

## Sufi Critique of Iqbal's Philosophical and Theological Dualism

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All philosophy, all thought, all theology has been dualist, especially as understood in Greco-Western framework. The dualist structuralist, oppositional and asymmetrical characteristics of Western thought has however been plagued by Unitarian mystical deconstructionist elements throughout its history although it has been marginalized/ othered by various stratagems. It is no wonder that deconstruction arose in the modern West. It couldn't have been otherwise because the East and all the traditional civilizations have been essentially Unitarian in outlook. Western mind has been biased towards logic and rationalism, neat classifications and categorizations, quantizations and mathematicalization of the universe or life process. It has repressed the intuitive, the feminine, the mystical, the mad-everything that comes under the realm of unreason. It has emphasized the head and thus the logic and the principle of contradiction and this ultimately led to flowering of modern science with its bias for the quantitative in the concrete, the finite, the rational, the masculine -in short one term of the various binaries . Theology, especially the exoteric way of doing it, has been more or less dualist. The Unitarian vision of mysticism that is the essence of all traditional religions has been providing the critique of dualism from within. Present paper attempts to contextualize and critique Iqbalian dualism from the vantage point of mysticism, more precisely Islamic mysticism.

Iqbal has been mostly perceived as a Sufi thinker. It is the orientalist scholarship that has contributed to the Sufi image of Iqbal. Nicholson and Arberry have contributed most to the Sufi image of Iqbal. Iqbal fitted well in Nicholson's image of genuine Sufi and it is he who popularized Iqbal in the west by translating some of his works. Nicholson is dualist to the core like Iqbal and popularized his dualist conception of self vis-à-vis Sufism. Arberry in his *An Introduction to the History of Sufism* declared that "Iqbal belongs by right to the history of Sufism".<sup>1</sup> Evidently Arberry like his teacher Nicholson doesn't regard Iqbal as the opponent of Sufism although his main contributions to which he is referring, the philosophy of self, was put forth by him in refutation of Sufism and its doctrine of self. Anamarie Schimmel too has failed to discern that Iqbal's line of thought runs counter to Sufi tradition and presents him as a significant Sufi thinker and especially applauds his rereading of Rumi and Hallaj that is in tune with his own heterodox understanding of Islamic mysticism. Some of the influential Muslim commentators like Yusuf Silim Chisti have also read him sufistically. Popular conception of Iqbal also reads him in Sufi terms. Most of the Iqbalian scholars

concede this Sufi interpretation of Iqbal. Although Iqbal's criticism of some aspects of Sufi thought is well recognized by them it is still appropriated in terms of Orthodox Islamic Sufism and Iqbal projected as reformist of Sufi thought and his identity as essentially a mystic poet, as Rumi's modern day disciple isn't questioned. Present paper argues against this interpretation of Iqbalian thought and highlights his refutation of orthodox Sufism and thus presents Iqbal as a critic of esotericist approach to religion which is nothing but Islam's inner dimension. However, Iqbal's contradiction of his major theses vis-à-vis Sufism here and there, both in his poetry and prose, will also be pointed out. Iqbal's ambivalent rather than categorical rejection of Sufism as the inner dimension of Islam is what will be our conclusion.

At the outset it needs to be noted that Iqbal perceived himself as a reformer of Sufism. He unambiguously declared that he wasn't against Sufism in principle and that he was himself initiated in Qadrite order. He only advocated an Islamized version of what he perceived its Persianized or *ajmi tasawwuf* and to purge it of ascetic ethics and *wahdatul wujud* philosophy: He has made it his position quite clear in his letters written after publication of his *Asrari Khudi* in which Hafiz had come under scathing criticism. Iqbal's poetry and prose is suffused with Sufistic vocabulary and imagery. Iqbal has emphasized his Sufi credentials time and again. He isn't prepared to part company with Sufism in any case. It is well established fact that until 1913 he had been deeply influenced by traditional Sufi thought and his poetry is standing testimony of this. It has also been convincingly argued that Iqbal had reconverted to Sufism in his later years and reconstruction and post-reconstruction letters and poetry reveal a deep influence of traditional Sufism. It is Iqbal's middle period in which he emerges as significant critic and sometimes outright rejecter of traditional Sufism. However, what characterizes his representative mature poetical and prose writings is commitment to an interpretation of Islam and Sufism that is simply opposed to traditional Islam (and traditional Sufism). Sufism constructed in Iqbal's image or according to his reformist agenda is anything but Sufism. Iqbal's interpretation is unprecedented and crassly heterodox. No great Sufi could concede Iqbalian interpretation. Iqbalian plea for reformation, Islamization or Arabization of Sufism is tantamount to almost total rejection of it as traditionally understood.

The paper borrows heavily from Shuja Al-Haqq's critique of Iqbal in his *The Forgotten Vision* (ch. 1<sup>st</sup>) There are various subsections of people in respect of their attitude towards Sufism. For religious fundamentalists, the self styled guardians of purity of religion—who are best described as epistemic chauvinists—it is a heresy, an anti-Islamic tendency of a foreign origin, even a conspiracy against Islam. For some progressivists, it represents decadent wing of religion, or religion in its dying phase. There is another group whose attitude towards Sufism is largely ambiguous—they might accept its 'Islamized' or Orthodox form, coupled with a reverence for the saints of the past and their shrines. Evolution of Iqbal's thought during his lifetime reveals all these divergent approaches to Sufism. The indifference or hostility towards Sufism comes as much from its association with its existing decadent forms,

with what is now merely a shadow of a once glorious reality, as from the concern either to see Islam as a legalist system constructed by exoteric theology. Fundamentalists reject Sufism due to its <sup>more</sup> aggressive, activist and increasingly pluralist vision of society in which the individual may construct his spiritual life according to his own understanding. Shuja rejects the conception of a monolithic Islam with the Sharia bound state being its supreme expression "as a laboriously devised myth by modern orthodox fundamentalist protagonist."<sup>2</sup> He argues that Islam embodied a pluralist culture, being a unity of the worldly culture i.e., the one regulated by the property and the state, on the one hand, and the ideal or transcendent culture, the one in which the individual is independent of the state and the property by virtue of its transcendence from the worldly existence and devotion to God, on the other. The latter, as the Quran envisioned, was to be the main support of the former, in so far as it was the ultimate ideal of human existence, and at the same time in opposition to the worldly culture because the ideal must maintain its autonomy through the criticism of the given. Sufism he sees as the embodiment of the transcendental culture. Iqbal exemplifies typically the orthodox perspective prevalent in the present day Islamic world which it identifies with the law or the sharia while branding Sufism as an alien intrusion that weakens the vitality of Islamic civilization. Iqbal attributes among others, following evils to Sufi influence- lack of effort, escape from the struggle of life, the renunciation of the world, exaggerated resignation and to cap it all negation of the self.

In his earlier work, *The Development of Metaphysics in Persia* Iqbal had presented a forceful case for the Islamic origins of Sufism. Contemporary European Scholarship was beginning to share this point of view. In this way he must be reckoned amongst the pioneers of modern Sufi studies. Iqbal is appreciative of Ismailis noting their method of allegorical interpretation of the Quran that the Sufis adopted afterwards and he protests the unfortunate connection of this movement with the politics of time. He criticizes orthodox intolerance towards independent thought in unequivocal terms. Iqbal denounces theologians who murdered Shihab ad-Din Suhrawardi Maqbul as "the hired slaves of blood-thirsty dogmatism which, conscious of its inherent weakness, has always managed to keep brute force behind its back". However, when transformation occurred in his ideas about Sufism this work was later to lie heavily on Iqbal's conscience. When 18 y after its first publication someone suggested that it should be translated in Urdu, he replied that he had undergone a revolution in his ideas since the publication of that work and so didn't see any benefit in the undertaking.<sup>5</sup> After his visit to England he became a changed man and spectacular turnabout occurred in his attitude vis-a-vis Orthodox Islam and Sufism. Now he concluded that it was Sufism that had led the Muslims to present sorry state. He rejected it as the greatest deviation from the pure, original Islam. He thought Sufism preached world negation and sought the denial of self, which he identified with personality. Self, or ego, *kudhi* as he called it, was the main asset of the individual which is to be developed and strengthened under all circumstances. This is what Islam also demanded. It was to this end (i.e.,

purging of Sufism) that Iqbal launched his first Persian work *Asrari-Khudi*. He was to embark upon the refutation of traditional Sufism with great zeal. He was now converted to the cause of "Orthodox" Islam that rejected Sufism on a priori grounds. Iqbal is now going to contradict, his doctoral thesis.

Iqbal's basic assertion was that the development of the ego was the highest good in the world. In his introduction to the translation of the *Asrar* he wrote that "the idea of personality gives us a standard of value. It settles the problem of good and evil. That which fortifies personality is good, and that which weakens it is bad".<sup>6</sup> Ego has to be limited, defined and cultivated within the boundaries of Islamic law. Iqbal takes sharia in absolutist terms. He argues for exclusivist exoteric version of Islam. Islamic universalism goes into the background and Ummatism is foregrounded. He is against mystical pluralism of Akbar, Abul Fazl and upholds Aurengzaib and Ahmed Sirhindi's religio-political conception of Islam. He denounced Sufism for their esoteric interpretation of Jihad against its exoteric meaning of war against the infidels. In a poem entitled *Jihad* he denounces Sufis for replacing the sword with the pen. He denies the key thesis that Sufism expresses the inner dimension of Islam. He glorifies power and action and defines ego in masculinist aggressive terms. He privileges deed over idea or action over contemplation.

His thought that the introduction of Sufi idea of self in Islam was one of its greatest misfortunes. Shuja quotes from his lecture on "Iranian Sufism and Islam", in which he observed:

"This Sufism has no relation whatsoever with the simple Islamic beliefs and Arab religious spirit ('arabi ruh-i-dini) and its basic defect is that it destroys self, whereas in fact self is the only thing which is the foundation of the life of the individuals and nations and which takes man to the highest material and spiritual stages".<sup>7</sup> He went onto observe that according to Sufis the individual should obliterate himself as the sole condition to attain to the stage of gnosis. In fact, he argues that this idea is opposed to Islam. He places two sets of twin notions in opposition to each other *khudi* and the sharia, on the one hand, and self negation and Sufism on the other. It is the former set which lies at the core of Islam as a 'race making force' while the latter is its antithesis. Such sufistic notions are the invention of 'sheep natured races' of mankind who wanted to sap the energy of the 'tiger natured races' by whom they were threatened. His condemnation of Plato as one of that ancient flock of sheep' is an attack on the father of Western mysticism. In a letter, while commenting on Hafiz and other Persian poets, he writes that they have resorted to esoteric interpretation of the tenets of Islam which is in fact a very subtle way of self negation. On the publication of *Asrar* he had reached the conclusion that "there is not the least doubt about it that Sufism is a foreign plantation in the soil of Islam which has flourished in the mental atmosphere of the Iranians".<sup>8</sup> He would rather call all Sufism as *ajami* Sufism because the majority of its originators hailed from Iran. In an article he recalls the ulama's fight against Sufism, for it was a kind of monasticism, *rahbaniyat*, which had no relation with Islam and due to which power of action was shaped from the Muslim nations. Even the word *tasawwuf* didn't exist in the times of the Prophet. By the 150 A.H. this word came into use for the first time and

gradually the Iranian followers of Sufism created such a social and ethical ideal that finally led to the destruction of the Muslims. Or at least this was one of the causes among others. The ulama of the *umma* opposed it as the very beginning and there is a universal consensus among the ulama of the *umma* that the doctrine of *wahdat-ul-wujud* was utterly unislamic.<sup>9</sup>

In another essay Iqbal declared that the doctrine of *wahdatul wujud* was the result of Buddhist influence on Muslims.<sup>10</sup> Elsewhere he had observed that Indian and Persian Sufis have interpreted the Sufi notions of *fana* under the influence of Vedanta and Buddhism "The result is that the Muslim is now good for nothing. According to me this interpretation was more disastrous than the destruction of Baghdad. In a sense all my writings are a kind of rebellion against this interpretation."<sup>11</sup> He has used very harsh words against Hafiz, Ibn Arabi, Hallaj and Ismailis. He situates himself in the tradition of Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Joyzi, those great and deadly critics of Sufism and its metaphysical worldview. He denies that Ali<sup>(RA)</sup> was given special occult knowledge by the Prophet.<sup>12</sup> In fact he hated all occultism. In one of his dialogues he is reported to have said that 'the forbidden tree' of the Quran is none other than the occultistic *tasawwuf* which prompts the patient to seek some charm or spell rather than take the advice of a physician. The *tasawwuf*, he added, which urges us to close our eyes and ears and instead to concentrate on the inner vision and which teaches us to leave the arduous ways of conquering Nature and instead take to some easier spiritual ways, has done the greatest harm to science.<sup>13</sup> He even had approved Mansur's murder at the hands of exoteric ulama.<sup>14</sup> He argues for Zoroastrian connection of *Ajmi tasawwuf* also.<sup>15</sup> He wrote about Ibn Arabi's *Bezels of Wisdom* that there is nothing except *ilhad* and *zindaqa* in it.<sup>16</sup> He denies any metaphysical or philosophical value of Sufism. He would reduce Sufism to some feeling and deny its metaphysical claims. He dismisses notion of *marifa* (gnosis) out of hand. He points out that the Quran uses term knowledge and not *irfan* (gnosis). He rejects Neoplatonian hierarchic metaphysical scheme. He rejects Sufi interpretation of some key verses of the Quran such as 'God is the light of the heavens and the earth'. He denies that God is immanent to the universe and says that He is creator of the world.

Iqbal follows Nicholson in his distinction between what he calls religious and philosophical mysticism<sup>17</sup> and terms them devotional and metaphysical mysticism respectively. This distinction leads Iqbal to the idea that there is no definite theoretical content underlying the mysticism of love and it is merely driven by an overwhelming passion for God. Iqbal denounces Sufism for trying to develop a metaphysical system relating to the universe and God.<sup>18</sup>

Iqbal's attack on Sufism is multipronged. He is most critical of its otherworldly orientation and ascetic ethics. He rejects its metaphysical claim of unity of Existence, its ethics, its consequences on political, social, scientific and other ground. He, however, isn't prepared to part company with Sufism. He wants to reform it or Islamize it. He is very clear about this. But could this "Islamized" Sufism of Iqbal be reconciled with the mainstream or traditional Sufism. This is now to be seen.

Sufism as the inner dimension of Islam is rooted in *Tawhidic* *Wahrnehmung*. It works out logical implications of doctrine of *Tawhid*. It is Unitarian as against dualist theology of exoteric Islam. It transcends all dualism, oppositions as it scents the underlying unity of Absolute. It posits Godhead rather than personal God or Being as the supreme principle. It shows how God is the Origin and End, First and the Last. And how everything is returned to, absorbed in God. How everything has only derived reality except God. Sufism reconciles all opposites in its Unitarian vision. Subject-object duality, Man—God duality, world-God duality is transcended and dissolved in the Unitarian perspective. Sufism attains gnosis when self is no more, when self is annihilated and only God remains. Ego, finitude, and in a way servitude is transcended in the infinity of God. *Marifa* is simply the realization of divinity within and thus vanity of all knowledge claims that are based on the dualism of subject and object. Our limited finite personality subsists in God after our ego gets annihilated. There is no negation of personality in Sufi's unity with God whereas Sufi's own personality, the human self is obliterated, it becomes the embodiment of the spirit of God. Sufi position is that human attributes be replaced by the divine attributes. Man becomes Godlike by transcending his finitude. From the Sufi perspective God is the transcendental dimension of man to which he must reach. He being man's ultimate essence which he must realize by elevating himself from his given alienated state. God is the Hearing, the Seeing. He resides in believer's heart. He is nearer to us than the jugular vein. He is the light of the world. And the light which enlightens everything. We live and move and have our being in God. *Ahsan* consists in realizing omnipresence of God. Man exists in God and through God. The way to end alienation in consequence of (*shirk*) lies in unity, in being near to Him, being like Him, or to transform oneself in His image. Perfect man is the mirror that reflects God only. He appropriates (or better God appropriates through him) the divine *akhlaq*—the divine attributes. He is the embodiment of the spirit of God, in whom He can be seen on the earth. Renunciation of the world means transcendence from the world, from the given, from the finitude, from the spatio—temporal limitations and this is achieved by taking oneself out of the world while being in the world, to partake of Eternity while being in the realm of time, by seeing through God's eyes, from the vantage point of transcendence or God. In surrender to God is the only bliss, the only liberation. The transcendence from material world alone ensures entry into the kingdom of God, the life eternal. The essence of religion is embodied in its endeavor to take man out of his finitude, of his bondage to the world, in the cultivation of the consciousness of God by way of critical practice which is characterized by the renunciation of the self, family, community and possessions of conquering aggressive self. The Unitarian doctrine implies that the duality of God-man is the appearance of the reality, and man transcends this appearance in order to realize the essence of reality which is Unity or Oneness. If the apparent dualism of God and man were absolute, man would never be able to transcend it. If the self or ego, which manifests man's given state as other than God were absolute, there would be no possibility of transcendence from it. Iqbal denied the Kernel, the doctrine of

Unity as expounded by Sufism and coined the term "Islamic Sufism" for his conception of a 'purified' Sufism that assumes absolute character of outward duality of man-God and world-God.

Iqbal is the champion of dualist worldview (and attributes it to Islam). Dualism of finite/infinite, world/God, man/God, ego/Ultimate Ego, subject/object, time/eternity, change/rest, created/creator, exoterism/esoterism, ideal/real, negative divine/positive divine is sustained throughout Iqbalian worldview and all this is fatal to Sufism. Iqbal unambiguously rejects the doctrine of *wahdatul wujud* or Unity of Existence. Intuition of the mystic/prophet dissolves/reconciles all opposites and dualisms in the experience of unity but Iqbal appropriates even this mystic experience in his dualist framework. According to him subject has experiences of God as Unique Other Self and finitude and separate status of experiencing ego is only temporarily transcended.<sup>19</sup> Time too isn't totally transcended in that eternal moment.<sup>20</sup> Mystic doesn't realize the divinity within, the Selfhood of his self but knows, experiences Ultimate Ego in his otherness. The gulf between God and man is in no way breached. Iqbal's conception of religious experience differs radically from the conception of mystical experience and gnosis of Sufis. There is no experiencer of some object, of some God from without. There is no distinction between experiences and experienced. Subject-object duality is transcended. Ego is no more as separate existence. No duality is there. Infinite grasps and "annihilates" the finite. Epistemological and metaphysical implications of Iqbal's understanding of religious experience are very different from that of Sufi conception of the same Unity of existence, of subject and object, of the essence of man and God isn't realized in Iqbal's interpretation of it. Thus Iqbal's appropriation of Sufism is tantamount to rejection of it. There is no way of appropriating divine attributes in the framework of Iqbalian dualist philosophy. What Iqbal does to traditional Sufism is almost a parody. Shuja's following remarks aren't quite unwarranted, although tone and style of language isn't acceptable.

He was a firm dualist, whereby man is finite and God infinite with no possible union between the two. But Sufism, and indeed all mysticism in most religions, is the expression of human yearning that is rooted in the knowledge that the ultimate ideal of all moral and spiritual life is union with God. Under this influence Iqbal tried to evolve a theory of human individuality in the light of what may be termed perverted dualism by bringing God into man instead of man going to God. From this inflated vision of the human self he composed poetry which often appears to be a parody of Sufi poetry. We may quote here a popular Urdu verse of his which apparently points to immense power of human individual, but is in fact a perfect specimen of perverted dualism.

Raise yourself to such heights that before every act God may ask man "what is your will?"

God coming to man to ask his will apparently may seem a very attractive idea, but it only illustrates the fact that there is no end to man's egotism when he conceives his ego as having a reality of its own, other than God. He thinks he can devour even Him in Sufism. This egotism is symbolized by Pharaoh, .... That it is the I of Pharaoh and not that of Mansur that Iqbal is

realizing. This is once again evident in the following passage from *The Reconstruction* "... In the higher Sufism of Islam unitive experience isn't the finite ego effacing its own identity by some sort of absorption into the infinite ego, it is rather the infinite passing into the loving embrace of the finite." .... It can be justified neither from the sufi point of view, nor from the orthodox nor does it accord even with common sense. From the Orthodox point of view it is simply heresy, and the ulama whom he endorsed for waging war against Sufism would certainly find this idea unattractive. From the Sufi angle and from common sense point of view it is simply impossible to think that the whole can be absorbed into a fragment. It is like ocean coming into the 'loving embrace' of a drop. This is precisely the claim for which the Sufis denounce Pharaoh. Rumi's vindication of Hallaj is based on the understanding that he effaced his finite self to let the infinite speak in him. Iqbal, on the other hand, is trying to put 'the infinite in the bosom of the finite, which is like father ruining into the 'loving embrace' of his infant son".<sup>20</sup> Iqbal is quite emphatic that the ego is able to retain full self-possession, even in the case of a direct contact with the all-embracing Ego. He criticizes Sufism for believing otherwise. He tries to argue that Infinite and the finite egos don't mutually exclude each other. He writes "True infinity doesn't mean infinite extension which can't be conceived without embracing all available finite extensions. Its nature consists in intensity and not extensity; and the moment we fix our gaze on intensity, we begin to see that the finite ego must be distinct though not isolated, from the infinite .... I am distinct from yet intimately related to that on which I depend for my life and sustenance."<sup>22</sup>

He says that the climate of religious life is the discovery of the ego as an individual deeper than his conceptually describable habitual selfhood. He asserts that it is in contact with (rather than realizing the identity of ) the Most Real that ego discovers its uniqueness and its metaphysical status.<sup>23</sup> Thus Iqbal is for maintaining the autonomy, the uniqueness, the separateness and distinctness of the human self. Sufism is precisely against such a dualist conception. What we here want to point is that there is contradiction, irreconcilable contradiction between Iqbalian and Sufistic perspectives. Most Real isn't contacted but experienced in the depths of the self; and felt and realized within. We become, so to say, the Most Real. Ego isn't discovered as an individual, deeper than the conceptually describable habitual selfhood but as the supreme Ego Himself. Mystic can no longer speak of I-thou relationship as there is no "I" left. It is God who sees through our eyes and acts through our hands as the prophetic tradition puts it. Iqbal isn't prepared to let God in and destroy his individuality. Bandagi he can't exchange for Khuda Wandi. He loves to pine and seek and accepts all the accompaniments of finitude of self. He opts for separation rather than union. *Wasl* is death and *hijr* is life for him. God's function is to act as witness and attest individual's unique status. Following lines from Javid Nama show Iqbal's firm faith in dualism.

Art Thou in the state of 'life, death, or 'death in life' invoke the aids of  
three witnesses to  
verify thy 'station',  
The first witness is thine own consciousness



See thyself, then, with thine own light  
 The second witness is the consciousness of another ego-  
 See thyself, then, with the light of an ego other than thee  
 The third witness is God's consciousness-  
 See thyself, then, with God's light  
 Consider thyself as living and eternal as He!  
 That man alone is real who dares-  
 Dares to see God face to face!  
 What is 'Ascension' only a search for witness  
 Who may finally confirm thy reality-  
 A witness whose confirmation alone makes thee eternal  
 No one can stand unshaken in His Presence  
 And who he can, verity he is pure gold.  
 Art thou a mere particle of dust?  
 Tighten the knot of thy ego  
 And held fast to thy tiny being!  
 How glorious to burnish one's ego  
 And to test its lustre in the presence of the Sun!  
 Re-chisel, then, thine ancient frames And build up a new being  
 Such being is real being  
 Or else thy ego is a mere ring of smoke

Sufism rejects the possibility that we can have a knowledge of God; that God can be a object of mystic's knowledge; God is known only through God as Bayazid puts it. God is seeing Himself in the realm of manifestation. Sufi by effacing his ego lets God in and mirrors His existence or God. Ego must go, the finite must be transcended so that Infinite could come into being.

Iqbal unnecessarily creates a binary of finite and Infinite, self and Self. Iqbal is interested in fullest development of ego, in finite appropriating the Infinite. In almost Nietzschean and Sartrean vein he wouldn't tolerate God in presence of man. He turns traditional monotheism of Islam where only God exists and man doesn't on its head by making man the centre of universe where God is just a witness of man's greatness. Iqbal is humanist and humanism is antithesis of Islam(although his humanism needs to be distinguished from modern western humanism). The Quran's theocentrism leaves no scope for humanism. Greatness of man is guaranteed only in Sufi perspective that elevates man to the status of likeness of God. Sufi could well say by creating divine attributes in himself that I am the Truth (Hallaj), I am the speaking Quran (Ali), Glory to me (BaYazid). Perfect man appropriates the attributes of divine like: Eternity, Omniscience, Man as perfect man is the pole of existence. He manifests, unveils the hidden treasure or Essence of God. His Ego appropriates whole universe. By becoming one with the infinite it shares in the glory of infinite. Infinite speaks through Him. God needn't be murdered so that man may live as Nietzsche and Sartre thought. Man houses God in the depths of his self as believers' heart is the only temple of God. Sufism shows the way how one enters the kingdom of God and becomes heir of it; how one ascends to Godhead by turning inward.

personal moment. Thus ego expands to infinity and enjoys the power and glory  
 to separate attributes by first crossing the dark night of the soul by surrendering  
 to become. Humanist aspirations could be fulfilled by relinquishing humanism.  
 this is what Sufism implied. Iqbal failed to notice that it isn't the individual or  
 the personality that Sufism denies. On the contrary, it questions the very  
 notion that there is only one mode of individuality and individual existence. It  
 offers its own notion and the way of its development. Mansoor was once asked  
 why he prayed if he himself was God. He answered that you don't know status  
 of my Self. It is worthy of it.

Shuja explains why Nicholson and Arberry misunderstood Sufism and  
 Iqbal. He writes: "Nicholson and Arberry have reasons to be excused for their  
 premature understanding of Sufism and Iqbal. Firstly they worked at a time  
 when modern studies of Sufism and for that matter of Islam were at a  
 relatively early stage. Secondly, living in the colonial era, they seem to be  
 sympathetic to a poet from the East who sought to breath a spirit of activism  
 and self-assertion in his people. But what is rather puzzling is Schimmel's  
 understanding of Iqbal. She has largely written at a time when the main  
 stance of Nicholson and Iqbal, namely that Bastami, Ibn Arabi, Sanai and  
 Hafiz stand in a different ideological strand than that of Hallaj, Attar and  
 Rumi, no longer holds ground. The so called distinction between devotional  
 and speculative Sufism with one affirming the transcendence of God and  
 other being pantheistic is no longer in vogue, at least in scholarly studies of  
 Sufism. Finally there is a wide realization that Sufism doesn't seek the  
 dissolution of the human individual in a non-personal unconscious Being.  
 Rather it is a conscious cultivation of a higher level of existence by way of  
 discarding the finite worldly ego and its replacement by a transcendental  
 universal consciousness, whose most poetic illustration is found in Rumi."<sup>24</sup>

Those who interpret Iqbal as a Sufi point to his discipleship of Rumi.  
 Rumi has been, of course, great inspiration for Iqbal. Iqbal called him his *Pir*.  
 Iqbal has showered great praise on Rumi. Iqbal saw himself the successor of  
 Rumi. We will now show how Iqbal has refuted Rumi's Sufism—the kernel of  
 his thought and accepted him as his *Pir* after he reread him and constructed  
 him in the light of his own philosophy of ego. The Rumi as read by Iqbal isn't  
 the Rumi the Unitarian, the Sufi as traditionally understood. Rumi's and  
 Iqbal's worldviews and underlying metaphysical perspectives differ as widely  
 as possible. Rumi's concepts of *wahdatul-wujud*, of self, of love, of unity of  
 religions, are of metaethical transcendence—all differ and are even  
 diametrically opposed to each other. Iqbal has "Islamized" Rumi's traditional  
 Unitarian thought and thus Rumi isn't the classical Sufi master. Iqbal does  
 same to the Rumi what he has done to Sufism in general i.e., reinterpret,  
 more precisely reconstruct it, to doxify it in terms of dualist exoteric theology  
 of Islam.

Rumi owed everything to his *Pir*-Shams Tebrez. He was God for him  
 and indeed had a vision of Him in him. He had completely surrendered his ego  
 to *Pir*. He spoke what *Pir* wanted him to speak. The spectacular  
 image

influence of Ibn Arabi on Rumi. Although Rumi's type of spirituality is distinct from that of Ibn Arabi and he must be considered as another peak of Sufism, we there is no doubt that he essentially accepted the doctrine of wahdatul wujud as Nasr says.<sup>32</sup> Corbin may be quoted in this connection.

"At first sight the teaching of Jalaludin Rumi and of Ibn Arabi seem to reflect two radically different forms of spirituality... Yet it would be quite superficial to dwell on the contrast between the two forms of spirituality cultivated by Mawlana and Ibn Arabi. Both are inspired by the same theophanic sentiment, the same nostalgia for beauty, and the same revelation of love. Both tend towards the same absorption of the visible and invisible, the physical and the spiritual, into a *unio mystica* in which the Beloved becomes a mirror reflecting the secret face of the mystic lover, while the lover, purified of the opacity of his ego, becomes in turn a mirror of the attributes and actions of the Beloved."<sup>33</sup> Both the Sufis share the Unitarian vision.

Rumi following summation of the theme of self-effacement is the antithesis of his philosophy of ego.

"In God's presence two I's can't be contained. You say 'I' and He says 'I': either do you die before God, so that duality mayn't remain. But as for God's dying: that is both impossible and inconceivable; for He is the Living, the immortal. So gracious is He, that if it were at all possible He would die for your sake, so that duality might vanish. Now since it isn't possible for Him to die, do you die so that He may reveal Himself to you and so that duality may vanish."<sup>34</sup>

Referring to Hallaj's famous saying Rumi interprets it such terms that Iqbal would be the last person to accept: "The man who says 'I am the servant of God' asserts that two exist, one himself and the other God. But he who says, 'I am God' has naughted himself and cast himself to the winds. He says, 'I am God'; that is, I am not, He is all, nothing has existence but God, I am pure non-entity, I am nothing.' In this the humility is greater".<sup>35</sup> The Unitarian spirit is seen in his distinction between the consciousness of form, the formal consciousness born of duality, and the consciousness born of Unity. In the context of the relation between God and the Prophet- Saints; these two modes of consciousness are thus compared.

Nay, they are two as long as you are a worshipper of form, (but) they have become one to him who has escaped from (consciousness of) form.

When you look at the form, your eye is two; look at its (the eye's) light, which grew from the eye. It is impossible to distinguish the light of the two eyes, when a man has cast his look upon their light.<sup>36</sup> Iqbal at one time justified Mansur's murder at the hands of exoteric ulama and would have endorsed Dhun Noon Misri's imprisonment also. But Rumi describes those who put latter in prison as profligates and vulgar and those who put Hallaj to death as traitors. He equates his death with killing of the Prophets of which the Quran and Jesus accuse the Jews.

The unity of all Being manifests itself in the consciousness of Unity. The most threatening aspect of this consciousness, as far as formal religion is concerned, is that it is realized after the complete transcendence of all forms that ultimately delimit religion. Rumi wrote:

There is a world outside Islam and disbelief  
 We are enamoured of the atmosphere therein.  
 The mystic lays down his head when he reaches there;  
 There is neither Islam nor disbelief in this place.<sup>35</sup>

Metaethical transcendence is thus expressed:

The man of God is beyond infidelity and religion,  
 To the man of God right and wrong are alike.<sup>36</sup>

The ideal of human spirituality is to attain, in the perspective of Rumi, a state which is beyond all definitions and determinations. One who has attained this has effaced his I and embodies the I or individuality of God, of the Whole. He is truly formless, neither this nor that:

What is to be done, O Moslems? For I don't recognize myself.

I am neither Christian, nor Jew, nor *Gabr*, nor Moslem

.... I am'n't of this world, nor of the next, nor of Paradise  
 nor of hell

I am'n't of Adam, nor of Eve, nor of Eden and *Riswan*

My place is the Placeless, my trace is the Traceless

It is neither body nor soul, for I belong to the soul of the Beloved.

I have put duality away, I have seen that the two worlds are one;

One I seek, one I know, one I see, One I call.<sup>37</sup>

It needn't be pointed out that Iqbal would have called this plain *kufi*. He has refuted Sufism precisely on these grounds, that it effaces individuality, the sense of distinction between good and bad, this and that, servant and lord. Mystic has no "other" and this is what is unacceptable to Iqbal.

Among the factors that are more generally responsible for Iqbal's perception as a Sufi thinker is his exaltation of love as against intellect in his poetry. This idea he drew from Rumi. However, as Shuja points out and some Iqbalian critics have also noted, he employs the notion of love altogether differently from the latter. Love in Sufism and Rumi, is evolved in the context of individual's longing for God, to seek Unity with Him. This goal is then realized through renunciation of human self. Iqbal is opposed to both these concepts. Loss of self is death and so is and union with God for Iqbal. It is evident from the *Asrar* in which Iqbal, unlike Rumi, who in the famous opening lines of *Mathnawi* expresses his longing for God through the simile of the reed waiting to be united with the reedbed, finds, true to his dualistic worldview, the reed's happiness in being away from the reed-bed.<sup>38</sup> Both from the Sufi as well as common sensical point of view is it difficult to conceive how love can be there without the unity of lover and beloved. For Iqbal love is expressed largely as the self's passion to expand and conquer. Iqbal has hardly written any *hamd*, although he wrote most beautiful *na't*. Shuja quotes Vahid that love with Rumi is to a large measure the love of God while as for Iqbal it becomes a passion for creation and subjugation of Nature.<sup>39</sup> Mujib has remarked aptly that a Sufi would be aghast at his associating it (love) with political expansion and dominance<sup>40</sup>. Love for Rumi is yearning to break the bond of duality.

For Iqbal self is an independent reality other than God and is characterized by a kind of aggressive and domineering spirit and to find

correspondence to this notion in Rumi necessitates unwarranted license in interpretation. Shuja quotes following verse from Rumi that typically underlies his concept of self and in opposition to Iqbal's concept of self.

Pour out wine till I become wanderer from myself/ for in selfhood and existence I have felt only fatigue.

And again:

O lovers, come out of the attributes of selfhood-obliterate yourselves in the vision of the living God's Beauty. Whereas for Iqbal the life of the *ego* is the life of the spirit, for Rumi "the life of the *ego* is the death of the spirit." Chittick has aptly put it: 'Rumi's central teaching, like that of other Sufis, comes down to this: "Remove self from the midst, so that you may grasp Self in your embrace."<sup>41</sup>

Shuja also refers to the curious consensus among Iqbal and most of his commentators that only Ibn Arabi by his doctrine of *wahdat al wujud* propounds the Unity of all being and the Sufis, like Rumi, though they believed in the single Reality, weren't Unitarians or what they call 'monists'. But Shuja answers by implication it only means they were dualists. This is untenable because, firstly, dualism is contrary to Sufism and secondly, anyone having a cursory knowledge of Rumi would be in a considerable difficulty to find its traces in him."<sup>42</sup>

In view of all this following observations of an Iqbalian critic, "He has to be accepted not only as one of the topmost exponents of mysticism, but also as the last great exponent of Irano-Pakistani mystic thought"<sup>43</sup> can't be accepted unproblematically

We now turn to another part of the picture. Iqbal has been described as a mystic and even pantheist by some Muslim commentators, his refutation of traditional Sufism notwithstanding. This claim will now be analyzed. Our contention is that Iqbal has contradicted/qualified his usual stance (as presented above) vis-à-vis Sufism. Iqbal's basic position is antagonistic towards traditional Sufism. But he is compelled to reject his own refutation of it throughout his poetical and prose works. Iqbal is quite vulnerable to Sufi interpretation at certain places.

By the time Iqbal wrote his *Reconstruction* there had occurred some change in his views vis-à-vis Sufism and after that he was increasingly drawn towards traditional Sufism although he never abandoned his fundamental convictions regarding his notion of separate identity of self, no possibility of union with God, and overall dualist framework. His key ideas continues to have antiSufi purport. In his *Reconstruction* he conceives Reality or Ultimate Reality in more or less Sufi framework. Sufis too designated God as Reality. Conceived as all pervading existence, as the inward and the outward, which encounters nothing as the other, whose perception constitutes our ultimate bliss, which is best perceived in mystical experience, through non conceptual means, is immanent as well as transcendent, as Nature constitutes His behaviour, all this comes close to traditional Sufism. He approvingly quotes Ibn Arabi to the effect that God is a percept rather than a concept. For Iqbal the chief hallmark of religious experience is assimilation of divine attributes and this is the traditional Sufi stance also; although Iqbal quickly contradicts

it by explaining it as the infinite passing into the finite. Only a Sufi could write "(Nature" is) organic to the ultimate Self. Nature is to the Divine Self as character is to the human self. And the knowledge of nature is the knowledge of God's behaviour, a way of seeking intimacy with Him. Iqbal's basic stance is that it is mystic experience which gives knowledge of God and which validates religion is Sufi approach par excellence. He comes close to rejection of his doctrine of self in his analysis of mystic experience when he says that in mystic state the ordinary distinction of subject and object doesn't exist. He also says that ego is perfected only in its contact with Ultimate Reality. He himself had experience of the paranormal, especially in the last years. Iqbal Exotericist orthodox critics like G.A. Pervez have taken strong note of it. His was a strong believer in saints and their healing powers and blessings. He prayed to God to be made *sahibi junoon*. It is in his *Javid Nama* where he appropriates mystics he comes close to Unitarian view. There he sees Hallaj roaming outside paradise because even paradise in a cage for such a free spirit. He seems to approvingly quote him to the effect that God and Prophet are one (*Abduhu* is like God). What he says of *Abduhu* is applicable to God alone or Ibn Arabi and Jili's perfect man:

*Abduhu dahr ast wa dahr az abduhu ast  
Ma hama rangaemou bay rang-o-bou ast*

Iqbal's following verse is in Hallajian vein:

*Nigahi ishq o masti mein wahi awwal wahi akhir*  
Iqbal so in this verse has beautifully appropriated the following sacred tradition which is one of key traditions quoted by Sufi." I created the universe for you"

Following lines from Bali Jibril reveal a unitarian streak:

*Tou hay muheita bakaran maei houn zara si abjou  
Ya mujay hamkinar ker ya mujay bay kinar ker  
Wahdatul wujud thought is evident in these verses of Bali Jibril:*

*Wahi asl makan O lamakan hay  
Makan kya shay hay andazi bayain hay  
Khizr kewnkar batayea kya baaye a*

*Agar mahi kaha darya kahan hay*  
Following couplet is in Vedantist vein in this couplet of Zarbi Kaleem:  
*ik tou hay ki haq hay is jahan mein  
Baqi hay namudi semayi*

Ibn Arabi is echoed in these lines of Zarbi Kaleem:

*Tou ay nadain dil nigah daryab  
Bikhud misli biniyagan rah daryab  
Chusan mumin kund posheda ra fash  
Zi la moujuda illallah daryab*

Iqbal surpasses many Sufis in his condemnation of reason and eulogization of *ishq* as instrument of knowledge and many a time his concept of *ishq* comes close to traditional Sufi notion of the same.

One of the Kashmiri Sufis had vision of Iqbal's station. What he says seems to be fully warranted by the facts. "He was circling around a *fanoos* and could not come to the inmost circle". He had achieved *fana fir Rasool* but then made no further progress. Hardly is there a match for this *Aashiqi Rasool*. His praise of Prophet and envisioning perfect man in Him is in keeping with this mystic's vision. He could well be seen in the Sufi tradition and countless verses could be quoted in support. But his philosophy of self and metaphysics are a strong rebuttal of traditional Sufi position. One could also argue that he contradicts his own point of view many a times and mysticism of the Unitarian variety creeps in. His heart is Sufi although his head may be dualistically predisposed. One could read his verses in deconstructionist vein to show how the dualisms and binaries get problematized. Despite his conscious effort to be otherwise he is and remains a Sufi although Shuja misses this fundamental point.

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