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Part : I

ALIENATION

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Alienation expresses a unique facet of the crisis of our times. What intellectual processes and cultural forces subtend our present predicament? In the west it is possible to detect the distinctive modern flavour of our experience of alienation in the transitional period of the late Middle Ages and Renaissance. A key is to be found in the rise of atomistic nominalism and the subsequent pulverization of being. A way of viewing the world and interpreting reality was then introduced that is not unrelated to our contemporary intellectual stance. The nominalistic concern with singulars ushered in a system of thought wherein the world was no longer seen as continuous but as disparate. I have in mind William of Occam. The effort to atomize the world carried a penalty. It became increasingly difficult to organize the items of experience into an organic whole. I see a connection between the "broken world" the existentialists talk about and the rise of nominalism. The upshot of this concern with singulars was to be an intensified consideration of man as an individual and an accompanying concern with his relation to other individuated existents. The problems of the self and individuality emerge in a new way. Nominalism and the early Renaissance were parallel movements.

Cassirer diagnoses that all the intellectual currents that nourish the Renaissance flow into the central problem of self-consciousness. In this context, Descartes' reputation

as the first modern philosopher is entirely justified. He, rather than Hegel, first articulated the dynamics of alienation. He, is, so to speak, the spokesman for an era that is literally world-less. It was quite natural for him to found his system on the isolated reality of the extra-mundane Ego. It was the only fragment of the world available to him. Nor does it come as any surprise that he never successfully extricated himself from the confines of the Ego. What is at stake in Descartes' philosophy is the ontological status of the world itself. Methodical doubt is the birthmark of the burdened self. As a philosopher of alienation, Descartes makes the soul (mind, spirit) and nature have nothing to do with one another. Sensations do not tell us anything directly about the outside world. Nature belongs exclusively to *res extensa* to be understood mathematically, abstractly and inferentially. Consciousness is discontinuous with the rest of reality. The Cartesian dichotomy not only separates mind from body but severs the experiencing creature from nature, the ego from the world, sensation from motion. It also separates one person from another one, *me* from *you*. The Cartesian ego, looking at the outside world, is in no contact, has no direct communication with any alter ego. Reality becomes a function of judgment.

On the epistemological level, the problem of alienation assumes the form of the assertion that to know is necessarily to apprehend mediately and indirectly. Knowledge relates men to reality through the mediation of appearance. It constitutes an overlayer on the thing-in-itself. In the development of our

knowledge we do not strip away the appearance to behold the thing in its pristine character, but pile layer upon layer of phenomenological constitution. Immediacy is lost at the beginning and is not to be recovered by the further elaboration of the mediation. This is the necessary and inevitable limitation of human reason in so far as it is engaged in cognitive inquiry. The possibility of human knowledge presupposes the alienation of man from himself and the world, and the development of knowledge only accentuates the alienation.

It seems legitimate to argue that the epistemology of alienation makes it impossible to identify basic particulars in a nonsolipsistic universe. In particular, the possibility of employing the concept of a person becomes difficult. The impossibility relates to the doubt concerning our knowledge of other minds, and finally to solipsism. Solipsism, etymologically derived from *solus ipse*, means I alone exist in my own right. If one embraces solipsism he will have to postulate non-perceptual reasons for believing in independently existing things and people, as, to some extent, with Hume. It is said that Kant can be credited with the disclosure that knowledge is a mode of subjectivity. There is no object outside the concept. Knowledge is the *mode* of our apprehension of reality. To know is to grasp reality in objective form, to *objectify* it. Knowledge is intrinsically a mediate relation to reality. It is subjective precisely because it is objective.

According to Kant's *Transcendental Apperception*,

experience is organised ultimately as my experience. "All possible appearances, and representations, belong to the totality of a possible self-consciousness. For nothing can come to our knowledge save in terms of this original apperception". (*Critique of Pure Reason*, A 113). Again, "only in so far as I can grasp the manifold of representations in one consciousness, do I call them one and all *mine*" (*Ibid.* B. 134). Hence no bridge to another self is provided in the Kantian analysis. The temporal flow of consciousness that forms the material of the inner sense I *know*, in psychology, as a phenomenal self, much as I know the material of the outer sense, in physics, as an ordered world of objects. But only my own self is accessible to me ; for only my consciousness is open to the inner sense. So I can find no access to another subject. I cannot know it empirically; and a noumenal self I cannot know for anyone, myself or other. However universal may appear the "understanding" or the "reason" with which Kant deals, it is still an abstract skeletal 'I' who possesses such understanding or such reason. For this 'I' there is, as far as one can see, no meeting ground for any contact with others of his kind. This is alienation in solipsism, which is inevitable on the plane of reflective consciousness. For Kant, consciousness is the vehicle by which we apprehend the world of material objects. Hence from a subjective point of view, the limits of the mind are the limits of the knowable world. All other sentient beings are merely particular forms of the subjective contents of any consciousness. Associated with the transcendental concept of apperception is a transcendental concept of an ego. Our

references to experiences ordinarily presuppose the notion of a person who has them. But it is impossible for this notion of a person to be exemplified in any particular experience. Hence this notion is empty. The concept is not the name of any object. It concerns only the condition of our knowledge.

In the post-Kantian debacle, experience lost its meaning for the idealists. They began to formulate the problem of alienation in new terms, and the problem of the relationship between the self and the world as well as other selves became one of central intellectual concern. This is clear in Fichte, Schelling and the poet Holderlin, among others, and finds extensive ontological articulation in Hegel's *The Phenomenology of Mind*. Hegel diagnosed the malady of his age as "a severance of mind from world, soul from circumstance, human cowardliness from external condition" and defined the alienated soul as "the consciousness of self as a divided nature, a doubled and merely contradictory being".

It is a basic idea of Hegel's philosophy that whatever is, is, in the last analysis, Absolute Idea, and that Absolute Idea is neither a set of fixed things nor a sum of static properties but a dynamic self, engaged in a circular process of alienation and dealienation. Nature is only a self-alienated (self-estranged) form of Absolute Mind, and man is the absolute in the process of dealienation. The whole of human history is the constant growth of man's knowledge of the Absolute and, at the same time, the development of self-knowledge of the Absolute, who through finite mind becomes self-aware and

“returns” to himself from his self-alienation in nature. However, finite mind also becomes alienated. It is an essential characteristic to finite mind (man) to produce things, to express itself in objects, to objectify itself in physical things, social institutions, and cultural products; and every objectification is, of necessity, an instance of alienation : the produced objects become alien to the producer. Alienation in this sense can be overcome only in the sense of being adequately known. Again, it is the vocation of man as man to serve as the organ of self-knowledge of the Absolute. To the extent that he does not perform this function, he does not fulfill his human essence and is merely a self-alienated man.

Feuerbach in *The Essence of Christianity* accepted Hegel's view that man can be alienated from himself, but he rejected both the view that nature is a self-alienated form of Absolute Mind and the view that man is Absolute Mind in the process of dealienation. Man is not self-alienated man. He is man's essence absolutized and estranged from man. And man is not alienated from himself when he refuses to recognize nature as a self-alienated form of God; man is alienated from himself when he creates and puts above himself an imagined alien higher being and bows before that being as a slave. The dealienation of man consists in the abolition of that estranged picture of man which is God.

Marx in his *Manuscripts of 1844* praised Hegel for having grasped that the self-creation of man is a process of alienation and dealienation. But he criticized Hegel for, among

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other things; having identified objectification with alienation, and the suppression of alienation with the abolition of objectivity, for having regarded man as self-consciousness and the alienation of man is the alienation of his self-consciousness, and for having assumed that the suppression of objectification and alienation is possible only and merely in the medium of thought. Marx agreed with Feuerbach's criticism of religious alienation, but he stressed that the religious alienation of man is only one among many forms of man's self-alienation. Man not only alienates a part of himself in the form of God; he also alienates other products of his spiritual activity in the form of philosophy, commonsense, art, morals, and so on. He alienates products of his economic activity in the form of commodities, money, capital, etc. He alienates products of social activity in the form of the state, law, and social institutions. Thus, there are many forms in which man alienates from himself the products of his own activity and makes of them a separate, independent, and powerful world of objects towards which he is related as a slave, powerless and dependent. However, man not only alienates his own products from himself; he also alienates himself from the very activity through which these products are produced, from the natural world in which he lives, and from other men. All these kinds of alienation are, in the last analysis, one; they are only different aspects on man's self-alienation, different forms of the alienation of man from his human "essence" or "nature", from his humanity. The self-alienated man is a man who is really not a man, a man who does

not realize his historically created human possibilities. A non-alienated man would be a man who really is a man, a man who fulfills himself as a free, creative being of *praxis*.

Since the publication of Marx's *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, written in 1844 and first published in 1932, the concepts of alienation and dealienation have become the object of passionate discussion among existentialists also. Alienation ends in absurdity, because under its domination the acts of individuals and groups become uncoordinated. The growing sense of frustration, anxiety and despair, which pervades the western hemisphere, is said to have at the back of it all man's estrangement from Nature, deeply felt by Rousseau and the Romantics. But chiefly the estrangement from God, which is in a certain sense the source of all these troubles, remains a recurrent theme from Kierkegaard to Marcel, and is present even when not discussed, as in the case of Sartre.

Man, as conceived by the existentialists, has severed every link with a transcendent God, but he has not reestablished contact with other men, his peers. He has remained isolated, shut up in his own finiteness – his own prisoner; nor has he outside himself any means of attaining transcendent save in the direction of nothingness. Kierkegaard postulated as the basis of his philosophical research, which is the expression of an agonizing religious compulsion, the predicament of "Singleness". In opposition to the philosophy of Hegel, which, by reducing the individual to the status of a particular and incomplete

manifestation of the Absolute Idea or Universal Spirit, has made of man "an animal genus endowed with Reason", Kierkegaard appeals to Christianity with the object of placing man in his individuality above humanity regarded as a universal essence. Singleness is a characteristic of man in his solitude and in his bewilderment when confronted with God - of man who finds God in alienation from others. Being in communication with the infinite above, the single man does not communicate with other finite beings. "Others" are not the society of which we form a part, but the undifferentiated and amorphous crowd from which we alienate ourselves in order that we may be ourselves and find the way to communication with God alone. The crowd, says Kierkegaard, is the non-truth; the single man is the truth. He who abandons himself to the crowd is lost, because to no man is the opportunity denied to become a single man, save to those who will fully deny it to themselves by their desire to belong to the crowd.

It is, of course, not the case that in existentialism there is any lack of the motifs proper to a philosophy of society. Heidegger, in his analysis, dwells upon the existential clarification of Jaspers, and broadens it into the concept of communication between existences. In both, however, the solution of the problem that arises from intercourse between myself and others involves a sociality that is denied and rejected, not affirmed and acquired.

In Heidegger, the state of impersonality, in which

man, in so far as he is a fallen being, finds himself from the outset, has for the most part the same characteristics as Kierkegaard's crowd. It represents the sphere of publicity in contrast to that of intimacy. Its essential elements are mediocrity and equalization. In everyday life, in which the performer of human actions is X, man is deprived of all opportunity of unfettered decision because it is X who decides. X is the author of those actions for which it is said that no one is responsible. In the anonymity of everyday life man is as much at his ease as if he was at home. Cast into the world in the role of a being whose destination is nothingness, he readily abandons himself to the assimilative influence of impersonality, with its mediocrity and equalization, in order that he may escape the anguish in face of nothingness which he experiences whenever he finds himself face to face with himself. Assimilation of the impersonality of everyday life represents a flight from oneself; only in this flight does man find tranquility and security. The man who evades the anguish of his own true being and takes refuge in anonymity is like the exile who returns to his native land. Hence, man's native land is not singularity but anonymity, impersonality, the crowd. Man is like the escaped convict who prefers the secure servitude of the prison to the threatened freedom of the underground. Society is the native land of the fallen man.

With Jaspers, society and the state are no longer regarded as the sphere of the fallen man, but are looked upon as objectively necessary. Society is not a prison, but a

necessity of the empirical life of man. But owe betide the man who allows himself to be absorbed by it and loses his identity in it. He can never rise again as an existence. Accordingly, man as existence must be continually in "tension" with the objective institutions of society. This condition reveals itself all through the history of the institutions themselves; every Church has its heretics, every State its rebels. And potentially the individual is always a heretic or a rebel who, to serve his individuality, avoids and, if he thinks fit, condemns society. In short, man vindicates social institutions but is at the same time involved in a continual struggle for his own independence. He restricts his freedom of action where it affects his neighbour, but does so because he needs to. And he needs to because the establishment of his neighbour's freedom endangers his own freedom. And true freedom does not exist save where it is threatened. A freedom that is communicated to others and accepted by them ceases to be freedom.

Once more society, regarded as the aggregate of the other men in whose midst we live, is left in the background. Here too the individual returns to the forefront. But Jaspers' man is no longer alone. In so far as I rise to the plans of existence my neighbour is equal in his singularity and in the fact that his transcendency is acquired at my expense. The relationship between myself and my neighbour on the plane of existence is called by Jaspers 'existential communication'. In communication my neighbour is no longer an object or an instrument of another "myself". Entry into communication with

others does not involve a loss of dignity; it is a meeting on an identical plane, or rather a mutual completion. Unlike Kierkegaard and Heidegger, Jaspers recognizes the value of the presence of one's neighbour for the purposes of existential clarification. Such communication is an essential element in the revelation of existence to oneself. Existence is revealed and realized in communication; and communication is only possible if I and my neighbour do not each make the other his tool, but meet in mutual recognition. Only thus do we both emerge in our proper character.

Thus, with Heidegger men never meet with Jaspers they meet, but outside the society in which the man of history finds realization. In Heidegger, sociality regarded as union is rejected; in Jaspers it is transferred to the spiritual communion. In Heidegger, contact with one's neighbour causes existence to retreat alone into itself, to shut itself up in its finiteness; in Jaspers, contact with one's neighbour is the *sine qua non* of a deeper mutual penetration, but it does not become participation in the activities of the concrete world of history. In both cases society is debased to the status of the crowd or is raised to that of a fellowship of "precious souls", but is never actually encountered as an integral part of our individual lives.

Sartre accepts much of the Marxist historiography but rejects the Marxist philosophy of history. His approach to a culture stresses its ideology as the synthesis of the objective

and subjective factors in the historical reality, whereas the Marxists stress the mode of production and explain subjective factors in terms of it. The absolute in history is, for Sartre, the human condition. Sartre agrees with Marx that personality is a function of the social environment. He contends, however, that there are certain constants which characterize the human individual; they do not constitute a nature or personality, but nevertheless can serve as guides to human behaviour within the context of a particular situation. In other words, as Marx believed, human nature cannot be understood apart from the social environment, but Sartre adds that it cannot be understood solely in terms of that environment. That which is universal is the human condition with its characteristics of individual responsibility, transcendence, freedom etc.

Sartre is as sensitive as Marx to the problem of alienation, but he differs as to its origin. The particular form which Marx gave to this concept was a description of man as alienated by the economic system. In the attempt to provide for his material needs man organizes himself for economic activity and sets in motion a pattern of institutional development which results in dehumanizing conditions of work for the labouring class, and a class system in which the worker is robbed of the fruits of his own labour. It is Marx's theory of surplus value. The worker himself becomes a commodity like any other object whose value is determined by market conditions. The capitalist system thus appears as inhuman, and the task to be achieved is the overthrow of the existing social order and the establishment of a

classless society in which man's self-alienation will come to an end. Marx apparently envisaged the classless society as a society in which human relations would take spontaneous forms. The class system, the state, law, the family and ideology – in short, society as we know it – would wither away and be replaced by natural and harmonious social relationships. But for Sartre, the original sin is not man's aim to produce the necessities of life, but the existence of *the other*. The problem of alienation is the problem of the relation of the individual to society. The individual is alienated by being placed in a world where he is not free, in the sense of the free pursuit of the realization of his own ends. By looking at me the other places me in a world which is alien to me. The worker who is paid for his labour is alienated because the purpose for which he is producing the article on which he works is not his own. "The alienating transcendence is here the consumer; that is, the 'They' whose projects the worker is limited to anticipating". Again, "the reality of the market, no matter how inexorable its laws may be, and even in its concrete appearance, rests on the reality of the alienated individuals and on their separation" (*The Problem of Method*, p. 78). Even the ordinary experience of obeying directional sign on the highway is a form of alienation, as is the use of a manufactured article. In following a sign or using a mass-produced article, my immediate ends are the ends of the 'They', and I apprehend myself as interchangeable with any one of my neighbours. In this sense, we lose our real individuality, for the project which we are is precisely the project which

others are. "Man defines himself in terms of his projects" (Ibid., p. 150).

Alienation, for Sartre, arises from the fact of social life, and not from just one of its aspects, namely the mode of production. The individual can avoid this state of alienation, assuming the determinations given him, only by the *look* of the other, by the meanings inherent in his environment, and the techniques which he employs as means to his own individual ends. Alienation is experienced by those individuals who are immersed in means and lose sight of ends, or accept their ends ready-made from an exterior source. Alienation is the result of assuming attitudes in bad faith, and its cure is the assumption of freedom. Bad faith is essentially a flight from responsible action, which is the only way to give a subjective interpretation to the objective determinations which threaten us with alienation. Sartre's alternative to alienation brings with it the anguish which results from a recognition of freedom. There is no promise of a final historical resolution of the problem. Sartre's oppressed worker is a revolutionary, like that of Marx, but the revolution will not end all forms of alienation, and the classless society will be bearable to individuals within it only if they in their turn surpass its determinations toward their own ends. Sartre resembles the Christian existentialists in his concern with alienation as a problem of individual subjectivity, and his call to the individual to leave the anonymity of the crowd for a consciousness of his individuality in the perspective of his transcendent goals. Because of his doctrine of commitment

he disclaims the view that salvation is a purely individual, not a political, solution. Real community with others, which is necessary to escape from alienation, is possible only through identification with a dynamic process of social reform. Man is, for Sartre, an active animal, and possession of certain goals is inseparable from progress toward their realization. The belief in certain individual goals as normative – without a concomitant effort to realize them on the social level – is a form of flight into bad faith. To the degree that a particular social structure discourages by making difficult the effort of individuals to assert their own purposes actively, it encourages alienation and oppresses the individual. Alienation somehow belongs to our heritage, it cannot be completely eliminated. It can only be reduced to reasonable terms.

we may now look at Sartre's conception of the human condition as regards its ontological status – and the consequent epistemological implications, in connection with a charge he brought against Kant, i.e., of solipsism. We have earlier argued that solipsism is a kind of alienation, which is helplessly logical. We shall not try to show that non-solipsism can also be alienating on ontological grounds, if, of course, one starts with the Kierkegaardian premises of singularity or inwardness. In singularity, one finds oneself beyond the objective circle of problems and everything becomes a matter of things about which nothing objective can be said.

According to Sartre, all human relations and functions

are to be understood on the basis of the fundamental being of man, i.e., *le pour-soi* or the For-itself. The For-itself is human consciousness and is equivalent to freedom and free choice. It is the revelation of, the desire of, the choice and internal negation of *l'en-soi* or the In-itself. The For-itself always implies the existence of the In-itself; the world is there as soon as human consciousness is there, since consciousness is *consciousness of something*. This something is not consciousness itself, but an external object. A *being-for-itself* can never be a *being-in-itself* without losing, *ipso facto*, its most characteristic feature of consciousness. The way in which a thing is present to consciousness is through negation. The thing is that which is present to consciousness as that which is *not* consciousness itself. This negation comes from the *For-itself* itself. Knowledge is neither a relation, a quality, nor an activity; it is the essence of the For-itself insofar as it is "present to". Knowledge is nothing but the fact that "there is" being.

Does the structure of human reality necessarily involve the presence of other persons, or the Other? Husserl's intermonadic world was constructed on the claim that the Ego implies the existence of the Other. To doubt the existence of the Other is to doubt one's own existence. For Husserl, the Other is some sort of regulative concept, a supplementary category to help us to understand the world. How can it be proved to exist beyond representation? For Hegel, the Other is absolutely necessary. The ego assumes its value through the Other. But the relation

is considered as that between *knowing* subject and *known* object. It ought to be considered as that between *being* and *being*. Heidegger emphasized this point by saying that the relation of human realities is a relation of *being*, and it links together the human realities or *Daseins* in their essences. He speaks of the idea of "team", which comprises you and me. All of us are linked together not through knowledge but through some feeling of dumb existence. The existence of the Other is not the conclusion of a proof but a fact which is *noticed*. Sartre proposed that the analysis of the *Cogito* must *reveal* explicitness (not *prove*, however) the existence of the Other. His analysis of the "look" shows that to be looked at is to be lowered from myself as a *subject* to myself as an *object*. The Other looks at me and thus constitutes himself as a subject against me. To look at me means to annihilate "me as a subject" and to reduce me to the rank of an object. Alienation is a spontaneous reaction to the fact that we are "looked at" by the Other and is therefore a proof of the latter's existence.

Either I can consider myself as I know myself – my *being-for myself*, or I can consider myself as known by the Other, i.e., my *being-for-the-other*. To be subject (*being-for-myself*) is not to be object, and to be object is not the same thing as to be subject. It is evident that Sartre takes the non-solipsistic awareness of persons as based on internal and external negations. "The other is the one who is not me and the one who I am not" (*Being and Nothingness*, p. 230). Interpersonal external negation holds on account of persons having bodies. Embodied persons are

alienated by external negation, which is the "constitutive structure of the being of others". This is a fact. But more important is the alienation on account of internal negation, i.e., just as I both am and am not my past self, so I both am and am not the Other. The Other constitutes me in my being as surely as my past, but just as in the act of existing I flee my past, so in the act of existing I flee the Other. The relation of internal negation makes my intuitive certainty of the Other's existence comprehensible. In the final analysis, for Sartre, there remains a dealienable alienation of ourselves from our *being-for-others*. My past is part of facticity, knowable by reflective consciousness. Simultaneous with it is my *being-for-others*, which can never be so grasped. The Other can be known as a body, but never as a subject. "I only reach my *being-as-object*" (Ibid, p. 302). Again, my past is founded by my freedom. I am responsible for it simply because it *is* a dimension of my being which I have to accept. On Sartre's terms, we are far more radically alienated from our *being-for-others* than from our facticity. We propose to call it non-solipsistic alienation. It may be noticed that in spite of Sartre's disavowal of solipsism, he, ultimately, succumbs to it. We can never, Sartre tells us, know another self other than probably -as, in fact, we know any object in our world. Sartre criticizes Kant for solipsism, but he in his turn, for all practical purposes, does not fare better.

It is true that the facts of Kantian epistemology suggest a radical solipsism. But the non-solipsist argument in

Kant would run as follows : The content of my consciousness, together with certain dispositions and propensities and capacities, constitute a single empirical self among many in an inter-subjective world of conscious human beings. Furthermore, the same consciousness which reveals the world to me, also, through self-consciousness, apparently reveals my own self to me as well. It is by this double aspect of consciousness that one can get over solipsism. The empiricists thought that the problem was how, given a certain set of epistemological or ontological premises, the existence of others could be proved. On the contrary, the question is : what kind of epistemology or ontology is required to explain the fact that we are incapable of doubting the existence of others. Kant emphasizes the differences between self-knowledge and knowledge of others. He insists, in A 362 of the first *Critique*, not only that self-knowledge is different from knowledge of others, but also that the latter is prior to the former. It is the other's knowledge of me, and not my knowledge of myself, which sets the standard for knowledge of persons. My privileged position about myself is paralogistic. It is the outer observer who first represents me in objective time. I can have knowledge of myself only so long as it is possible to view myself as an outer object. In asserting such a priority Kant does not deny that all our knowledge is based upon our personal experience. But in the *transcendental* way this claim is true that our outer descriptions and outer knowledge are prior to our inner descriptions and our inner knowledge. Kant's refutation of

empirical idealism is a firm rejection of the claim of the reverse priority. For Kant, the priority of outer sense to the inner is not the priority of a premise over a conclusion based on it. The priority, means, since the categories apply primarily to our objects, we could have no knowledge of inner experience without some knowledge of outer. For Kant, a condition of using the concept 'person' is to mean "that to which inner characteristics belong". And the solipsism consequential to entering the concept of "person" to mean the Cartesian ego is only overcome by stating that a person is essentially that to which experiences belong. The statement can be made only if we are able to discriminate between inner & outer characteristics. It is in providing a condition of using the concept of a person that Kant is a non-solipsist.

We have thus far tried to outline the interpretations and definitions of the concept of alienation with a sequel on the history of concept. In outlining the history of the concept we have confined our attention to the basic philosophical issues involved in the use of the concept, i.e., the ontological and the epistemological problems which are particularly relevant to an understanding of *alienation* as basically a concept of general philosophy. Generally, the concept is regarded as one of the ontological significance, but it is not often that epistemological issues are raised in this regard. We have devoted a good deal of our attention to formulating an epistemology that might be said to be consequential to a commitment to an ontology or estranged realities. We shall

see in connection with Rabindranath's account of aesthetic consciousness how the inescapable solipsism peculiar to reflective consciousness is transcended. The points made in this part of the essay will be presupposed in the sequels on Rabindranath to follow. In the meantime we may turn to a consideration of forms of alienation and a proposal of the basic criteria according to which the classifications could be made. These forms will be referred to later without a restatement.

II

All authors who have used the concept of alienation have distinguished between different forms of alienation; but not all of them have done so explicitly. Hegel attempted no explicit classification of the forms of alienation; but since, for him, the essence of all development was a process of alienation and dealienation, different stages in the development of the Absolute could be regarded as so many forms of alienation. It would be much more difficult to develop a similar classification for Feuerbach's works because the essence of his philosophy was the negation of systematic philosophy. "Alienated labour", a well-known fragment in Marx's *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* seems to suggest that we should distinguish between four forms of man's alienation : (a) the alienation of man from the products of his own activity, (b) the alienation of man from his productive activity itself, (c) the alienation of man from his human essence, and (d) the alienation of man from other men. But in other places Marx talks about other forms and sub-forms of alienation than in this fragment, for example, institutional

alienation. Generally speaking, for Marx, *alienation* is a phenomenon which occurs when something created to minister to human needs, acquires an institutional life of its own, an independent existence, and presents itself to men not as an artificial weapon forged by them in pursuit of some needs which may, indeed, have vanished long ago, but as an objective entity with power and authority, like some inexorable law of nature or of an all-powerful God. *Alienation* means the destruction of human solidarity by the existence of institutions originally designed to promote them, and it is, according to Marx, inevitable so long as the lives of men are dominated by class war – the inescapable form of the human struggle towards the mastery of nature and of their own irrational passions. It must be remembered that, for Marx, technological capacities are men's fundamental nature, and hence men differ from objects in nature principally because they are able to invent tools. Endowed with this unique capacity men create instruments to provide for their basic needs – for food, shelter, clothing, procreation etc., and these inventions alter men's relations to external nature. It transformed him and his societies, thereby stimulating him to make further inventions to satisfy the new needs and tastes brought about by the changes which he brings about in his own nature and world. Men's ideas are not born in isolation from the rest of these activities. Any technological advance in human development carries with it its own intellectual and moral horizons. Truth being dialectical, all life necessarily moves. Consequently, to call anything a timeless truth about men or society must be in principle absurd. There is nothing timeless

in the lives of men. All truths consist in some relationship between men's thoughts and the objects about which they think. All that can be judged objectively is their relative effectiveness. Human liberty consists in the systematic mastery of whatever resists human needs, whether in external nature or in his wild and self-destructive passions. Freedom is the planned control of available resources. The more rational the method of control, the ampler the resources, the larger the number of persons exercising such control, the greater the freedom. In short, we get in Marx, a few very important things : (a) a classification of the different forms of alienation, though he seems to put the different forms of alienation on the same level; (b) a definition of *alienation* in terms of estrangement of man from his human essence, and we prefer this to be the common mark of alienation underlying all other forms; and (c) a very clear and definite idea of dealienation based on gaining mastery not only over external nature, but also over one's own wild and irrational passions.

Twentieth-century writers differ greatly in their enumeration of the basic forms of alienation. Ernest Schachtel has distinguished four basic forms : the alienation of men from nature, from their fellow men, from the work of their hands and minds, and from themselves. Melvin Seeman enumerates five basic forms : powerlessness, meaninglessness, social isolation, normlessness, and self-estrangement. And Lewis Fener speaks of six : the alienation of class society, of competitive society,

of industrial society, of mass society, or race, and of generations. We shall see that Rabindranath would recognize most of these forms of alienation, though not as basic, and would add a few others arising from the Indian context such as those between village and towns, the literate elite and the illiterate masses, etc. But instead of enumerating all classifications of the forms of alienation it would be worthwhile to mention a few of the basic criteria according to which any classification of forms of alienation could be made and actually has been made by Rabindranath.

1. According to the nature of that which is alienated we may distinguish between alienation of things and alienation of selves. And if we distinguish different types of things or selves, we may add further subdivisions. To those for whom the only self is man, alienation of self is only another name for the alienation of man. It is possible to distinguish between individual alienation and social alienation. We may classify as types of social alienation the alienation of societies as a whole, the alienation of social groups, and the alienation of social institutions.
2. We can distinguish between alienation from something else or somebody else and alienation from oneself. The distinction is applicable only to alienation of selves. A self can be alienated either from something or somebody or from itself. According to the different kinds of "others" and according to the different aspects or sides of the self, further subdivisions can be added. For example, alienation from nature, alienation from fellow men, or alienation from one's body, one's feeling, one's needs, or one's creative possibilities.
3. According to whether that which is alienated is through one's own activity or through the activity of another, we could distinguish between alienation through others and alienation through oneself. Alienation of a thing can obviously be only an alienation through others. There can be different kinds of alienation of things, but alienation of self can be either alienation through others or an alienation through oneself.

The concept of self-alienation, found in Hegel and Marx and of the greatest interest for philosophy, is a result of applying a combination of the three basic criteria. What Hegel and Marx called self-alienation is alienation of a self from itself through itself. They differ in that. Marx recognized only one self-alienated self (man), while Hegel recognized two, man and God, or Absolute. Rabindranath seems to speak of three, man, God and Nature, but the concept of a self-alienated man is basic.

In what sense is it possible for a self to be alienated from itself? It seems plausible to say that to be self-alienated means to be internally divided, split into at least two parts that have become alien to each other. The term, "self-alienation" seems to suggest some or all of the following points : (a) The division of the self into two conflicting parts was not carried out from the outside but is the result of an action of the self. (b) The division into conflicting parts does not annihilate the unity of the self; despite the split, the self-alienated self is nevertheless a self. (c) Self-alienation is not simply a split into two parts that are equally related to the self as a whole; the implication is that one part of the self has more right to represent the self as whole, so that by becoming alien to it, the other part becomes alien to the self as a whole. Rabindranath speaks of the two parts as the *soul* and the *self*. For him, the soul is the "larger self" whereas the *self* is lesser (*Sadhana*, p. 70). The "self" is alienated, for Rabindranath, by definition, it is a "Role of my being", which is "Separate from all". The expression 'myself' is significant in this context.

It means that one way to specify and clarify the inequality of the two parts into which a self-alienated self is split is to describe the self-alienation as a split between man's real "nature" or "essence" and his factual "properties", or "existence". The self-alienated man in such a case is a man who is not in fact what he is in essence : a man whose actual existence does not correspond to his human essence. We shall have occasion to note that Rabindranath not only propounds such a view of self-alienation, but also applies it to other spheres of human activity. For example, he holds that a self-alienated society would be society whose factual existence does not correspond to the ideal or the essence of human society.

We reserve our discussion on the conception of man's essence to be undertaken in later chapters in connection with Rabindranath's views, an inkling of which may be suggested by saying that what he means by man's essence is neither an eternal idea (though he speaks of it *as if* it were so), nor a part of actuality (on this point, he is very clear), but the sum of historically created human possibilities. This would become evident from considering his views concerning culture and civilisation. To say, for Rabindranath, that a man alienates himself from his human essence would mean that a man alienates himself from the realization of his historically created possibilities. To say that a man is not alienated from himself would mean that he lives in terms of his possibilities and that in realizing his possibilities he is engaged in creating his human image. Man, for Rabindranath, is an endless way-farer.