

**JOHN STUART MILL AND THE EXISTENTIALISTS —
A MEETING - POINT**

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C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "JOHN STUART MILL AND THE EXISTENTIALISTS -A MEETING POINT" - submitted by Srimati Debjani Majumdar, an M. Phil. Scholar during the session 1988-1989 was done under my Supervision. The dissertation is prepared in partial fulfilment of the M.Phil. regulations of the University of Calcutta and is fit for submission.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

It will be rather incorrect or inappropriate , if we say that almost all philosophical enterprises so far have culminated in finding out the nature or essence of man. The philosopher's interest has often been directed to metaphysical, epistemological and ethical issues. It is customary to read in the history of western philosophy such ontological or epistemological considerations. But these issues could not be considered except as issues which have man in the centre. This is particularly true so far as epistemology and ethics are concerned in which man is established as a subject of knowledge or as the subject of moral judgement. Thus, in the history of western philosophy, we find different pictures of man as the epistemic subject or as the ethical subject. We do not, however, mean to suggest that man has been left out in the philosopher's metaphysical discussion. A question of human nature has often appeared, though secondarily, as a very important ontological subject.

If we consider western philosophy in the modern age we find Descartes separating man from nature or the objective world. This is a separation which has been made on the ground that man has a certain characteristic which is not available in non-human world. It goes to the credit of Descartes to have announced that man has mind besides his body. Mind manifests itself in all sorts of consciousness. Man has consciousness which is manifested primarily in his thinking capacity. This capacity is not simply a distinguishing character of man. For Descartes it is a feature which is a proof for man's existence to himself. Man is a thinking being and secondly, man is in a position to prove his existence which he does with the help of his thinking capacity.

The above is an example in which modern philosophy starts with the distinctness of human reality and the proof for its existence. This is an example in which the topic of man figures as the primary issue of philosophy. Besides the existentialist philosophers,

one may find it difficult to name any other philosopher for whom the human reality is the primary subject of his philosophical investigation.

Kant, for example, has distinguished man as the cognising subject very much like Descartes. But he finds it as a requirement of his critical philosophy. The point is that, man is not the primary issue of his philosophical enquiry.

In the above, we have tried to show that the question of human reality and of its nature came up in different philosophies for different reasons. Let us ignore the reasons and see that it did come up in their philosophies. The question is : can we really construct a philosophy about the nature of man ?

This question has been particularly taken up by the philosophers of existence and consequently we may restrict our discussion to the thoughts of some of the existentialists.

It seems that the term ' existentialism ' has to be explored. Descartes, in spite of his enquiry into the nature of man is an existentialist by concession because his thought is typically Platonic or essentialistic.

The suggestion is that the existentialistic investigation into the nature of man is anti-essentialistic. Let us take up this clue and look at this aspect of existentialism. It will help us to see how the concept of man is meditated by the existentialist.

The term ' Platonism ' or ' Essentialism ' indicates a belief in the reality of essence over existence. It is customary to describe existentialism, in the form of the slogan : " Existence precedes essence ". This characterization of existentialism is to be understood by contrasting it with the slogan of the essentialist namely, " essence precedes existence ". So far as Platonism is concerned, the concept of precedence here stands for ontological priority. It has been held by Plato that the essence or the Form is the primary member

of his ontology so much so that whatever has existence is what it is by virtue of its participation with essence.

In Platonic philosophy, therefore, a table is a table and not something else because it participates in the Form of the table. The Form, therefore, dictates or determines what a thing is,. In Platonic ontology we have at least two important levels of reality - one is the level of Forms or Ideas and the other is the level of copies or imitations. The particulars which we come to know as objects of the world are supposed to be copies of their respective Forms.

Plato's ontology, when seen from the point of view of the existence of human reality seems to suggest that individual human existences owe their nature to the Form of man. This kind of looking at things indicates that the Form is what makes a thing what it is and thereby play the role of a leveller in the sense that all human existences are taken to be similar or identical. From Plato's point of view all human natures are alike essentially, which simply means that so far as the

essence of man is concerned plato finds no difference between one man and another man. The individual characteristics which distinguishes one man from another are only contingent differences and not essential difference, for essentially all men are alike. This means that the points of difference between one man and another are non-essential points of difference and are of little philosophical significance.

Existentialism is a revolt against this kind of essentialism which ignores individual differences or the uniqueness of different personalities while it ascertains the essentiality of non-difference. The existentialists believe that nothing can be more damaging to the human personality than what is said by the essentialist. As a matter of fact one can look at essentialism as a philosophy which humiliates human personality by ignoring his uniqueness. It is humiliating to merge every individual into a crowd in which one cannot be distinguished from another. The concept of 'crowd' reflects a central contention of Platonism and it is this very concept which has been the target of the criticism of the existentialists.

It is necessary at this point to give an idea of the central thesis of the philosophy of existence. It is a philosophy which, as it is obvious, emphasizes individual differences as more important than similarity. Every individual human personality has a unique life history of his own so much so that one man cannot be identical with another man. The universal or the Form which every man shares is of course a phenomenon which must be accepted philosophically. But when we consider the nature of a man it is not speculation that is important. It is a question of value. There is no doubt that all of us share in the same universal or participate in the same Form. This thesis may be philosophically defensible. But the existentialist wants to enter into the question of value and to judge whether essence or the element of sameness or existence, i.e. the element of difference and uniqueness is more important or more valuable. The concept of man which we find in the thoughts of the existentialists is fundamentally based on a question of value while for the Platonist essence is more valuable and rationally satisfying. For the existentialists existence is more valuable from a point of view which is not of course rational in the sense in which the term is used in

philosophy, but is more satisfying to man himself. The rejection of Platonism by the existentialists does not follow the line initiated by Aristotle. There are no logical or philosophical arguments to disprove the thesis that the universal is more real than the particular. The non-essentialistic thesis has been upheld simply in the criterion of value. The existentialists therefore do not enter into a philosophical debate with the essentialists; but from their sense of respect for individuality and uniqueness it is clear that they would reject and stand against essentialism of Platonists.

The concept of man expressed in the philosophy of existence is the concept of the human reality as characterized by contingencies, irrational propensities, unpredictable possibilities all of which are accommodated in the concept of uniqueness. This is why these philosophers are so allergic to the concept of 'crowd '. They would say that essentialism reduces men into members of a crowd in

which people are hardly distinguishable from one another. Essentialism, as a writer said, provides readymade garments which may fit every body. The maker of the garment considers prospective users as absolutely identical like the products of a machine. Existentialism cannot stand this attitude in which a man's particularity is completely ignored as not worthy of consideration.

We can therefore, describe the concept of man in existentialism as the concept of a unique individuality for whom whatever is particular and contingent is more important than whatever it shares in common with other individuals.

The expression ' the concept of man ' is highly misleading. It appears to suggest that existentialism believes in conceptualizing manhood. This would mean abstracting what is common to many and thus would mean a lapse into essentialism which it rejects. The phrase ' the concept of man ' will be used here not in the Hegelian or in the Platonic sense. Existentialists do not intend to abstract what is common among many and do not

hypostatise it. We use this expression here just to indicate the picture of man as an individual in existentialism.

We shall concentrate our attention to the philosophical writings of Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Sartre. Our intention is to uncover existentialistic tendencies in the social and political thoughts of John Stuart Mill expressed particularly in his celebrated essay 'On Liberty'. We hope to show that Mill is an existentialist in a very technical sense. The branded existentialists did not show the social, political implication of their idea of man, which they could have show. Mill in his philosophy has worked out a social and political ideas on the concept of man which is thoroughly and perfectly existentialistic.

CHAPTER - I

'MAN' IN KIERKEGAARD'S PHILOSOPHY

If we go through the Philosophy of Kierkegaard we find that he is entertaining a concept of man which is, as it is ordinarily said, radically different from the traditional concept. By traditional concept we here want to refer to the Cartesian, the Kantian and the Hegelian concepts of man, Kierkegaard criticizes Descartes and Kant on the ground that they are describing man as a cognitive agent. On the face of it there is nothing wrong with the conception of man as a cognitive agent. But the point is that we cannot entertain this concept from existential point of view. The central conviction of the existentialists is that one must know himself as an individual existence. For these philosophers the question of individuality is as important as the question of existence. In other words, it is not simply existence that is important for the existentialists. It has rather the individual existence or the authenticity of existence that is important for them.

The conception of existence or the conception of man as we find in Descartes, Kant and Hegel has only

succeeded in finding out the essence of man either in cognition or in something else. Naturally, one would not be too wrong if one says that the Cartesian or the Kantian thoughts have lapsed into essentialism which we consider as the opposite camp of existentialism.

We are in a position, therefore, to say that the philosophy of Kierkegaard is a philosophy of individual. Curiously, it seems not necessary to speak of existence over and above individual. We do not know ourselves as individual unless we exist.

Should we, therefore, say that existence is always individualistic ? Let us start with the concept of individuality. History of western philosophy is full of various remarks and thoughts about individuality. From all such ideas we can collect a single notion. The notion is that individuality is another name for uniqueness. Something is an individual if it has a unique life-history of its own. It is an individual if it can be separated or distinguished from objects of similar or different kinds.

A table, from this point of view , will be considered an individual if it is possible to distinguish the table from other tables and chairs. One recalls here Leibnitz's Principle of Identity of Indiscernibles. Two drops of water, if we can discern, their numerical diversity must be different. This means that one drop of water is unique and not to be confused with another drop of water.

Can we say from this point of view that every particular that is contained in this world is an individual, when individuality is defined in terms of spatial and temporal uniqueness? A table is unique and so an individual, because the space occupied by the table is not the space which can be occupied by any other table or chair.

If we look at the whole thing from this point of view, and define individuality in terms of spatial uniqueness then a man cannot be distinguished as an individual from an inanimate object. It cannot be the contention of Kierkegaard to define human individuality in this way.

Strawson's notion of individuality is such that every particular entity of the universe is an individual for him provided of course it can be linguistically referred to and identified in his special sense. For him a table is an individual because it has a unique position in space and time ; it can be related to me in space and time in a special and unique way which will be different from the spatial and temporal relation between myself and any other object. Strawson, therefore, considers material objects as individuals. For him even persons are also individuals. What is damaging from the existentialist point of view is that the person or the human reality has been equated by Strawson with material bodies from at least one point of view.

From the above it follows that it is not simply spatial or temporal or any other kind of uniqueness that is important for defining individuality of man. Strawson's conceptions define individuality but do not distinguish man from non-human reality, It is precisely here that the existentialist would raise his head in protest.

It seems that Kierkegaard or for that matter, any other existentialists would have to define individuality or uniqueness as that of which the individual is aware. This seems to be the reason why Heidegger begins his philosophy by saying that man is existentially distinct in that he can ask questions about his existence. What it is for me to exist ?-is basically a human question. Thus we find that something is an individual if it is aware of its individuality. So far as Kierkegaard is concerned, we know that he describes man as an individual who knows of his unique existence through his acts of free-choice.

An individual therefore, must be reflective which means that an individual must be conscious. It seems that Kierkegaard and other existentialists would have to define individual existence with a careful consideration of the presence of consciousness. The presence of consciousness thus divides the world- the human and the non-human. But this is not lapsing into Cartesianism. The presence of consciousness does not make a man individual.

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Kierkegaard would say that we cannot define individuality by the presence of consciousness; nevertheless we cannot ignore that the notion of individuality is void if it is not built up in the background of the presence of consciousness. Man must be conscious in order that he may be aware of his uniqueness.

Let us not forget that it is not the awareness of spatial or temporal uniqueness that makes a man individual. Authenticity is much greater than spatial and temporal uniqueness. Existentialism attains a distinction by explaining the concept of authenticity through the notions of freedom and choice and not through the notion of spatio-temporal existence.

Can we define individuality in terms of man's physiological, biological or social distinction ? Kierkegaard's answer is in the negative. The reason why he does not define individuality or manhood in terms of physiological, or biological distinction is to be found in his notion of authenticity which is the distinguishing mark of all philosophies of existence. The individual, in his opinion, is an authentically existing individual. To describe a man

in terms of his physiological or even social existence is not to distinguish him as a unique reality which is never repeated anywhere in the universe. Authenticity is simply another name for uniqueness. Authenticity is not something which we can define theoretically. It is something which can be an object of personal appreciation or realization.

Such realizations take place in certain situations in human life. Existentialist philosophers speak of various real life situations in which authenticity of existence strikes him like a flash of lightning. This is illustrated in "the death of Ivan Illych" by Tolstoy, a story which pictures old man Illych dying. The old man who had never been aware of himself as a distinct personality had a taste of individual existence. When standing face to face with death he realised that Ivan Illych and none but Ivan Illych is dying. He realised that somebody could have ploughed the field for him but nobody could die for him. Death, therefore, is a situation in our real life in which authenticity of existence is suddenly revealed. The philosophers of existence have also spoken of the burden of decision, - a situation in which a man feels alone and finds nobody to take a decision

for him. The decision which affects my own life is something that must be taken by me. And in all such endeavours I stand face to face with myself as the agent or the subject who easily stands out as a solitary figure in the crowd of humanity.

We shall see the account of individuality or authentic existence given by Kierkegaard in his existentialistic thinking. There is no doubt that Kierkegaard defines the authentically existing individual as subjectivity. This is a subjectivity which realizes itself through successive choices which elevates him from one level of life to another level. In other words, in Kierkegaard's philosophy, individuality or authentic existence is realizable through choice and commitment.

We can distinguish between the process in which authenticity of existence unfolds itself to a man and the nature of this kind of existence. As a matter of fact the mode of realization of authenticity reveals Kierkegaard's conception of individual man.

Kierkegaard's philosophy presents us with a dialectic which consists in a description of man's journey through the different stages on life's way. The stages have been called the aesthetic, the ethical and the religious stage. Kierkegaard believes that a reflecting individual would proceed from the aesthetic sphere, would pass to the ethical sphere, and ultimately enter into the religious sphere in which he discovers himself as a subjectivity.

The aesthetic individual is a sensuous entity full of appetite, and all that is attached to the flesh. Kierkegaard does not believe that authenticity of existence is revealed at this stage. This is chiefly on account of fact that a man cannot distinguish himself from the rest of humanity by his appetite or flesh that is everything which is physical. Here we get a negative idea about what Kierkegaard thinks about the individual man. The individual man is not a lump of flesh which is full of appetite and ever directed towards sensuous gratification.

We find that Kierkegaard considers human existence on the religious level as man's entry into the final stage on life's way. It is the final stage in the sense that it is here that man finds himself as a subject who is passionate and faithful and who wants to divinise himself.

An analysis of this transition of man from the aesthetic to the religious via the ethical reveals a certain conception of man as an individual. We find here that Kierkegaard would not conceive of the individual as primarily a physical or appetitive entity. It is not the case that in conceiving of the individual Kierkegaard can ignore the element of flesh altogether. Man cannot be pure subjectivity who can go without flesh and the senses. The point is that Kierkegaard's individual man is the very human reality which we normally encounter, but who is definitely more spiritual than physical. His man is a passionate subjectivity.

How does the individual proceed from one stage on life's way to another stage ? Kierkegaard does not compare between the merits of the different stages from a rational point of view. It is difficult to say why Kierkegaard should consider the religious level as the highest level of life. For most commentators of Kierkegaard the selection of the religious level as the highest must have been dictated by personal prejudice or predilection. If we go through the life of Kierkegaard, we find that there is a reason to believe why this philosopher is more inclined to the religious stage rather than any other stage.

Of course, the person who is motivated by existentialistic tendencies might go for the religious sphere as more valuable than any other sphere. This remark is made in view of the fact that Kierkegaard has his own idea of religion . It is something which is founded on personal faith and passion - these being manifestations of one's subjectivity. Since subjectivity exposes authenticity of existence it is only natural that the religious stage should be considered as more valuable than any other stage.

But, is there any need or necessity that every human being should liberate himself from the aesthetic sphere and lift himself to the ethical and the religious ?

If we consider man as a being who travels through the different stages in life's way, we find that he is an individual who is constantly exercising choice. This choice or commitment is irrational. It is irrational in the sense that if there be any reason behind the choice of the individual it is a reason that is more a personal tendency than a logical account. It is true that the aesthetic man is pushed to the religious sphere by his despair. But whether to respond to this despair or not is a consideration which is something different from logical consideration. There is no logically compelling reason. If we can at all speak of reason here, it is a personal or subjective reason. Consequently, this psychological reason is not something that makes the choice rational.

The picture of man that we thus get in Kierkegaard's existentialism is the picture of an irrational man. The individual is one in whom not reason, but passion is more important. The other side of the picture is this, that like many other existentialists Kierkegaard describes man as the locus of certain possibilities. Every man has the possibility of elevating himself to the religious sphere in which

he can discover his authentic existence. The existentialist philosophers in general describes the individual's life as the gradual realization of possibilities. To say that every man is a unique individual is just to point out a possibility which awaits fulfilment. We have seen that the fulfilment of this possibility is a passionate adventure and not a journey on the way of reason. In short we can say that the picture of man in Kierkegaard's philosophy is the picture of an irrational man - a man with the possibility of realising the authenticity of his existence.

Since for Kierkegaard this realisation is of supreme importance therefore, he gives exclusive importance to passion and irrational commitment. The concept of possibility is important for it says that we cannot consider man after a model. Although we know that this possibility is open in a single direction nevertheless it is true that every man does not actualize the possibility which lies in him. This will account for the variation which we find between one man and another. Although existence is an exciting thing nevertheless the possibility of the realisation is presented as a possibility. Only those

people who are sufficiently strong to maintain their individuality, there is an existential life. Consequently, given the possibility which Kierkegaard will locate in every individual, we may say that the concept of the individual involves the notion of passion, choice, commitment and freedom. Kierkegaard's man is a free and passionate individual.

C H A P T E R - I I

'MAN' IN HEIDEGGER'S PHILOSOPHY

What does it mean to say that Dasein is essentially related to the world ? For Heidegger this is not a world to which we are cognitively related, a world which we know. This in fact is the way in which the relation between man and the world has been conceived by most modern philosophers. This again is the reason why one could doubt like Descartes the world or could bracket it like Husserl. Heidegger holds that man's first encounter with the world does not take place through a cognitive relation. According to Heidegger, our primitive view of the world is not an experience of entities which can be bracketed. Heidegger accuses Husserl of making his philosophy based on presuppositions, although ostensibly he proposes to build up a presupposition-less philosophy. Husserl's presupposition is that the world can be bracketed and set aside from human reality because our view of the world is the product of philosophical imposition.

It is true that the distinction between the subject and the object which is a grammatical one may not be ontologically neutral. Heidegger is not willing to put much importance to this grammatical distinction. Why should we suppose, he

asks, that the necessity of referring to a subject and an object must be conceded ? Is it only because there is a grammatical dictation ? In brief, there is not grammatical or non-grammatical need to emphasize the distinction between the subject and the object. Consequently he believes that man (and not the subject) finds himself in a world. This finding is made possible through his dealing with the entities of the world. This dealing, Heidegger says, " is not a perceptual phenomenon, but the kind of concern which manipulates things and puts them to use ". This is also a kind of knowledge though not a " knowing that ". Man's encounter with the world is a creative encounter as Heidegger says, Dasein " worlds ". This sort of knowing which is virtually a kind of creativity, means " having to do with something, producing something, attending to something and looking after it, making use of something,..... undertaking, accomplishing, evincing, interrogating, considering, discussing, determining." The terms used in this description of Dasein's knowledge clearly indicate that there is no passivity, no simple receptivity which

Dasein displays in its knowledge. Here we hear from Heidegger that knowledge of Dasein ensues in use, in interrogation and even in determining.

The above remark of Heidegger speaks of different forms of our practical attitude. Heidegger describes this practical attitude as "concern". Through concern we create our world. The world which we so create is not a world of thing but an altogether different world characteristically described by Heidegger as "a world of equipment". This again is not a world which is made out of the world of things. Heidegger's thesis is that the concept of equipment is more fundamental than the concept of thing or entity.

The concept of man in Heidegger's philosophy is concentrated in the notion of Dasein which is translated into english as Being-in- the world . Although this concept gives us the notion of human reality yet the proper picture of man is available in the sort of self-investigation which appears in the question : " what is it for me to exist ? ". In Kierkegaard's philosophy no ostensive attempt is made to distinguish man from non-human reality although we understand that it is not possible for a non-human entity to make a choice in favour of any one of the stages on life's way. Heidegger, on the other hand, believes that Being pervades not only the human reality but also the non-human world. But he holds that there is a fundamental relationship between man and Being because it is only man who is in a position to raise question about Being.

So, if we go through the first few pages of Heidegger's Being and Time we find that the concept of man presented by him is the conception of a reality which is " ontically " distinct in that it is ontological.

Heidegger, as we know, draws a distinction between ontic and ontological existence. To be in space and time is to have existence of a certain kind which finds expression in the term ontological. So, Heidegger does not concede existence only to man ; nevertheless the special sort of existence which is expressed in the term " ontological" has been conceded only to man - the chief reason being that man is essentially concerned with the question about his own existence.

But it is not a question which may be so important as manifesting the nature of human reality. Where am I to find out the answer ? If we go through Heidegger's philosophy, we find that Heidegger describes Dasein as inseparably connected with a world. As Heidegger would say that phenomenologically it is true that my most primitive experience is the experience of myself as connected with a surrounding. Man and the world in Heidegger's philosophy, constitutes a unity so much so that a separation would destroy the very nature of man.

It is from this point that we can try to find out the peculiarity of man as suggested by Heidegger's philosophy. There are reasons why Heidegger does not accept the

method of Husserl's phenomenology. The world cannot be bracketed and left outside the human reality. Like Descartes again the human self cannot be isolated from the world. Heidegger prefers to cancel the method of bracketing or epoche because it goes against a truth which we get phenomenologically, namely, man and the world constitutes a single unity.

But how is it possible to prove that the subject and the object are inseparably connected ? It may be a truth which, as Heidegger claims, is phenomenologically given. Yet it goes against our ordinary thinking. The world, which we perceive cannot enter into the very constitution of the human reality.

What is an equipment ? Heidegger distinguishes an equipment from a thing. In his thought the world is not a totality of things or entities as a realist would believe, nor again is it totality of facts as Wittgenstein would believe. By the term " thing " or " entity " we understand something that has independent or trans-subjective existence. Naturally, man stands outside such a world of things or objects. Actually, the notion of subjectivity is related to

the notion of an object. A subject is that which stands against an object. Since in Heidegger's philosophy, there is no thing or object-world for Dasein, the Dasein is not a subject.

Heidegger's man is a Being which of course is in possession of consciousness but is not for that reason a cognising subject. Heidegger, as has been said by some commentators, undercuts the distinction between subject and the object. This is so because the world of Dasein is a world of equipment. Heidegger and his commentators have to bring out the distinction between a thing and equipment. A thing is an object of perception, an equipment is not. It is only through the projection of his plans that a world is created by the individual.

This is illustrated in the remark of Heidegger that the world is an essential characteristic or structure of Dasein. He further tells us that the world is constituted by Dasein and Dasein is constituted by the world. How is this constitution possible unless there is a sense in which the two are mutually creative ?

Heidegger says that the notion of thinghood is a derivative concept and the concept of equipment is more primary. Let us look at the relation between thing and equipment. Equipment is not to be categorised in which we can categorise a thing. We cannot say that like a thing an equipment exists in space or in time or can enter into casual relationship with other things. An equipment is not an object of observation as a thing is. It is not something that we can notice. In simple terms an equipment is not a material.

A tool or an equipment is something that has use in a project. Naturally, outside the context of a project there is no equipment. Out of this context, it is a thing. An equipment is context-dependent. But a thing is independent of context. Heidegger therefore says that " taken strictly , there is no such thing as an equipment ". An equipment does not have the kind of existence that a thing has. It gets its being in a context.

Solomon expresses this idea in an excellent way, " Our concern for equipment is inseparably tied to a total context of task-to-be-done here. We do not notice individual things, therefore, but only the entire context." For the writer the table, the chair, the pen, the paper and the typewriter, for example, constitute a total equipment context within, which individual equipments find place.

The creation of the world of equipment by Dasein may be understood after the concept of intentionality as we find in Husserl's phenomenology. The subject performs many intentional acts towards objects. But the intentional acts of knowing or believing, judging etc. are theoretical acts while the concept of concern is a practical concept. In other words, we can say that " concern" may be understood as practical intentional acts. As Solomon says, " Care is intentionality, but with a new emphasis on the more practical and non cognitive acts which were neglected by Husserl". Dasein is not consciousness, at least not defined in terms of consciousness. Consequently intentionality of Dasein is not be defined as a kind of directedness towards objects. Heidegger speaks of intentionality

of a practical kind which puts meaning in a world thereby also creating it for itself. Dasein therefore, is not, again, a cognitive subject. It is here that we find an echo of Kierkegaard.

So, Dasein's relation to the world is a practical relation. The object of such world are equipments, not things. But why this care and concern ? Why should Dasein have this practical relationship to world ? Why should it create a tool-world of his own ? The answer to these questions will be found in Heidegger's idea of "search for self-identity" or simply self-recognition. What is self-recognition in Heidegger's philosophy ? It is to be found out in the answer to the question - what is it for me to exist ? It is to find out this nature of one's own existence. What is this recognition of self identity ? It is the awareness of one's authenticity as all existentialists would say. The authentic Dasein raises the question-what is Being ? and finds an answer in three main existential structures which are called by Heidegger "existence", "facticity" and "fallenness". What Heidegger calls "care"

is actually the unity of these structures. This is clear further in the way in which "care" is defined by Heidegger. Care is " ahead- of- itself already being in the world as being near-to (being encountered) within the world." These three phrases represent existence, facticity and fallenness respectively.

We shall try to understand the phrases. Heidegger explains "existence " as the projection of possibility. This shows that the concept of possibility is of prime importance for Heidegger, so much so that existence for him " is " possibility. It is not the case that Dasein first exists and displays its possibilities. The truth is that apart from possibility we cannot conceive of existence . Thus Heidegger conceives of Dasein as the centre of possibility. Man's existence can be conceived only through this possibility. The term " possibility" indicates that Dasein has freedom, because possibility is not necessity and therefore there is no constraint in it. Consequently we can discover Dasein's freedom when we consider it as the centre of

possibility. This possibility, Heidegger says, is with every Dasein, but it is not the case that everyone has a tendency to realise it in all its fullness. Since Heidegger believes that in some men this possibility is projected as realised, in others it is not, we are sure that Heidegger believes that man is free.

Now, what is the nature of this possibility ? If Dasein is possibility then it must be possibility of something or other. In Kierkegaard the concept of possibility is rather clear because he holds that an individual is the possibility of realising his authenticity by elevating himself on the religious level of existence.

The notion of possibility can be understood in two ways. In the first place, Heidegger holds that here we are talking of the possibility in Dasein of authenticity and inauthenticity. A man must be either authentic or inauthentic . One must choose whether he is to be authentic or inauthentic. The first level of freedom of Dasein is that it makes a free choice in favour of anyone of the two alternatives.

In the second place, how does a man realise his authenticity ? If we believe with Heidegger that a man has the possibility of realising his authentic being or ontological being, the question is, how does he realise this possibility. Heidegger speaks of the "projection " of possibility. What are the possibilities that Dasein projects ? The answer is contained in the idea that Dasein differs from every other form of Being in that the former has his projects, aims and values. Since "there is no human nature ", there are no projects and values that may be supposed to be constant properties of man. In his own projects and goals and values a man is unique or authentic. Through this projection of possibility man endows meaning to his world. Every man is seeking his own identity. But some find it in inauthenticity. This man does not have his own project and value. But Dasein does not have any fixed possibility. Perhaps the notion of possibility loses much of its meaning if we impose fixity on it. The value, aims and projects of every Dasein is unique. And once that is projected Dasein encounters its authentic existence.

Heidegger, therefore, defines Dasein as possibility. Now this concept is bound up with the concept of facticity. Dasein projects its possibilities in a world thereby giving meaning to it. Facticity is a term which means, that Dasein exists in a particular world. Heidegger says, " the concept of facticity implies that an entity within the world has Being-in- the World in such a way that it can understand itself as bound up in its destiny with the Being of those entities which it encounters within its own world ".

My association with the world is not like the association of the table with the room. I give sense to what is about me by making use of it. So, there is a sense in which I construct my world. This is what Heidegger understands by authenticity. The tree or the table exists in the world in the sense that it is placed in the midst of the world. But as Heidegger says : " The being that exists is man. Man alone exists. Rocks are, but they do not exist. Trees are, but they do not exist. Horses are, but they do not exist. Angels are, but they do not exist. God is, but he does not exist ". The point of Heidegger is that man is not literally "in" the world. His Being-in-the world is merely

a presence to the world. By projecting his unique possibilities Dasein creates a world of his own by ascribing unique meanings to it. He is authentic when he recognises the radical duality between the human and the non-human, between being-in- the world and being-in-the -midst -of -the world. Blackham presents an excellent synopsis of the whole idea in the following lines-

" Dasein then, being possibility, exists by projecting itself and these tentative projects are interpretations, not conceptual but existential . My comprehension of the world springs together with my sense of being cast into the world from a common root in the basic human situation, for I recognise what I exist for in my possibilities and what the things about me exist for in their answering to my possibilities. The meaning of human existence is elaborated in the possibilities of action of Dasein. I give sense to what is about me by making use of it ."

C H A P T E R - I I I

'MAN' IN SARTRE'S PHILOSOPHY

Cartesianism in a sense lingers in the philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre. Sartre admits of the bifurcation of man and the non-human world. But he does not say that the distinction of man consists in his cognising ability which the non-human object lacks. Sartre divides Being into two fundamental kinds- Being-in-itself and Being-for-itself. Although this distinction is not Cartesian, nevertheless the possession of consciousness by man is Sartre's point of departure when he explains human existence. But for him this consciousness is not a cognising consciousness that is directed to the external world. As Solomon says, "it is an active, living consciousness". We shall explain this distinction between the two kinds of Being with the intention of getting a glimpse of Sartre's conception of man.

Sartre discovers in human consciousness a certain kind of indeterminacy which is not to be found in objects of the physical world. The indeterminacy of consciousness suggests that through acts of consciousness man relates himself to the world and to himself in such a way that a

distance is created between man and the world. The creation of this distance is actually a mark of possibility which characterizes man.

The essential indeterminacy which marks the uniqueness of man must be compared with the determinateness that we find in physical objects. The determinateness which physical things have is of course a mark of completeness but man's indeterminacy and incompleteness is his typical character. A physical object like a Stone is ever complete in the sense that it is what it is. In being just it is, the being of the stone always coincides with itself. Sartre's idea is that the stone like every other physical thing has no mission to fulfil, no possibility to realise. The stone has no expectation ; it does not project its goals and values beyond itself. This fulfilment of the stone is something that gives it completeness but a dimension of being which Sartre discovers in man is not exposed to the stone.

Sartre would say that man is never complete in the sense that he always intends to fulfil his expectation and to pass beyond itself to an imaginary future. The stone is complete because it has no possibility, no emptiness within itself. Man has emptiness, disappointment and expectation. That is why he is not satisfied with the world of actuality which it wants to transform.

The idea contained in what is said above must be explained, with reference to Sartre's conception of nothingness. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the concept of nothingness is the prime concept in Sartre's philosophy. Consciousness of man has been described by Sartre as creative of nothingness. The concept of nothingness again is connected with the concept of nihilation. As Solomon says, "nihilation is an activity of consciousness and is responsible for the existence of nothingness in the world". Sartre would go to the extent of saying that consciousness itself is nothingness because consciousness is responsible for creating nothingness.

So far as Sartre is concerned, the essence of all human conscious activities is nothingness and nihilation. And it is this that distinguishes man from all other kinds of being.

The proposition that consciousness creates nothingness is not easily understandable. We do not normally perceive it. What we see is always "something". But this is far from what Sartre holds. He believes, contrary to ordinary thinking, that consciousness may be directed towards nothingness in the sense that we perceive nothingness. Sartre illustrates his point by saying that just as we can discover our friend peter in a restaurant, similarly, when peter is absent there, we perceive the absence of peter. This is a positive experience, an experience of a hall "inhabited by nothingness".

It is not only the case that our perception of nothingness gets a linguistic support because we speak of our having an awareness of absence. So far as the above example is concerned, we can say that the basis on which the absence of peter comes into existence, is an expectation which is not fulfilled by the external situation. Nothingness is not given to our consciousness in the flat sense in which tables and chairs may be given to us. Consciousness creates nothingness.

The peculiarity of consciousness is that it does not passively look at the world as a cognising agent. Consciousness does not simply accept what is given to him. It is the basic nature of consciousness that it is full of hopes and desires, expectations and projects. Man looks at the world with all its projects and desires which is seldom satisfied by the actual state-of-affairs. In other words, consciousness invariably makes certain demands which is seldom fulfilled. This gives rise to frustration and a sense of incompleteness in human nature. The tree and the stone are fulfilled and satisfied because they do not make any demand on whatever surrounds them. But human nature is essentially open to disappointment because it nihilates actuality. When the demand for peter is not fulfilled, we create nothingness by nihilating what is actually given. Consciousness thereby goes beyond or transcends the actuality of a state-of-affairs. In short, we can say that since every conscious act involves expectation, so every conscious act involves an act of nihilation.

If we compare Being-for-itself with Being-in-itself, we find the latter is complete. Completion is another name for the absence of possibility.

The stone is complete in the sense that the stone has no possibility ; it does not want to transcend the actual state-of-affairs and to project its desires on what surrounds it. On the other hand, Being-for-itself is disappointed, incomplete because it has the promise to become something-else. It has the possibility to establish its demand and thereby alter the actual state-of-affairs. Being-for-itself has the competence to cancel or to negate what is given thereby creating nothingness. The creation of nothingness is, therefore, a prerogative of Being-for-itself because it is only this kind of Being which contains possibility.

Being-for-itself would never remove the nothingness which it creates. In other words, human nature is always indeterminate and incomplete. Its possibilities and expectations would never be completely fulfilled. Nevertheless, man will project his possibilities towards the future. Man's ideal is total completion. But that would really deprive it of its glorious possibilities.

The concept of possibility which enters into the constitution of the concept of man is connected with the concept of freedom. Man is not only a centre of possibility,

man is free. It is a kind of freedom which permits man to withdraw himself from the external world. It is true that man cannot be free in the absolute sense. Yet, so long as man thinks of the future, so long as he establishes aims for himself, a man is free. This freedom is not absolute because man is free "within the contingencies of his finitude". It is not possible for man to ignore the limits of space and time and even of the situation in which he is placed. Nevertheless, Sartre believes that the situation may restrict my choice, but it does not determine my choice. The prisoner who is thrown within the prison-house is definitely limited by a certain situation. Yet within limits, the prisoner enjoys the freedom to choose between alternatives. Sartre says, " 'to be free' does not mean 'to obtain what one has wished' but rather by one self to determine oneself to wish ".

The determination or obstruction by circumstances does not actually amount to curtailment of individual freedom. As a matter of fact, resistance and obstruction have meaning only in the context that man is approaching the world with his desires and expectations.

To quote Sartre : " human reality everywhere encounters resistance and obstacles which it has not created, but these resistances and obstacles have meaning only in and through the free choice which human reality is ". The mountain is an obstacle to me only when I intend to cross it. If I do not have any such desire the mountain will be just a physical entity and not a kind of resistance. The concept of resistance, therefore, is meaningful only in the context of human freedom.

If we collect together the different concepts which have been used by Sartre in developing his meditations on human nature, we find that man in Sartre's philosophy is a centre of consciousness which is the locus of unlimited possibilities created in him by his desires and expectations. Man projects them to the future but is frequently frustrated by the actual situation which does not hold out in a promise for satisfying it. This obstruction does not kill his desire. Man defies actuality or rather denies it because it does not respond to his desire. In Sartre's terminology, consciousness thus

nihilates the actual State-of-affairs and thereby creates nothingness which again he wants to nihilate. But this process of nihilation and fulfilment is never complete and man is never a God- a Being in whom there is complete fulfilment. Sartre's man is therefore, neither a stone, nor a God. In stone the concepts of possibility and fulfilment have no application. In God, fulfilment is final which means that it negates the trace of every possibility in God. Man therefore, ever remains a centre of possibility who in his essential freedom challenges and transcends actuality.

It may be fruitful to compare the picture of man in Sartre's philosophy with the picture which has come out during our examination of the philosophies of Kierkegaard and Heidegger. What is most pronounced in Kierkegaard's philosophy is that he conceives of man as a passionate individual but Kierkegaard makes individuals a secluded personality who are separated from each other and also separated, from the world at large. Heidegger's man finds

inextricably connected with what lies beyond itself and who is conceived of as a centre of projects and possibilities. In Sartre, we find that man is essentially communicating with the world although he does not accept it as it is. Nevertheless, very much like Heidegger, Sartre describes man as a centre of unlimited possibility who continuously makes his journey through an unending process of realization of which desire, Sartre analyses human possibility in terms of desire, expectation etc. These are terms which have a tendency to project man as a being of passion rather than as a being of intellect and understanding.

C H A P T E R - I V

JOHN STUART MILL - AN EXISTENTIALIST ?

We propose to examine in this essay the position of some of the existentialists from a point of view that may look apparently queer. We have seen so far that Kierkegaard conceives of the individual as a solitary figure who enters into the solitude of a subjectivity. The individual here cannot realise his authenticity until he withdraws himself from his worldly background. Kierkegaard's concept of man is the concept of a solitary person.

Here we find a very deep and fundamental contrast between Kierkegaard's conception of man and Heidegger's conception of man. The man in Heidegger's philosophy, to be authentic, must be an individual in the world and not just a being in the midst of the world. The tree or the table exists in the midst of the world thereby displaying the superficiality of their worldly existence. Such things can be divorced from the world and that does no damage to their being. In other words, the relation between a tree and the world is, as the philosophy of the past said, an external relation.

The relation is not internal or necessary. On the other hand, man is a being who is not just thrown into this world, but is related to the world essentially, necessarily. Man cannot have being without being related to the world so intimately that it becomes a Being-in-the-world or a Dasein. For man Being and world compose an integrated unity.

Clearly, the two conceptions of man which we have considered are not similar. If one is a being in seclusion and solitude, the other is a being torn away from solitude and inextricably mixed with the world.

It is not our intention hereto search for a common thread in the concept of man in Kierkegaard and Heidegger's philosophy. We discuss it with the intention of projecting a new point of view in the study of the philosophy of one who is usually believed to be a social and political thinker and not an existentialist. The philosopher is John Stuart Mill.

It will sound revolting to many if we intend to discover existentialistic tendency in John Stuart Mill's

social and political philosophy. But, of course, in his celebrated essay 'On Liberty', John Stuart Mill gives expression to his ideas on human nature which we believe has an existentialistic flavour. It will not be difficult to discover traces of what both Kierkegaard and Heidegger say about human nature in this work of John Stuart Mill.

We shall confine ourselves obviously to the great essay 'On Liberty' to find out what John Stuart Mill wants to say on human nature. It will be found that John Stuart Mill has his own conception of authenticity although this term has not been used by John Stuart Mill. John Stuart Mill, let us say, does never announce his affiliation to existentialism. But in fact his social and political ideas bear unmistakable stand of the presence of mind which values authenticity of existence.

Let us first of all see the purpose which John Stuart Mill has in his mind in writing this essay. To put it synoptically, John Stuart Mill wants to deliver a blow against conformity, a thing which will consider as one of the deadliest of social maladies. He also wants to do what has never been done in any clear and effective way.

to define the limits beyond which society should not interfere with the individual, to define and justify the area within which the individual should be allowed to go his own way.

If we go through the pages of John Stuart Mill's essay, we find that John Stuart Mill is palled to a great extent by the different ways in which the individual is oppressed by the society. Whatever ~~form~~ the government may take, such oppression never comes to an end. This is something which happens in the remote past and is happening till to-day. As a result, history of the world has become really the history of the struggle between liberty and authority. "In our times", says John Stuart Mill, "from the highest class of society down to the lowest, everyone lives as under the eye of a hostile and dreaded censorship the individual or the family do not ask themselves : what do I prefer ? or, what would suit my character and disposition? or, what would allow the best and highest in me to have fair play and enable it to grow and thrive ? They ask themselves : what is suitable to my position ? What is usually done by persons of my station ? I do not mean that they choose what is customary in preference to what suits their own inclination. It does not occur to them to have any inclination, except

for what is customary. Thus the mind itself is bowed to the Yoke ;"

John Stuart Mill's essay is practically a revolt of humanity against state authority as well as whatever is traditional or customary. Whether it is the state or it is the society, everywhere absolute conformity is demanded. People are denied the liberty of thought and discussion. In fact people are terrorised to such an extent that they are afraid of arguing or debating issues. In the end they are afraid to think.

There are different ways in which the state or the society silences independent thinking. Either it does so in the name of a lofty position which some group of people enjoys or in the name of the lofty ideals which accumulate through ages in every society in the form of custom and tradition. John Stuart Mill believes that people cannot be compelled to pay homage to customs and traditions because mankind is not infallible. The peculiar character of the rule of authority is that it refuses a hearing to an opinion, because it is sure that it is false. In other words, the state or social authority assumes that its certainty is the

same thing as absolute certainty. Therefore, he believes that the people should not be conceded the Liberty of discussion. John Stuart Mill thinks that this is an assumption of infallibility. This assumption, he tells us, is at the root of the sacrifice of such precious lives as that of Socrates, because Socrates was a non-conformist.

Natural sciences, which are usually taken to be abode of truth does not display this sort of regimentation. Newton's philosophy, for example, was offered as an object of public debate and criticism. John Stuart Mill says that if Newton's philosophy "were not permitted to be questioned, mankind could not feel as complete assurance of its truth as they now do".

The lesson is that for the sake of truth every individual should be invited to have its say on every subject.

Apart from this question of fallibility John Stuart Mill says that society cannot impose its traditions and customs on the people for more than one reason. The

considered of opinion of John Stuart Mill is that the imposition of tradition and custom is detrimental to the most valuable thing in human nature which individuality. John Stuart Mill in fact offers three reasons why traditions and customs must not be imposed on citizens. The traditions and customs of other people are evidences of what their experiences have taught them. But, " in the first place, their experience may be too narrow ; or they may not have interpreted it rightly. Secondly, their interpretation of experience may be correct, but unsuitable to him. Customs are made for customary circumstances and customary characters ; and his circumstances or his character may be uncustomary. Thirdly, though the customs be both good as customs, and suitable to him, yet to conform to custom, merely as custom, does not educate or develop in him any of the qualities which are the distinctive endowment of the human being ".

John Stuart Mill believes that every man is born with certain cognitive and conative faculties. These faculties are exercised through an agent's free choice. If a man simply conforms to custom his facilities remain unused. John Stuart Mill holds that the mental and the moral, like

the muscular powers are improved only by being used. So, conformism weakens a man's faculties. John Stuart Mill's opinion is that the individual in such a case has no inducement to action because such inducements are not related to his feelings and character.

Why does John Stuart Mill ask men to get free from the yoke of custom and tradition ? The answer is that, society may guide a man to a good path but simple conformity destroys a man's worth as a human being . John Stuart Mill is convinced that it is not what men do that are important ; the question is, what is the inducement. Men do so many things on earth but of all the works of man which human life is employed in perfecting and beautifying " the first in importance surely is man himself. The importance of man is completely lost if he is reduced to a being that merely conforms " . About human nature, Mill says, " human nature is not a machine to be built after a model and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing " .

It is evident from the above remarks of John Stuart Mill that the concept of man in John Stuart Mill's thought is the conception of a being that is not mechanical, that does not act blindly or without question. This idea of man does not mean that John Stuart Mill is trying to find out the essence of man in his rationality or in his ability to question and challenge . To define man as a rational or as a challenging animal is not the intention of John Stuart Mill. When John Stuart Mill says that human nature is not to be built after a model, what he suggests is that the essence of man consists in his individuality or uniqueness. Man is not built after a model to do exactly the work prescribed for it, It means that the development of human personality and the range of his possible activity are undetermined. The concept of man finally emerges in John Stuart Mill's remark that man is a tree. You do not know the directions in which the tree will send its branches. There is no external dictation which would fix the pattern of the growth and development of the tree. The tree grows and develops according to the tendency of an inward force which means that the development is dictated by the inner nature of the tree itself. This is why we call it a living thing. Man is a living thing which should develop

according to the tendency of the inward forces. The slightest amount of external dictation would rob it of its life and would make it a dead machine.

One can notice in the existentialistic thought of Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Sartre that in spite of their anti-Cartesian motivations they believe that consciousness is a distinguishing feature of man. This is particularly true so far as Sartre's philosophy is concerned. This element of consciousness is either manifested in man's act of free choice or in all the projections of his possibilities. In John Stuart Mill's thinking man is a living being who is in possession of a life-force or vitality which is manifested in his unpredictable growth and development. What we want to suggest is that in all of these philosophers man must distinguish himself from non-human world. In Kierkegaard's philosophy, the aesthetic individual is a lump of flesh who is all sensibility ready to be affected by external situation. This is practically the picture of a man which is almost the picture of a non-human entity. In Heidegger, we find this difference very much pronounced from the beginning. Man is not a being thrown in the midst of the world, but a Being who is in the world, ~~not a being who is in the world~~. The point is that the

distinction between man and the non-human is very much pronounced in Heidegger's philosophy. In Sartre the same idea gets reflected in his conception of Being-for-itself.

John Stuart Mill describes man as different from a machine-which is built after a model. The revolt against Platonism that characterises the philosophy of the existentialists is surprisingly present in this remark of John Stuart Mill. Man is not a copy or an imitation of the Form of man as Plato would say. Platonism is humiliating to the human personality for at least two reasons. The first is that it reduces human beings to mere appearances, shadows of reality or the Form. In the second place, it emphasizes that since all human beings participate in the same universal, therefore they must be alike, and the features which human beings share in common are more real and important than the features in which they differ. John Stuart Mill opposes Platonism when he says that man is not built after a model. The anti-platonistic tendency which characterizes existentialism in general is patently manifested in John Stuart Mill's conception of man.

For John Stuart Mill, man is not a machine. A machine is something which is governed by mechanical laws. Consequently, machine has no freedom to act in his own way and to violate external dictation. When John Stuart Mill describes man as different from a machine he emphasizes an aspect of human nature which is so very fascinating for the exist_entialists, namely, freedom.

If we consider Kierkegaard's philosophy, we shall find that he believes that a man comes to realise his authenticity or uniqueness when he makes a free choice in favour of a particular stage on life's way. Kierkegaard describes this choice or commitment as basically irrational. What he wants to say is that this is a choice which is not regulated or dictated by any rule of action. Consequently, the concept of man in Kierkegaard's philosophy is the conception of a being who is free in everything that he does for realising authenticity.

In Heidegger and Sartre freedom finds supreme importance. It is expressed in man's projection of himself beyond the present into the future. This is exactly how Sartre

looks at freedom. To exist is to cross the boundary of the actual and extend oneself to what does not exist, that is to nothingness. It is a tragedy of human condition that man is a desiring being. Desire is a state of lack, absence or incompleteness. Man is incomplete to the extent that he discovers or creates nothingness. In Sartre's opinion the human reality experiences nothingness because of certain acts of consciousness which do not simply accept what is given in consciousness, but which has certain expectations. With this expectation consciousness denies and goes beyond what is presented to it. Consciousness then nihilates the present situation. An act of nihilation is a conscious act of going beyond the actuality of a state of affairs. Man is free to the extent that he thinks of the future, makes plans for himself and has preferences.

When we come to John Stuart Mill's philosophy, we find that John Stuart Mill believes that the distinctive feature of humanity consists in its act of nihilation. It can say "no" to every dictation. Like Sartre, John Stuart Mill also believes that man is essentially freedom. If we

look at Sartre we find that he says that freedom in the sense of being able to determine himself through decisions is at the centre of his being. When we come to John Stuart Mill, we find that he also believes that self-determination and freedom of decision are what characterizes man. This is acknowledging freedom as man's essential nature.

We have remarked that very much like Sartre, John Stuart Mill believes that the freedom of man is exercised in nihilation and in shaping his own future. For this John Stuart Mill wants to see that man sharpens his intellectual faculties. It may appear from this that the man in John Stuart Mill's philosophy, is a man of intelligence or understanding. This is not true. If we go through the third chapter of John Stuart Mill's essay, we find that John Stuart Mill characterizes man as a being who is passionate and impulsive.

John Stuart Mill definitely advocates the need for applying our understanding in matter of considering whether an established custom is to be accepted. In other words, he admits that our understanding should be our own. But he believes at the same time that man should have his own desires and impulses. Right from the introduction of his Book

John Stuart Mill speaks of a personal world of every individual. He says that there are certain actions which are self-regarding in the sense that such actions relate to the individual himself. If self-regarding actions are not detrimental to the interest of others, then the individual should be free in planning his own life within his personal universe. This is why John Stuart Mill imposes some rules of conduct on the state. John Stuart Mill's conception of self-regarding action and its immunity from social interference proves that he believes in a universe in which man is sovereign. As a matter of fact, John Stuart Mill says in the introduction of this book that over himself, over his own body and mind the individual is sovereign.

So far as the personal world of the individual is concerned, John Stuart Mill allows the individual to freely express his desires and impulses. It is not, therefore, reason and intellection that is important when we intend to shape our life. John Stuart Mill is an advocate of passion and impulse. He says, categorically, "to possess impulses of our own, and of any strength, is anything but a peril and a snare". Yet desires and impulses are as much a part of a

perfect human being as beliefs and restraints : and strong impulses are only perilous when not properly balanced ; when one set of aims and inclinations is developed into strength, while others, which opt to coexist with them , remain weak and inactive.

From the above it is clear that the inner force by which John Stuart Mill wants people to develop themselves is a force of desire and impulse. Man is after all a passionate individual. Even if the free-play of passion gives rise to eccentricity, John Stuart Mill concedes it. " Eccentricity " is bad when the conscience of a man is weak ." There is no natural connection between strong impulses and a weak conscience. The natural connection is the other way." It means that where there is a strong impulse, one can expect a strong conscience.

The conception of projects and possibilities, which we have noticed in the existentialist, thus find expression in John Stuart Mill's conception of human nature. Desires and feelings are actually the storehouse of possibility which should be allowed to manifest in an individual's life. Just as there is no limit to human possibility, similarly there is no limit to the expression of man's personal impulses. Sartre has believed that

every individual is the centre of unique possibility and therefore man will shape his life in a way which is not an imitation nor the outcome of dictation. Similarly, John Stuart Mill invites the eccentric individual as the " salt of the earth ". Without such people society becomes a pool of stagnant water. Desires and impulses are important for John Stuart Mill not only because they reveal what is unique in man, his authenticity, but also because he believes that a man with desires and impulses of his own is a man of character. For the existentialist, individuality is a good in itself because authenticity is an ultimate value. For John Stuart Mill, individuals of desires and impulses must be encouraged to unfold itself for that would make room for a society of strong character.

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Comments etc

1. T author confines herself to showing similarities bet Existentialists & Mill.
2. Everytime, the full name 'John Stuart Mill' is ^{written} ~~mentioned~~, and never 'Mill' for short. This seems odd.