



Theories and Perspectives of Alienation in Present Day World

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Abstract: *The present state of society embodies labour generated alienation transcending from patriarchy into family living styles and various professions giving an important place to filial voice in the ultimate decision- making. Even so, youth cultures are considered deviant. Labour and labour management at various levels of society has led to immense development in various parts of the world. People are in search of communication and identity patterns that would fit in with the needs of every race. With this scenario in mind the present paper tries to review theories and perspectives on alienation. Young people supported by public intellectuals enjoined by numerous organisations and then by countless citizens protest and try to transform themselves from a crowd of alienated individuals into a cohesive community.*

Keywords: *Decision- making, Communication, Identity, Alienation, Deviant.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The idea of alienation manifested itself in the literature, poetry, sculpture, painting and general culture of the times. Alienation also finds a place in everyday language. In Its historic English meaning alienation is equated with transfer of property. It is also used as frustration and hostility. Theologians used it to indicate separation of man from his God. They also saw it as outcastness.

There are five types of alienation as follows:

Estrangement: A person experiences himself as an alien. He is estranged from himself.

Normlessness: In the individual it is manifested as a state of uncertainty and insecurity. It is also generated by a sudden social and economic change in his life. It also results from the ineffectiveness of the culturally prescribed means to attain the culturally expected goals.

Meaninglessness: Lack of understanding of individual's own situation and thereby a failure on his part to predict the outcome of his own behaviour.

Isolation: When individuals fail to assign similar values to rewards that are highly coveted in society. They regard the social goals as being unworthy of being pursued and as such distances themselves from these rewards and the society in general.

Powerlessness: It refers to a lack of control over an individual's own course of action.

II. OVERVIEW OF MAIN THEORIES OF ALIENATION

A. Marx and Engels Theory (1844):

Marx's concept of human nature derived from Hegel takes production as the starting point. For Marx production is the "direct activity of individuality". Through production the individual reproduces himself. In the things produced, the product is the objectification of his labour. Thus, his labour becomes an object, it assumes an external existence. He sees a reflection of his self in the object produced. Man becomes an objective fact for himself. Accomplishes his self-realisation. Therefore through the things produced man comes to "confirm and realize his individuality". Thus production played a very central role in Marx's concept of human nature. According to him there are "social life" and "sensuous life". It is in response to the "sensuous external world" that he produces things. It is wage labour that eats up the object and the consequent self-realization so produced. Marx's idea of socialism is the emancipation from alienation.

B. Weber's Theory (1904-05):

Rationality is a product of democracy, bureaucracy and capitalism. It has led to give values and sentiments a back seat. Weber showed that the fate of modern times is characterized by disenchantment of the world. Men came to seek solace in mysticism or in the bonds of direct and personal relations only. Weber's concern for alienation becomes more explicit in his discussion of bureaucracy. For him bureaucracy was the best agent of rationality. With its emphasis on impersonal rules, precision, unambiguity, matter of factness and calculability, bureaucracy "naturally" promoted a rationality of any sphere of life it came in contact with. The real threat of alienation in the modern world, therefore, lay in the ever greater bureaucratization.



C. Mannheim's Theory (1923):

Objects of culture get transmitted in the form of religion, art, science, literature, the state and mode of social life. This is the superstructure according to Marx. According to Mannheim, when creativity is suppressed, it leads to alienation.

III. FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES ON OBJECTIFICATION

A. Immanuel Kant (1785):

Inequality as such is rampant in society. The way to fight objectification is to fight gender inequality. Kant thought that solution to sexual objectification is marriage and at that monogamous marriage.

B. Sandra Bartky (1990):

She uses Marx's theory of alienation to explain the objectification that results from women's preoccupation with their appearance. Labour is the most apparent human activity and its product is the exteriorization of the worker's being. And since the workers are alienated from the products of labour and thus objectification of selves. She attributes objectification to patriarchy: the objectifier and the objectified.

Mckinnon and Dworkin (1998) share the same view. Women wish themselves narcissism and are infatuated with their own being. Some feminists take women's and men's preoccupation with themselves as a matter of personal preference and not a feminist matter. Men's and women's object like status is not a natural fact, rather a consequence of gender inequality.

IV. ALIENATED PARENTS AND CHILDREN

There are alienated parents and children who wish to, secretly, get each other's love. The negative opinions of the alienating parent is not shared by the rest of the world (Warshak, 2010). Alienated parents acutely feel the hostility and rejection of their children, who seem cruel, heartless of their parents. Yet it is important to realize from their child's perspective, it is the targeted parent who has rejected them, they have been led to believe that the parent they are rejecting does not love them is unsafe and has abandoned them. Thus the primary response of the alienated parent must always be one of loving compassion, emotional availability and absolute safety. Patience and love, unconditional love, being there for the child, is the best response that the alienated parents can provide to bring the child back.

Children's connections to each parent must be fully respected to ensure their well-being as these children instinctively know that they are a combination of their mother and their father. A non-punitive approach along with proper custody of the child with the non-alienating parent is effective with co-parenting as a primary goal. Reunification is essential for the well-being of the family. (Baker, 2010)

V. CONCLUSION

The Western emphasis on the individual has led to stunning economic developments but also to alienation, anxiety and social divisions. A pervasive alienation from and apprehension towards others can lead to a desire for certainty, rigid boundaries and then physical separation. This encourages fundamentalist ways of thinking that can be bridged through new forms of communication.

The classical concerns of objectification, estrangement and alienation as articulated by Marx have generally been considered to be the basis of powerlessness and isolation in modern "mass society". In this type of society, armies of "cheerful robots" toil in meaningless work by day, snub their consciousness via mass culture in the evening and find momentary gratification in the competitive consumerism on weekends.

Even if this "ideal typical" description of life in a contemporary society may be a bit overdrawn, most examinations of alienation nevertheless focus on how the conditions of capitalist work, consumption and leisure time thwart human capacities for creative self-fulfillment and meaningful communal life.

All thinkers came to locate the source of alienation in the social, economic and political structure of modern society. They all seemed to agree on the nature of alienation and the forms it took. Their focuses were on the capitalist economy. While Weber though aware of such forces agreed that it was not the economy as such but rationality and the process of bureaucratization which are responsible for the alienation of modern society. Mannheim on the other hand, like Marx, finds the source of alienation in the lack of control of the producer over his own "works". And again like Weber, he also recognized the consequences of over rationality that led to alienation. These differences may be traced to differences in the life experiences of these scholars.

Thus while Marx could only speculate about society fully alienated, Weber and Mannheim were almost living in it. Marx was wholly utopian in his conception of society free of alienation, while Weber could never see an end to it.



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