

# Iqbal, the Sufi Epistemology, and the End Of History

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We attempt in this paper to examine the appearance of an epistemological paradox in the thought of Dr. Muhammad Iqbal.

There was that knowledge which he imparted to his native people that touched their very souls and fired them with a scorching reaffirmation of commitment to Islam. It was communicated in Urdu and Persian. Had it been communicated in English, the European world of scholarship would have rejected it and sneered at it. Iqbal would have suffered a loss of status amongst his European peers. And then there was that other knowledge which he communicated in English. It impressed European scholarship, as well as his Western-educated countrymen. Had some of it been communicated in Urdu or Persian (i.e., his rejection of belief in the advent of Imam Al-Mahdi, the release of *Dajjal*, and the return of Prophet Jesus), it would have created serious and abiding problems for him amongst the Muslim masses. To this day there are many Muslims who are inspired by Iqbal, but remain blissfully ignorant of the views mentioned above.

The dualism in Iqbal's thought and works is compounded by the fact that he sometimes says one thing in English, and then proceeds to say something quite different in Urdu or Persian.

For example, he agrees with the Turkish *Ijtihad* (if it may be called such) to the effect that *the Imamate or Caliphate* (which was abolished by the Turks in 1924) *can be vested in a body of persons or an elected Assembly*. Provided that a modern Parliament can be constituted of good Muslims, Iqbal would be willing to accept it as a valid substitute for the Caliphate. Yet Iqbal, in verse, urges the restoration of the Caliphate, and seeks that mobilization of the spirit which would make it possible:

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To once again establish,  
 The foundation *Khilafah* in the world,  
 You must bring from somewhere,  
 The mettle of your ancestors.

Iqbal is also quite explicit in his rejection of belief in the advent of Imam Al-Mahdi and in the return of Prophet Jesus (AS). This is what he says:

[The doctrine of the finality of prophethood] may further be regarded as a psychological cure for the Magian attitude of constant expectation which tends to give a false view of history. Ibn Khaldun, seeing the spirit of his own view of history, has fully criticized and, I believe, finally demolished the alleged revelational basis in Islam of an idea similar, at least in its psychological effects, to the original Magian idea which had reappeared in Islam under the pressure of Magian thought.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, in his letter to Muhammad Ahsan it would appear that he adds belief in the advent of *Dajjal* to the list of Magian ideas which, he claims, have infiltrated into Islamic thought. This is clear from his use of the word *masihiyat*<sup>2</sup> Yet Iqbal, in verse, is fairly explicit in the affirmation of belief in the advent of Imam Al-Mahdi:

Out of the seclusion of the desert of Hejaz,  
 The Guide of the Time is to come.  
 And from this far, far away valley,  
 The Caravan is to make its appearance.

The view has been expressed that Iqbal's *Khidr-e-Waqt* was none other than Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. We disagree. By no stretch of the imagination can Jinnah be conceived of having emerged from a distant valley in the Hejaz. Nor could Sultan Abdul Aziz bin Saud be conceived as *Khidr-e-Waqt*. Who then, was Iqbal referring to?

We trace this apparently disturbing dualism in Iqbal's thought and works and suggest that it resulted from an epistemological ambivalence in his thought. Different epistemologies function at different levels of consciousness. Iqbal's theoretic consciousness functioned with one epistemology. His aesthetic and spiritual consciousness functioned with another. Unless one succeeds in integrating all levels of consciousness in the personality, an epistemological ambivalence and a dualism in thought can appear.

It is a disservice to Iqbal to suggest that the explanation lies in his speaking one way to his European audience, and in another to his native audience. He is too great a scholar to have displayed such lack of integrity.

### Sufi Epistemology

The Sufis have a consistent record of not only recognizing, but, also, of using the heart as a vehicle for the acquisition of knowledge. That experience of the heart, through which it “sees” and penetrates “truth,” is frequently referred to as “religious experience.” In its wider sense, religious experience also includes that intuitive grasp which delivers to the believer the “substance” or “reality” of things. The Prophet (SAW) referred to it when he warned: “Fear the *firasah* (i.e., intuitive capacity for penetrating the substance of things) of the believer, for surely he sees with the light of Allah (SWT).” And Iqbal himself directed attention to it in his famous couplet:

For thousands of years,  
The narcissus bemoans its blindness;  
It takes ages before the discerning soul,  
Appears in the garden.

Iqbal's *deedawar* — the discerning soul — is clearly he who sees with an inner light. Iqbal is, himself, a true expression of a *deedawar*.

The epistemology, which embraces “religious experience” as a source of knowledge, is herein referred to as the *Sufi* epistemology.

All through history, it was always important for the seeker of knowledge to be able to penetrate the “substance” or “reality” of things. But that would become absolutely essential in an age in which “appearance” and “reality” would be in total conflict with each other. “Appearance” would be so dangerous that, if accepted, would lead to the destruction of faith. And so, in that age, survival would depend upon the capacity to penetrate beyond external form to reach internal substance, and thus be saved from being deceived and destroyed. Islam has declared that such an age would appear before the end of the world. And herein lies the abiding importance of the *Sufi* epistemology.

The Prophet (SAW) advised that Suarh Al-Kahf (Chapter 18) of the Qur'an be recited every Friday for protection from the *fitnah* (deception, trial) of *Dajjal*. His *modus operandi* is that of functioning by

deception. The story, in Surah Al-Kahf, of Moses (AS) and Khidr (AS) revealed the inadequacy of that epistemology which admits of knowledge only through observation. Moses (AS) is mistaken on all three occasions. Khidr (AS) on the other hand, who sees with the light of Allah (SWT), corrects the mistakes which Moses made. The story also indirectly points an ominous finger at the misguided community (or *Ummah*) of Moses (AS), i.e., the Jews, as the people who would experience the greatest deception, would be deceived and would then fail to read accurately the historical process. In consequence of being deceived they would blindly follow the most dangerous of all Pied Pipers, *Al-Masih Al-Dajjal*, to their final destruction in history. My view is that deception has already taken place, and the final destruction of the Jews is now assured.

Iqbal is himself the best example of a scholar with a matchless capacity to penetrate beyond appearances to grasp the reality of things. He made a thorough and penetrating study of modern Western civilization and came to the conclusion that its appearance was quite different from its reality. Just three months before his death he tore away the veil or appearance of "progress," and delivered a stinging denunciation of the modern West. Many, including the likes of Shaikh Muhammad Abduh, as well as today's secular liberals, have declared that they have seen Islam itself in the modern West. Iqbal was not deceived:

The modern age prides itself on its progress in knowledge and its matchless scientific development. No doubt, the pride is justified.... But in spite of all these developments, tyranny of imperialism struts abroad, covering its face in the masks of Democracy, Nationalism, Communism, Fascism, and heavens know what else besides. Under these masks, in every corner of the earth, the spirit of freedom and the dignity of man are being trampled underfoot in a way of which not even the darkest period of human history presents a parallel.<sup>3</sup>

### **Epistemology of the Modern West**

Modern Western civilization emerged in consequence of sudden unprecedented change that overtook Europe. A civilization which was previously based on faith (in Christianity), and which had given collective and dramatic expression of that faith in the Crusades, experienced such radical change as transformed it into a civilization now based on materialism. The new epistemology, which paved the way for the collective embrace of materialism, was one that specifically denied the possibility of knowledge being acquired through religious experience, or through revelations from the unseen. Observation and

experimentation were the only valid means through which knowledge could be acquired. That which could not be observed could not be known. The new epistemology naturally paved the way for a dramatic conclusion, to wit: a world, which could not be observed and known, did not exist. Hence there is no reality beyond material reality.

### **Iqbal's Epistemological Response**

Iqbal realized that the acceptance of this Western epistemology would result in the complete destruction of religion in the world of Islam. Knowledge would be secularized, and the secularized mind would be cut off from the Unseen world — the world of the Sacred. The heart would then lose that sacred light without which its sight is, at best, dim. Even the best scholars in the world of Islam would then be in danger of being deceived by essentially Godless Western Pied Pipers, and all of mankind would dance to their tunes. Islam would be so secularized that a Protestant version of Islam would emerge. An age, which had already experienced the total dominance of Western civilization over all of mankind, posed a great danger of precisely such an epistemological penetration of the Muslim mind.

Iqbal's response was to devote two of the seven lectures of the *Reconstruction* to a vigorous defense of the *Sufi* epistemology, and to place these two lectures at the very beginning of the series. They occupy the same prominent position in the book.

In "Knowledge and Religious Experience" and "The Philosophical Test of the Revelations of Religious Experience," Iqbal presented the most well-reasoned and persuasive challenge to the new Western epistemology ever penned by a Muslim. These first two chapters of the *Reconstruction* were produced and prominently placed for precisely this purpose, i.e., to stimulate Islamic scholarship to probe with Allah's light, and to penetrate beyond the seductive appearances presented by the Modern Age, in order to reach its poisonous reality.

More than sixty years have passed since that challenge (in the first two chapters of *Reconstruction*) was offered, yet neither has Western scholarship condescended to respond, nor has Islamic scholarship cared to follow in the epistemological trail which he blazed. Indeed, this failure on the part of Islamic scholarship is partly responsible for the terrible plight in which the world of Islam now finds itself. The Western world, with its secularized system of education, its politics of power-lust, greed and polarization of society, and its economics of exploitation, has enjoyed almost total success in deceiving the world of Islam and in thus leading it down the road of impotence, anarchy,

intellectual confusion, and the ruination of faith. The largest Muslim country in the world today, Indonesia, now stands at the very brink of being lost to Islam.

### **Iqbal's Ambivalence**

From his teen-aged days as a college student in Lahore to his university education in Europe, Iqbal's exposure to Western thought was continuously intimate. He also lived in an age that was forced to observe the literal explosion of Western scholarship on the stage of the world. History had never witnessed anything comparable to that scholarship which dramatically extended the frontiers of knowledge in nearly every conceivable branch of knowledge. The scientific revolution of the West was something unique in the world of knowledge. More often than not Iqbal's respect for Western scholarship grew into outright admiration. Our view is that this admiration for Western scholarship provoked a corollary. It revealed itself in the startling accusation that "during the last five hundred years religious thought in Islam has been practically stationary."<sup>4</sup> And the consequence of that profound admiration was found in the *Reconstruction*, which is littered with references to, and quotations from, his peers in the world of Western scholarship. There was no such peer within his own community, and so there is not a single reference in the *Reconstruction* to a contemporary Muslim scholar in the huge and intellectually influential Indian Muslim community.

This ambivalence, this love-hate relationship which found expression in the first two chapters of the *Reconstruction*, as in the endless references to Western scholars, was also revealed in Iqbal's choice of language for addressing Muslims on as important a subject as the reconstruction of their religious thought. He chose to address the Western-educated Muslim intelligentsia. Even so, it must have been an absolutely amazing spectacle to behold Iqbal, sixty long years ago, addressing his largely uncomprehending Muslim audience (one needs to have some knowledge of philosophy in order to comprehend these lectures) in chaste English and in a manner which conformed to Western linguistic etiquette and sensibilities. It must have been an equally amazing sight to behold the same Iqbal using the native Urdu and Persian languages to convey through poetry a message whose form and substance was quite alien to the Western mind.

We believe that Iqbal was not, himself, immune from the negative influence of the very Western epistemology of which he warned so strongly. His poetry, which came directly from the heart, witnessed the unsurpassed use of the *Sufi* epistemology and was uncluttered by any

Western logical or epistemological restraints. The same cannot always be said of his thought when expressed in English. Our purpose in this paper is to direct attention to a subject which, more than any other, illustrates Iqbal's epistemological ambivalence. That subject is "the end of history."

### **Islam and the End of History**

Is there an Islamic view of the end of history? Did Iqbal ever address it?

It is appropriate, in the context of the subject we are here examining, to note that Islam has chosen terminology located in *time* for referring to the end of the world. The Islamic word is "the Hour" (*Al-Sa'ah*). The supreme importance of this subject of "the Hour," i.e., the end of history, was established in the famous visit of Archangel Gabriel (AS) when he appeared before the Prophet (SAW) in the mosque in the form of a man. He asked questions, the Prophet (SAW) answered them, and Gabriel (AS) then confirmed that the answers were correct. Sometime after his departure the Prophet (SAW) informed the Muslims of the identity of the visitor, and of the fact that he had come (at that very late stage in the life of the Prophet) to instruct them in their religion. He had asked five questions, and two of these related to the end of history. The first was: *when will the end come?* And the Prophet (SAW) had replied to the effect that the one who was being questioned had no more knowledge of the subject than the questioner. The second question was: *tell me of the signs by which we would know that the end is at hand?* (i.e., what are some of the signs by which we would recognize the age which would witness the end of history?) He replied to the effect that *a slave girl would give birth to her mistress* (and this has now become a possibility because of surrogate parenting), and that *the barefooted shepherds of yesterday would be competing with each other in constructing high-rise buildings*. (Some of the foremost scholars of Islam in this age have declared that this sign has now materialized).

This extraordinary *hadith* amply demonstrated the supreme importance that Islam has attached to the subject of the end of history. It also clearly establishes that we now live in the last age.

The Islamic view of the last age is quite comprehensive. It includes the belief that the earth would function as habitat for a limited duration. (Al-Baqarah 2:36). The earth would one day be transformed into a dust bowl. (Al-Kahf 18:8). This implies that the end-time, which witnesses the death of the earth, would be preceded by an age of a constantly diminishing supply of (sweet) water, leading, eventually, to extreme scarcity of water. The Prophet (SAW) described that last age as

the age of *fitan* (i.e., tests and trials), and the Qur'an warned that all of mankind would be targeted, and that Allah's Punishment would be terrible. (Al-Anfal 8:25).

The constantly diminishing supply of water would take place in consequence of the release into the world, by Allah (SWT), of evil beings whom He created, viz., *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj*. The last two chapters of the Qur'an were specifically devoted to warning the believers of the very great dangers which would emerge in the world in consequence of the release of "evil created by Allah." The evil would appear as "evil beings" created by Allah (SWT) to test and to punish. They are *Ya'jooj*, *Ma'jooj* and *Dajjal*. The Prophet (SAW) described *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj* to be such thirsty beings that they would drink up all the water of the world. They would pass by a river, he said, and they would drink it dry.<sup>5</sup> The last age would thus be characterized by over-consumption, waste, and disrespect for water. Mankind would witness, in the last age, riots and wars fought over water.

When we look around us in the world, it appears to be quite clear that the countdown has already begun. There is an ominous and growing shortage of water in nearly all parts of the world today. The head of the U. N. Environment Program has recently expressed his fear that the world is heading towards a "period of water wars between nations." A Pakistani government minister has warned of the likelihood of riots over water in Karachi. The Kalabagh Dam project threatens bloodshed. The Farrakha Dam, built by India, threatens to drown Bangladesh. Turkey and Syria are poised on the brink of war. Water is one of the issues that divide them. Israel, the Palestinian Arabs, and the neighboring Arab States (particularly Jordan) have serious and growing differences over the sharing of dwindling water supplies.

It would therefore appear that the release of *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj* has already taken place. Iqbal agrees. Indeed, he appears to be one of the very few scholars of Islam to have ever had the vision and the courage to make a formal declaration that the release has taken place and, as a consequence, that we now live in the last age, or the age which will witness the end of history. The declaration was made in Urdu verse, and, predictably, there is not even a hint of it in any of his writings or statements made in English. This is the verse:

The hordes of Gog and Magog,  
Have all been released;

The Muslim can see with his eyes,  
The meaning of *yansiloon*.

The word *yansiloon*, which occurs at the end of the verse, and to the *tafseer* (interpretation) of which Iqbal has directed the attention of the Muslims, refers to a passage of the Qur'an in Surah Al-Anbia in which Allah, Most High, declares that when *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj* are released they will descend from every direction (*min kulli hadabin yansiloon*). Here is the passage:

And there is a ban on a town which We destroyed, that they shall not return (i.e., the town shall not be restored), until *Ya'jooj* (Gog) and *Ma'jooj* (Magog) are let through (the barrier which Dhul-Qarnain built in order to contain them), and they descend from every direction. (Al-Anbia 21:95, 96)

This indicates that *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj* would not only become the dominant force in the world, but that their power would subdue all of mankind. Indeed their power would be such that, according to a *Hadith Al-Qudsi*, Allah (SWT) has Himself declared: "none but I can destroy them."<sup>6</sup>

Our view is that Iqbal arrived at this amazingly accurate conclusion eighty years ago in consequence of his use of the *Sufi* epistemology. He not only made a critical and an acute observation of the historical process, and of the world which confronted him, but he also had the courage to make an intellectual leap for a startling intuitive grasp which delivered to him, for one dazzling moment in time, the very substance of the subject. The uneducated say many things without knowledge. But when a scholar of the Qur'an makes a declaration such as this, one cannot but pause in admiration, and with praise for Allah (SWT), the Source of all knowledge. Conventional Islamic scholarship, unable or unwilling to reach out for that intuitive grasp of the subject, is yet to pronounce on the release of *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj*. For Iqbal, on the other hand, modern Western civilization is the civilization of *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj*. (This is the view of Prof. Muhammad Munawwar.)

We believe that Iqbal was absolutely correct. Consider the following:

The Caliphate is an institution central to the collective integrity of the Muslim Ummah. Although the seat of the Caliphate was oftentimes filled in a manner which did not conform to the Shari'ah of Islam, the office of the Caliphate survived for some 1300 years. There is an indication of a prophecy of the destruction of the Caliphate, and of its restoration at the time of the advent of Imam Al-Mahdi, in the famous

hadith in which the Prophet (SAW) spoke of the return of Prophet Jesus (AS): “How will you be when the Son of Mary descends amongst you and your Imam will be from amongst yourselves.” (Sahih Bukhari)

Within seven years of Iqbal’s pronouncement concerning the release of *Ya’jooj* and *Ma’jooj* in 1917, the unprecedented power and influence of today’s dominant Western civilization led to the destruction of the Ottoman Islamic Empire and, subsequently, to the collapse of the Caliphate.

Secondly, the *Hajj* is an institution which is even more central in importance to Islam, and which has survived for thousands of years. The Prophet (SAW) has prophesied the abandonment of the *Hajj* in the context of the aftermath of the release of *Ya’jooj* and *Ma’jooj*. The fulfillment of that prophecy appears to be imminent. It should come to pass as soon as the Jews deliver on their promise to destroy *Masjid Al-Aqsa* in order to rebuild the Temple of Solomon (AS). When it does come to pass it will confirm, beyond any shadow of a doubt, that Iqbal was absolutely correct in this pronouncement concerning the release of *Ya’jooj* and *Ma’jooj*.

Thirdly, the basic characteristic of *Ya’jooj* and *Ma’jooj* is their *fasad* (i.e., their conduct which corrupts, spoils, ruins). (Al-Kahf 18:94). The age of *Ya’jooj* and *Ma’jooj* would thus be one of immense and unprecedented corruption. Everything will be corrupted — religion and religious scholars; government and political life; the market, the economy, and the world of finance or money; law and justice; transportation, the environment, even the ecological system of the earth; sex, marriage and family life; sports and entertainment; education, youth, the role of women in society, and so on. When we look around us in the world today we find ample evidence of this universal corruption, indicating that Iqbal was correct, and that the countdown has begun.

Fourthly, another basic characteristic of *Ya’jooj* and *Ma’jooj* is their Godlessness and immorality (*khathath*). The Godlessness was described in a *Hadith Al-Qudsi* in which we were informed that only one of every 1000 of the end-time would enter into heaven (and that person would be a follower of the Prophet). The rest, 999 out of every 1000, would all be the people of *Ya’jooj* and *Ma’jooj* and would all be sent to Hell.<sup>7</sup> The immorality was described in a *hadith* in which the Prophet (SAW) conveyed to this wife, Ummul Mo’mineen Zainab (RAA), the news that the advent of *Ya’jooj* and *Ma’jooj* would be in consequence of the increase of *khathath* in the world.<sup>8</sup> The Qur’anic use of the term *khathath* includes that sexual perversity which characterized Sodom and

Gomorraah. There is sufficient Godlessness, immorality, and sexual perversity in the world today to qualify for the description given by the Prophet (SAW). Again Iqbal is correct.

A fifth characteristic of *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj*, and one which also follows from the above, is that they will transform all of mankind into one single global society in which all will follow essentially the same way of life. It will be Godless and decadent. Already that single Godless, decadent society has embraced the elite around the world. The process is now moving inexorably to embrace the masses as well. The actual *hadith* is that *Ya'jooj*, the community (*Ummah*), will expand to incorporate another four hundred communities (*umam*). *Ma'jooj*, the *Ummah*, would do the same. And so the world of *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj* would be an ever-expanding globalized world of information, communication, entertainment, and culture, etc. It will culminate in one essentially Godless and decadent global society with the mental and spiritual illumination of Kentucky Fried Chicken and Coca Cola. A world government will preside over it. Television has played, and still plays, a crucial role in the relentless pursuit of that goal — a goal that now appears to be quite within reach. This confirms Iqbal's declaration.

Sixthly, perhaps the most significant clue of the release of *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj*, and ominous consequences of that release for the world of Islam, is located in the *hadith* (referred to above) in which the Prophet (s) spoke to his wife, Ummul Mo'mineen Zainab (RAA), about the release of *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj*. His words were: "Woe unto the Arabs, because of an evil which is now approaching." In other words, the release of *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj* would result in great calamities and suffering in the Arab world in particular. The clue is expressed quite explicitly in the Qur'an, however, when Allah (SWT) declared of a town (or city) which He had destroyed, that its restoration would never be possible until the release of *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj* makes it possible. (See reference to *ayaat* 95 & 96 of Surah Al-Anbia above).

My own use of the Sufi epistemology led me to the conclusion that the town was Jerusalem (i.e., the State of Israel). If I am correct, and Allah (SWT) knows best, then the Qur'an is declaring that the State of Israel, destroyed by Allah (SWT) twice in history, would be restored when *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj* are released, and, as a consequence, that restoration formed part of the Divine Plan through which Dajjal would deceive the Jews and lead them to their final destruction. Indeed, this is precisely why he is known as Al-Masih Al-Dajjal. The identification of the "town" with Jerusalem is not far-fetched at all. There are several ahadith which link *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj* with Jerusalem (i.e., the State of

Israel). For example, the Prophet (SAW) said that when Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj are released they will pass by the Sea of Galilee (which is in Israel).<sup>9</sup> Then there is a very long hadith in Sahih Muslim in which we are told that Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj will seek to attack Prophet Jesus (AS) in Jerusalem.

It should be noted that the Jordanian Israeli Peace Treaty required Israel to supply Jordan with a certain amount of water on a regular basis. Israel could only fulfill this treaty obligation by pumping water from the Sea of Galilee. The water level in the Sea of Galilee has now reached so low that further pumping of water would cause damage to its capacity to store water. Consequently, Israel has been forced to suspend its fulfillment of its treaty obligation concerning the supply of water to Jordan. Israel has recently told Jordan that the latter's share of water will be reduced by 60% during the coming summer due to "low rain fall." In response, the Jordanian Foreign Minister has urged Israel to fulfill its commitment and to carry out the signed agreement. The countdown has begun!

The restoration of the State of Israel not only confirmed the release of *Dajjal* and of *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj*, but it also constituted a veritable dagger plunged into the very heart of the Arab Muslim world. This, in turn, fulfilled the ominous prophecy: "woe unto the Arabs." We may add, in passing, that the feminist revolution of the modern age (in which *night* wants to become *day*) confirms that *Dajjal* is now in the last stage of his mission.

I was pleasantly surprised to find this conclusion confirmed by eminent *Sufi Sheikhs*. It is just possible that Iqbal came to the same conclusion and this was one of the reasons why he called for attention to be devoted to *tafseer harf-e-yansiloon*. After all, the Zionist Movement was established in 1898, and the alliance between the Zionists and the modern West was painfully revealed to Iqbal in the Balfour Declaration of 1917.

### **Iqbal's Epistemological Ambivalence and the End of History**

The major actors in the last stage of history, viz., *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj*, *Dajjal*, Imam Al-Mahdi, and the return of Prophet Jesus (AS), and the respective roles which they play, all combine to form an integrated inseparable whole. It is beyond the scope of this article to describe that whole, which requires another paper. That paper will appropriately be entitled *tafseer harf-e-yansiloon*.

What is truly alarming is that despite Iqbal's amazing and

accurate confirmation of the release of *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj*, he rejected belief in *Dajjal*, Imam Al-Mahdi and the return of Prophet Jesus (AS). What possible explanation could there be for this truly unfortunate situation? Also, how do we explain the surprising fact that apart for that one couplet on *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj* Iqbal is otherwise completely silent on the subject?

My view is that if Iqbal were alive today, the unfolding events in the world, and, in particular, in the Middle East, would have forced him to change his views with respect to Mahdi, *Dajjal*, and the return of Prophet Jesus (AS). Did he not himself say: Only stones do not change!

It was because the reality of *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj* was established by the Qur'an that there was no way that Iqbal could have dismissed the subject. The corollary is that if *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj* had not been established in the Qur'an, and were dependent on the *ahadith*, they would have suffered the same fate as belief in the advent of Imam Al-Mahdi, *Dajjal*, and the return of Prophet Jesus (AS). When Iqbal turned to the study of these subjects he appears to have experienced an epistemological transformation. The spiritual or religious consciousness was used to study the subject of *Ya'jooj* and *Ma'jooj*. The light of Allah (SWT) illumined the path for a dazzling display of the intuitive embrace of truth. On the other hand, it was the theoretic consciousness which was used to study the other verities which were not established by the Qur'an. I also suspect an impact of Iqbal's philosophical training, as well as the Western epistemology, on Iqbal's theoretic consciousness, when he directed attention to the verities of the last age which were located in the *ahadith*. This appears to be a subject worthy of serious study by a psychologist who is also capable of examining spiritual realities.

### Endnotes

1. Iqbal, Dr. Muhammad., *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, ed. by M. Saeed Shaikh (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1986) p. 115
2. *Iqbalnama*, Vol. II, p. 231. Quoted in M. Saeed Sheikh, "Editor's Introduction" to Iqbal's *Reconstruction*, op. cit., p. xi.
3. Iqbal, Dr. Muhammad., *New Year's Message*, Broadcast from All India Radio, Lahore, on January 1, 1938. Quoted in Syed Abdul Wahid, *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1964) p. 373.
4. Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, op. cit., p. 6.
5. *Kanz Al-Ummal*, Vol. 7, Hadith No. 2157
6. *Kanz Al-Ummal*, Vol. 7, Hadith No. 3021
7. Sahih Bukhari, 4:567; 6:265; 8:537
8. Sahih Bukhari, 4:797; 9:181; 9:249

9. *Kanz Al-Ummal*, Vol 7, Hadith No. 3021