

Research Article

# Specters of Uranus: Sense of Alienation in Western Thinking

Ramesh Sharma\* 

Department of English, Assam Don Bosco University, Assam, India

## Abstract

This paper examines the epistemology of the sense of “alienation” in Western thinking since early Greece through to modern day thinking up to Poststructuralism. The term is informed by a sense of insecurity assumed by Uranus to his power and an obsession to retain it. It led to the primordial creation of a binary opposition of “I/We” (Uranus, the power) and “they” (his offspring, the Giants and the Cyclopes, the possible threat to the power), or in short, a sense of alienation, a defense mechanism by Uranus to retain his power. This was the first social dichotomy consciously designed to retain power which soon translated into conflict like Gigantomachy (war between Uranus and the Giants) and later Titanomachy (the war between the Titans and the Olympians). The paper assumes that the idea first gets conceived in and executed by the first Greek God, Uranus, and since then it has found an active legacy in different transmutations. It uses analytical and interpretive methods to look into the transmutation through representative texts in different discourses-literature, politics, science, psychology, mathematics, history. The transmutation has a social impact and this paper is particular with conflict and war as examples. The paper also contends that most of the conflicts in the West, starting with the Trojan War until the Russian-Ukraine conflict, have germs in this idea. What Uranus did is often honestly re-orchestrated by his orphans in the West in new forms and platforms across time and hence an insight into it will certainly impact our perspective on the cause and consequence of conflict and war today.

## Keywords

Uranus, Alienation, Conflict, Greek Mythology

## 1. Introduction

“It is the *best* of the time; it is the *worst* of the time...” [10]  
“...the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence...” [12]

A big moral discomfiture for Western thinkers today is perhaps the West, in spite of being at the height of its civilization, has been and is being, rocked and wrecked by deadly wars starting with the Trojan War in the beginning, the two world wars through to the recent most Russia-Ukraine conflict. The Russian-Ukraine conflict, almost in line with the previous

wars, having a potential chance of getting transformed into a full-fledged world war, has also made a compelling case to look into the history and nature of the Western thinking and how it leverages wars. As a disclaimer, the West is not unique in terms of the wars. However, unlike the obsession for the war in the West, its inevitability, the war in the other parts of the world does not have a similar legacy. The battle of Kurukshetra for instance. It was supposed to have been fought in 3000 BC, and the generation has already forgotten to take

\*Corresponding author: sharma02021975@gmail.com (Ramesh Sharma)

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recourse to it. Bombing is often considered by the West as a means to peace. According to Jack S. Levy, “Peace, which is analytically distinct from justice, is usually defined as the absence of war” [5]. This also implies that the peace follows the war. And perhaps this belief on the inevitability of war for peace is one of the reasons why people like Dickens, as cited above, see “worst” of the time even at the best of the time and Eliot wants to look for its reason in the past.

It will be a wrong assumption to contend that a conflict is abrupt. A present conflict always demands a spiral into its history, into its sense, for its understanding in which the contention in the second extract above is a telling observation. This paper will argue that the “worst” time is also one of the ramifications of the inheritance of a deep-rooted desire for alienation in the Western thinking, incepted and executed as a defense mechanism against an assumed fear of getting annihilated from a place or position of power in the beginning and gradually inherited by generations in different discourses for the similar purpose. The paper does not indict the alienation, nor its inheritance; rather it attempts to 1) historicize it and 2) explore the inheritance across generations to give a wider context for its understanding.

## 2. Literature Review

Commentators of the Western thinking have been constantly hiding a bitter truth in it- the presence of Uranus-and consciously substituting it with full appreciation and glorification. Gratifying the ancient Greek philosophers, Thales and Anaximander, in the Twentieth Century A. D. Winsper writes that “In the fragments of their work which have come down to us the main intellectual and social currents of a great transitional age are plainly revealed” [36]. Winsper should have rather started thinking with Uranus who in fact laid down the foundation of the “currents.” The Western thought has been critiqued for having a dual nature since early Greece and its manifestation across time. Johanna Margaretha Tamm thus maps the legacy of this thought until the 19th century. According to Tamm, “Ever since the beginning of Western philosophy in ancient Greece ...there have been two fundamental approaches to life in general: materialism and spiritualism... In the 19th century the real fight began” [35]. However, Tamm forgets the cause and condition of these approaches and hence neutralizes the approaches as a “duality” in thought, a good nature of the Western thinking. In recent times, others have pretended a sense of “peaceful co-existence” in the thought. Understanding of this thought by the Soviet Union, according to Marshall D. Shulman is “a form of struggle between states with different social systems without resort to war” [34] and the Americans “a mixture of competition, restraint and co-operation” [34]. In this sense the co-existence is devoid of conflict, war, which is a white-lie considering the context of wars in the Middle East and Europe, where both the US and Russia are the active players. In other words, Shulman is consciously speaking of something im-

possible. Such one-dimensional approach of the thinkers has seriously sugarcoated the Western thinking and hence they demand confrontation. Bertrand Russell in the “Introductory” to *The History of Western Philosophy* correctly sees a sense of alienation in this thinking and chooses to deviate writing that his “...purpose is to exhibit philosophy as an integral part of social and political life: not as the isolated speculations of remarkable individuals...” [31] as in the convention. The glorification of the Western thinking can be seen being confronted by a sense of alienation always already inherent in it, designed long back and is being carried over (un) consciously by generations till today.

## 3. Methodology

Generally, we have three methods to approach alienation: Hegelian, Marxist and Existentialist. For Hegel, it is conditioned by a disparity between “spirit” and “self”; this is more a spiritual formation. Loius Dupre writes that in Hegel the sense of alienation comes when “The Spirit knowingly abandons its natural self in order to acquire a substantial self...its essence is separated from the actual world and flees into the beyond of faith” [11]. Marx brings Hegel down to earth and locates the condition for alienation in economic disparity. For him, alienation is social formation. “The question of the conditions of man's freedom is not a philosophical but merely an economic one” observes Gajo Petrović correctly about Marxist sense of alienation and adds that “In accord with this, one could also say that the question of the conditions of alienation is also an economic one” [26] Apart from the spiritual and the social dimensions, the Existential alienation is conditioned by a sense of separation from God. It is perhaps best articulated by Nietzsche and represented by Maximilian Beck. Beck observes for Nietzsche that, “God is only an illusion... Man...has to create himself according to his own design...Man as his own creator: that is, indeed, the ultimate consequence of the emancipation from God” [3]. In this sense, it is a religious formation.

However, the sense of alienation that this paper uses as a point of reference is neither spiritual, nor economical or divine, rather it is a fear formation. It was triggered in the Greek God Uranus by an internal fear of getting annihilated from power by an emerging threat in terms of Cronus. Consequently, the fear necessitated a total separation from the threat and thus Uranus distanced the Giants. In this sense, this craze for creating the first binary by scared God, this sense of alienation, was an obsession for power. The generation has not only adopted the obsession honestly like a faithful child but, as this paper unfolds, has also consciously attempted to whitewash the politics behind moulding it into different tenets of thoughts. But, before further deliberation a historical context, as Eliot emphasizes, to the obsession will throw more light in its inheritance.

## 4. Specters of Uranus: Historical Context

Every conflict, starting with the Trojan War through to the two world wars and the war today, has a power relation. As Lucchese contends, the “...crisis is the imperative of history...it is what contains the principles of power. Crisis does not exclude power; it contains it” [20]. The sense of alienation also has power relations. One of the ways to arrive at how the sense of alienation that orient and balances the divisive thinking, which has power connection, was ideated and inherited across generations is to recourse to a few originary stories in Greek mythology. The first Greek God, Uranus, the son of Gaia, conceived the sense so that his power of being the first primordial God remained intact. In the mythology Gaia “was one of the four spontaneously generated primeval deities. Chaos (‘gaping void’) came into being at the beginning of time, followed first by Gaia and then by Eros and Tartarus” [29]. In due course out of boredom, she intensely dreamt of a companion. The dream was so intense that she became self-pregnant out of which Uranus was born. Thus, Gaia and Uranus became the first parents.

Gaia then mated with Uranus and gave birth to her legacy of Giants, Cyclops and Titans. “Uranus, anxious to avoid being deposed by one of his children, kept all his offspring imprisoned in their mother Gaia” [29]. Gaia loved the Giants though they were monsters, but Uranus feared. Therefore, he pushed them back into the womb of Gaia. After the Giants, Gaia begot other monsters, Cyclops, who were also three in number. Like Giants, Uranus feared them too and therefore tied and threw them into the Tartarus. Deeply saddened by the loss of her children, Gaia further gave birth to a third type of children called Titans. Among them, Cronus or Kronos, became the most powerful one and eventually, with the help of Gaia, challenged and deposed his father. Cronus thus became king god after Uranus with Rhea, one of his sisters, as his queen.

However, Cronus too did not have the good luck to remain in power for long. He was also struck by the same fear of his father and adopted another means of distancing. Cronus and Rhea had six children of which Zeus was the youngest. “Cronus, in order to avoid succumbing to the same fate as his father, swallowed his children” [29] Hestia, Demeter, Poseidon, Hera and Hades the moment they were born fearing that they might supplant him in the future. All the siblings grew in his stomach. To save Zeus from being swallowed, Rhea, with the help of Gaia, secretly managed to send him to the island of Crete and put in a cave near to Lyctus, a city in Crete. Rhea then cheated Cronus to swallow a stone in place of Zeus. Zeus returned to his place grown up and rescued his siblings from Cronus making him vomit them intoxicated by a drug. The grown-up siblings jumped out of the mouth of Cronus one by one. Then with the help of Gaia, the Cyclops and the Giants, Zeus led a war against Cronus famously known as The War of Gods, defeated and hurled him into Tartarus as a prisoner and became the ruler with Mt. Olympus as his abode. It is said that

Zeus was also haunted by the same fear that Uranus and Cronus had. “Zeus had to contend with other possible threats to his power. He was especially concerned with the pattern of succession, begun with Cronus and Uranus, whereby each son violently usurped his father’s throne and was then deposed in turn” [29]. Therefore, he designed a strategy, the Trojan War, to divide the mortals, set them against each other and destroy.

The pattern flowed to Greek thinkers and got hosted and interpreted in them for adaptation to their time. When Plato started thinking about the qualification of a king in which he concluded he should be a “philosopher”, he succumbed to the same pattern. In other words, while looking for a good king, he started making the social division deeper. In the very beginning of his dialogue “Philosopher Kings”, he thus philosophically wrecked his contemporary society: “There will be discovered to be some natures that ought to study philosophy and to be leaders in the state; and others who are not born to be philosophers, and are meant to be followers rather than leaders” [27]. In the guise of the division, the “born to be philosophers” and the “followers” Plato started a binary opposition in people leading to a class difference. Plato was highly conscious of the imperative of the division as the base for his *Republic* where he conceived his utopia. Bertrand Russell sums up what Plato did next: “Plato begins by deciding that the citizens are to be divided into three classes: the common people, the soldiers, and the guardians. The last, alone, are to have political powers. There are to be much fewer of them than of the other two classes” [31].

Plato compounded the generation of the class further in his dramatic theory by dividing the characters sometimes into “good” and “bad” and other times into “criminal”, “slaves”, “inferior”, “superior”, “men” and “women.” For him slaves and women are not worth imitating in a drama, that is to say they are not worth intellectual purpose. Bertrand Russell once again sums up the stand of Plato. He says,

The good man, [Plato] says, ought to be unwilling to imitate a bad man; now most plays contain villains; therefore, the dramatist, and the actor, who plays the villain’s part, have to imitate people guilty of various crimes. Not only criminals, but woman, slaves and inferiors generally, ought to be imitated by superior men. Plays, therefore, if permissible at all, must contain no characters except faultless male, heroes of good birth.[31].

The “good man” and the “bad man” have the stamps of Uranus and Giants.

The legacy is honestly inherited by Aristotle while drawing a distinction between the types of men for their qualification to be imitated in poetry. He suggested “goodness” and “badness” as the norms which in turn would become the “distinguishing” marks of their “moral” differences.” He thus puts in *Poetics*, quotes S.H.Butcher: “Since the objects of imitation are men in action, and these men must be either of a higher or a lower type (goodness and badness being the distinguishing marks of moral differences) ... [4]. Aristotle thus registers the binary of “higher” and “lower” in dramatic theory to be

practiced and promoted by the future dramatists. Rousseau has rightly observed that “Aristotle, before any..., had said that men are by no means equal naturally, but that some are born for slavery and others for dominion” [30].

Uranus, however, did not die down with the classical thinkers. His legacy compounded and intensified continued in the Fifteenth century and Enlightenment Period in the West in many transmutations in terms of various discourses as mentioned before. This paper considers some of the thinkers as instances of inheriting the same obsession in diverse forms: Niccolo Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Rene Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Immanuel Kant, Charles Darwin, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, Carl Gustav Jung, Isaac Newton, Albert Einstein, Frederick Nietzsche, Paul Michel Foucault, Ferdinand de Saussure and Jacques Derrida. In their thinking we can locate an oblique but honest defense of the same seed thought transmuted in different discourses where they intellectually attempted to attend to the height of Uranus. In this sense Uranus has many transmutations today as analyzed next.

## 5. Transmutations

### *Political Transmutation*

In politics, the ideas of Niccolo Machiavelli are a good beginning to figure out Uranus. He gives the sense of alienation a political bent, taking it to the service of the Italian monarchy. For instance, in his book *The Prince* (1515), Machiavelli succumbed to the same pattern established by the Greek predecessors but with varied and intensified open villainy and cruelty laying the foundation for the ever remembered dark “Machiavellian” character which represents the darker sides of humanity, glorified to a large extent by the Elizabethan dramatists with racial offense sometimes in the form of Barabas and other times Shylock. Like Plato, Machiavelli recommended the division as a tool of administration for princes in managing principalities.

Machiavelli relies on “social conflict” as a source of good republic. As observed by Filippo Del Lucchese in regards to another book by him,

The theme of social conflict is present from the opening pages of the *First Decade of Titus Livius*. The causes of the greatness of a republic, Machiavelli argues, are a good army and a good constitution...good fortune and military virtue developed precisely because of the city's conflictual character. [20]

Lucchese further comments that “Niccolô Machiavelli is one of the very few authors to assign a positive role and political value to the theme of social conflict” [20]. In accepting conflict as the source of fortune and virtue, he not only accepts the alienation but also applies it to the politics of Titus Livius of the time and carries it to the extreme.

With special focus on the “new principalities” and their further subdivisions as “entirely new” or “mixture” of the

“hereditary” and the “newly annexed territories”, the book is all set to prescribe extreme form of cruelties that the prince of the “mixed principalities” should adopt for control and rule. In the chapter 17, “Concerning Cruelty and Clemency, and Whether it is better to be Loved than Feared” for the new prince, he thus prescribes the way fear be triggered by the prince:

Nevertheless, a *prince ought to inspire fear* in such a way that, if he does not win love, he avoids hatred...when it is necessary for him to proceed against the life of someone, he must do it on proper justification...he must keep his hand off the property of others, because men more quickly forget the death of their father than the loss of their patrimony [21].

In the administration of the principalities, Machiavelli tries to legalize fear, the “prince ought to inspire fear” as a mechanism and even inspires the prince to go against the life of someone and justify it. In short, he is educating the prince with the option of terror and along with it distancing the gap between the ruler and the ruled.

The Enlightenment and the Post-Enlightenment thinking propagated the seed thought further in their own multifarious domains. Thomas Hobbes, for instance, is concerned with the matter, form and power of an ecclesiastical and civil common-wealth. Through this discursive thought, as observed by Marshall D Shulman, Hobbes attains to an authoritarian figure of a transitional thought in seventeenth century England torn apart between Puritanism and revolution. “In response to Puritanism and revolution, then, Hobbes became the great theorist who envisaged the transition from kingship to secular state sovereignty and what we now call modernization...[and]... Thomas Hobbes and his book *Leviathan* are widely regarded as markers at that crossroads” [34] at the time of the Seventeenth Century civil-war in England. His representative book *Leviathan* (1651) is a study on human beings that distinguishes “Natural” and “Artificial” man. The seed thought figures in terms of this dialectic. Hobbes in the very beginning of the book renders natural man to a machine drawing analogy between the human organs and the parts of a machine:

For seeing life is but a motion of Limbs... why may we not say that all *Automata* (Engines that move themselves by springs and wheels as doth a watch) have an artificial life? For what is the *Heart*, but a *Spring*; and the *Nerves*, but so many *Strings*; and the *Joynis*, but so many *Wheels*, giving motion to the whole Body, such as was intended by the Artificer?” [16].

What necessitates Hobbes to engineer an artificial man is no doubt politics, Puritanism and revolution, but before that it is the obsession with the reason, the drive of the Enlightenment thought that virtually distinguishes the nature/natural as “the Art whereby God hath made and governs the World” and what human beings do and achieve as artificial. The mysterious analogy between the natural man and the artificial, in which the former merged into the later, eventually becomes an

instrument, a machine, that understands only the language of an instrument.

#### *Mind-Body Transmutation*

The trio Rene Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz show the extension of the seed thought up to a dichotomy of mind and body. Descartes is best known for “mind-body dualism.” What Descartes says is interesting: “I have a clear and distinct idea of myself inasmuch as I am only a thinking and unextended thing, and as, on the other, I possess a distinct idea of body, inasmuch as it is only an extended and unthinking thing, it is certain that this I ... is entirely and absolutely distinct from my body, and can exist without it” [8]. Mind has the attribute of thinking and body, matter, and extension. “The argument for the real distinction [in Descartes] is an argument that the essences of mind and body are distinct” writes Daniel E. Flagg, and adds that “... it is possible that mind is one kind of thing and body is another kind of thing—Descartes can claim that they carry the burden of the distinction” [13].

Having created the philosophical dualism, Descartes invokes another problem: if mind and body are distinct things how do they interact with each other? Descartes is of the opinion that the mind and the body interact with each other through sensations, remaining distinct apart. There cannot be more than one substance and it is God; mind and body are the extension of God. Spinoza seems to resolve the dualism with the extension of the ideal substance, God, that Descartes introduces. He writes, as quoted by Charles B Daniels, “[M]inds and bodies must inhabit two distinct plena” [6]. And for him, God unites the mind and body/matter in these plena. Although Descartes seems to have given a solution to the problem he triggers, the dualism he marks keeps on reverberating in the human mind. Leibniz, for instance, accepts the stand of Spinoza but he substitutes the god substance with the “harmony”, a design of God meant to unite the mind and the body. Mind and body interact because of a pre-established “harmony” between them. However, while trying to resolve the Cartesian problem of dualism, to forge a relation in the dialectic, they already accept and begin with the same dualism, the gap between mind and body; the same sense of alienation.

#### *Racial Transmutation*

Race study is purely a Western enterprise. The damage done by the study has already been experienced in the Western colonization. This was accomplished mainly through the ideas of prominent figures like Immanuel Kant and Charles Darwin. “Kant’s theory of race is significant for the development of aspects of critical philosophy” [32] writes Stella Sandford highlighting the dominance that Kant achieves in the racial line of thinking. In spite of his tremendous contribution to human thinking in terms of ideas like “metaphysics”, “epistemology”, “ethics”, “political theory” and “aesthetics”, Kant has equally damaged the generations with his so called “scientific theory of race,” an idea converted into mission accomplished under the project of the Western colonization. He thus begins his politics of human division into race, categorizing first in four basic different groups:

I believe that we only need to assume four races in order to be able to derive all of the enduring distinctions immediately recognizable within the human genus. They are: (1) the white race; (2) the Negro race; (3) the Hun race (Mongol or Kalmuck); and (4) the Hindu or Hindustani race. [19]

He further classifies them in terms of qualities corresponding to climate. Thus the “northern Europe,” which has a “humid climate,” has the “First race;” America with “dry climate” the “Second race;” “Black” with “humid heat” the “third race;” and “Asian-Indian” with “dry heat” the “Fourth race.” This division, in turn, also serves the intellectual variance, creating the false narratives of “superior” and “inferior” race. Strategically he terms the first race as “Noble” race!

It is interesting to note the restlessness of anthropological science and its obsession with the graduation of the number of races in successive studies, as pointed out by Charles Darwin in *Descent of Men*. According to Robert J. Richards, “[In] his book Darwin described the races as forming an obvious hierarchy of intelligence and moral capacity, from savage to civilized...” [28]. In other words, Darwin gives hierarchy even to intelligence. However, Only Kant and Darwin were not in the race to divide the races. There was a competition, a craze, among many. Thus, Darwin writes,

Man has been studied more carefully than any other organic being, and yet there is the greatest diversity amongst capable judges whether he should be classed as a single species or race, or as two (Virey), as three (Jacquinot), as four (Kant), five (Blumenbach), six (Buffon), seven (Hunter), eight (Agassiz), eleven (Pickering), fifteen (Bory St. Vincent), sixteen (Desmoulins), twenty-two (Morton), sixty (Crawford) or as sixty-three according to Burke. [7]

#### *Historical Transmutation*

Two significant German thinkers who successively reflect on how human history operates and established the seed thought as its phenomenon are Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Karl Marx. “Hegel’s greatness is as indisputable as his obscurity” [24], correctly writes Gustav E. Mueller assessing the authority he assumes in the line of his thought. Mueller even calls him a “legend” [24]. Hegel gives an ideal interpretation of the thought and Marx brings it down to the earth. His method is generally understood as the dialectical method of historical and philosophical progression. Three consecutive terms used in the dialectic are “thesis”, “antithesis” and “synthesis” as the process of arriving at knowledge. The terms are the summary of the entire corpus of Hegelian writings coined by the philosopher Heinrich Moritz Chalybaeus. In simple understanding, the dialectic implies that an idea will have its negation in the beginning before its acceptance and the chain continues in different forms, the pattern remaining the same. In Hegelian thought, human history has this operative phenomenon at its philosophical level. Once again Mueller notes, “In Hegel’s dialectic, philosophy had matured beyond such one-sided possibilities” [24] and thus hints to an alienated philosophical thought.

The Marxist dialectic is the same Hegelian dialectic applied to study human history as the history of materialism, history as a result of material condition unlike Hegel. In Marx's line of thought it is believed that, as pointed out by Philip J Kain, "It has been the case hitherto in history that material conditions determine consciousness..." [18], which already problematizes history into material and consciousness conditions. Further, in the first section "Bourgeois and Proletarians" of *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), Marx and Engels write that "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf...in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted...fight..." [22]. In short, the thinkers underline how human history operates. In it what they have already taken into granted is that human history is always already a confrontation between two alienated contradictory classes that keep on changing their vertices across time.

#### *Psychological Transmutation*

Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung have successively commented on psychosexual development of a child that tends to get two forms. Freud divides the human mind into three categories- Id, Ego and Superego, where, as according to M Karl Bowman "Id represents...emotional and instinctive forces...The ego is that part of the id which has been modified by the direct influence of the external world...Super- ego is regarded as a 'precipitate in the ego' and is a modification of ego" [2]. This is not the end. Two more attempts have been made by psychologists to bifurcate human psychology with masculine and feminine attributes—Oedipus and Electra complexes. Freud refers to the terms in *The Interpretation of Dreams* for the first and brought it into the character analysis of Hamlet towards 1910. He says, "The Oedipus complex... has through further study of the subject, acquired an unexpected significance for the understanding of human history and the evolution of religion and morality" [14]. In his work *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (*Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie*) Freud formulates three stages in the development of a child's psychology: oral stage (birth-1 year), anal stage (1-3 years) and phallic stage (3 to 6 years). To describe the psychological characteristics of the children at the phallic stage he uses the term "Oedipal complex." The term is taken from the character of Oedipus in the classical Greek tragedy *Oedipus the King* by Sophocles in which he murdered his own father and married mother unintentionally. According to Freud, a child develops such a temperament against same sex parents at the phallic stage: sons hate fathers and daughters mothers. However, with reference to the term "phallic" and the name Oedipus, Freud already makes psychology purely a masculine attribute.

Carl Gustav Jung does not agree with the term. In his book *Theory of Psychoanalysis* he develops a new term, "Electra Complex " for feminine oedipal attitude during the phallic stage alluding to the character of Electra in Greek mythology. Electra was the daughter of Agamemnon, the commander of

Greek forces during the Trojan War, and Clytemnestra. On return from the battle, Clytemnestra plotted the murder of her husband. As a revenge, Electra plotted the murder of Clytemnestra with her brother and sister. According to Jung, the Oedipal stage in a girl child, hatred for mother for the possession of the father, can be best explained by the complexity of Electra than Oedipus. He thus writes, "In the case of the son, the conflict develops in a more masculine and therefore more typical form, whilst in the daughter, the typical affection for the father develops, with a correspondingly jealous attitude toward the mother. We call this complex, the Electra-complex" [17]. And with this, in spite of the ingenuity in the attempt to explain the theories of the psychosexual development, the thinkers also curiously concede that human psychology is also as alienated as the materiality of the male and female sexes. With these, both have attained to the height of Uranus in psychology.

#### *Scientific Transmutation*

Development in science, for instance in Physics, has always remained a suspicious area in spite of its tremendous service to humanity. We may take two examples, Isaac Newton and Albert Einstein. Newton's theory of gravity following the incident in the garden at Woolsthorpe is pertinent to cite here. He writes, as quoted by Andrew Motte:

...if it universally appears, by experiments and astronomical observations, that all bodies about the earth gravitate towards the earth, and that in proportion to the quantity of matter which they severally contain...we must, in consequence of this rule, universally allow that all bodies whatsoever are endowed with a principle of mutual gravitation.... [23].

Beyond the discovery of the theorem what is significant is that it already considers the inevitability of the "bodies." In other words, Newton is already considering fragmentation of bodies as the basis. Unless he considers the fragmentation, the theory is impossible as it exists only in the pull of a body, mass, on the other. There should be at least two bodies, or masses, and a dividing line between them for the gravity to exist.

Einstein, on the other hand, is one step further in taking in granted the dividing line. His theory of science is empirical and thus he does not consider metaphysical. In other words, Einstein is an alienation between empirical science and metaphysics. His special theory of relativity, for instance, intrigues the readers with its name itself. What makes Einstein think about "relativity"? Is not the universe a single mass? His special theory of relativity states that space and time are relative rather than absolute; time must change according to the speed of an object (in the absence of gravitation). In the general formula of  $E=mc^2$ , it is shown that matter and energy are relatively equivalent and matter can be converted into energy. The necessity of relative existence arises only with a prior consideration that they are essentially different and hence alienated.

#### *Power Transmutation*

Two modern thinkers, who invest in power in relation to

human will and knowledge besides also being severe critics of the Enlightenment culture and accordingly the pioneers of Modernist thinking, are Frederick Nietzsche and Paul Michel Foucault. Fredrick Appel and Ruth Abbey in “Nietzsche and the Will to Politics” straightforwardly declare that the writing “...continues the challenge to the belief that politics is not central to the concerns of Friedrich Nietzsche...” [1]. In reference to the society and individual in *The Will to Power* Nietzsche writes, “The will to power appears a) among the oppressed, among slaves of all kinds, as will to “freedom”: merely getting free seems to be the goal ...b) among a stronger kind of man, getting ready for power, as will to overpower...c) among the strongest, richest, most independent, most courageous...” [25]. Although the will to power has knowledge and art dimensions, Nietzsche’s location of it in the “slave,” the “stronger,” and the “strongest,” first of all, is the acceptance of the opposite categories and only then their “will” within. Nietzsche’s thinking is divisive in other areas too. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, he refers to two opposite natures in human beings symbolized by the Greek God Apollo and Dionysius as Apollonianism and Dionysianism: the first symbolizes intellect, wisdom and the second intoxication, madness. In Greek mythology it can be seen that Apollo is always powerful and Dionysius is subjected to him, therefore wisdom prevails. Whenever Dionysius triumphs, tragedy prevails, thus the birth of tragedy. Thus, Nietzsche extends the sense of alienation even up to human nature.

Foucault, a fierce critic of the modern civilization and the writer of the seminal books like *Madness and Civilization*, in which he diagnoses the “madness” as a disease is a product of modern civilization, *Discipline and Punish* in which he does not appropriate punishment for crime. is generally remembered as the critic of discourse and with the terms, he exposes a dynamism between knowledge and power. As discussed in the *Archaeology of Knowledge* the discourse implies a total knowledge system of a particular place at a particular point of time; social institutions and disciplines all form the discourse. According to him, “Discourse...is not a consciousness that embodies its project in the external form of language (“language”); it is not a language (“langue”), plus a subject to speak it. It is a practice that has its own forms of sequence and succession” [15]. As such we can have literary discourse, religious discourse, philosophical discourse, mathematical discourse etc. The discourse generates knowledge and when the knowledge gains momentum it assumes power to its institutions behind. But when Foucault thinks on the dynamic relationship of power and discourse, in the same thinking he is also thinking that a discourse that has attained to power will certainly have overpowered other discourses around; power also implies the presence of a powerless else the power does not exist. Hence discourse theory is already well informed by an alienated sense of power and powerlessness in Foucault.

#### *Linguistic Transmutation*

Two linguists form the significant legacy of the similar line of thought in terms of language and its meaning. Ferdinand de

Saussure and Jacques Derrida have made a very significant development in stretching the divisive line in linguistic dimension. In fact, when Derrida composes the text *Spectres of Marx*, he also records the spectres of Uranus in it. Although there are other thinkers in the line like John Locke (“Essay Concerning Human Understanding” which anticipates Saussure and Derrida long back in the Enlightenment period), the observation of the split in the language in Saussure and Derrida is the extreme. Saussure considers language in terms of a “sign”, “signifier” and “signified.” He writes, “The bond between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary. Since I mean by sign the whole that results from the associating of the signifier with the signified, I can simply say: *the linguistic sign is arbitrary*” [33]. The “sign” is the point of intersection between the signifier and the signified which gives language its meaning, arbitrary though. However, Derrida does not agree with Saussure. Although he considers the signifier-signified split and also the “sign”, he does not see the sign translating into a meaning. For him, the moment the sign is formed, it deforms itself, the centre of the meaning in it shifts somewhere else. Thus, he writes, the difference that we find in the intersection of the signifier and the signified, the sign is “literally neither a word nor a concept” [9]. What is evidenced then is that the dividing line between the signifier and signified is brief in Saussure but it widens in Derrida to such an extent that there is no point of return though many see it as an enabling phenomenon in the sense that denying one centre of meaning unfolds many others.

## 6. Conclusion

It can be asserted that the Western thinking in its diverse transmutations repeats what Uranus thought about-the politics of divide- as the means to keep his power and rule secured. The same became a legacy in Cronus and Zeus through to the modern thinkers. This paper does not claim that the modern thinkers attained to the divine height of Uranus and the following Olympian Gods, but certainly they have secured their place as the king in their respective domain of thought, making the same pattern, understood as “transmutation,” the basis of their thinking. This basis is the specter of Uranus. As a cumulative effect, they have also certainly raised the empire of the canon of the Western thinking which has already proved lethal in many instances, the two world wars and colonialism as the foremost. And this is not the end. The thinkers like Marx and Derrida, for instance, have penetrated, and are penetrating, almost all the disciplines in humanities and social sciences in terms of perspectives in research thus catering the seed thought to an inexorable dissemination. And the paradox is that in spite of being an enabling phenomenon in many instances, obliquely they are also cruising human thinking with the same politics beyond boundaries whose further exploration as evidence, however, is beyond the scope of this paper.

## Author Contributions

Ramesh Sharma is the sole author. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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