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Significance of Iqbal's Wisdom Poetry

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Abstract: The distinguishing feature of Iqbal's poetry is his "conscious concerns" about issues vital to the Ummah. These concerns also provide the key to understand the psycho-dynamics of Iqbal's mind and help us to appreciate the reasons for which his poetry has become meaningful for the Ummah. Iqbal's poetry has to be considered as "contemplative or higher poetry" in that the response is born of his intellect. Iqbal is a poet of "intellectual conception" and "intuition expression" wherein the inner meaning dominates totally over the form. The "vital operation" of which Iqbal's poetry is a manifestation is an intellectual conception born of the poet's wisdom.

Ahmad Shawqi, the famous Egyptian poet, while paying homage to the poet-philosopher Iqbal, made an extremely perceptive remark as follows:

> Iqbal was unique among the Muslim poets in the sense that, while almost all of his contemporaries were singing praises of the high ups or indulging in indolent love poetry, central to the *conscious concerns* of Iqbal were the issues that were of vital importance to the Muslim Ummah, both on the theoretical as well as the practical level (emphasis added).[1]

The construct "conscious concerns," according to Shawqi, distinguished Iqbal from his contemporary poets and thinkers. The same expression also provides the key to understanding the psycho-dynamics of Iqbal's mind, and leads us to appreciate the reasons for which Iqbal's poetry has become significantly important and meaningful to us.

In the perspective of Islamic metaphysics, the phenomenon of consciousness, discerned in the world in a hierarchical manner, is a manifestation of the Divine Consciousness. The total manifestation of the Divine Consciousness, a self-disclosure *(tajallī)* of the Divine Attribute of Knowledge (*'ilm*), is the human intelligence. In the same way, it is only man, which has the gift of speech because he alone among earthly creatures is made "in the image of God" in a direct and integral manner.[2] It is the summit and perfection of human intelligence and, therefore, of human consciousness. Speech is as it were the

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immaterial, though sensory, body of our will and our understanding.[3] Similarly, human speech or human language attains its full plenitude or perfect deployment in poetry. If the summit and perfection of human consciousness is human language, then poetry or the poetic art could likewise be termed as the summit and perfection of human language. This necessarily entails that, not only in the Islamic traditional perspective but also in the traditional oriental theories of art, poetry is a conscious activity never separated from the Intellect. It is never envisaged as "emotions recollected in tranquility" or "a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings."[4] According to this perspective, poetry is not the expression of the subjective experiences of the separated ego of the poet, but the fruit of a vision of a reality, which transcends the being of the poet, and for which the poet must become the expositor and guide.[5] This does not mean, however, that consciousness should be reduced to rationality alone, i.e., discursive thought or reason severed from its transcendent poetic roots.[6] As pointed by Iqbal: "The total reality ... has other ways of invading our consciousness"; there are "non-rational modes of consciousness ... there is the possibility of unknown levels of consciousness" and "there are potential types of consciousness lying close to our normal consciousness."[7] How do these "other ways of invasion" relate to poetry? Iqbal tells us that the questions that call for an intellectual vision of reality for their answers are "common to religion, philosophy and higher poetry."[8]

The point made above is elucidated by other well-known poets. Jami referred to the same doctrine in the following verses:

> What is poetry? The song of the bird of the Intellect.
> What is poetry? The similitude of the world of eternity.
> The value of the bird becomes evident through it,
> And one discovers whether it comes from the oven of a bath house or a rose garden.
> It composes poetry from the Divine rose garden;
> It draws its power and sustenance from that sacred precinct.[9]

Likewise, Milton in his *Paradise Lost* (Book II -17; Book III - 51) wrote of a vision which would then be translated into poetry.

> And chiefly thou O Spirit, that dost prefer
> Before all Temples the upright heart and pure,
> Instruct me, for thou know'st:
> So much the rather thou celestial light
> Shine inward and the mind through her powers
> irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
> Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
> Of things invisible to mortal sight.[10]

Valmiki, who composed *Ramayana,* is reported to have been ordered to record a vision granted to him. "Then only, after concentrated meditation, when the whole story lay like a picture in his mind, he began to shape it into shalokas."[11]

Dante in his *Divine Comedy* says in the same vein:

> I am one who hearkens when
> Love inspires me, and I put thought into word
> After the mode which He dictates within me.[12]

Higher Poetry and Iqbal

It is, therefore, significant and not a matter of mere coincidence that the words which denote poetry or poetic activity in all the major Islamic languages and the word which denotes consciousness *(shu'ūr)* share the common triliteral verbal root *sha'ara* which means "to become aware of" or "to be conscious of." The same conceptual underpinning is evident in the traditional definitions of poetry that are found in the classical works on literary theory and compilations of the technical terms.[13] For the purposes of our present study, however, we have fashioned afresh these definitions, which do not make them better but merely make them more elaborate and easily accessible. The need for this reformulation[14] is rooted in the fact that Iqbal, though standing as an out-post of the sensibility and the world view which the great masters of traditional Islamic literature adhered to, was at the same time a man of the modern age.[15] The definitions are listed here in their hierarchical order, which is also the order of their scope and level of comprehensiveness. Poetry can be defined as such:

1. Language, in-formed[16] or moulded by metrical structures[17] and rhythmic patterns, is called poetry.
2. Language, in-formed by metrical structures and rhythmic patterns and manipulated in an excellent and beautiful manner, is called poetry.
3. Language, in-formed by metrical structures and rhythmic patterns and manipulated in an excellent and beautiful manner, is called poetry provided it does not take place involuntarily.
4. Language, in-formed by metrical structures and rhythmic patterns and manipulated in an excellent and beautiful manner, is called poetry provided it does not take place involuntarily.[18] The content, which is thus expressed beautifully, pertains to the formal aspect of beauty *(jamāl ṣuwarī).*[19]

5. Language, in-formed by metrical structures and rhythmic patterns and manipulated in an excellent and beautiful manner, is called poetry provided it is not involuntary and manifests beauty of expression. The content, which is thus expressed beautifully, pertains not to the outward form of beauty *(jamāl ṣuwarī)* but to the beauty[20] of the inner meaning *(jamāl ma 'nawī)*.[21]

What distinguishes Iqbal from other Urdu poets is that his major works belong to the last of the definitions of poetry listed above which, in fact, is the highest class of poetry.[22]

One may also look at Iqbal's work by juxtaposing it with the works of other poets in the Indian subcontinent. It can be said that the Urdu poetry of the Indian subcontinent, at the time when Iqbal emerged on the literary scene, could be *grosso modo* classified into four categories.

1. Contemplative or higher poetry in which the inner meaning *(ma 'na)* dominates over the outward form. In every day language, it is called the poetry of ideas and concepts as found in some of the poetic works of Mir and Ghalib.[23]

2. Poetry where the process of sublimation of feelings, sentiments and the sense impressions is the dominant motif as in most of the poetic works of Mir and some of the lyrics of Ghalib.

3. Poetry of lexical and linguistic techniques, i.e., poetry which incorporates the appropriate skills like play on words, use of proverbs, adages and other linguistic resources and devices. Poetic works of Dhawq and Dagh provide examples of this kind of Urdu poetry.

4. Poetry of literary embellishment and rhetorical devices. Most of the poetry of the Lucknow School falls into this category as does a part of Mu'mīn's poetic works and *Mathnawi Gulzar-i-Nasim.*[24]

Iqbal is neither the poet of sublimation, nor of the lexical/linguistic techniques and resources, nor of the literary embellishments and rhetorical devices though he uses all these elements in a consummate manner. Iqbal's poetry belongs, essentially and predominantly, to the first category. He is a poet of intellectual-conception and intuition-expression wherein the *ma 'nā* (inner meaning) dominates totally over the *ṣīrah* (form). It is, however, still different from the Urdu poetry of the same category, both in its inner dynamics and content of the inner meaning. While Iqbal's poetic master pieces were a fruit of an intuitive vision associated with the realm of the intelligible, the ideas and concepts in the works of the other poets were, by and large, conventional ideas shunted off from Sufism and the Illuminationist Schools. The psycho-dynamics of the common run of the poets was different in the sense that it stemmed from a different level of the artist's

being. At this point we encounter the question of the levels of consciousness which is central to the gradation of poetry into hierarchical levels, ranging from the most mundane and facile versification to the most sublime degree of inspired poetry.[25] Keeping ourselves within the same perspective but making our terms of reference more concise, we can say that poetry could be considered as the response or activity of a part of our being which, manipulated by the faculty of imagination, manifests itself in linguistic patterns. Those who represent the poetry of lexical/literary techniques and rhetorical devices or, in other words, the skilful craftsmanship of the poetic art, bring into play their rational faculties only and, to a certain extent, the lower reaches of imagination. It is a response born of the cerebral and discursive part of their being. Poetry of sublimation of feelings and sentiments is born of the response of the passional soul or the psychic activity surging and overflowing from the emotive self.[26] Contemplative or higher poetry is the response of the Intellect, i.e., born of intellection.[27] The reason Iqbal's poetry has to be considered as contemplative or higher poetry is, precisely, that the response is born of his intellect. His life is, as if, in the realm of the intelligible and his faculties entertain their imprint, the ideas, in the way ordinary people receive the effects and impressions of events and sense data. What do we mean, then, by the entertainment of ideas? It is the intuition of things as they are on higher than empirical levels of reference.

The terms "intuition" and expression are used here as the equivalents of "conception" and "generation" and, in using these, we are not thinking either of Bergson or of Croce. By "intuition" we mean an intellection extending beyond the range of dialectic to that of the eternal "reasons." It is, therefore, contemplation rather than thinking. Contemplation, in turn, implies to raise our level of reference from the empirical to the ideal, from observation to vision, from any auditory sensation to audition and so on. We must emphasise that contemplation is an act and not a passion. Contrary to what modern psychology says, we do not see in "inspiration" the up-rush or in-rush of an instinctive and subconscious will. "Inspiration" is an elevation of the artist's being to *super-conscious* and *supra-individual* levels. In this the poet or artist is not a passive instrument. "He" is much rather actively and consciously making use of "himself" as an instrument. Inspiration and aspiration, therefore, are not exclusive alternatives. It seems that the caricaturing of inspired poetry of the 20th century Surrealists with their "automatic writing" stems from a confusion, which they made between the light of the super-conscious with the darkness and the chaos of the sub-conscious. Therefore, man incapable of contemplation, in the sense

described above, cannot be an artist but a skilful workman. It is demanded of an artist to be both a contemplative and a good workman. This is precisely what is meant by "higher poetry" to which Iqbal's major works conform.[28]

Iqbal's Wisdom Poetry

Let us now briefly consider how the form of the artistic creation - in the case of the poet, a verbal crystallisation - is evoked? Human activity, in this regard as in others, works in a manner analogous to the Divine Activity, the Act of the Logos. The human operation reflects the manner of operation *in divinis*. The art of the human artist is his creation as the universe is the divine creation. The intuition-expression or, in other words, conception-articulation, of an imitable form is an intellectual conception born of an artist's wisdom just as the eternal reasons are born of the Eternal Wisdom. The images arise naturally in the spirit, not by way of an aimless inspiration, but in purposeful and vital operation "by a word conceived in the intellect."

The words "conceived in the intellect" come from a statement of St. Thomas Aquinas and we have so far only alluded to the doctrines of the Christian and Hindu literary traditions. Moreover, we have not quoted from Iqbal's poetic works either. This was, in the first place, to escape the charge of circular reasoning (that is to define Iqbal by quoting Iqbal himself) and, secondly, to place Iqbal in a universal, and a richer, perspective. However, there are strikingly close similarities of the doctrines mentioned above with the doctrines of the Islamic poetic tradition, to which Iqbal was a direct heir, that necessitate more than a few passing remarks.

According to Firdawsī, Sanaʾī, ʿAttār, Saʿdī, Rūmī, Jāmī and other masters of Persian literature, poetry is the fruit of a vision that is articulated by the poet. To quote their exact formulation, "it is conceived in the intellect and then born through the wisdom of the poet." The word used for wisdom is *ḥikmah* (sapiential wisdom) and the intellect is referred to by the words " *ʿaql, zamir, dil* or *jan,* etc."

One of the greatest authorities of Islamic metaphysics and sufism is Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn ʿArabī who wrote not only several hundred prose works, but also three *divans* of poetry and many thousands of additional verses scattered throughout his prose writings. As the greatest Muslim theoretician of imagination, he was able to utilise - with perfect awareness of what he was doing - the possibilities of poetical expression gained through imaginal perception.

For the Shaykh as well, the subject matter of poetry is not something that one thinks about as one might think about a problem in dogmatic

theology. Rather, it is something that is seen with the inner eye and heard with the inner ear. Only then it is described.[29]

So, whether we call it higher poetry, designate it as the poetry of gnomic wisdom, give it the title of sapiential or contemplative poetry or classify it as inspired poetry, all these appellations refer to one and the same reality which is situated at the junction between the form and essence and opens onto the Infinite. It is an activity in which the human poet is but the imitator of the Divine Poet since his "logical" utterance is simultaneously a "poetical" work.[30]

Thus, we repeat that the "vital operation," of which Iqbal's poetry is a manifestation, is an intellectual conception born of the poet's wisdom. Thus it is not surprising to find Iqbal saying: "Poetry is the heir of prophecy" or refers to himself as "of one voice with the trustworthy Gibra'il" or declares that "poetry that communicates the message of eternity is either the song of Gibra'il or the trumpet of Isrāfīl."[31] By doing this, Iqbal places himself squarely in the traditional continuity of Islamic literature, draws the sap of poetry from it and eventually becomes perhaps the finest flower that blossomed in the withering garden of traditional Islamic poetry.[32] This point has been well made in the study by John Haywood which, however, focuses mainly on the formal aspect of this continuity:

> Iqbal is in the long line of classical Islamic poets. Indeed, he is perhaps the last great classical Islamic poet.... The scholar familiar with the poetical classics of Arabic and Persian has the feeling, after reading Iqbal, that he is very much in the same tradition. Indeed, the last way to think of Iqbal is as a Pakistani poet. Rather does he speak for Islam universally and for the common ground between Islam and the other major world religions.
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> ...A large proportion of the verses in his work is truly gnomic poetry - "*ḥikmah*" wisdom in the highest sense of the word. Moreover, they are not wisdom only to Muslims, or to Orientals, but to men of every creed and race. This is one of Iqbal's great achievements that he bridged the gap between East and West, and gave utterance to the common ground in the great religious and philosophical systems of the world. [33]

In the context of the issue of formal and spiritual continuity that we have just mentioned, the question that is often debated in Iqbal studies is whether Iqbal was classical in both matter and manner or in style and imagery only! In other words, did he express new ideas, new matter in a classical manner? Old symbols - new message; traditional forms, modern content! A definitive answer to this problem requires further research and comparative studies with the great figures of the Islamic

tradition that could reveal the intellectual aspect of this continuity. In my view, however, he represents a continuity of both form and content. To maintain this position, one has to explain the differences that exist between the content of his poetry and that of the classics of the Islamic literary tradition. In this regard, some scholars have also pointed out, often in a manner of reproach, that much of Iqbal's poetry focuses on the problems and concerns of his own community. It is also something, which, at least apparently, runs contrary to universality, which is fundamental to sapiential poetry.

The key to the understanding of this problem again lies in the doctrine of art explained above. Poetry "has something to say" which "cannot be said." It "has something to say": it may not be didactic in the negative sense of the word but, if genuine, it is also the result of a kind of necessity, the outcome of a "pressure" or a "need" to crystallise a "meaning" into a "form." Then, an invisible spiritual universe governs every sector of humanity. This spiritual universe not only determines the form, language and symbolism that the poetic inspiration of that sector of humanity has to take but also the "pressure" and the "need" that arise from the specific cosmic conditions pertaining to it. The specificity of this "urgent" and "necessitating" character of inspiration, under which the poetry of that particular sector comes into existence, does not prevent the poetic expression to be any thing less than perfect and to fulfill the first and the main criterion of art, i.e., nobility of content.[34] On a secondary and contingent level, the question of social responsibility also enters into consideration.[35] As an applied side of sapiential doctrine and art, practical wisdom has always occupied its legitimate place in human collectivities and a poet, being a responsible member of the collectivity, has to participate in it and has to undertake it as a part of his human and spiritual vocation. It is, therefore, neither the question of a dichotomy nor a contradiction of the claims of universality. It is rather the other side of the same intellection, which is turned towards more practical and immediate issues of human existence. Here, poetry is "given to" or rather "imposed upon" the poet. Consider the case of Shaykh Mahmud Shabistari, the author of *Gulshan-i Raz (The Secret Rose Garden)* which is one of the greatest masterpieces of Persian Sufi poetry. He was asked about some extremely sophisticated and subtle theological and esoteric questions. In his own words: "Everyone knows that during all my life, I have never intended to compose poetry. Although my temperament was capable of it, rarely did I choose to write poems." Yet, in spite of himself, Shabistari, within a few days, and through direct inspiration (*ilhām*) composed one of the most enduring and widely read masterpieces of oriental literature.

This brings us finally to the question of the purpose or "use" of sapiential poetry. It is instructive to look, first of all, at a few representative statements of Iqbal on the question. He said:

> I have no interest in the art of poetry, but I have some special objectives. To achieve these ends I have chosen the medium of poetry because of the state and conditions of this country.[36]

> All human art must be subordinated to this final purpose (i.e. life) and the value of every thing must be determined with reference to its life-yielding capacity.... The dogma of the art for the sake of art is a clever invention of decadence to cheat us out of life and power.[37]

Iqbal is again in conformity with the traditional theory of literature here. Coomaraswamy tells us "It is the same if we read the scriptures of any tradition or the authors like Dante or Ashvaghosha who tell us frankly that they wrote with other than 'aesthetic' ends in view."[38] Since, according to the Hindu tradition, the purpose of art and, of course, poetry is "to know immortal through mortal things" and the Christian doctrine announces that "the invisible things of God" (that is to say the ideas or eternal reasons of things, by which we know what they ought to be like) are to be seen in the things that are made. Dante could say, "the whole work was undertaken not for speculative but a practical end.... The purpose of the whole is to remove those who are living in this life from the state of wretchedness and to lead them to the state of blessedness."[39] Ashvaghosha declared his purpose in the following manner:

> This poem, pregnant with the burden of Liberation, has been composed by me in the poetic manner, not for the sake of giving pleasure but for the sake of giving peace, and to win over other-minded hearers. If I have dealt in it with subjects other than that of Liberation, that pertains to what is proper to poetry, to make it tasty, just as when honey is mixed with a sour medicinal herbs to make it drinkable. Since I beheld the world for the most part given over to objects of sense and disliking to consider Liberation, I have spoken here in the garb of poetry, holding that Liberation is the primary value.[40]

Plato was also explicit on the point since the Muses are given to us "that we may use them intellectually, not as a source of irrational pleasure but as an aid to the revolution of the soul within us, of which the harmony was lost at birth, to help in restoring it to order and content with its Self."[41]

We need not dwell on it because it is evident that, according to the traditional theory of literature, the foundations of art lie in the spirit, in metaphysical, theological and mystical knowledge, not in the knowledge

of the craft alone nor yet in genius, for this may be anything at all; in other words the intrinsic principles of art are essentially subordinate to the extrinsic principles of a higher order. Art is an activity, an exteriorisation, and thus depends by definition on a knowledge that transcends it and gives it order; apart from such knowledge art has no justification; it is knowledge which determines action, manifestation, form and never the reverse.

Conclusion

Sapiential poetry, then, is a means and a vehicle for the expression of truth and it complements logic in that it deals with forms of knowledge which are not accessible to the unaided logical faculties of man. Also, this poetry brings about the transformation of the soul and its sensibilities in a manner which is not possible otherwise. It causes an assent in the soul of man and in this regard it has an almost alchemical quality about it, a power to transform knowledge, making it a "tasted" fruit which is digested and which transforms one's being, thus, through its re-echoing of the fundamental truths of our existence aids man to return to the higher states of being and consciousness.

Finally, art, even the highest form as in the case of sapiential poetry, is only the means to an end. It is a manner of "seeing through a glass, darkly," and although it is far better than not to see at all, the utility of every art must come to an end when "vision is face to face."

> A finite image of Infinity:
> This is the nature of all poetry.
> All human work to its last limit tends;
> Its Archetype in Heaven never ends.[42]

Notes

1. I am indebted to my teacher, Mirza Muhammad Munawwar, for the views of the Egyptian intelligentsia on Iqbal.

2. The Biblical expression says "in the image of God." In the Islamic tradition it appears in various authentic traditions of the Prophet (SAS). Also see Ibn 'Arabī, *Al-Futuḥāt al Makkiyyah*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dar Sadir, n.d), 124, 490; Murata and Chittick, *The Vision of Islam* (Lahore: Suhail Academy, 2000),120.

3. It may, however, be remembered that speech is not necessarily exteriorised, the articulated thought also involves language.

4. See R. L. Brett & A. R. Jones eds., *Lyrical Ballads* (London: Methuen & Co Ltd., 1963), 260. On the modern, reductionist conception of poetry, see S. H. Nasr, *Islamic Art and Spirituality,* (Cambridge: Islamic Text Society, 1987),

91; A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Christian and Oriental Philosophy of Art* (New York: Dover,1956), 29.

5. See Nasr, *Islamic Art and Spirituality,* 93.

6. Which is, as if, a reflection of the Intellect on the mental plane.

7. Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan/Institute of Islamic Culture, 1989), 13, 14, 37, 146.

8. See his complete statement in Ibid., 1.

9. Jami, *Sisalat al-dhahab, cited in* Nasr, *Islamic Art and Spirituality,* 91.

10. John Milton, *The Complete Poetical Works of John Milton* (Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1941),155 and 199; Nasr, *Islamic Art and Spirituality,* 96.

11. See A. K. Coomarasawamy and Sister Nivedita, *Myths of the Hindus and the Buddhists,* (New York, 1914), 23-24, cited in Nasr, *Islamic Art and Spirituality,* 93. Also see A. K. Coomarasawamy, *Christian and Oriental Philosophy of Art,* 53-55.

12. Dante, "Purgatorio," XXIV. 52-54, *The Divine Comedy,* translated by Laurance Binyon in *The Portable Dante,* ed. Paolo Milano (New York: The Viking Press, 1995), 312.

13. For example see *Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn,* vol. I (Lahore: Suhail Academy, 1993), 744-46. For an account of the views of Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina see S. Kamal, *The Poetics of Alfarabi and Avicena* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1991); Also see, S. H. Nasr and O. Leaman eds., *History of Islamic Philosophy,* vol. 2 (London: Routledge, 1996), 970.

14. For this formulation I am indebted to Mr. Ahmad Javid.

15. This point has always been emphasised in most of the studies of Iqbal's mind and art. See Annemarie Schimmel, *The Two Colored Brocade* (Chapel Hill: Bibliotheca Persica Press, 1992), 35; Anwar Ibrahim, *The Asian Renaissance* (Kuala Lumpur/Singapore: Time Books, 1996), 35.

16. This word conveys the idea of "shaping, giving form to, fashioning." See Nasr, *Islamic Art and Spirituality,* 90; *Oxford Dictionary,* vol. I (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 1341.

17. In so far as number and measure are nothing but expressions of unity, they constitute the essence of rhythm as the "formal" pole of poetry. See Ray Lavingston, *The Traditional Theory of Literature* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1962.

18. See Annemarie Schimmel, *The Two Colored Brocade,* 38.

19. That is, the sublimation of the sensible or the sense data (*maḥsūs*) into a

more subtle and refined form or a higher integrated pattern.

20. That is to say that as the impression or rather the imposition of the *ma 'na* increases, the outward form becomes more transparent and reveals more readily its inner meaning. Since we are dealing with poetry here, it would mean that, in the case of this highest level of poetry, the *ma 'na* comes to dominate totally over *sūrah* (outward form) and remoulds the outward form from within (without, of course, destroying the poetic canons).

21. There is yet another, rather esoteric, definition of poetry as the beauty of expression as well as the manifestation of beauty. It is the total and perfect expression of the manifest which is always rooted in that which is completely un-manifest." This is to say that it is rooted in the ineffable principle, the silence, which is the alpha and omega of all poetry and all music.

22. Obviously, this should not be taken to mean that Iqbal did not try his hand on versification pure and simple or that the other Urdu poets did not reach the heights of excellence. It is a question of the predominant characteristic only, otherwise examples of "language informed by metrical structures and rhythmic patterns" abound in Iqbal's *Baqiyat* (Disowned Verses) and, on the other hand, first rate poetry is to be found in all the great poets of Urdu.

23. In the same category, one has to include those verses, lyrics, odes, poems and epics which are either didactic or versify some historical or mythological story adapted for the purpose.

24. See Mohammed Sadiq, *A History of Urdu Literature,* 2nd ed. (Karachi: Oxford, 1984); Ali Jawwad Zaidi, *A History of Urdu Literature* (Lahore: Sahitia Academy, 1993).

25. Some of the leading authorities on the religious sciences have given the title of "the poet of inspiration" to Iqbal. See Amin Ahsan Islahi, "Dr. Iqbal - The Poet of Inspiration," *Iqbaliyat,* (Urdu) 27, no. 4 (January, 1987):13; Abu 'l-Hasan 'Ali Nadavi, *Rawa'i' Iqbal* (Damascus: Dar al-Fikr,1960).

26. According to Haywood, "The fact is that by accepted Islamic poetical canons, Wordsworth's poetry would rate very low - much lower than Shelley's - whereas to most English tastes these two poets are rated almost equal." See John A. Haywood, "The Wisdom of Muhammad Iqbal - Some Considerations of Form and Content," in *The Sword and the Sceptre* ed. Dr. Riffat Hasan (Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan, 1977), 162-175.

27. It must be noted that there is a distinction between reason and intellect. See S. H. Nasr, *Knowledge and the Sacred,* (Lahore: Suhail Academy, 1988); Martin Lings, *Ancient Beliefs and Modern Superstitions* (Lahore: Suhail Academy, 1988), 57.

28. The traditional scheme describes human types as the *jananic,* the *bhaktic* and the *karamic.* Iqbal was *jananic* or, if one prefers, a pneumatic type.

29. For details, see W. C. Chittick, "Revelation and Poetic Imagery," in *Imaginal Worlds* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1994), 67-

77. This doctrine of the imaginal world and its significance for artistic creation received further elaboration in the works of Mulla Sadra.

30. In their essence, "poetry" and "logic" are one and the same. See Nasr, *Islamic Art and Spirituality*, 91.

31. Respectively, in *Javid Nama,* tr. A. J. Arberry (London: Unwin, 1966), 65; "Zabur-i-'Ajam," and "Zarb-i-Kalim" in *Kulliyat-i Iqbal* (Lahore: Iqbal Academy, 1994), 430, 644. More could be cited from Iqbal on this point. Of particular importance, however, is the following quotation from his prose "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 find 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 be fully and in all seriousness what Heine playfully called himself "Ritter Von dem Heiliegen Geist," one who shall teach us to see the working out of our highest ideals in the everyday life of world and to find in devotion to the advancement of that life, not merely a sphere for an 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", Syed Abdul Vahid ed., *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1964), 95, 96.

32. See Annemarie Schimmel, *Gabriel's Wing* (Lahore: Iqbal Academy, 1989); Mirza Muhammad Munawwar, *Iqbal ki Farsi Ghazal* (Karachi: Aiwan-i-Urdu, 1977).

33. See John A. Haywood, "The Wisdom of Muhammad Iqbal - Some Considerations of Form and Content", 162, 172-3.

34. Perfect art is characterised by: nobility of content, this being a spiritual condition apart from which art has no right to exist; exactness of symbolism; and purity of style and elegance. See F. Schuon, *Language of the Self* (Madras: Ganesh, 1954), 122-135.

35. A contemporary poet such as Rilke is aware of this aspect which is reflected in his advise to a young would-be poet. See Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letter to a Young Poet* (New York: Random House, 1987), 6.

36. A letter written in 1935, see S. 'Ata Ullah ed., *Iqbal Namah,* vol. I (Lahore: Muhammad Ashraf, 1951). Iqbal wrote: "In poetry, literature for the sake of literature has never been my aim. There is no time left to me to attend to the delicacies of art. The purpose is to revolutionise modes of thinking. That is all. Keeping this principle in view, I try to express what I find useful. No wonder if the coming generations may not recognise me as a poet." "I have never known myself as a poet. Therefore, I have no rival competitors and I do not recognise any as such. I have no interest in the art of poetry. Yes, I have some specific goals to achieve, which I always keep before me. I took to poetry to explain

these goals with reference to the conditions and traditions obtaining in the country, otherwise you will not find any good coming from that low-minded person who accuses me of writing poetry." S. Ata Ullah ed., *Iqbal Namah*, vol. I, pp. 108, 195.

37. Schimmel, *Gabreil's Wing*, 62.

38. A. K. Coomarasawamy, *Christian and Oriental Philosophy of Art*, 25.

39. Cited in Ibid., 54.

40. Ashvaghosha, *Saudarananda,* colophon, in Ibid., 54.

41. *Timaeus* 47 D, in Ibid., 55

42. F. Schuon, *The Garland - Poems* (Bloomington: Abodes, 1994), 85.