

Iqbal`s concept of man

Rifat Aman

Sr. Assistant Professor, Dept of Education, Govt. College for Women, MA Road, Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, India

Abstract

Iqbal's philosophy evaluated man's role and position in a very dignified manner. Man is not only the centre and ruler of the world; he is also God's assistant in the creation, refinement and the perfection of universe which is still in imperfect. Iqbal tried to make man realize that the basic relationship of man with God is that of creator and assistant creator. God is essentially the supreme creator but perfection of his creation has very often depended on the creative talents of man. In his beautiful poem "Mahavira-Ma-Bayni" "Khuda-Wa-Insaan". Iqbal was not the first thinker of propound this doctrine. Many a thinker before him had endeavored to develop this idea of a perfect man or superman. But the vision of a perfect man that Iqbal has presented is fascinating and unique. The picture of the perfect man that he has painted is very lively and dynamic. His Mard-I-Kamil, Mard-I-Momin, Mard-I-Haq, Mard-I-Hue, Dervish, Faquir and Qalandar etc. are nothing but various expressions which stand for the perfect man.

Keywords: iqbal, man, god, adam, philosophy

Introduction

In Payam-I-Mashriq, Iqbal draws a fine picture of man's creation in a famous poem "Taskin-Fitrat" (Conquest of nature). The first section of poem in titled "Milad-I-Adam" (The birth of Adam), he points that the creation of man generated excitement and commotion in the universe. Man made of clay is, in fact a centre creativity and dynamism and gifted with forces of action, appreciation and intelligence. The glory of man thinks Iqbal lies in fresh activities while as other creation of the universe are busy in routine activities.

In Iqbal's philosophical order, man becomes perfect or immortal when he knows his innate potentialities by taking the initiative to bring about for reaching changes in nature as well as in the social and moral world around him. In the Javid Nama, the voice of God addresses man thus:

Life is both mortal immortal.
It is all creativity and eagerness.
Man of truth! Be sharp and incisive.
And become the destiny of they own world.

Iqbal evaluates the idea that the sincere endeavor of man is to see the truth face to face, through introspection to contemplate ultimate reality including the world and even beyond. The utility and vitality of man, thinker Iqbal lies in his strength and power, ya Qavi (the most powerful) is itself God's Attribute.

According to Iqbal, the human ego, in its development towards perfection, has to pass through three stages:

1. Obedience to the law.
2. Self control i.e. the highest form of self consciousness.
3. Divine vicegerency.

Obedience of the law and self-control, according to Iqbal, play a great role in the development and fortification of the human ego, but he preferred to regard them as representing mile stone on the upwards march towards the goal of attaining the state of perfect man, or superman. Obedience to the law, along with other favourable, tends, to train the ego for the second

evolutionary phase where it attains perfect self-control, in its turn prepares the ego for the third and last stage of human development i.e. divine vicegerency.

According to Iqbal the third stage in the development of the self is Niyabat-I-Ilahi (the vicegerency of God). Although man already possesses the germ of vicegerency (Quran 2:28) "not man as he is now, but man purified through obedience, self dominion and detachment, can reach the high station of divine vicegerency".

Iqbal describes the perfect man in superlative, he is the completest ego, the goal of humanity, of the life, both in mid and body; in him and the discord of our mental life becomes a harmony. This highest power is united in him with the highest knowledge. In his life, though and action, instinct and reason, become one. He is the last fruit of the tree of humanity, and all the trials of a painful evolution are justified because he is to come at the end. He is the real ruler of mankind; his kingdom of God on earth.

Nature must undergo long and painful travels to bring to birth the perfect man. The vicegerent is a creator and interpreter of values he is "the goal of life's Caravan" the ruler of all things that God created. Man is the deputy of God on earth. And over the elements his rule is fixed.

Iqbal's perfect man, then though a co-worker with God, is not a breaker of divine law. He is the master of all things but a slave to God.

According to Iqbal, the moral and religious ideal of man is not self annihilation but self-realization. He can attain this ideal by becoming more and more individual, more and more unique. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, "Takhallaqu Bi-akhlaq Allah" create in yours self the attributes of God.

Thus man becomes unique by becoming more and more like the most unique individual i.e. God. To him, physically and spiritually man is as self-contained center, but he is not yet a complete individual. The greater his distance from God, the smaller his individuality. He who comes nearest to God is the completes person but he is not finally absorbed in God. On the

contrary, he absorbs God into himself. The perfect man not only absorbs the world of matter, rather, by mastering it, only absorbs the God himself into his ego.

Iqbal believes that the strength of a perfect man is paramount and supernatural. He draws a fresh vigor and vitality from his faith, and God's will and might are on his side. Mountains cannot block his path, nor can oceans offer a hindrance. Describing the perfect man, Iqbal says:

A perfect man's hand is the hand of God,
 Dominant, creative resourceful, efficient,
 Human but angel like in disposition, servant with the masters
 attributes.
 His carefree heart is in different to the riches of either world.
 He is reasons last goal; he is the harvest of love.
 In the wide world, he sets all spirits ablaze.

In Iqbal's view, man can transfer both his being and his surroundings according to his own desires and inspirations. In fact, he makes improvements upon God's creation. For instance, God created night, man made the lamp, God created clay, and out of it he made the cup. God created deserts, mountains and forests, and he made parks, flower gardens and groves. Its man, who turned stone into a mirror and it, is he who turned poison into an antidote.

God creates the world, but man made it more beautiful. To Iqbal, the perfect man is ultimate goal of the evolutionary process of the world, and he is to develop out of his present stuff (self) just as the full moon is developed out of the crescent.

Iqbal's Mardi-Momen (The perfect man) possesses immense power and strength, and can change the destiny of people so, in a challenging mood, he asked and exclaimed:

Who can imagine the strength of his arm (perfect man)
 Destines are changed at the mere glance of a perfect man.

Again he says

God intoxicated Duwamish is neither of the East nor of the West. His home is neither Delhi, nor Isfahan nor Samarqand.

Unlike Plato, Iqbal's Man is not a man of the world of ideas. His perfect man belongs to this world of reality. He was not satisfied with merely converting kings into philosophers and philosophers into king; rather, his goal was to turn every man into perfect man, who may establish the kingdom of God on earth. Iqbal's Mard-I-Kamil (perfect man) is much more than Plato's philosopher and king combined together. For, while Plato's philosopher king was a representative at a state and belonged to an aristocrat class, Iqbal's Mard-I-Kamil was a Divine vicegerent of God on earth and a true representative of man kind. Iqbal man is superior to Plato's philosopher – king, as he is the real representative of socialism and humanism.

As Iqbal was interested in the reconstruction of society, so he believed that an ideal man (perfect man) is also must in the formation of an ideal society or world community. Iqbal's Mard-i-Kamil (perfect man) is a man of this world, and belonged to all man kind and lived in all time and clime, as he is an impartial being. He is a true representative or viceregent of God on earth.

Iqbal's wisdom visualizes a new man of future society, a comprehensive all round develop personality. His future man is indeed Mard-i-Mumin (man of faith), God fearing with

aesthetic tastes and the ability to create of a just social order. This personality for Iqbal is Sawar-I-Ashab (white rider horse of time) and deadeye Imkan Biya (splendid eye of future) where emergence from innumerable deserts is the message of glorious future. Allama Iqbal enhances this perfection in the finality of prophet of Islam PUH.

Its flames burned a hundred Abrahams:
 That the lamp of one Muhammad (SAW) might be lighted.

Concept of KHUDI

Iqbal harnessed all his intellectual brilliance to release man from influences of defeatism and pessimism. His exposition of man stood for the preservation of human personality. Real and significant basis of life in the eyes of Iqbal lies in the recognizing of Khudi or self. Khudi is the Chief feature of Iqbal's philosophy. Khudi is the centre of all activity and the core of personality. The entire system of universe asserts Iqbal originates in the self of Khudi and so the continuation of the life of all individual depends on strengthening of self. Therefore, everything should be done to strengthen it and bring it to perfection.

KHUDI is the determinant of the entire gamut of existence,
 All that thou seest is due to secrets of KHUDI. (Asrar-i-Khudi)

Iqbal in the context of human dignity and their onerous responsibility as vicegerent of God, attached special importance to the concept of KHUDI. Iqbal throughout his life encouraged mankind to strengthen KHUDI. In Zarb-E-Kaleem to emphasis the importance of KHUDI he says:

If Khudi is alive you can cross the deep sea on foot.
 If Khudi is alive Fakiri is Shahinshahi
 If Khudi is alive even the mountain turns to soft silk.
 The living crocodile is free on the breast of flowing river
 The path of a dead crocodile is obstructed even by a sandy wall.

A burning desire for development of self and its potentialities motivates Iqbal to put a great importance to the concept of Khudi. His famous Asrar-I-Khudi (the secret of the self) and Rumuz-I-Bekhudi (Mysteries of selflessness) Published to 1915 and 1918 respectively represent his concept of Khudi. He emphasized preservation and development of self to regenerate the sleeping Muslim Ummah. His philosophy of Khudi is based on the Quranic concept of human dignity and man's vice regency of God on this earth.

According to him Khudi is the only reality in this universe and all the rest is mirage. He is not ready to be absorbed in God, to lose his personality, rather, he emphasizes. Takhallaqu-Bi-Akhllallah, to qualify oneself with the qualities of God. Unlike the pantheistic philosophers and mystic Sufis, he said; Abandon self to flee to God not to be absorbed rather to absorb God into yourself and to return to self after being strengthened by his qualities. He deals with this topic in his lecture on the spirit on Muslim Culture (Published in Reconstruction of Religious thought in Islam). In the following terms, the mystic does not wish to return, from the repose of unitary experience and even when he does return, as he must, his return does not mean much for man kind at large. The prophet's PUH return is

creative. He returns to insert himself into the sweep of time with a view to control the forces of history and thereby to create a fresh world of ideals. For the mystic the repose of unitary experience is something final; for the prophet P.U.H. it is the awakening within him, of world-shaking psychological forces calculated to completely transform the human world. The desire to see his religious experience transformed into a living world force is supreme in the prophet P.U.H. He inspired the Muslim Ummah to develop their ego in the following words.

Exalt selfhood to such a height that before each dispensation God Himself would ask his servants, what is your pleasure.

The philosophy behind this human effort is based on the Quranic teaching that man is the architect of his own fortune. "Man achieves only that for which he strives and Allah does not change the condition of any nation unless it changes its own condition".

Iqbal in his Khudi concept emphasizes the importance of self in Asrar-I-Khudi. According to him order in the universe emanates from self and the continuation of life of individual existences also depends on the self. Consciousness of self and strengthening it are essential for existence of the individual self on which depends the order of the universe.

According to Iqbal Khudi is comprised of the following four components.

- Realization of the superiority of Man and the potential of his spiritual powers.
- Comprehension of the relative values of intellect and love.
- Comprehension of controversy of "Khair and Shar" (Good and evil)
- Comprehension of the human desire for eternal life this desire is Universal and has existed in man since his creation

Allama Iqbal has recommended the following programme for the development of Khudi in the book Asrar-I-Khudi (the secrets of the self).

1. Love of God and the Holy prophet (SAW)
2. Obedience of God and the Holy Prophet (SAW) based on the love mentioned under.
3. Distancing oneself from fatalism.
4. Abstention from asking favour from any other than God.
5. Creations and procreation of objectives and ideals. The best of these are to exalt and propagate the name and Commandants of God by all means possible and to enact and establish them after attaining the necessary political and material power.
6. Holding fast to the characteristic Islamic tradition in order to attain the continue Honour in material life.
7. Attainment of the vicegerent of God as the final stage when a person can and should establish the kingdom of God or the Islamic state on earth.

Iqbal's idea of self, thus properly developed and unfolded, is relevant to all the scientific facts now known. It is a complete philosophy of Economics, a philosophy of Art a philosophy of politics, all in one, and a psychology of the individual and society. It gives the lead to all these departments of knowledge and places them on the correct footing. It is this religious socio-political ideology which has always been the search of all religions, philosophies and science.

Dreams of world peace and world unity can never come out true unless all abandon their false ideologies and adopt the right ideology which has now fortunately taken a scientific shape in the Philosophy of Iqbal's peace will come to the world, not because we shall succeed in harmonizing conflicting ideologies, but because one ideology will replace the rest and dominate the whole world. The ideology that will dominate the whole world and bring ever lasting peace can only be the right ideology as sketched by Iqbal

In Asrar-I-Khudi written in 1915 Iqbal encouraged the development of an individual as separate personality through three stages (a) obedience to law (b) Self central (c) development as divine vicegerent. Rumuz-i-Bekhudi was written in 1918 dealing with individual life of a Muslim as a part of bigger Muslim Ummah. According to Iqbal to attain full personality one has to get spiritual substance from the wider society. He says in Rumuz-i-Bekhudi, when self becomes one with society; the tiny drop becomes a mighty sea.

Concept of God

The conception of God is the primordial concept which has been existing in man right from his creation Dr. Muhammad Iqbal stands one among those geniuses whose attempts in this field are distinguished and significant. Being well versed in both Islamic and western traditions of Knowledge, he could look into the subject into its proper perspective. His conception of God marks his interpretation of the Quranic view of God in the light of the modern western thought and science. The existence of God is justified by him through "Pure thought" of the western tradition and psychological and religious experience.

In his conception of God Iqbal rejects the traditional arguments of western thought cosmological, ontological and teleological arguments. He criticizes them on their having logic inconsistencies and deficient view of God. The cosmological argument seeks scientific explanation of God's existence. It traces the system of whole cosmos on the principal of causality. One cause leads to another contingent and that another and so on. According to its infinite series of cause stops at an uncaused first cause which provides the basic of whole cosmos. The uncaused first cause is regarded as Divine reality. Iqbal rejects the arguments for it is unconvincing and logically inconsistent.

The teleological arguments has its basis upon the design of the world with its inter woven adaptations, intelligence and morality. It holds that as human art necessitates its artist so does the design of the world implies the existence of its creator. The theory is outcome of sensible and objective reality in its specific form Iqbal rejects the argument as it does not solve the problem of the existence of God. It presents an illogical idea about God's creating intractable material than designing it like a Potter upon clay. It bring out the impression of limitation and difficulties of God which are those of an architect. Overcomes through external means similar to those employed by contrivance. Nature, thinks Iqbal, cannot be considered as analogous to the work of human designer. The human artificer cannot workout his plan except by selecting and isolating his materials from their natural relations and situations, Nature, however, constitutes a system of wholly inter dependent members; her processes present on analogy of architect's work depending on a progressive isolations and

integration of its material, can offer no resemblance to the evolution of organic wholes of nature.

The Ontological argument is also criticized by Iqbal the argument has been elucidated by both the medieval and some modern philosophers of west like St. Augustine (354-430), St Anselm (1033-1109), Descartes (1596-1650) and Spinoza (1632-1677). Its basis is the syllogism by which it deduces the existence of God from the concept of an eternal; infinite and absolute being. The idea of an eternal and infinite being necessarily involves his existence. While in agreement with Kant, Iqbal criticizes this argument on the ground that objective existence cannot be assumed from merely having a notion of a thing. As the mere idea of 300 dollars in mind does not prove its existence of God. Again this argument says Iqbal, discerns the logical fallacy, for it takes for granted the very point in question i.e. the transition from the logical to the real. The rejection of the ontological and the teleological argument by Iqbal is not because reason has no role to reach God but it is on the ground that they create dualism in reality, between thought and being. The real significance of the arguments can be realized only when the gulf between thought and being is bridged. Iqbal, thus seen the validity of the arguments in their true spirit.

Iqbal's faith in the existence of God is based on the testimony of Quran, the mystic literature of Islam and other religions. The latest discoveries of modern science in the domain of physics and biology have also strengthened this faith. We should carefully examine and interpret experience, he says, "following the clue furnished by Quran which regards experience within and without and symbolic or reality describes by it, as the first and last visible and invisible", God is prior to all existing things: even when all the things will perish the one reality, that is, He, will remain. He is thus the first and the last. God is even invisible as we cannot see him by our eyes and cannot form an adequate conception of him. He is visible in so far as we mark His prints in the visible aspects of nature and see Him by the eye of our heart. The approach of Quran to this important topic is both intellectual and emotional. "The Quran sees signs of the ultimate reality in the Sun" and the "Moon", "the lengthening out of shadows", "the alternation of the day and night", the variety of human colors and tongues, the alternative of the days of success and reverse among peoples, in the whole of nature as revealed to the sense perception of man. And the Muslim's duty is to reflect on these signs and not to pass by them as if he is deaf and blind, for he who does not see these signs in this life will remain blind to the realities of the life to come. According to Quran these are signs of existence of God for the people who try to understand it. "He is one who causes life and who causes death and to him belong the alternation of day and night. Why do you not understand them" asks the Quran. He gives His hearing and sight and mind. It is He who makes the night and the day and the sun and the moon which float on their respective orbits. Who causes the growth of the green fields, palm trees, grapes and all kinds of fruits? In all this there is a proof (of existence of reality) for the people who understand it. There are also proofs for the man who thinks over the law of the night and the day, the sun and the moon. Similarly, there are proofs to realize the truth in all that has been spread on this earth for the various species. But strongly enough, man is yet ungrateful and little thanks does he pay for all this.

The Quran over and again emphasizes God's knowledge in verses like; and with Him are the keys of the invisible. None but he knoweth them. And he knoweth what is in the land and the sea. Not a leaf falleth but he knoweth it, not a grain aimed the darkness of earth, naught of wet or dry.....Again, while talking of God's omniscience, the Quran uses two words. Alimun (knowledge in general) and Kabirum (Knowledge of the unknown), which indicates and emphasizes on God's Knowledge.

Iqbal himself admits this when he says that the universe is a moment in the life of God, and again that the nature is to God what character is to the human self. Insofar a God is all inclusive, and there is nothing alien to Him, His creation is free despite His knowledge. Hence fact that God possesses knowledge of events before they occur does not do away with His creation and its originality so long as He creates from within his nature. God's perfection lies in the fact that He has got such as complete and precise knowledge of the conditions obtaining in the universe that He has been proclaimed in the Quran as all knowing, all perfect and absolute. Thus God's Knowledge is not incompatible with his creativity and originality, as it was erroneously thought by Iqbal God has the knowledge of particular events before they occur, and His omniscience is based on His complete conversance with the overall universal conditions: it is calculation or estimation which enables God to foretell future events. In this sense, human and divine knowledge differs in degree more than in kind.

References

1. Ansari AA. Iqbal Essays and studies Ghalib Academy New Delhi. 1978.
2. Ashraf E. A critical exposition of Iqbal's philosophy Adam publishers & Distributes New Delhi. 2003.
3. Azad JN. Iqbal Mind and art, Jammu, Jay Kay Book House. 1998.
4. Bhat AR. Iqbal's Approach to Islam. Islamic book foundation New Delhi. 1996.
5. Brubacher J. Modern Philosophies of education, New Delhi, Tota-Mc-Graw-Hill Publication company Ltd.
6. Dar BA. Introduction of the thought of Iqbal Iqbal Academy Pakistan Lahore. 1981.
7. Dar BA. Articles on Iqbal Iqbal Academy 116, Meleod Road Lahore. 1997.
8. Deboer TJ. The history of Philosophy in Islam comso publications Darya Gung, New Delhi. 1903.
9. Fatahpora F. Iqbal Sab Kay Liye. Delhi Educational publishing house. 1981.
10. Fyzee, Ashraf AA. Modern Approach to Islam Asian publishing house. 1963.
11. Grover V. Mohammad Iqbal, Deep and Deep publications F-159, Rajuri Garden, New Delhi. 1995.
12. Habib S. Iqbal's Retures Melodize Educations, New Delhi, Adam publishers and distributors. 2000.
13. Saiyidain KG. Iqbal Educational Philosophy National Council of Research and Training Sri Auronbido Marg, New Delhi. 1988.
14. Journal of Hamdard Islamic Hamdard Foundation Pakistan.
15. Iqbaliyat, Journal of Iqbal Academy Pakistan Lahore. Muslim India, Delhi Magazine.