

realizable over a quantifiable dimension. But this mode of apprehension has a deeper affinity with our being than what is understood by objective psychology. The meaning of this affinity is made intelligible by religious mysticism. The Qalb, which is a propensity of awareness reaching out into unawareness, transcends the mode of apprehension of the objectively knowable truth through *Ilham* or *Ilqa* or *Kashf*. These three expressions connote something beyond intuition—rather, intuition is included in them. The knowledge through *Kashf* and *Ilham* transcends all logical operations and categorical functions of consciousness. Hence, the process of attaining such knowledge totally flouts analytic reasoning. Reality yields its secrets (*Rumooz*) to Qalb because of its affinity with our being. Perhaps the most comprehensive meaning of Qalb would include the highest state of awareness where the “aesthetic” and “intellectual” components of reality tend to fall on the same continuum and reveal the secrets of our affinity with the cosmos. The innermost of our being stands in an inseparable relationship with the cosmos. We shall see in a later part of this discussion that portions of the objective reality arrived at through *Ilqa* or *Kashf*, in their distinctly tangible aspects, might appear as “freaks” of the human mind to persons steeped in the habits of thought characteristic of a rational outlook, or more precisely, the scientific *Weltanschauung*.

In its more developed stage the state of psychic transmutation mentioned earlier reaches out into *Maarifat* where Qalb stands in an inseparable relation with its own destiny. *Maarifat* leads to the apprehension of the hidden powers of self and, as Rumi (1976) believes, it is the highest stage of spiritual development where the Qalb reveals the secrets of our being, attaining the power through which our “beingness” is apprehended “uninterruptedly” in its realizable possibilities. It is a truism in mystic orders of thought that our inner personality, namely the Qalb, reaches directly into the gradient of cosmic secrets and reveals its own realizable possibilities. Within this gradient of cosmic secrets Qalb stands as the human counterpart of existence, which alone carries the transcendental meaning of existence by deepening its affinity with the cosmos. The universe around us unfolds its meaning through its encounter with the universe within us. And from within the process of this encounter emerges the meaning of human civilization. According to Rumi (1976) the end of a civilization draws near when it loses its hold on its transcendental direction and consequently, its spiritual and material components fall apart, thereby undermining the very meaning of existence in individual and collective life. The chaos of a civilization, which marks its decline, unfailingly reflects itself through the individual consciousness; the inner resources of self are undermined, and the core of the individual’s beingness is thus eroded. Hence arises the existential crisis of a civilization.

The Meaning of Psychic Transmutation

Unawareness is the source of immense spiritual powers. The meanings that are carried over to focal awareness in an unquantifiable act of psychic transmutation reveal their tangible aspects through an outright displacement of serially ordered consciousness. Hence, the focal activity of the psyche enters into such processes that look like freaks of human mind. In fact, these processes are neither freaks nor mysteries: they are the coefficients of meaning placed at the disposal of our focal awareness. They are only 'fragments of the universe' embodied in our being, awaiting the subsidiary to be recreated.

So long as the subsidiary awareness remains tied to the discrete and discrepant appearances of our existence passing through the transient states of consciousness, the integral meaning of our being remains hidden to our focal awareness. The integral meaning, however, is apprehended only through the unitary experience within the depths of being.

To understand the nature of psychic transmutation, the meaning of the fact of experience as a cognitive element must be distinguished from its meaning as a function of the cogitative activity of the psyche. According to Brehm and Cohen (1962) "cognitive elements or cognitions are 'knowledges' or items of information and they may pertain to one's self and the environment" (p. 3). And, as Neisser (1966) has described it, "Cognition refers to all the processes by which the sensory input is transformed, reduced, elaborated, stored, recovered and used" (p. 4). Cognitive elements are therefore inevitably contingent on sensory input. Consequently, facts of experience or cognitions must have direct or indirect corroboration with external particulars.

A fact of experience resulting from the cogitative action of the psyche is not contingent upon sensory input. It is therefore not an item of information from outside. What the mystics have been telling us about the direct awareness of such facts of experience closely resembles, in a way, the "sentient awareness" of Eddington (1958) which "has no grammatical object except itself. My consciousness is my awareness, and parts of my consciousness—feelings, emotions, etc.—are parts of my awareness; and it is mere oddity of language which leads us to reiterate the awareness in such phrases as 'awareness of feeling'" (p. 199).

Sentient awareness in its mystic connotation is described as *Khabar*. The gradient of *Khabar* is inherent in the *Qalb*, and its highest point reaches into *Maarifat*. The lower points on the gradient include *Kashf*, *Ilham*, and *Ilqa*. The cogitative activity of the psyche disengages the subsidiary awareness from the successive order of events whereby the focal awareness apprehends the deeper meaning of reality which, otherwise, exists only in the form of cognitive elements in the passing states of consciousness. Thus, a transformation in perception and, consequently, a transformation in the whole body of facts is

brought about through the transformation of serial time into pure duration. The items of knowledge available on the gradient of Khabar are described as *Waridaat-E-Qalbi* by the mystics.

The displacement of serially ordered consciousness leading into the experience-in-pure duration enables the focal awareness to apprehend aspects of the external reality which are exclusively contingent on sensory input. Hence, as in *Kashf*, things may be seen or heard without the aid of sense organs. This is currently known as "extra-sensory" perception in modern Western psychology.

Since cognitive elements—and hence perception—can never come into existence without sensory input, and since the existence of an extra-sensory channel for perceiving reality is an impossibility under the governing epistemological assumptions of Western psychology, only an alternative system of explanation can possibly accommodate the indubious evidence of the phenomena that are termed extra-sensory.

The experience of pure duration yields a kind of *integral perception* of serially ordered reality. It enables the focal awareness to visualize a particular configuration of events which otherwise 'exists' only as future possibility. The state of psychic transmutation in the advanced stage of mystic transcendence tends to become more persistent. The problem of communicating such experiences in words becomes most difficult because the shift in the gradient of Khabar reaching into more intensive aspects of *Waridaat-E-Qalbi* is actually a shift from the articulate toward the inarticulate.

However, the inarticulate carries a state of *semantic effluence* where the focal awareness captures meaning by captivating the words, and communication, therefore, involves a minimum of diction. Eddington (1958) has drawn attention to an element of knowledge which, in a remote sense, has semblance with the meaning of semantic effluence. He writes:

Suppose I suddenly say "ouch." That would convey to you exactly what was meant to be conveyed by the former statement "I feel pain." It has the great advantage that it does not hint at any psychological theory of what has happened; it does not drag in knowledge not wholly derived from direct awareness, as any attempt on precise description would do. Normally it is an involuntary remark; but it is pity not to use deliberately an expression which conveys exactly what we mean to convey and no more. A typical element of knowledge acquired by direct awareness is that which we convey to another person by the exclamation "ouch." (p. 200)

In fact, the tacit component of the ineffable experience, namely its meaning, is rendered into the experience of the recipient through the infusion taking place in the *Qalb*, and whatever transpires between the individual and the conveyer through such inarticulate communication is termed *Husool*.

The mystic tradition places a heavy emphasis on the concept of *Muqammat*—or stages of spiritual development—where the operative aspect of Khabar

progressively reveals the state of psychic transmutation in its fullness. The path to Maarifat lies through a state of conviviality with one's self. It is a type of experience that is very much akin to the "peak experience" of Maslow: "tremendous intensification of any of the experiences in which there is a loss of self or transcendence of it, e.g., problem centering, intense concentration, forgetfulness, and intense enjoyment of music and art" (1970, p. 165). In other words, it is a kind of deep empathy with the self. Oceanic feelings and ecstasy arise through this very process of focal and subsidiary dissolution. Some external stimuli, such as music possessing a spiritual content, tend to support and facilitate this experience.

This state of conviviality eventually gives a more coherent meaning to existence—where death ceases to be the terminal event of life and is represented rather as a turning point of existence involving a transfiguration of awareness. The altered meaning of death leads to the emancipation of self from the captivating anxieties of life which, as the mystics say, tend to impede the growth of self and damage its inner resources.

Perhaps the most pragmatically oriented and constructive aspect the mystic tradition developed through centuries lies in its creative altruism. This is very close to the "unselfish love" of Maslow in its most salient aspects, which include care, responsibility, respect, acceptance, and a deeper understanding of the individual. The mystics report (Nizami, 1980) an experience of *Altruistic Effulgence* which provides a stable base in therapy, particularly where the need for a helping relationship arises. One of the greatest mystics of the Chisti order believed and recommended that a person in need of help should be *accompanied* into the deepest recesses of the self without being left alone there. He or she must not feel the slightest embarrassment in the company of the helper.

An immeasurable power—*Nafs-E-Geera*—which is attained through the state of conviviality with one's self (*Einführung*), is actually the most vital aspect of the process of the mystic therapeutic encounter. It captures the being of the other person in order to lift up the veil from the realizable possibilities of the self that are shrouded under the vagaries of the *Nafs-E-Ammara*, or the dehumanized self. *Nafs-E-Ammara* prompts the impulses to override the ego, which eventually culminates in meaninglessness.

Nafs-E-Geera is one of the most powerful concepts in the mystic literature. It creates affinity with the being of another person in the highest degree of empathy and touches the innermost recesses of his or her *Qalb*. As in the non-directive therapy of Rogers, the individual receives support through warmth, affection, encouragement, and acceptance. The *Nafs-E-Geera* of the helper reaches into the difficulties of the individual through an affinity which brings about healthy changes in the entire perspective of the person. *Qalb* is supposed to be the vanguard of awareness. It prevents the self from "getting

lost" in the discrete appearances surrounding life. The highest point where the state of psychic transmutation touches destiny is the revelation which defines prophecy, according to Iqbal, "as a type of consciousness in which unitary experience tends to overflow its boundaries and seek opportunities of rendering or refashioning collective life" (1934, p. 119).

The impoverishment of human awareness has manifested its "inescapable" consequences in the existential crisis of our civilization. One of the most fatal consequences is the destruction of the gravitational center of meaning within our being, resulting in estrangement from self and in the dissolution of inner identity and power. We are, thus, thrown into a state of futile confrontation with life in its individual and collective aspects, and while losing hold on our experiences we are being overtaken by an inwardly extending void of meaninglessness.

With its holistic emphasis and more encompassing view of human nature, humanistic psychology might hopefully cope with problems arising out of the existential crisis of our time. However, the reconstruction of a theory outside the framework of objective thought requires forthright acceptance of a theory of knowledge which can sustain and strengthen the subjective core of experientially-arrived-at datum. In this aspect humanistic psychology falls short.

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