

# Iqbal's Philosophy of Art

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Scattered throughout Iqbal's writings are his various pronouncements on the nature and purpose of Art. Iqbal has not propounded a theory of Beauty and Art as such, but from his writings it is clear that he had thought deeply about Aesthetics .and that he had a philosophy of Art though its component ideas do not seem to have appeared simultaneously (except perhaps in *Bandagi Nama*).<sup>1</sup> Although by "Art" most of the time Iqbal means his own art, i.e. the poetic art, much of what he says is relevant also to the other arts.

## Purpose of Art

For Iqbal, Art must add to the fulness and richness of life. Art is genuine and significant only when it impinges dynamically on life, deepening its appreciation, quickening its pulse and illuminating its fundamental purposes with insight.<sup>2</sup> He has no use for a self-regarding Art which is divorced from the problems of living. Art must serve life in some way and not exist merely for its own sake. Unequivocally he says:

Art is subordinate to life, not superior to it. The ultimate end of all human activity is life-glorious, powerful, exuberant. All human art must be subordinated to this final purpose and the value of everything must be determined in reference to its life-yielding capacity. The highest art is that which awakens our dormant will-force, and helps us to face the trials of life manfully. All that brings drowsiness and makes us shut our eyes to reality around on the mastery of which alone life depends - is a message of decay and death. There should be no opium-eating in art. The disguise of art for the sake of art is a clever invention of decadence to cheat us out of life and power.<sup>3</sup>

Iqbal has placed much emphasis on the "life-yielding" quality of art and stated emphatically that art which is "life destroying," robbing life of its joy, zest, courage and enthusiasm, should cease to exist

افسردہ اگر اس کی نوا سے ہو گلستان  
ہنر ہے کھاموش رہے منہ سخنیں

(*Zarb-e-Kalim*, p. 127)<sup>4</sup>

اگر نوا بیس پو شیدہ موت کا پیغام  
حرام میری نگاہوں میں نائے وچٹک و رباب

(*Zarb-e-Kalim*, p. 125)<sup>5</sup>

## Attack on "Decadent" Art

A good portion of Iqbal's writings on Aesthetics deals with the subject of what he considers to be "decadent" Art. Like Plato, Iqbal too had once been susceptible to the charms of poetry which sapped the energies of human beings lulling them into a barren, albeit a seemingly golden, dream of effortless existence. For Iqbal, Hafiz is the symbol of such life-stultifying art. This is surprising, for to the young

poet Iqbal, Hafiz had meant much. 'Attiya Faizi tells us of Iqbal's great admiration, for Hafiz and comments, "I felt that Iqbal believed more in Hafiz than in any other Persian poet."<sup>6</sup> In his Note-book, Iqbal himself paid a glowing tribute to the perfection of Hafiz's poetic technique: "In words like out jewels Hafiz put the sweet unconscious spirituality of the nightingale."<sup>7</sup>

Iqbal's rejection of Hafiz was, in effect, also a rejection of a phase of his own youth, a phase when he could say

زندگانی جس کو کہتے ہیں فنِ راموشی ہے یہ خواب ہے غفلت ہے، مستی ہے، ہیوتی ہے یہ

<sup>8</sup> (Bang-e-Dara, p. 93)

In lines which caused great uproar, Iqbal attacked, Hafiz in no uncertain terms

ہو شہیار از حافظ صہبا گسار  
جامش از زہر ابل صہبا یہ دار  
ناوک اند از کہ تاب از دل برد  
ناوک او مرگ را شیرین کند

<sup>9</sup>(Khayaban-e-Iqbal, pp. 230 - 232)<sup>10</sup>

He went on to compare Hafiz unfavourably with 'Urfi, another Persian poet

حافظ جاوہر بیان شیرازی است  
عربی آتش بیان شیرازی است  
اے کنار آب و کف بادماند  
اے کنار آب و کف بادماند  
بادہ زن باعربی ہنگامہ خیسند  
زندہ از صحبت حافظ گریند

<sup>11</sup>(Khayaban-e-Iqbal, p. 232)

Iqbal inveighed against Hafiz "for his quietism, his Epicureanism, his libertinism, his indifference to the great historical events that were taking place around him and the soporific effect of his mystical eroticism."<sup>12</sup>

Iqbal has painted a vivid picture of the harm that a poet who preaches death rather than life may do

بوسہ او تازگی از گل برد  
سست اعصاب تو از ایون او  
نغمہ ہائش از دلک دزد و ثبات  
مرگ را از سحر او دانی جیات  
دریم اندیشہ اندازد ترا  
از عمل بیگاہ می سازد ترا  
حسن او را با صداقت کار نیست  
در بخش چیز گوہر ترف دار نیست

(Asrar-e-Khudi, pp. 39-40)<sup>13</sup>

Implicit in Iqbal's rejection of Hafiz, is his rejection of a considerable portion of contemporary Persian and Urdu poetry. In his view, perhaps the senses could luxuriate in such art but themes such as the

following could hardly offer sustenance to the spirit

دلبرے باطائرے اندر نفس  
مرد کو ہستانی ہیزم بدوش  
جو گئے در غلوت ویرانہ  
آنکہ اندر دست او گل نوب چراغ

راجے در حلقہ دایم ہوس!  
خسروے پیش نیرے نرقتہ پوش  
ناز-پینے در روت غاسٹہ  
پیر کے از درو پیری داغ داغ

(Zabur-e-'Ajam, p. 254)<sup>14</sup>

### Transition from 'Ajam to Hijaz

In *Asrar-e-Khudi*, Iqbal bids us leave the “garden of Persia” and return to “the heat of the desert.”<sup>15</sup> 'Ajam was to become for Iqbal a symbol of Art which, though moving and beautiful in its own way, does not keep the ego in that state of tension, or heightened self-awareness, in which it is able to pervade reality and transcend all obstructing forces

اس شعر سے ہوتی نہیں شمشیر نودی تیز!  
جے شعر عجم گر چہ طربناک دو لاویز

(Zarb-e-Kalim, p. 127)<sup>16</sup>

Because Art is subservient to life which for Iqbal is the ego's striving for perfection - it is necessary to move on from 'Ajam to Hijaz. Hijaz now becomes, aesthetically, the symbol for that potent, life-yielding and life-enriching Art which unites Beauty and Power, and becomes an embodiment of Love. Iqbal says

دلبری با قاہری پیغمبری است  
دلبری بے قاہری جادوگری است

(Zabur-e-'Ajam, p. 264)<sup>17</sup>

### Is “Decadent” Art Not Art at All?

An interesting question comes to mind here. One wonders if Iqbal would have denied the status of Art to the work of poets such as Hafiz. Iqbal had known that “the good in art is not necessarily identical with the good in life; it is possible for a person to write fine poetry, and lead his society to Heil.”<sup>18</sup> Since it is possible for the good in Art to be separate from the good in life, Iqbal would not have denied the name of Art to that which was, in any way, detrimental to life. However, such art he would have banished from his ideal society.

### Attack on All Art

There are places in Iqbal's works where he seems to denounce not only “decadent” Art but all Art. His words “convey the impression that he has no use for poetry of any kind.”<sup>19</sup> To the Editor of *Makhzan*, Sir Abdul Qadir, he sent the message

جو کام کچھ کر رہی ہیں قومیں ، انہیں مذاقِ سخن نہیں ہے

(*Bang-e-Dara*, p. 140)<sup>20</sup>

His words may be easily misunderstood. Here Iqbal is not saying that Art is useless. He is merely expressing his disapproval of the passivity in which his fellow country-men were sunk, content with poetry which did not stir in them any longing for action while European nations were struggling hard to build a better life for themselves.

### True Poetry versus Versification

At times Iqbal has denied the fact that he is a “poet”

نہ بینی خیز ازاں مرد فرد است  
کہ برمن تہمت شعر و سخن بست  
سب کومے دلبران کارے ندارم  
دل زا زمے غم یارے ندارم  
نہ خاک من غبار رہگذارے  
نہ در خاکم دل بے اختیارے

(*Zabur-e-‘Ajam*, p. 204)<sup>21</sup>

This disclaimer is, of course, an attack on traditional erotic poetry which abounds in lifeless images of servile adoration. Such poetry lacks dignity and sincerity and is unworthy of the fortified, self-respecting ego.

When Iqbal says

مری نوائے پریشاں کو شاعری نہ سمجھ  
کہ میں ہوں محرم راز درون میخانہ

(*Bal-e-Jibril*, p. 76)<sup>22</sup>

he does not mean to say that he is not a poet but that his song is not mere versification. Versification is a mechanical activity, whereas true poetry is organic to the poet’s being and reveals to him the secrets of life and reality. This is another significant idea from Iqbal’s Aesthetics, namely, that poetry is to be distinguished from versification. As Sir Philip Sidney wrote, “there have been many most excellent poets that never versified, and now swarm many versifiers that need never answer to the name of poets.”<sup>23</sup>

### Art as Imitation

One of the oldest conceptions of Art is “Art as Imitation” (mimesis). For Plato, Art was an imitation of transcendental reality and not once but twice removed from the truth, as the artist imitates what is itself an appearance. Iqbal does not believe in the imitation theory of Art. He questions the very reality, which, according to Plato, poetry fails to represent. Even if Plato’s picture of reality could be represented it would, for Iqbal, be an immoral act; for it would amount to the bodying forth of illusions. For Iqbal

poetry does not represent an illusory world forever beyond human reach but a real world - a world which has a past, present and future, and can be seen and known.<sup>24</sup>

For Iqbal, Art is no more an imitation of Nature than it is an imitation of a supersensible world of Ideas. To the poet he says

فطرت کی غلامی سے کر آزاد ہنر کو  
صیاد ہیں مردان ہنر مند کہ نخچیر

(Zarb-e-Kalim, p. 115)<sup>25</sup>

To imitate Nature is to enervate the Self by denying an opportunity to its creativeness to manifest itself. Iqbal describes a poet who is merely an imitator of Nature thus

حسن را در پوزہ از فطرت کند  
رہزن دراه نمی دستے زند  
حسن را از خود بردن جستن خطاست  
آنچه می بایست پیش ما کجاست!  
نقش گر خود را چو بافطرت سپرد  
نقش او افگندد نقش فود سترد

(Zabur-e-'Ajam, p. 255)<sup>26</sup>

### Art as Improvement on Nature

Poets give life to the images of Nature from the dynamism of their own being. They are not passive observers on whose blank mind Nature leaves a series of discordant impressions. On the contrary, by imaginative participation in the life of Nature, poets give unity to the diversity of natural phenomena and a meaning to what they perceive. Nature is what it is, poets create from what is that which ought to be. In the words of Sir Philip Sidney, "Her (Nature's) world is brazen, the poets only deliver a golden."<sup>27</sup>

In Iqbal's words:

To permit the visible to shape the invisible, to seek "what is scientifically called adjustment with Nature is to recognize her mastery over the spirit of man. Power comes from resisting her stimuli, and not from exposing ourselves to their action. Resistance of what is with a view to create what ought to be, is health and life. All else is decay and death... The artist who is blessing to mankind defies life In the words of Fichte, he sees all Nature full, large, and abundant as opposed to him who sees all things thinner, smaller and emptier than they actually are. The modern age seeks inspiration from Nature. But Nature simply "is" and her function is mainly to obstruct our search for "ought" which the poet must discover within the depth of his own being.<sup>28</sup>

In regarding Nature as passive and static and the poet as possessing the inner power of investiture, Iqbal comes very close in idea to the thought expressed in the well-known lines of S.T. Coleridge:

O Lady! we receive but what we give,  
 And in our life alone does Nature live;  
 Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud!  
 And would we ought behold, of higher worth  
 Than that inanimate cold world allowed  
 To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,  
 Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth  
 A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud  
 Enveloping the Earth.<sup>29</sup>

The poet is expected by Iqbal to transcend Nature and to succeed where Nature has failed

بے ذوق نہیں اگرچہ فطرت  
 جو اس سے نہ ہو سکا وہ تو کر

(*Bal-e-Jibril*, p. 87)<sup>30</sup>

The poet adds a new charm to the of Nature

از نگاہش خوب گردد خوب تر  
 فطرت از افسون او محبوب تر

(*Asrar-e-Khudi*, p. 37)<sup>31</sup>

and may be said to have improved upon it

اں ہنر مندے کہ بر فطرت فزود  
 راز خودرا بر نگاہ ما کشود  
 آفریند کائنات دیگرے  
 قلب رابخشد حیات دیگرے

(*Zabur-e-'Ajam*, p. 256)<sup>32</sup>

Browning has, expressed the same thought thus:

For, don't you mark? we're made so that we love  
 First when we see them painted, things we have passed  
 Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see;  
 And so they are better, painted - better to us,  
 Which is the same thing, Art was given for that;  
 God uses us to help each other so,  
 Lending our minds out.<sup>33</sup>

To sum up the relation of Art with Nature it would be true to say that Iqbal believes with Sir Thomas Browne that "nature is not at variance with art, nor art with nature; they both being the servants of His Providence: Art is the perfection of Nature."<sup>34</sup>

## Iqbal's Disapproval of Drama

It has been observed by a writer that Iqbal disapproves of drama because "it kills our personality or egoism."<sup>35</sup> It is to be noted here that Iqbal does not disapprove of the writing of drama and that a number of his own poems have, in fact, a dramatic structure and effect. What he disapproves is the performance of a play because it involves a kind of mimicry or imitation, and by imitation the Self is weakened

حریم تیرا خودی غیر کی! معاذ اللہ  
دو بارہ زندہ نہ کر کاروبار لات و منات  
یہی کمال ہے تمثیل کا کہ تو نہ رہے  
رہا نہ تو، تو نہ سوز خودی نہ ساز حیات

(Zarb-e-Kalim, p. 104)<sup>36</sup>

## Emphasis on Creativeness

Throughout his writings, both poetical and philosophical, Iqbal has laid much emphasis on creativeness an attribute which humanity shares with God. "Both God and man", he says, "live by perpetual creation. The artist is an associate of God and feels the contact of time and eternity in his soul."<sup>37</sup>

In considering the creative imagination as an extension of God's creative powers, Iqbal has an affinity with Blake and Coleridge. "For Blake the imagination is nothing less than God as He operates in the human soul. It follows that any act of creation performed by the imagination is divine."<sup>38</sup> Coleridge defines the primary imagination as "the living power and prime agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM."<sup>39</sup>

For Iqbal, God is the archetypal poet and the supreme creative artist.<sup>40</sup> A human being is God's apprentice

گفت یزداں کہ چنیں است و دگر بیچ مگو  
گفت آدم چنیں است و چنان می بایست

(Zabur-e-'Ajam, p. 192)<sup>41</sup>

and to assert that human creativity is not inferior to God's

تو شب آفریدی چراغ آفریدم  
سفال آفریدی ایغ آفریدم  
بیابان و کہسار دراغ آفریدی  
خیابان و گلزار و باغ آفریدم  
من آنم کہ از سنگ آئینہ سازم  
من آنم کہ از زہر نوشینہ سازم

(*Payam-e-Mashriq*, p. 132)<sup>42</sup>

The artist also dares to question God about the Almighty's finest creation which is humanity itself

عالم سوزو ساز میں وصل سے بڑھ کے بے فراق  
وصل میں مرگ آرزو ہجر میں لذت طلب!

(*Bal-e-Jibril*, p. 32)<sup>43</sup>

### The Poet and Moral Responsibility

Iqbal agrees with Plato in regarding the poet as an inspired being. But Socrates when he had led Ion to confess to being either dishonest or divinely mad, had meant to discredit the poet anyhow. The poet has a touch of divine madness in him; from this Plato infers that a poet is not morally responsible for his utterances since his words are ordered by forces outside him. Iqbal admits that "inspiration is ... is gift the character of which cannot be critically judged by the recipient before accepting it."<sup>44</sup> However, from this premise Iqbal draws a conclusion vastly different from Plato's. The poet is blessed above others and therefore bears the burden of greater responsibility to God.

For Iqbal, then inspiration or the creative intuition is of the greatest importance, for if it is lacking, "a work can be perfectly made, and it is nothing; the artist has nothing to say... Just as finally the unique law of the perfect soul, according to the saying of St. Augustine is - love and do what you want - the unique rule of the perfect artist is finally 'cling to your creative intuition and do what you want?'"<sup>45</sup>

### Vision and Desire

Since the object of Art is to look into "the life of things" and unfold the secrets of Eternity, Iqbal says

اے اہل نظر ذوق نظر خوب بے لیکن  
جو شے کی حقیقت کو نہ دیکھے تو نظر کیا  
مقصود پھر سوز حیات ابدی بے  
یہ ایک نفس یا دو نفس مثل شرر کیا

(*Zarb-e-Kalim*, p. 117)<sup>46</sup>

Iqbal perceives poets as restless creatures, possessed of an unbounded imagination which sets before them endless goals and ideals to be achieved. The fire of their passion consumes their very being, yet for them desires and dreams are born every instant

فطرت شاعر سراپا جستجوست  
خالق و پروردگار آرزو ست

(*Javid Nama*, p. 45)<sup>47</sup>

Since desire is the fountain-head of Art, a desire which remains ungratified is of greater value to the artist than a desire which is lost in fulfilment



عالم سوز و ساز میں وصل سے بڑھ کے ہے فراق  
وصل میں مرگ آرزو ہجر میں لذت طلب!

(Bal-e-Jibril, p. 155)<sup>48</sup>

and so it is the poet's prayer that the ultimate goal remain an ever-receding shore

ہر لحظہ نیا طور نئی برق تجلی  
اللہ کرے مرحلہ شوق نہ ہو طے!

(Zarb-e-Kalim, p. 126)<sup>49</sup>

## Art and Life

Iqbal has said repeatedly that it is a necessary condition of Art that it is not bifurcated from the endless struggles and quests of life. "Matthew Arnold," says Iqbal, "defines poetry as criticism of life. That life is criticism of poetry is equally true."<sup>50</sup> Real poetry springs from the depths of actual experience, from the hopes and despairs, joys and sorrows, aspirations and frustrations of the human heart. To the poet, Iqbal says

اے میان کیسہت نقد سخن  
برعیار زندگی اور ابزن

(Asrar-e-Khudi, p. 42)<sup>51</sup>

Abstract knowledge is not the stuff of which poetry is made

نادان! ادب و فلسفہ کچھ چیز نہیں ہے  
اسباب ہنر کے لیے لازم ہے تگ و دو

(Zarb-e-Kalim, p. 169)<sup>52</sup>

Keats had also believed that "nothing ever becomes real till it is experienced; even a proverb is no proverb to you till your life was illustrated it."<sup>53</sup>

For Iqbal, "Art is living only in so far as the poet or any artist has poured his life-blood into it."<sup>54</sup>

رنگ ہو یا خشت و سنگ جنگ ہو یا حرف و صوت  
معجزہ فن کی ہے خوں جگر سے نمود!

(Bal-e-Jibril, p. 129)<sup>55</sup>

نقش ہیں سب ناتمام خون جگر کے بغیر  
نغمہ ہے سودائے خام خون جگر کے بغیر

(Bal-e-Jibril, p. 136)<sup>56</sup>

خون دل و جگر سے ہے میری نوا کی پرورش  
ہے رگ ساز میں رواں صاحب ساز کا لہو!

(Bal-e-Jibril, p. 154)<sup>57</sup>

### Intensity in Art

For Iqbal, as for Coleridge, “Passion must be the soul of Poetry.”<sup>58</sup> When passion - and for Iqbal, this passion is Love - irradiates Art, it acquires intensity, beauty and truth. With Keats, Iqbal had believed that “the excellence of every art is its intensity, capable of making all disagreeable evaporate, from their close relationship with Beauty and Truth.”<sup>59</sup> Intensity in Art, or what Longinus called “sublimity” is the product “of an inspired moment of passion, rather than of cool and sustained calculation.”<sup>60</sup>

### Art and Beauty

Both Keats and Iqbal held that through beauty the artist can somehow come into the presence of the ultimately real. Of Keats, a writer has said that he

substitutes the discovery of beauty through the imagination for the discovery of facts through the reason, and asserts that it is a more satisfactory and certain way of piercing to the heart of things since inspired insight sees more than abstract ratiocination ever can... The rationale of poetry is that intensity that is at once both beautiful and real.<sup>61</sup>

Iqbal has expressed the Keatsian idea thus:

حق اگر سوزے ندارد حکمت است  
شعر میگرد و چو سوز از دل گرفت  
بوعلی اندر غبار ناقہ گم  
دست رومی پردهٔ محمل گرفت

(Payam-e-Mashriq, p. 122)<sup>62</sup>

### Poetry and Philosophy

It is the poet who animates the abstract concepts of philosophy and gives to them a living reality. In Iqbal’s words, “Philosophy is a set of abstractions shivering in the cold night of human reason. The poet comes and warms them into objectivity.”<sup>63</sup>

Iqbal has expressed his lack of enthusiasm for mathematical or logical preciseness in poetry in his comment on Matthew Arnold: “Matthew Arnold is a very precise poet. I like, however, an element of obscurity and vagueness in poetry, since the vague and the obscure appear profound to the emotions.”<sup>64</sup>

He also states, "It is idle to seek logical Truth in poetry. The ideal of imagination is beauty, not truth. Do not then try to show a poet's greatness by quoting passages which embody scientific truth."<sup>65</sup>

## Iqbal and Nietzsche

Like Iqbal, Nietzsche believes that Art is inspired by passion rather than reason or logic. But for Nietzsche, the creative passion underlying Art and Poetry is a blind force. It is Dionysian power, the symbol of the Eternal Will, which destroys the Apollonian illusion of beauty, reason and enlightenment merely so that it can assert the permanence of change and the mastery of the irrational and immoral, will to live. With Iqbal, however, the will-to-live is inspired by a moral impulse. In its highest manifestation this moral impulse becomes Love, when the Self identifies itself with the object of its Love.<sup>66</sup>

Nietzsche has two categories of Art, the Apolline and the Dionysiac.<sup>67</sup> Iqbal also has two categories, symbolized by "*Jamal*" (Beauty) and "*Jalal*" (Power) respectively, but while Nietzsche is partial to Dionysian as against Apolline, Iqbal maintains a balance between beauty and sublimity, and recommends a synthesis of them in Art as well as in human life. It is of interest to note here that one of Iqbal's criticisms of decadent Art was that it possessed "*Jamal*" but lacked "*Jalal*" and was, therefore, ineffective.

نہ ہو جمال تو حسن و جمال بے تاثیر  
نرا نفس بے اگر نغمہ ہو نہ آشناک

(*Zarb-e-Kalim*, p. 122)<sup>68</sup>

One main difference in the effect achieved by the two categories of Art has been stated thus: "The mind feels itself moved in the representation of the Sublime in Nature; whilst in aesthetical judgment about the Beautiful it is in restful contemplation."<sup>69</sup> For Iqbal, both categories are needed for the perfection of Art: "I have tried to picture the movement of the true artist in whom Love reveals itself as a unity of Beauty and Power."<sup>70</sup>

## Iqbal and the Sturm und Drang School

Iqbal's theory of Art may be compared with the aesthetic theory of the Sturm und Drang School. The aesthetic theory of this school was a kind of transcendental Hedonism. Poetry was regarded as the source of ecstatic rapture which led to an inner enlargement of the being and its final immersion in the Absolute. The poet presented supersensible reality and poetry manifested the divine principle of creative energy which pervades the universe keeping the human soul constantly in a fever of self-expression. Poetry revealed reality more fully than philosophy, which was only concerned with conceptual thought. This school regarded the poet as God's co-worker in creation and as such an ideal being.<sup>71</sup>

To a considerable extent Iqbal agrees with this school of thought except for its hedonistic aspect. Getting involved in a kind of pseudo-mysticism, the Sturm und Drang School regarded the spiritual rapture which poetry produced as being desirable for its own sake. Iqbal, however, does not consider it desirable, unless it translates itself into concrete action. In Iqbal's philosophy there is no place for static pleasure or mere contemplation "much less for the spurious pleasure of feeling like a demigod or superman without acting like one."<sup>72</sup> In his own words: "Life, like the arts of poetry and a painting, is wholly expression. Contemplation without action is death."<sup>73</sup>

## Beauty and Love in Iqbal's Aesthetics

Beauty and Love figure very largely in Iqbal's aesthetics and it is interesting to see the different roles allotted to these concepts during the different phases of Iqbal's thought.<sup>74</sup> Iqbal's theory of Art, in its earliest stages, was heavily coloured by Neoplatonism. Like Plato, Iqbal identified God with Beauty and held that it was Beauty which set in motion the dynamic of Eros and Love.

Eternal Beauty is reflected in all things

حسن ازل کی پیدا ہر چیز میں جھلک ہے  
انسان میں وہ سخن ہے غنچے میں وہ چٹک ہے  
یہ چاند آسماں کا شاعر کا دل ہے گویا  
واں چاندنی ہے جو کچھ یاں درد کی کسک ہے

(*Bang-e-Dara*, p. 82)<sup>75</sup>

Avicenna believed that everything in the world is striving to complete itself; what prompts its striving is Love, and its aim is Beauty. Avicenna's theory also finds an expression in Iqbal:

کہنے لگا چاند! ہمنشینو!  
اے مزرع شب کے خوشہ چینو!  
جنبش سے ہے زندگی جہاں کی  
یہ رسم قدیم ہے یہاں کی  
ہے دوڑتا اشہب زمانہ  
کھا کھا کے طلب کا تازیانہ  
انجام ہے اس خر ام کا حسن  
آغاز ہے عشق، انتہا حسن

(*Bang-e-Dara*, p. 121)<sup>76</sup>

Until 1908, Iqbal had accepted the Platonic doctrine of "anamnesis" which Socrates advanced "as an explanation of how we come to be possessed at all of ideas more perfect than the things of our worldly experience."<sup>77</sup> Iqbal's early writings suggest that at that time he believed that before birth the soul enjoyed the presence of Eternal Beauty and that yearning for beauty in this life is a longing for that lost delight

محفل قدرت ہے اک دریائے ہے پایان حسن  
آنکھ اگر دیکھے تو ہر قطرے میں ہے طوفان  
حسن  
روح کو لیکن کسی گم گشتہ شے کی ہے ہوس  
ورنہ اس صحرامیں کیوں نالوں ہے یہ مثل جرس

(*Bang-e-Dara*, p. 93)<sup>78</sup>

During the first phase of the development of his theory of Art, Iqbal believed that Reality is made manifest to humanity only through Beauty. Every beautiful object be it a rosebud, or star or a scene, is a window through which one peeps into the heart of truth by establishing a kind of communication between mind and reality. The function of the true artist is to reveal similar beauty in all things, which are particular revelations of that Divine Beauty which permeates the whole universe.<sup>71</sup>

In 1908 - the year of his return from Europe - Iqbal went through a period of doubt about the existence of real beauty in the world

جلوہ حسن کہ ہے جس سے تمنا ہے تاب  
پالتا ہے جسے آغوش تخیل میں شباب  
ابدی بنتا ہے یہ عالم فانی جس سے  
ایک افسانہ رنگیں ہے جوانی جس سے  
دور ہو جاتی ہے ادراک کی خامی جس سے  
عقل کرتی ہے تاثر کی غلامی جس سے  
آہ! موجود بھی وہ حسن کہیں ہے کہ نہیں؟  
خاتم دھر میں یارب وہ رنگیں ہے کہ نہیں؟

(*Bang-e-Dara*, p. 131)<sup>80</sup>

He was also struck by the thought of Beauty's mutability. Beauty asks the Creator

خدا سے حسن نے ایک روز یہ سوال کیا  
جہاں میں کیوں نہ مجھے تو نے لازوال کیا

(*Bang-e-Dara*, p. 112)<sup>81</sup>

The reply is unexpected

ملا جو اب کہ تصویر خانہ ہے دنیا  
شب در از عدم کا فسانہ ہے دنیا  
ہوئی ہے رنگ تغیر سے جب نمود اسکی  
وہی حسیں ہے حقیقت زوال ہے جس کی

(*Bang-e-Dara*, p. 113)<sup>82</sup>

Here we have a glimpse of the idea that haunted Keats - that Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes and must die. This thought makes the lover pursue Beauty all the more intently and ardently and since "every mental pursuit takes its reality and worth from the ardour of the pursuer,"<sup>83</sup> its very mutability makes Beauty more real.

In *Asrar-e-Khudi*, Iqbal had written

حسن خلاق بہار آرزوست  
جلوہ اشس پروردگار آرزوست  
سینہ شاعر تجلی زارِ حسن  
نیزد از سینائے او انوارِ حسن

(Asrar-e-Khudi, p. 37)<sup>84</sup>

Later we see a gradual shifting of the emphasis from Beauty to, Love. Of Goethe, "it has been said ... that his search for the nature of beauty culminated and ended in praise of the divine powers of love."<sup>85</sup> Iqbal's quest also ended in Love. In the period extending from about 1920 to the time of his death, Iqbal described the essence of Reality not in terms of Beauty but in terms of Love. As M. M. Sharif has observed, "For the budding vitalist Iqbal, it was the creator of Love, but not its goal; now for the full-fledged heroic vitalist Iqbal, Love is everything."<sup>86</sup>

For Iqbal while Beauty is subject to mutability, not so is Love

حسن می گفت کہ شامے نہ پذیرد سحر م  
عشق می گفت تب فنا ہے دوا ہے دارم

(Payam-e-Mashriq, p. 195)<sup>87</sup>

اسے عالم رنگ و بو این صحبتِ مانا چند  
مرگ است و دوا و نوشق است دوا م من

(Zabur-e-'Ajam, p. 197)<sup>88</sup>

Iqbal has written extensively on Love which is for him the way and the end, the criterion of beauty, the power and the glory of human life

عشق مردان نقدِ خوبان را عیار  
بہت او آنسوئے گردوں گذشت  
از محبت جذبہ با گرد و بند  
بے محبت زندگی ماتم ہمہ  
عقل صیقل می زند فرہنگ را  
اہل دل را سینہ سینا و صد  
پیش ادھر مگن و حویچودات  
گر می انکار ما از نارِ اوست  
ن را ہم پرودہ در ہم پرودہ دار  
از حیاں چند و چون بیرون گذشت  
از حیا می گیرد از و تا ارجمند  
کار و بارش زشت و نامکرم ہمہ  
جو صہر آئینہ بخشد سنگ را  
با ہر مندال پد بیضا و صد  
جہلمہ عالم تلخ و شاخ نبات  
آفریدن جان دمیدن کارِ اوست

(Zabur-e-'Ajam, pp. 263-264)<sup>89</sup>

For Iqbal, the experiential knowledge of Reality as distinguished from abstract intellectualism is named “*Ishq*”. All true poetry must find its basis in Love

نغمہ می باید جنوں پروردہ آتش درخون ذلِ حل کر وہ

(*Zabur-e-Ajam*, p, 253)<sup>90</sup>

A real artist is a lover. Love alone brings true knowledge by unfolding the secrets of the heart

جس روز دل کی رمز مخفی سمجھ گیا بھوت م مرعہ ہائے ہنرمیں طرا

(*Zarb-e-Kalim*, p. 113)<sup>91</sup>

### Iqbal and Shelley

In his conception of Love as the source of poetry and of the moral impulse in human beings Shelley is close to Iqbal. He says:

The great secret of morals in love; or a going out of our own nature, and identification of ourselves with the beautiful that exists in thought, action or person, not our own. A man, to be greatly good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively, he must put himself in the place of another, and of many others, the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own. The great instrument of moral good is the imagination, and poetry administers to the effect by acting upon the cause.<sup>92</sup>

### The Poet as Prophet

In the history of literary criticism we come across a number of instances when a poet has been regarded as a prophet. This is hardly surprising since, like prophets, poets transform subjective into objective reality, and translate their own inner states of being into concrete facts and situations, thereby adding new dimensions to life.<sup>93</sup> However, seldom has the word “prophet” in this context borne so wide a connotation as it does in Iqbal’s thought.

Prophets see the deepest realities of human existence and since these realities can only be grasped through life-enhancing action, they attempt to produce, in the people to whom they are sent, such action or at least a state of mind conducive to it.<sup>94</sup> Poets must do likewise or else for Iqbal their art is trivial and of little significance

گر ہنرمیں نسبیں تعمیر خودی کا جوہر دائے صورت گری و ثنائی و نلے و مرو د

(*Zarb-e-Kalim*, p. 112)<sup>95</sup>

In those who lack strength and courage, they must infuse a spirit of resolve and fortitude:

نوا پیرا ہو اے بلبل کہ ہو تیرے ترنم سے  
کبوتر کے تن نازک میں شاہیں کا جگر پیدا

(*Bang-e-Dara*, p. 300)<sup>96</sup>

And if poets succeed in shaping the human personality, then they are accomplishing the task of prophets

شعر را مقصود اگر آدم گرمی است  
شاعری ہم وارث پیغمبری است

(*Javid Nama*, p. 46)<sup>97</sup>

Like Blake and Shelley, Iqbal also believes that poets are vouchsafed knowledge of what is yet to be - that is, they have the gift of foresight and prophecy. In the words of Blake:

Hear the voice of the Bard!  
Who Present, Past and Future sees.<sup>98</sup>

Shelley's theory of poetry "identifies poetry with prophecy,"<sup>99</sup> and for him, poets are "the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present."<sup>100</sup> For Iqbal

عکس اس کا مرے آئینہ ادراک میں ہے  
نہ تارے میں ہے نے گردشِ افلاک میں ہے  
نیری تقدیر میں نامہ بیباک میں ہے

(*Bal-e-Jibril*, p. 94)<sup>101</sup>

The true poet, like the prophet, is also an interpreter of Nature who reveals secrets not known to humanity. In Iqbal's words, "The world-spirit conceals the various phases of her minor life in symbol. The universe is nothing but a great symbol. But she never takes the trouble to interpret them and to reveal their meaning to humanity."<sup>102</sup>

For Iqbal, as for Shelley, poet-prophets are "gifted with a particular insight into the nature of reality."<sup>103</sup> They are visionaries and their poetry is the vehicle of their vision. Iqbal's poet-prophet is able not only to look into the future but also to inspire humanity to greater striving in order to achieve its higher destiny. Iqbal visualized the spirit of Sir Saiyid exhorting the poet:

سونے والوں کو جگا دے شعر کے اعجاز سے  
خرمن باطل جلا دے شعلہٴ آواز سے

(*Bang-e-Dara*, p. 41)<sup>104</sup>

Through their works, then, poets encourage human beings to translate the immense potentialities of



the Self into action.

Iqbal's poet-prophet possesses the lineaments of Carlyle's Hero as Poet. Like Carlyle's Poet as Hero, Iqbal's Ideal Person is both a revealer and creator of beauty and values<sup>105</sup>

چیں ربا ید از بساط روزگار  
ہر نگار از دست او گیرو عبار

(Zabur-e-'Ajam, p. 256)<sup>106</sup>

In Carlyle's words,

the true poet is ever, as of old, the Seer; whose eye has been gifted to discern the gold like mystery of God's universe and decipher some new lines of its celestial writings. We can still call him a Vates and Seer; for he sees into the greatest of secrets, "the open secret", hidden things become clear; how the Future is but another phasis of the present: thereby are his words in very truth prophetic; what he has spoken shall be done"<sup>107</sup>

For Iqbal, too, poets have a great social role to play. They are the "eye" of the nation:

شاعر رنگین نوا ہے دیدہ بینائے قوم  
مبتلائے درد کوئی عضو ہو، روتی ہے آنکھ  
کس قدر ہمدرد سارے جس کی ہوتی ہے آنکھ

(Bang-e-Dara, p. 51)<sup>108</sup>

Lacking poets a nation becomes a mere heap of dust

شاعر اندر سینہ ملت چو دل  
ملتے بے شاعرے انبار گل

(Javid Nama, p. 45)<sup>109</sup>

Since the artist has messianic role to play. it follows that "the spiritual a health of a people largely depends on the kind of inspiration which their poets and artists receive."<sup>110</sup> Subject to the kind of inspiration received, Art can proclaim the message of life, or death

سینہ روشن ہو تو ہے سوز سخن عین حیات  
ہو نہ روشن، تو سخن مرگ دوام اے ساقی

(Bal-e-Jibril, p. 18)<sup>111</sup>

From history Iqbal had learnt that life-denying ideas could destroy a nation more surely than anything

else. He believed that, “The inspiration of a single decadent, if his art can lure his fellows to his song or picture, may prove more ruinous to a people than whole battalions of an Attila or a Changes.”<sup>112</sup>

Or, in words of poetry

از نوا تشکیل تقدیر امم  
از نو اتخرب و تعمیر امم

(*Javid Nama*, p. 195)<sup>113</sup>

When Art is divorced from life and its problems, it heralds a nation’s downfall

نہ جدا رہے نو اگر تب و تاب زندگی سے  
کہ ہلاکی امم ہے یہ طریق نے لوازی

(*Zarb-e-Kalim*, p. 72)<sup>114</sup>

Like Tennyson, Iqbal believed that “A song that nerves a nation’s heart is in itself a deed”<sup>115</sup> and for him the whetstone of poets’ art was whether their words possessed the efficacy of the stroke of Moses - the emblem of Love and Power in Iqbal’s poetry - and could resurrect a people’s languishing spirit

ہے معجزہ دنیا میں ابھرتی نہیں قومیں  
جو ضرب کلیمی نہیں رکھتا وہ ہنر کیا

(*Zarb-e-Kalim*, p. 117)<sup>116</sup>

Not only did Iqbal hold it true that “nations are born in the hearts of poets”<sup>117</sup> but also that poets whose Art springs from their heart bring a message of life everlasting to the whole world

اہل زمیں کو نسخہ زندگی دوام ہے  
خون جگر سے تربیت پاتی ہے جو س

(*Bang-e-Dara*, p. 230)<sup>118</sup>

And if poets be indeed like prophets in their ability to transform life and history then their words are comparable in sanctity to the utterance of celestial beings

وہ شعر کہ پیغام حیات ابدی ہے  
یا نغمہ جبریل ہے یا بانگ سرافیل

(*Zarb-e-Kalim*, p. 133)<sup>119</sup>

### Iqbal’s Philosophy of Art: Questions

Two fundamental questions arising from Iqbal’s philosophy of Art relate to his views regarding (1)

inspiration and purpose and (2) functionalism and ‘universal’ Art. Each of these questions is discussed below.

### ***Inspiration and Purpose***

If poets are “inspired” as Iqbal believes them to be then is it logical to expect from them poetry with a “good” purpose? Is it not possible that their inspiration may lead poets to that which is detrimental to life?

Here it is to be noted that while asserting “the utmost importance for mankind” of “the personality that receives (the inspiration) and the life-quality of that which is received,” Iqbal recognizes that “inspiration is not a matter of choice.”<sup>120</sup> Does it follow then that the kind of inspiration received by a poet is a matter of sheer luck and that poets cannot be held morally responsible for what they say since they have no control over the inspiration under whose influence they speak?

At this point, Iqbal’s conception of inspiration is worth examining. Inspiration is not something which “possesses” a person; it is not an outside agency acting upon a person. Inspiration springs not from without but from within. It has an organic relationship with the poet’s being. Poets cannot, therefore, claim exemption from moral responsibility on the ground that their words are determined by the kind of inspiration they receive.

Far from regarding Art as determined, Iqbal agrees with Croce in regarding Art as the self-expression of the artist.<sup>121</sup> He also agreed with Croce that appreciation of Art is possible chiefly because we have the same emotions as the poet:<sup>122</sup>

نوائے او بہ ہر دل ساز گار است  
کہ در ہر سینہ قاشے از دل اوست

(*Armaghan-e-Hijaz*, p. 34)<sup>123</sup>

Sometimes from Iqbal’s writing it appears as if he thinks that inspiration may lead either to life-giving and life-enhancing Art or to decadent Art. He does not deny the name of inspiration to that which leads to the latter, However, like Shelley, most of the time, he describes inspiration - which is another name for the creative imagination - as the agent of moral good. Decadent Art is Art which bears no relation to life or is destructive to the vital impulse in humanity. Because real inspiration springs from the poet’s ‘heart’ and is intimately linked with the problems and ideals of human beings, Iqbal implies that decadent Art lacks real inspiration. If inspiration is the agent of moral good it follows that it can only lead to life-renewing and morally invigorating poetry.

The main difficulty arises when one tries to reconcile the idea that poets are inspired beings with the idea that their poetry must further a specific purpose. In *Javid Nama* the poet asks the Indian poet Bartari-Hari to answer this question

شعر را سوز از کجا آید بگوئے  
از خودی یا از خدا آید بگوئے

(*Javid Nama*, p. 198)<sup>124</sup>

The answer is couched in ambiguous terms

کس نہ اندوہ جہاں شاہ کجاست  
پرودہ او ازیم وزیر نواست  
اں دل گرے کہ دار و درکنار  
پیش بزدان ہم نمی گیرد قسرار  
جان ما را لذت اندر جستجوست  
شعور اسوز از مقام آرزوست

(*Javid Nama*, pp. 198-199)<sup>125</sup>

Iqbal and Shelley both believe that poetry gets at “the motives for good action, touching the heart by enkindling the imagination.”<sup>126</sup> For Shelley, however, poetry has no conscious purpose. “Didactic poetry is my abhorrence,” he said.<sup>127</sup> For Croce, too, Art is an autonomous activity free from ethics.<sup>128</sup> For Iqbal, in one sense, the highest poetry is didactic in nature, and Art cannot be divorced from ethics. Artists create with a conscious purpose in view. How is this conscious purpose reconcilable with the fact that they are inspired? The fact that artists are inspired means, for Iqbal, that they are being guided in their work not by reason or the discursive faculties, but by intuition, or through the heart. Intuition, as Iqbal conceives it, is a “higher kind of intellect,”<sup>129</sup> and not a blind force. Therefore, in view of Iqbal’s total vision it is possible to imagine an artist who is inspired but with a conscious purpose in mind.

### Functionalism and “Universal” Art

While there is much in Iqbal’s writings to support the statement that “Poetry as active history and history-making prophecy... is the supreme goal of Iqbal’s aesthetics,”<sup>130</sup> it is possible to challenge the following statement pertaining to Iqbal’s concept of an ideal Poet, “The Prophet fixes his eye his eye only on one specific goal and uses the simplest possible means of gaining it, preaching a single doctrine in order to collect the peoples around it like around a flag. That is exactly what Iqbal wants from his ideal poet.”<sup>131</sup>

Iqbal’s poet does, indeed have a prophet-like mission to accomplish, but in view of his deep admiration for non-didactic poets like Shakespeare and Ghalib, it is difficult to endorse the suggestion that Iqbal does not have much use for a poet who has no doctrinal commitment, To Shakespeare, the immortal playwright, Iqbal says:

حسن آئینہ حق اور دل آئینہ حسن  
دل انسان کو ترا حسن کلام آئینہ

(*Bang-e-Dara*, p. 277)<sup>132</sup>

and about the inimitable Ghalib, Iqbal observes, “He is one of those poets whose imagination and intellect place them above the narrow limitations of creed and nationality. His recognition is yet to come.”<sup>133</sup>

In stressing the functionalism of Iqbal’s ideal poet, it is often overlooked that Iqbal has also stated, not once but repeatedly, that true Art is that which leads to an increment and a more vivid apprehension of life. Iqbal shared the Dantesque concept that poetry was as “vast and deep as humanity, wherein every soul will stand forth revealed in its naked truth (and that) the object of a poet... is to enshrine in imperishable words the highest truths known to man and some truths that had escaped man’s notice.”<sup>134</sup>

These truths are not necessarily of a religious or moral import; nevertheless they are significant and valuable, because like Shakespeare's art, they are a translation of reality into human terms.

"Both Shakespeare and Goethe re-think the Divine Thought of Creation,"<sup>135</sup> says Iqbal, and he would have agreed that though some of the greatest poets have not set out to preach a particular doctrine, they have "both informed and created, have been both teachers and magicians."<sup>136</sup>

Iqbal, then, does not exclude from his concept of a poet, poets whose work has a "universal" rather than a "particular" import. He could scarcely have done so when he shared with Blake the view that the imagination includes "all activities which create or increase life,"<sup>137</sup> and with Keats his faith in the "holiness of the heart's affections and the truth of the imagination."<sup>138</sup> What he rejects is not "universal" Art which has no particular purpose to serve, but decadent Art which has no meaning

نغمه گر معنی ندارد مرده ایست  
سوز آواز آتش افسرده ایست

(*Zabur-e-'Ajam*, p. 253)<sup>139</sup>

The Art of a genuine artist according to Iqbal reflects all that the artist perceives, discerning good and bad equally

فطرت پاکش عیارِ خوب و زشت  
صنعتش آئینه دارِ خوب و زشت

(*Zabur-e-'Ajam*, p. 256)<sup>140</sup>

Such a conception of an ideal poet certainly does not exclude all non-didactic poets.

### Iqbal's Aesthetics: Summing Up

Iqbal, then, has a dual conception of a poet and consequently of Art. Firstly, poets are seen primarily as prophets having a definite function to perform and possibly having a fixed doctrinal commitment. Secondly, they are seen as artists who present life as they see it, their imaginative insight illuminating the secret depths of the human mind, their work concerned not with "the purely temporal of ephemeral aspects of individual or collective experience but with what is genuinely significant and abiding."<sup>141</sup>

The narrow conception of a poet may not be reconcilable with the wider one, but though the two conceptions may not be reducible one to the other, in one sense, the ultimate goal in both cases is the same. As one writer observes, for Iqbal, "the ultimate objective of Art... is the 'life eternal'."<sup>142</sup> The poet-prophet aims to secure this objective by moral and spiritual enlightenment and development; the artist attains the end of adding to the abundance and glory of life by responding with sensitivity to inner and outer reality and experiencing, perhaps in a moment of blessed awareness, that which lies beyond good and evil and foreshadows eternity.

### NOTES AND REFERENCES

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2. Saiyidain, K. G., *Iqbal's Educational Philosophy*, Lahore, 1960, p. 3.
3. Vahid, S. A., (Editor), *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, Lahore, 1964.
4. With its singing if it makes the garden melancholy,  
    'tis better that the early-rising bird should silent be.
5. If in a melody the call of death does hidden lie,  
    that flute, that harp, that viol is unholy in my eye.
6. Faizi, A., *Iqbal*, Bombay, 1947, p. 15.
7. Iqbal, J., (Editor), *Stray Reflections*, Lahore, 1961, p. 152.
8. That which is called living is but a forgetfulness,  
    a dream, a drowsiness, a drunkenness, unconsciousness.
9. Beware of Hafiz the drinker of wine,  
    his cup is full of deadly poison;  
    he is an archer who robs the heart of strength,  
    his dart makes even death seem sweet.
10. Edited by Faruqi, M. I. and Ghaznawi, K., Peshawar, 1966.
11. Hafiz, the enchanting poet, hails from Shiraz,  
    'Urfi, emitting fire, also hails from Shiraz,  
    'Urfi leads to the domain of the Self,  
    Hafiz remained on the banks of Ruknabad.  
    Drink wine with 'Urfi the tumultuous,  
    if you have life, avoid the company of Hafiz.
12. Hussain, M. H., *Iqbal on Poetry and the Poet*, (In manuscript, consulted by courtesy  
    of the author).
13. His kiss robs the rose of freshness,  
    He takes away from the nightingale the joy of flying.  
    The sinews are relaxed by his opium,  
    Thou payest for his song with the life.  
    His melodies steal firmness from thy heart,  
    His magic persuades thee that death is life,  
    He plunges thee in a sea of thought.  
    And makes thee a stranger to action.  
    His beauty hath no dealing with truth,  
    There are none but flawed pearls in his sea.  
    (Translation by Nicholson, R. A., *The Secrets of the Self*, Lahore, 1964, pp. 64-65.)
14. A monk caught in the snare of carnal lust;  
    A beauty with a bird imprisoned in  
    A cage, a king with folded knees before  
    A hermit wrapped up in a patchwork cloak;  
    A man from the hills with a firewood load;  
    A lovelorn maiden going to a temple;  
    A Yogi sitting in a wilderness;  
    An old man tortured by the pains of age,  
    Whose candle is about to flicker out.  
    (*Iqbal on Poetry and the Poet*.)
15. *The Secrets of the Self*, p. 70.
16. Though Persian verse is gay, heart-ravishing,  
    not sharpened by this verse is ego's sword.
17. Charm lacking power is mere sorcery,  
    but charm with power combined is prophethood.

18. *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, p. 84.
19. *Iqbal, on Poetry and the Poet*.
20. The nations which are strong in action  
do not have a taste for verse.
21. No good will ever come from any churlish boor  
Who lays the charge of versifying at my door.  
I do not know the alley where the poet's sweet-heart dwells;  
I have no lovelorn heart which someone's coldness ails,  
Mere humble dust, I yet do not lie on the street  
To be a carpet under beauty's feet.  
Nor is there in my dust  
A heart made clamorous by lust.  
(*Iqbal on Poetry and the Poet*.)
22. Look not on my troubled song as poetry,  
for I'm aware of the tavern's inside secrets.
23. Collins, J. C., (Editor), *Sidney's Apologie for Poetry*, Oxford, 1955, p. 12.
24. *Iqbal on Poetry and the Poet*.
25. Free art from imitating Nature's way,  
are artists hunters or mere beasts of prey?
26. He goes to Nature with a begging bowl  
For beauty's alms: a robber in disguise,  
He steals from Nature, itself destitute.  
To seek for beauty outside of yourself  
Is wrong: what ought to be is not before  
Your eyes, all ready-made for you to see.  
A painter who surrenders himself to  
The forms of Nature loses the form of his Self  
In imitating mere external forms.  
(*Iqbal on Poetry and the Poet*.)
27. *Sidney's Apologie for Poetry*, O. 8.
28. *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, p. 145.
29. Coleridge, E. H. (Editor), *The Complete Poetical Works of S.T. Coleridge*, Oxford, 1912, Volume I, p. 365.
30. Though Nature does not lack in taste,  
Perform what she has failed to do!
31. By his look the fair is made fairer  
Through his enchantments Nature is more beloved.  
(*The Secrets of the Self*, p. 61.)
32. The skilful master improves upon Nature,  
and reveals his secret to our gaze!  
He creates a new world  
and gives a new life to our being!
33. *The Poetical Works of Robert Browning*, London, 1905; Volume 1, p. 522.
34. Browne, Sir T., *Religio Medici* (Edited by Denonain J. J.), Cambridge, 1953, p. 26.
35. Sharif, M. M., *About Iqbal and His Thought*, Lahore, 1964, p. 91.
36. Your sanctuary and another's self! God forbid!  
Revive not the business of Lat-Manat,  
Theatre's object is - you should not be,  
if you are not, no selfhood and no life.

37. *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, p. 145.
38. Bowra, C. M., *The Romantic Imagination*, Oxford, 1964, pp. 3-4.
39. Coleridge, S. T., *Biographia Literaria*, (Edited by Shawcross, J., Oxford, 1907, Volume, I, p. 202.
40. *Iqbal on Poetry and the Poet*.
41. God decreed, "It is like this! Gainsay it not."  
Said Adam, "Verily it is like this, but it ought to like that!"
42. You created night and I made the lamp:  
You created clay and I made the cup,  
You created deserts and mountains and forests,  
I created orchards and gardens and groves.  
It is I who make a mirror from a stone  
and I who make an antidote from a poison.
43. Neither self-seeing, nor God-seeing, nor world-seeing,  
of your great art is this the masterpiece?
44. *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, p. 144.
45. Jacques H., *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, New York, 1953, p. 60.
46. Men of vision, it is good to have an eye for beauty,  
But the eye that does not perceive Reality has no vision!  
Art yearns for the immortal life,  
And not for this fleeting breath transitory like the spark.  
(Translation by Saiyidain, K.G., *Iqbal's Educational Philosophy*, p. 3.)
47. The poet's nature is all searching,  
creator and nourisher of desire.  
(Translation by Arberry, A. J., *Javid Nama*, 1966, p. 45.)
48. In the world of passion and melody, separation is better than union.  
In union is desire's death; in separation the pleasure of yearning.
49. Each instant, a new Sinai, a new flash,  
God grant Desire's journey never ends.
50. *Stray Reflections*, p. 37.
51. Oh! if thou hast the coin of poesy in thy purse,  
Rub it on the touchstone of Life!  
(*The Secrets of the Self*, pp. 68-69.)
52. Unwise one, literature and philosophy are naught,  
Life's struggle is essential to find material for Art.
53. Rollins, H. E., (Editor), *Letters of John Keats*, Cambridge, (Massachusetts), 1958,  
Volume II, p. 91.
54. Schimmel, A. M., *Gabriel's Wing*, Leiden, 1963, pp. 70-71.
55. Colour or brick and stone, harp, or speech and sound,  
born of heart's blood alone are miracles of Art.
56. Incomplete are all creations without the heart's blood,  
and lacking it a melody is but a frenzy false.
57. With the heart's blood, nourished is my song,  
In the harp there is the musician's blood..
58. Quoted in Abrams, M. H., *The Mirror and the Lamp*, New York, 1953, p. 134.
59. *Letters of John Keats*, Vol. I, p. 192.
60. Quoted in *The Mirror and the Lamp*, p. 133.
61. *The Romantic Imagination*, pp. 147-148.
62. Without fervour, Truth is but Philosophy,



- Gaining the heart's ardour, it becomes Poetry.  
 Avicenna is lost in the dust raised by the camel,  
 While Rumi's hand has reached the dörser's veil.
63. *Stray Reflections*, p. 127.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 106.
65. *Ibid*, p. 16.
66. *Iqbal on Poetry and the Poet*.
67. Carritt, E. F., *The Theory of Beauty*, London, 1931, p. 139.
68. Ineffective without Power is Beauty and Charm  
 A melody that has no fire is mere breath.
69. Bernard J. H. (Editor), *Kant's Critique of Judgment*, London, 1914, p. 120.
70. *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, p. 144.
71. *Iqbal on Poetry and the Poet*.
72. *Ibid*.
73. *Stray Reflections*, p. 110.
74. Here I am indebted to M. M. Sharif's illuminating essay "Iqbal's Theory of Beauty" in *About Iqbal and His Thought*, pp. 54-84.
75. Visible in everything is Beauty everlasting,  
 What's speech in humans, is in the bud a sparkle ravishing.  
 It is as if the sky's moon has become the poet's heart,  
 What happens to be moonlight there, is here a painful smart.
76. "Oh my companions," said the moon,  
 "You who night's harvest-acres glean,  
 On motion all this world's life hangs:  
 .Such is the ancient doom of things.  
 Swift runs the shadowy steed of time  
 Lashed by desire's whip into foam,  
 And what is the goal of all this haste?  
 Its cradle love - beauty its quest."  
 (Kiernan, V. G., *Poems from Iqbal*, London, 1955, p. 11.)
77. Wimsatt, W. and Brooks C., *Literary Criticism: A Short History*, London, 1951, p. 137.
78. There is in Nature's realm beauty unbounded,  
 if the eye can see, each drop's a riot of beauty.  
 but the spirit lusts for something that is lost,  
 else why does it mourn bell-like in this desert?
79. Das S., "The Philosophy of Sir Mahomed Iqbal," *Indian Review*, Madras; 1938, Volume 39, p. 737.
80. Beauty's display which keeps Desire restless,  
 which is, in the imagination, fed by youth,  
 that makes immortal this our mortal world,  
 and makes youth seem a colourful episode,  
 which makes good the intellect's limitations  
 and makes reason captive to the senses -  
 Ah! is such Beauty present anywhere or not?  
 Is the world's ring is there such a gem or not, O Lord?
81. Beauty asked God, one day  
 The question: "Why  
 Didst Thou not make me, in Thy world, undying?"

- (*Poems from Iqbal*, p. 10.)
82. And God replying -  
 “A picture-show is this world: all this world  
 A tale out of the long night of not-being;  
 And ,in it, seeing,  
 Its nature works rough mutability,  
 That only is lovely whose essence knows decay.”  
 (*Poems from Iqbal*, p. 10.)
83. *The Letters of John Keats*, Vol. 1, p. 242.
84. Beauty is the creator of desire’s spring-tide,  
 Desire is nourished by the display of Beauty,  
 ’Tis in the poet’s breast that Beauty unveils,  
 ‘Tis from his Sinai that Beauty’s beams arise.  
 (*The Secrets of the Self*, p. 61.)
85. *About Iqbal and His Thought*, p. 69.
86. *Ibid.*, p. 74.
87. Beauty said that my morning has no eventide,  
 Love said that I have the immortality of restlessness.
88. O world of colour and scent, how long will our association last?  
 Extinction is your final doom and love is my destiny.
89. It is a touchstone for the gold of beauty,  
 It both uncovers beauty and preserves  
 Its sanctity. Its aspirations soar  
 Beyond the summit of the skies, beyond  
 This world of quantity, cause and effect.  
 Love sublimates all passions and invests  
 With worth much that is worthless. Without love  
 Life is a funeral, a joyless thing.  
 A celebration of decay and death.  
 Love meliorates man’s mental faculties  
 And burnishes a stone into a mirror.  
 It gives the miracle-performing power  
 Of Moses’ Shining Hand. All that exists,  
 All that is possible yields to its might;  
 And in this bitter, gloomy world it is  
 A gushing fountain of sweetness and light.  
 The ardour of our thought comes from its fire.  
 Its work is to create and to breathe life  
 Into what it creates.  
 (*Iqbal on Poetry and the Poet.*)
90. A melody must be cherished on the madness of love,  
 it should be like fire dissolved in life-blood.
91. When the musician understands the secrets of the heart,  
 then overcome are all the stages and problems of art.
92. Shelley, P. B., “A Defence of Poetry,” *The Four Ages of Poetry*, Oxford, 1947, p. 33.
93. *Iqbal on Poetry and the Poet.*
94. McCarthy E., “Iqbal as a Poet and Philosopher,” *Iqbal Review*, October 1961, p. 21.
95. If Art lacks the Self-building quality.  
 woe to such sculpture, poetry and music.

96. Commence your singing nightingale that with your melody  
an eagle's heart is born within a pigeon's frail body.
97. If the purpose of poetry is the fashioning of men,  
poetry is likewise the heir of prophecy.  
(*Javid Nama*, p. 45.)
98. Frye 'N., (Editor), *Selected Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, New York, 1953, p. 35.
99. Pottle F. A "The Case for Shelley," *English Romantic Poets*, (Edited by Abrams M. H.). Oxford 1960, p. 290.
100. "A Defence of Poetry," p. 59.
101. The event that's yet beyond the curtain of the skies,  
its shadow can be seen in my mind's mirror.  
Not in the star nor in the motions of the sky,  
your destiny lies in my unfearing song.
102. *Stray Reflections*, p. 105.
103. *The Romantic Imagination*, p. 21.
104. With the miracle of verse, awaken those asleep,  
burn the seed of falsehood with the voice's flame.
105. *Iqbal on Poetry and the Poet*.
106. He transforms the old values of life,  
His art establishes the true standard of beauty.  
(Dar B. A., *Iqbal's Gulshan-i Raz-i Jadid and Bandagi Namah*, Lahore, 1964, p. 70.)
107. Carlyle, T., *Collected Works*, London, 1869, Volume III, p. 388.
108. The poet with the colourful song is the nation's eye,  
if in pain is any limb, 'tis the eye that weeps,  
how great a sympathizer of the body is the eye!
109. The poet is like the heart in a people's breast,  
a people without a poet is a mere heap of clay.  
(*Javid Nama*, p. 45.)
110. *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, p. 144.
111. Life itself is Poetry's passion, if enlightened is the heart,  
if 'tis not, then Poetry is eternal death, O giver-of-wine.
112. *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, p. 145.
113. The destinies of nations are shaped by a song,  
by a song nations are destroyed and rebuilt.  
(*Javid Nama*, p. 122.)
114. Aloof from life's pursuits the poet must not be,  
for such a way of singing proves the end of nations.
115. Tennyson, A., *Poetical Works*, London, 1959, p. 530.
116. In the world, without a miracle nations cannot rise,  
what kind of Art is that which lacks the power of Moses' stroke?
117. *Stray Reflections*, p. 125.
118. For the world's people, 'tis the way to everlasting life -  
that art of poetry which is nurtured by the living heart.
119. The poetry which is a message of eternal life  
is either Gabriel's song or else the voice of Israfil.
120. *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, pp. 144-145.
121. *About Iqbal and His Thought*, p. 104.
122. *Ibid.*, p. 106.

123. His melody is in concord with each heart  
for in each breast a piece of his heart lies.
124. Say, whence comes the fire into poetry?  
Does it come from the Self, or from God?  
(*Javid Nama*, p. 124.)
125. None knows where the poet is in this world,  
his melody springs from the high notes and the low.  
That burning heart which he has in his breast  
finds not repose even before God.  
Our soul's delight is in questing;  
Poetry's fire of the station of desire.  
(*Javid Nama*, p. 124.)
126. *Literary Criticism: A Short History*, pp. 422-423.
127. Shepherd, R. H., (Editor), *Shelley's Poetical Works*, London, 1888, Volume 1, p. 330.
128. Vahid, S. A., *Studies in Iqbal*, Lahore, 1967, p. 3.
129. Iqbal M., *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Lahore, 1965; p. 3.
130. Schimmel, A. M., *Gabriel's Wing*, p. 72.
131. *Ibid.*, p. 62.
132. Beauty mirrors truth, and the heart mirrors beauty,  
your art's beauty is the mirror for the human heart.
133. *Stray Reflections*, p. 51.
134. *Studies in Iqbal*, p. 218.
135. *Stray Reflections*, p. 144.
136. Bowra, C. M., *The Heritage of Symbolism*, London, 1943, p. 219.
137. *The Romantic Imagination*, p. 16.
138. *The Letters of John Keats*, Volume 1, p. 84.
139. Dead is a melody which has no meaning,  
its warmth is only from a dying fire.
140. His pure heart is the touchstone  
Of the beautiful and the ugly, and  
His art a mirror which reflects them both.  
(*Iqbal on Poetry and the Poet.*)
141. Saiyidain, K. G., "Progressive Trends in Iqbal's Thought," in *Iqbal as a Thinker*,  
Lahore, 1966, p.53.
142. *Ibid.*

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