Chapter One

Alienation and the Search for Meaning in Human Beings: A Historical Introduction

1.0 Alienation: Historical Perspective

The concept of 'belonging' has its history since beginning – primordial myths and The Old Testament, Vedas or The Holy Quran. Even Adam and Eve are also the same expressions of human being's need to feel right and belong somewhere in this universe in a context to make it meaningful; a requirement that has faithfully went along with human civilization all the way through its progress. Similarly, the demand of self-realization has been an ideal from earliest thinking. Nevertheless, while as idealistic philosophy has been limited to thought and never been applicable in real life, the relation between social order and ideal thinking remains a subject of essential examination. Jaanika Puusalu writes in *Malformation of Belonging: Historical Analysis of the Development of the Concept of Alienation*:

> Just as both the need to belong somewhere and self-realization are issues explicitly discussed prior to modernity, so too should the notion of alienation be treated as timeless. And while this research limits itself to the thread of the concept of alienation, following from Pre-Socratic philosophers introduction of the term, one should bear in mind that these are neither questions new to humanity, nor exclusive to the thinkers discussed in this thesis, but are as timeless as the phenomena that they seek to address. (4)

By studying the concept of alienation, we mean an entirely novel approach of philosophy that is based on in knowing what it means to be here and why a human being is here? What is a human being doing in this world? This is the main reason for human anxiety. There are answers to this question, some of them myths, some others are philosophical speculations and some fall in the category of a more logical subject called ontology. Gaarder writes in *Sophie's World*:

> The questioning of 'what it means to be?' evolved in Greece about six hundred years before the birth of Christ. Until that time people usually found answers to all their questions in various religions or in myths. These religious

explanations were handed down from generation to generation in the form of myths. A myth is a story about the gods which sets out to explain why life is as it is. Over the millennia a wild profusion of mythological explanations of philosophical questions spread across the world. The Greek philosophers attempted to prove that these explanations were not to be trusted. (19)

1.1 Alienation in Early Mythology

A brief study of various philosophers will explain this quest for meaning and alienation in human beings. By going through various philosophers and ideologies, we can get acquainted with how human beings have tried to answer the very basic question of existence and how alienation has always been there in human existence. Jostein Gaarder in his famous book *Sophie's World* writes about the history of myths:

In order to understand how the early philosophers thought, we have to understand what it was like to have a mythological picture of the world. We can take some Nordic myths as examples. (There is no need to carry coals to Newcastle.) You have probably heard of Thor and his hammer. Before Christianity came to Norway, people believed that Thor rode across the sky in a chariot drawn by two goats. When he swung his hammer it made thunder and lightning. The word "thunder" in Norwegian—"Thor-don"—means Thor's roar. In Swedish, the word for thunder is "aska," originally "as-aka," which means "god's journey" over the heavens. When there is thunder and lightning there is also rain, which was vital to the Viking farmers. So Thor was worshipped as the god of fertility. The mythological explanation for rain was therefore that Thor was swinging his hammer. And when it rained the corn germinated and thrived in the fields. How the plants of the field could grow and yield crops was not understood. But it was clearly somehow connected with the rain. And since everybody believed that the rain had something to do with Thor, he was one of the most important of the Norse gods. (20)

So, here we see that the physical phenomena are explained through a story or simple a myth. The reason is because human being needs explanation for why it is the way it is here and the answer may come from a myth, religion, science or any structure or a grand narrative or simply a discourse that may put an end to this existential crisis of quest for meaning. It should be remembered that the answer may

come from anywhere, the only thing that matters is that whether the discourse is able to make a fine explanation of the phenomena or not. The answers in past came from myths, then from religions, then from rationality, experience and observation and the process still goes on. The search is still going on and it will continue forever, so will this alienation of a human being be.

In Norwegian Mythical structure, Thor occupied the main place in the whole process or story. "His hammer could do more than make rain; it was a key weapon in the struggle against the dangerous forces of chaos. It gave him almost unlimited power. For example, he could hurl it at the giants and slay them and, according to Gaarder, he never had to worry about losing it because it always came back to him, just like a boomerang." (21)

The main issue in the above quoted example is that the whole discourse was based on fiction rather than any logical or scientific explanation. This explanation mythological for how the equilibrium of environment was preserved and why there exists a continuous scuffle amongst goodness and immorality and this kind of explanation is what philosophers disqualified. Human beings could not just sit indolently by and pause for some divine agency to interfere while calamities such as famine or pestilence appeared. Human beings need to act for themselves in the struggle against evil, crisis, and something that put their existence in danger. In myths and fiction, we see the happy ending coming sooner or somewhere at the end; whether it is Thor, the Batman or James Bond of the gods, superman or someone else, all of them once again conquer the forces of evil. But what is the real meaning behind it? Why human beings did need myths? Gaarder explains:

It wasn't made up just for entertainment. The myth also tries to explain something. Here is one possible interpretation: When a drought occurred, people sought an explanation of why there was no rain. Could it be that the giants had stolen Thor's hammer? Perhaps the myth was an attempt to explain the changing seasons of the year: in the winter Nature dies because Thor's hammer is in *Jotunheim*. But in the spring he succeeds in winning it back. So the myth tried to give people an explanation for something they could not understand. But a myth was not only an explanation. People also carried out religious ceremonies related to the myths. We can imagine how people's

response to drought or crop failure would be to enact a drama about the events in the myth. Perhaps a man from the village would dress up as a bride—with stones for breasts—in order to steal the hammer back from the giants. By doing this, people were taking some action to make it rain so the crops would grow in their fields. (22)

There are a so many examples from the world of the way people dramatized or applied their myths in order to explain the processes of nature happening around them. So far, Norse mythology was a simple explanation of how human beings used to explain the phenomena of nature and there are countless myths about Thor and Odin, Ram, Hanuman and many other gods. Mythological notions of this type prospered everywhere throughout the world and still are found in India and many other countries of the world but they were rejected in past by those who wanted more rational explanation of what it means to be here.

Similarly, mythological depiction was found in Greece when philosophy was developing more in the direction of rationalism. The stories of the Greek gods had been passed on from one age group to other for epochs. In Greece there were gods like Zeus, Apollo, Hera, Athene, and Dionysos to name a few of them.

Almost around 700 B.C., much of the Greek mythology was written down by Homer and Hesiod. This created a whole new situation. Now that the myths existed in written form, it was possible to discuss them. Early Greek philosophers condemned Homer's myths since the gods looked like human beings and were portrayed as selfish and unfaithful. For the first time it was in Greece that the challenge to this mythical explanation of physical phenomena were said to be nothing but human designs being illogical and comprising fallacies. One advocate of this assessment was Xenophanes (570 BC); Solomon and Higgins quote Xenophanes in their book *A Passion for Wisdom: A very Brief History of Philosophy*:

If oxen and horses and lions had hands and could draw as man does, horses would draw the gods shaped as horses and oxen like oxen, each marking the bodies of the gods like their own. (9)

This was probably the first stage where human beings (philosophers) felt the need to transcend the mythological mode of explanation without recourse to ancient

myths based on experience and reason. The purpose for these Greek philosophers was to discover natural, instead of mystical clarifications for natural processes.

1.2 Alienation and Early Greek Philosophers

The next stage came in early Greek thought where the quest was to find one basic substance or element that could explain the whole mystery of existence. The first philosopher we know of is Thales; his notion was that the source of all things was water. Roy Kenneth Hack in *God in Greek Philosophy to the Time of Socrates* writes:

> Thales… says the first cause is water (for which reason he declared that the earth rests on water), getting the notion perhaps from seeing that the nutriment of all things is moist and kept alive by it (and that from which they come to be is a first cause of all things). (42)

In keeping with Thales, It is not confirmed what actually Thales was trying to mean by that or what explanation of the phenomena he wanted to put forth, he may have assumed that wholly life initiated from water and it gets back or turns to water again while dissolving. It is apparent that Thales believed this because he must have seen water turning to ice or vapour and then altering back into water again.

The next philosopher is Anaximander of Miletus who lived at about the same time as that of Thales. His notion was world is only one of an innumerable worlds that grow and disband in boundless. Gregory Vlastos writes in *Studies in Greek Philosophy: The Presocratics* about the boundless as:

> No part of the compound, no matter how minute, being either hot or cold or dry or moist, etc., the whole is just what Aristotle would call "intermediate."… The Boundless itself, being perfectly blended, must be a state of equilibrium. In no portion of it can any power dominate another and commit "injustice." (80)

It is difficult to elucidate what boundless means in his terminology; nonetheless it gives the impression in an unadulterated way that he was not thinking of a familiar element in the way that Thales already had proposed. Possibly he intended that the substance which is the foundation of all things had to be somewhat other than the things that are created. Since the things that are created are inadequate

and imperfect, that which comes afore and afterwards them must be 'boundless.' Thus, it is unblemished that such elementary element cannot be water.

One more philosopher from Miletus was Anaximenes (c. 570—526 B.C.). He assumed the foundation of everything is air. Anaximenes was aware of Thales saying that everything came from water. But the question was where did water come from? He thought that water was condensed air. When human beings observe rain, they see water pressing from the air and when the same water is constrained further, it turns into earth, Anaximenes thought. Moreover, he also believed that fire was rarefied air. Stanley Frederick Sharp writes in *Critical Survey of Philosophy*:

> As we have seen Anaximenes was interested in the problem of the origin and structure of the physical world… he believed it could explain changes in physical states as a result of condensation and rarefication. As, according to Anaximenes, air is continuously in motion, it causes the alternating physical states. Air, he held is infinitely vast in extent and determinate in climate. In its normal state is it invisible but when hot, cold, damp or in motion it becomes visible; rarefied air generates fire; condensed air creates winds and clouds; condensed clouds produce water; and condensed water creates earth, stone and the rest of the world. From air all things exist, have existed and will exist. All of this we now know to be simply wrong. (2)

According to Anaximenes, air was consequently the source of earth, water, and fire. Possibly Anaximenes believed that earth, air, and fire were altogether compulsory to the foundation of life, however that the foundation of all things was air or vapour. Thus, similar to Thales, he assumed that there exists a need for a fundamental constituent that is the foundation of all natural changes.

Next philosopher we come across in Greece was Parmenides (c. 540-480B.C.). Parmenides assumed that in totality whatever exists has continuously been present. Greeks weren't unfamiliar to this notion known as *Immutable One*. They presumed that whatever exists has been existing and is eternal. Nothing can come out of nothing is the creed of Parmenides and nothing that exists can become nothing. There is no such thing as actual change or *dialectics* which means nothing could become anything other than what it is. Gaarder writes:

Parmenides understood, undeniably, that nature is in a state of constant change. He perceived through senses that things do change. But he could not connect this with what his reason accepted. When forced to choose between relying either on his senses or his reason, he chose reason because he didn't even believe things seen by sense alone as they give an incorrect picture of the world, a representation that does not tally with our reason. As a philosopher, Parmenides saw it as his assignment to depict all forms of perceptual misconceptions. (29)

Next famous philosopher is Heraclitus (c. 540-480 B.C.) who believed that continuous alterations or movements were in actual fact the utmost rudimentary representatives of nature. It could perhaps be explained that Heraclitus believed in what he could observe than Parmenides did. Gaarder writes in *Sophie's World*:

> "Everything flows," said Heraclitus. Everything is in constant flux and movement, nothing is abiding. Therefore we "cannot step twice into the same river." When I step into the river for the second time, neither I nor the river are the same. Instead of the term "God," Heraclitus often used the Greek word logos, meaning reason. Although we humans do not always think alike or have the same degree of reason, Heraclitus believed that there must be a kind of "universal reason" guiding everything that happens in nature. This "universal reason" or "universal law" is something common to us all, and something that everybody is guided by. And yet most people live by their individual reason, thought Heraclitus. In general, he despised his fellow beings. "The opinions of most people," he said, "are like the playthings of infants." So in the midst of all nature's constant flux and opposites, Heraclitus saw an Entity or one-ness. This "something," which was the source of everything, he called God or logos. (30)

It can be said that in one way, Parmenides and Heraclitus were the directly contradictory to each other. Parmenides' reasoning made it distinguished that nothing could change while as Heraclitus' perception made it equally clear that nature was continuously in a state of alteration. Here we see the first debate between rationalism and empiricism that would continue even in the 17th and 18th century European

philosophy. Moreover, Parmenides and Heraclitus both said two things: Parmenides said:

a)   That nothing alters, and

b)   That our sensory perceptions are untrustworthy.

While as Heraclitus said:

a)   That entirely each thing that exists, alters ("all things flow"), and

b)   That our sensory perceptions are reliable.

This crisis in philosophy was resolved by Empedocles (c. 490-430 B.C.) who explained in a better way how to remove confusion in philosophy. He believed both the scholars were right in one of their assumptions and yet incorrect in the other. The main problem according to Empedocles was that the philosophers were trying to find basic element which causes everything to exist; moreover, it established that the cause of their basic incongruity was that both philosophers had anticipated the existence of only one component. Gaarder writes:

> If this were true, the gap between what reason dictates and what "we can see with our own eyes" would be unbridgeable. Water obviously cannot turn into a fish or a butterfly. In fact, water cannot change. Pure water will continue to be pure water. So Parmenides was right in holding that "nothing changes." But at the same time Empedocles agreed with Heraclitus that we must trust the evidence of our senses. We must believe what we see, and what we see is precisely that nature changes. Empedocles concluded that it was the idea of a single basic substance that had to be rejected. Neither water nor air alone can change into a rosebush or a butterfly. The source of nature cannot possibly be one single "element." (31-32)

Next we face the sophists of Greece; the word 'sophist' can be translated as a wise and well-versed individuals. Their belief was that even supposing if answers to philosophical puzzles may be present, human beings cannot know the truth about the puzzles of the universe; a view in philosophy called scepticism. Nevertheless even if we cannot be sure about answers to all of nature's enigmas, human beings know that general public has to learn to live together. The Sophists selected to concern themselves with human being and his place in society. Gaarder writes:

"Man is the measure of all things," said the Sophist Protagoras (c. 485- 410 B.C.). By that he meant that the question of whether a thing is right or wrong, good or bad, must always be considered in relation to a person's needs. On being asked whether he believed in the Greek gods, he answered, "The question is complex and life is short." A person who is unable to say categorically whether or not the gods or God exists is called an agnostic. The Sophists were as a rule men who had travelled widely and seen different forms of government. Both conventions and local laws in the city states could vary widely. This led the Sophists to raise the question of what was natural and what was socially induced. By doing this, they paved the way for social criticism in the city-state of Athens. They could for example point out that the use of an expression like "natural modesty" is not always defensible, for if it is "natural" to be modest, it must be something you are born with, something innate. (54)

1.3 Alienation during and after Plato

Next is the great philosopher Plato who was concerned with the connection between what is eternal and immutable, on the one hand, and what "flows," on the other. To Plato, these two problems were one and the same. He tried to grasp a 'reality' that was eternal and immutable.

What Plato illustrated in the *Myth of the Cave* is the philosopher's road from ghostly images to the true ideas behind all natural phenomena. Plato's argument was that the connection between the darkness of the cave and the world beyond corresponds to the relationship between the forms of the natural world and the world of ideas. Not that he meant that the natural world is dark and monotonous, but then that it is dark and dreary in contrast with the lucidity of ideas. Rivca Gordon writes in *Existential Thinking*: *Blessing and Pitfalls*:

According to Plato, the good emerges in those he calls worthy in themselves. Things worthy in themselves include wisdom, knowledge, friendship, love, beauty, courage, truth, justice, and freedom. The reading of literature and diaries discloses that people in all lands, whatever their culture or religion, have anxiety about the good. One prominent example of this anxiety emerges when we perceive that, in all societies many people are anxious when they are

called upon to realize in their lives those blessings that Plato defined as things worthy in themselves. (120)

Next, we see the Cynics who question the world's limits and thus feel alienated because they are unable to identify with those who they perceive as content with the world as it is. Lorie Odegaard writes in *The Goddess and the God: A Synthesis*:

The famous of the Cynics was Diogenes, who used to live in a barrel and owned nothing but a cloak, a stick, and a bread bag. Diogenes showed that he was no less happy and rich than any great man before him because he had everything he desired. The creed of Cynics was that people do not need to be worried about their own condition. Even distress and death should not disturb them and neither should they let themselves be tortured by fear for other's miseries. The Stoics, furthermore, stressed that all natural processes, such as sickness and death, follow the resilient laws of nature. (456)

A human being must consequently learn to agree to take what his destiny offers because nothing happens inadvertently and that whatever happens, it is through necessity; therefore there is little use in complaining when fate decides something painful for a human being. A human being must also admit the joyful events of life in a composed way. Strauss *et al* writes in *Western Civilization: Beyond Boundaries*:

Around the year 300 B.C., Epicurus (341-270) founded a school of philosophy in Athens. His followers were called Epicureans. He developed the pleasure ethic of Aristippus and combined it with the atom theory of Democritus. Epicurus emphasized that the pleasurable results of an action must always be weighed against its possible side effects. Epicurus also believed that a pleasurable result in the short term must be weighed against the possibility of a greater, more lasting, or more intense pleasure in the long term. (105)

Gaarder writes:

Unlike animals, we are able to plan our lives. We have the ability to make a 'pleasure calculation.' Epicurus emphasized, though, that 'pleasure' does not necessarily mean sensual pleasure. Morals for instance companionship and the gratitude of arts also count. Moreover, the delights of life necessitated the old

Greek ideals of discipline, sobriety, and tranquillity. Desire must be controlled, and serenity will help us to endure pain. Fear of the gods brought many people to the garden of Epicurus. In this connection, the atom theory of Democritus was a useful cure for religious superstitions. In order to live a good life it is not unimportant to overcome the fear of death. To this end Epicurus made use of Democritus's theory of the "soul atoms." Epicurus said quite simply, "because as long as we exist, death is not here. And when it does come, we no longer exist. (112)

Epicurus summed up his redemptive thinking with his four medicinal sages:

1. The gods are not to be frightened of.
2. Death is not to be feared.
3. Good is easy to attain.
4. The fearful is easy to endure.

Live in seclusion! is what Epicurus recommends. We could perhaps compare his "garden" with our present-day communes. There are many people in our own time who have sought a "safe harbor"— away from society. John Bellamy Foster in *MarxÕs Ecology: Materialism and Nature*, Bellamy quotes Marx on Epicurus as, "Epicurus was the first to grasp appearance as appearance, that is, as alienation of the essence, activating itself in its reality as such as alienation" (55). Foster further writes, "Epicurus, Marx argued, was the first to discover alienation embedded via religion in the human conception of nature" (230).

1.4 Alienation in Mysticism

Similarly, after having a brief introduction how many philosophers in the past tried to explain the basic reason for existence and meaning of life, there has always remained a group of philosophers who are commonly known as Mystics who explain alienation as something that connects a human being to a divine being or transcendental reality occurring in a mystical experience. A mystical experience is an understanding of integration with God or the 'divine' or 'ultimate reality'. Various convictions stress the void between God and Creation, but the mystic recognises no such abyss. Gaarder writes:

The idea is that what we usually call "I" is not the true "I." In short glimpses we can experience an identification with a greater "I." Some mystics call it God, others call it the cosmic spirit, Nature, or the Universe. When the fusion happens, the mystic feels that he is "losing himself"; he disappears into God or is lost in God in the same way that a drop of water loses itself when it merges with the sea. An Indian mystic once expressed it in this way: "When I was, God was not. When God is, I am no more." The Christian mystic Angelus Silesius (1624-1677) put it another way: Every drop becomes the sea when it flows oceanward, just as at last the soul ascends and thus becomes the Lord. Now you might feel that it cannot be particularly pleasant to "lose oneself." I know what you mean. But the point is that what you lose is so very much less than what you gain. You lose yourself only in the form you have at the moment, but at the same time you realize that you are something much bigger. You are the universe. (115)

Plotinus (204—270 C.E.), who is known to be the forefather of Neoplatonism took his lead from Plato and developed a multifaceted 'spiritual cosmology' that involved three foundational fundamentals which are: 'the One', 'the Intelligence', and 'the Soul'; and, from these three the productive unity starts what is called 'the existence'. Thomson Gale in his article "Alienation" writes:

Historians of philosophy trace the concept back to the writings of Plotinus, whose doctrine of emanation assumed a procession from an ultimate undefinable source or principle to a multiplicity of finite beings: the undivided One unfolds into its various manifestations by a downward process linking the supersensible Being with a hierarchy of lower spheres and ultimately with the world of nature and material existence, matter being the lowest stage of the universe and the antithesis to the One. These Neoplatonic speculations had their counterpart in certain themes of early Christian theology, the gradual fusion of Christianity and Neoplatonism forming an important aspect of the Hellenistic era. For example, the Plotinian identification of matter with the principle of evil may be said to represent a link between Gnostic speculation and the theology of Augustine, whose writings in turn were to become an important source for the Lutheran interpretation of Christianity and therewith

for the German Protestant tradition, which in the nineteenth century was secularized in the philosophical writings of Hegel and Feuerbach.(par.2)

In Western mysticism, that is, within Judaism, Christianity, and Islam— the mystic stresses that his meeting is with a personal God. Even though God or divine exists both in nature as well as in every human soul, yet he is also far above and outside this world. Pravin K. writes in *Unity in Diversity*:

In Eastern mysticism, for example in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Chinese religion, it is more typical to highlight that the mystic experiences as a total amalgamation with God or the 'divine' For God is not only present in the world; he has nowhere else to be. (7)

In India, chiefly, there have been resilient transcendental movements even before Plato. Swami Vivekenanda, an Indian who was influential in transporting Hinduism to the Europe and America, once said, "Just as certain world religions say that people who do not believe in a personal God outside themselves are atheists, we say that a person who does not believe in himself is an atheist. Not believing in the splendour of one's own soul is what we call atheism." Moreover, a mystical understanding can correspondingly ensure ethical implications. William Johnston writes in the foreword of his magnum opus *The Mysticism of The Cloud of Unknowing*:

In other words, when we speak of mysticism, we speak of an area in which man is no longer completely in command of his own life, his own mind, and of his own will. Yet at the same time his surrender to a God who is "more intimate to him than his own self" and therefore mysticism precludes real alienation. (xi)

This introduction has highlighted what philosophers of the past thought and speculated about the meaning of existence and how their quest for the meaning to find what it is that makes meaning of human existence. From Myths to theists, rationalists and empiricists, all we see is that the quest is still going on and the one thing gets clearer with each philosopher after visiting his thoughts that alienation in a human being or beings is going to be there till the end because the question of the meaning of

life will forever remain an enigma until the problem of what to do here in this universe and why a human being is here existing is not resolved.

1.5 Alienation in Contemporary Society

Alienation is a precise word for describing the major problem that our society is facing today. Human beings feel alienated by society and it is considered to be a new phenomenon but the correct answer is that it has been with us, with human beings all the time. The only thing that can be argued is that it is more widespread today, more pervasive than even before. Alienation is a cry of a human being who feels himself as the victim of blind forces which are beyond his control. A feeling of hopelessness and despair comes because a human being cannot do anything in shaping his destiny. Harold Bloom writes in his book *Alienation*:

> The term alienation has its simple meaning—a condition of being estranged from someone or something—but it also has technical meanings. For instance, in law, alienation refers to a conveyance of property; something is said to be "alienable" if it can be sold. Alternately, Thomas Jefferson's famous rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are so tied to the essence of mankind as to be "inalienable" rights; no quantity of gold or silver can make a person relinquish them. In social psychology, alienation refers to a person's psychological withdrawal from society. In this sense, the alienated individual is isolated from other people; taken to an extreme, such psychological isolation expresses itself in neurosis. In critical social theory, alienation has an additional sense of separating the individual from his or herself, a fragmenting of one's self through work. (2)

David C. Schwartz in *Political Alienation and Political Behaviour* writes, "Alienation might then be defined formally as an attitude of separation or estrangement between oneself and some salient aspect of social environment" (7). Similarly, Erich Fromm's definition of alienation is often quoted while discussing it. The definition is quoted from *Three Authors of Alienation: Bombal, Onetti, Carpentier* written by M. Ian Adams and it follows as:

> By Alienation is meant a mode of experience in which the person experiences himself as an alien. He has become, one might say, estranged from himself. He does not experience himself as the centre of his world, as the creator of his

own acts- but his acts and their consequences have become his masters, whom he obeys, or whom he may even worship. The alienated person is out of touch with himself as he is out of touch with other person. (5)

Thomson Gale writes in the first paragraph of his article "Alienation" published in *Encyclopedia.com* about Alienation that it has various meanings in science and philosophy and everyday life. Gale writes:

The term alienation (estrangement) has many different meanings in everyday life, in science, and in philosophy; most of them can be regarded as modifications of one broad meaning which is suggested by the etymology and the morphology of the word—the meaning in which alienation (or estrangement) is the act, or result of the act, through which something, or somebody, becomes (or has become) alien (or strange) to something, or somebody, else. (1)

Dwight G. Dean writes in his article "Alienation and Political Apathy" published in Oxford Journals by Oxford University Press:

By "alienation" is meant that men pursue goals, and use means in their pursuit, determined either by social entities with which they do not feel intimately identified or by forces which they may be unable to recognize at all. Thus no man "wants" war, yet two are fought on a world-wide scale within a quarter-century. Practically everyone desires economic security, yet our society encountered its most devastating depression during the thirties, and fears still another. These are but two dramatic indications that social forces are abroad which most men little understand, to say nothing of master. The growth of alienation implies that the range of choice open to the ordinary individual, the area of discretion available to him, is declining. (185)

Commonly the word Alienation is used often to mean turning away or keeping away. But in Law, it means 'transference of estate' from one man to another person by a deal or through gift. Similarly in Psychiatry, It has been defined as some sort of aberration or deviation from normality. While as in sociology, it is often used to designate a person's feeling of alienation towards any form of existing phenomena

whether being culture or people, or any other form. Gale in second paragraph of his online article again writes:

> For many sociologists and philosophers, alienation is the same as reification: the act (or result of the act) of transforming human properties, relations, and actions into properties and actions of things that are independent of man and that govern his life. For other philosophers, "alienation" means "self-alienation" (self-estrangement): the process, or result of the process, by which a "self" (God or man) through itself (through its own action) becomes alien (strange) to itself (to its own nature). (2)

Looking at the history of the word 'Alienation', we see from the philosophy of history that most scholars agree it was Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel who elaborated the concept of Alienation. Others explain that it is *The Holy Bible* and the concept of original sin and redemption that created the concept Alienation. In Hegel, it is concluded that his doctrine of alienation and dealienation . There are others who claim that the concept of alienation came to humanity from idolatry. There is also one more view that this word actually has a history dated back to Plato. Gale writes, "others have maintained that the source for Hegel's view of nature as a self-alienated form of Absolute Mind can be found in Plato's view of the natural world as an imperfect picture of the sublime world of Ideas" (3). When it comes to those philosophers who elaborated the concept of Alienation, then it is important to mention some important names like Ludwig Feuerbach, Karl Marx, Soren Kierkegaard, Jean Paul Sartre, Martin Heidegger, and Albert Camus.

1.6 Alienation in Hegel and Marx

In Hegel, we see that his theory about alienation is that whatever exists is in a rounded way of estrangement and de-estrangement, whether it be Mind, Absolute spirit, God or Language. The history of mankind is the history of progress of a human being's understanding of the 'Meaning of life' or 'Absolute' and the knowledge in this process of evolving gives self-knowledge of the Absolute. This self-knowledge though finite makes an individual ready to comprehend and become self-aware and then makes him ready to return to himself from the alienation that has been caused in nature. This limited mind of a human being also turn into becoming alienated and it is its crucial and distinguishing aspect to objectify itself in physical things, objects, and

many other human structures and this each objectification is an instance of alienation i.e. the objects that were created are themselves now the alienated objects to the producer. Gale writes in the fourth paragraph of "Alienation" in *Encyclopedia.Com* that:

> 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 on of the self-knowledge of the Absolute. To the extent that he does not perform this function, he does not fulfil his human essence and is merely a self-alienated man. (4)

Feuerbach also acknowledged Hegel's observation that a human being can get 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" (Gale, para. 5) and a human being is not alienated from himself when he declines to recognize nature as a being itself self-alienated form of God; An individual is alienated from himself when he produces and places above himself an fictional imaginary unknown higher being and then pays obeisance before that being as a slave. The end to this alienation of human beings resides in the refutation of that estranged image of a human being that is God.

Similarly, one more famous philosopher who wrote about alienation is Karl Marx. He criticized Hegel and turned his philosophy upside down as is the famous phrase about it. Rabindra N. Kanungo writes in *Work Alienation: An Integrative Approach*:

> Marx followed Hegel's philosophical treatment of the concept of alienation but carved a place for it in political economy, rather than in philosophy. If Hegel, following theologians and philosophers of his time, identified the basic psychological state of alienation in individuals' spiritual lives, Marx identified it in their material working lives. Thus, Marx spoke of alienation of labour, rather than spiritual alienation. (13)

His concept of alienation is more associated with daily wage workers. Richard Schmitt writes in *Alienation and Freedom*:

The wage workers Marx had in mind differed from today's salaried professionals in that they had few skills. They just worked, not for the sake of work satisfaction, or in order to use and expand their skills, but merely for the money: They worked pretty much where they earned the most, selling their time and energy to the highest bidder without taking into account the character of the work they might have been required to do. The money earned was more important than the actual work. (29)

It is actually the unequal distribution of power that those who are in power have control over the means of production and other essential things for survival. Daily wage workers hardly manage to get those things or fulfil their dreams. This is the reason for alienation and it means they are at loss and workers are vulnerable to all such kinds of alienation whether from self, from society, from his species, from perception of the reality of the structure of the world. Allen Wood writes in *Marx-Arg Philosophers*:

Marx comes quite close to describing alienation explicitly as a lack of meaning or self –worth. He says that alienated workers are people 'robbed of all actual life content', and rendered 'worthless, devoid of dignity'. Under existing social relations, 'man is a degraded, enslaved, forsaken, despicable being'. (9)

Marx has discussed four aspects of alienation, one is from the object that is produced by the worker and the second one is from the work that one does, i.e., from the work itself. The third is man's alienation from himself and the fourth one is from other human beings. This means that a human being feels powerless, and feels the meaninglessness of life and gets estranged from the whole world from all these types of alienations.

For Marx, alienation comes from division of labour and by private ownership and by the context in which exploitation of human beings is done, in the social and economic context of work. Man's own work is becomes something external to him and it generates misery. This makes a man exhausted and mentally debased which is rather an extreme form of his alienation. Thomas Gale writes in the seventh paragraph of his famous article "Alienation" writes:

Man not only alienates his own products from is 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 of 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 fulfils himself as a free, creative being of praxis. (7)

1.7 Alienation in Ericc Fromm and Durkheim

Ericc Fromm also elaborated and expanded Marx's and Freud's conceptions of alienations as he defines it as an approach of involvement where a human being perceives himself as the core of the entire cosmos, and as himself being the designer of his own acts but the consequences of his acts is that they become his masters whoever he obeys or whoever he worships. Eric Fromm is the most important figure who popularised this term in English speaking world. Erich Fromm famous lines about alienation have become famous which he wrote in his book *The Sane Society*, he writes:

By alienation is meant a mode of experience in which the person experiences himself as an alien. He has become, one might say, estranged from himself. He does not experience himself as the centre of his world, as the creator of his own acts – but his acts and their consequences have become his masters, whom he obeys, or whom he may even worship. The alienated person is out of touch with himself as he is out of touch with any other person. He, like the others, are experienced as things are experienced; with the senses and with common sense, but at the same time without being related to oneself and to the world outside productively. (120)

Fromm particularly concentrates more on man and his relationship to himself. To him, alienation has become an endemic disease in the modern world, i.e., the capitalistic society. Helen Osieja in *Pedagogy and Conscience: The Teacher as an Agent of Awareness* writes:

Fromm defines alienated individual as somebody as "the person who can only experience the outer world photographically, but is out of touch with his inner world". The opposition of schizophrenia, that is, when the individual cannot experience the outer world objectively, as most do. (15)

Another Philospher, Émile Durkheim (1858—1917), considered to be the founder of modern sociology and the theory that society is *sui generis* reality, or a truth which is exclusive to itself and intricate enough to its composing parts. Unlike Marx, who viewed alienation originating from a non-existence of freedom and control, Durkheim explained it as a result of a situation of 'anomie' which means a collapse on/in/within social structure. Anomie for Durkheim has two senses which are meaninglessness and the other sense in which he uses the term is social deviance. In the first sense, it means that a state of normality occurs within a society where norms are slowly getting destroyed and tradition is being forgotten with moral norms included as well. Thus, the society starts to live life as it has no meaning in itself. In the second sense, it necessarily doesn't mean but it means rejection of conventional norms of society. Shrawan K. Sharma writes in *Alienation in the Poetry of Matthew Arnold*:

Although 'anomie' is an organizational characteristic, it is also subjectively experienced by the individual members of the affected system. Durkheim himself made use of this circumstance in his theory. (4)

Sharma further elaborates, "Strole defines 'anomie' as a generalized, pervasive sense of "self-to-others alienation," and intends his scale as a general indicator of alienation from society" (4). But one question that has been put to Durkheim is that there exists hardly any society or any culture which has remained in a state of equilibrium when compared with its values. We see in modern world which believes in democracy that there is a conflict between values and compromise and it rests on disequilibrium and if eliminated, totalitarianism will replace it. This will result in alienation again because totalitarianism is itself a cause of alienation of man and it deprives an individual of his right to dissent as Sharma writes, "It is discontent which ushers in change and progress, and not alienation" (Sharma 5). One may claim similarities between Marx's notion of the division of labour and Durkheim's concept of 'anomie' that both reinforce meaninglessness and have some relationship with each

other. The answer is yes because in a society where both anomic and forced division of labour meet, resentment and meaninglessness complement each other there. There are many critics who distinguish between alienation as espoused by Marx and as defined by Durkheim, for example, Kenneth Thompson writes in *Emile Durkheim* that if concept of anomie is differentiated and separated from that Marx's concept of alienation as Thompson writes:

> Some critics have sought to contrast Durkheim's concept of anomie with Marx's concept of alienation, but the contrast only holds up if anomie is kept separate from the forced division of labour; whereas in practice, as Durkheim perceived, they are frequently combined. There can be absence of regulation (anomie) at one level and coercive regulation at another level (forced division of labour), as exemplified by unrestricted competition and lack of agreement over the regulations of prices and incomes, on the one hand, and inequality of opportunities on the other. (87)

One more Sociologist who discusses alienation is Robert Morrison MacIver who has given his perspectives on alienation. MacIver considers alienation as one of the maladies in the modern world, especially in a world of democracy. He uses a word 'anomy' to which has been explained to mean 'lawlessness' but means more than this and is used to explain the life of a human being which is sterile in matters of spirituality and he is only responsive to himself and responsible to none. Sharma writes in *Alienation in the Poetry of Matthew Arnold*:

> He [MacIver] refers to three types of anomic persons- first those who having lost altogether abandon themselves to the present, but a present devoid of any significance; those who, having lost their ethical moorings strive to the pursuit of means instead of to the pursuit of ends beyond them; and those are overpowered by fundamental and tragic insecurity. (7)

Mills and Goffmans define alienation in a psychoanalytical way, they think of it as 'self-manipulation' while Goffman thinks of it as 'faculty interaction'. Sharma quotes Mill as:

> ...Men are estranged from one another as each secretly tries to make an instrument of the other, and in time a full circle is made: one makes an instrument of himself and is estranged from it also. (Sharma 8)

Michele Dillon writes about Goffmanin *Introduction to Sociological Theory: Theorists, Concepts, and their Applicability to the Twenty-First Century*:

> In Goffman's theory, the capacity to act on feeling derives only from the occasions [settings/situations], not from the individuals. The self may actively choose to display feelings in order to give outward impressions to others. But it is passive to the point of invisibility when it comes to the private act of managing emotions" (1983:218). In other words, Goffman takes it for granted that social actors manage the display of emotions in their self –presentation; he is not interested in the feelings beneath or behind the role performance, but in role performance irrespective of the actors' feelings. (340)

1.8 Alienation in Kierkegaard

One more major philosopher who has described alienation is Kierkegaard. Kierkegaard's contribution to existentialism is gigantic. One of only few thinkers who scrutinized human being as incapable of understanding his existence and meaning of existence in the world. It is this innovative understanding of man that is providing us the apparatuses to inspect the individual's affiliation to the social structure. This understanding attempts to enquire about an individual who is not contented and satisfied with his place in the world or, worse still, has gone astray to be estranged from his surroundings and his own self – everything which is in front of him/her. Kierkegaard's concept of alienation is closely related to the conception of a God, they should be considered more broadly as an idea of modern man (who in Kierkegaard's time was a Christian), who has went far away and lost his true essence, irrespective of creed, as the story of man struggling to understand his true meaning of his/her existence. Kierkegaard's philosophy discloses the incongruity between man's yearning to return to faith and the trouble and apparent improbability of that yearning the minute he is placed near the actuality of existence. From the perspective of modernity and the advances of science, acceptance of the divine seems doubtful; therefore, a human being's recognition of sacred conviction, Christianity in particular, is presented with obvious difficulty. Roubiczek writes, "The explanation of existence, however, must begin with personal experience, and so, to explain the phenomenon of faith, Kierkegaard uses the personal experiences of mythological and biblical characters to illustrate it."(Roubiczek 56) Kierkegaard emphasizes upon enlightening

Christianity among his contemporaries – all philosophical questions were reduced to the question of belief as the ultimate goal. The question of man's authentic being can only be related to man's belief in God, overpowering together both sets of the faithlessness in commonplace way of being which are the aesthetic and the ethical.

Kierkegaard's purpose is to make it clear and lucid that besides an individual, there is a sophisticated order, an intricate demand, and that it is only by following this order that a human has the potential to turn into a complete human being. Kierkegaard writes, "[F]or a person who has no God has no self either. […]Since for God everything is possible, then God is that everything is possible" (Kierkegaard 45). This harmony, nonetheless, is not straightforwardly attained, as modernity's attraction and pull is a subtle and yet powerful one, with its own merits and propositions for a man, but which nevertheless tears and militates in choosing the religious realm. It is this very struggle that alienation appears in Kierkegaard's writings more as a spiritual alienation or as Kenevan writes "humanity's failure to make the leap to faith needed to relate to their creative source" (Kenevan7). Jaanika Puusalu writes in his Master's Thesis *Malformation of Belonging: Historical Analysis of the Development of the Concept of Alienation*:

> It is with the notion of despair that Kierkegaard fully reveals his understanding of self, a "conscious synthesis of infinitude and finitude, which reaches to itself, whose task is to become itself, which can only be done in the relationship of God."(31)

When self is the concreteness of this synthesis – moving away from self, infinitization of self and then coming back to one self, then self which is not able to confirm this is in despair. "Yet a self, every moment it exists, is in process of becoming; […] [A]s the self does not become itself, it is not itself." (Kierkegaard 31)

Despair, therefore, is nothing unfamiliar to human nature, but in contrast is a common way of performing in ordinary life, which can be overcome only by an enthusiastic believer. Kierkegaard writes:

> Despair is not a result of the imbalance, but the relation which relates to itself. And the relation to himself is something human being cannot be rid of, just as little as he can be rid of himself, which for that matter is one and the same thing, since the self is indeed the relation to oneself. (Kierkegaard14)

Jaanika Puusalu again writes:

> With the concept of despair, however, Kierkegaard's aim is not solely to explain alienation but to do so vividly, to truly communicate the feeling of agony that alienation from one's true being brings. The language that Kierkegaard employs to address the matter – the diagnosis of sickness – further emphasizes its agony, powerfully illustrating the helplessness of the state in which man, without faith, finds himself: "Furthermore, the common view overlooks the fact that, when compared with illness, despair differs from what one usually calls sickness, because it is sickness of the spirit." (Kierkegaard 24)

In the similar investigation, nonetheless, the antidote for this upsetting state–, as Kenevan writes, "worse by far than physical sickness – is understood as well – there is no respite except that found through faith" (Kenevan7)

1.9 Alienation in Heidegger

One more philosopher to who has explained alienation is Heidegger. Heidegger's notion of alienation is more of an enlightening incident which makes an individual to reassess his existence and ponder over all other possibilities available to him. His perception of alienation is related to permanence; with which an individual is deeply absorbed in the world of 'they', where one "think[s], act[s] and do[es] what everyone else thinks, acts and does" (Large 56). This builds a sense of permanence in an individual and hides the very fact of existence, i.e., there is nothing over which we can establish the foundation of our existence except those reasons and prepositions that we ultimately create for ourselves to make universe comprehensible to ourselves. Sharin N. Elkholy in *Heidegger and a Metaphysics of Feeling: Angst and the Finitude of Being* writes:

> The nothingness about 'Being' that Heidegger wants humans to acknowledge is a nothingness that points to the fact that Being, as the groundless ground of all possibilities, can never be explicitly comprehended. But... the mood of Angst is the vehicle to this nothingness inherent to 'Being'. (16)

Alienation originates from the feeling that one's existence will come to an end and one will die; completely terminated from this world. This is the most emotional

experience in the life of a human being and no other experience can be compared to it. The experience that one will cease to 'be'; that one will become nothing, and the feeling that "it is the voice of Dasein as 'not-at-home', as the bare there-Being (Dasein) in the nothingness which remains when it is wrenched from its familiar absorption in the world" (Mulhall 140). It is important to note that according to Heidegger it is not the experience of dying that is feared or that terrorises 'Dasein' but one's not being able to be in the world, i.e., one would become nothing and that he is already on its way. Heidegger writes in *Being and Time*:

> The "nothing" with which anxiety brings us face to face, unveils the nullity by which Dasein, in its very basis, is defined; and this basis itself is as 'thrownness' into death. (356)

Heidegger pictures anxiety in two ways: the usual and imprecise experience against any background emotion to which everyday activities provide an escape and thus succeed in blocking it. The other form characterized by an unequivocal, deep and overwhelming sensation which interrupts and disturbs the normal sense of existence in an individual human being, revealing the uncovered truth of the world and the existence in it. All familiar ways of looking at the world, all well decorated grand ideologies meant for comprehending the basics of existence are stripped away into oblivion. What this experience reveals is upsetting and disturbing; this is why an individual tries to keep it at distance by busying and absorbing himself in the world of 'they-self'. The other approach would make way for the awareness of the insecurity of existence. Heidegger's answer to what should be done in such a circumstance is to submit decisively to what anxiety discloses by admitting and assuming responsibility both for our existence and death. This is the meaning of true freedom for Heidegger, because the world of 'they-self' can never offer shield or any protection against death. This makes us deal with our mortality, i.e., to perceive the temporal nature of our life and become ready to dive in this void of nothingness which he termed as 'thrownness' as he writes in *Being and Time*, "The "nothing" with which anxiety brings us face to face, unveils the nullity by which Dasein, in its very basis, is defined; and this basis itself is as thrownness into death" (356).

Alienation can crop up at any given circumstance or situation and overwhelm and suffocate an individual pointing to him the meaninglessness as the naked truth;

shattering everything within an instant of time. Sharin N. Elkholy in *Heidegger and a Metaphysics of Feeling* writes, "In Angst [Alienation] Da-sein is freed from the possibilities of the 'They'. Angst takes away from Da-sein the possibility of understanding itself, falling prey, in terms of the 'world' and the public way of being interpreted" (59). Alienation creates crisis by alienating an individual from everyday world and providing a way to dwell in the world clear-sightedly and with a pledge of changing the way of living one's life. An individual may still choose the same way of way he has been living so far but anxiety would have already played its role of making this choice an authentic one, i.e., he would do it now by his personal choice. The mood of anxiety makes him aware of what exists and what 'is' implies, by bringing him within a striking distance with his thrownness. Heidegger emphasizes this feeling where an individual doesn't feel at home in the world; where superficiality of every grand and small discourse acting within or over the human way of living is stripped naked because it forces him to focus on his 'Being'.

Daniel O. Dahlstrom in *Heidegger's Concept of Truth* explains anxiety/ alienation in two stages as 'about' and 'for', which he explains as being two sets of propositions often used in explaining Anxiety and Alienation. He writes, "a person is said to be anxious "about" (*vor*) her facticity, the situation into which she is thrown, as well as anxious "for" (*um*) her existence, the possibilities that she inevitably and, more or less responsibly, projects herself" (312). What happens when an individual is alienated is that everything that seems falling away, which in turn provides the basis for understanding of life, the life a human being lives here on this planet. To Heidegger, anxiety is a fundamental need which needs no cure in the form of pills. Frank Schalow in *The Incarnality of Being: The Earth, Animals, and the Body in Heidegger's Thought* writes, "Life-anxiety is a basic metaphysical necessity. It is the presupposition of human greatness. Without that, what would a hero be: either a ruffian or a comedian? (167). This is the main difference between Heidegger and Psychoanalytic schools because Heidegger sees it as a positive phenomena as which is contrary to the later schools as Schalow explains it, "Heidegger emphasizes the positive side of alienation, which sharply diverges from its character as a symptom to which psychoanalysts appeal in diagnosing the pathology of a given patient" (167). ayim Gordon in *The Heidegger-Buber Controversy: The Status of the I-Thou* writes, "If alienation is not soothed, if anxiety is faced courageously, it can lead, Heidegger

holds, to a worthier existence" (34). Alienation in this world, as defined from Heidegger's perspective, reveals that there lies no essential structure other than the possibility which an individual Dasein chooses to pursue while justifying its choice of doing so. Dasein is caught in a finite phenomena, a 'thrownness', moving towards death. This 'thrownness' does not determine the range of possibilities for Dasein but it has to choose among those possibilities. It is anxiety here which makes it clear to it, that there lies no essential structure which may give meaning to it except that it justifies it own choice. Peter S. Dillard quotes Heidegger in *Heidegger and Philosophical Atheology: A Neo-Scholastic Critique*:

> Ontologically, *Dasein* is in principle different from everything present and real which might serve as an ultimate justification for *Dasein's* choices. Beyond the activities and projects, *Dasein* chooses to pursue there is literally nothing. In the "moment of vision" (*Augenblick*) *Dasein* can either accept its ultimate "thrownness" and exist authentically without any metaphysical supports, or it can lapse back into its everyday, inauthentic existence and console itself with the illusion that its choices are ultimately grounded in some present-at-hand "nature". (76)

1.10 Alienation in Sartre

One of the important figures of French Existentialism is Jean-Paul Sartre. Looking at the biographical perspective of Jean-Paul Sartre, it had an abundant impact in the progress of his philosophical belief. 'Alienation' is a primary subject matter in Sartre's philosophy of 'consciousness', 'freedom' and 'nothingness'. Sartre is not a student of Bergson but he is seen be motivated to his theory of consciousness. There are other influences on Sartre, like Descartes, Husserl, Heidegger and Nietzsche. Sartre produced his first philosophical essay in 1930, "The Transcendence of the Ego" in which he defied a number of principles of Husserl's phenomenology. It is in the critical experience of being imprisoned in Nazi camp that the origin of Sartre's theory of human relationships is to be found. He has advanced the concept of an individual who he can exist distant from other human beings.

Sartre's great philosophical treatise *Being and Nothingness* explains the conditions of human beings from an individual's perspective. Sartre has acknowledged 'being-for-itself (*etre-en-soi*) which can be translated as consciousness

is a self-sufficient being. *Being-for- itself* has no relationship or association with *being-in-itself* which can be translated as an object. In the *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Sartre recognized Marxism as the factual philosophy of our age. In his final work, *The Family Idiot*, Sartre amalgamated both the individual perspective of *Being and Nothingness* and the social theory of *Critique*. Philip Thody in his book on *Sartre* writes:

> The most significant event in Sartre's early life is of course, the death of his father. Had Jean Baptist survived the fever he had brought back from Cochin China, his son would not have grown up in the Schweitzer household ... Jean-Paul would not have been a lonely child, with neither brother, nor sister and friends who spent most of his time in the imaginary world provided for him by books. (9)

In the play *Les Sequestre'sd 'Altone* (1959), he describes, the hero intentionally spends thirteen years in an attic so that he doesn't know about the events of outer world. Similar to like other existentialist philosophers Sartre explains 'anguish' as a type of an emotion which discloses the real characteristics of man's association with the world and himself. Sartre doesn't agree with Karl Jaspers, holds that the human condition reveals itself more clearly in the state of dread, fear, torment and solitude, than in standard familiarity helps Sartre's childhood experience him to cross the threshold into consciousness theory. Thody explains:

I found more reality in the idea," he states" than in the thing because it was given to me first and because it was given as a thing. (11) Similarly, Prof. Suman Gupta writes in *Twentieth Century Philosophy*:

> In spite of being an activist in the context of concrete social reality, in his philosophy, Sartre tries to deny the objective reality, social development and interpreted man as an important being who canonly feel anguished at his helplessness.... a helpless state which Sartre designated as "freedom". (100)

Most of the existentialist thinkers describe the concept of a human being without speaking considerably about the society and human relationships that include a human being and it is because of this reason their philosophy is entirely metaphysical in essence and identical is the situation with Jean Paul Sartre also. The

constitution of Sartre's philosophy is unquestionably Cartesian in its essence. Sartre initiates his famous book *Being and Nothingness* by replicating and commenting about the Cartesian 'cogito', yet the structure of his philosophy remains disparate from Descartes. Sartre's philosophy also owes to the philosophers like Berkeley, David Hume, and Immanuel Kant, and other philosophers like G.W.G. Hegel, Karl Marx, Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Nietzsche, helped Sartre, in formulating his essential ideas.

A discussion on Husserl, Heidegger and Sartre will help in understanding more comfortably what Sartre meant by 'alienation'. Sartre's philosophy in his early essays revolves on the conception of consciousness. It can be explained that consciousness is the basis from where Sartre begins his viewpoint. *Nothingness*, *Freedom*, *alienation* all are following from his 'consciousness.' 'The Transcendence of the Ego', Sartre recognized Husserl's theory of consciousness, which is as Gianfranco Dalla Barba quotes Husserl in *Memory, Consciousness and Temporality*, "Consciousness is consciousness of something" (92). In visualization of consciousness, there cannot or must not be participation of any object inside it and it cannot speculate an object. But in case of comprehending consciousness there is a chance of postulating an object inside it and this is what Sartre consents to, i.e., visualizing consciousness as the establishment of a human being.

Robert Richmond Ellis describes, "It is as a negation of the real that Sartre approaches the problem of art. The real, he states is completely contingent and for this reason never beautiful." (Richmond 12) And Sartre quotes in *The Psychology of Imagination*, "Beauty is a value applicable only to the imaginary and which means the negation of the world in its essential structure."(12)

In *Being and Nothingness* Sartre discusses the theory of consciousness in a more explained way. Sartre brings with an argument of the relationship between consciousness and the being of which it is conscious. Sartre accepts the dualism of Rene Descartes in his philosophy which fails to ascertain dialectical relations connecting appearance and essence, subject and object, possibility and actuality etc. The introduction of *Being and Nothingness* begins as:

Modern thought has realized considerable progress by reducing the existent to the series of appearances which manifest it. It aim was to overcome a certain

number of dualism which have embarrassed philosophy and to replace them by the monism of the phenomenon. (Sartre 3)

Sartre categorizes appearance with essence and he doesn't take into account essence of thing, merely presence in there and that is his consciousness. What is meant by the term essence here? Suman Gupta describes these views:

Essence, as a philosophical category, means the sum total of ties, relations and internal laws determining the transformation of an objective system. Essence implies the underlying causal connections in clear phenomena. Appearances on the other hand, are the external aspects of reality. They are the individual phenomena, properties or processes expressing outward aspects of reality. 'The category of essence and appearance forms of unity. (107)

Thus we cannot separate essence from its appearance and vice-versa. It can be valid for an entity, object, or for a human being, etc. The harmony of essences and appearances inaugurates a systematic outlook. Marx Says, "... All science would be superfluous if the outward appearance and the essence of things directly coincided" (Marx 817). Here the dialectics of Marx can be applied on to explain how quantitative leads to qualitative changes. A human being for Marx, through his understanding is able to renovate the impartial reality and also, this knowledge is imaginable only if there is an interaction between a subject and object. Sartre writes, "The appearances which manifest the existent are neither interior nor exterior; they are equal they all refer to other appearance, and none of them is privileged" (Sartre 3). Sartre's ontological status stands on only appearance. In this context Sartre has also overruled Kant's *thing-in-itself* or *noumena.* Sartre's *thing- in- itself* is indefinite and incomprehensible. For Sartre, Consciousness is continuously calculated in character directed towards at an entity. Similarly, the object also assumes consciousness. But it does not presuppose anything like the thing in itself of Kant. Sartre says in *Being and Nothingness*, "But if we once get away from what Nietzsche called, "the illusion of worlds behind the scene" (70); and if human beings discontinue having faith in the creature lying behind the appearance, then the appearance turns into full positivity.

Sartre rejects Immanuel Kant's *thing-in-itself* as the basic cause of the appearances and he holds a similar point with Hume in explaining his theory of 'appearance'. We can relate Sartre's appearance with Hume 'impression'. A brief

account of Hume's theory of 'impression' will make it easier to understand how it is related to Sartre's concept of appearance. Hume describes impressions as:

> As those perceptions which enter into our consciousness, 'with most force and violence,' and adds that he comprehends under the name all our 'sensation, passion and emotions' as they make their first appearances in the soul. (Hume 18)

He further says, "by the term impression is 'all our more lively perception when we hear, or see, or feel, or love, or hate, or desire or will." (Hume 18)

In the introduction of *Being and Nothingness* Sartre defines his venture and identifies it as Phenomenological Ontology. He differentiates his method from Husserl, in which real phenomenology apparently makes way for subjective idealism. Similarly, Sartre differs from Heidegger as he differentiates his approach where pure ontology ostensibly escorts to an incarcerated objectivism oblivious about the problem of subjectivity and consciousness. It is imperative here to discuss these issues in a detailed manner that would like draw a distinction between Phenomenology' and 'phenomenalism'. Phenomenology is a theory that has been used in different sense in contemporary philosophical thinking. Phenomenology is a subject if study where mind can be known and studied as it is in itself through the study of the ways in which it appears to us. Coming back to Heidegger we will see that Sartre is nearer to Heidegger than Husserl because he agrees to take and consent to Heidegger's notion of *being- in- the- world*. For Heidegger, "The essence of Dasein lies in its existence." (67) Sartre in his book *Existentialism is Humanism*, has used the sentence as "existence precedes essence." Silverman writes:

> For Heidegger there is not "the slightest point in common" between these two sentences in particular, Sartre has not understand that if the word essence is written in italics, this is meant to indicate that there is no question of a what, but only of a how. (169)

Sartre Writes in *Being and Nothingness*, "Heidegger has completely avoided any appeal to consciousness in his description of Dasein"(85). Silver & Elliston write:

> Sartre discards the contradictory notion of Dasein in his philosophy. Sartre feels that his consciousness or *being for itself* has one thing common with

Heideggerian analysis of Dasein, i.e., it is always mine", always individual. (Silver & Elliston 170)

The dissimilarity of Sartre from Heidegger is grounded on their individual concept of *nothingness*. For Sartre *Consciousness* is nothing but its *Nothingness* as Sartre writes:

The apprehension of nothingness implies its consciousness. For Sartre, anxiety is the apprehension of nothingness. So far as, Sartre's theory of 'the existence of other's is concerned his view differs from Heidegger. Sartre perceived that even the look of *Others* denies me (oneself) as the subject that I am for myself. He says...."there is no place for death in being which is for-itself. (Sartre 540)

While Sartre differs from Husserl and Heidegger but also consents to their concept of *phenomenological method* and the concept of *being-in-the-world*, Sartre establishes his own theory i.e., Consciousness is always of consciousness of something. Sartre has accepted all some of the views of Husserl and he agrees with Husserl that the character of consciousness is intentional but still, a human being in Sartre's conception is a subjective being who is able to live devoid of civilization and culture. Banaata Kalita writes in *A Study of Sartre*:

In the *Being and Nothingness* Sartre has developed a concept i.e. Bad faith. He says, bad-faith is a matter of lying to oneself. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre has given wide-ranging instances of persons, who are in bad-faith for example, the waiter in the cafe, the homosexual, the women and her would be lover etc. An individual is acting in bad-faith by denying his situation-birth, education, class etc. Sartre said when a person is acting in bad-faith he or she is very much conscious of the truth that he is hiding. Those human beings who are in bad faith are attempting to conceal themselves and hide their transcendence, their freedom, their ability to negate, to separate themselves from, to change, alter, or at least reinterpret their situation. In bad faith, an individual may reject the ambiguous existence of those who realize that they are both being for others and being for themselves that they are both being in the midst of the world and being in the world. That they may believe on perspective on themselves as true while discarding the other as appearance or they may deny

that they are both things as well as beings with futures of possibilities towards which they project themselves. (101)

Coming back to Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* we see Other's look makes an object. Sartre says:

The Other's look the necessary condition of my objectivity is the destruction of all objectivity for me. It is the Other's look, which makes me alienated from myself. My natural tendency according to Sartre is to be repulsed by this alien me and to try to tear myself away from the relation to the other which reveals it to me, in an attempt to avoid acknowledging it. But as I choose myself as a tearing away from the other, I assume and recognize that as mine this alienated me. (285)

The look makes me as an unalterable object, even when the other is no longer present. I cannot escape this aspect of being alienated. (Sartre 412) To Sartre if someone looks at me, I am conscious of being an object. But this consciousness can be formed only in and through the existence of the other. In this respect Hegel was right. However that other consciousness and that other freedom are never given to me; if they are they would he known and would therefore be an object, which would cause me to cease being an object (Sartre 412-413). A look of other makes me an object. And my consciousness is no longer there. It is produced by the existence of the other. My being for others is a fall through absolute emptiness towards objectivity, and this fall is alienation. Thus it is clear that the look gives us the idea of others existence.

In Sartre's own word. This is the fact that being far others is not an ontological structure of *being for itself* we cannot think of deriving *being for others* from a *being for itself* as one would derive in consequence from a principle, nor conversely can we think of deriving being for itself from *being for others*. (Sartre 373). Other's existence creates a fear inside me when others are looking at me, and it is a threat to my existence because of which fear arises. Sartre said fear is the discovery of one's being as object on the occurrence of the appearance of another object in my percept time field. Sartre's character has developed a similar kind of fear because of the existence of others.

We see that Sartre's philosophy is more like a summary of Cartesian dualism. It also became clear by discussing how Sartre was influenced both by the philosophies

of Husserl and Heidegger. Finally, a scholar can perceive and observe that Sartre's notion of alienation is not a conclusion of a particular social set up or due to exploitation; rather he argued alienation arises because of other's Look.

1.11 Alienation in Victor Frankl

One more philosopher to mention regarding the concept of alienation is Victor Frankl, famous for his theory and therapy called 'logotherapy'. His method of analysis is notably branded as 'logotherapy', derived from Greek word *logos*, which means study or word or spirit or God or meaning. Frankl's centre of attention is on meaning and how it is created or searched, although the other meanings are never distant. Frankl while relating his work with other psychiatrists like Freud and Adler proposed that Freud principally assumed a determination in seeking *pleasure* as the source of entire human motivation, to Adler, it is the *will to power* whereas in Frankl's *Logotherapy* it is the *will to meaning*.

Frankl's Logotheraphy has been defined comprehensively by Reker and Chamberlain in their book *Exploring Existential Meaning: Optimizing Human Development across the Life Span*:

> Logotherapy is built on "three pillars": on the freedom of the will, on the will to meaning, and on the meaning of suffering…Life has meaning-as long as one is conscious-in all circumstances, and the will–to-meaning is the main motivating factor in life. People have the freedom to find meaning in life, and the defiant power of the human spirit is a potent force in the struggle for survival. (190)

Frankl was a contemporary of both Freud and Adler and studied with them also and he consented to Freud's notion of *unconscious* but propagates that the will to meaning as more essential to human progress than the will to pleasure. Thomas and Segal write in *Comprehensive Handbook of Personality and Psychopathology, Personality and Everyday Functioning*, "Existential analysis is similar to psychoanalysis and is intended to bring to consciousness and enhance the 'hidden' logos." (194)

Existential analysis may be explained as an exact healing procedure which involves in assisting human beings discern their meaning in life. Frankl writes in *Man's Search for Meaning:*

Logotherapy regards its assignment as that of assisting the patient to find meaning in his life. In as much as logotherapy makes him aware of the hidden logos of his existence, it is an analytical process. (125)

Logotherapy was put to an examination in a personal way in prison by Frankl while being Nazi concentration camps. Frankl writes in *Unheard Cry for Meaning*:

This was the lesson I had to learn in three years spent in Auschwitz and Dachau: those most apt to survive the camps were those oriented toward the future, toward a meaning to be fulfilled by them in the future. (37)

This statement reinforced his belief that the principal human drive is the "will-to meaning". Logotherapy is a separate division of existential-humanistic school of psychiatric help; this is why it puts emphasis on positive implications and meanings in an individual's spirit. Thomas and Segal write in *Comprehensive Handbook of Personality and Psychopathology, Personality and Everyday Functioning*:

The main objective of logotherapy is twofold: facilitate clients' quest for meaning and empower them to live responsibly, regardless of their life circumstances. Logotherapy literally means "healing or therapy through meaning". It comes from the Greek word logos, which may mean the word, meaning, or God's will. Most people do not realize that logotherapy is actually a spiritually-oriented approach towards psychotherapy. (194)

Frankl writes in *Doctor and the Soul*:

A psychotherapy which not only recognizes man's spirit, but actually starts from it may be termed logotherapy. In this connection, logos is intended to signify 'the spiritual' and beyond that 'the meaning. (xvii)

Frankl (1986) proposes that, "three factors characterize human existence as such: man's spirituality, his freedom, his responsibility" (Frankl *Doctor and the Soul* xxiv). According to Frankl's dimensional ontology:

Human beings exist in three dimensions -- somatic, mental and spiritual. Spirituality is the uniquely human dimension. Nevertheless, these dissimilar dimensional entities must be understood in their entirety, because a person is a unity in complexity. (xxiv)

Logotherapy is specifically suitable in dealing with existential neuroses and vacuum which refers to wide-ranging feeling of purposelessness or desolation confirmed by a condition of world-weariness. Paul T. P. Wong quotes Victor Frankl in *From Logotherapy to Meaning-Centered Counselling and Therapy*:

> It is a pervasively happening in contemporary era, because of industrialization, the loss of traditional values and dehumanization of individuals. Most people may experience existential vacuum without developing existential neurosis. Many people feel that life has no purpose, no challenge, no obligation and they try to fill their existential vacuum with materials things, pleasure, sex, power, or busy work, but they are misguided (625).

Frankl writes in *Unheard Cry for Meaning:*

> The feeling of meaninglessness not only underlies the mass neurotic triad of today, i.e., depression-addiction-aggression, but also may eventually result in what we logotherapists call a 'noogenic neurosis. (298)

It should be remembered that existential vacuum should not be understood as a synonym of neurosis or any sickness; nevertheless, it may make human beings aware of their desolation and stimulate a pursuit for meaning. The counsellor can authorize, challenge and make his clients ready and motivated to fill their internal perceived vacuum. Logotherapy can complement psychotherapy in psychogenic circumstances for the reason that "by filling the existential vacuum, the patient will be prevented from suffering further relapses" (Frankl, *Man's Search* p.130)

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