

KIERKEGAARD AND IQBAL: STARTLING RESEMBLANCES IN LIFE AND THOUGHT

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Kierkegaard writes in his Diary: “I rise in the morning and thank God and I start my work. At a set hour in the evening I stop, and I thank God—and then I go to sleep (1848– No.173)”. Let us also begin in the name of God, who is Most Gracious and Most Merciful, and seek his aid to the straight path for search of Truth. This is the way, which was adopted by Kierkegaard and Iqbal who were sent on this earth by God on a particular mission.

Kierkegaard and Iqbal were gifted with prophetic vision. They knew and explained the meaning and the way of “Know thyself”. They have taught us how to undertake the journey into “selfhood” from the very start of its alphabets. Their lives provide us excellent examples of sacrifice for the sake of others, the honorable way of living in this world, how to achieve ‘salvation’ and the eternal peace in the life hereafter. Iqbal and Kierkegaard both strongly stress on Self-discovery, which is the only way to reach the Ultimate. Scientists, mathematicians and philosophers have been running all the times on their respective paths to catch a glimpse of the Real, but most of them got stuck after reaching a certain point. Of course, achievement of some of them is remarkable and some have gone very near to the goal on account of their hard struggle and belief; but ultimate successes have been the share of those who also carried with them the power of Love and Faith. But what is Love and what is Faith, where can we find them and how should we arm ourselves with these weapons. To find out the answer, we must read Kierkegaard and Iqbal—not only read them as we read a book but also must dive into the ocean of their thought.

Before we proceed further, let us have a glance on the life pattern, environment and historical background of the two great philosophers;

SØREN KIERKEGAARD (1813 – 1855)

Søren Kierkegaard was born on 5th May 1813 in Copenhagen. His parents descended from poor peasants from the harsh moors of West Jutland in Denmark. His father Michael Pedersen Kierkegaard was born on 12th

December 1756. At the age of 11, he left his home of Jutland and came to Copenhagen, where he joined his uncle Niels Andersen in his business as an apprentice and after twelve years hard work he was able to acquire his own license as a hosier in 1780. He married Kirstine Nielsdatter Royan, who died on 23rd March 1796. After one year he married his girl servant Anne Sørensdatter Lund (1768-1834). They had four sons and three daughters. Their youngest son was Søren Kierkegaard⁶³. The business of Kierkegaard's father flourished substantially and with the passage of time he became a rich man and a known person in Copenhagen. He managed to secure a respectable place in the society; his home in Copenhagen was a meeting place of intellectuals where they usually discussed day to day problems of the society and topics of political and religious nature; Søren Kierkegaard used to observe all that.

Describing his feelings of that time, Søren Kierkegaard says: "I was born in 1813 in that crazy financial year when so many other bank notes were put into circulation"⁶⁴. Kierkegaard was a born intellectual and by nature a philosopher. Fortunately he got chances of good education on account of being the son of a wealthy father. In 1821 he was admitted in famous school 'Borgerdydskolen' in Copenhagen and matriculated from University of Copenhagen in 1830⁶⁵. He attended Poul Møller's lectures on general concepts of Metaphysics during 1836-37⁶⁶. In Copenhagen University he studied theology but spent most of his time in the study of literature and philosophy. Kierkegaard passed his final theological examination on 3rd July 1840⁶⁷. On 26th October 1841 the governing board of University granted the Art Faculty Authority to confirm on Kierkegaard the degree of Master of Arts. At that time he was not in Copenhagen as he had already left for Berlin on 25th October for further study of philosophy at the Berlin University. Later on while he was studying in Copenhagen, he passed through a mental and spiritual turmoil on account of his tragic love with Regina, Corsair affair (to be discussed on following pages) and above all the death of his dear father. His father had died on 8th August 1838. Kierkegaard has described the

⁶³. KAP p.9-10

⁶⁴. KAP p.12

⁶⁵. DSK p.244

⁶⁶. Ibid.

⁶⁷. DSK p.244

event as ‘The big earthquake’.⁶⁸ Kierkegaard, however made no mention and said nothing whatsoever about his mother in any of his writings. The life of Søren Kierkegaard became a history of sickness and after the death of his father he lived for many years as an eccentric in Aalborg.⁶⁹

At the time of his prime youth, Denmark was under the spell of German Culture. The young Søren Kierkegaard could not help keeping himself away from the plague of young German rebels—called later as “Romantics”. He had a marvelous literary taste and possessed a poetic spirit. As against the family pattern and wishes of his father he rejected the bourgeois life— may be his physical shortcomings also played a part towards this. The poets like Byron, Wordsworth and Coleridge were the favorite of young romantics at that time. Kierkegaard was no exception; Byron also influenced him. Actually it was Lord Byron (1788-1824) who inspired Kierkegaard to forego the bourgeois life. The romantic poet Byron had a very short but highly emotional life. He died in young age when Kierkegaard was only 11 years old. John Douglas Mullen states that Byron’s ‘life was tormented by broken love, persistent melancholia, and by a terrible secret, which he would neither forget nor reveal. And of course as all good men do, he died young in the service of a just cause’⁷⁰. Lord Byron died while working in Greece for the forces of unification. His secret related to his incestuous relationship with his half – sister⁷¹.

Kierkegaard loved Regina Olsen whom he first met on 9th May 1837. She was too young at that time and therefore he kept his love undisclosed to her for three years till she was 17. During this period he continued to come closer to her and gradually she also started thinking positively about him. Kierkegaard was also helping in her studies and often lending her books to read, with the result that both became quite intimate with each other. On 8th September 1840 Kierkegaard left his home fully determined to tell his beloved about his so far hidden love. By chance he met her in the street outside Regina’s home. Regina told him that there was nobody at home, which Kierkegaard took as invitation and, therefore, accompanied to her

⁶⁸ . Ibid.

⁶⁹ . KAP p.12

⁷⁰ .KP p.12

⁷¹ .KP p.165

home. While they were together alone in the house Kierkegaard observed that Regina was a bit restless, so he asked her to play piano for him which she gladly started. But according to him this time he had no interest in piano, so he suddenly picked the music book and threw it on the piano saying: ‘O, what do I care about music, it is you I seek, for two years I have been seeking you’⁷². Regina was wonder–struck on this sudden burst from Kierkegaard and just kept silent. Kierkegaard left Regina in the stage of a pleasant shock and then straight went to her father, before whom he submitted his request for Regina. His father did not commit at that time but called him home after two days. Accordingly in the afternoon of September 10th 1840 a meeting took place at the residence of Regina’s parents and Kierkegaard got consent from her father. Regina also showed her willingness. Their engagement was subsequently announced in a ceremony, which was attended by distinguished guests from Copenhagen.

The following day Kierkegaard realized that he had committed a mistake. From now his period of anxiety starts. After this, one year of his life passed in emotional turbulence and at last on 11th August 1841⁷³ he wrote a letter to Regina returning the engagement ring. In his letter to Regina, he told her to forgive a person who could do every thing but was unable to make a girl happy. Upon getting the letter Regina ran to Kierkegaard’s place but he was not home. She then left a letter for him requesting not to break the engagement. Kierkegaard states that: ‘It is true that she had yielded to me almost adoringly, pleaded with me to love her, and this had so affected me that, I would risk anything and everything for her’⁷⁴. But there was a divine protest, so it seemed to me. Marriage — I would have to keep too much from her, base the whole marriage on a lie’⁷⁵. Expressing his inner pain Kierkegaard says ‘It was frightfully painful time – to have to be cruel and to love as I did. She fought like a lioness; if I had not believed there was divine opposition, she would have won’⁷⁶. The father of Regina also tried his best in persuading Kierkegaard not to break the engagement, but nothing could change his decision, which he firmly believed as being the will of God. At

⁷² KAP p.32

⁷³ .DSK p.245

⁷⁴ .KAP p.33

⁷⁵ .KAP p.34

⁷⁶ .KAP p.34

last after hard struggle and a tough period of two months Søren Kierkegaard wrote final letter to his beloved on 11th October 1841 finishing the relationship completely.

Heart broken Regina's father Councilor Olsen contacted Kierkegaard and told him that his daughter was in despair and that this would be the death for her as she was utterly desperate. Kierkegaard then accompanied to his home and ate supper with the family and also had a talk with Regina. Next morning he got a letter from her saying that she could not sleep that night and that he must come and see her⁷⁷. Kierkegaard went to her and they had a light exchange of words – of course with heavy hearts of both. Regina requested him to forgive her for any trouble that might have been given by her to him. In reply he said that it should be him who must apologize to her. Kierkegaard writes: "She said, 'promise to think of me'. I did so. She said: 'kiss me', I did, but without passion. Merciful God!". After that Kierkegaard left for Germany on 25th October 1841. During next four years he had made three trips to Berlin. Later Kierkegaard recorded in his diary (PAP.X, 5 A149):

"I went to Berlin. I suffered exceedingly. I was reminded of her every day. Upto this day I have unconditionally kept my resolve to pray for her at least once every day, often twice, besides thinking about her as usual"⁷⁸.

As earlier stated God sent Søren Kierkegaard to this world on a particular mission and such people by their gifted insight know very well about their task. If they are at any time attracted towards temporal charm they are reminded and then they return to the right direction. Exactly it happened to Kierkegaard. The love between Regina and Kierkegaard had reached very near to climax – rather to a period which is called 'point of no return', but a return was inevitable as there came a divine warning which was more powerful than the power of erotic love. Kierkegaard himself states the stage on which two lovers were standing: "There was a divine protest, so it seemed to me". It was that divine call which received from within and which pulled him out of a total chaos.

⁷⁷.KAP p.35

⁷⁸.KAP p.36-37

Two years after the death of her father, Regina married Fritz Schlegel on November 3rd 1847. Her husband later on became Governor in the West Indies. In a letter to Regina, Hanne Mourier quoted extracts of a letter, which according to her was written by Kierkegaard to Regina, which says: ‘Thank you that you married, but specially that you married Schlegel!’ Because, he said, that she had loved before him. S. K. added, “You see, Regina, in eternity there is no taking in marriage, there both Schlegel and I will be happy being with you”⁷⁹.

After break with Regina, Kierkegaard did not sleep for nights together and for the rest of his life; he carried with him the memory of his ‘Regina’. He remained restless throughout his life and he often uttered that ‘one can never forget his first love’. Regina rightly told him once; ‘you will never be happy anyway’⁸⁰. He himself has said: ‘since my earliest childhood a barb of sorrow lodged in my heart. As long as it stays I am ironic – if it is pulled out I shall die’⁸¹. The tragic love with Regina made his life still more tend towards melancholy. However, S. K. had a gentle soul in him in spite of his frequent expressions about his humanly shortcomings and sometimes talking of his own sin. It was the height of gentleness, that he never crossed limits of morality during his love affair with Regina. His love was pure in every respect and he kept his beloved’s honour in the society above every thing. His sensual passion towards his beloved could not overpower him and he firmly protected the sanctity of ‘love’. The life-long anxiety of Søren Kierkegaard played a significant role that kept him bodily at a reasonable distance from his beloved. He was cautious enough to avoid a sin like his father, who due to his folly, had to repent and lamented throughout his life – and may be due to Søren Kierkegaard’s own wrong doings in his early youth⁸².

Kierkegaard possessed a vast outlook of life. He realized that his country in particular and Europe in general were in turmoil culturally as well as politically. He fought simultaneously on both fronts. He found the remedy of cultural sickness in religion where he is seen standing alone and facing the whole Christian World. Politically he criticized rulers and warned them against their drifting towards a wrong direction in the name of democracy

⁷⁹ .KAP p.39

⁸⁰ .KAP p.34

⁸¹ .DSK p.23

⁸² . Intentionally the details avoided being considered irrelevant here.

and in patronizing the priests for making the common man asleep under the spell of their sermons. The youth of the country just damn cared about politics or religion. To them their life was once and the period of their youth was just once of which they must enjoy every moment, and that was all. The young generation was under the spell of romanticism of German Culture, which young 'Romantics' practiced to the extent of all-out freedom of action and human behaviorism crossing the outer limits of moral values. They were mercilessly trampling social laws and were totally devoid of discipline.

Out of many things, which worried Kierkegaard was daily newspaper 'Corsair' of Copenhagen. The owners of this Daily targeted Kierkegaard ruthlessly. The struggle began in January 1846. S.K was busy in his literary work and always sitting aloof on his desk at home, but the outer world was engaged in denouncing and making a mockery of him. He was fighting simultaneously against the press, the priests, and the ruling people and, above all, against his own self. The Corsair used to publish cartoons of Kierkegaard and wrote indecent remarks about him. Whenever he was seen walking outside, the boys in the street ridiculed and laughed at him. 'He became the object of amusement when he appeared in the streets of Copenhagen.'⁸³ S. K. in his journal entry says: 'This matter of the press is the deepest degradation of the human race for it encourages revolt from below.'⁸⁴ 'The daily press, especially in minor affairs, is evil simply and solely through its power of circulation...'⁸⁵ S. K. counter attacked the press forcefully. He said; "Those bunglers, those retired color guards and yes-men and half-baked students are called journalists."⁸⁶ The condition in 1847 as prevailed in the country is described by S. K. in his words; "How disgusting is the tyranny of grossness and vulgarity that prevails in Copenhagen, what nauseous dissolution, one does not feel it so much because each individual only contributes his own small share.....The Danish people are almost no longer a nation, but a herd.....Copenhagen no metropolis, but a regular small town"⁸⁷.

Those were last days of the absolute kingdom of Danish monarchy. Christian VIII ruled from 1839 to 1848 and was the last absolute King of

⁸³ KAP. P122

⁸⁴ KAP. P122

⁸⁵ KAP, P123

⁸⁶ KAP, P123

⁸⁷ .DSK p.79-80

Denmark⁸⁸. Although, Danish constitution was introduced in 1849 in response to massive demand for political freedom, S.K. was not satisfied. According to him, ‘political freedom in the sense of democracy, government by the people is an absurdity. The catastrophe is that the time requires what it does not need.’ All these demand for freedom in church, school, government and in daily life were, in his eyes, of far less significance than the question how the individual person becomes liberated for life in the service of God⁸⁹. Describing collaboration of church and the state, SK says: ‘In the splendid Palace Church a stately court Chaplain, the declared favorite of the cultivated public, shows himself to a select circle of distinguished, cultivated persons and preachers a moving sermon on the world of Apostle: “God close to the lowly and despised”: And nobody laughs’.⁹⁰

About Bible Societies of that time SK said that these were just like any other business company working with money and ‘distributing the Bible just as worldly away as other enterprises’ do with their wares. According to him ‘the Bible societies have done irreparable harm. Christianity has long been in need of a religious hero who, in fear and trembling before God, had the courage to forbid people to read the Bible’⁹¹. SK did not believe in the preachers of Christianity of his time and always insisted that they were paid-servants of the government. He says that how can he believe a person who swears by ‘all that is sacred that he is a cabinet-maker’ in spite of the fact that he ‘fumbles awkwardly with an axe’ SK says: ‘No, if a man handles an axe like that he cannot possibly be a cabinet-maker, notwithstanding his heated assurances to the contrary’⁹². It is a picture of the style adopted by SK, which looks like criticism of Christianity but has a positive impact. He very often says that he is a poet. Here is an example of his poetic way of expression when he says: ‘the sun is shining brilliantly and beautifully into my room: the window in the next room is open. Every thing is quiet out on the street. It is Sunday afternoon. I distinctly hear a lark warbling in one of the neighboring courtyard, outside the window where the pretty girl lives. Far away in a distant street, I hear a man crying – shrimp for sale - Then I call to my mind

⁸⁸ .KAP p.143

⁸⁹ .KAP p.153

⁹⁰ .DSK p.188

⁹¹ .DSK p.111

⁹² .DSK p.167

my youth and my first love – when I was filled with longing; now I long only for my first longing. What is youth? A dream. What is life? The content of the dream’⁹³

We have earlier mentioned that it was an era of the last absolute ruler of Denmark Christian VIII and it was also the prime time of Søren Kierkegaard’s creativity. Naturally he could not escape from the eyes of the King who had heard a lot about him as an outstanding brain in Copenhagen. SK’s Either/ Or had reached the Palace before its author went there. The king was, therefore, eager to meet such a wonderful person. SK had three meetings with the King of Denmark Christian VIII and held discussion on various topics relating to the country and the people. All the time during his conversation with the king he never lost a chance of his humor even at the time of a serious talk. Of course that was his way and when he was humorous and witty his convincing power was still more effective. During his first visit SK said to the King: ‘Your majesty’s only misfortune is that your wisdom and prudence are too great and the country too small; it is a misfortune to be a genius in a provincial town’. According to SK, the King said many flattering things to him and asked him to visit again. SK replied ‘I visit no one your majesty’ when the King said that he would send a word to him he answered ‘I am a subject, it is for your majesty to command; but in return I shall make one stipulation’⁹⁴. The king asked ‘well, and what is it?’ he replied ‘that I should be given permission to talk with you in private’⁹⁵. He also told the King: ‘I have the honor to serve a higher power, for the sake of which I have staked my life’.

After a couple of months, SK again visited the King. The King wished him to talk. ‘But it was stimulating to talk with him’. During this visit the talk was centered on political matters and government affairs. ‘That day was led the conversation to communism of which he was plainly enough anxious and afraid’⁹⁶. S. K. advised him to let this movement be between the political parties of the country and that the King should stay outside them. S. K. said: ‘I talked next of how to fight with the masses: simply remain quite quiet; that the masses were like a woman with whom one never fought directly but

⁹³ .EO I p.42

⁹⁴ .KR p.74-75

⁹⁵ .KR p.75

⁹⁶ .KR p.75

indirectly.....⁹⁷ He said that ‘the masses’ were lacking intelligence, so ‘they would always lose in the end’. S. K. further told the King that ‘what the whole age needed was education, and that what became violence in a large country, in Denmark became rudeness’⁹⁸. During this visit S. K. tried several times to depart but the King would not let him do that. He knew that it was impolite for a visitor to do that as one should only wait till the King bows. But every time when he sought the King’s permission to leave, the reply was: ‘yes, yes.....I have plenty of time’. When the third time same thing happened SK said: ‘yes, your majesty will understand that I have enough time. I was afraid your majesty might not have time’⁹⁹. When SK was finally ready to go the King ‘made a movement with his hand’ which meant that the departing visitor should kiss his hand, which was the custom. S. K. says: ‘I behaved as though I did not understand and bowed.’

S. K. met the King third time and that meeting was also quite interesting. In that meeting, which lasted for a considerable time many topics such as government affairs, personal matters and talks on Schelling and Hegel came under discussion. The Queen also participated for a short while. The King said to him that the Queen was very keen to see him. The Queen said that she had read part of ‘Either/Or’ but could not understand it. To which SK replied: ‘your majesty will easily understand that – that is all the worse for me’. So S.K did not even spare the Queen. During this meeting that was S.K’s last meeting with the King, the King began a talk about his government. SK interrupted and told that he wanted to say ‘one or two things’ to the King. That followed the most interesting dialogue between S.K and the King, which is quoted below in SK’s own words:

“Then he walked over to the window and so I followed him. He began to talk about his government. I said that I could naturally tell him one or two things, which perhaps he would not otherwise get to know, for I could tell him what he looked like from the street. ‘But am I to speak, or am I not to speak; for if I am to speak I shall speak quite straight out’. He answered: ‘Go on then’. And so I told him that he allowed himself to be seduced by his personal gifts and that a king should in this respect be like a woman, who

⁹⁷ .KR p.76

⁹⁸ .KR p.77

⁹⁹ .KR p.77

ought to hide her personal talents and simply be the woman of the house – and he simply a king. ‘I have often pondered over what a king should be. In the first place he can perfectly well be ugly; then he ought to be deaf and blind, or at least pretend to be so, for that gets over many difficulties, a tactless or stupid remark which being addressed to a king has a certain importance is best put off by a: ‘I beg your pardon’ – i.e. that the king has not heard it’. Finally the king ought not to say much but have some expression or other which he can use on every occasion, and which is consequently meaningless’. He laughed and said “charming portrait of a king. So I said: ‘Yes, it is true, one thing more: the king must take care to be ill every now and then, so as to arouse sympathy’. Then he broke in, with a peculiar expression which was almost one of joy and delight: ‘Oh that is why you go talking about being ill, you want to make yourself interesting’”.¹⁰⁰

As stated earlier after his final break of the engagement with Regina, Kierkegaard left for Germany by train. In this journey his only companion was his love torn heart, which actually made him Socrates of Denmark. He was quite conscious of his too short a life left at his disposal on this planet. During the period of his last fifteen years he remained completely devoted to his ‘given’ task and he did full justice with every moment that he got and with every single breath of his remaining fourteen year of life. During just a period of eight years (1841-48), it is amazing, that seven volumes of his marvelous books were published. These contain a vast range of subjects and cover all the main topics and questions in human minds since the time of the birth of Greek philosophy. He gave a new dimension to Existentialism and is rightly called the father of modern Existentialism. In addition, there are numerous of his other writing, statements, his journal and diary etc. Many books have already been written on Kierkegaard’s different subjects of human life and many still have to come. His works will remain everlasting, as he has left a treasure for mankind particularly in the shape of his following books:

1. The Concept of Irony (Om Begrebet Ironi), 29th Sept., 1841.
2. Either/Or (Enten-Eller), 20th Feb., 1843.
3. Philosophical Fragments (Philosophiske Smuler), 13th June 1844.
4. Edifying Discourses, 29th May, 1845.

¹⁰⁰ .KP p.78-79

5. Concluding Unscientific Postscript (Afsluttende Uvidenskabelig Efterskrift), 27th Feb., 1846.
6. Works of Love (Kjerlighedens Gjerninger), 29th Sept., 1847.
7. Christian Discourses (Christelige Taler), 26th April, 1848.
8. The Sickness unto Death (Sygdomen Til Døden), 30th Jul 1849

Our great philosopher Søren Kierkegaard died on November 11, 1855. About himself he has said:

“Thus do I live, convinced that God will place the stamp of Governance on my efforts – as soon as I am dead, not before -----this is all connected with penitence and the magnitude of the plan. I live in this faith and hope to God to die in it”(E/O II p.438).

Iqbal (1877-1938)

DR. MOHAMMAD IQBAL WAS BORN ON NOVEMBER 9TH, 1877 IN SIALKOT, THE FORMER CITY OF UNDIVIDED INDIA, NOW IN PAKISTAN. HIS FAMILY CAME FROM KASHMIR AND HIS FOREFATHERS WERE BRAHMAN WHICH IS AN EXTREMIST HINDU CASTE; MOSTLY THE TEMPLES IN INDIA ARE MANAGED AND CONTROLLED BY THE PEOPLE BELONGING TO THAT CASTE. HOWEVER, IQBAL'S ANCESTORS CONVERTED TO ISLAM AND MIGRATED TO SIALKOT. HIS FATHER SHEIKH NOOR MOHAMMED WAS A SMALL BUSINESSMAN WITH VERY LIMITED RESOURCES. HE WAS A RELIGIOUS PERSON AND A MYSTIC. HE HAD FINE LITERARY TASTE, AND MATHNAVI OF RUMI AND QURAN WERE UNDER HIS CONSTANT STUDY. HIS FATHER'S TEACHINGS AND THE WAY OF LIVING CREATED IN IQBAL KEEN INTEREST IN LEARNING. BY NATURE IQBAL WAS HIGHLY INTELLIGENT. HE WAS FORTUNATE ENOUGH THAT THE POVERTY OF HIS FATHER COULD NOT CREATE HINDRANCE TOWARDS HIS EDUCATION. HIS ELDER BROTHER NOTICED THE EXTRAORDINARY TALENT IN IQBAL AND SUPPORTED HIM TILL HE COMPLETED HIS EDUCATION. THE BROTHER OF IQBAL WAS A WELL-OFF PERSON AND HE HAD HELPED HIS BROTHER MONETARILY – ALSO SENT IQBAL TO EUROPE WHERE HE STAYED FROM 1905 TO 1908 AND COMPLETED HIS BAR-AT-LAW. IQBAL ALSO GOT HIMSELF HIGHLY EDUCATED IN PHILOSOPHY AND LITERATURE. HE WAS ALSO VERY LUCKY TO HAVE AMONG HIS TEACHERS A NUMBER OF HIGHLY LEARNED PERSONS FROM THE VERY BEGINNING TILL THE END OF HIS EDUCATION CAREER. IN SIALKOT ONE OF HIS TEACHERS WAS SHAMSUL ULEMA MIR

HASAN WHO WAS WELL KNOWN AS A HIGHLY LEARNED PERSON AND WAS AN AUTHORITY ON RELIGION.

IN 1893, WHEN IQBAL WAS ONLY SIXTEEN, HE HAD TO MARRY A GIRL NAMED KARIMBI WHO WAS 19 AT THAT TIME¹⁰¹. THIS MARRIAGE WAS ARRANGED BY THE ELDERS OF HIS FAMILY ACCORDING TO THE OLD TRADITION. AT FIRST, HE REFUSED TO MARRY KARIMBI BUT ULTIMATELY HE HAD TO SURRENDER TO THE WILL OF HIS ELDERS. THE RESPECT OF ELDERS HAS ALWAYS BEEN A MAIN PART OF FAMILY SYSTEM IN MUSLIM SOCIETY, BUT IN THOSE OLD DAYS AND WITH SOME FAMILIES IT AMOUNTED TO THE EXTENT OF RIGIDITY. IN FACT THERE WAS NO MATCH BETWEEN THE YOUNG COUPLE FORCED TO MARRIAGE. IQBAL WAS MENTALLY NOT READY FOR MARRIAGE AT SUCH A YOUNG AGE WHEN HIS EDUCATION WAS STILL NOT COMPLETE. MOREOVER HE BELONGED TO A POOR FAMILY AND WAS LIVING IN A SMALL HOUSE TOGETHER WITH THE WHOLE FAMILY. ON THE OTHER HAND HIS WIFE BELONGED TO A HIGHLY PLACED FAMILY. SHE WAS THE DAUGHTER OF A RICH PERSON AND HER PARENTS' RESIDENCE WAS LIKE A PALACE WHERE SHE WAS BROUGHT UP LIKE A PRINCESS. HER FATHER MR. ATA MOHAMMED WAS ONE OF THE FIRST BADGE OF DOCTORS FROM THE FAMOUS KING EDWARD MEDICAL COLLAGE, LAHORE. DR. ATA MOHAMMED ENTERED THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE AND VERY SOON BECAME A HIGHLY PLACED OFFICER. IN 1879, HE WAS APPOINTED AS HONORARY SURGEON TO VICEROY OF INDIA AND LATER ON SERVED AS CIVIL SURGEON IN THE PROVINCE OF PUNJAB¹⁰². HE LOVED IQBAL AND IQBAL ALSO HAD GREAT RESPECT FOR HIM. BUT IN SPITE OF TOO MUCH DIFFERENCE IN STATUS OF THE TWO FAMILIES THE MENTAL LEVEL AND THE LIFE PATTERN BETWEEN IQBAL AND HIS WIFE COULD NOT BE COMPROMISED. THEY COULD NOT LIVE TOGETHER EXCEPT FOR SHORT PERIODS AT DIFFERENT TIMES. FOR THE SAKE OF THE WISHES OF HIS MOTHER, IQBAL DID NOT DIVORCE HIS WIFE BUT HE SEPARATED FROM HER AND UNDERTOOK THE RESPONSIBILITY TO SUPPORT HER MONETARILY THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE. HE KEPT UP TO HIS PROMISE DURING ALL OF HIS LIFE AND IN SPITE OF HIS VERY LIMITED INCOME HE CONTINUED SENDING MONEY EVERY MONTH TO HIS SEPARATED WIFE. MR. NAZIR NIAZI A VERY CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF IQBAL SAYS THAT HE SENT THE LAST MONEY ORDER OF

¹⁰¹ ZR p-262

¹⁰² ZR p.263

MONTHLY AMOUNT TO HER PERSONALLY WHEN IQBAL WAS PASSING HIS LAST MOMENTS OF LIFE IN BED.¹⁰³ IQBAL'S EARLY AGE MARRIAGE AND THEN SEPARATION WAS THE BEGINNING OF HIS LONG SUFFERING OF UNEASY LIFE.

IQBAL PASSED HIS INTERMEDIATE EXAMINATION IN SIALKOT IN 1895 AND THEN SHIFTED TO LAHORE WHERE HE GOT ADMISSION IN GOVERNMENT COLLEGE. THE CITY OF LAHORE WAS CENTER OF LITERARY AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AT THAT TIME. HERE IQBAL'S TALENT WAS NOURISHED BY A GREAT ENGLISH ORIENTALIST SIR THOMAS ARNOLD, WHOSE EYES FOUND HIS IDEAL PUPIL IN IQBAL. IQBAL WAS TREMENDOUSLY BENEFITED WITH SUCH A LEARNED TEACHER, WHO FULLY REALIZING THE HIDDEN TALENTS OF HIS STUDENT WAS ALL OUT TO HELP HIS SKILLS DEVELOP. DURING HIS STAY IN LAHORE AND WHILE HE WAS STILL A STUDENT, IQBAL BECAME QUITE FAMOUS ON ACCOUNT OF UNIQUE STYLE OF HIS POETRY. PEOPLE STARTED LOVING HIM AND HE WAS WELL ADMIRER IN ALL THE GROUPS OF SOCIETY PARTICULARLY AMONG LITERARY AND POLITICAL GROUPS. AFTER FINISHING HIS STUDIES AND MASTERING THE LANGUAGES OF ENGLISH, ARABIC AND PERSIAN, IQBAL LEFT FOR EUROPE IN 1905. IQBAL BY NATURE WAS A PERSON WHOSE THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE COULD NEVER BE QUENCHED. IN EUROPE, HE WAS FIRST ADMITTED IN CAMBRIDGE TRINITY COLLEGE WHERE AMONG HIS TEACHERS WERE MAC TAGGART AND JAMES WARD.¹⁰⁴ HE HAD ALREADY DONE HIS LAW GRADUATION IN INDIA. HE COMPLETED A PART OF JURISPRUDENCE THAT WAS LEFT UNFINISHED IN EUROPE. HE THEN WENT TO HEIDELBERG IN GERMANY IN JUNE 1907 WHERE HE LEARNT GERMAN IN JUST THREE MONTHS¹⁰⁵ AND CONTINUED FURTHER STUDY IN PHILOSOPHY. THE SAME YEAR HE GOT HIS DOCTORATE DEGREE FROM MUNICH UNIVERSITY ON HIS FAMOUS THESIS 'THE DEVELOPMENT OF METAPHYSICS IN PERSIA'.¹⁰⁶

WHEREVER IQBAL WENT HE LEFT HIS UNDYING MEMORIES. IN ENGLAND, HE STAYED AT DIFFERENT PLACES IN DIFFERENT TIMES. THE LONGEST PERIOD OF HIS STAY WAS IN 1908. DURING THIS YEAR, HE OFFICIATED AS A LECTURER IN PLACE OF HIS TEACHER PROF. THOMAS ARNOLD IN THE UNIVERSITY AT LONDON. ALSO HE DELIVERED LECTURES

¹⁰³ ZR p.263

¹⁰⁴ GW p.37

¹⁰⁵ IAA p.16

¹⁰⁶ GW p.37

ON ISLAMIC TOPICS IN SPRING AND THEN RETURNED TO LAHORE SAME YEAR.¹⁰⁷ AFTER THIS, IQBAL HAD TWO MORE TRIPS TO EUROPE IN CONNECTION WITH INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT OF HIS COUNTRY ATTENDING ROUND TABLE CONFERENCES WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WHO RULED INDIA AT THAT TIME. DURING HIS MEMORABLE VISITS TO ENGLAND, IQBAL STAYED AT THE FOLLOWING PLACES¹⁰⁸:

IN 1908:

1) 49, ELSHA

2) 17, PORTUGAL PALACE, CAMBRIDGE

IN 1931:

3) 123, ST. JAMES COURT,

IN 1932 4) QUEEN ANNE'S MANSION ST. JAMES PARK

THE MEMORY OF IQBAL'S STAY WAS CELEBRATED BY AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND IN 1978 WHEN A NAME PLATE OF IQBAL WAS FIXED ON THE ENTRANCE OF 17 PORTUGAL PALACE, CAMBRIDGE.

NOW TURNING TO IQBAL'S PERSONAL LIFE AGAIN WITHOUT WHICH OUR KNOWLEDGE FOR IQBAL WILL BE INCOMPLETE. THE BEST PART OF IQBAL'S LIFE AS EXPRESSED BY IQBAL HIMSELF IN HIS VARIOUS WRITINGS WAS HIS STAY IN EUROPE DURING 1905-1908. DURING THIS PERIOD HE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY OF ASSOCIATION WITH HIGHLY LEARNED PERSONS, INTELLECTUALS AND PHILOSOPHERS OF THE TIME. BESIDES HIS LEARNED TEACHERS HE ENJOYED FRIENDSHIP IN ENGLAND AND GERMANY WITH TWO YOUNG GIRLS. ONE OF THEM WAS ATYA BEGUM WHOM IQBAL MET IN LONDON AND THEN IN GERMANY WHERE SHE WENT FOR HIGHER STUDY IN PHILOSOPHY. THE OTHER ONE WAS MISS EMMA WEGENAST WHO WAS ONE OF THE TEACHERS OF IQBAL AT HEIDELBERG IN GERMANY DURING 1907. BOTH THESE GIRLS WERE YOUNG AND EXTREMELY BEAUTIFUL FULLY GIFTED WITH REMARKABLE INTELLIGENCE AND KNOWLEDGE. THERE IS NO OTHER SOURCE TO JUDGE THE LEVEL OF ATTACHMENT BETWEEN IQBAL WITH EACH ONE OF THE TWO GIRLS EXCEPT THE LETTERS THAT HE WROTE TO THEM LATER ON. WEGENAST KEPT AND SAFEGUARDED IQBAL'S LETTERS AS A VALUABLE AND SACRED TREASURE AND BEFORE HER DEATH IN 1960 SHE HANDED THEM OVER TO PAKISTAN GERMAN FORUM IN GERMANY WITH THE INSTRUCTIONS TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR SAFE KEEPING THE

¹⁰⁷ GW p.39

¹⁰⁸ IIP p.98

SAME IN AN ARCHIVES MAKING THEM AVAILABLE TO RESEARCHERS ON IQBAL'S WORKS.¹⁰⁹ UNFORTUNATELY, NOT A SINGLE LETTER COULD BE TRACED IN IQBAL'S BELONGINGS WRITTEN TO HIM BY WEGENAST WHO AS APPEARS FROM IQBAL'S LETTERS WAS, ALWAYS PROMPTLY REPLYING TO HIM. WEGENAST WAS IQBAL'S TEACHER OF GERMAN LANGUAGE. PROF. DR. ANNEMARIE SCHIMMEL WRITES; 'THE HAPPY DAYS OF HEIDELBERG WITH ITS CHARMING LADY TEACHER ARE REFLECTED IN IQBAL'S ROMANTIC POEM EVENING ON THE NECKAR. IQBAL WAS ALL FOR GERMAN KNOWLEDGE AND HIS LOVE FOR GERMANY DID NOT FADE TILL THE END OF HIS LIFE'.¹¹⁰ DR. S. A. DURRANI STATES:'SHE REPRESENTED EVERY CHARM AND LOVEABLE THAT IQBAL HAD SEEN OR CAME IN CONTACT WITH AT GERMANY.'¹¹¹

After leaving Heidelberg Iqbal wrote several letters from Munich to which Wegenast responded promptly. These letters were written in German but Iqbal was never satisfied with expression of his feelings for Wegenast in that language. This fact was stated by him in several letters which he wrote to Wegenast . In his letter dated 16. October 1907¹² sent to her in reply to a card received from Wegenast he regretted his limited knowledge of German and said that German language was a wall between him and Wegenast. Iqbal got a reply to this letter quickly in the shape of a brief letter from Wegenast in which, as indicated from Iqbal's reply in his letter of 23 October 1907,¹³ she stated that she had torn and destroyed a letter, which she had written to Iqbal. Iqbal wrote to her in his letter that her action was cruel and that she was not like that with him while in Heidelberg. He further said in his letter that Wegenast 'had no right to tear off letter which belonged to him and insisted that he would not write to her unless he got that letter from her which she wrote but did not mail instead tore it off. It was cruel on her part', Iqbal added, 'probably the climate of Heidelberg was the cause that made her unloving.' However these were simply a few sweet bitter words as could well be expected from a lover. Their correspondence continued further without break for quite some time. Iqbal returned to London in November, 1907 and they remained in touch with each other as indicated from Iqbal's letter dated

¹⁰⁹ IIE p.105

¹¹⁰ BD p. 128

¹¹¹ IIE p.95

¹² IIE p.109

¹³ IIE p.110

16th November, 1907¹¹². Iqbal's letter of 2nd December, 1907,¹¹³ written from London is also interesting. In this letter he says: 'you just cannot imagine what is inside my soul. I wish I could see you again and talk to you. I do not know what to do. A person who has been once your friend cannot live without you. Please forgive me what I have said – I know you do not like emotions to be expressed in such a way. Please do write to me soon. It does not look nice to ruin a person who has never harmed you'.¹¹⁴

Wegenast sent her two pictures to Iqbal at London in January, 1908, which Iqbal acknowledged in his letter¹¹⁵ dated 20th January, 1908 saying: 'Thousand thanks for your pictures received by me this evening. It is extremely kind of you. Both pictures are really very beautiful and these will always remain in my study room on my desk. But you should not think that these are only on a piece of paper – your picture is in my heart¹¹⁶ and will remain there for ever.....probably it will not be possible that I see you again.....but I do admit that you have become a real power in my life'¹¹⁷. During rest of the time when Iqbal stayed at London several letters were exchanged between him and Wegenast. The last letter¹¹⁸ of Iqbal addressed to her from London is dated 27th June, 1908, in which he informed that it was not possible for him to travel via Germany. He further said that he would leave London on the 3rd of July and that he would be staying at Paris for a couple of days on his way home. Since it was his last letter from London naturally the expression of leaving the country without visiting his dearest friend was extremely sentimental, since he must have got the feelings that he would never be able to see his sweet heart again during his lifetime.

Upon arrival at his hometown, Sialkot (now in Pakistan), Iqbal wrote his first letter to Wegenast and then from his residence at Lahore on 11th January 1908. This letter contains full detail of arrival in his country and enthusiastic reception by a large crowd of young as well as elderly people. On his way home, after landing at Bombay young students gathered at every Station and

¹¹² IIE p.113

¹¹³ IIE p.113-114

¹¹⁴ IIE p.114

¹¹⁵ IIE p.114

¹¹⁶ IIE p.115

¹¹⁷ IIE p.121

¹¹⁸ IIE p.121

were singing his songs. In his letter he informed Wegenast that he was going to start his practice at Lahore as an Advocate and also told her that he would not be able to forget her beautiful country. It is quite a long letter written by Iqbal, but we cannot resist showing our readers the wording of its last paragraph which reads as under:

“please do not forget your friend who always keeps you in his heart and who can never be able to forget you. My stay at Heidelberg seems to me just like a dream and I do want to repeat this dream. Is that possible? You know better.”¹¹⁹ Afterwards correspondence between the two continued for the next 25 years. During this period a gap of 5 years is found which was the result of First World War which broke out in August, 1914 and lasted for 5 years. Total number of Iqbal’s letters, said to be 40, which were given by Wegenast, but at the time of publishing only 27 were available. No one knows what happened to the rest of the letters. Out of 27 letters which could be saved only 10 were in English and 17 were written by Iqbal in German.¹²⁰ The author of the book ‘Iqbal Europe Mein’ (=Iqbal in Europe) did a marvelous job in arranging translation of Iqbal’s letters from German to English and Urdu languages and then protecting them for ever after publishing in the shape of a book “IIE” together with valuable information connected with the subject. We have translated his Urdu text of the letters in English language. Following are the excerpts from two letters of Iqbal in English language contained in the aforesaid book. We hope our readers will find them extremely interesting. And they can even hear the sound of Iqbal’s heart in his words here:

Letter from Lahore,
30th July, 1913:

“I remember the time when I read Goethe’s poems with you, and I hope you also remember those happy days when we were so near to each other spiritually speaking”.

The last letter written by Iqbal was on 7th June, 1914¹²¹, after which 1st World War broke out which lasted for five years. When the war ended Iqbal wrote a letter to Wegenast on 10th October, 1919, expressing his concern

¹¹⁹ IIE p.125

¹²⁰ IIE p.107

¹²¹ IIE p.264

over ‘the great ordeal Germany had passed through’ and hoped that ‘the people would make up the losses caused by the war.’ It seems that this letter never reached in the hands of Wegenast apparently due to change in her address and there came a gap of over twelve years when Iqbal managed to get the new address of his dearest friend. Iqbal then sent to her a letter on 15th October 1931 from London, where he had gone to attend a Round Table Conference. Wegenast promptly replied and then he in reply to her letter wrote to her from Buckingham Gate, 20th October 1931:¹²²

“My dear Frl. Wegenast,

It was extremely kind of you to write. I received your letter early in the morning today when I was still in bed. I read it more than once partly because I was so glad to receive it and partly because I wanted to understand it better. I am glad to learn that in spite of the misfortunes that you have had to face you are cheerfully getting on in life. I shall never forget the days at Heidelberg when you taught me Goethe’s Faust and helped me in many ways. These were happy days indeed! I find from your letter that you are not the master of your time. I shall therefore try my best to come to Heidelberg and visit you once more in that old place. I still remember the River Neckar on the bank of which we used to walk together. But nothing is yet certain. I think I shall be able to tell you in short time whether it is possible for me to come to Germany while going to Rome. I have received an invitation from Rome and want to go there before I finally leave for India.

It is hardly necessary for me to say that I have a great longing to meet you and to revive the memory of those happy days which, alas! are gone for ever.

In the meantime please do write to me,

Yours Sincerely
Muhammad Iqbal”

Kierkegaard has clearly described nearly everything about his personal life. Unlike him, Iqbal has not written anything particular about this aspect of his life. Therefore, in order to know something in this regard we have to see what his close ones tell us about him. To be very specific and selective we have referred to Iqbal’s son Justice (Rtd.) Dr. Javid Iqbal’s book “Zinda

¹²² IIE p.269

Rud” (Urdu) and a book “Iqbal ” by Atiya Begum”, as well as Iqbal’s own letters which he wrote to Wegenast and Atiya Begum, besides comments of a few persons who are considered as authority on Iqbal.

We mentioned earlier that there were two girls who came in the life of Iqbal. Besides Emma Wegenast, it was Atiya Begum, who came from a Nawab family. She was daughter of a ruler of one State in India and happened to meet Iqbal during her study tour to England and Germany. She was highly intelligent, well-educated and extremely charming young girl. In England, she got a “special invitation” to meet a very clever man by the name of Mohammed Iqbal at a dinner on 1st April 1907. According to Atiya Begum she found Iqbal, at the dinner table, a scholar of Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit – a ready wit and ever alert in taking advantage of one’s weak point, and hurling cynical remarks at his audience¹²³. The dinner was hosted by Miss Beck who was looking after welfare of Indian students. After a few days Iqbal invited Atiya Begum to supper at Frascatis, a fashionable restaurant in London to meet some German scholars with whom he was working¹²⁴. After that she met Iqbal several times at different places either at Cambridge where Prof. Arnold was usually with them. He was the teacher of Iqbal and loved his pupil very much. Some times Prof. Arnold used to take them to picnic and sometimes they dined with him together. Iqbal once visited Atiya at her place with a few German and Arabic books on philosophy in the company of a German Professor and their discussion lasted for full three hours.¹²⁵ After that they continued meeting every now and then to study and promote their mutual knowledge of Philosophy. Atiya Begum narrates interesting stories of their meetings during various gatherings in which Iqbal also participated.¹²⁶ She was very much influenced by him and really benefited from his company in the field of her knowledge. About Iqbal she observed: “ He was a store-house of knowledge”.¹²⁷ Once Iqbal said to Atiya, “If you wish to increase

¹²³ IAB pp.14

¹²⁴ IAB pp.16

¹²⁵ IAB pp.19

¹²⁶ Atiya Begum wrote everything about Iqbal in her book (*Iqbal* by Atiya Begum) which was published many years after Iqbal’s death.

¹²⁷ IAB pp.21

your understanding in any branch of learning, Germany should be your goal".¹²⁸

On the advice of Prof. Arnold, Atiya decided to go to Germany and she left on 19th August 1907 with a group of students. Dr. Fayzee, the brother of Atiya, was also with them. The group arrived Heidelberg at 5pm the next day.¹²⁹ Prominent persons among whom there were Frau Prof. Wegenast, Frau Prof. Senachal and Iqbal welcomed them. Atiya's first impression of Iqbal in the environment of Germany as described by her was 'so unlike to what I had seen him in London, Germany seemed to pervade his being, and he was picking knowledge from the trees that he passed by and the grass he trod upon'.¹³⁰ Atiya has described many interesting events that happened from day to day while she was at Heidelberg in the company of Iqbal and German professors Frau. Senachal and Frau Wegenast. Atiya left Heidelberg after successful completion of her study tour taking with her unforgettable pleasant memories. She returned to London on 1st September, 1907 and then to India later same year. As earlier stated Iqbal was back home in 1908. Iqbal sent many poems to Atiya after her return to India. In fact seldom there was any letter of Iqbal when a poem or some verses were not in it even some of them later on not published. Atiya says: " I had also invited him to Janjira¹³¹ on behalf of Their Highness the Nawab Saheb and Begum Saheba of Janjira. Iqbal however never went there. He regretted to 'forego the pleasure of her company inspite of a strong almost irrepressible desire.....'.¹³² Atiya was naturally angry on this and expressed her feelings as such. There has been exchange of several letters between Iqbal and Atiya Begum. However we are only in possession of some of the letters of Iqbal that he wrote to Atiya and no letter from Atiya Begum is available. In one of his letters dated 17th July, 1909 Iqbal wrote:

"My dear Miss Atiya,

You say I have no regard for your wishes!! This is indeed strange for I always make it a point to study your wishes and to please you in any way I

¹²⁸ IAB pp.22

¹²⁹ IAB pp.25

¹³⁰ IAB pp.27

¹³¹ The native place of Atiya in India.

¹³² IAB pp.39

can. But sometimes, of course, such a thing is beyond my power. The force of my own nature impels me in a different direction”.

The above is a short excerpt from Iqbal's letter that is spread over 7 pages. According to Mohammed Usman, Iqbal loved Atiya as a person – may be once he wished to marry her but later thought it impossible. He might have thought that Atiya may not be absorbed as a part of his family whose living was so simple and commonly. Moreover Iqbal's financial condition was unstable. Hence their love ended in tragedy.¹³³ Another Iqbal's writer Masood-ul-Hassan writes that Iqbal and Atiya had decided to marry each other during 1907-1908. This is why Atiya repeatedly requested and invited Iqbal to come to her home town, Jangira, so that the agreement could be finalized. But Iqbal never went there, so the affair lasted for a short period of time and then ended in December 1911. After that Atiya was married to Faizi Rehiman in 1912.¹³⁴ But the author of *Zinda Rud (ZR)* says that whatever has been written about love affair between Iqbal and Atiya is all guess work that is devoid of reality.¹³⁵ The author of 'Iqbal-az-Atiya Begum' (IAA) Zia-ud-din Ahmad, who knew Iqbal and Atiya Begum very well and had the privilege of meeting both of them several times expressed great respect for their mutual love. In fact, they were friends in real sense. The refusal of Iqbal in coming to Atiya's home to meet her elders could not end her friendship with Iqbal. Even the marriage of Atiya with Faizi did not interrupt the correspondence between Iqbal and Atiya except that there was a little pause for a negligible period of time. 'Both were real friends and their friendship ended at the death of Iqbal after 40 years. If ever expressed, Atiya was the only person to whom Iqbal disclosed his inner pain and burning of his soul. There was no other person who could understand his deep feelings except Atiya Begum'.¹³⁶ However their love was in no case an erotic love. The letters of Iqbal written to Atiya Begum as a matter of fact present his own hand written life picture which Atiya published, as they were, in her book (IAB). So far Wegenast is concerned, Iqbal loved her and she loved Iqbal. Their love was real and spiritual love (kjærlighed) without passing through the bridge of erotic love (elskov). It was first love of Iqbal and, as Kierkegaard

¹³³ ZR pp.290

¹³⁴ ZR pp.290

¹³⁵ ZR pp.291

¹³⁶ IAA pp.7

said no one forgets his first love ever, Iqbal kept his love for Wegenast in his heart. Iqbal took with him his treasure of love to the other world where his love became immortal. Wegenast remained unmarried throughout her life in this world and calmly took the love of Iqbal to her grave. In this way the love of both of them got eternal life.

Prof. Dr. Annemarie Schimmel says: ‘R. A. Nicholson, who has introduced Iqbal’s ideas into Europe, has pointed out in his introduction to the translation of ‘Secret of the Self ‘ – an article which still belongs to the best ever written on behalf of the poet – that: “Iqbal is a man of his age and a man in advance of his age; he is also a man in disagreement of his age.”¹³⁷ At an occasion of literary conversation on the 23rd of July 1907 Iqbal’s another teacher at Cambridge Prof. Arnold saw a letter of Iqbal in the hands of Atiya. This was a gathering of intellectuals where ‘Iqbal’ also came under discussion. The letter in the hands of Atiya was written to her by Iqbal from Germany in German. Atiya says: ‘when this letter was read out both the fluency of the writer and the literary merit of the work was admired. Prof. Arnold requested me to give this letter to him, saying, “though Iqbal is my pupil, I get instructions from his writings.” He further said that I was fortunate in receiving such an important communication from him, and assured me that “this will remain as a cherished piece of German literature in my possession.” It was a delicate situation, and I could not but grant the request of this great man, so handed over to him Iqbal’s letter.’¹³⁸ Zia-ud-Burney says that when Iqbal returned from England after participating in Round Table Conference he was invited by Atiaya Begum at Aiwan-i-Riffat in Bomboy. Mr. Zia-ud-Burney was personally present there and among the guests were heads of the States, Diplomats from the Embassies of the Muslim Countries, prominent citizens and highly educated persons. Iqbal was requested to speak and also give some message to the audience. He therefore delivered a short speech in English, at the end of which he recited a verse in Persian:

CHUNON BEZI KE AGAR MARG-I-TUST MARG-I- DAWAM
KHUDA ZE KARDAI KHUD SHARMSAR-TAR GARDAD

¹³⁷ G.W p.43

¹³⁸ IAB p.22

When Iqbal ended his speech, a few persons surrounded Iqbal and requested to give English translation of his Persian verse. Following is the English translation in Iqbal's own words:

Live so beautifully
That if death is the end of all,
God himself may be put to shame
For having ended thy career.¹³⁹

Iqbal brought a revolution through his rich and burning poetry in the political field of his country as well as in philosophical world. He once said about himself, "I am two in one, the outer is practical and business-like and the inner self is the dreamer, philosopher and mystic."¹⁴⁰ He fought for the independence of his country against the powerful British rule and at the same time with all resisting forces including his own countrymen, prominent Muslim politicians and Religionists. He discovered Mohammad Ali Jinnah as a man of his taste who on the request of Iqbal came from London and took the lead of independence movement. Iqbal was his backbone and mind on one hand and a burning flame of eloquence on the other hand warming up the blood of young generation to the extent of boiling point through his extremely touching heroic songs.

Highly literary persons translated Iqbal's philosophical poetry in the shape of several books during his lifetime and afterwards in Europe and many other countries and further translations and research on his works is continuing on a large scale. Iqbal is another Swiss Canal, which links the minds of East and West. He is not new in the Western intellectual world. Besides his 'The Development of Metaphysics in Persia' his philosophical book 'The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam' (RRT) has given new dimensions of thought to modern thinkers. The book also contains one of his lectures 'Is Religion Possible', which was delivered by him in a session of the Aristotelian Society in London in December 1932. Following are the main books written by Iqbal:

1. The Development of Metaphysics in Persia (English) –
Cambridge 1908.

¹³⁹ IAA p.23,24,25

¹⁴⁰ IAB p.16

2. Asrar-i-Khudi (Persian), Lahore 1915.
3. Rumuz-i-Bekhudi (Persian), Lahore 1918.
4. Peyam-i-Mashriq (Persian), Lahore 1923.
5. Bang-i-Dara (Urdu), Lahore 1924
6. Zabur-i-Ajam (Persian), Lahore 1927.
7. The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam (English), London 1934 & Lahore 1951.
8. Javednama (Persian), Lahore 1932.
9. Pascha Bayad Kard (Persian), Lahore 1936.
10. Musafir (Persian), Lahore 1936.
11. Bal-i-Jibril (Urdu), Lahore 1936
12. Zarb-i-Kalim (Urdu), Lahore 1937
13. Armaghan-I-Hijaz (Persian and Urdu), Lahore 1938 – Iqbal passed away the same year.

A few hours before his death, H. H. von Veltheim-Ostran came to visit him¹⁴¹. Iqbal, careless of the fact that he was going to leave this world very soon of which he was well aware, discussed German philosophy with him till the time his breath could stand it. Iqbal died after a few hours of entertaining his last guest on 21st April 1938.

IDEOLOGICAL KINSHIP AMONG KIERKEGAARD & IQBAL

Kierkegaard belonged to 19th century but has been discovered in 20th century, whereas Iqbal (born in 19th century) belongs to the 20th century and discovered as such. Kierkegaard of the West and Iqbal of the East, both have given to the world a unique approach towards life, religion, God and the universe. These are the questions arising out in the mind of man from the very time of the awakening of intellectual instinct in him. The two great philosophers, Kierkegaard and Iqbal, have addressed these questions in a way that is quite different in style than that of the most theologians, scholars and philosophers of world fame. The life that Kierkegaard and Iqbal lived was

¹⁴¹ .GW p.59

full of selfless sacrifices and devotion to the cause of divine duty entrusted to them. The religion they followed and preached, though different in name, but the path adopted was the same and the destination they sought was the same. Both believed and advocated that the God is one and only one before whom each individual, on the Day of Judgment will stand 'alone and all alone by himself'. In this way both of them belong to the 20th century, which is our age. The two are not merely philosophers or as they called themselves poets but each one of them is a complete school of thought for humanity. They are revolutionists in philosophy and both of them are theologians but not in the sense like some of those who preach religion in Churches and Mosques just in order to earn their livelihood and lead a comfortable life. These two men are religious persons in real sense and each one of them, as we see, is too hard in criticizing Priests and Mullahs of his country, as a result of which they had to face terrible opposition of religious groups of their time. They adopted a realistic approach toward religion. Kierkegaard and Iqbal are both doctors of human nature. This is why they are so popular in the modern world that their ideas are being widely circulated through deliberations and writings by intellectuals and researchers. Every now and then new horizon of their thoughts and teaching are explored which appear in the shape of new books in various countries.

The teaching of Kierkegaard and Iqbal on human spirit and selfhood provides a guideline and awareness to researchers of self-recognition. As is the case with the writers of their category, the reader for the first time usually does not get into many aspects hidden in their beautifully well-knit phrases. In the case of Kierkegaard and Iqbal, as a matter of fact, it is sometimes impossible, in reading them for the first time, to sense the exact idea behind their selected words and the reader is just lost in the beauty and rhythm of their poetic style. The romantic period of the lives of both philosophers was very short and that too met with a painful tragic end – similar to a bud that faded before becoming a flower. Kierkegaard and Iqbal remained apart from the girls whom they liked; they actually had sacrificed their personal desires since both of them had a greater task ahead; they did not marry the girls whom they once loved so deeply. Kierkegaard had expressed the whole story of his tragic love but Iqbal being terribly involved in his nation building activities kept every thing, that related to his own self, concealed in his chest; His inner kept on boiling like unexploded volcano throughout his life. No

doubt Iqbal as well as Kierkegaard carried a bleeding heart; the words coming out of their pen are really drops of fresh blood from their heart. Iqbal's words about himself apply fully well to Kierkegaard also, where he says: "Each line of my verse is a drop of my blood (misra-i-man qatra-i-khun-i manast)". Indeed Kierkegaard and Iqbal have startling resemblance in their life and thought.

Both of them are staunch religious persons and reformers. Whatever Kierkegaard has done for Christianity Iqbal has done the same for Islam. Their approach to religion and God is realistic.

In politics they are critics of the present so-called democracy. They were against the rule of the masses but favored the rule of wisdom in which justice should prevail.

Both possessed unshaken power of faith and never cared if the whole world stood against them.

Both faced tragedy in their emotional life, which was the result of their own attitude towards the short temporal life.

Both sacrificed their personal pleasure for the sake of greater cause and for the good of human race. The worldly comfort did not attract them and the wealth to them was nothing more than a source keeping them alive

Both demonstrated man's ego practically as well as theoretically. Both fought on various fronts simultaneously against negative forces prevailing in religion, politics and society.

Both were scared of excessive tendencies towards objectivism and materialism. Their revolutionary approach to existentialism has provided new vision to modern thinkers.

Both have extensively deliberated on misconceived tendency of Man's right of choice and the most important task of life for both was first to 'know thyself'.

The relation between man and God is of utmost importance with both. They believed that God is not living far away from us but He is nearer than our own self.

Iqbal's 'philosophical kinship with Kierkegaard is deep, and who along with Kierkegaard recognized the limits of science and reason in understanding the Self and the apprehension of religious faith'; says Sami S. Hawi of Wisconsin University in his essay "The Aesthetic Self in Kierkegaard".

As said earlier the aesthetic age of both, Iqbal and Kierkegaard was too short and that too ended in tragedy; like a bud that faded before becoming a flower. However, the seed of their thought, sown in the fertile field of wisdom and nurtured by the time, gave birth to a thousand buds, which one by one with every rising sun on the horizon, is turning into full-bloomed flowers and spreading life giving fragrance in the garden of intellect.