

## **Iqbal's Ideas for the Restoration of Muslim Dynamism**

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### **Abstract**

Islam seeks to develop the human minds to a total submission to Allah the Almighty. Through its divine guidance, the Qur'an ushered a large section of the masses in Arabia from the darkness of ignorance into knowledge and enlightenment of their souls. Islam grew from a humble beginning into a mighty civilizational force. Islamic civilization like all other civilizations, started to decline after reaching its pinnacle of success. Ever since the fall of Baghdad in 1258, the Muslim world has been confronted with endless problems in all fields of life. Colonization of Muslim lands by the West had created the knowledge and technological gap between them and their colonizers. Being subjected to colonization, neo-colonization, and now globalization, Muslims are lagging behind other communities of the world. The Muslim minds which once came up with great ideas, discoveries, innovation and inventions, at the moment somehow become less prolific, and experiencing a state of lethargy and malaise. In realizing the great challenges faced by the Muslims in the modern world, this research intends to re-visit Iqbal's ideas to remedy the awful situations experienced by the Ummah.

**Keywords:** Iqbal, Ideas, Restoration, Muslim Dynamism

Kedatangan Islam adalah untuk membimbing pemikiran manusia ke arah penyerahan secara seluruh kepada kekuasaan Allah. Al-Qur'an telah membimbing sejumlah besar orang Arab keluar dari kegelapan jahiliyah menuju ilmu dan pencerahan jiwa mereka. Dari permulaan yang kecil, agama Islam telah mulai kembang menjadi sebuah tamadun yang berpengaruh. Tamadun Islam seperti lain-lain tamadun di dunia telah mulai jatuh setelah mencapai kemuncak kejayaannya. Sejak dari kejatuhan Baghdad pada tahun 1258, dunia Islam telah menghadapi pelbagai masalah dari segala aspek keberadaannya. Penjajahan Barat ke atas negara-negara Islam telah menyebabkan Umat Islam ketinggalan dalam bidang ilmu dan teknologi. Disebabkan penjajahan, neo-kolonialisme dan yang terakhir globalisasi telah menyebabkan umat Islam ketinggalan berbanding dengan bangsa-bangsa lain di dunia. Pemikiran orang Islam yang di suatu masa dahulu yang mampu mencipta, membuat penemuan baru and berinovatif, kini telah menjadi kurang prolifik, menghadapi kelusuan dan tidak berupaya untuk menjana pemikiran

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baru. Menyedari cabaran besar yang dihadapi oleh umat Islam di zaman moden ini, kajian ini adalah bertujuan untuk melihat kembali ide-ide yang telah diberikan oleh Iqbal untuk mengatasi situasi malang yang dihadapi oleh umat Islam dewasa ini.

**Kata kunci:** Iqbal, Ide-Ide, Pemulihan semula, Dinamika Umat Islam

### **Introduction**

Muslims, who built a great civilization during the Golden Age of Islam, are now faced with a dreadful situation in many parts of the world. The situation in the Middle East seems to be more serious than any other part of the world, as it has been subjected to a constant political upheaval resulting from internal weaknesses and external interferences. It is ironic to state that though the Muslims control the riches of the world in the form oil and gas, they are somewhat lagging behind other communities, in many sectors of life. Disparities exist between the rich and poor Muslim countries in many areas of life. At the moment, the Ummah is bleeding as it has been torn apart by sectarian wars, and wars caused by external military intervention, the disunity among Muslim countries is more serious than ever before, and Muslims have been labeled by Western media as terrorists, fundamentalists and a whole lot of other obscure labels. Pockets of migrant Muslim population who are living in many European cities have been subjected to discrimination for being alien to the prevalent culture in those countries.

In realizing the complexity of the problems faced by the Muslims in the modern world, this paper intends to go back in time to revisit ideas given by Allama Muhammad Iqbal to remedy these pathetic conditions. As a man of potentials and caliber, Iqbal is a renowned thinker not only known so to the people in the East, but also to the people in the West. During his time, he propelled extremely well in all his endeavors; as a poet, philosopher, statesman, barrister, thinker, and a religious reformer. Since his message to the Ummah is timeless, and given the fact that Muslims have not much progressed in overcoming the situations they were in during Iqbal's time, this research would like to draw out lessons from his personal life experience and his advice for the betterment of the Ummah. As a prelude to the crux of this research, this paper will sparingly dwell on the condition of the Muslims during the heydays of their civilization.

### The Golden Age of the Muslims

During the Golden Age of Islam (750-1258) Muslims were in the forefront in conquering knowledge through scientific research, exploration and expeditions. In their pursuit of mastering new knowledge and technology, they were prepared and open to the idea of learning all that was beneficial from the earlier civilizations. As such, they borrowed ideas from Indians, Persians and Greeks as a way of enriching their own civilization. Adopt, adapt and assimilate, or integrate was the approach used by early Muslim scholars in taking knowledge from those outside the Islamic faith.<sup>1</sup> This meticulous approach in taking ideas from others and adapting those ideas which were not contradictory to the Islamic metaphysical framework (*aqā'id*) and Islamic worldview of the Muslims in the modern terminology is known as Islamization of knowledge.<sup>2</sup> While carrying out many pioneering works in the areas of natural and social sciences during their Golden Age, Muslim scholars were equally interested in the philosophical ideas of the ancient Greek philosophers, namely; Socrates (469-399BC), Plato (427-347BC), Aristotle (384-322BC) and others.

Besides learning from earlier civilizations, Muslim scholars went on further to expand and came up with some original and innovative ideas. This was the spirit and culture of learning that was prevalent during the early Muslim era of knowledge expansion and exploration. There exist evidences in the annals of both Islamic and Western history that deliberate the fact that early Muslim scholars introduced modern Western scholars to some of the philosophical ideas of the Greeks through the translated and annotated works written by them. Moreover, they also learnt from many pioneering works written by Muslim scholars and scientists in medicine, astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, algebra, trigonometry, alchemy, geography, sociology etc. At the moment, only a few Western scholars duly acknowledge the great contribution of Muslims towards science and scientific explorations that have taken place in the West.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Imron Rossidy, (1998). An analysis of al-Attas' and al-Faruqi's conceptions of Islamization of knowledge: implications for Muslim education. Selangor: International Islamic University Malaysia.

<sup>2</sup> Mohd Abbas, (1997). Human nature: A comparative study between western and Islamic psychology. Selangor: International Islamic University Malaysia.

<sup>3</sup> Hasan Langgulung, (1981). Beberapa tinjauan dalam pendidikan Islam. Kuala Lumpur: Penerbitan Pustaka Antara.

Much of the scholastic works accomplished during the Golden Age of the Muslims were either diminished or came to a standstill during the Mongols invasion of Baghdad led by Hulagu Khan in 1258. During the Mongol invasion, not only great number of Muslims was butchered, but also their libraries with large volumes of books and original manuscripts were burnt to ashes.<sup>4</sup> The era between the fall of Baghdad and the European colonization of Muslim lands in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries kept the Muslim scholars occupied in their own polemics in the area of Islamic jurisprudence. In addition to this, they were also busy bickering and discrediting one another. This situation persisted for very long in the Muslim world, even during the dawn of the Industrial Revolution in Britain. During the Industrial Revolution, the West had managed to advance many steps ahead in science and research, leaving the Muslim world lagging behind. The Muslims, who earlier did many pioneering works in the field of science, either produced little or showed no progress in their research works while Europeans made giant strides in science and technology during the Industrial Revolution. Impacts of internal conflicts, Western colonization, and, later on, globalization have caused a huge educational and technological gap between the Muslim countries and the West. At the moment, all Muslim countries are liberated from the clutches of colonial rule; however, even with their rich natural resources, they find it hard to be on par with the advanced nations of the world. One of the reasons for landing in such a situation is their neglect in developing their science and technology.<sup>5</sup>

### **The East and West Meet in Iqbal**

Allama Iqbal was not only a Muslim thinker and statesman; he was also a great poet and a mystic-philosopher. As a Muslim scholar during the Western era of colonization of the East, Iqbal's intellectual ability and performance were not limited for finding solutions to the pressing issues of any particular group. As a poet-philosopher, he was interested in a wide spectrum of issues that were very important for the survival of

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<sup>4</sup> Op.Cit, Imron Rossidy, 1998.

<sup>5</sup> Mahathir Mohamad, (1986) *The challenge*, Kuala Lumpur: Pelanduk Publications; Mahathir Mohamad, (2003). *Globalisation and the new realities*. Selangor: Pelanduk Publications (M) Sdn. Bhd.

the human race as a whole.<sup>6</sup> In describing how passionate Iqbal was in analyzing the problems and prescribing remedy to the human issues, Mustansir Mir writes:

Iqbal was deeply interested in the issues that have exercised the best minds of the human race—the issues of the meaning of life, change and constancy, freedom and determinism, survival and progress, the relation between the body and the soul, the conflict between reason and emotion, evil and suffering, the position and role of human beings in the universe—and in his poetry he deals with these and other issues. He had also read widely in history, philosophy, literature, mysticism, and politics, and, again, his catholic interests are reflected in his poetry.<sup>7</sup>

As well-grounded in religion and fully aware with the mindset of the people of the East and West, Iqbal bravely spoke his mind through his speeches, poetry and philosophical writings. In assessing the boldness of Iqbal in calling for a change in the East and West, R.A. Nicholson, the translator of *Asrari-Khudi* into English, very aptly wrote in his introduction to Iqbal's work: "Iqbal is a man of his age and a man in advance of his age; he is also a man in disagreement with his age".<sup>8</sup> Nicholson's words well explain Iqbal's nature and philosophy in life. He describes Iqbal as the one who was critical of what he read in the bygone history and of what he observed in the unfolding of events during his lifetime. The words too precisely befit Iqbal's personality as a Muslim scholar who aspired to see change and progress within the Muslim society of his time. Iqbal's character which was averse to what was the norm of his day is personally admitted by him while boldly stating his ambition in life and his critical nature in his poetry:

What can I do? My nature is averse to rest;  
My heart is impatient like the breeze in the poppy field:  
When the eye beholds an object of beauty  
The heart yearns for something more beautiful still;

<sup>6</sup> Mohd Abbas, (2011). Contribution of Iqbal's dynamic personality theory to Islamic psychology: A contrastive analysis with Freud and selected mainstream western psychology. Selangor: International Islamic University Malaysia.

<sup>7</sup> Mustansir Mir, (2009). Brief Life Sketch. <http://www.allamaiqbal.com>. Retrieved on 17/4/2009, p.1

<sup>8</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, (1983). The secrets of the self (Asrar-i-Khudi). (Renold A. Nicholson, Trans.). Lahore: SH. Muhammad Ashraf, p.xxxi

From the spark to the star, from the star to the sun  
 Is my quest;  
 I have no desire for a goal,  
 For me, rest spells death!  
 With an impatient eye and a hopeful heart  
 I seek for the end of that which is endless!<sup>9</sup>

At the time when Iqbal first mooted his ideas on his new philosophy related to the ego development theory, some scholars from the Islamic circles who were prevalent at that time in India criticized and scoffed at his ideas. Although this was the case, Iqbal was persistent with his ideas right from their inception until the very end of his life. Iqbal as a critical thinker who had mastered the Western philosophy, and also as a man well versed in the problems of the Islamic world was always in the forefront, with his sharp criticism on the weaknesses found in the societies of the East and the West. In his much praised, although controversial, anthology of poems known as the '*Asrari Khudi*', which was published in 1915, this is what he said to his critics:

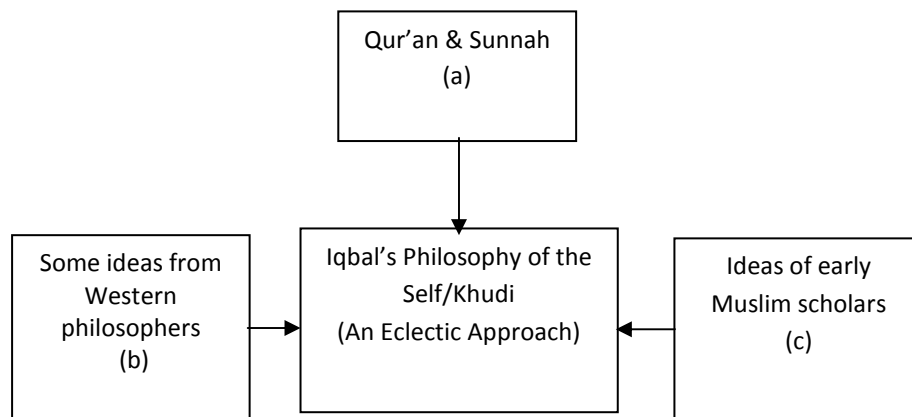
I am the voice of the poet of To-morrow  
 My own age does not understand my deep meanings,  
 My Yusuf (Joseph) is not for this market  
 I despair of my old companions<sup>10</sup>

As a Muslim philosopher of the modern age, Iqbal's ideas or rather his philosophical way of thinking on matters related to politics, social and religious reforms and progress in life are all in line or rather anchored in the true teachings of the two primary sources of Islam, namely the Qur'an and Sunnah. Like the message of the Qur'an, Iqbal's philosophy too has the appeal of a universal message to the whole of mankind. As such, in the process of formulating his own pattern of philosophy, he has eclectically combined the gist of philosophical ideas taken from prominent philosophers of the West and the East (refer Figure 1).

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<sup>9</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, & K.G. Saiyidain, (1995). Iqbal's poetry. Patna: Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, p.11

<sup>10</sup> Op.Cit., Muhammad Iqbal, 1983, p.4



(Figure 1: Iqbal's Philosophy, see Notes)<sup>11</sup>

In describing the ingenuity of Iqbal as a scholar who has read well in many areas of knowledge, Munnawar (1985) said the following:

Iqbal had keenly studied philosophy of both the East and the West. He was well versed in literature, history and law. A student of science he perhaps never was, yet he kept a keen eye on the latest scientific discoveries and theories. Being thus equipped intellectually he was in a position to pick up good points from different systems of polity, philosophy, economics and what not, and weave them into a new pattern.<sup>12</sup>

Through the marriage of ideas borrowed from the scholars of the East and the West, he created his own philosophy, otherwise known as the philosophy of the Self or the Ego philosophy. Iqbal emphasized very much on the existence of ego and its development in relation to human personality development. As a Muslim scholar, Iqbal was well read in

<sup>11</sup> Notes:

a) The dynamic teachings of the Qur'an on man and the good example shown by the Prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H.).

b) Ideas of Western philosophers which are not contrary to the Islamic principles. Iqbal agreed with some of the ideas of Goethe, Bergson, Nietzsche, Mc Taggart and also some existential philosophers.

c) Mainly mystical ideas of Ar-Rumi. He also liked the reformation works done by Al-Afghani and other Muslim reformers.

<sup>12</sup> Muhammad Munawwar, (1985). Iqbal and Quranic wisdom. (2<sup>nd</sup>.edn.) Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan, p.18

Western philosophy. Among the Western philosophers, Iqbal had immersed deeply into the ideas of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), William James (1842-1910), Mc Taggart (1866-1925), Goethe (1749-1832), and others. Any avid reader of Iqbal's ideas will come to realize that though many philosophers and Sufis had influenced him in his philosophical thoughts, the three great philosophers who had significantly influenced Iqbal in developing his ego philosophy were Mawlana Jalaluddin Ar-Rumi (767-820), Nietzsche (1844-1900) and Henri Bergson (1859-1941).<sup>13</sup> In formulating his philosophy of the ego through the eclectic method, Iqbal did not find any problem merging ideas taken from the good part of the Western philosophy with that of the Islamic heritage of the past. Iqbal strongly believed that sharing of intellectual heritage between the West and the Muslims was not something new in the history of human civilization. To him, it had happened before and can happen again and again. In defending this view point he wrote:

There was a time when European thought received inspiration from the world of Islam. The most remarkable phenomenon of modern history, however, is the enormous rapidity with which the world of Islam is spiritually moving towards the West. There is nothing wrong in this movement, for European culture, on its intellectual side, is only a further development of some of the most important phases of the culture of Islam. Our only fear is that the dazzling exterior of European culture may arrest our movement and we may fail to reach the true inwardness of that culture.<sup>14</sup>

In analyzing the above statement made by Iqbal one can deduce the understanding that what he liked West's dynamism and intellectual advancement in science and technology, and not its social life that was cut loose from religious acquaintances. He cautioned Muslims not to fall into the trap of this aspect of the Western civilization. In one of his poems, Iqbal gave the following advice to Muslims:

The East in imitating the West is deprived of its true self.  
It should attempt, instead, a critical appraisal!  
The power of the West springs not from her music  
Nor from the dance of her unveiled daughters!

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<sup>13</sup> Op.Cit. Mohd Abbas,2011

<sup>14</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, (1996). The reconstruction of religious thought in Islam, Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture,p.6



Her strength comes not from irreligion  
 Nor her progress from the adoption of the Latin script  
 The power of the West lies in her Arts and Sciences  
 At their fire, has it kindled its lamps.<sup>15</sup>

Among the scholars of the East, Iqbal liked personalities like Imam Syafie (767-820), Imam Al-Ghazali (1058-1111), Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi (767-820), and Jamaluddin Al-Afghani (1838-1897). As a man interested in Islamic mysticism (*Tasawwuf*), Iqbal read deeply the ideas of many mystic /Sufi scholars; namely, Hallaj (858-922), Ibn Arabi (1165-1240) and Rumi. Of all the mystics of the East, Iqbal liked Jalaluddin Rumi most profoundly. Out of love for this scholar, Iqbal immersed himself in reading Rumi's celebrated work known as the *Mathnawi*, which contains 25,700 lines of poems. After knowing Rumi through his writings, Iqbal took this great sage as his spiritual guide in mysticism even though he had lived 700 years earlier than Iqbal's time. Iqbal's relation with his teacher was a spiritual one rather than a physical and temporal one.<sup>16</sup>

Iqbal claiming himself as the follower of Rumi, praised his spiritual guide who inspired him in finding solutions of many spiritual matters. In one of his poetries, he described his veneration towards his teacher in these words:

Inspired by the genius of the Master of Rum.  
 I rehearse the sealed book of secret lore.  
 I am but as the spark that gleams for a moment.  
 His burning candle consumed me, the moth;  
 His wine overwhelmed my goblet.  
 The master of Rum transmuted my earth to gold  
 And set my ashes aflame.  
 The grain of sand set forth from the desert,  
 That it might win the radiance of the sun.

<sup>15</sup> K.G. Saiyidain, (1977). *Iqbal's educational philosophy*. Lahore: SH Muhammad Ashraf, p.20

<sup>16</sup> Mohd Abbas, (1997). *Human nature: A comparative study between western and Islamic psychology*. Selangor: International Islamic University Malaysia; Mohd Abbas. (2011). *Contribution of Iqbal's dynamic personality theory to Islamic psychology: A contrastive analysis with Freud and selected mainstream western psychology*. Selangor: International Islamic University Malaysia.

I am a wave and I will come to rest in his sea,  
 That I may make the glistening pearl mine own.  
 I who am drunken with the wine of his song.  
 Draw life from the breath of his words,<sup>17</sup>

Iqbal in developing his ego philosophy assimilated some of the dynamic teachings of Rumi. According to Vahid (1976), in analyzing Rumi's influence on Iqbal, some parallelism can be drawn between these two mystic-poets. The following are some of the similarities highlighted by Vahid:

- a) Their admiration for a life of ceaseless endeavour,
- b) Mysticism,
- c) Faith in love,
- d) Conception of God,
- e) Free-will,
- f) Creative Evolution, and
- g) Production of Perfect or Ideal Man.<sup>18</sup>

Reading Rumi's *Mathnavi* inspired Iqbal in producing poetical works like *Asrar-i-Khudi*, *Rumuz-i- Bekhudi* and *Javid Namah*. He had also claimed that it was Rumi who appeared in his dream and asked him to write the *Asrar-i-Khudi*. In the art of poetry, both Rumi and Iqbal had many similarities. Some of the similarities that can be traced are the following:

- a) They are both fond of introducing fables and apologues.
- b) Both quote extracts from the verses of the Qur'an.
- c) Both achieve dramatic effect by the use of dialogues.
- d) Both show admiration for the two Persian poets, Sanai and Attar.<sup>19</sup>

According to Vahid (1976), Iqbal as a modern Muslim philosopher discovered in the *mathnavi* a great deal of information and issues already mentioned in it long before the scholars and philosophers in the West started their quest to look for answers pertaining to questions on human nature and human existence survival on earth. Vahid's (1976) exact words on this point are:

<sup>17</sup> Op.Cit. Muhammad Iqbal, 1983, pp.9-10.

<sup>18</sup> Syed Abdul Vahid. (1976). Studies in Iqbal. Lahore: SH. Muhammad Ashraf, p.95

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., Vahid, 1976, p.94

In Rumi, Iqbal found Kant's Practical Reason, Fichte's Ethical Monism, Schleimacher's Religious point of view, Schopenhauer's urge for existence, Nietzsche's Will-to-Power, Bergson's Intuition and William James's Pure Experience. In fact, in Rumi, Iqbal found all that he had learnt to admire in various Western thinkers as well as all he had learnt from the Qur'an, and so he naturally turned to him as the Master.<sup>20</sup>

In reflecting on his mission and challenges in life with that of his spiritual guide (Rumi), Iqbal acknowledged that they both had some commonalities in wanting to contribute for the well-being of the Muslim *Ummah* of their times. Both these poet-philosophers were calling the Muslims of their respective time to cast off all fatalistic philosophies. At the same time, they called the masses to be bold and daring in facing the challenges of life. These poets also called for the realization of the power of the human ego and to use it for the dynamic growth of man himself. Iqbal in the following lines of his poetry stated that both Rumi and he had a common duty of calling people to God's way:

Like Rumi in the Harem, I called the people to piety;

From him I learnt the secrets of life.

In olden days when trouble arose he was there

To meet trouble in present times I am here (Iqbal in Qaiser).<sup>21</sup>

Any research on Iqbal's philosophy will reveal the undeniable fact that his philosophy is a fusion of ideas taken from philosophers of the East and the West. In his '*Stray Reflection*' (1992), Iqbal himself had acknowledged and appreciated the fact that he had gained from the poets and philosophers of the East and the West. The following is one among the many quotes that attest the fact:

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.<sup>22</sup>

The reason why Iqbal liked some Western philosophers was none other than for their research oriented thinking, boldness, dynamism and creative intelligence. By getting to know them, either through their

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., Vahid, 1976, pp.117-118

<sup>21</sup> Nazir Qaiser, (1986). Rumi's impact on Iqbal's religious thought. Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan, p.xviii

<sup>22</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, (1992). *Stray Reflections*. Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan, p.61

writings or in person, had created an impact on Iqbal's scholarly life. Even though Iqbal admired and emulated the good qualities seen in some of the Western philosophers, without fail, he highlighted to them the faults and loopholes found in their system of philosophy and education which are devoid of religious and spiritual essence. He states:

The European man of wisdom does not possess a wakeful heart, although he possesses a wakeful eye<sup>23</sup>

Believe me, Europe to-day is the greatest hindrance in the way of man's ethical advancement<sup>24</sup>

Iqbal in his opinion on the Western culture felt that it deprives the European man of his vision and soul for a spiritual life. As such, Iqbal further ventured on to think that this modern European culture has lost its piety in the race for modernization. As a result, this loss of piety has caused his soul, purity of conscience, high thinking and refined taste to disappear from his life. In another place in his poetry, Iqbal made the following statement:

The East perceived God and failed to perceive the world

The West lost itself in the World and fled from God!

To open the eyes on God is worship!

To see oneself unveiled is life (Iqbal and Saiyidain)<sup>25</sup>

K.G. Saiyidain (1977), whom Iqbal acknowledged as a scholar who had precisely captured his thoughts and his philosophy of education in his book: *Iqbal's Educational Philosophy*, wrote the following comments with regards to Iqbal's attitude towards the West:

He readily welcomes their spirit of research, their sciences, their strenuous striving to gain control of their environment. But he would certainly repudiate the merely superficial and sensational aspects of their civilization because they tend to weaken our self-respect, run contrary to some of our basic cultural values and give us an entirely false sense of being modern and progressive.<sup>26</sup>

Besides his criticism on the West, Iqbal felt disturbed to witness the development that was taking place in the Muslim world. It saddened him to see the mushrooming of a kind of Sufism which preached to the masses to indulge zealously in all spiritual practices, and at the same

<sup>23</sup> Bazm-i-Iqbal, (1969). *Iqbal*, (Vol. 18, Issues 1-4). Lahore: Bazm-i-Iqbal, p.510

<sup>24</sup> Sir Muhammad Iqbal, (1953). *The mysteries of selflessness: A philosophical poem (Rumuz-e-Bekhud)*. (A.J. Arberry, Trans.). London: John Murray, p.xii

<sup>25</sup> Op.Cit., Muhammad Iqbal, & K.G. Saiyidain, 1995, p.19

<sup>26</sup> Op. Cit. K.G. Saiyidain, 1977, p.23

time, either it neglected or paid little interest in calling people to perform their worldly duties actively as mentioned in the Qur'an. It was clear to Iqbal that such a message was contrary to what Muslims have been told to do in carrying out their duty as Allah's vicegerents. Iqbal's call for a dynamic participation in worldly life is very relevant to the following Qur'anic message:

*“But seek, with the wealth which Allah has bestowed on you, the reward and happiness of the Hereafter. Do not forget your share (of the needs and provision) from this world, and be good (to others) as Allah has been good to you (by giving you more than what you needed), and do not seek mischief in the land. Allah does not like the mischief-makers” (Al-Qur'an, 28: 77).*<sup>27</sup>

In analyzing the reason as to why people during the time of Iqbal thought that material world is a hindrance to the spiritual growth of an individual, one would discover that many analysts are of the opinion that it has its reason in the historical development that took place in the Muslim world. Facts from the annals of history reveal that the political situation during Iqbal's time was not in favour of Muslims. The era of European colonization in the Muslim world robbed Muslims of their power to rule their own countries. This situation which started with the fall of the Ottoman and Mogul empires was later experienced by many Muslim countries. Devastated by the feeling of defeat, the morale of Muslims was at the lowest abyss. This made them withdraw from active participation in politics and social life. This pathetic situation also made them lag behind in the areas of economy and education. As a means of escapism from active participation in social and political life, the Muslim masses started to seek solace and comfort for their hearts by practicing Sufism. By capitalizing on the state of helplessness of the Muslim masses, some Sufi scholars called the people to the spiritual path and for the purification of their hearts and minds. What was contained in their teaching was the subtle message to abandon this worldly life in search of a blissful and honoured life in the next world. Iqbal, who

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<sup>27</sup> Sheikh Abdullah Basmeih, (2007). Tafsir Ar-Rahman interpretation of the meaning of the Qur'an. Putrajaya: Department of Islamic Development Malaysia.

believed in the philosophy of action, realized this situation of the Muslims, who were unable to face the challenges of the modern world.

In assessing what was happening to the Muslims, Iqbal through his poems stressed that the teachings of the medieval mysticism in the East was wrongfully calling Muslims to live a life of renunciation of this world in order to gain merit in the next world. Iqbal who could not find any justification for such teachings in the Qur'an and the life of the Prophet of Islam called for vitality and dynamism through his poems and philosophical writings. In particular, he called for the banishment of the doctrine of the *Wahdah al-Wujūd* that preaches that the ideal status of an individual in his highest level of spirituality is to get his ego to gain union with the Ultimate Ego (God).

In studying Iqbal, one would discover that, at one point of his life before he left for Europe for his postgraduate studies, he was a great admirer of Ibn Al-Arabi and his teaching of the *Wahdah al-Wujūd*. Iqbal in his doctoral dissertation, 'The Development of Metaphysics in Persia (1908)' had praised Ibn Al-Arabi. Later in his intellectual life, he found out that Al-Arabi's philosophy and theosophy was not suitable to the philosophy of ego that he was developing. Iqbal later realized that Al-Arabi had been influenced by the Neo-Platonic teachings which were more theosophical and showed less vitality towards life. Moreover, Iqbal too felt that the *Wahdah al-Wujūd* concept was not in line with the basic teachings of Islam. This change in Iqbal's attitude from an admirer to a critic towards the type of Sufism brought by Ibn Al-Arabi can be seen clearly from the following description given in the *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (1972):

Iqbal was for a long time an admirer of the Spanish Sufi Philosopher Ibn-'Arabi (1165-1240), the most consistent advocate of pantheism among Muslim thinkers. Very soon, however, he realized that this philosophy was foreign to the simple and invigorating message of Islam, as embodied in the Qur'an and as represented in the dynamic life of Muhammad and his followers.<sup>28</sup>

In Iqbal's view, the type of *Tasawwuf* practiced during his days was not in line with the simple form of *Tasawwuf* practiced by the Prophet and his companions. Feeling disheartened with the type of Sufism practiced by the later generation of Muslims, Iqbal explained in

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<sup>28</sup> The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 1972. Vol. 3 & 4, New York: Mac Millan Publishing Co. Inc., p.212

his writing how and in what ways the Sufis have gone overboard in their spiritual practices contradicting themselves with what has been explained in the Qur'an.

Iqbal's criticism on the type of *Tasawwuf* practiced by some quarters of Islamic Sufi movement was mainly because he sensed that there were some similarities found in the teachings of *Tasawwuf* with that found in the Hellenistic, Vedantic and Buddhist philosophies of life. Very particularly, the Sufi teaching on '*Fanā' Fillah*' (self annihilation in God) in order to attain spiritual union with God seems to have some similarities with the doctrine of Atman-Brahman and Nirvana concept preached in Hinduism and Buddhism. According to Iqbal, the Sufi concept that preaches that at the highest level of spirituality, the soul of a Muslim reunites with Allah is a concept which is foreign to Islam. Contrary to such foreign concepts, Iqbal believed in a concept which makes a distinction between Allah as the creator and man as His creation. Though the human soul originates from Him, the demarcation line between the Creator and the created (God and Man relationship) should be maintained under all circumstances. In addition to that, Iqbal also strongly believed that man in his highest level of spirituality cannot be absorbed into Allah. On the contrary, he believed that it is only possible for man to assimilate Allah's Divine attributes into his character and personality. This idea of Iqbal has its basis on what has been stated by the Prophet, when he said: '*Takhallaqū-bi-akhlāq Allāh* (Imbue yourselves with the attributes of Allah). In giving a commentary on this Hadith, El-Muhammady (2002) stated:

It is not that man imbibes the qualities of God within him, for that would be unthinkable spiritually and theologically, but that man struggles to build his character based on lessons which he gets from contemplating on the meanings of the Names of God. This is in accordance with the famous remarks from spiritual masters: "The Lord remains the Lord even though He descends (in self-manifestation) and the servant remains a servant however high he ascends."<sup>29</sup>

In analyzing further the famous concept of the *Wahdah al-Wujūd* that states man in his relation to God is like a *Qatrah* (drop) while God is the *Bahr* (Ocean), which according to the proponents of *Wahdah al-*

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<sup>29</sup> Muhammad Uthman El-Muhammady, (2002). Iqbal and the Malay world (pp.161-177). In Motten, Abdul Rashid (ed.). Intellectual Discourse. Vol. 20, No. 2. Selangor: Research Centre, International Islamic University Malaysia, p.167

*Wujūd* leads to the belief that the highest achievement of man in his spirituality is to get himself drowned in the Ocean of God and become one with Him, as an antithesis to this teaching, Iqbal came up with a new concept which is contrary to the old idea of the Sufis. In his new concept, though he still preferred the analogy of God being the Ocean, and man being a drop slipping into it, he emphasized that it is not in the moral or spiritual teachings of Islam for man to go lose its own existence. Instead of man effacing his personality by slipping into the Ocean of God, man has to transform himself into a 'Shining Pearl' by having a more profound personality. In other words, Iqbal does not want man's individuality to lose its existence, but rather through the mercy and kindness of God, man should become dynamic by having some of His Divine attributes actualized in him. As a result of this, man becomes stronger in his personality.<sup>30</sup>

Besides his criticism on Sufism and its doctrine of the *Wahdah al-Wujūd* that had assimilated foreign elements into Sufi practices, Iqbal also found other reasons that account for the shortcomings of the Muslim *Ummah* of his time. Much of his meditation on the state of stagnation of the *Ummah* was seen extensively described in his poetry and also in his philosophical writings. According to him, one of the factors that contributed to the cause of non-productivity, intellectual lethargy and backwardness of the *Ummah* was due to the conservatism prevalent in the intellectual circle. This condition which did not take into consideration the modern and latest developments in the fields of science and education made Muslims lag behind the West in terms of its intellectual achievement. Moreover, due to these reasons, the Muslims who were not prepared to face the challenges of the modern world failed to strategize and avert the occupation of their lands by the West. This condition of the Muslims caused them dearly as they became the subjects of the West. This pathetic condition made the Muslims lose their freedom of speech and action. Iqbal also believed that this state of being ruled by others also robbed Muslims of their dignity and self-esteem. Iqbal (1996) once voiced up his displeasure on conservatism which he thought could be damaging to the growth of knowledge and human personality:

Conservatism is as bad in religion as in any other department of human activity. It destroys the ego's creative freedom and closes up the

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<sup>30</sup> Op.Cit., Mohd Abbas, 2011.



paths of fresh spiritual enterprise. This is the main reason why our medieval mystic technique can no longer produce original discoveries of ancient Truth.<sup>31</sup>

Inspired by the reformation works done by Al-Afghani (1838-1897), Iqbal too called for the reformation of the Muslim mind. His clarion call to the Ummah was to read the Holy Qur'an with all intensity and to produce action. According to him, the holy book of the Muslims is a book that calls for action/deed rather than a book of mere ideas. With such understanding of how the Qur'an should be approached, he criticized the old idea of plain reading for gaining merits in the hereafter. Very particularly Iqbal attacked on the type of mysticism followed by the Muslims of his time. He was convinced that mysticism that called for spiritual enlightenment at the expense of the abandonment of active participation in worldly things is against the true spirit of the Qur'anic teachings. Iqbal further emphasized that religious seclusion that keeps one from paying attention to the needs of the *Ummah* and correcting the evils, injustices and imperfections that happen within the society is an attitude which contradicts with the philosophy of the life of a *Khalifah* mentioned in the Qur'an. In realizing the intellectual lethargy prevalent in the Muslim world, Iqbal called for a dynamic participation of Muslims both in the mundane and spiritual life. With this aim in mind, he cautioned Muslims not to fall prey to the mystic and philosophical teachings that make them act passively towards life. In line with such an idea, Iqbal criticized Socrates, Plato and their Greek philosophy which paid much attention to the ideal than to the real life situation. Iqbal disagreed with Plato, the great Greek philosopher, when the latter despised the use of sense-perception in the pursuit of knowledge. Plato by overly emphasizing the ideal disregarded the importance of the real. By stating this world is just an illusion, Plato only paid attention to the ideal world. In Iqbal's view, disregarding the role of the sense-perception is a view in direct contradiction with the message of the Qur'an. Iqbal further emphasized that 'hearing and sight' are Allah's valuable gifts to mankind. Iqbal also criticized those Muslim scholars of the past who tried to interpret the Qur'anic teaching from the perspective of the Greek philosophy.<sup>32</sup> The following diagram (Figure: 2)<sup>33</sup> provides

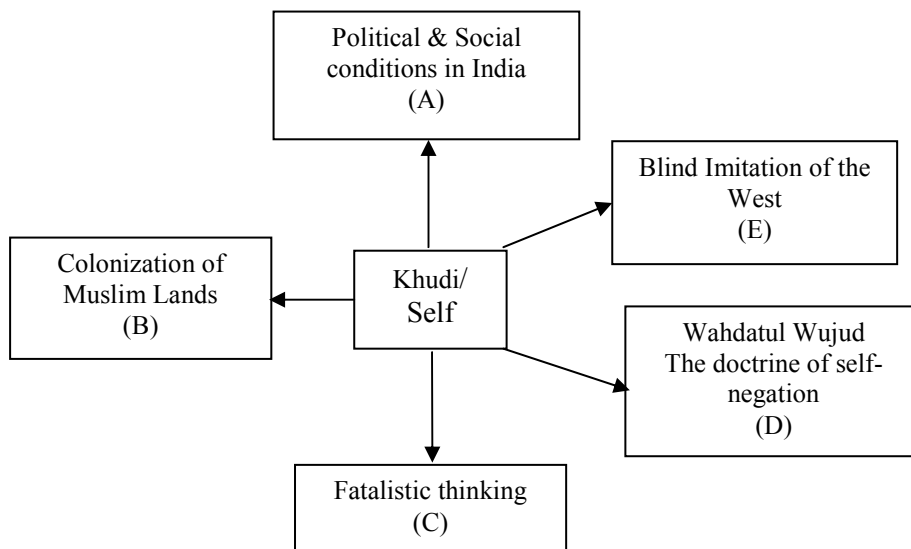
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<sup>31</sup>Op. Cit. Muhammad Iqbal,1996,p.145

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. Muhammad Iqbal

<sup>33</sup> Notes:

a vivid picture of the scenario during the time Iqbal emerged as a scholar who wanted to carry out his reformation works:



Further reading into Iqbal's ideas, will reveal the fact that generally the Muslim *Ummah* of his time was caught in the web of pseudo-mysticism and failed to follow the true spirit of Islam found in the dynamic teachings of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. Iqbal who realized the problems of the *Ummah*, wanted to bring upon an Islamic renaissance by calling the masses to relieve themselves from the meshes of superstition, mental lethargy, immobility and ignorance. His effort as a poet-

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- a) After the fall of the Mogul empire, Muslims lost their dominant position. As such, under the British rule, Muslims were left behind in education and other sectors of public life.
- b) Iqbal was saddened by the fact that all Muslim countries were under European subjugation. This pathetic situation has robbed their dignity, honour and self-esteem. It also created a state of mental slavery in them towards the West.
- c) Muslims lost their zeal and zest for life. Abandoning active participation in worldly life in the pursuit of attaining the nearness of God.
- d) Sufi teaching which preaches that at the highest level of man's spirituality, man can attain union with God.
- e) Muslims suffered inferiority complex and started imitating the Western culture.

philosopher and a religious reformer was aimed at awakening the *Ummah* from its deep slumber to a state of consciousness in executing its mundane duties in a more productive and dynamic manner. In addition to this, he also opposed the Muslims for their state of withdrawal, renunciation and feeling defeated in facing the challenges of life. Iqbal vehemently opposed those who took religion to be a sort of escapism and plainly resigned to the fatalistic concept of life. As opposed to all these, Iqbal called for a true understanding of the religion that calls for all individuals, male and female to take the forward march in life towards the conquest of the material world along with the spiritual enlightenment.<sup>34</sup>

It was brilliant of Iqbal, to capitalize on the use of poetry as a medium to express his ideas towards social reform because it was part of the culture of the people living in the subcontinent at that time to pass their leisure reading and listening to poetry in the media and in public gatherings. Iqbal's works in the area of social and religious reforms are very much similar to what have been done by Imam Muhammad Abdul Wahhab (1703-1792), Al-Afghani (1838-1897), Syeikh Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905) and other great Muslim reformers in Islam. Propelled by the zeal to witness progress within the Muslim Ummah, Iqbal called for the banishment of all superstitious beliefs that were misleading the masses in the Islamic world, particularly in the Indian subcontinent. By calling for the banishment of superstitious beliefs, he also called the Muslims to embark on the bandwagon of science which promises progress. To Iqbal, Muslims living in the modern world must learn to adapt themselves by utilizing science but at the same time they should not sever their relation with the past Islamic heritage. In other words, Iqbal called the Muslims to interpret the Qur'an and *Sunnah* in the light of the scientific age in which they were living. He also believed that, the failure on the part of Muslims to do so will be a state of stagnation and they would be left behind when compared to others in the world, particularly the West. His exact words calling the Muslims to adapt to the ever changing world were: "The task before the modern Muslim is, therefore, immense. He has to rethink the whole system of Islam without completely breaking with the past."<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Syed Latif Hussain Kazmi, (1995). Philosophy of Iqbal (Iqbal and Existentialism).New Delhi: A.P.H Publishing Corporation.

<sup>35</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, (1996). The reconstruction of religious thought in Islam, Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture,p.78

Iqbal's philosophy also clearly portrays his attitude which is very much in favour of science. To him, in order for man to progress spiritually he must look into the Qur'an as the 'revealed book' from God and the universe as the 'open book' of God. To him, science is not opposed to the religious teachings in Islam. Furthermore, he believed that scientific facts and findings can complement religion in strengthening one's faith. Iqbal highlighted this point in the *Reconstruction* (1996) when he said:

"In our observation of nature, we are virtually seeking a kind of intimacy with the Absolute Ego; and this is only another form of worship"<sup>36</sup> (p.45). "The scientific observer of nature is a kind of mystic seeker in the act of prayer"<sup>37</sup>

In his poetry, Iqbal called the Ummah to utilize science for the betterment of their lives by using it to extract the bounties that God has provided for them in the material world. In his opinion, man must use science and technology to bring out the hidden potential from the belly of earth to be utilized for his spiritual development:

Science is an instrument for the preservation of Life.

Science is a means of invigorating the Self.

Science and art are servants of Life.<sup>38</sup>

Iqbal in further calling the Muslims to embrace a positive attitude towards the learning and usage of science and scientific research methods highlighted the point that the message brought by the Prophet is very much in harmony with the scientific revolution that was taking place during the early twentieth century. Iqbal in defending science also stated his view that on the whole, the message of the Qur'an is anti-classical. By stating this he felt the message of the Qur'an is a call for a dynamic life which utilizes scientific research and exploration:

The Prophet of Islam seems to stand between the ancient and the modern world. In so far as the source of his revelation is concerned he belongs to the ancient world; in so far as the spirit of his revelation is concerned he belongs to the modern world. In him life discovers other sources of knowledge suitable to its new direction. The birth of Islam, as I hope to be able presently to prove to your satisfaction, is the birth of

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., Muhammad Iqbal, 1996, p.45

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., Muhammad Iqbal, 1996, p.73

<sup>38</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, (1983). *The secrets of the self (Asrar-i-Khudi)*. (Renold A. Nicholson, Trans.). Lahore: SH. Muhammad Ashraf, p.26

inductive intellect. In Islam prophecy reaches its perfection in discovering the need of its abolition.<sup>39</sup>

***Dynamism and Sustainability of the Ummah***

Going to Europe changed Iqbal in many ways. One marked transformation that happened in him is that he began to perceive humanity as a whole without looking at it based on colour, caste, nationality and geographical differences. This psychological makeup of a new Iqbal can be seen in his philosophy and poetry as he dedicated himself in highlighting the great culture and spiritual heritage of man. It was also around that time in Europe, that he started to think of Islam as a universal religion that can provide humanity with the much needed peace, security and prosperity. In sharp contrast to his thoughts, he also witnessed that the Muslim world had many shortcomings because of not following the true spirit of Islam. While assessing the situation in Muslim countries, Iqbal found out that the people were caught in the meshes of superstitions, inactivity and ignorance. In his opinion, the prevalence of such scenarios in a way caused the Muslims to dwindle in their spirit towards a dynamic life in bringing progress in their lives. In realizing the predicaments of the Muslims, Iqbal wanted to bring an Islamic renaissance by directing his philosophy and poetry aimed at awakening the Ummah from its deep slumber towards realizing the demands of the modern world. As a result of his visit to Europe, his message to the Muslims was aimed at calling them to renounce backwardness and to have a positive attitude towards scientific learning and exploration in broadening the horizon of their thinking. Iqbal became an advocate for scientific research in the Muslim world of his time. In many ways this resembled ideas of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898), the founder of the Aligarh University of India.<sup>40</sup>

After making a diagnosis of the problems battering the Ummah, Iqbal without any self-proclamation took on the role of a religious reformist. It was his intention to revive the Ummah of its religiosity towards Islam and to restore its dignity and glory which were once enjoyed by it during the Golden Age of Islam. This role of Iqbal as a religious reformer was identified by many scholars in Iqbal. Attitudes of total belief and dedication for a rightful cause and for a higher purpose in life was seen in Iqbal as a preparation for the task of bringing change.

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<sup>39</sup> Op.Cit., Muhammad Iqbal, 1996, pp.100-101

<sup>40</sup> Op.Cit. Syed Latif Hussein Kazmi, 1995

Bilgrami (1966) in his writing on Iqbal was able to capture Iqbal's passion and compassion in wanting to change the mindset of Muslims of his time. He writes:

Iqbal has rightly been called the mainspring of Muslim renaissance. He devoted the best part of his life to the careful study of Islam, its laws, polity, culture, history and literature. He was convinced of Islam 'as a living force for freeing the outlook of man from its geographical limitations.' He firmly believed that 'religion is a power of utmost importance in the life of individuals as well as states' and in order to convince the word of these eternal truths he did not merely devote his life in giving expression to his thoughts and feelings in his philosophy and poetry but also passed many restless nights praying to God.<sup>41</sup>

Iqbal during his postgraduate studies in Europe in the years between 1905-1908 and later through his travel to the European cities felt fascinated by their scientific development that was taking place. His fascination for scientific research is a further advancement to what he read in the Qur'an. As a religious book, the Qur'an contains many scientific data, and it calls for the observation and contemplation on the wonders found in the creations of God, in the universe. To Iqbal, the exploration, observation and investigation done by the scientists is a kind of mystic behaviour trying to establish an intimacy with the Creator. Furthermore, he believed that the physical sciences provide a sort of spiritual meaning to men who contemplate and ponder over God's wisdom behind His creations. Iqbal also stated, that on the spiritual and philosophical levels, the observation of nature teaches him the behaviour of God. In other words, nature which equates to God's habit is the portrayal of His existence. Iqbal's attitude towards science is the likeness shown by scholars such as Ibn Sina (980-1037), Al-Khawarizmi (780-850), Al-Biruni (973-1048) and others of the medieval era. In modern times, Iqbal's emphasis on scientific research is the echoing of what had been said by Jamaluddin Al-Afghani (1838-1897) and Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905).

In analyzing Iqbal's ideas and advice for the Muslim Ummah, one would come to recognize that as a religious reformer, all his works in

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<sup>41</sup> Bilgrami, H. H. (1966). *Glimpses of Iqbal's mind and thought*. Lahore: SH. Muhammad Ashraf, pp.iv-v

poetry and philosophy were aimed at bringing the Muslims out of their backwardness, superstitious beliefs, conservatism and passivity in life towards a state of preparedness in facing the challenges of the modern world. In his view, the message of the Qur'an is not all rituals (*Zikr*) but also scientific (*Fikr*). As Muslims, we should possess both these two aspects mentioned in the Qur'an in order to fulfill our duties in this world as Allah's vicegerents. In line with Iqbal's vision for the survival of the Ummah, modern day Muslims should be prepared to learn from others, particularly from the West, the latest development in the areas of science and technology for the betterment of the Ummah and humanity at large.

### **Present State of the Ummah**

As a scholar and a social-reformer, Iqbal showed great concern on the issues which he thought to be crippling the strength, energy and vitality of the Muslim Ummah of his time. Among the serious problems during his time were the spreading of the doctrine of *Wahdah al-Wujūd*, fatalism (*Qismat*) and colonization of the West of the Muslim lands. By referring back to the past Islamic history, one would find ample evidence for the claims made by Iqbal on what were the root causes for the decadence and backwardness of the Muslim Ummah of his time. In assessing the situation of the Ummah of the past and present, the writer feels that what seemed to be of grave concern to Iqbal is no longer a serious threat to the condition of the Ummah of the post-colonial period. At the moment, the Muslim Ummah though faced with many shortcomings has somehow realized the importance of education, science, technology and research in order to develop itself and stay competitive with others on the global level. However, due to lack of good governance and the existing leadership crisis in many Muslim countries, the Ummah is not well guided in overcoming many of its predicaments. Though the doctrine of *Wahdah al-Wujūd* and other pseudo-mysticisms are not a real threat to the Muslim Ummah of the present age, the divide between the Shiites and Sunnis, which is more political than theological is causing a lot of problems that give rise to bomb blasts and bloodshed on both sides. It is high time already for both these denominations to forget their past disputes and learn how to respect one another and to work hand-in-hand for the common goals of the Muslim Ummah. Since both parties believe in One God, the Qur'an

as the final testimony from God and Prophet Muhammad as the last messenger of Allah, it should not be a problem for them to look into the commonalities of the two rather than on the differences. For the writer, if the baggage of dispute and differences of the past between the Shiites and Sunnis are not resolved, it will be an advantage for others to maintain the rift that presently exists between the two groups. Without these groups coming together in one brotherhood, the issue on Muslim disunity within the Ummah will not be solved.

On the issue of colonization, what grieved and saddened Iqbal to witness was the physical subjugation of the Muslim countries by the West. Even in the present age, this issue has not been fully resolved. At present, though all the Muslim countries have been freed and they enjoy the status as independent countries, they are somehow indirectly controlled and ruled by the West. The Western hegemony and colonization in the disguised form in the name of neo-colonization and globalization are still observable in the East, more obviously in the Muslim countries. With regards to foreign intervention in Muslim countries, the writer feels that Muslims should learn how to resolve their own problems than to seek the aid of non-Muslim countries to manage their internal problems. At many times such interventions caused colossal damage to infrastructure and the death of innocent civilian population in many Muslim countries. Foreign involvement in countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and a few other countries in the Middle East should able to teach Muslim leaders a good lesson of what can happen to the citizens of their countries when they place the safety and security of their respective countries in the hands of others. By making the Qur'an and the Sunnah as the best guide, Muslim leaders should congregate and discuss to find amicable solutions to the pressing issues of the Ummah.

The present condition of the Muslim Ummah when viewed in the light of what has been envisioned by Iqbal is one which is pathetic. The scenario in the Muslim world depicts that the Muslims have not moved very far from the conditions they were in during the time they were subjugated by the Western colonial powers. Due to colonization or for other reasons, the Ummah is still lagging behind the other nations in the world in terms of science and technology. The riches in many Muslim countries in the form of petro-dollars given by Allah (SWT) are not put to good use in bringing the sustainable development by investing in science and technology. Many oil rich countries in the Muslim world use



billions of dollars to purchase sophisticated armaments from the West not only for national defense purposes but at times to be used to suppress and oppress their own citizens.

Due to the lack of infrastructure such as the scientific research center, scientists and scholars in the Muslim world migrate to other European countries which can cater for their advancement in their areas of specialization. The contributions made by such Muslim scholars and scientists, are largely benefitted by the host countries and not by the Muslim Ummah. This brain drain phenomenon that happens in the Muslim world further hinders and delays the progress and development in many Muslim countries. In realizing this situation, governments in the Muslim countries should try to regain, through the brain gain programme, these lost talented professionals by giving them not only attractive incentives, but also by investing a great deal of money in providing them with the much needed physical infrastructures. By having such facilities will also allow Muslim countries to practice 'brain retention'. Through the 'brain retention' programme, these countries can withhold their young and talented citizens from migrating to the First World countries in the West. Besides that, Islamic centers for learning should not only concentrate on the revealed knowledge, but also establish faculties for the study and research in the areas of human and natural sciences. At the moment, only few universities in the Muslim world are interested in such an approach, one of which is the International Islamic University Malaysia that was established in 1983. IIUM was the first university in the world that came up with the noble idea of Islamization of Knowledge and Education. The works carried out by the university under the Islamization of Knowledge programme are aimed at creating a harmonious relationship between the revealed knowledge and the acquired sciences/human sciences; also known as the natural and social sciences. Since science is essential in some ways for the recognition of God's greatness, and as science plays a crucial role for the survival of mankind in this world, science subjects should be given equal emphasis alongside the revealed knowledge at all levels of schooling in the Muslim world.

As Muslims, we cannot totally isolate ourselves from other communities of the world. We should have an open-mind to learn all that is positive and beneficial from others, and to collaborate with them in bringing the much needed peace and harmony to the world. In return, our Islamic faith and worldview that can be interesting domains for

others to know should be shared with them. In learning and forging a good relationship with others in the world today, Muslims should not lose their Islamic identity, faith, heritage, etc. Despite of the false reports and obscure names used on the Muslims and their Islamic faith on the internet and by the mainstream Western media, Muslims should strive to be diligent, productive and prolific in all aspects of life. Such qualities can create a good image of the Muslims in the eyes of others. If others use the internet and the print media for the wrong purpose, Muslims should use them for a good purpose in propagating the true Islamic message and values.

It is hoped that by making the changes stated above, Muslims would be able to bring back the past glory and fame once enjoyed by them. The Muslim Ummah which was once the leader of other societies in the world is at present being led by others due to its failure in understanding the true message of the Qur'an which is the *Zikr* and *Fikr*.

### **Conclusion**

The Muslim Ummah is still struggling to regain back its lost glory of the past. As the world is moving on, and many new things come to see the light of the day, especially in the areas of science and technology, Muslims should make adjustment in their lives in facing the challenges in the modern world. In their venture into mastering science and technology they should not compromise their Islamic faith and values. The leadership crisis and the absence of good governance in many Muslim countries are not helping to alleviate the prevalent backwardness, and in putting the Ummah on the right track to be on par with the rest of the advanced countries in the world. This paper has indicated that Iqbal's ideas are still relevant in calling for a change in the Muslim mindset. In their forward march towards development and progress, Muslims must be prepared to learn the good part of other civilizations, and be prepared to share its spiritual dynamism with others. Muslims in their effort to regain their dignified position which they once enjoyed during the heydays of their civilization should not isolate themselves from others. They should learn how to strategize in forging a good relationship with others. By having such an approach, Muslims can materialize the lofty ideals mentioned in the Qur'an. It is only when they learn to live with the principles stated in the Qur'an and Sunnah; they make this world a better place for themselves and others as well.