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The Islamic Revolution

Ibrahim B. Syed

Polytheism (shirk) was prevalent until the 7th century. It was replaced with monotheism (Tawhid) by the Islamic Revolution. This in turn opened the doors of research and investigation by abolishing the practice of worshipping the natural phenomena. Modern industrial progress owes its existence to the Arab Muslims due to their creed of monotheism, which instilled them a mental and practical revolution. Islam changed the thinking of the Muslims and contributed to the modern scientific revolution.

The Tawheed, which Muhammad propagated, was distinct from all other ideas because it was based on two principles:

Tawheed Rububiyah, which means that Allah, is One, without any partners or associates.

Tawheed 'Ulluhiyyah, which means that Allah must be worshipped alone in everything, and total slavery must be to Allah alone in everything ranging from the spiritual to the political.

It was this call for Tawheed, which provoked the anger of the Makkan political authority because they realized that Muhammad ﷺ posed a threat to their societal setup with this call. The response of Ja'afar ibn Abi Talib (R.D.A.) also illustrates this understanding which the **Makkan authorities feared**: *"He summoned us to worship the One True God and to reject the stones and idols we and our fathers had been worshipping in addition to Allah. He ordered us to be trustful in speech, to fulfill all the duties that were entrusted to us, to*

care for our relatives, to be kind to our neighbors, to refrain from unlawful food and consumption of blood. He forbade us to engage in lewdness and lying, the devouring of the money of the orphan and the defamation of married women. He commanded us to worship the One God and to assign no partners unto Him, to pray, to pay the purifying tax and to fast. We deemed him truthful and we believed him, and we accepted the Message he brought from Allah."

This understanding of the spiritual-political nature of the Message of Islam can also be found in many verses of the Qur'an.

Neil Armstrong walked on the surface of the moon on July 20, 1969. Why did it take thousands of years for man to land on the moon?

Non-Muslims ask, "If Islam had never come into existence, would there have been anything seriously lacking in world history?" The answer is yes.

Polytheism and superstition looked upon things and creatures as deities, and encouraged their worship. Before the advent of Islam, polytheism dominated the entire world. Man considered the moon, the sun other planets, wind, river, snake, cow, fire, mountain, etc. as deities. These natural objects inspired man to bow before it rather than try to conquer it. Holding the moon to be sacred was a major obstacle to even thinking of conquering it. The supremacy of polytheism was brought to an end by the Islamic revolution, which replaced it with

monotheism, making it the dominant creed of the times. What is revolution?

Revolution is defined as a sudden, radical or complete change; especially the overthrow or renunciation of one ruler or government and substitution of another by the governed. To change fundamentally or completely. To turn over in the mind: reflect upon: ponder.

In the Muslim world this revolution was brought about through the influence of religion. The western world began its revolution by separating the secular sciences from religion culminating in the landing of man on the moon. Modern science is a part of the Islamic revolution. Because of the polytheistic view natural sciences had become forbidden territory and natural phenomena were given sanctity. The Islamic revolution of monotheism opened the doors of research and investigation by displacing nature from its sacred pedestal. Modern science is wholly the gift of the Islamic revolution directly in its initial stages, and indirectly in its later stages. Modern scientific revolution was set in motion by Islam, which was sent by the Almighty for the guidance of all mankind for all eternity. Henri Pirenne author of "History of Western Europe" says, "Islam changed the face of the globe. The traditional order of history was overthrown." Islam is complete truth. All pervasiveness of superstition served as a hurdle to all kinds of human development. The kings or rulers exploited the masses through polytheism and superstition. The kings represented God on earth. Some kings like Nimrod, Pharaoh claimed as gods.

Dr. George Sarton, a former Professor of History of Science at Harvard University, stated in his book, "The Life of Science" that the foundations of science were laid for us by the Mesopotamian civilization (present day Iraq) whose scholars and scientists were their priests. The second development of science came through the Greeks. The Third Stage of development, however, is to be credited to the meteoric rise of Islam. For nearly four hundred years Islam led the scientific world as from one end of Islam to the other, from Spain to India, the great body of past knowledge was exchanged between her scholars and the torch carried forward with the new discoveries. Scholars of Christendom from about the eleventh century were mainly occupied for over two hundred years in translating from Arabic into Latin. Thus Islam paved the way for the Renaissance, which in turn led to science's fourth great development in the modern world.

It was God's decree that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to be a da'i (missionary) as well as a mahi (eradicator).

The Qur'an says:

"We have revealed to you this book so that, by the will of their Lord, you may lead men from darkness to light. (Quran, 14: 1)

The Nile Goddess

In Egypt, it was an ancient and pagan custom that sometime in July a virgin decorated with bridal clothes was thrown in the Nile River as an offering to propitiate (or to do something to get favors) the Goddess of the river Nile. After the advent of Christianity, the Egyptians became

Christians, however they continued to follow the ancient custom of sacrificing a virgin to the Goddess of river Nile.

During the time Hadrat Omar (RA), Egypt came under the Muslim rule and Amar bin Al-Aas (RA) was appointed Governor of Egypt. The Egyptian elders waited on the Governor in July, and wanted his permission for continuing the old custom of throwing a virgin in the river to seek the pleasure and favors of the Nile Goddess.

The Governor said that such a practice was offensive and revolting to Islam and hence he disallowed such practice in an Islamic State. He further argued that Islam knew of no Goddess of the Nile and the question of any expiation did not arise. Islam knew of only One God Allah and Allah did not stand in need of any propitiation.

After listening to this argument the Egyptian elders were not satisfied. They warned the Governor Amr bin Al-Aas (RA) that unless the sacrifice was made, the Nile River would not rise in flood and the entire countryside would get dry. Governor Amr was however, unyielding and inflexible that floods or no floods human sacrifice could not be permitted. The Egyptian leaders returned home in a gloomy mood.

The month of July came and passed away. No sacrifice was offered, and there was also no rise in the level of the river Nile. The month of August came and still the river did not rise. The Egyptians were trembling at what would happen if the river did not rise. The month of August passed away and still there was no flood in the river. The Egyptian leaders grieved and said, "That is all due to Islam. The Muslims have brought this fate Minaret

on us."

The month of August was gone and September came, and still there was no sign of any rise in the level of the river Nile. The Egyptians lost hope and most of them were thinking of migrating elsewhere. That made Amar bin al-Aas (RA) worried. He reported the facts of the case to Hadrat Umar (RA) and wanted his instructions. Hadrat Umar approved of the action of Amr in not permitting the human sacrifice. Along with the letter, Hadrat Umar (RA) sent a card on which it was written:

"In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. From the slave of Allah, Umar the Commander of the faithful to the Nile of Egypt.

"Everything in the Universe is subject to the will of Allah. The rise in your level is subject to the will of Allah, and we pray to Allah to command you to rise in level."

Hadrat Umar asked Amr that the card should be thrown in the middle of the river. On the eve of the Feast of the Christian Day of the Cross, Amr had the Christians assemble on the river bank and after reciting some verses from the Noble Qur'an and taking the name of Allah, he threw the card of Hadrat Umar in the middle of the river. Then the Muslims assembled on the riverbank lifted their hands in prayers seeking the blessings of Allah, in making the river rise in level. The card of Hadrat Umar floated on the surface of the Nile for some distance and then it disappeared.

The next morning the river rose to its full flood height. Verily Allah had commanded the river to flow, and that was the end of the

evil custom of sacrificing a virgin to secure a rise in the level of the river. That was the vindication of Islam. Many Egyptians now came to believe that Islam was a blessing and a true religion. They hastened to the Muslim camp and were converted to Islam.

Islamic Revolution

Before the time of the Prophet of Islam ﷺ, the ancient civilizations such as Greek, Egyptian, Roman and Persian- all were polytheistic (shirk) in their beliefs. They worshipped natural phenomena such as the earth (Goddess Gaia now in the west), rivers, mountains, sun, moon or stars. Only Islam was able to displace them from the pedestal of worship and created the intellectual frame of mind, which is known as the scientific revolution.

The polytheists believed the river to possess divine attributes. They believed the goddess of river caused the water to move and made it useful or harmful. In Islam the river is a creation of Allah and not a creator and it was a servant of Allah and not the Lord. Thus the Muslims found ways and means to exploit the rivers on a large scale. The history books tell us that there is no precedent in any nation to the large-scale irrigation system developed by the Spanish Muslims. The Spanish Muslims developed agriculture and created Departments of agriculture science and irrigation in the universities. They studied trees and carried out research on the properties of soil. The infertile lands were converted into orchards and lush green fields, in today's terms -a green revolution. Before this people treated rivers, springs and sea as gods. But the Muslims brought the green revolution

because of their monotheistic thinking.

Polytheism (shirk) was prevalent until the 7th century. It was replaced with monotheism (Tawhid) by the Islamic Revolution. This in turn opened the doors of research and investigation by abolishing the practice of worshipping the natural phenomena. Modern industrial progress owes its existence to the Arab Muslims due to their creed of monotheism, which instilled them a mental and practical revolution. Islam changed the thinking of the Muslims and contributed to the modern scientific revolution. Historians acknowledge that Islam changed the face of the globe. Polytheism and superstition blocked the progress and advancement of human development. Islam encouraged the investigation of nature and destroyed the sanctity of nature.

Islam also destroyed the concept of intermediaries between God and man, such as the Kings and priests who claimed as God's representatives on earth or even the incarnations of God on earth. Polytheism (shirk) curbed freedom of thought. Polytheism and superstition were the major obstacles to all kinds of progress. Superstitious beliefs were an obstruction in the path of free enquiry. The search for new truths and discovery of nature's secrets remained forbidden areas for them for centuries. Before the Islamic revolution, the world had been swept by superstitious beliefs and idolatry. The revolution based on monotheism of Islam put an almost complete end to polytheism (shirk) The Greeks excelled in the fields of art and philosophy. Their contribution to the field of

science (except Archimedes' hydrostatics) was actually quite negligible. Plato's teacher, Socrates (may be construed as a Haneef) never worshipped the pagan gods which were worshipped by the Athenians in Greece and instilled free enquiry among the youth of Athens and for that he was forced to drink hemlock as a punishment in 399 BC. Archimedes was killed by a Roman soldier in 212 BC failing to recognize him. The atmosphere for scientific progress did not exist in ancient Greece. Similarly, the mighty Roman Empire never produced a single scientist.

In Islam with its foundation of monotheism created an atmosphere and environment which stimulated scientific research that lead to the conquest of natural phenomena. The modern age which is the age of science and industry, of freedom and equality is the direct consequence of the Islamic revolution rooted in the Qur'an.

From the sixth century to the 10th century Europe was in dark ages while the Islamic civilization attained the pinnacles of science and technology. After the crusades, the Europeans came in contact with the Islamic civilization. They went to Muslim universities in Spain, Sicily, Cairo, and Baghdad. They translated the Arabic works into Latin for over two hundred years. The European Renaissance started in the 15th century and culminated in the emergence of the modern industrial civilization. Islamic revolution is responsible for the emancipation of the human thought.

During the Abbasid era, paper was being manufactured on a large scale and so books

could be produced without the dearth of paper. There were more than 400,000 books in the library of Cordova (Spain) in the tenth century, whereas in Europe at that time, the library of Canterbury- the top of the list of the Christian libraries- contained only 1800 books in the 13th century.

In many countries scholars were born with creative minds who could think independently of their fellow citizens. But due to the unfavorable atmosphere and hostile environment of times, their efforts could be brought to fruition. Their knowledge withered away before they could flower. On the other hand, Islamic revolution produced favorable atmosphere, it unleashed a mighty flood of knowledge which had been kept pent up for thousands of years by the dam of polytheism (shirk) and superstition. For progress of Science and Technology an atmosphere of free investigation is essential. One may be surprised to know that even today there are some people and societies who believe that the earth is flat. Even today the Hindus with MD and Ph.D. degrees worship the Sun as god and believe that the lunar and solar eclipses are caused when the snakes Rahu and Ketu swallow them. One thousand years ago Abu Rayhan Al Biruni explained how the solar and lunar eclipses are caused by the shadows of moon and earth falling on the sun and moon respectively. The Hindus believe in 320 million gods and goddesses. Even if one spends one minute in reciting the name of a god, the whole life is not enough to recite the names of 320 million gods and goddesses.



Hazrat Sheikh Mohiuddin Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani رحمه الله

Syed Abdul Hye Bukhari

Among the robbers:

Along the winding caravan route in Northern Iraq a large and lively caravan was progressing south-wards. It was a caravan of rich traders who were taking their merchandise to Baghdad with the hope of gaining considerable profit. It was the eve of the fifth century of the Hijra and the Islamic civilization had reached its very zenith. Baghdad, being the capital of the Muslim world, was the richest city in the world; it was also the centre of civilization, culture and education. Hence, it would not be wrong to say that all roads, in those days, led to Baghdad.

The caravan progressed steadily and merrily along the mountain passes. The pine clad mountain slopes presented a beautiful scenery to the onlookers. Little did the travelers think that behind that green foliage there lurked a dangerous enemy who was constantly watching them and seeking an opportunity to pounce upon them. It was a robber-infested area and none was aware of that fact except those who often traversed the route.

After sunset the caravan camped at the foot of a hill to rest for the night. Camp fires were lit, food was being cooked and gossip flourished. It was a merry sight to look at.

Suddenly there arose horrible cries from all sides, arrows flew in all directions and swords began to flash. It was all a confusion within the camp and none could recognize friend from the foe. The camp had been attacked by a band of robbers; the meagre resistance the merchants and their mercenaries offered availed them nothing and soon the defenders were overcome by the robbers and tied hand and foot. The robbers were not content with the camels

and mules loaded with merchandise, they also searched the clothes of the traders for cash.

While confusion prevailed everywhere in the camp a handsome youth of fair complexion sat under a tree apparently unperturbed by all the confusion. He seemed to be in his late teens and belong to a poor but respectable family. While he had been watching the proceedings with a look of remorse, a robber approached him with a drawn sword in his hand and shouted:

“Hail how much cash have you about your person?”

The youth looked at him serenely and said” Forty Dinars (Gold Coins).”

The robber could not believe that a person who looked so humble and poor in his outfit could be the owner of forty gold coins. He thought that the latter was fooling him, so he dragged him to the captain and said “Captain! this rogue of a lad says he has forty gold coins about his person”.

The Captain cast a searching glance at the youth and asked him: “Where have you concealed them, young man?”

They are sewn under the folds of my waistcoat,” the lad replied in a calm tone.

At the order of the captain the waistcoat was taken off from the youth and the folds were cut open. Lo and behold! there dropped from it forty glittering gold coins. The captain was amazed to see so much wealth in the possession of a person of such humble appearance. He was no less amazed at the simplicity of the youth who gave away his wealth so easily.

“Young man! you are a fool”, said the Captain to the youth. “None would have

suspected that you carried so much wealth about your person had you not given out your secret yourself”.

“That is quite right”, said the lad in his usual calm tone. He seemed not in the least moved even at the loss of all his wealth. “I am a student”, he continued, “and am on my way to Baghdad to pursue my studies. While I was leaving home, my mother advised me to be truthful on all occasions and I made a solemn promise that I would act on her advice. So, when your man asked me if I carried any cash about my person, I told him the truth. I could not prevail upon myself to disobey mother.” While the youth was explaining to the Captain why he had given away his secret, his simple Words were penetrating into the very soul of the latter. He was deeply absorbed in introspection. He thought to himself: “this simple lad detests to disobey his mother and has lost all he had on that account. But here am I, an accursed disobedient servant of the Almighty, nay, a rebel. I have enjoyed His blessings throughout my life but have disobeyed him in all respects. It is a shame on my part, I should learn a lesson from this lad who may still prove for me a guiding angel.”

Tears of remorse rolled down his cheeks and shone on his beard like dew drops on the grass. There he stood, a changed person, a repentant soul. When the reverie was over, he assembled his men around and ordered them to return to the travelers their goods. He told them that he was going to abandon his sinful ways and asked them he follow him. The next morning, the caravan set out on its way as merrily as ever and the youth who had saved their lives and wealth walked along with his usual calmness.

Life and Mission:

The Youth who had caused the Captain of

the robbers’ band to be repentant was none other than the illustrious saint Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani رحمه الله who is justly regarded by Muslims of the world as the greatest of all saints. He was a descendant of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Born in Jilan in 470 A.H. he lived in his native town till he was eighteen. Then he felt a keen urge for the study of Theology and Tassawwuf. As Baghdad was in those days the centre of education and culture he requested his mother to let him travel to Baghdad. The poor lady who was already a widow grieved at the thought of separation but she detested to prevent her son from the achievement of his noble aims. She gave him forty gold coins and said: “My son! your father had left eighty gold coins of which I give you forty and the rest I keep for your younger brother. Baghdad is far from here and it may be that I never see you again in Life, but I shall not stand in the way of your noble aims. Go my son! with the blessings of God and remember that you shall always be truthful.”

After a long and arduous journey, the Sheikh reached Baghdad. It was the richest city in the world in those days and a paradise of the epicurean. But the Sheikh, youthful though he was, concentrated his attention to his studies. Among his tutors in Theology, Abul Wafa Ibn Aqueel Muhammad and Abu Zakariah Tabrazi are most famous. He received his training in Tasawwuf from Abul Khair Hammad bin Muslim and Quadi Abu Saied Makhzumi.

After the completion of his education, he became a tutor at the seminary of Sheikh Makhzumi. His lectures were so fluent, so energetic and inspiring that his fame was soon spread far and wide and people from all walks of life began to attend his lectures.

The space within the building of the seminary proved insufficient to hold the

audience, hence, it was soon enlarged. Even the Caliphs and important officers of the state attended his lectures.

At the seminary, the Sheikh taught Tafsir, Hadith and Fiqah. He also used to write Fatwa often in accordance with the canonical schools of Shafii and Hambali. But the most important of his activities were his lectures which were attended by Muslims and non-Muslims alike. His lectures were almost always followed by the conversion of a number of Jews and Christians to Islam. Once, the Sheikh himself told to one of his friends: "I had wished to live in deserts or forests so that nobody could see me nor I saw anybody. But God wished to benefit His servants through me. Over five thousand Jews and Christians have embraced Islam at my hands by now and over hundred thousand sinners have become repentant. This is indeed a great blessing of God."

A number of miracles were wrought by the Sheikh but he disliked their publicity. If someone happened to witness one of his miracles, the Sheikh would ask him not to reveal it to anybody as long as he lived. He would say: "When a humble servant serves God sincerely and patiently for a long period of time, God reveals to him one of His secrets. But if that poor fellow reveals that secret to others God becomes displeased with him. The person who has the power to work miracles is told not to reveal his power till the time When God finds it suitable to reveal it."

Unlike some of our modern sufis who are regardless of the laws of the Shariah, the Sheikh paid due respect to it. He had faith in the fact that Shariah is complete; what is lawful in the Shariah is lawful forever and what is unlawful in it is unlawful forever. There can be no change in it at all. Once he said:

"Once I witnessed a great light which filled

the horizons. Then appeared a face which said to me: "O, Abdul Qadir! I am your creator, I have rendered lawful to you everything which had so far been unlawful".

When I heard this I said: "Be you gone you nasty thing!" As I uttered these words the light turned into darkness and the face become smoke. Then there came a voice: "Abdul Qadir! God saved you on account of your knowledge and wisdom while I had deceived a number of Sufis in the same way."

"But how did you discover it was Satan?" asked, one of the listeners.

The Sheikh smiled and said: "It was not very difficult: for, had not he said that he had rendered lawful unto me all that is unlawful in the Shariah?"

Despite the high social status the Sheikh enjoyed he associated freely with the humble and poor. He would sit with them and clean their clothes for them. He would spend his wealth freely to relieve the poor and the needy. None who approached him for help did ever return dejected. The Sheikh used to say:

"If I am given all the wealth of the entire world, I will spend it all to feed the hungry. It seems to me as if there is a hole in my palms through which everything escapes. Even if a thousand gold coins come to me at night nothing will remain with me till the dawn".

Humble though he was while he associated with the poor, he observed his dignity and self—respect in his dealings with the rich and the officers of state. He never rose from his place to greet them. He would not even stand for the caliphs who frequently attended his lectures. He would even chastise the caliphs for their misconduct and negligence. When Caliph Muqutazi le-Amrillah appointed Abul Wafa Yahya bin

Said, who was notorious for his cruelty, as chief Justice, the Sheikh chastised him from the pulpit and said:

“You have appointed as ruler over Muslims a person with most tyrannical disposition; what would be your excuse before the Most-Gracious, Most Merciful?”

When the Caliph heard this, he began to tremble. Tears of remorse began to flow from his eyes and he immediately issued orders for the dismissal of the Quadi.

The Sheikh would not accept any present from the caliphs or the officers of the state for he believed that the wealth they had amassed was not honestly earned by them. Once, Caliph Al-Mustanjid Billah presented the Sheikh with ten purses of gold coins. But the Sheikh refused to accept them as usual. At the insistence of the Caliph he took two of the purses and rubbed them against each other. It seemed to the caliph as if a stream of blood gushed forth from the purses and he heard the Sheikh saying: “Why man! don’t you feel ashamed. You suck human blood and present me with the same!” The effect of what the caliph saw and heard was so strong that he fainted away.

The Sheikh continued to guide humanity towards the right path and help them in the efforts of their spiritual development until he breathed his last in 561 A. H. at the age of ninety.

Among the books the Sheikh wrote, the following are most famous;

- 1- Gunyah Al-Talibeen (a work on canonical law based on the Hambalite School).
- 2- Futuh al-Gaib (on Tasawwuf).
- 3- Al-Fath al-Rabbani (a collection of sermons).

Other books include:

1. Jila al-Khatir.

2. Al-Yawaquit wal-Hikam.
3. Al-Fuyudat al-Rabbaniah.
4. Al-Mawahib al-Rahmaniah.

Sermons of the Sheikh:

The Sheikh was the greatest missionary of his time. He preached Islam both through his own example and his sermons which were irresistibly impressive. The effect of his sermons is as strong today as it was during the life of the Sheikh. The following are a few selections from his sermons:

Trust in God:

“When certain misfortune befalls a servant, he tries to come out of it by using his own resources. But when his own resources fail him, he approaches others for help. He goes to kings, the officers of state or the people who enjoy power and authority. If it happens to be an ailment, he goes to the physicians. But when even these resources fail him, he approaches his Creator with prayers and praises. That is, as long as his own resources work, he does not approach others among his fellow creatures whose resources are stronger than his own and as long as the resources of his fellow creatures work, he does not approach God. But God also tires him of his prayers and praises and finally the servant is plunged into a state of dejection. This is the proper time when God exercises His Will in the soul of the servant and causes him to be regardless of the system of cause and effect. He then learns to look at the Almighty as the cause of all causes and learns with certainty that everything rests in the Hands of God.”

On another occasion he said:

“Look at the entire creation as a captive in the hands of a great king whose dominions are boundless, whose commands none can disobey and whose awe fills everyone’s heart. Now picture to yourselves that the king had tied his captive hand and foot and

hung him on a pine tree at the bank of a river whose breadth none can measure, whose depth none can fathom and whose current is extremely swift. The king has taken his seat on a high throne which none can reach. There is by the King's side a large pile of arms including bows, arrows and spears and the king takes whichever arm he pleases and throws it at the captive. Now, is it wise on the part of the lookers on to become careless of the king and concentrate their hopes in the captive or be afraid of him? Whosoever is guilty of such miscalculation (with regard to the power and authority of the king and the captive) must be a lunatic or not a human being."

On yet another occasion he says:

"Remember Him Who constantly watches you; be with Him Who remains with you forever; give your hands to Him Who can uphold you and take you out of the darkness of ignorance, save you from doom, clean you of your filth and protect you from your misguided and misleading associates."

Unitarianism (Tawheed):

"You concentrate your trust in your own capacities, in your wealth, in the ruler of your city or in others among the creatures of God. But remember that whosoever becomes the object of your trust becomes your 'Ma'abud' (The worshipped one). The person whom you fear becomes your Ma'abud and the person about whom you believe that God has authorized him to cause you either harm or benefit, becomes your worshipped one."

He further says:

"All creatures are helpless; none can cause you harm or benefit except that they play the role of instruments in the Hands of Allah. He, the Almighty, is the motivating force in you and in all creatures. Whatever is good for you or is bad, is recorded and finalized in the Profound Knowledge of God and nothing contrary to it shall ever take place...

... Brave is the person who has cleansed his heart of everything other than God; who stands at the entrance of his heart with the sword of Unitarianism and Shariah in hand with the determination that he would let none enter it. He reserves the sanctuary of his heart solely for God. Such is the person who is benefited by the Shariah and whose inner self is trimmed by the *Ma'arifah*."

Relative Position of the Muslim and the World:

The Sheikh personifies the world as an old hag who becomes the mistress of a person who loves her and becomes the slave of the one who detests her. He says:

"Do not take your share of the worldly provision while she (the world) sits (as a mistress) and you keep standing (as a slave). Take your share at the table of the king (God) while the world stands with the tray on her head (like a slave) and you remain seated comfortably (like her master). The world becomes a slave of the person who stands in the service of God, she puts him to shame who stands in her service. It is lawful to keep the world in your hand or in your pocket and save it for some good use in future, but it is not lawful to let it enter your heart or fall in its love."

UNITY

"And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allah (i.e. this Qur'an) and be not divided among yourselves..."

(Qur'an 3:103)

Islamic Leadership

1. Ee'man and faith have been enjoined upon all Muslims. Muslims are required to have full belief in offering five times; regular prayers, to fast in the month of Ramadhan, to believe in the Day of Judgement and to have trust in the finality of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and, if means allow to go to Hejaz, for Pilgrimage. All these injunctions are absolutely necessary and a person cannot be called a Muslim unless he has full and complete faith in them.
2. Human beings are faced with the problem of true guidance in their life. Religion comes to fulfil this innate need, and history of humanity has recorded the religious pursuit of humanity. Some religions were brought by the representatives of the Creator. In the language of Islam it is Allah and in the language of other, it is God or Parmeshwar, etc. who sent the apostles with Divine guidance. Those Prophets who were given books are known to us. Among them are Jesus, David and Moses (عليهما السلام) and Muhammad ﷺ. The last and the final book is the Holy Qur'an, which is available for us in its purity. According to the Holy Qur'an, every Muslim following Islam, is required to declare his belief in:—
 - (a) The Oneness of God.
 - (b) All His Angels.
 - (c) All His Books
 - (d) All His Prophets
 - (e) The Day of Resurrection.
 - (f) The Day of Judgment
 - (g) That all actions - whether good or bad - proceed from Allah but that we are responsible for our own actions.
3. There are five fundamental principles of Islam. viz.:
 - (a) The declaration of (لا اله الا الله محمد)

(الرسول الله) meaning “*There is no God but Allah and Muhammad ﷺ is His Mesenger*”

- (b) The observance of the obligatory prayers, five times a day.
- (c) The observance of fasts during the day-time in the month of Ramdhan.
- (d) The distribution of Zakat (Islamic alms fee) among the deserving, amounting to one-fortieth of the wealth, in one's possession for a complete year.
- (e) The performance of Hajj (Pilgrimage) to Mecca, at least once in a life-time if passage money etc. is available.

This faith has been enjoined upon all Muslims. Every Muslim is also required to have belief in the finality of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Without the above belief no person can be called a Muslim. On these beliefs, depend all actions of a Muslim. Every Muslim is supposed to aspire for piety and nearness to the Creator. In the eyes of common Muslims, a religious leader (most pious-one) is the miniature representative of the Holy Prophets personality—a spiritually, morally and intellectually illuminated person. Let us elaborate the qualifications of such a personality, who earns the respect and love of the fellow Muslims in particular and humanity in general and also fulfils the conditions of piety. He is, at a time, a teacher and a guide, capable of helping not only intellectually but also spiritually, assisting them in emerging from spiritual darkness into the light divine (XIV:1) himself acting through the light bestowed on him by God (VI:122).

A religious teacher and guide is he who is highest in learning and piety among the Muslims and who is entitled for leading the congregational prayers. He transmits the

light of divine message to other Muslims. The Holy Qur'an has categorized him under (III : 104) as "inviters to Good". He has to pursue religious quest on the basis of Qur'an and the Sunnah (i.e. the dynamics of the Holy Prophet Muhammed ﷺ personality (together with an ever-deepening understanding of Nature and History as repositories of the Signs of God (III :1 & 9, 190; X IV :5, etc.).

Instruments employed for Religious Quest.

The Holy Qur'an projects two instruments in that behalf, namely Faith and Reason (LVIII :II).

Vision of Faith guided by Reason leads to the deepening of Conviction (XXXV :28; etc.) *which, leads to confident progress in the quest.*

Standard of behaviour relating to Religious Quest.

Faith begets Love; Reason begets Law. Love and Law have, however, been considered as antithetical in the pre-Qur'anic religious thought. But, according to the Holy Qur'an, they are complimentary and should therefore be reconciled (XCVI :1; Etc.) in order that a 'sound heart' is built up, which is the demand of religion (XXVI :89 etc.)

That is so, because, Love relates to motivation, while Law relates to discipline, which is vitally necessary for human success. But discipline cannot be consequentially imposed from without; rather it should grow from within—Hence Love should form the basis of following the law.

Also, the ethico-religious (spiritual plus moral) approach to life is grounded in love, while the juristic approach is grounded in Law. Hence, because, love forms the basis of following the law, the primary object in an

ideal religious life should be on the spiritual and moral aspects of human conduct rather than on juristic formalities. It means that emphasis on law should be subordinate to the emphasis on Love – not that Law should be discarded. That will ensure healthy development of human personality. Because the spiritual and the moral dimensions of conduct belong to the realm of "freedom" which renders initiative possible and ensures the flowering of human personality; while the formal or the juristic dimension is grounded in compulsion, which gives rise to inertia and stultifies the personality.

Hence it is that a much greater portion of the Holy Qur'an is devoted to spiritual and moral guidance than to juristic (al-fiqh) and the emphasis through and through is on the primacy of the spirit, which alone makes the pursuit of the Law fruitful (II:177 : II :263; XXII :37; etc.); while legalistic hair-splitting which is born of formalistic and externalistic approach to Religion, has been vehemently denounced (II : 67--71; Etc.)

Besides this, the pursuit consists in the concepts of Piety. Love, Truth, Justice, Beauty, Wisdom and Selflessness as given in the Holy Qur'an. These are the qualities which are found in the personality of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

As matters stand in the Muslim world today, it is the decline in the religious leadership from the Islamic standard in a serious measure. It is a major cause of its inability with regard to its emergence from the abyss it has been descending for some time. The youth, especially the Western-educated class fails to find out amongst many religious leaders these sterling qualities and hence the words uttered by the Islamic teachers and guides of to-day do not go deep into their hearts and appeal to reason. Hence there is a debacle on the plane of morality especially in the Islamic World. This

descending course is taking Muslim nations into the dark valleys of ignorance of the true guidance given by the Holy Qur'an and demonstrated by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is of the vital importance that the Islamic Leaders at the helm of affairs in the Muslim world, should sit together to find out the ways of improvements. The Islamic teachers and guides should establish a standard Council to judge the merits of such leaders. Those who are ill, spiritually, morally and

intellectually, should be treated in the hospital of Learning. They should be trained and given necessary facilities so that they may be able to go round the world and speak heart to heart to the different Muslim communities and through their character and through their preachings, reform the society as a whole. Unless the Religious Leadership is well-trained, duly—qualified and sincerely-pious, Muslim nations cannot hope to stop the spiritual and moral decline.

THE QUR'ANIC FOUNDATIONS AND STRUCTURE OF MUSLIM SOCIETY'

By

Dr. Muhammed Fazl-ur-Rahman Ansari .

B.Th., M.A., Ph.D.

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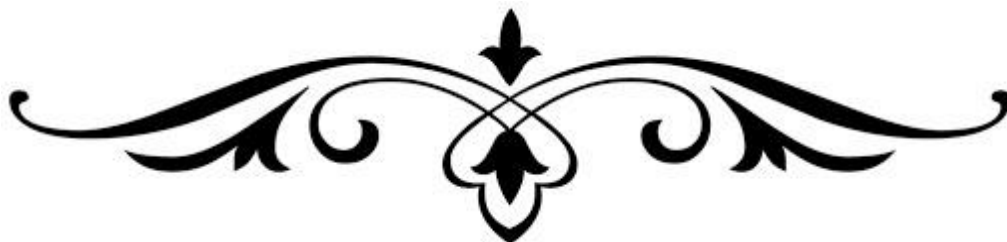
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Can Islam Be the Future Ideology of Man?

Khurshid Ahmed

A correspondent, after reading the series of articles on the "Ideology of Islam," has asked:

"One may agree with you that Islam is a great religion and its principles are the best under the sun. But can Islam be adopted in the Modern Age? The supremacy of the Modern Civilization is so overriding that the possibilities of Islam's success are hardly encouraging. And if Islam cannot become the future ideology of mankind, of what use would be all our lofty thoughts about Islam?"

Our correspondent has raised a very important question—a question which is shared by many educated people in the world of Islam.

I have to make three submissions in this respect.

1. Truth — Its Own Prize

The correct approach for a reasonable man is to see what is right, and to stand by the right come what may. One must not be deterred by the odds that might be pitched in the way of truth. With will and determination, effort, and sacrifice, the worst odds can be surmounted.

The prophets, when they began their mission, started with a minority of one. But they fought for the truth, and in the end, truth did prevail. Struggle for the truth is its own prize—and from a purely worldly viewpoint, it also bears fruit. Whatever good there is in human life owes itself to the noble efforts of the seekers after truth.

2. The Verdict of History

A study of history reveals an interesting fact. Many people always regard the civilization which holds sway over them as eternal, all-pervading, and unchangeable. But the

mightiest of civilizations were humbled after some time.

The Egyptians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Iranians, Indians, and Chinese all have had their day, but they could not resist the wheels of change. Their hegemony was broken one day. Why can't the same then happen to Modern Civilization?

The mechanics of history have their own way. The dominance of the West cannot be undefeatable. Arnold Toynbee tells us the story of the rise and fall of twenty-one civilizations, and P.A. Sorokin gives the story of the growth, dominance, and decline of thirty-six cultures. History is not going to change its course for the Modern West.

3. The Future Ideology

This points to the theoretical possibility of a historical change, but the actual situation is that the process of change has already begun and made good headway. Conditions in the present-day world are such as to suggest that Islam can and should become the future ideology.

Competing Barbarism

The world has become a huge hunting ground, an arena for competing barbarisms. The leaders as well as their followers are all at their wits' end, groping about in the dark. They stand bewildered and aghast in the midst of doubt and confusion:

"Wandering between two worlds, one dead

The other powerless to be born,

With nowhere yet to rest their head."

Almost all the great modern philosophers of history agree that "night has set over the Western world" and her satellites. They are

unanimous in viewing our times as the end of Western Civilization. Oswald Spengler, Nikolai Dani; Evsky, Arnold T. Toynbee, P.A. Sorokin, Walter Schubart, N. Berdyaev, Alfred Kroeber, F.S.C. Northrop, Albert Schweitzer, J.J. Saunders, and Lewis Mumford all explicitly describe our times as a period of one of the greatest transitions from one civilization or cultural super-system to a different one. The old system is gradually but surely dying, giving place to the new. No one believes in the survival value of the Modern Civilization, which has spelled disaster on an unprecedented scale. The following remarks of Lewis Mumford, author of the great epics *Technics and Civilization* and *The Condition of Man*, are very significant...

"Today every human being is living through an apocalypse of violence. Now, for the first time in human history, there is no spot on earth where the innocent man may find refuge... something else has been disclosed to our unwary eyes: the rottenness of our civilization itself. If our civilization should perish, this will come about because it was not good enough to survive."

Unrest

The discontent, frustration, and unrest of modern man clearly reflect themselves in the work of T.S. Eliot. He says:

"All our knowledge brings us near to our ignorance.

All our ignorance brings us near to death. But nearness to death, not nearer to God. Where is the life we have lost in living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?

Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

The Cycle of heaven in twenty centuries brings us farther from God and nearer to dust."

The civilization which the West had reared on the foundations of Godlessness and anti-religion has, it has now been revealed, only feet of clay. Its once mighty edifice is now crumbling down. But what about the future?

A study of the history of civilizations and contemporary philosophies of history reveals that the decay of a civilization and dying cultures have survived only through a religious transformation. Ethical movements alone have saved tottering cultures. The emergence of life in the South and Far East, the Stoic ethics upsurge in Greece, the religious renaissance in early Rome, the rise of Islam, contemporary pacifism, the M.R.A. (Moral Re-Armament), Christian Socialism, the Neo-Thomist movement, and a host of similar ethical movements of the decaying Western Civilization are a few instances in point. This is the verdict of all great philosophers of history.

P.A. Sorokin sums up modern philosophical thought as follows:

"Spengler contends that the last civilization phase of a high culture is marked by an emergence and growth of the second religiosity, which serves as a passage to the emergence of a new high culture and its new spring-phase. Toynbee states that in the last phase of civilization there emerges the universal church and a new religion which ushers in a new civilization dominated by the new religion in its period of childhood or growth. My study of the succession of the super-systems during some thirty-five centuries of the Creto-Minoan, the Creto-Mycenaean, the Graeco-Roman, the Western European, and the Hindu cultures has shown likewise that in all observed cases, after the decline of the Sensate Super-system (i.e., secular, materialistic, amoral, and purely this-worldly), a new ideational (religious) super-system becomes dominant."

— *Social Philosophies in an Age of Revolution* by P.A. Sorokin

4. Role of Religion

Spengler's "Second religiosity," Toynbee's "Universal Church" ushering in a new religious phase of a civilization, Berdyaev's new "Medieval" culture succeeding the declined "Humanistic secular," Schubart's "New Messianic prototype"—all these concepts are similar. Kroeber also states that often, "...after science and philosophy had seen their active course, religion once more becomes important." Thus, at least on this point, all important social theories seem to be in essential agreement as to a new Ideational Religious super-system supplanting the declined Sensate or disintegrating phase of a dying civilization.

The author concludes: "Notwithstanding the difference in the details and interpretations, almost all the writers considered agree on the revival of ethical movements in the last phase of the declining super-system of civilization."

This is a fundamental historical truth. When in the light of this principle we view the contemporary world, we come to the conclusion that religion alone can give the world a new civilization. Nearly all the philosophers of history prophesy that the coming civilization will be religiously ideational. The coming civilization is going to be basically different from that which has been dominant over the world during the last six centuries. It is also interesting to know that:

"All the writers agree that with the end of the dominant old and the emergence of the dominant new culture, a shift is taking place from the geographical centre, and from the nation or nations where the old super-system was local, to a new nation or nations. Since Western Europe is the centre

of the dying cultural super-system, the new civilization must emerge elsewhere."

These social philosophies are a pointer to the future. If the clouds of destruction are to dissipate, if the sorrows of man are to be lightened, and if the curse of war is to be lifted off man's brows; if civilization is to survive, the light of religion must dawn. It must be realized that fear of God and reverence for moral values are the only weapons which can arrest the downward march of humanity, and that Divine Revelation alone can offer the bridle that can control man's passions and the light that can guide his steps.

And wherefrom can we have that light except the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. Islam is a complete code of life, a moral order, a social scheme, a polity, and a cultural force. In its scheme of life, nothing is lacking, nothing is superfluous. Its efficacy as a culture-producing factor is beyond any shadow of doubt.

The pages of history bear testimony to the fact that it gave a new face to civilization and a golden era to history. Its principles are as modern as tomorrow morning and they can, even today, herald a new era in the life of humanity.

The current of history is moving towards THIS system of life—a system which humanity is ceaselessly searching for. The Materialistic Civilization has chained man down to unnatural ways of life and has sapped his soul.

Islam can give man a new lease of life. It gives the message of Truth and Justice which penetrate the heart. It can liberate man from the iron shackles of false gods. It can bring a revolution in the hearts and souls of human beings, ushering in an era of peace and prosperity.

(Courtesy: DAWN)

Why Do I Wear Hijab?

I probably do not fit into the preconceived notion of a "rebel". I have no visible tattoos and minimal piercing. I do not possess a leather jacket. In fact, when most people look at me, their first thought usually is something along the lines of "oppressed female." The brave individuals who have mustered the courage to ask me about the way I dress usually have questions like: "Do your parents make you wear that?" or "Don't you find that really unfair?"

A while back, a couple of girls in Montreal were kicked out of school for dressing like I do. It seems strange that a little piece of cloth would make for such controversy. Perhaps the fear is that I am harboring an Uzi underneath it! Of course, the issue at hand is more than a mere piece of cloth. I am a Muslim woman who, like millions of other Muslim women across the globe, chooses to wear the hijab. And the concept of the hijab, contrary to popular opinion, is actually one of the most fundamental aspects of female empowerment.

When I cover myself, I make it virtually impossible for people to judge me according to the way I look. I cannot be categorized because of my attractiveness or lack thereof.

Compare this to life in today's society: We are constantly sizing one another up on the basis of our clothing, jewellery, hair and makeup. What kind of depth can there be in a world like this? Yes, I have a body, a physical manifestation upon this Earth. But it is the vessel of an intelligent mind and a strong spirit. It is not for the beholder to leer at or to use in advertisements to sell everything from beer to cars!

Because of the superficiality of the world in which we live, external appearances are so stressed that the value of the individual

counts for almost nothing. It is a myth that women in today's society are liberated! What kind of freedom can there be when a woman cannot walk down the street without every aspect of her physical self being "checked out"?

When I wear the hijab I feel safe from all of this. I can rest assured that no one is looking at me and making assumptions about my character from the length of my skirt. There is a barrier between me and those who would exploit me. I am first and foremost a human being, equal to any man, and not vulnerable because of my sexuality.

One of the saddest truths of our time is the question of the beauty myth and female self-image. Reading popular teenage magazines, you can instantly find out what kind of body image is "in" or "out". And if you have the "wrong" body type, well, then, you're just going to have to change it, aren't you? After all, there is no way that you can be overweight and still be beautiful.

Look at any advertisement. Is a woman being used to sell the product? How old is she? How attractive is she? What is she wearing? More often than not, that woman will be no older than her early 20s, taller, slimmer and more attractive than average, dressed in skimpy clothing. Why do we allow ourselves to be manipulated like this?

Whether the 90s woman wishes to believe it or not, she is being forced into a mold. She is being coerced into selling herself, into compromising herself. This is why we have 13-year-old girls sticking their fingers down their throats and overweight adolescents hanging themselves.

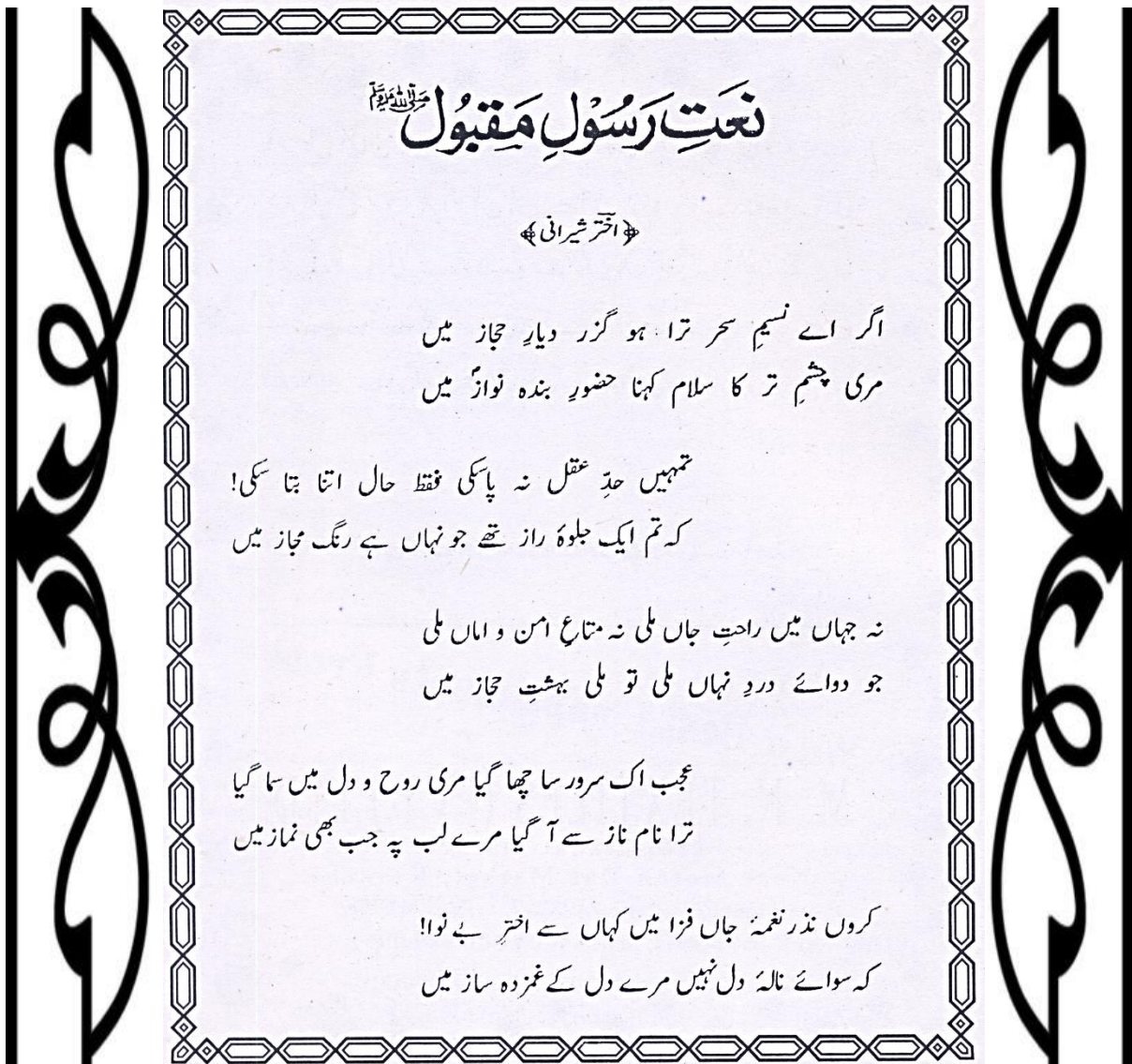
When people ask me if I feel oppressed, I can honestly say no. I made this decision out of my own free will. I like the fact that I am taking control of the way other people

perceive me. I enjoy the fact that I don't give anyone anything to look at and that I have released myself from the bondage of the swinging pendulum of the fashion industry and other institutions that exploit females.

My body is my own business. Nobody can tell me how I should look or whether or not I am beautiful. I know that there is more to me than that. I am also able to say "no" comfortably when people ask me if I feel as though my sexuality is being repressed. I

have taken control of my sexuality. I am thankful I will never have to suffer the fate of trying to lose/gain weight or trying to find the exact lipstick shade that will go with my skin colour. I have made choices about what my priorities are and these are not among them.

So next time you see me, don't look at me sympathetically. I am not under duress or a male-worshipping female captive from those barbarous Arabic deserts! I've been liberated.



Morphology of Religious Consciousness

A. K. Brohi

The most distinctive feature of man's life is not, I submit, as fully spelled out in the well-known Aristotelian dogma that man is a rational animal as it is in the recognition of the truth that he is a religious animal.

The moment man begins to be aware of himself he sees himself reflected in an undifferentiated ensemble which is other than himself, and in the very process of this perception, he finds that he has transcended himself. More precisely, his awareness of himself comes to him from his going out of himself and his encounter with the Not-self. Just as the eye cannot see itself, except perhaps in a mirror, the 'self' within us has no direct awareness of itself except as it sees itself reflected in the elements that are outside its power and control, but with which it, nevertheless, has a strange kind of affinity and contact.

It is the essence of religious experience that it makes us feel bound in some way to something that is other than ourselves—may that other be an object of worship, a system of beliefs and practice or some well-defined way of life. The word "religion", even etymologically considered, conveys the idea of being bound, of being re-linked to something. All we are and all we do, is evidence of this very link that we have with the world around us. The differentiation in the quality of life between man and man is, in principle ultimately possible only because each individual proceeds to recognize more or less consciously this link and in the process arrives at a conception of that "other" with which he nevertheless feels somehow connected in the depth of his soul. The whole life of man is an attempt to elaborate this relationship and to discover the precise nature of the ground that he has for affirming it. I know of no life possible in

the human sense unless it is in some measure capable of attaining to this level of transcendence and consequently of experiencing a certain degree of enlargement of its powers and the freedom of its movement. Everything else in the world simply exists; man, however, knows what he is and he wants to be what he has recognized as his truth, as his true existence. His rational powers are born in the very struggle to gain a glimpse of true existence—but the quest for the discovery of truth is born of his religious nature, of his instinctive craving for self-transcendence.

Animal life motivated by the desire to seek satisfaction of biological needs like the preservation of individual life through the intake of food and the preservation of the life of the species through the interplay of sex instinct. The satisfaction of these biological urges, be it noted, is secured through a series of somewhat complicated instinctive responses and the whole process of stimulus and response is called into play by a prenatally ordained inherent mechanism which ensures the organism the possibility of its own continuance as also the preservation of the species to which it belongs. But a higher degree of evolution in man is reached the moment life transcends the demand that his mere biological instincts make upon him and the possibility of choice between good and evil is thrown open before man for a moral decision. It is at this point that the religious attitude is born, bringing with it the necessity for man to act upon a ground which is not completely presented to him through his powers of sense perception but is discovered in response to the metaphysical need of finding out some explanation of the "why", "wherefore" and "how" of this moral

predicament.

The various traditional systems of religious belief, thought, and practice find their fulcrum in this basic need of man to achieve transcendence, to go beyond himself. Thus it is that man, as if by escaping the life hitherto lived by him in the darkness of instinctive and mechanical life, comes to live in a world of light, of larger truth.

The question whether a certain system of religious beliefs is valid or not raises other tormentingly difficult issues. These have no doubt to be settled independently of the basic truth, viz., that, as a matter of fact, psychologically considered, man's religious attitude is a concomitant condition of a level of life higher than that which we ascribe to the animals. Life is completely immanent in animals—but it becomes; partly at least, transcendent in man when the 'empirical self' in him becomes aware of his loneliness in a world which it comes to view as constituting the 'other'.

It is impossible, in purely rational terms, to account for life's evolution from the animal to the human plane. This transition from the animal phase of life to the human, is an enigma to us, a case in which, not the rational explanation, but the religious symbolism as reflected in the myths of mankind, is apt to render more intelligible to us the way evolution accomplished these miracles. The creation of man is a miraculous intervention of a 'power' whose manifestations we see within ourselves but whose operations we are, from the present plane of our consciousness, not yet qualified to comprehend. The mystery of life defies us at all levels. To illustrate: When I desire to raise my hand, lo and behold: the hand goes up. How does this miracle occur? How is it that my desire to move the arm, moves the arm? How does mind at all succeed in moving matter? The psychologist, if pressed for an answer to

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solve the riddle, would only say: "Oh, it is a case of ideo-motor action"—as if a pompous phrase ever explained anything. But precisely, how the idea imparts motion to my arm is the question to which no answer has so far been given by analytical psychology.

The metaphysical justifications for the maintenance of a given type of religious belief or its relevance to life have to be provided by our feeble powers of reason and the explanations have to be treated by us for what they are worth. But no matter what we say concerning them, we have no option but to admit that man's awareness of himself as an entity separate from that which surrounds him and his belief that despite this 'separateness' he is somehow linked up with life of his environment, seem to be the indisputable premises upon which to explain the emergence of man from the life of the brute—that is from the forms of life which preceded him in evolution and which, in some sense, continue to be an integral part of his psychic structure and experience.

Comprehensively stated, religious consciousness in the sense described above, has a reference to some supra-personal ground which we have to affirm just to be able to give meaning to our existence. How otherwise would it be possible to explain the phenomenon of moral choice? In order to make a choice from the possible courses of action spread out before us, we really are attempting—are we not? —to move out of the predicament in which we are involved, to another which our imaginative reconstruction presents to us as a desirable one for us to be in. But how do we at all choose—and, why do we talk about one course of conduct being right and the other being wrong, one leading us to the end which is felt to be good and the other believed to be evil? The urge to move from moment to moment to ever newer and

newer phases of existence is something we witness within ourselves directly because of our link with the unchanging supra-personal ground. And it is the perception of this ground that not only gives us a sense of moral direction but also our time-sense, and confers upon us the capacity to see either the frustration or fruition of our conception of good life in the succession of events as they unfold themselves before us. All this awareness of the moral predicament of man and his role as an agent of change in his environment and history, is possible only because we are, through our immediate experience, constantly in contact with that enduring and abiding ground of our being which is other than ourselves. It is the supra-personal life which lies at the base of our temporal and moral consciousness that gives us a sense of responsibility in all we do or do not do.

Sometimes the picture that we have formed within ourselves of our environment, thanks to discursive thought, gets rudely contradicted by the failure of action which was designed by us in terms of our conception of what the nature and operation of the forces that govern that environment are like. This leads us to revise and correct, from time to time, the portrait that we have in our mind of the world outside. Appearances thus corrected go on progressively changing in the light of new experience and the growth of our consciousness takes place precisely in the way we steadily succeed in altering for the better the picture "inside our heads" and making it an adequate representation of our environment. Very soon, the evidence furnished by our senses is found to be in conflict with what, according to our discursive thought, the picture of the environment ought to be like and, from that moment on, we begin to evolve that inner eye of wisdom through whose deliverance in the felicitous phrase of Plato, we

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eventually become "the spectator of all time and all existence" and in the wise words of Sophocles, begin "to see life steadily and to see it as a whole."

The cognitive adventure of life in man, which is responsible for the progressive refinement of his representational reconstruction of the reality outside him, has itself been called into play in the service of action, and its findings are valid only in so far as a plan for action is to be drawn up to deal with the environment. But, this plan for action is fundamentally conditioned by the fact that life finds itself being constantly challenged by all kinds of emergencies; and serviceable action has to be improvised to deal with these emergencies if life is at all to survive. As life advances and attains a greater measure of freedom, it begins to discover that the real ground of action lies completely outside the narrow precincts of its immediate consciousness. A simple illustration would make this clear. A farmer sets out to cultivate his field: the ground of his action is not what is presented to him in his immediate perceptual consciousness but has something to do with the imaginative construction of the ultimate fruits of his labour. It is this belief, namely, that what he sows today he shall reap tomorrow, which forms the ground of his action. But the harvest scene which he pictures to himself is not there; it is far away—and if he acts at all it is because he sees with the eye of wisdom that the harvest season, too, is there. Direct perception of the world of the Unseen thus gets implicated in all transactions of life and the mystical tradition of mankind merely extends this same ground of belief in the reality of the Unseen when it states that there are certain needs of our real self which can only find fulfillment if we can secure the merger of our finite self with a wider Being that engulfs it. The farmer in the foregoing illustration acts on a partial environment; the religious man

acts on his total environment.

And indeed a considerable bulk of testimony that is offered by the best that the human race has produced, tends to show that, in his relation to the universe, man must postulate the existence of "Objective Reality", which is not adequately conveyed to him by his sense perception or even by his cognitive consciousness but which is responsive to his whole being and is at once the transcendent and immanent ground of his experience of it. Thus it is that the combined wisdom of the religious tradition of mankind admonishes us to realize the truth of this relationship within the framework of that very ground—and which is what, in the last resort, gives to man's labour here below a meaning and a purpose.

There are, in main, three attitudes possible in principle for the comprehension of this relationship which in my reckoning man has with the ground of his experience:

1. He could proceed to personalize the ground, to treat it as a kind of a higher magnificent presence. Thus conceived, the 'ground' becomes the creator, sustainer, preserver of the world of appearance, and because it is a Person, a communication with it becomes the highest goal attainable for man. He submits to the will of this presence conceived as a Higher Person, adores and worships Him.

2. He could regard the ground as something impersonal, e.g., a sort of law, a kind of energy or power, and then proceed to explore the possibility of taking advantage of that law or power or process in order to plan action with a view to change successfully itself and the world of appearance. There can be no question here of man's sense of inward fulfillment or his experiencing a sense of exhilaration in the pursuit of this purpose, for the main

consideration behind knowing the law or power is one of expediency and is born of his desire to exploit it by taking advantage of the forces that are at work in the universe.

3. He could develop an attitude of psychological indifference to his relationship to this ground and in consequence proceed to decry and to denounce all attempts to gain a knowledge of the nature of that ground of man's experience as being at all relevant to man's capacity and competence for tackling his tasks here below. Here the point is not that man's link with the supra-personal ground does not exist; only that relationship is considered as completely meaningless and irrelevant for the purpose of satisfying the basic needs of his terrestrial life. Here man's phenomenological experience is itself interpreted to be a sufficient premise for discerning what his task on earth is like and the problem of securing his liberation or enlightenment is considered exclusively within the framework of his experience. Generally it is a hallmark of this attitude that the 'personality' aspects of man's life are not given such importance and this world is generally viewed, cynically and pessimistically, as a sort of valley of sorrow and suffering, of toil and tears.

I would like for the purpose of the present argument to characterize the first attitude as theocentric, the second as anthropocentric, and the final one as nihilistic.

A word by way of explanation is necessary to clarify the philosophic ideas that underlie the foregoing terms.

The first two terms are self-explanatory. An attitude is theocentric if the overriding consideration for man in all that he does is the awareness of his link with a meta-cosmic presence; but it is anthropocentric if it is the man who is the measure of all things. The first approach provides an

absolute norm for adjudging man's conduct, but in the latter case since man himself is constantly evolving and changing, this norm would have to be to that extent subjectivistic, relativistic and variable.

What is not so clear, however, is the implication of the third term: "nihilistic". Nihilism, according to the Oxford Dictionary, means: "negative doctrine, total rejection of current beliefs, in religion or morals; (philos.) skepticism that denies all existence, etc." I suggest that a total denial of current belief in religion and morals is itself a positive basis for action and is therefore a religious attitude: all significant denials are, in this sense, really affirmations.

Nihilistic attitude is negative in that it rejects all known codes of behaviour based on the knowledge of the supra-personal ground. But it is in itself a positive philosophy of action. When Marx, for example, declared war against the institution of religion, his war-aims had nothing to do with the elimination of religion as such; he was merely attacking what he felt was a kind of religious belief and practice sanctioned by the traditional norms of religion. He, in fact, wanted to establish another official religion and what he preached was yet another 'sermon on the mount'. His battle cry, of course, was so formulated that it gave a false appearance to his real mission. He was really out to establish another religion. In defence of this contention reference may be made to the following extract from Ralph Barton Perry's book, *Realms of Value*:

"Religion in this universal sense will then include cults which judged by Christian standard are atheistic. Thus Communism is said to be Godless and anti-religious because it rejects Christianity. But in the same breath the critics of Communism declare that Communism is itself a religion in that it exalts the proletarian revolution

above all other ends and holds that its success is guaranteed by the Law of Nature and History. Whether one says that Communism is atheistic or that it has made a god of Economic Force depends on whether one is thinking in terms of a particular religion or in terms of religion in general. The God which Communism denies is a particular variety of God—such as the Christian God. The God it affirms is another variety of universal God. Both gods answer the description of God as Cosmic Power viewed from the standpoint of what men take to be their paramount good."

"It is clear that esoteric Buddhism as well as Marxian Communism recognizes no God in the Christian sense. But Buddhism teaches that Nirvana is the supreme good and that the constitution of things—the view of Karma and ultimate illusoriveness of existence—permits Nirvana to be attained. Buddhism is thus a religion in its conjoining of a hierarchy of values with a cosmology; and it can even be said to have its god, if by 'god' is meant the saving grace of man's total environment."

In the comprehension of the foregoing argument, it would be useful to elaborate the central point around which gyrates that constellation of ideas that underlie the use of the three terms that I have improvised. That point could be seen in the three different views that the three religious attitudes mentioned above adopt in relation to the concept of 'personality of man'. For the theocentric, the human person is the most primary and inviolable element in the scheme of things; he is *sui generis*, and is underived and underivable from the world in which he has been lodged to do the battle. For the anthropocentric view, the man has emerged from what has gone before him and he is explicable in terms similar to those that explain the cosmos. He shares in his being that which exists outside of him in his

environment. There is for the present nothing unique in him, for he is just the child of the cosmos, and nothing more. In his right as being the final product of creation he is in some sense superior to all that has contributed to his existence. But that is all. For the nihilistic consciousness, the concept of personality is an illusion and the only explanation it is called upon to give is: how has this illusion arisen? For the materialist it is just a superfluous concomitant condition—a mere by-product; and the highest attainable end for man is to renounce this illusion and accommodate himself within the framework of the hostile universe in which his life has arisen by the interplay of forces which had no pre-vision of the end they were achieving.

As a sample of nihilistic view of life, let me exhibit the following passage from Bertrand Russell's famous Essay on "Free Man's Worship":

"The life of man viewed outwardly is but a small thing compared with the Forces of Nature. The slave is doomed to worship Time and Fate and Death, because they are greater than anything he finds himself and because all his thoughts are of things which they devour. But great as they are, to think of them greatly, to feel their passionless splendour, is greater still. And such thought makes us free men; we no longer bow before the inevitable in oriental subjection but we absorb it and make it a part of ourselves. To abandon the struggle of private happiness, to expel all eagerness of temporary desire, to burn with passion for eternal things—this is emancipation and this is free man's worship. And this aberration is effected by the contemplation of fate; for fate itself is subdued by the mind which leaves nothing to be purged by the purifying fire of Time.

United with his fellow-men by the strongest of all ties, the tie of the common doom, the Minaret

free man finds that a new vision is with him always shedding over every daily task the light of love. The life of Man is a long march through the night, surrounded by invisible foes, tortured by weariness and pain, towards a goal that few can hope to reach and where none may tarry long. One by one, as they march, our comrades vanish from our sight, seized by the silent orders of omnipotent death. Very brief is the time in which we can help them, in which their happiness or misery is decided...

Brief and powerless is Man's life; on him and on all his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way; for Man, condemned today to lose his dearest, tomorrow himself to pass through the gates of darkness, it remains only to cherish, ere yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day; disdaining the coward terrors of the slave of Fate to worship at the shrine that his own hands have built; undismayed by the empire of chance to preserve a mind free from the wanton tyranny that rules his outward life; proudly defiant of the irresistible forces that tolerate for a moment his knowledge and his condemnation to sustain alone, a weary but unyielding at last, the World that his own ideals have fashioned despite the trampling march of unconscious power."

The mood behind the words cited above is one of unyielding despair and such is the sort of human situation that we ourselves have witnessed only too often within the depths of our soul.

As a poet's vision of Human Destiny, it might claim our serious attention and respect. But as a philosophical discourse upon the condition of Man, it cannot escape our criticism. How can a free Man emerge at large from a universe where 'all being is bodily and all causation is mechanical?' If it

be true, as Mr. Russell says in some other parts of his Essay: 'That man is the product of the causes which had no pre-vision of the end they were achieving, that his origin, his growth, his hopes and his fears, his loves and his beliefs are but the outcome of accidental collection of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling can preserve an individual life beyond the grave, that all the labours of ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of man's achievement must inevitably be buried under a debris of ruins'—one cannot understand by what process can the urge to worship at all arise. After all, all worship is based on the miracle of self-transcendence. If the 'self' in man has an aspiration towards something which points a 'here beyond', it could not anyhow be the product of the 'causes that had no pre-vision of the end they were achieving.' Mr. Russell cannot have it both ways.

Adverting for a moment once again to the classification of the three religious attitudes we have been considering, it would be conducive to clarity of thought if I were to classify the traditional religions of mankind in terms of these denominations. Subject to some obvious reservations, the precise nature of which it is not necessary for me to set forth here, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and some systems of Hindu religious thought and belief fall into the theocentric group, whereas Mahayana Buddhism, Confucianism and Existentialism of the theistic variety fall in the anthropocentric group, and Atheistic Existentialism, Positivism, Behaviourism and Dialectical Materialism, considered as philosophies of life, fall in the nihilistic group. For the first group, the ground of personal life is interpreted as meta-cosmic Reality which manifests itself in, but is not exhausted by, Minaret

the world of appearance; and this Reality partakes of the character of a higher personal presence with whom dialogue by the finite person is possible. For the second, the supra-natural ground is transcendental to finite consciousness but is intra-cosmic; and man is to utilize his knowledge of its laws and processes much in the manner in which the mariners during the middle ages used to avail of "trade winds" for the purpose of being able to sail to the hospitable habitat in the tropics for doing trade. Not that 'winds' were designed to promote trade by facilitating the passage of the sailing vessels in hospitable habitats, but that man, having learnt the secret of the seasonal direction of the monsoonic winds, exploited the secret for doing navigation better than he would have been able to do had he no such knowledge. For the third, the ground is supra-personal only in the sense that the personality of man itself is unreal and the salvation of man therefore consists in giving himself up to a wider synthesis—to Nirvana, to the State, to the non-human elements in the cosmos, etc.

The primary categories of theocentric perspective are metaphysical in character; and as for anthropocentric and nihilistic perspectives, they are the psychological and the ethical ones respectively. The first instances the case of objective consciousness, the second reflects the twilight zone between the light of the objective and darkness of the subjective consciousness, and the last one is the case of pure subjective consciousness, that is to say, it tenants the world of unadulterated illusion and Maya which, for it, is the only reality. The approach of a devotee in the case of theocentric religious consciousness is that of humility, one of adoration of the Divine, of total surrender in an act of worship at its altar; and that of the devotee in anthropocentric religious consciousness, it is one akin to that of the cunning man, that

is to say, of a man who has somehow found himself possessed of a prescription which he is going to exploit for securing his redemption and for him the need to be reverential to the designer of the prescription does not so much as arise:—this, as would be noticed, is really not a religious attitude at all but partakes of the character of the belief in a sort of magical formula to secure certain results. For the nihilistic consciousness, it suffices to say that the only attitude it fosters is one of arrogance, since it is born of a conviction it fosters, viz., that every man is sufficient unto himself and his highest reach is along the direction of leading an active life to the end that the historical milieu in which he finds himself is radically altered. This is, it would be recalled, behaving more or less in the typical image of the strategy reflected in the ideal of the Prometheus Unbound. The theocentric attitude regards human action as a symbol, as though it constituted an offering of the finite at the altar of the Absolute; the anthropocentric attitude regards the human action as a means of self-fulfillment and does not pause to inquire whether or not it ought to concern itself with the consequences of action. The nihilistic attitude takes human action seriously, in that it constitutes for it the only mode that there is of acting on the environment—or rather 'pseudo-environment', since a subjective consciousness cannot know any other objective environment. His is an action for the sake of action, since in the scheme of things the pursuit of human activity is devoid of any serious purpose. The devotee who subscribes to a theocentric perspective, believes that his essential progress lies in securing an ever-increasing approximation to the meta-cosmic source of light and power. For such a one salvation within oneself and thus such like an infant on the bosom of the Infinite and thereby feel nourished and thus become stronger

(diviner) in the process. This is to be likened to a piece of iron taking on the character of fire by continuously remaining in fire. The anthropocentric devotee, on the other hand, conceives all his destiny in another dimension, which is one of discovering his identity with the Absolute, the Atma, eventually discovering himself as a Brahma. Here progress does not so much lie in the securing of transformation of the finite self as the discovery that the finite self is the Real Self and indeed the realisation comes to such a one that one has been so all along: it is, in short, a case of the dew-drop discovering that it is an ocean. For the nihilistic consciousness, the progress lies in finding itself engaged in an activity which involves it continually in the world of outer circumstances and this fate can be likened to that of a patient who is suffering from what modern medicine calls paralysis agitans: once he starts walking, he must go on and on—not so much because he wants to go on but simply because he has lost all volutaristic control over his movements. The meaning of existence for such a one lies in its meaninglessness and indeed its only point lies in its pointlessness. The functional lever of change for the one oriented in theocentric perspective is the consciousness of sin. The fact that I conceive myself to be, when He alone is, itself an act of sinful pride. For the anthropocentric consciousness there can be no sin, but only an error of judgement. The former depends for his redemption primarily on 'grace' of God and the latter one on an effort to exploit the magical formula in the sense stated above. For the nihilistic one, of course, there is nothing good or bad except perhaps that only thinking makes it to be so. Since his is the world in which what rules is the relativity, nothing is ontologically valid: after all, in the twilight all things are grey and in darkness they all vanish.

The presentation of the foregoing three
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characteristic attitudes have been offered in an attempt to facilitate comprehension of religious systems of thought, belief and practice. Of course, these characteristics shade off imperceptibly into greys and a given religious system may contain variations on the central and cardinal features that I have depicted.

What contributes to the emergence of certain types of religious consciousness in certain epoch and at certain places in the scheme of things is another and a far more fascinating chapter in the study of Comparative Religion and this is not the place to expate upon that aspect of the problem.

Before I conclude, I would like to present a possible solution of the problem of the immortality of the soul in terms of the three types of religious consciousness that I have attempted to delineate in the foregoing pages. It is obvious that for the nihilistic consciousness, the possible continuance of man's life after death presents no problem for the simple reason that for it human individuality is not a value, and since the emergence of the illusion of personality in man is itself attributable solely to the interplay of mechanical forces within his bodily life, with the disintegration of his body the bubble that is human personality bursts and man fades into oblivion and is heard of no more. For the anthropocentric consciousness, however, the problem of the survival of the human soul arises for serious consideration if only because it does treat human personality as representing a higher phase of manifestation of the Law of Evolution which it sees operating in the cosmos. But since the distinctive feature of the personality of man for the anthropocentric consciousness is not that it denotes the presence in him of any meta-cosmic principle but is something which is wholly contained within the range of

possibilities disclosed by the operation of some impersonal power or the working of some sort of plan or law, the issue concerning its survival after the disintegration of bodily life certainly presents some insuperable difficulties. There may, however, be as indeed there actually are, some representative founders of the religious systems and world-philosophies who appropriately belong to this category of thought, but who nevertheless hazard the belief that although, to begin with, nothing immutable or eternal manifests itself in the life of man, it is possible to hold that some form of life entirely unknown to us may yet emerge at the point at which human life begins to consummate itself. Immortality of soul thus, with such of them, is not a birthright of man but is something to be fought for and obtained as a reward for his work on earth. For them there is the possibility that something may survive after the death of bodily life which may be capable of continuing the evolution of life in the sense entirely unknown to us. For the anthropocentric consciousness, the belief in the survival of soul thus involves the hazard of faith. For the anthropocentric consciousness therefore the possibility of soul's survival after man's death is not eliminated on a priori grounds. It remains, right to the end, an open question.

For the theocentric consciousness, of course, the immortality of soul is not only the essence but the quintessence of that relationship which the earthly life of man has to meta-cosmic principle which is seen operating within the limits of the law that conditions the cosmos as if from a trans-cosmic source. Thus, with the disintegration of man's bodily life that entelechy which is encased in the 'muddy vesture of decay' ought to be able to regain its original status and any experiences acquired by the soul of man on earth would therefore be available

to it for its further growth and expansion after it has discarded the 'mortal coil'.

We started by saying that religious consciousness is the primary nexus which links man with something other than himself. On closer analysis this 'other' can either be: (a) some non-human force or law underlying at the base of the fabric of cosmos, or (b) some presence of a sort as it reveals to me when I look at the lives of my fellow-men, or again (c) it may be somewhat like the stuff from which my empirical self is made, e.g., my thoughts, my dreams, my feelings, my loves, my hates, and indeed it can be a piece with all that I have felt and found.

By empirical self, in this context, I mean the self that I contact when I introspectively attempt to recover, as I do when I set out to know myself. In order to avoid misunderstanding it is necessary to point out that even the self I recover in introspection is really outside me: do I not say 'I have hope', 'I have admiration', 'I have pain'? Even the contents of consciousness are outside that meta-cosmic principle, that 'I' in me which secures their organization in a synthetic unity of appreciation: My link with my mind is in no sense different from the link that I have with the distant Nebulae, and both of them are 'outside' me.

These three varieties of the other are reflected in the interpretation of the supra-personal ground by the three forms of

consciousness I have described; anthropocentric being based on the first, theocentric being based on the second, and nihilistic being based on the third element of our analysis. But the analysis also incidentally establishes the gradation in the kind of knowledge which at the present level of our consciousness is possible to us. Thus: (a) when I see the majesty and grandeur of Nature as it is manifested say in lightning and thunder, or (b) hear the soul-stirring voice of a friend, or (c) communicate with my empirical self as I do introspection which I talk of myself, I have presented to myself an orderly procession of the various levels of communication through that link that we have with the 'other'.

To assume that these are the only kinds of knowledge possible in principle for us to witness the 'other' is to go beyond the evidence that is available. All this, on the other hand, may go to establish the possibility of some higher form of consciousness in which I could directly communicate with the 'other'. That such a communion is possible for man's deeper or metaphysical self with the meta-cosmic Reality, which for the theocentric consciousness is a presence and a personality and that too in a manner entirely unknown to my present forms of consciousness, is what all higher mystical tradition of mankind has taught us to believe.

ATTENTION TO OUR READERS

It is our earnest request to the readers and subscribers "THE MINARET Monthly International" to extend their help and co-operation for increasing its circulation, convincing friends for advertisement, sending goods articles and giving precious suggestions for the improvement of the magazine.

جہان پوشیدہ کی حقیقت کو سمجھ سکے۔

اس لئے آیت زیر بحث کی ماقبل آیت میں آیا ہے۔
 ”مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا“

(لوح-۱۱:۱۳)

ترجمہ: تمہیں کیا ہو گیا ہے کہ تم اللہ تعالیٰ سے عزت و عظمت اور جلال و برتری کے حصول کے طلب کرنے والے نہیں بنے ہو۔ اس امر کی طلب کہ وہ تمہیں حالت موجودہ سے بھی بلند تر مقامات عطا فرما سکتا ہے۔ کیونکہ اس نے تمہیں ایسا ہی ترقی کرنے والا ذہن دیکر تخلیق کیا ہے۔

حواشی و حوالہ جات

- ۱۔ میر محمد کرم شاہ الازہری (متوفی ۱۹۹۸ء) نے اس آیت کا ترجمہ بایں الفاظ کیا ہے۔ ”اس نے تمہیں کئی مرحلوں سے گزار کر پیدا کیا ہے۔“ اور امین احسن اصلاحی (متوفی ۱۹۹۷ء) نے بایں الفاظ ”اس نے تمکو خلقت کے مختلف مراحل سے گزارا۔“ واضح ہو کہ یہ دونوں تراجم انسان کی خلقت عادیہ وغیرہ عادیہ ہر دو کی ترجمانی کرتے ہیں۔
- ۲۔ امام قرطبی مالکی (متوفی ۷۷۷ھ) نے اپنی تفسیر الجامع لاحکام

القرآن میں لکھا ہے۔ ”وقیل اطواراً: صبیاناً ثم شباناً ثم شیوخاً و ضعفا“ اس مفہوم پر مشتمل کوئی ترجمہ تو نہیں ملتا۔ البتہ ترجمہ کے ذیل میں یہ مفہوم ضرور ملتا ہے۔ اس لئے راقم نے اسے ترجمے کے طور پر نمایاں کر دیا ہے۔

۳۔ امام راغب اصفہانی لکھتے ہیں۔ ”وقیل اشاراً الی نحو قوله واختلاف السنتکم واللوانکم اُمی مختلفین فی الخلق و الخلق“ عبدالحق حقانی کے ہاں اس آیت کا ترجمہ یوں کیا گیا ہے۔ ”اس نے تمکو رنگ برنگ کا پیدا کیا۔“ اور فتح محمد جالندھری نے اس طرح کیا ہے۔ ”اس نے تمکو طرح طرح (کی حالتوں) کا پیدا کیا ہے۔“

۴۔ محمد علی (لاہوری) اپنی تفسیر بیان القرآن (حاشیہ زیر آیت) میں لکھتے ہیں۔ ”یہ حالات مختلفہ وہی ہیں، جنہیں قرآن کریم نے مختلف جگہ پر بیان کیا ہے۔ مثلاً پہلے مٹی کی حالت پھر اس سے کئی حالتوں میں تبدیل ہو کر یعنی نبات کی حالت میں گزر کر جسکا آگے آیت ۱۷ میں ہے۔ (بیان القرآن مطبوعہ ۱۹۷۷ء) اور محمد علی نے زیر بحث آیت کا ترجمہ بایں الفاظ کیا ہے۔ ”اس نے تمہیں مختلف حالات میں سے (گزار کر) پیدا کیا ہے۔“

FOR KIND ATTENTION OF READERS

Readers desirous of disposing off old books on Islam, Economics, Sociology or History from their collections are requested to contact us. The Qaderiah Library, a component of Aleemiyah University of Islamic Studies and its research and publication wing shall welcome and accept these books as donation.

انتہا خلق تام ہے۔ اور صدیوں سے ایسا ہو رہا ہے اور قیامت تک ایسا ہوتا رہے گا۔ میڈیکل سائنس کا ہر طالب علم اس ارتقاء سے خوب واقف ہے۔

خلقت عادیہ کے بعد کی حالت بھی ایک معلوم اور محدود ارتقاء ہے۔ اس ارتقاء کی ابتداء شیرخواری اور انتہا ارزل العمری ہے۔ یہ ارتقاء بھی ولید اول سے نسل آدم میں جاری و ساری ہے اور دن رات مشاہدے میں آتا رہتا ہے۔ اور سب سے بڑھکر یہ کہ خود انسانی وجود کو اس تجربہ سے گزرنا پڑتا ہے۔

بحیثیت انسان کے مختلف انواع و اقسام کی حالت بھی ہمارے مشاہدے اور تجربے میں نئی نہیں ہے۔ نوع انسانی کے مابین متعدد خلقی و غیر خلقی اختلافات ہی دراصل انسان کے اندر تناس و مسابقت کی راہ باز کرتے ہیں۔ اس قسم میں بڑا تنوع پایا جاتا ہے اور اس تنوع میں پروردگار عالم کی بڑی بڑی نشانیاں موجود ہیں۔ جو صاحبان فکر و نظر کے لئے بصیرت کا دافر سامان اپنے اندر رکھتی ہیں۔ یہ حالت بعض صورتوں میں تغیر و تبدل سے گزرتی ہے اور بعض صورتوں میں تخلیقی جبر کا شکار رہتی ہے۔

انسان کی خلقت غیر عادیہ سے مراد انسان کا مٹی سے آدم بننے کا سفر ہے۔ جو خود مختلف مراحل سے گزرا ہے۔ گویا یہ بھی ایک ارتقائی سفر ہے۔ مگر یہ سفر بھی محدود ہے۔ کیونکہ اب کوئی انسان مٹی سے نہیں بن رہا بلکہ نطفہ سے پیدا ہو رہا ہے۔

غرض یہ کہ آیت بالا کی تفسیر و تفہیم میں یہ چاروں مطالب شامل کئے گئے ہیں۔ مگر یہ چاروں مطالب، انسان کے ماضی اور حال سے متعلق ہیں۔ جبکہ میں نے اس کا مفہوم مستقبل کے پہلو سے ادا کیا ہے۔ مستقبل کا پہلو چونکہ ارتقاء کا متقاضی ہے۔ اور یہ وہ ارتقاء ہے، جو انسان کی دنیائے علم و عقل سے عبارت ہے۔ اور بلاشبہ ذہن انسانی کا ارتقاء ہے۔ جو فقط ماضی سے متعلق ارتقائی تاریخ نہیں، جو شامل

نصاب ہو کر محدود ہو گیا ہو بلکہ یہ وہ ارتقاء ہے، جو غیر محدود ہے۔ اور کچھ نہیں کہا جاسکتا کہ ہر لمحہ ترقی پذیر اور ہر آن فروغ پذیر انسان کا ذہنی سفر کہاں جا کے ٹہرے گا۔

میرے خیال میں یہی وہ حقیقت ہے کہ جو پروردگار عالم اس آیت میں بیان فرما رہا ہے۔ کیونکہ یہ آیت جس سیاق کلام میں آئی ہے۔ اس کے پیش نظر، اس کا یہی مفہوم زیادہ قرین صواب ہے۔ سیاق کلام کے لئے آیات ملاحظہ ہوں۔

”أَلَمْ تَرَ وَكَيْفَ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا ۖ وَجَعَلَ الْقَمَرَ فِيهِنَّ نُورًا وَجَعَلَ الشَّمْسُ سِرَاجًا ۚ وَاللَّهُ أَنْبَتَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ نَبَاتًا ۚ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُكُمْ فِيهَا وَيُخْرِجُكُمْ إِخْرَاجًا ۚ وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ الْأَرْضَ بِسَاطًا ۚ لَتَسْلُكُنَّ مِنْهَا سُبُلًا فِجَاجًا“ (نوح-۱۵:۲۰)

ترجمہ:- کیا تم نہیں دیکھتے کہ اللہ نے سات آسمان کس طرح باہم مطابق و موافق تخلیق فرمائے۔ اور کس طرح چاند کو ان میں روشن کیا اور سورج کو چراغ بنایا (جو روشنی اور حرارت کا مجموعہ ہے) اور اللہ نے کس طرح تم کو زمین سے سبزہ کی طرح پیدا کر کے نشوونما بخشی۔ پھر وہ تمہیں اس زمین میں پھر لے جائے گا اور پھر تمہیں باہر نکالے گا۔ اور اللہ نے تمہارے لئے زمین کو (باوجود گول ہونے کے) ہموار مناسب کیا تاکہ تم اس کے کشادہ راستوں پر بہ آسانی چل سکو۔

یہ وہ آیات ہیں، جو اپنے مطالب کی تفہیم و تفسیر کے لئے انسان کے علمی و عقلی ارتقاء کی پرزور متقاضی ہیں۔ ظاہر ہے کہ آسمانی نظام نیز اسمیں شمس و قمر اور خود زمین سے انسانی وجود کی تخلیق پذیری کو سمجھنے کے لئے، انسان کا ذہنی ارتقاء ناگزیر ہے۔ یعنی ایسا ارتقاء جو دم بدم بڑھتا جائے تاکہ وہ تدبر کی نظر کرتے ہوئے آیات میں مذکور،

انسان کا ذہنی ارتقاء

ڈاکٹر محمد شکیل اوج

اسٹنٹ پروفیسر، شعبہ علوم اسلامی، جامعہ کراچی

سے موجودہ حالت تک پہنچنے میں ایک طویل زمانہ لگا ہے تو بہت ممکن ہے کہ اس آیت میں اس امر کی طرف اشارہ ہو۔ یہ بہر حال 'اطوارا' کے مفہوم میں یہ سارے ہی مطالب شامل ہو سکتے ہیں، جو ہمارے مترجمین کے تراجم میں الگ الگ پائے جاتے ہیں۔ 'اطوارا' کا لفظ چونکہ مختلف حدود یا اقسام نیز مختلف مدارج یا احوال، یا اندازے کے مفہوم پر متضمن ہوتا ہے۔ (تاج العروس) اس لئے ہمارے ترجمہ نگاروں نے اپنے اپنے ذوق فہم کی مناسبت سے الفاظ کا چناؤ کیا ہے۔ مگر میں اس لفظ کا مفہوم، جن الفاظ سے ادا کر رہا ہوں وہ ان چاروں مفہیم سے کچھ مختلف ہیں۔ تاہم وہ جہاں از روئے لغت درست اور صحیح ہیں۔ وہیں عصر حاضر کے تقاضوں کے پیش نظر بر محل بھی معلوم ہوتے ہیں۔ میرے نزدیک عصر حاضر میں انسانی ذہن کے ارتقاء کے پیش نظر 'اطوارا' کا مفہوم حال بہ حال، درجہ بدرجہ ارتقاء پذیر، کے الفاظ سے ادا ہوگا۔ اس مفہوم کے تحت 'وَقَدْ خَلَقَكُمْ أَطْوَارًا' کا مطلب یہ ہوگا کہ بے شک ہم نے تمہیں بحیثیت نوع ایک حال سے دوسرے حال یا ایک درجہ سے دوسرے درجہ میں بتدریج ترقی کرتا ہوا انسان بنا کر پیدا کیا ہے، بایں معنی اس آیت میں انسان کے اس ارتقائی سفر کی طرف اشارہ ہے، جو صدیوں پر محیط ہے۔ دراصل یہ سفر، انسان کے ذہنی، علمی اور عقلی ارتقاء کا سفر ہے، جو بحیثیت مجموعی ہمہ دم جاری ہے اور آئندہ بھی جاری رہے گا۔

جبکہ خلقت عادیہ سے پہلے کی ارتقائی حالت ایک ایسا عمل ہے۔ جو سب جانتے ہیں۔ اور اب اس عمل میں کوئی ارتقاء نہیں ہو رہا ہے۔ گویا یہ محدود ارتقاء ہے۔ اس ارتقاء کی ابتداء نطفہ اور

وَقَدْ خَلَقَكُمْ أَطْوَارًا (نوح-۱۳:۷۱)

مذکورہ بالا آیت کے متعدد اور مختلف مفہیم پر مشتمل تراجم کئے گئے ہیں۔ ان ترجموں میں بعض نے انسان کی پیدائش عادیہ سے پہلے کی مختلف ارتقائی حالتوں کو پیش نظر رکھا ہے اور بعض نے پیدائش عادیہ کے بعد کی حالتوں کو۔ بعض نے وجود انسانی کی پیدائش کے بعد کی کیفیتوں کو ملحوظ رکھا ہے اور بعض نے انسانی پیدائش عادیہ کے تحت اس کا مفہوم بیان کیا ہے۔

آیت زیر بحث میں لفظ 'اطوارا' کے مفہوم کو سمجھنے کے لئے ہم نے اسے چار حصوں میں تقسیم کیا ہے۔

۱۔ خلقت عادیہ سے پہلے کے مراحل:- یعنی نطفہ، امشاج پھر علاقہ پھر مضغ، پھر عظام پھر لحم اور پھر خلق تام (جیسا کہ المومنون-۱۳:۲۳) (المومن-۶۷:۳۰) (الدھر-۶۲:۷۶) وغیرہ میں تفصیل موجود ہے۔

۲۔ خلقت عادیہ کے بعد کے مراحل:- جیسے شیر خواری، پھر بچپن

پھر لڑکپن پھر شباب پھر کھولت پھر ضعیفی پھر ارزل العری۔

۳۔ بحیثیت انسان کے مختلف انواع و اقسام:- مثلاً کوئی مرد، کوئی عورت، پھر ان میں کوئی صحت مند، کوئی بیمار، کوئی عقلمند، کوئی غبی، کوئی خیر، کوئی بدہیت، کوئی گورا، کوئی کالا، کوئی لمبا، کوئی چھوٹا، کوئی دبلا، کوئی موٹا، کوئی پینا، کوئی اندھا، کوئی امیر، کوئی فقیر، کوئی عالم، کوئی جاہل، کوئی مومن، کوئی کافر وغیرہ۔

۴۔ خلقت غیر عادیہ کے مراحل:- یہ وہ مراحل ہیں، جو ابتدائے آفرینش سے انسان پر گزر رہے ہیں۔ مثلاً مٹی پھر مٹی کی بھی مختلف حالتیں، جبکہ آخر آدم کہلایا۔ چونکہ آدم کو ابتدائی حالت