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ALIENATION, POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE

The term "alienation" designates a state which is simultaneously both cognitive and affective in character.* It involves an awareness of the other and a felt estrangement from it, accompanied with a feeling that this ought not to be so. The "otherness" of the other is a necessary precondition for the feeling of alienation, but the "other" is only a correlate of the "I" in reference to which alone alienation can ever arise. Things are not related by the relation of "I-other," nor can they possibly be related by it. Even among animals the relation is only implicit, for the consciousness of the "I" is never explicitly there. With man, who is essentially a being conscious of himself, the relation "I-other" constitutes the very essence of his distinctive being in this world.

The "other" in a sense, constitutes the world, and in that sense the awareness of the "I" transcends the world, that is, all that is the other. The "other," it should be remembered, is not all of one piece or of one level. It includes what, in general, may be called Nature, and man who is always something more than Nature. It also includes the creations of man, which have a peculiar, specific, irreducible character of their own. The "other" at all these levels may be seen either in its specific manifoldness or in its abstract generality. The "other" is not merely this or that but also that which is either this or that, and thus which appears as the one or the other. The abstract "other" which transcends all its specific modalities is implicit in the situation; its awareness is the awareness of the Transcendent Other which may be conceived either as Nature or as God, depending upon whether the paradigmatic pattern of the "other" is inanimate matter or man himself.

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Conceived on the pattern of inanimate matter, the transcendent "other" can only appear as indifferent, and make men feel lost in the empty spaces of the vast universe. The affective relationship in such a situation can only depend, first, on the initiative of man himself and, second, on a sort of projection into the world of Nature of feelings that are essentially alien to it. Man has to throw a veil of feeling over Nature in order to get into a positive relationship with it. To a certain extent this is made possible by the fact that Nature consists of the world of plants and animals besides that of matter, and that even so-called inanimate Nature is not strictly inanimate, as motion is its inherent property, which can always give rise to the semblance of something which moves. Further, the accidental shapes assumed by material objects tend to mimic those of the living world, and natural forms tend to arouse feelings of a certain sort, which then tend to be projected on these forms. Thus Nature is alive in myriad forms with all sorts of shapes and degrees of motion, arousing man to most diverse feelings which make the world not so dead or alien to him.

On the other hand, when the transcendent "other" is conceived on the pattern of "persons," the whole range of relationships which may obtain between one person and another can be developed within that context also. The "other" of Nature, whether conceived specifically or transcendentally, and whether the latter is thought of impersonally or personally, is too far off from the ordinary horizon of man. What constitutes the "other" is primarily the realm of persons with whom one comes in direct contact of some sort or other and who help, obstruct, fulfil or frustrate one, in the realm of feelings or of action or both, and who are thus objects of concern on the part of most persons most of the time.

The realm of the Personal, then, to use a phrase of N. V. Banerjee, constitutes *par excellence* the realm of the "other." This is the realm where one finds one's heaven or hell, where one feels at home or alienated. The "other," however, is not a bare "other," but is socially structured at least in the first instance. One is born not merely into the world but into a world that is always socially structured and, to a large extent, socially interpreted. Yet, whatever structuring and interpretation there may already be, one has to restructure and reinterpret it once again in one's own individual way. One is born, or as the existentialists say, thrown into the world, not just as a person but with a particular body, into a particular family, in a specific culture at a unique period of its historical development, and in a society which already has a fairly determinate system of role-expectations with a coordinate system of rewards and punishments. Each individual encounters these and has to come to terms with them and transcend them in his own way. The coming to terms never ceases nor, for that matter, does the need for transcendence. Between the alienation and the overcoming of alienation lies the eternal dialectic of man, at all levels and in all dimensions.

The terms "alienation" and its counterpart "anomie" have arisen among thinkers steeped in the study of society; the horizon of their thought has tended to be socio-centric in character. Marx and Durkheim formulated the concepts as if they were peculiarly descriptive of the situation of their own times, with critical and condemnatory overtones regarding the society that gave rise to such phenomena. "Alienation" and "anomie" became tainted words, and writers longed for the past or for a future when such a deep cleft in the heart of man would not obtain. But behind sociology lies history, and it is surprising that any student of history could ever have thought of alienation or anomie as confined to any particular historical epoch or society. For Marx, at least, history and alienation should have been coterminous, for the former could come into being only when men by their labour could produce a little more than was necessary to sustain and reproduce themselves. Behind history, however, lies philosophy. Marx, though he loved to call himself a materialist, was essentially an idealist and a dreamer. He loved to dream of a time in the future when there would be no alienation and when real History would begin; he had convinced himself by abstracts, ratiocinative logic that what he so devoutly desired was bound to come to pass as the very necessity of history itself. That "the real is rational" and that "the real is valuational" are the twin pillars of all idealism—the latter more basic than the former—and Marx subscribed to both.

Alienation, then, defines the condition of man, at least as we know him. It is neither historical nor social but is woven into the very texture of man. Self-conscious man cannot but feel the "other" as against himself, though what exactly is the other or his own self he may never know with sufficient clarity or certainty. The causes of alienation may be found to range from the trauma of birth to Original Ignorance or Original Sin. In between, one may find causes that relate to the pattern of early years of childhood upbringing, the social relations of production, the relations between generations, or the conditions of peace and war, prosperity and depression, cultural creativity and stagnation. Whatever the causes and however they be conceived, "alienation" describes that feature of the human situation which provides its most fundamental structural characteristic, without which man ceases to be man and becomes either a god or a beast.

The term "alienation" also has a negative overtone which cannot be ignored. It suggests that what *is* ought *not to be*, or at least is felt as what should not be. If "alienation" defines the structure of the human situation, then this means that at its very heart is the feeling that the situation ought not to be as it is. In other words, human reality is such that it is intrinsically realized or felt to be that which ought not to be. The very awareness of it is the awareness of something that has essentially to be surpassed or overcome. Man, as the poet-philosopher Nietzsche says, is a surpassing—a bridge to something higher and greater than himself. The existentialists have seen in man the tension of a "*pour-soi*" wanting to be an "*en-soi*," or a "*Dasein*" wanting to be "*Sein*," a tension that is ended only by death, which closes and heals the gap. But death is too natural and inevitable in character to provide a rational or acceptable solution to the problem intrinsic to the fact of self-consciousness itself. If a lapse into the "*en-soi*" is to be avoided, then a higher stage has to be conceived where the self-conscious self, inevitably aware of the "other" through this very fact of self-consciousness, achieves the virtues and the wholeness of the "*en-soi*" and "*Sein*" at the level of self-conscious being itself.

The dialectics between the self and the other (and the other also includes the self in a sense) provides the clue to the understanding of alienation in all its aspects and all its forms. A particular thinker or group or age might focus attention on one aspect or form to the exclusion of others. But the others are always there potentially, either as recessive or subordinate, ready to arise into focal awareness once the previous form of alienation has been tackled to a certain extent. The history of humanity may be written in terms of the forms of alienation that have dominated successive civilizations and cultures. To think of alienation as a discovery of Marx or as a peculiar characteristic of industrial societies is to betray a blindness both to philosophy and to history. But even those who are perhaps not so blind do not quite see that civilization itself is a creative response to alienation, and that the differences between civilizations derive from the diversity in the type of creative response made to the same alienation, or from the fact that the alienation which has been creatively met is itself different in character. The same is true of personalities also.

The problem, thus, is not so much one of alienation but one of what type of alienation, and of what one does with alienation. There is alienation and alienation, and there is also a creative, positive response to it as well as a negative one. Even in the traditional sense, a person suffering from anomie or alienation[1] may commit suicide, run amok and kill others, engage in revolutionary action, or occupy himself with some creative pursuit. At a deeper level, the fact of alienation may come to be seen as intrinsic to the human situation, and responded to in such a manner as to take the negative sting out of it and transmute it completely into its opposite. As we shall see, some of the basic Indian reflections on the subject may be understood in this manner.

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[1] The terms "anomie" and "alienation" are generally used to refer to different, though related, phenomena. The first refers primarily to the individual psyche while the latter does so to social classes. However, the difference is not very relevant to the point I am trying to make here.

It may be felt that to universalise a concept to the extent that we have been asking for is almost to emasculate it and make it meaningless for cognitive purposes. In fact, it has been argued that the conceptualisation of anomie or alienation outside of any particular historical context takes the sting of scathing critique out of the classical definitions of Durkheim and Marx, which contained radical ethical and political directions for transforming the actual social system.[2] This objection has been urged primarily in the context of the attempts of various sociologists to seek for operational definitions of the concept, so that it may be subjected to the usual processes of measurement, comparison and verification. The works of Leo Srole,[3] Gwynn Nettler,[4] Melvin Seeman[5] and Dwight Dean[6] have been the more important among such attempts. Even if we grant that the sacred authority of Marx or Durkheim is not to be questioned, that the correctness of a concept is to be judged by its accordance with what these worthies have said, or even that a concept in the social sciences is to be admitted only if it involves radical cultural and political directives for the society in which the thinker happens to be, we fail to see how anyone could be blind to the fact that on Marx's showing alienation could never be absent except in a mythical past or a mythical future. Marx might have convinced himself that the mythical was also the actual, but this all myth makers have always done.[7]

The new sociologists, however, along with the classical ones, seem to be so much confined to their present as to be unaware of the larger cross-cultural relevance of their concepts. What, for example, have Melvin Seeman's five dimensions of alienation got to do only with contemporary Western society? Powerlessness, Meaninglessness, Normlessness, Isolation, and Self-estrangement may all be found wherever anyone chooses to look for them. Surely, the profound questioning and disquietude regarding the nature of self in early Upanisadic and Buddhist thought and the retirement of many persons from active involvement in social life to seek an answer to such questions are as much signs of alienation in the sense of isolation and self-estrangement as are the modern phenomena in terms of which the concepts seem to be defined and formulated. In fact, if the Hindu analysis of the structural situation of man is to be believed, then very early the conclusion was reached that man could not but be estranged from himself except in the rare case of one who had achieved liberation or *moksa.* Similarly, in one of the earliest schools of Hindu thought, the self is characterised as essentially and inalienably alone[8] while the whole empirical-social life of man was seen by almost every thinker as characterised by suffering of all sorts. Take for example, John P. Clark's statement that "Alienation is the degree to which man feels powerless to achieve the role he has determined to be rightfully his in specific situations."[9] Has Mr. Clark reflected that except for purely ascriptional roles, all others would lead to the feeling of alienation in his sense? It may be replied that though the operational definitions of the practising sociologist are *applied* to the contemporary society or culture, it is neither asserted nor implied that they are relevant only within the context of that society or that culture.

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[2] John Horton, "The Dehumanization of Anomie and Alienation: A Problem in the Ideology of Sociology," *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 15, 1964, pp. 283-98.

[3] Leo Srole, "Social Integration and Certain Corollaries," *American Sociological Review*, December, 1956.

[4] Gwynn Nettler, "A Measure of Alienation," *American Sociological Review*, December, 1957.

[5] Melvin Seeman, "On the Meaning of Alienation," *American Sociological Review*, December, 1959.

[6] Dwight Dean, "Meaning and Measurement of Alienation," *American Sociological Review*, October, 1961.

[7] The hold of authority as a constraint on thought is supposed to be a special characteristic of Oriental cultures. It is, however, amusing to see the great care taken by disciplines to ensure the unsullied purity of thought of a Marx or Freud or Wittgenstein against the supposed contaminations of deviant heretics or unrespectful, independent innovators.

The definitions, in fact, transcend the boundaries of any particular society or culture. Leo Srole, for example, has explicitly asserted "self-to-others-belongingness," "self-to-others-distance" and "self-to-others-alienation" for a continuum and that "Eunomia" and "Anomia" can be studied at both macro and micro levels.[10]

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[8] This notion of self as essentially alone should not be confused with Melvin Seeman's notion of isolation, which he defines in terms of "*Low reward value to goals or beliefs that are typically highly valued in the given society*" (p. 789. Italics author's). The author does not seem to reflect that on this definition all creative innovators would inevitably be suffering from alienation. Further, the inclusion of both beliefs and goals in the definition complicates the situation further by treating cognitive and conative deviation on a par, while in most societies other than the strictly totalitarian ones they tend to be treated differently.

[9] John P. Clark, "Measuring Alienation within a Social System," *American Sociological Review*, 1959, p. 849.

However true this may appear at first sight, the limitation to contemporary culture and society seems subtly to penetrate the very perspective in which they view the whole problem. Seldom does there seem to be a consciousness of testing what they are saying against a varying background of different cultures. So much does "alienation" seem to many a problem of contemporary industrialised societies that even those whose conceptual formulations should make them see the irrelevance of this limitation fail to do so. Melvin Seeman's formulations, for example, seem at first sight to have nothing to do with the present alone. But according to his own statement, his primary interest in formulating the concept lies in testing the logic and limits of mass society theory.[11] There is, of course, the unstated and unquestioned assumption that the only mass society that has existed in the world is contemporary society, especially in the West.

To give only one more example, here is a statement which on the face of it seems parochial and limited and yet which would be accepted by most Western readers as obviously correct. Robert Blauner writes in an otherwise excellent book that "Alienation is a general syndrome made up of a number of different objective conditions and subjective feeling-states which emerge from certain relationships between workers and the sociotechnical settings of employment."[12] The shadow of Marx lies heavy on this statement. In fact, the author has justified himself by saying that "The concept of alienation, in its classical form, was an attempt to explain the changes in the nature of manual work brought about by the industrial revolution."[13] But the restriction to the work-situation and that, too, to the one of the industrial type, seems gratuitous indeed, and no amount of misplaced veneration for the classical formulation could save it from being so.[14] The myth of the unalienated peasant and the handicraft worker seems to haunt the sociological imagination with little warrant from prosaic facts. What perhaps was only a matter of the break from routinized habit coupled with the romantic fascination of the urban dweller, specially the literary artist, for a rural world has transformed the myth into an unquestioned fact. The peasant, it should be remembered, has not always been there, and if we could imaginatively transport ourselves to the times when agriculture began, we might find a great feeling of routinised bondage, in contrast to the free life of the wandering food gatherer, hunter, or even of the pastoral nomads.

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[10] Leo Srole, "Social Integration and Certain Corollaries," *American Sociological Review*, December, 1956, pp. 709-716.

[11] "Rightly or not, what I am after in the long run is a social-psychological test of the logic and limits of mass society theory." Melvin Seeman, "A Reply," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 70, 1964-65, p. 82.

[12] *Alienation and Freedom: The Factory Worker and His Industry*, Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 1964, p. 15.

[13] *Ibid*, p. ix.

Toynbee has suggested that the freedom of the nomadic herdsman in comparison with the farmer is deceptive, as the former's "seasonal migrations between summer and winter pastures are practicable only if he submits to a discipline as strict as that of a professional army on the march."[15] Even if this be granted, there remains the substantial difference between one who moves himself with the seasons and the other whom seasons pass by. Each is, of course, adjusted to his own cycle, and the problems arise within that framework. But the issue arises when a whole group of people suddenly has to change from one set of work habits to another. Those who are always talking of alienation as a distinctive character of the life of the industrial worker must remember, first, that the peasant way of life has been established for a far, far longer period of time than the way of life of the industrial worker, and second, that hardly any industrial worker would be prepared to go back to the life of the peasant if given the option.[16]

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[14] The term, "classical," it should be remembered, has different implications in the realm of art and literature on the one hand and of science on the other. In science the classical formulations are bound to be outmoded and inadequate, while in art and literature they have a perennial value and serve as standards of achievement. Yet even there a bondage to them would reveal a lack of creativity in the individual or culture which perpetuates it.

[15] Toynbee, *Change and Habit: The Challenge of Our Time*, London, Oxford University Press, 1966, p. 212.

[16] The same limitation applies to Professor Merton's discussion also. His delineation of anomie as resulting from a discrepancy between the culturally prescribed aspirations and the socially structured avenues for realizing them could not be considered as peculiar to any one culture.

The problem of alienation, then, has to be taken out of the parochial and limited perspectives in which it has usually been presented. It is *not* a problem of particular classes of men in particular societies at particular periods of time. Rather, it belongs to the very condition of man, and individuals, groups, societies and cultures may be distinguished by what they feel predominantly alienated from and how they attempt to meet and respond to this alienation. As has been pointed out earlier, the "other" from which one feels alienated may be one's own self or other persons or Nature in its transcendent or immanent aspects. Further, the feeling of alienation makes men move to overcome it in ways that are as diverse as humanity itself. Some of the most basic modes of response may be discussed here.

The "other" with respect to which the feeling of "alienation" arises may be seen as the perennial source of potential danger to oneself, either in its capacity of withdrawal in the context of an affective relation, or of obstruction in the context of the active realisation of one's purposes. On the other hand, the "other," even when responsive in terms of feeling or cooperative in terms of action, may be seen as making one essentially bound, in the sense of making one dependent on the "other" even as Nature may be seen as essentially binding one, not only in terms of its capacity for thwarting one's purposes or placing obstacles in the way of the fulfilment of one's desires, but also as constantly soliciting one's attention and thus not letting one rest in the self-sufficiency of one's own being.

The solution to such a threat from the "other" has been traditionally sought in the dominant Western tradition in the overcoming and subordination of the other. If one were powerful enough or persuasive enough, one could either force the other or cajole him to do what one wanted. But in either case one violates the essential freedom of the other to choose from his own volition, unconstrained by anyone else. Ultimately, therefore, Western thought has tended towards a monism of authority and values which is as jealous and destructive of any rival claimant as is the God in Judaism, Christianity or Islam. The pluralistic liberalism of the past two hundred years of the Anglo-Saxon portion of the Western tradition has already found major challenges in various forms of continental totalitarianisms, and it is a moot question whether it will survive for long even in its homeland. In any case, the limitation of the freedom of each by the freedom of the other, and the acceptance of this fact by everybody on the empirical plane, can only be lasting if basically no value which consists in the realisation of an external state of affairs is regarded as absolute, and if the realisation of freedom itself in its completeness is given up as a value. The only alternative is to conceive of freedom in such a sense that its absolute realisation on the part of one individual does not militate against its realisation by the others. But even if such a conception of freedom is formulated, the secondary nature of all values that are essentially realised through the actualisation of an external state of affairs will have to be accepted if the violation of the freedom of the other is to be avoided.

This, in fact, is the turn which Hindu thought took in its classical treatment of the problem. Absolute freedom, traditionally known as "*moksa*," was conceived in such a way that it could be realised by everybody; its realisation by anyone helped rather than hindered others in their own realisation. Simultaneously, all other values, especially those that consisted in the realisation of some external state of affairs, were regarded as ultimately secondary in character and, therefore, only relatively worth fighting for. If once the empirical realm, where alone external ends are striven for and conflict on their behalf is undertaken, gets devalued, then the realm in which alienation is primarily felt undergoes a change also. No longer is the empirical, historical "other" the centre around which the feelings of alienation and adoration alternate. There is a relation between two states of one's own psychic being, one in which one attains a self-enclosed, self-sufficient state of consciousness and the other in which one falls from it and is not able to recapture and sustain it once more. The "other" at this stage may either be completely abolished as in *Advaita Vedanta*, allowed to lapse as in *Buddhism* and *Jainism*, treated as completely other but without any affective relationships as in *Sāmkhya*, or as the Transcendent Person with whom one can enter into a perpetual relation of adoration and affection. In all these cases, however, the self is always treated as transcendent to the empirical other and not as its correlate or as in any way essentially related to it.

The self in its natural attitude is immersed in objectivity and treats itself as one object among the many that exist in the world. The discovery of the essentially transcendent character of the self and its consequent inalienable aloneness has, surprisingly, led to radically different feeling-realisations in the contemporary West on the one hand and in classical India on the other. The sudden realisation of man's aloneness in the contemporary existentialist literature of the West has given rise to feelings that have been variously described as "dread," "anguish," "the dizzying collapse of values," "nausea," etc., etc. In fact, the realisation has been accompanied by such a loss of significance, meaning and value that the only way out of the intolerable impasse has been through recourse to drugs, sex, suicide, murder—in short, what Gide called the *acte libre*. On the other hand, the classical descriptions of such a state in India have always been in terms of "freedom," "peace," "liberation," "independence," "self-sufficiency" and "bliss." One can only conclude that the loss of the sense of the transcendental self and its complete immersion into objectivity must have been so great in the West that its discovery, and the sudden reversal consequent on that discovery, have thrown everything out of gear and led to a traumatic shock which has unhinged everything, and led only to a hankering back after the lost identity with objectivity, that is, Nature.

There seems, however, a deeper and different reason for this situation. The positive response to alienation may take the form of domination of the objective, specially in its form as Nature. We have hinted at this before, especially with reference to persons, but it may be worthwhile to explore it a little further. The feeling of alienation that is sought to be removed through domination or mastery of the "other" may take either a predominantly cognitive or conative form. One may seek to master the object by knowing all about it or by subordinating it to the purposes of one's own will. In the former case, the object is left alone in itself, except to the extent that its manipulation is needed for the purposes of knowledge. Rather, it is interiorized and assimilated into the subject, and thus made a part of one's being without losing its own independent being in any relevant sense of the term. On the other hand, the subordination of the "other" to one's will results in a real domination which occurs primarily in the context of action. Knowledge itself in this context may come to be conceived as that which establishes its truthful claim only when it leads to successful action. It is through successful action, then, that one overcomes the feeling of alienation, and the dialectic in which it involves oneself leads further and further into time, causality, society, and history.

The "other" which one seeks to dominate through knowledge is primarily the "other" which belongs to the world of nature, that is, the non-human "other." One does try to know and understand other persons but this inevitably reduces them to the status of "objects," specially if the pattern of understanding is the same as with respect to natural objects. There is another pattern of "understanding" in relation to human beings, a pattern according to which we say, "to understand is to forgive," or that "nobody understands me." In this latter sense, understanding means accepting and sharing the "otherness" of the other, to see him not as others see him but as he sees himself, to feel with him rather than about him. This type of understanding can only be had with respect to a human being and is not so much a type of knowledge statable in conceptual terms as an imaginative identification with the life as it is actually lived and felt through by the person concerned. The pattern, confined as it is to our understanding of human beings, extends in some sense to their specifically human creations and collective behaviour also. The understanding of arts, history and society requires essentially to some extent, such an approach and the degree to which it is neglected by the cognitive enterprise in these domains, the alienation of man from himself may be expected to increase to that degree also.

This pattern of understanding was designated by some such term as "*einfühlung*" in the past and it used to be considered the distinctive method of the humanistic disciplines. However, under the impact of the successes of the natural sciences, the term "knowledge" came increasingly to be confined to that alone which could possibly be amenable to be studied by methods which were the same or at least structurally similar to those employed in the natural sciences. This gradually resulted in singling out for attention and study only those aspects of human reality which were amenable to study by those methods and once this tendency became widespread and dominant, it was but a short step to declaring that that which was not amenable to study by such methods was, for all scientific purposes, cognitively non-existent. As the methods used in the natural sciences were primarily adapted to the study of that which in no case could be conceived as the subject of any possible experience, cognitive or otherwise, this reduced man to the status of an object and thus alienated him from others and himself.

The dilemma involved in treating man as an object of knowledge, both himself and others, had been pointed out by Kant. As an object of knowledge, man could not but be thought of as determined while as the subject of action, specially moral action, he could not but be conceived as free. However, the attempt to discover a distinctive method of knowledge amongst the humanistic disciplines was an attempt to preserve, safeguard and perpetuate the awareness of the subjecthood of the other persons who were being made into objects of knowledge. And once the subjecthood of the object of study in the humanistic disciplines was ensured, so also was his affective life and active concern with values as integral parts of an experience which was essentially lived through. The retreat from this vision first into a superficial and then into a sophisticated behaviourism along with the banishment of all lived-through experience of affective life and concern with values as irrelevant for rigorous cognitive purposes and, thus, as scientifically non-existent resulted in man's alienation from that which he most essentially and intimately was. And as he could not completely get away from this reality of himself, it had to be pushed into corners and suppressed and distorted as it could not claim any acknowledged status of a public reality. But still in the case of oneself, there was some sort of an admission, however secret and furtive and unacknowledged it might be. In the case of others, even this was not necessary and they could be treated, for all cognitive purposes, as complicated robots. And this was done and continues to be done in the name of science, confining the word "science" paradigmatically to physics alone and also in the name of unitary scientific method which once again confines itself to the structural paradigm of the method used primarily in the physical sciences.

The disastrous consequences of being reduced to the status of an object have been eloquently described by Sartre in his well-known notion of "being looked at." But it is not so well realised that more than half-a-century of philosophical reflection on the nature of scientific knowledge has resulted in a conception of knowledge and the adoption of a criterion of cognitive meaningfulness which banish the subjecthood of man to the status of being nothing but superstition and illusion. And once the subjecthood of man is relegated to the realm of superstition and illusion, the knowledge relating to man becomes, like all knowledge relating to a mere object, primarily causal in character. But as the truth or falsity of such knowledge can only consist in its success or failure in the manipulation of persons, people find themselves as manipulating or being manipulated in such a framework. However, whether manipulating or being manipulated, one is either alienating or being alienated and thus contributing to the total state of alienation which is inevitably fostered by the perspective on knowledge made so currently fashionable by the philosophers of science today.

There is, of course, a sense in which science has tended to take into account the possible subjecthood of man. This has occurred in the context of what has come to be called "game-theory." The "other" in this perspective is certainly regarded as a subject, but only as one who is trying to deceive and outwit one by all possible means. It should be remembered that the theory arose in the context of competitive economic behaviour where each is trying to maximise his advantage at the cost of others. It has been generalised to other fields and situations, but the hard core of its presuppositions has remained the same. But this is to have the Hobbesian world where each is *against* the other without the comfortable belief of Adam Smith and his followers that it all ultimately added somehow to the total good. Yet, if the introduction of subjecthood into the cognitive framework of science can only be done in this way, then it could hardly improve the situation with respect to the alienating influence of science on modern man. The choice between being treated as an object on the one hand and as a subject that is essentially trying to deceive and win over others, is the only one that the contemporary paradigm of cognitive knowledge offers to modern man. No wonder then that to the extent man regards himself as a cognitive being—and Descartes laid the foundations of this in his famous *cogito, ergo sum*—he feels alienated from others.

The perspective of the essential subjecthood of others in the context of knowledge may perhaps be safeguarded if science itself is seen as the cooperative enterprise of diverse men, where each corrects the others' mistakes of omission and commission and thus contributes to the total sum of growing knowledge. This view is implicit, to a certain extent, in the writings of Karl Popper on the one hand and, on the other, of those who have adopted any variety of the sociological approach to the problem of knowledge. This, however, would bring to the fore the active, seeking aspect of man which is so much of an anathema to those who tend to be concerned with man as a knowing being.

The shifting of the focus to the consideration of man as an active being, however, raises the problem of alienation at a different and more difficult level. Action for the pursuit of knowledge is one thing; action for the pursuit of other ends another. The cooperation between different subjects is easier in the former than in the latter. And there is no intrinsic necessity why the "knowing" of other subjects need be patterned after the way we "know" physical objects. Action in awareness of the "otherness" of the other may, then, follow either that type of the knowledge of the other which is designated by some such term as "*einfühlung*" or its interpretation in terms of a possible danger to one's purposes or even one's own self. The former alone avoids alienation while the latter accentuates the possibility of its occurrence to the fullest extent. On the other hand, the patterning of the knowledge of the other on the model of our knowledge of physical objects cuts at the very roots of the possibility of overcoming alienation in any form whatsoever.

The attempt to overcome alienation through entering into a positive relationship of feeling with the "other" does not merely posit the other but also accepts, acknowledges and appreciates the otherness of the other. The wonder of love lies in the otherness of the other; this can be seen in the adoration on the face of any lover contemplating the one he or she loves. The dialectic of alienation can perhaps best be seen in the realms of love, where a thousand walls may dissolve and reform in minutes or even seconds. Yet even in love one may try to dominate and control the other, and thus seek to overcome the possible alienation inherent in the situation. But as everybody knows, this destroys the very foundations of love; even where it seems to succeed it does so in terms of appearances only. Further, one may also try to internalize the object of love through imagination, and thus turn away from the concreteness of the "other," which may be felt as the basic source of alienation in love. Much of the development of mystic love may perhaps be understood in this way. This is also the root of that well-known theme exemplified so classically in the story of Tristan and Isolde—that love lives and thrives only in separation.

Alienation, thus, may be taken as defining the human situation. So also may the attempt to escape it. But one can do so either in a positive or negative way. Suicide and murder are as much responses to alienation as are revolt and rebellion. Moreover, there is no *one* positive or negative way, and neither the one nor the other is ever achieved in unmixed purity. Cultures and individuals blaze with the positive as they attempt to meet the fate of their alienation, but the shadow of the negative always trails behind them. None knows this better than the heart of the individual, which may deceive others but not itself, and it is also clear to the eye of the sensitive yet discerning student of cultures and civilisations.