

## **A Comparative Study of Walt Whitman and Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal on “SELF”**

\* Sarmad Asim, MS Scholar

\*\* Dr. Aasia Nusrat, Assistant Professor (Corresponding Author)

\*\*\* Dr. Sardaraz Khan, Director ORIC

### **Abstract**

*In both religion & philosophy, the concept of self is of tremendous significance. It has always been an idea of contemplation for mankind as man has always discovered himself uncertain about the true value of his self. Self is a spiritual entity that contains the whole cosmos in itself & has dominion over the physical part of the body. Its power is fathomless & moves freely around the whole universe. Allama Iqbal & Walt Whitman are associated with different religious & cultural backgrounds, but despite this divergence, spiritual, ideological & poetical convergence can be seen in their works. The most striking similarity that can be spotted in their poetry, is their treatment of self. Both use self as a symbol of spirituality & mysticism. Iqbal's Secret of Self & Whitman's Song of Myself presents a distinct composition of religious, cultural, political & spiritual changes, their nations were going through. This research paper seeks to examine the poetry of Iqbal & Whitman to highlight the convergence as well as divergence in their beliefs on self.*

**Keywords:** Self, Self-realization, Khudi (soul), Individualism, Transcendentalism

### **Introduction**

This study that has been conducted is going to analyze the concept of “Self” as discussed by Iqbal in ‘Secret of Self’ originally written as Asrar-i-Khudi (soul) and Whitman in ‘Song of Myself’. The secret of self is an English translation of Asrar-i- Khudi (soul) written by Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal in 1915 in India. It was originally written in the Persian language. It is translated none other by his teacher, R.A Nicholson. The focus of this collection of poetry is ‘self’ in religious and spiritual perspectives. It is said to be the finest work of Iqbal. Song of Myself, on the other hand, is Walt Whitman’s most famous collection of poems previously titled ‘Leaves of Grass’ that was first published in 1855 as a collection of twelve untitled poems. It was divided into fifty-two sections in which Whitman used free verses. It was published with Whitman’s name in the title in second and third editions. In 1867, the fourth edition of the poem was published with fifty-two sections that were the representation of fifty-two weeks in a year. The final edition of the poem was published with the title ‘Song of Myself’. The poem is said to be influenced by the transcendentalist movement. Song of Myself was also criticized by people for excessive boldness and sexuality. There are many dominant themes of this poem such as sexuality, American democracy, nature, individualism, and civil war, but one theme that stands out others is ‘self’. Whitman’s use of the individual self to addresses universal and divine self-depicts his views on transcendentalism.

Walt Whitman and Allama Iqbal were two great philosophers belonging to two different cultures. Walt Whitman belonged to western culture and Allama Iqbal belonged to eastern culture. Both philosophers influenced and redeemed the mentality and character of the people through their works. Iqbal and Whitman, both chose poetry as a medium to convey their thoughts and ideas. But despite their cultural diversity, one can find many similarities and as well as divergences in their poetry. Both Iqbal and Whitman had their ideas of mysticism and Sufism. The most common element found in their poetry is an individual entity called ‘Self’.

Iqbal’s ‘Asrar-i- Khudi (soul)’ (Secret of Self) and Whitman’s ‘Song of Myself’ in his leaves of grass give a distinct composition of dominant mystical trends in their respective eras. Both poets showed the self as a supernatural being that has divine attributes. It has no time and space acting upon

\* COMSATS University, Defence Road, Lahore Email: [sarmadasim@gmail.com](mailto:sarmadasim@gmail.com)

\*\* COMSATS University, Defence Road, Lahore Email: [aasianusrat@cuilahore.edu.pk](mailto:aasianusrat@cuilahore.edu.pk)

\*\*\* University of Science and Technology, Bannu Email: [sardarazsorani@gmail.com](mailto:sardarazsorani@gmail.com)

it, and it moves between real and unreal, forward, and backward, between conscious, subconscious, and unconscious, alive and demise, and is resurrected from its eternal origin. Both poets emphasized on self-actualization through submitting their will to the Divine and to admit His power above everything.

The idea of self is the main inspiration for Walt Whitman's poetry as well. To him, the self is an immortal being that is different from the soul and body. He shows self, spirit, and body as three different entities and attempts to amalgamate them into one being. Whitman being a mystic differentiates the universal self from the divine self because he thinks all attributes of the self are divine. The body is formed from the soil while the spirit is righteous and pure.

Allama Iqbal and Walt Whitman, despite their cultural and religious differences, converge on the concept of 'self'. Both philosophers sketched self as a cosmic being that contains the whole universe. They also characterized 'self' as a supernatural entity that is free from limitations and is superior to body and spirit. Both believed that self can be strengthened by the power of love and its quality depends on the potency of faith, love, and devotion towards God and humanity. Both poets stressed on self-realization through the purification of heart and mind. Both emphasized seeking spirituality to resolve the mystery of self. They showed self-moving back and forth, between time and space, between dead or alive and its revival from its undying source. Both poets, at some point, favored scientific revolution in their respective eras. They took science as a good seeking and God finding activity. Their poetry was a guide for the people of their times and gave a message of independence and human dignity.

The idea of self has great significance in both philosophy and religion. Naturally, one finds himself quite fascinated by the questions of himself. But, it is almost impossible to give an answer that is satiable for everyone. Many intellectual and spiritual minds have pondered upon this question over the ages, but no one has given a precise answer or definition of self. Allama Iqbal and Walt Whitman are two substantial philosophers belonging to different cultures. Both are national poets of their respective countries who chose poetry as a medium to convey their ideas. East and West have their ideas of mysticism, but one can find prominent similarities in their poetry. Both Iqbal and Whitman, despite their religious and cultural differences, converge on their philosophies of self. Both poet-philosophers stressed individualism and self-realization. This research seeks to find similarities and differences between Iqbal and Whitman's poetry based on their concepts of self.

The main objectives of this research are to investigate the poetic works of Allama Iqbal and Walt Whitman and to compare their ideas of self. Despite their cultural diverge, both philosopher's emphasized spirituality and self-realization. So, the main questions of this research are:

1. Irrespective of cultural diversity, how far the concept of 'self' is treated alike in Iqbal's secret of self and Whitman's song of myself?
2. What are the similarities and differences between Walt Whitman and Allama Iqbal's poetry as far as their perception of self and its place with the context of man?

## Literature Review

### Iqbal's concept of Khudi (soul)

The essence of the doctrine given by Iqbal to Muslims is the concept of '*Khudi (soul)*' (Hamid 2011). Khudi (soul) is also known as '*Haqeeqat-e-Insania*' or 'the reality of man'. It is the collective essence of *Qalb-e-Muneer* (spiritual light of faith), *Qalb-e-Saleem* (inner peace), and *Qalb-e-Shaheed* (testifying oneness of the Divine) of, *Nafs-e-Ammara* (Inordinate appetite of the soul), *Nafs-e-Lawama* (conscience), *Nafs-e-Mutmaina* (benevolence of soul) and *Rooh* (Soul). When a man experiences or goes through these internal forces, then he can realize Khudi (soul) (self). These internal forces are present in everyone and influence one's character throughout his life. Iqbal says, if one does not activate his spiritual powers, he cannot bring any change to this world. He says that man is the secret of creation, and if he can understand the spiritual forces that God has put in him, then he will be able to become the true representative (Naib) of God (Iqbal, "The Calling of the Marching Bell" 220). "Immerse yourself in your-self, my forgetful one, this is the secret of life / Come out from the fetters of evening and morning, become immortal" (Iqbal, "The Calling of the Marching Bell" 221). Here, Iqbal emphasizes to delve deep into yourself and identify Khudi (soul) (soul). Khudi (soul) (soul) is like an ocean that has no limit. It is a force that is finite and has no dimension. Khudi (soul) has dominion over the whole universe. He describes Khudi (soul)'s power by its attributes. Khudi (soul) in this materialistic world is prophethood, Khudi (soul) in isolation is divine and it

contains the whole cosmos (Iqbal "Gabriel's Wing" 275-76). He says that Khudi (soul), prophethood, and God are interlinked with each other. "The way of the hermit, not fortune, is mine / Sell not your soul! In a beggar's rags shine" (Iqbal, "Gabriel's Wing" 294). Here, Iqbal describes his way of spirituality. He says, does not leave Khudi (soul) for worldly desires. Do not compromise your selfhood for the irrelevant and the insignificant. The journey towards Khudi (soul) starts when one protects his dignity and self-respect. When one demolishes himself or his desires for the love of God and to seek His will as a goal, he starts moving in the direction of Khudi (soul) (Hamid 2011). Awakening of self-starts when it becomes aware of its importance (Qasim 206). Significance of self (Khudi (soul)) in one's character is the source by which one can get close to the Divine (Shahid and Qurat ul Ain 2012).

Self 'Khudi (soul)' gets stronger by love 'Ishq' (Shodhganga 73). Iqbal says that it is the love of God that fortifies self. The heart is the place for the love of God and this love, devotion and commitment leads one to self-realization. To Iqbal, the only way of salvation is love. Self 'Khudi' (soul) becomes more passionate, more intense, and more alive by love. "Love is the foundation of life / Love is the flashing sword of death" (Iqbal, "Secret of Self" 11). This Divine love is the fountain of man's character and differentiates him from ignorant. Love cleans one's heart from materialism and makes it a meritorious place of the love of God. "Absorption of Divine attributes bring one closer to God" (Qasim 205).

There are three stages of Khudi (soul), the first of which is submission. At the first stage, man submits his desires and will to the will of God. He surrenders his desires to God and has no regard for his own will. The second stage of 'Khudi' (soul) is self-control (Zabt-e-Nafs). In the Quran, it is described as 'Jihad-bin-Nafs' (Struggle against self). Quran says, "But as for those who feared the standing before his Lord and restrained the soul from (his) desires, then indeed, Paradise will be his refuge" (Surah and Nazi'at verse 40-41). When a man has control over his self (desires), then he will be free from selfishness and acquisitiveness. He seeks things that please God. It is the state of heart that manages the activities of a man and keeps his internal and external forces intact. 'Taqwa' (piety) shows one's faith, fear, and dedication towards God. Taqwa is a state mind or a spiritual belief that influences one's decisions (Shodhganga 75). It shows how important one finds the desires of God and how he surrenders his desires. The final stage is the Divine vicegerency. "Iqbal firmly believed that God can be found not by begging, but the strength of will" (Shodhganga 76). One does not destroy himself in God but absorbs God in himself and it has no limit. If one can do that, then he becomes worthy of the vicegerency of God.

Self-being a cosmic entity contains the whole universe. Iqbal describes the enormity of Khudi (soul) (self) as, "The self-resides in you, just as the infinite sky with all its vastness is contained in the pupil of the eye" (Iqbal "The Calling of the Marching Bell" 18). Iqbal presents self-moving back and forth, between real and unreal and between dead and alive free from all restrictions. He says that the self is strengthened by spirituality and faith, and being a supernatural entity, it has a direct connection with God.

Maulana Rumi was the teacher of Iqbal and had a great influence over his personality. Iqbal shared the idea of an ideal man with Rumi. His *Mard-e-Momin* (Ideal of Men) is the true manifestation of a complete man who is psychologically, physically, and spiritually strong enough to be portrayed as an ideal man. "Can anyone even guess at the strength of his arm? By the glance of the arm who is a true believer even destiny is changed" (Iqbal, "The Calling of the Marching Bell" 220). This ideal man is a true believer and is not impressed by the glory of the world. He has gone through the process of self-realization and has the power to change fate. Iqbal emphasizes on the realization of self by purification of soul and body. The soul represents the spiritual part of self-whereas the body depicts the physical part. By realizing the true dignity of self, one can finally seek the real reason existence.

For Iqbal, the quality of self depends on the depth of love. The stronger the love gets, the stronger the self becomes (Qasim 207). Iqbal describes Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as the man with an ideal character for Muslims to follow to elevate themselves and to find the love of God. He shows Muhammad (SAW)'s character as the beacon of light (Mashal e raah) for all the Muslims till the Day of Judgment. Love of God can be found in the love of His Prophet (SAW) and this love of the Prophet leads to the love of God.

“When I am made strong by love  
Its power rules the whole world  
Its hand becomes God’s hand  
The moon is split by its fingers”  
(Iqbal, “Secret of Self” 13).

Here, Iqbal refers to a famous miracle of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) mentioned in the Quran (Ch.54, V.1).

### **Whitman’s Idea of Self**

Walt Whitman’s “Song of Myself” is an epic poem that is the representation of an American poet’s idea of a man’s individual and universal self. His idea of ‘self’ depicts the thinking and approach of American people in his era. He used free verse and common diction to show the true realities of the people of America. “Whitman is an American idol who is capable of representing American Ideological values like freedom of expression, self-determination, individualism, and autonomy”. (Armengol 77).

Whitman stressed freedom of choice for every American of his time. His views on liberty, self-sufficiency, and individual freedom were universal for everyone. Whitman’s poetic discourse “expressed and developed in a nation that offers such liberty as a key to granting true individual freedom” (Hermansen, 2010). He shows himself as a common man rather than a hero to raise his vision of self-realization and wisdom. He speaks as a “representative of all humanity” (Shahane 19). He speaks on behalf of all mankind. In the increasing materialism, Song of myself presents him as the voice of a real American with individual identity.

The idea of ‘Self’ is the most dominant theme in Walt Whitman’s ‘Song of Myself’. Whitman shows self as a supernatural being that is immortal and has divine attributes. He believes that it is a self’s everlasting quality that makes it superior to the body. The poet used ‘I’ as a symbol to represent himself as well as the universal self. He says, “I celebrate myself, and sing myself, / and what I assume you shall assume” (Whitman 29). Here, he uses his self to address the universal self that represents the American nation collectively. He says that the individual self is different from the universal self, and the universal self is different from the divine self. The individual self belongs to an individual whereas the universal self belongs to the whole world and the divine self-shows the immortality of the soul.

Whitman was close to nature and his poetry reflects his appreciation, admiration, and passion towards it. He says, “My tongue, every atom of my blood, formed from this soil, this air / Born here of parents born here from parents the same, and their parents the same” (Whitman 29). Here, Whitman tells about the origin of his body. He says that he as well as his ancestors were born from the soil that is why nature gives him a feeling of comfort and peace. Nature works as a relationship between the inner self and the outside world. The consciousness of his physical senses is at a peak in nature. Nature gives him a lesson of unity and joy. Self is a spiritual entity, is close to nature, and distant to the materialistic world. Whitman praises nature’s odorless smell over the artificial fragrances and perfumes made by man. “Houses and rooms are full of perfumes, the shelves are crowded with perfumes, The atmosphere is not a perfume, it has no taste of the distillation, it is odorless, It is for my mouth forever, I am in love with it” (Whitman 29). Here, Whitman describes his fondness of nature by comparing its distinct smell with houses and rooms filled with perfumes and artificial fragrances. He says that the odorless smell of nature is more appealing to him than the scent of perfumes made by man. He likes perfumes but loves the odorless smell of nature.

Whitman is not only the poet of the body but also the poet of the soul. “I am the poet of the Body and I am the poet of the Soul” (Whitman 45). “To be in any form, what is that? (Round and round we go, all of us, and ever come back thither,)” (Whitman 52). This line declares that human beings along with other species are in a cycle of life and death, but the divine self is immortal. Being a mystic, he believes in the eternity of the soul, and through demise comes revival (Ahmed 525). After death, the soul is reborn from its spiritual source. It is resurrected to make a connection between the individual self and the divine self. To him, the soul has endless power and can only be transferred from one realm to another.

Whitman has used ‘I’ throughout the poem on several occasions. In ‘song of myself’, I depict the individual self by which Whitman expresses his love and compassion for the common people, the working class, and the people whom he thinks to be the real heroes of the American nation. “Love for

the soldier, the common man, the working men, and the men he considered the real heroes of America” (Whitley 44). Whitman through his poetry combined his self with America’s universal self. “I beat and pound for the dead” (Whitman 43). Whitman is not only the poet of living but also of the dead. His heartbeats and beats are hard for the people who are not a part of this world anymore. He has a feeling of respect and compassion for them. “Universality makes him a part of everyone” (Greenspan 193). He believes to meet other stable and peaceful souls in the afterlife.

Whitman was a great believer in God. He saw, felt, and witnessed God’s immanence in his every creation. Everything that exists or ever to have existed had a hint of God’s greatness in it. Everything that He created testifies his greatness. His creations show His glory and dignity (Ahmed 526). Whitman says that he is not curious about God as he sees God’s reflection in His every creation. “I hear and behold God in every object, yet understand God, not in the least” (Whitman 76). Whitman is close to God yet unable to understand Him. There is a Divine presence around him that he can feel but cannot capture in his eyes.

The poetic discourse of ‘Song of myself’ tells about Whitman’s approach of spirituality and self. His poetry reveals his journey through life and his knowledge of spirituality. Ezra Greenspan raises a few points to understand Whitman’s poetic approach. They include “civil war, racism, transcendentalism, and Victorian ideals. These factors made Whitman’s self (122). Modern man seen in Whitman’s poetry is conflicted between internal and external decisions. As a result, suffers from depression and fragmentation of the individual self.

Whitman’s song focuses on is the co-existence of life and death. The body is mortal and will eventually perish but the soul is immortal. This immortality brings his self-closer to the Divine self. “And as to you Death, and you bitter hug of mortality, it is idle to try to alarm me” (Whitman 77). Death is an absolute reality. He does not worry about death because after the death of the body, his soul will cut loose from the bound of the body. Life comes with death. Man is born from a womb eventually to be buried in the grave. The body dies but the soul lives on. There is a new connection established between soul and divine after demise. The soul leaves all the materialism behind and moves to the further.

Mystic poetry is of great significance in understanding Walt Whitman’s poetry and his style (Ahmed 526). His use of common diction connects him to mystics and conveys his transcendental philosophical ideas. He seeks the connection between God and man. He discusses spiritual (soul) as well as the physical aspects (body) of self. He says that the body connects people with things that they are not familiar with. The soul learns from the experiences of the body. Through the body, man learns to relate nature and its immortality.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Transcendentalism**

The theory that has been applied to this research paper is transcendentalism. Transcendentalism is a literary movement that grew to prominence during the 19th century in New England. It is of great significance in both religion and philosophy. The central belief of transcendentalism is the inbred goodness of the people and nature. Transcendentalism also caters to the belief that God exists in the soul of every individual and His creation (nature) depicts the enormity of His power. Transcendentalism’s treatment of nature involves one’s closeness and dedication towards it. One must connect with nature to its core to find spirituality. Nature also motivates towards goodness and virtuousness. Meaning and truths of nature can be found by exposure to it. Transcendentalism also stresses on personal intuitiveness and imagination over objective empiricism. If a man is true to who he is, he does have anything but goodness in him. Adherents believe that society and its institutions are the main reason for the corruption of people’s purity and righteousness. The materialism of society must not be followed as it leads to the corruption of the mind. They also feel that people are in their best state when they are individualistic and self-sufficient. For them, nature and intuition are the most effective ways to find a higher state of consciousness. Adherents also stress on self-reliance, self-sufficiency, and independence towards the decisions and choices one makes.

The research questions of this research will be dealt with under the influence of these points:

- Existence of God in the soul of every individual.
- Nature is divine and spirituality increases in its company.
- Spirituality is required for self-realization.

- The power of man is endless.

### **Research Methodology**

The researcher has adopted the technique of literature review for the investigation of literature. The primary source of data collection for this research paper is the text of the poems, *Song of Myself*, and *Secret of Self*. The poems were investigated in context to the themes of transcendentalism, self, spirituality, and self-realization. The secondary source of data collection is related articles, related journals, documents, research papers, evidence researches, opinions, and websites. The researcher delved deep into these sources to extract the required data for his research paper.

### **Analysis**

#### **Godly characteristics in Man**

Allama Iqbal was a true believer of God and His dominion over the universe. He believed that God is present in the soul of every individual and man must seek Him. He also said that the heart is the only worthy place for God's love. Iqbal in his poetry asserts that one who has God as the fundamental part of himself prevails over everything. He answers to only God Himself. "One to whom God is as the soul in his body, his neck is not bowed before vanity" (Iqbal, "Secret of Self" 19). Here, Iqbal manifests the ideal man who is fully developed, has gone through the process of self-realization, and has no charm for the materialistic world. At this stage, one becomes the vicegerent of God and represents His will in his character. He has no fear in the heart but the fear of God. "Fear finds no way in the bosom, the heart is afraid of none But Allah" (Iqbal, "Secret of Self" 19). Here, he describes that one who has God as a part of his soul has no fear in himself. He is free from worldly worries and failures and only gets afraid by God's irate.

Like Iqbal, Whitman's treatment of God is quite fascinating. He believes in the existence of God and His supremacy over everything. He feels God's presence everywhere and sees no difference between Him and the self. To him, God even exists in the most ordinary things such as leaves, stones, and insects, and man can get close to God through spirituality and nature. Nature allows one to contemplate God's greatness through His creations. "He addresses that there is no need to be curious about God as His creations represent Him" (Whitman 76). To him, God's creations are the manifestations of His Immanence. He is not eager to know about God as he even sees Him in the simplest things, and they are a true depiction of His greatness. Whitman also assumes to have divine attributes in his 'self' and his divine quality makes him superior to other beings. The things he touches or the things that touch him to become sacred. "Divine am I inside out, and I make holy I touch or am touched from" (Whitman 49). Whitman here talks about the Divine quality of his self. He is pure inside out and things are made sacred just from a touch of his skin. To him, his self is Divine because of its undying quality.

#### **Divine Attributes of Nature**

In the history of American literature, Walt Whitman is one of the most significant poets. He is best known for his famous poem, *Leaves of Grass*. He talks about many different themes like science, mysticism, American democracy, and spirituality. Although, in all these themes, Whitman's center of attention is nature. He is a true admirer of nature and finds peace in its company. In his *Song of Myself*, he shows the relationship of a romantic poet with nature. He discusses nature by describing its different components such as lakes, ponds, and mountains. He says that he is in love with nature and sees perfection in it (Whitman 29). In the poem, Whitman is asked by a youngster to describe grass. He does not have a certain answer, so he starts thinking about the different aspects of grass that come to him. He compares nature with a flag of his disposition, God's handkerchief, or the child itself (Whitman 33). He also takes grass not only as the representation of a connection between man and nature but also of revival in nature. To him, the relationship between death and grass is optimistic. "The smallest sprout shows there is no death / and if there ever was it led forth to live" (Whitman 34). This spiritual rebirth of a soul in nature leads one to spirituality, therefore, self-realization and this realization of self-make one superior to others on the grounds of universal love.

Iqbal's concept of nature is quite contrary to Walt Whitman. He is close to nature and sees it to recognize 'Khudi (soul)'. He is passionate about nature and his self is at the peak of its consciousness. "My tears washed away the sleep from the eyes of narcissus, my passion wakened the grass and made it grow" (Iqbal, "Secret of Self" 6). Here, Iqbal symbolizes Khudi (soul) with a flower. His passion and dedication make himself wake up from slumber to realize itself. He addresses the whole universe, or the universal self goes through the process of self-realization to become an

ideal man with a perfect character. Later in that stanza, Iqbal says, “The gardener tried the power of my song, he sowed my verses and reaped sword” (Iqbal “Secret of Self” 6). Here, he tells about the power of Khudi (soul). To him, Khudi (soul) is sharpened by the love of God, and this love leads to spirituality, hence self-realization. “Untouched is the sea by my dancing rays, untouched are the mountains by my crimson hue” (Iqbal “Secret of Self” 6). Here, Iqbal says that when one can realize Khudi (soul), he becomes a perfect man with a character so strong even has the power to change fate. His self becomes deeper than the deepest oceans, and the colors of its passion becomes brighter than the brightest mountains but he is not sure about confronting others yet. To him, the world is too judgemental and with their ordinary minds, it will not be able to understand it. “The eye of existence is not familiar with me; I rise trembling afraid to show” (Iqbal “Secret of Self” 6). Nonetheless, Iqbal treats nature as spirituality self-realizing and ego negating atmosphere.

### **Requirement of Spirituality**

Whitman shows great philosophical importance in the simplest objects and deeds bringing American people to the fact that every experience has a spiritual significance to a fully conscious and fit individual. He says, “I loafe and invite my soul” (Whitman 29). Here, he creates a connection between matter and soul. On one hand, he shows his sensual experiences and on the other hand, he is in spiritual rest (loafe). He is aware that God is not separate from an individual. “Failing to fetch me at, keep encouraged. Missing me one place, search another. I stop somewhere waiting for you” (Whitman 79). Here, Whitman addresses the people of America and asks them to search for him. He is on a little lead on them but there is no need to be disappointed or discouraged as he awaits them. He motivates those who look up to him for inspiration. This search will lead them to the union with nature and probably to him. Whitman considers with himself, the one with nature. He is an inmate companion of nature, but he wants others to come to nature as well. Nature’s company enables one to unlock the latent potential to realize the self.

Iqbal’s take on Spirituality is somewhat different from Whitman. To him, there is only one way of spirituality that is one’s devotion, passion, and love towards God. Iqbal used the term ‘*Ishq*’ for love. To him ‘*Ishq*’ is a higher level of love and relates it specifically to God. He says, “So wilt thou enjoy the best dwelling, Place which is with God, Endeavour to obey, and o heedless one! Liberty is the fruit of compulsion” (Iqbal “Secret of Self” 18). To him, it is God’s love that allows the self to absorb Divine individuality. It is the depth or strength of God’s love in one’s heart that makes self-stronger and this love leads one to self-realization. Iqbal says, when one goes through self-realization, value for worldly desires comes to an end. Becoming the vicegerent of God becomes the only purpose of existence.

### **Man has Endless Power**

To Iqbal, the power of an individual depends on his faith, devotion, and the amount of love of God in his heart. Iqbal believed that man has limitless power and he just needs to unlock the hidden potential that God has put in him. He says that man can achieve a higher position by gaining spirituality and love of God in his heart. When a man goes through the state of spirituality and finds the love of God, he begins to closer to self-realization. For Iqbal, man is not only strong spiritually but physically also. “When I made strong by love / the moon is split by its fingers” (Iqbal “Secret of Self” 13). When the character of an individual is strengthened by God’s love, even the moon can be split just by pointing fingers. Iqbal believed that man is superior to other beings and considered him as a deputy on earth.

Walt Whitman’s ideas of man’s power are like Iqbal. He too believed that the potential of a man is limitless, and man can overcome an obstacle that comes to his path. He sees the power of man on the grounds of his self’s Divine attributes. “All his characteristics are the characteristics of Divine, the things he touches or being touched by becoming holy. His body smells better than the devoted prayer and feels more intellectual than the teachings of religious convents, holy books, and creeds” (Whitman, 1855, p.49). As Whitman represents a universal self by using his self, he shows the power of man describing the divine characteristics as whatever he touches becomes sacred.

### **Conclusion**

After exploring Iqbal’s ‘*Secret of self*’ and Whitman’s ‘*Song of Myself*’ in the light of transcendentalism based on personal intuition, God’s love, and self-sufficiency gave by Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, it can be concluded that Iqbal and Whitman converge as well as diverge at several points on their concepts of self. Both are pioneers of their respective eras, but their cultural, traditional, and religious diversity can be seen in their poetry. Iqbal’s concept of ‘*Self*’ is

completely spiritual and dedicated to Divine love while Whitman's idea of self revolves around his body. Iqbal shows self as a huge entity that contains the whole universe like an eye contains the whole sky in its pupil. On the other hand, Whitman shows self as a cosmic entity with attributes of the Divine. Both philosophers insist on gaining spirituality for self-realization. Inspiration for Iqbal's poetry is the Quran and he insists on Taqwa (piety). On the contrary, Whitman's poetry is limited to his body. To him, every experience that the soul goes through comes from the body. Both believed that self can be made stronger by love and spirituality.

This study concludes that being mystics, both poets had great value for the love of God. They believed that He is the supreme ruler of the cosmos and His greatness can be seen in his creations. Both poets appreciated science at some point as they took it as a healthy and productive activity to find God. They took away from getting closer to God for the people who seek Him in different things. In comparison to this, they did not completely take science as a positive activity. To them, science is also making people distant to God and helping them to create weapons leading to war.

## References

- Armengol, Josep M. "The Politics of Masculinity and Emotion: Walt Whitman's Celebration of Male Intimacy in The First Person". *ResearchGate*, May 2013. Web. January 12, 2019. <[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285598565\\_THE\\_POLITICS\\_OF\\_MASCULINITY\\_AND\\_AS\\_EMOTION\\_WALT\\_WHITMAN'S\\_CELEBRATION\\_OF\\_MALE\\_INTIMACY\\_IN\\_THE\\_FIRST\\_PERSON](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285598565_THE_POLITICS_OF_MASCULINITY_AND_AS_EMOTION_WALT_WHITMAN'S_CELEBRATION_OF_MALE_INTIMACY_IN_THE_FIRST_PERSON)>
- "CHAPTER-IV PHILOSOPHY OF IQBAL AS DEPICTED IN THE ASRAR-E-KHUD". *Shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in*. Web. January 8, 2019. <[http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/135279/10/10\\_chapter%204.pdf](http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/135279/10/10_chapter%204.pdf)>
- Emerson, Ralph W, and Edward L. Ericson. *Emerson on Transcendentalism (Milestones of Thought)*. Continuum; 1 edition, 1986.
- Galens, David. *Literary movements for students: presenting analysis, context, and criticism on literary movements*. Vol 2, Gale Group 2002.
- Greenspan, Ezra. *Walt Whitman's 'Song of Myself': A Sourcebook and Critical Edition*, New York, N.Y., [etc.]: Routledge 2005.
- Hashmi, Juni. "Zaid Hamid - 'Khudi (soul)' ko kar Buland itna..." *Youtube*, March 5, 2011. Web. January 15, 2019. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p2ltknAeIsI>
- Iqbal, Muhammad. *Call of the Marching Bell*. Translated by Dr. M.A.K. Khalil. M.A.K. Kahlil, Newfoundland, Canada 1997.
- Iqbal, Muhammad. *Gabriel's Wing*. Translated by Naeem Siddiqui. Iqbal Academy; 5th Edition 1989.
- Iqbal, Muhammad. *Secret of Self*. Translated by Reynold A. Nicholson. London: Macmillan and Co. 1920.
- Qasim, Khamsa, and Aurang Zeb. "The Concept of Khudi (soul) (The Self) in Iqbal's The Secrets of the Self", *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, June 2015. Web. January 9, 2019. <http://www.journals.aiac.org.au/index.php/all/article/view/1531/1474>
- Sbardella, Claire. "Walt Whitman and The Celebration of Nature". *ian.umces.edu*, September 14, 2017. Web. February 12, 2019. <http://ian.umces.edu/blog/2017/09/14/walt-whitman-and-the-celebration-of-nature/>
- Shahid, Afia, Qurat Ul Ain "Allama Muhammad Iqbal" *Slideshare*, May 12, 2012. Web. January 8, 2018. <https://www.slideshare.net/afishahid/allama-muhammad-iqbal>
- Whitman, Walt. *Leaves of Grass*. Book-of-the-Month Club; 1 edition, 1992.