His prescription promises the fulfillment of the biblical prediction that there would always be "wars and rumors of war." It is incumbent

on those of us who read his work to understand it critically. There may be applications from his work that apply to the present time. But it is also true that our world differs significantly from Iqbal's. Like Iqbal, we must burn the midnight oil and develop new solutions that address the "clash of cultures" problems of our time. Otherwise, we are destined to live out the prophetic words of Iqbal's translator, A. J. Arberry, in his 1918 introduction to Iqbal's *Rumuz-i-Bekhuri*,

...It is impossible to live intelligently for a single day in any part of that large stretch of the earth's surface extending from Morocco to Indonesia, without becoming uncomfortably aware that Islam and Europe stand poised against each other, and that the choice between peace and war may not be far off. Whether we like it or not, be we Europeans or Africans or Asians, we live in dangerous times and may well be heading for the greatest collision since Richard fought Saladin. (Iqbal 1918, xvi)

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