

*Muhammad Iqbal: Essays on the Reconstruction of Modern Muslim Thought*. Edited by H.C. Hillier and Basit Bilal Koshul. (Edinburgh: University Press, 2015, 244 pp. HB ISBN 978-0-7486-9541-6).

Muslims have been going through hard times in those last twenty years. The First World appreciation of Islam and Muslims has been very negative due to the fundamentalists' acts of terrorism. At the right moment in 2015, H.C. Hillier and Basit Koshul edited this nine-chapters book by different scholars about the life-activity of the philosopher, poet, and political and public influencer Mohammad Iqbal, the "Spiritual Father of Pakistan". After their preface describing each chapter, Riffat Hassan presents Iqbal and his philosophical theories and new postulations of Islam, highlighting the uniqueness of Iqbal's philosophical vision.

In chapter two, "The Human Person in Iqbal's Thought," Ebrahim Moosa brings forward in detail the concepts of *Tawhid*, *Wahi*, *Afaq*, *nafs/lanfus*, *Mi'raj*, *Ishq*, *Yaqin*, *Iman*, and *al-insan al-kamil*, and Iqbal's cornerstone, *Khudi*, the basis for his reconstruction of the Islamic understanding and thinking. Iqbal's goal is to achieve perfection, where a human being has to depart from the postulations of equality, solidarity and freedom and be actively and intentionally engaged through dialectical, intuitional reasoning and inspiration in order to progress and become the complete and fulfilled human being in spite of the restraints of meta-physical/ unconditioned and epistemological/ conditioned realities.

In chapter three, "Achieving Humanity: Convergence between Henri Bergson and Muhammad Iqbal," Souleymane Bachir Diagne examines the similarities that emerge from his close study of Bergson's *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion* (1932) and Iqbal's *Six Lectures on The Reconstruction of the Religious Thought in Islam* (1930). Diagne argumentation is addressed to readers instructed in European Philosophy and Islamic Studies. Reconstruction of Islamic thought starts with the aspiration of becoming the *homo perfectus* (*insan Kamil*) and renovating the Islamic society. Each human being acquires

the qualities of God through active and creative evolution and the effort to struggle with oneself and produce independent reasoning (*ijtihad*), away from the ego-activity, approaching the self (*khudi*), grasping wholeness, freedom and unity, to serve God through the active humanisation of society. He affirms that although Iqbal rejected nationalism, he played an important political role in Partition.

In chapter four, "The Contemporary Relevance of Muhammad Iqbal," Basit Bilal Koshul demonstrates the relevance of Iqbal's philosophy of *Khudi*. Iqbal reasoning trajectory, leaves behind the cosmological, teleological and ontological irreconcilable argumentation of opposites and proposes to combine knowledge (product of modern scientific examination of experience) with wisdom derived from revelation. Koshul contrasts Iqbal's use of science to modernize Islam, with Charles Peirce's science of religious ideas—so new scientific discoveries reinforce the belief in the existence of the First (the Alpha) and the Last (the Omega).

Richard Gilmore starts from the sacred lines: "By their fruits ye shall know them, not by their roots." Gilmore, far from being a religious person finds Iqbal's wisdom too valuable to leave it only in the scope of religion. In his "Pragmatism and Islam in Peirce and Iqbal: The Metaphysics of Emergent Mind," Gilmore brings together Peirce's pragmatism and Iqbal's Reconstruction of Islam to answer metaphysical questions about change and reconstruction in modern times. He highlights parallelisms between Peirce's and Iqbal's ideas regarding the way the mind works and the creativity process. Gilmore compares the main notions of both philosophers such as "personality," "ego," "law of mind," "nature of thought," "God," "evolution," "reparation," "creation," "efficient causality" and "final causality," as well as "*Tawhid*."

In chapter six, "Between Hegel and Rumi: Iqbal's Contrapuntal Encounters with the Islamic Philosophical Traditions," Sajjad Rizvi reveals Iqbal's fountains of inspiration and study for his reconstruction through a new mode of approach to Islam. As he unfolds how Iqbal embraced different mystic and philosophical ways of thinking from India, Europe



and the World of Islam, he underlines that Iqbal could be classified as a Muslim existentialist. To understand Iqbal's main input about his theories of *Khudi*, freedom, intentionality and creative power, a reader has to read both his poetry and his prose.

In "Reconstructing Islam in a Post-metaphysical Age: Muhammad Iqbal's Interpretation of Immortality," Christopher Scott McClure explores Iqbal's approach to the Islamic dogma of the afterlife. Iqbal values poetry's ability to represent infinity. As metaphysics no longer holds to explain immortality and Islam is no longer immutable, he divides the evolution of Muslims in human history into three stages: Faith, Thought and Discovery.

H.C. Hillier clarifies in chapter eight, "Iqbal, Bergson and the Reconstruction of the Divine Nexus in Political Thought," Iqbal's worries to cover all the issues related to his thoughts on the reconstruction of modern Islam. Hillier discusses the closeness of Iqbal's and Bergson's ideas about firstly, the need to overcome the epistemological crisis that the propagation of secularism provoked;

and secondly, to reconstruct the divine nexus in socio-political thought and action. Western, secular liberal societies have triggered the evolution of nationalisms, racism, classism, colonization, war and extermination.

Dayne E. Nix, from Naval War College, US, studies Iqbal's philosophical poetry, which he asserts is the perfect vehicle in Iqbal's culture to redress the damage and the wrongs done to the Muslims in India. In chapter nine, "Mohammad Iqbal: Restoring Muslim Dignity through Poetry, Philosophy and Religious Political Action," Nix affirms Iqbal had observed that the British colonization and the Muslim's own intellectual laziness had led them to the loss of their integrity. Iqbal proposed his pan-Islamic doctrine of the self-empowerment (*Khudi*) of the Perfect Man to restore the Muslim dignity. Not only was Iqbal the "Spiritual Father of Pakistan, but also the "Poet of Muslim Dignity."

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