

Iqbal And Bergson on Mystical Experience: A Critique

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Abstract

Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938) and Henri Bergson (1859-1941) have remarkably similar views on Mystical Experience. Both believed in the validity rather superiority of the knowledge achieved through Mystical Experience. Both had a desire to establish knowledge on some firm ground which is beyond any doubt. Moreover, both wished to make room for Metaphysics in an era (20th Century) which was ferociously hostile for this discipline. They had an objective to pave the way for a person in whom individuality has reached its peak and he is able to break the rigid and static world-order to replace it with a dynamic, active, energetic and vibrant one. This paper has used the qualitative methodology and analytical approach to show that Mystical Experience of Both Iqbal and Bergson is not a reliable source of knowledge; not trustworthy scientifically, philosophically and even religiously. Major finding of the paper is that mystical experience may not be a valid source of authentic knowledge hence it cannot be taken as the basis of any organized religion. The paper has concluded that it is not a substitute of the Prophetic revelation. Revelation is sent to the select few of Allah and may never be termed as 'experience'.

Keywords: Causality, Dynamic Religion, Experience, Freedom, Intellect, Intuition, Mysticism.

Introduction

Bergson on Mystical Experience

In the shortest possible words, if we wish to define the mystic, then he is a person who has overcome the Kantian categories and is able to break the space-time - causality nexus; may live in pure-duration, has surpassed the intellect and is at the level of intuition. Having all these characteristics, he may have the direct experience of the Reality and consequently with the vigor and boundless energy

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of this experience brings a mighty and sustainable revolution. He causes lasting change in human behaviour and character and transforms it forever.

But how is this great personality born? What are the pre-conditions of his birth? Which sort of socio-cultural milieu nurtures his genesis, growth and development? All these questions need a little bit more elaboration of Bergson's conception of consciousness in *Creative Evolution*. We may recall that both Iqbal and Bergson consider life and consciousness beyond mechanical explanation. In the third chapter of *Creative Evolution*, Bergson writes under a subheading of "Mankind":

It is the man alone in which consciousness has broken its limits has liberated itself. The entire history of life until man has been that of the struggle of consciousness to nurture matter, and to subdue itself with matter. The enterprise is seemingly paradoxical but it is not the case. It is to create with matter, which is determined, itself, an apparatus of freedom, to make a machine which would overcome mechanism; in other words, mechanism is used against mechanism. (Bergson, Creative Evolution. , 2007)

He continues in the same spirit:

"It is in this quite special sense that man is the "term" and the "end" of evolution. Life, we have said, transcends finality as it transcends the other categories. It is essentially a current sent through matter, drawing from it what it can." (Bergson, Creative Evolution. , 2007)

In this path of evolution, human consciousness acquired some special faculty which is not owned by any other living organism. However, during the course of evolution he lost this treasure and started trusting another source of knowledge, that is, intellect. His redemption nevertheless was hidden in rediscovering the lost wealth. As he utters:

Human beings did lose not only heavy and useless things during its journey through the history but also very precious material. Man's consciousness is primarily intellect but it is intuition too. Intuition and intellect are two facades of similar consciousness only with different directions. Intuition moves towards life, whereas intellect moves in the opposite direction, and harmonises itself with matter. A comprehensive and flawless

human situation is the perfect and beautiful blend of the two faculties. (Bergson, *Creative Evolution.* , 2007)

But why does all this happen? Why does life follow the path of evolution at all? Why do intellect and intuition come into being and adopt their respective roles? Who guides them and why? Who is the propagator of consciousness and compels it to untie the shackles of mechanical causality? This is nothing else but the push of life, the famous *Élan Vital* or Vital Impetus of Bergson. This impulse has nothing to do with the external factors and it is something strictly and purely internal. It is simultaneously the endogenous guide, stimulant and motivator of life in divergent directions of evolution. As Bergson, himself explains,

“The evolution of life in the double direction of individuality and association has therefore nothing accidental about it: it is due to the very nature of life.” (Bergson, *Creative Evolution.* , 2007)

It is pertinent to mention that the one direction, that is, *intellect* leads to *association*, while the other, *intuition* turns towards *individuality*. Hence a mystic is the product of the same *push of life*, the changing realities of world and conditions of life produce him or create him spontaneously. However, its trajectory or the route of action does need a thorough investigation. Here the starting point for us is to see which sort of environment promotes which faculty and which institutions. How someone endowed with intuition; the “gifted man” in the terminology of Bergson is raised and brought onto world-stage? To answers these interesting and important question we must explore *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, the last work of the philosopher of life. “Society constraints the individual and wishes to take hold of him. Since society is an independent whole, its authority is considered ultimate. But it is not the whole life; human society does have exceptional and gifted individuals, courageous persons, who may break the shackles of society, may immerse in the current of life and may emerge with new values.” (Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion.*, 1935).

To proceed with this line of argument we must have acquaintance with two very familiar sets of phrases used by Bergson in the context of the topic. These are “Open and closed societies” and “Open and closed morality”. Any reader of philosophy immediately recalls Karl Popper (1902-1994) when listens to the phrase, open and closed society. However, the fact of the matter is that it was Bergson who first introduced these two terms. According to Bergson, the earlier and elementary human societies were essentially the closed societies, which were small collections to which people were attached and attracted on instinctual basis.

An open society is that which includes entire humanity without any distinction. Similarly, the closed morality deals with those obligations of man which are necessary for the stability, solidarity and sustainability of that society. This morality is generally instinct-driven. Open morality, on the other hand is beyond every boundary and is all-inclusive. It aims at the welfare and well-being of entire humanity. Bergson differentiates both in this way:

Between the first and the second, morality, is the difference as is between the rest and movement. The first is supposed to be immutable, but the second is a forward thrust, a demand for movement. (Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion.*, 1935)

Bergson declares the purely static morality as infra-intellectual and the purely dynamic one as supra-intellectual. The first one is the intention and choice of the nature, while the second one is the creation and contribution of man's genius. (Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion.*, 1935)

The closed societies are composed of men who bow their head before the authority of closed morality which in turn guarantees them security and the preservation of the self and the species. There are some men who are genius; genius is of two types, genius of the mind as well as genius of the will. Latter is the man who places himself in the current of the vital impetus again. Intelligence also supports the process.

It liberates men from the fetters of their nature; the same nature which is inclined to follow the old ways. This nature is broken by some special and gifted people who can open the closed doors for themselves at least. This is an act which nature itself cannot perform for man without human initiative (Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion.*, 1935).

Now we come to the core question? What does a mystic feel? What happens to him? What is the content of that condition or the state which is known as the mystical experience? In the simplest words what is meant by the mystical experience? Bergson has responded to these questions very explicitly and thoroughly (how did he come to know? This we shall discuss in criticism).

"It (the mystical soul) does not directly perceive the force that moves it, but it feels an indefinable presence, or senses it through a symbolic vision. Then comes a boundless joy, an all-absorbing ecstasy or an enthralling rapture: God is there, and the soul in God. Mystery is no more. Problems vanished; darkness is dispelled; everything is flooded with light. But for

how long? An imperceptible anxiety, hovering above the ecstasy, descends and clings to it like a shadow.....For it shows that the soul of the great mystic does not stop at ecstasy, as at the end of a journey.....Its life, then, is not yet divine. The soul is aware of this, hence its vague disquiet, hence the agitation in repose which is the striking feature of what we call complete mysticism: it means that the impetus has acquired the momentum to go further.....The final phase, characteristic of great mysticism is imminent. To analyze this ultimate preparation is impossible, for the mystics themselves have barely had the glimpse of its mechanism” (Bergson, The Two Sources of Morality and Religion., 1935).

After this brief introduction of the mystic and his experience in the words of Bergson, we should move towards Iqbal.

Iqbal on Mystical Experience

It is HIGH time now to switch-over to Iqbal and see what he says regarding mystical experience. Iqbal is an ardent advocate of this experience right from the very beginning and the main purpose of his erudite lectures of *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* is to prove the validity of mystic experience. He applies two types of tests to it, that is, philosophical test and the pragmatic test.

Iqbal has also explained following characteristics of mystical experience:

- a- Immediacy,
- b- Un-analysability,
- c- Incommunicability,
- d- Unreality of Serial Time and
- e- Intimate association with the Unique Other Self (Iqbal, 2006).

Discussion and Debate

Schematically we should start our critical analysis from Bergson regarding the mystic condition and its salient features. But some of the points in the assertions of Iqbal are so glaring and obvious that they demand earlier attention. Unfortunately, the description of Iqbal does not make a coherent whole and is least helpful in understanding the nature of such an important experience. In point ‘c’ above, Iqbal has given two entirely different statements in a single paragraph, which are as under:

- i- The mystic state is highly objective.
- ii- The mystic state is passive.

Moreover, some other noteworthy and enigmatic points are as follows:

- i- God may be known as any other object.
- ii- (In mystic experience) distinction of the subject and object does not exist.
- iii- The mystic state in respect of its uniqueness remains in some way related to common experience.
- iv- (The mystic) experience is to be directly experienced. Therefore,
- f- Its content itself cannot be transmitted. (Iqbal, 2006).

It is surprising to note that mystic experience at a time is ordinary, like any other object but private and direct. On the other hand, in its distinction of the object and subject fades!!! Moreover, it is so individual that its content cannot be transmitted. But in some way is related to common experience. There are some very conspicuous points to be noticed:

- i- How can God be known as an ordinary object, while He is unlike anything in the world. (Pickthall, 1930).
- ii- Moreover, by virtue of its very nature mystic experience is something extra-ordinary and special. How can it be declared common?
- iii- If the distinction of object and subject is lost, it is anything but undiluted pure pantheism?
- iv- If it is unique and personal, in which sense of the word it is objective?
- v- It is incommunicable, cannot be transmitted, then how do people know about it? How does the mystic/prophet explain it?
- vi- If the content of mystic experience is incommunicable, what is the content of the propositions? What do the propositions describe then?

The last question bears special significance since Bergson too, has acknowledged above that *to analyse this ultimate preparation is impossible, for the mystics themselves have barely had the glimpse of its mechanism*. So, the matters which are not very clear to the first person, how were they revealed to the third persons, that is, Bergson and Iqbal? Have they ever met with some active mystics and Sufis? What is the source of this mysterious knowledge which cannot even be elaborated and elucidated in legible language? May, the religion meant to guide the entire humanity be founded or based on such an unclear and dubious experience, which is neither replicable nor demonstrable? Iqbal, being conscious of this serious objection has justified the incommunicability of the mystic experience in the form of the following argument. According to him, religious experience is the culmination of religious life, since one realizes in it the ego as a far more profound entity than ordinarily experienced (Iqbal, 2006). He further explains that without mingling with the Most Real, ego may not appreciate its

own worth and its own Metaphysical position. If we try to be simpler the mystical experience is not an intellectual fact rather a fact of life. It leads to internal biological transformation which cannot be captured by logical categories alone (Iqbal, 2006)

It seems that the fundamental task for Iqbal is to reject “logical categories”; the entire edifice of religious experience has been constructed to keep it beyond the categories and to defy renowned German Philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). Iqbal, in justifying and validating the mystic/religious experience reveals his disgust again for science in the passage to follow:

“It seems that the method of dealing with Reality by means of concepts is not at all a serious way of dealing with it. Science does not care whether its electron is a real entity or not. It may be a mere symbol, a mere convention. Religion, which is essentially a mode of actual living, is the only serious way of handling Reality. As a form of higher experience, it is corrective of our concepts of philosophical theology or at least makes us suspicious of purely rational process which forms these concepts.” (Iqbal, 2006)

Critical Analysis

Professor Altaf Ahmad Azmi (1942-2023), former Dean of the Faculty of Islamic Studies and Social Sciences, Hamdard University, New Delhi, India has rejected religious experience as a very dubious source of knowledge which is not reliable without the guidance of a clear revealed text. Actually, as per the opinion of prominent scholar Muhammad Khalid Masud (b.1939), Iqbal proposed mystic/religious experience as a basis for scientific experiment since it offers common ground for both science and religion. His second objective was to make Islamic thought acceptable for modern Muslim mind, specifically youth (Masud, 1996). Regretfully, according to Azmi both purposes failed because the Iqbal’s discussion of the ideas is so difficult and complex that it may not be fully understood by the experts, let aside the youth. Azmi sums up his critique in the following words,

“.....the religion whose possibility Iqbal discusses.....is not a religion that men need. Iqbal’s argument of compatibility between science and religion (higher mysticism) is fallacious.” (Azmi, 2003)

Azmi firmly insists that scientific and religious/mystical experiences have nothing in common. Besides, scientific experience is not limited to a few privileged persons

like religious experience. Iqbal was misled by the belief that the Ultimate Reality may be traced from the material world. The Qur'anic view of nature and the universe does not agree with that of higher mysticism.

Eminent Egyptian Philosopher, Hassan Hanafi (1935-2021) has mentioned four forms of rhetoricism, pernicious to religious studies: i-tautology, ii- apologetics, iii- rhetoric and iv- intuitionist approach. This intuitionist approach resembles very much with that of the religious experience of Iqbal. Hanafi has defined it as,

Every instantaneous expression of intensions, visions, or grasping of immanent basic truths of the religious, without any regard for scientific demonstration, proof, or analysis is called religious experience. (Hanafi, 1965)

If our interpretation is not wrong, Hanafi himself is not very much in agreement with the religious experience.

The next important point is the retention of the mystic's own personality during the experience since the traditional mysticism (which is strictly opposed by Iqbal) believes in the merger of the finite in the infinite. How can the finite sustain itself in the presence of the infinite? It must lose its individuality and identity in the presence of the Higher Self. Conversely, Bergson and Iqbal do not agree with it, since the individuality the mystic has attained with so much labour, hard-work, industry and toil should not be lost under any condition. Bergson is very confident here that a person in whom the individuality and ego-hood have reached a definite level of maturity is not going to melt under any temperature. He has lucidly expressed:

A soul which is so strong and noble enough would dare to question whether the principle in front of it is the transcendent basis of the scheme of things entire or merely its earthly delegate. It will be gratified to feel itself permeated, though retaining its own personality, by a being infinitely powerful than itself, just as an iron sustains itself by the fire which makes it radiate. (Bergson, The Two Sources of Morality and Religion., 1935)

Iqbal says in the same vein, only that person may face this situation courageously only when his ego has reached a specific point of strength and maturity. Its true test takes place when the finite ego faces the Ultimate Ego. This test was heroically cleared by the Prophet (*Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him*) of Islam when he met with the all-embracing Ego face -to- face at the night of

Ascension. He did not merge into the Being of Allah rather saw Him with a smiling face. In the words of the Holy Book:

'His eye turned not aside, nor did it wander'. (Pickthall, 1930).

Iqbal returns to the same question on the very last page of the *Reconstruction*, rather ends it on this. He says,

Ego does not wish at all to give up or get rid of its individuality or uniqueness; this is not its aim, objective or goal. The ultimate achievement of ego is not an intellectual act rather a vital act which adds to its profundity. It refines its will with the creative declaration that the world is not something to be appreciated or understood by reason, categories and logic alone, but something to be created and freshly created with perpetual action. It is a moment of supreme bliss and also a moment of great trial for the ego. (Iqbal, 2006)

Another very germane and significant matter which we are going to discuss now is of the sanity and mental soundness of the people who report religious experience and declare themselves the mystics. People who listen to divine voices or have visions, are they not deluded or have hallucinations in fact? How can we believe in them while we are unable to replicate their experience, additionally they may not describe it in ordinary language. So, what proof do we have of their intellectual normalcy? A person who is narrating an experience beyond normal consciousness, is his own consciousness normal? This is a major question falling simultaneously in the domains of history and psychology.

Both Bergson and Iqbal have defended their position on mysticism, but it is a matter-of fact that the stance of Iqbal is very strong and elaborate, supported well by the arguments from contemporary psychologists. Bergson has expressed his amazement that how the great mystics can be classed with the mentally diseased? He elucidates,

Mystics report their dreams, visions, ecstasies, and raptures. These conditions are also reported by mentally deranged and abnormal people. A significant work on ecstasy has declared it regarded as a psycho-asthenic manifestation (Pierret Janet, De l'angoissa a' l' extase) a lunatic may think he is an emperor.....In just the same way it is possible to caricature mysticism, however, will it prove that mysticism is an actual lunacy or madness? (Bergson, The Two Sources of Morality and Religion., 1935)

Bergson replies to this question himself with great vigor that absolutely there are some mental states which are abnormal and sick, and they completely mimic ecstasies, visions and raptures. And it is very difficult to distinguish them from the normal mindset. The mystic themselves are the greatest critics of such states and they have cautioned their followers not to be misled by spurious states of mind, hallucinations and delusions. Their primary interests are not merely these visions or dreams rather to get Divine guidance and to harmonize it with human will to transform humanity. He has given us a criterion to judge the sham from the real. If the mystic is taking you from the close to the open morality; his experience is genuine, otherwise not. (Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion.*, 1935).

Iqbal presents a very cogent argument regarding the uniqueness and rarity of mystic experience. Why is it reserves for some chosen few? He is of the firm opinion that Psychology is unable to grasp the profundity of the mystic experience, since: Psychologically speaking, all states, whether their content is religious or non-religious, are organically determined. The scientific mind is also organically determined as the religious one. Our psychologist may say nothing at all how the mind of a genius is created or works. A certain kind of temperament may be a necessary condition for a certain kind of receptivity; but the antecedent condition cannot be regarded as the whole truth about the character of what is received. The fact is that the biological connections of our mental actions may not judge at all either a value is superior or inferior. They posit no such criterion. (Iqbal, 2006)

Iqbal quotes a passage from the famous book of William James (1842-1910), *The Verities of Religious Experience*, wherein he has mentioned the dilemma of the Christian mystics. He says that it was difficult to differentiate between the really divine miracles and the malice of the demon (James, 1985). Iqbal affirms James that it is really the problem of all mystics and not of Christian mystics exclusively. The demon or Satan does interfere with the religious state as a Qur'anic verse stands as a testimony:

“We have not sent any Apostle or Prophet before thee among whose desires Satan injected not some wrong desire, but God shall bring to naught that which Satan has suggested. Thus, shall God affirm His revelations, for God is Knowing and Wise.” (Pickthall, 1930)

Iqbal also quotes a relevant passage from *The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, by W.E. Hocking (1876-1966) and concludes positively:

“A purely psychological method, therefore, cannot explain religious passion as a form of knowledge. It is bound to fail in the case of newer psychologists as it did fail in the case of Locke and Hume.” (Hocking, 1963)

Iqbal continues his argument in favour of the meaningfulness and normality of the mystical experience. He affirms emphatically,

“These experiences are perfectly natural, like our normal experiences. The evidence is that they possess a cognitive value for the recipient, and, what is much more important, a capacity to centralize the forces of the ego and thereby to endow him with a new personality. The view that such experiences are neurotic or mystical will not finally settle the question of their meaning and value. If an outlook beyond physics is possible, we must courageously face the possibility, even though it may disturb or tend to modify our normal ways of life and thought. The interests of truth require that we must abandon our present attitude.” (Iqbal, 2006)

Iqbal and Bergson have applied the same test to evaluate and assess the genuineness or fakeness of the religious experience. We may recall that Iqbal has tested the religious experience with the help of two criteria in the *Reconstruction*, that is, philosophical and pragmatic. Both for Iqbal and Bergson, the significance of the religious experience lies in the return of the mystic to the world with renewed vigour and a message for humanity.

Bergson writes that mystic would have never shaken off their sublime state of mind, but they do so; since they find it imperative for them to guide humankind. He further elaborates; that the mystic conveys to human beings that the world of senses is perfectly real but not all, but there is something else which is not a probability or chance alone rather the inevitability and conviction of the thing experienced. (Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion.*, 1935)

Conclusion

Both Iqbal and Bergson are the major philosophers of 20th century, and their hallmark is the rebellion against the dominant trends of the era in which they were born. As all the readers of Philosophy know, that 20th century had a very strong anti-metaphysical trend; it was marked by the Logical Positivism and Analytical Philosophy. Metaphysics had also suffered a huge blow already at the hands of David Hume (1711-1776), who wished to set ablaze the books of School

Metaphysics. Hume's Philosophy led the Skepticism to its logical limits and totally demolished the possibility of knowledge, leave aside its objectivity.

Immanuel Kant in his *magnum opus*, under the title of *Critique of Pure Reason* tried to establish knowledge again on firm grounds and affirmed the existence the outer world. However, his Transcendental Idealism was not free of difficulties, since he, too, declared Metaphysics impossible (Kant, 1999) According to him our mind works in 12 categories and may not appreciate the entities beyond space, time and causality. Iqbal and Bergson, being ardent admirers of faith and religion were direly in need of a Metaphysical system.

The real trouble lies in the fact that Metaphysical assertions (unfortunately) are neither the truths of reason, nor the matters of fact in the parlance of Hume (Hume, 2008); hence these may never be declared either true or false with sense perception or logic. Hence it was abhorred by the greatest sceptic of the History of Philosophy. But a strange change took place in 20th century, in which it was not declared wrong or incorrect, rather "meaningless" and "nonsenses". In this scenario it was the most difficult task to defend or promote Metaphysics. It was, however, done by Iqbal and Bergson. Both Iqbal and Bergson had following philosophical ambitions:

- To make room for faith with the help of some source of knowledge, other than sense perception and logic.
- To establish knowledge (read religion) on a very strong and doubt-free basis which cannot be challenged either by the sense perception or logic.
- To defy Kant very vigorously and prove him wrong.

Both Iqbal and Bergson opted for a third source of knowledge which is known as *intuition*. This intuition leads towards knowledge in which *unity of the subject and the object vanishes and knowledge thus achieved can be felt only*. This phenomenon has been named as *experience*. Though this experience is purely personal and private yet brings full conviction to its beholder.

Most interestingly neither Bergson, nor Iqbal were the originators or founders of this sort of knowledge. Actually, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Von Schelling (1775-1854) was the first German idealist who introduced this idea. It was used as the ontological foundation of Being in which the subject and the object become one (Schelling, 1799). In the beginning (Hegel, 1948) chose for it in the same meaning, but he revised it later and gave it his own connotation (Hegel, 1948).

The most pertinent question here is: Is religious Experience compatible with Islamic concept of God. Has not Iqbal moved towards Pantheism instead of

Monotheism? This question did arise when Iqbal delivered his lectures. This was, nevertheless, extraordinarily courageous attempt on the behalf of Iqbal; that he not only delivered these innovative lectures publicly but also published them in the book form. The great Muslim scholar Syed Suleiman Nadwi (d.1953) being the first critic of Iqbal, advised him not to publish these lectures, however, Iqbal stuck to his decision.

Renowned Egyptian scholar and Islamist Syed Qutb (1906-1966) drew great inspiration from Iqbal regarding his idea of the strong, vigorous and creative self; however, gradually he started drifting away from him. One of the reasons was his reliance on the other South Asian thinkers such as Syed Abul A'la Maududi (1903-1979) and Abul Hasan Nadwi (1913-1999) as per the analysis of Leonard Binder (1927-2015). One of the reasons was his Iqbal's strong tendency towards Aryan concept of God instead of Islamic one (Binder, 1988).

Altaf Ahmad Azmi has begged pardon for Iqbal from Allah, "May God forgive Iqbal. These lectures contain mostly such views that may be clearly declared infidel (*kufir*) and idolatrous (*shirk*) (Azmi, 2003).

Ali Abbas Jalapuri (1914-1998) considers Iqbal a theologian instead of a philosopher because his main objective in the *Reconstruction* is to defend religion in general and Islam in particular; whereas philosophy is a perennial, continuous and free intellectual effort, which cannot be subjected to a creed or faith. Like Ghazali (d.1111) and Razi (1150-1210), Iqbal is a theologian who is reconstructing religious thought in the light of modern intellectual trends and scientific discoveries. Jalapuri finds Iqbal better than Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) and Shibli Nomani (1857-1914) as he is well-versed in modern philosophy. According to Jalalपुरi, Iqbal's approach towards life was philosophical in his early poetry and during the writing of his doctoral dissertation, but in his later life he adopted a revivalist approach to the problems (Jalalपुरi, 2003).

Jalalपुरi faults Iqbal's theology for the following three elements:

- i- Aryan immanent rather than the transcendent concept of God that led him to pantheism.
- ii- Eclectic adaptation of modern philosophical theories of Fichte's ego and Bergson's theory of time.
- iii- Selective and arbitrary interpretation of the Qur'anic verses.

It is interesting rather painful to note that Iqbal and Bergson are not the first to challenge causality to accommodate faith, this attempt even more forcefully has already been made by Ash'arites in general and Ghazali in particular. The denial

of the system of cause and effect resulted in an irreparable loss to the Muslim World in the fields of Science and Technology. Had one Ghazali not been born, the Muslim World would have produced one thousand Galileos. The eminent Pakistani intellectual Fazlur Rahman (1919-1988), however, disagreed with H.A.R. Gibb (1895-1971) that Iqbal's thought is less faithful to 'the Qur'anic matrix of ideas' than Ash'araites' theology, which almost represents an 'almost total distortion of Islam' (Rahman, 1982). But he could not deny this observation of Gibb that Iqbal's reconstruction was primarily based on contemporary elements of thought instead of Qur'an. (Gibb, 1947). Javed Majeed (b. 1961) derived the result from *Reconstruction* that the nature and spirit of Iqbal's study of Islam is interrogative; but it suspends any final judgment on what Islam means (Majeed, 2009).

Moreover, it is quite dangerous, nevertheless, to shift religion from the domain of Metaphysics to Psychology since psychological states are far more uncertain, subjective and dubious as compared to sense perception and intellect, which are at least common among all the sane human beings. Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) has simply described it as *Psychology projected into the outside world*. To him religion can be most easily understood as turning *metaphysics into metapsychology*. He describes it as endopsychic perception, which according to him is very near to paranoia. (Freud, 2000). [Italics original]

As far as intuition is concerned, Epistemology (Theory of Knowledge) does not consider it as an authentic source of knowledge, in the history of Philosophy, German Idealists, Henry Bergson and Muhammad Iqbal declared it a valid source of knowledge, the reasons of which have been discussed above thoroughly.

Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) dedicated his entire life to Epistemology and finally concluded that there are only two sources of knowledge, that is, sense perception and intellect. Both are fallible; however, their fallibility does not entail at all that there is some other source of knowledge which is authentic and infallible (Russell, 1967).

In the end let us come to the Holy Qur'an, the greatest testimony regarding the matter, the entire Book has never mentioned this word 'intuition' rather has laid emphasis on the observation and reasoning as the sources of knowledge and has invited again and again man to observe the universe and think about it since there are "evidences" of a Supreme Being" in the cosmos which may be appreciated only by those who ponder and meditate.

Therefore, we may conclude that "mystical experience" may not be declared any source of religious knowledge and to construct the edifice of religion on this basis

is full of pitfalls and flaws. Finally, any such experience may never be compared with the revelation of the prophets (Peace be upon them). Revelation is something special which comes to the chosen of Allah through angels and this state of any prophet may never be named any 'experience'.

It will not be out of context to conclude this paper on the fact that neither Iqbal nor Bergson was a practicing mystic. They had never undergone any mystical training; then how could they make such claims about mystic experience with so much conviction and certainty?

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