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The Educational Theory of John Stuart Mill

by

© Ki Su Kim

A THESIS

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Date Sept. 18, 1986

DEDICATION

To Drs. Bum Mo Chung and Peter J. Miller

ABSTRACT

The study is an exploration of John Stuart Mill's educational theory. Unlike other studies, however, it does not limit itself to what Mill wrote about education, seeking rather to establish the context in which Mill's educational theory was conceived and of what purpose it was in service.

Chapter II is a study of how Mill came to commit himself to the making of history. His youthful involvement in the political movement of the philosophic radicals, the views of history taken by this group, Mill's mental crisis and its effects upon his role-definition in the process of history -- examinations of these factors lead to an analysis of Mill's view of the science of history and how this view contributed to his self-defined historical role.

Chapter III takes as its subject the theoretical basis of his thought, attempting to discover the nature of his methodological framework. The chapter focuses on Mill's anthropological theory and shows how this theory conflicted with the normative ideals outlined in Chapter II.

Chapter IV explores Mill's attempts to put theories into practice. His conviction in the power of reason, which he inherited from his mentors, gave him a preoccupation with the importance of theory. As the vital element in his theory of practice the thesis takes note of the concept of pleasure into which he attempted to incorporate a concept of quality. An examination of these issues is related to a consideration of Mill's moral and political theories.

On the basis of the preceding examinations, Chapter V explores how Mill determined the normative goal of the art of education and what pedagogical measures he derived for this goal from his descriptive theory of man. The chapter then moves to point out some pedagogical problems contained therein.

Chapter VI looks into Mill's educational theory in an historical light in order to show Mill's expections of national education. It examines the role of his descriptive anthropology and shows what implications it had for the historical mission Mill imposed on himself.

The final chapter summarises the conclusions of the thesis and makes an assessment of Mill's educational thought in terms of his theoretical and practical frames of reference.

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The University of Alberta supported me by granting a Dissertation Fellowship. Its resourceful and efficient library system greatly facilitated my work. The Mill Project of Victoria College, University of Toronto, allowed me an access to the precious materials under their custody. I am grateful to Drs. John M. Robson and Bruce Kinzer. I am also grateful to Drs. D.G. Brown and Wendy Donner for their essays.

The Department of Educational Foundations, University of Alberta, was my battleground for two degree programs. Its chairman, Dr. Robert Carney, staff and students gave me encouragement as well as criticisms.

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At the final moment, as usual, I come to think about my family; my wife, my two sons, my mother and, most of all, my father -- whose short life and noble thought will never vanish from my memory.

I share the little joy incurred from this thesis with all of them.

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I. Introduction

"When Mill died in 1873, he was the philosopher laureate. Students had long been nurtured on his *Logic* and *Political Economy*, *On Liberty* had been pronounced a classic at birth. And Mill himself was particularly acclaimed the spirit of the age."[1] Over his contemporaries, according to Dower, he held an "almost indisputable sway."[2] In politics and economics, in ethics and philosophy, Mill's views, more than those of other thinkers, may be said to have represented and expressed the Victorian frame of mind. And what was true of these areas of intellectual life was also true of Mill's views on education, the theoretical dimension of which is the subject of this thesis.

The major purpose of the study, then, is to explore the educational theory of John Stuart Mill. It is a study which can be approached in several ways, one of which is to construct out of Mill's fragmentary comments on education a theory according to certain preconceived categories, such as educational psychology, educational philosophy, curriculum and so forth. In the case of Mill, such an approach is inappropriate since it fails to come to grips with the developing matrix in which Mill's thought was conceived. His mental crisis, continuous communication with other leading thinkers, and his own involvement in the important political questions of the day cannot be ignored if a satisfactory description and explication of his educational theory is to be provided.

This latter approach raises several difficult methodological problems. To trace the development of a theory over time requires a sensitivity both to differences and continuities between different stages. Simply to divide a thinker's mental history into a number of periods, each completely separate from the others, and not to note the continuity of his thought is inappropriate. Throughout his life, Mill laid more weight upon certain elements of

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[1]Gertrude Himmelfarb, *Victorian Minds*, p.154.

[2]Robert S. Dower, "John Stuart Mill and the Philosophical Radicals," in J.F.C. Hearnshaw, ed., *The Social and Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Age of Reaction and Reconstruction, 1815-65*, p.113. Bertrand Russell's *Autobiography*, for example, clearly shows how influential were Mill's theories of politics, economics, philosophy and even his view about the women question upon this youthful philosopher. *The Autobiography of Bertrand Russel*, pp.49, 82, 132 and 205.

his thought than on others; this, indeed, was what caused his thought to develop in a particular direction. A full understanding of Mill's theoretical development emerges only when changes and shifts in focus are analysed within the context of his own existential problem-consciousness.

How, then, is this persistent problem-consciousness to be explored? According to what criteria is his life to be periodised and how is his thought to be organised for analysis? A speculative or analytic approach may be organised around such key elements as politics, ethics and philosophy. This will, in a certain sense, make possible a coherent and contextual exposition of his thought. Such an approach, however, cannot afford to ignore a momentous event in Mill's life, one which was crucial to his subsequent intellectual development. This was the mental crisis and its aftermath. As its *point de dépari* this thesis holds that a major change in historical consciousness was the most important outcome of Mill's celebrated mental crisis. This is not to imply that Mill, the speculative thinker, suddenly adopted a totally different historical outlook from that which he had possessed before the mental crisis. Rather, it is suggested that Mill, as a consequence of his working through the mental crisis, came to have a renewed zeal for his own participation in the historical process and thus needed to justify his involvement by reformulating his credo. Mill's writings, whatever their subject, were always permeated with certain historical value-claims. Education was no exception, and a comprehensive exposition of Mill's theory of education is possible only in the light of this changing historical consciousness.

Mill's view of his own place in history, in itself, will not, of course, fully explain the development of his educational theory. His particular historical consciousness was generated in relation to a general theory of history, and this cannot be ignored. For although a man can choose to alienate himself from or involve himself in historical activity, the ultimate ground on which he can explain his alienation or activity is a view of history itself. In this sense, man is inseparable from history and history from man. What then was Mill's view of the relationship between man and history? What role did he expect man to play in history? And how was such an anthropology related to his own historical consciousness?

Such questions demand a consideration both of Mill's theoretical and programmatic writings. Anthropology, for example, deals with man theoretically and in general terms; morals and politics, on the other hand, are concerned with his activities, social, economic and political, within the context of a particular age. Theories of morals and politics are theories of man's most conscious and intentional involvement in the historical process. An examination of Mill's theories of morals and politics, that is, his theories of practice, will throw light both on the role he assigned to the individual in history and on the process by which such an individual man was to be educated. For a person like Mill, whose character was predominantly intellectual, the theoretical regulation of his programmatic recommendations was paramount. At the same time, however, as a person with a strong historical consciousness and with a personal role to play in history, Mill possessed normative criteria which tended to go beyond and, in a fundamental respect, contradict the theoretical framework of his anthropology. In his views of "Genius" and in his revision of utilitarian moral and political theories are numerous examples of the friction and contradiction between his anthropological theory and his prescriptions and actual involvement in the historical process.

Education as a practice must be considered in both a theoretical and practical context. As a practice, it must serve some normative purposes, but as a theory it must ground itself not on the normative ends but on a solid bedrock of a coherent and correct analysis of man and history. What practical goal did Mill then set for his theory of education? What means did he propose to achieve such a goal? And what relationship did this theory of practice have to Mill's historical consciousness?

These are the major questions to be addressed in this study, which in considering Mill's educational theory will seek to avoid the meaningless adding together of fragmentary educational passages. In recognising a significant change of viewpoint after the mental crisis, it admits of development in Mill's theory of education, while refusing to allow the awareness of this development to distort the persistent framework of Mill's thought.

In order to provide a context for such an approach, it is necessary to review briefly the existing studies of Mill's educational ideas. Publications concerning Mill's educational

thought can be categorised into three chronological phases. The first phase corresponded with his life-time and the few remaining decades of the nineteenth century. The second phase was the period from the early twentieth century, when the history of education was born as a field of study, up to roughly the year 1950. Finally, with the revival of Victorian studies and the consequent renewed interest in Mill studies from the 1950s onward,[1] writings on Mill's educational ideas show certain differences from those of the previous periods.

Nineteenth-century comments on the educational aspects of Mill's thought were generally lively responses to what the influential thinker had said rather than attempts to understand systematically the whole structure of his thought. Accordingly, responses were directed mainly to the two most obvious educational writings, the *Inaugural Addresss* at St. Andrews University(1867) and the *Autobiography*(1874). On the positive side, an article in the *Westminster Review* interpreted the *Address* as an assault upon the reactionary prejudice at universities where "the worshippers [at the old shrine of the university] were more highly esteemed than the *cultus* itself."[4] Mill's *Address* was seen as a reformist protest in which "knowledge [was] for man, and not man for knowledge" and education was not "to instil this or that principle in the minds of the student, but to make him a more worthy and more capable man." This anonymous writer described the public responses to the *Address* as having been like "a crowd of critics [rushing] like alarmed bees to the defence of some small [reactionary] doctrine."[5] However, Anna J. Mill's survey of newspaper responses to the *Address* tells a somewhat different story: "Responsible conservative papers either refrained from editorial comment or distinguished sharply between Mill the politician and Mill the philosopher."[6] However varied the viewpoints of politically interested groups might have been,

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[1]The published items listed in Michael Laine's *Bibliography of Works on John Stuart Mill* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982) show a steady increase as follows: in the 1930s, 79 items; in the 1940s, 90 items; in the 1950s, 199 items; in the 1960s, 299 items; and in the 1970s (up to 1978), 297 items. Since Laine's *Bibliography* does not list *all* of the published items, it is difficult to treat such data as reflecting exactly the situation of Mill studies of each periods. Nevertheless, a rough guesswork may be possible on this basis.

[4]"Politics, Sociology, Voyages and Travel;" *WR*, 31(1867), p.523.

[5]*Ibid.*

[6]Anna J. Mill, "The First Ornamental Rector at St. Andrews University: John Stuart Mill," *The Scottish Historical Review*, 43:136(1964), pp.141-2.

Mill's idea of liberal education seems to have been generally accepted. A typical example was a review essay in an American journal, the *North American Review*. Accepting Mill's idea that the object of the university was "not to make skilful lawyers, or physicians, or engineers, but capable and cultivated human beings," this anonymous reviewer proclaimed that "the aim of the university is the perfection of men as men; not their usefulness as instruments."[7]

On the negative side, criticisms were mainly centred on Mill's curriculum. A *Popular Science Monthly* essay(1874) attacked Mill's contention that the antagonism between the ancient languages and the modern sciences and arts was "unreal" and that the controversy over these branches of knowledge was "futile and groundless." Because of the limitation of capacity of the student, the essay claimed, it was impossible to propose, as Mill did, "Why not both?" To stress both branches of knowledge meant nothing but "a practical surrender to one side."[8] Alexander Bain also assessed the curriculum of the *Address* as a failure and pointed as its simple reason to Mill's having "no conception of the limits of a University curriculum."[9] As the reason for such an overemphasis on classical studies the commentator of *The Popular Science Monthly* referred to the "overwhelming bias produced by a onesided training, of which Mr. Mill had been the victim in his youth." Mill's education described in the *Autobiography* was, the commentator added, rather "for polemics than for discovery," based on "intellectual exercise [in] the old scholastic logic."[10]

A relatively detailed educational examination of the *Autobiography* appeared in an American journal *The Christian Quarterly*(1874).[11] Viewing the book not only as "a general history" of Mill's mind but also as a record which contained "the secret of his education,"[12] the writer noted the effects of James Mill's educational practice on his son. According to this

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[7]"Mill's Inaugural Address," *North American Review*, 105(1867), p.292.
[8]"Mill, Education, and Science," *The Popular Science Monthly*, 4:17(1874), p.370.
[9]Alexander Bain, *John Stuart Mill: A Criticism*, p.127.
[10]"Mill, Education, and Science," p.370. Matthew Arnold, meanwhile, welcomed Mill's emphasis upon classical studies as a "powerful corroboration" of his own assertion that the "immense majority" should be carried to a "vital knowledge" of classics by means of their literary, historical, philosophical, or artistic senses. *Schools and Universities on the Continent, The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold*, IV (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1964), p.298n.
[11]"The History of a Great Mind," *The Christian Quarterly*, 10(1874), pp.145-74.
[12]*Ibid.*, pp.146-7.

essay, James Mill's educational practice was highly intellectual, providing knowledge and analytic power, keeping the child vigilant and imposing upon him always higher developmental tasks. Mill's emphasis upon literature in the *Address* was explained as having originated from such an educational practice of James Mill.

The nineteenth-century discussions were generally confined to the *Inaugural Address* and the *Autobiography*, and their primary interest lay in questioning the relevance of the educational prescriptions of the "manufactured" genius. The immediacy of the effect which the two books had upon their readers obstructed an objective understanding of Mill's educational theory itself. In order to see Mill and his thought as objects of study, it was necessary to view him not in immediacy but from a distance; this requisite was to be fulfilled in the twentieth century.

One of the striking features of early twentieth-century educational historiography was the tendency to explain the ideas or thoughts of individual educators or thinkers in reference to the general progress of education or educational system. Each educator or an educational thinker had thus to be housed in a period or sector so that a whole picture of educational progress could be clearly drawn. Adamson's *English Education, 1789-1902*(1930) was a good example. John Stuart Mill was located in a period from 1839 to 1867 which Adamson titled "Earlier Victorian." Within this period Mill with others was grouped under a section titled "[redacted]e Conflict of Studies." Why Adamson adopted such a periodisation, however, is not clear in his book. Because Mill's educational theory was influential during the period? Or because his educational theory was formed during the period? Since Adamson's discussion was focused on the *Inaugural Address*, none of the two presumptions makes sense. In judging a person's significance in history, what is important is not when his thought was formed but rather when its influence was exercised upon society. Mill's influence must be sought not in the period between 1839 and 1867 but in the period after the publication of the *Address*. Adamson's periodisation reflects the superficial nature of early educational historians' approaches to historical sources and the primitive state of Mill studies.

Adamson's understanding of Mill's educational theory was, in fact, not much ahead of nineteenth-century interpretations. He thus regarded the *Address* as embodying opinions "peculiar to [Mill] himself or to himself and his father."[13] The underlying assumption of this assertion was that "the profound effect which was produced upon the mind of John Stuart Mill by the education of his childhood and early boyhood is manifest in the St Andrews *Inaugural Address*."[14] What Adamson found to be the most formative influence upon John Mill was the "intellectualism" of James Mill. In the same vein, the "Editorial Diary" of the *North American Review*(1907) characterised Mill's education as a "very strenuously supervised" experience of a child who was to be pitied as the "poor little Mill."[15] Probably the most negative comment on James Mill's "intellectualism" was F.R. Leavis' identification of Mr. Gradgrind of Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* with James Mill(1907). Leavis' claim was that the utilitarian philosophy of Mr. Gradgrind had led him to bring up his children "on the lines of the experiment recorded by John Stuart Mill as being carried out on himself."[16] Stanley T. Williams(1921) followed the same line when he perceived Mill's education as a typical example of the "fanatical rationalism" of the Victorian period, in contrast with that of Edmund Gosse, the victim of strict evangelical education.[17]

Generally speaking, however, in the early twentieth century the rationalism of Mill's earlier education seems not to have been exposed to any serious question. Some interpreters tried to find certain positive values in the rationalistic educational practice of James Mill. George M. Janes(1931), while admitting that the father's educational practice was intellectually oriented, drew attention to the positive aspect of the subjective experience of the child. As Mill himself described it in the *Autobiography*, Janes claimed, his boyhood education was not an education of cram nor a mere exercise of memory, but an effort to have him to study out the reason of everything for himself. Thus though James Mill did not know

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[13]John William Adamson, *English Education, 1789-1902*, p.302.
[14]*Ibid.*, p.306.
[15]"Education, Personally Supervised," *North American Review*, 184(1907), pp.447-8.
[16]F.R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition*, p.251.
[17]Stanley T. Williams, "Two Victorian Boyhoods," *North American Review*, 213(1921), pp.819-26.

anything about the doctrine of interest, which was in vogue in Janes' America, "the son bore the laboring oar and gained both interest and momentum by conquering a subject."[18]

Unlike the 1874 essay in *The Popular Science Monthly*, there were also some interpreters who tried to explain Mill's mature educational thought, not simply as an extension of his earlier education, but as a modification or a development of it. E. Gazin(1922) belonged to this category. Viewing the *Inaugural Address* as "un exposé complet de ses [Mill's] vues sur l'éducation," Gazin pursued its genealogy in Mill's criticism of his father's educational practice upon himself and in Mill's own effort to develop a new educational ideal. Typically, Gazin characterised James Mill's practice as "une sévère [mental] discipline" based on two methods, "la réflexion sur le fond" and "l'exercice formel," which were derived from a strong "méfiance à l'égard du sentiment" and a firm "foi dans l'intelligibilité de l'abstrait." Because he ignored the concreteness of life James Mill failed to see the need to develop "la sensibilité" and "la volonté de l'homme." Mill's point of departure, Gazin claimed, consisted in recognising this deficiency in his earlier education and trying to fill the "lacunes" with what was missing.[19] Another attempt to explain Mill's educational thought as a development from that of James Mill was made by F.A. Cavenagh(1939).[20] An anthology of the two Mills' educational writings, Cavenagh's volume was comprised of James Mill's *Encyclopaedia Britanica* article "On Education," some portions of John Stuart Mill's *Autobiography* (dealing with "Childhood and Early Education," "Moral Influences in Early Youth," and the mental crisis) and the *Inaugural Address*. Though Cavenagh did not state how these writings were connected with each other, the organisation of the book and the "Introduction" provided an impression that the editor viewed the *Address* as the outcome of Mill's own development of the ideas of James Mill.

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[18]George M. Janes, "John Stuart Mill's Education," *The Quarterly Journal*, 21:2(1931), pp.107-18.

[19]E. Gazin, "Les enseignements pédagogiques de Stuart Mill," *Revue pédagogique*, 80(1922), pp.125-38, 168-78.

[20]Francis Alexander Cavenagh, ed., *James and John Stuart Mill on Education* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931).

To detach Mill's ideas from those of his father was a significant step in the search for what was distinctively his own thought. Two publications merit special attention in this connection. The one was Charles F. Thwing's 1916 essay "Education According to John Stuart Mill."[21] The significance of this essay in the educational study of Mill was that it was one of the earliest attempts to explain Mill's thought in his own terms, conscientiously ignoring the influence of James Mill. As usual, the primary sources used were the *Autobiography* and the *Inaugural Address*. Nevertheless, instead of relying entirely upon these two sources, Thwing looked for additional support from other writings such as Mill's correspondence, *Dissertations and Discussions*, *On Liberty*, *A System of Logic*, and *Three Essays on Religion*. From the *Autobiography* he picked up the emphasis on training instead of knowledge, and in a letter of 1852 the importance of the ability to think for oneself. In the same context, he singled out from *On Liberty* the necessity of diversity in education for the spontaneous and creative development of the individual.

The other publication was a chapter in Ramsdon Balmforth's *Some Social and Political Pioneers of the Nineteenth Century*(1900).[22] Unlike his contemporaries, Balmforth did not ground his argument on the two well-known educational works. Attempting "an outline of his [Mill's] position and principles on the political, social, and economic questions,"[23] he examined mainly *On Liberty*, *On Representative Government*, *Principles of Political Economy*, *Dissertations and Discussions*, "Chapters on Socialism" and *Utilitarianism*. The education described by Balmforth, therefore, was not education in general but the political education demanded by Mill's political and economic theories. "Universal free education," for example, was implied by Mill's ideas on participatory government. Since the participatory government Mill envisioned was not to be shared by all on equal terms, some being excluded from it, universal education had to be organised into a system of national education and general examinations instituted in order to determine who was to participate and to what extent. For the content of education, Mill's inclination toward socialism and

[21] *School and Society*, 3:53,4(1916), pp.1-8, 49-58.
[22] Ramsdon Balmforth, "John Stuart Mill and Political Education," in *Some Social and Political Pioneers in the Nineteenth Century*, pp.112-132.
[23] *Ibid.*, p.120.

emphasis on cooperation led him to suggest those studies which led the student to the pursuit of the common good. Balmforth argued such an education was supported by Mill's ethics, which had attacked the egotism of utilitarianism.

Though crude and simplistic, and though not noted by their contemporaries, the two essays by Thwing and Balmforth contained seeds which would be more fully cultivated by the scholars in the second half of the century. Thwing's attempt to relate the *Address* to other writings was followed by others, which built out of Mill's fragmentary mentions of education a comprehensive and systematic theory, while Balmforth's political perspective was adopted by later disputants about Mill's conception of public education.

Since 1950 general histories of education no longer attempt to explain Mill's educational thought simply in terms of the *Address*. Whereas Adamson regarded the *Address* as being "dominated by his [Mill's] father's intellectualism," the new historians of education try to see in it a peculiarly Millian conception of liberal education. Books like S.J. Curtis and M.E.A. Boultwood's *An Introductory History of English Education since 1800*(1960) and H.C. Barnard's *A History of English Education, From 1760*(1947)[24] tend to find in the *Address* a modern version of liberal education and to derive from Mill's adherence to liberty his negative attitude to State intervention in education. A number of publications have appeared on this aspect of Mill's theory. In his article "The Role of Education in Nineteenth-Century Doctrines of Political Economy"(1964), E.G. West indicates that among the classical economists and utilitarians the attitude toward public education moved from a "negative" to a "positive" one.[25] Like Adam Smith, however, Mill claimed that State intervention should be severely restricted; the State should do no more than render education compulsory while schooling should remain within the private sector. In another article(1964), however, West examines Adam Smith's and other classical economists' and utilitarians' opinions about public education and concludes that John Stuart Mill's opposition to State intervention was not meant to imply a return to the competitive market principle.[26] According

[24]Though published first in 1947, the book underwent four impressions in the 1950s and revised in 1961.

[25]*British Journal of Educational Research*, 12:2(1964), pp.161-72.

[26]E.G. West, "Private Versus Public Education," *The Journal of Political Economy*,

to West. Mill's view was that, as far as education was concerned, the buyer could not be the best judge and therefore there was a ground for intervention from authority.

What exactly was the stance taken by Mill in this conflict between liberty and authority? This question, important as it was for understanding Mill's theory of education in relation with his social philosophy, has provoked a good deal of study. In his third article on Mill(1965), West explains Mill's stance by referring to Isaiah Berlin's "negative" and "positive" conceptions of liberty.[27] According to West, Mill took a negative stance when he opposed coercion and limited the role of the State in public education to making education compulsory, excluding its responsibility to provide public schooling. However, Mill also used a positive concept of liberty when he allowed the State to intervene in the individual's life in order to prevent harm to others, and when he exposed his distrust of the ability of the people to judge wisely in educational matters.

As Mill's concept of liberty was extremely complicated, so too were the interpretations made of it by critics. Maurice Cowling(1963) views Mill's concept of liberty in relation to Comtean elitism, while Allan D. Megill(1972) tries to connect *On Liberty* with "The Spirit of the Age." Both tend to note the positive conception of liberty.[28] On the other hand, J.C. Rees(1960), James A. Stegenga(1973), Gordon Hirsch(1975) and Robert F. Ladenson(1977) focus on the individual rather than on society and tend to stress the negative concept.[29] R.J. Halliday(1968, 1976) opposes both interpretations and tries to see Mill's position as an eclectic

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[26](cont'd) 72:5(1964), pp.465-75.

[27]E.G. West, "Liberty and Education," *Philosophy*, 40:152(1965), pp.129-42. Reprinted in his *Education and the Industrial Revolution* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1975), pp.149-64. For Isaiah Berlin's liberty conceptions see Isaiah Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty*, pp.118-72. See also John M. Gray, "On Negative and Positive Liberty," *Political Studies*, 28:4(1980), pp.507-26.

[28]Maurice Cowling, *Mill and Liberalism*, and Allan D. Megill, "J.S. Mill's Concept of Liberty and the Second Justification for the Writing of *On Liberty*," *The Journal of Politics*, 34:2(1972), p.612-29.

[29]J.C. Rees, "A Re-Reading of Mill's *On Liberty*," *Political Studies*, 8:2(1960), pp.113-29; James A. Stegenga, "J.S. Mill's Concept of Liberty and the Principle of Utility," *The Journal of Value Inquiry*, 7:4(1973), pp.281-9; Gordon D. Hirsch, "Organic Imagery and the Psychology of Mill's *On Liberty*," *MNL*, 10:2(1975), pp.3-13; and Robert F. Ladenson, "Mill's Conception of Individuality," *Social Theory and Practice*, 4:2(1977), pp.167-82.

one.[30] Whereas Halliday's interpretations portray Mill as cautious, deliberate and not always confident in his eclecticism, Dennis F. Thompson(1976) draws a picture of Mill as a successful synthesiser of "participation" and "competence."[31]

The growing interest in Mill's concept of liberty has influenced the study of Mill's educational thought in a number of ways. First, it has helped expand the scope and the use of source materials. K.A. Ballhatchet(1951) and Gerald Sirkin and Natalie Robinson Sirkin(1973) studied the neglected writings of Mill at India House and contributed to the clarification of the role played by Mill in policy-making for the East India Company.[32] Ballhatchet tries to see Mill, along with his father, as the advocate of the utilitarian cause; but the Sirkins' article applies a newly developed interpretation of Mill's concept of liberty and claims that Mill's attitude to Indian education was not utilitarian but rather elitist. For example, the Sirkins point out, Mill favoured Oriental seminaries for a native intellectual elite instead of universal public instruction in the English language for the mass. Some scholars have tried to deepen their understanding of Mill's concept of liberty by applying it to the child. Victor L. Worsfold(1974) claims that Mill allowed no rights for the child, reserving them for the mature individuals capable of self-improvement.[33] John Kleinig(1976) also points out that for Mill the "maturity of faculties" was a prerequisite for the enjoyment of rights and, therefore, that the child's right to liberty "from interference with *self-regarding* behaviour [emphasis original]" was denied.[34] Kenneth Henley(1978) and D.A. Habibi(1983) attempt to defend Mill from accusations that he had a "low opinion of children."[35]

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[30]R.J. Halliday, "Some Recent Interpretations of John Stuart Mill," *Philosophy*, 43:163(1968), pp.1-17, and *John Stuart Mill*.
[31]Dennis F. Thompson, *John Stuart Mill and Representative Government*.
[32]K.A. Ballhatchet, "The Home Government and Bentick's Educational Policy," *The Cambridge Historical Journal*, 10:2(1951), pp.224-9; and Gerald Sirkin and Natalie Robinson Sirkin, "John Stuart Mill and Disutilitarianism in Indian Education," *The Journal of General Education*, 24:4(1973), pp.231-85.
[33]Victor L. Worsfold, "A Philosophical Justification for Children's Rights," *Harvard Educational Review*, 44:1(1974), pp.142-57.
[34]John Kleinig, "Mill, Children, and Rights," *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 8:1(1976), pp.1-16.
[35]Kenneth Henley, "Children and the Individualism of Mill and Nozick," *The Personalist*, 59:4(1978), pp.415-19; and D.A. Habibi, "The Status of Children in John Stuart Mill's Theory of Liberty," *Educational Thoery*, 33:2(1983), pp.61-72.

Among the publications on Mill's concept of liberty, C.W. Bouton's "John Stuart Mill: On Liberty and History"(1965)[34] and Graeme Duncan's *Marx and Mill*(1973) deserve special note. Bouton insists that *On Liberty* ought not to be interpreted in its own terms but in relation with Mill's other writings. According to him, Mill's concept of liberty was "the cause as well as the effect" of his notion of moral and intellectual development. Liberty was important not simply because it was a condition correspondent to human nature but because it was a precondition for as well as the consequence of the historical progress of mankind. Such a conjunction of liberty with history, Bouton thinks, enables one to interpret the whole of Mill's writings in this context. Though suggestive, Bouton's thesis does not show clearly how Mill viewed liberty in historical terms. Duncan's contribution to this aspect of Mill studies lies in elaborating further what Bouton had suggested. According to Duncan, what Mill foresaw in history was not the kind of conflict anticipated by Marx but a new harmony which was to be established under the leadership of an intellectual elite. The underlying assumption of this historical outlook was that the vital force which pushed history forward was the intellectual progress of mankind. Having the capacity to achieve knowledge, man had the potential to act wisely; left in ignorance, however, he would act foolishly. Therefore, particularly in a society in transition, it was dangerous to put power and authority in the hands of the ignorant mass. Hence two classes, distinguished not in socio-economic terms but in terms of sagacity and knowledge, were to be each provided with different political rights, different forms of liberty, and different education.

Bouton's "historical" and Duncan's "class" approaches are useful in a contextual exposition of Mill's educational ideas. But some serious questions remain unanswered. Did Mill really regard liberty as the final goal of the historical progress of mankind? If so, why then did he describe socialism, which he saw accompanying the future ascendancy of the working classes, as a sacrifice of individual liberty? Was liberty not a condition for the realisation of human perfection which Mill saw in the future? If Mill counted the intellectual

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[35](cont'd) D.G. Brown also defends Mill's view, contending that it was "general immaturity", which led Mill to deny any moral rights to do things. "The Rights of Children," *The Journal of Education*, 17(1971), pp.8-20.

[34]*The Wesstern Political Quarterly*, 18:3(1965), pp.569-78.

progress of mankind as the vital force of history, why then was he so concerned with feelings and the significance of the aesthetic?

Thwing's attempt to connect the *Address* to other writings and thus to reconstitute a theory of education in a systematic way was followed by others, notably by Kingsley Price(1967) and F.W. Garforth(1979, 1980).[37] Both share commonalities in their approach to Mill's educational theory. Educational theory, they hold, must be grounded on a certain philosophical and scientific (or psychological) basis; it must serve certain social purposes; finally, it must specify its goals and arrange a series of subjects into a curriculum. Thus organised, the accounts of Mill's educational theory provided by Garforth and Price are satisfactory as far as their structure is concerned. However, the preoccupation with reconstructing an educational theory make them simplistic and one-dimensional in their approach. At the bottom there is an "experiential" philosophy and an "associationist" psychology which stress the powerful influence of environment upon the human being and allow little significance to the subjective activity of man. At the top there is a theory of liberal education which aims "to perfect human nature"[38] to form a "capable and sensible" man. Another weakness they share is their tendency to fit fragmentary passages on education into a preconceived system and indiscriminately juxtapose what the youthful Mill said with the mature Mill's writings. As a systematic approach to Mill, Garforth's books are admittedly the most voluminous and successful; but they suffer from these defects.

An alternative approach is suggested in Francis X. Roellinger(1952). He notes Mill's statement in the *Autobiography* that the book is a record of successive phases of a mind "which was always pressing forward, equally ready to learn and unlearn either from its own thoughts or from those of others."[39] Therefore, Roellinger does not try to understand Mill's educational theory in a static and finished form, but in its changing and dynamic aspects.

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[37]Kingsley Price, *Education and Philosophical Thought*, and F.W. Garforth, *John Stuart Mill's Theory of Education*, and *Educative Democracy: John Stuart Mill on Education in Society*.

[38]Kingsley Price, p.501.

[39]Francis X. Roellinger, Jr., "Mill on Education," *The Journal of General Education*, 6:4(1952), p.246.

Despite Mill's "predisposition in favour of the teachings of his father and Jeremy Bentham," it is claimed, the sway of Mill's earlier education is not to be overestimated. Roellinger sees the "radical change" in Mill's educational thought "in the essays written in the period following the crisis."[40]

But was Mill after the mental crisis totally different from Mill before it? To what extent is such periodisation useful in explaining Mill's mental development? Some scholars attempt to answer those questions by finding certain common elements before and after the mental crisis. People like K.J. Fielding(1956) and William J. Baker(1970) try to show that Mill's emphasis on the non-rational aspect of man was not peculiar to the post-crisis Mill because James Mill's educational practice was not purely intellectual.[41] Peter F. Morgan(1978) shows that Mill's taste for poetry was actually prepared during his early life under the tutorship of his father.[42] Similarly, Geraint L. Williams(1982) shows that Mill's conception of human perfection and intellectual leadership was already formed before the crisis by his immersion in the Greek classics.[43]

However, Mill's education as described in the *Autobiography* is still perceived by many writers, notably Milhauser and Crossley, as cool, rigid and intellectual.[44] Particularly important in this connection are the psychoanalytic studies made by Albert W. Levi(1945), John Durham(1963), Bruce Mazlish(1975) and David Kowalewski(1980).[45] Viewing Mill's earlier education as having been conducted under the strict control by the father, the

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[40] *Ibid.*, p.248.

[41] K.J. Fielding, "Mill and Gradgrind," *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 11:2(1956), pp.148-51, and William J. Baker, "Gradgrindery and the Education of John Stuart Mill," *The Western Humanities Review*, 24:1(1970), pp.49-56.

[42] Peter F. Morgan, "The Poetic in the Early Life of John Stuart Mill," *Wordsworth Circle*, 7(1978), pp.121-8.

[43] Geraint L. Williams, "J.S. Mill on the Greeks: History Put to Use," *MNL*, 17:1(1982), pp.1-11.

[44] Milton Milhauser, "The Two Boyhoods," *Harvard Studies in Literature*, 4:1(1972), pp.36-51; and Robert Crossley, "The Failed Education of John Stuart Mill and Henry Adams," *The Journal of General Education*, 30:4(1979), pp.233-53.

[45] Albert William Levi, "The 'Mental Crisis' of John Stuart Mill," *Psychoanalytic Review*, 32(1945), pp.86-101; John Durham, "The Influence of John Stuart Mill's Mental Crisis on His Thoughts," *The American Imago*, 20:4(1963), pp.369-84; Bruce Mazlish, *James and John Stuart Mill*, and David Kowalewski, "Politics and Emotions in the Thought of John Stuart Mill," *The Journal of Psychohistory*, 7:4(1980), pp.455-65.

psychoanalysts tend to dramatise the mental crisis as an explosion of repressed emotions. Another psychological analysis by Clinton Machann explains the mental crisis as the moment at which the egoistic Mill transformed himself to the altruistic Mill.[46]

There are, then, a number of distinct contemporary approaches to the educational thought of John Stuart Mill. The studies in the context of liberty and social philosophy have advantages because they allow for contextual examinations of Mill's educational thought. In particular, Bouton's and Duncan's emphasis on "history" and "class" in Mill's social philosophy are helpful in understanding the historical and social meaning of Mill's educational theory. But what is neglected in their approach is Mill's problem-consciousness which he acquired through his personal experience. This study takes a new approach to these problems. It will argue that having personally committed himself to the historical process, Mill developed social, political, and educational theories for certain practical purposes which had been derived from his view of history. The normative elements in his theories were quite often in conflict with the descriptive anthropology firmly entrenched in him by his own education. This approach, I believe, will make the educational study of Mill both contextual and thematic.

Because to assume change apparently means to deny continuity, systematic and developmental approaches may be held to be mutually exclusive. However, the existing literature suggests, as we have seen, that there are in Mill's thought both change and continuity. By uncovering a certain continuous problem-consciousness we may be able to marry the developmental approach to the systematic approach. For example, Mill's interests in different subjects such as poetry, politics and education were not always synchronously aroused in him. Why he was more interested in this at a certain time and in that at another cannot be explained fully by a one-dimensional approach only. On the other hand, by being too much occupied with the changing aspect of Mill's thought, one is apt to miss what is persistently "Millian." By pursuing an appropriate balance between these two approaches, the study will make more acceptable the social contextual approach to Mill's educational theory.

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[46]Clinton Machann, "John Stuart Mill's 'Mental Crisis,'" *Journal of Individual Psychology*, 29:2(1973), pp.76-87.

If the study is successful in explicating Mill's educational thought in terms of his historical consciousness, it will be a contribution to our understanding of the intellectual climate of the Victorian age, in which the pre-Victorian rationalism underwent significant changes and modifications. Understanding Mill's confusion and dilemmas in this tumultuous age, we will be able to recognise the weakness of the claim of reason in the face of growing socialism, romanticism and evolutionism.

In spite of the somewhat ambitious appearance of the study, it has several limitations. The study aims at providing a comprehensive exposition of John Stuart Mill's educational theory, subsuming both systematic and developmental aspects of his thought. However, it is not the goal of the study to cover every aspect of his educational theory. The study is concerned with Mill's educational thought only in the context in which his historical consciousness was in harmony or in conflict with his views of man, society and ultimately education. In order to understand fully his history, anthropology and politics, other studies are needed. It is doubtful whether a complete exposition can be made without distorting some vital points in Mill's developing ideas. What is addressed directly in the study is the foundation of Mill's problem-consciousness, rather than the theoretical superstructures.

A major concern of this study, therefore, is the personal relationship of Mill to history. This will involve a consideration not only of Mill's view of history but also of the place he reserved for himself in the historical process. Chapter II, which deals with these issues, will examine the place of history in the thought of the elder Benthamites, whose influence on the young Mill was profound, and then follow Mill's changing view of history in relation with his commitment to actual political reform. The chapter will conclude with an examination of Mill's conception of the science of history and its role in the practice of reform.

Chapter III will examine Mill's concept of human nature. History for Mill was an enormous stream of intertwined laws of human nature. His belief in the possibility of constructing a science of history was grounded on his view that human nature was scientifically explicable. Beginning with an account of his view of the nature of man, the

chapter will proceed to point out the conflicts and contradictions between this descriptive anthropology and the normative values originating from his commitment to history-making. Mill's analysis of feelings, free-will and human action, although they were of central importance in his social and educational theory, reflected clearly and were seriously flawed by these conflicts and contradictions.

On the basis of Mill's theories of man and history, Chapter IV will examine Mill's theories of individual and social action. The chapter will bring under its purview Mill's revised utilitarian theories of happiness, morals and politics. Influenced heavily by the normative zeal of Mill, the historical man, these theories illustrate clearly the fundamental contradictions generated by his descriptive anthropology. The quality distinction in happiness, the concept of rule in his individualistic theory of morality, and the revised view of democracy -- all were in fundamental conflict with his ideals of a liberal-democratic future for society.

Chapters V and VI are, in a sense, an extension of Chapter IV. Chapter V focuses on Mill's ideas on education as a theory of social and political practice. Education as a practical activity must be subjugated to a normative goal; but as a means to this goal it can guarantee success only if it is based on some theoretical foundations. Once again, it will be argued that the central elements of his descriptive anthropology were in serious conflict with his paedagogical prescriptions. Chapter VI will consider Mill's views of the place of education in the process of history. This will involve a consideration of the conflict between Mill's account of utilitarian individualism and his observations concerning the educational responsibility of the State as an enlightened public power. The chapter then moves on to elaborate Mill's chief educational goal, the cultivation of character, both in the individual and the nation. Of major importance in this connection is the uncovering of the relationship of this education for character development to the reality of the life of the majority of citizens.

The conclusion will summarise the major issues arising from the preceding chapters, identifying fundamental problems contained in Mill's anthropological and social theories. This will lead to an assessment of his educational thought in terms of his methodological framework and historical consciousness.

II. History

A. Mill and History

"Mill had scarcely any prophetic gift," observes Sir Isaiah Berlin, "Unlike his contemporaries Marx, Bruckhardt, Tocqueville, he had no vision of what the twentieth century would bring." Mill failed to predict the political and social consequences of industrialisation, did not understand the strength of irrational and unconscious factors in human behaviour, and could not see the terrifying techniques to which modern knowledge has led and is leading. "But," Berlin goes on to say, "if he was not sensitive to the contours of the future, he was acutely aware of the destructive factors at work in his own world."[1] This is indeed an important point. Moreover, Mill's knowledge of their impact on his society implied an understanding of how such factors had come to existence. He was conscious of the age he lived as part of the historical continuum. Although, unlike many of his contemporaries, he was not a prophet, he was an historical man who put himself consciously and intentionally into the stream of history, trying to influence its flow.

Mill's historical consciousness of his age was strongly entrenched in his social and political theories. Occasionally, Mill expressed his consciousness of history explicitly in clear language; more often it was implicitly suggested, or even concealed, in nonhistorical arguments. Nevertheless, it was always there. In his changing opinion regarding the ballot question, in the high tone of his defence of liberty for individual development, in his severe criticism of the "intuitionist" moral philosophy, there lay a more or less consistent view that history was moving, and should move in a particular direction. This underlying historical outlook, even though Mill did not develop it to a futurological "vision of what the twentieth century would bring," was one of the determining factors of Mill's thought.

In attempting to understand Mill's view of history as an important factor of his thought, we cannot ignore the subjective elements which must have helped form it. His personal education, work and love-relationships, all these influenced his conception of

[1]Isaiah Berlin, "John Stuart Mill and the Ends of Life," in *Four Essays on Liberty*, p.183.

history. So these are important for our consideration. But they were not the only nor perhaps the most important formative influence. Of greater significance in forming his notion of history was his personal contact with history itself. Although contact brings with it a certain preconception of the object which one contacts, the tension occurring in the process of interaction generates a deeper conception of the object and a corresponding deepening of self-understanding on the part of the subject. Having contact with history as he initially conceived it, Mill developed a theory of history and, in doing so, reserved in it a place for himself. History was a theory expressing a process of development, and in this development both subject and object were intermingled. For Mill, theory was to be expressed in practice. Without considering this aspect of his historical consciousness, his view of history remains a dead body of theory, a mere abstraction without vitality. Mill was never content to be a mere theoretician; he wanted to be a theoretician who played a role in the process of history. Unfortunately, this aspect of Mill's consciousness has often been neglected in the studies of Mill's ideas of history.

Looking at Mill's writings about history without considering the subjective aspect of his thought has produced a good deal of confusion and contradiction. John C. Cairns, for example, claims that history "was never at the centre of his [Mill's] adult activity,"[2] while Clark W. Bouton argues that it played "the central role" in his thought.[3] We may agree with Cairns in the sense that Mill never wrote any history and that all he said about history was contained in reviews of other people's works. Although Mill once wished to write a history of the French Revolution, he gave this task up, yielding it to Carlyle. Mill never was an historian. At the same time it is also possible to agree with Bouton if we focus our attention on what Mill said in Volume VI of *A System of Logic*. Mill there developed a system of social science, the basis of which was a philosophy of history. Opinions, however, are at variance even in interpreting the same volume of the *Logic*. Richard Paul Anschutz concludes that history for Mill was merely descriptive while science was explanatory. Mill was then able to

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[2]John C. Cairns, "Introduction," *CW*, XX, p.xxvi.
[3]Clark W. Bouton, "John Stuart Mill: On Liberty and History," *The Western Political Quarterly*, 18:3(1965), p.569.

look forward in history "to the time when the findings of the historian could be verified, or even perhaps anticipated, by the deductions of the sociologist." So, in Anschutz' interpretation, Mill's "history" was something less than a science.[4] On the other hand, Clark Bouton claims that Mill's history was something more than merely descriptive because "its course can be shown to have been 'determined more or less precisely by the original constitution of mankind and by the circumstances of the planet on which we live.'" Moreover, Bouton insists, "this 'original constitution' is discoverable only through a study of the whole course and order of history."[5] According to Bouton, for Mill the study of history itself was a science; in Anschutz' view it remained simply a description of facts and a search for empirical generalizations which are not ultimate and derivative laws.[6]

Neither of these interpretations is entirely mistaken. The difference between Cairns and Bouton is a difference in point of reference, and that between Anschutz and Bouton is one of defining "history." But this does not excuse the particularism which, seeing trees, does not see the forest. Mill's "history" and his historical consciousness must be explained in some other terms than an expression of the facts and laws of human progress.

Fortunately, several studies have been published recently, which provide an escape from such narrow interpretations. Geraint L. Williams(1982) attempts to concretise Mill's thesis of the "science of history" by considering how Mill viewed the Greeks as an historic people. The basis of this attempt is Williams' view that "ultimately, having understood particular ages separately, we should be able to discover the laws to explain those ages and to understand the sequence of change from one period to the next."[7] Such an attempt is a significant advance towards substantiating the Boutonian claim. The superb analysis by Edward Alexander of Mill's historical writings(1976) is intended to show that Mill's view of history passed through a series of metamorphoses in the tension between the concepts of "progression" and "permanence."[8] This interpretation is noteworthy in the sense that it

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[4]Richard P. Anschutz, *The Philosophy of J.S. Mill*, p.89.
[5]Clark W. Bouton, p.570.
[6]Karl Britton, *John Stuart Mill*, pp.181-5.
[7]Geraint L. Williams, "J.S. Mill on the Greeks," *MNL*, 17:1(1982), p.2.
[8]Edward Alexander, "The Principles of Permanence and Progression in the Thought

diverts our attention from the literal comments of Mill to the changing and developing person Mill himself. John Coleman's "John Stuart Mill on the French Revolution"(1983)[9] and John C. Cairns' "Introduction" to the *Essays on the French History and Historians*(1985)[10] are also significant for their viewing Mill's "history" in terms of his changing attitude to France and her history. As Cairns points out, France was for Mill "a laboratory of intellectual exploration and political experimentation, and a mirror, the clearest he knew, in which to see what preoccupied him in England."[11]

The works of Alexander and Cairns provide a number of useful lines of thought. From Alexander's view we see that Mill's ideas of history were subject to change, evolving ceaselessly along the flow of his problem-consciousness. From Cairns it is clear that his view of history, particularly the history of France, inextricably revolved around his concern for political reforms. This, in fact, is the point of departure for the discussion which follows. Mill's conception of history is not only to be explained in its own terms; it is to be illuminated in the light of his subjective participation in history-making, in his concern and restless exertions for reform. Thus understood, his theory of history is not a dead set of ideas provoking, just like the blind men's elephant, endless discussion in which each disputant grounds himself on his own choice of particulars; rather, it elevates itself to a *live* theory coloured with the vividness of the life of John Stuart Mill, the historical man.

B. Mill and the Benthamite view of History

That the young Mill was educated on the principles of Benthamism[12] to be the leader of the reform movement of the Philosophic Radicals is well known. The drama of his adoption of Benthamism is described in the *Autobiography* as having occurred over a three

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[8](cont'd) of J.S. Mill," John M. Robson and Michael Laine, eds., *James and John Stuart Mill*, pp.126-42.
[9]John Coleman, "John Stuart Mill on the French Revolution," *History of Political Thought*, 4:1(1983), pp.89-110.
[10]*CW*, XX, pp.vii-xcii.
[11]*Ibid.*, p.vii.
[12]"My previous education had been, in a great measure, a course of Benthamism." *The Early Draft of John Stuart Mill's Autobiography*, p.74. In *Autobiography* "in a great measure" is replaced by "in a certain sense".

year period from the winter of 1821, when he first read Bentham, to the commencement of the *Westminster Review* (1824). At that time, or from that time on, Mill said he came to have an object of life which was "to be a reformer of the world," and to identify his own happiness with the striving for the achievement of this object. He regarded such an object as "something durable and distant" and his endeavour to pursue it as promising to himself constant self-development and "the certainty of a happy life."[13] In 1823 he declared, "I am one of those, Sir, who are friends, and not enemies to innovation; for I wish to see the human race well governed -- which would certainly be the greatest of innovations."[14] And, in fact, all the writings he published until his mental crisis fall in the category of Benthamite propaganda. He protested against the religious monopoly of the Established Church, advocating "Free Discussion,"[15] defended liberty of the press[16] and the classical utilitarian theories of political economy regarding value, population, and free trade,[17] attacked the conventional legal system[18] and the selfish rule of the landed aristocracy,[19] and advocated reform, most of all, political reform.[20]

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[13] *Autobiography*, p.80.
[14] (John Stuart Mill,) "Old and New Institutions," *MC*, 17 October 1823, p.2.
[15] "Religious Persecution," *MC*, 1 January 1823, p.1; "Free Discussion, Letter I, II and III," *MC*, 28 January, 8 February and 12 February 1823, each p.3; an untitled article, *MC*, 9 May 1823, p.3; and "Ireland," *Parliamentary History and Review*, 1826, pp.603-26.
[16] "Blessings of Equal Justice," *MC*, 20 August 1823, p.2; "On the Law of Libel," *MC*, 1 January 1824, p.2; and "Law of Libel and Liberty of the Press," *WR*, 3(1825), pp.285-321.
[17] "Exchangeable Value," *Traveller*, 6 and 12 December 1822, each p.3; a review essay on Thomas Took's *Thoughts and Details on the High and Low Prices*, *Globe and Traveller*, 4 March 1823, p.1; "East and West India Sugars," *ibid.*, 7 June 1823, p.3; a review of Thomas Took's subsequent volumes, *MC*, 9 August 1823, p.3; a review of T.R. Malthus' *Measure of Value*, *MC*, 5 September 1823, p.2; "Question of Population," *Black Dwarf*, 11(27 November 1823), pp.748-56, (10 December 1823), pp.791-98, and 12(7 January 1824), pp.21-3; "War Expenditure," *WR*, 2(1824), pp.27-48; "Quarterly Review -- Political Economy," *WR*, 3(1825), pp.213-32; and "The Corn Laws," *WR*, 3(1825), pp.394-420.
[18] "Judicial Oath," *MC*, 23 July 1823, p.3; a letter to the editor, *MC*, 15 April 1823, p.3; "Persecution for Religious Scruples," *MC*, 26 August 1823, p.3; "Technicalities of English Law," *MC*, 18 September 1823, p.2; "Practicability of Reform in the Law," *MC*, 8 October 1823, p.2; and "Pleadings," *MC*, 5 January 1824, p.3.
[19] "Absenteeism," *MC*, 16 September 1825, p.3, and "The Game Laws," *WR*, 5(1826), p.3.
[20] "Errors of the Spanish Government," *MC*, 12 August 1823, pp.2-3; "Securities of Good Government," *MC*, 25 September 1823, p.2; "Parliamentary Reform," *MC*, 3

It is also well known that the Benthamite line of the reform movement was grounded on a conviction that social institutions should be brought into accordance with what they referred to as human nature.[21] In this philosophy human nature was held to be fixed, while social institutions were changeable. So for the purpose of securing the greatest happiness of the greatest number, it was social institutions and not human nature that was to be reshaped. Mankind was conceived by Bentham as being under "the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*."[22] As pleasure-seeking, egotistic animals, men were thus inevitably and inescapably driven by selfish concern for their own pleasure; the primary and essential goal of social reform therefore was to set up securities to protect the majority from the harmful influence of the sinister interests of those who enjoyed power. This was the rationale for the Benthamite radicals' political program which demanded security "for person and property, for free economic development, and for good government."[23] The Benthamite view of human nature and the application of the principle of utility clearly pointed out the absurdity and irrationality of previous and existing social institutionns, in particular the aristocracy and the established church.[24] Convinced of the necessity of reform of existing institutions, the coterie of intellectuals called "Philosophic Radicals" tended to view the past with a good deal of contempt and thus to reject history wholesale.[25]

There is reason then to see this group of intellectuals as being ahistorical. Thus Coleman, pointing to Bentham's contempt for the study and use of history and the fact that his occasional use of historical material was confined solely to anecdote and illustration, writes, "When Mill's reaction against Benthamism was at its peak, it was this absence of a

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[20](cont'd) October 1823, p.4; and "Old and New Institutions."

[21]A fuller discussion of "human nature" will be provided in Chapter III.

[22]Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, p.1.

[23]John M. Robson, *The Improvement of Mankind*, p.8.

[24]"Benthamism," wrote Sidgwick in 1877, "is the one outcome of the Seculum Rationalisticum against which the philosophy of Restoration and Reaction has had to struggle." "Bentham and Benthamism in Politics and Ethics," *The Fortnightly Review*, 21:125(1877), pp.627-8.

[25]The method of deducing proper social institutions from "the physiological and psychological analysis" of the natural man (in the sense of the pre-civilised man) was not peculiar to this group but common to the Enlightenment writers and even to Hobbes. See C.B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism*, pp.29-46.

historical dimension to Bentham's thought that was singled out for criticism." Coleman goes on to say, "Benthamism was indeed built on the most ahistorical trends of eighteenth century thought; many of Bentham's disciples ignored history altogether."[26] While there is some truth in this conclusion, it requires a good deal of qualification. On the basis of their view of human nature and commitment to the principle of utility, the Benthamites *rejected* tradition and argued for a thorough social and political reform. But this does not mean that they *ignored* the past as history. How indeed can one reject the significance of a thing without admitting its existence? Their concept of reform did, it is true, imply a rejection of the past, but only in the sense that reform meant replacing what was improper and unworkable with that which was proper and functional. An act of reform, just like a revolution, must occur in history and thus be historical, whether or not its ideology, or principles, contained a "contempt for the study and use of history." This was why Benthamism, as an ideology of reform, was *historical* in its nature, whether or not its exponents despised historical study.

Moreover, a closer look at the issue demonstrates clearly that the young Mill's mentors did not ignore history and that his education was certainly not ahistorical. The curriculum which James Mill provided for his son included a wide range of ancient and modern historical works. John Stuart Mill himself noted in the *Autobiography* that his father's *History of British India* contributed largely to his education "in the best sense of the term" because it gave to his thoughts "impulse and stimulus as well as guidance."[27] Published in 1818, the production of this multi-volumed masterpiece was undertaken when the elder Mill was engaged in the final stage of his son's education, and inevitably involving his son in its writing. He wrote the book on the very desk where he taught his son and corrected the proofsheets while listening to his son's reading.

The book itself provides ample evidence of James Mill's historicism and of the fact that his thought was historically framed. Intending it as a "useful" history, James Mill performed "the labour of extracting and ordering the dispersed and confused materials"[28]

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[26]John Coleman, p.96.
[27]*Autobiography*, p.16.
[28]James Mill, *The History of British India*, I, p.xvi.

from the point of view of "A Critical History," which he explained, consisted of two areas. One was the matter of evidence, the concern of which was "to bring to light the value of each article, to discriminate what is true from what is false" and to compare and combine partial statements to fuller statements. On the basis of this, the other enterprise was undertaken, which was to form complete statements in which true causal relations and tendencies were to be exposed.[29] Such a method is technically sound enough to be considered a legitimate historiographical procedure.

Each volume is pervaded by a conception of the desirability of historical progress. Thus James Mill criticised Indian society for its long stagnation. "From the scattered hints contained in the writings of the Greeks," he concluded that "the Hindus, at the time of Alexander's invasion, were in a state of manners, society, and knowledge, exactly the same with that in which they were discovered by the nations of modern Europe."[30] But since they had achieved a state of civilisation, they must have had their own history of how they arose from savagery and barbarism. Even Westerners, when they first wandered into Greece, Italy, and the eastern regions of Europe, were "confessedly ignorant and barbarous."[31] So once were the ancient Hindus. "The transition from the state of tribes to the more regulated and artificial system of a monarchy and laws," James Mill explains, "is not sudden." It is the result of "a gradual preparation and improvement."[32] If they had progressed in the past, how had they come to stagnate? What lessons could be drawn from the causes of this stagnation for the purpose of preventing it and keeping a society in progress? If history was to be "useful," these were the kinds of questions to which it must provide answers, and this James Mill thought possible.

Considering the intellectual milieu of Scotland in which James Mill grew up, it is no surprise that he was possessed of so strong a view of historical progress. As Spencer Davis states, "one of the definite features of the Scottish Enlightenment" was "the amount of effort

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[29] *Ibid.*, pp.xviii-xix.
[30] *Ibid.*, p.118.
[31] *Ibid.*, p.121.
[32] *Ibid.*, p.123.

Scots put into developing the genre of "philosophical history"[33] in order to express their belief in historical progress. James Mill's *History*, which secured for him an early fame, was started before he began the intimate relationship with Jeremy Bentham. Consequently, it reveals a good deal of Scottish elements. Central to the idea of progress in history are "enlightenment" and "intellectual advancement," which can be looked upon as the keys to unravelling the mysteries of different historical stages. In this conjectural history, later more civilised stages were always cons dered to be better than earlier stages, the latter often being viewed with contempt.

How did James Mill move f om such an historicism to the ahistorical theory of reform in his "Essay on Government"(1828) which reduced the question of government simply to "a question about the adaptation of means to an end"[34]? In fact, of course, the "*a priori* reasoning"[35] of the "Essay," did not in itself contradict the historical method of the *History*. In making judgments upon historical events, James Mill asserted, the historian should always refer to the laws of human nature which were "the end, as well as instrument, of everything," or to "the principles of human society," that is, "the course, into which the laws of human nature impel the human being."[36] Referring to the established laws of human nature, one could evaluate judgments about historical evidence and determine whether they were true or false. When a multitude of events were thus collected, the same laws of human nature could be used to discern causes and effects, good ends and evil ends, proper means and improper means. This method, being appropriate to distinguish advanced institutions from the less advanced in history, was also useful in criticising existing political and legal institutions and in elaborating new or reformed ones. In this sense, there was a consistency, in spite of the seeming difference, between the pre-Benthamite *History* and the Benthamite "Essay."

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[33]Spencer Davis, "Scottish Philosophical History," p.5.
[34]James Mill, "Essay on Government," Jack Lively and Joan Rees, eds., *Utilitarian Logic and Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), p.55.
[35]T.B. Macaulay, "Mill's Essay on Government," *Edinburgh Review*, 49(1829), p.161. See also Lively and Rees, eds., p.101.
[36]James Mill, "Essay," p.xxvii.

James Mill's ready acceptance of Bentham's view of law and morality can also be explained in terms of his position in the development of the Scottish philosophical history. In Forbes' attempt to explain James Mill's Scottish connection, the key personality that connected James Mill to his Scottish intellectual predecessors was John Millar. From Adam Smith, Millar had learned that in the eighteenth century the basis of government was changing from authority to utility and that such progress was caused by the diffusion of knowledge. James Mill, in turn, learned this lesson from Millar and, adopting the principle of utility, brought to a close the Scottish tradition of "Historismus."[37] More recently, Stefan Collini and his colleagues have taken a wider perspective in looking at James Mill's position in the Scottish tradition.[38] The two rival reformist groups of early nineteenth century British intellectuals, the Philosophic Whigs and the Philosophic Radicals, are both regarded as heirs of the Scottish Enlightenment. While the *Edinburgh Review* group, represented by Mackintosh and Macaulay, were rooted in the Scottish soil, finding French Jacobinism distasteful and seeing in many existing institutions both utility and security, James Mill's Benthamite group, transplanted to England, attempted to expose the Whig lack of nerve and principle, and proposed a radical reform grounded on "science" instead of Macaulayan "experience." Thus one attacked, while the other defended, the British constitution. In spite of this major difference, however, both Mill and Macaulay, even in disputing with each other, made reference to the Scottish tradition and, in particular, to the idea of progress or "the March of the Mind."[39] Dugald Stewart has also been noted as an influence upon James Mill, who attended his lectures at Edinburgh University possibly in the academic year 1792-93.[40] Though appreciative of conjectural history and of the constitutionalist tradition, Stewart's lectures are interpreted as having heralded "a shift from the sceptical and explanatory focus of Hume and Smith towards a more explicitly normative concern with future goals of enlightened legislation

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[37]Duncan Forbes, "*Historismus* in England," *Cambridge Journal*, 4:7(1951), pp.387-400, "James Mill and India," *ibid.*, 5:1(1951), pp.19-33, and "'Scientific' Whiggism," *ibid.*, 7:2(1954), pp.643-70.
[38]Stefan Collini, Donald Winch and John Burrow, *That Noble Science of Politics*.
[39]*Ibid.*, p.105.
[40]Alexander Bain, *James Mill: A Biography*, p.16.

that could be attained regardless of specific forms of government."[41] Bentham, too, advocated this shift[42] and Stewart, in turn, endorsed Bentham's *Defence of Usury* and the Panopticon scheme as enlightened ideas of legal reform.[43] In effect, James Mill's adoption of Bentham's science of legislation was not incidental; rather, he adopted it because it provided exactly what Scottish historicism had looked for. The rationality of social institutions which Bentham proposed signalled the victory of reason, which in the Scottish view was to culminate the progress of history.

By taking the stance of a scientific reformist, James Mill tried to elevate his society from a lower to a higher stage, in effect helping to complete the historical process. The same logic may also be applied to Jeremy Bentham and his view of reform. With regard to history he was seemingly indifferent; but this is not to claim that his logical plan for reform, which was to "break loose from the trammels of authority and ancestor worship in the field of law,"[44] lacked a certain historical consciousness.

What Bentham rejected was any attempt to ground an argument for reform on historical examples and the reason for this was that history as a record of the facts about past human actions was "a record of error" or "a record of *uninstructive* error."[45] History, a record of ungeneralised particulars, had nothing to teach an enlightened man. Nevertheless, the past as the experiences of mankind never escaped Bentham's notice. It is in this sense that Leslie Stephen applied the term "historical school of jurisprudence" to Jeremy Bentham, who considered the reports of English legal decisions to be "an invaluable mine of experience for the legislator."[46] If Leslie Stephen was correct in pointing out that the "historical methods" of

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[41]Collini *et al.*, p.95.

[42]See, for example, Jeremy Bentham, *A Fragment on Government*, where the progress from natural to political society is perceived as having been motivated by a "sense of the utility of government"(F.C. Montagne, "Introduction" to Jeremy Bentham, *A Fragment on Government*, ed. Montagne [London: Oxford University Press, 1931], p.84.).

[43]Dugald Stewart, *Lectures on Political Economy*, in W. Hamilton, ed., *The Collected Works of Dugald Stewart*, IX, pp.46, 156.

[44]Jeremy Bentham, *A Fragment on Governrment*, in *The Works of Jeremy Bentham*, I, p.260n.

[45]Collini *et al.*, p.94.

[46]Leslie Stephen, *The English Utilitarians*, III, p.320.

John Austin, George Grote, and Henry Thomas Buckle grew out of the utilitarian school of Bentham and James Mill, it is clearly improper to accuse the latter of *a*-historicity. For them the record of the past as a listing of mere facts was too crude and too particular; in order to be trusted and utilised, both the record itself and the facts it contained had to be "philosophically" treated.

Philosophically treated, history for the elder utilitarians tended to be subject to their philosophy of reform. Thus James Mill's *History of British India* was so overladen with "a pre-established and favourite creed" of human nature that, as J.H. Burns points out, it broke his original promise to build a "philosophical history" which would explain social phenomena in terms of the laws of human nature. From the utilitarian reformist perspective human nature tended to be narrowly defined in terms of man's striving for happiness. History, when explained in terms of such a naive and simplified criterion, turned out to be merely a chronicle of good and bad institutions. This, J.H. Burns indicates, was directly opposed to James Mill's original proclamation that social phenomena and the development of society can be understood only by way of "a joint view of all the great circumstances taken together."[47]

The wedding in James Mill of the Scottish belief in progress with the Benthamite platform of reform produced the intellectual environment in which John Stuart Mill grew up. So when the young, and even the mature, Mill advocated a reformist cause, his advocacy was underpinned by the faith in historical progress which his father had carried with him from Scotland.

C. History in the Service of Reform

From the very early period of his commitment to the reformist movement John Stuart Mill began to refer to history in order to support the reformist cause. "All history proves," he stated in 1823,

> that in every nation of the earth, the powers of government have uniformly been monopolized in the hands of a privileged few, who, accordingly, never failed to abuse powers for the benefit of themselves and their connections, with only one difference,

[47]J.H. Burns, "The Light of Reason: Philosophical History in the Two Mills," Robson and Laine, eds., pp.18-9.

> that of old, when the public were far more ignorant and prejudiced than they now are, misgovernment was proportionally more flagrant."[47]

Alongside his attack on the privileged few, Mill made a case for intellectual progress; admitting that an improvement had taken place even under the misgovernment of the few. It was, indeed, this improvement which necessitated reform and promised its success.

For the young Mill the major historical development of his age was the parliamentary reform movement, which swallowed up all other political questions. The "desire for efficient securities for good government," Mill said in 1824, "has become much more general than it has been at any previous period of history."[48] The rise of the reform movement of his age was, in Mill's view, underpinned by the intellectual progress of the age, one distinguished from "all other ages by the number of persons who can read."[49] The number of literates of his time was so considerable that reading had become "the most approved and fashionable method" of killing time; consequently, the number of persons who had skimmed "the surface of literature" was far greater than ever before.[50] The ability to read, when it was widespread in society at large, assisted social progress, because, providing access to knowledge, it led people to think about themselves and their social habitat and eventually to dispel prejudices and improve "the physical and moral conditions of mankind."[51] Thus connecting the rise of the reform movement to the spread of knowledge among the people, Mill drew his readers' attention to the logic which connected enlightenment and reform.

In the logic which explained the rise of reform movements in terms of the dissemination of knowledge; it was quite natural that the role of those who had knowledge was highlighted. In the *History* James Mill wrote of the role of intellectuals, "In every society there are superior spirits, capable of seizing the best ideas of their times, and, if they are not opposed by circumstances, of accelerating the progress of the community to which they

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[47] "Old and New Institutions," p.2.
[48] John Stuart Mill, "Periodical Literature," *CW*, I, p.300.
[49] John Stuart Mill, "On the Present State of Literature," *The Adelphi*, 1:8(1924), p.684.
[50] *Ibid.*, p.686.
[51] *Ibid.*, p.685.

belong."[53] This theory that intellectuals could push society forward to progress was accepted by John Stuart Mill. The relationship of intellectuals with their age was a two-way traffic. On the one hand, Mill said, they "take their colour from the age in which they live."[54] The extent of their knowledge was thus delimited by their age and the problems they had were the problems they had *in* their age. On the other hand and contrary to this *passive* aspect, the knowledge they possessed enabled them to engage *actively* in the affairs of their age. One way of acting upon the age was echoing strenuously and if possible enthusiastically the reigning opinions. Dr. Southey was the "greatest living example" of this kind of intellectual.[55] However, writers like Southey, Mill believed, by writing *for* the many, were primarily interested in their own fame. The consequence of flattering the half-cultivated majority often meant a downgrading of a writer to the level of the many. The result was vulgarisation and even degeneration. The true intellectual could not be content to flatter prevalent opinions and encourage vulgar taste; he must be able to lead the many. And this intellectual leadership was to be used for the betterment of the human condition, that is, the progress of society, instead of for the maintenance of ***status quo***.

Mill's association of the reform movement with his belief in the intellectual progress of society led him to his conception of the role that intellectuals could play in achieving social progress. And it was in this context that Mill sought and found his own historical position. He wanted, in fact, to be a true intellectual, to do what a true intellectual must do. In "Civilization"(1836), Mill agreed that there were two choices for an intellectual who wished to "produce much direct effect upon the minds and destinies of his countrymen generally." He could be either "a member of parliament" or "an editor of a London newspaper."[56] Mill's choice was the latter. Even though he did not actually edit a newspaper, the majority of his publications were originally periodical contributions, all written in the spirit of intellectual leadership. In criticising the vulgar taste of popular writers, Mill insisted that a writer should

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[53]James Mill, *History*, I, p.124.
[54]"Present State of Literature," p.687.
[55]*Ibid*.
[56]John Stuart Mill, "Civilization," *CW*, XVIII, p.135.

maintain the "higher excellences both of thought and composition."[57] In order to do this he must cease to regard writing simply as a trade; He must see in it a duty of the enlightened man to preserve a high calibre of thought and to influence his readers. Therefore, when Mill took journalism as the arena of his action, his ambition was to be much more than a mere journalist; he wished to be a critic and spiritual leader of his people, leading them to desire and demand more appropriate social arrangements.

Having placed himself among the intellectual leaders of his age, Mill in 1824 declared that "in the present situation of Great Britain, and all countries of Europe, extensive and searching reforms are imperatively required."[58] This perception of his age as an age of reform implied the view that the past had bequeathed to the present the task of solving problems. If the problems were solved, the new society would be the best which ever existed. In this historical outlook the reform movement which was taking place in Mill's time appeared to be of vital importance in human progress, because it signalled the moment at which society was about to jump from a lower to a higher stage of civilisation. As an intellectual leader and the champion of reform, Mill viewed history exclusively from a reformist point of view. Just as James Mill's *History* was "saturated . . . with opinions and modes of judgment of a democratic radicalism,"[59] so too did John Stuart Mill's interpretation of history reflect the character of the particular reform movement to which he subscribed. The four historical essays which Mill wrote between 1824 and 1828 provide ample evidence of his political reformist view of history.

In his review, "Brodie's History of the British Empire"(1824), Mill criticised David Hume's *History of England from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Revolution of 1688*(1823) for its preoccupation with a chosen hero, King Charles, and its sacrificing of "truth, honesty, and candour."[60] "When events come to be looked at, not as they affect the great interests of mankind, but as they bear upon the pleasures and pains of an individual," Mill claimed, "a habit is engendered of considering the pleasures and pains of an individual as

[57] "Present State of Literature," p.687.
[58] "Periodical Literature," p.315.
[59] *Autobiography*, p.16.
[60] *CW*, VI, p.5.

of more importance than the great interests of mankind."[61] What was ignored by such a "romance" were "the sufferings of the many," while the glory of the individual hero was proclaimed. An historian, Mill asserted, should "relate, among the actions of his hero, some by which the many are made to suffer."[62] Brodie, on the other hand, was praised for his "diligence, accuracy, and perseverance" in developing facts from a number of scattered, and seemingly unconnected, pieces of circumstantial evidence. The facts which Mill saw in Brodie's book were the arbitrariness of Charles' rule, the resistance of the aristocracy, and the sufferings of the people.

However, in order to write a complete history, the discovery of facts was not enough. An analysis of causes must accompany the presentation of facts. Brodie's great deficiency, Mill pointed out, was his failure to explain why the resistance to the absolute power of the despot came so much earlier in Britain than in other countries. Brodie lacked the "comprehensiveness of intellect, which traces effects to the causes, and teaches the reader to take in by a *coup d'œil* the mutual connexion of all the great events of the age."[63] This deficiency, Mill thought, came from Brodie's lack of familiarity with the principles of legislative philosophy, an essential qualification for writing correct history.

The idea of writing a history utilising the principles of philosophy was foremost in Mill's review, "Mignet's History of French Revolution"(1826), in which he distinguished a "modern" historiography from the "old" mode of historical composition. Being written for amusement, the old history was good enough if it was successful as a narrative. The best history was thus the story best told. As was the case with Livy -- and Thucydides, except his earlier chapters which conveyed his opinion about evidence -- "he who raised the most vivid conceptions, and the most intense emotions" was considered "the greatest master" of this art. But for a modern history the narrative itself was but a secondary object; history must illustrate the laws of human nature and human society.[64] In the same vein Mill in "Modern French Historical Works"(1826) commended the new French historians who wrote because

[61] *Ibid.*, pp.3-4.
[62] *Ibid.*, p.4.
[63] *Ibid.*, p.10.
[64] *WR*, 5(1826), p.385.

they had something to say and not because they desired to say something."[65] He praised Dulaure for having paid "great regard to facts, and little to assertions" and de Sismondi, more notably, for being a writer "who is no party, except that of truth, and whose only bias is towards the happiness of mankind."[66]

Through his essays Mill emphasised that history should not be merely an interesting story about particular individuals. It must promote learning and, for this purpose, it must contain truth. This requirement that history should contain truth was connected with and, indeed, dependent upon a conviction that human actions were not random or inexplicable but proceeded according to invariable laws. Man acted not only out of idiosyncratic desire or random design but because the laws which determined both his human nature and his society made him do so. Therefore, in looking at the past actions of mankind, the historian had not only to find out the facts and describe what happened; he had also to discover the working out of the laws of human nature and society, and expressed it in causal terms.

In "Scott's Life of Napoleon" (1828) Mill pointed out the utility of causal explanation. Indeed, part of the historian's duty, Mill wrote, was to turn the facts of history to practical use.[67] The historian, Mill said, "who is fit for his office must be well disciplined in the arts of connecting facts into principles, and apply principles to the explanation of facts."[68] By these principles he meant the laws or springs of human nature which were the "causes by the perpetual and often unseen agency of which, a nation is made to be what it is, in respect to civilization, morals, and social relations."[69] To explain historical facts in causal terms, therefore, required one to view them in terms of "philosophic" principles of human nature. An important reason for Mill's commitment to these *a priori* philosophic principles was the weakness he perceived in the empirical generalisations which conventional history had obtained by its best effort. Drawn from the particular events of a particular time, the range of human experience which these generalisations covered was substantially restricted. Thus,

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[65] *WR*, 6(1826), p.63.
[66] *Ibid*., pp.64-5.
[67] *WR*, 9(1828), pp.251-313.
[68] *Ibid*.
[69] *Ibid*., p.256.

when an extraordinary event like the French Revolution occurred, they failed in "affording even the specious appearance of explanation, which is the utmost that such empirical philosophy can ever accomplish."[70] In order to understand the moving forces in this vast convulsion, the historian needed to have an understanding of the laws which governed all historical events. And these laws, being the laws of human nature, were the same as those which explained and, at the same time, could be used to design reformist legislation.

Mill said,

> It is not too much to expect, that the writer, whose judgment it is to guide that of his readers in such concerns, shall himself know as much as philosophy and experience can teach, of the science of government and legislations; that he . . . shall know at the same time what is best in itself. . . .[71]

The new historian -- "the man who is yet to come" -- would, therefore, also be a reformer and his history would culminate in a vindication of an historical process by which all social institutions would be brought into accordance with human nature itself. The ultimate use of history was to be found therein. In spite of a number of modifications to this basic philosophy, Mill's commitment to an *a priori* conception of human nature as the basis for historical explanation and for reformist activity persisted throughout his life.

D. Reform in the Historical Process

The young Mill sought to justify his reformist view of history and his early role in it by seeking a causal explanation of the historical process, which appeared to him to be one of rationalising and improving social institutions in accordance with the laws of human nature. The most significant feature of this progress was its intellectual dimension. Indeed, Mill regarded intellectual advancement as the determining factor in the progress of human history. Consequently, history in his conception was a simple, linear process which, reflecting the intellectual improvement of mankind, could be explained fully if "philosophically" approached. The mental crisis, however, as described in the *Autobiography*, resulted in a challenge to such a naive, rationalist outlook.

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[70] *Ibid.*
[71] *Ibid.*

The mental crisis began with questioning of his own involvement in the reform movement of the Philosophic Radicals. According to Mill, there were two "very marked effects" of the mental crisis upon his opinions and character, the one related to his view of personal happiness, and the other to his view of man.[72] Both were early modifications of the utilitarian doctrine Mill had inherited from his father. The first of the two effects resulted in a radical criticism of the Benthamite view of happiness. Against the hedonistic view of Bentham that happiness or pleasure was "the test of all rules of conduct" and "the end of life," Mill professed a new view that "those only are happy . . . who have their minds fixed on some object other than their own happiness; on the happiness of others, on the improvement of mankind, even some art or pursuit, followed not as a means, but as itself an ideal end."[73]

The most important effect of Mill's new theory of happiness was the renewed will it gave him to take part in the reform movement, this time with a more altruistic spirit. The reformist activities Mill had previously been conducting appeared to him now as being based solely on detached calculations and intellectual judgments. Reform had been pursued simply because, being the rationalisation of all social institutions, it was perceived as the only way to eliminate the absurdities of past ages. He had pursued it because he had thought it was right, and in doing so he had believed his own happiness must be generated. However, he now knew that his participation in the reform movement had been deficient of any genuine feeling of sympathy with others. If the reform he was to pursue was not only to alleviate the sufferings of the "people"[74] but at the same time be a source of pleasure for himself, he must sympathise with them. Mill was to find the true happiness of his life in such sympathetic feelings.

After he recovered from the mental crisis, Mill's reform activities certainly gained in intensity. Joseph Hamburger's claim that after the recovery Mill experienced "a few years

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[72]For Mill's view of man see Chapter III.
[73]*Autobiography*, pp.85-6.
[74]For the Philosophic Radical concept of "people," see Joseph Hamburger, *Intellectuals in Politics*, p.67. Hamburger points out the abstractness of their concept of people.

(c.1829-33) of hostility to Benthamism and withdrawal from political propagandizing" and reverted only in 1835 to an "orthodox Radical position"[75] is hardly vindicated by the evidence. As is often the case in interpretations of the mental crisis, Hamburger grounds his argument upon Mill's "admiration for such anti-Benthamites as Carlyle and Coleridge" and especially his "adoption of certain St. Simonian ideas."[76] It is true that after the crisis Mill absorbed many ideas of anti-Benthamite writers. It is also true that, as William Thomas points out, Mill's account of the crisis, which he tended to treat as a kind of prelude to his mature ideas, was "sharply separated from the account of his activities during his 'sectarian' period."[77] But in what sense and why did Mill suddenly revert in 1835 to the "orthodox Radical position"? Hamburger does not provide an answer. The truth is that, in spite of what Mill said in his account of the crisis, he continued through and after it to advocate reforms. Indeed, his writings were stronger in tone and richer in quality during the immediate post-crisis period than before. Nor did his interest in reform activities weaken. For example, when revolution broke out in France in 1830, Mill rushed to Paris to witness the historic happenings with his own eyes. And on his return to London he continued to keep an eye upon the reform activities taking place in revolutionary France. After the Reform Bill of 1832, he committed himself even more positively to the Philosophic Radicals in their efforts to create a separate reform party and eliminate Whig opportunism.[78] The 1830s, in fact, saw the most vigorous activities of Mill in the cause of reform.

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[75] *Ibid.*, pp.96-8.

[76] *Ibid.*, p.78.

[77] William Thomas, *The Philosophic Radicals*, p.150.

[78] For an account of Mill's effort to create a radical reform party, see Hamburger's own book(*Intellectuals in Politics*), especially chapters 4-8(pp.113-241). In the same period appeared Mill's observations on the on-going French reforms, in which focus was laid upon the issues relevant to British society, such as the questions of peerage and municipal autonomy. Even the writings about Saint-Simonianism did not contradict Benthamite doctrines. In 1832 Mill pointed out as a weakness of English character the absence of abstract *principles* of legislation, which was the keynote of the Benthamite rhetoric. See (John Stuart Mill,) "Comparison of the Tendencies of French and English Intellect," *MR*, 7(1833), p.802. This essay was originally published in the Saint-Simonian organ *Le Globe* in 1832. For Mill's attitude toward Saint-Simonians see Richard K.P. Parkhurst, *The Saint Simonians, Mill and Carlyle*.

If in the post-crisis years Mill's commitment to the reform movement became strengthened instead of weakened, the traditional view that the mental crisis was a revolt against Benthamite rationalism or the baneful influence of his father must be reconsidered. In his anthropological ideas Mill attempted to incorporate many heterogeneous elements into his previous thought. But in terms of his political participation he tended to hang on to his radical reformist principles. This, we may presume, largely originated from the self-awakening and sudden awareness of his need of sympathy for others.

Though positively committed to the cause of reform, however, it must be pointed out that Mill was no enthusiast. Even in the 1830s his participation in political activities was a somewhat reserved one. In France he was an observer avoiding any active commitment to another nation's revolution. In England, through the decade-long debates over parliamentary reform, he remained in his position at India House rather than trying to enter Parliament to fight along, or to lead, his Radical colleagues on the battleground. He wrote and proposed, but his voice was always calm and quiet, the voice of an outsider. Why did Mill, despite the post-crisis renewed zeal and altruism, always keep a little back from the front line of reform? The answer lies in the determination that he made during the crisis. True he wanted to, and indeed did, love and sympathise with others, but he could never identify fully with the suffering people. Reform was to him an important goal, so important that he could find his personal happiness in its pursuit; but basically it remained, as it was always to be, the active business of other people, to whom he would render every assistance.

Related to this "lukewarmness" was his self-imposed role as a periodical writer. In "Armand Carrel"(1837), in whom he evidently saw himself, Mill stated, "Thus excluded from the region of deeds, he [Carrel] had still that of words; and words are deeds, and the cause of deeds."[79] Like Armand Carrel, Mill took his writing for periodicals to be his "mode of action,"[80] which he never thought of as temporary and evanescent as was the case with the work of vulgar "journalists." By providing criticism of and wisdom about current political issues, Mill believed he could command an influence over the people even more powerful than

[79] *DD*, I, p.215.
[80] *Ibid.*, p.250.

that of the leader of a political party, A good periodical writer, like himself and Armand Carrel, he believed, could lead not only a political party but the whole nation by "an easy superiority of genius and character, which renders competition hopeless."[11] What Mill wanted was to activate his "genius and character" in teaching the people; thus he would assist in the cause of reform. It was this self-imposed intellectual leadership of a periodical writer which made him stand to one side and observe the battle.[12]

It was this subjective element, too, that made Mill's relationship with the Philosophic Radicals, as J.H. Burns describes it, so "complex and ambiguous."[13] Nonetheless, his post-crisis participation in the reform movement made it clear that his commitment to the Philosophic Radicals was unchanged and even strengthened. In this connection, William Thomas' interpretation of the crisis is interesting. In explaining why Mill fell into a state of dejection, Thomas points to the deteriorated public opinion of the *Westminster Review* circle, the dry and poor content of the journal, the dissolution of the Utilitarian Society, and the weakened position of Mill and his utilitarian friends in the London Debating Society when they encountered "the most outspoken opposition" from Tory speakers like John Sterling and F.D. Maurice. These new circumstances and events, Thomas explains, caused Mill's confidence in his own creed to crumble. As a result, Mill came to have "an increasing disrelish for controversy" and a desire for "a period of taking stock, of unhurried reflection on his intellectual inheritance." This, in turn, resulted in "an avid search for some remedy for his state of apathy towards reforming causes."[14] If Thomas' interpretation is accepted, the mental crisis was not simply a revolt against the orthodox Bentahmite utilitarianism but a process by which Mill struggled to revitalise that creed.

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[11] *Ibid.*, p.212.

[12] This detached attitude of an intellectual leader was actually a legacy of his father who had claimed that "the man whose mind contains the greater number of general theories, is the man best furnished for correct practice; the man whose mind contains the smallest number the least." James Mill, "Theory and Practice," *London and Westminster Review*, 3 and 25(1836), p.231. This preference for theory to practice Mill maintained through his life.

[13] J.H. Burns, a review essay on Joseph Hamburger's *Intellectuals in Politics*, *MNL*, 1:2(1966), p.27.

[14] William Thomas, p.167.

The ideas to revitalise this creed Mill sought from non-Benthamite sources. The consequence was a considerable enrichment of his thought. This was particularly true in regard to the question of causation in history, which had been a major concern of the young Mill. The first questioning of the orthodox Benthamite view was provoked by his reading of Macaulay's criticism of his father's "Essay on Government." The major argument of James Mill's essay was that the question of government was a question about adaptation of means to an end. The end of government should, therefore, determine the forms of government; that is, good government must be based on a correct understanding of its end or goal. This goal James Mill sought in the laws of human nature, which he summarily described as the laws of pleasure and pain.[15] In Macaulay's words, "Certain propensities of Human Nature are assumed; and from these premises the whole Science of Politics is synthetically deduced!"[16] For his use of such an *a priori* method Macaulay denounced James Mill as "an Aristotelian of the fifteenth century, born out of due season."[17] Macaulay went on to challenge James Mill's statement that, since particular historical events or experiences were separate and thus "divided," no laws or principles could be derived from them. Experiences, Macaulay claimed, could never be completely separate and "divided" or even appear to be so. Experiences, that is the facts, were logically prior to any theory and could not possibly be unreliable or contradictory. "When we say that one fact is inconsistent with another fact, we mean only that it is inconsistent with *the theory* which we have founded on that other fact. "But," he went on to say, "if the fact be certain, the unavoidable conclusion is, that our theory is false; and in order to correct it, we must reason back from an enlarged collection of facts to principles."[18] John Stuart Mill thought Macaulay was erroneous. At the same time, however, he found that there was something more fundamentally erroneous in his father's "philosophical Method."[19] This impelled him to start a long inquiry into logic, or the method of science. Mill did not say in the *Autobiography* exactly why Macaulay was erroneous, nor

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[15] James Mill, "Essay on Government," pp.55-6.
[16] T.B. Macaulay, "Mill's Essay," p.162.
[17] *Ibid.*, p.161.
[18] *Ibid.*, p.162.
[19] *Autobiography*, p.95.

what was wrong with his father's method. But considering what he said in "On the Definition of Political Economy"(1836) and in *A System of Logic*(1843), it is evident that Mill, in observing this dispute, began to sense the limitations inherent in his father's deductive method. Of course, Macaulay was mistaken because experiences, being always particular and disconnected from each other, could not provide any general principles. Moreover, no matter how many instances were collected, they could not reveal any underlying laws because they did not cover the whole range of possible human experience. The only way to arrive at and secure general principles which would govern both social and historical study was not to rely primarily upon experience, but rather to accept a deductive method which moved from the general to the particular.[90] In this, James Mill was correct. But the rigidity of his father's deductive method, itself a product of his conviction of the invariableness of the governing laws of things, failed to allow for the significance of the particularities of human experience. In real life, human actions occurred as a result of the influence of many "disturbing causes." Social phenomena were so complex that a handful of laws, which were, in effect, nothing but the premises of syllogisms, could neither explain fully nor predict precisely actual occurrences. Moreover, the premises or general principles on which the deduction was based were limited in their applicability by the finite number of instances from which they were derived. In order to test and validate the premises one must go back to concrete and particular facts."[91]

Mill's newly acquired respect for facts and the concreteness of particular experiences had an effect upon his attitude towards history. The thesis of causal explanation of historical facts which Mill held during the pre-crisis period had now to be reconsidered. Historical events were the results of numerous and various causes. In order for a general law to explain

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[90]Mill in "On the Definition of Political Economy" described the deductive method as "the essence of all science which admits of general reasoning at all." *CW*, IV, p.325.

[91]Mill declared that the method *a posteriori*, or that of specific experiences, was "altogether inefficacious . . . as a means of arriving at any considerable body of valuable truth." But, at the same time, he admitted its usefulness as an aid of the method *a priori* and as an indispensable supplement to it. The reason was that "no two individual cases are exactly alike, no *general* maxims could ever be laid down, unless *some* of the circumstances of the particular case were left out of consideration. *Ibid.*, p.327.

or predict an event, the law must itself have been demonstrated to be valid by reference to actual events; it must, in fact, have been tested in experience. Thus, abstract laws of human nature could no longer be viewed as prior or antecedent to historical facts, which now must be seen to evidence in themselves the laws of history. In the relationship between general laws and the particular events, the former were valid only when the particular events gave support to them. This meant that the historian was no longer required to view a theory of reform as *a priori* true as a law explaining events in history. Rather, it was the thesis of reform itself that was to be viewed in the context of history which now embodied its own law of progress.

For the post-crisis Mill the Saint-Simonians provided significant sources of reflection in this connection. Mill noted in the *Autobiography* that he was "greatly struck" by the "connected view" of the natural order of human progress which the Saint-Simonians presented to him. Especially he was impressed by their division of all history into "organic periods" and "critical periods."[12] Drawing a parallel between the growth of society in history and the growth of a human body, Saint-Simon claimed that both society and the body developed from stage to stage according to the law of progressive development.[13] Adopting the theory of human perfectibility, he viewed history as moving from "the miseries of savagery" to "the bliss of a secular paradise." In Eckelbar's summary:

> In the progress towards secular perfection political society is seen to pass through two alternative modes of historical existence: "organic epochs" and "critical epochs". According to the Saint-Simonians there have been two organic epochs in history: the first was the Greek and Roman polytheism ending with Socrates in Greece and Augustus in Rome; the second began with the preaching of the Gospels and ended with Martin Luther. The first organic epoch was followed by the critical period of philosophy, during which polytheism was undermined by the classical philosophers. With the Reformation came the close of the second organic epoch. The second critical epoch was to come to a close with the rise of the new era proclaimed by Saint-Simon and preached by his disciples.[14]

In the essays "The Spirit of the Age"(1831) Mill actually adopted the Saint-Simonian historical outlook. Using the terms "natural" and "transitional" for the Saint-Simonian "organic" and "critical," he declared his age to be "an age of transition." "Mankind have

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[12] *Autobiography*, p.98.
[13] John C. Eckelbar, "The Saint-Simonian Philosophy of History," *History and Theory*, 16:1(1977), p.40.
[14] *Ibid.*

outgrown old institutions and old doctrines, and have not yet acquired new ones," he observed. For although "a man may not be either better or happier at six-and-twenty, than he was at six years of age . . . the same jacket which fitted him then, will not fit him now."[95] The concept of growth which Mill employed here was stronger in tone than that of progress in his 1823 article "Old and New Institutions." Instead of the vague belief in the desirability of change that accompanied historical progress, he now demonstrated a firm conviction professing it with a necessitarian voice.[96] Thus in perceiving his age as a transitional age and historical progress as a necessity, Mill found an historical context for the reformist cause he was involved in.

The problem was, of course, that, if historical progress was to be viewed as inevitable, what reason was there to work in the cause of reform? In this regard, too, Saint-Simon became Mill's advisor. Mill had been of the opinion that the intellectual progress evident in history was an indispensable condition for reform to occur. To this Saint-Simon added a stronger note, arguing that intellectual progress was the driving force of historical change. Indeed, "the progress of the human mind, the revolutions which occur in the development of knowledge, [gave] each century its special character."[97] Thus in modern history the crucial factor that determined the course of revolution was "the practice of experimental sciences."[98] In order, therefore, to ensure the arrival of a new organic epoch it was essential to provide society with an intellectual leadership[99] equipped with such knowledge. In a letter to Gustave d'Eichthal(1829) Mill approved of, and commended, this very principle of a *pouvoir spirituel*, insisting that a "state in which a body of people, i.e. the uninstructed, shall entertain the same feelings of deference & submission to the authority of the instructed, in morals and

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[95]John Stuart Mill, *Essays on Politics and Culture*, ed. Gertrude Himmelfarb (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1973), p.3.

[96]Thus he insists that "every age contains in itself the germ of all future ages as surely as the acorn contains the future forest," and that "a knowledge of our age is the fountain of prophecy . . . the only key to the history of posterity." *Ibid.*, p.2.

[97]Henri de Saint-Simon, "The Reorganization of the European Community," in his *Social Organization, The Science of Man and Other Writings*, p.28.

[98]"Letters of Henri de Saint-Simon to an American," *ibid.*, p.70.

[99]"Letters from an Inhabitant of Geneva to His Contemporaries," *ibid.*, pp.1-11; "The Reorganization of the European Community," *ibid.*, pp.28-68.

politics, as they do in the physical sciences"[100] was the ultimate end of historical progress, "the only wholesome state of the human mind." The leadership of an intellectual elite in the future society, Mill thought, would have "a great tendency to protect us from many errors"[101] which had beset the eighteenth century, when too much was expected from the diffusion of knowledge among the labouring classes.[102] The inevitability of intellectual progress and its determining role in each age were both evident in history. In this movement of history towards the ultimate end, "the persons who are in possession of knowledge adequate to the formation of sound opinions by their own lights, form also a constantly increasing number, *but hitherto* at all times a small one"(my emphasis). Even in the early nineteenth century the average citizen could scarcely be regarded as possessed of sound knowledge or opinions. Mill therefore refused to accept the view that "an average man of the present day is superior to the greatest men of the beginning of the eighteenth century."[103] The number of the enlightened was still small. In order to keep this tiny but influential class on the right historical track it was necessary to reform certain social arrangements. According to Mill,

> Before, however, this stage can be attained or even aimed at it is necessary that several great steps should be taken in the improvement of the social organisation; & principally that the great social sinister interests should be removed, since while these exist, those, who would otherwise be the instructed classes, have no motive to obtain real instruction in politics and morals, & are subjected to biases from which the students of the physical sciences are exempt.[104]

In a transitional period it was only by reforming institutions that the development of "sinister interests" among the intellectuals as well as the mass of the people could be prevented. In short, reformed institutions were not only "highly useful" but also "absolutely indispensable" in bringing the human mind forward to "an ulterior stage of improvement."[105]

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[100]John Stuart Mill, letter to Gustave d'Eichthal, 7 November 1829, *CW*, XII, p.40.
[101]*Ibid.*
[102]The belief in the power of knowledge in society was one of the characterisitics of Enlightenment thought. James Mill, who was the last heir of the Scottish Enlightenment, still maintained this belief. See James Mill, "Schools for All, in Preference to Schools for Churchmen Only," W.H. Burston, ed., *James Mill on Education*, pp.120-93.
[103]"Spirit," p.5.
[104]Letter to d'Eichthal, *CW*, XII, p.40.
[105]*Ibid.*, p.41.

Mill regarded such a justification of the cause of reform as "the result of enlarged views of the history of mankind." Only when "the past and future fortunes of mankind" were contemplated by the philosopher "in one series," only when generations count "for no more in marking the changes of the moral, than an age or two in those of the physical world,"[106] could the present reformist cause bear a true historical meaning. Saint-Simonians, Mill believed, had discovered this meaning and thus had been able to identify and describe ideal social institutions. Their scheme might well have been "impracticable indeed, but . . . only in *degree*, not in kind." In Mill's understanding, "It is the true ideal of a perfect human society; the spirit of which will more and more pervade even the *existing* social institutions, as human beings become wiser and better. . . ."(emphasis original)[107]

The reformist viewpoint, then, itself justified by a particular view of history, was seen by Mill as a necessary condition for understanding the past history of mankind. "Without this, there is no possibility of viewing or judging past times with candour, or trying them by any standard but that of the present. And yet, he, who does not do this, will judge the present as ill as the past."[108] This conjunction of a correct understanding of the past with a correct understanding of the present provided support to Mill in the early 1830s when he was struggling to revitalise his sense of purpose in life. Once established in the thought of Mill, however, the belief in the usefulness of the knowledge about human history would persist even when his zeal for reform in the 1830s cooled down.

E. The Science of History

Just as the reform Mill pursued was grounded on reason and science, so, too, history was to be placed on a scientific footing. The scientific study of history, in fact, provided both a rationale for the reforms which were to transform social institutions and a signpost for the right track of historical progress.

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[106] "Spirit," p.27.
[107] (John Stuart Mill,) "St. Simonism in London," *Examiner*, 2 February 1834, p.68.
[108] Letter to d'Eichthal, *CW*, XII, p.41.

In his review of "Alison's History of Europe"(1833) Mill distinguished two kinds of interest in the study of history, a scientific interest and a moral or biographical interest. The former sought to discover "the general laws of the moral universe acting in circumstances of complexity," and attempted to trace "the connection between great effects and their causes." The moral or biographical interest was aroused by "the characters and lives of human beings," particularly their "deservings" or "fortunes" and provoked "our sympathy, our admiration, or our censure."[109] In depreciating the latter interest, Mill maintained his earlier concern with causal laws, and elaborated the characteristics of the science of history. Thus, for Mill a scientific view of the French Revolution would demonstrate that the Revolution had occurred not from causes peculiar to France but rather as a working-out of a universal historical causality. As an event in universal history, the Revolution was but "one turbulent passage in a progressive transformation embracing the whole human race."[110]

What most exasperated Mill about Alison's *History* was his failure to follow Mill's theory that all political revolutions originated from intellectual, or "moral," revolutions. For Mill, "The subversion of established institutions is merely one consequence of the previous subversion of established opinions."[111] Being ignorant of this theory, Alison was interested only in the "moral or biographical" aspect, portraying the drastic changes of the Revolution in fearful images and obscuring the legitimacy of the process itself. True, "political convulsion is a fearful thing," but, as Mill pointed out in defence of the Revolution, "the greater the evil, the stronger is the desire excited to be freed from it"; moreover, "the greatest evils are always those which it is most difficult to get rid of by ordinary means."[112] Mill's standing on the side of the Revolution was a logical consequence of his viewing it as a major consequence of "the great breaking loose of human faculties" since the "revival of letters" and the invention of printing. Thus in the French Revolution Mill saw "a change which is but half completed, and which is now in a state of more rapid progress here in England, than any

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[109] *MR*, 7(1833), p.513. Also appears in *DD*, I, p.56.
[110] *MR*, p.513.
[111] *Ibid*.
[112] *Ibid*., p.514.

where else."[113] Only the scientific study of history could provide an objective view of the Revolution, and link it with the cause of reform. Those who were actively engaged in the reform movement, therefore, could not afford to ignore history. Indeed, he observed in his critique "Guizot's Lectures on European History"(1836), the study of history was "an indispensable preparation for an enlightened discharge of their [the French people's] parliamentary duties."[114]

Mill's alignment of the French Revolution with the reform movement in England led him to be interested in French historians. Mill praised Guizot as one "among the first . . . of a school of writers on history, and the philosophy of history, which has arisen within the last twenty years." He particularly commended Guizot's *Histoire de la civilisation en Europe* and *Histoire de la civilisation en France* as "models of the manner in which history should be studied."[115] What attracted Mill's attention, particularly, was Guizot's method.

> He begins by familiarizing himself with the literature of the period, and any other evidence which it has left of its state of society. From these, when he has sufficiently imbued himself with their spirit, he learns what were at each period the causes actually at work, and within what limits each of those causes were operating. These being known, the general laws of human nature suffice to show of what kind must have been the influence exercised by each; and the conclusion is then tested by the history of the succeeding ages. Unless studied in this way, history is indeed nothing but an "old almanac," and has neither any meaning of its own, nor throws light upon anything else.[116]

Ascertained facts are explained in terms of the general laws of human nature and the explanation tested by reference to other facts; this is the essence of successful history. In continuing to insist in his "On the Definition of Political Economy," published in the same year, that in the moral sciences "the method of *a priori* is a legitimate mode of philosophic investigation,"[117] Mill still remained committed to his belief in the explanatory process of the general laws of human nature. At the same time, however, in viewing history as the

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[113]*Ibid.*, p.513. In *Dissertations and Discussions*, this original expression of 1833 is revised to: "[A] change so far from being completed, that it is not yet clear, even to the more advanced spirits, to what ultimate goal it is tending." *DD*, I, p.57.
[114]*WR*, 31(1836), p.307.
[115]*Ibid.*, p.309.
[116]*Ibid.*, p.325.
[117]"Definition," p.327.

testing-ground of general explanations. Mill prepared the foundation for his acceptance of the Comtean "Inverse Deductive" method in *A System of Logic*(1843).

By 1836 Mill had become convinced that the reform he and his colleagues were pursuing would be achieved in the near future. It was not clear, however, whether the final version of the reform would be exactly what they anticipated. As he pointed out in "Civilization"(1836), "the irresistible consequence of a state of advancing civilization" was that the old rules of the past were no longer applicable to the new situation.[118] As examples of recent developments in civilisation Mill pointed to the accumulation of wealth in the hands of the mass, the diffusion of knowledge and intelligence among the middle and even the working classes, and the capacity and habit of cooperation in industries, businesses, and associations.[119] Because of the first two phenomena the landed aristocracy was in decline while the middle and lower classes were in ascendance. At the same time, a collective way of life in which the individual was being engulfed in the mass was becoming more and more evident. Politically the world was moving towards the triumph of democracy, while morally the individual was losing his personal autonomy. The disappearance of the individual into the crowd had resulted in a "relaxation of individual energy"[120] and also a "moral effeminacy" or an "inaptitude for every kind of struggle" among the refined classes.[121]

This awareness of the possible "stationariness" or inertia in the emerging society in which political reform would have resulted in the rule of the mass, [122] reflected Mill's ambivalence regarding the ongoing progress of history.[123] The Philosophic Radical movement had begun to decline in the late 1830s and Mill was preparing his final campaign for the reorganisation of the reform party under the anticipated leadership of Lord Durham. In spite of the decline of Benthamite radicalism, Mill was firmly convinced of the progress of history

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[118]"Civilization," pp.119-20.
[119]*Ibid.*, pp.125-6.
[120]*Ibid.*, p.129.
[121]*Ibid.*, p.132.
[122]For Mill's fear of the "stationariness" of the future see Bryan S. Turner, "The Concept of Social 'Stationariness,'" *Science and Society*, 38:1(1974), pp.3-18.
[123]Mill was also worried about the undesirable effect of industrialisation. In the "State of Politics in 1836"(1836) Mill warned that railway construction would destroy "beautiful sceneries." *CW*, VI, p.327.

towards democracy. Indeed, the very reason for the decline of radicalism was not the victory of reactionary conservatism but the rise of the lower classes. In the "State of Politics in 1836"(1836) Mill evaluated the current political progress optimistically. Important improvements had taken place in legislation. There were hopeful indications not only of the "rapidity" but also of the "tranquility" with which "the nation is travelling towards the attainment of the best government to which in its present state of civilization it can aspire."[124] Ironically, it was from this very optimism that Mill's pessimism originated. In the approaching victory of mass democracy Mill saw the shadow of vulgarity. Mill's reviews of de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*(1835 and 1840) reflected his own anxiety about the undesirable consequences of the anticipated mass democracy. If democratisation turned out nothing but vulgarisation, society would have lost its commitment to progress and fall into a dreadful Chinese stagnation.

This was actually a concern of Mill throughout the rest of his life, and he continually pondered the ways to prevent such a deterioration. On the one hand, to the instructed class must be given greater power both politically and socially, while, on the other, the knowledge which was currently the possession of the instructed class must be taken forward to completion. A scientific understanding of historical progress would provide this class with a powerful weapon for protecting society from degeneration.

Mill's state of mind at this time is well illustrated in his review article of Thomas Carlyle's *French Revolution*(1837). In accepting the power of Carlyle's literary talent, Mill pointed to the concreteness given to historical events by Carlyle. "We at once felt," Mill wrote, "that what had hitherto been to us mere abstractions, had become realities; the 'forms of things unknown,' which we fancied we know, but knew their names merely, were, for the first time . . . 'bodied forth' and 'turned into shape.'"[125] The concreteness of events embodied in Carlyle's narrative originated in his creative imagination and depth and breadth of feeling. The former had the power to "summon up the Thing [from] a chaos of scattered

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[124] *Ibid.*, p.321.

[125] John Stuart Mill, "The French Revolution," in J.W.M. Gibbs, ed., *Early Essays by John Stuart Mill* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1897), pp.274-5.

hints and confused testimonies [to] a complete whole," and the latter made all images appear "arrayed in whatever of all that belong[ed] to them, [was] naturally most affecting and impressive to the human soul."[126] This observation reminds us of Mill's earlier interest in poetic truth. Carlyle's poetic skill, by which things were "authentically ascertained and imaginatively realized,"[127] were praised here in the sense that it "expresses the meanings which an age perceives in its institutions."[128] But in the review Mill did not forget to observe that "general principles are helps to observation" and that "without general principles no one ever observed a particular case to any purpose."[129] Carlyle had neglected this truth. Moreover, Mill pointed out, Carlyle obviously distrusted representative government and showed a "tendency . . to set too low a value on what constitutions and forms of government can do."[130] There was in Carlyle's *French Revolution* a concrete reality which was essential to the study of history; but there was no progressive politics nor legislative "philosophy." Carlyle's view of history clearly diverged from that of Mill. Mill's praise of the concreteness of Carlyle's historical narrative, then, was not wholesome but partial. Carlyle's poetic narration was superb in its own terms, but as a narration it satisfied scarcely more than the secondary object of reading history, that is, reading for amusement.[131] The fact that Mill gave great commendation, in spite of its weaknesses, to Carlyle's *French Revolution* may be explained to a considerable extent by his previous support for Carlyle's writing and his feeling of guilt for the destruction of Carlyle's original manuscript, either by carelessness or by Harriet Taylor's maliciousness.[132] Despite its emphasis on the literary quality and sensibilities, Mill's essay "The French Revolution" may be regarded as signalling the conclusion of his search for an "epistemology" of poetic truth. As Edward Alexander points out, Mill by this time was

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[126] *Ibid.*, p.279.
[127] *Ibid.*, p.310.
[128] Murray Baumgarten, "The Ideas of History of Thomas Carlyle and John Stuart Mill," *MNL*, 3:1(1967), p.8.
[129] "French Revolution," p.316.
[130] *Ibid.*, p.317.
[131] See p.36.
[132] For suspicions about Harriet Taylor's malicious destruction of Carlyle's manuscript see W.A. Hirst, "The Manuscript of Carlyle's 'French Revolution,'" *The Nineteenth Century*, 731(1938), pp.83-8, and R.P. Anschutz, "J.S. Mill, Carlyle and Mrs. Taylor," *Political Science*, 7:2(1955), pp.65-75.

"determined to salvage what he believed to be the essentials of philosophical thought and scientific history."[133]

This commitment to general philosophic principles was also evident in his review of "Macaulay's Lays of Ancient Rome"(1843). Like Carlyle, Macaulay was commended for his "higher faculty of Imagination." Thanks to this faculty, in his poems he had succeeded in reproducing with great felicity "the externals of Roman life" and "the feelings characteristic of Rome and of that particular age." But, as in the case of Carlyle, such a commendation could only be allowed if such literary aspects were not made "predominant over the universal features of human nature and human life."[134] In reviewing Macaulay's poetry Mill's concern lay not in the contribution of poetry to an understanding of history but rather in the switch from poetry to history which had taken place in ancient Rome. "The study of the manner in which the heroic legends of early Rome grew up as poetry and gradually became history," Mill said, "has important bearings on the general laws of historical evidence, and on many things, which as philosophy advances, are more and more seen to be therewith connected."[135]

If history had emerged in Rome from poetic legend, Mill believed, the study of history must therefore be an advance and thus take ascendance over poetry; intelligence, in effect, was superior to imagination. In his review of "Michelet's History of France"(1844), Mill attempted to distinguish three stages of historical inquiry. The first stage tried to "transport

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[133]Edward Alexander, "Permanence and Progression," Robson and Laine, eds., p.132. This tendency to salvage and to cling to philosophical principles was also evident in his reaction to the dissolution of the Philosophic Radical group around the end of the 1830s. Having retreated from the political battle, Mill found that the theory that had previously supported and justified his political activities had apparently lost its viability. Theory, which had been previously related directly to practice, now became independent from, if not predominant over, the latter. Thus Mill, though he was not unconcerned with political developments, became an observer of, rather than a participant in, current political issues. At the same time, the aloofness, which had characterised Mill's previous political participation, became more pronounced. He had left the battle to others; but he knew where they were heading; his role was not to drag them forward but to remind them of what they failed to see. Mill had become a sage. Such an attitude persisted, even when he was elected to Parliament. In the 1840s this tendency to divorce theory from practice lay at the heart of Mill's interest in the science of history as a way of understanding man and society. It made, in fact, historical understanding a core concept in his view of social science.

[134]*CW*, I, p.526.

[135]*Ibid.*, pp.526-7.

present *feelings* and *notions* back to the past, and refer all ages and forms of human life to the standard of that in which the writer himself lives"(my emphases).[136] To such an historian, his ancestors were no different from the "next neighbours." Such a history was better than the preceding ahistorical stage because "He [Anarcharsis Clootz as compared with Plutarch, or Mitford with Rollin] does give a sort of reality to historical personages."[137] In the second stage the past was regarded "not with the eye of a modern, but as far as possible, with that of a cotemporary[*sic*]" to produce "a true living picture of the past time, clothed in its circumstances and peculiarities."[138] For example, Niebuhr had attempted to detect "the meaning of small things" and to drag to light "the forgotten elements of a gone-by state of society, from scattered evidences which the writers themselves who recorded them did not understand," while Carlyle had tried to reproduce past events "in the colours of life, and with all bustle of a real scene."[139] The third and highest stage aimed "not to compose histories, but to construct a science of history."[140] In a concise form Mill outlined what he had been elaborating for many years. "The whole of the events which have befallen the human race, and the states through which it has passed" must be assumed to be "a series of phenomena, produced by causes, and susceptible of explanation." From this assumption, history must be regarded as a progressive chain of causes and effects, or as "a gradually unfolding web, in which every fresh part that comes to view is a prolongation of the part previously unrolled, whether we can trace the separate threads from the one into the other, or not."[141] The fundamental problem of the science of history was the reading-out of the laws which were operating in the sequence of historical events.

What were these laws? Mill did not treat this question as unanswerable or even as unanswered. As he had pointed out many times before, laws were derived from human nature and the laws of the outward world. This deep-rooted conviction, deriving from his

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[136] *DD*, II, p.125.
[137] *Ibid.*, p.127.
[138] *Ibid.*
[139] *Ibid.*, p.128.
[140] *Ibid.*, pp.129.
[141] *Ibid.*

associationist psychology, caused him to view all human actions as determined by the laws that governed the relationship between man and the world.[142] Man's actions, being determined by these laws, were predictable when the laws were known. Mill did not claim to know the laws. But when he claimed that an event was the effect of its preceding event, or when he insisted that a "great ruler cannot shape the world after his own pattern; he is condemned to work in the direction of existing and spontaneous tendencies,"[143] the laws which Mill conceived were evidently deterministic. In his review of "Guizot's Essays and Lectures on History"(1845) Mill compared the great man in history to the skilled pilot. A pilot could not steer as he wished against wind and tide; but, Mill wrote, there was a great difference between having a skilled pilot and none at all. What could this "skilled pilot" accomplish in history?

> Improvements of the very first order, and for which society is completely prepared, which lie in the natural course and tendency of human events, and are the next stage through which mankind will pass, may be retarded indefinitely for want of a great man, to throw the weight of his individual will and faculties into the trembling scale. Without Charlemagne, who can say for how many centuries longer the period of confusion might have been protracted?[144]

A great man might affect the rate of progress, but the course of historical progress itself was determined by the firm laws of human nature. It was on the basis of this determinism that Mill attempted to combine history with science.

Mill was thus able to claim in "Guizot's Essays" that "in the philosophy of society . . we look upon history as an indispensable test and verifier of all doctrines and creeds."[145] In *A System of Logic*, he argued that history could provide empirical laws of society by generalising from empirical facts. Being empirical, the generalisations made by historical studies were partial and might well be erroneous. In order to check and correct this tendency to error, a general sociology was required within which the validity of historical

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[142]On this Karl Popper comments, "It is undoubtedly Mill's psychologism [that is, his faith in the laws of human nature] which forces him to adopt a historicist method." *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, II, p.88. Talking about Mill's logic, Ernest Nagel also points out that Mill "does not always clearly disentangle issues that belong to empiricial psychology from those that involve questions of logical warrant." Ernest Nagel, ed., *John Stuart Mill's Philosophy of Scientific Method*, p.xxxiv.

[143]John Stuart Mill, "Guizot's Essays and Lectures on History," *DD*, II, p.255.

[144]*Ibid*.

[145]*Ibid*., pp.222-3.

generalisations could be examined and tested against the laws of human nature, specifically psychological and ethological laws. There were two kinds of empirical laws of society, one deriving from uniformities of coexistence and the other from uniformities of succession. Mill thus made the Comtean distinction between social statics and social dynamics. Social statics, which aimed to ascertain the requisites of stable political union, the complex phenomenon called a State, compared different forms and states of society and produced empirical generalisations. Some of these generalisations, however, once suggested, "are found to follow with so much probability from general laws of human nature, that the consilience of the two processes raises the evidence to proof, and the generalisations to the rank of scientific truths."[146] Social dynamics was to try to observe and explain "the sequencies of social conditions." If all the leading general circumstances were traced causally to the immediately preceding circumstances, social dynamics would be completed. But such an end could not be arrived at without ascertaining "the immediate and derivative laws according to which social states generate one another as society advances."[147] For this purpose social dynamics had to be combined with social statics. Not only the progressive changes of different elements but the contemporaneous conditions of elements must be considered. These considerations would lead by way of empirical generalisations to the law of correspondence which would explain the relationships not only of simultaneous states but also of simultaneous changes. The law of correspondence, thus obtained *a posteriori* but verified *a priori*, Mill insisted, was "the real scientific derivative law of the development of humanity and human affairs."[148] In order to reach this law, the synchronic study of social statics must be brought under the diachronic purview of social dynamics. In this sense, Mill's sociology was, truly, a science of the progress of history.

In subsuming social statics under social dynamics Mill attempted to elevate the "Philosophy of History" to a "Philosophy of the Progress of Society." When this integral science of man and society was established, Mill believed, "no important branch of human

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[146]John Stuart Mill, *A System of Logic*, *CW*, VIII, p.920.
[147]*Ibid.*, p.924.
[148]*Ibid.*, p.925.

knowledge will be abandoned to vulgar empiricism and unscientific surmise," and "the circle of human knowledge will be complete."[149] Central to this optimistic conviction was his belief that human knowledge was progressing from an empirical stage to a scientific stage,[150] or, in Comte's terminology, from a theological to a metaphysical and, finally, to a positive stage. In the development of physical sciences Mill saw the achievement of this goal. He thus sought to transplant the "Organs of Discovery and Proof" of the physical sciences to history and, in doing so, to update this hitherto unscientific field of study. Indeed, the concepts of "social statics" and "social dynamics" were applications to society of the concepts of "equilibrium" and "movement" in mechanics. Mill believed that his "Physical or Inverse Deductive" method, being able to explain movement or change, was superior to the "Chemical or Experimental" method and to the "Geometrical or Abstract" method.[151]

There were two pivotal notions in Mill's mature view of history: a belief in the possibility of a positive science of history as an integral social science, and the development of the speculative faculties as the main determining cause of social progress. In regard to the latter, Mill declared in *A System of Logic*[152] that such a generalisation, deduced from the laws of human nature, was "in entire accordance with" the general facts of history.[153] If intellectual progress was the driving force of historical development, it followed that the most important segment of a society in its achieving permanent improvement was the instructed class, of which Mill wished to be the leader. And if the science of social progress was

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[149] *Ibid.*, p.930.

[150] John Stuart Mill, *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, *CW*, X, p.284.

[151] By the term "Chemical or Experimental" method Mill meant the purely empirical stance taken by Macaulay and by the term "Geometrical or Abstract" method his father's metaphysical laws of human nature as the starting-point of deductions.

[152] With *A System of Logic* Mill's view of history and its study entered into maturity. His later historical reviews were elaborations of ideas in the framework already established. In his 1846 review of "Grote's History of Greece," Mill showed a special interest in the historiographical treatment of the legends of gods and heroes as historical evidence, in Grote's pursuit of the progress of opinion among the instructed classes of Greece, and the refined legal system of Sparta. *CW*, XV, pp.271-305. In the 1853 review, Grote was praised for his positive assessment of the Sophists, and particularly for his claim, "There was scarcely a possibility of permanent improvement for mankind, until intellect had first asserted its superiority, even in a military sense, over brute force." John Stuart Mill, "Grote's History of Greece II," *CW*, XI, p.321.

[153] *Logic*, *CW*, VIII, p.926.

established as an integral social science, such a science would be the source of wisdom by which the instructed class could lead the whole society. The implication of this historical science for reform and social progress may be estimated to some extent by examining Mill's theory of practice in which "theory" took absolute ascendance over "practice."

F. Theory and Practice

Mill's contemporary admirer Henry Thomas Buckle claimed that Mill's thought covered the complete range of human experience, from "the practical interests of every member of society" at the one extreme, and "the subtlest and most hidden operations of the human mind" at the other.[154] In achieving a mastery of the practical application of truths previously established as well as demonstrating an understanding of the process of reasoning, Mill had demonstrated excellence both in practice and speculation. As a result, Buckle claimed, Mill's principles, "however refined they appear, and however far removed from ordinary apprehension," could be implemented "without so dangerous a disturbance of social arrangements, and without so great a sacrifice of existing institutions."[155] Buckle took for granted that smoothness was an essential quality in any successful application of a theory to practice, and political smoothness could only be guaranteed when a full theoretical understanding of the practical interests of every member of society had been reached.

Perhaps Buckle was right in pointing out in Mill's ideas an attempt to achieve a theoretical mastery of practical interests. For Mill, especially in *A System of Logic*, a correct theory of practice supported by the logic of reasoning was taken to be almost identical with actually achieving a goal. Once a correct theory had been established, practice was almost a mechanical process. Therefore, the crucial point in achieving successful practice was the establishment of a theory -- a praxiology -- regarding various kinds of practice. This theory, dealing with how to apply already known laws of human nature to society, had to be distinguished from the primary theory of science, which established the laws. The goal of the

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[154]Henry Thomas Buckle, "Mill on Liberty," in Grant Allen, ed., *The Miscellaneous and Posthumous Works of Henry Thomas Buckle*, I, p.75.
[155]*Ibid.*, p.77.

primary theory (scientific statements) was to uncover and state the laws; therefore it was to be descriptive, or, as Mill said, "indicative." On the other hand, the theory of practice was concerned with providing means for certain practical goals. It was to be expressed, therefore, in statements like, "For such and such a purpose, such and such measures are required!" Its tone was normative or, in Mill's words, "imperative." Mill called this form of theory "Art" in contradistinction with the primary form of theory, "Science."[156]

In the realm of the theory of practice (or Art) Mill identified two ways of reasoning. The one was the reasoning of the judge who concerned himself not with determining "what course would be intrinsically the most advisable in the particular case in hand," but only with "within what rule of law it falls."[157] According to this reasoning, the individual's conduct was required to conform to certain pre-established rules; practical reasoning from the viewpoint of the judge was simply the interpretation of a given formula, that is, the logic of ratiocination. The other mode of practical reasoning was that of the legislator, and was not restricted by any existing rules or laws. Differing from the judge, to whom the ready-made rules were final, the legislator concerned himself with making rules to which all conduct should conform. In other words, the legislator was the cause of the rules which governed individual conduct. However, the legislator was not entirely free in conducting his business. In order to make his legislative action wise; rather than abitrary; the legislator needed an understanding or knowledge of certain guidelines which Mill called maxims of policy.[158] Mill contended that the legislator should not be regulated by these maxims of policy as strictly as the judge was regulated by the rule of laws. The legislator must have both the freedom and the ability to judge correctly circumstantial conditions and to apply wisely these maxims to his legislation. Otherwise, he would be a mere pedant or a "slave of his formula," like "the old-fashioned German tacticians who were vanquished by Napoleon" or "the physician who preferred that his patients should die by rule rather than recover contrary to it."[159] The legislator was, thus, allowed some degree of freedom to cope with the real world in a flexible manner. However,

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[156] *Logic*, *CW*, VIII, p.943.
[157] *Ibib.*, p.944.
[158] *Ibid.*
[159] *Ibid.*

this freedom was granted only to the extent that it would ensure an appropriate application of the maxims of policy. In this sense both legislator and judge were constrained by certain pre-established rules.

These rules, or precepts or maxims of policy, of the theory of practice, that is, Art, Mill stated, were no other than "the theorems of the corresponding science"[160] arranged "in the order suitable for some practical use."[161] The relationship of an Art to the corresponding Science was a direct one, and was expressed in two phases of communication. In the first phase of communication Art determined the end to be attained on the basis of the judgment of Science. On the request of Art, Science investigated the causes and effects of any matter related to the end and arrived at a theorem of the combinations of circumstances in which the end was attainable. From these combinations of circumstances Art picked one as possible and desirable in the given circumstances of reality. In the second and final phase of communication, Science developed for the end concerned a means in the form of a proposition that "the performance of certain actions will attain the end," and Art took this proposition as its rule or precept. In this logic of practice, therefore, both end and means of practice were provided and confirmed by Science.

From the theoretical scientist to the practical judge, a chain of cause and effect was established, the scientist being the cause of the legislator, who, in turn, was the cause of the judge. In this causal chain, only movement from cause to effect was permitted. For example, if a rule of practice failed to solve a problem in an actual life situation, the case could not be brought back to the scientist with a request to revise, or at least reconsider, the theory. The rules must be relied upon and, in order to make sure that the rules were valid, they must constantly be referred "back to the scientific laws on which they are founded."[162] The essence of Mill's logic of practice was that practice should apply correctly scientific theories to real life. Successful practice thus depended entirely upon the establishment of correct rules of conduct -- ethical, political and even aesthetic -- for ordinary men based on the most

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[160] *Ibid.*
[161] *Ibid.*, p.947.
[162] *Ibid.*

up-to-date discoveries of science.

By reform, then, Mill had in mind the application of the truths obtained by Science to the problems faced by his society. His own position in the causal chain of reform was that of the legislator, or the Artist. It is true that Mill wrote a number of essays and books on what might be called scientific subjects, such as political economy, logic, psychology and history, and in this sense he may also be said to be a Scientist. But from the point of view of his life-long concern with reform and/or historical progress, Mill the scientist appears to have been a necessary condition for Mill's role as the artist. In a letter to Carlyle Mill wrote:

> By logic . . . I meant the antithesis of Poetry or Art . . . the *literal* as opposed to the *symbolical*, and *reasoning* as opposed to *intuition*. Not *theory* of reasoning but the *practice*. In reasoning I include all processes of thought which are *processes* at all, that is, which proceed by a series of steps and links. What I would say is that my vocation is, I think, chiefly for this last; a more extended & higher one than for any branch of mere "Philosophy of Mind" though inferior to that of the artist [Poet]. [emphases original].[163]

Although he distinguishes here his "logic" from Carlyle's "Poetry or Art," his logic was a practical one. It was the artist, and not the scientist, that could command direct influence upon history. Even though Science was the cause of Art, it was, in a sense, Art and not Science that took real ascendance. In this sense, in spite of his concern with Science, Mill's real interest lay in the effect which he would have on the actual historical process.[164]

That in Mill's theory of practice Science could wield its power over the lives of men only through Art is significant for understanding the status of the science of history in Mill's thought. Although Mill was in his later years detached from actual political movements, he never wanted his theories to be separated from the historical process. The science of history he held to be the consummation of all social sciences. But he did not hold this opinion solely for the sake of the laws it would discover; Mill had committed himself, in his own words,

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[163]Mill to Thomas Carlyle, 12 July 1833, *CW*, XII, p.173.

[164]John M. Robson takes a viewpoint that the scientist Mill was supported and supplemented by the artist Harriet Taylor. "Harriet Taylor and John Stuart Mill: Artist and Scientist," *Queen's Quarterly*, 73(1966), pp.167-86. Such a view, though it may be useful in explaining the relationship between Mill and Harriet Taylor, tends to exaggerate the role played by Harriet Talyor upon the thought and life of Mill. Remember that the main area of Mill's "practice" was his participation in reform movement and his unremitting critiques upon current political and other issues. Mill started this kind of business long before he got acquaintance with Harriet Taylor.

> to take interest in history not as a mere narrative, but as a chain of causes and effects still unwinding itself before his eyes, and full of momentous consequences to himself and his descendants; the unfolding of a great epic or dramatic action, to terminate in the happiness or misery, the elevation or degradation, of the human race; an unremitting conflict between good and evil powers, of which every act done by any of us, insignificant as we are, forms one of the incidents; a conflict in which even the smallest of us cannot escape from taking part, in which whoever does not help the right side is helping the wrong, and for our share in which, whether be it greater or smaller, and let its actual consequences be visible or in the main invisible, no one of us can escape the responsibility.[165]

This was clearly a rhetoric of the practitioner. To know the causes and laws of progress imposed a requirement to take part in the process. The science of history was thus tied to reform activity, or the activity that moved history forward. Thus, in "Mr. Maine on Village Communities"(1871), which was his final review essay on history, Mill tried to draw lessons from Maine's study of ancient landownership for British and Indian land reform.

But to whom was this man talking, this man who already for many years had preferred to stay in seclusion? Certainly, he was not talking to "the smallest of us" because he made it clear in 1869 that as far as "the ignorant and untrained part of the poorer classes" were concerned,

> as long as their minds remain in the present state, our preventing them from competing with us for employment does them no real injury; it only saves ourselves from being brought down to their level. Those whom we exclude are a morally inferior class of labourers to us; their labour is worth less, and their want of prudence and self-restraint makes them much more active in adding to the population.[166]

His audience was evidently the instructed class, or Mill himself. As Mill became more and more removed from practice, his theory appeared to him more and more convincing. Exactly to this proportion, Mill's concept of history became more and more abstract, more and more theoretical.

Nevertheless, Mill considered himself as being always committed to the making of history, if not as an active fighter then at least as a wise man. And it was the normative values formed out of this commitment that provided guidelines for his intellectual activities. At the same time, Mill was convinced of the possibility of understanding the laws of human

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[165]John Stuart Mill, *Inaugural Address at St. Andrews*, p.69.
[166]John Stuart Mill, "Thornton on Labour and Its Claim," *CW*, V, p.664.

nature, on the basis of which the progress of history could be predicted and, to some extent, modified. This conviction, in fact, was the ground for his self-imposed role as an intellectual leader; once grasped, the laws would clearly point out what was to be done. But did, in fact, his science of history actually point to the realisation of his normative values and commitments? In order to determine the extent to which Mill's science provided support for his normative value-system, it is necessary to examine its basis, that is, his view of human nature.

III. Human Nature

A. Mill's Concept of Human Nature

Central to understanding Mill's view of man is the determination of what was connoted by his use of the term "human nature." In placing himself in the historical process as he conceived it and in elaborating a science of history as a legitimate mode of understanding man and society, Mill consistently made reference to human nature. From the very early essays of the 1820s to the later articles of the 1860s Mill's concept of human nature occupied the position of a basic axiom, the *point de départ* of all of his social and historical arguments. But nowhere in his vast writings did Mill insist "that . . . human nature is precisely this, that, and so, to the definite exclusion of this, that, and the other so."[1] This absence of definition, however, did not imply that Mill had no precise conception of what was meant by the term. Though not defined, its meaning was not unclear.

What then did Mill understand by human nature? Anyone who attempts to interpret and explain Mill's social and historical theory in any depth must answer this question. The question itself is not an easy one. Like the fish that slips out of the fisherman's hand, it is difficult to grasp fully. Mill did not give the term a single meaning; rather, he used it on different occasions and for different purposes. Moreover, in 1871 the term did not possess the same meaning as it did in 1824.

The question of what Mill meant by human nature is thus not a simple one of definition. Rather, it is a question to be considered and answered contextually. In Mill's view of social progress and social science, a concept of human nature was assumed to be both a starting as well as a finishing point. The full meaning of the term must thus be consistent with the logic which structured his philosophy. What was implied by the term human nature, then, was not simply a cluster of particular definitions and connotations but rather a logical context within which a coherent meaning could be detected. Behind the particular meanings of human nature was hiding an anthropology, a logic of explaining what man was. The

[1]John M. Robson, "Rational Animals and Others," Robson and Laine, eds., *James and John Stuart Mill*, p.143.

determination of this anthropological logic will throw clear light upon what Mill meant by human nature and thereby illustrate the entire Millian philosophy of history. The significance of exploring Mill's anthropology is not confined to clarifying his view of history. Reform itself was conceived by Mill as bringing social institutions into harmony with human nature. The logic behind this reference to the criterion of human nature was a determining factor in Mill's practical ideas. In short, it not only helped explain why things were as they were; it also provided the basis of proposals to reform social arrangements.

In spite of its significance, the study of Mill's anthropology remains in an exploratory stage. Generally it has been psychologists who have investigated Mill's conception of human nature in terms of man's relationship with the external world. From G.F. Stout's 1890 article[2] down to Daniel N. Robinson's 1982 book[3] Mill has been rightly considered in connection with his place in British empiricism and particularly in the tradition of Hartleyan associationism. Mill's father James Mill has been looked upon as the "most dogmatic figure of associationism"[4] and his views "the supreme and culminating effort of associationism of the mechanical kind."[5] Compared with James Mill, John Stuart Mill has been considered to be a more moderate associationist. His interpretation of psychological phenomena as mental chemistry has been praised because, in admitting the complex relationship between thoughts and feelings, it went beyond the simple mechanical combinations and composition of simpler elements. It was this attitude of "lesser dogmatism and cocksuredness"[6] and particularly his recognition of the significance of affect, that enabled Mill to develop theories of character formation, motivation, and volition which differed from the Owenite and the Asiatic Fatalisms[7] and from his father's rigid mechanistic views.

On the other hand, despite Mill's critical attitude to Reid-Hamiltonian intuitionism, his anti-intuitionist definition of the external world : "permanent possibilities of sensation"

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[2]G.F. Stout, "The Genesis of the Cognition of Physical Reality," *Mind*, 15:57(1890), pp.22-45.
[3]Daniel N. Robinson, *Toward a Science of Human Nature*, pp.31-81.
[4]Colin Wilson, *New Pathway in Psychology*, p.59.
[5]J.C. Flugel, *A Hundred Years of Psychology*, p.29.
[6]*Ibid.*
[7]See Robinson, pp.66-75.

has been criticised by the realists as another form of idealism. G.F. Stout declared in 1890 that "a naked possibility is nothing" and "Mill's possibilities are naked possibilities." In rejecting the certainty of the existence of the external world, Stout believed, Mill fell into idealism.[8] John Herman Randall advanced a similar criticism from an epistemological point of view. Randall claimed that Mill made it impossible to construct "a demonstrable certain science out of mechanical contacts with the world" and postulated scientific laws to be ultimately nothing but a series of relationships between sensations. Yet, in his discussion of the method of induction, Mill, in fact, did presuppose permanent relationships in the natural order of the external world.[9] This contradictory approach of Mill had been pointed out already in 1928 in Gail Kennedy's dissertation.[10]

These psychological and philosophical interpretations of Mill's views regarding the subject-object relationship provide rich sources for an investigation of Mill's conception of man. Mill's dilemma in attempting to defend the primacy of experience against a reactionary intuitionism, while at the same time maintaining a belief in causality as the basis of science in the face of the claims of a vulgar empiricism, made him oscillate between contradictory claims. This oscillation, however, did not imply any instability in his thought. It was rather a reflection of his incessant existential exertion to map out the place of man in his relationship with the external world. Psychological and epistemological arguments can shed light on the questions what is man and how is he formed. Nevertheless, neither psychology nor epistemology can answer directly these questions.

An attempt to provide such a direct answer was made in John M. Robson's essay.[11] Robson's approach was to single out from Mill's various writings what Mill saw as distinctively human. Man as an animal was the same as other animals, but man as a man was

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[8]Stout, pp.22-45. Julius Pikler's "'The Genesis of the Cognition of Physical Reality.'" *Mind*, 59(1890), pp.394-400, was a defence of John Stuart Mill from Stout's criticism. "Stout's statement," Pikler said, "is simply a contradiction of what was maintained by Mill, and, as such, proves nothing." P.394.
[9]John Herman Randall, Jr., "John Stuart Mill and the Working-Out of Empiricism," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 26:1(1965), pp.59-61.
[10]Gail Kennedy, "The Psychological Empiricism of John Stuart Mill," pp.20-1.
[11]Robson, "Rational Animals," p.143-60.

different from them. Like animals man had lower impulses, but unlike animals he also had higher human characteristics such as prudence, foresight and social affection. Robson went on to categorise Mill's comments on human qualities in three areas: needs, constitutions, and capacities. As an animal, man might have physical needs; as a man, however, he had needs of higher order, such as freedom of thought, freedom to choose his own mode of life, and the need to maintain proper relationships with his fellow-creatures. As an animal, man might be possessed of all kinds of biological drives and ruled by instinctual desires for self-preservation and self-satisfaction. But as a man, his constitution was made up of numerous noble elements such as the love of justice, a sense of personal honour and dignity, and feelings of sympathy. Mill's direct comments, thus recognised, do provide a tentative sketch of an answer to the question what is man. But they can do no more than provide a sketch of an ideal man. In Mill's anthropological theory there are elements which cannot be contained in a view of human nature defined simply in terms of the rejection of the animal side of man.

In considering Mill's anthropology, the question to be answered is not simply "What does the term stand for?" but rather "What is implied by the term?" As has been indicated already, the term human nature was used as a central concept both in a system of social -- or historical -- science and in a doctrine of reform. What was significant in this context was not only the question "What is man?" or "How is he formed?" but also "What is it that man is meant to be and do?" A consideration of this normative aspect of human nature, whether or not Mill himself was thoroughly involved in social and political activities, is indispensable to our investigation if we intend to explain Mill's thought in its dynamic working,[12] for it must be pointed out that Mill's practical expectations for man were frequently contradicted and constrained by his theoretical conception of man. The theory tended to view man as an object, or an animal, while the practice or pragmatic elements required him to see man as a subject, or a man. This tension between theory and practice, in fact, revealed itself

[12]The incorporation into the concept of human nature of a normative criterion was a primary source of confusion among Enlightenment thinkers. "Indeed," Christopher J. Berry writes, "the term 'nature' was systematically ambiguous. At one and the same time it referred to what existed and also to what should exist." *Hume, Hegel and Human Nature*, p.12.

throughout Mill's arguments about human nature.

B. Mill and Associationism

John Stuart Mill's introduction to the associationist mode of understanding man was undertaken by his father at the final stage of his domestic education and the very beginning of his journalistic activities. It was after he read Dumont's version of Bentham's *Traité de législation* and before he wrote his first "argumentative essay" in 1822 that he read Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, then Helvetius' *De l'ésprit*, and finally Hartley's *Observations on Man*.[13] At this time James Mill started to write the *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*, the basic argument of which John Stuart Mill took to be correct even as late as in 1869, when he republished it with supplementary footnotes. In his Preface to this edition Mill pointed out that Hartley's psychology took a strong hold in his father's early philosophical life and, when his father reached the maturity of his powers, he "formed and executed the purpose of following up Hartley's leading thought, and completing what that thinker had begun."[14] In justifying his annotation of the *Analysis*, Mill pointed to the new knowledge in physiological science, especially of "the functions of our nervous organism and their relations with the mental operations," and James Mill's failure to provide a full analysis.[15] This, however, he considered to be a minor defect. In effect, by providing annotations from Bain and Findlater as well as his own, Mill sought to update James Mill's psychology. Mill's own psychology thus overlapped considerably his father's and where he did differ, the difference lay rather in an elaboration than in any substantial revision.

In the *Autobiography* Mill pointed out as the "fundamental doctrine" of his father's psychology "the formation of all human character by circumstances, through the universal Principle of Association" and "the consequent unlimited possibility of improving the moral and intellectual condition of mankind by education." And, he added, "Of all his doctrines

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[13]John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography*, pp.43-4.
[14]James Mill, *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*, I, p.xvii.
[15]*Ibid.*, p.xix.

none were more important than this, or needs more to be insisted on."[16]

The mechanism by which circumstances formed human character, as explained by James Mill and accepted by his son, was relatively straightforward. The beginning of character formation took place at the extreme ends of man's nervous system, at the point where he had contact with the external world, that is, "the things by which we are surrounded."[17] The activities that occurred at this level were named subjectively "sensations" or "experiences" and objectively "impressions." Internally these sensations excited ideas, which in turn excited other ideas. "During the whole of our lives, a series of those two states of consciousness, called sensations, and ideas, is constantly going on."[18] Just as the objects and events experienced by our senses occurred synchronically or in succcessive order, so too did our sensations. In turn, ideas, which were the copies of sensations, "spring up" or "exist" in the order in which the sensations occurred, thus combining or associating themselves in a certain order. This was, in simple terms, the "Association of Ideas." Simple ideas combined with others and became more complex ideas, eventually leading to highly abstract concepts. Throughout this process of association complex ideas followed the order of simpler ideas and the simplest ideas copied the initial sensations which occurred in the order of contact with the outside objects. Consequently, the human mind, which consisted of complex ideas and the associations of complex ideas, reflected ultimately the natural order of the external world.

The theory was basically the same as that of Hartley and that of Locke. James Mill in his 1815 essay on "Education" and in the *Analysis*(1828) elaborated what orders or laws were at work in the associations of ideas, and what orders and laws made associations easier and more stable. These laws John Stuart Mill summarised in *Hamilton's Philosophy*(1865).

> 1st. Similar phaenomena tend to be thought together. 2nd. Phaenomena which have either been experienced or conceived in close contiguity to one another, tend to be thought together. The contiguity is of two kinds: simultaneity, and immediate succession. Facts which have been experienced or thought of simultaneously, recall the thought of one another. Of facts which have been experienced or thought of in immediate succession, the antecedent, or the thought of it, recalls the thought of the consequent, but not conversely. 3rd. Associations produced by contiguity become

[16] *Autobiography*., pp.65-6.
[17] James Mill, *Analysis*., p.3.
[18] *Ibid*., p.70.

> more certain and rapid by repetition. When two phenomena have been very often experienced in conjunction, and have not, in any single instance, occurred separately either in experience or in thought, there is produced between them what has been called Inseparable, or less correctly, Indissoluble Association; by which is not meant that the association must inevitably last to the end of life - that no subsequent experience or process of thought can possibly avail to dissolve it; but only that as long as no such experience or process of thought has taken place, the association is irresistible. . . . 4th. When an association has acquired this character of inseparability . . . things which we are unable to conceive apart appear incapable of existing apart.[19]

What existed in our mind, then, was an invariable reflection of the external world. Nothing other than this reflection could be there; no *innate* ideas were admitted. This was the basis of John Stuart Mill's attempt to defend "the belief in an external world" against Hamilton's "intuition" theory which tended to lead to "the final mysteriousness of the world."[20] In this seemingly materialist outlook, Mill found support for his reformist cause, which pursued the exposure and eradication of the existing evils as well as the improvement of man and his social institutions.[21]

But in order to argue that circumstances play the crucial role in the formation of human character, it was necessary, first of all, to show that the external world existed and worked independently of men's will. Mill, however, failed to do so. In Mill's empiricism the point of departure of all mental activities was man's contact with the world, that is, his experience of sensations or, to use James Mill's word, "feelings."[22] Beyond this man could not reach directly. Experience was thus private. It occurred only in an individual man, and in that

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[19]John Stuart Mill, *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*, *CW*, IX, pp.177-8.

[20]Alan Ryan, "Introduction," *ibid.*, p.xx.

[21]In the *Autobiography* Mill wrote: "The notion that truths external to the mind may be known by intuition or consciousness, independently of observation and experience, is, I am persuaded, in these times, the great intellectual support of false doctrines and bad institutions." P.134. In another place of the same book he also pointed out, "I have long felt that the prevailing tendency to regard all the the marked distinctions of human character as innate, and in the main indelible, and to ignore the irresistible proofs that by far the greater part of those differences, whether between individuals, races, or sexes, are such as not only might but naturally would be produced by differences of circumstances, is one of the chief hindrances to the rational treatment of great social questions, and one of the greatest stumbling blocks to human development." P.162. A.J.M Milne's *The Social Philosophy of English Idealism* provides an interesting interpretation on the conservative political implication of philosophical idealism although its scope is post-Millian.

[22]James Mill, "Education," p.47.

individual man it occurred, or began, at the extreme end of his body, that is, in his sensations. According to the laws of association, the experiences of sensation gathered themselves together in the order in which the causes of these sensations took place, and led to a final reconstruction of the causes of sensations. Thus explained, however, the external world and its order were no more than what man had *internally* experienced. But can man legitimately claim to know the existence of the external world merely on the basis of his internal experience? In "Berkeley's Life and Works"(1871) Mill developed three hypotheses with respect to the existence and nature of the external world. First, although man knows the world directly only through his sensation, the world as an object of sensation must be separate from the sensation itself. A object is out there, and man senses it. In other words, the external object is the cause and the sensation its effect. Therefore, if two sensations of the same object differ from each other, the difference originates not from the object itself but in the sensations. This led to a second hypothesis that the objects of the external world are constant and not likely to change. This hypothesis of constancy in turn supports the belief in the reliability of sensations, if an object is constant it will always cause similar sensations, which will be almost invariable. Finally, when an object of the external world is being sensed, it represents itself in sensation; when it is not being sensed, it fails to do so. However, Mill thought, even on the latter occasion, it still retains the possibility of being sensed because it is, by nature, constant. Thus the external world (or matter) is defined as the cause of sensation or at least of the possibility of sensation. Mill claimed his explicatioin was taught and verified by "experience."[23] Even if the problems caused by Mill's hypothesis of constancy are ignored, such a claim fell far short of demonstrating the existence of the external world. Even if Mill's claim is accepted, the external world would demonstrably exist only as long as sensations occur. As J.P. Day points out, the "possibility" of sensation does not incur sensation unless the external world is actually sensed.[24] Moreover, Mill's claim that things exist even when man does not sense ("experience") them because our experience

[23] *CW*, XI, pp.462-4.
[24] "Mill on Matter," in J.B. Schneewind, ed., *Mill: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969[1968]), p.137.

("sensation") teaches us so, was no more than a meaningless tautology that the world exist even when man does not *sense* it because *sensation* tells man that this is so. In attempting to verify the existence of the external world, Mill could only appeal to the validity of internal psychological laws.

When the existence of the external world was conceived in terms of man's sensations and internal psychological laws, the powerful role of circumstances in the formation of human character turned out to be a fiction, a projection of an internal psychological logic in the form of a belief. Thus, ironically, as the realists have pointed out, Mill had become a philosophical idealist. The external world in Mill's associationist empiricism was an abstraction and not a concrete reality. Freed from any requirement to take into account the actual conditions of reality, Mill's conception of the power of "the things of nature" could be magnified. It was this idealism in Mill's thought that dogmatically exaggerated the power of circumstances in the formation of human character.[25]

If circumstances were understood as determinants of human character, there was some logic to the claim that man could, by manipulating the former, artificially create or change the latter as he desired. If sinister interests were obstacles to building a just society, man could eliminate or suppress them by reforming social arrangements. The human character was thus totally plastic.[26] In the note for his speech "On Perfectibility"(1828) at the London Debating Society Mill insisted that man could be elevated in his moral and intellectual capacity. This belief in human plasticity led him to attack the theory of an innate human character, arguing

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[25]Circumstances are, Mill said in the *Autobiography*, "the ultimate elements of human nature." P.162.

[26]"The methodological assumption of human plasticity provided the anthropological writers of an empirical vein with the ground for emphasising the power of the scientific knowledge of man in improving human conditions. J.L. Stocks writes: "The emphasis on the sovereign value of direct experience, the denial of all originality to '*reason*', tends to have the rather paradoxical-seeming effect of bringing into relief the importance of *reasoning*. It is the art of thought to make a little experience go a long way, as paper money builds a vast credit system on a small accumulation of specie. In this way the empiricist falls naturally into a conviction of the supreme value of scientific abstraction and an ardent desire to extend its beneficent work"(emphases original). *Reason and Intuition and Other Essays*, pp.216-7.

> that the antiperfectibility doctrine, far from having the sanction of experience, is brought forward in opposition to one of the clearest cases of experience which human affairs present, and that by all just rules of induction we ought to conclude that an extremely high degree of moral and intellectual excellence may be made to prevail among mankind at large, since causes exist which have confessedly been proved adequate to produce it in many particular instances.[27]

The "adequate" causes here were intended to "form the strongest possible associations of the salutary class," that is, "associations of pleasure with all things beneficial to the great whole, and of pain with all things hurtful to it."[28] However, this altruistic goal, together with the goal of achieving "an extremely high degree of moral and intellectual excellence," contained in itself a normative expectation which his descriptive environmentalism could hardly satisfy.

C. Intellect and Feelings

This straightforward, perhaps simplistic, conception of man was seriously questioned by Mill during the mental crisis. In the *Autobiography* Mill criticised the education provided by his teachers, one which eventually brought him to dejection. He believed that they "had occupied themselves but superficially with the means of forming and keeping up these salutary associations"[29] of his own pleasures with the happiness of the greatest number. His teachers had, in fact, developed intellect at the expense of feelings and formed an intelligent being who had repressed his affective propensities. Mill believed the associations, thus produced, inevitably involved something artificial and casual and were not connected with any "natural tie."[30] In order to make a complete man, education should not be merely intellectual. Mill confessed that during his mental crisis he gave for the first time a proper place to the internal culture of the individual as one of the prime necessities of human well-being. He went on to say,

> I ceased to attach almost exclusive importance to the ordering of outward circumstances, and the training of the human being for speculation and for action. I had now learnt by experience that the passive susceptibilities needed to be cultivated

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[27] John Stuart Mill, "Speech on Perfectibility," in Harold Laski, ed., *Autobiography of John Stuart Mill* (London: Oxford University Press, 1928[1924]), pp.290-1.
[28] *Autobiography*, p.82.
[29] *Ibid.*, p.82.
[30] *Ibid.*, p.83.

as well as the active capacities, and required to be nourished and enriched as well as guided."

From this awareness of the importance of internal culture emerged his attempt to incorporate feelings (or "internal susceptibilities") into associationist psychology and his recognition of the value of poetry.

A number of discussions have taken place of Mill's interest in feelings and poetry. Stanley T. Williams claimed that Mill's mental crisis added to his "logical head" what was far more important, a temper of an "emotional nature." With his awareness of the importance of emotions Mill "emerged from his *Weltschmerz* with an enrichment of spirit"; consequently, he strove to discover poetry's "relation to other forms of art" and "to life." It seems clear, Williams argued, that after the mental crisis Mill was no longer "a logic-chopping machine."[32] Peter F. Morgan, on the other hand, tried to show that Mill did not discover poetic culture suddenly after the mental crisis but rather cultivated it gradually from his earlier reading in history.[33] Such opposing views provide an understanding of Mill in a broader context than the narrow framework of a rationalist utilitarianism. Nevertheless, an emphasis on emotions and poetic culture as being either dominant in a particular period or inherent throughout the development of Mill's thought does not clearly indicate their true importance. Hence John M. Robson claimed that "Mill not only had emotions and was motivated by them, but recognized their place in a complete moral and social theory."[34] In Robson's interpretation Mill's poetic theory was the fusion of old theories of the association of ideas with the new poetry and poetic theories of the romantics, motivated by his personal experience through the mental crisis. From this point of view, the tone of Mill's rhetoric was reconciliatory. The poet, Mill argued, having a unique method of mental association the key element of which was emotion, had a finer and quicker susceptibility to pleasure and pain. But to be truly great, he must have a cultivated intellect as well as imagination. Possessed of both capacities,

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[31] *Ibid.*, p.86.
[32] Stanley T. Williams, "John Stuart Mill and Literature," *The London Mercury*, 19:112(1929), pp.395-9.
[33] Peter F. Morgan, "The Poetic in the Early Life of John Stuart Mill," *Wordsworth Circle*, 7(1978), pp.121-8.
[34] John M. Robson, "J.S. Mill's Theory of Poetry," in Schneewind, ed., p.252.

the poet was able to achieve an ethical goal by presenting "scenes and characters which play upon the feelings of his readers in such a way as to pattern out for them a standard of beautiful conduct."[35] In effect, as Edward Alexander points out, Mill's view of poetry was related to "his definition of culture and of the form it must take in democratic society."[36]

These views may well be correct. Robson's view that Mill sought in the poet a balance between emotion and intellect is supported by the various writings of Mill on poetry. Such a person may well, as Alexander claims, have been viewed by Mill as an ideal type of man in his democratic utopia. In the analyses of Robson and Alexander, however, the essence of the relationship between the theory of association, from which Mill's teachers inferred intellectualistic theories of character formation, and the stress which Mill laid upon feelings and emotions, which constituted the basis of Mill's "internal culture," is still left untouched.

The point is that Mill did not see the two sides of the relationship as being entirely different; rather he believed intellect and emotion were both determined by the laws of the association of ideas; they were, therefore, only different aspects of the same activity of the human mind. When he criticised his teachers, the point of his argument, as Robson suggests, was not that they were mistaken in applying the associationist doctrine to the analysis of the formation of human character. The doctrine itself "appeared [to him] inexpugnable."[37] The teachers were mistaken only in the rigidity of that application, a rigidity which caused them to be concerned with means. The result was a great deal of intellectualism which, emphasising an important part of man's mental activity, neglected another part which was no less important. The habit of analysis bred in the young Mill had "a tendency to wear away the feelings."[38] And when a man was deprived of these feelings, he became in theory an abstraction and in reality a miserable creature, who was not a fully developed man. A gulf had thus been created between the character which the teachers sought to develop and the character which Mill conceived to be truly humane. Mill's interest in emotion and poetry after the mental crisis

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[35] *Ibid.*, p.277.
[36] Edward Alexander, "Mill's Theory of Culture," *The University of Toronto Quarterly*, 35:1(1965), p.75.
[37] *Autobiography*, p.82.
[38] *Ibid.*, p.83.

reflected his struggle to fill this gulf. He had not, however, abandoned the associationist viewpoint and as a result still maintained the same preference for intellect as his teachers. This was evidenced in his writings on poetry.

In "What is Poetry?"(1833) and "The Two Kinds of Poetry"(1833) Mill elaborated the meaning of poetry. Unlike matters of fact or science, poetry addressed not belief but feelings or emotions. Nevertheless, poetry, when it was really such, was an expression of the truth. Differing from fiction which gave "a true picture of *life*"(emphasis original), poetry painted "the human soul truly."[39] What was then the truth which poetry conveyed by painting the human soul? -- "All persons, even the most unimaginative, in moments of strong emotion, speak poetry. . . . What is poetry, but the thoughts and words in which emotion spontaneously embodies itself? As there are few who are not, at least for *some* moments and in *some* situations, capable of *some* strong feeling, poetry is natural to most persons at some period of their lives"(emphases original).[40] If poetic experience occurred in strongly emotional moments and was expressed in thoughts and words, the poets were "those who are so constituted, that emotions are the links of association by which their ideas, both sensuous and spiritual, are connected together."[41] Mill thus attempted to develop a new theory of association, one which could follow somewhat different trains than those of the intellectual kind.

In the case of the latter, a fact was remembered for its "fortuitous coincidence" with some trifling incident or circumstance that occurred simultaneously. And like a narrative, it followed the order of the occurrence of the events. Associations in this case were generally chronological. To these kinds of associations, custom and education added an artificial conditioning, as a result of which "objects group themselves according to the artificial classifications . . . for the convenience of thought or of practice."[42] For example,

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[39]John Stuart Mill, "What is Poetry?" in F. Parvin Sharpless, ed., *Essays on Poetry by John Stuart Mill*(Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1976), pp.5-6, 8.
[40]John Stuart Mill, "The Two Kinds of Poetry," *ibid.*, p.31.
[41]*Ibid.*, p.32.
[42]*Ibid.*, p.33.

classificatory concepts such as "cold" and "hot" would chronologically asssociate themselves with frostbite and burn, which in turn would provoke recollections of the efficiency of down-filled jackets or heat-resistant gloves, leading to an intellectual judgment on what a workman required when employed in the frigid Canadian North.

Poetic associations, on the other hand, were to be natural.

> Where . . . nature has given strong feelings, and education not created factitious tendencies stronger than the natural ones, the prevailing associations will be those which connect objects and ideas with emotions. Thoughts and images will be linked together, according to the similarity of the feelings which cling to them. A thought will introduce a thought by first introducing a feeling which is allied to it. At the centre of each group of thoughts or images will be found a feeling; and the thoughts or images are only there because the feeling was there. All the combinations which the mind puts together, all the pictures which it paints, all the wholes which Imagination constructs out of the materials supplied by Fancy, will be indebted to some dominant ***feeling***, not as in other natures to a dominant ***thought***, for their unity and consistency of character, for what distinguishes them from incoherencies. [emphases original][43]

While intellectual associations followed the successive order of causality, poetic associations took the synchronical order of similarity. Like a magnet, feelings gathered around themselves thoughts and images. A blizzard in the Arctic region shown on television could make the poet recollect the corpse of a destitute in his hometown which he saw a long time ago and inspire him with sympathy with the poor. Even though the poet would not be able to articulate intellectually why the blizzard was associated with an event that occurred long before, this unconscious recollection and arousal of sympathy would give him an awareness of the relationship and enable him to sing his pity for the dead man in the boreal cold.

This emotional association, however, had essentially the same mechanism as the intellectual association. Be it a feeling of sympathy or the unexpected occurrence of successive events, the logic which underpinned this link of association involved a necessary process. Therefore, the association thus established was an experience of the relationship of things and not a subjective state of mind which would adhere to a certain preference regardless of external conditions. It was attached to the external world and not to the heart. Poetic truth was a form of understanding, and Mill's theory of poetry thus became an "epistemology."[44]

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[43] *Ibid.*

[44] Jonathan Loesberg, "In Which a Poet is Frightened by a Lion," *The Victorian Newsletter*, 55(1979), p.26.

One might agree with W. David Shaw that we "can learn more from Mill when he is wrong than from most philosophers when they are right."[45] Nevertheless, it is clear that feelings coated with thoughts -- if that is possible -- were much more than mere feelings. In advocating the development of feelings, Mill was, in fact, promising an effect which only intellect was able to provide. Séamus Cooney may well be correct in his assertion that Mill failed to find "a genuine or lasting synthesis or reconciliation" between emotional truth expressed in poetry and the intellectual truth expressed in prose.[46] Whether Mill was successful or not in developing a theory of poetic truth, his concern to analyse and rehabilitate feelings or passive susceptibilities as internal culture may be viewed as an endeavour to go beyond the narrow mechanical view of man which he felt was contained in the associationism of James Mill. Endeavouring to do this, however, he was still swimming in the pond of associationism. Related to this endeavour was Mill's attempt to modify his father's interpretation of a theory of free-will within the framework of associationism.

D. Freedom of the Will

In the *Autobiography* Mill confessed that with his recovery from mental dejection he began to speculate seriously about "Philosophical Necessity." "I felt," he wrote, "as if I was scientifically proved to be the helpless slave of antecedent circumstances; as if my character and that of all others had been formed for us by agencies beyond our control, and was wholly out of our own power." He went on to say that he had overcome such a feeling and

> perceived, that the word Necessity, as a name for the doctrine of Cause and Effect applied to human action, carried with it a misleading association; and that this association was the operative force in the depressing and paralysing influence which I had experienced. I saw that though our character is formed by circumstances, our own desires can do much to shape those circumstances; and that what is really inspiring and ennobling in the doctrine of freewill, is the conviction that we have real power over the formation of our own character; that our will, by influencing some of our circumstances, can modify our future habits or capabilities of willing.[47]

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[45]W. David Shaw, "Mill on Poetic Truth," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 23:1(1981), p.36.
[46]Séamus Cooney, "'The Heart of That Mystery,'" *The Victorian Newsletter*, 21(1962), p.20.
[47]*Autobiography*, pp.101-2.

To this he added, "All this was entirely consistent with the doctrine of circumstances, or rather, was that doctrine properly understood."[48] In order to determine the extent to which Mill's tribute to the free-will of man was a significant modification of his associationist inheritance, it is useful to compare his arguments on this matter with those of his father. Such a comparison will show what progress, if any, Mill made in this connection and, in particular, what aspects of the issue of free-will he was concerned with.

In the *Analysis* James Mill devoted one chapter to the topic of "The Will." In it, he accepted the conventional definition of the will as the cause of the action. The will is the cause and the action the effect. In accepting this definition, however, he refused to allow any third element -- any force or power -- to intervene. For James Mill the force or power which was generally held to connect the cause to the action was not discreet but an integral part of the cause itself. His concern then was to throw light upon "the real state of mind which immediately precedes an action."[49] Before explaining the immediately preceding mental state of an action, it was necessary to define an action. Two kinds of actions were identified: those of the body and those of the mind. The actions of the body consisted of certain contractions of muscular fibres. The sequence of events in which muscular or fibrous contractions took place consisted of sensations, ideas, and muscular or fibrous contractions. Therefore, at the most basic level, James Mill asserted that "the Sensation, or Idea, is the cause of the contraction."[50] Contractions were originally occasioned by sensation, but afterwards, as a result of habit, they were caused by ideas which were copies of sensations. The will or the power of the will in this view of bodily action meant the "inseparable connexion between the Ideas, and the contractions."[51] This point of view, James Mill observed, was not inconsistent with the doctrine of "the Freedom of the Will" because it claimed "that our power of willing consists in the power of calling into existence the appropriate Idea; that the power of the will is not immediate over the muscle, but over the Idea."[52] Thus as far as actions of the body

[48] *Ibid.*, p.102.
[49] James Mill, *Analysis*, II, pp.328-9.
[50] *Ibid.*, p.330.
[51] *Ibid.*, p.346.
[52] *Ibid.*, p.348.

were concerned, James Mill believed, man could be said to possess free-will. That is, he could choose which ideas he would call up and thus select his actions of the body.

James Mill's theory of the involvement of the will in mental actions also focused on the power of the mind to affect the trains of its associations, that is, the "power of making an idea call up other ideas" rather than those which it would spontaneously excite. This calling up of other ideas implied a process of the mind's making new trains of associations. In this process, as in all processes in which the mind exercised its power, such as recollection and attention, a pleasurable sensation or idea was first desired as an end and then followed by its actual gratification or failure. In James Mill's view the power of the mind over its associations, that is, the will, was "nothing more than the power of certain interesting Ideas, originating in interesting sensations, and formed into strength by association."[53] Like the case of bodily action, mental action could take place in the absence of sensations. But what actually the mind willed was a recollection of appropriate associations and not any creation of new associations of ideas. James Mill, in fact, had connected man's bodily and mental actions directly to his experience of circumstances, leaving, in effect, little or no room for any ordinary language conception of free-will.

In trying to make clear the role of the will in the process of association, John Stuart Mill hoped to develop James Mill's theory into "a law of voluntary action."[54] Generally speaking, however, Mill's stance with respect to the will was basically the same as James Mill's, and his annotation to his father's *Analysis* remained within the boundary of orthodox associationism. Although Mill distinguished desire from idea, he still viewed it as causally connected with previous associations. To say that man had a desire meant simply that he had recalled a satisfactory, or successful, association of ideas. Desire in this sense was merely an active expression of that which occurred passively.[55]

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[53] *Ibid.*, p.379.
[54] *Ibid.*, pp.379-82n.
[55] Mill viewed desire as that motive which called the will into action. James Mill, *Analysis*, p.374n. But his rejection of any innate tendency prevented him from reserving any place in the human mind for the will. Nor did Mill attempt to define what the will was. Desire being the active motivation of the will, we may interpret it as a particular form of association in which the ideas of causes and

This psychological conception of the will was basically similar to the philosophical argument regarding human volition put forward in *A System of Logic*. If the human mind and action were determined by circumstances, they were subject to the same causal laws which governed the external world. Regarding the dispute over the question of the applicability of the law of causality to human actions, Mill clearly stated that he took the side of the "affirmative" doctrine, that human volitions and actions were necessary and inevitable. He thus rejected the "negative" doctrine that "the will is not determined . . . by antecedent, but determines itself."[56] But to argue that human volitions and actions were "necessary and inevitable" and at the same time to maintain that man had a "free" will was clearly contradictory. In the *Logic* Mill attempted to resolve the contradiction by modifying the doctrine of necessity. He there wrote that the term "necessity" itself was inappropriate because it presupposed a "mystic tie" between volitions and their antecedents and implied an "irresistibleness." Human actions were not governed by any one cause; man could control to some extent some of the causes of his action. But how and to what extent? Once again Mill resorted to his associationist psychology. The will was determined by a motive, but a motive was not always an anticipation of a pleasure or a pain. As man repeated an activity by way of the circuit of sensation-idea-motive-desire-action, the action itself became an end (the object of the *desire*) and man took action without going back to any motive. Thus man could come to engage in an action even though the action did not promise any immediate pleasure. If the motive and desire associated with an action were formed independently of any direct anticipation of pain or pleasure, it meant that man's will was, in this respect, "free" from the necessity of the influence of circumstances.[57] In Mill's words, "It is only when our purposes have become independent of the feelings of pain or pleasure from which they originally took

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[55](cont'd) effects are so inseparably tied up with each other that actions can be generated by it regardless of other immediate and contingent ideas.

[56]John Stuart Mill, *A System of Logic*, *CW*, VIII, p.836.

[57]This proposition, however, contains a contradiction because the beginning of the will is still desire which is a recollection of previous associations. The mechanism of how man jumps psychologically from an *an sich* to a *für sich* is still obscure in Mill's theory.

their rise, that we are said to have a confirmed character."[58]

Because the annotation was written later than *A System of Logic*, its argument may safely be treated as reflecting Mill's final view of free-will. The most baffling element in his theory of free-will was the tension between the will and external conditions. In creating a place for free-will, Mill did not attempt to refute the theory that circumstances determined human character. His intention was to fit his free-will theory to environmentalist doctrines, rather than to make a compromise between the two contradictory theories. Mill, therefore, argued that to say that man's character was formed *by* him was not inconsistent with the claim that it was formed *for* him, because "his own desire to mould it in a particular way, was one of those circumstances, and by no means one of the least influential." In effect, he reiterated his claim made in the *Autobiography*, "We are exactly as capable of making our own character, *if we will*, as others are of making it for us"(emphasis original).[59]

In spite of Mill's assuredness, the argument he developed concerning free-will was not persuasive. The will was explained as the direct association between motive and action, derived from already obtained ideas of pleasure or pain. Such an association, even when not related to the original sensations or ideas, was still mechanical and necessary. Though severed from the direct ideas of pleasure or pain, such an action did not involve any *free* will. And if man's desire to mould his character was regarded as part of circumstances, what then was the nature of these circumstances at the moment when an action was willed? Was it not itself simply the effect of circumstances, or man's experience ("sensations") of circumstances? Was not, in fact, the mind passive even at the very moment when it willed some action? Mill, in effect, differed little from his father who saw "the Freedom of the Will" in the recalling of appropriate associations.

In his review of "Bain's Psychology"(1859) Mill candidly admitted that the writings of "the Association Psychologists" gave an impression of "the almost total absence, in their analytical expositions, of the recognition of any active element, or spontaneity, in the mind

[58] *Ibid.*, p.843.
[59] *Ibid.*, p.840.

itself."[60] Once again he tried to show that the mind was "active as well as passive," referring to Bain's observation of new-born lambs, which confirmed the existence of a spontaneous tendency to perform movements independently of the stimulus of sensations, and a power to continue or abate a present movement without reference to present pleasure or pain.[61] But in *Hamilton's Philosophy* Mill refused to admit that such a tendency or power was *innate*. He rejected the claims that man, in possessing "a free intelligence," had an unmediated connection with a metaphysical Creator who also possessed a free intelligence, and that, because of this direct connection with God, man had an *a priori* ability to make judgment upon moral issues on the basis of his common sense. He also refuted Hamilton's theory that man's freedom was associated with his being a moral agent and that as a moral agent he was to conform with the already prescribed rules of duty. He further denied the existence of consciousness in the Hamiltonian sense of an "arbiter." According to Mill, consciousness was no more than my being aware of what I do or feel. It could neither predict nor advise what a man could be or do.

What was it, then, that took place when man willed something? According to Mill, immediately preceding an action, man was in an undetermined mental and physical state, "a conflict of feelings." His will tended to be formed by the stronger or more permanent feeling.

> The conflict is between me and myself; between (for instance) me desiring a pleasure, and me dreading self-reproach. What causes Me, or, if you please, my Will, to be identified with one side rather than with the other, is that one of the Me's represents a more permanent state of my feelings than the other does. After the temptation has been yielded to, the desiring "I" will come to an end, but the conscience-stricken "I" may endure to the end of life.[62]

The two "me's" in conflict represented two different kinds of feelings stemming from different experiences. The natural me might pursue pleasure, only to be punished by a stronger pain. In repeating this blind pursuit of pleasure, man became aware of another me, which, knowing the pursuit of a particular pleasure would necessarily bring forth pain, would tend to check the instinctual preference for direct pleasure. Which action a man took as a result of this conflict of me's depended entirely upon the power relationship between the two

[60]John Stuart Mill, "Bain's Psychology," *CW*, XI, p.354.
[61]*Ibid.*, pp.359, 365.
[62]*Hamilton's Philosophy*, p.452.

forces. Man's will was a function of the relative strength of internal mental forces, one binding him to the necessity of external circumstances and the other struggling to emancipate him from their yoke.

This theory of free-will, designed to refute Hamilton's theory of conscience, eventually made Mill succumb to the very theory he was attacking. Hamilton had argued that man's conscience involved a conscious effort to control intellectual desires. In refuting this theory, Mill argued that conscience was nothing other than a desire. If the conscious effort of conscience implied any battle, it was between two different me's and not between me and some alien force. In describing this internal process, Mill put forward the utilitarian logic that "the difference between a bad and a good man is not that the latter acts in opposition to his strongest desires; it is that his desire to do right, and his aversion to doing wrong, are strong enough to overcome, and in the case of perfect virtue, to silence, any other desire or aversion which may conflict with them."[63] But what was the desire to do right? By definition, it was not innate but acquired. But its function of providing the dread of self-reproach and the "conscience-stricken I" was evidently no different from that of Hamilton's "conscience," which was to check undesirable human actions. The difference Mill introduced was the difference in name; the substance of conscience remained unchanged.

Mill's difficulty lay not only in his attempt to incorporate the substantial part of Hamilton's theory of conscience into his utilitarian system but also in his attempt to ground his theory of character cultivation primarily upon this alien element. To produce a man who was both "good" and "free," while clinging to the principle of hedonism, was simply not possible.

E. Human Nature and Human Action

Mill's failure to provide an adequate account of feelings and freewill within the framework of associationism imposed severe limitations upon his theory of human action. Man was subject to the overwhelming influence of the external world and the possibility of

[63] *Ibid.*, p.453.

acting upon the environment and shaping his own self was virtually denied. If the mind and character of man were determined by circumstances, how then could human actions be explained? In the long term, it might be possible to argue that a man's tendency to prefer action A to action B was due to the circumstances in which he grew up. But specifically why he took at a given time action C instead of action D could not be explained simply by referring to circumstances. In order to explain a particular action, environmentalism required a theory of the will. However, this theory of the will, as we have seen, was itself couched in terms of the passive relationship of man with his environment and thus lost any explanatory power. In this respect, it illustrated the central dilemma of the associationist anthropology.[64] In order to explain particular actions of man, therefore, reference had to be made not to the will, which was a secondary phenomenon, but to a concept which was central to this anthropology, the idea of nature.

In his essay "Nature" Mill described "nature" in terms of "the modes in which it [the law which governs all phenomena] acts on other things (counting among those things the senses of the observer) and the modes in which other things act upon it; to which, in the case of a sentient being, must be added, its own capacities of feeling, or being conscious."[65] This description points to two key elements in Mill's view of human nature. First, man was in a constant interaction with circumstances, theoretically acting upon and being acted upon by them. Whichever of the two was more influential at a given time, all the consequences of this intercourse were regarded as part of the workings of nature. Mill's view of man as a product of circumstances effectively negated any metaphysical claim that nature had built into man certain *innate* tendencies, which might dictate human actions. Devoid of all innate capabilities,

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[64]For example, in Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* we find a strong advocation of the "free" will: "What causes rest in one [hand], and motion in the other [hand]? Nothing but my will, a thought of my mind; . . ." P.386. But ultimately in Locke's theory the will, that is, the "free action of the mind," turned out to be a "habit of the mind" due "to trains of motion in the animal spirit [an eighteenth-century concept to explain the physical and mechanical side of human action] which tend to move in established pathways in the brain." John Yolton, *Thinking Matter*, p.160. The will then became a mechanical phenomenon, and the "free" will a mirage.

[65]John Stuart Mill, "Nature," *CW*, X, p.374.

all that man did must have originated from the circumstances of the external world. In the working of circumstances upon the human being was evident the central element in human nature, its plasticity.

By what means, then, could man be influenced by external conditions? That the beginning of the formation of human character occurred in sensations has already been pointed out. This claim, when viewed in the light of Mill's environmentalism, involved some logical difficulties. If man did not have any innate faculties, how could he receive the influences of the external world? He must have an *innate* capacity to do so. Thus Mill's environmentalist view of nature included as its second element the "sentient being," that is, a claim that there were *innate* capacities of feeling, or being conscious. A mechanism was thus allowed through which the influences of the external world could reach the mind of man.

These two elements of human nature, its plasticity and its innate capacity of feeling, however, could not satisfactorily explain human actions. The problem was that man did not simply receive external stimuli; he also responded to them. For example, man avoided touching the thorn of the rose while, at the same time, he enjoyed observing its beautiful flower. Man preferred sweet honey to the bitter roots of the dandelion. Such pursuit or avoidance of particular objects presupposed certain innate predilections in man which made him accept this and reject that. Without such predilections, each human character would become a mishmash of attributes occasioned randomly by external stimuli. Moreover, a simply nondiscriminatory and receptive attitude toward all external stimuli would endanger man's existence itself. Therefore, environmentalism was forced to permit another exception to its logic. Long before John Stuart Mill, Locke had pointed out that "among the simple ideas which we receive both from sensation and reflection *pain* and *pleasure* are two very considerable ones."[44] Being primitive simple ideas, both pain and pleasure were too basic to be described or defined. They were only perceived through our direct sensations. Simple though they might be, pain and pleasure were decisive elements in the primary actions of man. To the animal side of man pleasure meant something acceptable and pain something to be rejected.

[44]John Locke, *Essay*, p.159.

In other words, pleasure was good and pain evil. In the light of man's primary contact with the environment, pleasure and pain were the only good and evil. "Things," Locke pointed out, "are good or evil only in reference to pleasure or pain."[67] But if man *naturally* accepted pleasure and rejected pain, he had already another *innate* capacity.

This second innate capacity was related to what both Locke and Mill referred to the passions. Regarding the existence of passions, Locke had stated,

> Pleasure and pain and that which causes them, good and evil, are the hinges on which our passions turn. And if we reflect on ourselves, and observe how these, under various considerations, operate in us; what modifications or tempers of mind, what internal sensations (if I may so call them) they produce in us we may thence form to ourselves the ideas of our passions.[68]

Passions, which were installed within a man *innately*, operated in such a way as to drive him to pursue pleasures and avoid pains and to prevent him from doing whatever was contrary to this criterion. Pleasure and pain, that is, "Good and Evil," Locke said, ". . . are the only Motives to a rational Creature: these are the Spur and Reins, whereby all Mankind are set on work and guided."[69] A similar logic was also adopted by the utilitarian Jeremy Bentham when he began his *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* with this remark: "NATURE has placed mankind under the governance of two masters, *pain* and *pleasure*" (capitalisation mine, other emphases original).[70] Pain and pleasure were taken for granted as key elements of human nature and the governing forces of human conduct in general. "They," Bentham went on to say, "govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think: every effort we can make to throw off our subjection, will serve but to demonstrate and confirm it."[71]

The concept of human nature thus has these basic elements, plasticity, sentience and a propensity to seek pleasures and avoid pains. In this concept of man, particularly in the light of the latter point, man appears as an isolated individual seeking the means for attaining his own pleasure and avoiding pain. John Stuart Mill, who was an environmentalist and a

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[67] *Ibid.*, pp.159-60.
[68] *Ibid.*, p.160.
[69] John Locke, *Some Thought Concerning Education*, p.53.
[70] P.1.
[71] *Ibid.*

utilitarian, adopted this view of man. Man in his natural and uncultivated state was solitary without any acquired capacity or any moral virtue. What he did have was a drive to gratify his own desires. He was a creature dedicated to the pursuit of egoistic activities. In the essay "Nature," Mill characterised the most natural and uncultivated man by the word "selfish." "Of the social virtues," he wrote, "it is almost superfluous to speak; so completely is it the verdict of all experience that selfishness is natural."[72] Saying this, he went on to criticise the (evidently Rousseauan) claim that sympathy was natural. An uncultivated man might occasionally have sympathetic feelings toward other persons; but such feelings were extended only to a limited number of individuals and toward the rest of the world the uncultivated man must be "unjust and unfeeling." Although such partial sympathy was not "solitary," it was still a "sympathetic selfishness, *l'egoïsme à deux, à trois*, or *à quatre*."[73] For the uncultivated man the most important criterion in choosing an action was the possibility it contained for gratification of his desire for pleasure and avoidance of pain. If this natural man had a will, that will was subordinate to this egoistic self-seeking and, consequently, his actions were instinctual and without forethought. The will, in this sense, could not control man's own actions without regard for immediate consequences.

Acting according to his instinctual impulses, the natural man possessed nothing deserving of praise. He was merely a sort of wild animal. Courage, for which the savage was often commended, was actually "a victory achieved over one of the most powerful emotions of human nature," that is, fear, and was thus unattainable by the savage.[74] Even "the quality of cleanness" was not natural to man, being clearly absent in children and "the lower classes of most countries."[75] Rousseau's misleading view of the savage that, having no motives to the contrary, he did not possess the inclination to engage in the "treachery and trickery of civilization" must be refuted because he, the savage, did not have "the faintest notion of truth as a virtue." Natural men were "always liars."[76] To the natural man, who was nothing more

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[72] "Nature," p.394.
[73] *Ibid.*
[74] *Ibid.*, p.393.
[75] *Ibid.*, p.394.
[76] *Ibid.*, p.395. In Mill's conception, therefore, savage man, children and lower classes

than a selfish beast, there was nothing more inappropriate than the expression "natural justice."[17] The absence in the natural man of any kind of virtue constituted a basic tenet of Mill's environmentalist anthropology and the ground of this belief was his hypothesis that man had an *innate* drive to pursue pleasure and avoid pain.

The negative view of the natural man contained in Mill's environmentalist anthropology carried with it obvious prescriptions for remedying man's natural weaknesses. Since the natural instincts of man to pursue pleasure and avoid pain were necessary and useful for his preservation, Mill declared, it was not wise, nor perhaps possible, to exterminate them entirely. Instead he proposed to reduce them to the minimum, to those which were necessary and useful. An undesirable instinct, that is, "an instinct to destroy for destruction's sake," must be not only regulated but also extirpated or, rather, starved by disuse."[18] In this he was following closely the view of his father that an individual must be educated to a perfect command over his appetites and desires, and acquire a "power of restraining them whenever they lead in a hurtful direction."[19] Because the natural inclinations and propensities of man were blind and not necessarily useful, education must replace them with desirable habits.

Associationism, in fact, contained within itself an assumption that man's drive for pleasure did not necessarily result in behaviour that was good (i.e. productive of long term good) either for himself or for others. This belief was accompanied by another -- that man was formed by experience. The normative prescription that natural instincts should be suppressed and desirable habits established was underpinned by the idea that an appropriate control of circumstances could establish or extirpate man's particular habits. The actual prescription for establishing appropriate habits was the control of the environment, notably a

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[17](cont'd) were all uncultivated and deficient in moral virtues. The view that natural man are liars has the same meaning as the view that the working class are "habitual liars." They are both uncultivated.

[18]*Ibid.*, p.396.

[19]The view that natural instincts are evil and the prescription to extirpate them is similar to the Christian doctrine of original sin. Like Mill's theory, the Christian doctrine treated the natural tendencies of man as evil and proposed to extirpate them. This may imply Mill's and other associationists' mental affinity with the dominant Christian way of thinking. Remember that James Mill was educated to be a minister and even Locke avoided confrontation with the Christian religion.

[20]James Mill, "Education," p.63.

well-calculated combination of reward and punishment as suggested by Locke. Reward would encourage a particular action by providing a gratification to the individual's desire for pleasure, while punishment would discourage it by assuring the inevitable consequences of pain. When deliberately used, the associationist believed, this method would surely reform the human character, in which *innate* faculties were denied except those of feeling and the instinctual pursuit of pleasure and avoidance of pain. He would, therefore, be moulded exactly according to the intentions of the educator.

Man's natural intercourse with his environment would to some extent have this effect. Initially and originally a man pursued happiness by seeking pleasure and avoiding pain. If he got more pleasure than pain through an action, he would be satisfied and happy; if he obtained more pain than pleasure, he would not be so. Experience would teach him to see that the direct pursuit of pleasure would often result in a greater pain and that there were actions which promised an ultimate, if not an immediate, happiness. Such a natural lesson, however, was not reliable because it came from the unorganised workings of the environment. Thus education was essential in environmentalist anthropology and the careful organisation and control of the environment the surest measure to guarantee its success.

In inheriting environmentalist and associationist psychology, John Stuart Mill also inherited the anthropology based on that psychology. For him, as for his predecessors, man was originally a pleasure-seeking animal who needed to be educated by a controlled environment. Thus conceived, the natural man possessed no elements of nobility. He had no felt need for freedom of thought, no desire for freedom to choose his own mode of life or proper relationship with others; nor had he anything like love of justice, honour, dignity, or sympathy. There was in the natural man no capacity to elevate himself morally. He was simply a wretched savage. This theory of man was, however, in conflict with Mill's view of historical progress in which he had committed himself.

If the individual man was a passive being and an accident in historical progress, what made the difference between the circumstances of one period of history from those of another? To Mill the atheist it could not be any supernatural power, any God or any Buddha.

Neither did circumstances by themselves produce history. Historical progression was made by man, although it was governed by the "ultimate" laws of history, and did not necessarily depend upon human wishes. Mere progression, however, did not guarantee progress. Therefore, to say in the Millian view that man was involved in historical progression did not lead to anything like the Marxian view of man as the creator of history. The ordinary individual, acting passively in his circumstances, did not challenge the external world in order to recreate it according to his own projection.

Mill's normative man was clearly opposed to this passive being. "There are," Mill said in *Considerations on Representative Government*, "no doubt, in all countries, really contented characters, who not merely do not seek, but do not desire, what they do not already possess, and these naturally bear no ill-will towards such as have apparently a more favoured lot."[10] Mill denounced such a passive character as possessed of "unmanliness" and "want of spirit." Even if historical progression brings about the self-government of the people, the passivity of the people's character will make it a "tyranny of the majority" or "the government . . . of each by all the rest."[11] Democracy promised only another kind of custom and the prevalence of vulgar opinions. How could Mill justify and support his reformist cause of progress in the face of such an anthropology?

He did this by creating a new "active" character, not from his descriptive anthropology but from his normative ideals. In "On Genius"(1832) Mill proposed to distinguish "the man who knows" from "the man who takes upon trust," or "the man who can feel and understand truth" from "the man who merely assents to it," or "the active" from "the merely passive mind."[12] "The man who knows," or the "Genius," was a man of originality, that is, a man who has "the capacity of extracting the knowledge of general truth from our own consciousness, whether it be by simple *observation*, by that kind of self-observation which is called *imagination*, or by a more complicated process of analysis and induction"(emphases original).[13] Knowing how and where history was moving, this genius

[10]P.67.
[11]*On Liberty*, *MW*, p.129.
[12](John Stuart Mill,) "On Genius," *CW*, I, p.334.
[13]*Ibid.*, p.332.

encouraged others and extended a helping hand, as the man who first climbed Mont Blanc did to those who climbed next. It was, Mill said in *On Liberty*, because of this enlightened individual that history could, in its long progression, escape from the tendency of "beliefs and practices to degenerate into the mechanical." With their "ever-recurring originality," a succession of persons of genius had been preventing "the grounds of those beliefs and practices from becoming merely traditional,"[114] allowing civilisation to prosper. It was only when "the sovereign many . . . let themselves be guided (which in their best times they always have done) by the counsels and influence of a more highly gifted and instructed One or Few" that human history could progress in the right track. Mill thus found a justification both for his reformist conviction in progress and for his theory of the liberty of individuality, since "the initiation of all wise and noble things comes and must come from the individuals; generally at first from *some one Individual*"(emphasis mine). Mill added, "The honour and glory of the average man is that he is capable of following that initiative; that he can respond internally to wise and noble things, and be led to them with his own eyes."[115] The descriptive man was thus subjugated to the normative man.

Who were these selected few? Were they a different race from the ordinary individuals? Mill's answer may have been both yes and no. Yes, they were a different race because they were gifted and they had knowledge, enabling them to lead ordinary men and women in the right historical track and, if necessary, to play a role of "counterpoise and corrective" towards the tendency of the world. They were "exceptional" individuals, possessing the higher eminences of thought, acting differently from the mass,[116] and even endeavouring "to bend circumstances" to themselves.[117] But, at the same time, they were not different from other individuals because, being human beings, they did not have originally any "peculiar [kind of] mental power." What made them different was "mental power possessed in a peculiar degree."[118] They were different from the rest of mankind not because they had

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[114] *On Liberty*, *MW*, p.194.
[115] *Ibid.*, p.196.
[116] *Ibid.*
[117] *Representative Government*, p.63.
[118] "On Genius," p.331.

different blood -- which was inconceivable to Mill the anti-aristocrat -- but because they had developed their mental power, that is to say, they were instructed. And this instruction, or education, was a special, purposefully planned operation of circumstances, which otherwise would produce passive characters only. Thus by instruction Mill attempted to form his descriptive man into his normative man, an attempt which, in fact, was central to his theory of social practice.

Why, then, did Mill so often emphasise the noble side of human nature? In anticipating the consequence of education, Mill clearly expected the emergence of an ideal type of man who would embody all the desirable qualities. This ideal man was to have developed feelings as well as a developed intellect, a freewill to act upon his environment as well as himself, and, most of all, a noble character, willing to sacrifice, if necessary, his own happiness for the greater happiness of the public. Contrary to the passive man in the uncultivated state who was a product of his environment, this cultivated man was to be an active agent controlling his own destiny. Contrary to the egoistic, self-seeking animal, this man was to be a cooperative and sympathetic man. Mill took this ideal man as the normative goal of education, which, he believed, was realisable within his descriptive anthropology of environmentalism. He thus attempted to transform the egoistic utilitarian man into a generous, sociable character.

Mill's difficulty, however, was that he sought to produce a man who was more than an egoistic atom by means of an anthropological theory which described man as a passive and selfish creature. Even the picture he drew of the ideal man was thus coloured with the environmentalist pastel. The normative man remained an ideal, detached from the theoretical foundations of Mill's descriptive anthropology, like "the floating fat of soup."[11]

The conflict in Mill's thought between these two views of man was clearly evident in his attempt to include the normative values implied by his commitment to history making within the framework of utilitarianism.

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[11]This, in fact, was a criticism by Sombart of the political lack of substance of the intellectual. Unfortunately, however, I cannot recollect my long-past reading of his work to point out where he said so.

IV. Utility

A. Happiness

The point of departure of Mill's rationale for social and moral reform was what his descriptive anthropology concluded to be man's most natural behaviour, that is, the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain. The logic that supported Mill's adoption of the utility principle was exactly that implied by his environmentalist conception of man. Like Locke, who defined pleasure and pain as good and evil, Mill in *Utilitarianism*(1863) wrote, "Actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness."[1] In the penultimate section of the *Logic*, Mill stated that the ultimate principle of the teleology of practice was "the promotion of happiness."[2]

Although happiness was a private matter of the individual, Mill's utilitarianism took it to be also a public matter of society. The individual, pursuing his own happiness, might well conflict with others and such conflict could be solved only in a social context. In this sense the promotion of happiness in Mill's teleology of reform involved two points of view, individual and social. From the point of view of the individual, the pursuit of happiness involved moral questions: What was meant by happiness? How could it be justified as good? And to what extent was individual pursuit of happiness legitimate? From the point of view of society, on the other hand, the goal of securing the greatest happiness of the greatest number raised political questions such as: Why, how and to what extent should the state and society seek the common good? Mill's arguments made in support of the reformist point of view can be boiled down to establishing rules for these moral, legislative and other Arts.[3] Before

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[1]John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, *MW*, p.257.
[2]John Stuart Mill, *A System of Logic*, *CW*, VIII, p.951.
[3]Mill in a letter to John Sterling wrote that "The only thing which I can usefully do at present, & which I am doing more & more every day, is to work out *principles*: which are of use for all times, though to be applied cautiously & circumspectly to any: principles of morals, government, law, education, above all self-education." Mill added, "I am here much more in my element: the only thing that I believe I am really fit for, is the investigation of abstract truth, & the more abstract the better. If there is any science which I am capable of promoting, I think it is the science of science itself, the science of investigation -- of method." 20-22 September 1831, *CW*, XII, pp.78-9.

considering these rules, it is necessary to clarify what Mill meant by the term "happiness."

In *Utilitarianism* (1863) Mill took Bentham's greatest happiness principle as the first principle of the foundation of morals.[4] Unlike sciences, which discovered general laws, the art of morals, as well as the art of legislation, started not from particular facts but from general principles. Bentham was to be commended for having established this principle of both moral and legislative arts. But Mill pointed out in his 1838 essay "Bentham" that Bentham's method of details or, as Bentham himself termed, the "exhaustive method of classification," succeeded only in developing partial truths from the first principle of utility. Because he refused to take into consideration all other schools of thinkers and because he could not see the true universal human nature, Bentham, in spite of his fame as a legislative thinker, failed to be a "moral philosopher."[5] This meant that Bentham's greatest happiness principle, although it was accepted by Mill, had to be understood in a different way from that of Bentham himself.

Bentham defined happiness as "the sum of the pleasures experienced during that quantity of time which is under consideration, deduction made or not made of the quantity of pain experienced during that same quantity of time."[6] A person's happiness could be determined in terms of how many pleasures and how little pains he had during a particular period of time. Therefore, the application of the principle of utility to moral and legislative practice, whose goal was the promotion of happiness, required the specification of pleasures and pains in tangible and manageable terms. Among the four sanctions of pleasure and pain enumerated in *The Principles of Morals and Legislation* Bentham picked the physical sanction as being comprehensive ("altogether") and, therefore, being the groundwork of the other three sanctions, that is, the political, the moral, and the religious.[7] Moreover, the value of pleasure and pain was calculable.[8] Consequently, Bentham's notion of happiness was

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[4] *Utilitarianism*, p.257.
[5] John Stuart Mill, "Bentham," *MW*, pp.97-8.
[6] Jeremy Bentham, *Panomial Fragments*, in *The Works of Jeremy Bentham*, III, p.214.
[7] Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, in *Works*, I, p.15.
[8] The criteria employed in the judgment of the value of pleasure and pain was provided in the following "memoriter verses": "*Intense, long, certain, speedy, fruitful, pure* / Such marks in *pleasures* and in *pains* endure. / Such pleasure seek

quantitative and indiscriminate as to the quality of pleasure and pain which one experienced.

Mill undertook the enterprise of revising this analytic and quantitative notion of happiness and contended that the concept of happiness must include some reference to quality. This revised estimate would clearly indicate some pleasures to be qualitatively superior, for example, "the pleasures of intellect, feelings and imagination, and of the moral sentiments."[9] Mill believed that pleasures of these kinds could furnish one with "a much higher value as pleasures than those of mere sensation."[10] However, Mill's attempt to incorporate the element of quality into the essentially quantitative utilitarian concept of happiness could not evade a good deal of logical obstacles. The "first principle" of greatest happiness identified pleasure with happiness. According to this principle, a greater amount of pleasure meant "happier" and a smaller amount "less happy." In revising the concept of happiness, Mill did not seek to discard altogether the Benthamite equation of quantitative pleasure with happiness. Here again his normative values confronted his descriptive principles, since Mill's concept of the quality of pleasure, by discriminating different kinds in pleasure, undermined the very ground of utilitarian hedonism. If quality of pleasure was to be counted as a moral and legal criterion, then it was no longer possible to claim that the greater amount of pleasure would bring greater amount of happiness.

In *Utilitarianism* Mill observed of the quality difference, "If I am asked, what I mean by difference of quality in pleasures, or what makes one pleasure more valuable than another, merely as a pleasure, except its being greater in amount . . . there is one answer." This "one answer," in fact, consisted of two points. First, Mill wrote, "Of two pleasures, if there be one to which all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective of any feeling of moral obligation to prefer it, that is the more desirable pleasure."[11] The unanimous or majority preference of those who had experienced two competing pleasures was

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[9](cont'd) if *private* be thy end: / If it be *public*, wide let them *extend*. / Such *pains* avoid, whichever be thy view: / If pains *must* come, let them *extend* to few." *Ibid.*, p.16n. Bentham took intensity and duration to be the most important of these. For Bentham's classification of pleasure and pain, see *ibid.*, pp.17-21.

[9]*Utilitarianism*, p.258.

[10]*Ibid.*

[11]*Ibid.*, p.259.

thus regarded as the proof of a pleasure's being desirable. A pleasure was more desirable than others if all or the majority of the experienced preferred it to others. The underlying logic of this statement was as empirical as that which Mill used for the proof of the principle of utility, namely, "The only proof capable of being given that an object is visible, is that people actually see it."[12] A pleasure was desirable if it was actually desired, and a pleasure was more desirable if it was more desired.

The second point of Mill's answer was:

> If one of the two [pleasures] is, by those who are competently acquainted with both, placed so far above the other that they prefer it, even though knowing it to be attended with a greater amount of discontent, and would not resign it for any quantity of the other pleasure which their nature is capable of, we are justified in ascribing to the preferred enjoyment a superiority in quality, so far out-weighing quantity as to render it, in comparison, of small account.[13]

Instead of those "who have experience" Mill referred to those "who are competently acquainted." And the pleasure of higher quality was described as something which the acquainted would take even when it was accompanied by a greater amount of discontent, that is, pain. This point, then, collided with the previous point. When the preference by those who had experienced a certain pleasure was taken as the proof of the pleasure's being qualitatively superior, then there would not be any need for introducing the criterion of the competence of the experienced. On the contrary, when the competence of the experienced was admitted as the criterion of a quality judgment, then the actual preference of ordinary people could not prove a particular pleasure's being qualitatively superior.

The two points put forward as the ground of Mill's quality difference thesis, in fact, turned out to be a source of perennial disputes among moral philosophers. The most classical and devastating assault was G.E. Moore's criticism of the empirical ground in Mill's argument. In Moore's view, the claim that a pleasure is desirable (that is, of a higher quality) has nothing to do with the pleasure's being actually desired. No one can say that the black box of the crashed Air India aircraft is capable of being seen simply because it is visible. Although a pleasure is desirable, there are a number of cases in which it is not actually "able

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[12] *Ibid.*, p.288.
[13] *Ibid.*, p.259.

to be desired." "The desirable," Moore said, "means simply what *ought* to be desired or *deserves* to be desired; just as the detestable means not what can be but what ought to be detested and the damnable what deserves to be damned"(emphases original).[14] So when it is understood that "desirable" means "what is good to desire," Moore contended, "it is no longer plausible to say that our only test of *that*, is what is actually desired"(emphasis original).[15] So Moore concluded that "Mill's admissions as to quality of pleasure are either inconsistent with his Hedonism, or else afford no other ground for it than would be given by mere quantity of pleasure."[16] Similarly F.H. Bradley in his *Ethical Studies*(1876) attacked Mill's "preferable kind of pleasure." According to him, higher and lower are comparative terms and refer to degree. "What is higher," Bradley wrote, "has a greater degree (or it has a greater number of degrees) of something definite; what is lower has a less degree or number of degrees. . . . So that apart from quantity, apart from degree, there is no comparison, no higher and lower at all."[17] Therefore, in order to compare higher and lower kinds of pleasure, one must reduce the data to the same denomination, that is, the same kind of quality. Otherwise, one abandons the greatest amount of pleasure principle. "Higher then," Bradley said, "has no meaning at all, unless we go to something *outside* pleasure, for we may not go to quantity of pleasure. But, if we go outside pleasure, not only have we given up the greatest amount theory, but we have thrown over Hedonism altogether"(emphasis original).[18]

These classical criticisms of Mill's quality claim for pleasure failed to resolve all the possible issues. As was pointed out in Moore's first criticism, Mill's quality claim could not be based on empirical grounds. And as Bradley pointed out, the quality claim was not reconcilable with an essentially quantitative utilitarian hedonism. But what is important to

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[14]George Edward Moore, *Principia Ethica*, p.67.
[15]*Ibid.*
[16]Moore, p.78.
[17]F.H. Bradley, *Ethical Studies*, p.118.
[18]*Ibid.*, pp.119-20. Criticism was also made by the utilitarian Henry Sidgwick. In 1874 he contended that "in order to work out consistently the method that takes pleasure as the sole ultimate end of rational conduct, Bentham's [quantitative] proposition must be accepted, and all *qualitative* comparison of pleasures must resolve itself into quantitative," for "all pleasures are understood to be so called because they have a common property of pleasantness, and may therefore be compared in respect of this common property." *The Methods of Ethics*, p.94.

note is that Mill wished to ground his quality claim, not on the pleasure-seeking activity of the many but on the special activities of very special individuals. Some recent interpreters try to understand Mill's claim in terms of the meanings implied therein rather than refute it by exposing logical incoherencies. John R. Billings, for example, complains of Moore's failure to question the applicability of quantity to pleasure. When an expert passes judgment upon the quality of an ordinary commodity such as motor oil, his judgment will be based on the additive numerical values of the implied properties such as the viscosity, the temperature range, or the flash point of the oil. But in the case of the quality of a pleasure, there is no way to develop such numerical values. The quality of pleasure is too complex to be handled in this way and the reason for this complexity is, Billings argues, the fact that quality is inherent not in the pleasure itself but in the whole of the activity which produces such a pleasure.[19] Accepting Billings' distinction between pleasure and the activity which produces the pleasure, Scott Gordon proposes to distinguish further "the activity which renders pleasure" from "the nature of the actor who is engaged in the activity."[20] In the Martin-West debate, too, the two partners, in spite of their conflicting views, develop a consensus that Mill's quality concept of pleasure is inseparably attached to a desirable life in which mental pleasure is more highly estimated than bodily pleasure.[21] Although arguments may differ, recent commentators generally share the opinion that the quality of pleasure, in Mill's view, had an inseparable relation with the quality of life.[22] This implies that the quality theory of pleasure is not to be

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[19]John R. Billings, "J.S. Mill's Quantity-Quality Distinction," *MNL*, 7:1(1971), pp.6-16. J.A. Graff, on the other hand, tries to defend Mill's quality concept, saying that a pleasure has an "intrinsic" value which can be immediately apprehended and cannot be exhausted by Bentham's intensity and duration only. "J.S. Mill's Quantity-Quality Distinction," *MNL*., 7:2(1972), pp.14-8.

[20]Scott Gordon, "The Quality of Pleasure," *ibid*., pp.18-20.

[21]Martin refuses to accept the "intrinsic" value theory. Mill, he argues, "is not saying that mental pleasures *per se* are more pleasant than bodily ones; rather it is the *life* in which they predominated that is more pleasant than the one in which sensual pleasures do"(emphasis original). Rex Martin, Defence of Mill's Qualitative Hedonism," *Philosophy*, 47(1972), p.146. Meanwhile, Henry R. West claims that "Mill does think that mental pleasures *per se* are more pleasant than bodily ones" and that "this is the only way to interpret any claim that . . . the life in which mental pleasures predominate is more pleasant than one in which sensual pleasures do." "Mill's Qualitative Hedonism," *Philosophy*, 51(1976), p.97.

[22]John Lachs holds that Mill had two views of happiness like a husband who, publicly embracing a well-loved wife, tenders a secret love of a mistress. Mill,

explained in its own terms but in terms of some external factors which Mill himself did not explicitly point out.

As early as in 1908 James Seth asserted that Mill's theory of happiness in *Utilitarianism* could not be judged to be fallacious simply by looking at the theory itself. Mill's argument must be interpreted "in the light of its context and of the purpose the author has in view."[23] Although Seth's intention was a partisan effort to protect Mill from his assailants, his proposal to view Mill's utilitarian theory in the general context of "theory" and the "practical purpose" of reform[24] was, and still is, significant for an objective understanding of the theory. Unfortunately, Seth did not elaborate further than indicating that Mill's distinction of higher and lower pleasures was only "provisional" and that

> the argument [of Mill] . . . is simply that, as a matter of psychological fact, the pleasures which form the constituent elements of human happiness are different from those which make up the happiness of the mere animal; that the human subject of happiness not merely prefers certain classes of pleasures to certain others, but regards the former as preferable in kind to the latter; and that this preference determines the nature of his happiness: the desire is so set upon certain forms of happiness that their absence makes man unhappy.[25]

Though he failed to elaborate the point, however, Seth was suggesting that the nature of higher quality pleasure was an ingredient of that human life which Mill had projected into the normative concept of man as distinguished from "the mere animal."

A useful elaboration was made by Robert P. Sylvester in this context. Sylvester points to the "new light" he obtained regarding Mill's quality concept of happiness,[26] and does not concern himself with whether the quality theory is consistent with Mill's utilitarianism.

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[22](cont'd) Lachs explains, took officially Bentham's theory that happiness is pleasure and pleasure happiness. But secretly he groomed a second view of happiness that "the adjectives 'happy' and 'unhappy' characterize the lives or parts of the lives of persons." "Two Views of Happiness in Mill," *MNL*, 9:1(1973), pp.16-20. Jean Austin also takes "happiness" not as "feeling happy" but as "being happy." Happy, according to her, is a predicate of a person, or of the life of the person, or a portion of that life. Jean Austin, "Pleasure and Happiness," *Philosophy*, 43(1968), pp.51-61.

[23]James Seth, "The Alleged Fallacies in Mill's 'Utilitarianism,'" *The Philosophical Review*, 17:5(1908), p.469.

[24]See *ibid.*, p.488.

[25]*Ibid.*, p.496.

[26]Robert P. Sylvester, "Pleasures: Higher and Lower," *The Personalist*, 56:2(1975), pp.127-37.

Rather, by analysing Mill's own statements he tries to uncover the underlying logic of his theory of happiness. Initially, he confesses, he read Mill's answer to the question of what was meant by quality difference in pleasure to be "a value poll." Thus, he went on to infer that the quality of pleasure was historical, in the sense that "any particular pleasure might fall under the higher pleasure designatum at one moment in the history of the race and under the lower pleasure category at a later time."[27] With his "new light," Sylvester gives up this view, realising that it was "not correct." In his new view, Mill's quality theory of pleasure was not empirically derived but rather "argued" on the basis of a classical model of human nature.[28] The classical model of human nature holds that "a human being, when he becomes reflective about his life and his desires, will find (as the facts about his nature) that the pleasures generated from the exercise of his *human* faculties are more valuable -- better -- than those pleasures which have their sources in his own nature" (emphasis original)."[29] Although man is an animal, man can be brought to prefer what is human to what is animal-like, and the greatest happiness principle does not fall into a swine ethic. This interpretation is supported by Mill's observation, which Sylvester quotes at the beginning of his essay, "It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied." Mill went on to say that "if the fool, or the pig is of a different opinion, it is because they know only their own side of the question. The other party to the comparison knows both sides."[30] When Mill claimed that the higher quality pleasure was recognisable by a competent judge, he had in mind by this competent judge not every man but rather one who was an ideal human being.

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[27] *Ibid.*, p.131.
[28] *Ibid.*, p.132.
[29] *Ibid.* In fact, in the classical anthropology of Locke, as Sylvester initially read out from Mill's quality theory of pleasure, the nature of virtue was the conformity to social norms resulted from a society's experience. However, with respect to how man conformed his actions to norms, Locke explained that "the principle of all virtue and excellency lies in a power of denying ourselves the satisfaction of our desires where reason does not authorise them." John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, pp.37-8. The essence of virtue, therefore, was, in the classical view, the control of human conduct by reason.
[30] *Utilitarianism*, p.260.

Thus viewed, the quality of pleasure ceases to be relative or "historical"; the higher pleasure of the year 1770 will remain a higher pleasure in 1985, for pleasures generated from the exercise of higher human faculties are always qualitatively more pleasurable than those which are not. But the claim that human pleasures achieved through the exercise of man's higher faculties are preferable to swine pleasures which gratify several appetites requires a psychological analysis of pleasure. Because of its ephemeral nature pleasure itself could not be used to justify pleasure. In order to justify or pass any judgment upon a preferable pleasure, one must consider not the pleasure itself but rather the particular desire which motivates the pleasure-seeker. The act of pursuing a pleasure is preceded theoretically by a state of mind which causes such an act. If pleasure is accorded a value, such value must be subjectively determined and originate from an evaluation of desire.[11] Viewed in this way, pleasure is an end, desire a motive. And while it is impossible to evaluate or rank pleasures directly, it is quite possible to do so with desires. For example, the desire to drive safely home from a party is clearly better than the desire to become inebriated, the desire to live according to a long-term general life-plan better than that for short-term enjoyment, and so on.[12] In fact, in his *Inaugural Address*(1867) Mill had himself adopted such a stance, emphasising the importance of "motive," which the consequence-concerned classical utilitarianism had rejected.[13] By discussing the quality theory of pleasure in the context of Mill's conception of human nature, Sylvester breaks through the endless debate about whether according to Mill a pleasure has intrinsic values or not.[14] Mill's qualitative hedonism sought standards in what he

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[11]Shigeo Nagaoka has recently indicated that "what is desired is a qualitatively superior pleasure rather than a qualitatively inferior pleasure. "Now," Nagaoka goes on, "with this interpretation, we can say that people not only make a qualitative distinction but also desire a qualitatively superior pleasure." "On Mill's Qualitative Distinction of Pleasures," *MNL*, 20:2(1985), p.25.

[12]Sheldon P. Peterfreund, calling Sylvester's stance "Aristotelian," distinguishes it from his discarded "empiricist" stance and from the "intrinsicalist" stance (by which he means the view that the qualities of pleasure are comparable with each other). From this understanding of Sylvester's stance, he proposes a new integralist stance, quoting Mill's words, "Happiness is not an abstract idea but a concrete whole." "On Mill's Higher and Lower Pleasures," *The Personalist*, 57(1976), pp.411-2. Integration of scattered elements may be necessary; however, it must be pointed out that each element cannot have equal weight.

[13]John Stuart Mill, *Inaugural Address at St. Andrews*, p.94.

[14]For recent "intrinsic" value discussion see Rem B. Edwards, *Pleasures and Pains*,

normatively rather than descriptively conceived by the term "human nature." As Sylvester points out, by "hooking desire and wants to a normative notion of human nature," Mill tried to ground "moral choice" on a reasonable ground.[33]

What Sylvester does not see, however, is that this normative notion of human nature was only one aspect of Mill's theory of human nature. Discovering in Mill's concept of human nature an adamant criterion of the normative quality of pleasure, Sylvester overlooks the fact that Mill was also committed to a view of human nature that was a product of empiricism and associationism. On the normative and practical side, Mill insisted that higher quality pleasures were better than lower quality pleasures. On the descriptive and theoretical side, however, he also insisted that pleasures were desirable in proportion as they were actually desired by the majority. His psychological and anthropological theory was in collision with his normative claim. Although Mill tried to make room for freewill, man was passive and his character was determined by the environment. Left alone, man desired those pleasures which circumstances prescribed for him. Man's passivity in the face of an all-powerful environment provided no guarantee and, indeed, made it extremely unlikely that he would ever recognise, let alone come to prefer a higher quality pleasure.

Mill's way out of this dilemma was to distinguish two types of human being. One type, consisting of those who somehow had developed fully their human faculties, would know both lower animal and higher human pleasures, and obviously prefer the latter to the former. With a "cultivated mind," by which Mill meant "any mind to which the fountains of knowledge have been opened, and which has been taught, in any tolerable degree, to exercise its faculties," a human being of this class -- the "Genius" -- would find "sources of inexhaustible interest in all that surrounds [him]; in the objects of nature, the achievement of art, the imaginations of poetry, the incidents of history, the ways of mankind, past and present, and their prospects in the future."[34] Most important of all, with such a noble mind

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[33](cont'd) and the dispute between Edwards and Narveson: Jan Narveson's review essay, *MNL*, 15:1(Winter 1980), pp.28-31, and Rem B. Edwards, "Narveson on Qualitative Hedonism," *MNL*, 16:1(1981), pp.6-10.

[33]Robert P. Sylvester, p.136.

[34]*Utilitarianism*, p.265.

he would enjoy a genuine "fellow-feeling with the collective interests of mankind." The other class, however, whose members unfortunately had not developed such a mind, would stick to their mean and selfish animal interests. Mill's higher pleasures were then nothing other than the pleasures of the cultivated class. When he demonstrated the difference between qualities in pleasure, he did so by arguing that this class *actually desired* higher pleasures.[17]

However, when we switch our attention from the cultivated to the uncultivated, the story is quite different. The people of this ordinary class, seeking physical and selfish pleasures, could provide no moral or aesthetic standards and no guide to conduct. Mill's claim that pleasures could be discriminated on qualitative grounds was based on his normative notion of human nature; it clearly implied a depreciation of the preferences of uncultivated and a rejection of the views of the majority. In this respect, his view of pleasure was an expression of his ideological desire for progress and perfection both in society and in the individual.[18]

B. Morals: The Individual Viewpoint

Such a discrimination of different qualities in the experience of happiness complicated the [redacted]al business of applying the principle of utility in the field of the art of morals. In Bentham's case and, in fact, in Mill's descriptive anthropology the responsibility for pursuing happiness was to be left to the individual concerned. Indeed, the whole system of utilitarian theory concerned itself with justifying and securing the individual's spontaneous pursuit of happiness. Morally the pursuit of pleasure was a sanction and judicially a right. If a particular individual's pursuit of happiness was such that it threatened to decrease the total amount of happiness in society, a well prepared set of penal provisions would work to check

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[17]Norman Kretzmann calls this class the "majority of seeing persons" in contrast with the "normal observer." See Norman Kretzmann, "Desire as Proof of Desirability," in James M. Smith and Ernest Sosa, eds., *Mill's Utilitarianism* (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1969), p.111.

[18]J.B. Schneewind claims that Mill's utilitarianism itself was "a comprehensive alternative" to the dominant Christian view. "Introduction" to J.B. Schneewind, ed., *Mill's Ethical Writings* (New York: Collier Books, 1965), p.38. Frederick Vaughan's *The Tradition of Political Hedonism, From Hobbes to J.S. Mill* is an easy-reading exposition in this respect. See especially Chapter 6 (pp.196-240).

such an undesirable happiness-pursuit and thus restore the maximum happiness in society. In saying that the individual should be left free to pursue his own happiness so long as he did not harm others, Mill accepted basically the moral and legal principles of Bentham. But when a quality difference was introduced into the pleasures men sought, questions arose how such differences could be applied universally to the maximisation of pleasure of individuals. The pleasures that were associated with the exercise of the intellect, feelings, imagination, and moral sentiments, were "refined" pleasures and superior to the crude, mainly physical ones. Moreover, such pleasures could be identified only by "the feelings and judgment of the experienced."[39] An ordinary individual, having no experience in the higher kind of pleasure, did not possess any capability to make judgment about qualitative differences of happiness. So when Mill claimed that happiness must include higher quality pleasures, that claim was in contradiction with his other claim that each is the best guardian of his own mental and bodily health. This conflict forced Mill to accept a dualistic stance towards the individual's pursuit of pleasure.

Mill stated that "the ultimate end, with reference to and for the sake of which all other things are desirable (whether we are considering our own good or that of other people) is an existence exempt as far as possible from pain, and as rich as possible in enjoyments, both in quantity and quality."[40] As far as avoidance of pains and pursuit of pleasure were considered in general terms, every individual was to assume responsibility for his actions and be, as Mill contended in *On Liberty*, sovereign over himself, over his own body and mind.[41] But since there were more worthwhile pleasures of a higher quality known only to the experienced, it followed that each individual was not in a position to take full responsibility for pursuing his own happiness. If the individual was well furnished with the means of comparison with regard to the different qualities of happiness, he would naturally seek higher quality pleasures. But if the individual, because of deficiencies in experience and in reflection, lacked such a means of comparison, he would not do so. And if a society was predominantly

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[39] *Utilitarianism*, p.262.
[40] *Ibid.*
[41] *On Liberty*, p.135.

made up of such "uncultivated" individuals, its happiness could not be maximised by leaving everyone free to pursue his own interests. This was clearly not desirable from a utilitarian viewpoint. In order to increase happiness to the maximum, the uncultivated individual should be led to pursue higher quality pleasures. Thus two conflicting principles of moral rules emerged: first, the necessity of granting freedom to the individual in the pursuit of happiness, and second, the requirement to lead the individual to develop his taste for higher pleasures.

In enunciating practical moral rules Mill took these two principles into account. The freedom of the individual to pursue his own happiness was clearly implied by the basic tenet of utilitarianism that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. But if an individual preferred not to pursue the higher pleasures, then freedom had no moral sanction behind it. In order to acquire the force of a moral principle man's pursuit of happiness had to be put in obligatory terms. True, Mill argued that "pleasure, and freedom from pain, are the only things desirable as ends" and that "all desirable things . . . are desirable either for the pleasure inherent in themselves, or as means to the promotion of pleasure and the prevention of pain."[42] In short, he claimed that the pursuit of happiness both in quantity and quality was "the end of human action" and "the standard of morality."[43] At the same time, however, Mill had also to prepare a theoretical justification for the requirement that the individual must be led to pursue higher, instead of lower, pleasures. In effect, Mill was forced to the conclusion that man, rather than follow his own desire for pleasure, should follow moral rules. Recent debates over Mill's concept of moral rules throw light upon this theoretical justification.

In 1953 J.O. Urmson published an article, provoking a good deal of discussion over the role of rule in Mill's moral theory.[44] Urmson's starting-point was that two misinterpretations had been dominant in Mill scholarship, both of which had to be corrected.

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[42] *Utilitarianism*, p.257.
[43] *Ibid.*, p.263.
[44] J.O. Urmson, "The Interpretation of the Moral Philosophy of J.S. Mill," Smith and Sosa, eds., pp.117-25. Long before Urmson's article, R.F. Harrod proposed a similar viewpoint. See R.F. Harrod, "Utilitarianism Revised," *Mind*, 45:178(1936), pp.137-56. However, it was Urmson's article that triggered the "act-" and "rule-utilitarianism" debate.

One was contained in the attempt to analyse or define the notion of right in terms of the *summum bonum*, and the other in the view which, even though it did not refer the rightness or wrongness of an action to the actual consequences, tended to decide the rightness or wrongness of the action by considering "whether it promotes the ultimate end."[45] In place of such received views of consequentialism, Urmson proposed four propositions as central to Mill's moral theory: 1) An action is right or wrong according to whether it is in accord with some moral rule; 2) The moral rule is correct when it promotes the ultimate end; 3) The moral rule is justified only in regard to matters in which the general welfare is more than negligibly affected; and 4) The action cannot be judged either right or wrong, even though it has some worth, if no moral rule is applicable.[46]

The moral rule referred to in this rule-utilitarianism was closely connected with what Mill had in mind by his "secondary principle" and "Moral law." It is illustrated more closely in Mill's statement in *Utilitarianism* about the relationship between justice and utility:

> For the truth is, that the idea of penal sanction, which is the essence of law, enters not only into the conception of injustice, but into that of any kind of wrong. We do not call anything wrong, unless we mean to imply that a person ought to be punished in some way or other for doing it; if not by law, by the opinion of his fellow-creatures; if not by opinion, by the reproaches of his own conscience. This seems to be the real turning point of the distinction betweem morality and simple expediency. It is a part of the notion of Duty in every one of its forms, that a person may rightfully be compelled to fulfill it. Duty is a thing which may be exacted from a person, as one exacts debt. Unless we think that it may be exacted from him, we do not call it his duty. [47]

Urmson interprets this passage as meaning that Mill viewed that "right and wrong are derived from moral rules."[48] As J.D. Mabbott indicates, the main point of this rule-utilitarian interpretation is that "the first principle [of the greatest happiness of the greatest number] is not relevant to determine the rightness of any particular act."[49] An action can be right if it is

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[45]Later R.B. Brandt named these "misinterpretations" an "act-utilitarianism" in contrast with the Urmsonian "rule-utilitarianism." See R.B. Brandt, *Ethical Theory*, pp.380-406.
[46]J.O. Urmson, p.120.
[47]*Utilitarianism*, pp.303-4.
[48]J.O. Urmson, p.122.
[49]J.D. Mabbott, "Interpretations of Mill's *Utilitarianism*," Smith and Sosa, eds., p.127.

in accord with a given moral rule even though it fails to bring about the *summum bonum*."[50] After a lengthy analysis of the relationship between utility and moral rules, David Lyons concludes that, for Mill, "To show an act wrong . . . is to show that a coercive rule against it would be justified."[51] Lyons' stance, which is thoroughly rule-utilitarian, characterises Mill's theory in terms of justified coercive rules, "without assuming that such rules could only be justified on utilitarian grounds."[52] Nowhere in his article, however, does Lyons provide the ground on which a coercive rule can be justified independently of the principle of utility. And, in fact, Mill's "coercive" moral rule was designed to augment and secure the greatest, and best, happiness both for the individual and for society at large. It was simply a sanction helping to bring about the general happiness of society.

A typically act-utilitarian criticism of rule-utilitarianism is attempted by D.G. Brown. His argument is based on two assumptions. One assumption is that Mill's principle of utility itself was *not* a moral principle at all. The principle, Brown says, "concerns the ultimate ends of action, and says that the only thing desirable as an end in itself is happiness." It is "the supreme principle of Teleology" which governs all practical reasoning.[53] The second assumption is that Mill's principle of enforceability of morality is essentially that contained in his argument in *On Liberty* that the individual liberty of action cannot be interfered with unless the conduct is harmful to others. Thus, any punishment must be preceded by a verification of the fact that the conduct concerned has actually harmed others. Otherwise no punishment whatsoever is justified either legally or morally. He argues, "Moral judgment on the wrongness of any kind of conduct depends on the utility of something other than that conduct itself."[54] This "ultimate something" Brown refers to as a standard of general expediency rather than a moral standard. Mill's concept of justice is based upon a natural feeling of "self-defence by retaliation" and extends "by sympathy to become collective

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[50]*Ibid.*, p.128.
[51]David Lyons, "Mill's Theory of Morality," *Nous*, 10:2(1976), p.109. See also his *Forms and Limits of Utilitarianism*, esp. pp.119-60.
[52]*Ibid.*
[53]D.G. Brown, "Mill's Criterion of Wrong Conduct," *Dialogue*, 21(1982), pp.27-44.
[54]*Ibid.*, p.33.

"self-defence" until "it coincides with the rational standard of promotion of happiness" in society at large.[55] If punishment is dealt out according to this natural rationale instead of artificial standards, the judgment about an action's rightness or wrongness must be made *naturally* according to the natural consequence of the conduct rather than according to any preset artificial rules. What counts then is not any kind of moral law but rather a law of causality. And where a law of causality reigns there will be no internal sanction whatsoever. If there is anything like a moral rule, it must be a rule of causes and effects, and, if there is anything like conscience, "it is just the thought that I [because of my action] deserve to be locked up."[56]

If it is agreed that Mill did not discard utilitarianism, Brown's refusal to admit into Mill's moral thought any kind of non-utilitarian element is understandable. Lyons' claim that Mill's moral rules are independent of the principle of utility appears to be less persuasive than Brown's, and, perhaps, as Brown puts it, a "heresy." From a strictly utilitarian perspective Lyons' moral rules can be *re*interpreted within a utilitarian framework. Thus, Brown points out, "Certainly Mill supposes that there will often exist such rules, and that their existence will have utility and be justified for that reason."[57] A rule; be it penal, social or individual, can be formulated only in reference to the individual's positive pursuit of happiness; it must be designed, however, to secure the maximum general happiness of society. A moral rule in this sense implies the acceptance by the individual of a social reality in which he coexists with his fellow citizens. By incorporating this social reality into his mind set and by cultivating the feeling of sympathy, an individual developed a moral character, that is a preference for something which, though not directly pleasurable, promised eventually a greater happiness. Moral sense, which consists in understanding that harm done to others will be punished and accepting that this harmful action deserves such punishment, is, as Brown points out, essentially social.

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[55] *Ibid.*
[56] *Ibid.*, p.36.
[57] *Ibid.*, p.33.

However, this emphasis on the acceptance by the individual of social values and the related development of moral character undermines the very ground of Brown's interpretation. After admitting the existence of moral rules in Mill's utilitarianism, Brown goes on, "But nothing in the text actually says that either the analysis of wrongness, or the substantive criterion of wrongness, contains any reference to such rules or to the utility of their existence."[58] This argument Brown supports by pointing out that rules about the expediency of punishments and rules about moral wrongness rest upon "causal information on the tendency of the particular punishment, given the kind that it is, to increase or decrease utility."[59] This is correct. The rules of the art of morals were the applications of the principles or laws of science to the sphere of practice, and the principles or laws of science, in turn, were the principles or laws of the causal relationships of all events. But in applying the principles or laws of science to morals, Mill did not mean that the scientific principles could become moral principles without modification. Mill clearly indicated that, when translated into practical terms, the "indicative" mood of scientific statements was to be transformed to an "imperative" mood of practical precepts. Science would say, "Things work in such and such ways," while practical precepts or rules would say, "Do this, do that!" Therefore, according to Mill's logic of practice, our morals had to consist of practical rules and precepts which would form the basis of judgments about actions. The rule-utilitarian mistake is not the contention that moral rules exist or even that they are coercive, but that they are non-utilitarian and that they even take ascendancy over the principle of utility. The principle of utility for Mill was, as Brown points out, "the supreme principle of Teleology," in other words, the principle of practice. As such, it was, though Brown is reluctant to admit it, the principle of morality. So when the Artist (or "legislator") adapted the principles or laws of science to his own realm, he was to select only those principles or laws which would contribute to the maximisation of happiness both for the individual and for his society. When the rules or precepts he worked out on the basis of scientific principles did not work as expected, he was to turn back to them and revise them, so that they would work properly. In

[58] *Ibid.*, pp.33-4.
[59] *Ibid.*

this sense moral rules were always to be subservient to the single goal of the greatest happiness.

Moral rules existed and did, in fact, govern conduct; they were, however, only "provisional admonitions" to facilitate practice. Mill wrote in the *Logic*:

> By a wise practitioner . . . rules of conduct will only be considered as provisional. Being made for the most numerous cases, of those of most ordinary occurrence, they point out the manner in which it will be least perilous to act, where time or means do not exist for analysing the actual circumstances of the case, or where we cannot trust our judgment in estimating them. But they do not at all supersede the propriety of going through (when circumstances permit) the scientific process requisite for framing a rule from the data of the particular case before us. At the same time, the common rule may very properly serve as an admonition that a certain mode of action has been found by ourselves and others to be well adapted to the cases of most common occurrence; so that if it be unsuitable to the case in hand, the reason of its being so will be likely to arise from some unusual circumstances.[60]

As Mill put it in the first edition of the *Logic*, "In some things our conduct ought to conform itself to a prescribed rule; in others, it is to be guided by the best judgment which can be formed by the merits of the particular case."[61]

These quotations suggest that for Mill moral rules were basically a means to complement the poor judgment of ordinary people and were to be produced for them for use on ordinary occasions in the form of precepts formulated by those acquainted with most up-to-date scientific knowledge. In such circumstances moral rules would work to promote the greatest happiness involving the higher pleasures. Yet, being precepts derived from experience, they would not necessarily work as expected on all occasions. Because of the limited intellectual progress of mankind, sometimes even the most enlightened would make mistakes and the rules made by them would not bring the most or best pleasure. This fallibility of moral rules had, for Mill, very different implication for the enlightened individual and the ignorant. When a moral rule failed, the enlightened, acquainted with laws and principles, would himself reconsider its validity and reformulate it. To him, therefore, moral rules were flexible and not binding. To the ignorant, however, such a failure would provide little room for readjustment. Since he was ignorant, he might not always be aware of whether it had failed or succeeded. And even when it succeeded in eventually bringing about

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[60] *Logic*, *CW*, VIII, p.946.
[61] *Ibid.*, p.1154.

the results desired by the rule-maker, he might not appreciate the true pleasure contained therein. To the ignorant, therefore, moral rules were fixed and binding, and virtue was attained only when he stuck to them regardless of their consequences.[62]

It was for this reason that the provision of correct moral rules was essential in order to lead ordinary people to desirable conducts. Rules were helpful to the enlightened few as well; but, having knowledge and judgment, they could more wisely adapt themselves to new situations. For the ignorant mass, rules were necessary to complement deficiencies in their judgment in order for society to maximise its general utility. But they were not sufficient; what was most necessary was a cultivation of desire for higher quality pleasures, the most reliable ground for the general happiness of a society. This was to be achieved by an education, which would enlighten the ordinary individuals about the existence of higher quality pleasures and, where unsuccessful, about their lack of knowledge and the necessity to respect the opinions as well as rules of the enlightened, who could see where rules would work and where they would not. Thus, in Mill's view, rules were accompanied by positive educational measures for improvement and adjustment. Thus, rules could justify their *locus* in the permissive and individualistic theory of utilitarianism.

The pursuit of happiness was an individual matter; so too was the development of one's moral character. But for the passive uncultivated individual, the development of his moral character required appropriate circumstances and above all education by the enlightened. And this was clearly no longer an individual matter where the enlightened had no say. Thus, ironically, Mill's developmental moral theory was pregnant with a moral discrimination. For without appropriate circumstances, particularly the guidance of the enlightened, the ordinary individual must remain humble and mean, a mere animal.

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[62]John Kilcullen defines "virtue" as "a settled disposition of character which causes a man or a woman to act according to certain rules." John Kilcullen, "Utilitarianism and Virtue," *Ethics*, 93:3(1983), p.451.

C. Politics: The Social Viewpoint

The law in Mill's view was a command, "an expression of desire, issuing from a superior, and enforced by a sanction, that is, by something of the nature of a punishment."[63] It was not a contract based upon the vulgar opinions of the majority. It was rather a prescription well thought out by a superior mind for the purpose of checking man's blind pursuit of pleasure and avoidance of pain. The means used were punishments which were attached to undesirable and antisocial acts resulting from a person's pleasure-seeking activity. The law was then by nature negative: it proclaimed to the public that anybody who did such and such would be punished. But with the normative concept of individual development which Mill introduced into his concept of legislation, the law would not be satisfactory if it merely threatened to punish wrong-doers. Somewhere in the legal provision of a society a means must be incorporated to lead people to pursue the desirable forms of pleasure. Each individual must be free to pursue his own happiness; but this individual freedom was merely a form and its content was severely restrained by an imposed value. Only the enlightened could be free in the fullest sense. The uncultivated, on the other hand, had to be taught by the cultivated, either directly or indirectly, to prefer the pleasures of higher quality to those of lower quality.

In the "Remarks on Bentham's Philosophy"(1833) Mill criticised Bentham for having "confounded the principle of utility with the principle of specific consequences."[64] Seeing only the direct consequences of actions, Bentham did not see that such actions supposed certain dispositions and habits of mind and heart. For example, in assessing the worth of a person's particular action such as stealing or lying, Bentham took into account only the evil effects of the action and did not consider "whether the act . . . in question . . . may not form part of a *character* essentially pernicious, or at least essentially deficient in some quality eminently conducive to the 'greatest happiness'"(emphasis original).[65] Because Bentham ignored man's moral character, he could only elaborate civil and penal laws in order to deter people from actually committing crimes and failed to consider how to render them incapable of desiring

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[63]John Stuart Mill, "Austin on Jurisprudence," *CW*, XXI, p.176.
[64]John Stuart Mill, "Remarks on Bentham's Philosophy," *CW*, X, p.8.
[65]*Ibid.*

such crimes. But a fully reformist legislation, which aimed to create new social and political institutions, must respond to greater social questions. "A theory," Mill wrote,

> which considers little in an action besides that action's *own* consequences, will generally be sufficient to serve the purposes of a philosophy of legislation. Such a philosophy will be most apt to fail in the consideration of the greater social questions — the theory of organic institutions and general forms of polity, for those (unlike the details of legislation) to be duly estimated, must be viewed as the great instruments of forming national character; of carrying forward the members of the community towards perfection, or preserving them from degeneracy. [emphasis original][66]

Mill believed that Bentham had failed to address these questions because he lacked "deeper insight into the formation of character" and "knowledge of the internal workings of human nature,"[67] which institutions *qua* circumstances helped form.

Mill suggested the direction which should be taken to create a new social and political arrangement. The citizens of the new society must have fostered in them public spirit instead of acting merely as selfish social atoms. They must be given the enlightened view that only the furtherance of public interest could promise and secure the greatest personal happiness. They would thus acquire "permanent steady principles of action, superior to any ordinary, and not in a few instances, to any possible, temptations of personal interest,"[68] that is, they would be possessed of an enlightened moral character. But a moral character could not be guaranteed by mere changes in outward circumstances. What was needed were the "changes in the state of the desires," changes which would occur only when an individual man came to find "the actual existence of such [moral] feelings and dispositions in others, and . . . their possibility for himself."[69] The "others," of course, who possessed moral feelings, were the instructed class, whose ethical writings were "chiefly needful" to those whose ethical feelings were weak. In order for the instructed class to perform this educative role, it was necessary "first to have, and next to show, in every sentence and in every line, a firm unwavering confidence in man's capability of virtue."[70] Therefore, the reformist cause had to take as its goal not simply forming new arrangements of outward circumstances but also establishing the status of the

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[66] *Ibid.*, p.9.
[67] *Ibid.*, p.8.
[68] *Ibid.*, p.15.
[69] *Ibid.*
[70] *Ibid.*, pp.15-6.

instruction of an influential and leading social class. This goal and the assumption Mill sought to justify within the utilitarian frame of reference and, understandably, created for himself logical difficulties.

In order to ensure the development of the moral character of every human being, and especially of "those who design to influence their fellow-men," Mill introduced the Humboldtian ideal of total man, "a complete and consistent whole," whose essence was to be "the individuality of power and development."[71] This Mill observed, quoting Humboldt, required two requisites, namely, "freedom" and "variety of situations."[72] Only when freedom of individuality was established could man choose his plan for himself, employ all his faculties, and quit the ape-like following of custom.[73] As G.L. Williams indicates, such spontaneous feelings of liberty could not be promised by following formal rules.[74] Freedom would enable individual men to struggle against and liberate themselves from the claims of custom. But this normative requirement of liberty was always in tension with the utilitarian logic contained in the greatest happiness principle.

In the "Introductory" chapter of *On Liberty* Mill wrote that there existed but "one very simple principle as entitled to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual in the way of compulsion and control, whether the means used by physical force in the form of legal penalties, or the moral coercion of public opinion." The principle itself he expressed as follows:

> The sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their member, is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. . . . The only part of the conduct of any one, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, in fact, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign."[75]

The most striking feature of this much debated passage is that the domain of liberty in social life is proclaimed in a defensive mode of expression. Liberty is a sanctuary into which no

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[71] *Utilitarianism*, p.186.
[72] *Ibid.*
[73] *Ibid.*, p.187.
[74] G.L. Williams, "Mill's Principle of Liberty," *Political Studies*, 24:2(1976), p.139.
[75] *On Liberty*, p.135.

social compulsion or control may intrude. In expressing it in this way, Mill did not refer to any positive requirement that the individual or society should do such and such with the given liberty, as his normative individual development thesis clearly required. Perhaps the underlying assumption contained in his phraseology was that liberty was an environmental circumstance (a "requisite") of individual development and not an inherent part of the development itself. If this view is correct and Mill viewed liberty as a necessary environmental circumstance for individual development of character, there existed a fundamental gap between this normative requirement and the thrust of his theoretical argument that the individual character was moulded by the external conditions. For, if liberty was given fully and equally in a society to all individuals, there was no guarantee that all or even the majority would develop their moral character. Perhaps some would do so; certainly some of them would not. Mill was thus forced to grant liberty selectively to the exclusion of those who had not reached "the maturity of their faculties" and "those backward states of society in which the race itself may be considered as in its nonage."[76] Mill's theory of social practice thus betrayed its original task of providing an ideal environment for all by excluding from it liberty and thus the possibility of developing moral character of a considerable part of the population. We shall return to this contradiction later. For now let us consider the frame of reference which presented Mill with such difficulties.

Mill evidently intended his principle of liberty to be in accord with the principle of utility when he said, "It is proper to state that I forego any advantage which could be derived to my argument from the idea of abstract right, as a thing independent of utility."[77] But a principle of liberty which restricted the intervention of the state or society to the minimum was in collision with the principle of utility which sought to maximise the general utility by all means. The classical utilitarian notion of utility was based on a mathematical concept of average which one could obtain by evening all pluses and minuses. Therefore, maximal utility could be obtained by suppressing minuses to the minimal level and promoting pluses to the maximal level. Applied to social policy, this logic implied the discouragement, if not actual

[76] *Ibid.*, pp.135-6.
[77] *Ibid.*, p.136.

suppression, of all undesirable or inefficient activities of the members of a society. But Mill's concept of liberty, which he introduced in order to justify his quality claim of happiness and the subsequent thesis of the development of moral character, was directly opposed to the universal suppression of minuses and promotion of pluses. Certain activities were accompanied by relatively small quantity of pleasure; but in the long run they would be productive of a high level of pleasure in a qualitative sense. In such a case it would not be wise or indeed ethical to discourage such actions. In order to justify such exceptional cases Mill needed to delimit the boundary between authority and individual liberty by invoking the criterion of "harm to others." However, Mill's failure to clearly define what was meant by "harm to others" has resulted in a good deal of confusion about where the line was to be drawn.

The focal point in the determination of the real meaning of the criterion "harm to others" is to be found by applying to it Mill's two conflicting principles of social practice, that is, the principle of liberty and the principle of utility. Did Mill conceive this criterion with a permissive intent to secure a sanctuary for individual freedom of activity? Or was his intention restrictive in order to allow grounds for public (or any kind of) intervention in private matters? [11] Judgments about the relationship between liberty and utility, as John Gray points out, are as various as the different moral outlooks of the commentators.[12] However, no matter what the moral outlook of the commentator, the utility principle is always connected with the concept of liberty, directly or indirectly, in harmony or in conflict. This is not only because the liberty principle as a theory was based on the utility principle, but also because

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[11]For a full discussion of the concept of "harm to others" in the context of the act and rule utilitarian debate, see D.G. Brown, "Mill on Liberty and Morality," *The Philosophical Review*, 81:2(1972), pp.133-58; "What Is Mill's Principle of Utility?" *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 3:1(1973), pp.1-12; and "Mill on Harm to Others," *Political Studies*, 26:3(1978), pp.395-99; J.C. Reese, "A Re-Reading of Mill on Liberty," *Political Studies*, 8:2(1960), pp.113-29; G.L. Williams, "Mill's Principle of Liberty," *Political Studies*, 24:2(1976), p.133; Fred Berger, *Happiness, Justice, and Freedom*; Richard Wollheim, "John Stuart Mill and the Limits of State Action," *Social Research*, 40:1(1973), pp.1-30; Ted Honderich, "'On Liberty' and Morality-Dependent Harms," *Political Studies*, 30:4(1982), pp.504-14; C.L. Ten, "Mill on Self-Regarding Actions," *Philosophy*, 43:163(1968), p.35.

[12]John Gray, "John Stuart Mill on Liberty, Utility, and Rights," in J. Ronald Pennock and John W. Chapaman, eds., *Human Rights, Nomos*, XXIII, pp.92-3.

Mill wanted to assimilate liberty into utility in order to ensure the development of moral character and to encourage the taste for higher pleasures in a utilitarian society.

Liberty, Mill believed, was an essential and indispensable condition of individual development, and it was only to the extent that liberty promised such development that it could be said to be a meaningful and useful liberty. When liberty was simply viewed as a part of the doctrine of laisser-faire and did not, in fact, promise development, Mill could not accept it. Therefore, when Mill declared the principle of liberty to be a sanctuary of self-regarding activities which should be exempt from any kind of public intervention, he did not mean that the individual should be free to make a choice which might harm his own character. Mill's intent was, rather, to protect the individual from the sway of maliciouss custom and the vulgar opinions of the majority. "Genius," Mill said, "can only breathe freely in an *atmosphere* of freedom."[10] With liberty, the otherwise fragile seed of wisdom would grow in the minds of the enlightened minority and ultimately spread among the masses. This was the necessary rationale for establishing the sanctuary of individual liberty. But the two imperatives, that is, that the individual have liberty and that he develop his own character, reflecting respectively the utility concept and the liberty concept, were essentially in contradiction.[11] An individual, though he was theoretically to be free as far as his action was self-regarding, was not free to downgrade his character because, if he did so, it would be contrary to the principle of utility. For the majority of the population, therefore, individual liberty was permissible only with a proviso that they should either themselves improve their own character (thus increasing the general utility of society) or listen to the wise opinion of the instructed minority. Without the commitment of a "free spirit" to improve the character of a nation, liberty would be destructive rather than constructive. This, in fact, was why Mill identified cases in which liberty could be withdrawn. For example, children, who were not yet mature enough to judge aptly their own business, could not have the same liberty as their

[10] *Liberty*, p.195.

[11] Harry M. Clor finds the central "difficulties and ambiguities" in Mill's theory of liberty in the "weighty problems associated with Mill's crucial concept of individuality and its relation to human excellence or nobility of character." "Mill and Millians on Liberty and Moral Character," *The Review of Politics*, 47:1(1985), pp.3-25.

parents had. The same logic was also applied to some of the adult population. Being an adult was not a sufficient reason for an individual to assume a full right to liberty. Before assuming the right he had to prove the maturity of his mental faculties; otherwise, his liberty would only harm the general utility of society. It was because of this descriptive theory of utility that, despite his beautiful oration in defence of liberty, Mill was always suspicious of the capabilities of the masses. He thus imposed a severe limitation upon the principle of liberty.

Such an understanding of Mill's concept of liberty opens the way for critics to attack various undemocratic aspects of Mill's social theory. Generally, for Mill the principle of liberty was invoked to facilitate the improvement of human character in society at large. Nevertheless, because of the positive and demanding conditions which Mill attached to liberty, some, and sometimes even a great, portion of the whole population were to be legitimately deprived of liberty and subjugated to the protection of those who had a free spirit. It was indeed these ironical two faces of Janus-like liberty that made people like Maurice Cowling castigate Mill as a totalitarian, while Ten, Gray, and others still defend him as a true liberal.[12]

Mill's Janus-faced theory of liberty was reflected directly in his political theories. His theory of government began, like that of his father, with defining its proper function as a means, the efficacy of which was dependent upon its "adaptation to the end."[13] But, unlike that of his father, Mill's theory was extremely complicated. One cause of this complication was Mill's quality distinction in pleasure which demanded mental development. The criterion of assessing political institutions, Mill wrote,

> consists partly of the degree in which they promote the general mental advancement of the community, including under that phrase advancement in intellect, in virtue, and in practical activity and efficiency; and partly of the degree of perfection with which they organize the moral, intellectual, and active worth already existing, so as to operate with the greatest effect on public affairs. A government is to be judged by its action upon men, and by its action upon things; by what it makes of the citizens, and what it does with them; its tendency to improve or deteriorate the people themselves, and the goodness or badness of the work it performs for them, and by

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[12]Maurice Cowling, *Mill and Liberalism*. For defensive arguments see C.L. Ten, *Mill on Liberty*; John Gray, *Mill on Liberty*; and David Spitz, *The Real World of Liberalism*.

[13]John Stuart Mill, *Representative Government*, p.18.

means of them."[14]

A good government, therefore, had to be, first, efficiently organised and, second, function to promote "the general mental advancement" of the society.

With respect to the efficient organisation of the government Mill subscribed to representative government as his father did, but on very different grounds. For James Mill representative government was the best form of government because it was the best means to restrain "those, in whose hands are lodged the powers necessary for the protection of all, from making bad use of it."[15] For John Stuart Mill, however, it was so because it could positively promise "the greatest amount of beneficial consequences, immediate and prospective."[16] The immediate beneficial consequences may have included the consequences James Mill expected. But by prospective consequences Mill meant that mental advancement with which good government ought to provide its citizens. However, as long as the character which government existed to encourage was an active and free spirit, a representative system was not always the ideal one. By giving up political power to a representative an individual lost the chance to exercise both his freedom and his faculties. This system, Mill believed, was appropriate only when direct political participation was impossible.

Mill's concern to promote the general mental advancement of society caused him to make some other remarkable modifications of the political implications of utilitarianism. One notable example was his opinion regarding the issue of universal suffrage. Basically, Mill did not discard the utilitarian rhetoric for universal suffrage. "No permanent arrangement of the suffrage," he said, "can be permanently satisfactory, in which any person or class is permanently excluded; in which the electoral privilege is not open to all persons of full age who desire to obtain it." But soon after this comment Mill proclaimed it to be "wholly inadmissible that any person should participate in the suffrage, without being able to read, write, and . . . perform the common operations of arithmetic."[17] In order to be admitted to the participatory democracy, the individual was, as Frederick Rosen points out, required to be

[14] *Ibid.*, pp.35-6.
[15] James Mill, "Essay on Government," p.58.
[16] *Representative Government*, p.58.
[17] *Ibid.*, p.170.

"fit" for it."[88] Having denied the suffrage to the uneducated, Mill further proposed to give more than one vote to those who were of "superior qualification," in effect securing an electoral procedure by which instructed minorities could gain political representation regardless of any possible unpopularity in their own constituencies. It was, of course, as Evelyne Griffin-Collart laments, a flagrant contradiction of the participatory rhetoric of democracy and a discriminative prescription for practice.[89] The cumulative vote would enable the cultivated few to play the role of counterpoise to the masses who were concerned only with self-interest; they would thus strike a balance on behalf of the general interest and justice. However, there was more to it than this. Certainly Mill made it clear that the plural vote should not outweigh that of all the rest of the community. But in the same place in *Representative Government* he also made it clear that the purpose of plural votes was to prevent the class legislation of the uneducated. What he sought, therefore, was the safeguarding of enlightened opinions against the uninformed views of the majority while preserving the forms of democracy.[90] For this purpose, it was necessary "to exclude people from representative democracy until they are morally and intellectually prepared for it,"[91] while strengthening the position of the instructed minority in constitutional arrangements.

Additional measures proposed for this purpose were the Chamber of Statesmen, the Commission of Legislation, and a "technocratic" civil service. The Chamber of Statesmen was to be a "council of all public men who have passed through any important political office or employment." Its role was "not exclusively a check, but also an impelling force" to the People's Chamber even though it was to be elected by unequally distributed votes. "In its [the Chamber of Statesmen's] hands," Mill said, "the power of holding the people back would be vested in those most competent, and who would then be most inclined, to lead them forward

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[88]Frederick Rosen, *Jeremy Bentham and Representative Democracy*, p.185.
[89]Evelyne Griffin-Collart, *Egalité et justice dans l'utilitarisme Bentham, J.S. Mill, H. Sidgwick*, III, *L'Egalité*, p.231.
[90]In a letter to a letter to Lord Monteagle Mill confided, "To allow the cumulative vote would be the best way which occurs to me of enabling quality of support to count as well as quantity." Letter to Monteagle, 20 March 1853, *CW*, XIV, p.102.
[91]Frederick Rosen, p.187.

in any right course."[92] A Commission of Legislation would be charged with drafting laws for consideration by the elected People's Chamber. Because of this important duty the Commission should be comprised of those who were better qualified, by their education, their knowledge and experience. Another proposal to place the best educated persons of the country in government positions also meant that the country's administration would also fall under the control of the instructed class. The business of legislation and administration were both to be the responsibility of the instructed few. What was the elected People's Chamber to do? Mill claimed

> that in legislation as well as administration, the only task to which a representative assembly can possibly be competent, is not that of doing the work, but of causing it to be done; of determining to whom or to what sort of people it shall be confided, and giving or withholding the national sanction to it when performed.[93]

Some, Dennis Thompson for example, have praised this system as having combined participation and competence. But, as J.H. Burns has observed, to such political institutions "the term 'democratic' has only the vaguest and most unhelpful application."[94]

Through all these proposals of *Representative Government* ran the thread of logic which was so apparent in Mill's anthropological and praxiological arguments. It was the enlightened and cultivated class that was to control in the public interest the workings of all social and political institutions. Democracy and individual liberty were certainly, in principle, the best form of government; but neither could be allowed to degenerate into mob-rule and moral decadence. This principle of the primacy of mental power Mill applied to all social issues, and particularly to the critique of the absurdities around him. Perhaps most notable were his views of the status of women. In an address to Parliament he asserted,

> There is nothing to distract our attention from the simple question, whether there is any adequate justification for continuing to exclude an entire half of the community, not only from admission, but from the capability of being ever admitted within the pale of the Constitution, though they may fulfil all the conditions legally and

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[92] *Representative Government*, p.253.
[93] *Ibid.*, p.107.
[94] Dennis Thompson, *John Stuart Mill and the Representative Government*, and J.H. Burns, "J.S. Mill and Democracy, 1829-61: I, II," *Political Studies*, 5:2, 3(1959), pp.158-75, 281-94. Quotation from p.272.

constitutionally sufficient in every case but theirs.[95]

For Mill the only ground on which any social and political discrimination could be justified was "either personal unfitness or public danger."[96] This principle could be applied to women when a woman as a person fell under these categories. But it was not acceptable that woman as a sex be discriminated against because there was no proof that she was inferior to man in her mental life. In Mill's substitutions of the male pronoun "he" by the neutral "it" in his writings, a fierce indignation against sexual inequality is evident.[97]

Another case to which Mill applied a similar logic was the issue of slavery. Mill denounced the institution of slavery, attacked Governor Eyre for his brutal treatment of the freed black slaves, and supported the North when civil war broke out in America over the issue of slavery. The ground for Mill's opposition to slavery was that no one could be discriminated for reasons other than his own individual characteristics. A mentally handicapped citizen, for example, could be denied equal rights to those which other citizens enjoyed, and a well-instructed person might be given more opportunity to express his opinion. But it was, for Mill, absurd to discriminate a certain group of people simply because of their skin-colour."[98]

Mill's defence of the causes of women and slaves did not, of course, conflict with his discriminative attitude towards the uneducated. Perhaps the most notorious example was his opposition to the ballot. As Bruce Kinzer points out, Mill's change in attitude from *for* to *against* the ballot was a change in Mill the politician and not in Mill the philosopher.[99] Although in the utilitarian political line Mill in his youth advocated the secret ballot, his life-long concern with intellectual leadership caused him to have reservations, and he thus

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[95]John Stuart Mill, *On the Admission of Women to the Electoral Franchise*, p.3.
[96]*Ibid.*, p.4.
[97]John M. Robson, "'*Why Men*?': Mill on the Masculine Gender," *MNL*, 20:1(1985), pp.20-22. About the theoretical problems in Mill's views of the women question Jennifer Ring provides an argument in her essay, "Mill's *The Subjection of Women*," *The Review of Politics*, 47:1(1985), pp.27-44.
[98]See, for example, John Stuart Mill, "The Negro Question," in Eugene R. August, ed., *Thomas Carlyle, The Nigger Question; John Stuart Mill, The Negro Question* (New York: Appleton-Century-Croft, 1971), pp.38-50.
[99]Bruce Kinzer, *The Ballot Question in Nineteenth-Century English Politics*, p.19.

later advocated an open ballot by which means the uncultivated mass could be subject to the surveillance of others including the cultivated few. To Mill the uneducated were always unreliable; they were, in his words, "habitual liars."[100] Mill may well have loved this class and have had sympathy with their interests at heart. But the gifts he wished to give them were protection and education.

When a society's political life was reformed in such a way as to lead each individual to endeavour to cultivate his tastes and all social institutions were educative, the general mood of the society would be progressive. The liberty to develop oneself provided by the new arrangements would enable the individual to "work out his own destiny" and "not have it worked out by a king, or a House of Commons."[101] It would, moreover, lead him to pay respect to those superior minds whose leadership and legislation had made it possible for him to improve his own character. Maintaining the standards of civilisation instead of lowering them to the level of ordinary individuals, the instructed few would also maintain society's level of cultivation and refinement, and carry out their "peculiar 'mission' of this age . . . to popularize among the many, the more immediately practical results of the thoughts and experience of the few."[102] As a result, society would be characterised by harmony and cooperation, instead of conflict, between different groups of individuals. This harmony and cooperation, Mill believed, would produce a stable state; not in the sense of the dreadful Chinese stagnation, but in the sense of an organic state within which constant progress would be secured. His reform promised not the final perfection of historical process of rationalising social institutions but rather the creation of a necessary condition for the historical progress of mankind to take place.

In all of Mill's theories of morals and politics was represented a persisting mandate to cultivate the mental faculties of mankind. This claim, on the one hand, made him strongly advocate the importance of enlightened opinions of the instructed few, and, on the other, to distrust the capabilities of the uninstructed many. Central to this elitist mentality was the

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[100]John Stuart Mill, "Thoughts on Parliamentary Reform," *CW*, XiX, p.338. See also *Autobiography*, p.168.
[101]John Stuart Mill, "Writings of Junius Redivivus I," *CW*, I, p.373.
[102]*Ibid.*, p.372.

theme of qualitative difference in pleasure which, in his view, only the instructed few could perceive and enjoy. However, just as the quality distinction in pleasure fell into conflict with the utilitarian theory of quantitative pleasure, Mill's adherence to the qualitative superiority of the instructed few contradicted the quantitative concept of democracy. An individual was demanded by Mill's social theories to cultivate his mental faculties; Mill's social theories denied him access to responsible public duties which would give him opportunities to do so.

V. Education: The Theory

A. The Art of Education

Alan Ryan has argued that Mill's social and political theory was an attempt to incorporate the development thesis of romantic idealism into the market logic of classical utilitarianism.[1] A similar observation has been made by Bernard Semmel. Mill's life, he believes, was dedicated to the pursuit of virtue. He thus could not avoid criticising the morality of his age. In his criticism, Mill "agreed with the ancient philosophers that the materialistic and self-seeking ethos of a commercial society was inimical to honor and personal dignity, truth-telling, and moral or physical heroism, qualities without which a good society could not exist."[2] Insofar as they help explain Mill's motives for revising utilitarianism, Semmel's views are valuable. They do, however, disguise the inherent contradiction in Mill's social thought. The ideas of "progress, self-realisation and [even] growth"[3] demanded for their incorporation into the market logic of utility considerable concessions from the utilitarian side, ones which it could not allow. Nothing is more illustrative of the conflict between these contradictory veins of argument than Mill's theory of education.

Apart from a period of monitorial tutorship to his younger siblings, Mill was never an educator. He thus tended to treat educational questions and seek solutions in the context of his philosophical principles, rather than in terms of the practical requirements of classroom situations. In discussing education, his arguments tended to be theoretical and far-removed from the actual practice of education. The resultant unreality of his arguments was recognised and criticised by Mill's contemporaries. A typical example was the criticism of his *Inaugural Address* that its recommendations were unreal and doomed to failure.[4] And, indeed, the

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[1]Alan Ryan, "Two Concepts of Politics and Democracy," in M. Fleisher, ed., *Machiavelli and the Nature of Political Thought* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp.76-113.
[2]Bernard Semmel, *John Stuart Mill and the Pursuit of Virtue*, p.82.
[3]Ryan, p.99.
[4]"Mill, Education, and Science," *The Popular Science Monthly*, 4:17(1874), p.370. Alexander Bain assessed Mill's *Address* as a failure because it did not have any

curriculum Mill proposed was virtually impossible for any existing university to implement. The impracticability of the recommendations of his educational theory, however, was in a sense exactly what Mill himself had intended. He certainly did not wish to preserve educational practice in its existing state; rather, he hoped to improve it and make it more contributive to the progress of history. Education, like all other areas of practice, needed to be reformed. It was this reformist stance in viewing education which caused Mill to stick to principles. As Mill confessed to John Sterling, "The only thing which I can usefully do at present . . . is to work out principles. . . . principles of morals, government, law, education, above all self-education."[5]

For the theoretician of education the principles of educational practice were to be considered within the "logic of practice." This required a rearrangement of "the truths of Science [in] the most convenient order for practice" instead of the order which was "the most convenient for thought."[6] Educational practice was, therefore, to be an application of scientific truths to the upbringing of human beings. In this speculative praxiology, the scientific laws of human nature took priority over the practical "first principle" of utility, and the latter over all other possible principles or maxims.

The science of ethology, that is, the science of character formation, was thus fundamental to the art of education. Psychology was "the science of elementary laws of mind"; ethology, on the other hand, was to be an ulterior science, investigating what "determines the kind of character produced in conformity to those general laws, by any set of circumstances, physical and moral."[7] If ethology had been fully developed, man would be able to provide competely the laws of character formation and positively to predict what kind of character would be produced by a particular combination of circumstances. Even when it was not fully developed, it had much practical value because the knowledge obtained by ethological inquiry could let man "know that certain means have a *tendency* to produce a

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[4](cont'd) "conception of the limits of a University curriculum." *John Stuart Mill: A Criticism*, p.127.
[5]Mill to Sterling, 20-22 September 1831, *CW*, XII, pp.78-9.
[6]John Stuart Mill, *A System of Logic*, *CW*, VIII, p.947.
[7]*Ibid.*, p.869.

given effect, and that others have a tendency to frustrate it"(emphasis original).[8] If the educator had control of the circumstances of an individual or of a nation, ethology would enable him to "shape those circumstances in a manner much more favourable to the ends [he desires], than the shape which they would of themselves assume."[9] With this scientific know-how the educator would be able to program a series of steps to reach the goal of greatest happiness. Once such a program had been established, perhaps in the form of maxims or precepts, education would be almost automatic and, no doubt, easy to provide.

In fact, however, Mill did not treat the art of education as mechanical or easy. Rather, it was for him extremely problematic. The difficulties posed by developing an educational praxiology was due to Mill's revised version of utilitarianism. If the notion of utility which the educative legislator was to put into his elaboration of educational rules was that of classical utilitarianism and only the quantity of happiness was to be considered, Mill might have developed a fuller theory of education succinctly and in a clear language. Actually, James Mill's essay "Education" is a good example of such a straightforward kind of argument. "The end of Education," James Mill argued, "is to render the individual, as much as possible, an instrument of happiness, first to himself, and next to other beings."[10] In order to achieve this goal the practice of education must follow the theory of "philosophy"(science) because the separation of practice from theory meant bad practice.[11] Having explained the psychological mechanism of the human mind, he was able to elaborate certain principles which, applied in controlling physical and social circumstances, would enable the educator to have "a perfect command . . . over a man's appetites and desires; the power of restraining them whenever they lead in a hurtful direction; that possession of himself which insures his judgement against the illusions of the passions, and enables him to pursue constantly what he deliberately approves."[12] This control of the natural desire for instinctual pleasure, James Mill

[8] *Ibid.*, pp.869-70.
[9] *Ibid.*
[10] James Mill, "Education," in W.H. Burston, ed., *James Mill on Education*, p.41. James Mill gave the physician rather than the educator the responsibility for rendering the body as an "operative cause of happiness."
[11] *Ibid.*, p.44.
[12] *Ibid.*, p.63.

claimed, was an "indispensable requisite" for the "greatest possible quantity of happiness" of the individual as well as society as a whole.[13] John Stuart Mill, generally, did not depart from this line of argument. But in introducing a qualitative concept of happiness without abandoning the associationist view of the power of controlling circumstances, he made a coherent educational theory impossible. Sticking to an environmentalist psychology and a utilitarian theory of practice, he maintained that the human character was to be formed intentionally by the provision of an appropriate environment for the promotion of happiness in society at large. But a refined and noble character, who would prefer higher quality pleasures to immediate physical ones, could not be produced simply by controlling an environment. Such a character was possessed of a spontaneous will to improve himself spiritually and, in effect, to raise himself above circumstances. This was more than Mill's psychological (or 'ethological') theory could take account of.

This contradiction was reflected in Mill's ambivalent attitude towards the art of education. In Book VI of the *Logic*, education, being an area of practice, was referred to as an art. But nowhere in his numerous works dealing with education did he actually produce a theory of the art of education. Mill wrote a good deal and promised to write even more about the science of ethology, which was to be the scientific counterpart of the art of education. But he wrote little on the art of education. Why did Mill, emphasising the importance of character cultivation in a properly organised society, fail to develop a theory of the art of education which might guarantee such development? I believe that he found it impossible to do so because of the logical contradictions between his character cultivation thesis and his acceptance of environmentalist and utilitarian principles. These contradictions made it difficult to develop ethological laws beyond the general argument that different circumstances formed different characters. Consequently, not only did Mill not develop any theory of the art of education; he also failed to fulfill his promise to write comprehensively about the science of ethology. The claim that circumstances formed character remained simply a claim, or an ideology, and, as such, remained in an unrelaxable tension with the normative

[13] *Ibid.*

imperative of individual and social development.

One of the ways in which Mill tried to sidestep the difficulties posed by these contradictions was to liberate the art of education from the narrow classroom situation and view it from the widest possible perspective. As Stefan Collini points out, the whole of Mill's writings could be titled "Essays on Education."[14] Not only classrooms but also all occasions of social life and all sorts of social and political institutions were regarded as educative environments.[15] The art of education, treated in such an extensive sense, afforded the educator the greatest power in a wide diversity of educational environments and, thus, a greater possibility of developing desirable characters. But simply enlarging the meaning of education did not really enable Mill to succeed in reconciling conflicting theses and left unresolved a number of questions. What role was assigned to education in its narrower sense? To what degree could theoretical elaborations alone guarantee the development of a desirable national character? Taking these questions as its major concern, the rest of this chapter will examine Mill's "art of education" in terms of 1) what Mill wanted to obtain by education, 2) the means he suggested for reaching such a goal, and 3) the pedagogical problems implied by such a theory.

B. The Goal of Education

In the *Logic* Mill stated, "Every art has one first principle, or general major premise, not borrowed from science; that which enunciates the object aimed at, and affirms it to be a desirable object."[16] Education as an art must thus be based on a clear conception of its end.

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[14]Stefan Collini, "Introduction" to *CW*, XXI, p.xlviii.

[15]In "Corporation and Church Property"(1833) Mill wrote: "On what, then, have mankind depended, on what must they continue to be dependent, for the removal of their ignorance and of their defect of culture? Mainly, on the unremitting exertions of the more instructed and cultivated, whether in the position of the government or in a private station, to awaken in their minds a consciousness of this want, and to facilitate to them the means of supplying it. The instruments of this work are not merely schools and colleges, but every means by which the people can be reached, either through their intellects or their sensibilities: from preaching and popular writing, to national galleries, theatres, and public games." *CW*, IV, pp.213-4.

[16]*Logic*, *CW*, VIII, p.949.

Having defined the end or goal, the educator could then direct his activities towards that end. The theory of the art of education consisted then of two parts, the theory of goal and the theory of means (or "rules") to achieve that end.

Although it was the task of education as an art to define its own goals, the art of education itself was determined largely by premises and conclusions of what Mill called "the Art of Life." The art of life, which was a body of doctrine, had three departments, Morality, Prudence or Policy, and Aesthetics. The territory of each of these departments of the art of life was respectively the Right, the Expedient, and the Beautiful, in human conduct.[17] The art of education was subordinate to the art of life; questions about its end and the place it was to take in the scale of desirable things were to be answered in reference to the principles of the art of life.

The ultimate standard of the art of life was the first principle of teleology, that is, the promotion of happiness. This standard, being the *philosophia prima* of practice in general, was to be the umpire of all conflicting principles of conduct. It was "the general principle to which all the practical rules ought to conform"; put simply, the criterion by which all practical rules should be tested was "that of conduciveness to the happiness of mankind, or rather, of all sentient beings."[18] Now, if the promotion of happiness was to be the ultimate standard of the art of life, it was also to be the ultimate principle of the art of education. But Mill made a reservation: "I do not mean to assert that the promotion of happiness should be itself the end of all actions, or even of all rules of action."[19] The promotion of happiness was to be the justification and the controller of ends, rather than itself the sole end. Thus one could determine whether a particular goal chosen for a particular field of practice would tend to promote the general happiness, and thus accept or reject it. But a goal was not to be rejected solely because it did not promise any direct happiness. Mill continued his argument:

> There are many virtuous actions, and even virtuous modes of action (though the cases are, I think, less frequent than is often supposed) by which happiness in the particular instance is sacrificed, more pain being produced than pleasure. But conduct of which this can be truly asserted, admits of justification only because it can be

[17] *Ibid.*
[18] *Ibid.*, p.951.
[19] *Ibid.*, p.952.

> shown that on the whole more happiness will exist in the world, if feelings are cultivated which will make people [act], in certain cases, regardless of happiness. I fully admit that this is true: that the cultivation of an ideal nobleness of will and conduct, should be to individual human beings an end, to which the specific pursuit either of their own happiness or of that of others (except so far as included in that idea) should, in any case of conflict, give way.[20]

Although, then, the nobility of will and conduct might not result in any immediate pleasure or happiness, it was in conformity with the ultimate standard of the art of life, because it did promise greater happiness for a greater number of people. Therefore, the art of education, being subordinate to the art of life, would have as its goal the promotion of happiness and, at the same time, the development of the nobility of will and conduct, leading to the virtue of self-sacrifice in the cause of a greater happiness. Thus did Mill seek to justify the romantic ideal of nobility of character within the logic of utilitarianism. In the absence of any clear statement in Mill's own writings of what the goal of education was to be, the achievement of these two goals may be taken as Mill's aim of education.

The virtue of self-sacrifice as a goal of education, however, was not justifiable from the point of view of classical utilitarianism. As Alan Ryan points out, the action of an individual within classical utilitarianism was that of "a private being, a consumer who comes into the market for goods, whose behaviour is to be understood in contractual and bargaining terms."[21] An action was to be undertaken on the basis of a calculation both of the pleasure which was to be produced by the action and the pain which different kinds of punishment would attach to it. The governing logic of such an action was the principle of economy, that is, the pursuit of the maximum pleasure by the minimum sacrifice. Making a sacrifice without gaining anything was, in this logic, a poor bargain. Mill did not want to deny the force of this logic. His claim for the cultivation of feelings which would enable people to act without regard for their own happiness, indeed, to sacrifice their own happiness when it conflicted with certain noble causes, was rather an added element to the market logic, one which would (as he hoped) complement and ameliorate its selfish and egoistic tendency. "I hold," he wrote, "that the very question, what constitutes this elevation of character, is itself decided by

[20] *Ibid.*
[21] Ryan, p.112.

a reference to happiness as the standard."[22] In short, the willingness of the individual to sacrifice his own happiness for the happiness of others was a sure way to promote general happiness.[23] Mill may have believed that this method of promoting general happiness was better than the passive avoidance of certain actions out of fear of punishment. Thus in *Utilitarianism* he attempted to admit the virtue of self-sacrifice into utilitarian theory. "The utilitarian morality," he wrote, "does recognise in human beings the power of sacrificing their own greatest good for the good of others." What it refused, he added, was "to admit that sacrifice is itself good."

> A sacrifice [he went on to say] which does not increase, or tend to increase, the sum total of happiness, it considers as wasted. The only self-renunciation which it applauses, is devotion to the happiness, or to some happiness, of others; either of mankind collectively, or of individuals within the limits imposed by the collective interests of mankind.[24]

With this justification of the virtue of sacrifice within the utilitarian frame of reference, Mill declared, "The character itself should be, to the individual, a paramount end."[25]

The virtue of self-sacrifice implied the full use of "highly developed faculties" since a man yielding his happiness to the happiness of others required an impartiality "as a disinterested and benevolent spectator."[26] The individual certainly could not suppress his own interests if his mind was under the rule of natural desires only. In order to seek what was good and avoid what was evil, that is, to know how to increase the sum of human happiness, Mill believed that man needed "useful knowledge."[27] But in order to be able to suppress his

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[22]*Logic*, *CW*, VIII, p.952.

[23]Lewis Samuel Feuer views Mill's thesis of character cultivation in the light of altruism. "The happiness of the self and the happiness of others," he contends, "are [for Mill] emotionally indissoluble. Only if one's own social feelings are developed will one know all the happiness of one's own inner life. The happy man takes joy in the happiness of others." *Psychoanalysis and Ethics*, p.54. This is incorrect. Virtue for Mill consisted in the ability to sacrifice one's interests -- in terms of mercantile calculation -- for a greater cause and not in ignoring their conflicting nature with others' so that one might dream that others' happiness was one's own happiness. A virtuous man might feel happy when others were happy, but not just because others were happy but because he was himself able to sacrifice his own direct happiness for a greater cause.

[24]John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, *MW*, p.268.

[25]*Logic*, 952.

[26]John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, *MW*, p.268.

[27]John Stuart Mill, "The Utility of Knowledge," Harold J. Laski, ed., *Autobiography of John Stuart Mill* (London: Oxford University Press, 1928[1924]), p.268.

own interests and subjugate them to other greater interests, he needed something more than mere knowledge. What was even more necessary was the intelligence to make an independent judgment and the mental habit of yielding personal good to the good of the public.

Mill's recognition of the value of knowledge in promoting general happiness was conspicuous in his youthful reformist propaganda. In "The Utility of Knowledge"(1823) he asserted that "the only useful knowledge is that which teaches us how to seek what is good and avoid what is evil," in short, "how to increase the sum of human happiness."[28] Knowledge in this sense was acquaintance with the known facts about things rather than an ability (or the method) to derive from experience new facts and the laws which governed them. The kind of knowledge that would contribute to the comforts and conveniences of life was that which would save human labour and multiply its resultant benefits and, particularly, wealth. For example, the discoveries in chemical and mechanical "philosophy" or science had greatly contributed to this purpose. The young utilitarian was convinced of the beneficial effect of generalising such factual knowledge to society at large. If each working man obtained this kind of knowledge, he would be "better qualified to distinguish right from wrong."[29] Morally this would lead to an awareness that "he is under the constant surveillance of hundreds and thousands equally instructed with himself," and politically to an enlightenment of the absurdity of "the terrific sway of priests and their coadjutors, aristocracies and kings."[30] The viewpoint of the young Mill was basically that knowledge would facilitate man's gratification of his needs; only to this extent did it possess value. Mill, therefore, did not completely agree with those who wanted to subjugate all human behaviour to the control of reason. In the speech on "Perfectibility"(1828) Mill attempted a defence of the passions. Against the claim made by a speaker that vices arose from the passions, Mill retorted that the passions were the springs of human actions, that "it [was] they which furnish[ed] the active principle, the moving force." Virtuous conduct was to be produced not by vanquishing the passions but by gratifying them wisely by means of applying practical

[28] *Utilitarianism*, p.268.
[29] *Ibid.*, p.270.
[30] *Ibid.*, p.273.

maxims as "only the regulator of human life."[31] By knowing what was good and what was evil, or what brought good results and what brought evil results, and by regulating his conduct wisely, man could make his conduct rational and economical.

After the mental crisis, however, Mill switched the emphasis from factual knowledge and the mechanical application of maxims to mental ability and independent judgment. In "The Spirit of the Age"(1831) he wrote that "in an age of transition the source of all improvement is the exercise of private judgment," and that "mankind should attach themselves to that, as to the ultimate refuge, the last and only resource of humanity."[32] This judgment was not to be achieved by mere knowledge of the facts and maxims. What was required was an ability to make such judgments. This position, in fact, was related to Mill's criticism of the conventional methods of education.

In "On Genius"(1832) Mill criticised the traditional cram method of factual instruction. "Modern education is all *cram* - Latin cram, mathematical cram, literary cram, political cram, theological cram, moral cram. The world already knows everything, and has only to tell it to its children, who, on their part, have only to hear, and lay it to rote (not to heart)"(emphasis original).[33] A few years later in a short essay contributed to the *Globe* Mill once again criticised the cram method while praising a "system of cultivating mental *power*"(emphasis original).[34] While the system of cultivation attempted at "qualifying [the child's] mind to get at results by its own observation, experience, and reflection," the trite system of cram endeavoured to stuff the child's memory with fragments of knowledge which were the results of other people's mental activities.[35] In the *Autobiography*(1873) Mill eulogised the education provided him by his father. "Mine," he wrote, "was not an education of cram. My father never permitted anything which I learnt, to degenerate into a mere exercise of memory. He strove to make the understanding not only go along with every step

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[31] *Ibid.*, p.296.
[32] In Gertrude Himmelfarb, ed., *John Stuart Mill, Essays on Politics and Culture*(Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1973), p.9.
[33] *CW*, I, p.337.
[34] (John Stuart Mill,) "Arithmetic for Young Children," *Globe*, 23 October 1835, p.2.
[35] *Ibid.*

of the teaching, but if possible, precede it. I never was told, until I had exhausted my effort to find it out for myself."[36] The ground of Mill's assaults upon the cram method of instruction was that rather than developing the power of the individual it served merely to preserve the conventional value-system of the existing society.

The child, however, must be brought up to contribute to the progress of history. To this end, only a fully developed power of the "knowledge and clear comprehension of . . . evil" could contribute.[37] The spontaneous exertion of individual mental faculties would not only enable the people to gain this knowledge; it would also develop "a vigorous intellect and a manly character,"[38] both of which were necessary for the replacement of old institutions by new ones and for keeping society in a healthy, vigilant and progressive state. The individual's ability to form independent, well reasoned judgments was a necessary condition for the development of a desirable character and a desirable society. But Mill did not think that it was the sufficient condition. Because of the disparity of ability and of education among individuals, it was essential that the less educated follow the more educated in important spheres of social life.

Like other utilitarians, Mill believed that properly reorganised social and political institutions would provide security against the misuse of power by the instructed class. A major problem in achieving a reorganisation of social institutions, however, was to determine what had caused the instructed class, in spite of their having knowledge, to serve their own rather than the general interest. Partly, as Mill pointed out in "On Genius," the traditional cram method of instruction was to blame for its failure to generate genuine reasoning power among the instructed.[39] More important, however, was the absence of any genuine non-intellectual or emotional development in the education of the elite. Recollecting the peculiarly intellectual education he himself had received, Mill stated in the *Autobiography* that analytic habits tended "altogether to weaken those which are . . . a *mere* matter of feeling"(emphasis original).

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[36]John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography*, p.20.
[37]"On Genius," p.338.
[38]*Ibid.*
[39]*Ibid*, pp.334-5.

> They are therefore . . . favourable to prudence and clearsightedness, but a perpetual worm at the root both of the passions and of the virtues; and above all, fearfully undermine all desires, and all pleasures, which are the effects of association, that is, according to the theory I held, all except the purely physical and organic; of the entire insufficiency of which to make life desirable, no one had stronger conviction than I had.[40]

What was missing in mere analytic habits was "the pleasure of sympathy with human beings," that is, "the feelings which made the good of others, and especially of mankind on a large scale, the object of existence." These, Mill believed, were "the greatest and surest sources of happiness."[41] The absence of these feelings of sympathy had weakened the conscience of the educated and made them "voluntarily ignorant of the right" and open to "the inroads of selfishness and falsehood."[42] Indispensable to the development of this self-sacrificial virtue was not only the ability to judge but a pre-logical habit or disposition to act properly. Indeed, it was these pre-logical feelings that were the true basis of noble behaviour both for the more and the less educated.

The underlying assumption of this proposal for an education of feelings was the alleged association of feelings with morality. The feelings Mill had in mind were not those man experienced naturally in his pursuit of pleasure but those which required cultivation. They thus had nothing in common with the passions which the young Mill had defended so forcefully. They were rather social feelings which, if cultivated, would govern man's instinctual drive for pleasure. Mill believed that these feelings involved an aesthetic sensibility. He stated in the *Inaugural Address*, "There is . . . a natural affinity between goodness and the cultivation of the Beautiful, when it is real cultivation, and not a mere unguided instinct."[43] As Wendy Donner points out, the justification of aesthetic education was to be found in the "moralizing effects"[44] of the cultivated feelings. An appreciation of beauty might not directly gratify an immediate need and even demand a sacrifice of such a need; but in developing an appreciation of beauty, the individual would also learn to recognise and value

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[40] *Autobiography*, p.83.
[41] *Ibid.*
[42] John Stuart Mill, *Inaugural Address at St. Andrews*, pp.75-6.
[43] *Ibid.*, p.94.
[44] Wendy Donner, "John Stuart Mill's Doctrine of Development," p.14.

virtue and the love of humanity.

In "Civilization"(1836), Mill pointed out as characteristics of "a state of high civilization" the diffusion of property, intelligence, and the power of cooperation.[45] The diffusion of property was obvious to everyone, while the pursuit of personal happiness or pleasure, with property as its chief security, was all-pervasive in society. Therefore, although in Mill's opinion one of the main duties of government was to protect the individual's right to the pursuit of happiness, he did not feel it necessary actively to assist people to succeed in their pursuit of pleasure. The first goal of the art of life -- that is, the promotion of happiness -- was concerned with checking and regulating rather than encouraging the individual's pursuit of happiness. But mere legislation regulating man's desire for pleasure was not enough to ensure the greatest happiness of the greatest number. What was really important was that individuals cultivate their character in such a way as to enable them to subjugate their personal interests to those of the larger society. Ignorance and want of culture, which prevented men from seeing this essential truth and obligation, were thus the most malignant obstacles to progress and the "primary and perennial sources of all social evils."[46]

Mill's emphasis on the necessity of character development was a response to his perception of the historical stage reached by his society. The development of intellectual capability promised intelligence and knowledge, while the nurturing of feelings of sympathy insured cooperation and social harmony. A noble character, comprising these two elements, when it became the national character, would terminate the long tyranny of privilege and prejudice and accelerate progress to a high level of civilization. Mill's exclusion from the goal of the system of national education of everything but the cultivation of character is a clear indication of how paramount it was in his practical, normative thought.

Education, that is, the formation of cultivated character, would ensure a culture which "each generation purposely gives to those who are to be its successors, in order to qualify them for at least keeping up, and if possible for raising, the level of improvement

[45]John Stuart Mill, "Civilization," *CW*, VIII, p.124.
[46]"Corporation and Church Property," p.213.

which has been attained."[47] This noble goal of education, however, was based on a theory of character formation which could produce no more than a passive and selfish individual.

C. The Means of Education

Mill's theory of the means of the art of education concentrated upon achieving the goal of character formation. The university, for example, which was to crown the system of national education, was to be committed to the development of "capable and sensible" men," who were to embody in themselves the two ingredients of the desirable character, intellect and feeling, or intelligence and conscience. Thus, while Mill divided his proposed university curriculum into three areas, the intellectual, the aesthetic and the moral, his whole argument converged upon one single point -- that the role of the university was to form men rather than laywers, physicians, or manufacturers. In whatever branch of intelligence and whatever kind of trade a man would become a specialist in the future, he could exercise a wise and conscientious judgment if and only if he had intelligence and conscience.

In developing his theory of the means of the art of education Mill was faithful to his descriptive theory that human character was formed by circumstances. In *Utilitarianism*, for example, he pointed out as measures of shaping the desirable self-sacrificial character, first, "laws and social arrangements" and, second, "education and opinion."[49] Mill went on to assert that laws and social arrangements should be prepared in such a way as to keep "the happiness, or . . . the interest, of every individual, as nearly as possible in harmony with the interest of the whole."[50] That Mill took it as the main theme of his social theory to lead individuals to pursue higher pleasures by means of cultivating their tastes has already been pointed out.[51] Perhaps the best example of his faith in the educative power of social arrangements was his view that participatory government itself would help promote desirable

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[47] *Inaugural Address*, p.5.
[48] *Ibid.* p.7.
[49] *Utilitarianism*, p.268.
[50] *Ibid.*, pp.268-9.
[51] See pp.106-27.

character development. Whatever the reality was or is,[52] Mill believed that citizens' direct participation in local government, for example, service on juries or in parish offices, would make them "very different beings . . . from those who have done nothing in their lives, but drive a quill, or sell goods over a counter."[53] Most salutary was the moral education it would provide. In participating in public functions, a private person

> is called . . . to weigh interests not his own; to be guided, in case of conflicting claims, by another rule than his private partialities; to apply, at every turn, principles and maxims which have for their reason of existence the general good; and . . . usually finds associated with him in the same work minds more familiarised than his own with these ideas and operations, whose study it will be to supply reasons to his understanding, and stimulation to his feeling for the general good. He is made to feel himself one of the public, and whatever is their interest to be his interest.[54]

Inspiring feelings for the general good was only one of the favourable effects of democratic participation. Another was its contribution to the mental faculties of the participant. In "De Tocqueville on Democracy in America[II]"(1840) Mill took note of de Tocqueville's view that "the dissemination of public business as widely as possible among the people [was] . . . the only means by which they can be fitted for the exercise of any share of power over the legislature; and generally also the only means by which they can be led to desire it."[55] Personal money-getting was more or less a mechanical routine: it brought, so Mill thought, only few of one's faculties into action. Therefore, when and if a person pursued exclusively money-getting, his attention and interests would tend to be fastened upon himself, "making him indifferent to the public, to the more generous objects and the nobler interests, and, in his inordinate regard for his personal comforts, selfish and cowardly."[56] Taking action for the public good, however, would liberate his ideas and feelings from this narrow circle, be the action that of a vestryman, juryman, or elector. Taking charge of public business would

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[52]J.T. Pederson has examined surveys on the electoral behaviour of British and American citizens and refutes Mill's claim that participatory government helps educate the people: "On the Educational Function of Political Participation," *Political Studies*, 30(1982), pp.557-68.

[53]*Representative Government*, p.73.

[54]*Ibid.*

[55]John Stuart Mill, "De Tocqueville on Democracy in America[II]," *CW*, XVIII, p.168.

[56]*Ibid.*, p.169.

provide him with chances of becoming "acquainted with more valid business, and a larger range of considerations,"[57] for which he must exercise a wider range of mental faculties than mere personal business would require. In developing both the individual's feelings and mental power, Mill concluded, participatory democracy would make him feel "that besides the interests which separate him from his fellow-citizens; he has interests which connect him with them; that not only the common weal is his weal, but that it partly depends upon his exertions."[58]

Mill's faith in the educative power of social arrangements was not limited to political institutions. In 1826, criticising Stuart Wortley's bill to reform the Game Laws, Mill declared that the goal of property, as a social institution, ought to be "the general good."[59] Wortley's bill attempted to make all game animals the property of the owner of the land where they were caught, whereas conventionally they were regarded as the common property of the community. Although it was possible to prohibit hunting on other people's land, it was impossible in practice to prevent poaching since game animals were the major meat source for the poor. To prohibit what was practically impossible to detect encouraged violations of the law. Legislation like this, Mill cautioned, would simply perpetuate poaching and, consequently, other kinds of crime. In a similar logic, Mill criticised Smith O'Brien's military operation to suppress the Irish rebellion after the potato famine.[60] Irish disaffection was not caused by demagogical leaders. The greatest of all causes was the fact that several million Irish cottiers had nothing but potatoes to support themselves. Cultivating another person's land and being robbed of its produce, the Irish cottier "neither gained anything by industry and frugality, nor lost anything by idleness and reckless multiplication."[61] The only solution was to give land, as had happened in revolutionary France, to the cultivator[62] because it was only by possessing his own land that he could mobilise his own "activemindedness" and develop

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[57] *Ibid.*
[58] *Ibid.*
[59] John Stuart Mill, "The Game Laws," *CW*, VI, p.108.
[60] John Stuart Mill, "What Is to Be Done with Ireland?" *CW*, VI, pp.499-503.
[61] John Stuart Mill, *England and Ireland*, *CW*, VI, p.529.
[62] "What is to Be Done?" p.503.

intelligence.[63] Bad institutions did not motivate or even permit people to elevate their moral character and were the sources of all social evils. Thus, when the increase in crime was debated in the House of Lords, Mill insisted in his newspaper commentary that, if crime had increased among the working classes, it was because of the administration of the Poor Law.[64]

Reform was the only way to establish an educational social environment. Related to this reformist stance was Mill's constant criticism of established opinions. Established opinions were rooted in custom which invariably served established interests of the ruling classes. In this sense, to keep the people under the sway of established opinions meant to reinforce slavish submission to conventional privileges. Especially distasteful to Mill was the domination of people's minds by the Established Church. "I thank heaven," the young Mill said bitterly in an address, "that my heart is not so hardened by bigotry, nor my understanding so perverted by lawyercraft but that I can sympathize with an oppressed mass."[65] Criticising the Church's practice as "bigotry" and useless "lawyercraft," Mill pronounced the established church to be "the bitter enemy" of the improvement of the human mind and of education.[66] Making it mandatory to accept only one doctrine and persecuting those who held different ones was no different from punishing a person merely because he happened to be taller or shorter.[67] Intolerance of another's beliefs would prevent any improvement through free discussion. The ground on which Mill rejected the Church of England's spiritual domination was also that on which he rejected other kinds of imposed opinions. Writing to the Rev. H.W. Carr, Mill stressed that "what the poor as well as the rich require is not to be indoctrinated, is not to be taught other people's opinions, but to be induced and enabled to think for themselves"[68] so that they may either form, by their own effort, appropriate opinions or decide which opinion to take among those exppressed by others. Only when induced to think, would man have the opportunity to utilise his mental

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[63](John Stuart Mill,) an untitled article, *MC*, 3 December 1846, p.4.
[64]John Stuart Mill, "The Alleged Increase of Crime," *CW*, VI, p.258.
[65]John Stuart Mill, "Speech on the Church," Laski, ed., p.311.
[66]*Ibid.*, p.321.
[67]John Stuart Mill, "Law of Libel and Liberty of the Press," p.14.
[68]Mill to the Rev. H.W. Carr, 7 January 1852, *CW*, XIV, p.80.

faculties.

In "The Utility of Religion" (written sometime in the 1850s) he professed the optimistic view that religion had been extirpating its regressive evils in such a way as to make itself useful both to the individual and to society.[69] But basically he regarded religion itself as a personal matter; no one was entitled to inculcate his religious belief in the growing generation. "In regard to religion," Mill wrote in 1868,

> I do not think it right either oneself to teach, or to allow any one else to teach one's children, authoritatively, anything whatever that one does not from the bottom of one's heart & by clearest light of one's reason believe to be true. It seems to me that to act otherwise on any pretext whatever, is little if at all short of a crime against one's children, against one's fellow-creatures in general, & against abstract truth in whatever form it appears most sacred to one's eyes.[70]

The reason why teaching religion authoritatively was a crime was that it would "encumber the reason" and "entangle the conscience" of the child.[71] Mill was opposed even to non-denominational teaching of religion which, he believed, was a compromise reached by competing religious sects in order to "join in trampling on the weaker."[72] Teaching religion on a non-denominational basis was by its nature no different from the indoctrination of the Church of England dogma. Education must be secular and religion had no place in it.

Mill's exclusion of all forms of indoctrination of established opinions narrowed down considerably the range of ideas that could be used for educational purposes. Opinions, whether they were desirable or not, would act upon the mind of the child as part of his environmental circumstances. They thus needed to be controlled so that only desirable ones would work upon the child. The power of opinions, Mill said in *Utilitarianism*, must be so used as to

> establish in the mind of every individual an indissoluble association between his own happiness and the practice of such modes of conduct, negative and positive, as regard for the universal happiness prescribes; so that not only he may be unable to conceive the possibility of happiness to himself, consistently with conduct opposed to the general good, but also that a direct impulse to promote habitual motives of action, and the sentiments connected therewith may fill a large and prominent place in every human being's sentient existence.[73]

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[69] *CW*, XVI, p.406.
[70] Mill to Charles Friend, 29 October, 1868, *CW*, XVI, pp.1468-9.
[71] *Ibid.*
[72] "Speech on the Church," p.328.
[73] *Utilitarianism*, p.269.

The optimum condition for this desirable influence of opinions[74] to occur was the prevalence in society at large of desirable opinions, which, once again, only a thorough reform could produce. In an age of transition, however, such an intentional and purposeful control of opinions must fall under the category of what Mill specifically called education, itself a means to bring about the reformed society.

In Mill's theory of education, it was the deliberate and appropriate use of the environment which was the foundation of all mental development. In a wider sense education included "whatever we do for ourselves" and "whatever is done for us by others." Education comprised all kinds of indirect effects upon character and human faculties produced "by laws, by forms of government, by the industrial arts, by modes of social life; nay even by physical facts not dependent on human will; by climate, soil, and local position."[75] "Whatever helps to shape the human being; to make the individual what he is, or hinder him from what he is not - is part of his education."[76] Mill contrasted the beneficial effects of culture with those of Nature, both its "niggardliness," which engrossed "the whole energies of the human being in the mere preservation of life," and her "over-bounty" which afforded "a sort of brutish subsistence on too easy terms."[77] In either case nature by itself could not make human beings exert "the human faculties"; nature, in fact, was "hostile to the spontaneous growth and development of the mind."[78] Where nature failed there education was to intervene. If nature failed to inspire the human character to pursue growth and development, the intervention of

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[74]According to Mill's argument in his essay "Arithmetic for Young Children," education must aim to "strengthen . . . intelligence by judiciary exercise," that is, by making the child "learn the theory by seeing it at work in his own practice." P.2. Education in this sense is child-centred and indoctrination of established values has no place in it. Nevertheless, at the same time, in Mill's selective attitude toward opinions was implied a distrust of the child's ability to distinguish what was good (both for himself and for others) from what was evil. The concept of the influence of desirable opinions can be construed as an alternative to the conventional method of indoctrination. Being an alternative, however, it failed to promise a truly child-centred educational method. The engineering of social environments was aimed not only to influence but also to lead the child's (and people's) opinion formation. Despite its seemingly liberal basis, a controlled environment would control the child's way of thinking.

[75]*Inaugural Address*, p.4.

[76]*Ibid*.

[77]*Ibid*., pp.4-5.

[78]*Ibid*.

the educator was required artificially to reorganise circumstances in such a way as to direct the individual to cultivate intelligence and will. Thus, in the art of education in its narrower sense the primary means consisted of the effective control of circumstances by the educator while the secondary means was "what we do for ourselves," our own exertions.

Mill's belief in the educative value of controlling the environment was particularly conspicuous in his pedagogical prescriptions for aesthetic education and moral education. The foundation of these two different categories of education was the cultivation of feelings; because the basis of morals was the "tenderness of conscience" which aesthetic education promised. Frequently sung patriotic and, interestingly enough, warlike songs such as "Rule Britannia" and "Scots wha hae" had a permanent influence upon the higher regions of human character, while Moore's songs were more influential in forming the Irish national character than Grattan's speeches.[9] Poetry, sculptures, paintings, and music could all provoke feelings about noble objects and have an elevating effect on the character. The "sublimer order of natural beauty" such as the Scottish Highlands and other mountain regions could raise man above "the littleness of humanity" and make him feel "the puerility of the petty objects which set men's interests at variance, contrasted with the nobler pleasures which all might share."[10] The idea that the beautiful had a moral effect upon the human mind was clearly connected with the idea that the human mind was formed by circumstances.

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[9]In James Mill's view education aimed primarily at the happiness of the individual who was being educated while the happiness of other individuals was only its secondary purpose. Therefore, when he advocated a universal education, he attached to it, as Ely Halévy points out, a proviso that it must be neutral to individual values. *The Growth of Philosophic Radicalism*,p.290. In John Stuart Mill's commendation of militant patriotic songs, however, such an egoistic individualism is submerged under the rhetoric of public cause. It is interesting in this connection to explore the influence of the mid-Victorian imperialism upon John Stuart Mill's ideas. See, in this regard, Brian S. Turner, "The Concept of 'Stationariness,'" *Science and Society*, 38:1(1974), pp.3-18; Abrams L. Harris, "John Stuart Mill: Servant of the East India Company," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, 30:2(1964), pp.185-202; G.W. Spence, "John Stuart Mill, an Imperialist with a Philosophy of History," *The Cambridge Review*, 19 April 1968, pp.380-2; and Eric Stokes, *The English Utilitarians and India*.

[10]*Inaugural Address*, pp.93-4. This educative effect of natural beauty appears to be a remnant of the influence of Wordsworth upon the youthful Mill. See, for example, Wordsworth's *The Prelude*: 99-103(p.336), 121-7(p.337), 275-81(p.341), 322-7(pp.432-3), and 526-9(p.349).

A beautiful environment inspired feelings which were the basis of moral habits; thus, Mill believed that "the moral and religious influence which an[*sic*] university can exercise, consists less in any express teaching, than in the pervading tone of the place."[81] In order to foster a sense of duty and a value-system that viewed all knowledge as a means of making oneself useful to others and elevating the character of human species, it was primarily the human environment to which the educator had to appeal.

> There is nothing which spreads more contagiously from teacher to pupil than elevation of sentiment; often and often have students caught from the living influence of a professor, a contempt for mean and selfish objects, and a noble ambition to leave the world better than they found it, which they have carried with them throughout life. In these respects, teachers of every kind have natural and peculiar means of doing with effect, what every one who mixes with his fellow-beings, or addresses himself to them in any character, should feel bound to do to the extent of his capacity and opportunities.[82]

An important element in moral education was, as Mill expressed it to the Rev. Stephen Thomas Hawtrey, "the contact of human living soul with human living soul," the ground on which "real education" was to depend.[83] An intimate relationship between the educator and the educated was, in Mill's opinion, indispensable for the development of moral feelings. If this was true, then a genuine moral education could not be achieved in a classroom situation where a teacher had to take care of numerous children. Mill thought that it was in the home rather than in classrooms that moral education should properly be conducted. "It is," he said, "the home, the family, which gives us the moral or religious education we really receive."[84] But mere intimacy did not itself guarantee an appropriate moral education. The father might well have established opinions, such as religious creeds, and try to indoctrinate the child with them. Only where desirable opinions and feelings prevailed could moral education prosper; where undesirable opinions and feelings were dominant, there no moral cultivation could be expected. Hence Mill introduced the concept of moral example, the hero. In "The Spirit of the Age," pointing to "three distinguishable sources of moral influence," Mill laid a great emphasis upon the "eminent wisdom and virtue" of the hero while denouncing the powers of

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[81] *Inaugual Address*, p.76.
[82] *Ibid.*, p.77.
[83] Mill to the Rev. Stephen Thomas Hawtrey, 10 August 1867, *CW*, XVI, p.1304.
[84] *Inaugural Address*, p.76.

religion and worldliness.[85] Those who had personal influence upon the child's mind were to embody in themselves this wisdom and virtue. Only under the influence of such spiritual model, and in a social setting where undesirable opinions were eliminated, could the individual be assured of the development of his moral sentiments.

The moral sentiments thus produced would make the child fully use his mental faculties. Instead of forcing the child to accept their own views, parents should leave alone difficult questions of Christian doctrine and let him develop in good time his own judgment. If parents and educators provided correct models in their own concern for the truth and made clear the difficulty of attaining it, then, Mill thought, the child would develop a habit of tolerance for other people's opinions and would be able to reason for himself which opinion was right and which wrong.[86]

That good models would be imitated by the child was also central to Mill's argument about aesthetic education. "To whatever avocations we may be called in life," Mill said, "let us never quash . . . susceptibilities within us, but carefully seek the opportunities of maintaining them in exercise."[87] The ideal of art was perfection. A model of perfect beauty would provoke in the child a desire to perfect his human character by means of cultivating his artistic sense. The sense of perfection in pure art would "make us demand from every creation of man the very utmost that it ought to give, and render us intolerant of the smallest fault in ourselves or in anything we do."[88] To engage the child in a work of art, Mill believed, would stimulate the child intellectually.

The claim that the child would imitate invariably a desirable model, however, is justified only when it is proved that he does not possess any subjective power to act against environmental circumstances. If the child is in possession of such a power, then he can either choose or not choose to imitate the model according to his own judgment. The claim that a desirable environment would invariably cause the child to exercise his mental faculties was therefore grounded on a dubious basis. Mill may well have realised this and, as a result, added

[85] "Spirit," p.29.
[86] Mill to Charles Friend, *CW*, XVI, pp.1468-9.
[87] *Inaugural Address*, p.94.
[88] *Ibid.*, p.95.

to the environment an active agent, a character charged with developing the child's intelligence.[89] Like his father, Mill was committed to the "supervised" development of intellect, before which all other aspects of education paled into insignificance.

Education was to aim at producing not simply a shoemaker but an intelligent shoemaker and, for this purpose, it was not to teach how to make shoes but to give mental exercise and form desirable habits. No doubt, an education for a shoemaker was essential for the child's future happiness. But he would pick up some day and somehow the skills necessary for the trade. What was of vital importance was that his intellect be developed since only a fully developed intellect or mind would enable him to use the skills not only for himself but also for others. University education as the final stage of a system of education, Mill thought, was not concerned with professional knowledge but the ability to "direct the use of . . . professional knowledge" and "bring the light of general culture to illuminate the technicalities."[90] Factual knowledge was to be acquired in the pre-university "elementary" instruction. Fragments of theories, principles, facts, skills in arithmetic and so on could be satisfactorily provided in the pre-university schools. What the university as the culmination of education had to teach was the ability to "methodize" the student's fragmentary knowledge.[91] Professional education was, no doubt, a part of higher education, but it was to be the business of professional schools, such as laws schools and medical schools and not that of a university. The university was to complete "an education intended to form great minds," that is, "to call forth the greatest possible quantity of intellectual *power*" and "to inspire the intensest *love of truth*" (emphases original).[92]

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[89]This, in fact, was the key aspect of James Mill's utilitarian pedagogy. For James Mill, central to education was "the knowledge of the order of the events of nature on which our pleasures and our pains depend, and the sagacity which discovers the best means of attaining ends." Eli Halévy, *Philosophic Radicalism*, p.290. In grounding the whole system of his pedagogical theory upon intellectual development, John Stuart Mill, in fact, exposed his frame of reference, which was basically classical utilitarian.

[90]*Inaugural Address*, p.7.

[91]*Ibid.*, p.8.

[92]"Civilization," p.144.

The fostering of this "love of truth" was the responsibility not only of intellectual education but of both aesthetic education and moral education. Wendy Donner points out that there was to be "an associative link" between pleasures obtained through aesthetic and moral sensibilities and intellectual activities themselves.[93] As was pointed out by Mill in his recollection of his mental crisis, an exclusively intellectual education could dry up the well of feelings. Aesthetic and moral feelings would keep the intellect from degenerating into selfishness. But, at the same time, feelings without intellect could be aimless and meaningless. Only by being supported by intellectual power could aesthetic and moral sensibilities attain a direction. Therefore, in the alleged "associative link" between feelings and intellect it was to be feelings that were to be associated to the intellect and not the intellect to feelings. Feelings were required to complement the intellect; thus, the culmination of Mill's university curriculum was intellectual education. [94] The disinterestedness which made the cultivated man pursue the cause of general happiness instead of his immediate personal happiness, while belonging to the domains of aesthetic education and moral education, was ultimately related to the habit of pursuing, and the willingness to stick to, the truth. Mill's emphasis on intellectual education in his proposed university education was, in effect, a mainstream into which all of education would flow. Intellectual education in the university was "the crown and consummation of liberal education"[95] and, as such, the crucial element both for the production of the spiritual leaders of a nation and for the preservation of the university as an

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[93]Wendy Donner, p.15.

[94]Mill in the two essays on poetry attempted to develop an aesthetic epistemology that poetic experience provided a non-logical association which was a form of knowledge. On this ground, Karlheinz Biller tries to make a case for the educational function of poetry and the poet ("Die Funktion von Sprache, Literatur und Kritik in der Pädagogik der Utilitaristen zur Zeit John Stuart Mills"). But Mill's epistemological interpretation of poetry never appeared in works published thereafter. Particularly, the *Inaugural Address* did not say anything like this even when it stressed the close relationship between the aesthetic and intellectual aspect of education. Mill's aesthetic interpretation of poetry was, in my view, an experiment which he conducted in order to reconstruct his utilitarian doctrines with fresh elements of thought when he recovered from the mental crisis. When, however, he found it difficult to reconcile poetry with his philosophy, particularly his epistemological empiricism, he no longer viewed poetry in that way and discarded his formerly professed interpretation.

[95]*Inaugural Address*, p.9.

institutions to "keep alive philosophy."[96]

The *Inaugural Address*, in dealing with the vexed question of the relative importance of classical and modern studies, suggested the combination for intellectual education of both studies by proposing "Why not both?"[97] This often quoted phrase has been interpreted by commentators as indicating that Mill was pursuing pansophism. Actually, the curriculum Mill proposed in the *Address* covered so many subjects and demanded so profound a depth in understanding that one could quite legitimately claim, with Alexander Bain, that it was not practically applicable to university education. But, as we have seen, merely promising a greater quantity of knowledge was not what Mill intended. Rather, he wished to promote in the student's mind an intellectual ability to form a proper judgment and to use knowledge for the benefit of mankind in general. Mill's curriculum for intellectual education, therefore, had two sides, theoretical and practical.

On the theory side, the key subjects for intellectual education were logic and psychology, that is, "the philosophy of mind." "In the department of pure intellect," Mill said, "the highest place will belong to logic and the philosophy of mind." Logic was "the instrument for the cultivation of all sciences" and the philosphy of mind "the root from which they [sciences] all grow."[98] Consisting of ratiocination and induction,[99] the science of logic would provide all sciences with "the general principles and laws of the search after truth."[100] Ratiocination would enable the student to draw conclusions from premises and help him detect false ones. Induction would help him discover new truths from his own experiences. In close relationship with the science of logic were the particular branches of

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[96]John Stuart Mill, "Sidgwick's Discourse," *CW*, X, p.42.
[97]*Ibid.*, p.12.
[98]"Civilization," p.146.
[99]Mill in the *Inaugural Address* treated "ratiociantion" and "induction" as the two constituent parts of logic. Induction was the method to derive regularities and eventually laws from particular experiences; ratiocination was the way to infer feasible occurrences of events from established universal premises. However, to this empiricist, ratiocination could not start from an absolute and ultra-empirical truths. The universal premise itself was the results of inferences from particular experiences. Ratiocination therefore meant inference from established empirical truths. See Karl Britton, *John Stuart Mill*, pp.111-46.
[100]*Inaugural Aaddress*, p.52.

science. If logic was a theory, individual sciences were practices.[101] A full command of logic was not to be attained without an acquaintance with individual sciences. On the deductive side, mathematics and mathematical sciences such as geometry and physics would train the student's reasoning power and give him the "first notion of a connected body of truth."[102] Experimental sciences like chemistry would give him a habit of observation and experiment. The relationship between these practical sciences and logic may be summarised in his words: "A man learns to saw wood principally by practice, but there are rules for doing it, grounded on the nature of the operation, and if he is not taught the rules, he will not saw well until he has discovered them for himself."[103] By becoming familiar with the particular sciences the student would get acquainted with two roads to truth, that is, observation -- including experiment -- and reasoning. But it was logic that was to declare "the principles, rules, and precepts, of which they [sciences] exemplify the observance."[104] In this sense logic as a subject was a crystalisation of all efforts to develop man's mental powers.

By the "philosophy of mind" Mill meant the sciences dealing with human nature. Physiology, covering "the laws of organic and animal life," was useful not only for principal maxims of hygiene and practical medicine but as "a preparation for judging rightly of Man, and of his requirements and interests."[105] Physiology would show that man is a complex and manifold being

> whose properties are not independent of circumstance, and immovable from age to age, like those of the ellipse and hyperbola, or of sulphur and phosphorous, but are infinitely various, indefinitely modifiable by art or accident, graduating by the nicest shades into one another, and reacting upon one another in a thousand ways, so that they are seldom capable of being isolated and observed separately.[106]

Mill also pointed out as another beneficial effect of physiological studies an understanding of the predisposition[107] in man which had greatly influenced the operation of all moral forces.

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[101] *Ibid.*
[102] *Ibid.*, p.47.
[103] *Ibid.*, p.56.
[104] *Ibid.*, p.52.
[105] *Ibid.*, p.60.
[106] *Ibid.*, pp.60-1.
[107] Basically, Mill refused to admit into human nature any innate predisposition. However, as it was pointed out in Chapter III, an exception was allowed, that is, man's natural tendency to pursue pleasant stimuli and avoid painful ones. If

[108] Physiology provided an understanding of the organic dimension of man; it was psychology, however, that contained the scientific laws of human nature. By becoming familiar with the laws of association, the "laws of our thoughts and of our feelings," men would have "a clue to the interpretation of much that [they] are conscious of in [themselves], and observe in one another."[109]

When familiarised with logic, mathematics and the physical sciences, the student would possess a "thinking faculty, active and vigorous."[110] This faculty, combined with an understanding of human nature through physiology and psychology, would "kindle the aspirations and aid the efforts" of future intellectual leaders to stand above the multitude and to provide wise precepts. But in order for them to become leaders, it was necessary that they also study foundational sciences which dealt with "the great interests of mankind as moral and social beings."[111] The subjects recommended for this particular exercise of mental faculties were the practical sciences or philosophies, such as ethics, politics, political economy and jurisprudence. Mill believed that these sciences ought not to be taught from a textbook; rather each student would be his own teacher. No set of ready-made conclusions were to be imposed upon the student. The teacher might supply the student with material for consideration, for example, facts and the best examples of speculation made by other people on each of the subjects they confronted. But actual inference and conclusion must be made by the student. Only such a method, Mill believed, would enable the student to speculate about appropriate means for an end.

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[107](cont'd) "predisposition" is understood as this natural mode of response to environments, the function of physiology in Mill's intellectual curriculum turns out to be elucidating the biological mechanism of man's psychological tendency to seek pleasures and avoid pains. The "philosophy of mind" then provides the student with tools to explain the nature of man in descriptive terms. Such a descriptive vein of logic was also evident in his argument on the usefulness of logic. Logic was a way to derive rules from, and apply them to, particular experiences. It is interesting that Mill's intellectual education started from such descriptive subjects in order to move to practical subjects. This approach is basically the same as that which Mill the historical man showed in attempting to regulate the normative mandates of practice by descriptive tools.

[108]*Inaugural Address*, pp.61-2.

[109]*Ibid.*, p.63.

[110]"On Genius," p.35.

[111]*Inaugural Address*, p.66.

Particularly important in this connection were history and classical languages. History, when "philosophically" studied, would give the student a certain largeness of conception and familiarise him with the action of great causes. Seeing the "infinite varieties of human nature . . . so vividly brought home to him," the student, if he had an ability to think for himself and if his speculation was not cramped by prejudice, would discover "the great principles by which the progress of man and the condition of society are governed."[112] Moreover, he would "behold so strongly exemplified the astonishing pliability of our nature [and] the vast effects which may under good guidance be produced upon it by honest endeavour."[113] Studies in classical languages and literature would also have a similar effect. Languages and literature were the means for understanding "other cultivated and civilised people."[114] The two classical languages and the literature extant in those languages would bring before the student the thoughts and actions of many great minds, minds of many various orders of greatness, and these related and exhibited in a model "tenfold more impressive, tenfold more calculated to call forth high aspirations, than in any modern literature."[115] The greatness and variety of those spiritual models in the classical literature would circulate through the current of his thoughts or the tone of his feelings and become assimilated, and be part and parcel of himself. At the very least, they would help him appreciate different opinions, habits, and institutions of the remote past and thus train the mind of the student to a "large and catholic toleration."[116]

The control of an appropriate environment and the deliberate discipline of mental faculties were, therefore, the main elements of Mill's pedagogical prescription. Basically, these were also the key-point of James Mill's classical utilitarian pedagogy. The problem, then, was how could such an old method attain the new goal, that is, the formation of self-sacrificing non-utilitarian character.

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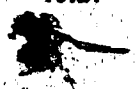
[112] "Civilization," p.145.
[113] *Ibid.*
[114] *Inaugural Address*, p.26.
[115] "Civilization," p.145.
[116] *Ibid.*



D. Pedagogical Problems

"If there is a first principle in intellectual education," Mill wrote in the *Principles of Political Economy*, "it is this -- that the discipline which does good to the mind is that in which the mind is active, not that in which it is passive."[117] Mill so forcefully stressed the active occupation of the mind with problem-solving that interpreters like F.W. Garforth find it difficult not to categorise him as a representative of the "'progressive' current of educational thought," linking him with Locke, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Dewey and A.S. Neill.[118] Of the influence of Locke's environmentalism on his thought, there is abundant evidence. Of his link with others, the evidence, however, is very weak.

In the works of Rousseau and other naturalist educators the goal of producing active, fully developed individuals was to be achieved by means of curricula and philosophies of curriculum which at least in theory made possible its attainment. In Rousseau's case, for example, the child was put into real life situations and made to develop his practical wisdom and capabilities to cope with new environments. The development which would come out of this method was an integrated man, both mentally and physically, who could survive in the world by his own effort.[119] In Mill's case, however, the emphasis upon the active mind was calculated to produce "mental superiority"; little or no consideration was paid to the physical and productive aspects of the child's activity. Consequently, the person which his pedagogy would produce was not the independent man living in the world but the enlightened spirit, detached from all worldly affairs. If an educated man was active, he was so only in spirit. It was mainly at this point that Mill distinguished himself not only from Rousseau but from Pestalozzi, from Dewey, and from A.S. Neill.

How valid, then, were the measures which Mill proposed for the development of mental excellence? The answer simply is that they were largely invalid. To begin with, the practical normative mandate that education should cultivate character required as a prerequisite creative individuals possessed of active mental powers. Mill's pedagogical

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[117]John Stuart Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*, *CW*, II, p.281.
[118]F.W. Garforth, *John Stuart Mill's Theory of Education*, p.142.
[119]Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *L'Emile ou de l'éducation*, esp. Books Two and Three.

prescription for this goal, however, was obstructed by environmentalist and associationist psychology. The belief that circumstances formed human character made him lay tremendous emphasis in his curriculum theory upon an appropriate environment. Given rich and healthy aesthetic and moral environments and appropriate models, the child would appreciate beauty and use his mental faculties to develop aesthetic and moral senses. The strategic use of the model was also recommended in intellectual education. By introducing the student to scientific methods, Mill thought, the teacher could provide a model of "the art of estimating evidence." These models, Mill believed, would cause the student to think carefully using his own reason. Similarly, Mill's associationist psychology led him to recommend, in order to develop the power of reasoning, building "the trains of mind" or "mental habits." In the *Inaugural Address*, together with models, Mill advocated rules and appropriate practice as "the resources which the most perfect system of intellectual training" could command.[120] But if these were the only methods[121] that the teacher could use for intellectual development, education would turn out to be primarily a matter of drill in logic and in sciences. And if the controlled use of the environment and drill were all that Mill could recommend for developing man's mental powers, his paedagogy would clearly fall short of the goal of providing a man with a fully formed active mental faculty. The active power of the mind could not be developed by a passive stance to the influence of environment and heavy drills. This represented a prominent gap between Mill's normative goal of human development and his descriptive praxiology in education.

This fundamental contradiction was evident, too, in Mill's social view of education. Mill proposed that the system of national education should be geared to form a cultivated, national character. Even at the pre-university level, the main focus of education was to be the formation of disinterested and somewhat altruistic individuals. Such a goal itself implied a contradiction with his first principle of practice, that is the principle of utility. For suppose that his goal was fully attained at a national level, what would be its consequence for society at large? Certainly, as Mill desired, the general mood of the society would be cooperative and

[120] *Inaugural Address*, p.46.
[121] *Ibid.*

self-sacrificial rather than competitive and egoistic. But if every individual in society was cooperative and self-sacrificial, then the principle of utility itself could not be the *philosophia prima* of practice. If everyone was self-sacrificial, the pursuit of personal happiness would everywhere yield to that of the general and greater happiness; no one, in that case, would regard personal pleasure as an essential ingredient of his happiness. And where no one pursued direct personal pleasure, there could be no guarantee of the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

By adopting into his pedagogical theory cultivation as a major goal and at the same time adhering to his associationist psychology, Mill fell into a dilemma, with respect to both his utilitarian credo and its normative imperative. In order to make development the goal of educational practice, Mill had to go beyond associationist environmentalism and the logic of the market.

VI. Education: The Practice

A. The State and the Provision of Education

Mill's conviction that intellectual progress was the driving force of the progress of history was reflected in the importance he attached to educating an intellectual elite and an enlightened mass. Since history could not be left to its natural development but must be controlled in order to secure social harmony, the mission of the educator was to produce both an elite and a mass educated not only in intellect but also, and more importantly, in character. His theory of the art of education like his moral and political theories was an elaboration of his thesis concerning the cultivation of character. The heavy emphasis upon the need for education was underlined by a deep distrust of the uneducated majority, the working class, to whom the unavoidable progress of history was to force the educated ruling classes to yield power.

A typical expression of Mill's concern about the ignorance of the mass is found in his views on the population question. Mill saw in knowledge a final solution to the problem of the poverty of the mass. In his early contributions to *The Black Dwarf* (1823-4) Mill made the point that "as long as they [the working classes] are in poverty, Reform may be delayed for an unlimited period."[1] Low wages deprived the working class of any time for leisure and education, and this in turn meant the lack of any opportunity to turn a reflective attention to the abuses of power by the ruling class. "Until they are well fed," said Mill, "they cannot be well instructed: and until they are well instructed, they cannot emancipate themselves from the double yoke of priestcraft and of reverence for superiors."[2] Ironically, in the young Mill's view and that of classical utilitarianism, the responsibility for alleviating the poverty of the working class belonged to the working class themselves. According to the Ricardian theory of the wages fund, to which Mill subscribed, a sum of wealth was available at any given time for the payment of wages. In the long run, the wages fund might increase or decrease, but, in the short run, it was the number of competing labourers which determined the actual wages of

[1] (John Stuart Mill,) "Population I," *Black Dwarf*, XI (27 November 1823), p.749.
[2] *Ibid.*, p.752.

each.[3] In this theory, the poverty of the working class was caused to a great extent by the fact that "there [were] more men in existence than [could] be employed and maintained, in comfort, by the productive capital of the country."[4] If the people were less numerous, the competition would be much smaller and wages would increase. Why, then, in spite of such an obvious law of the market, did the working class not try to restrain the growth of their numbers? To the young Mill, who viewed social phenomena through a utilitarian eye, the answer was crystal-clear: it was because they were ignorant. "It [was] not interest, but passion, which, in all save extreme cases, determine[d] the public conduct of the mass."[5] Being ignorant, the working people were driven by the search for immediate, sensory pleasure; they could not, therefore, consider what was really good for themselves or for their fellows. Consequently, they lived and acted only according to their passions, without restraint, and multiplied the number of competitors in the labour market, perpetuating both their poverty and ignorance. A vicious circle was thus created, starting and ending in ignorance.

The elimination of ignorance was the answer to the population and poverty question. In order for an individual to restrain his desire for immediate physical pleasures, he needed to have a certain degree of moral virtue. The act of restraining the sexual drive was clearly for Mill a "moral and virtuous" one.[6] Thus, the young Mill fully accepted the Malthusian theory of population and its associated concept of "moral check" as the means of controlling population growth. And the inculcation of this moral check was the responsibility of education; "*I have no belief in the efficacy of Mr. Malthus's moral check*," wrote Mill, "so long as the great mass of the people are so uneducated as they are at present"(emphasis

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[3]John Stuart Mill, "Thornton's Claim of Labour," *CW*, V, p.643. For the "long run" and the "short run" concepts in the wages fund theory, see Pedro Schwartz, *The New Political Economy of J.S. Mill*, pp.70-5.
[4](John Stuart Mill,) "Population II," *Black Dwarf*, 11(10 December 1823), p.792.
[5](John Stuart Mill,) "The Ballot," *Examiner*, 5 December 1830, p.769.
[6]"Population II," p.798. Mill's understanding of the poverty question in terms of the ignorance of the uneducated mass reveals his generally negative attitude toward the working class. If a worker was to be commended for his restraint of sexual desire (since it helped ameliorate the general conditions of his class), could it be argued that in the shortage of labour (instead of the shortage of jobs) a worker be praised for his indulgence in sexual pleasure because he helped increase the supply of labour?

original).[7]

Inherent in the young Mill's fear of ignorance and emphasis upon the importance of education was a view of useful knowledge, which, in fact, also underpinned the mature Mill's thoughts on social problems. In 1823, he wrote that "the only useful knowledge is that which teaches us how to seek what is good and avoid what is evil; in short, how to increase the sum of happiness."[8] This classical utilitarian view of the nature of useful knowledge assumed that an individual's conduct was "under the constant surveillance of hundreds and thousands equally instructed with himself."[9] Useful knowledge, in this sense, implied an awareness of any punishment contingent upon one's own conduct. Blind indulgence in egoistic pleasure-seeking would inevitably bring about unpleasant consequences while a wise discretion would promise pleasurable rewards. Once gained, an understanding of the consequences of conduct would supply criteria not only for regulating the individual's own conduct but also for assessing the behaviour of others. Thus, if the individual understood that the nation's wealth was concentrated in the hands of the few and made use of only for their enjoyment, or that the government or the dominant religion of a nation had been devised to protect the greedy interests of the privileged classes, the individual would be able to form an appropriate judgment -- that existing social institutions could not promote general utility. Useful knowledge thus became a prerequisite for a properly organised society.

Central to this view of useful knowledge was an individual's relationship to his physical and social environment. He was to take certain actions if they were expected to be accompanied by rewards, but if there were no such expectations, or if there were expectations of punishment, he was to restrain his desire. Thus, man's control of his sexual desire should be based upon his awareness that he could not "accommodate the numbers of his family to his means of supporting."[10]

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[7](John Stuart Mill,) "Population III," *Black Dwarf*, 12(7 January 1824), p.22.
[8]John Stuart Mill, "Utility of Knowledge," Harold J. Laski, ed., *Autobiography of John Stuart Mill* (London: Oxford University Press, 1928[1924]), p.268.
[9]*Ibid*., p.270.
[10]"Population III," p.22.

In classical utilitarianism the consequence of an action, whether reward or punishment, concerned no one but the individual actor; it was thus only the individual concerned who was responsible for his deeds. As the young Mill pointed out, "Each man will . . . be the best judge of his own convenience."[11] If useful knowledge was understood in terms of a response to external conditions based solely upon selfish considerations, education would seem to be a private matter. This individualistic view of education contradicted Mill's reformist stance. For if the acquisition of useful knowledge was an individual responsibility and not a public matter, what was the ground for Mill's indictment of ignorance as the cause of general poverty? Who, in fact, was to provide the ignorant mass with useful knowledge?

An education which provided useful knowledge to be employed in the intelligent pursuit of individual happiness fell into the category of private business; there existed, therefore, apparently no grounds for the public power to intervene. W.H. Burston points out that the classical utilitarians laid the foundation of their social theories on the concept of competition among individuals to achieve worthy ends. The underlying assumption of this view was, Burston explains, that each individual, pursuing his own happiness, would be motivated by a concern for the public good and would eventually produce what was "wholly beneficial" to society at large.[12] Burston's "public concern," however, is difficult to locate in classical utilitarianism, according to which an individual's motive for interacting with his environment was solely individual and private. Even socially useful actions, such as restraining sexual desire in order to control population growth, were to be taken on the calculation of personal gains and losses. What was, then, the young Mill's reason for advocating the provision of education for the ignorant mass? According to James Mill, the main ground for the provision of popular education was not that the educated individual would take into account the public benefit but rather that the awakening and sharpening of his own self-interest would contribute to the general utility of society. Defending the monitorial schools from the criticisms of the Church, James Mill lamented the fact that in England "the

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[11] *Ibid.*

[12] W.H. Burston, "The Utilitarians and the Monitorial System of Teaching," in George E.F. Bereday and Joseph A. Lauwery, eds., *The Yearbook of Education, 1957* (London: Evans Brothers, 1957), pp.392-3.

formation of their [the lower orders'] minds was the result of chance"[13] and not the result of education. The reactionary Church of England was so afraid of the power of education that, James Mill claimed, it tried to protect itself by preventing the growth of popular education and by keeping the people in ignorance. Thus, when James Mill argued for popular education, his stand was political and, toward the recipient of popular education, benevolent and optimistic. Similarly, when the young Mill argued that useful knowledge and education was the prerequisite to reform, he was expressing no more than a *laissez-faire* individualism and the logic of the market. Even though knowledge was necessary for an individual to judge what was good and what was evil, and even though knowledge was indispensable for the success of reform activities, the individual was not to be provided with it nor to be required to take it by the civil authority.

Compared with the young Mill's view of education, the mature Mill's proposal for national education contained a new perspective. Unlike the young Mill's *laissez-faire* individualism, the mature Mill's normative praxiology aimed at the cultivation of a non-egoistic character as the goal of education. Without benevolence and a spirit of the self-sacrifice the individual would never willingly give up immediate pleasures for the sake of noble and higher pleasures of which the possible benefits were not always self-evident. From the point of view of the mature Mill, therefore, the individual was entirely unqualified to be the best judge of what was truly necessary for his greatest happiness unless he had cultivated his character. This was certainly a revision of the market logic. In the *Principles of Political Economy* Mill declared that the uncultivated could not be "competent judges of character," and would have no desire to improve their own character. Even if they had the desire, they would not have any capability to find "the way to it by their own lights." Left to the purely voluntary activity of individuals, education would be driven by market forces and lack both a worthwhile end and appropriate means. In Mill's words, "The ends not being desired, the means will not be provided at all." Put in other way, "the persons requiring improvement having an imperfect or altogether erroneous conception of what they want, the supply called

[13]James Mill, "Schools for All," W.H. Burston, ed., *James Mill on Education*, p.122.

forth by the demand of the market will be anything but what is really required."[14] In order to develop the character of those who needed improvement, including children, and to rescue the national character from the natural vulgarity of the market, judgments about education must be transferred from the multitude of uneducated individuals to a "well-intentioned and tolerably civilized government."[15]

In transferring the right to make judgments in educational matters from the uneducated mass to the public power, the mature Mill attempted to eliminate in the realm of education any influence of the backward portion of the population. This decision was based on a presumption that the government would not be a mere power but an enlightened one, possessed of "a degree of cultivation above the average of the community it rule[d]."[16] and manned by the instructed class. The government would, in fact, be capable of supplying "better education and better instruction" than that desired by the uneducated majority of the population. It was on this ground of the intellectual superiority of the civil authority that the principle of *laisser-faire* was denied in education and the intervention of the State justified.

However, since Mill did not discard the principle of utility that legitimised freedom of choice in the individual's pursuit of happiness, certain fundamental questions remained unanswered in his advocacy of State intervention in education. The individual, Mill believed, was the best judge of what was required for his material well-being. Thus, insofar as his material life was concerned, he was to assume total responsibility for his actions; but once his action extended beyond his material life to involve any mental values he was no longer a reliable judge, and, in fact, was not to be accorded liberty. This limitation of the individual's freedom and responsibility was in basic contradiction with Mill's commitment to the principle of utility and *laisser-faire*, and full of ambiguities, the most striking of which was Mill's ambivalent belief about what factors were involved in the cultivation of character. Mill had acknowledged the individual's freedom of choice of the means to gratify tastes and inclinations.[17] But precisely what tastes and inclinations and what associated means were

[14]John Stuart Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*, *CW*, III, p.947.
[15]*Ibid.*
[16]*Ibid.*
[17]*Ibid.*

related, or not related, to the cultivation of character? And was not character cultivation itself to form tastes and inclinations? Mill had, in fact, attempted to establish a border between the domain of individual freedom and that of State intervention which could not logically be sustained.[11] How could the State, by leaving the individual free to pursue his own objects according to his own tastes and inclinations, hope to develop in him the tastes and inclinations towards the higher pleasures? Could the State, by leaving the individual free to pursue his selfish gratification, develop in the same individual the antithetical virtue of self-sacrifice? If so, then what exactly was the extent of the area in which an individual was free to pursue material self-gratification without regard for anyone and anything else? In spite of Mill's sophisticated theory of higher and lower pleasures and the principle of "harm to others" as the limit of individual freedom, his answer to these questions was nowhere clear and explicit. In order to make habitual the pursuit of higher pleasures one must suppress the desire for lower pleasures. But if this claim was correct, in order to develop a cultivated character that preferred higher to lower pleasures, a system of education must seek to suppress *all* kinds of purely personal gratifications, even when they did not go beyond the boundary of "harm to others." For personal gratifications were motivated by egoistic and selfish interest which could not coexist with noble self-sacrificial virtues. To argue otherwise was to discard the cultivation of character as the goal of national education.

It is perhaps not surprising that Mill's national system of education was but a shadow of that which his ideal of cultivation seemed to imply. The State itself, according to Mill, had no responsisbility to provide for the education of its citizens. Rather it was the parents or "those on whom children depended" who were to assume the duty and bear the responsibility

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[11]The satisfactory settlement of this border question was impossible. In the utilitarian principle, since happiness was an individual concern, no one except the individual concerned could prescribe a desirable end for the individual. The very idea of State intervention itself was, in the light of this utilitarian individualism, a violation of the *philosophia prima* of utilitarianism. "A strict utilitarianism," Amy Gutman points out, "must . . . reject John Stuart Mill's suggestion that education be guided by the perfectionist ideal of maximising development of the particular capacities of each individual." "What's the Use of Going to School?" in Amartya Sen and Bernard Williams, eds., *Utilitarianism and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p.263.

for the education of rising generations. Certain primary elements and means of knowledge existed in every community and these were to be acquired by all of its members. Parents were to assume the duty of making their children familiar with these elements and means of knowledge, presumably without regard to their relationship to the ideal of cultivation and the pursuit of higher pleasures. The failure to fulfill this duty was a crime, both against the children concerned and against society, because both the children themselves (when grown up) and society would suffer from their ignorance. The mature Mill drew strength for this view of parental duty from his population theory, according to which the pains of bearing children and their upbringing were invariable punishments resulting from man's indiscreet search for immediate and lower pleasures. It was, of course, a basic classical utilitarian principle that parents should bear the financial burden of education. While, given the existing poverty and negligence of education among the working class, Mill welcomed the support provided to elementary education from charitable sources, as a principle he argued that the expense for education belonged to the parents. But where parents were expected to procure and pay for the education of their children according to their wishes and abilities to pay, a coherent and complete system of national education could not be established.

What ground was there then for an enlightened government to intervene in educational matter? In his essay "Endowments"(1869) Mill gave three reasons why education ought not to be left to the forces of the marketplace. First, the uneducated mass could not act as a competent judge in matters of education. Second, the poor did not have the means of paying for it. Finally, not understanding its value, they would not care sufficiently for it.[19] Mill's major prescriptions for the role of the State in national education were derived from the last two points. Because the poor would not voluntarily pay for the education of their children, the State had to make it a legal obligation for all parents to provide an elementary education for their children. If parents could not afford to pay for it, the State must help them do so.

> It is . . . an allowable exercise of the powers of government, to impose on parents the legal obligation of giving elementary instruction to children. This, however,

[19] *CW*, V, p.622.

> cannot fairly be done, without taking measures to insure that such instruction shall be always accessible to them; either gratuitously or at a trifling expense.[20]

Education was thus viewed as a commodity which, because it was good for the consumer, must be sold to him whether or not he wanted it. And if the consumer could not pay for it, the commodity was to be provided "gratuitously" or "at a trifling expense." Striking in this violation of the principle of the market were two assumptions, first, that the consumption of the commodity of education should be mandatory and, second, that the price should be modified if the market did not allow the full consumption of the commodity. Such a view of national education was a normative derivation from Mill's historical outlook rather than from any adherence to a classical utilitarian view of the market.

However, the normative requirement to have the commodity of education consumed regardless of the wishes of the consumer was fundamentally opposed to the utilitarian or classical economical principle that the pain of payment was to be exacted only in reference to the expected gain of a pleasure. In order to sell the commodity of education, it was relatively easy to make education compulsory because it was a legislative business, a matter of proclamation. Because it raised monetary problems, however, making education accessible to all was not easy. In an ideal society, where the government was wise and the people sufficiently enlightened, educational expenses would be met from general taxes without violating the principle that the buyer pays for the commodity he wants to purchase. But in a transitional age, in which the uneducated could not appreciate the benefits of education, it was "impossible to be assured that the people will be willing to be taxed for every purpose of moral and intellectual improvement for which funds may be required."[21] In other words, in a transitional age the people would not necessarily want to partake in the wholesale bargain of education and the government would have no grounds to exact from them the price for the unwanted commodity of education. And without any power to commit the tax-payer's money to education, the government had practically no means to provide education, "gratuitously" or

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[20] *Political Economy*, *CW*, III, pp.948-9. Mill preferred education "at a trifling expense" to free education because free education would fail to inspire independence in the mind of the working classes. See *ibid.*, p.949.

[21] John Stuart Mill, "Corporation and Church Property," *CW*, IV, p.216.

"at a trifling expense." While introducing an extraordinary value-claim into the market logic, Mill did not want to mutilate the market logic itself and consequently denied practically what was claimed theoretically. Hence Mill grounded his theory of national education on an element which happened to exist not by logic but simply by chance. In England, fortunately, elementary education was being provided to a considerable degree by charity through the two great voluntary school societies. When education was voluntarily provided by "individual liberality," Mill contended, it was not desirable that the government should intervene, financially or administratively.[22] The government, thanks to this favourable situation, could simply play the role of policeman, that is, to make sure that the funds from private endowments were employed appropriately for educational purposes according to the wishes of the donor.

In Mill's view the endowments made by individuals for the education of the poor were basically private properties, and as such subject to the wishes of those who bequeathed the funds. The government, whose major duty was the protection of private property, had no right to dispose of such private funds in ways other than in accordance with the wish of the donor. Mill's justification of government management of these funds, therefore, was carefully elaborated in order not to violate any principles of private ownership. The rationale for government intervention was not to thwart the wishes but to facilitate the realisation of the founder's intentions. For example, a rich widow on her death may have made provision in her will for the teaching of a particular religious doctrine to the poor of her parish. At least, in the short term after her death, her bequest would have certain useful effects since presumably her decision was based on a rational judgment of the needs of her society. But after a number of years the situation might well change and there would no longer be any guarantee that the effects of her bequest would still be useful. In that case it could be argued that it would be a betrayal of her intention to interpret her original bequest literally and, for example, require adherence to a particular religious doctrine. By this ingenious argument, Mill attempted to justify government intervention in the application of educational endowments to what he

[22] *Political Economy*, *CW*, III, pp.949.

conceived to be proper educational goals. For a certain period of time private endowments should be permitted to be used according to the donor's wishes; but after that period they must be brought under the control of an enlightened government for the general utility of the community.

Mill's theory of national education, beginning with the normative requirement of cultivating national character and implying a logically related educational role for the national government, thus ended up with recommending a loose system of schooling which relied for its facilities, curricula and methods of instruction upon the idiosyncracies of private benefactors and the entrepreneurial spirit of educational business men. The responsibility for choosing education for their children was left to parents, while the actual practice was to be developed by private institutions. The education available to the nation would inevitably be characterised by variety rather than uniformity.[23] This variety of education, Mill hoped, would ensure the formation of a national character equipped with fully developed mental faculties and a noble spirit of self-sacrifice. But could an education, grounded on the logic of the market and the peculiarities of benefactors, ever be expected to develop such a noble national character? An examination of the content of Mill's proposed national education will throw additional light upon this question.

B. National Education and the National Character

"An important, if not the most important, part of every course of public education," Mill wrote in 1834, "is that which is intended to awaken and to enlighten the conscience, or principle of moral duty."[24] The formation of a moral character, constituted of a cultivated intellect and developed feelings, was not simply "an important part" but rather the key-note of Mill's well-orchestrated rhetoric for organising national education. The central importance of the cultivation of character was, in fact, the ground on which he criticised Adam Smith's classical economist contention that any government financial support to the education of the

[23] "Endowments," p.617.
[24] (John Stuart Mill,) "Lord Brougham's Defence of the Church Establishment," *MR*, 8(June 1834), p.443.

working class would turn out to be "a mere premium upon idleness and inefficiency."[25] Smith was wrong, Mill claimed, because "instruction, when it is really such, does not enervate, but strengthens as well as enlarges the active faculties and, in whatever manner acquired, its effect on the mind is favourable to the spirit of independence."[26] In commenting on the debate on the Universities Admission Bill(1834) Mill stressed the need for a pre-university education ("elementary education") in the form of "endowed institutions of education" in which would be taught "those kinds of knowledge and culture, which have no obvious tendency to better the fortunes of the possessor, but solely to enlarge and exalt his moral and intellectual nature."[27] Similarly, in his essay "Reform in Education"(1834) Mill lamented the perversion of the infant school from its original nature, that is "an institution designed for *moral* culture only -- a place where the child learned nothing, in the vulgar sense of learning, but only learned to live . . . places designed exclusively for the cultivation of the kindly affections"(emphasis original).[28]

Mill's justification for this goal of national education was that it would provide the student with the necessary mental abilities and the right kind of character to choose the means which were really conducive to the desired end of the general happiness of a society. Although the disinterested and even self-sacrificial virtues which the cultivation of character was to produce might well bring no immediate pleasure to the individual concerned, they would, in the long run, secure the greatest and best happiness for the larger society. Mill also believed such virtues would also eventually bring the individual to appreciate higher quality pleasures. In insisting that what was good for an individual would not necessarily be good for society as a whole, Mill was clearly diverging from the classical utilitarian point of view. Indeed, he was claiming the reverse, that what promised immediate pleasure for the individual would work against the good of society. Mill's pedagogy was thus concerned with checking the individual's pursuit of short term happiness. It was in this connection that his quality thesis of pleasure had direct and inescapable educational implication.

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[25]"Corporation and Church Property," pp.214-5.
[26]*Political Economy*, *CW*, III, p.949.
[27]John Stuart Mill, "Debates on Universities Admission Bill," *CW*, VI, p.259.
[28]*CW*, XXI, pp.70-1.

This revised utilitarianism supplied Mill with the logical ground for his assault upon existing educational practices, particularly the irrationality and short-sightedness of parents and educators of all classes. Most repugnant to Mill was the class-bias of the university education of the rich. The established universities of Oxford and Cambridge had their clienteles exclusively among the higher classes, who sent their children to university in order to reproduce themselves and their classes.

> The sons of the aristocracy go [to Oxford and Cambridge] because their parents went, and because it is gentlemanly to have been there. Those who are to be clergymen go, because it is very difficult otherwise to get into orders. Those who are to be barristers go, because they save two years of their apprenticeship by it, and because a fellowship is a considerable help at the outset of their carrier. No one else goes at all.[29]

Consequently, the education offered by Oxford and Cambridge was not to rectify social absurdities but to pro[illegible]t them. The object of their education, Mill pointed out, was "not to qualify the pupil for judging what is true or what is right, but to provide that he shall think true what we think true, and right what we think right."[30] Universities inculcated established opinions and produced disciples of theories already accepted as true, rather than formed thinkers or inquirers who would discover what was wrong with the existing society and develop ways to improve it. Oxford and Cambridge were "the hot-bed of Toryism" and strongholds of the enemies of reform. They were, according to Mill, not the "reservoirs of sound learning and genuine spiritual culture" but the "sinks of the narrowest and most grovelling Church-of-Englandism."[31] The education of the higher classes might well produce some eminent figures; they were, however, eminent solely because of their family origin, and certainly not because of any development of their power. "From Doctor the Duke of Wellington down to poor Lord Encombe," Mill sneered at the graduates of those universities, "every character in the farce felt so solemnly persuaded that he was or at least looked like, a hero or a martyr! while in reality he only looked like a fool."[32]

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[29] "Universities Admission Bill," p.259.
[30] "Civilization," p.140.
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] John Stuart Mill, "The Tom-Foolery at Oxford," *CW*, VI, p.250.

The university, Mill believed, should be free from parental and thus class interests. In order to provide sound learning and genuine culture, the university must be a place where "teachers can afford to teach other things than those which parents (who in nine cases out of ten, think only of qualifying their children to *get on* in life) spontaneously call for"(emphasis original)."[33] Education should be cut off from the practical interests of the parents. "The empirical knowledge which the world demands, which is the stock in trade of money-getting life," Mill said, "we would leave the world to provide for itself; content with infusing into the youth of our country a spirit, and training them to habits, which would ensure their acquiring such knowledge easily, and using it well."[34] Mill made the same point in his criticism of the existing education of the poor.

When Mill claimed that education was the solution to the poverty of the lower classes, he did not mean that the school would provide the means to support one's family. He meant, rather, that it would supply an intellectual power to observe all matter of things from an enlightened perspective. With this acquired intellectual power a child of the working class would grow to see what was good and what was not good for his life. When Mill finally abandoned the wages fund theory, his belief in the importance of intellectual power in improving the situation of the working classes was strengthened. Cooperation among the working class he no longer considered to be harmful to the labour market. Rather, when well organised, working class cooperatives might even elevate the labourer to the co-ownership of enterprises. Crucial to Mill's optimism about the future of the working classes was their ability to help themselves; an ability which would be strengthened by the cultivation of a cooperative character. "In the matter of their poverty," he wrote, "there is no way in which the rich *could* have helped them, but by inducing them to help themselves"(emphasis original)."[35] And this inducement to self-help through cooperation could be given *only* by education.[36] But the self-help which Mill had in mind was not the kind which children of the

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[33]"Universities Admission Bill," p.259.
[34]"Civilization," p.139.
[35]John Stuart Mill, "The Claims of Labour," *CW*, IV, p.376.
[36]"Education," Mill pointed out in the same place, "is not the principal, but the sole remedy, if understood in its widest sense." *Ibid.*

poor could achieve merely by obtaining job skills. Rather, it was a power which only those whose character had been cultivated possessed, the ability to cooperate with each other. And this implied the acquisition of the virtue of self-sacrifice. Clearly and not surprisingly, the need for such an education was not felt by parents, who believed it necessary to send their children to work as soon as possible in order to increase their meagre family income, or, if they could afford it, to have them taught job and trade skills. For Mill vocational skills were, of course, useful for earning a living; but what the children of the poor urgently needed was the development of their minds for "the guidance of their hands."[31] Moreover, vocational skills could and should be learned in the course of an individual's working life; the education conducted in a national system ought not to intervene in or seek to replace what would occur naturally. It must, rather, provide what people could not and would not do of their own volition.

Thus; at both the upper and lower levels of national education the cultivation of character and the development of intellect and feelings occupied the dominant place, while vocational and other practical training was left out of the public concern. Mill's exclusion of vocational and practical training from a system of national education was also, as Samuel Hollander points out, based on the orthodox utilitarian view of the "divergence between social and private returns" in investments.[32] In the *Principles of Political Economy* Mill described the "cultivation of speculative knowledge [as] a service rendered to a community collectively, not individually." But any intellectual progress which resulted for the community, when valued in the logic of the marketplace, would not enable the individual to claim any material benefit, even though it rendered benefit to society at large; the public fund, therefore, must bear the cost.[33] A similar logic could also have been applied to public education. To undergo the cultivation of one's character, which would clearly be of benefit to the community, rather than enter the workforce, would not in itself necessarily result in any monetary gain to the recipient. However, Mill refused to follow where the argument led and maintain that any

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[31] *Ibid.*, p.378.
[32] Samuel Hollander, "The Role of the State in Vocational Training," *The Southern Economic Journal*, 34:4(1968), pp.517-8.
[33] *Political Economy*, *CW*, III, pp.968-9.

monetary disadvantage suffered as a result of compulsory education ought to be compensated for out of the public fund. Rather, he argued that the cultivation of character, though not providing material gain, would allow the recipient to enjoy pleasures of higher quality. A cultivated character would, therefore, benefit the individual, and he who benefits by education must, as a principle, pay for it. When Mill recommended public payment of fees for those who were unable to pay them, his logical ground was the social effect of a failure to provide individual character cultivation and not the individual loss or gain in direct material interests. On the other hand, benefits associated with vocational skills would clearly go to the individual who acquired them and not necessarily, he believed, to society as a whole. Where the benefits of learning were private and not public there was no ground at all for any spending from the fund under public control.[40] Implied in this theory of public spending on education was a strong laisser-fairism which accorded the individual the freedom and responsibility for achieving his own pleasures and happiness.

Mill's refusal to apply to vocational and practical training the same status that he allowed to the education of character cultivation was based on more than the mere distinction between the social and private returns of an investment. Commenting on a report on the use of child-labour in the flax-spinning industry at Dundee, Mill praised its recommendation to reduce the workday of the children and went a step further to argue that a law should be established, "*interdicting altogether* the employment of children under fourteen, and *females of any age*, in manufactories"(emphases original).[41] Children under the age of fourteen, Mill

[40]It is interesting that Mill did not take into account the basic doctrine of classical economics that the increase of individual wealth meant the increase of national wealth. Does not vocational training help promote the productivity of a nation? And does it not eventually produce social benefits? This *laisser-faire* attitude toward vocational training reflected the general tendency of British intellectuals before the 1860s to regard science, technology and education as 'the business of individuals, voluntary societies, or the churches.' For an overview of nineteenth-century opinions regarding this matter, see George Haines, "Technology and Liberal Education," in Philip Appleman, William A. Madden and Michael Wolff, eds., *1859: Entering an Age of Crisis* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1959), pp.97-112.

[41]John Stuart Mill, "Employment of Children in Manufactories," *Examiner*, 29 January 1832, pp. 67. Generally, Mill was sympathetic to the helpless status of women and children. For example, commenting on Mr. Fitzroy's bill to prevent domestic brutality, he noted in 1853 that such a bill would be "a step in the right direction." John Stuart Mill, "Remarks on Mr. Fitzroy's Bill for the More Effectual

insisted, should not be "employed otherwise than in fitting their bodies by exercise and freedom, and their minds by education, and that best of all moral training, that of the parental fireside, for the duties which they have to discharge in life."[42] The engagement of children in productive labour was thus viewed as being unsuitable for character cultivation. Underlying Mill's rejection of productive labour as an educational experience was his descriptive view of man's life in which labour was an evil (a pain) which one had to undergo in return for a good (a pleasure). Human labour, according to Mill, contained two indispensable elements. One was the exertion, be it muscular or nervous, required to shape natural objects into useful forms, and the other was the necessity to experience "all feelings of a disagreeable kind, all bodily inconvenience or mental annoyance, connected with the employment of one's thoughts, or muscles, or both, in a particular occupation."[43] Labour was a painful activity both for human body and for the mind and was justified only in terms of future pleasure.

This negative view of labour was based on Mill's understanding of what man accomplished through the process of labour. By labour man transformed natural objects into

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[41](cont'd) Prevention of Assaults on Women and Children," *CW*, XXI, pp.103-8. In 1850 Mill had criticised a barrister who had assaulted his six-year-old illegitimate son. (John Stuart Mill,) "Punishment of Children," *Sunday Times*, 2 June 1850, p.2. Mill's opposition to female labour was grounded not only on sympathy but on two more important grounds. One was that the employment of the mother of children in any gainful occupation would withdraw her "from the midst of her family"(*ibid.*) where one of her major roles was the education of her children. Although Mill believed that a single woman had equal rights in occupations and other fields of social life, her marriage to a man implied that she made a choice of a peculiar profession, that is, the profession of a housewife. "Like a man when he chooses a profession, so, when a woman marries, it may in general be understood that she makes choice of the management of a household, and the bringing up of a family, as the first call upon her exertions, during as many years of her life as may be required for the purpose; and that she renounces, not all other objects and occupations, but all which are not consistent with the requirements of this. The actual exercise, in a habitual or systematic manner, of outdoor occupations, or such as cannot be carried on at home, would by this principle be practically interdicted to the greater number of married women." John Stuart Mill, *The Subjection of Women*, p.89. The other ground was derived from his wages fund theory. The withdrawal of women (as well as children) from the labour-market, he believed, would reduce the number of competing labourers and raise "the wages of the remainders" in the market. "Employment of Children," p.67.

[42]*Ibid.*

[43]*Political Economy*, *CW*, III, p.25.

useful goods. For example,

> A workman takes a stalk of the flax or hemp plant, splits it into separate fibres, twines together several of these fibres with his fingers, aided by a simple instrument called a spindle; places other similar threads directly across them, so that each passes alternately over and under those which are at right angles to it; this part of the process being facilitated by an instrument called a shuttle. He has now produced a web of cloth, either linen or sackcloth, according to the material.[44]

What was it that man had accomplished in this process of labour? Mill did not accept the view that man actively had created the final product by his labour out of materials that were passive or inert. "By what force," asked he, "is each step of this operation rendered possible, and the web, when produced, held together?" It was nothing other than "the tenacity, or force of cohesion, of the fibres: which is one of the forces in nature, and which we can measure exactly against other mechanical forces, and ascertain how much of any of them it suffices to neutralize or counterbalance."[45] What man did in his labour was to put "objects in motion"; the rest was done by "the properties of matter, the laws of nature."[46] In a real sense, then, nature provided not only materials but also powers.

Given this limited role of the labourer in the process of production, the best possible type of labour was that which minimised human involvement in the productive process. In setting things in motion, man's most primitive method and one which was the most painful was the use of his own muscles. The substitution of human muscular movement by that of cattle and by the movement of wheels powered by water, wind or steam had rid man of much of this pain and, at the same time, increased productivity. Crucial to this lessening of pain and increased productivity were the invention and use of tools and machinery, themselves the product of improved skills and knowledge of the community.[47] It was, in fact, not labour but intellectual improvement, as a phenomenon independent from labour, which had rescued the labourer from physical and mental hardship. What pains still remained in the labour process was due to the incomplete state of human knowledge.

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[44] *Ibid.*, p.26.
[45] *Ibid.*, pp.26-7.
[46] *Ibid.*, p.28.
[47] *Ibid.*, pp.106-7.

Mill's proposal to make illegal child-labour was intended to protect children from an activity that was painful and which held no possibility of character cultivation. However, Mill believed that it was not wise to keep a child completely isolated from labour. Labour was a necessary evil, as impure pain, which must be borne if man was to achieve happiness; the appropriate educational policy was, therefore, to teach the child that it was inevitable and that idleness and indolence must be avoided, if he wished to avoid severer pains and secure the means for future comfort. Considered solely in terms of Mill's own utilitarian principles, a training in labour, therefore, would seem to be an essential part of moral education. Why, then, did Mill exclude vocational preparation from his theory of national education? The answer lay in Mill's own view of labour in which, as we have seen, the role of the human agent was diminished to insignificance. Labour was simply a "mechanical routine"[48] in which the labourer contributed little or nothing of himself to the object he was working on; rather, he followed blindly the instructions supplied by the machine-designer or the superintendent of the factory. Unlike Marx' labourer who was ideally to project his very self into his product, Mill's labourer was merely a cog in a complex machine. As part of the mechanism, the labourer had no need to possess a concept of the final form of the product. He had no need of a knowledge of the workings of the machinery he was operating. He had no rights or discretion in determining the product of his own labour; indeed, his role in the productive process was insignificant, the work being accomplished by the properties of matter being exploited by machines purchased with the money of the capitalist. So insignificant an agent was he that his replacement by another labourer made no difference to the final product. This mechanical productive process required little or no mental exertion. It was not surprising, then, that Mill believed that productive labour was not educational.[49]

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[48] "Reform in Education," p.70.

[49] The contradictory views of labour of Mill and Marx originated from their different anthropological points of view. Marx started from a theoretically presumed natufal state in which man laboured and produced just for himself. Because man laboured for himself his product belonged to himself; he had, in fact, embodied himself in what he had done. On the other hand, Mill's starting-point was the labour which Marx regarded as unnatural and alienated, the commodity which was *actually* being sold and purchased in the marketplace. For Mill labour was what Mill himself could see in a manufactory orgahised according to Andrew Ure's "Philosophy of

Mill's exclusion of any vocational preparation from schooling and his taking mental, emotional and character development as the major goal of national education meant that the education of the lower classes was to be subject to serious limitations. Mill's national education was directed mainly at the working classes who had little opportunity to develop their mental faculties or sensibilities. However, in its exclusion of vocational preparation, Mill's national education lost contact with a significant part of the life of the working classes, their work. The working classes, therefore, were to be required to learn a great deal that would inevitably be impractical and unreal in the actual circumstances of their life. Moreover, the theoretical ground of national education was a view of labour which belittled the role of the labourer in the process of production. In effect, Mill's national education was designed to inspire in the minds of the working classes a consciousness that would cause them to despise their own role and status. Could a cultivated national character be built up on the basis of the depreciation of work and the humiliation of the working classes?

With respect to the possibility of the mental development of the working classes, Mill, whose descriptive anthropology convinced him of the plasticity of the human character, tended, in one respect, to have an optimistic view. "I yield to no one," he wrote, "in the degree of intelligence of which I believe them ['the body of the people'] to be capable."[50] But it was also his descriptive anthropology that caused him to place severe limitations on the possible mental development of the working classes. Interestingly, Mill at times seems to have recognised the possibility of mental development through activities related to a calling or occupation. An occupation, he wrote, "does not place any limit to their [those in the occupation] possible intelligence; since the mode of learning, and the mode of practising, that

[49](cont'd) Manufacture." It was, in fact, this descriptive approach that obstructed Mill from accepting fully the normative development thesis which theoretically presupposed the ideal of active man. To all those who advocated the development thesis -- Humboldt, Schiller, Hegel, Marx, and even Rousseau -- labour (or work) was an essential and indispensable element of man's integrity. The literature on this topic is legion, Rousseau being, perhaps, the only exception. See Ki Su Kim, "The Concept of Work in Rousseau's Educational Thought."

[50]John Stuart Mill, "The Spirit of the Age," in Gertrude Himmelfarb, ed., *John Stuart Mill, Essays on Politics and Culture* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1973), p.12.

occupation itself, might be made one of the most valuable of all exercises of intelligence."[51] Moreover, an occupation was an important element in the environment which formed the human mind. But for virtually everyone in the working class, work was an environmental factor that failed to supply enough variety of stimuli to positively affect their mental faculties. In Mill's words, "What sets no limit to the *powers* of the mass of mankind, nevertheless limits greatly their possible *acquirements*"(emphases original).[52] Because of the narrow range of activities involved in an occupation, it could not provide "sufficient opportunities of study and experience" to make working men "familiarly conversant with all the inquiries which lead to the truths by which it is good that they should regulate their conduct."[53] And, of course, the narrowest and most limiting occupations were to be found in the factory, the exclusive working preserve of the working classes.[54]

About the ability of working class to partake in intellectual culture Mill was, therefore, ambivalent. On the one hand, he argued, "Let him [the ordinary working man] learn what he can, and as well as he can."[55] Moreover, because the working class was "precluded by the nature of things from ever inquiring and investigating enough," he believed that its members should be allowed and encouraged to pursue intellectual curiosities "to the utmost extent of each man's intellect, leisure, and inclination."[56] On the other hand, this plea for the mental development of the members of the working class was based on an assumption

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[51] *Ibid.*
[52] *Ibid.*
[53] *Ibid.*
[54] If opportunities for study and experience were denied to the majority of the population because of the narrowness of the range of activities in their occupations, it followed that responsibility for the intellectual development and progress of the community must be given to those few whose circumstances relieved them of the limiting effects of physical labour. "Those persons," Mill declared, "whom circumstances of society, and their own position in it, permit to dedicate themselves to the investigation and study of physical, moral, and social truths, as their peculiar calling, can alone" be expected to undertake this intellectual business and become "masters of the philosophical grounds of those opinions of which it is desirable that all should be firmly *persuaded*, but which they alone can entirely and philosophically *know*"(emphases original). *Ibid.* Knowledge must be discovered and developed by professional inquirers and the mass of working people should recognise that their monotonous working situation restricted their mental activities.
[55] *Ibid.*, p.13.
[56] *Ibid.*

that they would never escape from their restrictive social and economic circumstances. Consequently, Mill added a proviso that a member of the working class must bear in mind that "there are others who probably know much with which he not only is unacquainted, but of the evidence of which, in the existing state of his knowledge, it is impossible that he should be a complete judge."[57] This, in fact, was the vital element in Mill's theory of national education.

Applied to a theory of national education, such a view of the potential mental development of the people was well fitted to the existing intellectual and social and economic order of society. Echoing the conventional opinion of his age, Mill wrote: "The State does not owe gratuitous education to those who can pay for it. The State owes no more than elementary education to the entire body of those who cannot pay for it."[58] Government's responsibility was to use the money under its control, that is, endowed funds and not the tax-payer's money, in such a way as to ensure access of the poor to an elementary education. If a parent could afford to purchase an education for their children, cheap or expensive, he was out of government's concern. In Mill's system of national education the rich would obviously supply their children with more expensive and presumably better education. The poor, on the other hand, if they did not have enough money to purchase an education of their choice, were to be required by law to send their children to schools provided by the government-controlled endowed funds.

What was to be the character of this minimal State-provided education? It was theoretically to be an education of the intellect and feelings. However, in view of what Mill said in the *Inaugural Address*, it is doubtful whether such an elementary education could supply more than fragments of knowledge, or even begin to develop the child's aesthetic and moral sensibilities. Mill had distinguished the function of the school from that of the university, defining the role of the former as teaching knowledge and of the latter as providing a philosophical treatment of the knowledge. On the basis of the knowledge acquired in the school, the university student was expected to reflect on and develop a mature view of

[57] *Ibid.*
[58] "Endowments," p.627.

knowledge at the most general level. It is not clear whether this school was a State-regulated institution in which a national elementary education was to be provided.[59] It is, however, clear that State-regulated national elementary education would be the lowest in status and the minimal level of all forms of the pre-university schooling. It is difficult, then, to agree with Mill's contention that such a minimal education, which at best was to provide rudimentary elements of knowledge only, would lead its recipient to a cultivated character.

Interestingly and ironically, Mill believed that the State had a major responsibility for providing a superior education to those who merited it. The "superior education," he wrote, "which it [the State] does not owe to the whole of the poorer population, it owes to the *élite* of them."[60] By the term *élite* Mill had in mind "those who have earned the preference by labour, [that is, industry and hard work at schools] and have shown by the results that they have capacities worth securing for the higher departments of intellectual work, never supplied in due proportion to the demand."[61] This idea, expressed at a time (1869) when State-supported national education was being advocated only for the elementary level, was certainly a progressive one. The children of the very poor were to be recommended for support from endowments for an education of intellectual leadership, if they proved in the course of elementary education to be "the sort on whom a higher education [was] worth bestowing."[62] By the provision of educational opportunity, which circumstances of birth had precluded, the talented could be educationally elevated and possibly given a cultivated character. Such children would be truly unique. For only the very few could ever hope to prove their capacity to benefit from higher education in a State-regulated low cost, low status elementary school, particularly since the major part of their lives were spent in the educationally impoverished environment of their home. And even if some were chosen, their

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[59]F.W. Garforth interprets Mill's "elementary education" as meaning "fundamental skills and information which he [Mill] believed necessary in nineteenth-century Britain." In Garforth's view, Mill had in mind as its clientele "the labouring classes" and not "a particular age group." *John Stuart Mill's Theory of Education*, p.184.

[60]"Endowments," p.627.

[61]*Ibid.*

[62]*Ibid.*

success was to be based on a negation of the uncultivated life of their own family. Mill's normative goal of cultivating national character, it seemed, promised little to the poorer classes. Indeed, if anything, it seemed to confirm them in their place, economically, socially and educationally.

C. Education, the Elite and the Working Classes

The central element in Mill's theory of national education, that is, the cultivation of a national character, carried with it, therefore, a severe limitation. A fully cultivated character was realisable only with the final touch of higher education which was virtually unavailable to the working class. Provided with the minimum of fragmentary knowledge in the lowest rank of the national hierarchy of schools, children of the working class could never hope to fully attain a desirable character. Such a limitation was, in fact, acknowledged by Mill himself.

"Happy will be the day," Mill wrote in "The Spirit of the Age," "on which these [proofs of the moral and social truths of great importance to mankind] shall begin to be circulated among the people."[63] Such a day of universalisation of moral and social scientific methods, however, was far off. For despite the fact that the grounds of such truths were simple and obvious, they were not, unfortunately, "intelligible to [the majority of] persons of the most limited faculties, with [only] moderate study and attention."[64] Not everyone would have sufficient experience of mankind in general and sufficient reflection upon his own experience to appreciate "the force of the reason [for scientific inference] when laid before him." Thus, even if a number of proofs of truths could be brought down to the level of the uninformed mass, there would still remain "something which they must always and inevitably take upon trust."[65] This something Mill took to be that which could not be arrived at by common sense, which was worth little in terms of furthering a correct understanding. "Judging by common sense," Mill insisted, "is merely another phrase for judging by first appearances." For the uninformed individual, "the real question, to be determined by [his]

[63] "Spirit," p.13.
[64] *Ibid.*
[65] *Ibid.*, pp.13-4.

own judgment, is, whether most confidence is due in the particular case, to his own understanding, or to the opinion of his authority."[66] The wisdom of the uninformed consisted, in effect, of determining whose opinion to follow. The informed individual, however, was free not only to form his own judgment but even to disregard an authority in so doing.

Mill's pessimistic views regarding the potential of the mental faculties of the multitude were repeated as late as 1865 in his essay *Auguste Comte and Positivism*. On Comte's claim that it was the duty of society to provide "every one who grows up to manhood and womanhood [with] a course of instruction in every department of science, from mathematics to sociology, as can possibly [be] made general," Mill commented that only a few were competent to receive such instruction.[67] Even more questionable was Comte's assertion that not only "the mere results of knowledge" but also the methods of knowledge, "the mode in which those results were attained," could be made "the common inheritance of all persons with ordinary faculties."[68] Knowledge and the methods of knowledge, Mill insisted, could not be given fully to the whole population; the need for the ordinary people to rely on the authority of the intellectually superior still remained paramount.

Comte wished to supply scientific knowledge, including an understanding of its methodology to all of the people since it was clearly impossible to bring about "the allegiance of the mass to scientific authority by withholding scientific knowledge."[69] Mill shared Comte's antipathy to intellectual despotism over the ignorant mass, since he himself had advocated at least an elementary education for everyone. Neither Comte nor Mill desired to establish a monopoly of knowledge by the instructed class. Both shared a conviction that true understanding and complete knowledge could be attained only by means of science. And for both Comte and Mill the means of science was, unfortunately, available to the limited number of people. This was the ground of their claim for the authority of the instructed few. Those who possessed it were to be assigned to an unchallengeable status, one which did not imply an

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[66] *Ibid.*, p.13.
[67] John Stuart Mill, *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, *CW*, X, p.303.
[68] *Ibid.*
[69] *Ibid.*

intellectual despotism but rather an intellectual leadership. This respect for the authority of the best-instructed was a central element both in Comte's social theory and in Mill's theory of national education.

Within this common general position, however, there were a number of significant differences in their views of the desirable relationship between the well-informed and the poorly-informed. In order to determine these differences and locate the status of the intellectual elité, as well as that of the mass, in Mill's utilitarian utopia, it is helpful to examine a generally held interpretation of the two thinkers' views of the matter.

According to Iris Wessel Mueller, Comte believed that in order to be morally regenerated, the working class needed to be elevated to "a state of personal dignity and physical well-being."[70] To this end he "called for uniformity of hitherto divided interests, for a collective effort in the service of humanity."[71] Comte believed that "the only way of ending [the] stormy situation" of the anarchy in Europe following the French Revolution was to induce "the civilised nations to abandon the negative and to adopt an organic attitude; turning all their efforts towards the formation of the New Social System as the definite object of the crisis."[72] The working classes were "the chief sufferers from the selfishness and domineering of men of wealth and power." For this reason, they were "the likeliest to come forward in defence of public morality"[73] and would certainly be the "most energetic allies"[74] of the leadership of the philosophers, that is, men of science. The alliance of the working classes with the philosophers would strengthen the latter's moral guidance of the intermediary or capitalist classes from self-love to a social love. Thus, the development of the moral and intellectual power of the working class was an indispensable condition for the construction of the positivist society.

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[70]Iris Wessel Mueller, *John Stuart Mill and French Thought*, p.124.
[71]*Ibid.*
[72]Auguste Comte, "Plan of the Scientific Operations Necessary for Reorganising Society," in *System of Positive Polity*, IV, p.527.
[73]*Ibid.*, I, p.109.
[74]*Ibid.*, p.102.

Despite the importance of the role assigned by Comte to the working class as a collectivity, he had few, if any, illusions about their intellectual capacity as individuals. The historical task of Comte's positivism was the construction of an industrial regime and a spiritual organisation in which the possessors of knowledge were to be ranked within a priesthood according to the hierarchical order of the various sciences identified by Comte. Because the state of opinions and manners determined the character of social institutions, it was to the spiritual organisation that Comte gave, as an anonymous nineteenth-century commentator indicated, a "superior concentration of authority."[75] In the final stage of historical progress, "the education of society [would fall] . . . into the hands of [these] savants."[76] Thus, a hierarchically organised educational order would consolidate and unify various social groups and organisations under a centralised intellectual authority. In this Comtean utopia, an appropriately organised social life could be achieved only through science, particularly social physics, the highest form of knowledge. No responsibility for decision-making could be left to the "spontaneous individual action" of the ordinary people. As Mueller points out, "the inferior orders had to be led by their superiors."

> From this . . . fact, Comte proposed that working classes would only gain a sense of dignity and that uniformity of interests would only be achieved when men were enlightened as to their "real" as opposed to their "imaginary" interests, when they had a clear comprehension of the necessary differentiation of their functions and of the necessary distinctions of their ranks.[77]

According to Mueller, as a spokesman of liberalism and utilitarianism, John Stuart Mill could not accept such a clear denial of the validity of individual freedom of action. "Mill suggested," Mueller argues, "that long before the superior classes should have reached the degree of perfection and enlightenment that would permit the operation of a 'tutelage' system, the concomitant improvement of the inferior classes would have made such a government superfluous."[78] Mill is thus held to be a Benthamite who believed that there was in society a natural harmony of interests, that because no one alone was able to guide society,

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[75]"The Comtist Utopia," *Fraser's Magazine*, 80(1869), p.6.
[76]Auguste Comte, "Philosophical Considerations on the Sciences and Savants," in *System of Positive Polity*, IV, p.616.
[77]Mueller, p.124.
[78]*Ibid.*, p.126.

the democratic process would have to be tolerated, and that even when society reached the stage where the democratic system was no longer a necessary expedient, this situation would still be "a positive 'good' because the vast majority of the people would have reached a state of enlightenment."[79] Thus, Mill becomes, in Mueller's view, a liberal while Comte remains a totali[illegible].

Such an interpretation, however, is misleading. The original statement of Mill in the *Principles of Political Economy* to which Mueller refers reads as follows: "This, at least, seems to me undeniable, that long before the superior classes could be sufficiently improved to govern in the tutelage manner supposed, the inferior classes would be too much improved to be so governed."[80] Mill was here criticising what he called "the theory of dependence" being promulgated by some of his contemporaries. Basing itself upon a romantic attachment to medievalism, this theory held that "the rich should be *in loco parentis* to the poor, guiding and restraining them like children."[81] The poor were not "required or encouraged to think for themselves" or to "give to their own reflection or foresight an influential voice in the determination of their destiny."[82] The lot of the poor was to be regulated for them by the rich "in all things which affect them collectively."[83] Like parents, the rich were obliged to provide affectionate tutelage while the poor had to pay them a "respectful and grateful deference."[84] Mueller is clearly mistaken in her assumption that Mill's criticism here was directed against the views of Auguste Comte. Through all the revised editions of the *Principles of Political Economy* which successively appeared between 1848 and 1871 Mill never once mentioned specifically whose views he was criticising. Moreover, Mill's attack on the theory of dependence was based on his rejection of the authority of traditional ruling classes, not of a spiritually superior class which Comte had in mind. In his summary of the dependence theory Mill used only once the phrase "the higher classes." However, contextually the phrase was

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[79] *Ibid.*
[80] *Political Economy*, *CW*, III, p.760.
[81] *Ibid.*, p.759.
[82] *Ibid.*
[83] *Ibid.*
[84] *Ibid.*

used in the same sense as the word "rich" as opposed to the word "poor."

What Mill attacked in "the theory of dependence" was, in fact, not the spiritual leadership of the Comtean utopia but the rich and privileged classes of his age. The dependence theory, Mill believed, was a reactionary "ideal of the future," appealing to "our imaginative sympathies in the character of a restoration of the good times of our forefathers," which, in reality, had never existed. Indeed, Mill wrote, history showed clearly that

> all the privileged and powerful classes, as such, have used their power in the interest of their own selfishness, and have indulged their self-importance in despising and not in lovingly caring for, those who were, in their estimation, degraded, by being under the necessity of working for their benefit.[85]

The eradication of this selfishness from the new leadership and the inclusion of spiritual excellence in its stead was essential to Mill's program of human progress. In this regard Comte was no different. As Emile Faguet pointed out in 1899, the separation of spiritual power from temporal power and the resolution of any possible antagonism between them were major points on which both Comte and Mill agreed in their views of history. The driving force of historical progress was intellectual and spiritual power; it was thus obvious that in any reorganisation of society this spiritual power should be set up as "un pouvoir précis et distinct."[86] In their discussions of the future relationship between the rich and the poor, both Mill and Comte emphasised its moral quality. "A close examination," point out Ekelund and Olsen, "of Mill's views on profit sharing and of the ideal moral relationship between worker and capitalist reveals they are but a restatement of Comte's (and Saint-Simon's) scenario of that same relationship in the positivist state."[87]

In what respect, then, if any, did Mill differ from Comte? In *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, after examining Comte's criticism of the "negative philosophy" of the previous three centuries, Mill declared that "M. Comte has got hold of half the truth, and the so-called

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[85] *Ibid.*

[86] Emile Faguet, "Auguste Comte et Stuart Mill," *Revue bleue, politique et littéraire*, 36:14(1899), p.439.

[87] Robert B. Ekelund, Jr. and Emile S. Olsen, "Comte, Mill, and Cairnes," *Journal of Economic Issues*, 7:3(1973), p.394.

liberal or revolutionary school possesses the other half."[88] According to Comte, Mill explained, "whatever goes by the different names of the revolutionary, the radical, or the negative and critical school or party in religion, politics, or philosophy" was a metaphysical instrument of attack upon the old social system,[89] useful only in an age of destruction. For example, to assert the need for liberty of opinions or conscience was a "negative" position which would no longer be valid when positive science established universally acceptable laws in astronomy, physics, and sociology.[90] Similarly, the doctrine of equality, while useful in destroying the old order, possessed little relevance in the new. Mill summarised Comte's view, "He observes that mankind in a normal state, having to act together, are necessarily, in practice, organized and classed with some reference to their unequal aptitudes, natural or acquired, which demand that some should be under the direction of others."[91] The sovereignty of the people was also a "metaphysical" axiom, a purely negative doctrine, meaningful only in a destructive age when it served to uphold "the right of the people to rid themselves by insurrection of a social order that has become oppressive." In a constructive age, however, the doctrine would no longer be useful since it would condemn all superiors to "an arbitrary dependence upon the multitude of their inferiors."[92]

Mill, to a great extent, agreed with Comte's critique of negative philosophy. Thus, with respect to liberty of opinions and conscience, Mill noted that "every one is free to believe and publish that two and two make ten, but the important thing is to know that they make four."[93] For Mill, liberty should not extend to licence, allowing, for example, an individual to challenge the established truths of science or the general rules established by the best-informed. On Comte's position regarding the necessity of inequality, Mill commented that "there is not a word to be said against these doctrines." He went on, "When, after being properly educated, people are left to find their places for themselves, do they not

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[88] *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, p.313.
[89] *Ibid.*, p.301.
[90] *Ibid.*, pp.301-3.
[91] *Ibid.*, p.304.
[92] *Ibid.*
[93] *Ibid.*, p.303.

spontaneously class themselves in a manner much more conformable to their unequal or dissimilar aptitudes, than governments or social institutions are likely to do it for them?"[94] Comte's rejection of the sovereignty of the people, Mill fully approved. "As a metaphysical dogma or an absolute principle," he wrote, "this criticism [by Comte] is just."[95] This did not mean, of course, that Mill opposed representative government. "The direct participation of the governed in their own government, not as natural right, but as a means to important ends, under the conditions and with the limitations which those ends impose"[96] was clearly for Mill desirable. All in all, the general tone of Mill's analysis of Comte's criticism of democratic, negative doctrines was sympathetic, albeit at times somewhat ambivalent. As a utilitarian he could not give up his adherence to the principle of individual liberty of thought; he was forced to admit, however, its limitations on the non-utilitarian ground that scientific truths were not always intelligible and could not be left to the judgment of ordinary people. The point on which he most strongly agreed with Comte was the necessity to establish the authority of the best-educated. "It is," Mill wrote, "the necessary condition of mankind to receive most of their opinions on the authority of those who have specially studied the matters to which they relate."[97]

Mill's crucial divergence from Comte was his optimism with regard to the beneficent effect of education and its consequences for social organisation. As far as policy was concerned, Mill took the same line as Comte, on the one hand insisting upon the education of ordinary people while, on the other, arguing that they should respect and rely upon the wise judgment of an intellectual elite. When it came to evaluate the effects of such a policy, however, Mill took a far more optimistic view than Comte of the desirable changes which would result from the education of ordinary people. When ordinary people were no longer ignorant, their relationship to those who were intellectually superior need not be anything like "the blind submission of dunces to men of knowledge."[98] An enlightened public would

[94] *Ibid.*, p.304.
[95] *Ibid.*
[96] *Ibid.*
[97] *Ibid.*, p.313.
[98] *Ibid.*, p.314.

naturally develop a unanimity of opinion within itself because scientific truth would not allow any diversity of explanation.[99] It would thus not require the rigid hierarchical organisations proposed by Comte. For if on this educated mass was imposed an organised spiritual leadership, as Comte wished, it would aim "not merely to promulgate and diffuse principles of conduct, but to direct the detail of their application; to declare and inculcate, not duties, but each person's duty, as was attempted by the spiritual authority of the middle ages."[100] Such an authority was unnecessary and would exercise spiritual despotism.

Although he rejected Comte's proposal for an organised power or a spiritual leadership, Mill thought it natural and indispensable that there should be an "intelligent deference of those who know much, to those who know still more," and that education should be practically directed by a "philosophic class."[101] What he refused to accept was the claim that this philosophic class should be a centralized authority, and that it should possess a monopoly of education. Such a spiritual and intellectual centralisation, Mill feared, would tend to produce a single type of character and hinder the progress of mankind in its "unfettered exercise of . . . highest faculties."[102] In the same vein Mill criticised Comte's later idea that in a positivist society the development of human forces of all kind should be regulated by such an authority.[103] Mill was not a totalitarian; but he was not, in its proper sense, a liberal democrat either. What Mill actually sought was what he argued for in the *Principles of Political Economy*, the ongoing enlightenment of the working classes which, he believed, would eventually demolish the political domination of the class above. Inevitably the working class would emerge one day as a dominant political force. To prevent a disastrous tyranny of the uninformed it was necessary to subjugate the working class to another master, one whose superiority would consist in its possession not of property but of scientific

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[99]Although Mill used such a logic in order to refute the hierarchical organisaton of Comte, it was basically grounded on an idea of the unity of sciences in which the central one was to be physics. In this sense Mill's theory was not totally incompatible with that of Comte. For the "positivist" conception of science see Russel Keat and John Urry, *Social Theory as Science*, esp. pp.9-26.

[100]*Ibid.*

[101]*Ibid.*

[102]*Ibid.*, pp.414-5.

[103]*Ibid.*

truths.[104]

This subjugation was to occur in an entirely different historical situation than any that had existed previously. Political measures alone were not enough to meet this urgent historical demand. Only a general awareness that there existed intellectually superior individuals who were able to make better judgments could provide stability to working men's tempers, making them moderate and producing harmony in society.

Mill's goal of national education, that lofty ideal of developing the national character, was, in fact, directed exactly to this end. The cultivation of aesthetic, moral and intellectual sensibilities was the persistent theme in Mill's educational theory. But what he aimed at by this was the Comtean ideal of "harmony and order," not necessarily the fuller development of the individual. In this respect, his pedagogy was subordinate to the political ideals which he had conceived in his self-defined role and participation in history-making.

[104]When political action is grounded on a scientific standard, Paul Feyerabend argues, such demands lead to elitism. "A citizen who wants to judge science must either become a scientist himself, or he must defer to the advice of experts." "Democracy, Elitism, and Scientific Method," *Inquiry*, 23:1(1980), p.10.

VII. Conclusion

John Stuart Mill is generally regarded as the "pioneer of democratic liberalism,"[1] whose major contribution to modern political thought was the the importance he attached to the cultivation of the individual's character. The possibility of the full development of the power of the free individual had not been present in the pre-Millian market logic of utilitarianism. Mill's thesis of character cultivation brought into question the egoistic spirit of liberalism, and at the same time opened the way for the defenders of liberalism to justify individual freedom not so much on the ground of non-interference with the beneficent and "invisible hand" of the market but on that of individual perfection. The contention that the possession of a cultivated character would enable an individual to give up his immediate personal interests for the greater benefit of society meant that the market itself could not always be the coordinator of conflicting interests. More important than the logic of the market was a value-system which, on occasion, could reject and even despise cash-values. When social harmony had been attained through the exercise of self-sacrificial virtues, society would no longer be a laisser-faire community in the Hobbsean state of *omnis omnum bellum*. It would be a cooperative rather than a competitive community and no longer a libertarian society in the classical sense.

In inheriting the faith in "the ultimate removability of the removable evils of life," which Dorothea Krook praises as "the good and noble side of utilitarianism,"[2] the young Mill took part in the historical struggle for political reform. In common with the elder statesmen of utilitarianism, the primary concern of the young reformer was to secure the free operation of the marketplace and to wage war on its enemies, the Church and the aristocracy, whose continual existence and prosperity rested upon their denial of the market logic. In this assault on outmoded institutions, the young Mill and other philosophical radicals saw the eventual triumph of reason and reform over superstition and reaction. In rejecting all that belonged to

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[1]J. Salwyn Schapiro, "J.S. Mill, Pioneer of Democratic Liberalism," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 4(1943), p.147.
[2]Dorothea Krook, *Three Traditions of Moral Thought*, p.192.

the past and in accepting and helping to bring about all that belonged to the future, Mill committed himself to history-making. "Break your shackles, Prometheus," so cried the young Mill, "Bring the world under the sway of reason, and you will see nothing but progress!" In the new Promethean light each individual would see clearly both his own interests and the absurdities of all the existing repressive social mechanisms. He would then be led to a conclusion that only a secure and free marketplace would ensure his right to pursue happiness.

Thus understood, the historical outlook taken by Mill during his youthful commitment to reform was at considerable variance with that to be found in his mature writings. While the young Mill tried to complete what the bourgeois revolution had left unfinished, the mature Mill attempted to remedy the deficiencies which the new organisation of society would contain in itself. Some day, the mature Mill believed, aristocracy and clergy, the *bêtes-noirs* of reformism, would yield their ruling power to the people, and representative government would emerge as the best form of government for the protection of the interests of the majority. On that day, the problem society would face would not be how to protect the interests of the majority from hereditary privileges, but rather how to preserve the mental and moral standards of society from deterioration. Such a concern originated from the place Mill had reserved for himself in the struggle of mankind for historical progress. He, the mature Mill, was to be a leader not in the political battle but rather in an intellectual and spiritual struggle. His role, therefore, was to provide his countrymen with important theoretical insights rather than to drive them toward a practical political goal.

Mill's decision to take on such a role was understandable given the philosophical credo of the circles in which he was raised. Born into a philosophical school formed in the wake of the Enlightenment, Mill was so convinced of the power of reason that he believed all social problems to be soluble through its exercise. Once a problem had been subjected to rational analysis, its solution was merely a mechanical matter. Mill threw this light of reason, most of all, on the history of mankind. To the eyes of Mill, the atheist, human history could not be explained in terms of any divine volition or other mysterious forces. History, he believed, was

determined by the relationship of man to his environment; progress was thus to be explained in terms of how man came to utilise more effectively his environment. The crucial factor in the progress of human history was the intellectual progress of mankind. Such a view of history provided a strong support for Mill's self-imposed role as intellectual leader.

Man's relationship with his environment, the key element in Mill's conception of history, possessed too an anthropological meaning. In the line of John Locke, Mill and his father James Mill held the view that the human mind was formed by sensations which, in turn, were responses to the stimuli of circumstances. Such a theory emphasised the powerful role of circumstances in the formation of human character. Everything in the human mind was to be explained as having come from the environment through sensations. Man was an outcome of the workings of circumstances and his relationship with his environment was essentially passive. It was this passivity of man that provided the logical grounds for the educational and even legislative endeavours of the reform groups. For by controlling and rearranging the environment one could determine the formation of the human character. However, when applied to the process of historical progress, such an anthropology could not explain how man, passively formed by circumstances, could discover and create what had never before existed. Neither the cultivation of an active character nor intellectual progress itself could be explained by such a theory.

Mill's anthropology contradicted, in fact, many of normative claims which he made as a participant in the making of history. Intellectual progress, the driving force of social improvement, was an achievement of man, not the result of any mysterious forces. Yet how could such a passive creature as man achieve intellectual progress? Theoretically he could not. Mill's solution to this dilemma was to create a new type of man, a superman, the "Genius," an active being, a man of originality. Such a man, created in order to make possible intellectual and thus social progress, served also to explain the function of the enlightened portion of society in history. He could not, however, be explained in terms of the environmentalist anthropology on which Mill grounded his social theories. This fundamental limitation of Mill's theoretical position is evident in several areas of his thought.

In elaborating moral and political theories, the logical line Mill followed was that of rationalism. Correct practice was possible only when the most up-to-date knowledge was transformed into practical precepts. Practice was merely a process of applying scientific knowledge to the solution of actual problems. Practice itself had no role to play in testing theories or discovering the weaknesses contained therein. When Mill developed moral theories from this rationalist point of view, his first principle was derived from his descriptive anthropology. The most basic and instinctual response of man was to seek what was pleasant and to avoid what was unpleasant. The principle of utility, which was justified by this instinctual pleasure-seeking, was, therefore, the primary moral maxim which Mill's descriptive anthropology could justify. However, when Mill proclaimed the existence of qualitative distinctions in pleasures, he lost touch with the science of his descriptive anthropology. The claim that only certain men could identify and thus prefer higher quality pleasures meant that the vast majority of men could no longer be viewed as the best judges of their own interests. The virtuous or active man, moreover, could act freely, unaffected by his environment, and choose to sacrifice immediate pleasures on behalf of something nobler. However, the ordinary man, formed passively by circumstances, could not do so unless the environment were arranged deliberately for this purpose.

In defending individual liberty, Mill promised that freedom would make possible full individual development. He even claimed, in imitation of the romantic-idealist rhetoric, that the spontaneous character was like a tree that grew from the soil of freedom. This claim, however, could not be supported by Mill's own descriptive theory of the passive man. Freedom implied an environment without formulated controls, overt or covert. But in such a situation the passive man could do nothing but receive random stimuli. Perhaps it was this contradiction that caused Mill to build into his political theory a series of authoritarian policies. Only the genius could develop his character in a condition of freedom. Only he had access to moral virtue and wisdom. It was, then, both morally and practically expedient to teach the ignorant to accept the authority of the wise few. Mill's theory of education, in fact, centred upon this point.

Mill's theory of character cultivation was conceived in the matrix of his normative praxiology, which he developed through his subjective participation in history-making. Consequently, his educational theory, the major goal of which was the formation of a virtuous character, reflected his historical consciousness as a sage who was to lead his people in the path of progress. From elementary school to university the curriculum was to be organised toward this single goal of the art of education. Intellectual education to improve mental power to reason independently, aesthetic education to develop sensibilities and feelings, and moral education to instill a sense of duty and an appropriate value-system -- all these three branches of curriculum were directed to producing a "capable and sensible" man, that is, the "Genius." Individual sciences were taught as practices of the general theory, and reasoning was developed in the subject of logic. Psychology was as important as logic because it dealt with "human nature." These two crucially important intellectual subjects, logic and psychology, found their practical expression, in social subjects, such as legislation and history. In short, Mill's intellectual education was geared to equip the student with an ability to pass correct judgment upon social and historical issues. Such a curriculum, when combined with his aesthetic and moral education, was no doubt appropriate for an enlightened intellectual leadership which was to take a decisive role in history.

Logical difficulties arose, however, when Mill attempted to achieve such a lofty goal by the means which his descriptive anthropology permitted him. Basically, the measure Mill was forced to propose for such an education was an appropriate control and use of the environment. Teachers were important not as mentors but as models. In intellectual inquiries and in moral judgments and behaviours they would provide examples which the student was free either to imitate or to criticise. Beautiful scenery such as that of the Scottish Highlands and patriotic music, were to be utilised in service of the student's emotional development, the basis of his moral virtue. But could the passive responses of the student to these environmental elements guarantee the attainment of any active principles of virtue?

The contradiction between Mill's lofty ideal of character cultivation and his descriptive anthropology is even more clearly evident in his discussions on elementary

education. Since the cultivation of a lofty and public-spirited character was the goal of national education, so too it was the aim of elementary education. But could only several year's experience in a school environment achieve such a noble goal? Mill's ambivalence in answering this question was exposed in the *Inaugural Address* when he gave to elementary schools the task of teaching fragmentary knowledge. Intellectual ability was to be acquired at universities; elementary schools were to provide certain "elements of knowledge" so that the pupils might possess certain fragments of known facts.[3] Elementary school was not intended to produce cultivated characters, but rather to contribute to a mood of society in which the wisdom and virtue of the enlightened few would be respected by the majority. Respect by the ordinary for the leadership of the mentally superior -- in promising this desirable consequence Mill's pedagogy contributed to his goal of intellectual and social progress.

What is clear is that Mill was far from being a "pioneer of democratic liberalism." Instead of introducing a new theory of democratic liberalism he attempted to revise the old one in order to remedy its deficiencies. In this sense he was a revisionist, attempting to incorporate into his theory what was called in Britain "Toryism" and on the Continent "idealism," which placed spiritual values in a superior place to the material. Mill, however, could do this only superficially since, despite his openness to certain normative values, he was reluctant to discard his descriptive anthropology and the moral and political theories derived therefrom.[4] His adherence to his anthropology obliged him to remain ethically utilitarian.

[3]Perhaps the essence of Mill's claim for elementary education lies in the idea that the school environment would work on the minds of children who otherwise would be spoiled by the harshness of their family environments. This, however, contradicted Mill's environmentalist argument that the family must become the primary locus of educational experiences.

[4]Richard B. Friedman's "An Introduction to Mill's Theory of Authority" tries to find in John Austin's ideas similarities to the arguments Mill made regarding the question of authority. Friedman then concludes that Mill's view in this regard did not mean a fundamental departure from utilitarianism but acceptance of a theory developed by Austin within the utilitarian frame of reference. In J.B. Schneewind, ed., *Mill: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969[1968]), pp.379-425. Friedman's interpretation is acceptable to the extent that the faith in the power of reason forced the utilitarians, including Mill, to argue for the creation of an enlightened group, whose authority would be unquestionable. Mill's theory of intellectual leadership quite clearly originated from this mental attitude. But on the point whether the authority of intellect needed to embody moral virtues Mill diverged from classical utilitarianism. Austin's theory

politically a defender of parliamentary government, and educationally an advocate of popular education, while at the same time advocating measures for progress which were contradictory to all of these. He was struggling to go beyond the narrow framework of utilitarianism; but his failure to abandon the eighteenth-century rationalistic framework made him, as Marx put it, struggle to "reconcile irreconcilables."[5] By this phrase Marx described "the shallow syncretism" of the Millian political economy, which, still claiming "some scientific standing and [aspiring] to be something more than mere sophists and sycophants of the ruling classes, tried to harmonise the Political Economy of capital with claims . . . of the proletariat."[6] This inability to reconcile irreconcilables was, in fact, why Mill, in spite of his emphasis upon cooperation, failed to abandon the logic of the market and to clearly vindicate his socialism.[7]

Ironically, it was this unsuccessful attempt to reconcile irreconcilables that makes Mill so remarkable in the history of education. Mill died when a system of national education was being born in England. Advocates of national education insisted that enlightenment would bring good to the individual and consequently to society. A more important argument, however, was one to which Mill was opposed, that is, the claim that national education would help increase materially the productivity of the nation. It was at this time that a number of educational thinkers advocated as an alternative to science, technology and vocationalism the need for liberal education. That Mill was one of them suggests that, in a sense, he was alienated from the actual historical process. It also meant that he was performing his self-imposed role of the teacher of his fellows to the very last moment of his life. Once again,

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[4](cont'd) should be interpreted as a symptom of the decline of utilitarian dogma.
[5]Karl Marx, *Capital*, I, p.16.
[6]*Ibid.*, p.15.
[7]For Mill's socialism see, Lewis S. Feuer, "John Stuart Mill and Marxian Socialism," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 10:2(1949), pp.292-304. Pedro Schwartz, *The New Political Economy of J.S. Mill* and "John Stuart Mill and Socialism," *MNL*, 4:1(1968), pp.11-5; James R. Bennett, "Mill, Francis W. Newman, and Socialism," *MNL*, 2:1(1966), pp.2-7; L.E. Fredman and B.L.J. Gordon, "John Stuart Mill and Socialism," *MNL*, 3:1(1967), pp.3-7; Graeme Duncan and John Gray, "The Left Against Mill," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Suppl. 5, pp.203-29; David Levy, "Libertarian Communists, Malthusians and J.S. Mill Who Is Both," *MNL*, 15:1(1980), pp.2-16; and Wendy Sarvasy, "J.S. Mill's Theory of Democracy for a Period of Transition Between Capitalism and Socialism," *Polity*, 16:4(1984), pp.567-87.

in old age as in youth, he was telling the world what it needed to know and what it was unaware of.

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DD: Mill, John Stuart. *Dissertations and Discussions*. 4 vols. London: John W. Parker and Son, 1859, 1875[IV].

MC: *Morning Chronicle*.

MNL: *Mill News Letter*.

MR: *Monthly Repository*.

MW: Mill, John Stuart. *Utilitarianism*. Edited by Mary Warnock. Glasgow: William Collins & Co., 1979.

WR: *Westminster Review*.

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