Alienation: A Multi-dimensional Interpretation

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In view of the increasing interest in the concept of alienation today, and in addition to the usual treatment which deals with its theories that are based on certain assumptions and assumed views of the attitude towards the other, the purpose of this paper is two-fold: First, it intends to interpret the meaning of the concept of alienation in a socio-psychological context which indicates the individual feeling of dissociation from the other; second, based on this interrelationship of self and the other it argues that alienation is a multi-dimensional concept and suggests seven different yet interrelated meanings for it including estrangement, anxiety, impersonalization, isolation, powerlessness, anomie and shame.

Alienation And The Other

One might argue that one of the major problems of man is that of human interrelatedness. This problem is one of the individual society relationship. The problem concerning the concept of alienation has been growing and various disciplines have endeavoured to define it. However, the issue is not so much what alienation is, but more important, how is our knowledge of alienation possible? Man discovers his knowledge in relation to the other since the key to our knowledge is the other, therefore, knowledge is not possible without the other. The other is an element in the consciousness process that constitutes knowledge. The world is experienced by the self as being inhabited by other selves, as being a world of others and for others.

Considering the significant role which the other plays in understanding and clarifying the meaning of the concept of alienation, we limit the term to mean the individual feelings of dissociation from the other. Such feelings, although, they are products of conditions that produce them, should not be confused with the conditions themselves. Therefore, it seems necessary to distinguish between alienating conditions and feelings of alienation. We are concerned, primarily, with describing and analyzing the process of the feelings of alienation. What matters in this sense, are problems that are lived and directly experienced. This implies that if one uses the term alienation, one has to ask: “From what is it that man is alienated?” One’s answer is: “From his true nature”, which means from the nature of man and the nature of the other. Alienation arises from a heightened awareness and tension consciousness of relationship to the other.

Following the long history of alienation, and its usage by various philosophers, sociologists and psychologists the analysis of the concept could be conceived to describe man as alienated from himself, and this self-alienation is interpreted as a penetration of the other person into the self. It refers to the alienated man as being every man and no man, drifting in a world that has little meaning for him and over which he exercises no

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power, a stranger to himself and to others. Apathy, indifference, feeling of emptiness or lack of a sense of purpose in life represents a set of terms describing the experience of alienation. These experiences are products of tension consciousness in relation to the other.

Heinemann, (1) suggests that the feelings to which the term "alienation" refers are, objectively, different kinds of dissociation, break or rupture between human beings and their objects, whether the latter be other persons, or the natural world, or their own creations in art, science and society; and subjectively, the corresponding states of disequilibrium, disturbance, strangeness and anxiety. Ogurzov (2) maintains that alienation is a philosophical-sociological concept. It refers to a process characterized by the fact that the individual's productive activity, his work, and the result of his activity have become independent and have gained command over the producing agent. For any given social structure, one important task is to study processes which affect the individual's relation to his work, affect his social relations and the relations he established to non-human objects.

Various social scientists have noticed the depersonalization, indifference, and joylessness in what they call the "bureaucratized mass society" which treats workers like standardized parts of a machine and deprives persons of individuality, freedom and pleasure in their occupations and amusements. Life in a society of masses, wrote Wright Mills in his book "White Collar", (3) implants insecurity and furthers impotence; it makes man uneasy and vaguely anxious; it isolates the individual from the social group; it destroys group standards. Acting without goals, man in the mass feels pointless.

This means that the individual's experience of self-alienation is not only due to his orientation towards the other, but is also due to his being cut off from the other or failing to achieve a meaningful relationship with the other. Man feels the anxiety or despair when he loses the status through which he identifies himself or which offers him his security. Conflict becomes conflict in a relationship between the I and the other.

Although Rousseau did not develop an explicit theory of alienation, we find in his work a description of a lived experience in the social world as alienated. He provides evidence of how inauthentic human existence is in such a world. For Rousseau the awareness of alienation in the social world prompts a change from self-love to selfishness: the individual wants to 'pretend' to be someone other than he really 'is' and as a consequence his life becomes "inauthentic". This is the nucleus of human alienation. Interpreted in that way Rousseau's theory of alienation can be characterized as being individual-oriented. He makes assumptions concerning individual human nature. This nature, when socialized and subjected to societal demands, can no longer express its true human self. Rousseau speaks of man's being disengaged from his original, natural freedom by entering into social contract. (4)

Alienation And Its Meanings:

We turn now to a discussion of the concept of alienation as a multi-
dimensional meaning and suggest a wide range of meanings including estrangement, anxiety, impersonalization, isolation, powerlessness, anomie and shame. This implies that man can be seen as alienated from his nature, from his god, from his creative and productive potential or from his institution, from his body and from his self. He may suffer fear and anxiety or feel powerlessness and isolation; he may be a stranger to himself and to others; he may have mechanized or impersonalized relationships with others or too often he may be unable to achieve an identity or communication with others. In dealing with all these meanings of alienation our analysis does not solely refer to its state (definition), but more important, to the process of this state which implies the relationship of man to the other. Without this relationship and the necessary existence of both the self and the other the meaning of alienation remains insufficient.

1. Estrangement

Hegel's conception of alienation is a purely spiritual alienation and one which he terms “Creative Alienation”. The absolute in Hegel's system is spirit. Nature is defined as one form of “self-estranged spirit”. This spirit is objective reality. In “Phenomenology of Mind”, he devotes a whole chapter to “spirit in self-estrangement; culture”. Once again it is assumed that reality is essentially and consequently cultural reality can be estranged of the spirit: “The estrangement on the part of spirit from its natural existence is the individual's true and original nature... (5)

Man is a spiritual being or in Hegel's language spirit produces culture and civilization. Man's own creations, works of arts, religions, philosophies, science, law, and the state become members of the realm of the objective or of the absolute spirit. In creating these worlds man can lose his soul and live in imaginary, purely subjective realms. His creations, as embodiment of his own mind, are in a certain sense outside him, and yet they form part of his own self. This alienation, Hegel maintains, prevails in the whole sphere of culture. Therefore, Hegel sees that in every act an element of estrangement is involved; this element could be called a creative alienation."

The transformation of the world-spirit into external objects is called by Hegel the 'self-detachment of the spirit'. The creative activity of the spirit causes parts of its essences to be detached from itself. The detached part becomes object outside the spirit. Nature and man are two different aspects of spirit. Nature is that part of the spirit which had detached itself from the (spirit) totality. But this detached part is not conscious of itself as being a part of the totality. Man is that part of the spirit which gains self-consciousness through thinking. The spirit which manifests itself in man becomes self-conscious:

"This world although it has come into being by means of individuality, is in the eyes of self-consciousness something that is directly and primarily estranged .... from total spirit as culture. (6)

Self-detachment and subsequent alienation are necessary if the spirit is to achieve full (cultural) self-consciousness. The dialectical process (of
estrangement and overcoming of estrangement) is always continuing. The spirit must detach itself from its (subjective) totality and create objects in order to reach self-consciousness. The alienation of the spirit from itself through the creation of objects has a central function for the striving of the spirit to self-realization. Alienation is the necessary consequence of the antagonism between (abstract subjective) totality and realized self-consciousness. The spirit needs the objects in order to be able to realize itself.

This kind of analysis presupposes a distinction between subject and object and the relationship between them. The self-conscious object is seen as distinct from the alienated 'outer' object (both being ways in which the spirit has expressed itself in its creative activity). The self-conscious spirit experiences the objective world as something alienated and conceives the experience of that which occurs outside itself as something alien.

An important part of Marx's thought is played by the Hegelian idea of 'alienation'. Marx derived from Hegel the notion of self-creation, but in opposition to Hegel he conceived this self-creation as not the activity of pure spirit but a social development based upon the human mastery of nature. For Marx the history of mankind is the history of the increasing development of man, and at the same time of increasing alienation. Marx's theory of human alienation, as presented in the philosophical and economic manuscripts, differentiates his own thinking from Hegel, but he still uses the same terminology. He uses the term alienation in the sense of 'estrangement' as well as in the sense of 'detachment' (7).

Unlike Hegel, Marx transforms the concept of alienation from an 'alienation of creativity' to 'alienation of productivity', that is, relations of productivity which occur in the process of production and which organize this process. This corresponds to his replacement of idealism by humanistic materialism. Marx's theorizing of alienation starts with a critical survey of Hegel's thought. Of central concern in Marx's theory of alienation is the human being and the chance he has in controlling his social and natural environment. The problem of alienation introduces a humanistic aspect into the analysis of social processes. This humanistic aspect (the emancipation of man, his self-realization) remains in Marx's writing although the emphasis later shifts. Whereas Marx's earlier concept of man leads him to socio-humanistic attitudes, he shifts later to socio-economic concepts. Therefore, Marx has two theories of alienation. The first one (developed in the Economic and Philosophical manuscripts) builds upon a philosophical anthropological theory of human nature. His later theory of alienation is based upon a socio-economic concept of human nature. His concern is with the fate of the human being. The human being and his social role lies at the nucleus of Marx's thinking.

In contrast to Hegel, Marx assumes that it is not spirit but man who becomes alienated. In the process of alienation and in the return to himself man becomes man, and not, as in Hegel's case, spirit becomes man. The alienation of productivity becomes 'alienation of labor' and then 'alienation of classes' (as relations of labor) or class struggle. On the basis of these assumptions, Marx interpreted the history of capitalism as the history of the self-alienation of man. Private property is the necessary
result of alienated labor, i.e. of the external relation of the worker to Nature, to man's products, to himself:

"In the real practical world, self-estrangement can only become manifest through the real practical relationship to other men.... Through estranged labor, man not only engenders his relationship to the object and to the act of production as to powers that are alien and hostile to him; he also engenders the relationship in which other men stand to his production and to his product, and the relationship in which he stands to these other men. (8)

However, alienation for Marx shows itself not merely in the result but also in the process of production, within productive activity itself. What, then, constitutes the alienation of labor?

"... 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 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 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.... The external character of labour for the worker appears in the fact it is not his own, but someone else's, that it does not belong to him, that in it he belongs, not to himself, but to another.

For Marx the social conditions and the process of alienation give rise to certain psychological consequences and individual states of alienation (estrangement): the worker becomes alien (estranged) to his own activity as well as to his social world.

Estrangement may be characterized as estrangement not only from the social communities in which man lives, but also from the natural world. Loss of community isolates man, far from sharing his being, only intensifies the alienative process; it separates him from self and from others. Modern man is uprooted. He is not close to earth.

Susanne Langer wrote in her "Philosophy in a New Key":

"...We have put many stages of artifice and device, of manufacture and alteration, between ourselves and the rest of nature. The ordinary city-dweller knows nothing of the earth's productivity; he does not know the sunrise and rarely notices when the sun sets; ask him in what phase the moon is, or when the tide in the harbor is high, or even how high the average tide runs, and likely, as not he cannot answer you. Seed-time and harvest are nothing to him. If he has never witnessed an earthquake, a great flood, or a hurricane, he probably does not feel the power of nature as a reality surrounding his life at all. (9)

Today man does not simply coexist with nature; rather he is estranged from nature.

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2. Anxiety

In philosophical terms anxiety arises as the individual is aware of being as being faced with the ever present possibility of non-being. Kierkegaard (10) concerned himself with the anxiety concept as individual self-alienation. Loss of self can produce anxiety for Kierkegaard. He felt that the self could only be asserted by identification with God. In the “Concept of Dread” this sort of alienation finds a most profound and penetrating psychological analysis as being dominated in a state of anxiety by an alien power which threatens man. He goes one step further in his analysis of alienation as an internal happening within oneself in his “The Sickness Unto Death”; anxiety becomes despair. and despair is the sickness unto death.

Despair, Kierkegaard says, is the imbalance in the relation of the self to itself, or every disturbance in the process of becoming a self. It is a sort of self-consumption, a specific illness of man as a spiritual being which arises from his attempt to separate himself from the power which created him, or from his neglecting or forgetting his spiritual nature. Whoever has no God has no self, and he who has no self is in despair. The despair of not willing to be oneself is the despair of weakness; the despair of willing desperately to be oneself is defiance (of God).

Anxiety is contrasted to fear for Kierkegaard. Fear refers to something one definite (e.g. I fear him). Anxiety refers to something one indefinite; it is apprehension about a foreign power.

“Man, as a striving being, finite, in a world that is never entirely of his own making, is forever in between some kind of fear and some kind of hope, some kind of knowledge, and some kind of ignorance. Fear and hope are at odds: hope wants fear removed; it demands action. Fear lets hope dread its end. Fear, mingling in our hope, hope mingling in our fear—each pleads for knowledge against the other’s weakness for ignorance.” (11)

Both fear and knowledge have a social dimension. We cannot start from ‘man’, the isolated individual man. No man is an individual man. Everyone is this or that man among other men. A man’s fear does not depend on his individual knowledge and ignorance alone.

For instance within the universe other’s knowledge serves to reassess one’s own ignorance; other’s ignorance can shake one’s confidence in one’s own knowledge.

Paul Tillich describes anxiety as man’s reaction to the threat of non-being. Man is the creature who has self-conscious awareness of his being, but he is also aware that at any moment he might cease to exist. (12) Non-being does not mean simply the threat of physical death (although physical death probably is the most common form of non-being). The threat of non-being lies in the psychological and spiritual realms as well, namely, the threat of meaninglessness in one’s existence. Generally, when this form of anxiety is confronted, when the individual realizes the threat of meaninglessness and takes a stand against this threat, the result is a
strengthening of the individual’s feeling of being a self, or a strengthening of his perception of himself as distinct from the world of non-being of objects (physical non-being).

Karl Jaspers in his book “Man in the Modern Age” raises the problem whether man can present his self-hood or identity in a world dominated by giant technological and bureaucratic “apparatus” of his own creation, yet alien to him. The price we pay for progress he suggests is anxiety, a dread of life that the sufferer may feel himself to be nothing but a lost point in empty space in as much as all human relationships appear to have no more than a temporary validity.

“The sufferer from anxiety has confidence in no one; he will not enter into absolute ties with any other person. One who fails to participate in what others are doing is left alone. The threat of being sacrificed arouses the sense of having been utterly forsaken, and this drives the sufferer out of his frivolous ephemeralness into cynical hardness and then into anxiety. In general, life seems full of dread.” (13)

A dread of life in its intensity is modern man’s companion. It is felt and threatened in the masses. Today man is alarmed with a dread concerning his selfhood. Man as a member of a mass is no longer his isolated self. The individual is merged in the mass, to become something other than he is when he stands alone. On the other hand in the mass the individual becomes an isolated atom:

“The masses are our masters; and for every one who looks facts in the face, his existence has become dependent on them, so that the thought of them must control his doings, his cares, and his duties.” (14)

Once modern man cannot escape the dread of being he is left afraid, anxious and isolated in a world based on impersonal relationship.

3. Impersonalization

Alienation refers to impersonalization, the breakdown in the differentiation between human beings and other objects. The theme of impersonalization is a central problem of modern man. Man finds himself isolated, anxious and uneasy. He is confused as to his place in the scheme of a world on which he is increasingly dependent but which is more impersonal, more densely populated yet in face-to-face relationship more dehumanized. It is a world which is more open for communication but in which man is isolated from his next door neighbor. Today man has become mechanized, routinized, made comfortable as an object. This type of alienation could be seen in various spheres of life; bureaucracy and specialized communication are examples.

Bureaucracy, as described by Max Weber, has increased the power of alien forces over man. Weber noted that bureaucracy became appropriate for capitalism because the more bureaucracy depersonalizes itself, the more completely it succeeds in achieving the exclusion of love, hatred, and every purely personal (especially, irrational and inarticulate) feeling from the execution of official tasks. In the place of the old personal type ruler,
who is moved by sympathy, favor, grace and gratitude, modern culture requires the emotionally detached and rigorously professional expert for it sustaining organization (15).

There is growing uneasiness because of insufficient communication. Modern man suffers from the loss of the sense of a real communication that arises in interaction and participation. Contemporary man knows togetherness but not community. Community here refers to communal relations that are based on affectual feeling and belonging, while togetherness refers to associative relations that are based on impersonal feeling and self-interest. And togetherness only isolates man from his fellows. Mass society weakens the bond of traditional human groupings and thereby leaves the individual at the mercy of the impersonal communication. Camus's novel, "The Stranger", (16) is perhaps the most notable modern attempt to describe a man unrelated to anything, a man for whom everything is meaningless, a man who murders and feels nothing. Marcel feels that we are living in a broken world. (17) an increasing specialization of life and growing powers of the state are invading the privacy of the person and destroying the brotherhood of men. This is a world in which human beings tend to become functionaries who exercise isolated mechanical functions in human society, are reduced to statistical numbers, and are no longer free agents in their own right. In a society dominated by technology everything becomes a problem to be solved by calculation. In such a world having is more important than being. Everybody has employment, has possessions, and has certain functions to fulfill. Having (concentration on things rather than persons) is a source of alienation. Objects which we possess have us. Men are in danger of being possessed by these objects. Those who concentrate so much on having are in danger of becoming captive souls cut off from other persons.

4. Isolation

Fromm relates alienation to isolation. His approach is that of social psychologist and psychoanalyst. Modern capitalism has succeeded in producing a man who feels free and independent; but he is alienated in the sense that his acts and drives have become estranged from him. The worker has no part in planning the work process and he is hardly in touch with the whole product. The relation of man to his fellow men is one between abstractions: two living machines who use each other, everybody is to everybody else a commodity. in “Escape From Freedom”, (18) Fromm shows that the modern man, freed from the bonds of a preindustrial society which had given him the security of a sense of belonging to the group, now finds himself alone and anxious in which he is unable to establish new and emotionally satisfying social relationships.

5. Powerlessness

Alienation may refer to a sense of powerlessness. The structure of the industrial society gives rise to feeling of powerlessness as Seeman suggests. (19) Powerlessness as a state of alienation was suggested by Marx in his discussion of the workers’ separation from effective control over his economic destiny, of his helplessness, of his being used for purposes other
than his own. In this connection Weber argues that the worker is only one case of powerlessness, for in the industrial technological society the scientist is also separated from control of the means of inquiry and the civil servant from control of the means of administration.

For Nisbet, alienation could be characterized as withdrawal. (20) This is a withdrawal of energy from social ends and purposes. There is lack of commitment to any norm or rule. The individual's relationship to social norms becomes meaningless. In contrast to withdrawal Merton characterizes alienation as overconformity. (21) Overconformity is an over response to norms and over identification with rules and values of society. Both withdrawal and overconformity are indicative of imbalance in the relative importance of maintaining personal self-esteem on the one hand and the attainment of socially assigned status on the other. This imbalance can result in a state of powerlessness.

6. Anomie

The concept of anomie as an aspect of alienation was introduced into the social sciences by Emile Durkheim. It refers to a state of normlessness or rulelessness, or de-regulation, which result from some change in the social order. It refers to a state of both society or group, or of individuals confronting that structure. Durkheim viewed the collective order as the external regulating force which defines and orders the goals according to which individuals should orient their behavior. If the collective order is disrupted or disturbed a kind of individual aspiration may then arise, which is incapable of fulfillment. Under these conditions, deregulation or 'anomie' ensues. Durkheim explains anomie in various modes and under various conditions.

In "Suicide" (22) he points out that man is distinctive in that the bonds which he accepts are not solely physical but moral, that is, social. The collective (normative moral) force restrains suicide; a weakening of this force results in an increase of suicide. In situations involving economic disasters, something similar to social declassification occurs; certain individuals are suddenly demoted to a lower status than their previous one. These individuals must then restrain their needs and learn greater self-control. When traditional rules have lost their authority of strength the de-regulation (anomie) is further aggravated by passions being less disciplined just at that time when they need to be more disciplined. The increased demands of these passions make fulfillment impossible. In "The Division of Labour" (23) Durkheim notes that as industrial functions become more specialized certain social functions lose their adjustment to each other. The conflict between capital and labor increases. In the past, as a craftsman, the worker lived at the side of his master, but with the birth of large scale industry, the worker becomes more separated from his employer. Under all these conditions anomie prevails. Anomie is alienating disorientation of the collective consciousness (social consciousness).

The psychological (more individual oriented) concept of anomie has been formulated by both MacIver and Riesman. Both formulations are similar. MacIver looks upon anomie as a breakdown of the individual's
sense of attachment to society. It is not simply loneliness, but a state of mind in which the individual's sense of social cohesion is broken or spiritually sterile. He is responsible only to himself, responsible to no one; he lives on the thin line of present situation between no future and no past, and has lost the dynamic unity of personality. MacIver suggests that there are three kinds of anomie persons: 1. those who have lost all system of values which might give their lives meaning and who thus live only in a meaningless present; 2. those who no longer have any personal or social values to which they can harness their drive to action and who, therefore, transfer their drive to the pursuit of means alone (especially the pursuit of power), rather than the pursuit of goals; 3. a type characterized by a fundamental and tragic insecurity, the insecurity of those 'helplessly' disoriented. (24)

Similarly Riesman (in "The Lonely Crowd") calls attention to the fact that the pressure of a highly competitive individualistic society tends to make man exceptionally sensitive to the actions and wishes of his peer groups. In his anxiety for the approval of the others, he sacrifices his own individual autonomy and social freedom. As a conformist, he is fearful that he does not measure up to the role expected of him by other conformists. Such fear isolated him from his peers. (25)

7. Shame

Shame is the apprehension of the presence of the other. Shame is a unitary apprehension with three dimensions: "I am ashamed of myself before the other." (26) On the basis of this definition Sartre distinguishes between two attitudes towards the other or itself. I can consider myself as I know myself (Sartre calls this my knowing self as Being-for-myself) or I can consider myself or I can know myself as known by the other (knowing my Being-for-the other).

"There are two authentic attitudes: that by which I recognize the other as the subject through whom I get my objectness—this is shame; and that which I apprehend myself as the free object by which the other gets his being-other. This is arrogance or the affirmation of my freedom confronting the other—as object. (27)

Shame is possible only in relation to the other; indeed, shame implies that I am ashamed of myself in the presence of the other. The other is a real existent being, completely independent of my thinking and through his look the other transcends me. The other’s presence invests me with a feeling which I could certainly not acquire on my own or in solitude. Shame and (pride) are spontaneous reactions to the fact that we are looked at by the other, that the other's presence alters our presence. And because of this alteration we are dissatisfied that our presence is dependent upon the other presence's.

"Pure shame is not a feeling of being this or that guilty object but in general of being an object; that is of reorganizing myself in this degraded, fixed, and dependent being which I am for the other" (28).

To conclude, our analysis has shown that definition of alienation could refer to a variety of meanings and that definition alone does not give
complete knowledge of the meaning of the concept. The more adequate knowledge of alienation is the knowledge of its relation to self and the other. What counts for our investigation of alienation is not what is being thought but the process by which it has been thought (the how). We have been concerned with the broader sense of alienation, its role in revealing the thinking process which is the essence of man as a conscious being. Nothing is more distinctively human than the consciousness of self and the consciousness of the other. In the light of this interpretation, alienation has been viewed, throughout this paper, as an experience, lived experience, expressed in various modes and in view of various thinkers as summarized in the following:
Alienation: A Multi-dimensional Interpretation

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(2) D. Ogorzov cited in Joachim Israel, Alienation From Marx to Modern Sociology (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1971) p. 5.


(6) ibid. p. 516.


(9) ibid. pp. 72-73.


(15) ibid. p. 40.


(22) Robert K. Merton, The Social Theory and Social Structure (The


الاغتراب وتفسيراته المتعددة للإبعاد

د. نوال الصاوي

لقد زاد اهتمام العلماء الاجتماعيون والدروسيون حديثاً في دراسة الاغتراب، وزاد معه بالتالي الاهتمام بتفسير معانيه المتعددة للإبعاد. غير إن تلك المعاني بمختلف ابعادها خلت من تعريف شامل يجمعها في اطار واحد. وقد جاءت هذه الدراسة هادفة إلى:

أولاً: ايجاد تعريف موحد شامل لمعنى الاغتراب المتعددة للإبعاد ممثلة في أن الاغتراب عبارة عن تجربة يعيشها الفرد ويعبر عنها في انماط مختلفة وفق عملية فكرية واحدة جوية وعي الذات من الغير، مع الاعتراف أن الغير يمكن أن يكون فرداً أو جماعة، مؤسسة أو مجتمعاً، مادة أو روحًا، وأن ما يميز معاني الاغتراب العديدة نوعية الغير ونوع الوعي به.

ثانياً: لقد جاء البحث في هدفه الثاني محاولاً تطبيق تعريفنا لاغتراب على سبع معاني مفترضة وتشمل الشعور بالايتام، بالقلق، بفقدان الإنسانية، بفقدان القوة بالعزلة، بالاضطراب، باللعب مستندة إلى تحليلات نسبي ورد من مفهوم لمعنى الاغتراب. هذه ضمن نظرية متكررة مثل هيج، وما ركس وروس ودوركيم، وسيرتين وسارت وغيرها.

ثالثاً: يؤكد هذا البحث أن المفهوم المتكامل لمعنى الاغتراب لا يعني تعريفه فقط بل أيضاً عملية فهمه أي: ما هو الاغتراب وكيفية معرفتنا به؟