



## A Sociological Search for the Metaphysical Roots of Man's Alienation From Self

Ron Shane<sup>[a],\*</sup>; Lauren Kupis<sup>[a]</sup>; Alva Liang<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>[a]</sup>Department of Theatre, University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, California, USA.

\*Corresponding author.

Received 12 June 2015; accepted 13 August 2015

Published online 26 September 2015

### Abstract

The intent of this article is to demonstrate the coalescence between social psychology and English literature. Alienation is a phenomenon which must be comprehended both in sociological terms, and likewise, utilizing literary constructs. It is demonstrated in this work that alienation encompasses more than social alienation, psychological alienation, or sequestering from an individual's work related pursuits. It is shown by the authors that alienation is also prodigiously metaphysical, where the individual is inflicted by a separation from self that involves the cryptic workings of the unconscious. It is necessary for both sociologists, psychologists, as well as other practitioners who are concerned with the multi-dimensional aspects of alienation to understand how this psychological process has mystical aspects that have been overlooked by pervasive theorists.

**Key words:** Metaphysical alienation; Social Psychology; Existentialism; Marxian alienation; Marx, Self-estrangement; Romanticism

Shane, R., Kupis, L., & Liang, A. (2015). A Sociological Search for the Metaphysical Roots of Man's Alienation From Self. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 11(3), 66-78. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/sll/article/view/7376> DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/7376>

### INTRODUCTION

The fact that individuals, in all their divergences, leave only the lowest parts of their personalities to form a common denominator is stressed by Heine: "You have

rarely understood me, and rarely did I understand you. Only when we met in the mire did we understand each other at once."

...In pointed antithesis to this position, Frederick Schlegel formulated the new individualism thus: 'it is precisely individuality that is the original and eternal aspect of man; personality is less important. To see one's noblest calling in the cultivation and development of this individuality would be divine egoism' (Simmel, 1950, p.32, 80).

For many years, sociologists have been trying to understand why individuals feel alienated from their societies. A survey of the literature on alienation shows that various conditions in western societies have been viewed to be inherently alienating. Social theorists have argued that certain conditions within the structure of society have caused individuals to react with feelings of alienation. There are two major sociological traditions which are concerned with the societal conditions that produce feelings of alienation within the individual. Silverstein and King have categorized these theoretical orientations as the "alienated society tradition" of the neo-Marxists and the "mass society tradition" (Silverstein, 1967; King, 1972).

In this chapter, I will be primarily concerned with analyzing each of these two traditions and showing that neither of them can fully account for the alienated character of certain members of society. Georg Simmel has suggested when traditional sociological explanations prove to be inadequate; the sociologist must alter his approach to the problem from that of either "general sociology" or "pure, or formal, sociology" to that of "the study of the epistemological and metaphysical aspects of society" (Simmel, 1950, p.16, 21, 23). In the final portion of this chapter, bearing in mind Simmel's methodological proposition, I will discuss the scholarly works that I intend to investigate which can provide sociology with a greater understanding of the problem of alienation; an understanding that will go beyond its traditional empirical facts. The ensuing examination will begin with

my analysis of the “alienated society tradition,” which will then be followed by my investigation of the “mass society tradition.”

## 1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE “ALIENATED SOCIETY TRADITION”

The “alienated society tradition” is rooted in Marx’s *Philosophic and Economic Manuscripts of 1844*.

The crucial theme of this disquisition was that the worker within a capitalistic society is alienated from the product of his labor, the work of his hands. In other words, Marx saw the worker in a capitalist society as sundered both from the product and from the control of the processes of his work. Marx gives a detailed account of how a worker in a capitalistic society becomes alienated initially from the product of his labor, and then from the process. (“act of production”) of his labor. The following quotation of Marx describes a worker’s alienation from the product of his labor.

Labour’s realization is its objectification. In the conditions dealt with by political economy this realization of labour appears as loss of reality for the workers; objectification as loss of the object and object-boridage; appropriation as estrangement, as alienation.

—All these consequences are contained in the definition that the worker is related to the product of his labour as an alien object. For on this premise it is clear that the more the worker spends himself, the more powerful the alien objective world becomes which he creates over-against himself, the poorer he himself — his inner world—becomes, the less belongs to him as his own. —The worker puts his life into the object; but now his life no longer belongs to him but to the object.—The alienation of the worker in his product means not only that his labour becomes an object, an external existence, but that it exists outside him, independently, as something alien to him, and that it becomes a power on its own confronting him; it means that the life which he had conferred on the object confronts him as something hostile and alien. (Marx, 1959, pp.59-60)

Marx then depicts a worker’s alienation from the process of his labors:

... the estrangement. is manifested not only in the result but in the act of production ---within the producing activity itself. How would the worker come to force the product of his activity as a stranger, were it not that in the very act of production he was estranging himself from himself? The product is after all but the summary of the activity, of production. If then the product of labour is alienation, production itself must be active alienation, the alienation of activity, the activity of alienation.

What then, constitutes the alienation of labour? First, the fact that labour is external to the worker, i.e. it does not belong to his essential being; that in his work, therefore, he does not affirm himself but he denies himself, does not feel content but unhappy, does not develop freely his physical and mental energy but mortifies his body and ruins his mind. The worker therefore only feels himself outside his work, and in his work feels outside himself. He is at home when he is not working, and when he is working he is not at home. His labour is therefore not voluntary, but coerced; it is forced labour. It is therefore not the satisfaction

of a need; it is merely a means to satisfy needs external to it. Its alien character emerges clearly in the fact that as soon as no physical or other compulsion exists, labour is shunned like the plague. (Ibid., p.72)

For Marx, a worker’s alienation from the process of his labor precludes any possibility of creative fulfillment for a member of society, since he regards creative activity to be a direct consequence of not being alienated from the process of one’s labor. Thus, a set of societal values which are not based on creative fulfillment through unalienated work are inherently alienating for the members of society.

In the previously quoted passage, in which Marx explains the worker’s separation from the producing activity of his labor, he points out how this condition brings about the worker’s estrangement from self. The worker who is alienated from the process of his labor finds himself alien to himself, and sees himself in his work as other than himself, or rather, fails to find himself or recognize himself. Thus, Marx saw the social malady of work alienation to be largely responsible for the members of society being alienated from themselves.

Marx viewed this social malady as a consequence of the evil and exploitative action of the bourgeoisie ruling class. He argues that private property is the basis for the exploitative tendencies of the bourgeoisie and it is the deep rooted cause of “alienated labor.”

Private property is thus the product, the result, the necessary consequence, of alienated labour—true, it is as a result of the movement of private property that we have obtained the concept of alienated labour (of alienated life from political economy) . But on analysis of this concept it becomes clear that though private property appears to be the source, the cause of alienated labour, it is really its consequence, just as the gods in the beginning are not the cause but the effect of man’s intellectual confusion. Later this relationship becomes reciprocal. Only at the very culmination of the development of private property does this, its secret, re-emerge, namely, that on the one hand it is the product of alienated labour, and that secondly it is the means by which labour alienates itself, the realization of this alienation. (Ibid., pp.80-81)

The neo-Marxists have been responsible for the popularization of these early ideas of Marx, since the economic and philosophic manuscripts of 1844 were not published until 1932. Erich Fromm, a neo-Marxian theorist of the “alienated society tradition,” has relied heavily upon the early writing of Marx in his analysis of the prevalence of alienation in contemporary American society. Fromm’s conceptualization of alienation is very similar to Marx’s analysis of a worker’s estrangement from self.

A mode of experience in which the person experiences himself as an alien... man does not experience himself as the active bearer of his own powers and richness, but as an impoverished “thing”, dependent on powers outside of himself... (Fromm, 1955, p.111).

Fromm believes, like his predecessor Marx, that man’s estrangement from self is caused by his separation from the process of his labor, which prevents man from

experiencing self-fulfillment. Fromm has broadened the Marxian concept of man's estrangement from self thus:

a) Man has become subservient and enslaved to the objects which he has produced.

The essence of what the prophets call "idolatry" is not that man worships many gods instead of only one. It is that the idols are the work of man's own hands—they are things, and man does indeed bow down and worship things; worships that which he has created himself. He transfers to the things of his creation the attributes of his own life, and instead of experiencing himself as the creating person, he is in touch with himself only by worship of the idol. He has become estranged from his own life forces, from the wealth of his own potentialities, and is in touch with himself only in the indirect way of submission to life frozen in the idols. (Ibid., p.47)

b) Modern man has been transformed into a marketable commodity.

Man experiences himself as a thing to be employed successfully on the market. He does not experience himself as an active agent, as the bearer of human powers. He is alienated from his activity as a loving and thinking individual, but from his socio-economic role he has been transformed into a commodity, experiences his life forces as an investment which must bring him the maximum profit obtainable under existing market conditions. (Ibid., pp.140-141)

Thus, Fromm regards the shared system of values that were created from the economic system of capitalistic society as the sociological cause of alienation.

C. W. Mills, another proponent of the "alienated society tradition," has characterized modern middle class man as alienated from his work and himself. His analysis of alienated man closely parallels, the theory proposed by Fromm.

Estranged from community and society in a context of distrust and manipulation; alienated from work, and on the personality market, from self; expropriated from individual rationality and politically apathetic--these are the new little people, the unwilling vanguard of modern society. (Mills, 1956, p. xviii)

According to Mills, the increased level of material affluence has likewise accentuated the middle class man's feelings of dehumanization and self-estrangement.

In short, the theorists of the "alienated society tradition" see the sociological condition of work alienation as a component part of the social-economic structure of the capitalistic society. This social condition of man's alienation from the process of his labor is responsible for the members of society feeling estranged from themselves. The ruling elite of the capitalistic societies tenaciously preserves those societal values that give rise to the sociological antecedents of self-estrangement.

## 2. CRITICISM OF THE "ALIENATED SOCIETY TRADITION"

The validity of the Marxian theory of alienation hinges upon the supposition that those members of a society who are engaged in creatively fulfilling work and who

are only marginally affluent would not be alienated or estranged from themselves. Some of the writers and artists during the nineteenth century were engaged in work that was creatively fulfilling, and they were only marginally affluent. If these individuals were less self-estranged than those members of society who were either separated from the process of their labor or who were excessively affluent, this would support the Marxian theory of alienation. However, if these few artists and writers were actually self-estranged than the majority of the members of society, this would be evidence against the Marxian theory of alienation.

An examination of the works and lives of writers and artists who were creatively fulfilled by their work and were not excessively affluent shows that these individuals were even more self-estranged than the other members of their societies. These writers and artists didn't have to devote their time to work which separated them from the process of their labor, as they either obtained a minimum livelihood from the sale of their writings or art works or else received support from their families or patrons. The lives of certain nineteenth century writers and artists were occupied with creative fulfillment.

For example, the French symbolist poet Charles Baudelaire lived on a substantial patrimony from his family. Shanks records that Baudelaire left his stepfather's house as soon as he could draw upon his fortune of seventy-five thousand francs. Baudelaire didn't have to confront the invidious alienating condition of working in a capitalistic society; rather his life was focused on leisure and creative realization through his work. He "hated the materialism of the bourgeois monarchy... and the money-grubbing, parvenu, modern world of his day..." (Baudelaire, 1930, p.38).

The Marxian theory of alienation would predict that Baudelaire wouldn't be self-estranged or have feelings of alienation, since he was neither separated from the fruits of his labor nor excessively affluent. Baudelaire's writings and poetry, however, demonstrate an extreme sense of self-estrangement and feelings of alienation.

Common sense tells us that the things of this earth have but little substantiality and that true reality is only found in dreams.

Prisoned in self by his defenses, found the world a dissecting hall.

The poet too can ride the flying cloud, Mock at the bowman, soar above the gale, But dragged to earth amid the scornful crowd, He churns his giant wings, of no avail...

He was the albatross, tormented by those who held him captive. But chains had only strengthened his muscles, struggling to be free. The enforced solitude of those nine months, coming at a time of life...had turned him still farther back upon himself, fixed forever his habit of seeking out, analyzing and recording sensations.

I am my heart's own vampire, for I walk alone, condemned, forlorn, by laughter everlasting torn yet doomed to smile, -ah, nevermore!!

Thus, even though Baudelaire was unscathed by separation from the process of his labor, his writing clearly indicates that he was severely self-estranged, more so than those members of society affected by the social conditions of work alienation.

The English nineteenth century poets, Byron, Keats, Shelley, and DeQuincey are only a few of the many writers of that century who, like Baudelaire, were given patrimony from their families and so were exempt from the social condition of work alienation. And like Baudelaire, all these poets were plagued by feelings of alienation and were estranged from themselves, as were many other writers and artists of the nineteenth century who were not given patrimonies or allowances by their families or patrons, but were able to eke out a livelihood from the sales of their writings or other forms of artistic enterprise. Even though writers such as Kierkegaard, Dostoevsky, Carlyle, and Melville were able to earn a livelihood from the sales of their writings, hence not having to subject themselves to alienating work, their writings bear witness to the fact that they were more self-estranged and alienated than the average worker of their societies.

This fact, that those writers of the nineteenth century who were engaged in creative fulfilling work felt more self-estrangement than those members of their societies whose lives were burdened by toilsome alienating work, indicates that particular aspects of the Marxian theory of alienation may not be tenable. The fact that certain individuals feel alienated and self-estranged, even though they find creative fulfillment through their work, certainly reduces the validity of Marxian theory. Marx contends that the etiological basis of alienation and self-estrangement can be totally explained by work alienation. This appears to be an erroneous theoretical position; more prudent appraisal of the relationship between work alienation and self-estrangement would be that work alienation plays only a partial role in bringing about feelings of self-estrangement. However, to concede that the Marxian concept of work alienation is only a partial explanation for feelings of self-estrangement still does not explain why an elimination of this factor would cause self-alienation to quantitatively increase. In other words, why is it that certain writers and artists of the nineteenth century are more alienated and self-estranged than other individuals, despite the fact that they are involved in work which is creatively fulfilling?

This observed paradox in the subjective experience of these artists might be explained by suggesting that they are less alienated from themselves than the majority of the members of society (separated from the process of their labors), but that the majority of members of society were less cognizant of their separation from self than the artist. Bell supports this view by arguing that Marx believed the workers in a capitalistic society sometimes didn't even recognize or feel their alienation from self.

In the capitalist system, in the bargain made between worker and employer, the individual was formally free. What, then was the means whereby a man, unbeknownst even to himself, was alienated and enslaved? (Bell, 1959, p.25)

Thus, work alienation increases the degree of self-estrangement, but it attenuates the individual's subjective experience of that condition.

It is entirely possible that the threshold of recognition for feeling self-estrangement has a characteristic pattern of being asymptotic? At a given level of separation from self the individual will be the most aware of his self-estrangement, while exceeding this level will only decrease his feelings to the extent that he may not even be aware of them. Work alienation may increase one's level of self-estrangement to the point that it passes beyond the level of greatest awareness; thereby reducing one's sensitivity to this condition. Artists of the nineteenth century, exempt from the condition of work alienation, were more intensively sensitive to their self-estrangement than the work alienated members of their societies, since their level of separation from self is closer to the optimal point of recognition of this experience. Hence, these artists felt more self-estranged, even though they were less separated from themselves than the members of society who was engaged in working conditions which increased their separation from self.

Marx and his followers have identified the economic system of capitalistic societies as being responsible for producing the condition of work alienation or self-estrangement. Kaufmann contends that feelings of alienation are not confined to any particular historical period, nor are they indigenous only to capitalistic societies. In the contrary, Kaufmann argues that feelings of alienation seem to be a feature of man's existence throughout his development. Kaufmann refers to certain prominent literary figures and philosophers of different periods in history to illustrate and substantiate his position that man has felt estranged from himself not due to the rise of capitalism, as is claimed by Marx. In the following passage, Kaufmann shows how alienated Plato felt himself.

Plato also knew the experience of the divided self. He felt at home neither in his body nor with his appetites but more than once Plato cites approvingly an ancient play on words that were dear to the orphic sect: the body (soma) is the soul's tomb (sema). This means that the soul is buried in the body, that life is one long exile, and that salvation is to be found only in death. To be a self is to be a stranger. (Kaufmann, 1971, p.xxx)

Kaufmann writes of Heraclitus' inability to overcome his estrangement from self.

One of Heraclitus' best-known aphorisms is 'I tried seeking myself: I did not want anything but to try. To live what wanted all on its own to come out of myself. Why was that so very difficult? (Ibid., p.xxxi).

In another example, Kaufmann points out that inherent within Kant' philosophy is the fact that man is essentially alienated from his self.

Other worldliness is usually a sign of alienation from this world from concrete human society, and from one's empirical self. This self is not ultimately real; my freedom and unique worth depend on another dimension, which Kant called nominal. One need not speak of self-alienation when discussing Kant's ethics, but it is essential to recognize that the Kantian division of the self - this sense of estrangement from one's own natural inclinations - was precisely what first Schiller and then Hegel tried to overcome by developing a different ethic. (Ibid., p. xxxii)

Kaufmann cites many other eminent writers and philosophers of preceding historical periods who have recognized that they were alienated from their eternal selves. A capitalistic economic system does not seem to be a sufficient explanation for man's alienation. Factors other than the capitalistic economic system must give rise to man's self-estrangement, since many individuals through-out history have felt alienated. What Marx proposed to be the etiological basis of self-estrangement doesn't explain why certain members of society feel self-estranged, even though they weren't living in a nineteenth century capitalistic society.

Marx's analysis of the cause of alienation was not only too narrow in terms of what social conditions he identified as bringing on this unpleasant subjective state, but it also ignored or dismissed any possibility that the psychological character of the individual could be an important determinant in the cause of alienation. Roszak supports the view that Marx had erroneously identified alienation to be primarily brought about by sociological factors rather than psychological.

If alienation means that nightmare of existential weightlessness we associate with Kafka's whitecollared Joseph K. or Tolstoy's gentry man Ivan Ilych, then the socio-economic alienation Marx finds in the life of the proletariat is at most a derivative special case of the universal phenomenon. As we shall see Marcuse and Brown disagree significantly in their diagnosis of the condition; but they are at one in insisting that alienation in this generalized sense is primarily psychic, not sociological. It is not proprietary distinction that exists between men of different classes, but rather a disease that is rooted inside all men and what the psychiatrist knows is that alienation results from deep and secret acts of repression that will not yield to a mere re-shuffling of our society's institutional structures. (Roszak, 1969, pp.95-96)

In another passage, Roszak depicts the marginality of Marx's theoretical conception of alienation.

The prevailing notion of alienation in the Marxian corpus has only the most marginal connection with the way in which this idea functions in the thinking of Kierkegaard or Dostoevsky or Kafka. It is rather as if the nee-Marxists are attempting to usher Marx into the contemporary world on the coattails of existentialists, artists, and philosophers for whom the immediate issues of social justice, class conflict, and exploitation were a subsidiary concern, if that. (Ibid., p.94)

According to Bell, Marx in his analysis of alienation intentionally avoided looking at the psychological roots of that condition, as they were contradictory to his basic overall theoretical scheme. Bell argues that Marx was determined to remove the concept of alienation from

being a "philosophical abstraction of the mind," and by doing so it caused him to inaccurately identify the origin and reduce the parameters of alienation.

For Marx, therefore, the answer to Hegel was clear: The alienation of man lay not in some philosophic abstraction of mind, but in the property system. The extraordinary thing was that Marx had taken a concept which German philosophy had seen as an ontological fact, and had given it a social content...

As ontology, as an ultimate, man could only accept alienation. As a social fact, rooted in a specific system of historical relations, alienation could be overcome by changing the social system. But in narrowing the concept, Marx ran risks of falsely identifying the source of alienation only in the private property system; and of introducing a note of utopianism in the idea that once the private property system was abolished man would immediately be free. (Bell, 1959, p.39)

By narrowing and reducing the scope of alienation, Marx also overlooks the crucial determinants of this condition. Ironically, Marx's determination to avoid seeing alienation as a philosophical abstraction of the mind inevitably led him to substitute one form of abstraction for another. Bell sees Marx moving from one kind of ideation to another.

The irony, however, was that in moving from 'philosophy' to 'reality,' from Hegelian phenomenology to political economy, Marx moved from one kind of abstraction to another. In his system, self-alienation became transformed: man as 'generic man' (i.e. man writ large) becomes divided into classes of men. For Marx now, the only social reality is not man, nor the individual, but economic classes. Individuals and their motives count for naught. (Ibid., p.25)

Marx's moving from a philosophical level of abstraction to a socio-economic level brought about a new form of tyrannization for man. Individual variability is replaced by the variability of economic classes, as the individual becomes less discernible with a Marxian level of abstraction than with the level of abstraction which Marx rejected. By transforming man from a psychological and philosophical category of an economic category, Marx increased the separation between the reified categorization of man and man's inherent nature. The way in which Marx conceives of man is more self-estranging than the Hegelian psychological level of abstraction since Marx's categorization of man is at a greater distance from man's inherent nature.

In short, the Marxian theory of alienation "is at the most a derivative special case of the universal phenomenon" (Roszak, 1969, p.95). When a man is not separated from the fruits of his labor he is more cognizant of the fact that he is estranged from himself. The social condition of work alienation has been shown not to be a necessary determinant for individuals to feel self-estranged. Numerous writers and poets throughout history who have strongly felt their alienation from self were not separated from the process of their labor. However, work alienation does appear to increase a person's level of estrangement from self, which results

in his being less aware of his self-estrangement (since the greater a person's alienation from self the less aware he seems to be in that condition). If work alienation isn't the essential cause of man's self estrangement, then the capitalistic social system can't be assumed to be the primary factor that produces the social conditions that give rise to alienation.

Marx's replacement of the Hegelian philosophic and psychological categorization with his social-economic level, of abstraction caused him to reduce the scope and narrow the concept of alienation and to overlook and not identify the essential determinants of that condition.

Many of the world's most eminent poets and writers who were creatively fulfilled by their work sought after a more encompassing sense of human realization than Marx's notion of realization through non-alienating work. Marx's conception of creative fulfillment through work is a starting point rather than an end point for these poets and writers. The condition of work alienation, which Marx saw as the cause of alienation, fails to account for why men feel separated from themselves. In the next part of this chapter, I will consider those theorists which Silverstein and King have labeled as forming "the mass society tradition of alienation." This theory of alienation looks upon certain conditions within society as being responsible for man's feelings of self-estrangement.

---

### 3. A DESCRIPTION OF THE "MASS SOCIETY TRADITION"

---

The mass society tradition of alienation can best be understood by the following three propositions:

- a) Contemporary society is characterized by the absence of a shared system of values.
- b) It is characterized by a lack of community.
- c) It is characterized by the absence of social groups intervening between individuals and the power of society.

The first of these propositions was derived from Durkheim's concept of anomie. Durkheim's notion of anomie refers to an absence of a shared system of values, and this condition occurs when there is no common agreement among the members of society about what constitutes the legitimate means of attaining a given goal, or which of the normative goals behavior should be directed toward. The abandonment of a shared system of values for a society can also mean a breakdown of its traditional moral meaning on a transcendental level. A possible corollary condition of anomie is that of individuals within a society who have values which deviate from the values of the other members of their society. There is an apparent relationship between Durkheim's concept of anomie and the socio-logical idea of value deviance.

Silverman interprets Durkheim as arguing that the principal cause of anomie is the domination of society

by economic interests or the division of labor which itself has led to the separation and specialization of occupations. The economic structure of modern society was viewed by Durkheim to have undermined those institutions which provided the members of society with a shared system of values and moral regulations. Social institutions such as church and state, which were the basis for supplying a shared system of values for society, were seen by Durkheim to have been stripped of their meaning by the economic changes within western society. However, Merton's use of the term "anomie" is narrower in scope than Durkheim's: "Common values have been submerged in the welter of private interests seeking satisfaction by virtually any means which are effective." (Merton, 1956, p.128).

The second major proposition of the mass society tradition is concerned with the lack of a sense of community in contemporary society. This characterization of society was largely developed from the ideas of Ferdinand Tonnies, who saw society as changing its orientation from the unity and community values of 'the *Gesellschaft* organizational form, to that of *Gemeinschaft* form of social organization (deep separation or loneliness between himself and other men). The loss of unity and community within society has been attributed to society's increased complexity, which Tonnies believes to be a function of greater specialization within the work force. The increase in the complexity of society not only has contributed to a greater separation between men, but according to Adorno has also heightened a person's sense of meaninglessness.

The third major proposition of mass society theory deals with the absence of social groups intervening between the members of society and the power elites.

This proposition was formulated by Kornhauser in his work *The Politics of Mass Society*, where he describes the negative outcomes that result from the removal of intermediary groups between the elites and non-elites.

Elites are accessible and non-elites are available in that there is a paucity of independent groups between the state and the family to protect either elites or nonelites from manipulation and mobilization by the other. (Kornhauser, 1959)

The intervening groups in society prevent individuals from being tyrannized by the power elites or the reverse from occurring, where the total society becomes tyrannized by the masses. The disappearance of these intermediary groups is also related to economic development and the division of labor. This condition within a society causes its members to be more distant from the source of power or more politically powerless. Kornhauser claims that when the masses become powerless, they are likely to engage in a range of action from total apathy to participation in totalitarian mass movements.

Nisbet's analysis of the loss of community within contemporary society incorporates the above three propositions. He sees the community structure within a

society responsible for moral regulation, maintenance of intermediary groups, and shielding the members of society 'from feelings of meaninglessness and powerlessness. When the community is replaced by centralized power, its social functions likewise become inactive. People subjected to the control of a large centralized power structure experience "a state of mind that finds a social order remote, incomprehensible, or fraudulent; beyond real hope or desire; inviting apathy, boredom, or even hostility."

It is evident that these three propositions are all very similar. They all characterize modern mass society as having impaired the operation of various social institutions that were important for the stability of its members.

#### 4. A CRITICAL LOOK AT THE MASS SOCIETY TRADITION OF ALIENATION

It is apparent that the mass society tradition has ignored the individual's predisposition as a factor in accounting for man's feelings of self-estrangement. Instead, the theorists of this tradition have focused their attention exclusively on the conditions within society that might be causing individuals to feel alienated. This theory of alienation is doomed to fail as far as explaining the factors that bring about the condition of alienation, since it hasn't considered the possibility of psychological variables within people as a cause of their feelings of self-estrangement.

For example, in Durkheim's depiction of the condition of anomie in contemporary society, there does not seem to be any indication that he is referring to the phenomenon of alienation. The O.E.D. defines the term "alienation" as:

The action of estranging, or state of estrangement in feeling or affection; the action of transferring the ownership of anything to another; the state of being alienated, or held by other than the proper owner; mental alienation: withdrawal, loss.

Alienate: To make estranged; to turn away the feelings or affections of anyone; to alter. (v.)

Durkheim's anomie is a condition in which the individual experiences an absence of something, but alienation is somewhat different in that it is a separation from something. However, Israel, King, Silverstein, Seeman, and Lukes all have regarded Durkheim's anomie in varying degrees as interchangeable with the concept of alienation. (Israel, 1971; Allyn & Bacon, 1971; King, Silverstein, & Seeman, 1959; Luke, 1972). For this reason, Durkheim's anomie will be assumed, for the sake of discussion, to be referring to alienation or interchangeable with it.

If we assume that there is a correspondence between alienation and anomie, then Durkheim is arguing that alienation is an extremely abject and maladaptive state for the individual to experience. Many nineteenth century literary figures and artists such as Blake, Keats, Shelley,

Thoreau, Emerson, Wordsworth, Novalis, and Carlyle, all viewed alienation in a way that is diametrically opposed to Durkheim's conception. For example, Blake writes that the authentic artist has to alienate and liberate himself from society and the common lifestyle of other men in order to create a higher form of art.

You must leave fathers and mothers and houses and lands if they stand in the way of art. Prayer is the study of art. Praise is the practice of art Fasting and etc., all relate to art. The eternal body of man is the imagination... it manifests itself in his works of art (in eternity all is vision). (Blake & Erdman, 1970, pp.271-272)

These artists and literary figures shaped their lives in a manner that made it necessary for them to reject the shared value systems which governed the action of the other members of their society. Durkheim believed that for the members of society to be adjusted and not self-estranged, they had to adhere to its shared value systems. Hence, for Durkheim, the absence of a shared system of values creates the conditions which bring about feelings of alienation within the society. What Durkheim saw as promoting a sense of salubrity among the members of society was regarded by writers of the nineteenth century as a diseased condition which the individual must attempt to free himself from. The Romantic poet William Blake describes in his poem "London" how man is imprisoned by his "mind-forg'd manacles" which were created by the shared values within his society. According to Blake, the social institutions are responsible for the "marks of weakness, marks of woe" that each individual experiences as a member of society.

I wander thro' each charter'd street,  
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,  
And mark in every face I meet  
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every man,  
In every infan't's cry of fear,  
In every voice, in every ban,  
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear.

How the chimney-sweeper's cry  
Every black'ning church appalls;  
And the hapless soldier's sigh  
Runs in blood down palace walls.

But most thro' midnight streets I hear  
How the youthful harlot's curse  
Blasts the new-born infant's tear,  
And blights with plagues the marriage hearse.

(Ibid., pp.26-27.)

Like Blake, Nietzsche interprets "moral regulation" as a "way of passing sentence, and turning one's back on the will to existence" (Nietzsche, 1967, p.11).

Thomas Carlyle, another nineteenth century writer, believed that the values and institutions of society prevented its member from understanding and experiencing a sublime form of existence. Values and social attitudes that are common to a western society are

metaphorically depicted by Carlyle as “living and lifeless integuments” that shield the individual from experiencing his self and nature as a visionary and beautiful infinite.

The world, with its loud trafficking, retires into the distance; and, through the paper hangings, and stone-walls, and thick-plied tissues of commerce and polity, and all the living and lifeless integuments (of society and a body), where with your existence sits surrounded, the sight reaches forth into the void deep, and you are alone with the universe, and silently commune with it, as one mysterious presence with another (Carlyle, 1927, p.41).

Carlyle is arguing that if man is to experience a loftier and more authentic existence or life’s “mysterious presence,” he must extricate himself from the damaging common values of his society.

In short, Durkheim believes that alienation is a maladaptive or negative condition not to be experienced by any member of society. It has been demonstrated that certain literary figures of the nineteenth century viewed alienation quite divergently from the position taken by Durkheim. These writers insist that alienation from the institutions and values of society is liberating and is necessary if the individual desires not to be imprisoned by these false social constructions. Durkheim’s social phenomenon of anomie does not explain why an individual is alienated or the causes of his feelings of self-estrangement; in fact, Durkheim may be speaking of a condition which is antithetical to the state of alienation.

Tonnies’ characterization of contemporary society as having destroyed any sense of community is very similar to Durkheim’s notion of anomie. My foregoing critique of Durkheim’s anomie is applicable to Tonnies’ analysis of the loss of community within society. The three critical points which I have suggested to be weaknesses in Durkheim’s concept of alienation are also relevant objections to Tonnies’ depiction of self-estrangement. They are as follows:

- a) The feelings of self-estrangement which have been associated with the loss of community within society is not always experienced by the individual as a negative and debilitating condition.
- b) The sense of community isn’t a deterrent to feelings of alienation as many nineteenth century artists considered the sense of well-being produced by community life to be oppressive and imprisoning to them.
- c) Furthermore, these artists believed that in order for man to comprehend the heights of his infinite self, it was necessary for the individual to separate himself from community life.

Tonnies, in the following passage, distinguishes the *Gesellschaft* form of social organization (absence of the operation of community and separation and isolation of men) from the *Gemeinschaft* social unit (a strong community atmosphere, in which men are not isolated from each other).

So deep is the separation between man and man in *Gesellschaft*, that everybody is by himself and isolated, and there exists a condition of tension against all others. *Gemeinschaft* is a social unit which does not come into being primarily through social design: one finds one’s self belonging to it as one belongs to one’s home. (Tonnies, 1957, p.88)

Georg Buchner, nineteenth century German playwright, would have taken issue with Tonnies’ view that a person who is part of a community unit wouldn’t feel isolated and distant from the other members of that social unit. At the time when Buchner wrote the following statement, the German society in which he lived was characteristic of the *Gemeinschaft* form of social organization.

How eager I am for a letter from you! I am alone as though in the grave; when will your message waken me? My friends desert me, we scream in one another’s ears as though deaf; I wish we were dumb, then we could only look at one another - Recently I have scarcely been able to look one in the eyes except tears come. Each man exists in himself and is unable to break that impenetrable shell. Man is isolated. He knows no real communication with his fellow man. He is adrift on a sea of impersonal blindness. (Buchner, 1963, p. xv)

Another nineteenth century writer Henry David Thoreau, who lived during a time when American society possessed a community atmosphere, felt nevertheless separated from other men. He believed that man is distant from other men even when he is physically close to them. Thoreau does not see any possible way for men to transgress the boundaries that separate them while they are members of a social community.

I never found the companion that was so companionable as solitude. We are for the most part more lonely when we go abroad among men than when we stay in our chambers. Solitude is not measured by the miles of space that intervene between a man and his fellows. The really diligent student in one of the crowded hives of Cambridge College is as solitary as a dervish in the desert ...what sort of space is that which separates a man from his fellow and makes him solitary? I have found that no exertion of the legs can bring two minds much nearer to one another. What do we want most to dwell near to? Not to many men surely, the depot, the post-office, the bar-room, the meeting-house, school-house, the grocery, Beacon Hill, or the Five Points, where men most congregate, but to the perennial source of our life. (Thoreau & Walden, 1960, pp.93-96, 66)

Buchner’s and Thoreau’s description of their feelings of alienation and separation from other men demonstrates that many individuals within a society dominated by *Gemeinschaft* social unit are still going to feel self-estranged and isolated from other men whether or not there is a strong sense of community. However, for some members of society in the community social unit may be serving a useful role, but there is no indication that it removes the conditions which cause a man to feel alienated from himself or other men. The third proposition of the mass society tradition of alienation stems from Kornhauser’s discussion of the loss of intermediary groups that separate the elites from the non-elites; this results in feelings of powerlessness and alienation for

those persons who are members of the latter group. Since this proposition is strikingly similar to the other two preceding propositions, there is no need to restate the weaknesses which this third proposition is subject to.

The theme that is central to each of these propositions of the "mass society tradition" is the importance of the regulatory function of social institutions for maintaining a level of stability and well-being for the members of a society. The destruction of these regulatory institutions is what causes the members of society to feel alienation (powerlessness, anomie, and loneliness). However, I have shown that some of the world's most prominent writers argued that separation from the regulatory institutions of society is man's way of liberating himself from the immurement of his condition. Hence, the thrust of my critique of the "mass society tradition" is that social institutions not only don't eliminate the conditions which give rise to feelings of alienation, but they might themselves be a major determinant of man's self-estrangement.

This tradition which insists that the behavior of individuals should be regulated by social institutions and values does not see the importance of allowing enough latitude within the framework of society for a person to expand and liberate his transcendent self. In other words, individual value deviance of a qualitative nature cannot flourish within a social context which demands blind conformity on the part of every member of society to its values. The theorists of this tradition are not concerned with the actual content of social values or the nature of activities that these values define as satisfying, but rather just assume that since individuals adhere to a set of values, they must be satisfying. Hence, the mass society tradition indirectly is in favor of preserving shared values that could be damaging to man's sublime mental nature.

In summary, the sociological conditions that give rise feelings of alienation that were put forth by both "the mass society tradition" and "the alienated society tradition" have been shown to be inadequate as an explanation for the cause of alienation. Instead, both of these traditions are more concerned with supporting an anti-alienation ideology. The theorists of these two traditions are fostering an ideology for man which Nietzsche defines as "the veil of illusion against the assaults of reality." These theorists are hindered from seeing why many artists and other members of society find it necessary to separate themselves from the oppressive and immuring aspects of the society. They extol the very objects which some of the members of society are trying to liberate themselves from.

---

## 5. WILLIAM BLAKE AND THE DEEPER ROOTS OF ALIENATION

---

In my review of what sociologists have set forth to be the social conditions which cause feelings of alienation,

I have shown that they need to investigate other works that treat this problem in order to augment and broaden their comprehension of its etiological basis. Various sociologists who have studied the problem of alienation have not been able actually to account for why man feels estranged from himself. The present theories of alienation do not explain why creatively fulfilled nineteenth century artists who didn't confront social conditions that were alienating nevertheless were inclined to feel self-estranged. If the sociologist is to begin to understand this question, he will have to examine the writings of those artists of the nineteenth century who were alienated in ways that go beyond the theories which he has put forth to explain that condition.

Georg Simmel argues that the sociologist should not limit his understanding of social problems only to those aspects of human life that are not outside the concrete knowledge of man's social reality. He insists that the sociologist sometimes must examine those elements of man's social life which does go beyond empirical facts.

If these problems go beneath the concrete knowledge of social life, others, as it were, go beyond it. They try, by means of hypothesis and speculation, to supplement the unavoidably fragmentary character of the empirical facts (which always are fragmentary) in the direction of a closed system.

Thus, like every other exact science which aims at the immediate understanding of the given, social science, too, is surrounded by two philosophical areas. (Simmel, 1950, pp.23-24)

Epistemology and metaphysics are Simmel's two non-empirical problem areas, which he claims to be as important to the development of sociology as are its concrete fields of investigation. He defines these two philosophical areas of sociological research in the following way:

One of these covers the conditions, fundamental concepts, and presuppositions of concrete research, which cannot be taken care of by research itself since it is based on theorem. In the other area, this research is carried toward completions, connections, questions, and concepts that have no place in experience and in immediate objective knowledge. The first area is the epistemology, the second, the metaphysics of the particular discipline. (Ibid., p.23)

Moreover, Simmel, in another section of *Sociology* of Georg Simmel, sees the sociologist as having the freedom to pursue solutions to puzzling problems related to man and society without being confined to the parameters of a specific discipline, but rather able to utilize many specific disciplines for his research purposes. For Simmel, then, sociology is not to be thought of as a subject matter differentiated from the "subject matters of all other sciences."

Sociology thus is not only a science with its own subject matter that is differentiated, by division of labor, from the subject matters of all other sciences. It also has become a method of the historical disciplines and of the human studies in general. Yet in order to use it, these sciences by no means need to abandon their

own particular viewpoints. They need not become mere parts of sociology, as that fantastic exaggeration of its idea, which I mentioned earlier, would make us believe. Rather, sociology adapts itself to each specific discipline - economics, history of culture, ethics, theology, or what not. In this respect, it is essentially like induction. (Ibid., p.13)

Simmel believes that sociology's flexibility comes from the fact that many other disciplines contain the concept of society. These different fields of study which are concerned with man's society "might be too different from one another in content, orientation, and method of solution to be treated as if they amounted to a homogeneous field of inquiry" (Ibid., p.3). Furthermore, Simmel sees the role of the sociologist not as that of a scholar restricted to the boundaries of one field of study; instead, the sociologist is faced with the task of attempting to integrate the methods or the approaches of several disciplines for the purpose of "yielding new solutions or deeper study" to unanswered questions. In other words, sociology does not differ from other disciplines in that it studies, but rather in its approach to traditional problems which other disciplines have not been able to provide solutions for. Sociology is a type of "induction, as a new principle of investigation, penetrated into all kinds of problem areas" (Ibid.). Simmel in the following passage, explains what he considers to be the scholarly role of sociology.

It thus contributed new solutions for tasks well established in these areas. The parallel suggests that sociology is no more a special science than induction is (and surely, it is not an all-embracing science). Insofar as it is based on the notions that man must be understood as a social animal and that society is the medium of all historical events, sociology contains no subject matter that is not already treated in one of the extant sciences. It only opens up a new avenue for all of them...the sociological approach yields possibilities of solution or of deeper study which may be derived from fields of knowledge contextually quite different (perhaps) from the field of the particular problem under investigation. (Ibid., p.14)

In adhering to the guidelines which Simmel sets forth in this preceding quote, the sociologist is placed in a position of advantage and disadvantage. When the sociologist attempts to study a difficult research area, he can draw upon many different disciplines which will afford him the opportunity to see his particular problem area from many diverse vantage points. However, this places a tremendous burden on the sociologist to ascertain a deeper understanding of given a problem than what other scholars in related disciplines have been able to discover from studying it from the perspective of one particular "discipline".

The purpose of this present study follows from the fact that sociologists have not been able to fully understand why men feel estranged from themselves. Sociologists have only examined the sociological etiology of this problem without attempting to obtain a deeper comprehension of this human phenomenon which has

been affecting men throughout history. Simmel proposes that when the sociologist can't approach a problem area with an empirical or concrete method, he should then redefine his problem in metaphysical terms.

They assert or doubt—and both assertion and doubt, equally, derive from a super-empirical world view—that the play of social-historical phenomena contains a religious significance, or a relation (to be known or at least sensed) to the metaphysical ground of being. More particularly, they ask questions such as these: Is society the purpose of human existence, or is it a means for the individual? Does the ultimate value of social development lie in the unfolding of personality or of association? Do meaning and purpose in here in social phenomena at all, or exclusively in individuals? Do the typical stages of the development of societies show an analogy with cosmic evolutions so that there might be a general formula or rhythm of development in general (as, for instance, the fluctuation between differentiation and integration) which applies to social and material alike? (Ibid., p.25)

Simmel ends his discussion of metaphysical sociology by arguing that its questions can't be answered in the same way that a sociologist would solve questions rooted in the concrete world. Empirical knowledge or facts will not be of any value to a sociologist when he studies those questions which are not based on man's social nature. According to Simmel, the sociologist must then deal with this form of question "by interpretations of ascertained facts."

Evidently, this type of question cannot be answered by the ascertainment of facts. Rather, it must be answered by interpretations of ascertained facts and by efforts to bring the relative and problematical elements of social reality under an overall view. Such a view does not compete with empirical claims because it serves needs which are quite different from those answered by empirical propositions. (Ibid.)

The method which sociologists have in the past employed to study the condition of alienation will not be applicable to the metaphysical approach which I will be employing in this study. The type of questions which will be treated in this study go beyond the concrete nature of this particular problem; therefore, it would not be feasible for me to investigate the metaphysical nature of man's self-estrangement by using empirical facts. Furthermore, following Simmel's analysis of the sociological method, my examination of the area of metaphysical alienation will force me to abandon the traditional approach to this problem, and instead, to study this research area from the vantage point of a literary scholar. By approaching the problem of man's estrangement from self from the discipline of English literature, I hope to begin to uncover a new way of comprehending this important human phenomenon.

I have already indicated in the earlier pages of this chapter that certain writers of the nineteenth century were not alienated from themselves on a sociological level, but suffered from metaphysical self-estrangement. For this reason, in this dissertation I will be analyzing literature of the nineteenth century, and its writers who formulated in their artistic creations an in-depth conception of

metaphysical alienation. It would be impossible in this study to examine every metaphysical self-estranged writer in the nineteenth century. Therefore, I am forced to limit myself to the investigation of one poet, William Blake, who has extensively treated the condition of metaphysical alienation in his writings.

The Romantic English poet William Blake is considered by M. H. Abrams to be the greatest modern mythic (metaphysical) poet. M. H. Abrams writes of William Blake:

The mythical system which Blake created is complex...and its multiple relevance both to general human history...In a parallel way Blake's prophetic books narrate various stages of the division and reintegration of the universal man, whose life story is the collective representation of the history and potential future of everyman...his founding image is recognizably in the lineage of that ancient mythical being, the primal man our-Adam who falls in fragmentation. (Abrams, 1971, p.257)

Kathleen Raine applies the following statement to Blake's art: "Supreme art is a traditional statement of certain heroic and religious truths, passed on from age to age, modified by individual genius, but never abandoned" (Raine, 1968, p.xxxi).

William Blake's "Songs of Innocence and Experience" has been selected as the primary source for my examination of the deeper roots of man's alienation. These poems of Blake's compared to the poetry of his contemporaries, offer the sociologist a very exacting mythic theoretical conception as to why man is estranged from himself. Throughout my analysis of Blake's poetry, I will be referring to the literary art of his contemporaries for purposes of enlarging or clarifying certain aspects of Blake's theories, and showing where these poets agreed or disagreed. The writings of Blake's contemporaries diverge from his theoretical account of man's metaphysical state of self-division and how man is to recapture his lost unity. In addition, a subject of equal importance which will not be discussed in this study is that Blake viewed society's influence on metaphysical alienation in a way which differed from certain of his contemporaries. There was considerable disagreement amongst various nineteenth century English poets as to what effect the values of a particular society had on an individual's perception of self-division and how to recover the state of heavenly unity.

Blake expresses in the following passage that he believes that man's separation from his eternal self is not significantly affected differently by various societal shared value systems, since this condition (as I will show in the later chapters) is rooted in the interior universal selfhood.

O when shall the morning of the grave appear, and when shall our salvation come? We sleep upon our watch, we cannot be awake, and our specters rage in the forests.

For every one open'd within into eternity at will, but they refus'd, because their outward forms were in 'the abyss. (Blake & Erdman, 1979, p.188, 344)

The terms "self-estrangement" or "metaphysical alienation" are not used either by Blake or his contemporaries as they developed a wide range of concepts to characterize this condition of the human psyche. These terms only apply to feelings of separation in a sociological context, but are not relevant expressions of the condition of man's loss of his perfected state of unity. For this reason, in my treatment of Blake's mythic theoretical system I won't be using the restricting terms of alienation or self-estrangement, but instead, my terminology will contain a diverse array of concepts to explain Blake's meta-physical considerations.

The theme of Blake's "The Songs of Innocence and of Experience" is man's mythic (metaphysical) separation from his infinite self or the journey of man's soul—the idea of uroboros (soul) turning back on itself (its end and beginning are the same). These poems of Blake's deal with transformations and changes in man's inner being or what takes place in the interior cave of every man. Moreover, Blake is describing a journey that begins with the human soul's descent from its highest heaven to the lowest and darkest pit and ends with its return to its lost empyreal paradise. In the following passage, Jung is explaining the second half of the journey which man's soul experiences returning to its eternal kingdom. However, in this study I will be only treating the first of man's interior journey where his soul plunges down from its heavenly Eden into the earthly paradise, and then descends further to the dark and dismal habitat of outer selfhood. Jung describes the second phase of the soul's journey:

What yoga aims at in this exercise is undoubtedly a psychic change in the adept. The ego is the expression of individual existence. The yogin exchanges his ego for Shiva or the Buddha; in this way he induces a shifting of the psychological center of personality from the personal ego to the impersonal non-ego, which is now experienced as the real ground of the personality. (Jung, pp.636-638)

John Milton expresses what a poet sees when he contemplates the deformity of his soul which is brought by its imprisonment in a fleshy cell or a poetic realization of the first phase of his soul's journey.

Or let my lamp at midnight hour  
Be seen in some high lonely tow'r  
Where I may oft out-watch the bear  
With thrice great Hermes, or unsphere  
The spirit of Plato to unfold  
What worlds, or what vast regions hold  
The immortal mind that hath forsook  
Her mansion in this fleshy nook (Milton, 1964, p.37).

---

## SUMMARY

Chapter two deals with how Blake and his contemporaries regarded literature, the literary imagination, and literary creation. Blake and the other English Romantic poets saw man's imagination as having two rather different portions. For example, Coleridge proposed the idea that man's

imagination creates artistic creations from either the primary imagination or the secondary imagination.

For Coleridge and the other English Romantics, the primary imagination is perceived by the poet when he hears the transparent voice of divine inspiration which transcends the thoughts and memories of man's conscious mind. The literary creations produced by the primary imagination reflect a wisdom that transcends the writer's personal identity and the experiences of the rational world. In contrast, the concept of the secondary imagination represents man's conscious everyday world. The secondary imagination utilizes the storehouse of memories of the conscious mind, and its literary productions are imitations of the clamoring and striving of man in his physical and social world. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to viewing how literary sociologists have regarded the two different modes of literary creation. I point out that the literary sociologist must approach works which are inspired by the primary imagination differently from those works produced by the secondary imagination. When the literary sociologist attempts to study literature created by man's divine imagination, he should employ a methodology that meets the criteria which I have outlined.

In chapter three I treat Blake's conception of the soul's fall from its edenic heavenly homeland into the physical confines of the body. I categorize poems of the "Songs of Innocence" into three groups, with each group corresponding to a particular state of the human soul. This chapter includes a review of the first two groups. The poems of the second group describe Blake's conception of the soul's departure from the absolute beauty of its heavenly homeland. Blake shows the interior portion of the human soul awakening to find itself having become separated from the great bliss of its ethereal homeland and chained to a world of hellish night. The innocent interior soul is hopeful that it will be able to return to its former state of inward perfection. Blake pictures in group one of the "Songs of Innocence" the exterior portion of the human spirit in a perfect state of union with nature. The poems of this group reflect the joy that the earthbound soul experiences in its condition of fusion with the mighty heart of nature. During this period of the soul's life in the body, it does not know what it means to be separated from the outside world.

In chapter four, I examine the poems that comprise group three of Blake's "Songs of Innocence." In these poems, Blake brings to a close the splendor and pleasure which the innocent soul experiences from its connection with its earthly Eden. The fallen adult souls are shown by Blake to cunningly lead the blissful soul away from its state of earthly paradise to a land of no return. The innocent soul is taught by the fallen adult souls never to go back to its earthly paradise, and learns to become fascinated by the poisonous world serpent or the imprisoning outer world. After the innocent soul becomes separated from the spiritual beauty of its earthly paradise,

it falls into a state of forgetfulness and only understands the dark veil of the temporal world. Blake also explains in certain poems of this group how the interior portion of the soul becomes detached from its visionary knowing memory as a result of exterior soul losing its energies to the human ego. This chapter ends with the interior soul sleeping in the hollow dream of the body, after falling away from its eternal golden wisdom.

In chapter five, which concludes this study, I discuss certain poems of the "Songs of Experience." I have reviewed only those poems of the "Songs of Experience" which are most germane to the theme of this study. Those poems which I did examine are where Blake records what happens to the human spirit when the ego or outer selfhood steals away its life fire and uses it for activities of the outer world. Blake depicts the soul after its life energy has been taken from it as being deformed and lifelessly asleep and therefore not able to see that its sacred conscious powers have been perverted into meaningless actions and achievements of the outer self. In these poems, Blake argues that when the human soul awakens from its deathly sleep, it then must recover or take back its fiery energies from the tyranny of the human ego. The central figure in the poem "The Earth's Answer," near its conclusion, repines against his outer selfhood, and proposes to regain his life energies for the purpose of allowing his soul the opportunity to heal or purify its imperfections (during its stay in the fleshy abode), so that it will be able to return to the condition of heavenly perfection.

---

## REFERENCES

---

- Abrams, M. H. (1971). *Natural supernaturalism*. (p.257). New York: W. Norton and Company.
- Baudelaire, S. (1930). *Flesh and spirit*. (p.38). Boston: Little, Brown, and Company.
- Bell, D. (1959). The "rediscovery" of alienation. *In the Journal of Philosophy*, LVI( 24), 35.
- Blake, W., & Erdman. (Ed.). (1970). *Laocoon: In the poetry and prose of William Blake*. (p.271-272). New York: Doubleday and Company.
- Buchner, G. (1963). *Complete plays and prose*. (p.xv). New York: Hilland Wang.
- Carlyle, T. (1927). *Sartor resartus*. (p.41). New York: The MacMillan Company.
- Fromm, E. (1955). *The sane society* (p.111, 140-141). New York: Fawcett Publications.
- Fromm, E. (1956). *The art of loving* (p.72). New York: Harper and Row.
- Fromm, E. (1961). *Marx's concept of man* (p.47). New York: F. Ungan Publishing Company.
- Israel, J. (1971). *Alienation: From Marx to modern sociology; A macrosociological analysis*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Jung, C. (n.d.). *Concerning the Mandala: In the archetypes and the collective unconscious*, (pp.636-638). Complete Works of Carl Jung, Vol. IX, Part I.

- Kaufmann, W., & Schacht, R. (Ed.). (1971). *The inevitability of alienation*. (p.xxx). New York, Doubleday and Company, Inc.
- Kornhauser, W. (1959). *The politics of mass society*. New York: The Free Press.
- Luke, S., & Finiften, A.W. (Ed.). (1972). *Alienation and anomie: In alienation and the social system*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
- Marx, K. (1959). *Economic and philosophic manuscripts of 1844* (pp.69-70). London: Foreign Languages Publishing House.
- Melvin Seeman, (1959). *On the meaning of alienation*. In *American Sociological Review*, 24(6).
- Merton, R. (1956). *Social structure and anomie: In social theory and social structure* (p.128). Glencoe Illinois: The Free Press.
- Mills, C.W. (1956). *White collar* (p.xviii). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Milton, J. (1964). *I L Penseroso: In the complete English poems of John Milton* (p.37). New York: Washington Square Press, Inc.
- Nietzsche, F. (1967). *The birth of tragedy*. (p.11). New York: Vintage Books.
- Raine, K. (1968). *Blake and tradition* (Vol.I, p.xxxi). New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Roszak, T. (1969). *The making of a counter culture* (pp.95-96). New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc.
- Silverstein, M. (1967). *Alienation as an ideology among intellectuals*. Doctoral Dissertation from UCLA in the department of Sociology.
- Simmel, G. (1950). *The Sociology of Georg Simmel* (p.32, 80). London: Collier-MacMillan Limited.
- Thoreau, H.D. (1960). *Walden*. (p.66, 93-96). New York: The New American Library.
- Tonnies, F. (1957). *Community and society* (p.88). East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press.