

**BINARY BETWEEN FAITH AND REASON: A STUDY OF  
CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM SINCE THE EARLY  
ENLIGHTENMENT**

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**MEHAK SHARMA**



**Centre for Political Studies  
School of Social Sciences  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
New Delhi-110067**

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JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY  
CENTRE FOR POLITICAL STUDIES  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
New Delhi-110067

Telephone No : 011-26704413 Fax : 011-26741504  
email : cpsjnu09@gmail.com

Date: 21.12.2021

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled "Binary between Faith and Reason: A Study of Christianity and Islam since the Early Enlightenment" submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this university or any other university.

MEHAK SHARMA

CERTIFICATE

We Recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

प्रो. नरेन्द्र कुमार / Prof. Narender Kumar  
अध्यक्ष / Chairperson  
NARENDER KUMAR  
New Delhi - 110067  
Centre for Political Studies  
School of Social Sciences  
जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
नई दिल्ली / New Delhi - 110067

Chairperson: Centre for Political Studies Supervisor →

Amir Ali

Supervisor  
Centre for Political Studies  
School of Social Sciences  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
New Delhi - 110067

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mehak', is enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

**Mehak Sharma**

## Chapter 1: Introduction

A “binary opposition” or a “binary system” is a set of associated terms or concepts that are antithetical and mutually exclusive to each other, such as right and left, backward and forward, and dark and bright. The Binary system is the foundation of structuralism, which views “binary opposition” as fundamental to all languages and thought. (Smith, 1996) Structuralists consider binaries important to understand things and concepts in a clear and better manner. For instance, it is comparatively easy to understand democracy by contrasting it with authoritarianism. However, some problems related to the question of binary need our attention. For instance, what creates these binaries (such as democracy and authoritarianism; Justice and injustice; secularism and theocracy, etc.) at the very first? Second, are there any alternative ways of looking at these concepts or notions? This research work is about one such binary that plays a vital role in our day-to-day lives- the binary of “faith” and “reason”.

Faith is something with which most of the human race is intricately affiliated. The word faith has always had a special place in almost all languages of the world. Faith has its roots in the Latin words *fides* and *feid*, which means trust or confidence in any person, confidence or trust in a person, object, place, and concept. Examples include faith in ourselves and our spouses, friends, parents, and children. . All human beings believe in one or the other thing. In short, faith, in general, means a belief in anything. However, this research is particularly concerned

with the word faith as a religious belief. Faith and reason are often used interchangeably with religion or mysticism and science or rationalism, respectively. In general parlance, both faith and reason are understood as terms that are opposite to each other. Faith is usually understood to be an irrational act and a belief in the unseen. In contrast, the reason is usually considered a belief in things/places/persons that can be verified. These are generally things that we can see and experience. This view of faith falls in the category of incommensurable viewpoint. Philosophers like Kierkegaard, Richard Dawkins, and Sam Harris fall under this category. For instance, in his work *Fear and Trembling*, argues that it is not possible to believe by “virtue of reason”. He says, “If we choose faith we must suspend our reason to believe in something higher than reason”. Therefore, for him, a passionate commitment to God can only be made by doing away with rationality. (Sztanyo, 1996). Richard Dawkins claims: “Faith is the great cop-out, the great excuse to evade the need to think and evaluate evidence. Faith is belief despite, even perhaps because of, the lack of evidence”. Sam Harris defines faith as “the license religious people give themselves to keep believing when reasons fail” (Mathison, 2013). The common thing in all these definitions is that faith is in a conflictual relationship with reason. Therefore, faith and reason exist in a binary relationship.

From an average person’s perspective, the conflict between “reason” and “faith” is as old as human history itself. But it would be too simplistic to understand the relationship between religion and rationality based on popular belief which marks rationality as the enterprise of indisputable facts, and religion/faith as a set of unverifiable facts. Unlike Kierkegaard, Dawkins, and Harris, who believe in binaries between faith and rationality, many scholars hold alternate perspectives. A vast majority of scholars throughout history have considered the term reason to stand in complete harmony with faith. For scholars like Locke, faith and reason are two sides of the same coin. For Locke, “Faith is nothing but a firm Assent of the Mind: which if regulated, as is our Duty, cannot be afforded to anything but upon good reason; and so, cannot be opposite to it” (Garret, 2007). Even for Kant, “Religious belief and reason are in complete harmony with one another” (Pecorino, 2001).

The incompatibility approach regarding faith and reason is a recent phenomenon, argues Harrison. He argues that faith and reason, as we see them today, is the result of the unfolding



of both religion and science, during the Enlightenment in a way that resulted in putting both religion and science into watertight compartments (Harrison, 1990). As Mathison has rightly remarked, “Most of the contemporary discussion about the supposed conflict between faith and reason has arisen in the context of discussions about science and religion” (Mathison, 2013). Many developments that took place since the early Enlightenment brought changes in how we used to look at science and religion. This, in turn, also changed our world view on faith and reason and the relationship between the two. For example, Enlightenment has limited reason to logical reasoning, which is antagonistic to faith. There are many ways of looking at faith and reason. For instance, one way of defining reason is in terms of cognitive human faculties. Another is using reason in terms of the source of knowledge. Such viewpoints of reason stand in harmony with faith. Therefore, Enlightenment has resulted in establishing the relationship between faith and reason as binary, and this ‘binary framework’ became the dominant way of looking at the two over the period of time.

The other problem begins when the people in the West begin to pass statements that there is no such contradiction between faith and reason in Christianity as one finds in Islam. There is a considerable difference between how some Western scholars view Islam in terms of its reason-based foundations and how oriental scholars think and treat the same. Westerners see Islam as devoid of any intellectual reasoning and thus an absolute incompatibility between faith and reason. This has connotations not only in global political discourses around religion and its role but also has far and wider implications on how cultures and communities exchange ideas and interact with each other. We often witness incidents where Islam is targeted, mocked, and blamed for lacking rationality. Recently, Prime Minister of France Emmanuel Macron stoked a controversy with his statement against Islam. He remarked, “Islam was “in crisis globally, and he plans “to reform Islam” to make it more compatible with the republican values of the country. These remarks resulted in huge protests by the Muslim nations (The Guardian, October 26, 2020). Similarly, the infamous event of Charlie Hebdo, a French satirical magazine, which published cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad, provoked a deadly terror attack on the publication house in 2015 (BBC, Sep 1, 2020). But, we need to understand the reason behind these kinds of statements or arguments against Islam.

Such episodes of questioning the nature of Islam have escalated in recent times, mainly in the wake of the 9/11 attacks and suicide bombings around the world, which are often linked to Islam by the popular media. Sam Harris says that the contention between faith and reason is not seen in Christianity now as the West has prioritized reason over religion by adopting secularism. But, in Islam, there is contention between the two as there is no place for reason in Islam (Harris, 2004). This argument is nullified or at least gets challenged if we take the viewpoints of Muslim scholars like Allama Iqbal. Allama Iqbal believes that there is no need to settle the conflict between faith and reason in Islam as the two are not separate but work in tandem towards reaching the truth (Iqbal, 1974). The arguments supporting the incompatibility discourse between reason and faith are based on the pre-conceived notion of looking at faith and reason in a particular manner that closes down the possibility of looking at the two from other perspectives, often resulting in stigmatization of faiths like Islam. The reason is that the binary understanding of faith and reason has become the mainstream way of looking at the relationship between the two over time, invalidating other possibilities of understanding them. As a result, contemporary society is fighting the twin challenges of religious extremism and scientific materialism. It can be said that, largely, it is because of the binary created between faith and reason, and the narrow understanding of the two has resulted in either strictly adhering to fanatic religion or value-free rationality.

Hence, many questions need to be addressed while discussing and debating the binary of faith and reason. First, what created the binary between the two, as we see it today in its best form, in the West, in the form of secularism? Second, is there an alternative way of looking at or understanding the relationship between faith and reason, apart from the dominating binary explanation? What problems does the binary understanding of faith and reason carry with it? Lastly, does it hold any importance to have these binaries at the very first? The purpose of the thesis is to understand the indispensability and the problems that the binary understanding of faith and reason carry, by taking the case of Islam and Christianity, since the early Enlightenment. The thesis questions the epistemic base of the faith-reason binary looks at its implications and explores the possibility of settling it down.

The thesis contains six chapters. The first one is the introductory chapter that focuses upon the significance of the study and mentions its objectives. It also includes methodology and the literature review. The second chapter is about the relationship between faith and reason in the pre-Enlightenment era. Before explaining the grounds or developments that set the stage for creating the binary between faith and reason during the Enlightenment, the thesis provides a background on the relationship between the two before the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The third chapter throws light on the major developments from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century, causing the faith-reason divide. The study suggests the three antecedents responsible for the whole narrative of the faith-reason binary. The fourth chapter inquires about the faith-reason relationship in Islam. It focuses on the idea that the popular belief regarding the lack of synchronization between faith and reason in Islam, unlike Christianity, is based on some myths and pre-assumed notions that have roots in the Enlightenment. This has been done by tracing the place of reason and science in Islam. For that purpose, the chapter has been divided into two parts- 4.1) Science and Islam in the Pre-Enlightenment Era and (4.2) Allama Iqbal on faith and reason in Islam: An approach different from Enlightenment one. Then in the fifth chapter, the thesis explores the various problems that the separation of faith and reason has caused, not just for the West but for Islam as well. It has been divided into the following three parts 5.1) West and disenchantment: Divorce from emotions and values, (5.2) Problems with modern political models- the modern nation-state, capitalism, and secularism, and (5.3) Islam and stagnation: the problem of religious extremism. In the end, the concluding chapter will bring all the major arguments of the study in a nutshell. It will answer the main question of the thesis: Is the faith-reason binary inevitable keeping in view the problems attached to the whole question of binary between the two?

## **1.1 Review of Literature**

The relationship between faith and reason as we see it today results from the unfolding of both religion and science during the Enlightenment in a way that put both religion and science into watertight compartments. Hedley says that “science, it is said, operates within a world view that regards natural phenomenon as the product of impersonal forces. By contrast, religious and magical systems involve personalized Gods, spirits, and demons. Whereas the scientific

procedures, the theoretical enterprise has been characterized by dogmatism. Religions have required worship, ceremony, and sacrifice and these forms of activity are alien to western science. He further argues that science may be concerned with impersonal forces and religion with personalized Gods. Still, the very word force carried religious meanings even for Issac Newton. In describing the operation of a gravitational force, in mathematical terms, he also ascribed it to an omnipotent God” (Hedley, 2014). Thus, religion and science seem to be differentiated on these grounds. But if one closely analyses the history of not just science but religion as well, one will see that both were not separate. As Locke says that it is true that faith is a revelation from God but to be sure that such a revelation is definitely from God himself, we need to apply reason as it is our responsibility to check the validity of such revelations. Therefore, faith needs to be regulated by reason (Locke, 1824).

Scholars like Peter Harrison and Akeel Bilgrami trace the reasons for such construction of the relationship between religion and science to the Enlightenment, which started in England. In his work titled *Religion and Religions in the English Enlightenment*, Peter Harrison talks about how the term religion as we understand it today emerged in the West quite late. It, he argues, emerged basically with Enlightenment that provided us with a new framework for understanding the religious aspects of human life. At the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, reformers emerged in the scene, first in England, as it is in England that the groundwork for Enlightenment was laid down. Reformers, for the first time, drew a distinction between religion, based on revealed knowledge, and natural knowledge. The reasons behind drawing this distinction were the developments that took place during that period. One such important development was the reduction of Christianity to the beliefs and practices of the Church controlled by the priest. Those practices were believed to be discriminatory as well as authoritarian in their nature. As a result, the practices and beliefs of the Church began to be questioned for its anti-reason approach, and thus, it became necessary to put “religion” into the rational investigation. Before that, reason and religion were not considered contrary to each other. It is evident from the Cambridge Platonists’ understanding of the terms, who instead of distinguishing Natural and revealed knowledge of God, claimed that both are not separate but two vehicles of the same truth. Instead of calling it a revealed or natural knowledge, Platonists preferred to call them in terms of the reason of two kinds- “human

faculty” and “divine reason” (*Nous*), which is generally understood as natural knowledge and revealed knowledge. Pure ideas that give substance to all phenomena are only known to divine reason, which is known to human reason by rising above the evils of the material world through moral discipline. They believe that it is only in the mind of God that the true knowledge resides, and it is possible to avail that by use of human reason through divine dispensation. So Harrison argues that for them, revealed and natural knowledge are not separate, unlike reformers who began to believe otherwise (Harrison, 1990).

Considering the viewpoint of both reformers and Platonists, Harrison argues that it is important for us to describe what is meant by nature? In the seventeenth century, enquiring minds like Francis Bacon talked about the two views of nature.

One is that which emerges from reason, induction, and observation that in the Kantian language is ‘Pure Reason’. Second is one based on inward instinct, moral law, the intuition that in the Kantian language is ‘Practical Reason (Harrison, 1990).

As the Enlightenment progressed, the first view, i.e. nature has to do with reason based on sense, observation, logic, induction instead of instincts, gained prominence. This understanding of nature gained prominence because it sharply contrasted with religion, which turned out to be the source of oppression and atrocities for a long time. It is believed that it was against these atrocities and oppression in the hands of the Roman Catholic Church that the Enlightenment emerged in the scene. As the World became preoccupied with the purpose of scientific inquiry in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it became imperative to demystify religious practices by the imposition of natural laws. Reason was no longer considered an ally of religion as it drifted away from its Platonic moorings. It just became a means for interpreting the revelations and resolving the competing claims of many revelations. It has now attained a more narrow understanding of it (Harrison, 1990). Similarly, Heredia believes that understanding faith and reason as binary is a western concept and not the eastern one (Heredia, 2002).

Akeel Bilgrami opines that criticizing Enlightenment for emphasizing the “Scientific Rationality”, a restricted understanding of the Rationality is not appropriate. The Enlightenment indeed stressed upon the particular notion of Rationality that is dubbed scientific as it relies on observation, induction, and experimentation. But it is equally important to trace the reasons that led to prioritizing certain kinds of rationality over others. Bilgrami says that the main factor that can be considered for this understanding of reason to be prioritized over the other notions of reason as described earlier was some of the developments taking place in the background. Many developments of the seventeenth century are important to understand as they acted as a catalyst for the emergence of Enlightenment. These two important antecedents, according to him, are “Newtonian Science” and the “Rise of Capitalism” (Bilgrami, 2006).

Until the sixteenth century, science was believed to support the religious realm. Scientific thought held that the Earth is at the center of the Universe and the Sun revolves around it. Only when Copernicus rejected this notion, the Europeans began to reject the Aristotelian-medieval scientific thought. It was for the first time that science is believed to have questioned the authority of the Church. After that, Kepler and Galileo attempted to prove that the Sun is at the center of the Universe through experimentation based on the same lines as Copernicus. However, the major figure of the Scientific Revolution is considered to be Newton. He combined all the methods of Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo into one single method of mathematical laws. He justified his claims by the mathematical rule of universal gravitation and concluded that all planets move according to fixed rules operated by mathematics. Therefore, Newtonian science is thought to have brought a great revolution in the field of science. This new science rejected the Cartesian method of deduction based on hypotheses in favor of rules supported by mathematical experimentations and observation. This set the stage for the conflict between religious and scientific thought (Henry, 2002).

The second development that necessitated the rationality-religion divide was the rise of capitalism. Two viewpoints need to be explained here while talking about the rise of capitalism. The first viewpoint is held by scholars like R.H. Tawney, who would say that religion played a positive role in the rise of capitalism. As most of the capitalists were

Protestants, changes were made within religion to make it more attuned to capitalism. The phrases like, “God hath commanded you some way of the other to labor for your daily bread”, began to be emphasized. In short, this new religion was defending commercialism, trade, and thus profit. As Tawney says, “it was not that religion was expelled from practical life, but that religion itself gave it a foundation of granite....The good Christian was not wholly dissimilar from the economic man”. He believed that it became a common saying during this period that there is no sin in becoming rich as God wants all of us to do labor and work, but it is wrong in becoming rich by charging interest on a loan of the needy (Tawney, 1947).

On the other hand, people like Kenneth Berke believed otherwise. He would say that the impersonal attitude in life is considered important to have a profit-driven attitude and to imbibe the monetary motive in one’s life which are the foundations of capitalism. The impersonal, according to Berke, meant that it is not influenced by the Christian ideas of selflessness and love for the community. This kind of impersonal attitude could only be imbibed when religion gets faded into the backdoor, and rationality gets prioritized over religion (Burke, 1969). In Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, “Instrumental Rationality is defined as a specific form of rationality that focuses upon the most efficient or cost-effective means to achieve a specific end” and therefore, this kind of rationality could only sit perfect with scientific rationality, that is based on observation as well rules rather than moral laws.

The question that one needs to ask is which viewpoint to believe? Both are right in the sense that it might be true that in the beginning, the religious principles got attuned to fit fine with Capitalist’s principles to avoid the sudden shock. Still, there is always a limit to religious principles to support capitalism’s selfish and blood-sucking motives. So it became necessary to develop an impersonal and interest-driven attitude in life, which is only possible by restricting religion to the private sphere. Therefore, it can be said that capitalism that got its legitimacy from religion in the beginning later sidelined the same religion to grow and expand. Many negative elements of religion crystallized during that period played an important role in making religion fade into the private sphere.

Until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, religion was reduced to the popular beliefs and practices of the Church. The religion, which was believed to be faith linked to the dynamic of the heart, struggling to reach the truth, was now viewed as already known fixed truths and beliefs proposed by the Church (Harrison, 1990). Religion began to be criticized during that period for its lack of reason, as many contradictions began to be seen within it. In general, Christianity that proposes peace began to endorse conflict. Much of the conflicts that emerged were religious only. Locke believed that men are fundamentally equal and it is their fundamental right to be treated as equals. This idea of basic equality, according to Locke, was not a “dictate of reason but an axiom of theology.” He states that “God created all of us in a state of equality where all power and jurisdictions are reciprocal. All of us lords, all of us kings, all of us bishops; each of us equal to the greatest and subject to nobody” (Waldron, 2002). Remember Locke was writing in the 17<sup>th</sup> century when the autocracy and dominance of the church at the hands of the clergy were at their height. This paradox causes one to question religion altogether, with a viewpoint to correct it. Many thinkers of the Enlightenment expressed their critiques of religion.

Hobbes admitted that revelation had occurred, but scriptures need to be subjected to rational criticism and insisted that supernatural phenomena such as miracles also need naturalistic explanations. Though not in favor of replacing religion completely, he believed that religious activities need to be managed by applying reason within the state. Similarly, Spinoza talked about critical evaluation of the scriptures through reason to reduce the harm caused by revealed religion. He was not totally against the revealed religion, provided the distinction was made between true or natural religion and the prophecy and the laws interpreted from the sacred books. A critique of religion is important, according to Spinoza, so that true religion is not confused with superstitions and irrational doctrines. He believed that things associated with “religion” could be used, provided it is interpreted rationally. Later, revelation and the texts associated with it as a whole were criticized by English deists on the ground that there is nothing rational in all these, and all the evidence of miracles and prophecy associated with Christianity are unsound (Hudson, 2005). Therefore, one can say that constant discrimination and authoritarianism by the Church led to investigations into Christianity, which later on transformed into questioning the religion in itself. As a result, Christianity began to be



questioned at the most fundamental level. It began to be challenged by posing rationality to its opposite side. Religion is something that became for reformers, a highly suspected enterprise as they argue that it sometimes leads to corruption of human reason as well (Harrison, 1990).

Based on this viewpoint that faith is not akin to reason, Harris questions religion in general – but Islam in particular. He argues that there is no place for reason in Islam, whereas Christianity has sorted out this contradiction over time through secularism. He says, “Christianity passed through its bloody and repressive phase during the middle age, but since then it has been gentrified due to the influences of Enlightenment and secularism in the west.” (Harris, 2004) This viewpoint of looking at faith and reason as binary is subjected by scholars like Allama Iqbal, who believes that faith and reason are not in contradiction but complementary to each other. Islam itself talks about the importance of reason, but their understanding of reason is very different from its dominant understanding, which is one of logic and cost-benefit analysis. Iqbal believes that the end goal of both faith and reason is to reach the truth. But faith sees the reality in its whole whereas reason sees it in piecemeal form. To unravel truths, religion also requires rational foundations. This rationality is not based on logic and cost-benefit motive as stressed by the West. Instead, it is analogical reasoning. It is this analogical reasoning that can be reconciled with faith (Iqbal, 1974). Siddiqui argues that Islam is not antithetical to reason. Islam is only antithetical to reason when reason is motivated by desire and self-interest. But the true nature of reason lies in transcending desire and taking into the picture the broader interest of the community (Siddiqui, 1983).

Therefore, on the one hand, faith and reason are seen in binary form, and on the other, it is believed that both faith and reason can be reconciled in a particular manner. One theory became the mainstream theory with time, and the other became the alternative one. The problem is not limited to this only. If one moves further from the question of inquiring about the nature of the relationship between faith and reason, one will see that other fundamental questions need to be answered first. First is the question of the creation of the binary itself. As Michel Foucault believes, many binaries – such as sane and insane order, and disorder – are not natural but social constructs. For instance: the binary of sane and insane emerged in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to keep the population of unemployed and idle from going astray. So, Houses of Confinement

emerged not just as an institute but as an institute of moral surveillance. Hence, a question that needs an inquiry is understanding what kind of power-relations work behind in creating these binaries, including the binary of faith and reason (Rainbow, 1984).

The second issue is that even if these binaries are social constructs – as believed by Michel Foucault – it is indeed very difficult to do away with them. Peter Elbow in his work, *The uses of Binary thinking*, argues that putting things in binary is not due to the emergence of structuralism but from the tradition of dichotomous thinking such as sun/moon. According to G.E.R. Lloyd, for Elbow, we witness a certain kind of dichotomy in all-natural phenomena such as day and night, east and west, summer and winter. Elbow further believes these dichotomies or contradictions are at the foundation of the development of a tradition of critical thinking and logic from Socrates to the present. Criticism and skepticism are usually identified with intelligence. Further, complex information can be unraveled only by categorizing issues into two poles (Elbow, 1993). But in recent years, especially with the deconstructionists' reaction against structuralism, we have seen strong criticism of binary thinking. Blake in *The argument* says, "Without contraries is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence" (Blake, 1975). In short, binaries are important for unearthing complex data. For instance: In the case of faith and reason, it is possible to understand the meaning of faith completely without understanding what faith is not. The question is not whether there is reason in faith or reason is the opposite of faith. But the revelation that is believed to be the main part of major faiths like Islam and Christianity is not what is called reason generally, and to understand both these concepts, it is important to put them in binaries.

Therefore, it is clear that binaries are important. However, we have seen strong criticism of these binaries in recent years, especially with the deconstruction or post-structuralism response against structuralism. Gnanasekaran says, "The word deconstruction is derived from the French verb *deconstruire* connoting to "undo the improvement of" or "the development of" It believes that there is no destruction without advancement and vice versa, and thus contains both improvement and obliteration (Gnanashekarana, 2015). Shirley F. Station in *Deconstruction* says, "Deconstruction is a concept given by Derrida in the late 1960s that

challenged the understanding of texts according to fixed meanings, structures, and binary oppositions.” It believes that meanings are not fixed and, therefore, not decidable. As a result, texts are fluid and should not be understood in proper structures and forms according to fixed meanings. On the contrary, it is possible to find many meanings of the same word in a single text, all of them possible. So, it is possible to have several meanings of faith and reason, some are not even decidable. Derrida believes that human beings are logo-centric in the West, i.e. they believe that all beliefs and actions are grounded on a centering principle, and certain ideas need to be prioritized over others. This type of dualistic thinking of Western Civilization goes back to Aristotle. It tends to see everything in pairs or binary forms such as male/female, good/evil, and truth/lie, and in each of these pairs, one is held by the society to be superior (Station, 2009). Therefore, the problem is twofold.

The first one is understanding concepts according to fixed structures and binaries, where one is viewed as superior. Second, this particular kind of understanding of a specific concept gains its dominance over time and becomes the dominant one. Or it could become the only way of understanding the concept, ignoring or closing down the possibilities of other elements or other vantage points. For instance, faith and reason have been put in binaries since the early Enlightenment. The belief is that both follow contradictory ways of reaching the truth – as one is based on revelation as the source of knowledge and the other on logic. It does not entertain the viewpoint that there can be other ways of looking at faith and reason, as suggested by Allama Iqbal. Not only that, it prioritizes reason over faith. With time, this understanding of faith and reason as a binary became the mainstream theory.

From all this arises the problem of reification and stigmatization. What binaries do is that it attaches certain symbols and features to certain categories, whether these are concepts or identities. These symbols and features are important as they only mark one concept or identity as different from another. As Nancy Fraser puts in her work *Rethinking Recognition*, “justice is possible only through recognition of differences, but it poses the problem of reifying and stigmatizing identities.” One such identity is the identity of belonging to the Islamic faith. There is pressure on group members to conform to given group culture. For instance: a Muslim man is supposed to be someone with a beard and there is a moral pressure on all of them to

abide by these given notions (Fraser, 2000). Similarly, if we extend this argument a little further and talk about the notion of faith and reason, we will find that the concepts like faith and reason also get reified. For example, it is believed that faith has no place for reason in general, and some faiths like Islam, in particular, as believed by Sam Harris. Therefore, the binary way of looking at faith and reason not just ignores the other possibilities of looking at the concept but also stigmatizes and reifies some faiths like Islam based on the fixed understanding of the two.

Considering all the problems that the binary understanding of structuralism carries with it, Post-structuralisms provides the solution in terms of deconstruction. And if we deconstruct all the concepts and identities and free them from their fixed features and symbols, then it would be difficult to understand and have the clarity of the things.

## **1.2 Methodology**

As the work is mostly theoretical dealing with the question of binary between faith and reason in Christianity and Islam since the early Enlightenment, it is examining, interpreting, reinterpreting, and analyzing the existing literature on faith and reason in Christianity and Islam. The purpose of this study is to trace the trajectory of the relationship between faith and reason, and for that matter, both primary and secondary sources are used in this research.

Some of the selected primary sources that have been used in this work are Locke's *The Reasonableness of Christianity (1824)*; Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologica*; Iqbal's *The Reconstruction of Religious Thoughts in Islam (1974)*, Iqbal's Urdu Poetries, Newspapers' articles, and many more which throw light on the role and importance given to faculty of reasoning in both Islam and Christianity since their inception. Secondary sources review, analyze, interpret or evaluate the information in the primary sources. Most of the works referred to in the thesis are secondary. Works of scholars like Akeel Bilgrami, Alasdair MacIntyre, Brad S. Gregory, Ehsan Masood, George Saliba, Humberto Garcia, Irfan Ahmad, John Brooke, Mahmood Mamdani, Peter Adamson, and Peter Harrison have been referred.

Each of these scholars' voices out complex concerns, though situated historically, regarding the categories of religion/faith and science/reason. The study, thus, remains qualitative, that is, extensive study of books, journals, and papers on the subject is being conducted.

## Chapter 2: Faith and Reason in the Pre-Enlightenment Era

Ask an average man or a woman about the relationship between faith and reason; the first answer that comes to mind is that both belong to a different genre. The popular belief is there is a historical battle between science/rationality and religion/faith. At a theoretical level, scholars have drawn three contrasts while dealing with the question of science and religion, “Science considers natural phenomena as the result of impersonal forces. By contrast, religious systems involve personalized Gods, spirits, or demons. The scientific enterprise is legitimized by agreed testing procedures, the theological enterprise has been characterized by dogmatism. Whereas religions have required worship, ceremony, and sacrifice, these are the forms of activity alien to Western science.” (Hedley, 1991, p. 7) On these bases, faith, and reason or we can say religious belief and scientific rationality are often differentiated. But it would be a too simplistic approach to understand the relationship between religion and rationality based on popular belief, which marks rationality as the enterprise of indisputable facts, and religion as the set of unverifiable facts. The reason is, as Hedley remarks, the dividing line of the relationship between science and religion has been continuously shifting, with the change in the meanings attached to both domains in different contexts.

Many scholars believe that both science and religion have been coined recently. The term “religion” in the present context was rarely used before the 19<sup>th</sup> century, argues Harrison. The term “religion” was used as *religio* which meant worship or piety (Harrison, 1990). It is majorly through the works of E.B. Tylor, an early anthropologist; the term “religion” acquired its current meaning. Tylor’s work *Primitive Culture* (1871) explains the concept of animism,

a view that the core element in every religion is a belief in spiritual beings. This work made the term “religion” in its present meaning popular.

Similarly, the term “science” obtained its present connotation during the Enlightenment. According to Harrison, “Earlier science was referred to as natural philosophy or experimental philosophy” (Harrison, 1990). It was William Whewell (1834) who standardized the term “scientist” to refer to “practitioners of different branches of natural philosophies”. Whewell, a science historian, coined the term “scientist” in 1833. It first found mention in the review of Mary Somerville’s “On the Connexion of the Physical Sciences” published in the *Quarterly Review* in 1834 (Ross, 1962, pp. 65-68). Although the relationship between natural philosophy or science, and Christianity was not entirely free from tensions until the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, it was more or less harmonious. Only from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards, some unsettledness began to emerge between the two. It reached a peak in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. While perceiving the relationship between “science” and “religion”, historians should not ignore the social and political circumstances that played an important role in changing our understanding of the two, argues Hedley (Hedley, p. 11). It is imperative not to limit our understanding of “science” and “religion”, by totally relying on the 21<sup>st</sup> century absolute distinctions between the two, having roots from the early Enlightenment. Therefore, it becomes necessary to enquire about the relationship between faith or religious belief and reason or scientific rationality in the pre-Enlightenment phase (before the late 17<sup>th</sup> century) and see whether it was any different from how we approach faith and reason today.

## **2.1 Christian Religious Beliefs as Presupposition of Scientific Enterprise**

Religious beliefs in the past have always provided fundamentals to the natural philosophers to begin their inquiry. One such example is the Christian doctrine of the “Intelligent Creator Model”. The works of the seventeenth-century philosophers such as Newton, Kepler, and Robert Boyle were motivated by their search for order in the universe regulated by an “intelligent Creator”. It was common for these natural philosophers or scientists, which is what we call them today, to appeal to their religious beliefs in their natural philosophy (present-day science). One such significant natural philosopher who played a very important role in the history of scientific development was Newton. He held strong religious beliefs that were

reflected in his works (Pfizenmaier, 1997). It is quite evident from the letter Newton, after formulating his law of gravitational theory based on a mathematical model, wrote to Richard Bentley, a young contemporary of Isaac Newton. In this letter, he observed that all the stars could collapse into a single point if we go by the law of gravitational pull. This problem came to be known as “Bentley’s paradox” or the “cosmological paradox”. According to Newton, “each star in the universe ought to be attracted towards every other star. They should not remain motionless, at a constant distance from each other but should all fall together to some central point” (APS News, 2005). However, Newton later resolved this paradox by claiming that God prevented stars from collapsing into each other, by making ‘constant minute corrections’ (Brian, 2005, pp. 32-35). Newton asserted that the regulation of the solar system must be ascribed to the “counsel and contrivance of a voluntary agent- God” (Rovira, 2010, p. 22).

Similarly, Johannes Kepler (1571-1630), who defended Copernicus’ heliocentric model and discovered the three laws of planetary motion, considered his Christian faith to be informing his scientific work. Kepler believed that the Universe is just the mirror image of a divine creator. Kepler, in his first major publication *Mysterium Cosmographicum* (1596), mentions:

And the three most important things, of which I persistently sought the causes why they were such and not otherwise, were the number, size, and motion of the orbits. That beautiful commensurability (harmonia) of static objects: the Sun, the fixed stars, and the intervening medium (on the one hand), with God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (on the other hand), made me dare this (Barker and Goldstein, 2001, p. 103).

So, one of the main reasons that led Kepler to interrogate and later defend this new heliocentric theory was its perfect tuning to his religious beliefs. He found sync between the three elements of Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and the different parts of the Copernicus model: the Sun at the Centre as Father, the fixed stars at the extreme surface as Sons, and the Holy Spirit as the intervening medium. Moreover, Kepler also believed that the Sun’s unique position in this theory is compatible with the one occupied by God in this heavenly World. Most of Kepler’s major works announcing his significant scientific discoveries begin with a thanksgiving note to the Almighty, which would not only be rare but strange to find in the works of modern scientists (Kozhamthadam 2002, p. 897). In the Introduction of one of his



scientific and technical works *Astronomia Nova* that provided strong arguments for heliocentrism, he writes:

To praise and glorify with me the wisdom and greatness of the Creator, which I have revealed in a deeper explication of the form of the Universe, in an investigation of the causes, and my detection of the deceptiveness of sight. Let him not only extol the bounty of God in the preservation of living creatures of all kinds by the strength and stability of the Earth but also let him acknowledge the wisdom of the creator in its motion, so abstruse, so admirable (Ibid, p. 888).

The above statement from Kepler shows us that religious beliefs strongly influenced the scientific community during the pre-Enlightenment phase. In fact, these beliefs were acting as a guiding source to explore and enquire about the truth.

## **2.2 Reason as an Ally of Faith**

The basic problem with the idea of faith is that it is considered to be based on revelation or revelations, backed by divine authority. These sets of revelations are in some sense considered immune from rational investigation, critique and any attempt to do so is seen as a crime or mistake or even blasphemy at times. This makes one believe that faith and reason somehow are mutually exclusive. To address this problem, two eminent Christian scholars of the pre-Enlightenment era have shown us how faith is not just compatible with reason, but both have an organic connection. The two scholars, Thomas Aquinas and John Locke hold to the possibility of “Natural Theology”. Broadly, it is an area that focuses on exhibiting the aspects of God’s attributes or the existence of God using human reason. Natural Theology “amounts to forgoing appeals to any putative revelation and religious experience as evidence for the truth of propositions, and accepting as data, only those few naturally evident considerations that traditionally constitute data, acceptable to philosophy in general. That’s what makes it natural theology” (Kretzmann, 1997, p. 2).

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) was a prominent philosopher of the 13<sup>th</sup> century who wrote extensively on the harmony between faith and reason and Christianity and

philosophy. Aquinas as a thinker represents an explanation of faith through his architectonic method and heavy reliance on Aristotle. However, this explanation will likely become more questionable with the rise of Newtonian science that is not anchored in Aristotle. This is perhaps the big story about science in the 17th century. Aquinas argues that there are two ways to know about God's existence: One is by 'reason' and the second is by 'sacred teaching'. It is possible to demonstrate the existence of God in the same way we explain another natural phenomenon through the pre-existing cause or *posteriori* demonstrations, he argues (*Summa Theologica*, 1981, Ia: 2.2). According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, "*a posteriori*" is a kind of "logic, which usually refers to reasoning that works backward from an effect to its causes". Aquinas talks about the five ways through which the existence of God can be demonstrated in *Summa Theologica*, and in each of these ways, he cites some observable phenomenon. For him, the main factor behind all these phenomena is not anyone but God. These five ways or phenomena are: "the motion"; "the reality of contingency"; the "existence of efficient causes"; the "end-directed activity of natural objects"; and the "varying degrees of perfection in the natural order" (*Summa Theologica*, 1981, Ia 2.3). It is not possible here to go into the details of each one of these; however, we can delve into one of these ways - "the existence of efficient causes". The argument is like this-

In the world of natural phenomena, we would notice a sequence of efficient causes. But it is indeed impossible to claim that a phenomenon is an efficient cause of itself. In all the efficient causes following a sequence, there must be the first cause but it is not possible to find that "first cause" in the same way it is almost impossible to reach up to infinity. This "first cause" is caused by some "intermediate cause", which in turn is the cause of the ultimate cause. There can be one or more than one intermediate cause as well. To reject the cause is like dismissing the effect. Therefore, to accept that there is no first cause among all the efficient causes is like to say that there is neither an intermediate cause nor an ultimate cause. Therefore, he suggests accepting and believing in this "first cause", generally ascribed by the name 'God' (Ibid). It would be better to simplify the argument for our clear understanding. It goes like this- i) All the natural phenomena in the world follow the "efficient cause" ii) No phenomenon can be the efficient cause of itself. iii) Each efficient cause has a precedent or a "prior cause". iv) But it is almost impossible to find out that efficient cause or reach the infinity, and v). As we can't

go up to the infinity of all the causes, there must be the first cause, referred to as 'God' (Copleston, 1955).

An illustration of plant life would help us to understand Aquinas's argument in a better way. A plant's growth first depends upon a seed. The seed depends on water and sunlight to become a plant. The availability of the two factors rests further upon the proper atmospheric activities such as rain, clouds, and the sun's inclination. These atmospheric activities are further controlled by other fundamental causes, the order of which continues. However, the events described above proceed concurrently, meaning simultaneously and not sequentially. But still, they present order in the sense that each event depends causally on a prior phenomenon for its existence. Copleston argues that while describing these events, Aquinas is not emphasizing the causal ordering of this phenomenon but "the hierarchy of causes in which a subordinate member is dependent on the causal activity of a higher member." (Copleston, 1955, p. 122) Therefore, we can say that Aquinas was more interested in the metaphysical ordering of causes than their temporal ordering. This metaphysical ordering also requires a "first cause" or a "first member". 'First' in the sense that this cause doesn't depend upon any other cause of the highest order (Ibid, p. 123).

As we have already explained, the presence of the first cause only would justify the presence of the subsequent causes and effects because self-causation is not possible. The absence of the "first cause" would automatically mean omitting all the causes and effects which is practically not possible. But the impossibility of self-causation is not applicable for the first cause. As Aquinas says, "there must be a first efficient, and completely non-dependable cause, where the meaning of the word 'first' is not in the temporal sense but the ontological sense" (Ibid).

This leads us to the second question, which is, if God is the first and the supreme cause among all the efficient causes, then how it is possible that 'He' possesses the characteristics attributed to him by Christian theologians and philosophers such as love, goodness, just, omnipresence, etc.? As Aquinas says, "When the existence of a cause is demonstrated from an effect, this effect takes the place of the definition of the cause in proof of the cause's existence" (Summa Theologica, 1981, Ia 2.2 and 2). For instance: when we say "God is good" or "God is just", it simply means that God is the reason for goodness and justice in his creation. However, it

doesn't explain to us exactly the nature of God (Ibid, 13.2). Aquinas believes that it's only possible to demonstrate God's existence through reason; however, grasping the divine nature perfectly is not possible. According to Aquinas, 'God', who is the first cause, is uncreated but created everything around us and "contains within Himself the whole perfection of being" (Ibid, 4.2). What he meant is that when we say "God is good", it doesn't mean that "God is not evil" or "God is the cause of all goodness in his creatures". It simply means, "Whatever good we attribute to creatures, pre-exists in God, and in a more excellent and higher way" (Ibid, 13.2).

However, the underlying assumption that has pushed all the arguments is the idea that the world began to exist and has not always existed. Such an assumption is based upon sacred teachings, he opines. As he states, "by faith alone do we hold, and by no other demonstration can it be proved that the world did not always exist" (ST, Ia 46.2). Also, considering the importance of sacred teaching, Aquinas argues that God's existence is a matter of faith for most people, and it is neither acceptable to some nor possible for some to understand the rational arguments supporting God's existence. Therefore, it is perfectly fine if few accept God's presence based on sacred teaching, which others try to explain using reason (ST, Ia 2.2). Despite this, Aquinas believes that the doctrinal truths of Christianity-truths, embraced by faith, are often authenticated by "fitting arguments" (Summa Contra Gentiles, 1975, I.6.1). In short, faith can only be strengthened by applying reason (De trinitate, 1993, 2.1). Briefly, we can say that Aquinas believes that faith and reason are not separate but the two ways of knowing the truth. "Reason" explains what we can understand by logic and experience alone. For instance, we can demonstrate the existence of God through the application of *posteriori* reasoning. However, some phenomena or special revelation like the World has not always existed or God sent Jesus as the Prophet, which can be explained by faith alone. Faith builds on reason and reason on faith, and since both faith and reason are different ways of arriving at the truth, both are consistent with each other.

Similarly, John Locke extensively discusses the relationship between Christian faith and reason in his works, and like Aquinas, he also holds a complementarian viewpoint of the relationship between the two. Locke, in his work *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, argues that there has always been a close relationship between the Christian faith and reason, which

is quite evident from the importance given to the idea of equality in the Christian faith. Such importance given to the idea of equality has rational foundations. This link between the idea of equality, reason, and Christian faith is well explored by Locke in his *The Reasonableness of Christianity*. Jeremy Waldron has dealt in detail with Locke's works and provides us one of the best reviews of his work, especially Locke's "The Reasonableness of Christianity" in his work *God, Locke, and equality*. In this work, Locke is exploring the idea of basic equality, the idea that we as human beings are required to be treated and respected as equals. Locke's primary concern is not to deal with the questions like: In what ways can we be treated as equals? Or, how can we be treated as equals? But with the more fundamental aspect of the whole equality discourse. He is asking the fundamental question related to equality – why at all do we need to be treated as equals?

Waldron argues that for Locke, the argument for supporting the basic equality principle should be such that it transcends the particular context and can be applied to all the times. That is only possible if such answers of treating humans as equals are rooted in human nature itself (Waldron, 2002, p. 9). Waldron argues that "Locke was exploring the possibility that humans were by nature worthy of respect as one another's equals, not just one another's equals in the politics of late seventeenth-century England, and.....twenty-first-century America" (Ibid, p. 10) . For Locke, the roots of basic equality, the idea that "all men are by nature equal" can be found in Christianity. For him, it was "an axiom of theology". For instance, Locke argues that according to the Bible, God has created all of us in "a state of equality, wherein all the power and jurisdiction is reciprocal, no one having more than another" [2nd T: 4]. Also, "all of us lords, all of us kings, each of us equal to the greatest, and subject to nobody" [2nd T: 123] (Waldron, 2002, p. 6). This shows that the idea of basic equality is fundamental to the Christian faith, and therefore, it is why the idea gets so much importance. But what is it in human nature that humans are required to be treated as equals? It is because "women as much as men are created in the image of God and endowed with the modicum of reason, that is for Locke, the criterion of human equality" (Waldron, 2002, p. 22). In the *First Treatise*, Locke says that God created man "in his Image after his Likeness an intellectual Creature . . . For wherever else the Image of God consisted, the intellectual Nature was certainly a part of it and

belonged to the whole species” [Ist T: 30] (Waldron, 2002, p.71 ). Here, the term ‘man’ stands for human beings in general.

Therefore, the principle of basic equality is laid upon the idea of rational beings, which for Locke, is supported by the Christian doctrine itself. This shows the importance given to the whole idea of rationality embodied by human creation in the Christian faith. So, in this backdrop, it can be said that Christian faith and reason are deeply connected. Similarly, in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke deals with the meaning of faith and reason and their relation to each other. The reason, for him, means-

“The discovery of the certainty or probability of such propositions or truths, which the mind arrives at by deduction made from such ideas, as it has got by the use of its natural faculties; viz, by the use of sensation or reflection”(Locke, 1975, IV.18.2).

Faith, on the other hand, “is assent to any proposition...upon the credit of the proposer, as coming from God, in some extraordinary way of communication.” (Ibid, IV.18.3, p. 690) Such extraordinary communication is what we call revelation. Revelation, according to Locke, is of two types: “Original revelation” and “Traditional revelation”. “Original revelation” is "that first impression, which is made immediately by God, on the mind of any man." “Traditional revelation” is "those impressions delivered over to others in words and it’s the ordinary ways of conveying our conceptions to another" (Ibid, IV. 18.3). This original revelation for Locke is a pure form of revelation, but when humans try to write it down or convey it to another person, it becomes a derivative or traditional revelation. It is where the actual problem begins to evolve. For Locke, as this derivative revelation is written, interpreted, rewritten, and reinterpreted over a period of time, it begins to diverge from its original source. The farther it moves away from its source, the greater its chances of corruption.

The second problem is the unfamiliarity with the language in which the original revelation is revealed. Since it is not always possible to grab the essence of words or meanings written in a particular language through translation, chances are that the original intention of the revelation loses its meaning after some time (Ibid, IV. 18.3). Moreover, most of the revelations, whether Islamic or Christian, are very old and written in older versions of the present language. So, the

chances of misinterpretation increase with the unfamiliarity of the language. Therefore, for Locke, the main question is: “how do we know that a revelation or testimony, which claims to be from God, is in fact from God only?” Locke believes that we must verify whether the interpretation we have is right and verify the credentials of those claiming to deliver a revelation from God (Ibid, IV.16.14).

It is where reason plays an important role, according to Locke. He says that it is possible to check the validity of a particular proposition through probability. Probability is not a certainty, but it’s likely to be true (Ibid, IV.15.3). The various types of factors to be taken into consideration while testing the validity of a proposition are (Ibid, IV.15.4) - i) “Number of witnesses”; ii) “Their reliability”; iii) Their skills, and iv) “Their intent”

Although the chances of certainty about the complete validity of a particular proposition through probability are less, the possibility of error is reduced to a large degree. Locke distinguished between “degrees of probability”, the highest degree he calls “assurance”. “Assurance” means when the truth of a claim is supported by the agreement of all the witnesses of that claim, in all the ages. For instance: Fire warms a person. The truth of this claim is agreed upon by all the witnesses of the fire in all ages. Locke considers the second highest degree of probability as ‘confidence’. Confidence is when the proposition that is witnessed by others is in sync with our own experiences. There is some other type of probability, which Locke believes, neither depends on the testimony of others nor on our experiences as it is almost impossible for our senses to reach these things. These things are “either above us (spirits) or below us (microscopic beings too small to see), or too far from us (life on other planets)”. Here, Locke believes that it is also possible to obtain correct judgments through reasoning by analogy (Ibid, IV, 15.6). A detailed analysis of analogical reasoning will be dealt with in the third chapter. As of now, we can say that Locke rejects uncritical reliance on the opinions of others and calls for the application of reason. He (1975) writes:

Because the Mind, not being certain of the truth of that, it does not know, but only yielding to the Probability that appears to it, is bound to give up its assent to such testimony, which, it is satisfied, comes from one who cannot err, and will not deceive. But yet, it still belongs

to reason, to judge of the truth of its being a revelation, and of the significance of the words, wherein it is delivered (Ibid.18.8, N: 694).

In brief, Locke says that it is true that faith is a revelation from God. But to be sure that such a revelation is definitely from God himself, we need to apply reason as it is our responsibility to check the validity of such revelations. Therefore, faith needs to be regulated by reason. For those who would not use reason and base their claims on faith, Locke writes:

“...he that takes away reason to make way for revelation, puts out the Light of both and does much what the same as if he would persuade a man to put out his eyes, the better to receive the remote light of an invisible star by a telescope” (Ibid, IV.19.4, p. 698).

So, for both Aquinas and Locke, reason plays a significant role in strengthening the faith by freeing it from erroneous interpretations. Similarly, till the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Christian religious beliefs served as a presupposition for natural philosophers like Newton and Kepler in their search for Universal truths. It becomes quite evident from the above discussion that if we begin to unravel the history to understand the relationship between faith and reason, we will realize that the absolute polarity notion regarding faith or religious belief and reason or rationality was not always there, but might have come into existence as a result of a myriad of misinterpretations and myths accompanying such misinterpretations. Historically tracing those misinterpretations and the accompanying myths would be another fascinating area to explore in the scholarship of faith and reason. Understanding the possible reasons behind the binary understanding of faith and reason is the theme of the third chapter.



### **Chapter 3: Early Enlightenment and the Faith-Reason Binary**

The public discourse promotes the dominant idea that faith and reason are constantly at war with each other. People like Thomas Dixon (Dixon, 2018) believe that the Enlightenment rationalists created the “conflict-narrative” in the late 1700s. This seems to be true but considering this to be the only fact would mean brushing aside alternative perspectives. The current work emphasizes that the idea of war between faith and reason was not always there but resulted from important developments of the early English Enlightenment period unfolding from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century England where the groundwork for Enlightenment was laid down. These developments changed how religion and science were perceived, resulting in the creation of faith and reason binaries. These antecedents that laid the foundation of the faith-reason binary are- the emergence of Protestant Reformers, more precisely the Anglican Protestants, Mercantile capitalism, and Newtonian science. Also, the fourth important element that acted as a final catalyzing agent for this divide was the adoption of secularism as a political doctrine by the West. However, these developments need not be seen in a segregated manner or sequential order as they overlap each other, making the process more complex. This chapter will discuss these important developments in detail.

### 3.1 Emergence of Protestant Reformers

Scholars like Peter Harrison trace the reasons for the faith-reason binary to the early Enlightenment, which started in England. Peter Harrison, in his work titled *'Religion' and Religions in the English Enlightenment*, talks about how the term religion as we understand it today emerged in Western thought quite late. It, he argues, emerged basically with the Enlightenment that provided us with a new framework for understanding the religious aspects of human life (Harrison, 1990). The same argument Harrison is making in his new work, *The Territory of Science and Religion* (2015). In this, he argues that there were no terms as such that correlate to our modern concepts “science” and “religion” in the pre-modern world. “Natural philosophers” were those dealing with an inquiry into the truths of nature. But philosophy, as Pierre Hadot has argued, was viewed by the pre-moderns as a “system and a way of life rather than propositional beliefs”. For them, philosophy was concerned with therapeutic practices to transform the philosopher’s perceptions of the universe and being. This approach combined, rather than segregated, what we today consider to be the Balkanized boundaries of science, religion, and ethics (Hadot, 2002, p.3). ‘*Scientia*’ and ‘*religio*’ for pre-moderns were viewed as “interior states”, or “dispositions”. Aquinas identified ‘*scientia*’ as an intellectual virtue and ‘*religio*’ as a moral virtue, one related intimately to interior acts of devotion and prayer rather than their outward expression”. The Aristotelian science that was in favour of this understanding of ‘*scientia*’ and ‘*religio*’ crumbled in the 17th century. However, before that, ‘*religio*’ was already recognized as a “propositional knowledge external to and independent of the individual rather than an interior state or disposition” (Harrison, 2015). The process, however, began much earlier in the 16<sup>th</sup> century itself. At the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, reformers or what we call Protestants emerged in the scene first in England as a response to the oppressive and discriminatory practices of the Roman Catholic Church. They set the conditions that later resulted in the separation of religion from science, and consequently, reason from faith. It all began with establishing a distinction between religion, based on revealed knowledge, and natural knowledge.

Medieval thinkers believed that a person could reach the knowledge of the existence of God and discover natural laws by applying reason. According to them, the natural and the revealed are the two types of knowledge of God that complete and complement each other. His view

found its place in traditional Catholic theology until it got corrupted, argues Peter Harrison (Harrison, 1990, p. 7). Roman Catholics began to define the Church as the bishops and started to propagate the infallibility of the Bible. Protestants emerged as a response to the Roman Catholics. Harrison says, “Whereas in the Middle Ages the concern of the Christian West has been with faith—a ‘dynamics of the heart’—in the seventeenth century, it shifted to the impersonal religion of rituals and practices” (Ibid, p. 1). This religion was rooted in external aspects of religious life and a system of practices came under sharp criticism. The reformers distinguished between ‘revealed’ and ‘natural’ knowledge of God based on this ‘new religion’ rooted in corrupt practices of Catholics.

Two important Protestants, Luther and Calvin, following Augustine’s lead, stressed that human reason has become corrupted due to the negative consequences of the fall. Harrison argues, “Since natural theology resulted from the exercise of fallen human powers of speculation, it became for the reformers a highly suspected enterprise” (Ibid, p. 6). Contrary to it were the Cambridge Platonists, who instead of distinguishing natural from revealed knowledge of God, believed that both are not separate but two vehicles of the same truth as “natural religion in its most perfect expression, was a legitimate, and indeed the legitimate form of religion”. Instead of calling it as a ‘revealed’ and ‘natural’ knowledge, Platonists preferred to call them in terms of ‘reason’ of two kinds— ‘human faculty’ and ‘divine reason’ (*nous*), which are respectively understood as natural knowledge and revealed knowledge. Pure ideas that give substance to all phenomena are only known to divine reason. And this divine reason is revealed to human reason by rising above the evils of the material world through moral discipline. They believed that it is only in the mind of God that the true knowledge resides, and it is possible to avail that by the use of human reason through divine dispensation. So, Harrison argues that for them, revealed and natural knowledge are the same, the viewpoint that slowly started changing with the emergence of reformers (Ibid, p.8).

Taking into account the viewpoints of both reformers and Platonists, it becomes imperative to describe what is meant by “nature” or “natural”. Harrison believes that in the treatment of religion, three different understandings of nature developed in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, from which three distinct interpretations of religion emerged. According to the most conservative interpretation, the natural order is opposed to the supernatural as ‘natural’ religion is the

product of human sins; it stands in sharp contrast to supernatural or religion based on revelation. Although this distinction didn't originate with the reformers, they concretized the distinction, criticizing those who ventured to build religion based on reason. This viewpoint propagated by reformers or the Protestants denied using reason in divine operation but allowed the application of reason in criticizing institutions and men. This conservative view of nature was not acceptable to more enquiring minds of the 17<sup>th</sup> century like Francis Bacon, who talked about two more views of nature. He put forward the two distinct understandings of nature. The "light of nature", he (1990) said, is used under two meanings:

the one, which springeth from reason, sense, induction, argument, according to the laws of heaven and earth; the other, that which is imprinted upon the spirit of man by an inward instinct, according to the law of conscience, which is a sparkle of purity of his first estate; in which latter sense only he is a participant of some light and discerning touching the perfection of the moral law (Ibid, p. 6).

So, the two kinds of nature, according to him, are-

- i) One is that which emerges from sense, induction, and logic that in the Kantian language is "practical reason".
- ii) Second is one based upon inward instinct, moral laws, an intuition that in the Kantian language is "pure reason."

The first one believes that "natural knowledge" emerges from sense, induction, logic, argument, whereas the latter, according to Peter Harrison, is derived from Renaissance thought. According to the latter view, Nature is not opposed to the supernatural, as believed by the reformers, but rather complements it. Both natural, as well as religion based on revealed knowledge, has their source in moral laws. These moral laws derive from a common source i.e. God. Thus, according to renaissance thought, nature is simply another mode of divine operation. It is this same view held by Platonists as well. As the Enlightenment progressed, the first view – nature has to do with reason based on sense, observation, and induction – gained prominence, becoming the dominant notion of understanding Reason. This understanding of

nature gained importance because it made a sharp contrast with religion, which in reality, turned out to be the source of oppression and atrocities for a long time. It is believed that it was against these atrocities and oppression in the hands of the Church that the Enlightenment emerged (Harrison, 1990, p.7). To be precise, many negative elements of the religion crystallized during that period, which played a crucial role in its fading into the private sphere. Until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, religion was just reduced to the popular beliefs and practices of the Roman Catholic Church. The ‘religion’, which was believed to be faith linked to the “dynamic of the heart”, struggling to reach towards the truth, is now viewed as already known fixed truths and beliefs proposed by the Church (Harrison, 1990). During that period, this Religion came under criticism for lacking reason and leaning towards oppression, as many contradictions began to be seen within it. In general, Christianity that proposes peace began to be endorsing conflict. This led to the rise of Protestant reformers to bring reformation in Christianity.

Simultaneously, Enlightenment thinkers, through their writings, began to criticize “religion”. For instance, Hobbes admitted that revelation had occurred, but Scriptures needed to be subjected to rational criticism, insisting that supernatural phenomena such as miracles also need naturalistic explanations. He did not favour replacing religion completely but believed that religious activities need to be managed by applying reason within the state. Similarly, Spinoza talked about critical evaluation of the scriptures through reason to reduce the negative impact of religion. He was not totally against the revealed religion, provided a distinction was made between true or natural religion and the prophecy and the laws interpreted from the sacred books. A critique of religion is important, according to Spinoza, so that true religion is not confused with irrational beliefs and superstitions. He believes that doctrines and principles associated with ‘religion’ can play an important role in our lives if interpreted rationally. Later on, revelation and the texts associated with it as a whole were also criticized by English deists, on the ground that there is nothing rational in all these, and all the evidence of miracles and prophecy associated with Christianity are unsound (Hudson, 2005). Therefore, one can say that constant practices of discrimination and authoritarianism by the Church led to investigations into Christianity in the beginning. As time passed, these investigations transformed into the

practice of continuous questioning of religion to the extent that Christianity as faith itself would eventually be challenged.

It began to be challenged by posing rationality to its opposite side, thus causing the divorce between faith and reason in the West (Harrison, 1990). However, soon these Protestants, or more precisely the Anglican Protestantism who broke with the old oppressive tradition of considering priests as the source of authority insisted that the Christian doctrines should only be based on scriptures supported by reason realized the problem of using reason. They saw that the application of reason by different people could result in multiple interpretations of the same scripture. As a result, they saw the emergence of multiple competing Christian truths. As Gregory says, "Protestant appeals to scripture alone produced an unwelcome pluralism of competing Christian truth claims" (Gregory, 2012, p. 100). As a result, they failed to establish a unified reading of scripture or set of rules defining our day-to-day activities.

One could at this time also begin to speak of religions. Recognizing the notion of more than one religion quickly presented in the words of Harrison, the "new and distinctively modern problem: Which religion is the true religion?" (Harrison, 2015, p.102). Therefore, Gregory argues that, by the eighteenth century, Europeans, to protect their society from communal violence, resorted to the principle of religious tolerance. The principle of 'religious tolerance' got a place in the laws under the term 'secularism', a doctrine that believes in restricting religious practices to the private sphere. Everyone was free to have different beliefs according to their likings, and no one was allowed to impose these beliefs and practices upon others. Religion, which was a way of life earlier, established itself as an individual enterprise. According to Gregory, we are living in "the Kingdom of Whatever " (Gregory, 2012, p. 112). In such a world, there is a clear-cut demarcation between faith and reason, where faith is an individual enterprise and reason, a public enterprise. Harrison says that the implicit approval of the "cognitive authority of this naturalistic standard charged with the normative categorization between rational and irrational by the apologists and natural philosophers proved decisive in setting the stage for the later conflict between science and religion", and consequently, faith and reason (Harrison, 2015).

This conflict that began with the emergence of Anglican Protestantism, concretized more with the rise of Newtonian science. Harrison argues that earlier both religion and science were concerned with knowledge, but the replacement of the Aristotelian framework with the Newtonian framework in the 17<sup>th</sup> century resulted in re-imagining ‘science’ in new ways. Dawson (2020) says that for Harrison-

Science now claimed cognitive authority by virtue of its empirically adequate models, the production of useful technologies, and accurate causal accounts of the operations of nature. The utility of science, ultimately, is what buttresses its claim not only to provide unique and privileged access to truth but also to stand as a normative rampart against the forces of irrationality and superstition. (Dawson, 2020)

This takes us to the second antecedent of the faith-reason binary, which is the emergence of Newtonian science.

### **3.2 Newtonian Science**

Until the sixteenth century, science was believed to be supporting the religious realm. Scientific thought held that the earth is at the center of the universe with the sun revolving around it. Only when Copernicus rejected this notion did the Europeans begin to abandon the Aristotelian-medieval scientific thought. This thought considered syllogistic logic as the main instrument of rational explanation. This syllogistic logic follows the deduction method to explain particular facts. It was for the first time that science was questioning the authority of the Church.

Following the footprints of Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo, attempted experimentation to prove that the sun is at the center of the universe. However, the major figure of the scientific revolution is considered to be Newton. He combined all the methods of Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo in one single method of mathematical laws. He justified his claims by the mathematical rule of universal gravitation and concluded that all planets move according to fixed rules operated by mathematics. Therefore, Newtonian science is believed to have brought a great revolution in the field of science. This new science rejected the Cartesian method of

deduction based on hypotheses in favor of rules supported by mathematical experimentations and observation, setting the stage for the conflict between religious and scientific thought (Henry, 2002). Cartesianism is a form of rationalism derived from Descartes's thought that even rejects the Aristotelian method of deduction based on logic and even empiricism. It believes that scientific knowledge can be derived from innate ideas through deductive reasoning. It emphasizes that our sensory experience is the source of all the knowledge around us. For Descartes, the knowledge of deductive reason is provided to us by 'God', and therefore, needs to be trusted completely (Jonathan, 1991).

Newton's work *Principia*, published in 1687, opens with the three laws of motion that he draws from the works of Galileo, Christian Huygens, and Descartes. Newton rejected both the Aristotelian and Cartesian methods of deduction and gave a new theory based on the Universal law of gravitation. According to this new theory, all bodies have the power of gravity, proportional to their quantities of matter. Therefore, it is because of this gravitational pull that all the objects attract each other. Newton used this law of universal gravitation to explain all natural phenomena such as the "tidal waves", the irregularities of 'the motion of the moon'. But what caused this universal gravitation? If we go by the mechanical philosophy beliefs, a mechanical cause should be behind any event. Newton was criticized for not providing any such cause. However, Newton had another side to him. He recognized the agency of 'God' in considering forces between particles as ontological realities. Whatever the truth is, one clear thing is that there was a fundamental shift in our worldview established by this 'new science'. It offered a powerful alternative to the established belief systems (Iqbal, 2000, pp. 549-550). Margaret Jacob, in her work, *Scientific Culture and the Making of the Industrial West* (1997), says:

In making possible the shift toward this world and away from the next, the new Science from Descartes to Newtonian offered a radically altered picture of nature. Science made nature lawful, and as the definition of creation changed, so too did the human conception of the creator. A new religious outlook was being invented. 'Natural religion' and 'natural theology' became passwords to a distinctive religiosity. Miracles and divine interpretations became rarer; being religious began to mean thought rather than prayer. A vision of order



and harmony, God's work, replaced biblical texts and stories, God's word.....The roots of our uniquely modern ability to examine nature and society as self-contained entities and to offer explanations natural, that is entirely human, lie in the crisis of the late 17<sup>th</sup> century (Jacob, 1997, p. 74).

Therefore, this new non-Aristotelian science established the demarcation between religion and science through establishing the new approach to knowledge. However, one can't ignore the role played by religion in pushing and establishing the new science.

### ***3.2.1 Role of Protestantism in the Emergence of 'New Science'***

Harrison has dealt in detail with the role that Protestantism played in the rise of 'modern science' in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. In *Protestantism and the Making of Modern Science*, he argues that the 'scientific revolution' brought by Newtonian science was not made possible through the radical segregation of religion from science. The success of this modern science was possible only because of the space provided and different conditions brought by the Protestantism of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. He argues that it is mistaken if we consider that religious conflict between Catholics and Protestants of the 16<sup>th</sup> century did not influence the rise of modern science when religion was actually "the only game in town". The real question is how the rise of the Protestant Reformation in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries impacted the emergence of new science (Harrison, 2016, p. 101).

First, Harrison believes that the reformation started the culture of questioning the traditional religious authorities, which opened up the possibilities for new knowledge through generating distinct social environments and new institutions. Philosophers like Francis Bacon argue that it was church reformation brought by the Protestants that acted as a source of inspiration for the new knowledge and new approach to the study of nature. People started linking reforms in the religious realm to the new inventions and innovations in the scientific realm. It became quite common to identify the scientific innovators such as Kepler, Copernicus, and Paracelsus with the Reformation's central figures such as Luther and Calvin. Copernicus and Paracelsus were referred to as "the Luther and Calvin of natural philosophy", and Kepler as "Luther of astronomy".

The second reason is that these natural philosophers often turned to these Protestants for social legitimacy, argues Harrison, and there is no doubt that they got the legitimacy and support from the Protestant Reformers (Ibid, p. 102). The reason being their new scientific discoveries and theories were considered as an attempt to revive the ancient Christian teaching and return to the purest form of religion. Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo's scientific theories relied on the ancient Greek Pythagorean teachings. The Greeks were believed to draw their scientific knowledge mostly from Biblical figures such as Moses, Job, and Solomon. Following this, one can claim that the theories of Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and even Newton were in line with the authors of the Hebrew Bible. Copernicus dedicated his classic *De revolutionibus* (1543) on the "heliocentric model" to Pope Paul III, in terms of providing him great encouragement. He also cites the other two Greek Philosophers Plutarch and Cicero in this work. Kepler called Pythagoras "the grandfather of all Copernicus" and Galileo also made a direct reference to Pythagoras theory. Therefore, these natural philosophers responsible for bringing the scientific revolution and influenced Newton showed great reliance on ancient Greek figures like Pythagoras, Cicero, Plutarch, who were greatly inspired by the events and figures of the Hebrew Bible (Ibid).

Third, Harrison argues that the shift to non-Aristotelian Science was greatly encouraged by Luther and Calvin in an attempt to re-Christianize the tradition that was believed to be corrupted by Aristotle and his paganism. For Luther, Aristotle was the sinner for corrupting "Christian theology" and "natural philosophy". He blamed both the church and the universities for turning into the places "where only that blind, heathen, teacher Aristotle rules". Lambert Daneau, the known Calvinist thinker and writer of the book *Physica Christiana*, or *Christian Physics* (1576), sought to use scripture to "reform the works of the philosophers". Similarly, another thinker of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Robert Fludd, a cosmologist, mathematician, and astrologer, also vehemently rejected Aristotle's works as lacking "the true philosophy" due to its deviance from the scripture. Thus, Aristotelian philosophy was considered to be against the reformation principle of "*sola scriptura*" meaning "scripture alone" (ibid, 103) Ann Blair remarks that this strong insistence on "pious natural philosophy", "Mosaic Natural Philosophy" or "Christian philosophy" played a significant role in the emergence of "new science" or the "Newtonian

science” or the “non-Aristotelian science” even though natural philosophers sought to give preference to experiment and experience over written sources. In short, reformers in the religious realm or the protestant reformers played a significant role in liberating the sciences from the clutches of Aristotelian philosophy and vice versa (Blair, 2000). Harrison remarks, “Liberation from the strictures of Aristotelian philosophy was thus a common goal of reformers of both religion and the sciences.” (Harrison, 2016, p. 104)

The question that becomes important here is: What was the major source of contention of the religious reformers such as Luther and Calvin with the Aristotelian Philosophy? Harrison chalks out some problematic areas of Aristotelian philosophy which according to reformers were incompatible with “true Christianity”: his lack of knowledge of the “Fallen World”, his rejection of the theory that “world had been created” and, his teleological stand on the nature and its operations. Therefore, the proponents of modern science purposely decided to focus on these very contentious elements of Aristotelian philosophy, to attain social legitimacy. This led to the invention of new doctrines and theories that were imperative for modern science’s growth. Our focus would be here on one of these issues, that is, Aristotle’s lack of knowledge of the fallen world. For Protestants, the problem with Aristotelian science was its belief in the unassisted faculty of human reason and sense experience. He believed that human’s sensory and cognitive powers could accurately come to the conclusions of the working of the universe and nature, and thus there is no need for experiments. This viewpoint was neither accepted by religious reformers nor the scientific reformers and thus became the reason for their alliance. For Protestants, the “human fall” was similar to a “fall from perfection”, destroying both cognitive and moral abilities. Thus, it is impossible to fully understand and comprehend nature through reason after the incident of Adam’s fall, declared Luther. Luther was even skeptical of all those philosophers and universities promoting the scientific doctrines of Aristotle on the premise that truth can be discovered by the application of our intellect. The various scientific doctrines propounded were: “the stone is heavy and thus falls quickly”, “the feather is light”, and “the water is wet”. Like Luther, Calvin was also skeptical of Aristotelian Philosophy. He believed that “the whole soul is vitiated” due to the fall, and so our faculty of reason and the senses. In short, Protestant reformers believed that Aristotelians had undermined the

consequence of original sin on the human faculty of reason to attain knowledge, argues Harrison (Harrison, pp. 104-105).

This analysis of the “fall” opened up new possibilities, according to Bacon. One such possibility was a belief that Adam, in his innocence, must have had great knowledge about nature and its operation which he lost after the “fall”. Therefore, the “fall narrative” resulted in an emphasis on the twofold goal of humans, argues Bacon. First was to reinstate their fallen morality through religion and faith, and second, to reinstate their mastery of nature through arts and sciences. This was how the new science got its legitimacy from the religion itself. This is quite evident from the fact that the early founders of the Royal Society, which was established in 1660, mostly talked in theological terms to justify the new science such as “recapturing a lost human dominion over nature” (Ibid, p. 106).

It can be worth accepting that the “natural sciences” gained significant authority and prominence owing to Protestant Reformation. The recognition of this new experimental or modern science from the religious realm was required initially because the new science still had to prove its utility and was often seen with suspicion. The advocates of modern science found it useful to align themselves with religious values. As a result, “natural philosophy” and “natural theology” established a good relationship with each other. This partnership was necessary as it helped the “new science” attain social legitimacy and acceptance as a mainstream activity in the modern West, argues Gaukroger (Gaukroger, 2005, p. 23). It was not science alone that benefited from this partnership. Robert Boyle argues that religion too gained from this in the beginning. The Protestant Reformation brought with it religious pluralism. This caused great chaos in the society as the proponents of each religion started asserting that only their religion was true. In such an atmosphere, science came to the rescue by providing empirical evidence and proof for God’s wisdom and power. Robert Boyle said, “The New Philosophy may furnish us with new weapons for the defense of our ancient Creed” (Boyle, 1675). Glanvill, Royal Society Fellow, accepted the fact that the new sciences helped “to establish the infallible truth of Scripture History, and twists such as cord as is as strong as anything in Geometry or Nature.” These arguments often rested on the notion that the natural philosophy accepted the happening of certain incidents surfaced in scripture, such as the event

of “Noah’s Flood”, argues Harrison. Natural philosophy, through examining the important testimonies, gave the required external assistance to the established beliefs of that time (Harrison, p. 114).

Sadly, this initial partnership between modern science and religion did not last long. Harrison argues that this anti-Catholic environment soon shaped the conflict between science and Christianity by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, arose the “conflict-narrative”. Although the main event that marked the division between science and religion can be traced back to the publication of Darwin’s book on evolution, its roots can be found in the emergence of Newtonian science replacing Aristotelian science in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The other important event was the publication of two important works that further crystallized the conflict by portraying religion as the rival of science. These were John Draper’s *History of the Conflict between Science and Religion* (1874) and Dickson White’s *The History of the Warfare between Science and Religion in Christendom* (1896). It is ironic how the science that flourished under the umbrella of ‘Protestants’ ultimately eroded religious supremacy and established its authority. Harrison remarks, “Science thus came to assume the upper hand over religion and ever since shows no signs of relinquishing it” (Harrison, p. 116). By removing religion from the scene, science became more fact-based and quantitative. It indeed emerged under the support of Protestants, but scholars like Bilgrami establish a link between Newtonian Science and the rise of capitalism. He suggests that Newtonian science owes much to capitalism for its success and domination in the longer run (Bilgrami, 2011 and Hessen, 1931). Therefore, it is important to explore the link between the two, and this leads us to the third important antecedent to the science-religion or faith-reason binary, which is “Rise of mercantile capitalism”.

### **3.3 Rise of Mercantile Capitalism**

Mercantile capitalism, like Newtonian science, did not flourish and succeed in a vacuum. Like Newtonian Science, religion too played a very important role in the initial success of capitalism. There are two scholars whose viewpoints need to be considered while discussing the relationship between the rise of capitalism and religion. In his work *Religion and the Rise*

*of Capitalism*, R. H. Tawney – the most influential social critic of his time from England – investigates how religion has moulded socio-economic practices and played a crucial role in the rise of capitalism in England in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. According to him, Max Weber, a 19<sup>th</sup>-century prominent sociologist, thought that “Western Christianity as a whole, and in particular certain varieties of it, which acquired an independent life as a result of the Reformation, had been more favorable to the progress of capitalism than some other great creeds” (Tawney, 1936, p. xiii). While discussing the development of capitalism in England in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, Tawney argues that as most of the Capitalists were Protestants, phrases from the Bible more attuned to economic activities were emphasized and used often in deliverance. Phrases like, “God hath commanded you some way or the other to labor for your daily bread”, began to be emphasized. Even holding property by individuals was also allowed but on the condition that it was used for the wider interest of the public. It was declared, “The riches may rightly use their riches to select some occupation especially serviceable to others” (Ibid, p. 243). Thus for Tawney, it became a common saying during this period that there is no sin in becoming rich as God wants all of us to work and labor, but it is wrong to become rich by charging interest on a loan of the needy. He writes, “It was not that religion was expelled from practical life, but that religion itself gave it a foundation of granite....The good Christian was not wholly dissimilar from the economic man” (Ibid, p. 253).

On the other hand, scholars like Kenneth Burke, an American theorist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, would say otherwise. In his work *A Grammar of Motives*, he remarks that the impersonal attitude in life was considered important to have a profit-driven attitude and to imbibe the monetary motive in one’s life without which capitalism doesn’t work. The impersonal, according to Berke, would mean that it is not influenced by Christian ideas of selflessness and love for the community. This kind of impersonal attitude could only be imbibed, when religion gets faded to the backdoor, and rationality which is “instrumental” in nature gets prioritized over religion (Burke, 1969). In Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, “Instrumental Rationality is defined as a specific type of rationality that focuses upon the most efficient means to achieve a specific end” and therefore, this kind of rationality could only sit perfectly with scientific rationality, the basis of which is observation and rules rather than moral laws.

The question that one needs to ask is: which viewpoint to believe? Both these viewpoints seemed right in the sense that it might be true that in the beginning, when capitalism was still at its infant stage, those religious principles were used that fit fine with Capitalist's Principles to avoid the sudden shock. But there is always a limit to religious principles to support the selfish and blood-sucking motives of capitalism. So it became necessary to develop an impersonal and interest-driven attitude in life that is only possible by restricting religion to the private sphere. Therefore, it can be said that the capitalism that got its legitimacy from religion in the form of Protestantism in the beginning later sidelined the same religion to fully grow and expand. As Tawney (1936) has rightly pointed out-

When the age of the Reformation begins, economics is still a branch of ethics, and ethics of theology; all human activities are treated as falling within a single scheme, whose character is determined by the spiritual destiny of mankind; the appeal of theorists is to natural law, not to utility; the legitimacy of economic transactions are tried by reference, less to the movements of the market than to moral standards derived from the traditional teaching of the Christian Church; the Church itself is regarded as a society wielding theoretical, and sometimes practical, authority in social affairs (Tawney, 1936, p. 279).

Therefore, there was no such contradiction between religion and capitalism in its infant form' it was only in the next two centuries that the actual motives of capitalism got unveiled, and it slowly and steadily pushed religion to the backdoors. Tawney further writes, "From a spiritual being, who, to survive, must devote a reasonable attention to economic interests, a man seems to have become an economic animal" (Ibid, p. 279). Rising forces of capitalism were relegating religion to the fringes and pushing science to the mainstream. Against this backdrop, it is important to understand the relationship that unfolded between capitalism and Newtonian science during the Enlightenment period. Unlike Harrison, who focuses upon the role of Protestants in the emergence of Newtonian science, Bilgrami (2011) and Hessen (2009) focus upon the role played by mercantile capitalism in the flourishing of "new science".

### ***3.3.1 Capitalism and Newtonian Science –***

Bilgrami establishes a link between Newtonian science and the Rise of Capitalism. He argues that the success of Newtonian Science was due to the rise of capitalism. As the feudal economy

disintegrated in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, new modes of production started emerging, argues Boris Hessen. First, we saw the emergence of merchant capital and the manufacturing sector. After that took place the birth of Industrial capitalism from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards. With that, there took place the birth of large-scale industry which wanted to harness the forces of nature (Hessen, 2009). Therefore, capitalism was in dire need of promoting a certain notion of nature that suits their hidden agenda of exploiting nature. Such nature should be value-free and therefore, could be exploited and manipulated for industrial interests (Bilgrami, 2011, p. 35). Coincidentally, Newton was propagating a similar view of nature at that time (Bilgrami, 2011, p. 35). Boris Hessen argues that Newtonian Science freed science from the teleological view of nature by identifying the “causative study of nature”. Bacon argued, “Nature knows only mechanical causation, to the investigation of which all our efforts should be directed” (Hessen, 2009). Mechanical causation as the truth removed nature from its divine element, and thus “transformed nature to a set of impersonally perceived natural resources”. These natural resources began to be viewed as goods ready to be transported to the markets to meet the ever-increasing demands of industrialization” (Bilgrami, 2011, p.36). Bilgrami writes-

Newton’s and Boyle’s metaphysical view of the new science won out over the freethinkers’ and became official only because it was sold to the Anglican establishment and, in an alliance with that establishment, to the powerful mercantile and incipient industrial interests of the period in thoroughly predatory terms. Terms which stressed that how we conceive nature may now be transformed into something, into the kind of thing, that is indefinitely available for our economic gain by processes of extraction, processes such as mining, deforestation, plantation agriculture intended essentially as what we today would call ‘agribusiness’ (Bilgrami, 2011, p. 35).

In short, the old economic model based on agriculture which was dominated by a few elites was on its deathbed. A new economic system, that is, the earliest form of capitalism, was emerging. This new system, unlike agriculture, was concentrated on towns rather than land. This new mode of production needed new machines, navigation was also required for a trade, and there was increasing demand for weapons due to rising possibilities of war to establish a trade monopoly. In short, a renewed scientific understanding of how the world worked was



required. This new scientific understanding was provided by Isaac Newton, an English scientist. Newton's view of nature was in tandem with the goals and aspirations of the rising capitalist class. In his work *Principia* (1687), he explains the laws of gravity. His ideas were mostly not acceptable in the beginning as they were in contradiction to the established worldview. Earlier, the idea of "nature" was based on idealism which required religion and God to understand the natural world. But Newton's view of mechanical causation was "materialistic", which provided space to understand nature independent of religion or God. However, Newton's materialism was also criticized as his religious ideas were coming back into his physics (Hessen, 2009).

Nevertheless, what is coming out of this discussion is: "science flourished along with the bourgeoisie. To develop its industry, the bourgeoisie required science that would investigate the properties of material bodies and the manifestations of the forces of nature" (Ibid). Hessen (2009) further writes:

The Royal Society brought together the leading and most eminent scientists in England, and in opposition to university scholasticism adopted as its motto 'Nullius in verba' (verify nothing based on words). Robert Boyle, Brouncker, Brewster, Wren, Halley, and Robert Hooke played an active part in society. One of its most outstanding members was Newton. We see that the rising bourgeoisie brought natural science into its service, into the service of developing productive forces. ... And since ... The basic problems were mechanical ones, this encyclopedic survey of the physical problems amounted to creating a consistent structure of theoretical mechanics which would supply general methods for solving the problems of celestial and terrestrial mechanics (Ibid).

Therefore, the history of science and religion is not very simple. Both realms were brought under tremendous change during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries due to Protestant reformation, Newtonian Science, and rising Capitalism. Each element influenced the other element in one way or the other. For instance, we saw how the Protestant Reformation not only brought changes in the religious realm but played a significant role in the initial success of Newtonian science and mercantile capitalism. Similarly, Newtonian science flourished under the patronage of the bourgeoisie class whose goals and aspirations were in tandem with the world

view promoted by Newton. All these developments in science and religion resulted in promoting a certain notion of rationality. This rationality, in the words of Bilgrami, is scientific, instrumental, and value-free. This brought it in sharp contrast to religion (Bilgrami, 2008).

Ironically, religion lost its authority and domination by the combined forces of Newtonian Science and Capitalism, whose initial success was possible due to religion only. As a result, a never bridging divide between science and religion began to take shape in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and crystallized by the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This conflict became the reason for putting faith and rationality in binaries, as rationality got reduced to ‘scientific rationality’ post-Newtonian science event putting it in confrontation with faith. Although the seeds of this conflict between science and religion, and consequently faith and reason were planted by the combined forces of Protestant reformation, Newtonian science, and mercantile capitalism, they were watered by secularism. This brings us to the fourth important element in the science-religion divide, which is Secularism in the West.

### **3.4 Aspects of Secularism in the West**

One should be clear about what is meant by ‘secularism’ as followed in the West. According to Semiha Topal, the basic definition of Secularism is “the separation of church from politics”, and broadly, it’s the separation of religion from politics. This differentiation, she argues, has its roots in the specific period of Western Christianity. She argues that there is an agreement among many of the scholars that pre-modern and non-western cultures were not formed based on this binary between a private and public world which is the principle of Western Secularism. Topal argues that Secularism is a concept developed in the Christian context. Referring to Jose Casanova (1994), she argues that there are four developments, as we already discussed, that can be considered to have played a significant role in the process of secularization that is specific of western origin: “the Protestant Reformation”; “the formation of the modern state” based on the very idea of the priority of reason over faith; eventually leading to the growth of modern capitalism, and the “early scientific revolution”. She further states that according to Talal Asad, the very roots of western secularism are found in the very attempts to define

religion during the Enlightenment period (Topal, 2012, pp. 2-5). Talal Asad in his work *Formations of the Secular*, argues that instead of looking at the secular as “the space in which real human life slowly liberates itself from the controlling power of 'religion' resulting in the latter's relocation; we should analyze how it is the formation of the modern state with Enlightenment that produced the very distinction between the secular and the religion”. According to him, the debate on secularism is over two views.

First, “Is ‘secularism’ a colonial imposition, an entire worldview that gives precedence to the material over the spiritual, a modern culture of alienation and unrestrained pleasure? Or is it necessary to universal humanism, a rational principle that calls for the suppression—or at any rate, the restraint—of religious passion so that a dangerous source of intolerance and delusion can be controlled, and political unity, peace, and progress secured?” (Asad, 2003, p. 21). For him, it is the former in which the roots of Secularism as we understand it today can be found.

Bilgrami is also of the same opinion. He argues that Secularism in general means a church-state separation which, when taking the political form, is defined as a political doctrine based upon promoting “neutrality” and equidistant from all religions in a plural society (Bilgrami, 2014, p. 10). However, Bilgrami believes that it is not feasible for every nation to adopt such a policy when it is a byproduct of particular historical circumstances. Bilgrami is also of the same opinion that secularism or any other concept for that matter doesn’t take place in a historical vacuum. They occur in a particular context and setting and can’t be grasped outside that particular context. He insists that secularism can only be understood within the context of developments in modern European societies. These societies were tormented by political chaos and wars in the name of religion, which led to the destructive “Thirty Years’ war”. Also, the Westphalia treaty laid the foundation of the nation-states. These nation-states no longer appealed to the divine rights of the king for seeking legitimacy and therefore required a new form of legitimacy. This could only be possible by generating a feeling among its subjects towards the nation-state. This feeling took the form of “nationalism”. In European societies, this feeling of nationalism was created by identifying an “external enemy within” or “the other”. These later came to be categorized as minorities – religious, linguistic, and so on. This gave rise to majoritarianism by permanently dividing the societies into two- majority and minority

fighting among themselves. Thus, Bilgrami says that it is in this context, secularism as a political doctrine was adopted as a necessity to counteract the violence and intolerance resulting from “religious conflict”, “majoritarian politics”, and “nationalist sentiments” (Bilgrami, 2014, pp. 25-26).

Like Bilgrami, Carlos Eire (2016) also believes that Secularism as we understand it today is the result of certain historical developments from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century in Europe. However, unlike Bilgrami, he focuses on the role of Protestantism in the Secularization of the West. Eire argues that Protestant Reformation caused a great “cultural shift,” and played a significant role in the “secularization of the world”, especially the west. However, the term “secularization” here needs to be understood in a much broader term, and not in terms of a current simplified version of church-state relation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. “Secularization”, he argues, needs to be understood as a “process whereby the realm of the sacred was redefined and contained within a more constricted sphere, both privately and publicly”. But what caused this shift in the importance of sacred? Firstly, Protestants, unlike Catholics, did not believe in combining the matter and spirit or matter and the spiritual world. They created a divide between the two realms. For Protestants, the finite cannot contain the infinite. They believed that God is transcended and is much above the created or material world. Second, they believed that “matter” is just a hurdle to the path of heaven and thus, not in a position to traverse the gap between earth and heaven “The more you give to the material,” said Zwingli, “the more you take away from the spiritual” (Eire, 2016, pp. 79-80). John Calvin similarly says: “Whatever holds down and confines the senses to the earth is contrary to the covenant of God; in which, inviting us to Himself, He permits us to think of nothing but what is spiritual.” Eire argues that the creation of matter and spirit binary was the first step towards modernity, as in the long run, it caused demystification of the material world (Ibid). We can say that this also became the reason for the faith-reason binary, where “reason” is at the dominating position. This separation and the declining significance of faith is the reason that we today live in a disenchanted world (Bilgrami, 2014).

The negative impact of disenchantment resulting from the secularization of the west is illustrated in the next chapter. But what is important here is to understand that the secularism

the West adopted under particular circumstances is considered as a doctrine that resolved the conflict between faith and reason in the West. This is believed not to be achieved by other nations, especially the Islamic nations. For instance, scholars like Sam Harris believe that Christianity has been able to solve the conflict with reason in the post-Enlightenment period by establishing their society based on secularism (Harris, 2004). He believes that there is a clash between faith and reason in the modern world. He believes that a person's belief can result in throwing reason into exile. He argues that a belief of a person defines their vision of the world and dictates behavior as well. However, there are problems with some of our most cherished beliefs that can even influence a person to the extent of killing someone. Here he is referring to our religious beliefs of any kind. He opines that all the religious beliefs agree on one important point: respect for other faiths is not something that God endorses. Therefore, intolerance is intrinsic to every faith. As a result, religious beliefs are beyond the scope of rational discourse. Harris even goes to the extent of criticizing the religious moderates because of their belief that peace is possible. They believe that if all of us learn to respect other people's beliefs, peace is possible. But Harris opines that this is not possible at all. For instance: A Christian can never respect the belief of others as long as he has a firm belief in the notion that only his baptized brethren will be saved on the 'Day of Judgment'. In some ways, all religions take a biased viewpoint against others and have spent so many years pointing out the errors of other faiths. He, therefore, argues that all beliefs are equally untouched by evidence (Ibid, p. 1-24).

He further says that although there is no rejection of the fact that all of us have needs; both spiritual and emotional, that cannot be fulfilled by mere scientific understanding of the world yet it does not require faith in non-testable propositions. The objective of each religion is to teach the truth of the Universe for which it has no proof and today every person desires to have authentic knowledge about the world. There is nothing sacred about it anymore. The list of unsacred elements in it is nearly endless such as feudalism, the divine right of kings, slavery, forced castration, chastity belts, sodomy laws, and taboos against contraception. He further says that it is true that religion helps the people, at least those who are under one faith to unite and cohere but religion has to be credited much for resulting in wars of conquest. Today the world is already united due to environmental, political, and economic as well as other

necessities, and therefore, there is no need for religion as it has misused our mind to such an extent that it has become difficult to even apply rational discourse (Harris, 2004, pp. 1-28).

Harris (2004) says that there is a tendency of suspending our faculty of reason and blindly following religious beliefs, even when those beliefs promote the worst of human atrocities such as terrorism. He argues that religious beliefs are so blinding that they go to the extent of even supporting and justifying terrorist activities. Although he begins with blaming all the faiths, he ends up blaming Islam specifically for being anti-rational. He says that the contention between the faith and reason is not seen in Christianity now, as this problem has been solved in the post-Enlightenment period through the adoption of secularism whereas, in Islam, there is no place of reason as such. We can see this in the form of terrorism, suicide bombings that are seemed to have their linkages with the Islamic religion majorly (Ibid, pp. 1-28). But he is missing the important point here: the western notion of secularism is not inevitable for all societies and places that have never gone through such a trajectory.

Bilgrami argues that Gandhi was never in favour of applying the political models of Europe like secularism in Independent India because India had a long history of religious diversity and tolerance. For Gandhi, “secular citizenship was not a precondition of a democratic society”. He believed that it was a cure created for the fears of European Nationalism (culminated in 20<sup>th</sup>-century fascism), a political model that in the Indian context took the form of “Hindutva” or “Hindu Nationalism”. Such an idea was the brainchild of Savarkar and Gandhi opposed such an idea of “majoritarian Hinduism”, and universalism of secularism. Gandhi considered both of them as “illegitimate imports of European modernity” (ibid). Adopting such models would be “a mimicry of its colonial masters, a form of cognitive slavery” (Bilgrami, 2014, p. 27). Neither such western notion of secularism is feasible for the Islamic nations who firstly, never gone through such trajectory, and secondly, religion cannot be relegated to private domain in the Islamic countries following the Islamic principles according to which Islam is not just a religion but a way of life, and therefore a strict church-state separation or a relegation of religion to the private domain is not possible (Bilgrami, 2014). This doesn’t mean that in Islam, there is a conflict between faith and reason, unlike Christianity. It is in this backdrop, it becomes imperative to explore the relationship between faith and reason in Islam.

## **Chapter 4: Faith and Reason in Islam**

The popular belief is there is a lack of synchronization between faith and reason in Islam, unlike Christianity. Usually, it is argued that the West has been able to accommodate the conflict between faith and reason but Islam has not been able to. It is based on some myths and pre-assumed notions about faith and reason that have their roots in the Enlightenment. The chapter will explore the relationship between faith or religion and science or reason in Islam, particularly through Iqbal's perspective. We will see how the relationship between faith and reason can be understood in Islam, and whether the understanding of faith and reason in Islam has been different from the way it has been understood and imposed by Enlightenment by looking at the works of Allama Iqbal, a Philosopher of the East. Many scholars such as Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Chirag Ali, Shibli Nu'mani, Muhammad Abduh, etc, have enquired on the question of faith and reason in Islam and attempted to bring reform in Islamic society. But this Muslim intelligentsia tried to do so by following the Western standard through promoting new science and scientific rationality. They were greatly inspired by the achievements of the Western world "ranging from scientific and technological progress, the Newtonian conception of the universe, Spencer's sociology, and Darwinian evolutionism, to the western style of living" (Moaddel and Talattof, 2000, p. 1). However, Allama Iqbal's contribution is unique in the sense of responding to the question of faith and reason, not from the dominant

understanding of the two, but seeing the faith and reason all together from a different vantage point. Before delving into Iqbal's notion of faith and reason in Islam, it is imperative to set a background and look at the dominant western perspective of faith and reason in Islam.

#### **4.1 Faith and Reason in Islam through Western Perspective:**

Heera Hashi, a 19-year-old American Muslim was discussing the 9/11 attack with her classmate when she encountered the statement that 'All terrorists are Muslims'. These remarks disturbed Hashi so much so that she decided to create a "712-page Google document" on Muslims condemning terrorism. The document includes a wide range of acts from domestic violence to terrorist acts like 9/11. Within a week, a site called 'muslimcondemn.com' was the result (Mahdavi, 2017). There was a condemnation of the 9/11 attack from the Muslim communities around the globe. Also, a statement condemning the 9/11 attack, calling it a 'horrifying event' was issued by 50 scholars in the *Study of Islam Section at the American Academy of Religion*, which is one of the largest international organizations responsible for the academic study of religion. Despite all these condemnations to the attack, there is another side to the picture as well. If some people from the Muslim community condemned the attack, some celebrated that event. 'Fox News' reported the celebration taking place in Ein al-Hilweh refugee camp through firing the guns in the air after the local news reported the attacks on the World Trade Centre. Similar kinds of celebrations took place at the Rashidiyeh camp near the southern city of Tyre, Palestine (Fox News, 2001). The question then arises which account represents the authentic Muslim response- the Hashi account that shows the Muslims condemning the attack or the story of Palestine-Celebration of the attack? Also, to add to this, the attackers when interviewed didn't have any sense of guilt as they believed that they did it in the name of "Allah" and to make Him happy. Such events compel one to question Islam as a faith for its fundamentalist nature and lack of "reason".

Criticizing Islam for its fundamentalist nature and lacking rationality, especially by the West is not a new thing. For instance, André Servier, a historian from France in *Islam and the Psychology of the Musulman*, writes that "The only thing Arabs ever invented was their religion. And this religion is, precisely, the main obstacle between them and us". Servier



explains Islam as a "religious nationalism in which every Muslim brain is steeped". For him, the "rigid dogma" of Islam had made the Arabs "incapable of fighting against the material forces placed at the disposal of Western civilization by science and progress" (Lorcin, 2006). Similarly, Philip Schaff in his work *History of the Christian Church* describes Islam as the promoter of violence and fanaticism. He argues that Islam tends to produce social evils in the places it conquers. He says, "Mohammedanism conquered the fairest portions of the earth by the sword and cursed them by polygamy, slavery, despotism, and desolation. The moving power of Christian missions was love to God and man; the moving power of Islâm was fanaticism and brute force" (Schaff and Schaff, 1910). What he meant by this is that Islam is the promoter of violence whereas Christianity is the promoter of peace. So, Islam had always been seen with skepticism for its irrational nature. However, the criticism of Islam by the West grew much stronger after the 9/11 attack.

It is based on events like 9/11, that many scholars have questioned the irrational nature of Islam as a faith. The various incidents of Islamic terrorism in the recent past especially the 9/11 attack on the United States have caused many non-Muslims to accuse Islam of a violent and irrational religion (Puniyani, 2005, pp. 97-98). Among them, two Islamic critiques whose opinion created a lot of remonstrance in Islamic countries are Sam Harris (Harris, 2004) and Pope Benedict XVI (Benedict, 2006). Pope Benedict XVI's speech on "Faith, Reason and the University: Memories and Reflections" at the *University of Regensburg* in 2006 created a lot of controversies. In the speech, he made a comparison between Christianity and Islam on the question of faith and reason. He quoted Byzantine Emperor Manuel II while discussing the nature of holy war in Islam. He said that once the emperor remarked, "Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword, the faith he preached". The emperor further explained why spreading the faith through using violence is irrational and unacceptable. He said, "Violence is not compatible with the nature of God and the soul. God is not pleased by seeing blood. Also acting unreasonably is contrary to the nature of God but for Muslims, God is transcendent in an absolute sense. His will is not bound up with any of our categories, even that of rationality". His main line of argument was that there is no compatibility between

reason and faith in Islam as there is in Christianity. Christian worship, he argues, is in complete harmony with reason (Benedict, 2006).

Sam Harris is also talking on the same lines in his work, *The End of Faith: Religion, Terror and the Future of Reason*. Harris believes that there is a clash between faith and reason in the modern world. He argues that there is a general trend of blindly following religious beliefs; even when those beliefs promote the worst atrocities, such as terrorism. Although he begins with blaming all the faiths yet he ends up questioning Islam particularly. He believes that the contention between the faith and reason is not seen in Christianity now, as this problem has been solved in the post-Enlightenment period through the adoption of secularism in the West whereas, in Islam, there is no place for “reason”. We can see this in the form of terrorism, suicide bombings, etc., which often seem to have their linkages with the Islamic religion (Harris, 2004). He claims that certain Quranic verses sanction violent action against unbelievers. The Qur’an says, “Fight in the name of your religion with those who fight against you” (Ibid).

What is common between Pope Benedict and Sam Harris is that both of them believe that there is a kind of balance that can be found between religion and reason in Christianity especially after the Enlightenment whereas, in Islam, no such balance is found. Similarly, recently, we witnessed France’s Prime Minister Emmanuel Macron running into controversy for his statement against Islam. He remarked, “Islam is “in crisis globally and his plan “to reform Islam” to make it more compatible with the republican values of the country (The Guardian, 26 October 2020). These remarks resulted in a huge protest among the people in the Muslim nations. But we need to understand the reason behind these kinds of statements or arguments against Islam.

These statements coming from the powerful figures of the West like that of Emanuel Macron and Pope Benedict show that Islam has been vilified and blamed, primarily because of the perception that there is a lack or absence of rationality in it, especially in the post-9/11 period. The common line of argument is that there is a lack of compatibility between faith and reason in Islam, whereas such issues of incompatibility don’t exist in Christianity. This has become

possible due to the adoption of Western secularism on the part of the west in the post-Enlightenment era. Two things can be inferred from this. First, this blame and vilification of Islam by the West for its lack of rationality is the continuation of old age east-west binary, or to be more specific, the result of a clash between oriental Muslims and Western Christians. This rivalry is well explained by Bernard Lewis and Samuel Huntington's reference to "the clash of civilizations". Lewis in his work titled *The Roots of Muslim Rage* describes the strained relationship between Muslim World and the US, particularly in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attack as an "irrational but surely historical reaction of an ancient rival against our Judeo-Christian heritage, our secular present, and the worldwide expansion of both" (Garcia, 2012, p. xii). This gap and tension between the Judeo-Christian West and the Muslim world have got widened over the period of time. The second reason for such attacks and stigmatization of Islam could be the so-called dominant belief that Islam as a faith has somehow missed the Enlightenment bus of freedom, development, and rationality because of its anti-rational and conservative approach and thus as a result was left behind. It is in this backdrop, this chapter would explore the authenticity of both these arguments and suggests that both are misplaced and generalized assumptions. In this chapter, we will see that there is harmony and coming together of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam on the question of faith and reason. Also, we will see that Islam never missed the bus of rationality, but had boarded another Enlightenment vehicle. This vehicle boarded by Islam was also later shared by certain dissenting sects of Protestantism against mainstream Anglican Christianity (Garcia, 2012).

#### ***4.1.1 Coming Together of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam on the Question of Faith and Reason***

Adamson argues that the popular assumption we have today about the inter-faith dialogue being the recent development and the gift of more enlightened west is not true. In fact, in the Islamic Medieval world, conditions were more favourable for the inter-faith debates and discussions. This can be very well explained by the fact that the two very important and popular Jewish philosophers of the medieval era, not only were influenced by Islam but heavily relied upon the Islamic scholars to justify the core principles of Judaism through rational inquiry, considering the reasoning method as the sign of God's blessing. Here, reasoning should not be

confused with “Scientific rationality” and mathematical observations that came into the picture much later during Enlightenment. These two important Jewish Philosophers are Saadia Gaon and Moses Maimonides (Adamson, 2016, p.41).

Saadia Gaon was a 9<sup>th</sup>-century Jewish Philosopher, born in Egypt, just a few years after the famous Muslim philosopher al-Kindi’s death. He was a biblical commentator, an expert in the field of Hebrew Bible, Jewish law, and the oral traditions collected in Mishnah and Talmud. His most famous philosophical work is *The Book of Doctrines and Beliefs*, originally written in Judeo-Arabic. The purpose of this book is to explain the rationale foundation of Judaism. For this, he is drawing mostly from the Islamic scholars, particularly, the *Mu’tazilites*<sup>1</sup>, to explain how the fundamental beliefs in Judaism conform to reason. Also, we can see similarities in the arguments proposed by Saadia Gaon and many Islamic scholars of that time such as al-Kindi, al-Ghazali, and al-Razi, despite coming from two different faiths or religious traditions. Gaon believes that there are three ways through which knowledge can be obtained: “sense experience”, “reason” and the “inference”. These three means of knowledge can be supplemented by *Khabar* (testimony). He warns us against blindly following the authority and instead advises us to rely most upon the three sources of knowledge. The same was the viewpoint of al-Razi who rejected the uncritical reliance on authority, which in Arabic called ‘*Taqlid*’ or the stagnation. Gaon argues that the three sources: sense, reason, and inference are endorsed by Bible as well. But the most important of all these sources for Gaon is the “reason”. Reason, for Gaon, is something that can grasp truths on its own without using senses or observation. Also, he believes that the messages of scriptures too are in sync with reason. He argues that to believe that murder is wrong, we don’t need to just rely upon the “Ten Commandments” including the order not to kill. We can very well figure out through “reason” that it is wrong to commit (Adamson, 2016, pp.42-44).

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<sup>1</sup> According to Adamson (2016), Mu’tazilites were the group of thinkers considered to be the first philosophers of Islam. The core principle followed by Mu’tazilites was Tawhid or the oneness of God. They relied upon three main sources- Koran, Hadith and the *aqi* (reason). So, they were both the philosophers and theologians. They not only believed in the application of reason, but in the sacred ness of the texts as well. For them, the sacred texts were not the Hellenistic Philosophical treatise but the actual sacred texts – the Koran and the Hadith.

The emphasis on reason brings Gaon close to *Mu'tazilites* in the sense of significance given to 'aql' or reason by them. However, the most important ground of commonality in the opinions of Gaon and *Mu'tazilites* is the belief in the concept of the oneness of God. Gaon endorses the concept of oneness of God or '*Tawhid*' not just based on scriptures. He believes that it is reasonable to believe that "God doesn't have a Body". Gaon warns us against attaching different features to God as this can result in reducing him to a body. Therefore, he is critical of the Trinitarian theology, and criticizes the notion on the same grounds as would have been done by al-Kindi, argues Adamson. He argues that the main reason behind the emergence of Trinitarian notion in Christianity was attributing features like "power", "life" and "knowledge" to the Creator. This further resulted in establishing the distinction between these three divine properties based on our limited language and superficial perspectives of these terms. The result is the Trinitarian theology- considered God as three elements in one- a Creator who is alive, knowing, and powerful (Adamson, 2016, pp.45-46). In short, it can be said that Gaon seems to be borrowing so much from the Islamic scholars, that if he doesn't refer to the Bible in his works, one could easily get confused whether one is reading a Jewish philosopher or an Islamic.

Like Gaon, another Jewish philosopher, whose writings show the influence of Islamic scholars, was Moses Maimonides. Moses Maimonides was one of the significant figures in the history of the medieval period. There is a saying in Judaism: "from Moses to Moses, there was no one like Moses" Maimonides was a rabbinic scholar, the famous Jewish Religious authority, and the greatest Jewish philosopher of the medieval era. He was born in 1138. He had a remarkable influence of Aristotelian philosophy on him. Also, he was the contemporary of another great Aristotelian Muslim philosopher Averroes. Both of them hailed from Cordoba (Adamson, 2016, p. 236). Maimonides's most significant philosophical work is "Guide for the Perplexed". The purpose of this work was to dispel the perplexity of the students of philosophy, who were also the believing Jewish that "Truths derived from philosophical arguments or reasoning are incompatible with scriptures". Despite his disdain for Islam due to the atrocities faced by his family under the Almohads, he agreed with *Mu'tazilites* on the transcendence of God and the impossibility of describing the true nature of God through using the same language that we use for things created by Him (Ibid, p. 238). He believed that it is important for all the

Jews to understand “God rationally has no Body”. So, he attempted to rationalize the understanding of God through a new reading of the Hebrew Bible and rabbinical texts (Adamson, 2016, pp. 238-239).

He devised a three-fold strategy or the guide to lay down the rational foundation of Judaism by reading the statements in the scriptures in a new light. These are summed up as – strategy of “Concealed Negations”, “Concealed Description of God’s Creation and Statements to be taken “symbolically” or “allegorically”. First is to read the positive statements about God through concealed negations. For instance, when we encounter statements like “God is powerful”, it simply needs to be understood as “God is not weak”. This would help us not to attribute features to God based on man’s limited understanding of the things that often result in establishing a comparison between God and humans. Maimonides believes that our Creator is exalted above this very limited notion of knowledge that we as human beings have. Second, to understand that some statements at first appear to be about God, are actually about His creation. For instance, merciful and happiness are the attributes carried by human creation because God is too transcendent to possess such characteristics. The third strategy is to make certain statements about God just “symbolically”. For example, when we are told that God sits on the throne, it simply means that he is the creator and the master of this world (Ibid, p. 239). Maimonides is also applying the allegorical interpretation strategy to refute the statements suggesting that God directly talked to the Prophets in the Bible. Drawing from Islamic thinkers like al-Farabi and Avicenna’s viewpoint about Prophecy occurring to the one who is ready for such blessing, Maimonides argues that Prophets receive truth through their reasoning ability (Ibid, p. 240).

From the above discussion, it can be rightly said that the philosophers of Judaism were greatly influenced by Islamic philosophers to lay down the rational foundation of Judaism. Philosophers of both Judaism and Islam were optimistic about *aql*/reason and its ability to unearth the truths. But it doesn’t mean that these philosophers never realized the limitations of reason. For example, Gaon while talking about the relationship between man and woman argues that reason can only explain to us that there should be loyalty between a husband and wife but can’t tell us how exactly a marriage ceremony is to be performed. These are the things

that need to be directly taken by scriptures and followed as God's commands (Adamson, p. 48). Similarly, Maimonides does realize the possibility of miracles that can't be comprehended by reason, and thus, falls beyond the line which the reason can't pass (Ibid, p. 241). Therefore, they realized that reason has its limits and boundaries. However, they also understood that reason is a beautiful gift of God given to humans and by the use of this tool, we can discover the unknown to some extent.

Up till now, we have traced the commonality shared by Judaism and Islam on the question of faith and reason. Now, let's move to the more complex part, which is finding the traces of alliance between Christianity and Islam on the question of faith-reason from history. Though complex as we have already seen that most of the blame and bashing of Islam for its anti-rational approach is coming from the Christian scholars. To find such an alliance, we don't need to go too far. It can be easily found during the so-called Enlightenment phase. A phase where it's believed that Islam did not contribute at all or in the language of Edward Said, "an alien and reactionary religion in contrast to enlightened and progressive west". On the contrary, Garcia suggests that there is a need to reconstruct history without any gaps. Islam was not always "diametrically inferior to Europe" (Garcia, 2012, p. 13). Many dissenting Protestant sects such as Arianism, Socinianism, Unitarianism, and Deism were greatly influenced by Islam from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century. These dissenting protestant sects constituted the "Radical Enlightenment", a term made famous by Jonathan Israel. For Israel, "Radical Enlightenment" was different from the "mainstream Enlightenment" in many ways, but majorly in terms of its sharp divorce from traditional religious faith, rejecting monarchy, aristocracy, church authority, racial hierarchy, etc. (Israel, 2010).

These protestant sects grew disenchanted with the mainstream Anglican Protestantism due to the increasing dominance of the church of England, their concept of Trinity; increasing religious discrimination; women discrimination; inequality, and therefore, drawn very closely towards Islam. Although all these dissenting protestant sects have different historical chronologies and don't believe in the same ideas and principles, the one thing that binds them together strongly is their anti-Trinitarian stand. Therefore, they share the Islamic idea of monotheism (*Tawhid*) (Garcia, 2012, p. 2). Garcia is explaining that many of the radical

English writers were greatly fascinated by Islam as an egalitarian religion; religion promoting brotherhood, peace, women's rights, and the foremost important, its emphasis on the oneness of God (*Tawhid*). These values were missing in then England. These writers are Samuel Taylor, Percy Shelly, Henry Stubbe, Rober Southey, Coleridge, and John Toland. These scholars, Garcia argues, were not just impressed by the principles and teachings of Prophet Muhammad, but also referred his ideas to question the repressive and corrupt Anglican authority.

Garcia further states that these writers saw in Muhammad a 'Prophet' and 'priest', who crushed "the blasphemous Rites of the Pagan and idolatrous Christians..." (Coleridge, p. vii) and "the blueprints for a dissenter-inclusive toleration policy" (p.31). Not just this, these writers such as Mary Wortley, also got inspired by the Ottoman Empire in granting women more rights compared to Britain (Garcia, 2012, p. 61). In short, one can easily see a "cross-cultural exchange between the early modern Christian West and the Muslim world" which is a forgotten history (Garcia, p. xiv). Forgotten or what one could say a deliberate attempt to erase these pages from the chapter of Enlightenment history. Islam and certain dissenting protestant sects were deliberately crushed under the wheels of the mainstream Enlightenment bus as they were emerging as a hurdle in their path towards establishing a socio-political system of their choice. This is quite evident from the fact that the Anglican state officially banned the Anti-Trinitarians from holding public office and getting degrees from top educational institutes like Oxford and Cambridge. For all these radical English authors examined by Garcia (2012), Muhammad is the epitome of rationality, tolerance, peace, and enlightenment, and from whom, English people need to learn. These radical thinkers were charged with blasphemy and under England's Blasphemous Act of 1698, an anti-Trinitarian could be jailed for three years. They were blamed as an enemy to the peaceful and enlightened society by creating divisions in the society, and therefore acting as a threat to their idea of a secular society (Gregory, 2012).

It is a great paradox that those who wanted to establish a truly enlightened and free society by crushing the old age orthodoxy of the church and establishing a true democracy were labeled as the ones who never wanted to board the Enlightenment bus. This brings out the domineering tendency of the mainstream Enlightenment with its emphasis upon the idea of "instrumental



rationality”, and sidelining those ascribing to another kind of reasoning that we have already discussed in chapter third, and will further be made clear. The worst-hit of this domineering tendency of the enlightenment is Islam that has been constantly blamed and criticized for not wanting to be enlightened enough and lacking any kind of rationality. It is because of the established western framework that perceives Islam as inherently lacking “reason” and is an “adversary of reason”. Such a framework is so powerful that it has become the only truth not just for the West but for the Muslim world as well. The aforementioned discussion explains that to consider Islam as a faith that lacks rationality, is highly a misplaced one.

It is in this backdrop, Irfan Ahmad’s work, *Religion as Critique* deserves our attention. Ahmad in this book is challenging the established notion that Islam lacks critical thinking and reason. Such a belief, he believes, is the result of Western prejudice towards Islam. He argues that the “genealogy” of targeting Islam by the Western scholars through their speeches, writings, etc. is long and “runs almost concurrently with Europe’s Colonial expansion” (Ahmad, 2017, p. 12). He quotes famous proponents of such thought of Western superiority to Islam. Martin Luther “likened Muslims to the Antichrist” while Ernest Renan saw this supposed absence of critique as the cause of “the immobility of the Muslim societies”. (Ibid, p. 8) Ahmad argues that while Islam was “perceived as an adversary of reason, ‘reason’ was depicted to dwell within Christianity. So was a critique, a medium to institute reason in a world rampant with ‘unreason’” (Ibid, p. 49). Ahmad is criticizing claims like Islam is devoid of reason as Eurocentric, based on the language of Enlightenment. He thinks, “Enlightenment was neither universal nor humanistic; in fact, it was local and ethnic” (Ibid, p.33). He explains how the Enlightenment resulted in drawing boundaries and categories between civilized and uncivilized, rational and irrational, western and non-western, reason and fanaticism, and so on. In all these binaries, Islam appeared as “other”- the irrational and uncivilized one (Ibid, p.48).

Ahmad questions this entire framework as it is based on defining critique and reason in a particular manner. He believes that critique is and was never absent in Islam. (Ibid, p 15) This point is also proved by the fact that the first verse descended on the Prophet Muhammad was “*Iqra*”, meaning “read”. The Qur’an urges humans to read, write, think and acquire knowledge. The word *Ilm* (Knowledge) is mentioned 750 times in the Qur’an. The importance

of knowledge can also be ascertained from the two important Hadith. It is narrated from Anas Bin Malik that the Messenger of Allah said, "Seeking knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim!" Ali Ibn Abu Talib, the 4<sup>th</sup> Caliph, once said, "I would be slave of a person who teaches me a letter". Following these commands, Muslim empires insisted on acquiring and learning knowledge and therefore, provided support to establish such institutions in general and scholars in particular. Such a tradition was followed by the great Islamic Civilization which formed afterward, beginning with the Abbasids (Wani and Maqbol, 2012).

Under the Abbāsids, the Islamic world became the intellectual hub for philosophy, science, education, and medicine, the center of which was Baghdad (Ibid). Muslim empire under the Abbasids was aware of the importance given to the knowledge in the Qur'an and Hadith. The Abbasids were influenced by the Hadith like, "the ink of a scholar is equal to the blood of a martyr", emphasizing the importance of knowledge. As there was a great thrust given to the pursuit of knowledge, many great Muslim scholars emerged during the period from the 8<sup>th</sup> century onwards, many. These scholars such as Ibn Sina, Al-Khwarizmi, and Al-Biruni were not only living a religious and pious life but were also excellent in mathematics, geography, astronomy, physics, medicine, and chemistry. Along with that, these scholars held excellence in religious studies. The reason being Islam doesn't make segregation between knowledge of nature and the knowledge of God because of the belief that it is Him, the supreme power, who created nature (Ibid). Therefore, to discover the ultimate Supreme power, there is a need to study nature and the natural phenomenon. This is why, each major branch of science was developed under the Abbāsīd dynasty, which got its inspiration from the ideals and principles of Islam. Our purpose is not to delve into those contributions, but the point is that science and Islam, or for that matter faith and reason were not incompatible in Islam. As Ahmad has rightly commented that the problem is not with Islam, but the inability of present frameworks imposed by the West since the Enlightenment.

These frameworks of rationality fail to recognize that reason was never absent in Islam but was already at work in Islam. He says that the Qur'an emphasizes the task of the Prophet as (*iṣlāḥ*) reform that requires interpretation of the existing laws and critiquing them through the application of reason. (Ibid, pp. 15-17). One of the most important tools for interpretation in

Islam is Ijtihad. Codd says that Ijtihad was used to interpret the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet soon after his death for many years to extract important information and rule suited to the changing times. Therefore, it becomes imperative to explore the term *Ijtihad* and its usage, and how it can be used as an important tool of reasoning in Islam (Codd, 1999).

It is here, Allama Iqbal's notion of Ijtihad deserves attention. Allama Iqbal was one of the important philosophers of the East belonging to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Many Muslim scholars such as Sir Syed Ahmad Khan have attempted to solve this conflict between faith and reason in Islam, by emphasizing science and modern education, that is, English education. These attempts are based upon accepting on the part of these Muslim scholars that like the West, East particularly the Muslim society needs to give priority to reason over faith to progress. Allama Iqbal is also considered to be one of the most important scholars who have attempted to respond to this conflict in his work *The Reconstruction of Religious Faith in Islam*; wherein he introduced his notion of '*Ijtihad*'. But there is the problem. Iqbal's notion of *Ijtihad* is bound to be misunderstood as an attempt to solve the contention between faith and reason in Islam posed by enlightenment. The fact is that he doesn't view the relationship between faith and reason as one of conflict but believes that both faith and reason stand in complete harmony with each other in Islam.

#### **4.2 Faith and Reason in Islam: Iqbal on Ijtihad.**

Iqbal in *The Reconstruction of Religious Thoughts in Islam* argues that both faith and reason are complementary to each other. Although the approaches of both might be different, the end motive of both is to find answers to the pertinent questions of the universe. These questions are- "What is the nature of the Universe in which we all live? Is there any fixed element in the formation of the universe? How are we related to it? He believes that these kinds of questions are common to both religion and philosophy of science" (Iqbal, 1974). If the purpose of both faith and reason is the same, then the question that one needs to ask is: what is the difference between religion and philosophy of science?

Nelson in his recent work, *God? Very Probably* (2016), says:

Science' cannot provide the required meaning. Science has had extraordinary success in discovering the workings of the natural order and in giving human beings vastly and in giving human beings vastly greater abilities to put nature to use for human benefit. But there is nothing in the workings of the laws of physics—or of biological evolution—that gives meaning and purpose to human existence (Nelson, 2016, p. 250).

In the words of Whitehead, “religion”, on the other hand, “is a system of general truths that have the capacity of transforming character when they are sincerely held and properly comprehended”. As the most important motive of religion is to guide the life of a human being, it becomes imperative that the general truths carried by religion it must be resolved. Our actions should not be based upon doubtful principles of conduct. The things that remain unresolved are doubtful, and therefore not important (Whitehead, 1927). Iqbal on the same line says, “We avoid guiding our actions by general principles which are not settled. If we do not know what number is the product of 69 and 67, we defer any action presupposing the answer, till we have found out. This little arithmetical puzzle can be put aside till it is settled but things are not equal between religion and arithmetic. We use arithmetic, but we are religious. Arithmetic enters into our nature, so far as that nature involves a multiplicity of things and it is there as a necessary condition, not as a transforming agency” (Iqbal, 1974). Whitehead says, “ Our character gets developed according to our beliefs. This is the most important religious truth from which escape is not possible. As a result of this, religion stands in greater requirement of a rational foundation of its principles because it is not possible to settle the general truths without reasoning” (Whitehead, 1927).

Iqbal says that the quest for rational foundations in Islam began long back with the Prophet only. His constant prayer was: “God! Grant me knowledge of the ultimate nature of things!” Similarly, the search for an independent content for spiritual life and higher consciousness is given a great emphasis in Christianity also. However, in Christianity, it is believed that to achieve that higher consciousness, one is required to leave the material world which is external

to the soul of man. It is only possible by the awakening of a new world within one's soul. Islam too agrees that goal of a human is to attain the higher consciousness and understand the ultimate truth of life. But the difference is that in Islam, the internal and external are not considered two opposite forces which cannot be reconciled, argues Iqbal. Our internal life consists not in total isolation from the external or the real world but its continuous attempt is to appropriate the real to absorb it. Hence, the internal is not something foreign to the world of matter but permeates it through and through. So, both Christianity, as well as Islam, demands the spiritual self in man but the only difference and indeed the major one is that Islam accepts the fact that there is a link between internal and external. It also believes that the world of matter is important and believes in discovering a foundation for the regulation of life (Iqbal, 1974). In Europe, the conception of Christianity is based upon doing away with the material world and focuses entirely upon the spiritual world. It is because of the belief that spirituality is some experience that happens inside and doesn't necessitate some reactions to its social environment. On the contrary, Islam puts a great emphasis upon Ummah (Muslim brotherhood). Therefore, one cannot abandon the social life as we all are originally linked to the social order. Iqbal says, "The rejection of the one (external world) will eventually mean the rejection of the other (internal world)" (Sherwani, 1977). Iqbal also says:

With Islam, the ideal and the real are not two opposing forces that cannot be reconciled. The life of the ideal consists, not in a total breach with the real which would tend to shatter the organic wholeness of life into painful oppositions, but in the perpetual endeavor of the ideal to appropriate the real with a view eventually to absorb it, to convert it into itself and illuminate its whole being. It is the sharp opposition between the subject and the object, the mathematical without and the biological within, that impressed Christianity. Islam, however, faces the opposition to overcome it. This essential difference in looking at a fundamental relation determines the respective attitudes of these great religions towards the problem of human life in its present surroundings (Iqbal, 1974, p. 7).

Therefore, what Iqbal meant here is that like Christianity, Islam also calls for the attainment of spiritual life. However, what distinguishes Islam from Christianity is that Islam recognizes

the contact of the real with the ideal. It believes that the purpose is not to abandon the material world because the real test lies in accepting the world of matter and then mastering it. It is this reason that Christianity has been able to sort out the conflict between faith and reason created by Enlightenment, through resorting to the notion of secularism because deep down it is based on the premise that faith is something that is a private affair and concerned with the inner spirit only which has nothing to do with the real world. On the contrary, Islam believes the other way around. Therefore, the Islamic world can't adopt the kind of secularism adopted by the West that requires one to limit his or her religious moorings to the private domain. But that doesn't mean Islam is and was never against reason which is quite clear as has been already discussed above. It is just that Islam does not permit to adopt the "Instrumental Rationality" proposed by the West. The question then is: If Islam is not against reason as such, then how faith and reason can be reconciled then in Islam?

#### ***4.2a Connecting Faith and Reason in Islam: Iqbal on 'Ijtihad'***

Iqbal believes that rationalizing faith is important so that the universal truths of nature can be unfolded. Also, for him, as it is not possible to provide solutions to the constantly emerging new questions and problems through the literal understanding of the Qur'an, the use of reason becomes imperative. But what kind of "reason" Iqbal is referring to? As has been already mentioned that scientific reasoning is of such a nature that it can't sit properly with the notion of faith, Iqbal attempts to solve this issue. To reconcile faith with reason, he is proposing the concept of *Ijtihad* in his work *The Reconstruction of Religious Thoughts in Islam. Ijtihad*, according to him, means "to exert and form an independent judgment on the legal questions related to religion" (Iqbal, 197, p. 63). Iqbal argues that with changing times, new conditions and situations may arise which cannot be responded to by directly referring to the Qur'an and Sharia. (Iqbal, 1974). One such issue is the women issue. In fact, in his work '*Ilm al-Iqtisad*', he criticizes the way the custom of polygamy has been used and understood. Iqbal argues that the problem is not just to interpret the already existing laws in changing times, but also there is a requirement for new laws. New laws are required because the conditions of the world don't

remain constant. There is always a shift and change in situations. The only viable solution to deal with such emerging new questions and situations is using '*Ijtihad*' (Ibid, pp. 59-62).

In the wider sense, *Ijtihad* means applying human reason while explaining Sharia law. It includes a range of mental processes from the interpretation of the Qur'an's text to the text of the Qur'an to the evaluation of the genuineness of a Hadith (Ganai, 2010). The word '*Ijtihad*' is derived from the root word '*Jihad*' which means "striving with full exertion" In the legal terminology of Islam, it denotes an attempt to choose between two or more different legal interpretations in the light of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and also to deduce any new rulings to address new legal questions from the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Iqbal argues that three kinds of *Ijtihad* have been acknowledged- "(i) complete authority in legislation which is confined to the founders of the schools, (ii) Relative authority which is to be exercised within the limits of a particular school, and (iii) Special authority which relates to the determining of the law applicable to a particular case left undetermined by the founders" (Iqbal, 1974). He says that the most important one is the third kind because we witness new problems daily that require an immediate solution. However, Qur'an and Shariah don't deal directly with these issues. Here, the role of *Ijtihad* becomes more important than ever before but the practice of performing '*Ijtihad*' has been denied ever since the completion of the establishment of five schools of thought in Islam in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, argues Iqbal (Ibid).

Initially, a legal system based upon scientific knowledge was established. This continued till the 13<sup>th</sup> century. As this system was produced by applying *Ijtihad*, it was scientific yet its foundations were rooted in faith. Reformers like Ibn Taymiyah (the late 1200s) opened new horizons in the knowledge and understanding of Islam's application to the needs of society. Some theologians declared the end of *Ijtihad* by the 13<sup>th</sup> century as a necessary step to protect Muslim society from further disintegration (Bassiouni, 2012). This phase of stagnation is known as the phase of *taqlid*. After understanding the meaning of *Ijtihad*, the next important question to explore is: who can practice *Ijtihad*? It is believed that only a *Mujtahid* can practice *Ijtihad*. According to Siddiqui al Qadri, "*Mujtahid* is someone who should be an expert in the Arabic language and literature so that he can decide properly between the different connotations of the same word; have a good knowledge of the Qur'an; have the Traditions of

the Holy Prophet i.e. Hadith memorized; should be an expert in both the science of logical criticism i.e. *Dirayat* and historical criticisms i.e. *Riwayat*, so that he may be able to view the worth of various traditions in their proper perspective” (Qadri, 1950).

Despite all these qualifications in a person, there is no guarantee whether a person rightfully holds all these attributes required to become *Mujtahid*. Iqbal already realized that the practice of performing *Ijtihad* can result in the problem of many interpretations or even misinterpretations of the Qur’an as well. To do away with such repercussions, he calls for a particular setup based on the Grand Assembly of Turkey to perform *Ijtihad*. According to him, the authority to perform *Ijtihad* should not be given to a single individual. Instead, it should be granted to a group of people. According to Iqbal, Islamic law has four sources- the Qur’an (the central Religious text of Islam), Hadith (Narrative describing the word, actions, and habit of Prophet Mohammad), *Ijma* (Consensus), and *Qiyas* (Analogical Reasoning). Our focus of attention here is *Ijma* and *Qiyas* because, for Iqbal, these are the two most important the two important methods used while performing *Ijtihad* (Iqbal, 1974).

*Ijma* means consensus. It was an important method used in the Muslim world, especially in the Turkey legislative Assembly to solve a particular problem. Iqbal, however, gives completely a fresh interpretation of *Ijma* (consensus) keeping in view the needs of the time. He criticizes Western democracy based upon the idea of church-state separation. Therefore, he was in support of Islamic democracy. He believes that *Ijma* should become an active functional source in the form of legislative assemblies in the present political setup. He believes that an assembly should be organized in a way that both *Ulema* (body of Muslim scholars who are recognized as having specialist knowledge of Islamic sacred law and theology) and the modern intellectuals from varied domains such as humanities, science, law, etc. work together. He thinks that it is almost impossible for an individual to possess all these qualities. Modern scholars might not have the intricacies of Muhammadan law. As a result, they have the chance of committing mistakes while interpreting laws. To eliminate or at least lessen the chances of fallacious interpretation, Iqbal believes that there must be a separate council of *ulema* who are well acquainted with the world affairs to oversee the legislative



activity of the *Mejlis* (assembly or a council). However, Iqbal believes that there is one problem with such an assembly, which is, to reach an agreement between these modern intellectuals and the *ulema*. What Iqbal has to say about this threat? But let us first look into the other important method required to perform *Ijtihad* (Iqbal, 1974).

It is clear now that *Ijtihad* needs to be performed by a body of persons instead of a single individual to reduce the threat of erroneous interpretations but there is a need to understand this: what kind of methodology or more specifically reasoning needs to be adopted by *mejlis* so that decisions can be made. It is important to explore this question of the very fact that the kind of reasoning which we usually call ‘Scientific reasoning’, that has established its dominance all over the world, is antagonistic to faith. The complex behavior of life can’t be dependent upon the difficult rules which are logically deduced from certain general concepts laid by observations and experiments. Such mathematical rules can’t be applied to an intricate system of religion. Does that mean that reason and faith can never walk together? It would be wrong to accept this dominant truth as the only truth as Ahmad has rightly said that the problem is our limited understanding of the reason (Ahmad, 2017). On the same lines, Iqbal believes that we need to see “reason” not separate from “faith”. Instead, reason needs to be used to revamp religion. Therefore, Iqbal proposes the notion of *Qiyas* or “analogical reasoning” that is in line with the school of Abu Hanifah (Iqbal, 1974).

Analogical reasoning is the “legal practice of reasoning by cases and analogy”. For instance, in Islamic law, a new case is assimilated to one or more previous cases that serve as precedents. The mechanism of assimilation is an analogy, but the analogy must be guided by a cause that is common to both the new and the earlier case. If the same cause is there in all the cases, then the earlier judgment can be applied to the new case. Analogical reasoning can be inferred from earlier judgments in the Islamic world and then can be applied to the new problem which is unknown within the Islamic model of the Qur’an, Hadith, and *Ijma* (consensus). It means that the Qur’an and Hadith can be analyzed from a primary issue that is known (*asl*) to a new problem (*fara*) if there is a cause that is common (*illa*) for both the problems. For example, it is written in the Qur’an that drinking wine is prohibited as it makes a person unconscious but

Qur'an is silent on drug abuse as it was not known in the early days of Islam, although drug abuse is now not permitted by *Sharia* (Islamic law). So we can arrive at a judgment about drug abuse through a four-step process.

Given case: Drinking alcohol is prohibited

New case: Are drugs also prohibited.

Cause: Drinking alcohol is prohibited because results in loss of consciousness.

Judgment: Therefore, taking drugs is also prohibited because it too results in loss of consciousness (Fairak, 2014).

Therefore, analogical reasoning can be used to revise religion according to new circumstances and situations. *Ijtihad* is not about bringing change in the fundamental text i.e. Qur'an. Thus, one should not confuse *Ijtihad* with bringing innovations in religion, but it is about using the analogical reasoning to make judgments about different problems of the changing time in accordance to the core principles of the Qur'an only and that too by a *mejlis* keeping in view an Islamic principle of *Ijma*. In short, as believed by Iqbal, it is possible to bring both faith/religion and reason together through *Ijtihad* based on the methods of *Ijma* and *Qiyas*.

Although Iqbal's framework of *Ijtihad* appears to be a workable solution to deal with the modern problems as it applies reason without negating faith, his proposed concept does contain some problems. First is to achieve a consensus in the *mejlis* consisting of Ulema and the laymen. Iqbal was well aware of the fact that *Ijtihad* is a guarded privilege of the competent and Knowledgeable but his fondness for the institutions was such that he attempted to make a compromise and reconciliation in the form of appointing *Ulema* to guide the deliberations. The problem of such compromise is that in such a setting laymen would not be able to contribute in an equal and authentic manner. A union between the competent and the layman is an utter impossibility showing a contradiction in terms. What contribution can a layman make to the deliberations of a board of medical experts? A layman can only present the problem and even his understanding of the nature of the problem is something not to be relied upon. A layman has a complete voice in the West because legislation springs from the ignorant will of the

common man such as legislations on alcoholism, homosexuality, adultery, etc., without any reference to the will of God, argues Yusuf. He argues that it is not a wise decision to give the decision-making powers to such an assembly that hardly knows much about the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The point is that the grave errors which Iqbal visualized to be possible are just inevitable in such a framework (Yusuf, 1962).

Iqbal was aware of the possibility of such a problem, and therefore he also proposed a solution. He believes that the only viable solution is to improve the present education system in Islamic countries by giving importance to Islamic studies as well as an extensive study of modern jurisprudence (Iqbal, 1974). However, the problem is that such a process might take many years. Another issue is that there are chances of conflict arising among Ulema as well. Such conflicts can result in the lingering of the process, as a result of which, chances are that one would never be able to arrive at a particular solution of a proposed problem or an issue (Yusuf, 1962). Therefore, although Iqbal's framework of *Ijtihad* seems appealing, at the ground level, it seems too idealistic and the chances of its successful implementation at the practical level are very bleak.

Despite Iqbal's attempt to connect faith and reason in Islam through his unique framework of *Ijtihad*, his concept of *Ijtihad* is not very simple and easy to implement as has already been mentioned. But one thing that can be said without a doubt is those who believe that faith and reason are not complementary to each other in Islam need to revisit their understanding of both faith and reason. Both faith and reason are compatible provided one does not view them under the established notion of both faith and reason and picture them both in the new light. Those who believe that both reason and faith are not compatible either misunderstand Islam or misunderstand reason. There is no doubt that such understanding is based upon the prefixed notions about faith and reason and whose roots can be found in the dominant Enlightenment. Such understanding not only limits the scope of understanding faith and reason from a different perspective but carries with it other problems as well that we fail to acknowledge. In the next chapter, the thesis would delve into the various problems that the separation of faith and reason has caused, not just for the Islamic world but for the West as well.

## **Chapter 5: Faith-Reason Separation and its Repercussions: A Study of West and Islam**

### **5.1 West and Disenchantment: Divorce from Emotions and Values**

Modern civilization has been critiqued by various scholars on various fronts. The foremost is the idea of “Scientific Rationality” upon which modernity thrives. Akeel Bilgrami argues that the main problem with Enlightenment and the resultant modernity is the idea of “disenchantment” rooted in “scientific rationality”. Bilgrami describes disenchantment as “a way of disillusion with the primordial emotions and values, often rooted in religious principles and beliefs” (Bilgrami, 2006, pp.3-7). The “modern rationality” or the “Instrumental reason”, as we name it, has been the subject matter of concern for the “Frankfurt School”. However, Max Horkheimer was the one who laid the foundation for all the subsequent works in the area.

Horkheimer, as a philosopher, is known for his two important works during the 1940s. These are *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1997), which was co-authored with Theodor Adorno and *Eclipse of Reason* (1947). The overarching theme of the two is to critique “Instrumental rationality”. In these works, the authors are suggesting that through its stress on instrumental concerns, reason crumples down to irrationality. In *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Horkheimer and Adorno are arguing that as the Enlightenment stressed upon the particular kind of rationality, an instrumental one, it turned against itself in the process. This is noted in the very beginning of the text: “Enlightenment understood in the widest sense as the advance of

thought, has always aimed at liberating human beings from fear and installing them as masters. Yet the wholly enlightened earth is radiant with triumphant calamity” (Horkheimer, 1997, p.1). Benhabib in her work *Defense of Modernity* argues that in all the major modern institutes, such as the state, public and private bureaucracies, the capitalist firm, courts, the army, and the schools, the “rationalized” modes of relationship and behavior is promoted. She argues-

Rationalization and the commodity form involved the segmentation of complex tasks, relationships, and issues (Sachverhalte) into fragments of equal and fungible units that would be governed by calculable and formal rules and procedures that in turn would be interchangeable, predictable, and hence ‘indifferent’ to material qualities. Just as the commodity form reduced all material objects and human relationships to formal equivalencies that could be exchanged in the marketplace for money, so too rationalization abstracted from the personality of the individuals involved in positions of authority and made them into faceless bureaucrats and taskmasters (Benhabib, 2009, p. 394).

Therefore, the above-mentioned processes of rationalization, actually resulted in a loss of freedom, going against the basic principle, which laid the entire foundation of the Enlightenment movement. Quoting Weber, Benhabib further says that the modern rational societies, therefore, produce “narrow specialists without mind, pleasure-seekers without heart; in its conceit, this nothingness imagines that it has climbed to a level of humanity never before attained” (Ibid). Similarly, Horkheimer in the first chapter of the book *Eclipse of Reason*, argues that instrumental rationality focuses on just the “means”, the means that are economical, cost-effective, and work efficiently to achieve ends, without actually focusing on the “ends” in themselves. So, it doesn’t bother about the legitimacy and morality of the ends (Horkheimer, 1947). In short, the disenchantment in modernity, Bilgrami argues is because of the reason that modern rationality is based upon cost-benefit approach, efficient means, and rationalization of behavior based on these lines. Such “scientific rationality” is often contradicted with faith, based on revelation as a source of knowledge. Monetary motive gains the supreme authority in the modernity project. It is this very outlook with its devastating cultural and political consequences that is the target of Bilgrami’s critique (Bilgrami, 2006, pp. 3-7). Allama Iqbal’s viewpoint also to some extent revolves around the same understanding of modernity. He

understood modernity's exploitative and materialistic nature. Zulfiqar Ali Khan says in *A Voice from the East*-

Iqbal could not fail to observe that triumphant materialism waged an unrelenting war against religion and morality. The consequence, as he saw, was tragic. Men lost sight of the higher aims of life and wallowed among its sordid interests. To a keen student of history like him it was quite clear that materialized society constituted a danger to moral and spiritual life, for, in the mad pursuit of the almighty dollar, the loftiest ideals were ever knocked down from their high pedestals. The body politic could never remain in a state of vigorous health and at once ceased to exercise its beneficial influence, when in its daily functions justice was regulated by selfish motives and ethics were divorced from politics. This corruption of morals inevitably undermined the greatest empires and destroyed the harmony and confidence obtaining in international relations. Iqbal who had previously imagined that the Occident was actuated by truth and justice wrote a poem embodying a piquant protest against the prostitution of the noble ideals of freedom and equality (Ali Khan, 1922, pp. 20-21).

Iqbal believes that the mad competition among western nations to pursue material interests has resulted in limiting the idea of this world just to a place for shopping. Although we can't ignore the fact that the West has unearthed many mysteries of nature using the same "scientific knowledge", the never-ending hunger for material objects will take the western civilization to a cataclysmic end, argues Iqbal. Mathew Arnold in his famous poem *The Future* depicts "the prospects of human happiness as gloomy". According to him, this civilization can divert men's minds from noble ideas towards selfish and materialistic pursuits because the industrial civilization tends to pressurize men to think more in terms of money and less about the divine aspects. The world is slowly and slowly moving towards becoming material in the worst meaning of the term. Iqbal argues that Rutherford is right in saying that Europe tends to make people fool by giving them big promises that are false. Such pursuit for material interests tends to engulf the world again into another Great War (Ibid, pp. 21-25). Iqbal writes:

“The iridescence of modern civilization dazzles our eyes  
But this artistry is an artifice of false jewelry” (Kulliyat, p.305)

And then:

“The splendor of the knowledge of the West failed to bedazzle me  
The dust of Medina and Najaf is the collyrium of my eyes” (Kulliyat, p.343)

Also, he states that:

“This knowledge, this wisdom, this statesmanship, this governance  
They suck blood, and teach the tenets of equality!  
Unemployment and promiscuity and inebriation and destitution:  
Are these not victories enough for the civilization of the West?” (Kulliyat, p. 435)

What he is trying to say in the above couplets is that despite the commitment of this new civilization towards equality, wisdom, and peace, there are problems of unemployment, bloodshed, war inherent to this civilization. So, one could see a paradox which is also an important feature of this modern civilization. It is the lack of spiritual strength in the western civilization that resulted in the first world-war, Second World -War, and the authoritarian fascist regimes. He further states that although civilization has the power today to produce goods for immediate satisfaction of bodily needs and pleasures yet inside it is hollow. This spiritual hollowness of the modern materialistic world is sought to be filled by the sound of jazz and the din of automobiles. These things are used by people to distract the mind, to engage the eye, to satisfy the body, but internally there is emptiness. What matters is just the satisfaction of one’s bodily welfare and interest. This emphasis upon bodily and material welfare on the part of the West is well reflected in all the modern political-economic models. All these models such as Nationalism, Capitalism, and Secularism are founded on the sharp distinction between faith and reason, where “Instrumental Reason” takes the front relegating faith to the private domain. The next section will delve into the various problems with modern political-economic models

such as the modern nation-state, capitalism, and secularism based upon what the separation of faith and reason has caused, not just for the Islamic World but for the West as well.

## **5.2 Problems with Modern Political-Economic Models: Modern Nation-state, Capitalism, and Secularism.**

The element of disenchantment in modern civilization made Iqbal even criticize all the existing modern political models such as the notion of the modern nation-state, secularism as well as economic model, that is, capitalism.

### ***5.2.1 Nationalism and the Modern Nation-State***

No concept has been so much debated and contested in an account of modern society, other than the “nationalism” and its constituent “modern-nation state”. Nationalism was not a widely used term until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It was only from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards that nationalism began to be recognized as one of the important, if not the greatest determining factors of modern history. Nationalism is often mistaken to be very old and the eternal factor in political life. However, modernists believe that nationalism is the product of specific effects of the modern age traced back to the late Enlightenment phase or more specifically the French Revolution. According to these modernists, the American and French revolutions may be regarded as their first powerful manifestations. Beginning with Latin America, it spread to central Europe in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and from there, it traveled in the ancient lands of Asia and Africa in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Kohn, 1955). But what do we mean by Nationalism and a nation-state?

Gellner writes that nation, in the modern sense, presupposes the existence of a state defined by boundary and territory. But he believes that “nations and states are not the same contingency, nationalism holds that they were destined for each other; that either without the other is incomplete. But before they could become intended for each other, each of them had to emerge,



and their emergence was independent and contingent” (Gellner, 1983, p 6). Walker Connor has noted that an in-depth analysis of nationalistic thought would require that the scholars refrain from using the term ‘nation’ as a substitute for the ‘state’ (Connor, 2005). Many scholars in post-colonial India engaged with the notion of nationalism and also expressed their discomforts around the notion of nationalism and its constituent modern-nation state. Among these, the two important philosophers of the 20th century were Muhammad Iqbal and Rabindranath Tagore.

Muhammad Iqbal, in his Presidential Address to the All-India Muslim Conference in 1932, stated that “the present struggle in India is sometimes described as India’s revolt against the West. I do not think it is a revolt against the West; for the people of India are demanding the very institutions which the West stands for” (Iqbal, 1932). Iqbal Singh Sevea argues that Iqbal’s revolt against the West and the criticism of western civilization was manifested in his critique of the political ideology of nationalism, and its constituent concept of the territorially defined nation-state (Sevea, 2012, p.126). According to Iqbal, popular western political ideologies should not be accepted by the people of the east, particularly by the Muslims for the very simple reason, that these modern models, no matter how humanistic and progressive they seem, are rooted in the fundamentally profane and secular spirit of the modern civilization. This Modern civilization is based upon the preponderance of scientific rationality that is devoid of not just Islam’s unique ideas and vision but more broadly the humanistic ideals like love, tolerance, affection, etc. However, attempts to link Iqbal’s discourse on nationalism with the demand for the creation of a separate state of Pakistan have resulted in misconceptions regarding Iqbal’s thoughts. Such misunderstandings require an in-depth analysis of Iqbal’s idea on nationalism.

Iqbal denounced the western brand of nationalism based on territorial lines and advanced the idea of pan-Islamism in line with Jamal-ud-Din Afghani. However, Iqbal did not come up with these views until 1905, argues Sarwar Khan. Before he departed for Europe in 1905, Iqbal’s poems were mostly tinged with the sentiment of nationalism, argues Khan. One of the longest poems of Iqbal of that period is *Tasweer-i-Dard* (The Picture of Sorrow) which was read by

Iqbal in March 1899, at a meeting of the Anjuman Himayat-i-Islam, Lahore. In this poem, Iqbal lamented the internal differences and dissensions which were deeply prevailing in the country. His deep sense of emotional attachment to his country is well reflected in another poem entitled *Naya Shiwala* (the New Temple). In this poem, he has dreamt of constructing a new Temple in India, where love will reign supreme and where the image of India will be worshipped (Khan, S. 2001, pp. 69-70). The most famous of such poems is *Tarana-i-Hind* in which Iqbal's nationalist fervor has reached the highest peak. He says-

“Of all the world, India is the best.

We are its nightingales, it is our garden” (Ibid)

However, his viewpoints towards nationalism in particular, and the western political models, in general, are believed to have changed after his sojourn to Europe for higher studies in 1905. Iqbal went to Europe at the age of 28 with a very positive approach towards it as for him it was a treasure of knowledge. He stayed in Europe till 1908 and studied law and philosophy at different universities. Europe was undergoing intellectual turmoil at that time. The emphasis on rationalism and science-led development had resulted in the formation of materialistic trends (Iqbal, 2002, pp. 6-9). Iqbal soon realized the problems with the West and therefore, he vehemently started rejecting the blind acceptance of Western civilization. One could say that his contact with Western philosophy created a sense of disappointment in him towards Western philosophy and broke all his illusions (Hussain, 1983, pp. 11-12). He analyzed the writings of great philosophers dominant at that time closely such as Nietzsche, Kant, Bergson. He also closely observed the forces of secularism and territorial nationalism working in Europe and realized that the construction of human life on the lines of modernity and ‘scientific rationality has made the life of humans inhuman and barbaric (Iqbal, 2002). All these experiences made him realize the lack of metaphysical elements in western life. This created a sense of disillusionment towards the West.

Apart from the life of the West, Iqbal also got disturbed due to the many events happening back at home in undivided India and also at the world level. Iqbal returned to India in 1908. The condition of Muslims of the Indian sub-continent was such at that time that their primary

agents i.e. the British govt. and the secondary agents were mostly Hindus. In 1911 also, the British accepted the demand of the Hindus and united the Bengal to just appease the Hindus. They also shifted the capital from Calcutta that was the linguistic homeland of Muslims, to Delhi. The torch of independence of India had passed into the hands of the Congress party which was a Hindu party. The Hindus had adopted the culture, manners, and customs of their master i.e. the British, and also adopted their system in industrial, as well as administrative fields. Those who were intellectual among the Muslims were also westernized and were obsessed with the system of the West (Khomeini, 1989). One such great Muslim personality and contemporary of Iqbal was Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898). Although he died much before Iqbal got an opportunity to visit Europe yet Iqbal was aware of the Syed's teachings and writings.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was in great awe of British culture and its education system. He believed that the liberation and development of *quam* could only be possible under the British Raj through adopting the modern education system. One thing that is important to note here is that for Syed Ahmad Khan, *quam* sometimes meant Muslims of India, but also at times Hindus and Muslims of India together. He never talked in terms of the universal brotherhood of Islam. The influence of western civilization was so much on him that even the killings of his men at the hands of the British during the revolt of 1857 could not bring much change in his attitude. Unlike Iqbal who developed a sense of disenchantment with the west after his experience in Europe, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan felt more the need of following the footsteps of the West after his journey to Europe in 1869. He spent around 17 months in England, and when he returned in October 1870, he "settled down in a large house on the banks of the Barna River, and lived in European style". However, this doesn't mean, he was a lesser Muslim. He used to pray five times a day, argues Raj Mohan Gandhi. It was just that he wanted to alleviate the condition of his people, especially the Muslims, and for him, it could only be possible by emulating the British Raj (Gandhi, 2000).

Now coming back to reasons for Iqbal's averse attitude towards the West. Apart from his experience in Europe and domestic events, the International context at that time was also quite disturbing. The common people particularly the Muslims were the victims of poverty and

could hardly get their daily bread (Khomeini, 1989). The poor and the underdeveloped nations were under the clutches of colonialism that led Iqbal to write against colonialism which became the reason for the World's most destructive War in 1914. Italy occupied Libya, Balkan states attacked Turkey and France also annexed Morocco. He writes in *Kulliyat* that Europe, Belgium, France, and Holland had extracted great wealth from their colonies. All this led to the First World War. Iqbal believed that the colonial policy of all imperialist states had one common agenda which is to keep up the economic dominance of the West over the East on the pretext of civilizing the barbaric nations of Asia and Africa. He even praised Mussolini in the sense that, unlike the west, Mussolini declared his goals openly instead of covering them under the garb of moral principles like equality and peace. He said, "The soul of the West is dead now and the West has been suffering from this malaise since the beginning of the materialistic age in post-Enlightenment period" (Hussain, 1983).

In all these disappointments, Iqbal sensed a ray of hope in the form of the Russian Revolution of 1917 with its agenda to establish socialism. Professor Allem Janov says that Iqbal can be considered to be the first man in India to welcome the Russian Revolution. He was sympathetic to the socialist movement because he believed that it has the potential to sweep out all the foul airs from the atmosphere. Inspired by this, he hoped for a return to the socialism of Islam. Although the basic feature of modern-socialistic theory conformed to Islam yet the chief flaw in it was its nature of atheism which Iqbal never approved. He believed that this attitude of Russia towards religion was due to the corruption of the Catholic Church of Russia, but Russia would not be able to exist long without religion because no societal system can exist on the lines of atheism. Another event that also played an important role in Iqbal's life was the revolution in Chinese Turkestan in the 1930s. It all began in 1914 when Chinese officials attempted to impose Chinese as the official language over the traditional Muslim language i.e. Arabic and Persian. In 1933, the Muslim population started revolting under the leadership of just a sixteen-year-old boy named Ma Chong. Iqbal was so much influenced by this revolution that he wrote that the home of Babar, Taimur, and Changez has not stopped producing the military geniuses of the highest level. He also thought that the revolution in Turkestan might grow into a pan-Turanian movement (Hussain, 1983, pp. 10-26).

So, it is clear that the philosophy or the life of the West helped in transforming the ideas of Iqbal. Besides that, it was also the events happening at home and abroad that created a sense of disappointment and despair in Iqbal. These events acted as a trigger in shaping his ideas more towards modernity and the problems that it carries with it. This led him to address the plight of Muslims in his both prose and poetry, and criticize Nationalism based on the concept of modern nation-state vehemently.

Iqbal drew upon western works and thinkers such as Arthur Keith and Lord Acton to develop his views on nationalism. Sir Arthur Keith rejects the notion of nationalism for its promotion of racial and tribal identities through dividing mankind into nation-states. Lord Acton was a harsh critic of nationalism ideologies and the institution of the nation-state. His opposition to nationalism centered on two points – the totalitarian and centralizing tendencies of the modern nation-state and the incompatibility of Catholicism with nationalism due to the attempts of the nation-state to subordinate the church and religion (Sevea, pp. 130-13). Based on these writings, Iqbal too dejected the notion of western nationalism based on two assumptions. First, he found out that the idea of a modern nation-state based on territorial lines promotes racial discrimination and the idea of self-interest. He realized that in a nation-state, the interest of an area within certain boundaries is considered to be of utmost priority. The idea of looking down upon other nations is intrinsic to the very idea of the territorial nation-state as such a nation develops at the cost of other nations. Second, religion and moral values take a backseat in front of a nation. Iqbal thought that the basic problem with the idea of the modern nation-state is that it's against the foundational principle of Islam, that is, Tauḥīd (oneness of God). The sheer anchor of Tauḥīd is one's ultimate loyalty to God, not to thrones. Contrary to this loyalty, nationalism demands supreme loyalty to the nation-state (Ansari, I, 1961). Iqbal states in *The Reconstruction of Religious Thoughts in Islam-*

It seems to me that God is slowly bringing home to us the truth that Islam is neither Nationalism nor Imperialism but a League of Nations which recognizes artificial boundaries and racial distinctions for a facility of reference only, and not for restricting the social horizon of its members (Ansari, I, 1961).

Iqbal's growing dissatisfaction against nationalism is well expressed in his poem '*Wataniyat*', wherein, he writes:

“Of all the new gods, the biggest is the nation,  
That its garment is the coffin of religion” (Kausar, 2003)

In Europe (1905-1908), Iqbal became aware of the objectives and repercussions of Nationalism. He soon realized its tendency to create divisions among humans and nations, and thus, prevent the world to achieve universal brotherhood. It is because the concept of nation in the modern sense is based on the advancement of one nation's profit at the cost of other. That is why Iqbal was against the whole idea of the League of Nations as he believed that humanity cannot unite through creating a league of nations by first dividing it into rival nations. In his poem *Makkah and Geneva*, he says:

“In the present age in which the company of nations is common,  
Hidden from sight is the unity of Adam;  
Differentiation is the aim of Western governance,  
The purpose of Islam is only the community of Adam.  
Mecca has sent this message to the men of Geneva  
The association of nations or the association of Adam?” (See Sevea, 2012, p. 146)

What he meant in the above couplet is that the spread of this idea i.e. nation as a political concept where nationalism is concerned with the formation of nation-states based on geographical, racial, linguistic, and such other differences is bound to divide the Muslim world into various camps.

Despite Iqbal's aversion towards nationalism, it is wrong to assume that Iqbal was not patriotic. His opposition to nationalism should not be seen in coterminous with the rejection of

'patriotism'. He differentiated between patriotism and nationalism. While patriotism can be a natural sentiment towards one's motherland, nationalism is a modern political ideology that emerged from a profane and imperialistic worldview. In his address in the annual session of the All India Muslim Conference in 1932, Iqbal clearly stated "Patriotism is a perfectly natural virtue and has a place in the moral life of man" (Sherwani, 1995). He declared "*Wataniyat*" as an idol carved by western imperialism and wanted to replace this *wataniyat* with the love of *watan* in a Prophetic tradition (Ibid). Javed Majeed argues that for Iqbal, if "a nation is simply a geographical term, then he has no objections to it. In that sense, it is safe to say that we are all Indians and are so-called because we live in that part of the world, which is common by the name of India". However, it is when the word 'nation' ceases to be a geographical term and becomes a political concept that the problem of otherness begins. Javed Majeed further argues that according to Iqbal, the goal of Islam is to establish a community that ignores all national and racial distinctions. Therefore, it is for this reason that "Muslims can't be a nation in the political sense of the word except in terms of their being a *millat*" (Majeed, 2009).

*Millat* (community) according to Iqbal is not circumscribed by territorial limitations. A Muslim does not belong to India, Rome, or Syria, he argues. Hence, he was against the idea of territorial nationalism as it is in contradiction to the concept of *Ummah* i.e. Muslim brotherhood that occupies an important place in Islam. In fact, according to Iqbal, there is no contradiction between a country when taken in a geographical sense and Islam. He stated quite categorically that a country is merely a geographical term and it does not clash with Islam, as in Islam, it is believed that every human being loves the land of his birth and according to his/her capacity remains prepared to make sacrifices for it. Thus, he found no contradiction between his love for his country, *the Ummah*, and humanity. Hence, Iqbal who sang *Taran-i-Hind*, also, later on, could sing *Taran-i-Milli*. (Ibid).

Such viewpoints of Iqbal manifest that Iqbal had a serious issue with the idea of a modern-nation state defined by territorial demarcations. But, it's tragic that he is linked with the idea of a separate Muslim nation-state and celebrated as the father of Pakistan. (Sevea, 2012) Even scholars like Balraj Puri blame Iqbal for Muslim separatism and impose the post-partition reality on him (Khan, S. 2001). Such an understanding of Iqbal not only oversimplifies the

complexity of his political visions and philosophical thoughts but also puts Iqbal in confrontation with his earlier criticism of western nationalism and his ideas of Pan-Islamism, argues Sevea. Iqbal says in one of his poems-

*“Chu rakht-i-khwish az in khak  
Hane guyand ba ma ashna bud!  
Wa lekin kas nadanast in musafar  
Che guft wa ba ke guft wa az koja bud!”* (Kulliyat-i-Iqbal (farsi), p. 1021)

“When I prepared myself to depart from this earth  
Everyone said, ‘he was our friend’.  
But no one really knew this traveler,  
What he said and to whom and from where he came” (Sevea, 2012, p. 1)

It’s not an easy task to understand Iqbal’s viewpoint completely. Iqbal got involved in politics after 1923 and his ideas began to take more concrete shape. He was elected to the Punjab Legislative Council in November 1926. Now he had realized that the Hindus and Muslims could not live together because the Hindu- Muslim conflict was not merely religious. It was a clash of the two different peoples who had different languages, literary roots, and different concepts of art. He suggested that the Muslims of the Indian sub-continent should demand territorial specification in the form of a separate State based on the distinct cultural unit. He stated: “I would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single State. Self-government within the British Empire, or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-West India”. Wasti argues that Iqbal was using the word state; not with the meaning of a sovereign independent state but as a component and constituent unit of India (Wasti, 1978).

K.K. Aziz, a renowned Pakistani historian writes that Iqbal in his famous Allahabad address nowhere talked about the creation of a separate homeland for Indian Muslims (Aziz, 2002).



He argues that Iqbal was not against the unity between Hindus and Muslims or for that matter alliance for a greater cause (anti-colonial movement in that context), but such alliance did not mean a composite Indian nation. Such cooperation can be based on the same model as that of the alliance of the Muslims with the Jews of Medina through *Mithaq-ul-Madina* (Covenant of Medina) (Niazi, 2012). As Azīz states that: "It is grossly misleading to call him the originator of the idea of Pakistan or the poet who dreamt of partition. He never talked of partition and his ideal was that of a getting together of the Muslim provinces in the northwest to bargain more advantageously with the projected Hindu center. It is one of the myths of Pakistani nationalists to saddle Iqbal with the parentage of Pakistan" (Ibid).

If one looks at Muhammad Iqbal's viewpoint before his death in April 1938, one will find that he engaged in a public debate with Hussain Ahmad Madani (1879-1957), a leading Deobandi scholar over the compatibility of nationalism and Islam. Both attacked each other's idea of nationalism that has been explored by scholars and researchers. Maulana Madani argued that Islam aligns with establishing a political community based on territory, and to support his argument, he even quoted from the Qur'an. Allama Iqbal blamed Madani for having drifted from Islam for defending western nationalism. Iqbal considered nationalism and its constituent nation-state as 'the greatest enemy of Islam'. Unlike Madani and many of his contemporaries, Iqbal believed that the introduction of modern political models and institutions like nationalism would require a complete transformation of the structure of Islam (Sevea, 2012, pp. 1-2). This debate between the two also appears in Barbara Metcalfe's paper, which appears in a work titled *Islamic Legitimacy in a Plural Area*, edited by Anthony Reid and Michael Gilsonan (Routledge, 2007). She argues, while Madani insisted on the culturally plural and secular democracy as the viable solution for India's Muslims, Iqbal, on the other hand, wanted a homogenous Muslim society (Metcalfe, 2007, p. 86). Maulana Madani considered such a society in consonance with the Qur'an. In Dec 1937, he made a statement at a political meeting in Delhi, "in the current age, nations (*qaumain*) are based on territory (*autaan*), not religion (*mazhab*)" (Ibid, p.87). Iqbal didn't agree with his viewpoint. He thought it was tragic that a scholar like Madani could not understand Qur'an. Barbara Metcalfe writes:

In poetry and prose, Iqbal had, for decades, in company with a minor strand of other Indian intellectuals as well as with European and non-European critics across the globe, denounced the black side of modernity: competitive nationalism and its resultant militarism, imperialism, and consumerism (Ibid, p.88).

In short, for Iqbal, Muslims are a language or race. Iqbal's concept of nationalism was fundamentally non-territorial and any attempt to correlate Iqbal's view on nationalism with the creation of a separate nation for Muslims would be based upon shallow as well as a linear understanding of Iqbal's thought. He vehemently rejected the notion of the modern nation-state as divisive, anti-Islam, and also against the humanitarian principles and anti-Islam. His purpose was to awaken the consciousness of Muslims so that they should know their importance and the role they had played in the unfolding of history. This would only be possible through a Muslim federation within the larger Indian federation. Iqbal himself seemed aware of the fact that his thoughts could be misinterpreted. In a letter to Edward John Thompson, Iqbal writes in 1934:

You call me (a) protagonist of the scheme called "Pakistan". Now Pakistan is not my scheme. The one that I suggested in my address is the creation of a Muslim province i.e. a province having an overwhelming population of Muslims in the North West of India. This new province will be, according to my scheme, a part of the proposed Indian Federation. Pakistan scheme proposes a separate federation of Muslim provinces directly related to England as a separate dominion (Iqbal, 1934).

Iqbal's theory is too grand and universal to be reduced to just a call for a separate homeland of Pakistan'. To understand it completely, there is a need to learn about his philosophical thoughts behind it. Stigmatizing Iqbal as fundamentalists and separatists whose idea of Pakistan as a nation was based on the mere idea of a separate Muslim nation would be a great injustice to Iqbal as a Philosopher. It would not be appropriate to judge any author, poet, and philosopher just by looking at his one idea while ignoring the whole trajectory of his works and the context of his works. The one theme which remained dominant and most important in

his entire thought on Nationalism was *Khudi*, and therefore, one needs to understand Iqbal's Nationalism not in a vacuum but from the perspective of *Khudi*.

According to Iqbal, Islam focuses upon a unique relationship between individuals and society. It is the establishment of the relationship between the individual and society, which is one of the central questions for any social order. Iqbal sought to explain this relationship in his two famous mystical poems: *Asrar- e- Khudi* (the Secret of Self) and *Rumuz - e -Bekhudi* (The Mysteries of Selflessness). In *Asrar- e- Khudi*, throws light upon the stages and conditions necessary for the development of *Khudi* (higher Self) in an individual, whereas, *Rumuz-e – Bekhudi*, is about a deep connection between an individual and his community. It discusses the possibility of the actualization of this higher Self (*Khudi*) for the individual by being a part of his community and society. Thus, a soul of a person can be enlightened and nourished only through community, or society. This community needs to follow social order based on the spiritual ideals of Islam. Iqbal considers *ummah* as a spiritual community that helps in the transformation and development of this Self. It is for this purpose, Iqbal rejects the idea of a nation as a political concept as unhealthy which provides no scope for the development of that self as it is against the principles of the Qur'an. As the first stage according to Iqbal itself to achieve that *khudi* is the obedience to divine law, one cannot think of reaching the goal of Human Ego by living in a community that is not based on the principles of *Ummah* and *Tauhid* as Iqbal himself mentions in '*Rumuz-i-Bekhudi*' (The Mysteries of Selflessness) that an individual's truest self in the community alone achieves fulfillment (Sharma, Mehak, 2018, pp. 252-253). However, Iqbal's assertion of Qur'anic conception of nationhood should not be misread as his lack of political approach, argues Sevea (Sevea, 2012, p. 129). Sevea argues that Iqbal's purpose was to articulate a "'partly political, partly cultural' programme which would ensure that nation is developed according to its national character. The demand for an autonomous Muslim state in the northwest of India was part of this wider 'partly political, partly cultural' programme (Ibid, p.165).

The fact is that Iqbal had realized that Hindus and Muslims could not live together because the the conflict was not merely religious but cultural. He became aware of the fact that both Hindus

and Muslims have different cultures and each group has a right to free development according to his cultural traditions. He stated in a letter to Jinnah that he wrote on 20th March 1937:

It is necessary to tell the world both inside and outside India that the economic problem is not the only problem in the country as pointed out by Mr. Nehru. From the Muslim point of view, the cultural problem is of much greater consequence to most Indian Muslims. (Iqbal, 1968)

In his Allahabad address (1930) in the Muslim League session, he told the audience:

Cannot ignore facts, however unpleasant they may be. The only practical course is not to assume the existence of a state of things, which does not exist, but to recognize facts as they are and exploit them to our greatest advantage. He further states that it seems to me that Islam is neither Nationalism nor Imperialism but a league of nations that recognizes artificial boundaries for a facility of reference only (Khan, Sarwar, 2001, pp. 69-70).

So, Iqbal's vision was somewhere envisioning a certain kind of federation within a larger political system to create a powerful federating unit for the Muslims for the protection of their culture and social setup. Iqbal has indeed been criticized for the demand for a separate Muslim State that looks contrary to the ideal of unity proposed by Iqbal himself. But it holds validity only if we miss the main point of Iqbal's political thought. Iqbal's demand for a separate State was based on the rejection of the idea of Nationalism itself. A separate Muslim State was not to be an end itself. It was just a means to achieve the end goal of unification of the whole Muslim world. This goal was attainable either through a "league of Muslim nations" or through a joint forces of many small independent Muslim States tied to each other for purely political and economic reasons. The creation of a separate Muslim State was proposed as a temporary move. The ultimate purpose was the union of this State with the other Muslim States. (Sharma, 2018, pp. 253-254). In his address, he stated: "the construction of a polity on national lines if it means a displacement of the Islamic principles of solidarity, is simply unthinkable to a Muslim" (Khan, Sarwar, 2001, pp. 69-70). On 15 December 1932, in a speech delivered before

the National League, London, Iqbal stated: "Islam does not recognize the difference of race, of caste or even of sex. It is above time and space, and it is in this sense that human beings are accepted as brothers." (Ibid).

So, for Iqbal, the main problem with the whole project of the modern nation-state is that it is based upon hatred and contempt towards people from other communities and nations and thus creates or reinforces a sense of 'otherness, which Tagore is opposed to. Iqbal was aware that the biggest problem the world is facing today is "the race problem", which has its roots in the very idea of the modern nation-state. Mehmood Mamdani also believes that rather than a return to barbaric tribal ways, the violence of postcolonial societies should be understood as fulfilling the logic of colonialism closely linked to the whole project of modern-nation states. The whole project of the modern nation-state is based upon creating the homogenizing units, turning majority and minority into permanent political identities. As Mamdani argues in his book, *Neither Settler, Nor Native: The Making and Unmaking of Permanent minorities*, the origin of the nation-state can be traced back to Iberia in 1492 (and not in Westphalia in 1648, or France in 1789, as many argue) with the establishment of the Spanish state through ethnic cleansing of Jews and Muslims and their deportation. The whole idea of One Nation, One People, and One religion set fire to the relations between majority and minority within the same state. Then under the Liberal solution in the form of the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, two key concepts of modern-state were born-religious toleration at home and reciprocal guarantee of sovereignty abroad. Then Locke formulated the key tenets of the liberal theory of nation-state. Under it, only the majority has sovereignty and the minority must not participate in sovereignty. The liberal notion of nation-state turned majority and minority into permanent political identities. This was the original sin according to Mamdani (Mamdani, 2020).

He, in his book, explores, how the notion of nation-state along with its violent and divisive project got exported to other parts of the world through European Colonialism. He argues that the extreme violence that racks erstwhile colonies today serve the same goals, and draw on the same rationale, as the violence deployed by European powers when they first took foreign territories. The United States established the model for settler-colonialism, providing the template upon which the South African apartheid regime and the Israeli state were patterned.

The same model was also used by the fascist regime of Germany in catastrophic ethnic cleansing. Mamdani explains how this damaging political violence continues into the post-colonial societies under the garb of the modern nation-state building project. For instance, genocides in Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and elsewhere continue to be used by states, with popular support, in their attempt to build more socially and culturally cohesive societies, targeting the minorities or the “others”. As long as the nation-state continues to remain the defining establishment of our modern societies, these forms of violence will persist (Mamdani, 2020).

The loss of Andalusia (Iberian Peninsula) by Muslims (Moors) in 1492 CE was highlighted by Allama Iqbal in his epic poem ‘*Masjid-e- Qurtaba*’. It was ruled by the Muslims for eight centuries until 1492 CE when Granada was conquered by Catholic Monarchs. Muslims were referred to as “Moors”, a derogatory and negative term used for the people who came from Morocco. It had emerged as one of the great Muslim civilizations: reaching its zenith under the Cordovain (Ummayad Caliphate) in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. It was established as a pluralistic society where the people of three monotheistic religions: Jews, Muslims, and Christians participated equally and freely and contributed to arts, science, and architecture. One of the greatest examples of architecture was the Mosque of Cordoba that was commissioned in Spain by Abd al Rahman in 784 CE, later expanded by his successors. The mosque was then turned into a Cathedral, after the fall of Muslims in Spain. However, the original architecture of the mosque has been maintained. In 1932, Iqbal visited this Grand Mosque and penned down a poem titled ‘*Masjid-e-Qurtaba*’ (The Mosque of Cordoba) on the loss of one of the great cities Andalus in general and the Qurtaba Mosque (Mosque of Cordoba) in particular. The poem was published in his 1935/36 collection *Bāl-e Jibrīl* ('The Wing of Gabriel'). The poem reflects his sadness. (TNS, March 29, 2021) He writes:

*“silsila-e-roz-o-shab naqsh-gar-e-hādsāt*

*silsila-e-roz-o-shab asl-e-hayāt-o-mamāt*

*silsila-e-roz-o-shab tār-e-harīr-e-do-rañg*

*jis se banāī hai zaat apnī qabā-e-sifāt*

*silsila-e-roz-o-shab s̄az-e-azal k̄i fuḡhāñ*  
*jis se dikhātī hai zaat zer-o-bam-e-mumkināt*  
*tujh ko parakhtā hai ye mujh ko parakhtā hai ye*  
*silsila-e-roz-o-shab sairafi-e-kā.enāt*  
*tū ho agar kam ayaar maiñ huuñ agar kam ayaar*  
*maut hai terī barāt maut hai merī barāt*  
*tere shab-o-roz k̄i aur haqīqat hai kyā*  
*ek zamāne k̄i rau jis meñ na din hai na raat*  
*āni-o-fānī tamām mojaza-hā-e-hunar*  
*kār-e-jahāñ be-sabāt kār-e-jahāñ be-sabāt*  
*avval o āḡhir fanā bātin o zāhir fanā*  
*naqsh-e-kuhan ho ki nau manzil-e-āḡhir fanā” (Iqbal, 1935)*

“The succession of day and night, is the architect of events.

The succession of day and night, is the essence of life and death.

The succession of day and night, is a two-colored thread of silk,

With which the Divine essence, prepares its apparel of attributes.

The succession of day and night, is the reverberation of the symphony of Creation.

Through its modulations, the Infinite demonstrates the parameters of possibilities.

It tries you, it trues me,

The succession of day and night is the touchstone of the universe.

But what if you are of lesser value, what if I am of lesser value.

Death is your ultimate destiny, death is my ultimate destiny.

What else is the reality of your days and nights?

Besides a surge in the river of time, sans say, sans night.

Frail and evanescent, all miracles of ingenuity,

Transient, all temporal attainments: Ephemeral. All worldly accomplishments.

Annihilation is the end of all beginnings; Annihilation is the end of all ends.

Extinction, the fate of everything; Hidden or manifest, old and new” (Iqbal, 1935)

Iqbal, in this poem, lamented over the fall of the great Muslim civilization at the hands of the cruel and divisive forces of the modern nation-state. He is trying to convey the message that the material world is not everlasting. It is temporary, and with it, all great examples of art and architecture, ancient buildings and monuments, are heading towards decay and destruction. That’s the reason, Allama Iqbal like Tagore too had a problem with the notion of nationalism as it promotes otherness, violence, and destruction. But both of them supported patriotism that stands for love for your motherland or fatherland. But if patriotism means love and loyalty for your country (*Hubbul watani* in Urdu), one can ask- what debars a patriot or patriotism from turning into a chauvinist or chauvinism? The answer to this question requires an investigation into the concept of patriotism. When somebody is asked to define the term patriotism, the first thing that comes to one’s mind is nationalism. This is because Patriotism is often confused with the similar term nationalism. However, this is not the complete reality. In fact, many scholars have made a distinction between the two terms. For instance, Lord Acton, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, used nationality in terms of affection and instinct, whereas he used patriotism in terms of a moral relation. He defined nationality “as our connection with the race that is merely



natural or physical”, whereas patriotism for him “is the awareness of our moral duties to the political community” (Acton, 1972, p. 163). George Orwell distinguished the two in terms of aggressive vs. defensive nationalism. For him, nationalism is about power and the desire to attain as much power as possible for your nation whereas patriotism is a kind of devotion to a particular place and way of life, but has no desire to impose on others (Orwell, 1968, p. 362). Patriotism is thus, distinguished from nationalism in terms of the strength of the love and a kind of concern that one feels for its country. When the love and concern are exhibited in a reasonable degree without any ill thoughts or belligerent actions towards them that is patriotism, whereas when you begin to love your country to the extent of hating others and acting badly towards them, that is nationalism (see Billig, 1995, pp. 55-59). In this sense, Patriotism is not vice as with the case of nationalism. It is a virtue in the words of Alasdair MacIntyre (1984).

MacIntyre, a Scottish philosopher, in his 1984 lecture, *Is Patriotism a Virtue?* poses a simple question: whether Patriotism is a vice or a virtue? He argues that there are two viewpoints on patriotism. One is the popular one that considers patriotism in a contradictory relationship with morality. He argues that according to this viewpoint, “there is an inherent conflict between patriotism and the modern west’s liberal democratic ethos.” Also, like “marital fidelity, the love of one’s own family and kin, friendship, and loyalty to such institutions as schools,” explains MacIntyre, patriotism is “a kind of loyalty to a particular nation which only those possessing that particular nationality can exhibit” (MacIntyre, 1984, p.4). He believes that such personal loyalties are incompatible with the liberal standard of universal neutrality because for the liberals-

To judge from a moral standpoint is to judge impersonally. It is to judge as any rational person would judge, independently of his or her interests, affections, and social position. And to act morally is to act per such impersonal judgments. Thus, to think and to act morally involve the moral agent in abstracting him or herself from all social particularity and partiality. The potential conflict between morality so understood and patriotism is at once clear. For patriotism requires me to exhibit peculiar devotion to my nation and you to yours. It requires me to regard such contingent social facts as to where I was born and what

government ruled over that place at that time, who my parents were, who my great-great-grandparents were, and so on, as deciding for me the question of what virtuous action is—at least insofar as it is the virtue of patriotism which is in question. Hence the moral standpoint and the patriotic standpoint are systematically incompatible (Ibid, p. 5).

However, MacIntyre disagrees with this viewpoint that considers a patriotic in an antagonistic relationship to liberal moralists. In this case, patriotism is a vice devoid of any moral standpoint. But he believes that the two standpoints – the patriotic one and the moral standpoint need not conflict. Patriotism, for him, is a virtue, provided we understand patriotism in the right fashion. To support this argument, he states:

I understand the story of my life in such a way that it is part of the history of my family or this farm or this university or this countryside; and I understand the story of the lives of other individuals around me as embedded in the same larger stories so that I and they share a common stake in the outcome of that story and in what sort of story it both is and is to be: tragic, heroic, comic. A central contention of the morality of patriotism is that I will obliterate and lose a central dimension of the moral life if I do not understand the enacted narrative of my individual life as embedded in the history of my country. For if I do not understand it I will not understand what I owe to others or what others owe to me, for what crimes of my nation I am bound to make reparation, for what benefits to my nation I am bound to feel gratitude (MacIntyre, 1984, p. 16).

Therefore, for MacIntyre, patriotism doesn't necessarily mean to fit it into either of these binaries, which is: loving your country blindly or just hate it. It is a virtue that means, a “mean” or a “middle ground” in the Aristotelian sense. It is about realizing how not just the feelings of pride, but also the sins of our country shape the way you connect to other people in the world. It is less about hating the other nation and celebration of a particular government or a leader or a nation defined in terms of territory, and more about caring for the people with whom you share your country. It is a kind of social foundation that allows us to be our best selves. Therefore, it is not in contradiction to morality, as pointed out by liberal moralists on the ground that makes one irrational. But at the same time, it is also not based on the same morality as endorsed by liberal moralists because of the simple fact that it doesn't “render our social

and moral ties too open to dissolution by rational criticism” (Ibid, p.18). Thus, it is an act of virtue or a means that debars patriotism from falling into either of the two extremes- loving your country blindly that often results in hating the other country or not having any sense of emotional attachment to your country. It is the perfect balance of the two. It is this notion of patriotism as a virtue that Iqbal called for. However, Iqbal’s thought on nationalism is assumed to be devoid of humanism or the broader humanitarian goals as he is speaking more in terms of the unity of the entire Muslim community as against the entire human community.

In this context, Rajmohan Gandhi argues that Iqbal’s proposal for a separate Muslim federation was not the result of hatred towards Hindus but is based on spiritual and moral principles. He wanted a world of brotherhood and that is why he was against the idea of territorial nationhood. The Indian Muslim community was chosen by him just as a starting reference point for this upcoming world. This is evident by a statement made by him when he was criticized by a European for the contradiction between the universalism of his thought of humanity and the application of this only to the Muslim community of India. To this, he replied:

The humanitarian ideal is always universal in poetry and philosophy but if you work it out in actual life you must start with a society exclusive in the sense of having a creed and well-defined outline, but ever-enlarging its limits by example and persuasion. Such a society in my belief is Islam...All men and not Muslims alone are meant for the Kingdom of God on earth, provided they say goodbye to their idols of race and nationality and treat one another as personalities... (Wahid Syed, 1964).

Also in an interview to All India Radio that was conducted just three months before his death, he stated:

Only one unity is dependable, and that unity is the brotherhood of man, which is above race, nationality, color or language.....so long as men do not demonstrate by their actions that they believe that the whole world is the family of God.....the beautiful ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity will never materialize (Schimmel, A, 1963).

Therefore, an in-depth analysis of Iqbal’s letters, verse, writings, and statements suggest that Muhammad Iqbal was thinking of an alternate world to the modern state. To realize this vision,

he had high hopes for the Muslim community in India. The Muslim community in India is to become a starting point of his mission of universal brotherhood.

### ***5.2.2. On Capitalism:***

Modernity as has already been discussed is based upon the material interests according to Iqbal and since it is based upon striving for material interests, it promotes Capitalism. Iqbal had criticized the capitalist system as he believed that Capitalism is a bloodthirsty system. He states:

“What they call commerce is a game of dice,

For one profit, for million swooping deaths.

Their science, philosophy, scholarship, government.

Preach man’s equality and drink man’s blood” (Hussain, 1983)

What he is trying to say is that capitalism works upon the notion of ‘haves’ and ‘haves not’ as proposed by Karl Marx. It divides society into two sections- one is with the riches and the other is the deprived section that we call ‘have-nots’. It lures the people with the promise of improving their lives but improves the life of few at the cost of many through its exploitative tendencies. Therefore, capitalism for Iqbal divides society into two sections- an exploited and an exploiter one. Iqbal believes that real fraternity is difficult to establish between nations without achieving economic equality. Such equality can only be achieved if the social system is free from the capitalist forces and allow such forces only within certain limits. However, he was critical of communism as proposed by Karl Marx as well. He says-

“The transfer of political power to the proletariat will make no difference

The ways of the proletariat are the same as those of the bourgeoisie

It may be the majesty of kingship or the fun of democracy

If religion is separated from politics the latter becomes mere tyranny” (Khalil, 1991).

In these verses, Iqbal has rejected communism proposing the formation of a proletarian society is the only possible solution to Capitalist forces and the problems generated by them. Iqbal rejects the very basic hypothesis of Karl Marx's book *Das Kapital* in the following verses:

“The world does not like tricks and guiles of science and will not their contests.  
This age doesn't like ancient thought, from the core of hearts their show detest.  
O wise economist the books you write are quite devoid of useful aim  
They have twisted lines with orders strange No warmth for labor though they claim.  
The idol houses of the West their schools and churches wide:  
The ravage caused the greed of wealth. Their wily wit attempts to hide” (Ibid).

Like Iqbal, Tagore was also critical of industrial capitalism. Adam Webb argues that Tagore called it a “cult of the machine that was having a dehumanizing effect both on the West itself and the international system.” According to him, “the enthusiast of industrial capitalism was a mere living money-bag jumping from profit to profit, and breaking the backbone of human races in its financial leapfrog” (Webb, 2008, p. 196).

### ***5.2.3. Pitfalls of Western Secularism-***

Iqbal says, “That according to the law of Islam there is no distinction between the Church and the State. The State with us is not a combination of religious and secular authority, but it is a unity in which no such distinction exists” (Iqbal, 1908). Opposite to that, what we can see in the western nations is the sharp distinction between the church and the state. The church is something that is considered to be limited to the private sphere whereas the state is something that is public and works on the notion of reason. This distinction has kept in mind keeping in view the conflict that is there between faith and reason, a conflict that got unfolded with Enlightenment as has already been discussed in the first chapter of the dissertation. The main problem that has merged with this distinction is the way the important values such as love, care, sympathy that are central to religion have got overshadowed by the very idea of individualism. In 1840, in the second volume of *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville says that “individualism” is “a word recently coined.” Similarly, 16 years later, in *The Old*

*Régime and the French Revolution*, Tocqueville writes that word “individualism was unknown to our ancestors, for the good reason that in their days every individual necessarily belonged to a group and no one could regard himself as an isolated unit” (Smith and Moore, 2014, pp. 1-2). It means the idea of individualism is of recent origin, whose roots can be traced back to Enlightenment and the whole project of the modern secular nation-state.

The idea of individualism is based upon the notion of self-interest. This idea of self-interest derives its roots from the kind of rationality upon which the very idea of the modern state is based upon i.e. rationality based on logic and cost-benefit analysis. As a result of all this, one could see disturbed family life in the western nation with a high rate of depression because most of the people there are living an individualistic life (Smith, J. 2014). Not only this, but one can also draw a link between individualism and the increasing rate of social crimes. A recent example may be found in *The Myth of Individualism* by Peter L. Callero. The book introduces the reader to the notion of individualism by invoking the case of an American domestic terrorist, Theodore Kaczynski, who murdered 3 people and injured around 23 people from 1978 to 1995. But how this case is linked to a vicious serial killer? Callero represents this killer as a representative of “extreme” individualism for various reasons. Callero summarizes:

Kaczynski’s extreme commitment to individualism is evident in (1) his intentional avoidance of personal relationships, (2) his deliberate physical separation from others, (3) the belief that he could live out his life completely independent of a larger community, (4) his solitary development of a personal program of social reform, and (5) his private strategy to unilaterally impose his ideas through a series of private acts that destroyed the lives of others (Smith and Moore, 2014, pp.1-2).

On individualism, Jesse Smith writes-

Our families, our cultures, our localities, even our religions and belief systems, are merely private affairs. Not greater forces that guide us through life and connect us to others. Instead, just little puzzle pieces we put together to help define what matters – our self-made selves. If you don’t feel happiness, it’s because you failed to create it for yourself. You chose the wrong pieces. Or put them together poorly. And there’s nothing anybody else

can do about it. You've made yourself, unlike the rest. They can't understand your special brand of pain. I can't imagine a better recipe for loneliness, meaninglessness, sense of failure – in a word, depression.....If we could learn to focus more on where we're coming from and less on where we're going – how we can contribute to our families and communities and cultural traditions, instead of standing apart from them – we might feel more connection and purpose (Smith, J, 2014).

Therefore, we have seen how modern civilization and its political-economic models are problematic. These models are grounded in the sharp contrast between faith and reason, the binary imposed by Enlightenment. So far, we have seen how these models have created a problem for the world, especially the Western world. However, even the Muslim world has not remained untouched by these problems. Muslim society is worst hit by modern civilization and its elements. The next section will explore the impact of these modern political models founded upon the faith-reason binary on the Islamic world.

### **5.3. Islam and Stagnation: Problem of Religious Extremism**

Muslims had before them their degenerated and subjugated society in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century due to the decline of their political power worldwide (Khalif, 1995). This resulted in intense anxiety among the Muslims. But they didn't retaliate them as a single unified power to deal with such subjugation and loss of power. Instead, two separate sections or we can say movements appeared to there were two kinds of movements or one can say the sections that emerged to seek a solution. Both these movements adopted a different approach. One movement was headed by religious leaders and the other one by Liberals, and both were against each other (Khomeini, 1989).

#### *Movement of the Liberals:*

This movement was conducted by scholars like Sir Syed Ahmad Khan who believed in ameliorating the situation of Muslim society by following the footsteps of the West. He was in favour of promoting the English language and modern science among them. He believed that it is important for the Muslims to understand that time is changing, so it has become a necessity to study nature and exploit the possibilities of nature as modern science is doing.

Also, the Muslim society needs a modern *ilm al- kalim* (Khomeini, 1989). Sir Syed Ahmad Khan opined that it is not the penetration but the distance from the West that is the root cause of the decline of Muslims in India. Hanif in his work, *Islam and Modernity* argue that Sir Syed Ahmad Khan started from the premise that nothing in Islamic belief could be opposed to reason based on logic. He opposed ignorance, superstitions, and evil customs prevalent in Muslim society (Hanif, 1997, pp. 136-140).

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan firmly believed that to progress, the acquisition of western education and science by the Muslims is a must. As time passed, he started emphasizing the idea of pragmatism, modernism and started advocating for strong interfaith relations between Islam and Christianity. He published many writings promoting liberal, rational interpretations of Islamic scriptures. However, his view of Islam was rejected by Muslim clergy as contrary to traditional views on issues like jihad, polygamy, and animal slaughtering. In face of pressure from extremists, Sir Syed avoided discussing religious subjects in his writings, focusing instead on promoting education. So, for him, it was only by the reconciliation of Islam and modernity based on “reason” that the Muslim society would be benefited. He also believed that there is nothing in the Qur’an that is against the use of reason. This modern science is in complete conformity with the Islamic faith (Ibid). So, this movement believed in improving the condition of the Muslims by adopting western values and the notion of scientific rationality.

#### *Movement of the Traditionalist:*

The traditionalist movement was mostly led by religious leaders such as *Ulema* (Islamic jurisprudence scholars). French sociologist Oliver Roy says, “Islamic Political imagination of the Ulema has endeavored to ignore or disqualify anything new.... History is something that must be endured; whatever is new is contingent and merits only a fatwa from time to time” (Zaman, 2002). They decided to abstain from all the modern elements such as the English language in the schools and contemporary culture as a threat to the integration of Muslim society. They considered the English language, culture, the science to be invaders, resulting in taking extreme paths (Khomeini, 1989). To protect their society from any kind of



disintegration, these traditionalists decided to adopt the path of stagnation of which Allama Iqbal was highly critical.

Allama Iqbal in the last chapter of his work *The Reconstruction of Religious Thoughts in Islam* makes an interesting argument against stagnation. He argues that there is nothing in Islam that's against "reason". Islam condemns stagnation or *taqlid* (the unquestioning acceptance of legal decisions of another without knowing the basis of those decisions). He argues that as God is the ultimate spiritual basis of all life, loyalty to God demands the loyalty of man to his ideal nature. The ultimate spiritual basis of all life is eternal but reveals itself in change. History shows us that we experience new problems with the change in time and circumstances. Eternal principles give us a foothold in the world of perpetual change. These eternal principles can be understood in change only. We can get to know about those changes through reasoning. The ruler of Yemen when newly appointed once asked by the Prophet that "how he would decide the matters that are coming before him?" He in return replied that "he will judge matters according to Book of the God" At this, the Prophet asked that "if the Book of God has nothing to guide you, then?" He replied that then "I will act upon the precedents of Prophet of God" Prophet again asked that "if the precedents also fail?" Then he replied that "he will exert to form his judgment through reasoning". This shows the importance of reasoning in Islam (Iqbal, 1974, pp. 62-67).

Iqbal further argues that although the use of reasoning as a faculty to deal with questions of the changing times has been admitted by the Sunni School at the theoretical level yet in practice it has always been denied ever since the establishment of five schools or madhabs after Prophet's death. Such an attitude seems to be strange in a system of law based on the foundations provided by the Qur'an which provides for an essentially dynamic view on life. It is therefore important to discuss the cause of this intellectual attitude that has reduced the law of Islam to a state of stagnation which precisely can also be considered as the reason for the blame often charged against Islam as being anti-reason. He argues that some European thinkers believe that the stationary character of the Law of Islam is due to the influence of the Turks but this is a completely superficial opinion because the legal schools of Islam were established

long before the Turkish influence even started to work in the history of Islam (Ibid). Iqbal pointed out three causes for this stagnation-

- 1) *Rationalist Movement as a threat to Social Integrity of Islam* - Rationalist movement appeared in the church of Islam during the early days of the Abbasids that created huge controversies especially on the question of the eternity of the Qur'an. The Rationalists denied it on the ground that it was just another form of the Christian dogma of the eternity of the word whereas, on the other hand, the conservative thinkers opposed the rationalists considering it as undermining the very foundations of Islam. Conservative thinkers regarded the rationalist movement as a force of disintegration and considered it a danger to the stability of Islam as a social unit. Their main purpose was basically to preserve the social integrity of Islam. To realize this, the only option available to them was to use the binding force of Shariah.
- 2) *Rise and Growth of Sufism*: The rise and growth of Sufism that developed gradually under the influence of non-Islamic character to a large extent are responsible for this attitude. Sufism is a kind of free thought and is in alliance with Rationalism. The emphasis that it had put on the difference between "appearance" and "reality" created an attitude of indifference to all that applies to "appearance" and not to "reality". This spirit of total other-worldliness in later Sufism provided the prospect of unrestrained thought on its speculative side and thus, finally absorbed the best minds in Islam. As a result of which, the Muslim state was left in the hands of unthinking masses of Islam with no personalities of a high caliber to guide and therefore had to find their security only in following the already established five schools blindly.
- 3) *Destruction of Baghdad and Fear of Disintegration*: The destruction of Baghdad that was the center of Muslim intellectual life in the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, gave a deep blow to the Islamic world.

However, science and reason remained an integral part of Islam even after the disintegration of Baghdad as believed by George Saliba. Saliba believes that it did create a fear of further

disintegration in the Muslim society in such a period of political decay. To avoid that, the conservative thinkers of Islam considered excluding all kinds of innovations in the law of Sharia, the only way to preserve the uniform social life of Islam. There is no denying the fact that their main agenda was social order as a duty to counteract the forces of decay but this is also true that in an over-organized society the individual is crushed out of existence. Iqbal on the contrary believes that the only effective power that crushes the forces of decay in people is the rearing of the self of the individuals. Such individuals only can reveal the depth of life (Ibid).

Zulfiqar Ali Khan in his work named *A Voice from the East* says that Iqbal talked highly against stagnation and loss of desire to enquire about the new or unknown things that play an important role in the development of 'self' or *khudi* of a person. Iqbal in his work '*Asrar-i-Khudi*' condemns the stagnation and loss of desire as the ultimate death of the individuals and nations. He says that -

“From the flame of desire, the heart takes life,

And when it takes life, all die that is not true.

When it refrains from forming wishes, its opinion  
breaks and it cannot soar.

Desire is an emotion of the self.

It is a restless wave of the self's  
sea.

Desire is a noose for hunting  
ideals; A binder of the book of  
deeds.

Negation of desire is death to the living,  
Even as the absence of burning extinguishes the  
flame. Why does the mind strive after discoveries  
and scale the heavens?

This desire that enriches life,

And the intellect is a child of its womb” (Khan, 1922, pp. 35-37)

What he is trying to emphasize is that every human action is led by desire. This desire performs the same function in the human body as is performed by steam in an engine. Man-made machinery stops working if the propelling force loses its power. Similarly, the human body which is also like a machine created by God loses the zeal for life if the desire is dead. Today the competition is tough and it is only a burning desire within a person that will keep him alive. Otherwise, the birds and beasts will prey upon him and tear him to pieces. So, one should be afraid of stagnation and decay. Iqbal says that a man who struggles best in his life is very likely to achieve the best in life. Hence, Iqbal is putting great emphasis on the importance of keeping the flame of desire burning to serve as a stimulus to life. It is important for a person to constantly advance and for that it is a must to feel alive which is not possible if one has adopted the path of stagnation in his life. Iqbal is asking us not to forget that as a newborn child, the first thing we felt was the appetite for mother’s milk. So, hunger was the first sensation that we felt on arrival in this world. He further states that our creator, thus, expects us to strive for our nourishment. Iqbal quotes Meredith who says, “He who refuses to struggle, let him perish and let the curtain of death hide him away forever!” (Ibid, pp. 37-45). Iqbal says that the idea of rest is treated as the culmination of human ambition in most of the literature of oriental peoples. Many mighty people who have succumbed to this temptation had a very bad end, he argues. So, this should serve us as a warning to keep that fire or the quest to know things within us alive.

In short, the negation of desire is death to the living. It is even more than this. Zulfiqar Ali Khan says that according to Iqbal, neglect of conscious activity on the part of a person can blast the hopes of many generations that are yet to be born. It is possible that a nation becomes a slave for the aggrandizement of other nations and as Plato says, “You lose half of your virtues if you lose your liberty” (Ibid). Iqbal writes:

“Life consists of movement;

Such is the law that rules the world.

On this route, a halt is  
impossible;

To remain static means death.

Life is eternal, always quivering, and always young.

The only constant thing in the world is change.

Everything lives by continuous strife and struggle;

I am continually thirsty as though I had fire beneath my feet” (Maitre, 1981, pp. 38-39).

In *The Reconstruction of Religious Thoughts in Islam*, Iqbal is emphasizing the same point that it is not possible to bring any change if a person is turned into a living stone. He is arguing that in Qur’an, it is mentioned “Verily God will not change the condition of men, till they change what is in themselves” (13:11).

It means that if a person does not take any initiative then the spirit within him hardens into a dead stone. His life and the onward movement of his spirit depend upon how far a person tries to understand the reality that confronts him. It is only possible to understand reality through knowledge. Knowledge, according to Iqbal, is sense-perception that is elaborated by understanding. He further states that the one important feature of the Qur’an is the emphasis that it lays on this observable aspect of Reality. Quoting from Qur’an, he says, “Assuredly, in the creation of the Heavens and of the earth; and in the alternation of night and day; and in the ships which pass through the sea with what is useful to man; and in the rain which God sendeth down from Heaven, giving life to the earth after its death, and scattering over it all kinds of cattle; and in the change of the winds, and in the clouds that are made to do service between the Heavens and the earth - are signs for those who understand” (2:164) (Iqbal, 1974, pp. 62-70). So, he is trying to say that change is the law of nature and it is neither possible to survive nor understand the reality if a person takes on the course of stagnation and decay. It is this problem of resorting to *taqlid* and denial of the reason that often leads to misinterpretation of Qur’anic verses, resulting in resorting to religious extremism, violence, and war.

However, one must not take these incidences as a ground for justifying the irrational nature of Islam. Islam as a religion is not anti-reason, provided that reason is not defined in the strict sense of term based on its dominant understanding that has its roots in Enlightenment. Although the period of stagnation in Islam can be traced back to Baghdad's disintegration during the Abbasid period yet the main reason is the faith-reason divide created during Enlightenment which generated a false image of reason. In the post-Enlightenment period, the general notion that emerged is anything rational is anti-religious, and vice versa. From the writings of Iqbal, it is quite clear that, for Iqbal, both west and Muslim world are not free from problems. If the problem with the west is too much emphasis given to the reason that comes from understanding faith in contentious relation with reason, then the problem with the east or more specifically with the Muslim society is two-fold- one is that Muslim section who blindly follows the west and the other, who gives too much emphasis to religion. For both, there is no middle ground except taking on extreme paths. For instance, Muhammad al-Houni, a Libyan reformist living in Italy, comes to the following conclusion while talking about the problem of the Arab Muslim society “Arab societies have only one of two options: either to sever their ties with Western civilization and its cultural institutions and to continue to do themselves harm . . . or to irrevocably sever their ties with the religious legacy of the Middle Ages, for their philosophy to be a philosophy of life and freedom, and not one of death and hatred” (Reilly, 2010, p. 188).

Iqbal would say that both of them: the West and the Muslim world failed in the sense that both of them are understanding the relationship between faith and reason from the dominant perspective of the West which views faith and reason as mutually exclusive to each other. Both of them have failed to understand faith and reason in the clear sense of the term. In short, both east and west have a problematic approach towards understanding faith and reason.

## **Conclusion: Is Faith-Reason Binary Inevitable?**

The debate on the relationship between faith and reason, the two fundamental pillars of human life and experiences, is not new. While scholars like Thomas Aquinas, John Locke, and Iqbal believe that both faith and reason complement each other, others like Kierkegaard, Richard Dawkins, and Sam Harris favour a thesis of incompatibility between the two. However, the primary concern of the thesis is not delving into the common question of whether faith and reason are complementary to each other or in a contradictory relation to each other? This question has generally been taken by many as their field of investigation. But instead, the thesis tries to explore the more fundamental problems related to the question of binary between faith and reason. It challenges the very epistemic basis of the faith-reason binary.

Firstly, it deals with the question of the faith-reason binary creation. It's asking whether the binary between faith and reason is natural in nature or social construction. For instance, Foucault believes that most of the binaries in society are constructed ones, like sane-insane, order-disorder (see Rainbow, 1984). The thesis suggests that faith and reason were not always seen in terms of binaries in the strict sense. The binary instead is a result of the historical developments in 17<sup>th</sup> century England. The three most important antecedents to this faith-reason separation were the emergence of the Protestant Reformation, the replacement of Aristotelian science with Newtonian science, and the Rise of Mercantile Capitalism (see Harrison, 1990 and Bilgrami, 2006). These developments started giving a certain shape to religion and rendered to it a certain fixity with which we understand it today. At the same time,

there was a transition that was going on in science that would render it in the form that we understand it today.

In short, all these developments brought changes in the way we used to perceive “science” and “religion”. In fact, the very terms “science” and “religion” were not very common during those times. Science used to be referred to by other names like natural philosophy, and religion as faith and theology (see Harrison 1990 and 2015). However, with the rise of reformers, Newtonian science, and Capitalism, the common understanding of science and religion changed forever. Science (referred to as knowledge, natural philosophy, education, or ‘*Ilm*’ earlier) used to be seen as a collective endeavor before the replacement of Aristotelian science with Newtonian science, which then changed its nature forever. Today, it’s more of an individual enterprise (see Masood 2009 and Saliba, 2007). Earlier, its purpose was to satiate the needs of the community, which is now being replaced by fulfilling the needs of the private enterprises. Also, this “new science” is premised upon the new kind of reasoning or rationality, often referred to as ‘scientific rationality’ that is instrumental. Instrumental, because it is premised upon reaping the maximum monetary benefits using the resources efficiently, effectively, and logically. This “new reason” proposed by science is based upon the idea of evaluation and proofs using mathematical models and data. All these developments at the level of science and this new rationality/reasoning put it in confrontation with religion. Religion became its Alter- Ego that set faith and reason into polar relations, the boundaries of which got concretized over the period of time. This is one side of the problem.

The second level of the problem or the question that the thesis is focusing upon is the emergence of one polarity of this binary as the dominant one, causing the other polarity to fall into a non-dominant position. The dominant pole in the binary is “science”, “reason” and the “modern-nation state” and the non-dominant pole is religion or faith. The three antecedents mentioned above, not just caused developments at the level of science, but also the level of religion. At the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, reformers emerged on the scene, first in England, as it is in England that the groundwork for Enlightenment was laid down. Reformers for the first time, drew a distinction between religion, based on revealed knowledge, and natural knowledge. The main reason behind drawing this distinction was the fact that Christianity was



reduced to the beliefs and practices of the Church, in all the domains of life, which over a period of time turned discriminatory and authoritarian. As a result, the practices and beliefs of the Church began to be questioned in terms of its anti-reason approach. Religion now began to be understood more in terms of beliefs and practices that needed to be put into a rational investigation. Before that, reason and religion were not considered contrary to each other (see Harrison, 1990). Sixteenth-century Protestants decided to do away with the old age tradition of considering priests as the supreme authority and instead insisted that “scripture alone” should be the basis of Christian doctrine. But soon it was realized that different people could derive different interpretations from the same scriptures through the application of reason. As a result, multiple Christian doctrines emerged with no single reading of scripture or set of rules for living. This divided the society into multiple groups. As Gregory (2012) puts it; “Protestant appeals to scripture alone produced an unwelcome Pluralism of competing Christian claims” (p. 100). By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Europeans to avoid war in the name of religion decided to adopt the policy of religious tolerance by keeping the religious beliefs and practices limited to the private matter. This is what we know by the name of western secularism, wherein, religion has been pushed to the backdoor as an individual enterprise. Also, as religion got pushed to the backdoor, science and its doppelganger ‘reason’ or more precisely the ‘modern/instrumental rationality’ emerged as an important public enterprise. These two are not just promoted by the modern nation-state, but these two are like the armor of the state on which the notion of modern-nation state is actually premised. This modern nation-state works on the principle of instrumental rationality, in the sense that, it tries to achieve its national interest at any cost in the most effective way. Such kind of rationality promotes divisiveness and otherness. Also, as this nation-state is based on the idea of ‘one nation, one people and one religion, it results in creating majority and minority into permanent political identities (see Mamdani, 2020).

It is this idea of instrumental rationality and the idea of one people and one religion that pushed the world into one of humanity’s biggest crises in the form of world-war I and world-war II. These incidents in the name of national interests continue to persist even today, such as genocides in Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and elsewhere continue to be used by states, with popular support, in their attempt to build more socially and culturally cohesive societies, targeting the minorities or the “others”. The modern-nation state has no religion of its own, except the

religion of nationalism. The paradox is that the modern state is premised upon the idea of separating politics from religion, but in the process, the nation has become its biggest religion (see Iqbal's *wataniyat*). As long as the nation-state and its doppelganger 'instrumental rationality' continue to remain the defining establishment of our modern societies, these forms of violence will persist. This brings us to the third problematic element of the faith-reason binary, which is the socio-political implications of the modern political models- the models founded upon the very binary of faith and reason. One such model is the Nation-state as has already been mentioned, and the others are the idea of western secularism and capitalism (see chapter 5 of the thesis).

This takes us to the fourth important question related to this binary, which is, if the binary of faith-reason is also a social construct and carry its own sets of problem, the important question we need to ask ourselves is whether it is possible to do away with the binary between faith and reason at all? Scholars like Peter Elbow would say that it's not possible to do away with the binary as everything that we as human beings believe or do, is in binary form. It is a reflection of how our mind works, and therefore it's a natural process. For instance, we, as humans, like to compartmentalize everything in good and bad; white and black. In fact, we witness a certain kind of dichotomy in all-natural phenomena such as day and night; east and west; summer and winter. Also, Elbow further believes that it is these dichotomies or contradictions that provided a context and a favorable ground on which the tradition of critical thinking and logic from Socrates to the present, evolved. Criticism and skepticism are usually identified with intelligence. Further, it is only by categorizing issues into two poles that the complex information can be understood in a better manner (Elbow, 1993).

In short, binaries are important for understanding and processing complex information in a simpler form. If we apply it in the case of faith and reason, we can say that it is very difficult to understand faith completely without understanding what is not faith. The question is not whether there is reason in faith or reason is opposite of faith, but the question is that at least revelation that is believed to be the main part of major faiths like Islam and Christianity, is not what is called as reason generally, and to understand both these concepts, it is important to put them into binaries. Therefore, it is clear that binaries are important, but we have already seen

the problems associated with this binary thinking. One more problem associated with the faith-reason binary is that we end up stigmatizing certain faiths that don't fit into the so-called dominant understanding of faith and reason. For instance; Islam as a faith has always been criticized for not accommodating the "so-called reason", whereas such accommodation is appreciated in Christianity in the form of Western Secularism. Today, we witness many problems on religious lines. If we dig down and analyze these examples closely, we will realize that all have their roots somehow, in stigmatizing certain communities on the ground that there is a lack of reason in particular faith much more than other faiths.

Looking at all these issues and complexities, the viable option seems to be doing away with the binary of faith and reason, or in the language of post-structuralism, deconstruction of the two. Sirley F. Station in *Deconstruction* says that Deconstruction is a concept given by Derrida in the late 1960s that challenged the understanding of texts according to fixed meanings, structures, and binary oppositions. It believes that meanings are not fixed and therefore, not decidable. As a result, texts are fluid and should not be understood in proper structures and forms according to fixed meanings. On the contrary, it is possible to find many meanings of the same word in a single text, all of them possible. So, it is possible to have several meanings of faith and reason, some are not even decidable. Derrida believes that in the West, human beings are logo-centric i.e. they believe that all beliefs and actions are grounded on a centering principle and certain ideas need to be prioritized over others. This type of dualistic thinking of Western Civilization goes back to Aristotle. It tends to see everything in pairs or binary forms such as male/female, good/evil, and truth/lie. In each of these pairs, one is held by society superior (Station, 2009). But the idea of deconstruction neither seems practical nor possible as doing away with the binaries somehow seems to be not just unavoidable but indispensable as well. Similarly, the bitter reality of the problematic elements related to the faith-reason binary also can't be brushed aside. To solve this dilemma, it can be said that understanding the concepts in binaries is not where the problem lies. It becomes problematic only when they create fixed boundaries around them, that get concretized over time in such a manner that it results in not only limiting its scope but also has serious socio-political implications as seen in the case of faith-reason binary. Therefore, while the thesis questions the very foundations of the faith-reason binary, but the complete settling of the binary seems impossible due to the

cognitive claim of the mind indispensably thinking in terms of binaries. Therefore, the thesis is developed between the epistemic displacement of the faith-reason binary and yet the cognitive confirmation of the binary itself.

Displacement because as we already have seen the binary between faith and reason as the product of certain developments during the Enlightenment. However, certain scholarly circles think that such binary faith and reason are believed to be resolved in Christianity through the adoption of secularism. They defend Christianity on the basis that it doesn't stand in an antagonistic relation with reason and there is perfect harmony between the two; whereas the same scholarly circles blame and attack Islam for its non-rational approach (Harris 2004 and Pope Benedict XVI, 2006). Such trends of questioning the nature of Islam have increased in the recent past, especially in the wake of the 9/11 attack, suicide bombings around the world, which often seem to have their linkages with Islam. For instance, Sam Harris says that the contention between the faith and reason is not seen in Christianity now, as this problem has been resolved in the post-Enlightenment period through the adoption of secularism whereas, in Islam, there is no place for reason.

These arguments are based upon the pre-conceived notion of looking at faith and reason as a binary that closes down the possibility of looking at the two from other vantage points, and, often results in stigmatizing faiths like Islam. These arguments fail to realize that there is not just one ~~sort~~ kind of rationality which is the scientific or the instrumental rationality. It is this rationality that stands in an antagonistic relationship with reason. But, there are other kinds of reasoning like analogical reasoning, also known as '*Qiyas*', and proposed by Iqbal in his work *The Reconstruction of Religious Thoughts in Islam*. This analogical reasoning stands in perfect harmony with faith. These statements also suggest one more binary, that is west and the Islam binary which has got more sharpened after the 9/11 attack. These remarks reflect that the criticism of Islam on the part of the west for lack of rationality, especially in the wake of the 9/11 attack, is part of the larger picture of old-age enmity between the two. However, this assumption seems to be wrong if we take a closer look into history. Philosophers and scholars of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have historically shared a closer alliance on the matters of faith and reason.

During the middle ages, great Jewish Philosophers like Saadia Gaon and Maimonides were greatly inspired by Mu'tazilites to establish a rational foundation of Judaism (Adamson, 2016). This was followed by an intellectual alliance between Islam and dissenting Protestant sects in the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> century, majorly in England. These Protestant sects are opposed to the trinity of mainstream Anglican Protestantism, and as a result, are drawn closely towards Islam. In fact, these sects consider that English society needs to learn from Muhammad, who was a perfect man of rationality, Enlightenment, and peace. However, such a viewpoint was not shared by the mainstream Enlightenment. Islam is accused by the “Enlightened” west and Christianity of supposedly missing the bus of Enlightenment and getting left behind, as a result. This is not entirely true as Islam and certain dissenting sects of Protestantism had boarded another Enlightenment vehicle. This other “Radical Enlightenment” was crushed under the wheels of the mainstream Enlightenment bus for several reasons. One among them was the emerging threat from these sects to the creation of secularized society, a society where religion becomes a private entity, instead of a matter of public discussion. This brings out the violently domineering tendency of the mainstream enlightenment with its emphasis upon instrumental rationality that scholars like Adorno and Horkheimer have pointed out. To add insult to the injury, the accusation has been made that Islam never wanted to board the Enlightenment bus in the first place. However, it has already been discussed in chapter four, that Islam had already been on a different vehicle. To be precise, Islam was never against rationality. It was only opposed to the idea of a particular kind of rationality proposed by the mainstream Enlightenment.

This scientific rationality endorsed by the dominant Enlightenment created tension between faith and reason, a tension that got crystallized over the period of time. This tension is assumed to be resolved by the west through the adoption of secularism. However, it is believed that the tension still persists in Islam. To continue with the bus metaphor, the headlights of the Enlightenment bus were so blinding and dazzling that they put Islam along with the dissenting protestant sects on to a historical blind spot. This mainstream Enlightenment has created a blind spot, a point on the retina where vision doesn't occur. The task of philosophy becomes making the blind see. In short, the whole discourse about the lack of rationality in Islam has emerged from the understanding of faith and reason in terms of binary which is the result of

mainstream Enlightenment. It has resulted in creating boundaries around the notion of faith and reason that invalidates the other forms of knowledge. This understanding of faith and reason as binary needs to be displaced. This doesn't mean that the thesis is rejecting here the idea of the indispensability of binaries as our mind mostly thinks in terms of binary (Elbow, 1993). Hence, the purpose is to find a balance between the epistemic displacement of the faith-reason binary and the cognitive affirmation of the binaries themselves.

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