

XXII

NOTE ON NIETZSCHE*

The Ego

The teaching of the 'Asrar-i-Khudi' rests on two points: (a) That personality is the central fact of the universe. The old testament describes this ultimate fact as the great 'I am'. The Koran, however, describes the ultimate personality in much grander terms (59: 23, 24):—

هو الله الذى لا اله الا هو الملك القدوس السلام المؤمن
المهيمن العزيز الجبار المتكبر . . . و هو العزيز الحكيم = حشر

Read in this connection 'Asrar-i-Khudi'.

در معنی این که اصل نظام عالم از خودی است

Tr.—The ego is the root of all existence.

(b) That personality, 'I am', is the central fact in the constitution of man. This smaller or dependent 'I am' is variously described in the Koran *ضعيف* ، *قتور* ، *كفور* ، *عجول* ، *ظلم* ، *جهول* yet it is also described as *احسن* ، *علي نفسه بصيرة* the bearer of Divine trust. The case of man, therefore, in spite of his constitutional shortcomings is not hopeless. On the other hand the Koran says:

*This note was dictated by Iqbal to Mr. Nazir Niyazi in the summer of 1937. Mr. Niyazi has very kindly handed over the note to Iqbal Academy, Karachi. The Academy has been kind enough to supply a copy of the note to the Editor. There is so much misunderstanding about Iqbal's indebtedness to Nietzsche that this note will be read with interest by all students of Iqbal —Ed.

- (i) بللی قادرین علی ان لسوی بنانه
 (ii) الحسیب الانسان ان یتوک سدی

The slender 'I' which appears to be capable of dissolution by the smallest of shocks appears to have a future and can achieve permanence as an element in the constitution of the universe provided it adopts a certain mode of life. It has the quality of growth *قد افلح من زکها* as well as the quality of corruption *و قد خاب من دسها*; it has the power to expand by absorbing the elements of the universe of which it appears to be an insignificant part, it has also the power of absorbing the attributes of God, *تخلقو باخلاق الله* and thus attain to the vicegerency of God on earth. The various stages of its spiritual expansion are described in the 'Asrar-i-Khudi' as follows:—

- (i) "اطاعات" Complete surrender to the Law—
 This is symbolised by the camel.
 (ii) self-control "ضبط نفس"
 (iii) Vicegerency of God "نیابت الهیه"

The superficial resemblance of these three parts of the growth of human 'I' with Nietzsche's 3 metamorphosis of the spirit may mislead some readers. It is therefore necessary to warn the reader of 'Asrar-i-Khudi' that Nietzsche does not at all believe in the spiritual fact which I have described as "خودی" in the poem, vide—Will to Power, Vol. 2, No. 12-20.

According to Nietzsche the 'I' is a fiction. It is true that looked at from a purely intellectual point of view this conclusion is inevitable, Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* ends in the conclusion that God, immortality and freedom are mere fictions though

useful for practical purposes. Nietzsche only follows Kant in this conclusion. There is, however, another point of view, that is to say the point of view of inner experience. From this point of view the 'I' is an indubitable fact, (vide Bradley's discussion on this point) which stares us in the face in spite of our intellectual analysis of it. In this respect Leibnitz is nearer to truth than either Kant or Nietzsche—The monad or the I-atom according to him is an ultimate fact. His mistake, however, is that he regards the I-atom as something closed and windowless. This, however, is contradicted by experience, because we know that the 'I' grows and expands by education. The question, therefore, which should be raised in regard to the human 'I' is not whether it is a substance or not. The question was raised by our theologians whose philosophical discussion achieved nothing. The question which ought to be raised in my opinion is whether this weak, created and dependent Ego or 'I' can be made to survive the shock of death and thus become a permanent element in the constitution of universe. The answer that 'Asrar-i-Khudi' tries to give to this question, of course in a poetical way and not in a philosophical manner, is this that the human ego can be made permanent by adopting a certain mode of life and thereby bringing it into contact with the ultimate source of life. The various stages of its growth are mentioned in the 'Asrar-i-Khudi'. Thus in its essence 'Asrar-i-Khudi' and Nietzsche are diametrically opposed to each other. 'Asrar-i-Khudi' wholly depends on the factum of "خودی" in which Nietzsche does not believe.

THE SUPERMAN

The conception of this Superman in Nietzsche is purely materialistic. This conception may be new in European literature. It is, however, the same as the idea of the Overman in Emerson. It is probable that Nietzsche borrowed it from the literature of Islam or of the East and degraded it by his materialism. In the literature of Islamic mysticism the expression used for the higher man is "انسان کامل". I wrote on this subject about 36 years ago immediately after leaving the College. My dissertation was published in the "Indian Antiquary" of Bombay and now forms part of my *Development of Metaphysics in Persia*. Being a thoroughgoing materialist, Nietzsche cannot use the term spirit except in the sense of life in its metaphysical manifestations. The first metamorphosis of life according to him is camel, which from his point of view is a symbol of load-bearing strength. The second is lion, that is to say the strength to kill without pity, for pity is a vice and not virtue with Nietzsche. The third metamorphosis is child, that is to say the Superman passing beyond good and evil like the child and becoming a law unto himself. This is materialism turning the human ego into a monster, which, according to Nietzsche's idea of immorality, has repeated itself and will repeat itself infinite number of times. Nietzsche fell into this error of the world repeating itself on account of his fatal error, namely that clock time is the real time. On this point again 'Asrar-i-Khudi' is opposed to Nietzsche's teaching. He never grappled with the problem of time and accepted without criticism the

old Hindu and Greek idea of time. The time movement to him is circular. In the 'Asrar-i-Khudi' it is regarded as a straightline. Life, therefore, to Nietzsche is repetition, to 'Asrar-i-Khudi' creation. The perfection of the perfect man according to Islam consists in realising this aspect of time which can be described only as the eternal *now*. To Nietzsche there is no such thing as the eternal *now*. Further Nietzsche's Superman is a biological product. The Islamic perfect man is the product of moral and spiritual forces

NIEZSCHE'S MATERIALISM

Nietzsche recognises no spiritual purpose in the universe. To him there is no ethical principle resident in the forces of history. Virtue, Justice, Duty, Love all are meaningless terms to him. The process of history is determined purely by economical forces and the only principle that governs is 'Might is Right'. It must be noted that Karl Marx and Nietzsche borrowed this materialistic interpretation of the historical process from the left wing followers of Hegel and accepted it without criticism. They, however, drew absolutely opposite inferences from this interpretation. Karl Marx predicts that power will eventually fall into the hands of the proletariat by the sheer force of historical causes. The proletariat therefore wrest by force the power from the hands of the rich and imposed upon the world a new social order. Nietzsche on the other hand says that it is the superior man who has been robbed of power and he should assert himself and tell the inferior to remain where they should be, i.e. hewers of wood and drawers of

water. The truth is that this materialistic interpretation of the historical process has marred the teachings of both Karl Marx and Nietzsche. It has however done more harm to the teachings of Karl Marx.

THE MEANING OF KHUDI

The word 'Khudi' was chosen with great difficulty and most reluctantly. From a literary point of view it has many shortcomings and ethically it is generally used in a bad sense both in Urdu and Persian. The other words for the metaphysical fact of the 'I' are equally bad, e.g. انا نبت ، نفس ، شخص ، انا. What is needed is a colourless word for self, ego, having no ethical significance. As far as I know there is no such word in either Urdu or Persian. The word 'من' in Persian is equally bad. However, considering the requirements of verse, I thought that the word 'خودی' was the most suitable. There is also some evidence in the Persian language of the use of the word 'خودی' in the simple sense of self, i.e. to say the colourless fact of the 'I'. Thus metaphysically the word 'خودی' is used in the sense of that indescribable feeling of 'I', which forms the basis of the uniqueness of each individual. Metaphysically it does not convey any ethical significance for those who cannot get rid of its ethical significance. I have already said in the *Zuboor-i-Ajam*:

گرفتم این کہ شراب خودی بے تلخ است
بدرد خویش نگر زهر ما بدرمان کش

The wine of egohood is no doubt bitter, but do look to thy disease and take my poison for the sake of thy health.

When I condemn self-negation I do not mean self-denial in the moral sense; for self-denial in the moral sense is a source of strength to the ego. In condemning self-negation I am condemning those forms of conduct which lead to the extinction of the 'I' as a metaphysical force, for its extinction would mean its dissolution, its incapacity for personal immortality. The ideal of Islamic Mysticism according to my understanding is not the extinction of the 'I'. The 'فنا' in the Islamic mysticism means not extinction but complete surrender of the human ego to the Divine Ego. The ideal of Islamic mysticism is a stage beyond the stage of 'فنا' i.e. 'بقا', which from my point of view is the highest stage of self-affirmation. When I say "Be as hard as the diamond", I do not mean as Nietzsche does callousness or pitilessness. What I mean is the integration of the elements of the ego so that it may be able to obstruct the forces of destruction in its means towards personal immortality.

Ethically the word 'خودی' means (as used by me) self-reliance, self-respect, self-confidence, self-preservation, even self-assertion when such a thing is necessary, in the interests of life and the power to stick to the cause of truth, justice, duty, etc., etc., even in the face of death. Such behaviour is moral in my opinion because it helps in the integration of the forces of the Ego, thus hardening it, as against the forces of disintegration and dissolution (vide *Reconstruction*); practically the metaphysical Ego is the bearer of two main rights that is the right to life and freedom as determined by the Divine Law,