CHAPTER VI

COMPARISON BETWEEN SARTRE’S AND IQBAL’S NOTIONS OF FREEDOM
Both Jean-Paul Sartre and Muhammad Iqbal occupy a unique place in their respective areas of influence in the modern Western and Eastern philosophical worlds. Sartre is a prominent champion of existential philosophy, while Iqbal's greatness lies in reviving and reconstructing Islamic thought. It would be an interesting study to compare and contrast their positions regarding freedom, an issue that has acquired new dimensions in the context of the present historic situation in which individual's identity and freedom have been threatened by bureaucracy, technology and an all embracing collectivism. This study becomes more interesting in view of their contrasting beliefs—Sartre is a declared atheist, and Iqbal is firmly committed to the Islamic faith—, as one of them rejects God in order to safeguard human freedom, while the other reaffirms his faith in God so that man can exercise his freedom fully. Yet both of them are champions of individual man's freedom. Furthermore, both of them are creative writers of the highest calibre. Sartre is a great fiction writer of our age and Iqbal is universally acclaimed as one of the greatest poets of Indo-Persian tradition in the 20th century.

The similarities and dissimilarities in their philosophical outlooks are equally glaring. There are some areas in which
both are in agreement and some in which they disagree. Their
difference seems prominent due to Sartre's tackling of the
metaphysical notions on an atheistic basis; conversely Iqbal's
system of thought is rooted in the intensive faith in God,
and his approach is a theistic one. The main question is
how far does belief or unbelief in God make a difference in relation
to a philosopher's views on freedom. Does it make a fundamental
difference or give rise to only secondary and minor differences?

Sartre's and Iqbal's conception of freedom has been already
discussed separately in previous chapters of this study. Here we
can compare and contrast in detail their notions of freedom.

Existentialism is a point of departure, insofar as it
provides an alternative approach to the understanding and living of
life and consequently changes one's entire outlook by creating
new attitudes, values and ideals. The central contention of
existential philosophy—in the words of Sartre—'existence
precedes essence'¹ is a revolutionary one and shakes the hitherto
dominant essentialist philosophy to its foundations. It provides
a new conception of man, and a new outlook by making 'human exis-
tence' the real frame of reference. For Sartre human reality
or human subjectivity is the foundation of all thought and action.
He says that man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges
up in the world and consequently defines himself afterwards.²

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2. Ibid., p. 28.
Iqbal, who is an amalgam of Eastern religious insight into reality and Western intellectualism, has crucial existential insights to offer. He dwells upon certain important existentialist themes without calling himself an existentialist. However, he is not in full agreement with the exponents of the slogan—Sartre's dictum—"existence proceeds essence" and its implications. Nevertheless, he emphasises the main themes current in contemporary existentialist philosophy such as:

(a) Man's existence and his personal involvement;
(b) Anti-intellectualism and anti-personal functionalization;
(c) Alienation and authentic existence, and prominent among all
(d) Freedom and creativity.

These ideas he certainly shares with the continental existentialists. Before proceeding to discuss Iqbal's views on these issues, it would be relevant to enumerate and expound some common elements enunciated by the existentialist thinker Sartre and the Muslim philosopher Iqbal.

(a). Man's Existence and His Personal Involvement:

Existentialism being a philosophy of 'human existence' man's encounter with himself has its roots in the philosophies that emphasized the significance of the study of man and his inner experience. Such philosophies have been predominantly mystical
and humanistic. What is described as mystical experience, if analysed properly, seems to be akin to existential experience or subjectivity. The dictum of Protagoras: "Man is the measure of all things", and that of Socrates: "Know thyself" emphasize the study of human reality from two different points of view. Mystics of the East and the West and Sufis and ārifū in the Muslim World, despite their concern and yearning for establishing direct, immediate and intimate relationship with God, have been more concerned with human existence and subjectivity than the philosophies of rationalist and empiricist traditions. Similarly all creative literature right from the pre-Socratic Greek epics and tragedies as well as Sanskrit poetry up to the modern age has been always treating man as the central theme of poetry, drama, novel, stories and other literary genres. Though existentialism is described as a 'literary philosophy' by the protagonists of analytical philosophy of our age contemptuously, yet it is an apt description for existential philosophy in view of the similarity of the approaches of creative literature and existentialism to the study of man.

It is worthwhile to trace the elements of existential thought and its approach in the spiritual experiential insight of Sufis and literati expressed in their stray utterances and poetic works. Starting from Iliad and Odyssey of Homer up to the medieval ages in the creative experiences of Saint Augustine (Confessions), Dante (Divine Comedy) Ibn Sīnā (al-Ishārāt and Hayy ibn Yaqẓān), Suhrawardī, al-Maqtūl (Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq),
Rūmī (Mathnawī), Sa‘dī (Gulistān), Ḥafiz (Dīwān), al-Ghazzālī (al-Mungadh min al-Dalāl), ‘Aṭṭār, Maḥmūd Shabistsarī, Sanā’ī (Hādīqah), Ibn al-‘Arabi (Futuhāt al-Makkiyāh and Fūsūs al-Hikam), Mullā Sadrā (al-Asfār), Mīr Taqī Mīr (Kulliyāt), Khwājah Mīr Dard (Dīwān and ‘Ilm al-Kitāb), Bīdil (Kulliyāt and Chahār ‘Unsur), and Ghālib (Dīwān-e Urdū and Kulliyāt-e Fārsī), everywhere the spiritual existential experience is expressed in symbolic and metaphorical language unfolding the innermost depths of the totality of human existence. Similarly in modern times in the works of Goethe, Dostoyevsky, Franz Kafka, Miguel de Unamuno, T.S. Eliot, Leo Tolstoy, Chekhov, Albert Camus, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Iqbal, Tagore and Aurobindo Ghosh one may find certain elements of existential approach and thought intermingled with either romanticism or idealism or mysticism. All the representatives of romanticism from Rousseau to Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley and Keats share some basic features with the present existentialists. Whatever may be the philosophy or ideology of genuine creative writers the element that threads them together and brings them closer to existentialists is their subjectivity and creative involvement in and commitment to the totality of human existence and its destiny.

In the words of Karl Jaspers, "man is everything". Existentialism aims at describing and evaluating in its termenology are 'human situations'. When the term "existentialism" is used broadly, it refers to a type of thinking that "emphasize human existence"
and the qualities peculiar to it rather than to nature or the physical world. Man-centered and individualistic existentialism seeks to probe the darker corners of the human situation. Yet emphasis on 'human existence', though the beginning of a definition, is actually too vague for us to use in reference to this philosophy. Existentialism, therefore, represents "an attitude or outlook that emphasizes human existence—that is, the distinctive qualities of individual persons—rather than man in the abstract or nature and the world in general."^2

All the existentialists have tried their best to construct their philosophical systems on existential basis. For them 'human existence' is prior to everything. This theme of human existence has been greatly emphasized by various existential philosophers in their respective works, such as Soren Kierkegaard's 'Fear and Trembling', 'Concluding Unscientific Postscript', and 'Either/Or'; Martin Heidegger's 'Being and Time', Karl Jasper's 'Philosophy of Existence'; Gabriel Marcel's 'The Mystery of Being', and 'Man Against Mass Society'; and Jean-Paul Sartre's 'Being and Nothingness' and Existentialism and Humanism'. Besides these prominent advocates of existentialism, the subject of 'human existence' as indicated earlier, is also dealt with in the writings of Nietzsche, Husserl, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Dostoyevsky and Albert Camus. In short it can be said that all

existential philosophies are concerned with the manoeuvre of existing individuals whose being is ambiguous (both bound and free, separated and joined) in a total existence which is ambiguous (finite and infinite, end and means, a plenitude and nothing). 1

One should keep in mind that there are two groups of thinkers in existential philosophy. One is theistic in which Kierkegaard, Jaspers and Marcel fall; the other is atheistic of which Heidegger and Sartre are the exponents. Both the theistic and atheistic groups of existentialism explain their conception of human person and his different modus according to their own outlook. But as for freedom, there is no basic difference between the two groups.

Sartre in his 'Being and Nothingness' and "Existentialism and Humanism" explained his views regarding the existence of man. Analysing his famous dictum, 'existence precedes essence' he says that the being which exists in the world is only man. As mentioned earlier, Sartre does not believe in the existence of God and therefore his approach towards existentialism is an atheistic one. As he himself says in "Existentialism and Humanism":

Atheistic existentialism, of which I am a representative, declares with great consistency that if God does not exist there is at least one being whose existence comes

before its essence, a being which exists before it can be defined by any conception of it. That being is man or, as Heidegger has it, the human reality. ¹

According to Sartre, man is the only being that has no nature because there is no God to have a conception of him. He is a subjective being:

Man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world—and defines himself afterwards. ... Man is, indeed, a project which possesses a subjective life. ²

Man is undefinable because to begin with he is nothing. Sartre asserts:

He will not be anything later, and then he will be what he makes of himself. Thus, there is no human nature because there is no God to have a conception of it. ³

Therefore, all existentialists, particularly Sartre, emphasize 'human existence'. Sartre very keenly seeks to know the reality of human existence and formulates a comprehensive theory of being. His main interest is directed towards an ontological goal and in fact, all the existential thinkers have the common

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2. Ibid., p. 28.
3. Ibid., p. 28.
problem of expounding the salient features of human reality.

Iqbal may be considered the first Muslim thinker to make a serious attempt to reconstruct Islamic thought on an existential experience of human individual. The fundamental difference between Sartre and Iqbal is that the former, as mentioned above, does not believe in the existence of God, while the latter's approach to existential philosophy is rooted in the firm belief in the existence of God. Iqbal approaches human reality in relation to God. Though Iqbal's and Sartre's interpretations are different yet their meeting ground—'emphasis on human personality'—is the same.

It may be said with some justification that it would be apt to compare Iqbal's approach to human freedom with that of either Kierkegaard or Jaspers or Marcel. For, they share theistic world-outlook with Iqbal and they start their odyssey of their quest for human existence from the same stand-point, that is belief in God who created man as a free being and ensured his free creativity. But the point at issue is as to how God, the Absolutely Free Being, can create another free being, and how far can man exercise his freedom despite a superior Free Being. God, being the Creator, in His very act of creation, delimits freedom of His creatures. Iqbal has resolved this difficulty in his 'Reconstruction', but it would be difficult for any authority on theistic existentialism to defend human freedom
against the Absolute Freedom of God. It may be done only by reducing God to a mere concept, which would be an anti-existentialist position. Iqbal's position with regard to man's freedom is more clear than that of theistic existentialists. This point needs a much deeper analysis and an elaborate discussion, in which we cannot indulge within the limited framework of our present thesis. However, among the existentialists, Sartre is undoubtedly the most outstanding champion of man's freedom, while among the contemporary theistic thinkers Iqbal may be called the most articulate advocate of man's freedom as well as his creativity.

Iqbal refers to the Qur'anic teachings to stress the significance of human reality in all its aspects. The Holy Qur'ān in an unambiguous and forceful manner emphasizes "the individuality and the uniqueness of man"¹ and assigns him the highest status of being the Vicegerent (Khalīfah) of God on earth.² In his 'Reconstruction' Iqbal points out that according to the Qur'ān, "Man is the chosen of God"³ as His representative and trustee on the earth. He is the supreme being among all the creatures of Allah:

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\text{والقد كُرَمْتُمُ بِالْأَفْضَلِ وَكُمْ خَلَقْنَاهُمْ فِي الْكُبْرَىَّ الْبَيْحَىَ وَرَزَّجْنَاهُمْ منْ الْأَشْهَابِ وَكُضُّنَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ لَيْفَاتٍ مِّنْ حَمْساً ثُغِيسَنَّهُمْ (الْإِسْرَءِيلِيُّـانِ)
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⁴ (الإسْرَأِيُّـلِيُّانِ

1. Iqbal, The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, p. 95.
2. Al-Qur'ān, II:30 and VI:165.
"Verily we have honoured the children of Adam. We carry them on the land and the sea, and have made provision of good things for them, and have preferred them above many of those whom We created with a marked preferment."

Iqbal's conception of "man" has been discussed in the previous chapter of this dissertation, indicating that the 'self' or 'ego' occupies the central position in his philosophy. He maintains that it is the reality of the self (Khudî: خُوْدٌ) through which man approaches superhuman reality. As for Sartre, human reality is the supreme object of inquiry for Iqbal.

The most distinguishing element in Iqbal's world-view is his stress on the 'human personality', its reality as a free being and the course to adopt to strengthen it. He holds that 'Khudî' or self-hood is a real and pre-eminently valuable and significant entity which is the centre and the basis of the entire organisation and order of life. Like existentialists, particularly Sartre, Iqbal emphasizes the individuality and the uniqueness of human existence. He asserts in his 'Asrâr-e Khudî':

The moral and religious ideal of man is not self-negation but self-affirmation and he attains to this ideal by becoming more and more individual, more and more unique.

1. Al-Qur'ân, XVII: 70.
2. The Secrets of the Self, op. cit., (Introduction), pp. XVIII-XIX.
According to Iqbal, "life" is nothing but "individual" and its highest form is, in his words, the 'Ego' (Khudî: خودی) in which the individual becomes prominently a self-contained exclusive centre.\(^1\) He seems in full agreement with Sartre when he says that the human 'ego' or 'self' is the real entity, and everything, which is there in the universe, is due to its very existence. In this connection he, more precisely in the Asrār-e Khudî, says:

Inasmuch as the life of the universe comes from the power of the self, Life is in the proportion to this power. When a drop of water gets the Self's lesson by heart, It makes its worthless existence a pearl.\(^2\)

The form of existence is an effect of the Self, whatsoever thou seest is a secret of the Self. When the self awoke to consciousness, It revealed the universe of Thought.\(^3\)

Iqbal formulates and very systematically elaborates his theory of the soul as an active, creative entity eternally seeking and never stopping in its unique search. According to

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1. Ibid., p. XIX.
2. Ibid., p. 20.
3. Ibid., p. 16.
him, like Sartre, individual person's existence should be regarded as the sole criterion of life and every one must recognize his 'self' and its various capabilities and potentialities. Iqbal in *Jawād Nāmah* (*The Pilgrimage of Eternity*) underlines:

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What man contains in himself is the world,
And what the world cannot enclose is man.
His vision makes the sun and moon unveiled;
And even Gabriel no access gains
Unto his solitude. His lofty rank
Is higher far than heaven; therefore know
On man's respect is civilization based.
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Thus, like the existentialists, Iqbal recognizes and underscores the reality of human personality, and, in fact, this is one of basic themes which he shares with the existential thinkers.

In two of his works *Asrar-e Khudi* and *Rumūz-e BeKhudi*, human ego has been most eloquently described in its different aspects and dimensions. These works are composed in the meter adopted in *Mathnāvī* of Mawlānā Rūmī, who too emphasized the importance of man, saying:

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I am tired of the devil and the beast;
I desire man'.
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Iqbal elaborates the same theme of his mentor-Rūmī, asserting:

آدیت احترام آدمی باجرش ازمنام آدمی

Humanity consists in respect of man:
So acquaint thyself with the dignity of Man.

In juxtaposition to this attitude, Iqbal presents the plenitude of his expressions regarding the importance of human existence in different ways. As he says, in his poem Lālah-ī Sahrā (اللّاه-ی سَحْرَاء: The Tulip of the Desert), that all other objects, belonging to heaven and the earth, including the sun and the stars are mute, though curious spectators of the drama of human life. He says:

بنگردن آدم سے جگہ میں کوئی سریع کوئی نہیں سکتا

From Man is the warmth and activity in the Universe—
The sun is a spectator, and so are the stars.

The human self (or Khudī) according to Iqbal is finite, but it is also boundless in its peculiarity:

دو کرکس کا آدی کرکس کا برق یا چھوٹی کرکس

Man is an ocean of which
Every drop in itself a boundless ocean.

1. Ibid., p. 418.
2. Kullīyāt-e Iqbal (Urdu), op. cit., p. 414.
In another poem in *Jāwēd Nāmah*, Iqbal, like Sartre, underlines the uniqueness of individual existence with all its inner fecundity and self-sufficiency, asserting thus:

He is a star
With neither east nor west, which setting naught
Doth know; whose axis corresponds to north
Nor south. His destiny entreaured lies
In words, "I shall create"; the earth and sky
Are commentaries thereof. The grave and death
And resurrection and the crack of doom
Are facets of his soul; the fire of hell,
The lights of heaven symbolise his deeds.
He is the leader, he the prayer too,
He is the mosque, the holy sanctuary,
He is the Pen, the Ink and he the Book,
By portions are revealed the qualities
That in him latent lie; no limits mark
His state. His mere existence guarantees
The promise of all possibilities,
Their measure is his golden mean.

Iqbal seems to be in agreement with Heidegger and Sartre who hold that it is the fact of consciousness which radically distinguishes man from other beings and all other living creatures. According to them, man has achieved the highest measure of individuality and is, consequently, most conscious of his own reality:

The nature of the ego is such that in spite of its capacity to respond to other egos, it is self-centred and possesses a private circuit of individuality excluding all etos other than itself.

According to both, the entire religious and existential experience of man shows the importance and the uniqueness of the 'human self'.

Existentialism is also a philosophy of man's personal involvement. In this system of thought a human being is treated as an 'actor' and not a "spectator". Existential philosophy lays emphasis on man's inner life and experience. It brings out his inner, personal, immediate and subjective awareness. All the existentialists commonly hold that there is no knowledge apart from the knowing 'subject'—Man's inner life with his unique moods, anxieties and decisions. Kierkegaard, the father of modern existentialism, philosophizes with reference to his own personal problems:

Philosophy and biography go together in the sense that the former arises in response to personal problems in which Kierkegaard is involved and which are solved on existential level, by choice rather than simply on the abstract and theoretical level. 2

Existentialism opposes all forms of objectivity and impersonality insofar as they pertain to the life of man. With reference to Kierkegaard, Sartre writes:


2. Frederick Copleston, Contemporary Philosophy, op. cit., p. 128.
Kierkegaard bases his position upon individual man here and now, man in his passion and anxiety; and such of his argument is founded openly upon personal experience, ...

The realm of personal involvement is much emphasized by all existentialists. Kierkegaard and Sartre seem prominently eager to develop this attitude. Kierkegaard regards the human individual as an 'actor' and not as an object—a 'spectator':

(Kierkegaard) does not stand back from problems as an impersonal analyst and spectator; he grapples with them as one who is involved in them with his whole being; they are for him not merely objects of intellectual curiosity but rather matters of vital concern which he cannot regard with a purely detached interest. He is not a spectator, but actor. 2

Sartre incorporated the same views and asserts that human individual is completely involved himself in the world. According to him, "man is thrown into this world" 3 and therefore he is responsible for every thing he does. Both Sartre and Heidegger analyse this theme and distinguish between man's being-in-the-world and his being-in-the-midst-of-the-world as the two modes of his existence. The purpose of drawing this distinction is to emphasize that although man is necessarily present and involved in the world and cannot withdraw from it, yet he does

not lose his individuality. One must note that 'present' or 'involved' does not mean, for both the thinkers, absorption or losing one's 'self' to the world and sink to the level of brute material objects, which both of them termed as the state of 'inauthenticity'. It is an interpretation of Socrates' dictum: "know thyself" and to make use of this knowledge for the purpose of comprehending and conquering the world. In reality, "man is the being", Heidegger holds, "who is immediately present to the world and who must live out his life in and through his inescapable relationship to the world", because "the being of human reality", as Sartre also asserts, "is originally not a substance but a lived relation."\(^2\)

Existential philosophy is a personal, self-evolving, creative effort rather than an impersonal and imitative process of philosophizing. In short, it is an approach to life that lays its emphasis on man's existence and his personal involvement.

Iqbal too, like the existentialists, stresses man's consciousness and personal involvement in his own being and the world as well. There is a remarkable similarity between Iqbal and the existentialists in their approaches to the problems of man's consciousness, his identity, personal involvement, death, anguish, dread etc. Iqbal also is, like the existentialists, against classicism and intellectualism. Inspite of certain differences between

Iqbal and Sartre a number of elements are common to both. The universe, according to Iqbal, the theist, is a God oriented one. Yet this approach to and description of human existence are much akin to those of the atheistic existentialists such as Sartre and Heidegger, who too have analysed human existence in cosmic field-situation. Concern for man as an existing individual being and his personal involvement in different spheres of life are the common points of the two philosophical systems.
(b). **Anti-Intellectualism and Anti-Impersonal Functionalization:**

Existentialism is a thorough revolt against some of the main features and concepts of the traditional speculative philosophy and impersonal attitudes of the modern industrially oriented and technology-dominated era. It is a protest against the tradition of rationalism initiated by the Greeks, especially the traditional "system building" of philosophy as formulated by Plato, Spinoza and Hegel. In such a 'system', according to the existentialists, the human individual is lost in a supersensible world, in abstract universals, or in a universal ego. In the previous pages, the nature or 'essence' of man has been discussed and distinguished from his radical 'existence'. In this way, it can be rightly said that "existentialism is a protest in the name of individuality against 'reason' and 'nature' that were so strongly emphasized during the eighteenth-century 'Enlightenment'".¹

The basic ideas of reaction against the established religious authority and the challenge to Christian faith were first found in Kierkegaard's philosophy. In rejecting Christianity, "Kierkegaard had perceived the discontinuity between faith and reason, and in rejecting speculative philosophy he retained this perception and built his position upon it."² According to him speculative philosophy has not yet apprehended the true spirit of Christianity:

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² Blackham, H.J., *Six Existentialist Thinkers, op. cit.*, p. 3.
And yet, no, it is not so; in relation to Christianity, systematic philosophy is merely skilled in the use of all sorts of diplomatic phraseology, which deceives the unsuspicious. Christianity as understood by the speculative philosopher is something different from Christianity as expounded for the simple. ¹

Moreover, in his famous works 'Philosophical Fragments' and Concluding Unscientific Postscript, Kierkegaard attacks mainly the established "system" of Hegel. He points out that Hegelian philosophy fails to define its relation to the existing individual. Further, by ignoring the ethical values it also confounds human existence. According to him existentialism begins as a voice raised in protest against the absurdity of Pure Thought:

A philosophy of pure thought is for an existing individual a chimera, if the truth that is sought is something to exist in. To exist under the guidance of pure thought is like travelling in Denmark with the help of a small map of Europe, on which Denmark shows no larger than a steel pen-point—aye, it is still more impossible. The admiration and enthusiasm of the youth, his boundless confidence in Hegel, is precisely the satire upon Hegel.²

Gabriel Marcel also rejects the Hegelian idea of abstract knowledge. As he says, "What do we know of ourselves? We are beyond truth and falsehood, we cannot be qualified"³ and

2. Ibid., p. 275.
he says that there can be no absolute knowledge of the real
nor that of the self.

Existentialism as stated before is a philosophy of human
existence and personal involvement. Besides being anti-intelle-
ctualistic in its approach and attitude, as discussed above, it
is set against impersonal functionalization and opts for a
subjective approach to life. It is a revolt against the impersonal
nature of the modern industrial or technological age as well as
against scientism and positivism:

Existentialism is a reaction against pseudo-
scientific philosophizing, and the term
"existential" (Existenz) focuses this reaction
by calling our attention to the concrete human
situation from which philosophical thought
arises. 1

All the existentialist thinkers attach the greatest value and importance
to the existence of human individual as he inwardly perceives
himself, feels, enjoys, suffers, wills rather than to a conceptual
framework applicable to all. In this respect, the common revolt
of existentialists is against certain dominant philosophical
religious, social, political and literary concepts and trends
which imply 'dehumanisation' and impersonal functionalization.
Frederick Copleston, in his 'Contemporary Philosophy', points out
that "the powerful tendency towards the political and social
totalitarianism with its reduction of personal responsibility

1. Karl Jaspers, Philosophy of Existence, (Trans. & Introduction
Richard F. Grabau), (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia
and its evaluation of personal values in terms of service to the collectivity gave an impetus to the existentialist theme of personal involvement. Thus, it may be said that existentialism is a movement of anti-intellectualism and anti-functionalization of man.

Iqbal, in agreement with the existentialist thinkers, holds that the traditional speculative philosophies have failed to grasp the basic reality of human 'existence' and its various distinctive qualities. In order to highlight and emphasize the uniqueness of the self, Iqbal too, like the existentialists has developed his critique of classical and modern philosophical, theological, literary and artistic thought.

It must be kept in mind that Iqbal does not completely reject the importance of reason or intellect in life. According to him intellectual knowledge "prepares us for a more masterful insertion into subtler aspects of human experience." Further, he holds that intellect has been evolved to help man in his actions. Here Iqbal's approach regarding intellect seems somewhat different from the existentialists, for instance Sartre, who completely rejects 'reason' or 'human nature'. Sartre says:

There is no human nature... Man simply is... Man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself.  

1. Frederick Copleston, Contemporary Philosophy, op. cit., p.138.
He further adds:

One will never be able to explain one's action by reference to a given and specific human nature... he is thrown into this world... \(^1\)

Sartre rejects human nature and 'essence' because he does not believe in the existence of God. Iqbal's attitude is contrary to him (Sartre) because he (Iqbal) has firm faith in God's existence and that is why his approach is atheistic one. He is against intellectualism in the sense that he, like Kant, points out the inadequacies of the intellect. Here, like Bergson (and unlike Sartre) he thinks that the higher form of intellect is 'intuition'. He sees no unbridgeable gulf between 'intellect' and 'intuition':

Nor is there any reason to suppose that thought and intuition are essentially opposed to each other. They spring up from the same root and complement each other. The one grasps Reality piecemeal, the other grasps it in its wholeness. The one fixes its gaze on the eternal, the other on the temporal aspect of Reality.\(^2\)

Plato and other idealists had repudiated sense experience as a source of knowledge and the modern irrationalists do not accept the validity of intellect as an instrument of the knowledge of reality. Iqbal's view in this regard, writes Khalīfa 'Abdul Ḥakīm, is "integrative, considering sense-perception, intellect

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1. Ibid., p. 34.
and intuition to be different modes of apprehension of the same reality."¹ His outlook is unmistakably Qur'anic, not only appealing to reason in support of revelation and faith but also regarding hearing and sight as the most valuable divine gifts and declaring them to be accountable to God. Sartre's position is different; for him man's reality is the sole criterion of everything and, like Nietzsche, he says that God does not exist. However, Iqbal's rejection of idealists like Plato, Hegel etc. seems similar to that of the existentialists. He, just like existentialists, attacks Plato's rationalism and calls him 'a sheep'. This is so because according to Iqbal, Plato's thought has deeply influenced the mysticism and literature of Islam by making them to follow the sheep's doctrine. In 'Asrār-e Khudī' Iqbal says about him:²

Plato, the prime ascetic and sage,
Was one of that ancient flock of sheep.
His pegasus went astray in the darkness of idealism. . .
He dominates our thinking,
His cup sends us to sleep and takes the sensible world away from us.
He is a sheep in man's clothing,
The soul of the Sufī bows to his authority.

Moreover, it may also be pointed out that Iqbal saw Greek Thought as the supreme example of classicism, which strictly follows certain laws. Islam, on the other hand is opposed to the Greek outlook and is in its spirit romantic, inviting man to take risks in his quest for reality:

Plato regarded time as unreal but the Buddha emphasized its reality. Iqbal rejects Plato and accepts the Buddha. He devotes a part of his Mathnawi: Secrets of the Self, to the criticism of Plato's ideas and their deadening influence on the Muslim mind. He warns that 'we must be on our guard against his theories'. For Plato the concrete, physical world is an illusion and ideas alone partake of Reality. Iqbal holds, on the contrary, that:

'Nanhe jahan nu aqal to khush ast, meh do dil nu aqal aamal to khush ast
Sweet is the world of phenomena to the living spirit,
Dear is the world of ideas to the dead spirit.'

Plato 'made hand, eye and ear of no account' and 'slumbered and took no delight in deeds'. The Muslim mind was poisoned by his philosophy of the denial of the material universe. It goes without saying that under his influence most of the Muslim thinkers somehow upheld the notion of the unreality of time. Sufism was more deeply influenced by Plato who may be regarded as its presiding genius. Iqbal does not regard change as evil and does not agree with the Buddha that salvation lies in the liberation from the life-cycle by eliminating desire, the root-cause of the will to live. Life is suffering and suffering is rooted in desire. Iqbal, like the Buddha, does certainly regard life as an expression of desire, but, unlike him, he considers it a blessing:
"Life is occupied with conquest alone,
And the one charm for conquest is desire.
Life is the hunter and desire the snare.
Desire is love's message to Beauty.'

Iqbal thus partly rejects the Buddha's philosophy of life because he, in Iqbal's view, could not appreciate the life-force of time. Desire is the vitality to grapple with the temporal. The temporal is real because time is God's attribute or God himself.

As far as the concept of space is concerned, Iqbal rejects the Greek concept of space also. The Muslim mind could never agree with the absolutistic concept of space:

The ideal of the Greeks was proportion not infinity. The physical presentness of the finite with its well-defined limits alone absorbed the mind of the Greeks. 2

Iqbal holds that the ideal of the Muslims was the infinite and this could not be harmonized with the absolutistic concept of space: 3

All the forms of atomism posed the same difficulty. The Ash'arite atomism was an attempt to overcome this difficulty. Nasir Tusi (A.D. 1201-74), for the first time since Ptolemy (A.D. 87-165) gave

1. Waheed Akhtar, "Iqbal's Conception of Time", op. cit., pp. 77-78.
2. Iqbal, Reconstruction, op. cit., p. 132.
3. Waheed Akhtar, op. cit., p. 82.
serious thought to the difficulties of demonstrating the certitude of Euclid's parallel postulate on the basis of perceptual space. He realized the necessity of abandoning perceptual space, furnishing a basis for 'the hyperspace movement of our time'.

Al-Berūnī saw, from a purely scientific point of view, the insufficiency of the scientific view of the universe. Iraqi, as Iqbal claims, insisting on the plurality of space-orders and time-orders, speaks of a Divine time and Divine space.

Again, Iqbal shares with the existentialists the realization of the inconsequentiality of pure intellect or thought. Like that of the existentialists, his philosophical system may be conceived as a reaction against the abstractionism of the idealists especially Hegel and Plato. According to both the systems the intelligible order of things is more than an airy hypothesis or an a priori datum. In this regard Iqbal, in his 'Darb-e Kalím' speaks with barely concealed contempt about Hegel:

'Hegel's shell has no pearl in it; His shadow-world is all illusion.'

Iqbal's problem is quite similar to that of Kierkegaard who makes an attempt to meet the challenge of materialism, institutionalized religion and society, which according to him collectively erode the spiritual foundation of human existence.

1. Iqbal, The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, pp. 132-34.
2. Ibid., p. 134.
Both the thinkers tried their level best to save the individual man from the danger of losing his individual identity. Iqbal realizes the loss of individual personality (Khudi) in modern artificial and technological milieu, especially the Muslim world of pseudo-mystic pantheism, and other such religious movements. He sees that:

Hindu intellectualism and Islamic pantheism have destroyed the capacity for action based on scientific observation and interpretation of the phenomena, which distinguishes the Western peoples "and especially the English." ¹

Iqbal in this way, accuses, particularly, the early Muslim scholastics of failing to grasp the spirit of Qur'an under the influence of Greek speculative philosophy and impersonal functionalization of man's individuality (Khudi).

"It is the misfortune of our age that it has too much knowledge, that is has forgotten what it means to exist!" (Kierkegaard). ... Iqbal's diagnosis of the sickness of modern civilization is not different from that of Kierkegaard. He is critical of contemporary body of knowledge because of its incapability to teach how to live. In Javid Nama (The Pilgrimage of Eternity) the Indian disciple, in his anguish to learn how to manage life, asks his spiritual preceptor:

"My thought has scaled the heavens but I remain lowly and miserable on earth I cannot make my way in the world; I stumble at every step. Why am I incapable of managing my worldly affairs? Why is the spiritually wise a fool in worldly matters?"

¹ The Secrets of the Self, op. cit., p. XII (Introduction).
Kierkegaard's scientifically wise and Iqbal's spiritually wise, are both at a loss and have forgotten to exist as human beings. Dostoyevsky summarised this situation in these words:

'Leave us without books and we shall be lost and in confusion at once. We shall not know what to join into, what to cling to, what to love and what to hate, what to respect and what to despise. We are oppressed at being men—men with a real individual body and blood. We are ashamed of it, we think it as a disgrace and try to continue to be some sort of impossible generalised man.'

This is the predicament of modern man. Immensity of knowledge has made man insignificant in his own eyes. He has drifted from himself in the ever-widening stream of his own intellectual gains. In the gigantic machinery of technocracy and bureaucracy he has become an infinitesimal part, replaceable any time on the slightest show of unadjustability with the whole. Dostoyevsky's 'generalised man' is multiplying to the point of population-explosion, but the real man, whom Rumi sought among demons and beasts with a lantern in his hand, is not to be found. Existentialist thinkers tried to search and rehabilitate the real man in their own way, and Iqbal aimed at fulfilling the same task in his own way. Concern for man is the meeting ground for the existentialists and Iqbal.

As stated earlier, Iqbal's revolt against intellectualism is somewhat different from that of the existentialists who completely reject speculative philosophy and are rightly called "irrationalists." Iqbal is not an obscurantist who fails to understand the significant role played by the 'intellect' in the individual's

life, worldly affairs and social evolution. However, he points out the inadequacies of the intellect and lays emphasis on its higher form to know the 'secrets of the self' that is, 'Reality in its wholeness'. The apparent belittling of the individual self provokes a protest as by the existentialists, against the over-exaggeration of the intellect's role in life. Iqbal's poetry in particular records this protest, in which he belittles intellect as compared to 'ishq (عشق), the passion to love and create.

On the whole Iqbal's philosophical attitude like that of the existentialists, may be regarded as anti-intellectualistic with a severe attack on the philosophies advocating impersonal functionalization of man. Emphasis on the uniqueness of human reality plays a pivotal role in both the systems.
(c). Alienation and Authentic Existence:

According to the existentialists, human existence is prior to everything and for them the first principle is man's making of himself as he is a project which possesses subjective life. They believe that before this projection of the self nothing exists, that is, man is responsible for whatever he chooses and does in different situations, and hence the responsibility of his action falls on his own shoulders.

Existentialist thinkers, particularly Sartre, have discussed in detail the fact of alienation in their writings. According to him, there are two modes of being—'being-in-itself' and 'being-for-itself'. Being-in-itself, as stated earlier, is the self-contained being of a thing, for example, a stone is a stone, it is what it is and no more or no less. It means the being of a thing always coincides with itself only. On the contrary, 'being-for-itself' is co-extensive with the realm of consciousness, and the nature of consciousness is that it is perpetually beyond itself. Accordingly Sartre holds that man in his existence, is always beyond this world, sometimes towards the future and sometimes outside of this world, and even transcends his own being. Man never possesses his being as he possesses a thing. Thus, he never comes to the position of a thing that coincides with an object. This can only be done when he is not conscious of or rather when it is not alienated from himself.

According to Sartre, the human reality has the radical duality of the 'in-itself' and 'for-itself' and is made up of this duality. Whereas the in-itself is defined as a being "which is what it is", man or the human reality is defined as a being 'which is what it is not and is not what it is."¹

Sartre points out that man is nihilating nothingness, because if existence has no objective ground nor has any reference to any system of values, then, in this sense, conscious human existence is pure nothingness. In other words, due to the fact that man constantly creates himself as well as the objective situation, his empirical being is viewed as nothingness. It can be inferred that to exist man must perpetually transcend himself or be alienated from himself. In this regard Paul Tillich holds:

The state of existence is the state of estrangement. Man is estranged from the ground of his being, from other beings, and from himself. ²

From the above discussion it necessarily follows that man must abandon all hopes of attaining a secure and harmonious integration with the surrounding objective world. Accordingly, in desiring, valuing and existing, man necessarily rejects this objective world in which he lives. Therefore, all projects

which are turned toward the acceptance of the world as it is constituted imply a diminution of man's being and a loss of self-respect in so far as they tend to reduce the tension which constitutes the necessary condition of free human action. Sartre, in his 'Being and Nothingness', points out that "freedom is a lack of being in relation to a given being."¹ He is emphatic in asserting that the human reality is a 'detotalized totality (of 'in-itself and for-itself). Man is both 'in-itself' and 'for-itself' but an important point to be noted is that the two dimensions of his being are radically different. There seems a deep dent in his very being which will never close at all.

The upshot of the above Sartrian theory is that "man is the foundation without foundation" of his values. Value derives its being from its exigency and not its exigency from its being.² Sartre says:

Nothing, absolutely nothing justifies me in adopting this or that particular value, this or that particular scale of values. As a being by whom values exist, I am unjustifiable. My freedom is anguished at being the foundation of values, while itself without foundation.³

¹ Sartre, Being and Nothingness, op. cit., p. 485.
² Ibid., p. 38.
³ Ibid., p. 38.
According to Sartre, the price of human existence is alienation from self, from God, from nature or material world and from society. Man is condemned to freedom.

Existentialist thinkers, especially Sartre, have discussed in detail the spheres of finitude and alienation or estrangement. Sartre explains death, finitude and guilt from the standpoint of alienation. It is said that estranged from the ultimate power of being, man is determined by his finitude. His destiny is given over to his natural fate. He came from nothing and he returns to nothing. He is under the domination of death and is driven by the anxiety of having to die. This in fact, is the first answer to the question about the relation between sin and death. For Sartre, the most important feature of human reality is the fact of self-transcendence, the ontological necessity men are under to exist in and through choice. All the anguish and tragedy of human existence can be traced to this source. And it is this feature of human reality alone which constitutes its finitude. But, for Heidegger, on the contrary, death is the greatest source of anguish and the prime symbol of human finitude. He does not deny self-transcendence. Sartre points out that the awareness of death has value insofar as it obliges man or helps him to make authentic decisions. Moreover, he says that the awareness of death helps man to achieve authenticity. It necessarily involves a renunciation of the right to choose. Therefore, it is, in fact, nothing
other than an impossible attempt to be for oneself the essence or the nature which one can only be for another. Sartre, in this connection, in his *Being and Nothingness* remarks:

> The very existence of death alienates us wholly in our own life. ...To be dead is to be a prey for the living. This means, therefore, that one who tries to grasp the meaning of his future death must discover himself as the future prey of others. We have here, therefore, a case of alienation.

This is, in short, the existential exposition of alienation as systematically elaborated by Sartre.

Now, we propose to discuss a few observations regarding authentic existence put forward by existentialists. For them, an authentic man is one who recognizes the radical duality between the human and non-human. According to existentialists, man must live in the world; and being-in-the-world (which constitutes his conscious and purely authentic being), in which man recognizes his existence and knows his potentialities does not imply *being-in-the-midst-of-the-world* (which is the state of human inauthenticity, in which man loses his existence in the artificial man-made world which is the world transformed by human technology). They hold that an authentic life is one which is based upon an exact assessment of human condition, while in inauthentic state man becomes forgetful of the

ontological roots of his very being. The ontological necessities of human condition, existentialists hold, are degraded in the state of 'fallenness' or 'inauthenticity'.

A brief account of Iqbal's doctrine of alienation will be given here to compare and contrast his view with that of the existentialists. So far as contrast is concerned, Iqbal's views on death are diametrically opposed to the views of Sartre and other existentialists. Man, according to him, is not condemned to death due to the finitude of his ego. On the contrary, it is finitude through which he may overcome and conquer time. Finitude is not a curse but a blessing, for it motivates man to attain infinity and eternity:

Finitude is not a misfortune. ...This is a very important point and must be properly understood with a view to secure a clear insight into the Islamic theory of salvation. It is with the irreplaceable singleness of his individuality that the finite ego will approach the infinite ego to see for himself and consequences of his past action and to judge the possibilities of his future. ...Finitude (is) the highest state of human bliss. 1

Iqbal believes, unlike the atheist Sartre, that man's life does not end with his bodily death. For Sartre, this life in the corporeal world, is all that man possesses, while for Iqbal it is just a preparatory ground for the life-after death.

1. Iqbal, Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, op. cit., p. 117.
He is convinced that man's essence, that is 'soul', is immortal. It is up to man to conquer finitude and attain immortality through his inceasing struggle to overcome time and finitude:

(Finitude): The 'unceasing reward' of man consists in his gradual growth in self-possession, in uniqueness and intensity of his activity as an ego. Even the scene of 'Universal Destruction' immediately preceding the Day of Judgement cannot affect the perfect calm of a full-grown ego.

The man who does not flee from death but faces or rather chooses it freely with a purpose overcomes it, as in the case of a martyr like Husayn ibn 'Ali(A). Hence death is not a cause of alienation as Sartre believes, but a means to attain unity with God. It also makes human life meaningful, while Sartre says that the dread of death makes human existence absurd. A perfect believing man, i.e. mard-e mu'min: feels no dread in the face of death; he approaches it willingly, knowing that it brings in its wake eternity. Mu'min, according to Iqbal, dies with a smile on his lips:

\[\text{'I tell thee the sign of a Mu'min — When death comes there is a smile on his lips.'} \]

1. Ibid., p. 117.
What makes human life absurd and devoid of all human values is seeking refuge in the world and escaping from death. According to Iqbal, it is not death but the attempt to escape from it that alienates man from God, his ownself and the world of human existence.

Before proceeding, it is essential to note that Iqbal has never explicitly used the term "alienation" or "estrangement" in his philosophical or poetical writings. However, the conception of alienation is embedded in his poetic reflections. He raises the problem of two-fold alienation—God alienated from man and man alienated from God. Besides, man's alienation from the world and from himself also figures in his philosophy. In one of his early and powerful poems, "Shikwah" (The Complaint) Iqbal takes up the question: Why is man alienated from God?, and in the 'Answer to Complaint' Jawāb-e Shikwah (جواب شکوہ) God's reply does not seem to be satisfactory at all, because of the fact that estrangement or alienation is not God's problem, but is actually a human problem.¹

No doubt much of Iqbal's poetry and prose suggest to readers a straight way to dealienation. In the light of his concept of 'ego' or 'Khudî' he asks man to overcome his manifold alienation. He deals mainly with the problem of alienation on the social and religious levels.

¹. Waheed Akhtar, "Existentialist Elements in Iqbal's Thought" op. cit., p. 32.
Iqbal's insistent concern with the problem of alienation is brought out from his early poetry. He is of the view that for a creative human person isolation from the world or detachment from the external circumstances is necessary:

The theme of solitariness is also in many instances the necessary conditioning factor for the blossoming forth of the creative potential. The creative writer, initially engaged in the act of externalization of his insights, also wishes necessity to have a responsive audience, the absence of whom brings him chagrin and frustration. It is also true that the pressure of the creative impulse finds a fruitful soil in the detachment that is forced upon him by the external circumstances.  

But isolation or seclusion, which is a prerequisite condition for creative activity, is different from alienation. Sometimes scholars and critics with little insight into creative feeling of loneliness confuse it with alienation, which is harmful for creative activity. 'Alienation' is imposed upon man by a society, nature and his own self. On the contrary, a poet's withdrawal from society and his feeling of loneliness is a healthy state of creative self that does not accept alienation. This isolation is aimed at strengthening one's individuality and rejecting the fallen state of day-to-day being. It is rather a first step towards de-alienation and a revolt against dehumanised society.

With the product of his creative activity an artist or poet or a genius recovers his authentic self and establishes a new relation with nature and society by participating through his creative activity in reshaping human society and creating human values. A.A. Ansari in the above passage, has misunderstood the true significance of creative loneliness and has wrongly considered it as 'alienation', which according to his misconceived notions is a pre-condition for creativity. Iqbal himself did not confuse these two different human states. Lāleh-e-Sahrā (The Tulip of the Desert) is a symbol of creative loneliness, and Iqbal does not at all mean to present alienation as a value state in this poem.

According to Iqbal, man should 'create his own world if he be amongst the living'. Human existence Sartre holds, lies beyond thought, and it moves towards transcendence that offers a field for personal venture. According to Karl Jaspers:

As human beings we are never self-sufficient; we are not our own only goal but relate to Transcendence. It enhances us and simultaneously enables us to see through ourselves and realize that we are nothing....Freedom and Transcendence lead to a basic consciousness. ¹

Sartre sets up a distinction between being-for-itself and being-in-itself (pour-soi and en-soi), and argues that values emerge

¹. Jaspers, K., Existentialism and Humanism, op. cit., p. 70.
as a result of the insertion of the former into the latter. In other words, according to him values are expression of the 'for-itself's striving' towards identification with the unattainable in-itself. The nihilating movement of Sartre's 'for-itself' towards its possibilities is really an essential mode of overcoming alienation or that which Iqbal calls estrangement or separation or deprivation which is a recurrent theme in Iqbal's most significant poetry. Man's longing and loneliness is his exclusive privilege because according to Iqbal, the totality of the world of non-human beings is not prompted by this unique desire. He says: ¹

'Rivers, mountains, the moon and stars—
What do they know of separation and longing!
The pain of separation—it becomes me alone;
This dust—it alone has known separation.'

Again, in this respect, Iqbal says in his Bāl-e-Jibrīl: ²

'The stars are strayed and non-communicative;
Separation is the destiny of all existence.'

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2. Ibid., p. 345.
Thus, according to both Sartre and Iqbal, a creative being is condemned to alienation that produces an undying urge for bringing out man's hidden creative potentialities to overcome alienation. Both the thinkers hold that for a creative human individual estrangement from the dehumanised world or detachment from other external circumstances that reduce Being-for-oneself to day-to-day-Being is very essential. Only in such a situation does man's creative impulse find a fruitful soil and he can create and reshape his world according to his desires and aspirations.

However, according to Iqbal, human person complains to God for his lonliness:

1. "Where, O God is a companion for me in this world? I am the tree on Mount Sinâi, where is my Moses?... I am as the tulip of the field, in the midst of a company I am alone. I beg of Thy grace a sympathising friend, and adept in the mysteries of my nature."

Again, in this regard Iqbal asserts in Asrâr-e Khudî:

2. Ibid., p. 124 (p. 144).
Iqbal's complaint to God is a plea to liberate him from his estrangement or loneliness which hurts him badly. Iqbal's man complains to God because of his being-in-the-midst-of-the-world. Sartre and Heidegger too have rightly termed this state of being as 'inauthenticity'. Iqbal says to God:

'Iqbal's complaint to God is a plea to liberate him from his estrangement or loneliness which hurts him badly. Iqbal's man complains to God because of his being-in-the-midst-of-the-world. Sartre and Heidegger too have rightly termed this state of being as 'inauthenticity'. Iqbal says to God:

'My madness has a grievance against thy Divinity; Thou hast for thee the spacelessness and has confined me to the four dimensioned space.'

Iqbal is fed up with the corporeal short-lived, limited and alienated state of being. His intense feeling of alienation from the world reflects in his Urdu and Persian poetry. B.A. Dar expounds Iqbal's view in this regard with reference to his "Gulshan-e-Rāz-e-Jadīd":

"Free yourself from the snare of night and day; Reach within yourself and retire from this noisy world; Throw yourself into the inner recesses of your heart."
The awful silence of an alienated being and its dread of nothingness is beautifully expressed by Iqbal in his poem "The Tulip of the Desert" in \textit{Bāl-e-Jibrīl} as follows:

\begin{center}
\begin{quote}
This azure Dome, this loneliness!
I dread the vast expanses of this desert! ...
O desert breeze, let me also have thy gifts:
Silence and Pathos, ecstasy and grace.
\end{quote}
\end{center}

The opening lines of the poem depict the poet's deep sense of anxiety he is experiencing in the world. Throughout this poem the 'tulip' is used as a symbol of the passionate nature of man and of the intensity of the apprehension of Nothingness:

This poem evokes a kind of existential dread that rises in undulation little by little, and it also reflects an anticipatory phenomenon.

This conception of dread or anxiety, or the anguish of being prevails throughout existential philosophy. It is a kind of prelude to existentialism. "The anguish of being reveals the radical contingency and ultimate meaninglessness of both man and the world." Therefore, Iqbal's conception of 'alienation' seems very close to that of existentialists.

However, it should be noted that Iqbal's conception of alienation is somewhat different from that of existentialists.

1. \textit{Kulliyāt-e Iqbāl} (Urdu), \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 413-14, (Tr. A.A. Ansari, \textit{ed}) \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 213, 218).
particularly that of Sartre and Heidegger. Firstly, Iqbal's approach is theistic and, therefore, his conception of alienation from God is not similar to Sartre's and Heidegger's conception because they are atheists and reject God's existence. For them the question of alienation from God does not arise. God is no guarantee of human freedom, but He, in the view of Sartre, takes away freedom from man. Secondly, there is also some dissimilarity between Iqbal's authentic man and the existentialist's authentic being. Inauthenticity is the outcome of alienation, and authenticity means de-alienation. In his later poetry, Iqbal suggests a way to dealienation. His 'authentic man' or Mu'min (Ideal Man) is the Vicegerant of God (on earth), who has bestowed upon him His unique Attributes like knowledge, wisdom, freedom, creativity, power, patience, justice, consciousness, Love, sympathy etc. This aspect of Iqbal's notion of authenticity is irrelevant to the views of Sartre, for according to him, it is only 'Human existence' which is the ground of conscious and free life.

(d). Freedom, Creativity and Responsibility:

After having gone through and analysed briefly some of the common elements in existentialism and Iqbalian philosophical ideas, we may take up the issue of freedom and creativity in order to compare and contrast Sartre's and Iqbal's approaches to these conceptions.
The conception of freedom in the philosophy of Sartre and Iqbal has been discussed separately in the previous pages of this thesis. Here we shall bring out the main points of agreement and disagreement between the two thinkers.

As indicated earlier, existentialism being a philosophy of 'freedom' and 'creativity' is anti-deterministic. The emphasis of existentialists on personal existence and subjectivity has led to a new stress on man's freedom and responsibility. According to existentialist thinkers determinism, whether genetic, social or environmental, does not offer adequate explanation of man's inner potentialities and capabilities. Existentialists say that man brings out his unique inner potentialities and creative skill only because of his freedom. Their viewpoint insists that first of all, man exists in the world and with his utmost freedom creates himself through each of his actions. He is the maker of himself and "by virtue of his freedom, originally creates himself".1 Man is the project which possesses subjective life. Apart from this projection of self nothing exists. Existentialists hold that man fulfils his project only due to his freedom. He is responsible for whatever he does and, in this way, the whole responsibility of his action falls on his own shoulders. Man has considerable freedom within his own being in case he wills to express it. According to Karl Jaspers, the

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dignity of man is in his freedom:

To see the essence of man in his freedom, however, is to see him in his dignity. All individuals, myself included, are irreplaceable under the same high obligations.

Freedom is a unique quest which lies in working out the demands of one's inner nature and expressing one's genuine or authentic self. Freedom means facing conflicting choices, making decisions and accepting them.

Jean-Paul Sartre alone among all the existentialist thinkers elaborated a systematic and detailed theory of freedom. He approaches the problem from the atheistic viewpoint totally denying God. Man is completely free at his will to do whatever he likes. To him there is no God and hence "everything is permitted". Sartre says:

Nothing will be changed if God does not exist; ... and we shall have disposed of God as an out-of-date hypothesis which will die away quietly of itself.

In case God does not exist, Sartre points out, there is only one being whose existence comes before its essence and that being is 'man'. Man is undefinable, because to begin with he is nothing:

1. Ibid., p. 69.
3. Ibid., p. 33.
Freedom is precisely nothingness which is made-to-be at the heart of man and which forces human reality to make itself instead of to be... for human reality, to be is to choose oneself; nothing comes to it either from outside or from within which it can receive or accept... Thus, freedom is not a being; it is the being of man—i.e. his nothing of being.  

Human individual will not be anything unless and until he will be what he makes of himself. Hence, there is no human nature, because there is no God to have an idea of it:

For indeed existence precedes essence, one will never be able to explain one's action by reference to a given and specific human nature; in other words, to a given and specific human nature; in other words, there is no determinism.  

Man is not what he conceives himself to be, but he is what he wills, what he chooses and "what he makes of himself" through freedom, and "that is the first principle of existentialism". Moreover, freedom, according to Sartre, is the only ground of all values.

On the contrary, regarding freedom and creativity, Iqbal has quoted various Qur'anic verses in his Urdu and Persian poetry and particularly in his 'Reconstruction', affirming

2. Sartre, J.P., Existentialism and Humanism, op. cit., p. 34.  
3. Ibid., p. 28.  
4. Ibid., p. 28.
his faith in Allah. In the fourth lecture in *Reconstruction*, he presents three significant themes from the Qur'ān reaffirming the Islamic view of man's being a Vicegerent of Allah, a chosen entity and "trustee of a free personality which he accepted at his peril." Iqbal argues that man's freedom and creativity, in the sphere of ethics, must be under the direction of the highest Good and Absolute Freedom i.e. God. The greatest of all obstacles, says Iqbal, in the upward life of the ego is matter or Nature, yet it is not evil, since it enables the latent powers of life to unfold themselves. According to Iqbal, the Ego attains freedom by the removal of all the obstructions in its way. 'It is partly free and partly determined; and reaches fuller freedom by approaching the individual who is most free, termed 'God'.

Conversely, Sartre holds that there is no God and man is condemned to freedom:

> Everything is permitted (because of the fact that) God does not exist... One will never be able to explain one's action by reference to a given and specific human nature; in other words there is no determinism—man is free, man is freedom.

His position is not like that of Iqbal who maintains that man in some spheres of activity is free, and in some other spheres

has to follow Divine Commands. Sartre emphatically asserts in *Being and Nothingness*:

> Freedom is not a being; it is the being of man—i.e., his nothingness of being. If we start by conceiving of man as plenum, it is absurd to try to find in him afterwards moments or psychic regions in which he would be free. ...Man cannot be sometimes slave and sometimes free; he is wholly and forever free or he is not free at all.

This is, in fact, the major difference between the approaches of the two thinkers. Sartre's existentialistic outlook is labelled as humanistic because he saves man's freedom at the cost of God. Iqbal's existentialism—if the term may be applied to his approach—is also humanistic despite his firm faith in God, because God in his philosophical Weltanschauung does not deprive man of his freedom but rather guarantees it.

However, in spite of some differences, what both the systems have in common is the doctrine of freedom through which human existence can translate its authenticity into actions. For Iqbal, as for Sartre, man is a self-contained centre of activity, self-conscious, creative and self-evolving being. Human self is free in the sense that it is not determined by anything outside it. Freedom is its own architect and the very laws governing its mode of operation in the world are of its own making. Above all, according to Iqbal, man is the architect of his own life and is the sole sovereign in the

scheme of creation and the undisputed master of his destiny. Iqbal says:

مرقص بندھوں شمس خان کےئ لیاں یتکھیا نےترکیر بخش

'O lover of Truth! Be conclusively final like a glittering sword, Be thy self the destiny of thine own world.'

According to Sartre freedom reveals itself in dread that compels man to seek refuge in the inauthenticity of existence. To him overcoming dread leads to authentic existence that is moral, and flight from it is inauthentic and immoral. In Iqbal's philosophy, when one realizes what is freedom, it seems to be the source of all values. According to him life of the ego is possible in freedom only:

نگیس ہم کے روہانی صہیب تھے کا کشم اوراناد کر کر کہیاں ہے زندہ

'Life is reduced to a dried rivulet when it is imprisoned within confines; In freedom, life embraces boundlessness like an ocean.'

Iqbal maintains that there are only ego-sustaining and ego-dissolving acts.¹ Freedom sustains the ego, while slavery dissolves into nothingness. Man's first act of disobedience to God, which caused his expulsion from heaven, was an act of freedom meant to sustain the ego. Escape from freedom, according to Iqbal, is an ego-dissolving act that negates all future for

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¹ Iqbal, *The Reconstruction*, op. cit., p. 119.
human existence. He asserts that when a person gives up his freedom, he falls down from the high pedestal of human existence, into the state of inauthenticity. Iqbal, in his poems, calls all the acts of the slave devoid of morality; according to him even his prayer is not authentic, because it negates the freedom of ego, it is not a bold "yearning for a response in the awful silence of the universe."¹ A slave's prayers deepen and thicken this silence. To accept slavery and to remain contented with this state is the death of ego. Real man can only be brought up in the spirit of freedom, while slavery distorts character, degrades human nature and finally lowers man to the level of beasts.² On the one hand, God refuses to respond to the prostrations of the slaves, and, on the other, the earth refuses to accept the dead body of a slave:³

O, the heartless being! Thou hast been a slave in the world; Because of thine surrender to slavery the heart of mine is burning like hell. Thine corpse has made the darkness mine even darken; Thine corpse has torn into shreds mine veil of modesty.

1. Ibid., p. 92.
Beware of the corpse of a slave; Beware an hundred times; O Israfil, O the Creator of the Universe! pure soul! Beware.'

For Iqbal, freedom is the highest religious, social, moral and political value. He gave a philosophical orientation to his attempt to reconstruct the religious ideas according to the historic necessity of his times. Like Sartre, Iqbal accorded the highest position to freedom in the hierarchy of values. No doubt freedom occupies a similar position in the existentialist philosophy in general, but Iqbal's concept of freedom seems far more comprehensive than that of all the existentialist thinkers including even Sartre. Sartre's views are in conflict with those of Iqbal when he (Sartre) proclaims that there is no God and "we are left without excuse" ¹ and that "man is condemned to be free." ² Iqbal says that there is God—who is the Most Free and is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. The human ego attains highest freedom by removing all the material obstacles in its way, though matter is not a bondage, it rather paves the way for attaining freedom. And attaining supreme freedom does not mean that human self or Ego has to annihilate itself for the sake of being absorbed in God. Man remains man and does not lose his Khudi or egohood. The Prophet of Islam, the ideal and the most perfect of all the Prophets has to ask his followers to proclaim: 

"We bear witness that Muḥammad(S) is the slave and the messanger of Allah".

1. Sartre, Existentialism and Humanism, p. 34.
2. Ibid., p. 34.
It reiterates that man is first of all 'a man' howsoever high a position he may attain. The obedience to Allah ensures the life of human ego and strengthens his Khudî, which is life of freedom. For Iqbal freedom is not a value or mode of human existence. It is the very life of Khudî (egohood).

Iqbal seems to be in agreement with Heidegger and Sartre who hold that it is the fact of consciousness which radically distinguishes man from other beings and all other creatures. The issue assumes central importance in the thought of Iqbal. For Iqbal the realization of freedom is the core of human consciousness. According to him it is not something static, rigid, given and complete, but it is a dynamic process, and because of freedom it is a self-creative process based on an act of improvisation and rejection of what has been (its bondage). Like Iqbal, both theistic and atheistic versions of existentialistic philosophy maintain that man is incomplete, undefinable and unpredictable. As Karl Jaspers says:

Nobody can conceive all human potentialities. Man is always capable of doing more and other things than anyone expected. He is incomplete, he cannot be completed, and his future is never sealed. There is no total man, and there never will be one.1

Similarly, atheist Sartre asserts that:

\[\text{man} \text{ is not definable, it is because to begin with he is nothing. He will not be anything until later, and then he will be what he makes of himself.} \]

For Iqbal, human consciousness is the basic and central subject of discussion. According to him, it is only this unique faculty of consciousness which makes man radically distinct from other worldly objects, so that he can participate in the creative act of God. Here Iqbal differs from Sartre, according to whom there is no other creator but only human individual. He says that God is the Supreme Creator of everything and man with his consciousness and other capabilities participates in the creative act of Allah. Iqbal says:

Man, therefore, in whom egohood has reached its relative perfection, occupies a genuine place in the heart of Divine creative energy and thus possesses a much higher degree of reality than things around him. Of all the creations of God, he alone is capable of 'consciously participating' in the creative life of the Maker.  

According to Iqbal, this universe is a Divine creation but it is not a complete act of creation:

The process of creation is still going on, and man too takes his share it, inasmuch as he helps to bring order into at least a portion of the chaos. The Qur'an indicates the possibility of other Creators than God. 

"The universe is still incomplete perhaps, For one may respond to an ever-recurring command of "come into being.""

1. Iqbal, The Reconstruction, op. cit., p. 72.
There are other worlds unseen  
And the essence of existence is not yet void!

It is man, in view of Iqbal, who is destined to complete the process of creation. In a long poem *Sāqī Nāmah*, he writes:

'Blessed is God, the best of those who create'

Iqbal lays great stress on man's creative activity and refers to the Qur'ān, which expressly mentions creators besides Allah. For instance, one of the following verses of the Holy Book (Qur'ān) indicates:

'Such a reference to the Qur'ān indicates how Iqbal conceives the act of human 'creativity'. One will not find in Sartre or other atheistic existentialists this view of human creativity. And it is in this unique interpretation of human freedom and creativity that Iqbal goes beyond existentialist philosophy and surpasses its conception of freedom.'