CHAPTER V

The Relationship of the Material and the Spiritual

It is very necessary issue in educational philosophy whether Ideal and the Real, The material and the spiritual, The Physical and Mental are to be regarded as interrelate or stands out in sharp contrast with each other. Therefore it is necessary to take a stand about interrelationship, to define purpose and correct techniques of education.

In analyzing the process of the development of individuality, Iqbal has given considerable thought and attention to this traditional dualism between the Real and Ideal, which has often coloured philosophic speculation.

For the growth of self implies that the individual should evolve the inner richness of his being. Establishing fruitful contacts, with one’s environment on as many points, can bring this. Through this contact individual won achievement, increase intellectual, and will open the great possible ways in his life to fulfill his need according to the environment.
In conformity with the general trend of Islamic thought in this behalf, Iqbal is emphatic that, in his development, man must take account of the material conditions, which set the stage for his conscious activity. Islam, as he puts it, "is not afraid of its contact with matter" but recognizing clearly the intimate and fruitful relation of the Ideal with the Real.

To the world of matter, which exhorts us to utilize its resources for the service of the highest spiritual ends, Iqbal makes this clear in the language of poetic symbolism:

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حلقينت در جازعا بعجوبات
زخلاکی می رود به انساب است
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O heart! Look for the secret of life in the bud; Reality is revealed in its appearance! It grows out of the dark earth But keeps its gaze towards the rays of the sun!34

Thus the ideal and the real are not two opposite forces.

The affirmation of the spiritual self demands a willing acceptance of the world of matter with a view to making it an ally in the process of our development.

The rank materialist and the narrow-minded biologist may deny all reality to what the Quran calls Alam-i-Anfus (The world of the mind) but they will not find any support for this position even amongst the more advanced thinkers in the sciences which have discovered, with amazement, the old respectable and solid matter turning, in their hands, into energy or electrons or a "mere projection of the consciousness of the perceiver".

There is a growing tendency to explain-material things in terms, which cannot be described, as material. The extreme idealist may similarly refuse to admit the reality of the Alam-I-Afaq (World of Matter). But it is difficult to deny the obstinate fact that, for practical purposes, it does exist and has to be taken into account in any balanced scheme of education.

Iqbal says, "the ultimate reality according to the Quran, is spiritual and its life consists in its temporal activity. The spirit finds its opportunity in the natural, the material and the secular. All that is secular therefore, sacred in the roots of its being. The greatest service that modern thought has rendered to Islam and, as a matter of fact, to all religions, consists in its criticism of material or natural. A criticism which disclose that the merely materials has no substance unless discover its rooted in the spiritual. There is no such
thing as a profane world. All this immensity of matter constitutes a scope for the self-realization of the spirit.

As the prophet so beautifully puts it, “The whole of this earth is a mosque.” Iqbal therefore, holds that the purpose of education is to see that man is not betrayed into the mistake of subordinating the mental to the physical and concentrating exclusively on the effort to gain the whole world even at the cost of losing his soul in the process.

His position in this behalf is amply confirmed by certain recent developments in the fields of psychology, Education and Biology. In an article contributed many years ago to the Forum of Education entitled “the incidence of philosophy on education”, professor Hetherington argued that there is a certain meeting point of the recent work done in the fields of education, philosophy and social reconstruction.

He described it as the attempt to mitigate the sharpness of the distinctions, which were held to prevail between “the world of true being and the temporal and changing world of ordinary experience, between the rational intellect and other powers of the soul”.

It is coming to be recognized more and more that, wherever reality is to be found, it is not by turning away from the world of appearances but by penetrating to the full meaning of what is latent there.

The practical implication of this view for education is that the school should attempt to elicit the intellectual, aesthetic and moral
significance of the ordinary occupations and interests of life and to "find the growing point of the mind in its effort to handle the everyday, concrete problems".

The modern reconstruction of curriculum and methods, which aims at bringing the social activities and occupations of life into the work of the school and encouraging methods of self-activity, problem-solving and projects may be interpreted as a recognition of this principle, a principle with which Iqbal would certainly be in agreement.

Iqbal has, however, been criticized from another point of view. In his insistence on the value of the Ideal and the Spiritual, he is sometimes accused of soaring so high as to lose all contact with the everyday world of matter in which the ordinary people have their being.

Some of his poetry has also been interpreted as implying a dualism between the ideal and the real world and a depreciation of the latter. A superficial study of some of his poems does, indeed, lend color to this charge. Thus in Bal-I-Jibril, he makes a clear distinction between the 'world of mind' and the 'world of body'.

من کی دنیا؟ من کی دنیا کوزستی جنبد چون
تک کی دنیا؟ تک کی دنیا کوزبد چون کور چن
What is the world of the mind?
Yearning and intoxication, absorption and eagerness!
What is the world of the body?
Profit and loss, artifice and intrigue!
Once achieved, the riches of the mind abide;
The riches of the body are like the shadows-
They come and they pass away!
No foreigner rules in the world of the mind.
Nor any priest or Shaikhs or Brahmins.
Deeply was I humiliated by the Qalandar's remark:
"When you bow before others,
Neither the body nor the mind are yours!"\(^{35}\)

The whole trends of Iqbal's thought in his poetical works
and his lectures we find that the allegation is not correct. He is
emphatically opposed to those pseudomystics, other worldly idealists
and self-centered aesthetes who would cheerfully ignore the evils,
injustices and imperfections of this material world, give up active

\(^{35}\) Bal-I Jibril, p. 49.
effort in behalf of its reconstruction and seek cowardly compensation in cultivating their own selfish interests, intellectual, artistic or spiritual, in seclusion.

He makes this clear in his lectures: “Such a being as man who has to maintain his life in an obstructing environment cannot afford ignore the visible. The Quran opens our eyes to the great fact of change, through the appreciation and control of which alone it is possible to build a durable civilization.”

Thus, his preoccupation is not with the Immutable and the Unchangeable alone but he is actively concerned with this world of changing phenomena. It is only by flinging ourselves like good crusaders into this struggle that we can fulfill the purpose of our life, not by shunning the struggle on earth and keeping our head in the clouds! Listen to the lament of the ‘Indian disciple’ to his saint, Rumi:

آس ساہنی پر اپنے کام کی?
کا پیلیاں بیس بیاں ہڑپڑیاں
گلیل مرے لئے کیا نہیں کارا کی؟
ا اپنے نہیں کا جناب کا رزاراہیا؟
To this Rumi cryptically replies!

آن کو یک انتکس رنگارنگ بود
بر زمین رنگ جمپن دنوارش پر

He who can stalk across the skies
Should not find it difficult to walk on earth!

Meaning thereby that anyone who is really gifted with the intellectual and creative activity of the spirit must make a good job of his life here and now. It is a false and degrading "Spirituality" which weakly puts up with worldly degeneration and injustice for oneself or one's fellows.

The proper cultivation and strengthening of individuality is equally necessary for the conquest of the two worlds; that is the implication of the Qalandar's remark in the verses quoted above from Bal-I-Jibril. If one is lacking in self-reliance and self-confidence and cultivates a mendicants mentality, one is likely to forfeit both the worlds at a single stroke.

The eastern nations which, for the last two hundred years, have been priding themselves on their "spirituality", while they have progressively declined in their power, prestige and proper organizations of their social life and institutions.

36 Ibid, pp. 189-190.
Their claims to superiority over the western nations on the basis of this fancied, rootless spirituality are as untenable as the counter claims of the western nations, which have been mainly pre-occupied with the increase of power, which they have devoted to destructive purposes.

Iqbal believes that real and abiding salvation is unattainable through a life of asceticism and *tapassya*. It is here and now that men and women must learn to live justly, decently and sincerely; it is here that they must ceaselessly cultivate their manifold inner powers and try to control the tremendous forces of Nature; it is here that they must learn to utilize them, not for domination but for service, not for repression and destruction but for creation and enrichment; it is here that, by devotion to the highest ideals, they can become partners in God’s creative activity and can help in the establishment of “God’s kingdom on Earth”. If the “here” is thus looked after with usefulness, intelligence and integrity, the “hereafter” will certainly take care of itself.

But, while cognizant of the claims of the material world, he is keenly appreciative of the spiritual self in man, and his entire philosophical thought is imbued with a deeply religious spirit.

He refuses to believe that the world of matter alone constitutes the whole of Reality and that man should concern himself exclusively with its interest’s problems. The goods of the mind and the riches of the spirit, always aspiring upward are far too valuable to be sacrificed at the altar of a crass materialism.
Man's creative is not confined to the reshaping of matter alone; he has also “the capacity to build a much vaster world in the depths of his own inner being, wherein he discovers sources of infinite joy and inspiration”.

In art and poetry, literature and science, philosophy and religion. In the pursuit of these cultural and spiritual values, he should make use of the physical world as his raw material and exploit its possibilities for strengthening the upward movement of the human spirit.

“The relation of man to nature must be exploited”, he warns us, “in the interest not of unrighteous desire but in the nobler interest of a free, upward movement of spiritual life”. Education must keep this ideal in view if it is to fulfill its great mission in modern life.

On the contrary of Iqbal's philosophy about materialism and spiritualism, in the modern age people have been becoming more and more greedy and have been busy in collecting money. They have lost their character. Many people have been becoming thieves, dacoits, and sexually corrupt.

Mahatma Gandhi said, “The lust for money and power has been able to corrupt the man.

Mahatma Gandhi has always placed emphasis on the value of ‘Production Work’. In his scheme of basic education productive work is the center of all learning, which ultimately results in the development of personality. For Mahatma Gandhi, if God
descends in India again as incarnations Vishnu, he will have to come in the form of 'Bread'.

Thus the foundation of happiness to be accepted as a value for modern education system has to be interpreted in terms of fulfillment of basic necessities of life viz. enough to eat, enough to cloth and enough to live a comfortable family life. Earthly pleasure is lowest type of value but this is the accepted value of our society.

In attaining material sufficiency cultural progress became static and the material happiness became the final goal, and due to this reason deterioration of culture takes place and this lead to exploitation and disintegration of society and greediness.

Modern India is being education mainly with the bread and butter aim of education as a result most of our graduates run after money, power, comforts without caring for any values. Due to the dominating objective of developing productive ability, for attaining self-sufficiency, in India, education is considered a passport to getting 'Jobs' and employment.

In India, British's designed their educational system in 19th century with the objective of making a cultural gentleman who has knowledge of manners and active participant in public discussion. The second objective of British education was to develop rational thinking and material love.

So that education was not indigenous, but more materialistic. In this way Indian education became more or less
materialistic and the value traditions are being slowly given up. Modern Indians are educated mainly with the need the bread and butter aim of education as a result most of our graduates run after money, power, comforts without caring for any values.

The degenerating in the present day life, the demoralization of public and private life, the utter disregard for values etc. are all traceable to the fact that moral religious and spiritual values lost their impact. Today men have no faith on religion. There are lot of conflict of values, crises of values between religion and material life.

People are becoming more or less money minded. They want to collect more and more money by one way or the other at the cost of values. They want to become rich over night through corrupt practices.

We are living in the age of science and technology. Which has given us abundant power. This wrong use of this power can destroy the entire all forms life on earth. Advancement of science and technology is responsible for cutthroat competition, materialism and barbarism.

With rise of materialism man has been so busy in amassing wealth that he has discarded values like honesty, social service, service of mankind, perseverance and patience.

With the development of science and technology a tendency towards industrialization and consequently urbanization, has been developed. The growth industrialization and urbanization
has given birth to commercial outlook to life in its varied manifestations.

Traditional joint family system has been disappearing and the single-family system has been increasing. These changes are responsible for erosion of values.

Iqbal envisages the new man of the future society as an all round, harmoniously developed personality. His concept of the new man is in utter contrast to Nietzsche's superman, who is free from all moral obligations.

Iqbal was a God fearing personality with lofty ethical principles and of physical perfection these qualities according to the iqbal do not develop automatically; they are molded and inculcated. Iqbal has a firm belief that the new man with aesthetic qualities, tastes and the ability to appreciate and to create the beautiful in art, in life, and to construct life in harmony with the laws beauty is on the way.

Iqbal's system of thought shows fullness of feelings and interests as an integral part of the picture of the new man, who would find new happiness in the fullness of life. This new man would have a feeling of mastery over nature and sense of his own dignity.

Hw would be passionate in his efforts to understand human culture of feelings. Iqbal very clearly elaborates his view of the future man in his lecture knowledge and religious experiences where he argues:
"The extension of man's power over nature has given him a new faith and fresh sense of superiority over the forces that constitute his environment. New points of view have been suggested, old problems have been restated in the light of fresh experience, and the new problems arisen".

He goes a step further and says: "It seems as if the intellect of man is outgrowing its own most fundamental categories – time, space and causality". And what he foresees in the distant future as man's strides in various fields is not going to happen, according to Iqbal, as a mere accident but would result in a process of evolution.

Mysticism or Sufism is the religious philosophy of Islam. It is described as the apprehension of divine realities. But Iqbal's scathing criticism of this order in India and the Middle east, both in his poetry and prose, has given rise to an impression that Iqbal was opposed to Sufism.

This is far from truth: Iqbal's wrath is all against the religious formalism degenerating into schools of surrender and renunciation. Iqbal saw a doctrine of destiny spreading around, which made all human efforts appear futile, and he raised his voice against this attitude to life.

Iqbal's concept of Sufism is that it should function as a source of courage, heroism and self-sacrifice and not as a fountain head of resignation and inactivity.
In the preface to ‘the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam he draws a line between genuine and non-genuine Sufism. Lashing out at the later he says:

“The more genuine schools of Sufism have, no doubt, done good work in shaping and directing the evolution of religious experience in Islam; but these later day representatives, owing to their ignorance of the modern mind, have become incapable of receiving any fresh inspiration from modern thought and experience”.

Iqbal does not accept the theory that the Sufistic order is ascetic world neglecting, static and life destroying. The real Sufistic order according to Iqbal is dynamic, pragmatic and inspired by spiritual vision. It does not ignore the natural motives before humanity and aims at evolving a civilization, which is socially just, aesthetically beautiful and spiritually integral.

Iqbal brings out the difference between the prophetic and mystic types of consciousness, saying: “the mystic does not wish to return from the repose of unitary experience; and even when he does return, as he must, his return does not mean much for mankind at large.

The prophet return is creative. He returns to insert himself into the sweep of time with a view to controlling the forces of history and thereby to create fresh world ideas. For the mystic the repose of unitary experience is something final; for the prophet it is the awakening within him of world-shaking psychological forces calculated to completely transform the human world.”
Iqbal beckons to acquire modern knowledge and adopt scientific outlook with a view to conquering nature as ordained by the Holy Book. According to him, people of the earlier ages were aware of this secret of success. Therefore, they did not draw a line between the spiritual progress and the worldly progress.

Spiritual progress and worldly progress, according to the Iqbal, are the two aspects of the same issue. In order, therefore, to regain the past glory, which unfortunately does not exist now for them, Iqbal advises the people to follow again the path forsaken by them.