

Understanding A.M. Iqbal's Vision on Perfect Man

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Abstract

This article tries to elucidate A.M Iqbal's vision on the concept of perfect man. Its significance is at the point that Man can transform both his being and his surroundings according to his own desires and aspirations. He actually makes improvements upon what is created by God. God created night, he invented the lamp; God created clay, and from it he made the cup; God created deserts, mountains, forests, orchards, gardens, and groves. He makes glass out of stone and turns poison into an antidote. God created the world, but he made it more beautiful.

Iqbal's reasoning amply justifies belief in the ascendancy of man over the universe and his predicted perfection. The perfect man is the ultimate end of the revolutionary process, and he is developed out of the present man, just as the full moon is developed from the crescent.

Keywords: *vision, antidote, self-annihilation, wujud-I basit, mard-i mu'min*

A. Introduction

The vision of perfect man that Iqbal presents is unique and fascinating. But he is not the first thinker to profound this conception. Many a thinker before him endeavored to develop the idea of the ideal man. Ibn Sina and Ibn Tufail expounded their ideas about the perfect man in their famous allegories commonly known as *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*. Ibn Arabi was the first Muslim thinker who presented the conception in a definite form. It was further elaborated by *Abd al-Karim Ibn Ibrahim al-Jili*. Though Iqbal is indebted to his predecessor, yet the picture that he paints is lively

and dynamic. His terms such as *Mard-i Mu'min*, *Mard-i Haq*, *Faqir*, *Qalandar*, are the expressions which stand for the ideal man.

In addition to poetical susceptibilities Iqbal was also endowed with a practical insight. He condemns all the teachings which lead to self-annihilation or detachment from the world.¹ He calls us to return to it again and again and to utilize it for the purposes of moral, intellectual and social elevation.² His perfect man is the crystallization of his ideas presenting the solution to human misery. In his philosophy he aims to give us not a mere abstract ideal, whose colorful vistas may vanish in the glare of reality, but practical guidance as well.

The universe, according to him, is not a block universe, a finished product or completed Reality, incapable of change.³ With all its diverse and manifold phenomena, it is not the outcome of a divine will at a definite moment like a full-fledged Minerva from Jove's head. According to him, the transformation of chaos into cosmos and the emergence of life, mind and consciousness can be referred to an evolutionary process.⁴ But this evolution neither ungodly-taking matter as inert, static and lifeless⁵-nor does it takes man's present structure, mental as well as physiological, as full fruition of the process of biological evolution.⁶ Life is imminent in the universe.⁷ Everything organic or inorganic can be traced to a common source of creation, the Self or *Wujud-I Basit*. This common source of creation or the Self was an indivisible whole in the beginning,

¹ Iqbal's letter to Siraj-ud-Din Pal, Iqbal Namah, pp. 34-7. Hindu intellectualism and Islamic Pantheism, according to him, are the main causes of Eastern inaction and passivity. (The secrets of the Self, Introduction, p. xiii). He traces Islamic Pantheism with its philosophy of self-annihilation to Persian Pantheism, Vedantism and Buddhism (Iqbal's letter to Zafar Ahmad Siddiqi, Iqbal Namah, p. 23), and criticizes Neo-Hegelianism (The Secrets of the Self, Introduction, p. xiii), Platonism (Ibid., pp. 56-9), and all other philosophical systems which negate life (Ibid., pp. xxii-xxiii).

² The Secrets of the Self, Introduction, p. xviii-xx.

³ Te reconstruction Of Religious Thought in Islam, London, 1934, p. 10.

⁴ The Secrets of the Self, Introduction, pp. xviii-xix; Bal-I Jibril p. 44.

⁵ He agrees with Prof. Whitehead, according to whom, nature is not a static fact situated in a dynamic voieligious Thought in Islam, pp. 115) To my mind there is nothing alien to the Quranic outlook than the idea that the universe is a temporal working out of a preconceived plan an already completed product which left the hand of its maker ages ago and is now lying stretched in space as a dead mass of matter to which time does nothing, and consequently is nothing (Ibid., p. 52).

⁶ Ibid., p. 115.

⁷ *Bali-Jibril, Saqi Namah.*

possessing definite powers of perception and volition. In order to manifest itself, it posited the not-self; the latter is to serve the former on the one hand as a mirror and on the other as an objective operation. Moreover, the existence of opposition or the not-self is to provide the self with an immense scope for struggle – the necessary basis of all evolution. It should not be thought that the not-self or matter is entirely devoid of life or ego hood. It rather consists of a colony of egos of a lower order; and finite life and higher consciousness emerge out of them, when their association and interaction reach a certain degree of coordination. Thus, ego designated as matter are only less developed, while perfection is measured with the scale of individuality. The different levels of existence signify different stages in the development of ego hood. The urge of self manifestation and self development is present in everything and is expressed in every living being- from a unicellular organism to man's highly developed personality. Throughout the entire gamut of being, says Iqbal, run the gradually rising note of ego hood, till it reaches its perfection in man.⁸ Man's individuality or selfhood is highly developed; hence, his supremacy in the universe. Nevertheless, it has not yet reached its fullest development, which is the seal of man's perfection and which entitles him to Divine vicegerency.

All this clearly shows that Iqbal's whole emphasis is upon the self or Khudi, and it is the nucleus of his ideal man or *Mard-I Mu'min*. He does not agree even with the common interpretation of *Hallaj's Ana'l-Haq*, which, according to him, is only an emphatic assertion of Reality and the unique significance of man's self, and does not in any way imply his identity with God, i.e. man's merging in the Divine Being like a drop of water slipping in the ocean.⁹ Nay, life with all its complexity and diversity is not mere phenomenon or appearance of the underlying principle of Reality or Godhead. It does have reality of its own-developing, self-manifesting, and having the Ego for its center. Hence, what is to be aimed at, is not self-mortification and self-effacement but self-expression, self-development and inner richness of our being. It is the fortification and fullest expression of individuality that brings us nearer to God without depriving us of our self-hood. Iqbal says: The end of ego's quest is not emancipation

⁸ The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, p. 68.

⁹ Ibid., p. 91.

from the limitations of individuality; it is on the other hand a more precise definition of it.¹⁰ The value of life is in proportion to the uniqueness and the intensity of the Self. ¹¹ It is the urge of self-existence and self-expression that transforms a worthless drop of water into a pearl and makes the grass cleave the breast of the garden.¹²

Thus, the moral and religious ideal of man, as Iqbal emphasizes in his letter to Nicholson, lies in the fortification of his personality and the increasing uniqueness of his individuality. Man both spiritually and physically, is a self-contained center. Still he is not a complete individual, he can become more and more so by creating in him the Divine Attributes, i.e. by evoking the Divine in his Ego, and thus coming nearer to God without effacing his own selfhood.¹³ He is to be bathed and saturated in the light of God or the Supreme Ego. This Assimilation of God's Attributes in himself strengthens and solidifies man's personality and lends him divinity. In other words the experience of unity does not imply the absorption of the finite Ego into the Infinite Ego, but rather the passing of the later in the loving embrace of the former.¹⁴ The true infinite does not efface the finite; on the other hand, it embraces the finite without effacing its finitude, and explains and justifies its being.¹⁵ The light of God, instead of extinguishing the candle of individuality, increases its glow. Hence, man's perfection can be determined in proportion to the degree of his self possession in the presence of God.¹⁶ The complete individual can see God face to face without losing his own self. He can retain full self-possession even in the case of direct contact with the all-embracing Ego.¹⁷ This conception of the Ego presents an optimistic point of view about the future of man. Self, being the reservoir of immense potentialities, opens before us the vistas of infinite and real possibilities, at the end of which we have the perspective of our Perfect Man- the final cause and ultimate end.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 187

¹¹ The Secrets of the Self, pp. 9-12.

¹² Ibid., pp. 20-1

¹³ Ibid., Introduction, pp. xiii-xiv.

¹⁴ The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, p. 104.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 28.

¹⁶ Zaburi 'Ajam, p. 32.

¹⁷ The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, p. 111.

Man is dynamic center of energy placed in a dynamic universe. Although he is conscious of his own insignificance, his own imperfection as well as of that of the world, he is endowed with a free personality, initiative and creative power, which place him in a position to mould and change what lies in him and outside.¹⁸ He is free in the sense that, in spite of the limitations of his own nature and obstructions imposed upon him by his surroundings, his real self, unlike a physical event, is not fettered by space and serial time.¹⁹ Space and time according to Iqbal, are not objective realities external to and independent of man's self. The Self is the only ultimate reality, while space and serial time are the ways in which the self manifests itself.²⁰ The problem of time is the more important of the two.²¹ And is vitally connected with the problem of immortality, which is a necessary condition of the perfection of personality.²² Real time is not periodic—a succession of events, which can be enumerated like the pearl beads in a thread.²³ It is not straight line divided into the past, the present and the future, which we have partly traversed and partly have to traverse irrespective of our will.²⁴ The analysis of the self shows that pure time or duration is identical with life itself, while serial time is a fetter that is forged by life for itself, in order to assimilate the present environment; the self is either efficient or appreciative. The efficient ego is related to physical existence, which, while retaining its unity as a totality, expresses itself as a series of specific and consequently numerable states that can be conceived as spatial points, like so many stages in a journey. It lives in serial time. The appreciative Ego corresponds to the spiritual realm. Its unity is like the unity of the germ in which the experiences of its individual ancestors exist, not as a plurality, but as a unity in which every experience permeates the whole and all elements interpenetrate. It lives in pure duration unadulterated by space—in a single now which, in spite of change and movement, remains indivisible. Space is closely allied to pure time; it is to time what body is to mind.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 11-2

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 94.

²⁰ Javid Namah, p. 7.

²¹ Dr. Muhammad Raziuddin Siddiqi, "Iqbal's Conception of Time and Space" in *Iqbal as a Thinker*, p. 31.

²² *The Secrets of the Self*, Introduction, pp. xvi-xvii.

²³ *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 46.

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 45, 47.

Thus, space and serial time are both relative to the self. Because of our interpretation, they appear to us as made up of points and instants. In our constant pursuit after external things, we weave a kind of veil round the appreciative self, which thus becomes completely alien to us. The efficient self gets the upper hand in those who consider space or serial time a reality, while pure duration sinks into abeyance. But the struggle on the part of man can reverse the position. If he realizes the significance and power of his self, he can transcend space and time, and can shatter the universe-and thus regenerate his personality. A revolution in his consciousness can free him from the shackles of serial time, while pure duration becomes a sword in his hand, enabling him to conquer the whole existence.²⁵

According to the common view, all destinies are given readymade somewhere in Eternity, and the temporal order of events is a mere imitation of the eternal mould. This view is only mechanism in another form, in which fate or destiny takes the place of

Rigid determinism, leaving no scope for human or even Divine freedom. This conception, with its paralyzing and deadly effect, is the source of pessimism and inaction. Passive resignation to the will of God deprives man of his active will, creative power and the zeal and zest of life. Iqbal opposes this view in these words: "The destiny of a thing is an unrelenting fate which overrules like a task master; it is the inward reach of a thing, its hidden and realizable possibilities, which serially actualize themselves without any feeling of external compulsion."²⁶ It is time regarded as prior to the disclosure of its possibilities. It is time freed from the net of casual sequence.... In one word, it is time as felt and not as thought and calculated. A true man is not fettered by destiny; it is he who governs it. God is Omnipotent and the Creator of the universe, but if the universe does not suit man's desires and purposes, it can be shattered. Man himself can demand from God his fate, because fates are innumerable and he is free to make a choice. He can elevate himself even to that lofty height where God will consult him before assigning him his destiny.²⁷

Thus, man is the possessor of tremendous powers and immense potentialities. Iqbal has done away with the conception of

²⁵ Asrar-i-Rumuz, pp. 80-5.

²⁶ The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, p. 47.

²⁷ *Bal-I Jibril*, p. 81.

space, time, and destiny as untraversable barriers to man, and has thus given a satisfactory basis to novelty, originality and initiative. No doubt, man is brought to the lowest of the low and is placed amidst an obstructing environment. But all this provides him with an opportunity to develop and assert his potentialities and powers. His imperfection becomes a necessary condition for his perfection. He is not satisfied with his self and his surroundings as they are and complains to God for making them such. But possibilities of his nature compensate him for all the limitations imposed upon him and enable him to become a co-worker of God. He is placed amidst the forces of obstruction, but he is equipped with the most suitable faculties of adjustment, which enable him to overcome obstacles. He is a restless being, capable of inflicting pain on himself, in order to realize his ideals and to find fresh scopes for self-expression. In spite of all his failings, he, the trustee of a great responsibility, which even heaven, earth and mountains could not bear, stands superior to his surroundings. He is destined to become a permanent element in the constitution of being. In spite of the limitations imposed upon him from the external world, he possesses an ascending spirit which enables him to rise from one state of being to another.

2. The Concept of Personality

In the concept of Allama Muhammad Iqbal²⁸, an individual is the basis of all aspects of educations, which then must be educated and concerned together with the development of its relationship to the community. For, the essence of the educative process, reduced to its most elementary terms, lies in the fact of a living human organism being in constant interaction and contact with a vast and complex environment, which keeps on changing and growing as a result of this continuous, mutual intercourse. Like the philosopher, the educator must necessarily inquire into the nature of these two terms of his activity-the individual and the environment-which ultimately determine the solution of all his problems.

According to Allama Muhammad Iqbal individuality is a real and preeminently significant entity which is the center and basis of the entire organization of human life. Some schools of thought,

²⁸ Saiyidain, *Iqbal's Educational Philosophy*, Muhammad Ashraf: Lahore, Pakistan, 1992.

philosophical and religious, have tended to belittle the reality of the Self regarding it as a mere illusion of the mind, not possessing any abiding significance of its own. Thus both pantheism and pseudo-mysticism, as they developed in the East as well as the West, looked upon it as a mere fragment of the Eternal mind, constantly striving for reabsorption into it. The English disciples of Hegel, as well as those who believed in the doctrine of Pantheism, were also of opinion that the highest objective and ideal of man is to lose his individual identity in the Absolute, like the drop which slips into the ocean and ceases to exist as an individual entity. This view is definitely rejected by Iqbal who considers these movements of thought to be misleading as intellectual hypothesis and dangerous in their socio-political implications. He is definitely of the view that the negation of the Self, or its absorption into the Eternal Self, should not be man's moral or religious ideal; he should, instead, strive to retain his infinitely precious individuality and to strengthen it by cultivating his originality and uniqueness. The end of Ego's quest is not emancipation from the limitations of individuality; it is, on the other hand, a more precise definition of it. Iqbal commented on the well known words of Hallaj, "I am the Creative Truth" he further pointed out that the proper orientation of human experience is not the drop of slipping into the sea but the realization and bold affirmation of the reality and permanence of the human ego in a profounder personality.²⁹

This movement towards the achievement of a profounder individuality is not confined to man alone. Iqbal finds it clearly expressed in the development of all living organisms. Throughout the entire gamut of being runs the gradually rising note of ego-hood till it reaches its perfection in man.³⁰ He believes that all living organisms are struggling to achieve a more complex and perfect individuality. In man, the creative impulse has triumphed enabling him to develop powers which have opened up before him possibilities of unlimited growth and freedom.

In his *Lectures*, Iqbal elaborated that individuality is not a datum but an achievement, the fruit of a constant, strenuous effort in and against the forces of the external environment as well as the disruptive tendencies within man himself. The life of the Ego, he further

²⁹ Ibid., p. 9.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 9.

explained is a kind of tension caused by the Ego invading the environment and the environment invading the Ego.³¹ And it is essential that the living intimacy of this relationship between the two should be utilized in education. Through his give-and take between the individual and his many sided-environment, through establishing as many intensive and fruitful contacts with the surrounding reality as possible, the individual evolves the inner richness of his being. A life of solitary, self-sufficient contemplation, which cuts him off from the stimulus and energizing currents of social life, is apt to make him ego-centric and limited in his interests and sympathies. Iqbal takes a dynamic view of this continuous process of adjustment between the individual and the environment and points out that it is the lot of man to share in the deeper aspirations of the universe around him and to shape his own destiny as well as that of universe, now by adjusting himself to its forces, now by putting the whole of his energy to mould its forces to his own end and purpose. And in this process of progressive change, God becomes a co-worker with him, provided man takes the initiative.

If he does not take the initiative, if he does not evolve the inner richness of his being, if he ceases to feel the inward push of advancing life, then the spirit within him turns into stone and he is reduced to the level of dead matter. This statement brings out clearly Iqbal's view of the relationship between the individual and the world and shows how it differs from the traditional view of man's adjustment to his environment. For him, the development of individuality is a creative process in which man must play an active role, always acting and reacting purposefully on the environment. It is not matter of the individual passively adapting himself to a static environment. It also helps to define the nature of the environment which is likely to be favorable to the growth of the self. True self expression, whether of the individual or the community, can be secured only when the self feeds on, and draws its inspiration from, one's own cultural heritage and achievements. Iqbal is fully alive to the value of a community demands on the part of its members both a genuine appreciation and a critical appraisal of its cultural values and traditions. They must have the capacity for the active understanding, assimilation and reconstruction of the existing culture; for then alone

³¹ Ibid., p. 16.

can they forge for themselves an individuality which is both original and enduring. Any form of education which ignores this fundamental truth is fore doomed to superficially because it cannot gain any foothold in the depths of the people's psychology.

3. The Basis of Personality Education

Etymologically, to educate means to lead out or to bring out³². Man has been endowed with many capabilities but most of them remain dormant or embryonic until something awakens them, nourishes them and brings them out for a full play. Education therefore, stands for bringing out and developing to their full potential all the faculties that are latent in each individual. The Arabic word Rabubiyyat or Tarbiyat has something more to add to the above meanings of education. Among the inherent capabilities of man there are some which, if not checked properly, have the tendency to disintegrate human personality. Rabubiyyat means not only to bring forth, nourish and evolve but also to look after, give right proportion, sustain and carry a thing to its desired end successfully. It is thus bring out and directing towards a harmonious flow all human capabilities for an individually and socially valuable, not pernicious, end. This process cannot be left to chance or experiences of trial and error, for that would mean chaos and disorderliness amounting to a denial of man's own faculties of setting things right. Man therefore, need an artificial or contrived education in addition to that which he receives automatically through experience.

To actualize the epistemology of education in the concept of Allama Muhammad Iqbal, the discussion should be started from elaboration on the meaning and philosophy of education³³ in general,

³² Mahar Abdul Haq, Educational Philosophy of the Holy Qur'an, Institute of Islamic Culture: Lahore, 1990.

³³ In its broader sense, education is a life long process, which starts with conception and ends with death. Education, in its wider sense, includes all the influences which act upon an individual during his passage from the cradle to the grave. See, O.P. Dhiman, (2007), *Foundation of education*, New Delhi: A.P.H. Publishing Corporation, p. 6. He further elaborated that education is a process in which an individual goes on increasing his knowledge and learns through his experiences and contacts with environment. Education as such, is not teaching or learning of 3 R's; reading, writing and recurring, but consists of development of 4H's, head, heart, hand and health. Education includes all the knowledge and experiences, acquired during infancy, childhood, adolescence, youth, manhood or old age through any agency of education; the school, home, mosque, society etc. In this way one's whole life and all life activities become a real source of education. Ibid, p. 7. The

and in subsequent it will be related to the nature and the concept of education from the sight of Islamic religion.

As far as the discussion on the word of education is concerned Carter V. Good, had defined as the aggregate of all the processes by means of which a person develops abilities, attitudes, and other forms of behavior of positive value in the society in which he lives³⁴. He further elaborated that the word education is the social process by which people are subjected to the influence of a selected and controlled environment (especially that of the school), so that they may attain social competence and optimum individual development. However, education according to the researcher could not be separated from the position of man as the main object of it. Man naturally has been endowed with many capabilities, but most of them remain dormant or embryonic until something awakens them, nourishes them and brings them out for his perfection.

Education, therefore, stands for bringing out and developing to their full potential all the faculties that are latent in each individual. The Arabic word *tarbiyah* has something more to add to this meaning of education. Among the inherent capabilities of man there are some which, if not checked properly, have the tendency to disintegrate human personality. *Tarbiyat* means not only to bring forth, nourish and evolve but also to look after, give right proportion, sustain and carry a thing to its desired end successfully. It is thus bringing out and directing towards a harmonious flow all human capabilities for an individually and socially valuable, not pernicious, end. This process cannot be left to chance or experiences of trial and error, for that would mean chaos and disorderliness amounting to a denial of man's own faculties of setting things right. Man, therefore, needs an artificial or contrived education in addition to that which he receives automatically through experience. Man's need for education arises

definition of education also clarified by Mohammad Muslehuddin, as he quoted from Aristotle, that it is the attainment of happiness virtuously, and according to John Lock, is the attainment of a sound mind in a sound body. Meanwhile according to Herbert Spenser it is a process to prepare an individual to be a complete living. Moslehuddin also quoted the definition of education from John Dewey, from his book of *Democracy of Education*, that education is the process of forming fundamental dispositions, intellectual, and emotional, towards nature and fellowmen. See, Mohammad Mouslehuddion, (tt), *Islamic Education its form and features*, Islambad: Islamic Research Institute, p. 21.

³⁴ Carter V. Good, (1959), *Dictionary of education*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 2nd. Ed. P. 191.

from the fact that, among all other animals, man is perhaps the one most ill-equipped with instinctive mechanism for dealing profitably with his environment. According to the teaching of the Holy Qur'an man is altogether a new creation as compared to an animal just as vegetation is altogether a new creation as compared to minerals or just as an animal is altogether a new creation as compared to vegetation, in spite of a few similarities common to them all. He has, therefore, to be studied in his distinctive position as man only and not as an animal³⁵.

Mahr Abdul Haq further elaborated the relationship between a man and the world of education that some living things fend for themselves from their very birth because they have no purpose of life before them other than just fending for themselves. In many others that have a period of helpless infancy the mechanisms they need for adult life are soon gained as a matter of growth rather than by way of learning.³⁶ This is because they are merely things and they have to reach an adult life for procreation only and no more. Man is not a thing in that sense; he has many higher purposes to fulfill. His longer period of dependent infancy has a very important objective behind it. In his later years he has not only to take care of himself but to take care of others also and prepare for a higher plane of life which starts after the physical death. He has to share big responsibilities and pass through a number of thorny paths of life with care and caution. He has to protect his spiritual self from disintegration. The very fact that education is a life-long process for human beings alone by itself a he fact that beyond this earthly world life must go on further to a newer and higher plane and that this worldly span of a few decades is just a period of training and preparation for it. Among all the other things of nature, man holds a position of superiority because of his higher faculties of feeling, understanding, thinking and willing. These things either do not possess these faculties all or have very little of them. For this very reason these are all things and are not responsible for their actions; and for this very reason their actions are measured or predetermined actions; that is to say, they cannot do otherwise what they do instinctively. This is the reason that in our made laws, the

³⁵ Mahar Abdul Haq, (1990), *Educational philosophy of the holy Qur'an*, Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1st. ed., p. 14.

³⁶ Ibid.

responsibilities of the children, the mentally retarded, the grown ups, the educated, the wise and the highly talented persons are fixed in varying degrees according to the level of their consciousness the wisest carrying the highest burden on their shoulders.

From another angle it can be seen and observed that where there is a lack of these faculties nature itself assumes all or most of the responsibilities of nourishing, sustaining and evolving the objects of creation to their full potentialities. For example in stones and other dead matter where there is no consciousness everything is done by nature itself through its fixed and unchangeable laws. The diamond in the coal, the pearl in the oyster, the fruit in the genesis of the seed, the dead from the living and the living from the dead all evolve according to their predetermined rules of individual evolution which the things themselves can neither change nor amend nor defy. It can also be seen that in higher things in which life or consciousness makes its first appearance nature withdraws as much as is necessary according to the level of consciousness which the things possess, giving each living as much freedom to work unassisted as is required for its nourishment, sustenance and evolution. So these things have either no period of training or have a very short one which just enables them to satisfy their physical needs and no more. In them the acquisition of abilities is a matter of maturation of instincts, not education. It is man alone who is the most plastic and educable of all the creation of Allah and, as such, he stands in most need of a right sort of education. The meaning behind the word right sort of education is that education meant for and suitable to human beings and not that which the lower creation of Allah requires. In some directions, and to a certain extent, man gets automatic rather than deliberately instituted training. In the natural course of his life he meets with situations which he never expected; he learns lessons which he never wanted to learn; he develops capabilities for overcoming such difficulties as appear suddenly before him, and he acquires knowledge which no one else had designed for him. But all this automatic learning is too limited to enable him to cope efficiently with all the complex situations of his life. Education of the right type will enable him to achieve his accomplishment more easily, more speedily and more profitably with the added help of the required skills, attitudes and values than otherwise.

According to Mahar Abdul Haq³⁷ man has within his own being, certain capabilities which can either integrate his personality or shatter it into pieces. It is also within his own power of choice to let these capabilities work either way towards the path of enlightenment or towards the path of darkness. The path of enlightenment is the path of human-ness and the path of darkness is the path of animality. The right type of education is the only means that can guide and train man's will to choose the right path of enlightenment instead of the wrong path of darkness. The process through substantial part is played by observation and imitation of what is observed yet the linguistic, emotional, spiritual or even gestural communication between the teacher and the taught has no parallel. To instruct is to build something in. It may be the knowledge of facts, relations, rules, laws or principles to be built into the mind or specific way of thinking, feeling, behaving, reacting, or responding to the internal or external calls of duty that is to be constructed. Instruction is, thus, the process that incorporates information as well as an effective and proper use of that information into the mind of the learner. Training is the process of imparting merely the practical knowledge of some operation, whether mental or physical. It is just giving exercise in a particular skill to the extent of habit formation. Animals are trained for certain operations; they cannot be instructed or educated because they devoid of feeling, understanding, thinking, and willing.

Man's superiority over the rest of creation is to be recognized from the point of view of his educability also, because it is he alone who can be instructed as well as trained. In other words, it can be said that if a man remains confined only to what he is physically or mentally trained for and does not rise above the level of habit formation in skills, he loses his superiority over animals. His actions will be just mechanical or animal actions, devoid of feeling, thinking, understanding and willing which lead on to freedom from animality. Apart from information and skills, there are certain beliefs and allegiance also which help shape the conduct, disposition and feelings of the individual and the society in which he lives. These dogmas are implanted in the mind usually through indoctrination rather than through formal instruction. But if this method by passes man's power

³⁷ Ibid, p. 18

of critical judgment, it will not have full acceptance of the individual as it will leave a margin of doubt in his mind. To check the waywardness of the free will indoctrination is necessary, but it must always remain subordinate to the other rational methods. The holy Qur'an enjoins every muslim not to drop rationality anywhere. Even men of faith are strictly warned that when they are admonished with the signs of their Nourisher they must not droop down at them as if they were dumb and blind.

Thus, the right method of education, which the Holy Qur'an sanctions, is a combination of all the three methods stated above on the principle that attention called to facts, and to the inferences which the facts warrant, must always remained combined with psychological process of suggestion through example. Mahar Abdul Haq further elaborated that the Quranic method of education can be summarized into three points; *zikr* and *fikr* (remembrance and contemplation), as an instruction, *saum wa salat* (fasting and canonical prayers) as a training, and the third is *amr bil ma'ruf and nhy anil munkar*, (mutual admonition and counseling for recognized behaviour and prohibition for unapproved conduct) as indoctrination. Each commandment of the Holy Qur'an which begins with do this is followed by the words so that. These letter words explain the rationality of the commandment that proceeds them. This indoctrination comes in through reason or submission to evidence and in this way all that is imparted in the minds becomes faith which is the highest form of education and the most sublime aim for all true knowledge.

One very important thing to remember is that all education, whether it is through instruction, training, indoctrination or through a balanced combination of all the three methods is always self education. It is self education that makes possible for the learner to excel even his teacher. If it were not so, advancement in knowledge would have been impossible and the amount of learning could not increase. Faith or training of the will combined with self surrender to higher values is another name for self education and for this there can be no better motivation than the belief that even these worldly acts of ours are other worldly acts for which man fully responsible.

The next educational dimension concerns the nature of man who is to be educated. Some people say that man's nature is all good; some say it is all bad. Some hold the view that it is neither good nor bad but it is like a clean slate on which impressions can be made by

the teacher, the society and the environment, in whatever shape they want. As the Holy Qur'an has as its subject matter, therefore, it discusses at length all the various aspects of human nature in respect of its multiplex relationships. In the Chapters that will follow we shall try to study man in as many aspects are necessary for building up a systematic philosophy of education. Suffice to say here that according to the Holy Qur'an human nature is basically good though it has tendency to fall down to the lower state of animality also. It is the right philosophy of education alone that can bring the intelligent order and discipline, true sense of responsibility and efficiency into the chaotic world situation. The present day educational institutions are ineffective because of the wrong philosophy of education that puts too much premium on individual achievements but not on the means with which achievements are made. A lop sided progress without any sense of accountability for individual actions is no progress at all because it has no purpose to fulfill except more and more progress even at the cost of disintegration of the human soul. For educational reforms to produce concrete and useful results man must first have full knowledge of the existing state of affairs in his institutions as to how far he has deviated from the path of absolute values that alone can bring about universal unity of mankind, peace and prosperity for all. Then he must know all about the social, political, economic and such other factors as are responsible for the downfall of his educational standards. In the third place, the reformers must be equipped with all the powers that are necessary for putting the reforms into effect. And lastly, each and every member of the *ummah* must know what education really means and what functions it has to perform at each of the various stages of schooling and in each of its possible dimensions.

The theory of education, according to Saiyidain, cannot be profoundly elucidated without consciously postulating some conception of the nature of the individual to be educated, his relationship to the community and, what may be called, his ultimate destiny.³⁸ For, the essence of the educative process, reduced to its most elementary terms, lies in the fact of a living human organism being in constant interaction and contact with a vast and complex

³⁸ K.G. Saiyidain, (1992), *Iqbal's educational philosophy*, Lahore: Muhammad Ashraf Publication, p. 7.

environment, which keeps on changing and growing as a result of this continuous, mutual intercourse. Saiyidain further elaborated that educator is like philosopher must necessarily inquire into the nature of these two terms of his activity; the individual and the environment which ultimately determine the solution of all his problems.³⁹ The concept of individual is equal to the concept of ego in the philosophy of Muhammad Iqbal. In this regard, Iqbal's ego which has been quoted by Saiyidain is the object of the educator's attention. Ego of human being is a real and preeminently significant entity which is the center and basis of the entire organization of human life. The assertion of the Ego in the concept of Iqbal is not a datum but an achievement, the fruit of a constant, strenuous effort in and against the forces of the external environment as well as the disruptive tendencies within man himself. The life of the ego, he explained is a kind of tension caused by the ego invading the environment and the environment invading the ego. And it is essential that the living intimacy of this relationship between the two should be utilized in education. Through this give and take between the individual and his many sided environment, through establishing as many intensive and fruitful contacts with the surrounding reality as possible, the individual evolves the inner richness of his being. A life of solitary, self sufficient contemplation, which cuts him off from the stimulus and energizing current of social life, is apt to make him ego centric and limited in his interests and sympathies. Iqbal who has been quoted by Saiyidain takes a dynamic view of this continuous process of adjustment between the individual and the environment and points out that it is the lot of man to share in the deeper aspirations of the universe around him and to shape his own destiny as well as that the universe, now by adjusting himself to its forces, now by putting the whole of his energy to mould its forces to his own end and purpose. And in this process of progressive change, God becomes a co-worker with him, provided man takes the initiatives. This basic concept of education is based on the teaching of the Holy Qur'an: "Verily, God will not change the condition of men, till they change what is in themselves.

According to Saiyidain, Iqbal has repeatedly stressed the point that *question*, (i.e. asking dependence on others, the slavish imitation

³⁹ Ibid.

of their weakens the self and that, unless individuals as well as the community develop self reliance and evolve the inner richness of their own being, their potentialities will remain warped and repressed. From the explanation above it is clear that the word education is closely related to the existence of man as its object and to the strong relationship between man and his environment. However, the impact of society upon the individual is another dimension to be elaborated in order to elucidate the term of education in general.

Society, according to Sayyid Sajjad Rizavi, can change the behavior of individuals, who constitute it, in so far as it liberates and limits the activities of men and sets up standards for them for being followed and maintained. This change in the behavior of the individuals, which brings them closer to the collective norms, necessitates the existence of any agency through which influences from without the individual affect his behavior and orientate it towards desired as well as desirable goals and objectives⁴⁰. Unless the behavior of individuals is changed according to the genus of the society and molded into a type, generally needed and approved by the social order, the society cannot perpetuate itself. This process of changing their behavior of individuals starts very early, immediately right after their birth. Known as socialization, it is both a molding and creating process, in which the group tries to bear upon the child, and in which the individual's thoughts, feelings and behavior gradually and continually change and develop in accordance with the values set by the society. Society exists through a process of transmission quite as much as biological life. This transmission occurs by means of communication of habits of doing, thinking and feeling from the older to the younger. This transmission is necessary to acquaint the child with what is desirable, followed and respected by the society so that he may have a frame of reference to judge his actions and try to conform to the accepted norms of the society.

4. Conclusion

Thus, it can be concluded that, in order to build up and maintain a society, not only do we need a change in the behavior of

⁴⁰ Sayyid Sajjad Rizavi, (1986), *Islamic philosophy of education*, Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, p. 21.

a newly born child, but also have to develop a sense of social adjustment among its members. To the mind of the writer, the relationship of an individual with his environment could be made as the basis of developing the nature of human being into his real perfection

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