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The paper '*The Crisis of Modern Subjectivity: Rethinking Muhammad Iqbal and the Islamic Tradition*' by Muhammad U. Faruque examines the major contributions of Muhammad Iqbal, focusing on his concept of the self (*khudi*) and his interpretation of Sufism, which he regarded as central to his engagement with the Islamic intellectual tradition and to his effort to reinterpret Islamic thought in relation to modern science. Developing a critical inquiry on epistemeological relativity, Faruque stations Iqbal's ideas alongside earlier figures of the Islamic tradition and the subsequent scholarship that has examined his philosophical and literary contributions. Through this comparative approach, the paper highlights the formative influence of Western epistemology on Iqbal's attempt to synthesize the intellectual traditions of the East and the West. It ultimately argues that the Eurocentric orientation of Iqbal's thought undermines his project of intellectual revival by misrepresenting the historical development of key doctrines within the Islamic intellectual tradition.

Muhammad Allama Iqbal, a pioneer of Muslim intellect who remains a personality of such magnitude whose effect has managed to create a scholarship of its own kind. The creation of a dedicated scholarship around Iqbal has cemented his legacy on two polemical ends, as the paper argues. At one end, there is a defensive and apologetic reception of Iqbal's imagination and its philosophical impact on a national scale, which leads to the dismissal of any critical scholarship aimed at scrutinizing his existing works. And the other end, Iqbal's profound novelty and literary greatness are portrayed as unsurpassable in existence.

In a close reading of the first section, this paper examines Muhammad Iqbal's explication of his theory of the self—often criticised for adopting a tone similar to Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of the *Übermensch*. It explores the fragments of selfhood embedded in Sufi practices and how these have been misconstrued in later scholarship on Iqbal. A notable divergence in the relationship between *khudi* and *insān-e-kāmil*, as understood by earlier Islamic scholars, reveals a perspective that contrasts with those of earlier Muslim predecessors. In the absence of valid Sufi accounts supporting the realisation of a superior being, contemporary scholars such as Ebrahim Moosa have interpreted Iqbal's concept of *khudi* as embodying a "superhuman" and Moreover, the idea

of Muhammad Iqbal as a philosophical figure grants leverage to his contributions to the intellectual tradition. However, from a critical standpoint, the author contends regarding Iqbal's own intellectual training required to engage with earlier Islamic intellectual traditions, including philosophy (*falsafa*), theology (*kalām*), and philosophical mysticism (*'irfān*). In his view, the Islamic intellectual tradition fell short to procure intellectual acumen producing only few thinkers similar to the status of the Hindu philosophical thought. This characterisation of intellectual history, as done by Iqbal carries on a reductionist approach which portrayed the Islamic intellectual environment as un conducive for the growth of scientific and philosophical pursuits. With such a perception, it becomes problematic for Islamic knowledge to be faithfully justified on its own terms within Iqbal's work.

From a philosophical perspective, the paper argues that Muhammad Iqbal's understanding of Sufism contains several instances of oversimplification and biased interpretation. This is exemplified in his reading of Abd al-Karim al-Jili's fundamental treatise *Al-Insān al-Kāmil fī Ma'rifat al-Awākhir wa al-Awā'il* (*The Perfect Human Concerning Knowledge of the End and the Beginning*). In engaging with this work, Iqbal appears to err in his conceptualisation of *dhāt* (substance), explaining *Mutlaq al-Dhāt* (the Divine Essence) as unknowable to human perception. Iqbal's position on the Divine Essence oversimplifies al-Jīlī's view, even though he cites the latter as the basis for his own concept of the perfect human. In attempting to further extrapolate the idea of the perfect being from al-Jīlī's works, Iqbal introduces elements of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's philosophy, particularly the notion of "pure thought," along with Christian theological concepts such as the term "God-man." At the same time, he mistranslates several key terms—for instance, *tajallī*, which he renders as "illumination," but which is more accurately translated as "manifestation" or "self-disclosure." This lapse in reading and interpretation of al-Jīlī creates a significant distortion of the historical tradition of Sufism and its associated figures as represented through Iqbal's philosophy.

Adding to the debate on the characteristics of Sufism, Iqbal continues to adopt a Eurocentric perspective in "Bedil in the Light of Bergson" (1916), where he alleges Persian Sufism for subsuming the spirit of great intellectual figures in Islamic history. He also identifies pantheistic tendencies within Sufism to be a major corrosive force, offering a simplistic critique of its practices rather than engaging with the appropriate scholarly literature on the subject. Furthermore, the Sufi concept of *fana*, which is understood as 'self-negation,' contrasts sharply with Iqbal's perception

of fana which he explains as 'inactivity'. In his commentary on Abd al-Qādir Bīdil's work on Sufi metaphysics, Iqbal falls short of grasping Bīdil's allusion to Ibn 'Arabī's concept of divine imagination, which transcends human imagination. For Iqbal, the argument containing allegory presented by Bīdil remains incapable of explaining the relationship between humans and knowledge, leading to a misinterpretation of the entire proposition as originally made by Bīdil .

Apart from philosophy and metaphysics, the author further presents substantial evidence of oversights made by Muhammad Iqbal in the realm of natural sciences. In his interpretation, Iqbal elucidates the theory of evolution as proposed by Ibn Miskawayh, combining it with his own understanding of evolutionary theory. The writings of Ibn Miskawayh provide insight into the progression of attributes from mineral to vegetal, animal, and ultimately human life. Meanwhile, Iqbal, employing logic similar to that of Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory, projects Ibn Miskawayh's treatise to articulate his own understanding of barbarism evolving into civilization through physiological and spiritual changes—an idea that is absent in the original text. This blending of traditional theory with modern scientific explanations reveals Iqbal's attempt to form a superficial connection between two fundamentally different theories.

Continuing his intellectual exploration, Muhammad Iqbal presents a theoretical dialogue between Albert Einstein's Theory of Relativity and his own concept of the self, which he describes as non-spatial, non-temporal, and absolute, yet unaffected by external influences. For the author, the implications that Iqbal draws echo his interpretation of the theory of relativity, which he employs to elaborate on the impact of motion and space on human psychology, highlighting the interrelation between the observer and reality. However, his argument reveals a notable lack of rigorous mathematical foundation in theoretical physics, as Iqbal relies instead on mystical interpretations of the theory of relativity offered by prominent traditional Muslim intellectuals.

In response to the epistemic domination resulting from colonial activities, Muhammad Iqbal vehemently challenges the colonial episteme by strategically positioning the Islamic intellectual tradition and highlighting its unique coherence in contrast to it. However, the paper seeks to demonstrate that Iqbal's extensive undertaking lacks a coherent methodological approach, portraying the achievements of the Islamic intellectual tradition merely as precursors to modern science rather than as significant accomplishments in their own right. Iqbal attributes a hedonistic character to the progress of Western knowledge while simultaneously acknowledging the

intellectual prowess he gained through figures such as Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Friedrich Nietzsche, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and William Wordsworth.

As the paper progresses, the second section addresses Iqbal's perspective on selfhood within the Islamic philosophical and theological tradition. Rejecting the dualistic interpretation of the Cartesian principle, Iqbal advocates for the unity of mind and body on the ground of permanence between the former and the latter element, belonging to the same framework of operation which can not be separated from each other. The paper develops the claim that building on this rejection, Iqbal situates the same position within the Islamic philosophical and theological tradition concerning selfhood. By examining the reasons behind the oversight of Iqbal's assessment, it becomes clear how he simplifies the multidimensional debates surrounding selfhood in the Islamic context: specifically, the effort to find a balance between the material and immaterial conception of the self.

In his work *Gulshan-i Raz-i Jadid (The New Rose Garden of Secrets)*, which Muhammad Iqbal presents as an extension of *Gulshan-i Raz (The Rose Garden of Mysteries)* by Mahmud Shabistari, the inquiry gravitates around the notion of *fanā*—the annihilation of the self. Shabistari opens his argument through the question of self-realisation, or the problem of I-ness (“Who am I?”), accompanied by a call to “travel within yourself.” Iqbal's interpretation, however, locates the meaning of this inquiry in the accumulation of knowledge by the human individual—the “I” in his philosophy—along with a zeal to uncover the secrets of the universe through scientific knowledge. For Shabistari, by contrast, the dictum “travel within yourself” signifies a commitment to a spiritual journey that transcends the spatio-temporal realm, requiring the renunciation of corporeal existence in order to achieve union with the Absolute Divine, who is referred to as the “I” in the original text.

Evidently, the author underscores the claim that Iqbal's engagement with the notion of the “I” concerns human immortality, a view that theoretically diverges from Shabistari's original conception. In continuing his argument, the author contends that Iqbal reduces the concept of *fanā* by interpreting it merely as a “loss of individuality” or a “negation of selfhood,” in contrast to the more nuanced descriptions offered by prominent Sufi thinkers such as Shah Waliullah Dehlawi. It is important to note that the Sufi conception of *fanā* and *baqā* involves the removal of the veil between God and the human being; the conventional self conceals the divine self. Iqbal, however, interprets this process differently—not as the dissolution of illusory consciousness but

as an act of “self-affirmation,” a conclusion he also draws from the famous utterance of Mansur al-Hallaj, “I am the Real” (*ana al-ḥaqq*). Within Iqbal’s argument, there appears to be a failure to acknowledge the distinction between self-loss—the process of relinquishing one’s attributes in approaching God—and *fanā*, which represents the culmination of that process. By treating *fanā* in isolation, Iqbal overlooks its complementary counterpart, *baqā*, understood in Sufi thought as the divine ordinance that grants subsistence to the annihilated self of the individual.