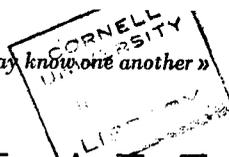


« O mankind, surely we have created you from male and female, and made you tribes and families that you may know one another »

[Quran 49:11]



# PROGRESSIVE \* ISLAM

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## SOME PROBLEMS OF LEADERSHIP IN ISLAMIC SOCIETY

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The Muslims, like some other peoples of other societies, are entering, at the moment, a period of great social and intellectual changes. Three factors contributed greatly to this phenomenon. The technological unification of the world by means of Western technical sciences, the domination of Western civilization upon that of Islam, and the internal conditions of the Muslim people themselves, are the main factors that powerfully exerted a strong influence on the vital changes that are now taking place. Naturally new thoughts and new modes of viewing the affairs of man and society would arise. In such a situation, it is to be expected that those people who are concerned with the welfare of Islam and the Muslims, would seriously consider the various emerging and pressing problems in the light of the past and the requirements of the present. In the history of societies, as it is in the history of a human being, the past and the present can not be properly comprehended without referring them to one another. It is in this spirit that we shall attempt to understand the position of the influential groups in the present Islamic society which is undergoing a period of important transitory changes in its socio-economic structure. I am here not referring to the peculiarities and diversities inherent in the different cultural and regional units composing the Greater Islamic Society, which may very well condition the presence of changes and problems which are specific to that unit and which do not affect the nature of the influential trends as a whole.

### INFLUENTIAL TRENDS OF THOUGHT AMONGST MUSLIMS

Amongst those who are dealing with the problems of Islamic society at the moment could be distinguished two types of individuals each respectively uttering the thoughts and desires of their groups. One is the orthodox group and the other is the modernist. Before I proceed let me give a word of warning as to the special meaning of the terms orthodox and modernist which I here employ due to my failure in discovering more suitable words to describe the two groups. Thus the terms orthodox and modernist which

are used here are not to be identified with those employed in the West to describe certain religious groups. As Hans Reichenbach pointed out, a clear definition of words we used are as important as the knowledge of the object in relation to which those words are employed. Indeed we do share the attitude of the logical-positivists in emphasizing the importance of clarifying our concepts when we desire to express our thoughts in the manner it ought in reality to be done.

**THE ORTHODOX GROUP.** This group of Muslim thinkers, is at the moment exerting a considerable influence on the religious life of the masses. This group of thinkers, or leaders of thought, known amongst the Muslims as the ulama, are characterized by certain factors pertaining to the group. They are the following: (a) The group as a whole is neither acquainted nor familiar with modern thought which is a predominantly Western product. (b) They are not familiar with any of the European languages. The language medium between the different nationalities in this group is Arabic. (c) Their institutions of higher education and learning are to be found in Muslim countries. The al-Azhar University in Egypt is one of them. As a whole the members of this group derive their knowledge from books written by Muslims themselves on Islamic topics or by contacts with one another. Apart from this, their source of knowledge on other non-Islamic topics such as other religions or philosophies, are either derived from translation works in Arabic or from books written in the other Eastern languages which they happen to understand which are usually their local or national languages. (d) As a whole they earn their livelihood not as government officials but as merchants, landowners, agriculturists, teachers, or writers. (e) As a group they do not belong to either the wealthiest or the poorest class. (f) Almost none of them, with very rare exceptions, ever travelled to the West or to other non-Islamic areas. (g) Amongst the ulama, as a whole, are to be found many pious people who exhibited great capacities for devotion and uprightiness. (h) Despite violent disagreements which sometimes happened between them, the

ulamas manifested greater feelings for Muslim solidarity than any other group taken as a whole. (i) The ulamas are fully conscious of the difference between Islam and nationalism. They opposed nationalism on the grounds that it is unethical and injurious to the universal brotherhood between the believers. (j) In politics the ulamas are sufficiently active to exert certain pressures on the government. (k) Amongst the ulamas and the rest of the orthodox group, there is a greater concern for social justice than amongst any other group. The reactionary opinions of some of the ulamas are more often due to ignorance than to bad intention. (l) The ulamas in their attitudes towards various issues cling more to the past for solutions than to the present.

These are some of the main factors distinguishing the ulamas and their orthodox followers from the modernist. Every thing mentioned above is of course not to be taken in an absolute sense. Before we arrive at the core of our investigation, let us know something about the distinctive characteristics of the modernists.

**THE MODERNIST GROUP:** Unlike the ulamas, the modernists received their education from Western institutions. With Arabic language they are not familiar. They are to be found mostly among government officials and journalists. Economically they belong to the same class as the ulamas. Many of them had travelled abroad especially to the West and the United States. The pious counted very few amongst them. Unlike the ulamas, the feeling of brotherhood between the believers in Islam is more experienced on an intellectual rather than on an emotional plane as well. As such they are more vulnerable to nationalism than the ulama. Like the ulama they are politically active. Like the ulama they are also concerned with social justice. Unlike the ulama they do not cling to the past for the solutions of the problems facing us now.

Before we continue further, let us know the advantages and shortcomings of both groups respectively. The shortcomings of the ulamas are ignorance of the European languages and their being confined to the Muslim countries. Thus the door to modern knowledge and new cultural experiences is closed to them. Apart from this, and most important of all, is their attitude of clinging to the past. We shall discuss this later in connection with the problem of Ijma and Ijtihad in the coming issues of Progressive Islam. The other factors we mentioned are as a whole advantages to the Muslims.

The modernists on the other hand, despite their valuable insights regarding the problems of the present appeared not to be the group to whom we could entrust the welfare of Islam and the Muslim community. To begin with there is a tendency among the modernists to regard Is-

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lam as the Quran supplemented by private individual judgements. In the long run, the influence of the modernist shall make religion to be conceived as purely a personal and private affair. Furthermore, the modernists lacked the depth of knowledge concerning Islam which the ulama have. The same thing could be said with their knowledge of Western science and philosophy. Thus the modernists occupy the unpleasant position of neither belonging to those who are well versed in modern thought nor in the sciences of Islam. Lest it be misunderstood, I am not suggesting that people like Syed Jamaluddin al Afghani, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Syed Amir Ali, Sir Muhammad Iqbal, and Muhammad Abduh are modernists in the sense that I use the word here. They were not people who disavowed their past. They were not people who took things lightly. They were people who searched for a new synthesis between Islam and the requirements of human life. Although they did not want to imitate the past in all respects, they did not consider it something that could be brushed aside. They respected the past just as much as the present. As a whole, their attitudes towards the regeneration of the Islamic people were sound.

## THE EMERGENCE OF BOTH TRENDS:

The ulama emerged as an axiomatic social necessity. There is no system of life or belief that did not possess a group of individuals forming a class of the selected few whose task is to provide leadership, intellectual as well as practical, to the community in general belonging to that particular belief or system of life. Such being the case, the ulama as a class, are not only justified to exist, but they are also a necessity born out by the very nature of society itself. Thus to conceive Islam without the ulama is just the same as to conceive science without the scientists. Many people know something about science just as many people know something about their religion. But to say that by the mere fact that many people know something about science and religion, it would be enough to cause the development of both science and religion, is an error of the greatest magnitude. Just as the development of science requires, as an absolute condition, the existence of scientists as a class who are well versed in the affairs of science, so does the development of religion in need of the presence of a group of people well versed in the affairs of the faith. For Islam this group is the ulama. We thus consider the ulama as a group to be a social necessity which cannot be avoided. Thus whoever thinks of neglecting the ulama or ignoring them, ignores or neglects the very nature of society itself.

The modernists owe their birth as a group also to the forces of social development. As new problems emerge new groups arise to take cognizance of them. The modernists, due to their being familiar with the European languages and their being acquainted with the Western countries and civilization, happened to be the group that discovered the existence of new and pressing social problems not perceived by the ulama. They felt most the necessity to re-evaluate the temporal validity of certain legal decisions which are regarded by the ulama as binding upon the Muslims individually, as well as communally. In this we completely sympathize with the modernists. It is not in the desire to re-evaluate certain rules and prescriptions of the Shari'ah that we disagree with the modernists, but it is in their method of approach and their qualification to do so that we differ with them. We strenuously and persistently shall strive for the abolishment of the death penalty for apostasy and any form of adultery, this being not in harmony with the spirit of the Quran and the requirement of our age. Here again we sympathize and fully agree with the modernists. Although this is not carried out in practice at the moment, yet the mere fact that it is still thought of by some of the ulama, is sufficient for us to regard this as a serious problem worthy of the greatest attention. It is up to us to convince those ulama to give up the belief in such prescriptions and rules since they do not belong to the fundamentals of Islam. This also implies that we must bring about a change in the thoughts and attitudes of those ulama regarding the nature of Idjma and Idjtihad. To do this we must possess a profound knowledge of Islam and modern thought together with a sound method of reasoning such that the validity of our claims would be once and for all accepted by the ulama. There had been numerous instances in the history of Islam when hitherto suspected or unwelcomed ideas had been accepted by the community on the authority of their spokesmen and the strength of their reasoning. There is no reason for us to fear why the same event shall not occur in our time.

ISLAM AND  
SECULAR DEMOCRACY

By J. W. SYED, M. A.

(II)

Now we come to Islam, and have to examine how far it is in harmony with secular and democratic conceptions. Theocratic conceptions are not only foreign to the genius of Islam but are a complete negation of it. Islam did not establish a Church with a sacerdotal hierarchy of clergy; it only established a democratic and social welfare-state to promote man's moral and material well-being. Islamic thought and society are civil and secular to the extent that it fully takes into account the temporal world and offers a complete guidance for the conduct of the present life. The dualism of sacred and profane, the spiritual and the temporal, the papal and the imperial, the religious and the political, and the Church and the State has never existed in the early and real Islam as preached and practised by the Prophet and the first four Caliphs. Islam never meant to divide human life into water-tight compartments; it presented a unitary and monastic view of life and the universe.

"There is no such thing as a profane world", writes Dr. Iqbal "all this immensity of matter constitutes a scope for the self-realization of spirit. All is holy ground. As the Prophet so beautifully puts it, 'the whole of this earth is a mosque.' Islam has laid equal emphasis on all aspects of human life, the temporal and the eternal, the material and the moral. It does not recommend the renunciation of the world, and, therefore, does not require its followers to turn their back on the earthly life. Islam as a social philosophy is not a religion in the European detached and private sense of the word; it is, in the words of Prof. Gibb, 'a fully rounded society on a religious basis which comprehends every aspect of human life.' Islam affirms that the world and life have a value and meaning in themselves. There is no theology in Islam in the Christian-European sense of the world. The only theology in Islam, if theology it may be called at all, is that this universe is governed by Law and by a Law-giver, that it has not been made in sport.

Rousseau has expressed strikingly correct views about Islam and its Prophet. Discussing the question of the dual power of Church and State, Rousseau says: "Mahomet held very sane views, and linked his political system well together; and as long as the form of his government continued under the Caliphs who succeeded him, that government was indeed one, and so far good. But the Arabs, having grown prosperous, lettered, civilized, slack and cowardly, were conquered by barbarians; the division between the two powers began again; and though it is less apparent among the Mahometans than among the Christians, it nevertheless exists, especially in the sect of Ali." Islam recognises the sovereignty of God over the universe, but it does not imply a belief in a theocratic polity. The first four Caliphs always considered themselves as the representatives of the Prophet, and never claimed a sacerdotal character as representatives of God divinely and directly appointed by Him as His representatives. In contrast to the Infallibility and irresponsibility of the Roman Pope in relation to the human mortals, we have the statement of the

First Caliph of Islam: "People, I have been appointed as your Caliph although I am not better than you. I shall follow the way (of the Quran), I will not innovate. If I act rightly, help me, and if I go wrong, set me right." An early Muslim ambassador to the Byzantine Court, Maaz bin Jabl, expressed the democratic ideal of Islam in these words: "Our Caliph is one of us. We shall accept him as our Caliph so long as he follows our Book and keeps to the way of our Prophet, otherwise we shall remove him. If he should commit theft, we shall cut his hands; if he should commit adultery, we shall stone him to death; if he should rebuke anyone of us, he shall also be rebuked; if he should injure anyone, he shall have to pay for it. . . his position is like any other from amongst us." These concrete examples from Muslim history abundantly prove that the government of the first four Caliphs was based on the principles of the rule of law and responsibility to the governed. The basic postulates of modern secular democracy are a polity based on Law and Constitution, a government responsible to and removable by the people, no hereditary and autocratic rule of an individual or a group of individuals, and conceptions of human dignity, liberty and justice. These fundamental concepts of modern democracy are also the basic concepts of Islam. The great achievement of Islam and its Prophet was to produce order, law and civilization out of chaos, anarchy and barbarism. The primitive and warring tribes of Arabia were welded into a nation, and were bound together by loyalty to a common ideal and faith. Islam put an end to the arbitrary and despotic rule of princes and priests; it proclaimed the liberation of man from the domination of Caesar and Pope. With the coming of Islam these human gods and demi-gods fell from their pedestals of innocence and reverence to the common level of humanity. The Prophet established a constitutional democratic contractual state whose primary aim was establishment of justice, order and peace. The Prophet had declared: "Time will come when an old woman would journey through Arabia from one end to the other with gold and none will dare molest her." The government established by the Prophet was a government by discussion and consultation, in which the will of the people is limited and governed only by the universal law of reason and morality. In Islam there is neither prince nor priest. When the chief of an Arab tribe, which had accepted Islam, said to the Prophet: "Thou art our prince", the Prophet answered quickly: "The Prince is God, not I." Islam altogether denied the lordship of man over man; it put an end to the persecution and oppression of man by man. When an Egyptian Copt complained to Caliph Umar against the son of Amr bin Al-Aas, Umar said: "Amr bin Al-Aas, since when have you learnt to make men slaves; their mothers brought them forth free." This is an irony of history that the world remembers little or not at all these words of Umar but all of us remember the words of Rousseau that "man is born free but everywhere he is in chains." Islam had put an end to hereditary mon-

archy; the Prophet and the first four Caliphs did not nominate their own children or relatives as their successors. On his death Caliph Omar expressly excluded his own son from the Council of Regency which he had set up to elect his successor. The Caliph is not omnipotent; he is bound to exercise his power within the limits set by the Law. Caliph is not a king; no sacerdotal character attaches to the office of the Caliph. Caliphate is a civil public office, having as its object the service and the enforcement of law and justice and morality. He is the trustee of the interests of the people, and is answerable to them for his actions. "No obedience in sin", said the Prophet. The contract of allegiance between the Caliph and the people is inviolable so long as the Caliph is physically and morally fit to do his duty, and so long as he does not violate the Law.

Much before the European Renaissance, Enlightenment and the French Revolution, Islam not only piously declared but actually practised the modern democratic concepts of human dignity, equality, justice and religious toleration. Much before Montesquieu, who is generally credited with having enunciated the principle of the separation and independence of the two powers of the Executive and the Judiciary, the Caliphs set the example of bowing before Law by appearing in person before the Judge. It was unknown in the history of the world that the Head of the State should appear in person before a Court of Law like an ordinary and common citizen, but Islam alone provides such examples. Once in a dispute between Caliph Omar and Abi Ibn Kaab, the Caliph had to appear in the Court before Zaid bin Sabit. When Caliph Omar entered court-room, Zaid vacated his seat out of respect for the Caliph. Omar said: "Ibn Sabit, this is the first injustice that you have committed in this case." Omar refused to accept preferential treatment and took his seat by the side of the other party. Caliph Ali also set the same example of bowing before the supremacy of law. Even in the Abbasid period such examples were not unknown. When the labourers of Madina brought a suit against Caliph Mansur, the Caliph appeared in person before the judge. An old woman once lodged a complaint with Al-Mamun against his son Abbas. The prince had to appear in the Court of the Caliph for the hearing of the complaint. When once a Quraish woman committed theft, the Quraish approached Asama bin Zaid to plead for her before the Prophet. When Asama spoke to the Prophet about the case, the Prophet addressed the people thus: "Nations in the past were annihilated because whenever any big person committed theft (crime), he was let off, but if any poor person committed theft he was punished. But, by God, even if Mohammed's daughter Fatima would commit theft, her hands too would certainly have been cut."

Islam enjoined absolute equality before Law, without distinctions of patrician and plebeian, high or low. In Islam there is no such legal and political fiction as "The king can do no wrong." One may well ask as to who of the two, Omar or Montesquieu, was the originator of the very idea of the supremacy of Law and Judiciary?

We nowadays hear about welfare-state. A Muslim Caliph like Omar felt himself responsible not only for the welfare of human beings but even of animals. Omar once said: "If on the other side of Euphrates a camel should die without being looked after, I fear God will hold me responsible." On another occasion he said: "I will so provide for the widows of Iraq that after me they may not have to look for support to any one." Can the concept of social-welfare and state-responsibility go further?

The real aim of the Muslim State was the furtherance of good, and the repression

# IQBAL AND FREE WILL

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The Problem of Free Will and Predetermination has always been one of the most significant and crucial problems in the history of human thought. It has been discussed in almost all ages since man began to think consciously, and all the great leaders in the realms of religion and philosophy have tried to pronounce judgement on it. If we believe in a life hereafter, and in punishment or reward for deeds done in this world, then it becomes a matter of paramount importance and necessity to settle the question whether we are free in our acts or whether there is a higher Will than our own which has predetermined the course we shall follow. For it is apparent that reward or punishment can be meted out only if we are free agents, making our own choice of the good and evil acts. There would seem to be no justice in making a man responsible for acts which are pre-determined.

The problem, therefore, lies at the root of religion and morals, and calls for a satisfactory solution at the very outset. Iqbal has expressed his views on this fundamental problem both in his poetical works and in his "Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam". In a short discourse it would not be possible to give an exhaustive account of all that Iqbal has said on the subject. I must postpone this to some future occasion, and confine myself now to giving a brief review and an analysis of his ideas, bringing out the essential points raised by him, and determining how far he has dealt with them satisfactorily, and whether he has been successful in finding a definite solution. In another essay, I have analysed Iqbal's conception of Time and Space, and have pointed out that Iqbal believed the problem of Space and Time to be a question of life and death for the Muslims. It is most unfortunate that his failing health prevented him from elaborating and elucidating this vital point, namely the spatio-temporal relationship of the human individual and the Ultimate Ego. This would have given us a deep and revealing insight into the thorny question of free will or predestination. In the absence of an authoritative presentation of the subject by Iqbal himself, we have to content ourselves with the few paragraphs in the Lectures, and the scattered verses in the poetical work, to see how he interprets the Divine Teachings revealed to the Holy Prophet of Islam, peace be on him.

## THE NATURE OF THE EGO

First of all Iqbal considers what light modern psychology throws on the nature of the ego. He criticises William James' conception of consciousness as a "stream of thought", and remarks that although it is an ingenious description of our mental life, it is not true to consciousness as we find it in ourselves. According to him consciousness is something single, presupposed in all mental life, and not bits of consciousness, mutually reporting

to one another. We appreciate the ego itself in the act of perceiving, judging and willing. The Quran is clear on the directive function of the ego:—

"And they ask thee of the soul. Say the soul proceeds from your Lord's command (17: 87)."

Iqbal draws our attention to the two words "Amr" and "Khalq" used in the Quran to express the two ways in which the creative activity of God reveals itself to us. The word "Khalq" expresses the relation of God and the Universe of extension; and the word "Amr" expresses the relation of God and the human ego. Thus it is seen from the verse "al-rub min 'amr rabbi" that the essential nature of the soul is directive, as it proceeds from the directive energy of God. The personal pronoun used in the expression My Lord throws further light on the nature and behaviour of the ego. It is meant to suggest that the soul must be taken as something individual and specific with all the variations in the range, balance, and effectiveness of its unity. As the Quran says:—

"Every man acteth after his own manner, but your Lord well knoweth who is best guided in his path" (17: 86).

Iqbal affirms that a man's experience is only a series of acts, mutually referring to one another, and held together by the unity of a directive power. His whole reality lies in his directive attitude. He cannot be perceived like a thing in space, or a set of experiences in time-duration; he must be interpreted, understood and appreciated in his judgments, in his will-attitudes, in his aims and aspirations. This is the answer Iqbal gives in the light of Quranic teaching to the first question as to the nature of the ego.

## EMERGENCE OF THE EGO

Then Iqbal goes over to the next question. How does the ego emerge within the spatio-temporal order? He finds the answer to this question in the Quranic verse:—

"Now of fine clay have We created man; then We placed him, a moist germ, in a safe abode; then made We the moist germ a clot of blood; then made the clot blood into a piece of flesh; then made the piece of flesh into bones; We clothed the bones with flesh; then brought forth man of yet another make." (23: 12-14).

From this verse Iqbal argues that the "yet another make" of man develops on the basis of physical organism, that colony of sub-egos through which a profounder Ego constantly acts on him, and thus permits him to build up a systematic unity of experience. Iqbal thinks that the soul and the body are not two different things in the sense of Descartes, independent of each other, which are united somehow in some mysterious way. He considers this Cartesian hypothesis

about the independent existence of matter as perfectly gratuitous, and devotes a few pages of searching analysis to establish this point. He takes up the relativistic conception according to Einstein's theory that the body is not a thing situated in an absolute void; it is a system of events or acts. The system of experience called soul or ego is, according to Iqbal, also a system of acts. The characteristic of the ego is spontaneity whereas the acts composing the body repeat themselves.

The body is accumulated action or action of the soul, and as such undetachable from it. He asserts that matter is a colony of egos of a lower order out of which emerges the ego of a higher order. To remove doubts and misconceptions, he explains that the mere fact of the higher emerging out of the lower does not rob the higher of its worth and dignity. He goes one step further, and affirms that it is not the origin of a thing that matters, but the capacity, the significance and the final reach of the emergent that is important. As the evolution of life shows, though in the beginning the mental is dominated by the physical, yet later on the mental as it grows in power, tends to dominate the physical and may eventually rise to a position of complete independence. The Ultimate Ego that makes the emergent emerge is immanent in nature, and is described by the Quran as the First and the Last, the Visible and the Invisible.

It has already been remarked that the ego is not something rigid. It organizes itself in time, and is formed and disciplined by its own experiences. It influences and is itself influenced by Nature causally. Iqbal then raises the next question whether the ego determines its own activity, and if so, how is the self-determination of the ego related to the determinism of the physical universe? By considerations based on configuration psychology he refutes the arguments of those who claim that the determinism of the ego and that of Nature are not mutually exclusive, and that the scientific method is equally applicable to human action. He was bound to adopt this method because he thought that the principles and conclusions of physical science were against him.

## IQBAL JUSTIFIED BY MODERN PHYSICS

It must be remembered that Iqbal wrote his Lectures before 1928, and was therefore, unable to take account of recent developments in physical science which began at about that time, and which have entirely revolutionized the whole concept of matter, energy and causality. If he had knowledge of these latest developments he would have perceived at once that the advocates of mechanism and predetermination had really no case, and their arguments would be refuted by the very physical principles on which they were based. I shall try to explain this briefly.

The two fundamental principles of classical physics which prevailed in the 19th Century and in the first quarter of the present century were those of the absoluteness of matter and energy, and of the determinism in mechanics.

It was believed that matter and energy were two entirely and absolutely different entities, quite independent of each other. Matter had weight and inertia, whereas energy had no weight. Matter travelled in a corpuscular manner, while energy was propagated by waves. There was a separate law of conservation for matter and another for energy. Matter was never converted into energy, and energy never transformed into matter. The advocates of mechanism took advantage of this physical principle, and put forward the notion of a transcendent God operating upon it from without, and the real Author of all that happens in the Universe. Man was nothing but a tool, obeying the command of the Master, and doing only what has been pre-ordained.

The opponents of religion took advantage of this very difference of matter and energy to point out that since every effect must have some cause, and since the material universe could not have been created by God who is immaterial.

Now the theory of Relativity and the Quantum theory have established beyond doubt that matter and energy are not two different things, but two aspects of the same entity, just as ice and steam are two forms of the same substance. Light has weight and inertia just like matter. Both of them travel sometimes like particles and sometimes like waves. Matter is converted into energy and energy is converted into matter according to a formula which is called Einstein's mass-energy relation. This formula has been proved not only theoretically, but also by actual experiments in the laboratory, by Millikan (1916) and by Cockerroft & Walton (1932). Incidentally, it may be remarked that it is this formula which is the basis of the atomic bomb. This discovery has taken away the ground from under the feet of the mechanists and the theists. It shows us clearly that the earth could very well have created the universe: God is the Light of the Heavens and the earth (Quran).

The second argument of the mechanists was taken from the determinism of classical physics, prevalent until the year 1927. It is a consequence of Newton's Laws of Mechanics that if the state of a dynamical system is known at the present moment, it can be calculated for any instant either in the past or in the future. This was the point emphasized by the poet in his famous lines:

"Ye! the First Dawn of creation wrote  
"What the Last Day of Reckoning shall read".

The success of Newton's mechanics had led people to apply the same mechanical principles even to the psychological phenomena, and the mechanical brain was a favourite term in those days. This had given rise to an absolute and rigid determinism not only in the physical domain, but also in human life. All our future actions are determined completely by our past; we have no control over them and no choice in the matter. If we accept Newton's Laws then there is no escape from this conclusion.

In the year 1927, however, Heisenberg made his epoch-making discovery of the Principle of Indeterminacy in Quantum Mechanics, which has demolished completely Newton's mechanical determinism. Heisenberg showed that the behaviour of even a single atomic particle is not determined; there are an infinite number of possibilities out of which any one might happen. We can only be wise after the event, and can say afterwards how it has actually behaved. Determinism has since then dropped completely out of physics. This is due to the fact that in order to know the state of any particle, we have to find both its position and its speed. It can be proved that both these qualities cannot be determined simultaneously with exactness. In order to determine the position of the particle, we have to observe it by throwing light on it. But since the light has the same mass as a striking ball with another ball, the first ball will be displaced from its position. The very act of observation disturbs the particle. Hence the uncertainty about its position and speed.

Now consider Newton's mechanistic principle. It says that if the present is known, the future is determined completely. But Heisenberg has shown that it is not possible to determine the present, therefore the future is indeterminate. This is the Principle of Indeterminacy. I have given only the barest outline, shorn of all mathematical reasoning. It is, however, sufficient to show that the mechanists and determinists have no more basis for their belief. As already remarked Iqbal had no knowledge of these later developments in modern Physics, and tried to refute their arguments by other methods. All the same he has arrived at the right conclusion about the freedom of the ego. He remarks that the fact follows from the view of ego-activity which the Quran takes.

## THE QURAN ON FREEDOM OF THE WILL

The Quran lays down:—

"And say: The truth is from your Lord: Let him then who will, believe; and let him who will, be an unbeliever" (18: 28).

Again, the Quran says:—

"If ye do well, to your own behoof will ye do well; and if ye do evil, against yourself will ye do it." (17: 7).

Iqbal points out that "Islam recognises a very important fact of human psychology, that is the rise and fall of the power to act freely, and is anxious to retain the power to act freely as a constant and undiminished factor in the life of the ego. The timing of the daily prayer, which according to the Quran bestows self-possession to the ego by bringing it into closer touch with the ultimate source of life and freedom, is intended to save the ego from the mechanising effects of sleep and business. Prayer in Islam is the ego's escape from mechanism to freedom".

Iqbal explains further the concept of the human ego's freedom by considering the Quranic legend of the Fall of Man. He shows that contrary to the account given in Jewish literature, the Fall does not mean any moral depravity; it is man's transition from simple consciousness to the first flash of self-consciousness, a kind of waking from the dream of nature with a throbbing personal causality in one's own being. He affirms that goodness is not a matter of compulsion; it is the self's free surrender to the moral ideal, and arises out of willing co-operation of free egos. He says that a distinction must be drawn between the determined like a machine cannot produce goodness, and then arrives at the conclusion that freedom is a condition of goodness. The Quran says:—

"And for trial will We test you with evil and with good." (21: 35).

The Quranic verse describing man's acceptance of the test of personality, is a clear and irrefutable indication of the ego's freedom:—

"Verily We proposed to the Heavens and to the earth and to the mountains to receive the "trust"; but they refused the burden, and they feared to receive it. Man undertook to bear it, but has proved unjust, senseless." (33: 72).

## SO-CALLED FATALISM OF ISLAM

Iqbal admits that a most degrading type of fatalism has prevailed in the world of Islam for many centuries. He ascribes its prevalence partly to philosophical thought, partly to political expediency, and partly to the gradually diminishing force of the life-impulse which Islam imparted to its followers. The Quran was misinterpreted to establish the theory of the "accomplished fact" in order to support vested interests, and to make the oppressed people reconciled to their

of evil and injustice. The gods of the ancient peoples were the patrons and protectors of their own worshippers, but the God of Islam is not a tribal or a national god; He is the protector and sustainer of all. Burning alive of people for differences of opinions as happened in Europe, is unthinkable and impossible in an Islamic social and political order. A state based on Islamic ideals is perfectly consistent with the democratic, secular, and humanist trend of modern life and thought. The State in its very nature and function is a moral institution with a moral purpose, namely, the attainment of justice and the highest human good. That at least was the view held by the fathers of political philosophy—Plato and Aristotle, although their conception of justice was not so universal, human and absolute as that of Islamic justice.

It is an important and remarkable fact of the early history of Islam that in the days of the Holy Prophet and the four Caliphs there was no separate department of religious affairs, nor was there any such office as that of Shaikh-ul-Islam, or Mufti-e-Azam; these were later innovations. The Prophet and his Companions never thought of religion as something separate from the main stream of human life and activity.

Islam had positively internationalised and humanized human society. Before Islam all societies and civilizations such as Greek, Roman, Judaic and Hindu

were tribal, racial and national, and their vision was limited by geographical and territorial boundaries. In medieval India the crossing of national boundaries and going beyond the seas was a good reason for being outcasted, as happened with Raja Ram Mohan Roy. Islam, on the other hand, considered travelling over the earth and study of lands and peoples as a virtue. Quran clearly laid down: "Mankind is one community." It further declared: "There is no compulsion in religion. The right direction has become distinct from error." Islam refused to recognise any human superiority based on race, tribe and family; the only legitimate superiority which it recognizes is that of piety and learning.

Much before Grotius, Islam showed the way to decent and civilized relations between the nations; it established international relations on a basis of morality and humanity; it humanised the laws of war. It was a common practice in the Roman Empire, of whose legacy the West makes much, that the vanquished and captive enemy was tied to the victor's chariot and was dragged through the streets, a fact noted by Shakespeare: Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings he home? What tributaries follow him to Rome, To grace in captive bonds his chariot-wheels?

Such inhuman and barbarous practices even against the enemy were put an end to by Islam.