

## Renewal of Islamic Education Prespective of Muhammad Iqbal

Nur Iftitahul Husniyah,<sup>1\*</sup> Victor Imaduddin Ahmad,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Islam Lamongan, Indonesia, <sup>2</sup> Universitas Islam Lamongan, Indonesia,

<sup>1</sup> [iftita\\_tunggadewi@unisla.ac.id](mailto:iftita_tunggadewi@unisla.ac.id), <sup>2</sup> [victorimaduddin109@unisla.ac.id](mailto:victorimaduddin109@unisla.ac.id),

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### Abstract

Muhammad Iqbal as a philosopher figure who pays attention to the chaos of Islamic education in his time in his homeland, the renewal of Islamic education that is more constructive, namely Muhammad Iqbal, expressed his criticism in his writings, no matter how inconsistent it is when only western education or only Islamic education is studied individually, by presenting A more comprehensive renewal of Islamic education between the collaboration of western and Islamic education which complements each other. This study uses literature study research, then uses a qualitative descriptive method, which is a thorough research study from data collection to analyzing data descriptively to produce conclusions regarding answers related to Muhammad Iqbal's Islamic education renewal perspective. The results of research on Muhammad Iqbal's thought in Islamic education emphasize individuals who are stressed on the basics of the Koran and Sunnah in living life in realizing a perfect or true human being with a balanced educational process between Western knowledge and traditional Islam, which results in progressive Islamic education.

**Keywords:** Renewal; Islamic education; Muhammad Iqbal;

### INTRODUCTION

Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938 AD) was a Muslim reformer whose innovations were more emphasized in the field of philosophy, so that Iqbal was better known as a philosopher rather than a theologian or poet. Muhammad Iqbal was born in Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan (now), 9 November 1877 AD, into a religious family. His father,<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Nur, was a Sufi figure, while his mother, Imam Bibi, was also known as a pious Muslim woman.<sup>2</sup> His formal education began at the Scottish Mission School, in Sialkot, under the guidance of Mir Hasan, a teacher who specialized in Arabic and Persian literature. Then at Government College, in Lahore, until he received a BA degree, in 1897, and a Master's degree in philosophy, in 1899, under the guidance of Sir Thomas Arnold, a famous orientalist. During

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<sup>1</sup>Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Intelektual Islam: Teologi, Filsafat dan Gnosis*, terj. Suharsono (Cet. II; Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1996), hlm. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Tahun Iqbal terjadi perdebatan. Tahun di sini mengacu pada informasi yang umum bahwa Iqbal meninggal pada 20 April 1938, dalam usia 60 tahun. Tentang hal ini, juga soal keluarganya, lihat Abd Wahhab Azzam, *Filsafat dan Puisi Iqbal*, terj. Rafiq Usman, (Bandung: Pustaka, 1985), hlm. 13-16.



this education, Iqbal received a scholarship and two gold medals because of his achievements in Arabic and English.<sup>3</sup>

Iqbal's reform of thought was indeed very comprehensive, touching all aspects of Muslim life. Muhammad Iqbal, according to Mukti Ali, was a strong thinker, and faced more forward than backward. He really loves Islamic institutions with his conception of the dynamism of Islam rather than its static. Islam for Iqbal is a cultural movement that rejects static views.<sup>4</sup> It is with this dynamic thinking that Iqbal sees the need to renew Islamic thought, including in the field of education.

Iqbal views that it is time for Muslims to reform all ideas that are developing in the Islamic world. The main thing Iqbal did in this case was to oppose the abstract dualism of classical philosophy, which had kept mind and matter in a strict container. According to Iqbal, ideals originating from idealism and reality originating from realism are not two opposing forces. The two can be reconciled. In this case, Iqbal has drawn inspiration from the world of modern philosophy towards an inductive approach to approaching the spirit of Islam, although the difference is that Islam recognizes the existence of transcendental reality.<sup>5</sup>

From the above, it can be said that the thought paradigm used by Iqbal to bring about his reforms is by using a synthetic thinking methodology. He succeeded in combining Western intellectual traditions with Eastern intellectual traditions in a thinking paradigm. However, Iqbal's efforts to synthesize thoughts were not carried out without a critical attitude. He first selected what came from the West, so that his thinking remained comprehensive; covers East and West.

The field of education had become one of Iqbal's intellectual renewal agendas, because he saw that Islamic intellectualism at that time could be said to have almost stopped, because Muslims had stopped taking inspiration from the Koran. The diagnosis offered by Iqbal to cure this problem is to regenerate the spirit of intellectualism through three sources, namely sensory absorption, reason and intuition. According to Iqbal, these three sources must be taken and used simultaneously, without ignoring any of them. This is what is called Qur'anic thinking. If Muslims are able to do this kind of thinking, then the knowledge revolution in the Islamic world will occur in an amazing way.<sup>6</sup>

At the end of 1926, Iqbal began to enter political life when he was elected as a member of the Punjab DPR. In fact, in 1930, he was appointed president of the annual session of the Muslim League which took place in Allahabad, which gave rise to the idea of establishing the State of Pakistan as an alternative to the problems between Muslim and Hindu communities. Even though there was a strong reaction from politicians, this idea

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<sup>3</sup> Mian M. Tufail, *Iqbal's Philosophy and Education*, (Lahore, The Bazm Iqbal, 1996), hlm. 12; Mukti Ali, *Aliran Pikiran Islam Modern di India dan Pakistan...*, hlm. 174.

<sup>4</sup> A. Mukti Ali, *Alam Pemikiran Islam Modern di India dan Pakistan* (Cet. IV; Bandung: Mizan, 1998), hlm. 186.

<sup>5</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, *Membangun Kembali Pikiran...*, hlm. 12 dan Miss Luce Claude Maitre, *Pengantar ke Pemikiran Iqbal*, terj. Djohan Effendi (Cet. VI; Bandung: Mizan, 1992), hlm. 50.

<sup>6</sup> Danusiri, *Epistemologi dalam Tasawuf...*, hlm. 149.

immediately received support from various groups, so that Iqbal was invited to attend the same conference the following year, to discuss this idea further.<sup>7</sup>

Iqbal continues to work and raise the spirit of his nation. In 1935 he was appointed chairman of the Punjab branch of the Muslim League and continued to communicate with Ali Jinnah. However, in the same year, he began to suffer from illness, and it got worse until it led to his death, on April 20, 1938.<sup>8</sup>

Iqbal inherited many written works, in the form of prose, poetry, answers to people's responses or prefaces to other people's works. Most of these works were in Persian, according to Nicholson,<sup>9</sup> to make them accessible to the Islamic world, not just Indians. Because, at that time, Persian was the dominant language in the Islamic world and was used by educated people. His works include, *The Development of Metaphysics in Persia* (desertation, published in London, 1908), *Asra-I Khudi* (Lahore, 1916, about the process of achieving human beings), *Rumuz-I Bukhudi* (Lahore, 1918), *Javid Nama* (Lahore, 1932), *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (London, 1934), *Musafir* (Lahore, 1936), *Zarb-I Kalim* (Lahore, 1937), *Bal-I Jibril* (Lahore, 1938), and *Letters and Writings of Iqbal* (Karachi, 1967, collection of Iqbal's letters and articles).<sup>10</sup>

## METHODE

This study employs a qualitative design utilizing a library research method with a biographical analytical approach. The researcher's presence in this study serves as the primary instrument to objectively collect, reduce, and interpret data. Research Subject and Target: The focus of this study is the philosophical-theological thought of Muhammad Iqbal. The primary sources used encompass his monumental original works, such as *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* and *Asrar-i-Khudi*. Secondary sources are drawn from relevant academic journals and biographies. Data Collection Technique: Data are gathered through documentation techniques via heuristic steps, which include close reading, classifying, and systematically noting Iqbal's core ideas from literary texts. Data Analysis Technique: Data are analyzed using a descriptive-analytical method combined with content analysis and a hermeneutic approach to capture the contextual meaning of the figure's thought. Trustworthiness of Research Results: Data validation is conducted through source triangulation (comparing various primary and secondary texts) and increasing the rigor of interpretive observations to minimize researcher bias.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Muhammad Iqbal's Educational Thoughts

*Rise!*

*And carry the mandate on your shoulders,*

*Breathe your hot breath over this garden,*

<sup>7</sup> M. Munawar, *Dimension of Iqbal*, (Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan, 1986), hlm. 11; al-Biruni, *Makers of Pakistan and Modern Muslim India*, (Lahore: Ashraf, 1950), hlm. 208. Bandingkan juga dengan Robert D. Lee, *Mencari Islam Autentik*, terj. Baiquni, (Bandung: Mizan, 2000), hlm. 70.

<sup>8</sup> Tentang hal ini, secara detail, lihat Azzam, *Filsafat dan Puisi Iqbal*., hlm. 38-43.

<sup>9</sup> Schimmel, *Gabriel's Wing*., hlm. 49.

<sup>10</sup> Lebih lengkap uraian tentang karya-karya ini, lihat Pattiroy, *Pemikiran Filsafat M. Iqbal*, (Yogya: Tesis UIN Su-Ka, 1998), hlm. 105-111; Danusiri, *Epistemologi dalam Tasawuf Iqbal*., hlm. 11-16.

*So that the fragrance of narwastu covers everything.  
Don't!  
Don't choose to live like the song of the waves,  
Only sing when it crashes on the beach!  
But, be you a flood!  
Move the world with your charity<sup>11</sup>*

For centuries, Muslims have been fascinated by narrow religious understanding, as if studying the universe and history was not a religious act. With this fascination, it is not surprising that the theologians of the Classical era were too busy "taking care of" their God, so that humans were left stranded on earth. Under the shadow of Hellenistic-Greek philosophy, Islamic theology has developed far. However, at the same time, this theology has clouded Muslims' understanding of the Koran.<sup>12</sup> Because of this, Iqbal views that now is the time for Muslims to reconstruct their thinking in various fields, including Islamic education.

In fact, Muhammad Iqbal has never textually written a theory or philosophy of education in a book, let alone an educational curriculum for Muslims. However, contextually, all of his thoughts indicate the need for reconstruction in the field of Islamic education. Through his poetry compositions, Iqbal criticized the education system in force at that time.<sup>13</sup> In one of his poems, Iqbal wrote.

*I graduated from school and boarding school full of sadness,  
There I found no life,  
Nor love, I found no wisdom, nor wisdom.  
School teachers are people who have no conscience,  
Numb, numb,  
And kiai are people who don't have a himmah,  
Weak minded, poor experience.<sup>14</sup>*

This poem is Muhammad Iqbal's criticism of the Western education system and the traditional Islamic education system. According to him, the Western education system tends towards materialism. This tendency will in turn undermine human's higher spiritual values. In Iqbal's view, Western education is only capable of producing people who have high intellectual abilities, but does not pay much attention to the conscience of students. An education system like this ultimately causes human growth and development to be unbalanced between the outer and the inner aspects.<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile, criticism of the traditional Islamic education system has been leveled because this education can only imprison the human brain and soul in a tight cage. Traditional education is unable to produce intelligence that can solve various worldly problems.

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<sup>11</sup> Sajak Iqbal ini dikutip dari A. Syafii Maarif, *Membumikan Islam* (Cet. II; Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1995), hlm. 120. Sajak ini secara jelas berisi semangat untuk melakukan rekonstruksi.

<sup>12</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, *Membangun Kembali Pikiran...*, hlm. 6.

<sup>13</sup> Fazlur Rahman, *Islam dan Modernitas: Tentang Transformasi Intelektual*, terj. Ahsin Mohammad (Cet. II; Bandung: Pustaka, 1995), hlm. 66.

<sup>14</sup> Dikutip dari Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, *Pendidikan Islam yang Mandiri*, terj. Arif Muhammad (Cet. 1; Bandung: Dunia Ilmu, 1987), hlm. 33.

<sup>15</sup> Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, *Pendidikan Islam yang Mandiri...*, hlm. 34

All of this sharp criticism was carried out because he was of the view that education is an inseparable part of human civilization, in fact education is the substance of human civilization.<sup>16</sup> According to Iqbal, education actually aims to form a "true human being".<sup>17</sup> In this case, Muhammad Iqbal views the existing education system as having failed to achieve its goals. According to him, ideal education is education that is able to combine dualism (between worldly aspects and hereafter aspects) equally and in balance. The two existing education systems, namely the traditional (Islamic) education system and the Western (Christian) education system, in Iqbal's perspective, have not been able to realize this ideal education.

After Muhammad Iqbal expressed his criticism of the two education systems that existed at that time, what did Iqbal himself think about education? K.G. Saiyidain in the book *Iqbal's Educational Philosophy*<sup>18</sup> states that there are at least eight views of Iqbal on education in order to implement his ideas of renewing his thinking. These eight views are:

Individual concept: With this concept, Iqbal emphasizes that only humans can carry out education. Therefore, according to Iqbal, education must be able to foster the characteristics of human individuality in order to become perfect human beings. What is meant by a perfect human according to Iqbal is one who can create divine qualities to manifest within himself, so that he can behave like God. These qualities are absorbed into him until they become total union.<sup>19</sup> Individual growth: Muhammad Iqbal believes that humans as individual creatures will experience various changes dynamically in the context of their interactions with the environment. Therefore, education must be able to direct the growth and development of the individual in an optimal direction. This growth and development is an active creative process carried out by individuals as their actions and reactions to the environment. This process, according to Iqbal, is not an event where individuals just passively adapt to their environment.

Physical and spiritual balance: In Iqbal's view, individual development has the implication that he must be able to develop the inner richness of his existence. The development of this inner wealth cannot be carried out by detaching it from material ties. Therefore, the physical as reality and the spiritual as an idea must be combined in the individual development process. The link between the individual and society: The understanding above provides a deep understanding of the nature of the link between individual life and society's culture. Society is a place where individuals express their existence. Therefore, without society, an individual's life will weaken and his life's goals will become directionless.

Individual creativity: Muhammad Iqbal rejects closed causality, which makes it seem as if nothing new can or might happen again. In fact, humans have creativity that needs to be developed evolutionarily. With creativity, humans are able to free themselves from limitations, and penetrate and conquer time. Creativity itself can only be developed through the educational process. The role of intellect and intuition: There are two ways to perceive

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<sup>16</sup> Salahudin Al-Nadwi, *"Muhamamd Iqbal wa Qadhiya al-Tajdid"*, (Studi Islamika, Vol. II, No. 1, 1995), hlm. 171.

<sup>17</sup> Fazlur Rahman, *Islam dan Modernitas*, hlm. 67

<sup>18</sup> Buku ini telah diterjemahkan ke dalam Bahasa Indonesia. Baca K.G. Saiyidain, *Pemikiran Filsafat Iqbal Mengenai Pendidikan*, terj. M.I. Soelaeman (Cet. 1; Bandung: Diponegoro, 1981).

<sup>19</sup> Danusiri, *Epistemologi dalam Tasawuf...*, hlm. 134.

reality. Each method has a special role in directing and enriching human creativity. Intellect plays a role in capturing creativity through the five senses part by part, and not comprehensively. This is because the intellect focuses on incidental and temporal things. Meanwhile, intuition plays a role in capturing reality directly and comprehensively. Therefore, Iqbal believes that metaphysical truth cannot be achieved by training the intellect. Metaphysical truth can only be obtained by focusing on what may be perceived by an ability called intuition. The meaning of this statement is that Iqbal wants a meeting between external power obtained from knowledge and inner power that arises from intuition. With this, Iqbal concluded that education should pay attention to human intellectual aspects and intuition at the same time.

**Character education:** If humans equip themselves with individuality that can develop optimally, which is then based on strong faith, then they can become an invincible force. Humans like this will be able to direct themselves to virtue, and be able to align themselves with God's will. That's what Iqbal calls a tough character. This disposition includes sensitivity and strength. Sensitive to humanity and ideal values, as well as strength in adhering to the intentions that have been sparked in the heart. To be able to develop a character like this, according to Iqbal, education should be able to foster three traits which are the main elements of humans, namely courage, tolerance and concern.

**Social education:** Muhammad Iqbal emphasized that social life should be carried out on the basis and principles of monotheism. Tawhid should be able to live in human intellectual and emotional life. By this, Iqbal means to express that the social order of life should be active in draining and exploring all the powers implied in science, in addition to being able to control the material environment. It is impossible to build a social order without cultivating knowledge and utilizing it to achieve the goals that human society wants to achieve.

### **Renewal of Islamic Education**

With the eight educational views above, it can be said that Muhammad Iqbal's educational reform is a creative effort to understand the educational process philosophically. The idea of educational reform was actually put forward by Iqbal as a reaction to his dissatisfaction with the totality of Indian civilization in particular, and human civilization in general. Muhammad Iqbal feels that it is necessary to reform education, because there have been various deviations from human values carried out by the existing education system.

Muhammad Iqbal tries to analyze the damage to the mind and mind that has hit human civilization. All of this is caused by the filth of the human soul which has stripped humans of their intellectual and emotional greatness. Even though human civilization has achieved splendor, extensive government, and developed commerce, the human soul is still filled with anxiety. This is because these souls have been infected with the filth of civilization. Therefore, Iqbal believes that it is time for educational reconstruction.

Muhammad Iqbal's criticism of Western education was actually a defensive action to save Muslim thinking from the pollution and damage caused by Western ideas. These Western ideas came through various scientific disciplines whose main aim was to destroy traditional Islamic moral standards by giving rise to materialistic views. Meanwhile, Muhammad Iqbal's criticism of the traditional Islamic education system is a corrective action

for Muslims' misunderstanding of viewing Eastern world education as prioritizing aspects of the afterlife rather than the worldly, by balancing these two aspects.

With all this criticism, Muhammad Iqbal tried to formulate an education system which was a synthesis of the Western education system and the Eastern education system. This is what Iqbal means by the reconstruction of Islamic education. This reconstruction was given a philosophical basis by Iqbal, so that Islamic education always tries to increase human dynamics and creativity.

Iqbal raised the idea of educational reconstruction inseparable from the socio-historical factors surrounding it. At that time, Muslim territories, especially in India, had been divided by invaders, which led to socio-political conflicts between them. This conflict in turn gave rise to two different views. The first view is accommodative-cooperative towards the Western education system, and the second view is conservative-traditional which is anti-Western education. The first view is represented by Ahmad Khan and the second view is represented by Al-Maududi. Responding to these two opposing views, Muhammad Iqbal came up with the idea of reconstructing Islamic education which was a synthesis between the two. Thus, Islamic education, in Iqbal's view, is education that is neither Western nor Eastern, but education that is in between the two.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the description above, we can conclude that education according to Muhammad Iqbal actually aims to form "true humans". In this case, Muhammad Iqbal views the existing education system as having failed to achieve its goals. According to him, ideal education is education that is able to combine dualism (between worldly aspects and hereafter aspects) equally and in balance. The two existing education systems, namely the traditional (Islamic) education system and the Western (Christian) education system, in Iqbal's perspective, have not been able to realize this ideal education.

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