CHAPTER VI

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE VIEWS OF KIERKEGAARD, NIETZSCHE, HEIDEGGER AND SARTRE

In course of our study of the concept of Man in the philosophy of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger and Sartre, we have come to the realization that, although they all have depicted an existentialist image of man, they have depicted it, each in his own way. It is so, because existentialism is not a system of philosophy like other systems, and the existentialists do not form one school of philosophy, as there are other schools of philosophical thought, each pursuing one single objective and goal. As a matter of fact, existentialism is a way of life rather than a way of speculation; ‘not to know, but to be’ has been the motto of the existentialists in general; it is a revolt against rationalism and objectivism, its standpoint is primarily individualistic, with utmost importance laid upon the freedom of man.

Kierkegaard was the founder of the existentialist movement in philosophy and the fore-runner of theistic existentialist thought. As such, the image of man delineated by him is naturally spiritualistic. Although he criticised traditional Christianity, he re-interpreted it from his own existentialist point of view and said that it is a way of life rather than a system of knowledge. According to him, God is implicitly present in every man, and one has to make Him explicit by living an ideal way of life through self-purification and self-integration, by the intensification of self-less love inspired by the spirit of self-
sacrifice. The highest ideal of man, according to Kierkegaard, is to raise oneself to the spiritual stage, passing through the aesthetic and the moral stage.

On the other hand, Nietzsche, as the second founder of the existentialist movement, was the propounder and propagator of the atheistic line of existentialist thought, with his declaration of the death of God. Naturally his delineation of the image of man has been secularistic. According to him, all traditional values have to be transvaluated, and man must develop his Will to Power to overcome his baser animal instincts, and raise himself to the status of the Superman. The highest ideal of man is, for him, the attainment of supermanhood. Nietzsche dreams of a race of superhuman beings who would be self-made and self-determined. His image of man is not spiritual, but psycho-social.

Heidegger was an atheist at the early stage of his philosophical career, but at the later stage, he became a theist, believing in the Holy. He was predominantly a metaphysician and as such, his concept of man is ontological by nature. According to him, man is an existent being, and man alone has existence. However, he later on believed in the existence of the Holy, and as such, his existentialism took a new turn towards the end of his philosophical career. His metaphysical outlook combined with his practical bent of mind led him to the development of an image of man that is metaphysico-mystical. Man, for him, is a being-in-the-world, called by him, Da-sein (being-there), to whom Being discloses itself, and who, like a shepherd, attempts to preserve the dignity of Being through the spirit of sacrifice. Heidegger makes a wonderful synthesis of individualism and universalism with the introduction of his concept of the Holy and with his concept of Being-in-general to which man is integrally related. In fact, Heidegger’s concept of man may be aptly described as mystically metaphysical, in so
far as according to him, man must find his fulfilment of life in the realization of his integral relation to the Holy, by uplifting himself from his fallen state, from the status of a mere being to the status of a being sublime in mystical union with the Being, that is the ultimate objective of a man's life.

According to Sartre, man is not a being with any hidden potential gradually manifesting itself; man is a being-for-itself, a self-conscious and self-determined individual being, who fashions his future by his authentic choice and efforts. Man is existence, consciousness and freedom at the same time. Sartre admits no transcendental ego or self as the seat of consciousness, but he admits self-consciousness. He studies man from the phenomenological-existentialist point of view and all aspects of a man's being are considered by him—biological, psychological, moral and social.

Sartre is an atheistic humanist, and he considers every individual man to be responsible for what he does, to himself, as well as, to others. Personal interests, according to him, must not stand against the social interest; that is to say, one must adjust one's self-interest with the interest of the society. Thus atheism leads to humanism.

In Sartre's image of man, the concept of nothingness, as well as, that of freedom plays an important role. Man is by nature an imperfect being, whose ultimate objective is to remove his imperfection so far as it is possible, keeping in mind that it can never be removed completely. The ideal image of man is that of what he is to become in future by his authentic choice and self-execution of his project relating to the future. Thus an ideal man's life is a life of ceaseless activities guided by authentic choice for the good of himself and of mankind as a whole. Man should form his own destiny, because he can do it, as being essentially possessed of the freedom of will or the power of self-determination.
Sartre has given due recognition to all the three faculties of human mind—thinking, feeling and willing. Thought, emotion, passion and action—all these play their respective roles in characterizing human personality as an existent being. In Sartre's existentialism, there is to be found the ideal of a whole man, i.e., man in his entirety, in all aspects of his nature—biological, psychological, moral and social. Thus Sartre gives us a phenomenological-existentialist concept of man, that is non-spiritualistic, but bio-psychological and ethico-social, and in which there has been a wonderful synthesis of individualism and socialism.

(i) The Concept of Man

Kierkegaard rejected traditional Christianity as a mere body of theoretical knowledge, and re-interpreted it as a way of life. He was concerned with living authentically and developing one's personality in unison with the Divine Spirit immanent in one's soul. According to him, every existing individual is unique, not an instance of the concept of man. He emphasizes the non-universal aspects of an individual—his thoughts, feelings, emotions and dispositions. According to him, man is essentially a moral agent rather than a knowing subject, and wisdom is the guide for his practical living. The meaning of human existence is the significance which one provides for one's own life through the realization of one's personal freedom and passionate commitment, bearing the burden of responsibility on one's own shoulders, and in all these, the authenticity of choice plays the most important role. Man's choices are ultimately unjustifiable, there is no justification for a single way of life for all men. An ideal man, a true Christian, must live a life of faith and passion, as existing in the presence of God who is beyond the grasp of reason. Man must realize the presence of God within himself through passionate inwardness, and only in this, there is the consummation of human aspirations and the fulfilment of the
ultimate objective of human life. Thus the image of man portrayed by Kierkegaard is predominantly spiritual. According to him, an ideal man is one who passes through the aesthetic and the moral stage, and rises to the spiritual stage by surrendering himself absolutely to God, to whom he essentially belongs. However, he holds that till the attainment of the spiritual stage, a man must live morally and maintain a rationally justified harmonious relationship with others, giving full recognition to the moral principles. It is only on reaching the spiritual stage that a man becomes unconcerned with his socio-moral relationships and becomes wholly absorbed in his relationship with God, in a spirit of absolute dedication.

Like Kierkegaard, Nietzsche valued the 'how' more than the 'what', the subjectivity of the thinker more than the objectivity of the system, the growth of human personality more than the conceptual integrity of abstract thought. They both found something fundamentally wrong with human nature, so far as man's historical reality is concerned. As Kurt F. Reinhart says, 'Man is something which must be overcome, the Christian called for a restoration of the religious integrity of human existence. Nietzsche, the Napoleon, demanded that man be de-Christianized, because he thought that it was Christianity which had brought about the corruption of human existence. The impact of Nihilism, he contends, has created a unique historical situation, making it possible to prepare the way for the "higher man" or the "Superman" of the future. But the emergence of the "new man" he expects not from Supernature, but from nature; more precisely, from man's praying instincts and ugres and thus ultimately from the "Will-to-Power". This Will-to-Power manifests itself in two phases or stages; in the first it appears as Nihilism, while in the second it is "sublimated" into the will to create the "higher man." Both find paradox of existence in the mysterious union of the temporal and eternal, of nature and spirit, or the subhuman and the suprahuman, but whereas
Kierkegaard calls upon the power of the Absolute Divine Spirit to raise into his suprahuman dimension, Nietzsche calls upon the forces of the earth of purely this-worldly nature to restore wholeness and haleness to human existence'.

The ideal image of man, as depicted by Nietzsche, is the image of a man who has no relation to God, as according to him, God is already dead, in the sense that the belief in God is proved defunct with the concept of Universal being already obsolete. In the absence of belief in God, the individual man comes to limelight and is considered to be the whole and the sole authority of himself who creates his own values and lives his own life, keeping the burden of the whole responsibility on himself for whatever he chooses and does, as he thinks proper, under the guidance and exercise of his will-to-power. This will-to-power, according to Nietzsche, must be exercised as the power to overcome oneself, to conquer one's baser animal instincts and passions, for raising oneself to the status of a superman, whom the society will follow as the ideal man, and thus the society also will be upraised. Nietzsche's image of man is individualistic and moral; but at the same time, also social; because it is the duty of the superman to look after the well-being of society as a whole.

A comparison of Kierkegaard's concept of man with that of Nietzsche reveals that Kierkegaard's ideal man is more and more close to God, as his innermost Being; on the contrary, Nietzsche's ideal man is more and more close to himself and to society, of which he is a member and in which he lives and moves, there being no God to whom he has to answer for his actions.

While Kerkegaard takes Man as an existent individual embodying the spirit of God as his essential nature, the manifestation of which is the ultimate objective of his life; Heidegger regards man as a being-in-the-world, to whom Being discloses itself. Man, for him, is the shepherd of being.
Throughout his philosophical career, Kierkegaard has been a staunch believer in God as the immanent, inner principle of every individual human being, the presiding Deity of each and every individual soul. His image of man is spiritualistic. According to him, love of God outweighs all business of life. But unlike Kierkegaard, Heidegger was a metaphysician and in his earlier life, an atheist, although in his later life, he turned a theist, believing in the Holy. He called man, a Da-sein (being-there). So far as his earlier thought is concerned, his view, as regards the life and destiny of man, is quite different from that of Kierkegaard, because, he did not believe in the existence of God, and as such, the question of His being the inner spirit of man does not arise at all. But so far as Heidegger's later philosophy is concerned, he believed in the existence of God and according to him, the Holy is the connecting link between Man and God, man's objective of life is the realization of God, which takes the place of Being and in this respect, Heidegger's concept of man comes closer to Kierkegaard's concept. However, there is no parallel of Kierkegaard's inwardization of the spirit and the practical way of life in Heidegger's thought, in which there is to be found a mystical union of man and God through the realization of the Holy, which brings man face to face with God.

Thus Kierkegaard's image of man is predominantly spiritual, while Heidegger's image of man is ontological. Kierkegaard's main interest is in the spiritual development of the individual and feeling one with the inner spirit of God; whereas Heidegger's main interest is in the discovery of Being as a metaphysical reality and ultimately in the mystical union of Da-sein with Being or God through poetical ecstasy. Kierkegaard prescribes the spiritual path, while Heidegger prescribes the path of poetical emotion for the fulfilment of human aspiration.

In Sartre's existentialism, Man is taken as existence, consciousness and freedom; and as an individualist, he considers existence to be prior to essence. Only human being exists and
nothing else. Man is a being-for-itself (*pour-soi*), While any other being is being-in-itself (*en-soi*). The for-itself is existent, self-conscious and self-determined. Whoever exists is man, whoever is self-conscious and possesses freedom is man. The existent individual is of primary importance, while the essential characteristic possessed by man is of secondary importance. Man is by nature imperfect and incomplete; his imperfection and incompleteness are to be removed by all means, so far as it is humanly possible. Man is the architect of his own future. A man becomes what he does by his own initiative. Human life is an unending project which has to be executed properly by authentic choice, self-conscious efforts and through the exercise of free will.

Sartre takes into consideration the very fact of nothingness as belonging to the essential nature of man, as a part of human consciousness, of which he becomes aware in his anguish. He exercises his freedom absolutely by himself in his life-situations, of which he is the sole master. In the exercise of his freedom he sometimes takes recourse to bad faith to get rid of his anguish of infinite freedom that seems unmanageable.

Like Nietzsche, Sartre does not believe in the existence of God, because, according to him, the idea of God is self-contradictory and meaningless. He gives due importance to man's morality. According to him, man has to devise his own morality and make his own choices without the help of rules or principles. The individual, while choosing for itself, also chooses for other people living in the same society. Herein Sartre's concept of morality becomes socialistic rather than personalistic. In his hands, the Marxist man becomes an existentialist man with full scope for the exercise of personal liberty in the social perspective, keeping in view the well-being of the society as a whole. According to Sartre, the demand of a revolutionary is essentially a moral demand, made as a claim, to a free life for the oppressed.
No member of a society should pursue the realization only of his own ends. Man's freedom implies also his responsibility to others.

For Sartre, pessimism is not the fate of man, although man faces it in the dark moments of his life. As a being-for-itself, endowed with self-consciousness and freedom of the will, man is capable of making his own life and that of others sublime, by his authentic choice and free actions, always being aware of his moral dignity. So, Sartre himself was an optimist and he depicts an image of man such that even in the midst of despair, man can have an optimistic vision of the future, the actualization of which depends on man and man alone.

So far as the concept of man is concerned, Kierkegaard's view is spiritualistic, that of Nietzsche is non-spiritualistic, Heidegger's view is ultimately spiritualistic, although it was non-spiritualistic at the earlier stage, and last of all, the view of Sartre, like that of Nietzsche, is non-spiritualistic. All these four philosophers have thought of the highest ideal of human life, but in different ways. Kierkegaard's eyes were fixed to the ideal of God-realization through spiritual self-development; as an absolute disbeliever in the concept of God, Nietzsche looked towards the ideal of man's self-development to the status of a superman conquering all lower instincts and passions, but still remaining a man; Heidegger, being a metaphysician, looked at man as an ontological being, but gradually realized that man's highest ideal of life consists in the realization of Being or God through the mediation of the Holy, and in this respect, it may be regarded as spiritualistic; and it is Sartre who, unlike Kierkegaard, but like Nietzsche, started his philosophy as an atheist, and his concept of man is humanistic and socialistic in the true sense of the words. Sartre has been a worthy follower of Nietzsche, in carrying out his atheistic standpoint to its ultimate consequence, and building up his socialistic ideal of
man. Heidegger has been an exception to the general existentialist trend of thought in this respect that he is, unlike others, predominantly a metaphysician, an ontologist, his sole concern being with an enquiry into the nature of man as an ontological reality within the purview of the existentialist thought, and he found in poetic emotion, the way to the mystical realization of Being, which, discloses or reveals itself to man as a \textit{Da-sein} (being-there). Kierkegaard's spiritualistic image of man has no parallel in any of the three others; Nietzsche's image of man as the superman is something unique; while Sartre's image of man as being-for-itself, that is non-spiritualistic, but moralistic and socialistic is, above all, unprecedented and superb.

\textbf{(ii) Man and 'God' or 'No God'}

In Kierkegaard's existentialism, Man and God are intimately related and the relation is personal, because according to him, God is an Absolute Other, not an impersonal universal principle. The individual stands in an immediate relation, affirmed by faith, to God, the Supreme Subject, the Personal Absolute. It is through the affirmation, in faith, of his relationship to God that a man becomes an individual in the highest possible degree, and this relationship is appropriated in pure passionate inwardness.

Kierkegaard does not believe in history as an objective process revealing God, who is transcendent, invisible and uprovable. Man realizes God in his own self by absolutely surrendering himself to God and thus becoming his true self, that is both finite and infinite, a finite being related to the Infinite. He who has no God is alienated from himself, and is in despair, but he who takes leap of faith, recovers himself, his true self. While God's being is infinite, eternal and absolutely free, the being of the existing individual is finite, temporal and subject to changing situations. Freedom can never be conceived
without reference to man's inner relationship to the individuality of God. Existential freedom consists in man's appropriation of the inwardness of his existence. The object of faith is the reality of the God-man, not that of God and man. Here Kierkegaard becomes mystical, as speaking of the intuitive vision of God in one's own self in passionate inwardness. One sees God not before oneself, but in one's own inner being, as one with oneself, in one's intimate communion with whom, there is the cosummation of one's ultimate aim of life—the attainment of perfection as becoming one's true self as an existing individual.

While Kierkegaard is a theist, a staunch spiritualist, a strong believer in Man-God relationship, Nietzsche is an atheist, a staunch disbeliever in God, and as such, there is no scope for Man-God relationship in his philosophy, or it may be said that the concept of God has been totally excluded from Nietzsche's existentialism, and thus man's relation to God, according to him, turns out to be absolutely negative. Nietzsche replaced the Christian theology by the penitential theology of a Universe without God, and held that to believe in God is not only an error, but also a crime against life. With the rejection of the concept of God there is rejected also the concept of sin.

From the death of God, Nietzsche passes on to the birth of the superman as an embodiment of the will to power and a self-ordainer of all values, rejecting all traditional values based upon the Christian theology and absolutist ethics. According to Nietzsche, the belief in God being already defunct, man must rely on himself and make proper use of his own will to power to raise himself from the lower state to the higher, the superhuman state. The concept of God has nothing to do in a man's life. Faith in God turns a man to an inauthentic being; on the contrary, giving up faith in God turns him right to the authentic being. Self-reliance and self-endeavour alone can make a man's life sublime.
Not God, but Superman is the ideal of man, not divinity, but superhumanity is the highest object of attainment for man. Becoming a Superman is the highest self-realization of a man, and that is quite different from the Kierkegaardian God-realization as the true self-realization. For Nietzsche, God-realization is a misnomer, because there is no God at all, there are only individual selves, and the highest human ideal is to realize oneself truly by moral self-development, subduing the animal instincts and passions to the yoke of reason, wherein lies the real fulfilment of life. 'Don't look up at the high heavens in search of God for your redemption; but look into your self, have faith in your will to power, exercise it, following your moral conscience, and realize your true self as a Superman'. —This is perhaps the message of Nietzsche to mankind.

In Heidegger's philosophy, we come across two successive trends of thought concerning God—at first Heidegger was concerned with Being and its relation to human being; later on, he shifted from being to God via the Holy, and man's relation to the Holy and to God.

In this transition of thought, philosophizing gives place to poetizing, being becomes grossly personified and man's attitude towards Being becomes more like worshipping rather than asking a philosophical question. At this stage man becomes related to Being like a shepherd and attempts to preserve the dignity of Being through the spirit of sacrifice. Herein we notice a parallelism between the thoughts of Heidegger and Kierkegaard. Even at the earlier stage of Heidegger's thought what strikes us is that he was then unconcerned with the concept of God, and concerned with the concept of Being, thus at this stage Heidegger's approach was not atheistic like that of Nietzsche, but rather non-theistic, his exclusive concentration being laid upon the concept of Being in relation to that of being.
So far as the concept of Holy is concerned, there is to be found a mystification of the man-God relationship as we find in Kierkegaard's existentialism, where there is spoken of the mystical union of man and God in the innermost depth of the human soul. But whereas Kierkegaard describes the experience as intuitive vision, Heidegger speaks of it as poetic vision. If one can grasp the essence of the Holy out of the truth of Being, the realization of the essence of the Divinity does not remain afar and God-realization, a distant cry.

In Sartre's existentialism, there is to be found an echo of Nietzsche's declaration of the death of God, in so far as Sartre declares that "God does not exist." While Nietzsche says that the concept of God as universal is obsolete now-a-days, Sartre says that the idea of God is self-contradictory and as such, an impossibility, and it is meaningless in a world where man is the architect of his own fate. According to Sartre, in man, existence precedes essence, and there is no essential human nature conceived by the so-called God. Man wants to become God, but fails, because becoming God is like becoming an in-itself, that is something complete and finished. Incompleteness or imperfection is the inborn nature of man, an essential aspect of his very existence. According to Sartre, God may be taken, from the existentialist point of view, as the unrealized and unrealizable highest ideal of man, which can never be actualized in its entirety. Man is related to God only in a negative way. He creates his own values by his own authentic choice, because his existence consists essentially in his freedom, that is integral to human nature. Man is a useless passion, displayed in his futile attempt to become God. Every man is a potential God, but his potentiality remains for ever unactualized. Thus for man, God is an impossible possibility.

Sartre's view of the relation between Man and traditional God is decidedly negative, as it is with Nietzsche's view of the
same. But while Nietzsche replaced the concept of traditional God by his concept of the Will to Power, Sartre replaced it by his concept of God as the unrealized and unrealizable highest ideal of man, that is an impossible possibility, but that becomes a guiding principle of human life, like Nietzsche's Superman, which is not, of course, an impossible possibility as in the case of the Sartrean God.

A comparison of the four views regarding the relation between man and God reveals that Kierkegaard and later Heidegger are close to each other, while Nietzsche and Sartre are on the same track, in spite of differences of attitude and outlook. The earlier Heidegger displays an extraordinary metaphysical outlook concerning the ultimate reality, called by him, 'Being', which, according to him, is the proper object of metaphysical enquiry; unlike others, the earlier Heidegger is a non-theist, unconcerned with God exclusively concentrating upon the sole metaphysical problem of Being. Both Kierkegaard and Heidegger emphasize the importance of self-sacrifice for the realization of God, and both are mystical, although Kierkegaard is intuitional, while Heidegger is poetical. Both Nietzsche and Sartre are atheists; but while Nietzsche replaces God by the Superman, as a possibility that can be actualized by the exercise of the will to power, Sartre replaces God by the Ideal as an impossible possibility, which can be approximated, but can never be consummated fully, because it is an ever-widening concept like the horizon receding from the person viewing and approaching it.

(iii) Man and Man: Inter-Personal Relationship

In Kierkegaard's philosophy, the inter-personal relationship of human beings is possible only in the aesthetic and moral stages of human development, not in the spiritual stage, where the individual man surrenders himself absolutely to God, transcending all human relationships. However, the authentic
inter-personal human relationship is possible only at the moral stage, where one lives according to one's own authentic choice, as a moral agent. Although Kierkegaard is decidedly an individualist, still he recognizes the moral virtues like friendship and psychic love as social virtues and holds that an individual must be courageous, temperant, kind and generous to prove himself worthy of his place in the social order; he must satisfy the primary demands of morality—commitment to others, acceptance of duty and obligation, submission of personal interest to community interest, etc., he must be guided by the rational principle of authentic choice and the ideal of self-sacrifice.

But according to Kierkegaard, there cannot be any interpersonal relationship proper at the aesthetic stage, where a man is dictated not by reason, but by sensuous passions, and his animal instincts are not rationally controlled by the principles of morality. Life at this stage is guided by sensuousness, and egoistic desires, for the satisfaction of which, a man commits immoral acts, and develops a negative relation to others, rather than a positive one.

Unlike Kierkegaard, Nietzsche is an absolute disbeliever in the existence of God and traditional moral and spiritual values; according to him, man being possessed of the will to power, is the creator of his own values, and this will to power as the power of self-overcoming sublimes him from manhood to supermanhood. Nietzsche's individualism is stronger than that of Kierkegaard, because, he does not believe in the existence of God. Still in his philosophy, there is room for inter-personal human relationship. He recognizes honesty, courage, generosity and politeness as the four cardinal human virtues; and this works as the basis of there being possible positive inter-personal relationship between man and man, in his philosophy of the will to power. According to him, the man-to-man relation is not always a relation of enmity and indifference, but also of love.
and friendship, mutual trust and fellow-feeling. A life of moral conscience is superior to a life of animal instincts, passions and desires; and only when a man overcomes his animal instincts and passions, that he becomes an authentic being, an existent being, and is capable of establishing a properly desirable relationship with others. Thus like Kierkegaard, Nietzsche holds that only at the moral stage of self-development, a man can have positive inter-personal relationship with others. But Nietzsche does not believe in any spiritual stage of self-development in the manner of Kierkegaard, and as such, he does not approve of any transcendence of the man-to-man relationship for there being man-God relationship; but he rather puts emphasis upon the relationship between man and superman, in so far as he holds that the superman will come to the rescue of the fallen human beings from their states of self-degradation by enkindling in them the light by which they have been enlightened themselves by attaining supermanhood.

Heidegger also has given importance to inter-personal human relationship, but in a way different from that of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. According to him, a man has first to know the being of others, in order to know his own being; being-with (mit-sein) is an existential characteristic of Da-sein. The initial relation of one person to another is through soliciting in the form of requesting, demanding and other like processes. Da-sein as a being-with-others is inseparable from others in his self-forgetfulness in daily life, he has his identity in his social rules. As being-with, he is not personal self, but the self of the anonymous public, he is called das Mann as a being-with-others. The Dasein's temptation to remain as das Mann is his fallenness, it is the basis of his inauthentic self. He must raise himself from this state for becoming his authentic self, for existing properly. Thus according to Heidegger, the inter-personal human relationship is a passing phase in the life of a Da-sein in his upward journey towards the attainment of authentic existence,
towards the realization of his true self.

Sartre's view of the inter-personal human relationship is conspicuously different from the views of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Heidegger, and no other existentialist philosopher deals so elaborately with the relation between man and man as Sartre does. His concept of for-itself as a body-consciousness-continuum together with his concept of freedom leads to his peculiar view of the inter-personal relationship of man and man. One's relations with other people are a threat to one's freedom because, the other is capable of reducing one to an object, as one is capable of turning the other into an object. Human relationships in general consist of the confrontation and struggle between two subjects each wishing to escape the other's look. Sartre considers sex to be the basic or primitive form of every human relationship, and according to him, sexuality is a general, personal characteristic pervading all human endeavours. Sex is a conscious project, it is a consciously attained power. Sexual desire aims at turning one's partner into a pure body, not a pleasurable activity, pleasure is the death and failure of sexual desire.

According to Sartre, human relationships are essentially unhappy, because, there is a transition from love to masochism, from masochism to hate and indifference leading to sadism, and from sadism to attempt at murder, thus human relationships being throughout full of conflict and struggle. Herein Sartre's view of inter-personal human relationship is radically different from Heidegger's concept of being-with others.

(iv) Man and the world

According to Kierkegaard, Man as existent individual is a being-in-the-world unlike beings-in-the-midst-of-the-world, i.e., non-existent beings. One who is really existent does not merge oneself in the group or the crowd and has an independent status
of one's own. Kierkegaard is an individualist regarding man's relation to society and the world in which he lives, but to which he is not subjugated; he lives according to his own authentic choice and shapes his own destiny. His highest ideal is to realize God in his inner being by absolute self-surrender to God as the inner principle of his being. Kierkegaard's ultimate concern is with God, not with the world, and as a free existent being, man, according to him, is not ruled by the world, but it is rather the world which is ruled by him. Kierkegaard was not much concerned with the problem of society as with the problem of self-purification and self-development for the realization of God. That is why, he valued the spiritual stage of life more than the aesthetic and moral stages. If, however, an individual attains spiritual perfection, the society also becomes perfected thereby, thus Kierkegaard's direct concern with individual perfection has an indirect influence upon the perfection of society. To speak truly, an existent individual lives in the world not as a being-in-the-midst-of-the-world, but as a being-in-the-world, whose ultimate aim is to realize God within himself by absolute self-surrender and self-sacrifice.

Nietzsche was interested in and concerned with 'the world of existence' rather than the world of truth. According to him, man's earthly life is sacred, and there is no life beyond in a transcendent world. Man requires new values not only for shaping his life, but also for determining the significance of the world. Nietzsche's view has remarkable similarity to Kierkegaard's assertion that man is responsible for the use to which he puts his life. But while Kierkegaard is a staunch theist, Nietzsche is a staunch atheist, and as such, according to the latter, Christianity is irrelevant to the man's evaluation of the world, man must make his own values, because God is dead after all.

According to Nietzsche, the open horizon is the horizon of
this world, not of some true realm beyond appearance. He rejects the notion of a world lying beyond experience—both the Christian and philosophical postulations of other worlds. Not God, but man redeems the world by becoming himself the creator of the world, and the world thus redeemed, its new value achieved, will be a site of recovery and a place for the Superman.

While Kierkegaard re-discovered the individual; Nietzsche made a gift of a new earth for him, for his habitation as a truly existing individual with his will-to-power over himself and others. Not withdrawing from the world and being self-absorbed for the intuitive vision of God, but sacrificing oneself for the world, for the humanity at large, bequeathing to the posterity a world of superhuman beings as the guiding stars of society is the immortal message of Nietzsche.

As to the relation between Man and the World, Heidegger's view is that apart from man, there is no world, and apart from the world, there is no man. Of course, he understands by man, Da-sein, i.e., man as an authentic being. According to Heidegger, from the existentialist point of view, the world has two aspects: (i) it is an instrumental system in relation to man's practical concern; and (ii) it is a threat to man's authentic existence, as he can lose himself in it. The self and the world are given together. Da-sein and the world are not related as subject and object, they constitute a single unitary phenomenon, not a mere totality.

The world as conceived by Heidegger is the play of the four regions of the square—the earth, the heavens, gods and mortals, intersecting one another. The earth is the supporting principle, the source of the emergence of everything; heaven is the pure principle of light in which everything shines forth as it is; the gods as immortals are the beckoning messengers of divinity, who bring with them the area of holiness in which God may
appear as His own absence; and the mortals are men, being capable of dying. Each of these four is in the other, and they together constitute an indissoluble unity. The relation that holds them together is 'infinite', because standing within the four-fold, each region is freed of its one-sidedness and finitude. The earlier Heidegger describes man as being-in-the-world as constitutive of Da-sein; while the later Heidegger characterizes him simply as 'dwelling'—the way mortals have their sojourn on earth. Man is man in so far as he has his home on the earth, under the heavens, in front of the gods, with his fellowmen. However, only in sojourn with things, it is possible for men to enter into relation with being and the world.

According to Heidegger, Man can realize his relation to the world truly only by living an authentic or moral life by taking full responsibility for whatever he does individually for himself. He must treat himself as isolated, unique and free. His ultimate aim of life is to realize his integral relation to Being, through his realization of himself as a Da-sein, as a being-in-the-world.

Thus, Heidegger's description of man's relation to the world has a uniqueness of its own. Although both Kierkegaard and Nietzsche characterize man as a being-in-the-world, as Heidegger also does, the conception of the four-fold is something unique in the Heideggerian conception of the world. So far as the earlier Heidegger is concerned, his world-view does not differ substantially from that of Kierkegaard or Nietzsche; but so far as the later Heidegger is concerned, his world-view is quite different from that of either of the two. However, the later Heidegger has some striking similarity with Kierkegaard in respect of man's position in the world, as well as, in relation to God. Both Kierkegaard and Heidegger are of the opinion that as a being-in-the-world, man's highest objective is to become united with God, and to this end living an authentic life as an individual, as a being-in-the-world, not as a member of the crowd,
is a necessary prerequisite. But as an absolute atheist, Nietzsche has no such divine objective of life, still he believes in the necessity of moral living or determining one's true relation to the world which, in fact, is the world of man, the world of the prospective Superman, for whom the world would be, and by whom it would be shaped as an ideal place for the ideal living of human beings.

In Sartre's view also, man as being-for-itself, is a being-in-the world and he is separated from the world he lives in, by the nothingness inherent in his nature as a conscious being. Sartre conceives nothingness as the external spatial gap or distance lying between himself and his world, between his thought and its object, as well as, the internal, temporal gap between his past and his future. Man is in the world, still he is distinct from the world, because the world consists mostly of things-in-themselves, whereas men are beings-for-themselves, who are endowed with freedom of will, and can shape their own destiny by authentic choice and self-efforts, they are unlike things-in-themselves, which have no future of their own. Man as an authentic being, determines his own fate by controlling his situation, and thus the world is for man, and it is fashioned by man for his living an ideal life. That is to say, the world as it is, is not acceptable to man, but the world as it should be, is the true world of the existent man.

According to Sartre, consciousness is necessarily consciousness of the world from the point of view of a potential agent. As a member of the society, man is a free agent, whose acts are necessarily his own. Thus Sartre's approach to morality is subjectivist. One has to devise one's own morality and make one's own choices without the help of rules or principles. A man manifests his freedom to choose in his relation with himself, as well as, with other people living in the society, of which he is a member. As regards his relation with himself alone, a man
may have recourse to bad faith; but as regards his relation with others, he cannot exercise his freedom in a way that violates the right to freedom of others. It has to be remembered that, while choosing for oneself, one chooses also for others within a common world. Thus there is a shift from personal morality to social morality, from subjectivity to inter-subjectivity.

Still further, Sartre also considers what should be the authentic choice and project of a socio-political group of people, keeping in view the better interest of humanity as a whole. That is why, he shifts from the question "what should I do? to the question "what should we do?" Sartre gives an existentialist interpretation of Marxist philosophy to suit his own standpoint. He rejects the material dialectic and moves towards social dialectic—the activity of man in the social world. He characterizes society by its seriality, i.e., side-by-sidedness without community, the mere juxtaposition of individuals of all kinds or categories. The suffering proletarians are, according to Sartre, not only economically deprived, but are also treated as mere objects or means in the world of the bourgeoisie, turned into Us-objects united into a class. However, in an ideal moral society, envisioned by him, a proletarian would be a free subject, actively following the goals of his own subjectivity. As essentially free, man is a moral being who creates values and he must make his contribution to the achievement of a just society, for which he must be in opposition to any particular social or political order. Each and every man has to become an ideal man or a real man by authentic choice and action keeping in view the moral and social implications of human freedom. Self-effort and interpersonal co-operation alone can lead to an ever progressive social change. Sartre was quite hopeful of such a social change.

Sartre's view of the relation between man and the world, the individual and society, resembles, to some extent, the view of Nietzsche, who also considers man, the existent individual,
to be at the herald of society, controlling it and shaping it according to his own choice, by dint of his will to power. However, Sartre does not give us anything like Nietzsche’s concept of Superman; but in spite of that, we find, in his philosophy, an image of man, that is not to be found in the philosophy of any other existentialist. While Kierkegaard and Heidegger were concerned more with the realization of Truth, and less with the experience of this world; Nietzsche and Sartre were concerned exclusively with man’s position in this world, his relation to society. According to all the four existentialist thinkers, man is a being-in-the-world, not a being-in-the-midst-of-the-world; but they differ as to the relation of man to the world, of the individual to the society. Kierkegaard is an individualist and holds that a truly existent being does not merge himself in the group or crowd, he rules the world rather than being ruled by the world. However, man’s ultimate concern is not with the problem of the world, but with the problem of self-purification and self-development, of the realization of God within himself. But Nietzsche was not concerned with the world of truth, there being no God transcendent to or immanent in the world; the world of existent beings, the earthly life, was sacred to him, for the betterment of which he strived throughout his life. While Kierkegaard was inspired by the spirit of self-sacrifice in relation to the world, Nietzsche was inspired by the spirit of self-assertion, the will to power; according to him, the future world is to be the world of super-human beings. Heidegger conceives of man-world relation as an inter-dependent relation, constitutive of an integrated whole, a single unitary phenomenon. His conception of the four-fold or square—earth, heavens, gods and mortals, is a unique conception not to be found in the philosophy of the other three existentialists. Unlike Kierkegaard and Heidegger, but like Nietzsche, Sartre finds the world devoid of God, as the only field of action for man, who as a moral agent, has to work for himself and for society, even on political issues, by his own authentic choice, with due respect to the interest of
other people living in the society, for the actualization of the ideal image of man. Moral and social consideration must not be overlooked for the attainment of personal goals.

From Kierkegaard to Sartre, we notice a transition of thought gradually making way for a realm of values based on socio-moral considerations. However, in this transition, there are two currents of thought—one basically theistic, and the other, fundamentally atheistic; and as such Kierkegaard and Heidegger, on the one hand, and Nietzsche and Sartre, on the other, direct the two currents—one is socio-spiritual, and the other is socio-psychological, which terminate in the Sartrean thought as the socio-political as well. In fact, the world of the existentialists is the world of authentic human beings who themselves determine the course of its going on, and fashion it so as to make it an ideal place for human habitation, a human paradise, in which they can live, move and have their fulfilment of life through perfect realization of their authentic existence, till death overcomes them. Life in this world, without any prefix or suffix, has to be sublimated by all means humanly possible, and to this end, the existentialists give us an elixir of life for breaking down the passivity of the sleeping souls.

REFERENCE